

Japan Association for Language Teaching

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Japan Association for Language Teaching

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The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education. Established in 1976, JALT serves an international membership of approximately 3,000 language teachers. There are 37 JALT chapters, all in Japan, along with 20 special interest groups (SIGs) and one forming SIG. JALT is one of the founders of PAC (Pan-Asian Consortium), which is an association of language teacher organizations in Pacific Asia. PAC holds regional conferences and exchanges information among its member organizations. JALT is the Japan affiliate of International TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and is a branch of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language).

JALT publishes *JALT Journal*, a research journal; *The Language Teacher*, a bimonthly periodical containing articles, teaching activities, reviews, and announcements about professional concerns; and *JALT International Conference Proceedings*.

The JALT International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning and Educational Materials Exposition attracts some 2,000 participants annually and offers over 600 papers, workshops, colloquia, and poster sessions. Each JALT chapter holds local meetings and JALT's SIGs provide information and newsletters on specific areas of interest. JALT also sponsors special events such as workshops and conferences on specific themes, and awards annual grants for research projects related to language teaching and learning. Membership is open to those interested in language education and includes automatic assignment to the nearest chapter or the chapter you prefer to join, copies of JALT publications, and reduced admission to JALT-sponsored events. JALT members can join as many SIGs as they wish for an annual fee of ¥1,500 per SIG. For information, contact the JALT Central Office or visit the JALT website at <www.jalt.org>.

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In this Issue

Articles

Our first paper in this issue is contributed by **Setsuko Mori**, **Peter Gobel**, **Kitcha Thepsir**, and **Punjaporn Pojanapunya**. The paper considers the causal attributions ascribed by EFL students to success and/or failure in learning an L2 from a comparative perspective (Japanese and Thai learners), and the paper is an important contribution to this accelerating research trajectory. In our second paper, **Tsuyuki Miura** reports the findings of a study conducted in the Japan context on long-term motivational changes in L2 learning. A number of hypotheses are tested and the main findings include that student motivation changes frequently and can be strongly influenced by entrance examinations. In the final main paper for this issue, **Yusuke Okada** uses the micro-analytic methods of Conversation Analysis (CA) to examine the interactional consequences of “failed” questions in the context of the foreign language classroom.

Perspectives

In this section, we welcome a timely piece from **Paul Stapleton** and **Paul Collett**. The paper offers a critical retrospective on the first 30 years of work published in *JALT Journal*.

Reviews

We have six book reviews in this issue of *JALT Journal*. In the first, **Howard Doyle** reports on a volume offering a collection of papers dealing with Japanese applied linguistics. In the second, **Richard Lavin** reports on a work which offers 1110 essential academic words. Our third review, by **Douglas Meyer**, considers a book which examines the latest major theories in the field of SLA. Our fourth review, by **Sumi Shioiri**, deals with a book in the area of communicative language teaching for Japanese language education. In the fifth of our reviews, **Craig Smith** considers an edited volume on TESOL classroom practice. Finally, **Tim Stewart** reports on a book which offers a guide to research in ELT classrooms.

From the Editor

This issue of *JALT Journal* represents the continuing efforts of a group of dedicated volunteers to whom I am deeply grateful. Many of these volunteers are standing members of our Editorial Advisory Board and many are occasional readers. Of course, once papers are accepted we rely heavily on the production group and my usual expression of gratitude at each issue is, as always, heartfelt.

Articles

Attributions for Performance: A Comparative Study of Japanese and Thai University Students

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Attribution theory posits that people look for causes for their successes and failures. Past research indicates that these causal attributions may influence future performance, and it has been suggested that attributional tendencies may be affected by culture and outcome. To understand the role that culture and outcome may play in attributions for foreign language learning, a set of questionnaires was designed to investigate how EFL university students (355 Thai and 350 Japanese) in two countries judged their successes and failures on actual language learning tasks. Although there were a few differences based on culture, MANOVA results revealed that both groups focused more on external factors (such as teachers and classroom atmosphere) for success and internal factors (such as lack of ability and effort) for failure. The impli-

cations that can be drawn with regard to cultural bias, language teaching, and the nature of the learning environment are considered.

帰属理論は、人は成功や失敗を認知する際、原因帰属を試みとする。関連の先行研究では、原因帰属は文化や行為の結果に左右され、ひいては未来の行動に影響を与えるという可能性が示唆されている。本論文は、異なる文化背景をもつ英語学習者がその学習体験における成功と失敗の原因を何に求めるかを検証したものである。英語学習者の原因帰属プロセスを検証するにあたり、タイおよび日本の大学1年生(各355人、350人)を対象に質問調査を実施した。その結果、両国の大学生はどちらも、成功の原因は教員やクラスの雰囲気等の外的要因に求め、失敗の原因は能力不足や努力不足といった内的要因に求めることがわかった。これらの類似する原因帰属パターンを文化的な影響によるものと仮定し、英語学習においてどのような影響を与えるのかについても考察した。

One of the most widely discussed issues in both educational and social psychology is the power of people's beliefs. What students believe, and how they interpret past behavior and actions, may be reasonably assumed to have an effect on their current and future actions (Dörnyei, 2001). In the area of language learning, many psychologists tend to question why some learners are more successful than others. From the point of view of this important query, learners' attributions for their own success and failure are one issue that researchers need to take into consideration. This paper focuses on a survey of attributions for doing well or poorly on classroom tasks in an EFL setting, and was administered to 705 students at two universities in two countries—Japan and Thailand. The paper begins with background information pertinent to the creation of the survey instruments, including a brief overview of attribution theory, and a review of attribution studies in the field of second language acquisition. Statistical results for the present study are then discussed, with an emphasis on their relationship to the theoretical background presented above. Finally, what the results of the study may tell us about language learning in different cultural contexts is considered.

Review of the Literature

Attribution Theory in Mainstream Psychology

In mainstream psychology, many researchers have tried to understand achievement behavior through analyzing perceived causes of success or failure (Burke, 1978; Elig & Frieze, 1979; Weiner, 1979; Weiner, et al., 1971). Research in this area has sought to identify the types of causal attributions people make to explain successes and failures in occupational and educational settings, and how these attributions affect expectations for future success or failure.

Attribution theory (Weiner, 1979) suggests that individuals have a need to either find or manufacture reasons for why a particular outcome occurs. These reasons may then have a significant effect on future action, motivation, and achievement strivings. These attributions are used to answer internal and external questions related to performance and are frequently posed in the negative since people are more likely to be concerned about negative or unexpected outcomes in an attempt to either save face or control future outcomes. Most attempts to test attribution theory have dealt with four types of causal explanations for success or failure: (a) ability, (b) effort, (c) luck, and (d) task ease or difficulty (e.g., Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Weiner et al., 1971). In addition, an outcome might also be attributed to a number of other factors including other people (such as teachers or other students), mood, fatigue or illness, personality, and physical appearance (Weiner, 1986).

We can see, then, how attributions of causality may vary from person to person and task to task, but they also vary from culture to culture, and they vary from social group to social group as well (Graham, 1991). Despite these differences in perceived causes for success or failure, all of these causal attributions can be quantitatively compared in terms of a set of underlying properties, or causal dimensions (Weiner, 1979). Weiner argued that the motivational dimensions of attribution could be described as a causal structure consisting of three parts: (a) locus, (b) stability, and (c) control. The locus of causality is concerned with whether a cause is perceived as being internal or external to the individual. For instance, ability and effort could be classified as internal, whereas task difficulty and luck would be classified as external. The stability dimension refers to whether a cause is fixed and stable, or variable and unstable over time. In this case, ability would be seen as stable, with effort being unstable or variable over time. Finally, controllability indicates how much control a person has over a cause. The effect of either luck or weather would be uncontrollable by an athlete, for example.

In attribution theory, these three dimensions form the basis of the taxonomy used to classify the specific causes of any success or failure. For instance, ability and effort, the two most commonly perceived causes in Western culture, can be thus classified within the cells of a Locus x Stability x Control matrix. This means that failure due to low ability is perceived as a characteristic of the failing individual, endures over time, and is beyond personal control. Effort, on the other hand, indicates a cause that is internal, unstable, and controllable.

Attribution Theory in Educational Contexts

In the field of education, a number of studies have investigated student attributions regarding test performance (Marsh, 1984; Meyer & Koelbl, 1982), past and future task performance (Burke, 1978; Farmer, Vispoel, & Maehr, 1991; Frieze & Snyder, 1980; Little, 1985; Pancer, 1978; Vispoel & Austin, 1995), the relationship between causal attributions and expectancy (Betancourt & Weiner, 1982), causal attributions and gender (Bar-Tal, Goldberg, & Knaani, 1984; Farmer & Vispoel, 1990; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Travis, Burnett-Doering, & Reid, 1982) and teacher expectation and causal attributions (Cooper & Burger, 1980; Seegers, Van Putten, & Vermeer, 2004). The majority of these studies were concerned with the school milieu in general, analyzing attributions and performance across academic subjects as well as other school activities. For example, Vispoel and Austin (1995) looked at junior high school students' recollection of successes and failures in the areas of English, math, music, and physical education, noting strong connections between causal beliefs and classroom achievement. Although the results of the cited studies differ to some degree, they have highlighted not only the importance of attributions of ability, effort, luck, and task, but also have shown how these various attributions can be interpreted in terms of the dimensions of locus, stability, and control (see Table 1).

Table 1. Dimensional Classification Scheme for Causal Attributions

Attribution	Dimension		
	Locus	Stability	Controllability
Ability	Internal	Stable	Uncontrollable
Effort	Internal	Unstable	Controllable
Strategy	Internal	Unstable	Controllable
Interest	Internal	Unstable	Controllable
Task difficulty	External	Stable	Uncontrollable
Luck	External	Unstable	Uncontrollable
Family influence	External	Stable	Uncontrollable
Teacher influence	External	Stable	Uncontrollable

From Vispoel & Austin (1995), based on Weiner (1979)

These results support early theories that attempt to explain why some attributions facilitate success or failure more than others. Weiner (1979, 1986) has proposed that internal attributions produce greater changes in esteem-related affect than external attributions, stable attributions are more concerned with expectancy for success or failure, and controllable attributions are more closely connected with persistence than uncontrollable attributions. From early studies the existence of these causal dimensions was accepted despite a lack of empirical evidence, the nature of open-ended questionnaire and interview-generated data precluding detailed quantitative analysis. However, in recent years the use of factor analysis and multi-dimensional scaling has provided some support for their existence (Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Meyer, 1980; Meyer & Koelbl, 1982; Vispoel & Austin, 1995).

Attribution Theory in a Foreign Language Context

Although a great number of people spend a considerable amount of time studying foreign languages, very few are likely to reach a reasonable level of second language (L2) proficiency. As a result, language learning, in many people's minds, is associated with failure, risk taking, and losing face (Horwitz, 1988). In addition, learning a foreign language challenges students by forcing them to integrate and assimilate new cultural practices (Williams & Burden, 1997). For these reasons, attribution theory is a relevant research area in the L2 field. Skehan (1989), for example, called for more attribution theory research, suggesting the possibility of synthesizing many of the individual variables associated with language learning into a more coherent account of the language learning process.

Given the theoretical significance of attributions in L2 motivation, it is actually surprising how little research has been conducted. There may be many reasons for this. For one thing, causal attributions are quite complex, and this affects the design of the study: broad questionnaires focusing on linear relationships and broad categories do not adequately portray the intricacy of the attributional process. Nevertheless, a few researchers have provided insight into the L2 causal attribution process.

In their study of L2 learners of French, Williams and Burden (1999) found that the British primary school children interviewed attributed success to external factors, with the number of attributions increasing with age. Younger children tended to focus on listening and concentrating as causes for doing well, while older children cited effort and interest among reasons for doing well. They also found that many of the attributions mentioned were strongly connected to teacher influence.

In a study of 51 American undergraduate and graduate foreign language students, Tse (2000) suggested that the main attributions for success in foreign language learning were the teachers' willingness to help students, a positive classroom environment, family or community assistance from target language speakers, and motivation to learn. Attributions for failure included lack of study or insufficient motivation, and mixed-level classes.

Williams, Burden, and Al-Baharna (2001) uncovered 11 positive and 18 negative attributions among 25 students learning English in Bahrain. They found that the main attributions for success included practice, support from family, and a positive attitude, while teaching methods, lack of support from family and teachers, poor comprehension, and a negative attitude were cited as the most common negative attributions.

In her qualitative study of university learners of French, Ushioda (2001) cited four attributional patterns among the learners: attributing positive L2 outcomes to personal ability or personal qualities; attributing negative L2 outcomes to temporary shortcomings that may be changed; attributing negative affective experiences to the learning context; and attributing future success or changes in behavior to personal resources. Ushioda noted that these attributions may act as a filter through which the learner views positive or negative experiences in such a way as to maintain a positive self-concept.

In another study on foreign language learning among 285 adolescent students in the UK, Williams, Burden, Poulet, and Maun (2004) identified 21 attributional categories, with the major reasons for doing well cited as effort, strategy, ability, teacher, interest, task, and peers. One interesting finding was that the majority of attributions for both success and failure were considered internal. They also found clear differences in attribution for success and failure based on gender, year groups, and language studied.

In an effort to provide a more accurate representation of learner attributions, Kalaja (2004) and Heikinen (1999) used a discursive model to look at individual narratives of students' language learning histories, attempting to link student beliefs and causal attributions to explain their performance in EFL learning. They came up with a group of five interpretive repertoires, or ways in which students construct the learning environment and their roles as learners: (a) individualistic, (b) effort, (c) naturalistic, (d) institutional, and (e) fatalistic. These repertoires were then connected to the following attributions: (a) personal abilities, (b) effort, (c) informal contexts (taking advantage of opportunities), (d) formal contexts (the classroom), and (e) luck. Isomöttönen (2003) used a similar research approach in looking at

hard-of-hearing learners of EFL and came up with similar results, although additional repertoires were added due to the nature of the learners.

Hsieh and Schallert (2008) attempted to combine two motivational constructs, self-efficacy and attribution, to explore the motivation of 500 undergraduate foreign language learners in the US. The students were asked to consider their test scores in light of these two constructs, and give actual reasons for the outcome. Analysis suggested that self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of achievement, supplemented by ability attributions.

It must be noted that, with the exception of the last study, all of the FL studies mentioned here used data gathered through open-ended questionnaires, interviews, or autobiographies. The analysis, then, tended towards the qualitative, rather than the quantitative, which may help to explain the variety in the number of attributional categories uncovered, as well as the differences in the findings, making it difficult to compare groups or generalize findings. In addition, many of the studies employed role-playing methods to gather data (creating hypothetical situations), rather than measuring actual behavior. This prompted the authors to move the research in a more quantitative direction, with a particular task in mind, which would allow the use of larger numbers of participants and more sophisticated statistical procedures.

With these reference points, a study was carried out to explore perceived reasons for successes and failures in speaking and reading classes among 1st-year Japanese university students (Gobel & Mori, 2007). The results revealed that students who reported performing poorly attributed poor performance to a lack of ability and lack of effort. On the other hand, students who reported performing well attributed their performance to teachers and the classroom atmosphere. This finding was contrary to much of the research done to date. Since most of the previous research had been done in Western countries, it was hypothesized that the results might be explained by cultural differences.

In fact, cultural differences in attributional patterns have been reported in mainstream psychology (e.g., Betancourt & Weiner, 1982) and general education (e.g., Sivan, 2006). The authors were curious to know if the results of Gobel and Mori (2007) would extend to other Asian countries. Comparative studies in foreign language education can be difficult due to differences in language learning goals and curriculum, for example. However, a study done by Thepsiri and Pojanapunya (2008) convinced the authors that the English education curricula of Thailand and Japan, as well as the importance of learning English in both countries, were similar enough to warrant a com-

parative study. It was hypothesized that similarities between Thailand and Japan would be evident in student attributions of success and failure, and that the results of the comparative study would differ from results of previous foreign language learning studies undertaken in the West. To explore this possibility, the following research questions were formulated:

1. To what factors do Thai and Japanese students attribute their successes and failures?
2. Are there differences in attributional response based on country (Thailand and Japan)?
3. Are there differences in attributional response based on outcome (success and failure)?

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were 705 university students from Thailand and Japan. The Thai participants were a total of 355 first-year students (193 female and 162 male) attending an autonomous state university in Bangkok. Most were majoring in engineering; none were language majors. All students already had a minimum of 6 years of exposure to English as a foreign language in primary and secondary education. At this university, the students have to take at least three compulsory integrated-skill task-based English courses in which all four language skills are studied simultaneously depending on the nature of each task. They meet twice a week for two periods of 50 minutes. The teachers use in-house materials designed by the department staff based on the principles of task-based learning.

The Japanese participants were a total of 350 first-year university students (121 female and 229 male) attending a private university in Kyoto. Their fields of study included law, business, economics, and sciences. Although they were not language majors either, they were taking required English courses just like their Thai counterparts. The required English course curriculum consisted of reading classes and oral communication classes. These classes met twice a week. The reading classes were taught by Japanese teachers of English, and the oral English classes were taught by native speakers of English. Each teacher had a choice of textbooks and teaching styles, but had to follow the guidelines for goals and objectives set by the university.

As described above, the actual contents of the classes and teaching methods may have been different. However, the Thai and Japanese participants

were comparable in that both groups were 1st-year non-English majors studying English as a foreign language in required classes, had similar curriculum and class environments (e.g., class size), shared similar past learning experience (6 years in junior and senior high schools), and had general English proficiency levels varying from beginner to upper intermediate.

Measure

Two versions of a questionnaire were created based on previous research (Vispoel & Austin, 1995) and our research questions: one version asked about successful experience whereas the other asked about unsuccessful experience (see Appendix for the translation of the questionnaire). Both versions of the questionnaire were administered in participants' native languages after they were forward-and-backward translated by experienced translators from English to Thai, and from English to Japanese.

Both versions of the questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, the students were asked to choose an activity from a list of 25 activities which they were either particularly successful at, or at which they performed particularly poorly in the previous semester. Although those activities were roughly divided into four skills, they were instructed to choose only one activity in order to avoid complications in the subsequent statistical analyses. The main purpose of this section was to help the students focus on a particular activity rather than thinking of learning English in general when identifying attributions for success and failure.

In the second part, the students were then asked to rate the importance of the 12 statements provided as reasons why they might have done well or poorly on a given activity on a 6-point Likert scale. Those 12 attributions were labeled: (a) ability (I have strong/weak skills in English), (b) effort (I tried/didn't try very hard), (c) strategy (I used the right/wrong study or practice methods), (d) interest (I had interest/no interest in the activity), (e) luck (I had good/bad luck), (f) teacher influence (The teacher's instruction was appropriate/inappropriate), (g) task difficulty (The task was easy/difficult), (h) class atmosphere (I liked/didn't like the atmosphere of the class), (i) interest in grades (I had interest/no interest in getting a good grade), (j) preparation (I was well-prepared/ill-prepared), (k) enjoyment (I like/don't like English), and (l) class level (The level of the class was appropriate/inappropriate).

Procedure

Both the Thai and the Japanese participants answered the attribution questionnaire in their required English classes at the end of their semester. The participants were divided into two groups. Pertaining to their language learning experience over the last semester, one group was asked about successful activities and reasons for success while the other group was asked about unsuccessful activities and reasons for failure. The division into two groups was to avoid any unnecessary confusion that might occur if they were asked about both successful and unsuccessful experiences at the same time. The way of dividing the students was slightly different between the Thai and Japanese sections. In the Thai section, half the class focused on successful learning activities, while the other half focused on unsuccessful ones. On the other hand, in the Japanese section, entire classes were randomly assigned to complete a questionnaire regarding either success or failure. At both sites the questionnaire was completed within 15-20 minutes.

Data Analysis

The data from the completed questionnaires was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and checked for accuracy. To determine the effects of country (Thailand and Japan) and outcome (success and failure) on attribution scales, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. MANOVA is an extension of analysis of variance and used with multiple, dependent variables.

