

Communicative Language Teaching in Tertiary EFL Contexts in Japan: Examining Learner Beliefs, Perceptions and Attitudes

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Learner views of learning cannot be ignored, since they may have a facilitative influence on teaching and learning. The learner views examined in this study are Japanese university students' perceptions of classroom practices they have experienced, their attitudes toward these classroom practices, and their beliefs about English language learning in general. Results revealed that there was a match between student beliefs about English language learning in general and their perceptions of the classroom practices they experienced. These strong beliefs and perceptions seemed to influence students' positive attitudes towards particular classroom practices. The implications of these results to language teaching as well as suggestions for future research are discussed.

学習者の学びに対する考えは、学習と教育の両面に効果的な影響を及ぼす可能性を含んでおり、非常に重要である。本研究では特に日本の大学生の授業活動に対する認識と態度、さらに英語学習全般についての見解を調査した。台湾の中等教育の学生を対象に行われたアンケート(Savignon & Wang, 2003)を日本の大学生向けに一部変更し関西圏の大学に在籍する学生を対象に調査を実施した。両国とも、EFLの環境で英語教育が実施されているが、学習者の考えに関して異なる結果が得られた。



Background to the Study

Communicative language teaching (CLT) started in the late 1970s in Europe and gained momentum in the early 1980s (Hu, 2002). The major focus of CLT is to develop learner ability to use language in context, which contrasts sharply with the previously established traditions which emphasize learner knowledge of formal language features (Savignon & Wang, 2003). In CLT using the target language (meaning-focus) is encouraged with less emphasis on accuracy (form-focus), and language should be taught at the discourse level rather than at the sentence level, unlike more traditional approaches (Celce-Murcia, 1991). As Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) further explained, in order to develop communicative competence, learners should be provided with ample opportunities to use the target language for communicative purposes and to learn the language through using it. Thus, focus should be placed on learner-centered and experience-based instruction. Learner-centered instruction encourages teachers to utilize techniques that focus on or account for learner needs, styles and goals; techniques that give some control to the student (e.g., group work or strategy training); and techniques that allow for student creativity and innovation (Brown, 2001). Experience-based learning, on the other hand, considers experience as the foundation of, and the stimulus for, learning, and encourages learners to acknowledge and build on taken-for-granted processes which are often ignored in educational contexts (Boud, Cohen, & Walker, 1993).

The concept of CLT was introduced into Japanese schools, specifically into junior and senior high schools, only in 1989 by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). This 1989 MEXT version of CLT was called *The Course of Study* which was implemented four years later in 1993. In *The Course of Study*, three new oral communication courses were introduced: Oral Communication A (OCA), Oral Communication B (OCB), and Oral Communication C

(OCC). The main goal of introducing these courses was to improve the poor English listening and speaking ability of Japanese students (Tanaka, 2009). Then in 1999 the MEXT English curriculum underwent another revision. The course names were changed, but the goal was the same, to develop the “practical communication abilities” (MEXT, 1989, 1999) of secondary students. This 1999 revision was implemented in 2003. The action plan in this revision also covers developing the English language abilities of university graduates. Specifically, the action plan stipulates that an average university graduate should be able to use English at least at a professional level in their work.

With the implementation of MEXT’s 2003 CLT curriculum, three major studies were conducted. One was by Gorsuch in 2000, a second by Taguchi in 2005, and a third by Nishino in 2008. These three research projects shared the same goal; to explore the factors that influenced teacher perception of CLT. The results of all three studies showed that teachers were dissatisfied with CLT because it was considered incompatible with the exam-oriented atmosphere of the Japanese English education system which is not designed to assess communicative ability (Gorsuch, 2000; Nishino, 2008; Taguchi, 2005).