Results

Perceived Successful and Unsuccessful Activities

In the first section of the questionnaire, the students were asked to choose one successful activity or one unsuccessful activity. As mentioned earlier, this question was included so that the students could focus on one specific activity, rather than English learning as a whole, when answering the attribution questions in the subsequent section of the questionnaire. Although the kinds of activities chosen and their effects on attributions were not closely examined in this study, for reference purposes the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of Reported Successful and Unsuccessful Activities by Country

Reported activities	Successful		Unsuccessful	
	Thai	Japanese	Thai	Japanese
Reading texts using appropriate strategies	37	3	22	2
Answering comprehension questions	29	11	15	2
Learning vocabulary	27	8	8	11
Understanding grammar	23	6	5	8
Translating texts and passages from English	8	17	5	9
Reading and summarizing texts	7	10	4	7
Quizzes and exams (Reading)	4	5	3	5
Other (Reading)	0	1	1	1
Reading total	135	61	63	45
Understanding a listening passage using appropriate strategies	12	5	17	7
Listening and repetition/dictation	5	17	10	13
Listening and note taking	5	2	8	14
Quizzes and exams (Listening)	4	3	7	13
Other (Listening)	0	0	2	1
Listening total	26	27	44	48
Giving a presentation and/or speech	12	7	26	13
Role play	7	6	4	1
Giving opinions/sharing ideas in class/groups	3	31	4	11

Reported activities	Successful		Unsuccessful	
	Thai	Japanese	Thai	Japanese
Answering teacher's questions	1	12	3	19
Exams (Speaking)	1	12	1	6
Other (Speaking)	0	0	0	1
Speaking total	24	68	38	51
Writing a summary	9	6	16	7
Writing paragraphs	8	1	5	6
Writing diaries and/or portfolios	2	4	4	8
Writing a report	1	5	3	8
Quizzes and exams (Writing)	1	3	1	1
Other (Writing)	1	0	1	1
Writing total	22	19	30	31
TOTALS	207	175	175	175

Research Question 1: Attributional Responses Based on Country and Outcome

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of the attribution category scores based on student responses on the 6-point Likert scale. In rank order based on the total sample means, the four most endorsed success attributions for the Thai students were interest in grades (5.25), teacher influence (4.66), classroom atmosphere (4.42), and effort (4.42), whereas the four most endorsed success attributions for the Japanese were teacher influence (4.22), class level (3.96), classroom atmosphere (3.89), and interest (3.64). Interestingly enough, both the Thai and Japanese students attributed their success to teacher influence and class atmosphere, both of which are defined as external, stable, and uncontrollable attributions according to attribution theory (Weiner, 1979, 1986). In contrast to the results of success attributions, the four most endorsed failure attributions for both the Thai and Japanese students were ability (3.97, 3.17), effort (3.31, 4.00), strategy (3.54, 3.80), and preparation (3.52, 4.13), respectively. Again it is interesting

to note that these failure attributions are all internal attributions (see Table 1).

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations by Country and Outcome

Attribution scales	Country	<i>N</i>	Outcome	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Ability	Thai	176	Success	3.45	1.00	-0.32	0.32
		180	Failure	3.97	1.13	-0.35	-0.31
	Japanese	174	Success	2.95	1.32	0.17	-0.73
		175	Failure	3.17	1.48	0.17	-1.03
Effort	Thai	176	Success	4.42	0.81	-0.49	0.61
		179	Failure	3.31	1.16	0.09	-0.57
	Japanese	175	Success	3.54	1.24	-0.11	-0.36
		174	Failure	4.00	1.50	-0.54	-0.67
Strategy	Thai	175	Success	3.83	0.85	-0.41	0.77
		178	Failure	3.54	0.96	-0.11	-0.39
	Japanese	175	Success	3.35	1.27	-0.05	-0.69
		175	Failure	3.80	1.43	-0.40	-0.71
Interest	Thai	176	Success	4.28	0.89	-0.86	1.56
		179	Failure	2.68	1.30	0.50	-0.53
	Japanese	174	Success	3.64	1.20	-0.25	-0.26
		174	Failure	2.50	1.27	0.64	-0.30
Luck	Thai	175	Success	3.63	1.34	-0.24	-0.57
		179	Failure	2.47	1.39	0.67	-0.36
	Japanese	175	Success	3.05	1.54	0.22	-0.96
		175	Failure	1.69	1.16	2.04	3.80
Teacher influence	Thai	175	Success	4.66	0.97	-1.07	2.07
		180	Failure	2.76	1.33	0.66	-0.44
	Japanese	175	Success	4.22	1.38	-0.74	0.05
		175	Failure	1.69	0.96	1.69	3.19
Task difficulty	Thai	176	Success	3.28	0.96	-0.06	0.72
		179	Failure	2.88	0.97	0.24	-0.17
	Japanese	174	Success	3.57	1.29	-0.09	-0.62
		175	Failure	2.73	1.26	0.36	-0.57
Class atmosphere	Thai	176	Success	4.42	1.03	-0.42	0.06
		179	Failure	2.77	1.28	0.60	-0.23
	Japanese	175	Success	3.89	1.62	-0.35	-1.03

Attribution scales	Country	N	Outcome	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
		175	Failure	1.80	1.05	1.63	2.96
Interest in grades	Thai	176	Success	5.25	1.06	-1.82	3.70
		179	Failure	2.94	1.70	0.53	-0.90
	Japanese	175	Success	3.42	1.24	-0.22	-0.63
		175	Failure	2.20	1.23	1.19	1.19
Preparation	Thai	176	Success	3.84	0.83	-0.47	0.99
		179	Failure	3.52	1.24	0.09	-0.56
	Japanese	175	Success	3.16	1.23	0.02	-0.43
		175	Failure	4.13	1.34	-0.40	-0.65
Enjoyment	Thai	176	Success	4.14	1.10	-0.47	0.36
		179	Failure	3.08	1.44	0.25	-0.79
	Japanese	175	Success	3.42	1.44	0.11	-0.83
		175	Failure	2.28	1.37	1.19	0.87
Class level	Thai	176	Success	4.40	0.91	-0.28	-0.17
		180	Failure	2.88	1.38	0.71	-0.28
	Japanese	175	Success	3.96	1.42	-0.29	-0.79
		175	Failure	2.03	1.14	1.42	2.25

Research Questions 2 and 3: Country and Outcome Differences

A one-way MANOVA was performed to examine the effect of country (Thai and Japanese) and outcome (success or failure) on the 12 attribution scales. Some assumptions underlying MANOVA are multivariate normal distribution and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices (Green & Salkind, 2005). Despite a few items with marked skewness and kurtosis, a sample size such as this one, with relatively equal sample sizes between groups, ensures that all assumptions have been met (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Another assumption, that the scores are independent, has also been met in this study.

As Table 4 shows, the results for the MANOVA indicated a significant main effect for country and outcome on the dependent variables, Wilks's $\Lambda = .69$, $F(12, 673) = 25.33$, $p < .00$, $\eta^2 = .31$, and Wilks's $\Lambda = .42$, $F(12, 673) = 77.19$, $p < .00$, $\eta^2 = .58$, respectively. A significant interaction between country and outcome was also seen, Wilks's $\Lambda = .80$, $F(12, 67) = 14.22$, $p < .00$, $\eta^2 = .20$.

Table 4. The Summary of MANOVA Results with Country and Outcome as Independent Variables and Attributions as a Dependent Variable

Effect	Value	<i>F</i>	Hypo-thesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	0.036	1.52E+03	12	673	0.00	0.964
Country	0.689	25.331a	12	673	0.00	0.311
Outcome	0.421	77.185a	12	673	0.00	0.579
Country* Outcome	0.798	14.219a	12	673	0.00	0.202

Because the interaction between country and outcome was significant, the researchers chose to ignore the independent variable main effect, and instead examined the differences among attributes for country and outcome separately. To control for Type I error across the main effects, an alpha level of .01 was set. Except for effort, strategy, task, and preparation, all comparisons for country were significant at $p < .01$, and all comparisons for outcome except strategy were significant at $p < .01$.

The comparisons of means indicated that the Japanese students had higher attribution ratings than the Thai students on task difficulty, effort, strategy, and preparation. This suggests that Japanese students have a stronger tendency to attribute easiness of task to success, and blame lack of effort and preparation and inappropriate strategy use for failure. For the independent variable of outcome, success attribution ratings were significantly higher than those of failure in terms of ability and preparation. This finding implies that both the Thai and the Japanese students tend to attribute ability and preparation to failure more than success.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this study was to address gaps in the literature on motivation and language learning by examining the relationship between EFL students' attributions regarding authentic classroom activities and their completion of those activities. It was revealed that attributional responses differed when the students succeeded and failed. Although Thai and Japanese students chose different activities as successful and unsuccessful activities, they showed some striking similarities regarding to what they attributed their successes and failures. First of all, both the Thai and the Japanese students tended to attribute more to successes than to failures. In particular,

they seemed to focus more on external factors, especially teacher influence and classroom atmosphere, when they succeeded. On the other hand, when they failed, they both seemed to focus more on internal causes, namely lack of ability and effort. This is congruent with the findings of a previous study (Gobel & Mori, 2007) with Japanese university students. In that study, we also found that the participants did not show the self-enhancement or self-protective tendencies that are widely recognized in cognitive psychology (Krueger, 1998). The self-enhancement tendency refers to individuals' propensity for giving themselves credit when they succeed, and the self-protective tendency denotes their propensity for blaming others when they fail. A meta-analysis of studies conducted in Japan (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) confirmed such a self-critical rather than self-enhancing tendency among the Japanese participants and contended that cultural differences may play a part in this. Markus and Kitayama further argued that a number of Western cultures such as those of North America promote independence and autonomy, while many non-Western cultures such as those of Japan and Thailand emphasize interdependence and connectedness among individuals and the group. As a result, in Western cultures the independent self is motivated to maintain autonomy and uniqueness, the individual engaging in self-enhancing biases to support the idea that one is self-sufficient and worthy. In contrast, in interdependent cultures, individuals consider themselves as part of an encompassing social unit, and as a result, are encouraged to adjust behavior to maintain meaningful social relationships (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997). In such cultures, modesty and acquiescence are accepted responses, making it unwise for one to stand out or explicitly express self-confidence. In the present study, although the Japanese students attributed lack of effort and preparation, as well as inappropriate strategy use, to failure more than the Thai students did, the results showed a self-critical tendency among both the Thai and Japanese students.

This finding has some important pedagogical implications. Firstly, from the teacher's standpoint, cultural sensitivities must be considered. Teachers from Western countries teaching in non-Western ones should consider the culture when creating tasks and syllabi, as well as when engaging the students. Although most teachers may be aware of cultural differences and take them into account when dealing with areas such as pragmatics, they also need to keep in mind the effect the culture has on a student's view of performance. It cannot simply be assumed that all students have the same perceptions and preferences regarding learning styles, teachers and classroom environments, and classroom activities.

Secondly, based on Weiner's (1979) dimensional classification, both ability and effort can be categorized as internal attributions. However, the major difference is that the former is considered as stable and uncontrollable whereas the latter is deemed unstable and controllable. According to Weiner, internal attributions produce greater changes in the self-esteem affect than external attributions, stable attributions are more concerned with expectancy for success or failure, and controllable attributions are more closely related to persistence than uncontrollable attributions. Considering this, it seems that our participants' tendency to blame lack of ability for failure is more problematic than their tendency to blame lack of effort. In school settings, for example, it is not hard to imagine that students who continue to fail on a certain task have a lower expectancy for success, and consequently become less persistent on future achievement tasks. Future failure is then seen as unavoidable, and learned helplessness is then reinforced.

There is hope for the student, however. Previous research has suggested that student perseverance is improved when attributions for failure are changed from internal, uncontrollable factors (such as poor ability) to internal and controllable ones (such as lack of effort). If this is true, then teacher feedback and well-designed tasks can be used to help change student attributions. When students perform poorly, a teacher's response can lead them to attribute their behavior to causes that are either facilitative or debilitating. A teacher displaying disgust, for instance, implies a lack of ability on the part of the student, whereas a teacher becoming irritated with a student implies that the student has the ability but has simply not applied it. Similarly, a student could also interpret too much praise or excessive help from teachers as an indication of a low ability. Finally, tasks designed at an appropriate level of difficulty, with clear goals and objectives related to the curriculum, can also encourage students to attribute their failures to unstable, controllable factors—factors that do not guarantee failure in the future.

Current models of L2 acquisition take into account the fact that students' perceptions in the FL classroom can affect learning outcomes. As attributions can influence students' self-efficacy and directly affect their expectations of future success, teachers need to pay attention to how learners view their successes and failures, which is directly related to how they make sense of the learning environment. How students make attributions for their failures, for example, may influence how they approach future tasks. Since attributions are dynamic and permeable, teachers should be able to affect the future causal attributions of students, changing the way students view themselves as learners, how they create their own ideas of success and

failure, and even how they view themselves and their progress in learning a language. In other words, helping students to view success and failure as outcomes that can be controlled may increase their expectancy for success and lead to actual success in future endeavors.

There were obvious limitations to the present study. First, although the Thai and Japanese students worked on a similar timeline and with similar curricula, the contents of the classes and teaching methodologies were different, which may have affected the results. However, bearing in mind that it is almost impossible to find identical groups with comparative studies such as this one, the similarity between their learning histories and experience lends weight to the results of the study.

Secondly, to avoid the possibility of obscuring the results of statistical analyses, it was decided to have the participants report on only one activity. As a result, it was not possible to take type of activity into consideration when interpreting differences in attributional responses. Although there are limits to self-report studies, the authors have attempted to shed light on causal attributions for success and failure using a more quantitative approach, rather than the interpretive approach used in many of the previous studies in our field (e.g., Ushioda, 2001; Williams & Burden, 1999).

It is clear that further research is needed. In the meantime, the research reported here reminds us that the classroom is directly connected to a larger social world. It is not within the scope of this paper to address the broader social and political dimensions of motivation, which may change from culture to culture and situation to situation. If anything, the results of this study point toward one important feature of the classroom setting: the teacher's role in developing student awareness of the boundaries and constraints that may affect motivation.

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Appendix

Translation of Questionnaire for Successful and Unsuccessful Learning Experience

(This appendix is a combined questionnaire created for brevity's sake. In the actual study, the students in the success group and the failure group received questionnaires specifically related to either success or failure outcomes.)

I. Personal Data

Fill in the information which is appropriate to you

1. University:
Faculty: Department: ID:
2. English Course studied in the 1st semester:
3. Sex: Male () Female ()

II. Perceptions of English Language Learning

1. Think about your past experience in the 1st semester English class. Try to remember a time in which you did particularly WELL/ POORLY on an activity in the class. The activity you are thinking of might be listed below. If so, circle the activity. If the activity is not listed below, circle the "other. . ." and describe the activity in the space provided. Be sure to choose only ONE activity.
 1. Reading texts using appropriate strategies
 2. Answering comprehension questions
 3. Learning vocabulary

4. Understanding grammar
 5. Translating texts and passages from English
 6. Reading and summarizing texts
 7. Reading quizzes and exams
 8. Other reading activities_____
 9. Understanding a listening passage using appropriate strategies
 10. Listening and repetition/dictation
 11. Listening and note taking
 12. Listening quizzes and exams
 13. Other listening activities_____
 14. Giving a presentation and/or speech
 15. Role play
 16. Giving opinions/sharing ideas in class/groups
 17. Answering teacher's questions
 18. Speaking quizzes and exams
 19. Other speaking activities_____
 20. Writing a summary
 21. Writing paragraphs
 22. Writing diaries and/or portfolios
 23. Writing a report
 24. Writing quizzes and exams
 25. Other writing activities_____
2. There may have been many reasons why you did (WELL, POORLY) on the activity you just circled. The following statements are possible reasons why you might have done (WELL, POORLY). Read each statement and fill in the appropriate space on the computer mark sheet to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| A Strongly disagree | D Somewhat agree |
| B Disagree | E Agree |
| C Somewhat disagree | F Strongly agree |
1. I have strong/weak skills in English.
 2. I tried/didn't try very hard.
 3. I used the right/wrong study or practice methods.
 4. I had interest/no interest in the activity.

5. I had good/bad luck.
6. The teacher's instruction was appropriate/inappropriate.
7. The task was easy/difficult.
8. I liked/didn't like the atmosphere of the class.
9. I had interest/no interest in getting a good grade.
10. I was well-prepared/ill-prepared.
11. I like/don't like English.
12. The level of the class was appropriate/inappropriate.

A Retrospective Survey of L2 Learning Motivational Changes

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This study investigated the long-term L2 learning motivational changes of 196 Japanese university students using a retrospective approach. The participants' perceived level of motivation and the rank order of their motivational reasons over 7 years were measured using a survey in order to test five a priori hypotheses: (1) The participants' motivational levels have frequently changed since they started English learning; (2) these levels were affected by entrance examinations in their final years of junior high and high school; (3) the patterns of motivational change between high and low proficiency university students differ; (4) the rank order of motivational reasons has changed over time; and (5) the rank orders of motivational reasons between high and low proficiency university students differ. These hypotheses were mostly supported. The primary findings indicated that the participants experienced frequent motivational changes in their learning experiences and they were strongly influenced by entrance examinations.

本稿は196名の日本の大学生を対象に、英語学習における動機付けの変化を調査したものである。参加者自らに、過去7年間に渡る動機付けの強さとその理由の順位を回顧的調査手法にて報告させ、そのデータをもとに、以下5つの仮説を検証した。(1)参加者の動機付けの強さは、学習開始時から変化し続ける、(2)動機付けの強さは、中3および高3時の入試に強く影響を受ける、(3)学習到達度の差は、動機付け理由の変化に差を生む、(4)動機付け理由の順位は時間の経過に伴い入れ替わる、(5)学習到達度の差は、動機付け理由の順位に差を生む。すべての仮説はほぼ立証され、結果として、参加者の学習動機付けは頻繁に変化していることや、入試に影響を受けていることなどが明らかになった。

L2 acquisition is a long-term process that inevitably involves several years of study, and as such, many learners and teachers recognize that learning motivation can change for various reasons over the long period of time necessary to attain a high level of proficiency. Despite the importance of gaining a clearer understanding of how and why motivation for learning a foreign language fluctuates, only a limited number of studies on long-term motivational change have been reported. One method of investigating L2 learner motivation change is to use a retrospective approach in which participants are asked to reflect on the motivational changes that have occurred in their learning experiences. This study utilized a retrospective approach in order to investigate Japanese university students' motivational changes over a 7-year period.

Studies of Motivational Change

Research into the dynamic nature of L2 motivation can be divided into two groups according to the length of the learning period investigated. The first group is made up of longitudinal studies of motivational change that has occurred over a specific course, which varies in length from 1 to 3 academic years. The following three studies were conducted by utilizing a primarily quantitative approach, a common practice in the field of L2 motivation research. Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, and Mihic (2004) investigated 197 Canadian students' motivational changes in learning French over 1 academic year. They used Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) in the beginning and end of the 1-year course to measure five affective variables considered to be important in the socioeducational model of second language acquisition (SLA): (a) integrativeness, (b) attitudes toward the learning situation, (c) motivation, (d) language anxiety, and (e) instrumental orientation. A single-factor repeated-measures ANOVA indicated that there were statistically significant changes only for a few variables (e.g., French class anxiety, Motivational intensity, and French teacher evaluation). Gardner et al. also assessed the relationship between the participants' language achievement, as measured by the final course grades, and the changes in the affective variables. The participants were split into three course-grade groups: A, B, and less than B, and the MANOVA results suggested different patterns of affective changes in the three grade groups. For example, the A students started the course with relatively high levels of motivation, positive attitudes, and low levels of anxiety, and tended to maintain these levels through the year. In contrast, the less than B group had lower levels of motivation, less positive attitudes towards the course, and higher levels of

French class anxiety than the participants in the other two groups at the beginning of the course, and they became even more negative by the end of the course. Gardner et al. concluded that the affective changes were moderate over the 1-year course, the changes were clearly associated with the levels of students' success in the course, and there was a clear tendency for the students' attitudes, motivation, and anxiety to decrease from the beginning to the end of the course.

Similar studies have been conducted in the context of Japanese students' English learning. Irie (2005) tracked 84 junior high school students and their motivational changes over the 3-year curriculum. The participants' overall motivation and their motivational profiles were investigated with a mixed-methods design. The results indicated that most of the participants maintained a stable degree of L2 motivation over the 3 years, a result that might have been caused by the students' use of a number of motivation maintaining strategies, such as setting proximal and attainable subgoals and focusing on positive learning experiences. In addition, a supplemental qualitative investigation revealed that the participants' teacher was an especially talented and enthusiastic educator who used a variety of strategies to increase and maintain her students' motivation to learn. At the same time, Irie confirmed that the strength of many students' motivation decreased between the beginning and the end of the 3-year curriculum. Irie proposed two possible reasons for this decrease: the compulsory nature of English education in Japan and the self-critical nature of some Japanese people.

Another longitudinal study conducted in Japan was an investigation by Berwick and Ross (1989) into the relationship between the changes in 90 Japanese university students' motivation and their English learning before and after they had completed their 1st-year university courses. The researchers used a pre- and posttest design in which a 50-item attitude survey was administered and the students' English proficiency was assessed at the beginning and end of the school year. The survey items were entered as predictors in a series of stepwise regression analyses that were performed to identify the best predictors of both the pretest scores and the gain scores between the pre- and posttests. The results indicated that 150 hours of classroom instruction resulted in an increase in the number of predictors from the beginning to the end of the school year (i.e., only three predictors accounted for 20% of the variance in the beginning of the semester while six predictors accounted for 43% of the variance at the end of the semester). The researchers interpreted the emergence of a wider variety of predictors as an indication that the students' initial motivational attitudes were tem-

poral and that taking the university courses stimulated other motivational attitudes. Overall, the participants' motivation was low and there was a weak relationship between their motivational changes over time and their performance on the proficiency measures. Berwick and Ross attributed these results primarily to the university entrance examination system in which Japanese students' motivation to learn English peaks in the last year of high school. Many 1st-year Japanese university students appear to have little motivation for foreign language learning regardless of whether they successfully pass the entrance examination for their first choice university, or (more likely) fail that test and pass the examination given by a university that was not their first choice.

Distinct from the majority of L2 motivation research, a qualitative approach to investigating learners' motivational change was applied in the next two studies. The researchers focused on individual motivational reasons expressed by a small number of learners, rather than investigating the overall pattern of motivational change in a large group. Ushioda (1998) investigated the characteristics of effective motivational thinking in 20 motivated Irish college students learning French over more than a year. She conducted individual interviews twice with a 15- to 16-month interval between the interviews over 3 academic years. The data acquired from the first interview revealed that the most successful students perceived their positive learning experiences, such as being in France or a Francophone country, as the main factors underlying their motivation, and the less successful students tended to perceive their future goals as the main motivators. Based on the results, Ushioda concluded that effective motivational thinking is a selective thinking pattern in which some participants filter their learning experiences by foregrounding positive experiences and deemphasizing negative experiences; this strategy appeared to help the more successful learners to sustain long-term involvement in L2 learning.

As a part of his mixed-methods dissertation study, Nakata (2006) also investigated qualitatively how 1-year student-centered learning experiences affected the developmental process of motivation of Japanese non-English major freshmen. The researcher investigated motivation using a social constructivist framework. He emphasized the importance of learners developing a core level of intrinsic motivation and becoming autonomous learners in order to attain high levels of proficiency. After this 1-year project-based course was completed, Nakata conducted case studies of five of the successful course participants. He concluded that all five students had developed intrinsic motivation and that two of them had further developed the core

level of intrinsic motivation necessary for further linguistic development. He concluded that language learners' motivation is strongly influenced by their learning experiences and by the way and degree to which they internalize what they have experienced.

The second group of studies was focused on motivational changes over extended periods of time. As the researchers employed a retrospective approach, these studies are highly relevant to the present study. Hayashi (2005) investigated patterns of motivational change among 481 Japanese college students over 9 years: 3 years in junior high school, 3 years in high school, and 3 years in university. He explained how these patterns emerged using the framework of self determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The participants responded to questionnaire items asking about their L2 motivation during the 9-year period, specifically the periods when their motivation was the strongest and the weakest, and the reasons why it was strong and weak during those periods. Hayashi used cluster analysis to identify four motivation developmental patterns: high-high, low-low, high-low, and low-high. The participants displaying the high-high pattern showed consistently high motivation, while the low-low participants reported having low motivation throughout the 9 years. The high-low pattern was distinguished by an initially high level of motivation that dropped by the 2nd year of high school, while the low-high pattern indicated low initial motivation that increased around the 1st year of high school. Hayashi tentatively proposed that different levels of internalization of extrinsic motivation caused the different patterns. He argued that initial motivation was the result of intrinsic motivation, and that initial motivation could be sustained only if the students internalized extrinsic reasons (e.g., succeeding on an entrance examination) for studying English. Although he did not statistically analyze the overall pattern of the 9-year change in the participants' motivation, a line graph that he provided showed that the participants' motivation declined moderately from junior high school to university, increased slightly when the students were in their final years of junior high and high school, and declined relatively sharply after entering the university.

Sawyer (2007) investigated the motivational fluctuations of Japanese learners over 8 years of English instruction (i.e., 3 years in junior high school, 3 years in high school, and 2 years in university) with 120 non-English majors in a private Japanese university. Sawyer created an instrument in which the participants were asked to mark their levels of motivation to learn English at the beginning and end of each year in school. The participants also wrote comments concerning their learning and learning motivation. The

statistical analyses supported three previous findings: (a) motivation is high at the onset of junior high school but decreases, (b) motivation decreases from the 1st to 2nd year in high school but increases in the 3rd year, and (c) motivation is high immediately before the university entrance exams but decreases upon entry into a university. In addition, the hypothesis that teachers influence students' motivation gained a number of supportive comments in the junior high school period, while the hypothesis that motivation is influenced by peers and social group members was more salient in the high school period.

Motivation-Related Perspectives

In this section, three motivation-related perspectives that constitute the basis of this study will be briefly reviewed. These perspectives will then be applied to the motivational rank order section of the research instrument. The first motivational perspective concerns intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, which are important components of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), one of the most influential theories in motivation research. According to the theory, *Intrinsic Motivation* (IM) and *Extrinsic Motivation* (EM) are distinguished according to the degree of the learner's self-determination. Intrinsic motivation, which is considered to be a relatively strongly self-determined form of motivation, refers to motivation that is based on internal factors, such as enjoyment or satisfaction. In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is based on external factors, such as getting good grades or tangible rewards. EM is considered to be a relatively weakly self-determined form of motivation. Recent researchers have discussed several subtypes of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in accordance with different degrees of self-determined forms of both. Proponents of this approach have proposed that extrinsic motivation becomes increasingly similar to intrinsic motivation as the degree of self-determination increases. For example, when a learner studies a foreign language because of future career goals (i.e., for extrinsic motivation) and is aware of the fact that the decision to study is made by herself for her own sake, her motivation may be internalized, resulting in a type of motivation that shows no major differences from intrinsic motivation.

In addition to internalized forms of motivation, goals are also considered to play an important role in motivated behavior. The importance of goals is best explained by goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1994), which is the proposal that goals are necessary for individuals to take action; therefore, motivation is more likely to emerge when a goal is present. Learning per-

formances are differentiated according to the degree of goal specificity, the difficulty of attaining the goal, and the individual's commitment to achieving the goal. The more specific and difficult that a goal is, the higher the achievement and the greater the commitment to the goal that people will make, provided that the goal is perceived as valuable and attainable. Goal-orientation theory (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996) describes the distinction between intrinsically oriented goals (mastery orientation) and extrinsically oriented goals (performance orientation), concepts that are related to the distinction between IM and EM. The differences between intrinsic or mastery orientation and extrinsic or performance orientation do not necessarily mean that the former results in greater learning because these two goals can positively interact and facilitate motivation and learning (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000).

The last form of motivation that is pertinent to this study is social in nature, as it arises from the influence of significant others (Urda & Maehr, 1994). Social motivation includes social welfare goals, social solidarity goals, and social approval goals. These social motives pertain to the reasons why students are trying to achieve a goal, rather than what they are trying to achieve. Wentzel (1999) stated that interpersonal relationships and socialization processes, such as peer interactions, influence student motivation, and that the goals that emerge from these social interactions influence the quality rather than the amount of motivation. In foreign language learning, students' parents, teachers, peer groups, and the school environment may function as the four most important social influences in the learning environment (Dörnyei, 2001). However, social motivation and influences from significant others are subject to cultural contexts. For example, Japanese students are generally described as more interdependent than American students (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and if this is true, they are likely to be influenced relatively strongly by family members, teachers, and friends.

Research Purpose and Hypotheses

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate motivational changes that Japanese college students have experienced as they moved through secondary school to their 1st year of university education. Specifically, I will test five hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 through 3 concern changes in the participants' motivational levels:

Hypothesis 1. The participants' motivational levels have frequently changed since they started learning English.

Based on investigations of motivational changes over extended periods

of time (see Hayashi, 2005; Sawyer, 2007), I hypothesize that the Japanese participants in this study have frequently experienced motivational fluctuations.

Hypothesis 2. The participants' motivational levels were affected by entrance examinations in their final years of junior high school and high school.

Hayashi (2005) and Berwick and Ross (1989) found empirical results indicating the powerful influence that entrance examinations can exert on Japanese students. I hypothesize that the participants' motivation increases before they take the examinations and decreases after the examinations are completed.

Hypothesis 3. The patterns of motivational change between the high and low proficiency university students differ; the high proficiency students have maintained generally higher levels of motivation in secondary school than the low proficiency students have.

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that the participants' current level of English proficiency reflects their past motivational levels.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 concern the change in the rank order of motivational reasons:

Hypothesis 4. The rank orders of motivational reasons have changed over time.

The participants in this study attended at least three schools where they were taught by different teachers and where they studied with different classmates over the 7-year period under examination. They also took two entrance examinations when they were in their final year of junior and senior high school. Even though English was compulsory for most of the students, these experiences may have influenced their reasons to learn English.

Hypothesis 5. The rank orders of motivational reasons between the high and low proficiency university students differ.

As Hayashi (2005) reported that students who maintained a high level of motivation were both intrinsically motivated and had sufficiently internalized external reasons for studying, I assume that these motivational differences are related to the students' current proficiency (see Nakata, 2006, for related implications).

Methods

Participants

Participants in this study were 196 non-English majors studying in a private university in western Japan: 161 freshmen, 28 sophomores, 5 juniors,

and 2 seniors.¹ All of the students had completed 6 years of compulsory English education in junior high school and high school before entering university. The freshmen and sophomores were taking 6 hours of English classes per week in an academic English program that runs for four consecutive semesters. Because the university department has a reputation for having a demanding English program, these participants' overall level of motivation to study English may have been higher than that of the average Japanese university student.

The students took an institutional TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) when beginning the program in April 2005, and were placed into one of two proficiency levels based on the results. The mean (M) of the TOEFL scores ($N = 194$ because of two missing cases) was 436 ($SD = 42.42$). The TOEFL scores were used in this study to divide the participants into two proficiency groups. The scores of the high proficiency group ($N = 111$) ranged from 437 to 523, and the scores of the low proficiency group ($N = 83$) ranged from 330 to 433.²

Instruments

The Appendix shows an English translation of the *Changes of Learner Motivation Questionnaire*, in which a retrospective approach was employed. Part I of the questionnaire asked about demographic information. Part II presented a motivation chart that was designed to allow the participants to more readily recollect and graph their past L2 learning motivational levels. The participants were asked to draw their motivational levels on the chart for a 7-year period: 3 years in junior high school (JH), 3 years in high school (HS), and 1 year in university (U1). The x-axis represents the seven school grades and the y-axis represents motivational level. The y-axis scale has five levels (i.e., three primary scales for low, mid, and high motivational levels, and two intermediate levels that are located between the low and middle, and the middle and high motivational levels). The seven motivational levels measured with this scale formed a set of dependent variables that was used to test Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

Part III of the questionnaire was a motivational ranking task. In the three subsections, the participants were asked to reflect on their overall learning motivations when they were in junior high school, high school, and the 1st year of university, and to rank order in importance the six statements from 1 (i.e., the strongest motivation) to 6 (i.e., the weakest motivation). The six motivational reasons that were listed in each subsection were underpinned

by three motivational perspectives: the intrinsic-extrinsic distinction, goal theories, and social motivation theory, as described earlier.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 were tested with data gathered from Part III of the questionnaire. Two intrinsic motivational reasons and three extrinsic motivational reasons were included among the six dependent variables in the ranking instrument. The first and second intrinsic motivational reasons represented interest toward the target language and culture, and enjoyment of learning English, respectively. Of the three extrinsic motivational reasons, the first represented a short-term goal, the second represented medium-term and specific goals commonly observed in the Japanese context, and the third represented relatively long-term goals. The last motivational reason in the ranking instrument represented the influence from significant others. If the participants perceived that different motivational factors were particularly memorable at a certain stage of learning, they were asked to write them in the relevant section.

Procedure

Four instructors teaching in the English language program, including the researcher, administered the questionnaire during class time in January 2006 on the last day of the fall semester. The instructors told the participants that the purpose of the questionnaire was academic research and that their responses were confidential and would not affect their grades. The instructors also obtained the students' verbal permission to use their most recent TOEFL scores.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the survey were initially entered into Microsoft Excel and then exported to SPSS for statistical analyses. The motivational levels recorded on the motivation chart were transformed into numbers from 0 to 5 (low = 0; high = 5).

Results

In the results and discussion sections, the entire sample is referred to as All Students, and the higher proficiency group and the lower proficiency group are referred to as the High Group and the Low Group, respectively. In addition, abbreviations will be used for expressing school years, (i.e., JH = 3 years of junior high school, JH1 = the 1st year of junior high school, JH2 = the

2nd year of junior high school, HS = 3 years of high school, HS1 = the 1st year of high school, HS2 = the 2nd year of high school, HS3 = the 3rd year of high school, U1 = the 1st year of university).

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were tested by conducting a series of repeated-measures ANOVAs with year in school as the independent variable and the 7-year motivational level estimates as dependent variables. The TOEFL score was used as a grouping variable.

Hypothesis 1: The participants’ motivational levels have frequently changed since they started learning English. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the participants’ motivational level as measured on Part II of the questionnaire. Two tendencies can be generalized. First, a general trend was identified for All Students, and the High and Low Groups’ motivational levels: They rise steadily in the first 3 years of study, drop in HS1, rise steadily again in HS2 and HS3, and drop once again in U1. Second, the High Group displayed a higher motivational level than the Low Group throughout the 7 years. The confidence intervals of the two groups overlap in JH, indicating that the motivational levels of the High and Low Groups do not largely differ during that period; however, in HS and U1 the confidence intervals do not overlap, which indicates that the motivational levels of the High and Low Groups are reliably different during these periods.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Motivational Levels

			JH1	JH2	JH3	HS1	HS2	HS3	U1
All	<i>M</i>		3.01	3.13	3.45	3.21	3.38	3.85	3.77
Students	95% CI	Low	2.80	2.94	3.25	3.03	3.19	3.66	3.60
		Upper	3.21	3.32	3.64	3.40	3.57	4.03	3.95
	<i>SD</i>		1.42	1.35	1.38	1.31	1.37	1.28	1.22
	Skewness		.01	-.17	-.40	-.22	-.27	-.78	-.75
	<i>SE</i> Skewness		.18	.18	.18	.18	.18	.18	.18
	Kurtosis		-1.27	-1.18	-1.11	-1.00	-1.12	-.60	-.42
	<i>SE</i> Kurtosis		.35	.35	.35	.35	.35	.35	.35

			JH1	JH2	JH3	HS1	HS2	HS3	U1
High	<i>M</i>		3.10	3.14	3.61	3.45	3.72	4.13	4.10
Group	95% CI	Low	2.75	2.88	3.36	3.20	3.46	4.35	3.88
		Upper	3.28	3.39	3.87	3.69	3.97	4.25	4.32
	<i>SD</i>		1.39	1.37	1.35	1.31	1.35	1.19	1.17
	Skewness		.08	-.17	-.57	-.47	-.72	-1.32	-1.33
	<i>SE</i> Skewness		.23	.23	.23	.23	.23	.23	.23
	Kurtosis		-1.22	-1.23	-.94	-.80	-.63	.77	.92
	<i>SE</i> Kurtosis		.46	.46	.46	.46	.46	.46	.46
Low	<i>M</i>		2.99	3.12	3.22	2.90	2.93	3.48	3.34
Group	95% CI	Low	2.67	2.83	2.92	2.63	2.65	3.19	3.09
		Upper	3.31	3.41	3.53	3.17	3.21	3.77	3.60
	<i>SD</i>		1.47	1.34	1.38	1.24	1.28	1.32	1.17
	Skewness		-.07	-.17	-.21	.04	.24	-.24	-.24
	<i>SE</i> Skewness		.26	.26	.26	.26	.26	.26	.26
	Kurtosis		-1.35	-1.10	-1.21	-.95	-.86	-1.16	-.69
	<i>SE</i> Kurtosis		.52	.52	.52	.52	.52	.52	.52

Note: School years are: JH1 = the 1st year of junior high school, JH2 = the 2nd year of junior high school, JH3 = the 3rd year of junior high school, HS1 = the 1st year of high school, HS2 = the 2nd year of high school, HS3 = the 3rd year of high school, U1 = the 1st year of university.

Figure 1 illustrates how the participants' perceived motivational levels changed throughout the 7-year period.

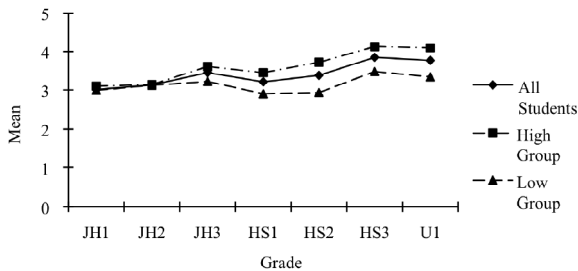


Figure 1. Change of Motivational Levels

Note. School years are: JH1 = the 1st year of junior high school, JH2 = the 2nd year of junior high school, JH3 = the 3rd year of junior high school, HS1 = the 1st year of high school, HS2 = the 2nd year of high school, HS3 = the 3rd year of high school, U1 = the 1st year of university.

A repeated-measures ANOVA was run with year in school as the independent variable, the estimated motivational level as the dependent variable, and the students' TOEFL score as the grouping variable. The results indicated that the motivational levels of All Students, the High Group, and the Low Group changed to a statistically significant degree over the 7-year period: Wilks's $\Lambda = .72$, $F(6, 188) = 12.09$, $p < .01$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .28$ for All Students; Wilks's $\Lambda = .59$, $F(6, 105) = 12.06$, $p < .01$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .41$ for the High Group; and Wilks's $\Lambda = .80$, $F(6, 77) = 3.24$, $p < .01$, multivariate $\eta^2 = .20$ for the Low Group. Follow-up polynomial contrasts indicated significant linear effects with means generally increasing over time for All Students and the High Group: $F(1, 94) = 32.50$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .14$ for All Students, and $F(1, 113) = 47.41$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .30$ for the High Group. Neither a significant linear effect nor higher-order effects were found for the Low Group. Table 2 presents the results of post hoc pair-wise comparisons for each group. Five pairs differed to a statistically significant degree: three pairs in the High Group, and two pairs in the Low Group. Taken together, these results suggest that the participants' perceived motivation has frequently changed since they started studying English, a finding that supports Hypothesis 1.

Table 2. Posthoc Pair-Wise Comparisons

Pair	All Students		High Group		Low Group	
	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>
JH1 – JH2	-1.50	-.11	-1.09	-.10	-1.04	-.11
JH2 – JH3	-4.03*	-.29	-4.21*	-.40	-1.02	-.11
JH3 – HS1	2.58*	.18	1.42	.14	2.26*	.25
HS1 – HS2	-2.34*	-.17	-2.76*	-.26	-.26	-.03
HS2 – HS3	-5.13*	-.37	-3.39*	-.32	-3.91*	-.43
HS3 – U1	.78	.06	.23	.02	.91	.10

Note. School years are as in Table 1 above.

$p^* < .05$.

Hypothesis 2: The participants' motivational levels were affected by entrance examinations in their final years of junior high school and high school.

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the means for both the High and Low Groups declined slightly twice, between JH3 and HS1 and between HS3 and U1. As shown in Table 2, the pair-wise mean comparisons differed significantly in the All Students and the High and Low Groups between JH2 and JH3, and between HS2 and HS3: All students, $t(194) = -4.03, p < .05, d = -.29$; High group, $t(111) = -4.21, p < .05, d = -.40$ between JH2 and JH3, and; All Students, $t(193) = -5.13, p < .05, d = -.37$; the High Group, $t(110) = -3.39, p < .05, d = -.32$; the Low Group, $t(83) = -3.91, p < .05, d = -.43$ between HS2 and HS3. The estimated effect sizes for these differences were relatively large, except the one for the Low Group between JH2 and JH3 ($d = -.11$). These results indicate that the students' motivational levels increased between JH2 and JH3, and between HS2 and HS3, and decreased between JH3 and HS1, and between and HS3 and U1 to a statistically significant degree. Because these increases and decreases occurred at the same time that the entrance examinations took place, it is highly likely that these motivational changes and the tests were related to each other; therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 3: The patterns of motivational change between the high and low proficiency university students differ; the high proficiency students have maintained generally higher levels of motivation in secondary school than the low proficiency students have.