Learner attitudes toward learning and the perceptions and beliefs which determine them may have a profound influence on learning behavior (Cotterall, 1995), and on learning outcomes (Weinert & Kluwe, 1987). Successful learners develop insightful beliefs about language learning processes, their own abilities and the use of effective learning strategies (Anstey, 1988), which have a facilitative effect on learning. These successful learners tend to develop a more active and autonomous attitude that allows them to take charge of their own learning. As far as language acquisition is concerned, Gardner (1985) argued that “attitudes towards aspects of the language could play a role in determining how successful an individual could be in acquiring it” (p. 7). Specifically in Japan, to determine the relationship between student attitude

and motivation toward English language study some studies have been conducted. Shimizu (1995) examined differing student attitudes and expectations about foreign and Japanese instructors while Benson (1992) looked into the effect of students' attitudes and motivation toward their English studies while preparing for entrance examinations during their years at secondary school. Berwick and Ross (1989), in their longitudinal study of first-year university student attitudes and motivation toward English, confirmed that upon entering university, student motivation was low because, "motivation to learn English hits its peak in the last year of high school..." (p. 206). So students, "...arrive exam-worn survivors with no apparent academic purpose at university" (p. 206). O'Donnell (2003) uncovered how incoming freshmen at a small non-elite university studied English in secondary school and examined the attitudes and motivations that they held about language learning, showing that English language educational experiences at secondary school remained unchanged. Parents and teachers continued to emphasize the importance of studying English to prepare for entrance examinations. Most student participants generally assessed their secondary English language experiences negatively. While O'Donnell's goal was to examine incoming freshmen students' attitudes and motivation regarding language learning in high school, the main goal of this research is to examine the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of university students toward CLT. We believe what O'Donnell emphasized in his study; that university instructors of English must come to know their students' language experiences and attitudes and motivations to bridge possible cultural and pedagogical gaps, as students at the tertiary level may hold the same beliefs about the general nature of language learning and learning and communication strategies developed from their secondary language experiences. Through understanding their students instructors may find ways to help them find a purpose for pursuing greater language proficiency while at university. Specifically, our research seeks to address the following questions:

1. What are learners' beliefs about English language learning generally?
2. In terms of instructional focus, what are learners' perceptions of the classroom practices they have experienced?
3. What are learners' attitudes toward these classroom practices?

Method

Participants

A total of 299 students from four private and two public universities in Japan answered a questionnaire designed to collect their attitudes toward communicative language teaching. Their attitudes toward classroom practices they have experienced were a particular emphasis of the questionnaire. 143 students were English education majors and the other 157 students belonged to other departments. 111 are first year students, 75 second year students, and 79 third year students. Participating institutions and classes were selected through their direct connection to the six researchers and instructors contacted through professional organizations such as the Japan Association of Language Teachers, creating a convenience sample. Thus this study cannot claim to accurately represent the views of language students throughout all of Japan.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire was adapted from Savignon and Wang's questionnaire (2003) and is reproduced in Appendix A. Since the original questionnaire was designed to gather data from junior and senior high school students in Taiwan, it was modified for this study. Items were reworded to reflect the different focus of the present study to gather data from university students rather than high school students. For example, "I like grammar-focused English teaching in my Senior High School" was changed to "I like grammar-focused English teaching in my university."

The questionnaire, which has a total of 51 statements, is divided into three parts. Parts one and two each consist of 11 statements relating to perceptions of classroom learning experiences. In each of these two parts five statements relate to form-focused classroom practices while another five relate to meaning-based classroom practices. An 11th statement in both parts one and two relates to error correction. Part three of the questionnaire consists of 29 statements concerning beliefs about English language learning in general. Items one to 11 are similar in nature to the 11 statements in parts one and two of the questionnaire. In addition, statements 12 to 16 specifically address beliefs about grammar-focused instruction; statements 17 to 19 concern beliefs about meaning-based instruction; statements 20 and 21 are related to beliefs about error correction; 22 and 23 are concerned with pronunciation; 24, 25 and 28 address the importance of English; and 26 and 27 are concerned with learner perceptions of the interrelationship between language learning ability and intelligence. Statement 29 pertains to students' wish to speak English like native speakers. For this statement, students had to choose which dialect of English they would prefer to speak, for example: American English, British English, etc.

The questionnaire also includes items for student background information such as year level, what type of university they attend and major.

Responses were on a Likert scale from one to seven, with one coded as strongly disagree and seven as strongly agree. For ease of interpretation, the data were merged. For example, data for responses 1 to 3 were merged and labeled as "Disagree" while data for responses 5 to 7 were merged and labeled as "Agree." The questionnaire was translated into Japanese and vetted by two Japanese professors of English for clarity and accuracy. To make certain of the comprehensibility of the questionnaire, it was administered to a test group of university students and revised and finalized based on their feedback.

Results

Learner Beliefs about Language Learning

Table 1 summarizes the results of Part III of the questionnaire. Appendix B includes more detailed results.

Beliefs about Grammar-Based Learning

Questions 1 to 5 and 12-16 in Part III of the survey questionnaire ask about student beliefs regarding grammar-focused practice in language learning. The results for all questions except 5 indicate they have varied beliefs regarding the significance and effectiveness of grammar-based exercises.

Table 1. Beliefs about Language Learning

Items in Part III	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Grammar-based learning: 1-5 and 12-16	288	112(39%)	55(19%)	121(42%)
Communication-based learning: 6-10 and 17-19	287	20(7%)	39(14%)	228(79%)
Correction: 11, 20, 21	288	39(13%)	34(12%)	214(75%)
Pronunciation: 22, 23	287	87(30%)	54(19%)	147(51%)
Importance of English in society: 24, 25, 28	287	32(11%)	41(15%)	214(75%)
Relation between English and other subjects: 26, 27	287	102(35%)	76(26%)	110(39%)
Desire to speak like native speakers: 29	286	20(7%)	22(8%)	244(85%)

While most questions in this group directly asked about student beliefs regarding grammar-focused practice, question 5

indirectly addressed this issue by asking, *Opening one's mouth to practice speaking in the classroom is not essential for English learning*, to which students strongly disagreed (90% of students, see Appendix 2). This result suggests that students' responses display different strengths of beliefs depending on how questions are asked. However, with the other questions in this group students did not demonstrate consistent beliefs regarding grammar-focused practice.

Beliefs Regarding Communication-Based Learning

On the other hand, the responses to questions 6 to 10 and 17 to 19 demonstrate students' clear and consistent belief that learning English should contain communication-based training as the main focus. The answers to questions 7, 9 and 10 more closely examine student thoughts on how communication-focused training should be implemented in class. They seem to believe that for this type of communicative training, teachers play a significant role in creating an atmosphere (Q10, 83% agreed) that allows students to interact with classmates in real-life situations (Q7, 91% agreed). They also believe trial-and-error in communicating in English can enhance their language skills (Q9, 91% agreed).

Beliefs About Correction

Responses to the question about whether it is important to avoid making errors in learning English (Q20, 81% disagreed) indicate student support for the importance of trial-and-error in language learning. Furthermore, students report their belief that teachers should correct errors in class (Q11, 81% agreed). Nevertheless, when asked about more exact error corrections, such as pronunciation and grammar corrections, they were less interested in correction (Q21, only 67% agreed).

Beliefs About Pronunciation and the Desire to Speak Like Native Speakers

Questions 22 and 23 investigate students' ideas on the interrelationship between good pronunciation and the good learner or good English. The results suggest that students have varied opinions on the interrelationship (mean of Q22 and Q23, 51% agreed and 30% disagreed).

Question 29 looks into their desire to speak like native speakers of English. Interestingly, though students answer that they have the desire to acquire native-like speaking ability (Q29, 85% agreed), they do not believe that good pronunciation skills always represent good general English skills or learning skills. In addition, from the results above, it can be said that regardless of their desire to speak like native speakers, they are not so interested in receiving pronunciation and grammar corrections from their teachers in class.

Beliefs About the Importance of English in Society

Questions 24, 25, and 28 concern university students' general beliefs toward English education in Japan. The responses reveal their commonly held ideas that learning English is important for the Japanese (Q24, 76% agreed), that English is highly useful for getting a job (Q25, 83% agreed), and that English education should begin in elementary school (Q28, 65% agreed). While they seem to feel the necessity to learn English for their future, they don't seem to feel the necessity to start English education earlier.

Beliefs About the Relationship between English and Other Subjects

The responses to Questions 26 and 27 show their neutral beliefs regarding the interrelationship between learners' general

academic skills and English skills (mean of Q26 and 27, 39% agreed and 35% disagreed). The results reveal that not so many students clearly relate them together.