This hypothesis concerns the difference between the motivational changes that took place in the two proficiency groups. As shown in Figure 1, the means of the two proficiency groups were similar in JH1 and JH2, but started to differ in JH3, and the distance between the two groups was maintained for the next 4 years. In addition, the mean increases between JH2 and JH3, and between HS2 and HS3 were all larger in the High Group than in the Low Group, while the mean decreases between JH3 and HS1, and between HS3 and U1 were all larger in the Low Group than in the High Group. As shown in Table 1, the participants in the High Group perceived their motivational levels as being higher than did the participants in the Low Group across all 7 years. This is one indication of the existence of a positive relationship between motivational level and general proficiency. These findings support the third hypothesis: that the two proficiency groups in university differ in motivational change and that the high proficiency students maintained a generally higher level of motivation in secondary school than the low proficiency students.

Hypothesis 4: The rank orders of motivational reasons have changed over time.

Hypothesis 4 was examined by conducting a series of Freidman's tests with each of the six motivational reasons in each period of schooling as test variables and English proficiency (TOEFL score) as a grouping variable. Table 3 presents the test results and medians of each motivational reason in JH, HS, and U1 for All Students as well as those in the High Group and the Low Group. The χ^2 ratios were evaluated at $p < .05$. Statistical significance was found for five motivational reasons in All Students, for four reasons in the High Group, and for four reasons in the Low Group. Among them, reasons 3 (short-term goals), 4 (medium-term, specific goals), and 5 (long-term goals) consistently differed significantly in All Students and the two proficiency groups. On the contrary, reasons 1 (interest in the target language and culture), 2 (enjoyment of learning), and 6 (influence of significant others) did not differ consistently over time in All Students or the two proficiency groups. Reason 6 (influence of significant others) was particularly stable in the Low Group (median = 2) and showed no statistically significant difference. Kendall's W indicated weak relationships among the variables. These results suggest that goal-related reasons changed over time, while other reasons did not; these findings partially support the fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: The rank orders of motivational reasons between high and low proficiency university students differ.

This hypothesis was evaluated by calculating Mann-Whitney U tests with each of the six motivational reasons for each period of schooling as test variables and the TOEFL score as a grouping variable. Table 4 presents the results of the tests and the medians of each motivation reason in JH, HS, and U1 for the High Group and the Low Group. The results of z-approximation tests showed statistically significant differences in the motivational reasons between the two proficiency groups when the medians differed by more than 1. Statistically significant differences were found for motivational reasons 4 (medium-term, specific goals) and 5 (long-term goals) in JH; reasons 2 (enjoyment of learning), 3 (short-term goals), 4 (medium-term, specific goals), and 5 (long-term goals) in HS; and reason 5 (long-term goals) in U1. These results suggest that the motivation ranks between the two groups were the most varied in JH and least varied in U1. Motivational reasons 1 (interest in the target language and culture) and 6 (influence of significant others) showed no statistically significant differences over time, while the other reasons showed at least one statistically significant difference. This

Table 3. Motivation Ranks

	Motivational reason	Median			χ^2	Kendall's <i>W</i>
		JH	HS	U1		
All Students (<i>N</i> = 138)	1	4	4	5	10.50*	.04
	2	4	3	3	7.11*	.03
	3	5	4	3	51.13*	.19
	4	3	4	3	19.59*	.07
	5	3	4	4	22.83*	.08
	6	2	2	2	4.04	.02
High (<i>N</i> = 83)	1	4	4	5	.36	.00
	2	4	4	3	4.04	.02
	3	4	3	3	32.59*	.20
	4	2	4	3	12.11*	.07
	5	4	4	5	13.46*	.08
	6	2	2	2	8.50*	.05
Low (<i>N</i> = 55)	1	3	4	5	21.31*	.19
	2	4	3	3	3.06	.03
	3	5	5	4	20.69*	.19
	4	4	5	3	13.58*	.12
	5	2	3	3	9.40*	.09
	6	2	2	2	.70	.01

Note. The motivational reasons are: 1 and 2 = Intrinsic motivation, 3 = Short-term goals, 4 = Medium-term goals, 5 = Long-term goals, 6 = Influence of others. Schools are: JH = junior high school, HS = high school, U1 = the 1st year of university.

**p* < .05.

suggests that significant differences mostly emerged among the goal-related reasons as noted in the results for Hypothesis 4. Among these goal-related reasons, reasons 3 (short-term goals) and 4 (medium-term, specific goals) were ranked high in the Low Group, while reason 5 (long-term goals) was ranked high in the High Group in JH, HS, and U1 (See Table 4). Thus, the students in the High Group ranked long-term goals higher than short- and

medium-term goals, while those in the Low Group ranked short- and medium-term goals higher than long-term goals. Taken together, these findings provide strong support for the fifth hypothesis: that high and low proficiency students differ in their rank orders of motivational reasons.

Table 4. Motivational Rank Differences Between the High and Low Proficiency Group

	Motivational reason	Median		Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	<i>z</i>
		High Group	Low Group		
JH	1	4	3	2025.50	-1.14
	2	4	4	2128.50	-.69
	3	4	5	1860.00	-1.89
	4	4	4	1551.50	-3.26*
	5	4	2	1714.50	-2.51*
	6	2	2	2118.00	-.74
HS	1	4	4	1885.00	-1.76
	2	4	3	1781.50	-2.23*
	3	3	5	1594.50	-3.07*
	4	4	5	1685.00	-2.68*
	5	4	3	1702.00	-2.56*
	6	2	2	2083.00	-.90
U1	1	5	5	2033.50	-1.11
	2	3	3	1909.50	-1.66
	3	3	4	1933.00	-1.55
	4	3	3	2037.50	-1.08
	5	5	3	1586.50	-3.11*
	6	2	3	1963.50	-1.44

Note. Motivational reasons and schools are as in Table 3.

* $p < .05$ (2-tailed).

Discussion

The statistical results mostly supported the five *a priori* hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 through 3 concerned the change of motivational levels. Regarding Hypothesis 1, the results indicate that the students' L2 learning motivational levels have frequently changed over time. In previous longitudinal studies, such as Gardner et al. (2004) and Irie (2005), the researchers reported that learners' motivation level was relatively stable during the period under study; however, when investigated over a longer time period that began with the commencement of the students' initial classroom experiences studying English, their motivational levels clearly displayed frequent changes. One possible reason for this finding was that the participants in this study were asked to assess their motivational change over a 7-year period that involved experiences at three school levels (JH, HS, and U1), with numerous teachers, and with two high-stakes entrance examinations. In previous longitudinal studies, by contrast, the researchers investigated students' motivational change in one course or in a single educational institution. This difference has possibly led to the different results.

A second difference from previous findings was that the participants' motivational levels displayed a general increasing trend throughout the period under study. This is the opposite of the trend reported in previous longitudinal studies, in which the learners' motivational levels gradually decreased (e.g., Gardner et al., 2004). This difference might be attributable to the relatively strong motivation of the participants in the present study. As introduced in the methods section, the university department where this study was conducted is known to provide a rigorous English program, so the majority of the participants had to have relatively positive learning histories in order to be able to enter the program.

Although the participants' motivational levels displayed a general increasing trend, relatively sharp increases occurred twice between JH2 and JH3, and between HS2 and HS3, while relatively sharp decreases occurred twice between JH3 and HS1, and between HS3 and U1. These sharp increases and decreases, a pattern similar to that observed by Sawyer (2007), occurred when the entrance examinations for high school and university took place; these findings indicate the powerful influence that entrance examinations can exert on Japanese students' motivation. In Japan, high school and university entrance examinations remain unarguably high-stakes tests that largely determine students' future courses, a feature in the Japanese educational landscape that has not changed since Berwick and Ross (1989) conducted their study two decades ago. Therefore, it is inevitable that in many cases,

motivation for learning English increases before the test and decreases afterwards. This implies that many Japanese secondary school students perceive passing entrance examinations, especially university examinations, as an ultimate future goal and that proximal sub-goals may partly consist of succeeding on the term-end tests that they take in secondary schools and mock examinations that they take in supplementary prep schools, instead of perceiving the entrance examination as a proximal sub-goal for long-distance goals, such as studying abroad to earn a degree in a foreign university or working in an international business. This lack of long-term goals may be one reason why the majority of Japanese university students appear demotivated to learn English and eventually fail to attain high proficiency.

Looking at the change of motivational levels in the two proficiency groups (Hypothesis 3), both groups were similar in the first 2 years, but started to differ in their final year of JH. Furthermore, the High Group maintained a higher degree of motivation than the Low Group throughout JH and U1. One possible cause of this finding is the different amount of motivational increase that occurred before the entrance exams and the different amount of motivational decrease that occurred afterward in the two groups. The statistical results showed that the increase before the tests was larger in the High Group than in the Low Group, while the decrease after the tests was larger in the Low Group than in the High Group. These two changes, which occurred when the participants were in their final years of junior and senior high school, might have partly determined their current English proficiencies. The students who increased their motivational level before taking the entrance examination were more likely than students with lower levels of motivation to score well and be satisfied with the test results and were therefore better able to keep their motivational levels relatively high, a situation that may have contributed to their higher current proficiency. This interpretation is consistent with Ushioda's (1998) finding that the motivated students in her study perceived their past learning experiences as the most influential factor affecting their motivation and that successful past learning experiences generated future motivation.

Hypotheses 4 and 5 concerned changes in the rank order of motivational reasons in different years in school. Hypothesis 4 was partly supported: the rank order of the three goal-related reasons consistently changed, while the intrinsic and social reasons were stable. This finding is almost certainly related to the ranking of the reasons; the students ranked the goal-oriented reasons relatively high, intrinsic and social reasons relatively low, and the social motivational reason was ranked low for all three school periods. On

one hand, this result makes sense when considering the major impact of entrance examinations on motivation suggested in the results for Hypotheses 2 and 3. The students were pressured to become goal oriented because of the two high-stakes tests that they faced at pivotal learning stages. On the other hand, this result is unexpected because intrinsic reasons, such as enjoying learning English, have usually been found to play important motivational roles in the case of relatively motivated learners (Brown, 2001, pp. 76-77; Nakata, 2006; Ushioda, 1998). Furthermore, previous studies have suggested that many Asian English learners receive relatively strong motivational influences from people close to them such as friends or family members (Sawyer, 2007; see also Chen, Warden, & Chang, 2005). The current result is consistent with Hayashi's (2005) suggestion that initial intrinsic motivation is insufficient to sustain long-term motivation, and that students who sufficiently internalize extrinsic goals, such as passing entrance examinations, succeed in maintaining high levels of motivation. The adequate internalization of extrinsic goals may lead to the development of stronger intrinsic motivation and autonomous learning (Nakata, 2006).

Among the three goal-related reasons, and regarding Hypothesis 5, the High Group ranked the long-term goal relatively high, while the Low Group ranked the short-and medium-term goals relatively high. This difference indicates that the higher proficiency students tended to focus on long-term goals, such as their future career, while the lower proficiency students tended to target immediate goals, such as passing the next test or earning credits. Miller and Brickman (2004) argued that learners who seek long-term goals are likely to set short-term sub-goals that allow them to consequently achieve their long-term goals. The higher proficiency students in this study who established long-term goals might have successfully achieved specific sub-goals (e.g., success on term tests), but the continued presence of long-term goals motivated them to continue studying and achieve their current higher proficiency levels.

Conclusion

This study resulted in four main findings:

1. The participants' L2 learning motivation frequently fluctuated over the 7 years.
2. High school and university entrance examinations strongly influenced the participants' motivation.

3. The participants were more goal oriented rather than either intrinsically or socially motivated.
4. The higher proficiency participants generally perceived entrance examinations as proximal sub-goals that would help them achieve distant future goals, while the lower proficiency participants perceived passing entrance examinations as their ultimate future goal.

These findings imply that having distant future goals that go beyond passing a university entrance examination is important for sustaining the long-term learning motivation that leads to higher levels of foreign language proficiency. As many Japanese students need to keep studying English after graduating from university if they wish to become highly proficient users of English, university English courses should be a source of long-term goals by providing students with meaningful answers to the question of why they need to study English now and in the future.

Notes

1. The five juniors and two seniors were repeaters who had failed to pass the courses when they were freshmen.
2. For the motivational rank order section of the questionnaire, the data from only 138 participants were entered because 56 answered as if they were responding to a Likert scale instead of rank-ordering the options.

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Appendix

Changes of Learner Motivation

PART I

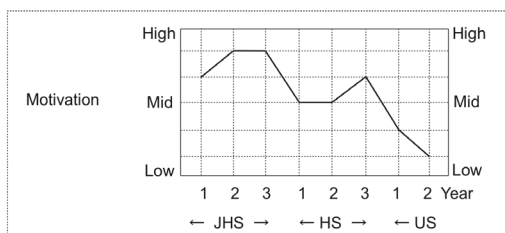
- Department_____ Year__ Student number _____Name _____
- Do you have experiences of studying abroad? (yes / no)
- If yes, what age? From age ____ to age____ for ____ years in _____

PART II

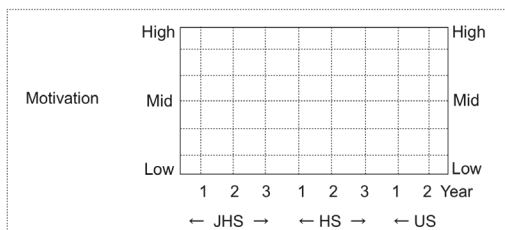
The purpose of this survey is to investigate English learners' motivational changes. Because this is academic research, your responses have absolutely no relation to your EC course grades. Thank you for your cooperation!

How has your English learning motivation changed since you were a junior high school student (JHS), high school student (HS), and university student (i.e., current) (US). Look at the example chart below, mark your answer with dots, and connect those dots with lines as shown in the chart.

Example →



Mark in the
chart right →



PART III

1. The following three questions (A), (B) and (C) will ask about the motivation at the three different times that you marked in the chart above. Answer the questions below by thinking of your overall junior high and high school motivation.

(A) When you were **a junior high school student**, what was your motivation to learn English? Read the following six sentences and rank them from 1 (strongest motivation) to 6 (weakest motivation)

- ☐ I was interested in English culture or English speaking people.
- ☐ I enjoyed learning English.
- ☐ I wanted to earn good grades in my English courses.
- ☐ I wanted to succeed the high school entrance exams.
- ☐ I wanted to study abroad, or have a job using English, or live in English speaking countries in the future.
- ☐ I was influenced to study English by people around me such as my parents/friends/teachers.

If you were motivated for other reasons, please write them here (no rank is needed).

(B) When you were **a high school student**, what was your motivation to learn English? Read the following six sentences and rank them from 1 (strongest motivation) to 6 (weakest motivation).

- ☐ I was interested in English culture or the English speaking people.
- ☐ I enjoyed learning English.
- ☐ I wanted to earn good grades in my English courses or to gain credits.
- ☐ I wanted to succeed the university entrance exams.

- () I wanted to study abroad, or have a job using English, or live in English speaking countries in the future.
- () I was influenced to study English by people around me such as my parents/friends/teachers.

If you were motivated for other reasons, please write them here (no rank is needed).

(C) **Currently**, what is your motivation to learn English? Read the following six sentences and rank them from 1 (strongest motivation) to 6 (weakest motivation).

- () I am interested in English culture or the English speaking people.
- () I enjoy learning English.
- () I want to earn good grades in my English courses or to gain credits.
- () I need English for getting a job.
- () I want to study abroad, or have a job using English, or live in English speaking countries in the future.
- () I am influenced to study English by people around me such as my parents/friends/teachers.

If you were motivated for other reasons, please write them here (no rank is needed).



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Repairing “Failed” Questions in Foreign Language Classrooms

外国語教室における「失敗」となった質問の修復

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While the pedagogical value of teachers' use of questions in classrooms has been widely researched, what exactly teachers do if a question fails to obtain an adequate response has not yet been sufficiently addressed from an interactional perspective. This study examines how and why foreign language teachers deal with this problem and how they pursue a response. Conversation analysis of EFL classroom interactions demonstrated that teachers employed three strategies to repair a question: a modification of the failed question in the target language, codeswitching into L1 as a further step of the modification, and proffering candidate responses to the failed question. Teachers do not merely simplify and sharpen the focus of the original question successively to pursue a response, but they teach English in interaction by trying to help students understand the meaning of the questions in English. Implications for teachers who face the problem of failed questions are discussed.

これまで教師による「質問」の教育上の価値はよく研究されてきたものの、「質問」が学生の回答を得ることに失敗した場合に教師はどうするのかということは相互行為的視点からは十分に研究されてこなかった。本稿は外国語教室の中で教師が、失敗となった質問をどのようにそしてなぜその方法で扱い回答を求めていくのかを研究するものである。外国語としての英語教室での相互行為の会話分析により、教師は次の3つの方略を取ることが分かった。失敗となった質問の目標言語による改良、そしてその次の段階としての学生の第1言語へのコードスイッチング、回答例の提案である。教師はターン毎に質問を易しくしたり焦点を絞ったりするだけでなく、目標言語である英語で「質問」を理解させようと試みることによって、英語を相互行為の中で教授していることが明らかとなった。最後に失敗となった質問という問題に直面する教師への示唆を議論し、本稿の結びとする。

The notion of teachers questioning their students has always played an important role in education. From ancient times, as in Socrates and Boy's dialogue in *Meno* (Guthrie, 1956), the act of questioning has been used by teachers to carry out pedagogical work. The well-known *Initiation-Response-Feedback/Evaluation* (IRF/IRE) sequence (Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) is a prevalent format in classrooms typically initiated by a teacher's question. Although teachers' questioning has been criticized by critical discourse analysts (e.g., Young, 1992) as an imposition of the teacher's power over the students, Macbeth (2000, 2003) argued that critical discourse analysts fail to recognize what teachers' questioning accomplishes and also tend to overlook its rich pedagogical value. Through a microanalysis of classroom interactions, Macbeth demonstrated that teachers' questioning is a way to organize a classroom in terms of the installation of knowledge; that is, it constructs objective knowledge of a lesson through the interactional sequence developed from a teacher question. Knowledge to be learnt is not only found in the content of the teacher's question, but it is collaboratively constructed in the sequence through the exchange of the teacher's question and the students' responses. The virtue of questioning in the classroom is that it invites students' participation in constructing learning content through the question-answer sequence and therefore makes the content apparent to the students. In this sense, questioning is an essential technology for collaborative teaching and learning in classrooms.

The importance of teachers' questioning holds for second or foreign language education. Chaudron (1988) states that "teacher's questioning is a primary means of engaging learners' attention, promoting verbal responses, and evaluating learners' progress" (p. 126). Lee (2006a) argues that teachers' questions are "central resources whereby language teachers and students organize their lessons and produce language pedagogy" (p. 691). Through a microanalysis of ESL classroom interactions, Lee (2007) demonstrated how teachers' questioning enables the accomplishment of several types of pedagogical goals at the third turn of a three-turn sequence of actions (i.e., the feedback in an IRF sequence), in addition to feedback or evaluation alone, such as achieving classroom order and steering the interactional trajectory.

However, while the value of questioning in language teaching has been recognized by researchers, and practical advice for teachers on how to ask a question has been covered to some extent in teacher education textbooks (e.g., Brown, 2007; Richards & Lockhart, 1994), thus far, to the author's knowledge, there have been no studies or pedagogical suggestions spe-

cifically addressing the issue of what to do when a question fails to elicit an adequate response from a participant-relevant (i.e., emic) interactional perspective. The solution to this problem has been left to the competence of individual teachers. If questioning is pedagogically valuable in classrooms, however, it would be worthwhile to study how teachers in classroom interactions ask second or subsequent question(s) to obtain an adequate response when the original question fails to do so. Such a study will inform language teachers about how to handle the problem of failed student responses.

In this paper, I address the issue of failed questions or the trajectory of unsuccessful question and answer sequences. The research focus is on how teachers in language classrooms, especially in foreign language (FL) classrooms, deal with the problem of failed questions.

Studies on Repair for “Failed” Questions

A question calls for an answer, usually in the immediately following turn (Sacks, 1987). If an answer is not readily available, as indicated either in the form of silence, a repair initiator, or an inappropriate response, the questioner is put in the position of considering the reason for non-availability of an answer to the question. The question is treated as “failed” by the questioner’s subsequent repair practice in response to the non-immediate or non-adequate answer; a failed question is an interactional construct held by both the questioner and the answerer, not a question itself doomed to failure from the onset. Pomerantz (1984) studied how American first language (L1) English speakers treated failed questions in ordinary conversation. She found that failed questions were repaired in three ways: (a) repair of a problematic vocabulary item for understanding the question (e.g., by replacing the troublesome word); (b) repair of a problematic reference for understanding the question (e.g., by providing detailed information to the troublesome reference); and (c) repair of a problematic assertion in the content of the question (e.g., by weakening the original assertion or changing the opinion so that the hearer can agree to the question).

In institutional settings in which one party in the interaction is given asymmetrical rights to ask questions, the party tries to clarify the focus of the failed question. The study of American broadcast news interviews by Heritage and Roth (1995) discovered that the interviewers added a specific word, a phrase, or more detailed information to sharpen the focus of a failed question. This way of handling failed questions, in an increment, was also found in several institutional talk settings in Sweden such as health care in-

interactions, courtroom trials, police interrogations, and social welfare office talk (Linell, Hofvendahl, & Lindholm, 2003). Antaki's (2002) study of failed questions showed that particularizing or personalizing the content of the failed question from a more general one was another approach used by staff at a service institute for children with learning difficulties.

These practices are not only limited to interaction among L1 speakers; they are also found in interaction involving second language (L2) speakers. Gardner (2004) studied conversation among L1 English speakers and L2 English speakers, and discovered that the L1 speakers used strategies similar to those found in the studies above to pursue an answer, such as rephrasing the question with different words, adding a turn increment to the question, modifying the question with a minor change, or expanding the question by adding new information.

Studies on English oral proficiency interviews (OPIs), such as Kasper (2006) and Kasper and Ross (2007), have found the same practices employed by the interviewers, but a difference was discovered in their orientation to the trouble source of the non-answer. In Gardner's (2004) study, non-answers in L1-L2 speaker conversations were treated as an indication of possible disagreement to the assertion in the question, not as incompetence of L2 speakers. Therefore, the L1 questioners initiated repair on their failed questions in order to get an agreement from the L2 answerers. On the contrary, in the OPIs, when an answer was not available from the candidate, it was not considered as a dispreferred marker that indicated the answerer's orientation to disagreement, but as an indication of a lack of understanding due to the answerer's level of language proficiency. The interviewer's orientation to the candidate's incompetence was made public through the practice of eliminating dispensable parts of the original question, such as the change from "Can you tell me about what you did over Golden week?" to "Tell me what you did for Golden Week, over Golden Week" (Kasper & Ross, 2007, p. 2051). Kasper and Ross concluded the omission of "can you" in the subsequent version of the question is to "make the request more transparent and hence easier to understand."

Orientation to the answerer's lack of competence in repairing the failed question can be seen as key to explicating how teachers pursue a student's answer in language learning classrooms, in which the students are institutionally identified as not yet competent in the target language (TL). The study of code-switching in Turkish university EFL classrooms by Üstünel and Seedhouse (2005) touched on another way of handling the failed question, as documented in the following segment from their study.

Segment 1 (adapted from Üstünel & Seedhouse, 2005, p. 313)

1. T: okay (.) hh on Tuesday night?
2. (0.5)
3. T: on New Year's night?
4. (1.0)
5. T: on Tuesday (.) last Tuesday?
6. (2.0)
7. T: Salı günü?
 on Tuesday
8. (0.5)
9. S4: er-
10. T: =YılbaTı gecesi?
 on New Year's Eve
11. S4: I (2.0) study (0.5) English

The teachers' original question (line 1) is followed by a gap of silence, not an answer. Then, the teacher initiates several modified versions of the question, which are also met with silence. After several repairs in the TL, the teacher handles the non-answers by employing the students' L1 (lines 7 and 10). The Turkish questions finally obtain a response (line 11).

Üstünel and Seedhouse's (2005) study analyzed some of the interactional practices teachers use to deal with failed questions in FL classrooms. As in other instances of institutional talk, modifications are employed, but in this particular talk the bilingual practice of codeswitching (CS) is also used as a further step to pursue an answer from the students. Üstünel and Seedhouse suggested, "CS is one further (but more radical) way of modifying and simplifying the linguistic forms [to repair the failed question]" (p. 315). Considering the similarities between the Turkish university EFL context and EFL classrooms in Japan in which almost all of the students share the same L1, the findings in this study give insight into how to handle a failed question in our classrooms.

However, it seems necessary to advance this line of study to be more instructive to teachers dealing with the trouble of failed questions. First, the possibility of other practices for dealing with the trouble should be examined. Second, not only how, but also why these practices are used needs to be accounted for (e.g., why was the re-initiation of the question in the CS conducted

only after the modifications in the TL in the segment?). If there is rationality in designing practices to handle the failed question in FL classrooms and if this is explicated, then teachers will be able to follow the practices strategically, not randomly, when faced with the problem in their classroom. Or at least, the effectiveness of rational practices can be evaluated. The value of prior research on failed questions actually lies not only in the fact that it explicates an individual's conversational techniques but also in the fact that it has practical implications for institutional practice in areas such as interviewer and teacher training. If interviewers and teachers know that a question sometimes fails to elicit an adequate response and are aware of how to deal with the situation strategically, they will be better prepared. In turn, a study of the way teachers treat failed questions in FL classrooms will have implications for pedagogy in which teachers' questioning is crucial for teaching and learning.

The Study

Objectives

This study aims to extend the line of studies on failed questions to FL classroom settings and to explicate how and why teachers deal with the problem of students' inappropriate responses as the teachers engage in their pedagogical work. I will conduct a detailed analysis of naturally occurring examples of teachers' repair on failed questions in FL classrooms in order to determine the methods they use to deal with the problem of students' inappropriate responses.

Data and Method

The study is based on audio-recordings of 810 minutes of classroom interaction in EFL classes at a Japanese university. Interactions in three classrooms were recorded: (a) an intermediate communication and writing class (270 minutes), (b) a semi-intermediate communication and writing class (180 minutes), and (c) an intermediate communication class (360 minutes). The teacher of the first two classes was an L1 English speaker who had lived in Japan for more than 10 years. He had experience as a teacher of English in a variety of schools and had completed level 1 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. The teacher of the intermediate communication class was an L1 English speaker who had lived for more than 30 years in Japan.

The data were analyzed using conversation analysis (CA), which is a structural analysis "done by reference to contextual features, especially

sequencing, and to conventional understandings and procedures" (Bilmes, 1988, p. 161). The purpose of CA is to explicate the mechanism (not psychologically but socially) that produces and explains individuals' actions in interaction. Social mechanisms do not exist as governing rules of interaction but reflexively construct and are constructed by individuals' competent ways of engaging in interaction. In other words, CA aims to consider individuals' competence in accomplishing socially ordered action in interaction (Heritage, 1984). The detailed transcription employed in CA is a way to understand such individuals' methods of interaction; it makes visible the individual's orientation to detailed features of sequences of interaction as publicly displayed cognition (Schegloff, 1991). The data were transcribed according to the standard CA conventions (see Appendix). The detailed transcription approach has another virtue: Readers can follow the analysis of the data as it was analyzed by the researcher and can even challenge the analysis. This promotes the reliability and validity of the study (Seedhouse, 2005). Detailed ethnographic notes taken during the time of the recordings were also employed as supplementary information.

Through detailed structural analysis of the segments, this CA-informed study focuses on the methods teachers use to deal with the problem of failed questions.

Analysis

A total of 22 cases of teachers' repair of failed questions were found in the data. Ten cases were from the semi-intermediate communication and writing class and nine were from the intermediate communication and writing class. All the cases were found in the same kind of activity, namely discussion activities that took place between the teacher and students. The students were given about 10 minutes to discuss two questions within a group of four students first, and then one of the members of each group answered two questions posed by the teacher. The teacher occasionally asked a new question to students on the topic related to the discussion after hearing their answers to the given questions. Three other cases were found in the intermediate communication class, all of them in the same activity, the teacher's feedback to students on their performance in a speaking test. This feedback talk was conducted immediately after the test. In each instance of testing and feedback, only the students taking the test were in the classroom.

While it would be ideal to show all 22 cases of the ways teachers dealt with failed questions, here I will present several selected excerpts transcribed

from the data as examples (in the 22 specimens) of the repair practices the teachers used to pursue a response from their students (see ten Have, 2007, on specimen perspective).

Modification in TL of Failed Question

As in prior research, the teachers in my data enacted a modification of their failed question to pursue an answer from students. Eight cases of the modification similar to the example below were found in the data.

Segment 2

'D' for Derek (teacher), 'F' for Fumiya.

1. D: uh: million dollars what do you do,
2. (1.2)
3. F: shopping.
- 4.→ D: haha £go shopping.£ .hh go shopping,
- 5.→ for what.
6. (0.3)
- 7.→ D: what do you buy.
8. (0.4)
- 9.→ D: go shopping for: ,
10. (0.8)
11. F: Ferrari.
12. (0.6)
13. D: oh Ferrari, nice.

The question in line 1 is a pre-given question for which the students have prepared in groups. After providing receipt of Fumiya's response, the teacher, Derek, asks a related question in lines 4 and 5 "go shopping, for what." However, this does not immediately get answered but instead results in a 0.3-second gap. Derek then modifies the question in line 7 by emphasizing "what" instead of "for" in the original question. Seeing another 0.4-second gap in the next turn, he further modifies the question; this time he omits "what," and elongates the "for" with continuous intonation, which can be considered a designedly incomplete utterance (see Koshik, 2002). Fumiya finally answers the questions in line 11. Through his answer, it is seen that

he analyzes what has been asked is to say a name of an object which corresponds to “what” following “for;” (lines 7 and 9). Derek accepts Fumiya’s analysis and response as an acceptable answer with a compliment.

The modifications above succeed in obtaining an acceptable response from a student, but when necessary, the teachers go one step further to pursue an answer by using the bilingual practice of codeswitching into the students’ L1.

Codeswitching After Modification in TL of Failed Question

In the following segment, taken from the intermediate communication class, the teacher employs the students’ L1 after several modifications in TL as repair for a failed question.

Segment 3

‘E’ for Ethan (teacher), ‘G’ for Goro, two other students are also present.

1. E: uh: (0.8) what famous your hometo:wn?
2. (0.4)
3. E: no.
4. (0.4)
- 5.→ E: how do you change it,
6. (1.6)
7. E: what famous your hometown,
8. (0.3)
- 9.→ E: change it to (.) (better) English.
10. (2.2)
11. E: ↑what famous your hometown.
12. (2.5)
- 13.→ E: ↓change it.
14. (0.9)
- 15.→ E: naoshite kudasai.
correct please
please correct (it).
16. (1.0)

17. G: °what is famous for wo naosu nen°
 ((to other students))
O correct IP
(We are supposed) to correct what is famous
for.
18. E: <what is your home[town famous for.]>
19. G: [↑ah::
20. E: chotto muzukashii.
little difficult
(It is) a little bit difficult.

Ethan first reads out a memo he took during the speaking test (line 1), quoting back to the students something one of them had said. Then while continuing to look down at the memo, in line 3 he uses the prototypical negative token (“no”) to retrospectively reject the form of the quote, in effect telling the students that it is incorrect.² So it is in this sequential context that Ethan’s question first appears (line 5). Then after a long gap, Ethan reposes the question with the error, which specifies the content of “it” in the first version of his question (line 5), and repeats his request for the student to suggest a more appropriate syntactic form. The modification (by omitting “how do you”) and the addition of “(better) English” specify both the point and the action that the students are required to engage in. However, this second request does not elicit a response from any of the students but instead results in a longer gap (line 10). Ethan again indicates the mistake, but this, too, is followed by another lengthy silence (lines 11 and 12). In line 13, he again directs the students to change the problematic utterance, but this time he uses perhaps the simplest grammatical form—a direct request (“Change it”). After yet another non-response from the students, Ethan finally produces a further request with the same content but in Japanese (line 15). Goro, one of the students, identifies the teacher’s action as a request for them to correct the grammar in the proposed sentence and explains this to the other students (line 17). Finally, Ethan stops waiting for the student to answer and provides the response himself.

Although it is not clear whether Ethan treats Goro’s turn at line 17 as an acceptable response to his direction, it appears here that the teacher orients to the ordering of a number of repair practices for pursuing an answer, that is, first TL modification(s) and then CS. A similar pattern is found in another extract from the data, Segment 4.

Segment 4

'D' for Derek, 'K' for Kenta, 'Ss' for students.

1. D: any Kyoto people?
2. K: ((raises hand))
- 3.→ D: Kyoto's good yeah?
4. (0.3)
- 5.→ D: good to live?
6. (.)
- 7.→ D: sumiyasui?
8. good to live?
9. (0.2)
10. K: sumiyasui.
11. good to live.
12. D: yeah. good to live.
13. (0.3)
14. K: [°good to live.°
15. D: [>↑okay good work.< ((app[lause])
16. Ss: ((applause))

On seeing Kenta's embodied response to his question, in line 3 Derek puts forward a related assessment that includes a turn-final tag question, "Kyoto's good yeah?" However this does not receive an immediate response and Derek then adds an increment "to live" in line 5, which makes clear the meaning of "good" in his original question. As a further step, in line 7, he changes languages and asks the question again in the student's L1. After a 0.2-second gap, the student responds to the question in Japanese, which is considered an answer to the last, codeswitched question in that the answer is in Japanese. The answer is acceptable to Derek, the questioner, who acknowledges it with "yeah." in the immediately following turn (line 10). He then moves on to direct a positive assessment toward the whole class ("okay good work.").³

The repair practice in this segment seems to indicate that a failed question is not always a problem on the student's part. Here Derek leaves just a micropause before initiating a CS. It is reasoned that such a pause would be difficult for an intermediate student to fill with a response in the TL. Con-

sidering the fact that he hastens to go on to CS, the segment seems to be a case of the teacher's self-repair rather than a teacher-initiated (i.e., other-initiated) repair for the student's problem in understanding the question.

Another important finding is that the pattern appearing in the segments above is similar to Segment 1 (Üstünel & Seedhouse, 2005), in which the teacher modified his original question in English as the TL, and then employed CS in the students' L1. The pattern actually seems to be fairly common. It is found in seven cases in my data and one more in Üstünel and Seedhouse. Why then do the teachers order modification in the TL first and CS later? According to Üstünel and Seedhouse, the length of the gap after a TL modification is the key: A gap of 1.0-second or more after a modification in the TL triggers the practice of CS (p. 321). As we have seen, however, there are cases that do not fit this explanation. In addition, it does not answer the question of why a modification in the TL is done first. I will pick up on these points in more detail in the discussion section.

Proffering Candidate Responses: A Bidirectional Repair

Teachers sometimes also offer candidate responses as another strategy; that is, on receiving no answer but a gap of silence at the turn after a question, they provide possible answers to the non-answered question.

Segment 5

'D' for Derek, 'N' for Naoko, 'R' for Rei.

1. D: ↑million dollars what would you do,
2. (2.6)
3. N: I: want to buy a car.
4. (0.7)
5. D: ↑o:kay, buy a car.
6. (.)
- 7.→ D: ↑what type of car.
8. (2.1)
- 9.→ D: Toyota Porsche Ferrari:;
10. (1.1)
11. R: ((to N)) Benz
12. (0.4)

13. N: ((to D)) Benz.
 14. (0.3)
 15. D: oh::. ((start writing on the blackboard))
 16. Benz. Mercedes Benz. ((finish writing))
 17. (0.4)
 18. D: nice.

The focal turn in this segment appears in line 7, when Derek initiates the specification question “what type of car.” In this segment, Naoko and Rei have formed a pair and have been practicing two teacher-prepared questions for about 15 minutes. In the response turns, Naoko represents the pair and answers both questions when Derek asks them. Derek’s first prepared question, “million dollars what would you do,” is answered by Naoko.⁴ Then, after a gap, he acknowledges her answer with “o:kay,” and initiates his follow-up question to the pair in line 7. The question does not receive immediate uptake, and results in a 2.1-second gap. Derek then poses some possible answers with slightly rising intonation in line 9 formulated as a three-part list (Jefferson, 1990). After a 1.1-second gap, Rei prompts Naoko with an answer in line 11, which Naoko then delivers to Derek (line 13). He accepts the answer and provides a favorable assessment in line 18.

The practice of repairing failed questions, as we have seen, involves bidirectional repair; that is, proposing possible answers operates in two directions at the same time. On the one hand, it works backward to sharpen the content of the failed question by incrementing the information, where the question “what type of car” can ask what line of car such as sports car, SUV, or minivan. Furthermore, by being given possible answers, the content of “what type of car” is clarified as “which manufacturer or what brand of car.” On the other hand, the practice also works forward to repair the trouble of answering, as it makes the acceptable class of answers available to the student. In Segment 5, the students’ answer is in the class of answers provided: Benz is a brand of car, as are Toyota, Porsche, and Ferrari. In other words, the practice deals with both the problems in understanding the content of the question and the challenge in producing an answer, and succeeds in obtaining an adequate answer from the students. This practice is found in another six cases in my corpus, including the following.

Segment 6

'D' for Derek, 'A' for Atsushi.

1. D: teacher is good very good job.
2. (0.3)
3. → D: ↑what teacher;
4. (0.5)
5. → D: high school junior high school elementary?
6. (1.0)
7. A: high school.
8. D: high school. ((writing "high school" on
9. the blackboard)) high school, (.) kids are
10. very (0.3) very nice.

Here, after listening to Atsushi's answer, "teacher," to the question given to all groups, "What do you want to be after graduation?" Derek initiates a topically related question, "what teacher" in line 3. Receiving no immediate response, the teacher suggests possible answers to the question in line 5, which is again a three-part list. After a further 1-second gap, Atsushi answers "high school." Considering that one can mean different things in asking "what teacher" such as "a teacher of what subject?" an appropriate answer might be something such as "PE teacher." By presenting possible answers, Derek retrospectively defines the intention of his question and also prospectively suggests a class of answers. Atsushi could have answered, "I want to be a high school teacher," but he followed the suggested class of answer and simply gave "high school," which was accepted through repetition and embodied action by Derek, who then briefly extends it into a topically related assessment in the next turn constructional unit.

Discussion

This detailed analysis of naturally-occurring interactions in EFL classrooms indicates that teachers repair the troubles of failed questions with the following three strategies: (a) a modification of the failed question in the TL, (b) codeswitching into L1 as a further step of the modification, and (c) suggesting answers for the failed question.

The interactional practice of modification shares the features of the interviewers' practice of pursuing an answer in OPI settings (Kasper, 2006;

Kasper & Ross, 2007). By re-asking in a grammatically complete sentence (Segment 2), changing the speech act from an indirect to direct request (Segment 3), and by emphasizing a part of speech and purposefully omitting a part of a sentence (line 7 and line 9 in Segment 2), the teachers display their orientation to the difficulty of analyzing what is required by the questions. In other words, the teachers identify the trouble source as the student-recipient's inability to parse the questions in a timely manner.

The teachers' orientation to addressing the students' difficulty with the question is observable through their strategy of proffering candidate responses. By suggesting a possible class of answers for a failed question, the teachers are able to repair the problems both in parsing the question and answering the question; the practice locates the trouble sources of a failed question in both the understanding of and the responding to the question, dealing with these problems in an economical way by repairing both troubles at the same time.

The bilingual practice of codeswitching into L1 focuses more on the trouble of understanding the failed question. It is of course easier for students to parse a question in their L1 rather than in the TL. A question arises here: Why do teachers resort to CS only after a TL modification? To address that issue, we need to consider the nature of the question, or language, and also the nature of language teaching.