Learner Perceptions

Table 2 summarizes the results of Part I of the questionnaire. Appendix C includes more detailed results.

Table 2. Perceptions of Classroom Practices at University

Items in Part I	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Grammar-based learning: 1-5	254	180(71%)	133(24%)	43(17%)
Communication-based learning: 6-10	251	44(17%)	33(27%)	175(70%)
Correction: 11	252	86(34%)	40(16%)	126(50%)

Perceptions of Grammar-Based Learning

Questions 1 to 5 in Part I of the survey questionnaire ask about student perceptions regarding grammar-focused practice they experienced in their classes. The responses to these questions indicate that students' experiences in classrooms are generally not grammar-focused training. Responses to the question about whether their class has its main focus on grammar explanation and practice (Q4, 75% disagreed, see Appendix 3) also clearly indicate this weak focus on grammar-based learning in class. Additionally, several questions investigated language use by students and their teacher during lessons, since traditional grammar-based learning is usually implemented with teachers' frequent use of learners' native/main language (Q3, 77% disagreed) and with students' rare opportunities to speak (Q5, 76%

disagreed). All these results suggest that the classroom practices they experienced are usually not grammar-focused.

Perceptions of Communication-Based Learning

Questions 6 to 10 in Part I of the questionnaire ask about student perceptions regarding communication or meaning-based practice they experienced in their classes. The responses to these questions reveal that such communication-based practices are common in their classes. From their responses, frequency of classroom practices can be also assumed: interactions with their classmates occur most frequently (Q7, 82% agreed), English is actually used frequently (Q10, 77% agreed), communicative-based practices are often implemented (Q6, 72%), trial-and-error attempts to communicate are usually made (Q9, 68% agreed), and combined training of communication practice and grammar practice is provided when necessary (Q8, 49% agreed).

Perceptions of Correction

Question 11 in Part I of the questionnaire asks about student perceptions regarding error correction they received in speaking from their teacher during lessons. The responses to this question do not indicate a consistent perception that teachers frequently correct their errors in class. While half the students perceive they receive error corrections from their teacher, one-third of the students answer they do not (Q11, 50% agreed and 34% disagreed).

Learner Attitudes

Table 3 summarizes the results of Part II of the questionnaire. Appendix D includes more detailed results.

Attitudes Toward Grammar-Based Learning

Questions 1 to 5 in Part II of the survey questionnaire ask about student attitudes regarding grammar-focused practice they experienced in their classes. The responses to the questions show students' strong disfavor toward classes with grammar-based learning as the main focus. Specifically the responses indicate that they do not like classes with rare chances for students to speak (Q5, 82% disagreed, see Appendix 4), with a lot of grammar explanation and practice (Q4, 80% disagreed), and with frequent use of Japanese by teachers (Q3, 75% disagreed). Looking at student perceptions above and attitudes regarding grammar-based learning in class, it is discovered that students do not expect grammar-based learning and this type of learning actually do not often happen in their classes. In addition, they want their teachers not to use Japanese frequently in class, and teachers actually don't use it a lot. Therefore, it can be said that student preferences and actual class practices match quite well.

Table 3. Attitudes Toward Perceived Classroom Practices at University

Items in Part II	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Grammar-based learning: 1-5	84	208(73%)	39(14%)	36(13%)
Communication-based learning: 6-10	84	23(8%)	35(12%)	226(80%)
Correction: 11	85	23(8%)	42(15%)	220(77%)

Attitudes Toward Communication-Based Learning

Questions 6 to 10 in Part II ask about student attitudes regarding communication or meaning-based practice they experienced in their classes. The responses to these questions show students' strong favor toward classes with communication-based learning as the main focus. Especially students highly regard learning in an atmosphere where they can actually use English (Q10, 86% agreed), being able to make trial-and-error attempts (Q8, 82% agreed), and combined training with both communication and grammar practices (Q6, 82% agreed). Though, in the perception section above, they report that they do not receive such combined training so often in class, they would probably love to have more of such mixed training for better communication and grammar.