Put simply, any question has two components: propositional content and an action (or speech act) that it is designed to achieve (cf. Hauser, 2005). A student first has to determine that what the teacher is saying is a question (i.e., an action requiring some response) and must also understand the question's propositional content (i.e., what response is specifically required). Since it is widely accepted that the meaning of language can be ambiguous or indexical, parsing a question actually demands interpretation work on the part of the student, which is done on the basis of (a) sequential context, (b) situational or background context, and (c) the conventional meaning of language.⁵

The first two components require an answerer to use interactional competence. Understanding a question as an action requesting a response is realized by the answerer's tacit knowledge of interactional norms in a given situation. Thus far, classroom studies on teachers' questioning that have been conducted using ethnomethodology and CA have focused on (students') tacit knowledge of these two components or discursive practical reasoning of questions (Lee, 2006b; Macbeth, 2000, 2003; Mehan, 1979). These studies have indicated that, given that a question demands the use of competence, the act of questioning is pedagogical in its own right. It should

also be noted, however, that prior to discursive practical reasoning, conventional linguistic reasoning is required.

It is a given that when a teacher's question is formulated in the TL, the addressed student has to use knowledge of TL conventions. On the other hand, if a teacher's question is formulated in the students' L1, the student does not need to use linguistic knowledge of the TL but rather can use L1 knowledge. The use of the L1 for questioning means that the teacher is not teaching the TL communicatively. Therefore, although L1 questions succeeded in eliciting responses or reactions from the students and should be considered as a valuable resource in repair, the teachers generally kept them as a last resort.

In summary, questions and modifications in the TL and the use of codeswitching in FL classrooms are explained on the basis of priority in formulating questions. Questioning in language classrooms has two pedagogical benefits. Firstly, as Lee (2007) demonstrated, it enables the teacher to engage in pedagogical work at the third turn position. For example, in segments 2, 4, and 5 the teacher invited students into new but related questions at the third turn positions (see lines 4–5 in Segment 2, line 3 in Segment 4, and line 7 in Segment 5). In addition, questioning itself is a way of teaching in that it demands discursive and linguistic reasoning. In order to satisfy both these pedagogic benefits, any first version of a question has to be posed in the TL, meaning the use of the TL for questioning is prioritized. Grammatically simplified TL questions (in the sense of omitting a word or a phrase in the original question) which appear as subsequent versions of the question are reasonable considering the teachers' orientation to the pursuit of the pedagogical values of questioning. While these modifications may weaken the second pedagogical value, they do not totally eliminate it. The use of the L1 is least prioritized, achieving only the first of the two pedagogical values, although it accomplishes that goal more efficiently than does a question in the TL. The practice of proffering candidate responses does not deviate from the priority in formulating questions; although it suggests possible answers, it is typically done with a question-like form intonation, and the students orient to such turns as questions, rather than as answers. Thus, it can be seen that teachers in FL classrooms appear to follow a prioritized hierarchy of actions in order to teach their students the TL during their interactions.

It should also be noted that a failed question is not always the student's problem. Questions from the teachers may potentially be ambiguous and the teachers themselves may orient to their speech as the origin of the breakdown. In this case, as seen in Segment 4, the teacher may self-repair the trouble source first with a combination of the modification and CS practices.

Concluding Remarks

Language classrooms are where we teach a language to students. The methods used by teachers to repair failed questions have rationality according to this goal. The present study identified three strategies used to handle failed questions, and these techniques are no doubt evident in the way most teachers teach. I would suggest that in FL classrooms like those in Japan it is beneficial for native speakers of a TL to learn the students' L1, as Derek and Ethan have done. Although it is prioritized lower than modification of the question in the TL, students' L1 can be a valuable resource for obtaining a response and to engage in pedagogical work at the third turn position. Thus, the use of the L1 should not be totally prohibited as it has a role to play in teaching the TL.

Although the three practices can also be found in ordinary and other institutional talk, the practices seem to be particularly effective interactional devices for language teaching. It should be noted, however, that the strategies found in the study are not identified as the best ways to deal with failed questions. The teachers' practices are surely rational, but there may be other, perhaps even better, ways to pursue a response from students. The current study represents an initial attempt to document practices of teachers' management of failed questions in detail. It will be more meaningful when this study is supplemented by subsequent studies extending the line of research, providing a more extensive knowledge base for repairing the source of trouble in failed questions.

Notes

1. All names in the segments are pseudonyms.
2. Ethan's nonverbal actions are based on my field notes.
3. The question and answer on students' residences had become a sequence in which three students participated as answerers before this segment started. Therefore this utterance should be heard as a compliment to the whole class or at least to those students who participated. "Okay" seems to be used as a transition-making marker (see Beach, 1993).
4. Readers might be curious as to the reason why the teacher does not modify the initial question, which is not with the conditional phrase "if you had," in the 2.6 gap instead of waiting for the student's response. First, it seems that the omission was recipient designed to simplify the question for the pair, as they had already been given 15 minutes to

consider it and also had seen that the other five groups' had been asked and answered the same questions before them. Second, because of their preparation, the teacher seems to think that the pair understand the question.

5. Although language is indexical, it does not mean that it is totally indexical. Language has a focal meaning because of its conventions (word, phrase, and grammar) that are more or less the same as a dictionary definition (Bilmes, 1986). Otherwise, people would find it impossible to communicate with each other.

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Appendix

Transcription Conventions and Abbreviations

Transcriptions Conventions

(0.0)	Time gap in tenths of a second
(.)	Brief time gap
=	“latched” utterances
[The beginning of overlapped talk
()	Unintelligible stretch
(())	Transcriber comment
-	Cut-off
:	Elongated sound
?	Rising intonation
.	Falling intonation
,	Continuing intonation
↑	Marked rise of immediately following segment
↓	Marked fall of immediately following segment
<u>under</u>	Emphasis
££	Smiled voice
°°	Decreased volume
> <	Increased speed
< >	Decreased speed

Abbreviations

IP	Interactional Particle
O	Object Marker

Perspectives

***JALT Journal* Turns 30: A Retrospective Look at the First Three Decades**

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With the *JALT Journal* having entered its fourth decade, this retrospective of the first 30 volumes surveys some aspects of papers published in the journal, including characteristics regarding research methodology, research focus, and pedagogical level, as well as several other factors. Results of the review of 297 articles revealed that the publication has mirrored other journals in applied linguistics by adopting an empirical focus with quantitative methods being used in most of the published studies. The primary research focus was language teaching pedagogy; however, other areas receiving attention in the first three decades were pragmatics, motivation, and test reliability, with these three appearing prominently in the latter half of the 30 volumes.

JALTジャーナルが第二世代に入ったことにあたり、第一号から30号まで回顧し、掲載論文の幾つかの特徴を検証する。その特徴は研究方法論、研究の焦点、そのほかの諸点における教育学のレベルに関するものである。297編の論文を調べた結果、本ジャーナルは応用言語学の分野で、これは最近の傾向である定性的研究ではなく、定量的研究アプローチを使った研究が大部分であり、それらが実証的側面重視の立場を取ることで、他の研究誌と重なっていることが明らかになった。当然想定されることであったが、JALTジャーナルの第一の研究主眼は語学教育学ではあるものの、第一世代の諸論文は語用論、動機論、試験の信頼性にも関心を注ぎ、この三つのテーマは第二世代の諸論文においても目だって取り上げられている。本再検討はまたJALTジャーナルのユニークな特徴を構成する要素に深く関係するいくつかの側面にも光を当てている。

As in any field, language teaching has witnessed change and growth over the past generation with new approaches, frameworks, methodologies, theories, and trends. The shift in approach from the audio-lingual teaching method to more communicative-oriented teaching is just one of many examples of change within the language teaching field. Naturally, teachers and researchers have followed these shifts, although, as one would expect, the situation in Japan has developed its own individual characteristics.

The publication of the 30th volume of the *JALT Journal* in 2008, marking the end of the journal's third decade, appears to be an appropriate occasion to look back at the nature of the journal's first generation of research publications in order both to describe its distinctiveness and to suggest where the patterns that have emerged may be leading.

Other similar published studies have acted as a guide to the type of description and trend spotting that we attempt in this paper. With regard to reviews of research methodology, Lazaraton (2000) surveyed four prominent applied linguistics journals over a 7-year period in the 1990s, examining 332 published articles. Her findings revealed there was considerable focus on quantitative research with 88% of the studies following this methodology while only 10% were qualitative. However, Gao, Li, and Lu (2001), in a comparison of Chinese and Western language learning journals, noted that in the four Western journals they surveyed from 1985 to 1997, the number of studies using quantitative research methods went from over four times that of qualitative approaches at the outset to roughly equal numbers by 1997. More recently, Ellis (2006) noted the increasing number of qualitative articles being published in the journal he edits, *Language Teaching Research*. In his own small-scale survey of 25 empirical articles in the journal under his watch, he found that only 24% of the studies were quantitative while 76% were "interpretive," although some of the latter included descriptive statistics. A similar shift is noted by Magnan (2005) who, as editor of *The Modern Language Journal*, surveyed research articles in the same journal. Magnan revealed that from 1996 to 2005, research articles comprised 82% of the published papers, while 18% were essays. Among the research articles, 74% were quantitative and 20% were qualitative with the remainder a combination of the two. A decade earlier, quantitative studies accounted for 93% of papers. Most recently, Benson, Chik, Gao, Huang, & Wang (2009), in a survey of 2202 research articles in 10 leading international teaching and learning journals from 1997 to 2006 found that 22% could be classified as using qualitative research. Benson, et al. do comment that this percent-

age should not be compared to Lazaraton (2000) or Gao et al. (2001) above because both of these considered only empirical articles at the outset, while Benson et al. included all types of articles, both empirical and nonempirical. While qualitative research appears to be finding wider acceptance in international journals within the field, it is worth noting a recent review by Richards (2009) which “revealed no evidence of a continuing expansion of [qualitative research] papers published in leading journals in our field, but the new millennium has seen consolidation to a point where its position seems secure” (p. 167), a perspective echoed by Dörnyei’s (2007) claim that “applied linguistics has been offering an increasingly level playing field for both QUAN and QUAL approaches” (p. 36).

Research methodology, however is just one of many facets that define the nature of articles in a journal. Other variables include the origin and nationality of authors. Magnan (2005), for example, in the same study mentioned above, noted an increase in the percentage of non-U.S.A.-based authors with a concurrent increase in articles authored by researchers from other parts of the world, reflecting an increasing number of submissions from countries other than the United States.

Other categories that appear worthy of consideration when surveying a journal’s collection of articles include:

- the level at which the research is focused (e.g., primary, secondary, tertiary)
- the topic under study (e.g., pragmatics, motivation)

Thus, the primary purpose of the present study is to survey each of the main articles in *JALT Journal*’s first 30 volumes in order to classify and summarize its nature while identifying patterns and trends which may shed light on where language teaching research in Japan is headed.

Method

The first 30 volumes of *JALT Journal* were examined focusing on four main areas:

- author’s nationality (Japanese or non-Japanese)
- research methodology (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods plus instruments and statistical tests)
- level (elementary, secondary, tertiary, or other)
- primary topic focus

Only the 297 full-length articles were assessed in the survey, including papers in the *Research Forum* and *Perspectives* sections. Other sections,

such as *Book Reviews* and *Point-to-Point* articles, were not included. While determining how to classify each article with regard to the above rubrics may appear straightforward, various nuances appeared in the course of the evaluation. Accordingly, we first independently scored two randomly selected volumes of *JALT Journal* under the categories listed above and then compared our classifications for consistency. After some negotiation, a taxonomy was established and a systematic scheme of data entry was decided.

The following conditions were set:

- Author nationality was determined by assessing first and family names. In a few cases where ambiguity arose, e.g., a non-Japanese first name but a Japanese family name, the author was deemed Japanese. In the case of multiple authors where there were both Japanese and non-Japanese names, the paper was classified under both nationalities.¹
- The methodology used in a paper was determined to be quantitative if numerical results played a role in the findings.
- The methodology used in a paper was determined to be qualitative if recognizable approaches, such as interviews, discourse or conversational analysis, observations, and documentary or transcript analysis, were employed.
- If elements of the above two methods were used, the methodological approach utilized by the author(s) was defined as a mixed methods approach.
- In order to give each paper equal weight only one central topic focus of each paper was determined, even though some papers could be viewed as having two central points. For example, in one paper (in Volume 15.2) concerning the evaluation of written errors by Japanese teachers of English and assistant (native English speaking) language teachers, the author's concern was with both the errors and native/nonnative teachers assessment differences. We determined the latter of these to be the main focus. In these few cases, the title usually helped in making the decision.
- Papers were categorized according to their particular teaching context—was the focus of the paper on issues related to primary, secondary, or tertiary education, or had the author(s) adopted a general stance?

Results and Discussion

In this section, we discuss prominent patterns and trends emerging from the database of 297 *JALT Journal* articles published between 1978 and 2008. Although many of the patterns and trends arose out of numerical counts within the categories we chose to explore, we will also bring to light qualitative information that has characterized research papers in *JALT Journal's* first 30 years. While a 30-year period can be divided into several possible periods (e.g., 5- or 10-year periods), most of the analysis below focuses on *JALT Journal's* first and second halves (i.e., Volumes 1-15 and Volumes 16-30). We chose this time span because it appears to best illustrate some of the major trends we explore. However, finer gradations could result in a better understanding of the trends, and in some places we mention this. The tables and figures also illustrate these finer trends in time.

Nationality

Figure 1 shows a marked increase in the number of papers from Japanese authors. Some of this increase may be due to the existence of American graduate schools in Japan conferring degrees in TESOL, as well as the increase in the number of graduate distance education programs offered by universities in the United Kingdom and Australia. The recent move in Japanese universities requiring teaching staff to apply for grants and publish research in refereed journals may be another factor.

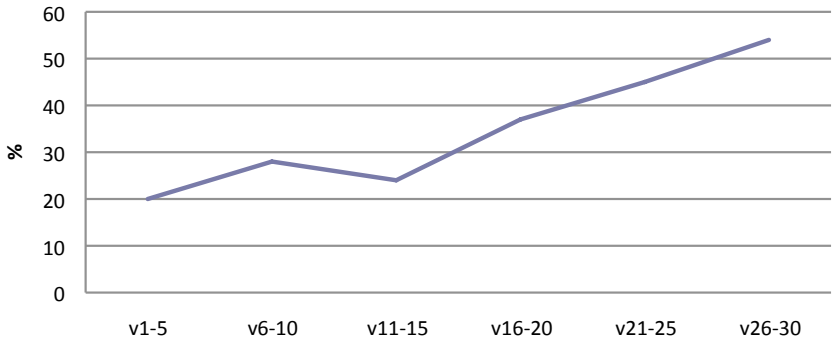


Figure 1. Japanese Authors by Percentage

Empirical Versus Nonempirical

As applied linguistics has become established as a field of scientific study, the expectations for producing findings from empirical studies has grown. Figure 2 graphically reflects this move towards a greater emphasis on experimental, or at least data-producing, studies. Underscoring this trend, Lazaraton (2005) notes that in the 1970s and 1980s, research in applied linguistics underwent a significant move towards quantitative studies. Gao, et al. (2001) noted a similar trend in their study.

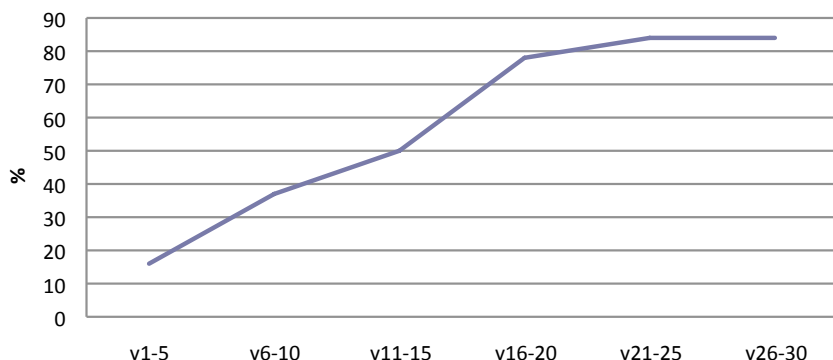


Figure 2. Percentage of Empirical Studies in Volumes 1-30

Concurrently, nonempirical articles, which can include theory-building studies, classroom techniques, critiques, and reviews, among other types of papers, have witnessed a notable decline. In the first 15 years of *JALT Journal*, nonempirical articles ($n = 72$) accounted for 63% of papers while in the past 15 years, they have accounted for only 23% ($n = 43$). In the past 8 years that figure has dropped even further to 19% ($n = 16$). Half of these appeared in the *Perspectives* section, which seems to serve as a venue for nonempirical papers.

Of particular interest among nonempirical studies is the large number of *teaching technique* pieces which appeared in the early volumes. These *how to* pieces, which included step-by-step instructions for classroom pedagogy, virtually disappeared in *JALT Journal*'s second 15 years with none appearing in the past 7 years. This move away from practical pieces towards empirical studies may reflect a natural maturation of the journal towards theory and research. There may also have been recognition amongst the journal's contributing demographic that applied or pragmatic pieces were more suitable

for submission to other teaching-oriented journals, such as *The Language Teacher*. A similar pattern has been noted by Stapleton and Collett (2008) in a review of submissions to JALT's other major forum for discussion of research findings, the JALT National Conference. In that study, we noted that the word *data* appeared in abstracts submitted to the conference in 2008 at close to double the rate of 6 years earlier.

Research Methodology

The most noteworthy pattern arising from a review of each empirical paper was the dominance of quantitative over qualitative design. In the 30 volumes, quantitative studies led qualitative ones by a factor of approximately four to one (see Figure 3). In this sense, *JALT Journal* content has followed a similar path to the journals mentioned above which also showed a strong skew towards studies driven by numerical data (Lazaraton, 2000). However, over the past few years, there has been a shift in this trend towards a greater proportion of qualitative studies (Figure 3). Also notable in Figure 3 is the steady increase in the percentage of mixed methods or mixed model studies, which use both qualitative and quantitative techniques, such as the use of interview data to triangulate statistical findings (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In the past 10 years, 16 articles (about 18% of all empirically oriented papers) incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods within the same study. The most usual pattern among these was a questionnaire that had a Likert scale (quantitative) as well as open-ended questions (qualitative) (50%). The second most common pattern was a Likert-style questionnaire coupled with an interview (25%). Among these studies, similar to the findings in Benson et al. (2009), the analysis focused on the numerical data with the qualitative data used as supplementary evidence. It is interesting to note that a diverse range of authors in the social sciences have been advocating mixed methods approaches (e.g., Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) as well as those in SLA (e.g., Dörnyei, 2007; Lazaraton, 2005), reflecting a call by a number of methodologists to move away from the "paradigm wars" that have dominated discussion on methodology in the soft sciences over the last half-century towards a more pragmatic approach to research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The above finding may represent a growing trend in future approaches to research, a conclusion shared by Richards (2009).

Among quantitative studies,² the most popular instrument was the questionnaire (40%, $n = 59$); however, other instruments and designs were well represented including the use of language performance scores from stu-

dents (38%, $n = 56$), numerical scores arising from speech and text analysis including frequency counts of spoken and written texts and error analyses (22%, $n = 32$). The use of think-aloud protocols accounted for about 3% of the quantitative studies. The use of more than one data-producing resource resulted in percentages exceeding 100.

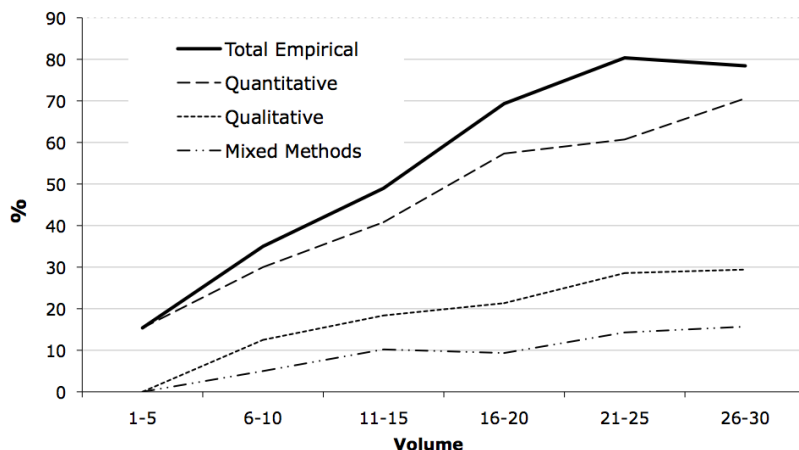


Figure 3. Methodology Type by Percentage

Over 51% of authors who chose a quantitative design employed some sort of statistical significance test ($n = 76$). The most popular among these were *t* tests, with 35 instances (24% of all quantitative studies) accounting for over half the statistical significance tests used, ANOVA or MANOVA (21%, $n = 31$) and chi-square tests (4%, $n = 6$) in that order. Other common numerical tools included percentages (14%, $n = 21$); simple counts (14%, $n = 20$); correlations (8%, $n = 12$); reliability tests (mostly Cronbach alpha) (6%, $n = 8$); and means (4%, $n = 6$). The complexity of the statistical instruments has increased considerably when comparing the latter 15 years with the former. For example ANOVA or factor analysis was used only four times in the first 15 volumes compared to 27 times in the more recent 15. Lazaraton (2000) has noted that 40% of published studies in the four journals that she surveyed employed ANOVA, and added that if there is one statistical measure applied linguists should know how to use correctly, it is this one, due to the stringent set of assumptions underlying its use, and the possibility of misapplication.