Attitudes Toward Correction

Question 11 in Part I of the questionnaire asks about student attitudes regarding error correction they received in speaking from their teacher during lessons. The responses to the question show that students would like to receive error-corrections in speaking activities from their teachers (Q11, 77% agreed). In the perception section above, only half of the students report that they receive error-corrections from their teacher. Based on these results, it is suggested that students consider they need more error-correction from their university instructors.

Discussion

The overall results of the study indicate these Japanese university students' beliefs about English learning and their perceptions of class experience match quite well. Savignon and Wang (2003) administered the same kind of questionnaire to students in secondary schools in Taiwan but showed a different pattern, as

they found a mismatch between learners' strong preference for communicative approaches and their class experiences, which were form-focused. There are several possible ways to explain why our study obtained different results. One factor may be the sample groups used for the present study. The researchers in this study conducted the research in their own schools and teacher acquaintance schools, so the participating teachers may value communicative language teaching more highly than those in Savignon and Wang's study, may use CLT methodologies more, which may improve student perceptions of their learning experience.

Nishino (2008) might offer another possible explanation. Researching teacher attitudes at secondary schools in Japan, Nishino mentions the hesitance of teachers to use CLT in class is perhaps attributable to student expectations for teachers to focus on college entrance examinations. At tertiary schools, however, the need for exam preparation is removed, and there is increasing pressure on universities to produce students with communication skills. Therefore, student expectations at the tertiary level may be for teachers to focus on communication, which may in turn be reflected their survey responses.

Regarding student attitudes toward learning practices experienced in university as reported here in comparison to previous studies, Berwick and Ross (1989) mentioned college freshmen lack motivation to learn English after their tiring entrance exam preparation. Furthermore, O'Donnell (2003) noted students' negative assessment of their grammar-translation experience of high school. Both of these reasons match the experiences of many teachers in Japan but further qualitative research needs to be done to confirm these ideas. Benson (1991) investigated college freshmen's self-rating of their four skills, showing they lacked confidence in their understanding and speaking skills, explaining this may be related to their past experiences in junior high school and high school. His research also noted students

believed English would not be useful later in life at and after college. While here we did not directly investigate student motivation to learn English, students did have a consistently favorable attitude toward communicative learning and a shared belief that English learning is important for their future. Perhaps, if our student participants, like Benson's, lack confidence in understanding and speaking, they may prefer communicative training in order to overcome those perceived weaknesses. One important difference between Benson's study and ours is that while his learners held negative beliefs regarding the importance of English, ours thought English quite important, which may be a reflection of the 20-year time difference between the two studies. It may be that in today's society the importance of English is more widely acknowledged among college students.

In terms of attitude toward grammar-based practices experienced in university, more than two-thirds of students give negative responses. In contrast, when asked about their attitude toward mixed training of communication and grammar practice, most responded positively. In their responses about general beliefs regarding language learning, they displayed various ideas regarding grammar-based learning, indicating students do not only have negative attitudes toward grammar-based learning, but instead have more nuanced impressions of it. Regarding the variation in answer responses, it is possible that some question statements are not clear enough to students to answer appropriately concerning learning experiences in college or high school, even though the title of Part I and II clearly says "English practice in the classroom in my university" and "My attitude toward the instructional practice in my university" respectively. For example, our study only directly translated questions from the original questionnaire, therefore we made no attempt to establish whether students should respond to the questions based on current or passed courses or consider how individual students interpreted each question being asked of

them. For any future study, several modifications to the questions should be considered to reflect these considerations.

The researchers of this study are also interested in finding the various factors that influence students' beliefs, perceptions and attitudes such as their major, year level in school, and age to start learning English. The previous study in Taiwan (Savignon & Wang, 2003) indicated that the students' starting age had a significant effect on both their attitudes toward form-focused instruction in junior and senior high school and their beliefs about English learning in general. In the study, Taiwanese students with initial learning age before entering secondary school tended to have a stronger unfavorable attitude toward form-based instruction. However, this age effect was not observed in their attitudes or beliefs about communication-based practices. The present study also shows a similar tendency for varied beliefs, perceptions and attitudes toward form-based instruction and of rather consistent beliefs, perceptions and attitudes toward communication-based practices. Further data collection and analysis is required to investigate this age effect or other covert effects in the future.