In reporting statistical significance, the actual statistics that need to be reported has been an issue of some controversy over the past few decades;

at least one area of consensus is that it is necessary to report the effect size (the measure of the strength of the relationship between two variables) and power (the probability of successfully finding a statistically significant difference when the difference exists). In respect to reporting effect size, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA), 5th edition (2001) recommends

for the reader to fully understand the importance of your findings, it is almost always necessary to include some index of effect size or strength of relationship in your Results section The general principle to be followed . . . is to provide the reader not only with information about statistical significance but also with enough information to assess the magnitude of the observed effect or relationship. (pp. 25-26)

The APA manual also states that failure to report effect size is a defect in research (p. 5), while the Task Force on Statistical Inference of the APA stated “reporting and interpreting effect sizes in the context of previously reported effects is essential to good research” (Wilkinson & The APA Task Force on Statistical Inference, 1999, p. 599). See also Thompson (1998, 2002); Carver (1978, 1993), Shaver, (1993), Oakes (1986), and Cohen (1969) for an in-depth discussion of the issues here. In the case of *JALT Journal*, approximately 41% of the papers utilizing statistical significance testing published between 2001 and 2008 (2001 was the year the APA first made its stance explicit) include indices that give a measure of effect size, such as Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient r , or η^2 ; 14% of the papers explicitly mention the effect size.³ In light of the kinds of comments above, is simply including a statistical result without including some mention of it in the body of the results or discussion enough? We would argue no, as it is not necessarily the case that all readers of an article will have the necessary statistical knowledge to understand clearly what a measurement is showing, or the result may get lost amongst the other data. Including a reference to effect size of a statistical significance test would help make the substantive significance of the results clearer.

Among qualitative studies, documentary analysis (including textbooks, journal entries and the like) accounted for 32% of the total ($n = 20$), followed by interviews (27%, $n = 17$), open-ended items on questionnaires (23%, $n = 14$), conversational analysis (23%, $n = 14$) and observations (6%, $n = 4$). Ethnographic studies, in which a researcher becomes a participant observer who provides a thick description based on field notes triangulated

with interviews after a lengthy engagement with subjects (Anderson-Levitt, 2006), did not appear in the data, although studies by Gorsuch (1998) and Shimada (1986) came closest to this approach.

Topic Focus

Table 1 shows the number of appearances of the most frequently researched topic areas among the 297 articles. These topic areas go a long way towards giving *JALT Journal* a character of its own, given the wide range of areas within ELT and applied linguistics to choose from. The frequencies in Table 1 reveal a healthy diversity of research areas. Papers focusing on teaching or methodology were by far the most common, with general theory-based discussion papers dominating the early volumes. However, there has been a clear movement away from the latter in recent years and this dovetails with the trend noted above towards increased empiricism. As the number of studies discussing pedagogy and methodology have declined, those focusing on affective factors, especially motivation, along with teachers' and learners' beliefs have increased.

Table 1. Frequencies of Topic Areas

Topic area	No. of appearances	First 15 years	Second 15 years
Pedagogy/Methodology	60	38	22
Pragmatics	27	7	20
Motivation/affective	21	3	18
Test reliability/validity	17	3	14
Second language acquisition	18	9	9
Culture	16	8	8
Learner development/strategies	15	7	8
Teacher/learner beliefs	15	1	14
Assessment	12	5	7
Team teaching	6	0	6
Study abroad	4	0	4

Turning to the particular educational level the papers were aimed at—primary, secondary, tertiary, or non-specific—just over 49% had a tertiary focus, with only 30% of these being published prior to Volume 15 (see Table 2). Thirty-three percent of the papers were nonspecific (i.e., presenting a generalized overview or broad picture of teaching practices), with a little over two-thirds of these papers appearing in the first 15 volumes.

Table 2. Frequencies of Level

Level	Volumes 1-15	Volumes 16-30	Total
Tertiary	42	101	143
Secondary	4	46	50
Primary	1	6	7
Nonspecific	62	32	94

Only seven papers had a primary school focus, with all but two of these appearing in the last three volumes. While this is not unexpected, due to the lack of any official foreign-language education policy at the elementary level prior to the recent implementation of compulsory English language education as set out in the Ministry of Education’s updated course of study (see MEXT, 2009), it does point to an area where there may be potential for research. In fact, the impending move in Japan towards compulsory English education due to commence for 5th and 6th graders in 2011 may explain this recent interest in primary education. We expect more articles focusing on this level as English classes are added to the elementary school curriculum.

What is most interesting is the tenfold increase in papers focusing on the secondary school level over the years, perhaps reflecting a move towards an increased research-orientation within the high school English teaching profession. The authorship of these papers is fairly evenly distributed amongst non-Japanese (24 secondary school-focused papers) and Japanese authors (27); however, a greater percentage of the total number of Japanese authors have published papers with a secondary education focus than have non-Japanese.

As noted in the section on nationality of authors, the number of Japanese authors has been increasing in the past 15 years, and this trend combined with the findings above may point to an increase in the number of high

school teachers adopting the role of research-practitioners and working to expand their professional qualifications.

Ancillary Highlights

One strong trend was a shift away from the publication of opinion or discussion pieces on pedagogy, policy, or culture that tended to dominate the earlier volumes. These generalist papers, which largely appeared in the first 15 volumes, presented broad visions of the best approach for language teaching in Japan and beyond. In more recent volumes, however, rather than attempts by practitioners to define best practices for language teaching, we are seeing more specific skills-based studies focusing on a certain level and a discrete population.

Another notable feature emerging from the study was the recent lack of published discussion or debate. Earlier issues occasionally included a section where readers submitted their reactions, usually criticism of a paper in a previous issue, sometimes leading to a lively debate in the *Point to Point* section. Such discussions may have disappeared for many reasons, including budget constraints or a lack of submissions; however, it is notable that this public forum no longer appears. On the other hand, this move away from debate and discussion may be a natural one given that most papers are now reports on empirical research in which broad generalizations are not offered.

Similarly, it is interesting to note that few *think pieces*, in which authors make broad critical comments on the profession (Bernard Susser's 1998 critique of EFL teaching was one example), have appeared in the past decade. *JALT Journal* does have a regular section entitled *Perspectives*, which may originally have been established for authors to bring perspective to the field; however, recently papers in this section have tended to be empirical (and quantitative). The academic essay gives authors the opportunity to suggest creative ways forward, and when well argued, the proposed frameworks and theories are taken on by the field. Naturally, we cannot know whether this decline in essays has occurred because of a lack of submissions in this genre or a bias among reviewers against this type of piece. We suggest that the essay does have a place in advancing knowledge, and it is worth noting that Google Scholar shows Susser's critique as one of *JALT Journal's* most cited papers. One other area where the *Perspectives* section may serve a useful function is in the running of review pieces such as Irie's (2003) survey of research on motivation within Japan. This section could provide a forum for general reports by Japan-based researchers that may not otherwise be

accessible to a non-Japanese-language readership. Perhaps articles of this kind is one area where *JALT Journal* could make more of a contribution in the future.

Conclusion

There are important aspects of a journal's nature which a retrospective such as this one cannot quite elucidate. Clearly, this study looks only at papers that were published, while missing the much greater proportion of papers that were submitted, but rejected. It is difficult to precisely identify the factors that drove the patterns and trends identified in this review. For example, we have noted the dominance of quantitative studies over the 30 years, although in recent years there has been a shift towards qualitative and mixed methods studies. However, we do not know whether this is a reflection of the methodology used in the average submission, or whether it reflects the biases of the editors and reviewers over the years. Similarly, we do not know whether the recent interest in motivation and teachers' and learners' beliefs points towards a greater number of submissions in these areas or simply more interest in these topics on the part of *JALT Journal* reviewers. Perhaps it is a combination of both. Based on current trends, however, we can speculate that future published articles will continue the movement towards a more empirical approach informed by a more eclectic methodology, a conclusion shared by Benson, et al. (2009).

One rather blunt tool for measuring *JALT Journal's* impact on the field is Google Scholar's generated links to the most cited articles in the journal's collection of volumes. An advanced search using the exact phrase "*JALT Journal*" generates 1,640 links (as of March 2010) with the first page of 10 links all listing dozens of citations. As measures such as this one become increasingly available, reviews in the future will be able to more accurately quantify the extent and nature of a journal's impact.

For the time being, however, we can conclude that the first 30 volumes reveal that the articles published in *JALT Journal* have mirrored research trends in applied linguistics journals and the ELT community as a whole. The movements uncovered in this survey include the increased empiricism as evidenced by quantitative studies and more recently a move towards qualitative and mixed methods of research, both of which reflect a shift towards scientific inquiry in the field of language teaching. With this shift has come a concurrent decrease in theoretical essays and articles focusing on classroom techniques. Other trends include a steady increase in the number

of papers published by Japanese authors and an increased diversity of topics covered. In addition to these broad tendencies, there are nuances revealed by this study of the JALT community's premier scholarly publication that uncover *JALT Journal's* unique contribution to language learning in Japan. We trust that this important and dynamic role will continue for yet another generation of language learners and teachers.

Notes

1. The "Nationality" category was included for indicative purposes only. Contacting each author to determine whether or not they were actually Japanese nationals was deemed beyond the scope of the present study.
2. All percentages for quantitative and qualitative studies also include those studies that used mixed methods.
3. These are figures we would expect to be similar to many other journals in the same field as *JALT Journal*, as it is still more common to not see mention of effect size than to see it published.

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Reviews

Japanese Applied Linguistics: Discourse and Social Perspectives.
Junko Mori and Amy Snyder Ohta (Eds.). London: Continuum,
2008. xiii + 364 pp.

Reviewed by
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This collection of papers promises to contain a critical linguistics and a critical pedagogy of Japanese language. The editors address their field in the title, *Japanese Applied Linguistics*, defining this as using language to consider real-world problems relating to the Japanese language. Their aims are to explore different issues linked to Japanese as spoken as a first language (L1) and as an additional language (p. 1), and to expand dialogue between Japanese language specialists and applied linguists in general (p. 6). All of the authors in this collection, with the exception of one, have either studied or now work in North American universities or do both, and are interested in pragmatics, interaction and conversation analysis (CA), sociolinguistics, or discourse-related topics.

The book has 12 chapters in four parts. Parts 1 and 2—the first seven chapters—focus on Japanese as L1. In chapter 1, Ono and Jones consider variations in the use of conditional modality forms in conversations using “usage-based linguistics” (p. 26). Mori then shows how interaction among nonverbal modes of discourse, including “syntax, prosody and nonverbal cues [and] the participants’ shared understanding of the sequential order of turns” (p. 57), affect negotiating opinions in Japanese. A similar analysis of classroom interaction discourse in chapter 3 by Cook shows how the plain naked (informal) verb form (e.g., *~u*; copula *da*) is used both in familiar informal settings and in detached, public, more formal settings. These chapters in Part 1 are the closest the book comes to descriptive linguistics (i.e., focus on Japanese language forms).

The focus of Part 2 shifts from language forms to the ethnographic and the sociolinguistic—language use and language choice in context. Wetzel’s (chapter 4) timely update on *keigo* (honorifics) and its perceived ideology follows logically from Cook’s preceding chapter on the observation of plain

verb forms in contrasting formal and informal contexts. Then, from polite language to regional dialects, Okamoto (chapter 5) considers switching from the standard Japanese (SJ, or *kyootsuugo*) variant to Osaka dialect. She found that the use of standard and regional forms changes with formality and social distance, except when variant choice is made for style management within a specific context.

The next two chapters are more ethnographic in focus. Okada (chapter 6) pays attention to gender by presenting a spatial and conversation analysis of a male boxer and a female coach (including photos). The rationale is to keep in mind the *joseigo/danseigo* (women's/men's language) dichotomy. However, Okada observes that in boxing professional identity and discourse supersedes gender in terms of linguistic behavior. Matsumoto examines elderly (female) identity in chapter 7. These case studies (of disclosure in extended conversations) reveal attitudes of women in their 70s and 80s towards the approach of death among close relatives and friends. Applying linguistic investigation techniques (in this case, CA) gives valuable insights into other sociocultural domains.

Part 3 turns to Japanese as an additional language (JAL) pedagogy. Ohta (chapter 8), on the function of laughter in lessons, shows that laughter is both therapeutic to and symptomatic of learning. Yotsukura (chapter 9) goes beyond classroom practice when she compares Japanese L1 users' and JAL learners' discourse strategies in *toiawase* (general inquiries). The chapter is instructive in two ways. First, it demonstrates variation among communication and language practices on one hand and assumptions about appropriateness across different language communities on the other. Secondly, it shows how variation in language structure and form is dependent on context and participants. This is an instructive chapter for teachers of Japanese and higher level Japanese users.

With a more sociolinguistic and intercultural focus in chapter 10, Kanno examines the issue of whether language-minority children in the Japanese education system are either insiders or outsiders ("guests" p. 275). Kanno views them as transnationals—neither insiders nor outsiders—with ties to both Japan and another culture. Her point is that educators in Japan have a fixated attitude: an authentic Japanese for insiders and an adapted one for outsiders to supplement their mother tongue.

It would have been useful if Kanno's chapter had advocated attention to students' L1 and L2 literacy skills, or suggested expanding pedagogical repertoire to include lessons in all the languages mentioned using the content of non-language subjects. Literacy is alluded to in empirical research reported by Yoshimi (chapter 11). She suggests that competencies which students bring to

JAL learning situations can become a resource. This is not new, though the author may rightly believe it is new to people in Japanese language education.

A frequent purpose of critical pedagogy discourse is to establish more equitable and effective outcomes, such as better practice. Kubota embarks on this in chapter 12, drawing upon the critical pedagogy literature, notably Pennycook's understanding of "critical thinking," "social relevance," "emancipatory modernism," and "problematizing practice" (2004, cited on p. 329). Kubota explores how such perspectives could alter Japanese pedagogy, at least in North America. Echoing Okamoto in chapter 5, Kubota contends that unlike the situation with English, expanding on "the norm of Standard Japanese has not been scrutinized" (p. 336). She leans towards what she calls the open-minded linguistic internationalism of Japanese rather than linguistic patriotism. Voices like hers need a forum, and this collection of papers provides welcome company.

The editors establish cohesion among the chapters early on, and it succeeds for the most part. A critical-linguistic tone evolving in earlier chapters strengthens at the end, but at the expense of missing out on significant fields of Japanese applied linguistics. These fields include Japanese written language and its attendant field of literacy, philology (i.e., incursion of loanwords, their adoption and adaptation), forms and use of Japanese in new and changing media in the world, and the state of Japanese and of Japanese scholarship outside of Japan, Britain, North America, and Australia. These fields give scope for another volume of Japanese applied linguistics papers.

Despite the gaps cited, this book is eclectically informative, good scholarship, and a sound plug for conversation analysis, which is featured extensively. There is a fairly comprehensive index split between author and subject. Given the field of specialization and backgrounds of the authors, an edition in Japanese translation should be little trouble to publish. This would further assist specialists in Japan to realize some other ways people think about and employ the Japanese language outside of Japan.

For the reader primarily interested in descriptive linguistics of Japanese, Tsujimura (2007) gives more extensive and comprehensive detail of Japanese phonology, syntax, and semantics, but for work on Japanese applied linguistics from the same North American school, Mori and Ohta's collection is a significant, currently relevant reference book.

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**京大学術語彙データベース基本英単語1110 (*The Kyoto University Data-Based List of 1,100 Essential Academic Words*).
京都大学英語学術語彙研究グループ + 研究社. Tokyo:
Kenkyusha, 2009. 270 pp.**

Reviewed by

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This work, which I shall refer to as *Kyodai 1,110*, is a compact wordbook consisting of 1,110 vocabulary items, divided into three sections. In my view, it represents a valuable addition to the still rather limited selection of academic vocabulary teaching materials useful for Japanese university students.

The book is of a type that will be familiar to any teacher who has looked around a Japanese bookstore, consisting of words on the left side of each page, with translations and examples on the right. The translations are written in red, and a sheet of red plastic is included to hide these translations and enable students to test themselves easily. The foot of many of the right-hand pages has helpful notes to clarify points that may puzzle students. For example, two of the words on page 62 are *incentive* and *differentiate*, and note boxes on page 63 explain briefly the differences between *motive*, *incentive*, and *inducement*, and between *distinguish*, *discriminate*, and *differentiate*.

The book is divided into three sections; within each section, items are not ordered alphabetically, nor clustered semantically. This means that they can be learned in the order given without interference from neighbouring items.

To determine the worth of the book, we might ask two questions: Is the selection of words a useful one, and does the book help students to learn them? To tackle the second question first, anyone looking for a full textbook for an academic English class with exercises and reading passages should look elsewhere (e.g., Huntley, 2005; or Schmitt & Schmitt, 2005). However, in most teaching situations in Japan, the practical choice is likely to be between studying a few words in rich contexts and with lots of reading, and learning many words with little context. For students embarking on their study

of academic English, with a limited knowledge base, the latter approach may be best. From that perspective, the design of the book is suitable, and the self-testing feature is particularly valuable. Separating the vocabulary learning component from what students will actually do in class leaves the teacher considerable flexibility. Spending large amounts of class time on supervised learning of the words, using the remaining time for activities of the teacher's choice, would be a sound option, while teachers wanting to spend more time on other activities could simply assign word learning for homework, perhaps conducting tests in class.

These days, much work on academic vocabulary is based on the Academic Word List (AWL) compiled by Coxhead (1998, 2000). This list consists of 570 words, representing the items that Coxhead found occurring above a specific frequency threshold in multiple academic fields within the four larger groupings of Arts, Science, Law, and Commerce. The AWL can be considered a general academic rather than narrowly specialist or technical list. However, Ward (1999) has shown that the AWL may not have particularly good coverage of the vocabulary of any given academic field. There is arguably a gap to be filled between highly specialized fields and general academic vocabulary.

The Kyoto work, like that of Coxhead, involves databases compiled from a range of fields, but introduces a new layer between the discipline-specific databases and the database of general academic vocabulary (English for General Academic Purposes, or EGAP). This layer includes two databases: the database of academic vocabulary for liberal arts (EGAP-A), compiled from literature, law, education, integrated human studies, and economics databases, and the database of academic vocabulary for science (EGAP-S), compiled from medicine, engineering, science, pharmacology, and agriculture databases. The book features 477 words from the EGAP, followed by 311 words from EGAP-A and 322 words from EGAP-S.

This division is somewhat arbitrary—one could for example imagine including economics in EGAP-S, in addition to or instead of in EGAP-A; or one could create a three-way division of arts, hard science, and social science—but the project is valuable in partially replicating Coxhead's research with a different selection of subject divisions. In addition, it is likely that the selection of words reflects the needs of Japanese students better than Coxhead's work, which used a New Zealand university with a different faculty structure.

Let us look at some examples of the words featured in the respective lists. The first two pages of the general academic section contain the following words: *function, factor, individual, indicate, variable, significant, involve, es-*

timate, and *interaction*. The first two pages of the arts-based section have the following words: *treaty*, *jurisdiction*, *judicial*, *cite*, *statute*, *executive*, *dispute*, *legislative*, *defendant*. Finally, the first two pages of the science-based section have: *protein*, *telomere*, *antibody*, *strain*, *assay*, *mutation*, *receptor*, *component*, *membrane*, *substrate*, *chromosome*, *cancer*, *concentration*, and *constant*.

A glance at the various lists leaves the clear impression that the three lists are indeed very different in character. I would have little hesitation in recommending the first list to any student interested in academic English. The other two lists raise a few more questions, though.

The words listed from the arts section seem to have a strong bias towards legal fields, raising the possibility that the criteria used for including words in the book might benefit from some modification. Turning to the science-based list, I question whether *telomere*, for instance, is a word that all my students in science fields should know. We seem to have a mix of more-or-less technical words from various fields such as biology along with more general science words.

Some of these idiosyncratic word selections call into question details of *Kyodai 1,110*'s theoretical base. For teaching purposes, however, I would suggest that they do not detract greatly from the book's value. Certainly, I would be happier asking my arts-based students to learn *quote*, *undermine*, and *articulate* than *oscillation*, *fluorescence*, and *curvature*. When moving on to the two final sections, some selectivity when asking students to memorize words should prove sufficient. In summary, *Kyodai 1,110* does a well-defined job, and does it well, but teachers should exercise their judgment when deciding exactly how to use it.

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***Understanding Second Language Acquisition.* Lourdes Ortega.
London: Hodder Education, 2009. xv + 320 pp.**

Reviewed by

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Lourdes Ortega's *Understanding Second Language Acquisition* is a graduate-level introduction to the field of SLA and provides students of linguistics with a comprehensive overview of the latest major theories and recent trends in the related areas of bilingualism, interlanguage, age, crosslinguistic influences, cognition, language aptitude, and motivation. Rather than a practical teacher's handbook like H. D. Brown's (2007) *Teaching by Principles*, Ortega's book takes an academic approach best suited for students of linguistics. This is not light reading, and at times the introduction to multiple theories on the same subject can be overwhelming. However, the novice teacher is exposed to a vast new area of language education, the basics of applied linguistics, and several well-chosen case studies. Students of linguistics are encouraged to think deeply about the different theories examined by Ortega, and compare the theories with their own experiences.

The book opens with an analysis of critical periods for the acquisition of human language. Controversy over the critical period hypothesis continues to this day, with Ortega taking the middle road. She encourages the reader to keep an open mind and suggests a rather extensive further reading list for the more highly self-motivated readers who absolutely must satisfy their curiosity about the issue.

On another topic of interest, Ortega tackles the complex phenomenon of crosslinguistic influences (transfer), which includes a pertinent discussion of Japanese language students learning English. Japanese students, whose L1 pattern is quite different from English, tend to avoid the use of relative clauses in order to reduce the potential for mistakes. Ortega points out that such risk avoidance may produce more accurate output, but in the long term may hinder L2 development.

Ortega devotes substantial attention to cognition, and the basics of skill acquisition theory (automatization), long-term memory, working memory, attention, and noticing (a learner's inclination to see the difference between his output and that of a native speaker). Noticing requires not only higher levels of motivation, but also focus on L2 form, usually grammar. This is a key element of language learning, and noticing on any level will contribute

to acquisition (Schmidt, 2001). Ortega admits, however, that the jury is still out on whether or not learning without attention is possible.

This book also introduces an exciting new approach to SLA, *emergentism*, which draws on the tenets of information processing theories. This approach, promoted by language psychologist Nick Ellis (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006), argues that simple learning mechanisms operating across human perception and cognition systems interact with language learning as a part of a communicatively rich human social environment. This means humans are driven to exploit the functionality of language (i.e., to communicate actively in a socially and linguistically rich environment). This presents a significant challenge to those from homogeneous nations with one official language and with very small ethnic or linguistic minorities.

Foreign language aptitude is presented through the case studies of two radically different learners. One learner grew up in Minnesota in the 1960s and developed a lifelong infatuation with learning the French language and culture. Study abroad and immersion experiences helped to shape her L2 identity, which eventually led to a PhD in French. In contrast, another learner of French struggled tremendously trying to learn to speak the language. Although he could read and translate complex philosophy texts in French, at age 55 he was unable to communicate effectively with his French colleagues despite strong motivation and extensive time on task.

Ortega asks how we can account for such significant individual differences in language learning. Of course, we cannot. Not only are several questions left unanswered, but several more are posed. Some readers may feel left hanging as they are expected to pursue the topic through further reading.

Memory, age, foreign language anxiety, and learning strategies are also discussed in subsequent chapters, with the author refusing to support any single theory. As readers, we are left to seek the answers for ourselves again through the suggested further reading. It is likely that only the most motivated readers would do so.

Ortega finds it necessary to draw heavily on theories and methods from social psychology when dealing with the topic of motivation and SLA. She addresses the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, Gardner's integrative/instrumental motivation paradigm, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, and Yashima's international posture. All of these engaging topics are thoroughly examined, giving the reader an extensive background on the history and direction of studies on motivation and linguistics. I found this to be one of the most interesting sections because it filled in a number of gaps in my previous understanding of motivation and SLA.

Throughout the book, students are given a solid foundation upon which to build their knowledge of SLA. Although the author leaves us to ponder various theories, there are useful chapter summaries that wrap up the key points succinctly, while providing annotated suggestions for further reading to satisfy those who want to read more. That is what I like the most about Ortega's book: The door is left open for readers to pursue topics of interest, to follow up, and ultimately, to come to their own conclusions.

However, this may not be a good book for those who easily become lost in the details of numerous academic expressions and unfamiliar case studies. The linguistic terms, references, and concepts are of a scholarly nature and may require the guidance of a linguistics professor for comprehension. This is exactly what makes Ortega's *Understanding Second Language Acquisition* a great textbook for any linguistics program, as it pushes the reader to not simply accept modern theories of SLA, but to consider them deeply. I highly recommend this book for university libraries as well as for the bookshelves (and the eyes) of highly motivated language teachers. If you are considering professional development (or even simply want to become a better teacher), you will find Ortega's book aptly titled.

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Japanese Language Teaching: A Communicative Approach.**Alessandro G. Benati. London: Continuum, 2009. ix+214 pp.***Reviewed by*

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The main aim of this book is to help students and instructors of Japanese, as well as young researchers into the learning of Japanese, have a better understanding of what communicative language teaching really is and how it can be used in the language classroom. While it is aimed at teachers of Japanese, many language teachers can benefit from the detailed discussions of theories related to second language learning and the design of communicative activities for the classroom. This book also helps language teachers rethink two things: the sensitiveness of instruction and the rationale of focus on form.

In the 1980s, communicative language teaching (CLT) **was popular in Japan** and influenced Japanese language education deeply. Because Japanese education in Japan, unlike English education, is not influenced by backwash from entrance examinations, the basic concepts and tasks of CLT were taken up widely among Japanese teachers (Suzuki, 2007). However, while advocating a learner-centred type of education (Sawada, 2003), teachers and researchers in Japan rarely have focused on questions about method or approach. This created an emphasis on one of the main characteristics of CLT, deemphasizing instruction. In a timely manner, Benati in this book reminds us of the importance of instruction. Although it is a very complex and delicate process to prove the effects of instruction, the author argues that teachers and researchers should spend more time and effort identifying and detailing these effects.

This book also reconsiders the meaning of focus on form. Many Japanese teachers in Japan combine practices of the Audiolingual Method and CLT in their classrooms. However, some instructors have emphasized the differences between the Audiolingual Method and CLT too much and have forgotten that instruction by CLT includes a focus on form. This book also reminds us that instruction by CLT should not simply be meaning focused, but **must carry with it some degree of attention to the grammatical properties of language.**

The book has seven chapters, divided into three parts: preliminary considerations (Part A), communicative language teaching (Part B), and

classroom research (Part C). In Part A, Benati reviews some of theories and research findings concerning the important factors (e.g., input, interaction, output, and the role of instruction) and the effects of focus on form in second language acquisition.

Through this detailed review, Benati argues that although the effects of instruction are limited, grammar instruction can facilitate acquisition and help learners to become aware of items in the input. This suggestion on the effects of grammar instruction is particularly encouraging for language teachers.

In Part B, the characteristics of CLT are presented and discussed. After providing an overview of CLT, Benati suggests three approaches to grammar teaching and presents various tasks for teaching Japanese. These practical approaches support teachers' daily instruction and comprise one of the most significant parts of this book. One of these approaches is "processing instruction" (PI) (p. 41). PI is a new type of grammar instruction which encourages learners to make form-meaning connections. The greatest difference between PI and traditional grammar instruction is who (teacher or learner) connects the form and the meaning. For example, in the PI approach, the form *-mashita* should be connected to the meaning *past* by learners, not by teachers.

However, a more extended discussion of the appropriateness of each grammatical task is needed. For example, Activity D (p. 88) is a task on input enhancement to learn *ne* (the sentence final particle in Japanese), and shows a dialogue containing many instances of the target item. In the sentence *I must go to a bank* in Activity D, *ne* cannot be attached. Without a grammatical explanation about when we cannot use the target item, learners will not be able to tell when they are using this particle incorrectly.

In Part C, the process of conducting classroom research through the use of experimental methodology is presented. The final chapter shows the results of a study conducted to measure the effects of PI on two linguistic features (tense forms) of Japanese. The results of these experimental studies support those obtained by other studies investigating the effects of PI on different romance languages.

However, two questions arise from these results. First, it is relatively easy for learners to connect the form and meaning of tense. As mentioned above, for many other linguistic features with complex meanings, it is difficult for learners to connect form and meaning. Are there any effective activities for these other complex features? Second, the tests (pp. 197-200) are more suited for a PI group than a traditional instruction group because the tests

are similar to the activities of PI. There must be other ways to measure the effectiveness of grammatical instruction.

Despite these criticisms, Benati shows us the connection of theory and practice to experimental studies as well as the significance (and difficulties) involved in measuring the effects of instruction. As Benati points out, further research should be conducted to support these results. The important point is that language teachers and researchers must continue discussion on the effects of their own instruction.

Throughout the book, there are many helpful questions to help us to understand the theories and concepts related to CLT. Each chapter has key terms and suggestions for further reading. **There is also a detailed bibliography** of studies on CLT, second language acquisition, and the acquisition of Japanese as a second language.

Japanese Language Teaching succeeds in its main aim to be a helpful reference book on the underpinnings of CLT, especially for teachers, and at the same time addresses the essential questions of what second language acquisition is. In answering these questions, this book encourages teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their own instruction, while suggesting that researchers return to the classroom.

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***Insights on Teaching Speaking in TESOL*. Tim Stewart (Ed.).
Alexandria, VA: TESOL, 2009. x + 262 pp.**

Reviewed by

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The latest volume in the TESOL Classroom Practice Series will be especially useful to EFL teachers in Japan. *Insights on Teaching Speaking in TESOL* was thoughtfully put together and edited by Tim Stewart, an active member of the local teaching community who is adept at making practical connections among teachers throughout the EFL world. The authors of 5 of the 17 chapters in this volume have a wide range of spoken-language teaching experiences with Japanese university students. Although teachers in Japan have a prominent place in the collection, the teaching practices reported in the other chapters come from ESL classrooms in Canada, the USA, and the UK as well as from EFL classrooms in Taiwan, the UAE, Vietnam, and Germany. Many of the authors, both native and nonnative speakers of English, also have years of teaching experience in several different nations.

The first section has eight chapters on the development and implementation of teaching materials; the second section's three chapters are about teaching public speaking; and the five chapters of the final section focus on ways to provide feedback to students and ideas about assessing speaking proficiency.

Even though most of the authors teach university students or adult learners, the lessons described will likely also interest teachers of younger intermediate-level students. Indeed, readers will find that many of the ideas in the book can be adapted to a wide variety of teaching situations. For example, a description of the development of lessons for primary school children in Germany which outlines how children learned to move away from rote imitation to become imaginative, creative speakers offers generally applicable ideas about motivation. Another chapter explains how an original scaffolding approach was successfully used to adapt conventional speaking tasks for use in an English for Occupational Purposes course for nursing students. Many of us face similar challenges in adapting textbook speaking tasks for our classes.

Several chapters may be of special interest to teachers who are involved in developing blended-learning speaking lessons which combine traditional EFL teaching methods with Internet resources. In a chapter entitled

“Authentic iBT Speaking Practice Using Open-Source Voice-Recording Software” Saito-Stehberger and Oh describe ways to teach speaking that support the development of skills needed for the speaking tasks on the Internet-based TOEFL test. Chartrand’s chapter “From Podcasting to YouTube: How to Make Use of Internet 2.0 for Speaking Practice” explains efficient ways to integrate the use of podcasting and social networking websites with speaking course lessons. An additional use of the audio and video features of Web 2.0 technology for the assessment of public speaking tasks is described by Yeh in “Practical Strategies for Assessing Students’ Oral Proficiency Through Vlogs.” Yeh presents a convincing argument that the new easy-to-manage, web-based audio-video technology promotes the creation of a constructive classroom learning community which can lead to improvements in public speaking skills.

The volume also has much to interest teachers of English for Academic Purposes. Incorporating the teaching of critical thinking skills into the design of speaking tasks is a theme found throughout. In addition, there are several descriptions of EAP lesson materials intended to prepare students to make presentations at conferences, including an interesting pedagogical rationale for moving away from the ubiquitous slideshow speaking aids to poster presentations.

I see three ways that teachers can use this book. First, it could serve as a graduate school TEFL program course book. This is a book that can, chapter by chapter, encourage constructive discussion and inspire creative lesson planning. The consistency in the step-by-step presentation of the teaching ideas and the straightforward writing style in each chapter make it an accessible textbook for Japanese graduate students. Each of the authors introduces the topic, sets the context, and after describing each aspect of the learning task in short clear sections, concludes with a personal reflection—all done from the perspective of a conscientious, unpretentious teacher who has found ways to have learning theory inform teaching practice.

Secondly, the book provides a collection of models of good research writing that teachers can use to make plans to conduct and publish their own classroom research. Many of the chapters, especially the editor’s introduction, include plenty of useful and up-to-date references to the literature related to teaching speaking. For those of us who are a few publications away from a better job and for people who need to keep publishing to keep their research grants, *Insights on Teaching Speaking in TESOL* offers support.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, reading this book may be an effective antidote to “stagnation” in teaching, a term that Stewart uses, instead of the more common expression *burnout*, to describe what can

happen to some teachers who have had too many speaking classes, year after year, that are easy to get through but at the same time difficult to teach well. A common survival strategy is to build up a short collection of guaranteed crowd-pleasing lessons that through repetition can be delivered perfectly. The result can be a period of stagnation in our careers in which we cease experimenting with new ways to teach speaking. If you're stuck in a rut with your speaking classes, you owe it to yourself, and to your students, to try to get out: As Stewart says, "This [stagnation] is why we need to challenge ourselves in our teaching, and that should involve challenging our students as well" (p. 117).

Insights on Teaching Speaking in TESOL offers much more than insights. Enough practical information is given to make it possible for us, as busy as we are, to try out some of these new ways to teach speaking in our next classes.

***Exploring Second Language Classroom Research: A Comprehensive Guide.* David Nunan and Kathleen M. Bailey. Boston: Heinle, Cengage Learning, 2009. vii + 496 pp.**

Reviewed by
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Exploring Second Language Classroom Research truly is a comprehensive guide to research in ELT classrooms. By exploring second language research in 500 pages, David Nunan and Kathleen Bailey confirm their reputations for thoroughness. Happily, they also deliver the goods once again with tremendous organizational facility and transparent prose. Indeed, it is difficult to think of writers in the field better situated to explain second language classroom research. Nunan and Bailey have lived and shaped the developments they describe through their research, teaching, and learning activities since the 1970s.

This book bridges a significant gap in ELT reference materials. In my graduate courses on language classroom research, I have encountered considerable difficulty finding a textbook to recommend to my students. The books I have surveyed until now have had a narrower focus, either generic

how-to-do-research manuals, or those explaining qualitative research, or surveys of particular methods of conducting classroom research such as case studies or action research. Nunan and Bailey deliver a comprehensive survey.

Exploring Second Language Classroom Research is divided into four parts: (Part I) an overview of second language classroom research, (Part II) research design issues, (Part III) data collection issues, and (Part IV) data analysis and interpretation issues. Each part of the book is informed by the four underlying themes listed below. These recurring themes illustrate the pragmatic stance of the authors.

1) **Empirical research matters.** Nunan and Bailey make a strong pitch for a balanced, practical approach to research: “empirical research does have an important place alongside common sense and experience in helping teachers to determine what they can and should do to facilitate learning” (p. 5). Bias against the experimental method amongst ELT practitioners is convincingly shown to be unnecessary and unhelpful.

2) **Teachers should be involved in classroom research.** The authors’ fundamental belief is that “there is a central place for teachers in the research process” (p. 5). To encourage teachers to put on their researcher hats, Bailey and Nunan dive right into the muck of what it is to do research and how to get started in Part I. This immediately provides context for readers with limited experience. They express concern about how “neat and tidy” published research “is in many ways a misrepresentation” of a messy process with “missteps, blind alleys, false starts, and frustrations” that neophyte researchers should be aware of (p. 438).

3) **Research is a set of skills people can learn.** The authors encourage language teachers not to shy away from researching their teaching, pointing out the significant professional development benefits. Bailey and Nunan explain that “the ability to do research is not a matter of one’s appointed position, but rather of one’s knowledge, skill, and attitude” (p. 5). Classroom research is not an impossible task. What teacher-researchers require are desire, time, and diligence.

4) **Research methodology should be appropriate to the circumstances.** Throughout the book, the authors make strenuous efforts to discount the debate on the value of qualitative versus quantitative approaches to classroom research since, “neither approach is inherently superior to the other” (p. 439). Nunan and Bailey suggest possibilities for combining psychometric and naturalistic research methods and procedures. Their open-minded view of research is refreshing as they argue for teacher-researchers to choose a

research method, or to blend methods, based upon appropriateness: “as researchers we must be eclectic and choose data collection and analysis procedures that are appropriate for answering the research questions we pose” (p. 5). Yet, they candidly caution about the pitfalls of blending methods. Besides data management and time concerns, Nunan and Bailey highlight the possibility that different types of data could lead to different interpretations of results. Conversely, the two types of data used in combination can help to explain anomalies in results.

Through their elaboration of these interlinking themes, Bailey and Nunan convey an understanding that ELT is a big tent supported by academics and practitioners, and fortified by results the research process generates. They define classroom research broadly to encompass both classroom-based and classroom-oriented studies. The concept of classroom-based studies refers to research surrounding the interaction of teachers and students during lessons, an idea that has been complicated with the advent of the virtual classroom where students and teachers no longer need to inhabit the same physical space. Classroom-oriented studies, on the other hand, are not conducted in classroom settings, but make claims potentially relevant for classroom teaching and learning. When defining research, the authors list three key components: (a) a question, problem, or hypothesis; (b) data; and (c) analysis and interpretation. To complete the research cycle, results need to be presented in writing or in a talk.

Each of the four parts of the book is introduced with a very brief explanation of what follows together with bulleted lists of individual chapter aims, particularly welcome in a volume of 500 pages. Placed throughout the explanations in each of the 15 chapters are two types of reader task boxes requiring either *action* or *reflection*. In addition, sample studies illustrating the key points of each chapter are presented. Chapters conclude with summaries of the payoffs and pitfalls incurred by different methods and techniques, a concluding recap of chapter highlights, as well as a list of questions and tasks for readers to consider. Selective annotated lists of references for further reading are also provided.

Despite the comprehensiveness of the guidance, or perhaps because of it, I found reading this volume to be surprisingly non-taxing. The skillful delivery of information is accomplished through a pragmatic approach to issues, combined with transparent prose, and aided by ample use of clear headings, tables, and figures. These veteran writers demonstrate their teaching skill through a careful recycling and expansion of key concepts to aid understanding.

It would be impossible to cover this material in a single graduate course, but the organization allows teachers to pick and choose sections to explore. I was somewhat surprised that collaborative research and the importance of working with colleagues are not emphasized more in this comprehensive book, though. Collaboration seems to me to be central to the activity of teachers' research in classroom settings (e.g., Edge, 2002; Johnston, 2009); however, this does not diminish the usefulness of the book for ELT professionals who are now researching their own practice, or are contemplating becoming teacher-researchers.

Nunan and Bailey aim to introduce the state of the art in language classroom research and to help readers develop practical skills to conduct their own investigations. In particular, they hope to empower language teachers to "examine their own classroom contexts systematically" (p. 4). In support of these aims, this introductory manual contains good practical explanations of the latest technical and theoretical research frameworks in ELT. Both beginning and advanced ELT researchers will find *Exploring Second Language Classroom Research* a valuable contribution to the field.

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Information for Contributors

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JALT Journal, the refereed research journal of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (*Zenkoku Gogaku Kyoiku Gakkai*), invites practical and theoretical articles and research reports on second and foreign language teaching and learning in Japanese and Asian contexts. Submissions from Asian and other international contexts are accepted if applicable to language teaching in Japan. Areas of particular interest are:

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2. Classroom-centered research
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