Finally as we can see above, the results of many studies combined together provide important information for English language instructors. Some important points include: students feel English is important in society but do not feel it connects with their other subjects, students prefer CLT based instruction to grammar based instruction, students desire to speak like native speakers, students do not want their teachers to speak extensively in Japanese, and student beliefs about language teaching generally match the instruction they are receiving but they would like more error correction. Instructors of English at the tertiary level can use this information to raise the overall motivation of their college students, keep in mind learners' affective responses to classroom tasks and improve the quality of L2 task performance in class (Lambert 2001).

Conclusion

Our study found that our student participants saw quite a good match between their beliefs and attitudes toward communicative language learning and their perceptions of their classroom learning experiences, which contrasts sharply with similar research conducted in Taiwan, where there was a mismatch between student beliefs and their perceptions of their experience of learning English (Savignon & Wang, 2003). What is still not clear is whether CLT in practice really does provide college students with ample opportunities to use the target language for communicative purposes and to learn the language through using it, a potential topic for future research. Furthermore, as Savignon and Wang (2003) pointed out, it is not certain if student perceptions of their English learning really represent actual classroom practice, thus research that couples student questionnaire responses with classroom observations may be necessary to establish a link between perception and actual practice. Finally, in order to generalize results throughout Japan more accurately, additional studies with larger samples from a wider range of schools using various research instruments are necessary.

The findings of this study also reveal the student beliefs were compatible with a contemporary, communicative orientation toward language learning, which, in turn, likely influenced their positive perceptions of CLT in their classrooms, particularly meaning-based instruction.

Finally, although this study covered only 299 participants from six universities, the findings suggest that for English language teachers both in secondary and tertiary levels to successfully implement CLT, student beliefs, perceptions and attitudes should be taken into account. As Savignon (1997) stressed, if all the variables in L2 acquisition could be identified and the many intricate patterns of interaction between learner and learning context described, ultimate success in learning to use a second

language most likely would be seen to depend on the attitude of the learner; thus, learner views of learning cannot be ignored. Knowing these views enables teachers to design a curriculum tailored to fit the communicative needs of their learners.

Bio Data

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

(English translation of the Japanese questionnaire used in the study)

Questionnaire on Communicative Language Teaching in English Classes

This questionnaire is optional. Please circle the number or provide an answer that best reflects your view for each item. Answer each item as truthfully as possible. Your responses will not be taken against you and your teacher. All answers to this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you.

What is your opinion about each item below?

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

- I. English practice in the classroom in my university
 1. English teaching in my university is grammar-focused.
 2. My English teachers in my university often ask us to do sentence drilling and repeat sentences after them.
 3. The language used in the classroom by my teachers is mostly Japanese.
 4. English teaching in my university is mainly explaining and practicing grammar rules.
 5. I seldom need to open my mouth in the classroom.
 6. English teaching in my university is communication-based.
 7. My teachers often design activities to have us interact in English with peers.
 8. Our focus in class is communication, but the teacher would explain grammar when necessary.

9. English teachers in my university allow us trial-and-error attempts to communicate in English.
10. My English teachers often create an atmosphere for us to use English.
11. My English teachers often correct my errors in speaking in class.

II. My attitude toward the instructional practice in my university

1. I like grammar-focused English teaching in my university.
2. I like sentence drilling and repeating sentences after my teachers in my university English class.
3. I like the language used in the classroom by my English teachers in university to be mostly Japanese.
4. I like much of the time in the classroom to be spent in explaining and practicing grammar rules.
5. I like an English class in which I do not need to open my mouth.
6. I like communication-based English teaching.
7. I like communicative activities so that we could interact in English with peers.
8. I like my English class to be focused on communication, with grammar explained when necessary.
9. I like English teachers in my university to allow us to make trial-and-error attempts to communicate in English.
10. I like my English teachers to create an atmosphere that encourages us to use English in class.
11. I like my errors in speaking to be corrected by my teachers.

III. My beliefs about learning English

1. Learning English is learning its grammar rules.
2. English learning through sentence drilling is effective.
3. I believe Japanese should be frequently used in my English class for my better understanding of the lessons.
4. I believe the more grammar rules one memorizes, the better he/she is at using English.
5. Opening one's mouth to practice speaking in the classroom is not essential for English learning.
6. A language classroom should be communication-focused.
7. It is important to practice English in real-life or real-life like situations.
8. Languages are learned mainly through communication, with grammar rules explained when necessary.
9. I believe making trial-and-error attempts to communicate in English helps me to learn English.
10. A teacher should create an atmosphere in the classroom to encourage interaction as a class or in groups.
11. It is important for the teacher to correct students' speaking errors in class.
12. The formal study of grammar is essential to eventual mastery of English.
13. I believe my English improves most quickly if I study and practice the grammar.
14. There should be more formal study of grammar in English class.
15. It is more important to study and practice grammatical patterns than to practice English in an interactive way in the classroom.
16. Grammar rules should be explicitly explained in class.

17. Learning English is learning to use the language.
18. Learning English by practicing the language in communicative activities is essential to eventual mastery of a foreign language.
19. A communication-focused language program often meets the learner's needs.
20. I believe it is important to avoid making errors in the process of learning English.
21. Teachers should correct students' pronunciation or grammatical errors in class.
22. A good language learner usually pronounces beautifully.
23. A person's good pronunciation usually indicates good English.
24. Learning English is important for people in Japan.
25. English is useful in getting a good job.
26. Good language learners are intelligent.
27. Students who have good grades in other subjects are likely to be good language learners.
28. English education should begin in elementary school.
29. I wish to speak like English native speakers.
30. If you agree with the above statement, what English would you like to learn to use?
 1. American English
 2. British English
 3. Canadian English
 4. Australian English
 5. Others, please specify

Background information

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. Gender: | 1. Male | 2. Female | |
| 2. Major: | 1. English | 2. Education | 3. Others |
| 3. College / University: | 1. Private | 2. Public | |

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------|--------|
| 4. Grade / Year level: | 1. 1st | 2. 2nd |
| | 3. 3rd | 4. 4th |
5. When did you start learning English?:
- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Before 7 years old | 2. Between 7 and 11 |
| 3. Between 12 and 15 | 4. At 16 or after |

Appendix B

Original Data for Table 1. Beliefs About Language Learning

	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Items in Part III				
<i>Grammar-based practices</i>				
Q1 Learning English is grammar-focused	288	149(52%)	77(27%)	62(22%)
Q2 Sentence drilling is effective	288	111(39%)	60(21%)	117(41%)
Q3 Japanese should be used	289	186(64%)	41(14%)	62(21%)
Q4 More grammar rules, better at English	286	105(37%)	53(19%)	128(45%)
Q5 Opening mouth is not essential	287	257(90%)	11(4%)	19(7%)
Q12 Grammar is essential for mastery	286	33(12%)	36(13%)	217(76%)
Q13 Grammar improves English quickly	287	115(40%)	64(22%)	108(38%)
Q14 More formal study of grammar	287	123(43%)	74(26%)	90(31%)
Q15 More formal study than interaction	289	173(60%)	70(24%)	46(16%)
Q16 Explicit explanation of grammar rules	289	105(36%)	61(21%)	123(43%)

Items in Part III	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Mean: (<i>Note:</i> Since Q5 was reversed (disagree meant support for speaking), the results of Q5 were reversed in calculating the mean for this category)	288	112(39%)	55(19%)	121(42%)
Communication-based practices				
Q6 Classroom is communication-focused	287	28(10%)	51(18%)	208(72%)
Q7 Practice in real-life situations is good	287	8(3%)	17(6%)	262(91%)
Q8 Communication with grammar lesson	288	30(10%)	56(19%)	202(70%)
Q9 Trial-and-error attempt to communicate	288	9(3%)	17(6%)	262(91%)
Q10 Atmosphere to use English by teacher	288	14(5%)	36(13%)	238(83%)
Q17 Learning to use English	286	33(12%)	46(16%)	207(72%)
Q18 Communicative activities and mastery	285	17(6%)	28(10%)	240(84%)
Q19 Communication-focused meets need	285	21(7%)	63(22%)	201(71%)
Mean	287	20(7%)	39(14%)	228(79%)
Correction				
Q11 Error correction by teacher	286	35(12%)	34(12%)	217(76%)
Q20 Avoiding errors is important	288	233(81%)	23(8%)	32(11%)
Q21 Pronunciation and grammar correction	288	49(17%)	46(16%)	193(67%)

Items in Part III	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
Mean: (<i>Note:</i> Since Q20 was reversed (disagree meant support for errors), the results of Q20 were reversed in calculating the mean for this category)	287	39(13%)	34(12%)	214(75%)
Pronunciation				
Q22 Good learner pronounces beautifully	286	70(24%)	49(17%)	167(58%)
Q23 Good pronunciation, good English	287	103(36%)	58(20%)	126(44%)
Mean	287	87(30%)	54(19%)	147(51%)
Importance of English in society				
Q24 Eng. is important for people in Japan	287	33(11%)	37(13%)	217(76%)
Q25 Eng. is useful in getting a good job	285	19(7%)	30(11%)	236(83%)
Q28 Eng. education in elementary school	289	44(15%)	57(20%)	188(65%)
Mean	287	32(11%)	41(15%)	214(75%)
English and other subjects				
Q26 Good language learner is intelligent	287	64(22%)	78(27%)	145(51%)
Q27 Other subjects and language learning	287	139(48%)	73(25%)	75(26%)
Mean	287	102(35%)	76(26%)	110(39%)
Q29 Speak like native speakers	286	20(7%)	22(8%)	244(85%)

Appendix C

Original Data for Table 2. Perceptions of Classroom Practice in University

Items in Part I	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
<i>Grammar-based practices</i>				
Q1 Grammar-focused	259	176(68%)	49(19%)	34(13%)
Q2 Sentence drilling and repeating	255	153(60%)	27(11%)	75(29%)
Q3 Mostly in Japanese	252	193(77%)	19(8%)	40(16%)
Q4 Explaining and practicing grammar	251	187(75%)	33(13%)	31(12%)
Q5 Seldom need to open mouth	251	190(76%)	26(10%)	35(14%)
Mean		180(71%)	133(24%)	43(17%)
<i>Communication-based practices</i>				
Q6 Communication-based	250	41(16%)	29(12%)	180(72%)
Q7 Interact in English with peers	253	33(13%)	12(5%)	208(82%)
Q8 Communication with grammar lesson	251	73(29%)	54(22%)	124(49%)
Q9 Trial-and-error attempt to communicate	250	42(17%)	39(16%)	169(68%)
Q10 Atmosphere to use English	251	29(12%)	29(12%)	193(77%)
Mean		44(17%)	33(27%)	175(70%)
Q11 Frequent error corrections in speaking	252	86(34%)	40(16%)	126(50%)

Appendix D

Original Data for Table 3. Attitudes Toward Perceived Classroom Practices in University

Items in Part II	n	Disagree 1-3 n (%)	Neutral 4 n (%)	Agree 5-7 n (%)
<i>Grammar-based practices</i>				
Q1 Grammar-focused	284	192(68%)	52(18%)	40(14%)
Q2 Sentence drilling and repeating	281	174(62%)	48(17%)	59(21%)
Q3 Mostly in Japanese	284	213(75%)	41(14%)	30(11%)
Q4 Explaining and practicing grammar	285	228(80%)	28(10%)	29(10%)
Q5 Seldom need to open mouth	285	235(82%)	26(9%)	24(8%)
Mean	284	208(73%)	39(14%)	36(13%)
<i>Communication-based practices</i>				
Q6 Communication-based	284	36(13%)	44(15%)	204(72%)
Q7 Interact in English with peers	282	29(10%)	38(13%)	215(76%)
Q8 Communication with grammar lesson	283	23(8%)	28(10%)	232(82%)
Q9 Trial-and-error attempt to communicate	285	15(5%)	36(13%)	234(82%)
Q10 Atmosphere to use English	285	13(5%)	28(10%)	244(86%)
Mean	284	23(8%)	35(12%)	226(80%)
Q11 Frequent error corrections in speaking	285	23(8%)	42(15%)	220(77%)