Lindskoog, A. (2014). The impact of globalization on language education policies in Japan and South Korea.
*Accents Asia, 6(2),*pp. 1-14

The Impact of Globalization on Language Education Policies in Japan and South Korea

Allen Lindskoog[1]
Chuo University, Tokyo

ABSTRACT

The impact of Globalization on English language education policies has been felt throughout East Asia. The impact effects language learning, policy decisions, curriculum development, and teaching (Nunan, 2003). The common theme from nearly all East Asian countries' educational ministries and governmental institutions is the discourse of globalization – with linguistic capital a country can be competitive in the global economy. This paper examines the discourse surrounding globalization and English language by comparing South Korea and Japan and how the impact of globalization has impacted English language policies and practices on these two countries.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has had a direct affect on shaping English language education policies throughout East Asia. Globalization impacts language learning on multiple levels including policy decisions, curriculum development, teaching and learning (Nunan, 2003). A theme that emanates from nearly all East Asian countries' educational ministries and government institutions is the discourse of globalization – the linguistic skills, specifically English, translates to linguistic capital in which a country can be competitive in the global economy (Block & Cameron, 2002; Paik 2008). Globalization levels the playing field for countries and individuals allowing for a chance at a better life, and English language is the key. As McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) contend, "the powerful narrative of English acquisition leads learners to believe that if they 'invest' in English learning, they will reap the benefits of social and intellectual mobility" (p, 9). With the advent of the Internet and new technology, people are no longer confined to their local communities and have the ability to communicate with one another from across the globe (Garcia, Flores & Chu, 2011). The whole notion of social space has changed. Borders once dividing countries and cultures are now porous with the ability to easily access vast amounts of information (McKay & Bohorst-Heng, 2008; Clyne & Sharifian, 2008).

[1] Allen Lindskoog was a film, television and stage actor in both Minneapolis and New York City as well as having worked in a variety of businesses including one of the largest ad agencies in New York City for over fifteen years. Allen has lived in in Tokyo, Japan for over seven years and currently teaches at Chuo and Hosei Universities. Correspondences can be sent to skoog5600@gmail.com

The role of English in a globalized world may be about communication and access to information, but governments shape the discourse. As a result language is not neutral, but rather there are political and cultural ideologies embedded, which in turn directly affects governmental policies related to English language. The role of government both shapes these policies in order to promote national interests as well as makes decisions related to educational issues such as entrance examination tests (Lee, 2011).

Many Asian countries including Japan and South Korea require entrance examination tests in order to move from elementary school to junior high school or to determine which university a student will be able to attend. Examination tests act as the gatekeeper to access to top schools. With such access means the opportunity of gaining better jobs and a higher social status in life. However, not everyone has the opportunity of achieving higher social status through education resulting in economic disparity. Thus the success or failure of passing entrance exams has far-reaching affects at the social level. For example, wealthier Japanese and Korean families tend to spend a significant amount of money for their children to attend after school programs called cram schools in order to prepare for and pass examinations to enter prestigious schools.

The discourse of globalization policies ensures that English remains the dominant language in order to serve the "haves" and limit the "have-nots". Park (2011) argues that an economically motivated way of thinking has permeated language teaching by promising a good job, upward mobility and a new life. The language teaching industry has reinforced this view in order to meet the needs of their students. Furthermore, the teaching industry has expanded significantly from not only cram schools in Asian countries, but also the textbook industry. There is so much at stake, so much money to be made in the teaching of English that it is important that it remains the dominant language for study (Phillipson, 2001).

The economics of language calls into question the discourse of globalization and whether or not it is realistic to think that there is an opportunity for everyone to improve social standing by learning English. There are implications and costs of teaching in countries where English is learned as a foreign language. That learning English may help a country become more competitive is a narrative prevalent at the governmental policy-making level. By putting so much emphasis on learning English, in order to become globally competitive, this takes the focus off of other areas of education such as math and science, both areas necessary at creating an educated populace and competitive workforce. However, in many Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea, learning English may be important, but only for a small percentage (Lee, 2011; Phillipson, 2001).

This paper examines the discourse surrounding globalization and English language in South Korea and Japan and how it is impacting English language policies and practices. The result has been a gap between policy decisions, implementation and the reality in the classrooms. Comparing the two countries' educational policies will highlight the reasons why English education policy in Japan has not succeeded with improving the ability for Japanese to communicate using the English language, whereas South Korea has met with some success.

The first section will be on the discourse of globalization and how it relates to the spread of the teaching of English language. The next section will look at the historical view of English language development in South Korea and Japan and compare two programs, South Korea's EPIK (English Programme in Korea) and Japan's JET (Japanese Exchange and Teaching) programme. Then the discussion will turn to an overview of the English educational policies and implementation in both South Korea and Japan. Following that there will be a discussion on the

future and potential solutions to the problems related to educational policies and implementation. Finally, the paper concludes with a review of the discussion and an alternative approach to English language policy and discourse.

The discourse of globalization and language

Since the mid 20th century there has been a continuing dominance of the United States' and what is called linguistic imperialism (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). The new changes after decades of British rule are attributed to factors such as technology, mass communication and the ease of transportation. Because of technology, the shrinking of space allows for the global to interact with the local. The common feature that binds the global and local is the spread of English. McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) argue that most recently globalization has been a term widely used in the 21st century projecting an image of a level playing field in which everyone has a chance at the global market and the opportunity to exchange information and achieve upward mobility. Others such as Phillipson (2001) see globalization as a homogenizing of culture and linguistic diversity and a contributing factor to the widening gap between the rich and poor.

There are multiple distinct viewpoints from which to view the issues of homogenization, linguistic diversity and the gap between the rich and poor. One view is Phillipson's (2001) position that the spread of English is having a homogenizing effect on the indigenous language, which allows the business world access to larger markets resulting in the need for countries to reform their English language policies to remain competitive. On an individual level the homogenizing effect may result in the potential loss of language and culture. Some see the westernization of Asia and the introduction of fast food chains, television programs and movies for example as a threat to Asian cultures. The viewpoint from the U.S. government is that English is meant to serve western countries and support agendas related to economics. However, an alternative viewpoint on the influences of the global spread of English is Pennycook's (2008), counter-argument "that rather than viewing globalization merely as synonymous with economics and disparity, it is more useful to explore the complexities of global flows of culture" (p. 65). Pennycook (2010) continues his argument with saying that "to suggest that globalization is only a process of US or Western domination of the world is to take a narrow and unproductive view of global relations" (p. 65). Pennycook's argument is not just about economics, but rather he goes on to state that it is about the "complex flow of people, signs, sounds, images across borders" (p. 65). What Pennycook is implying is that what needs to be taken into consideration is the strength of a culture. An introduction of a second language into a culture will not diminish that culture in anyway. In fact, what has happened in many cases is that the indigenous culture inculcates a richness and diversity into English. Cultures relate to English in different ways due to the needs of the people and their historical and economic relationship to the language. If that is the case, then English language is considered to be local (Clyne & Sharifian, 2008).

At the local level as Pennycook (2008) explains, "the changing cultural and linguistic worlds in which English users live pose a challenge for how we perceive culture, ethnicity and language" (p. 4). From a local perspective language is reworked to form new identities in areas such as popular culture, resulting in a hybrid form of English that is reworked to match the user's needs, as opposed to governmental policies dictating the needs of the people. However, in many

cases the argument from a cultural perspective is largely overshadowed by the more commonly viewed economic argument by local communities.

The value of English language is considered to be a force dominated by globalization and directly tied to the economic survival of the country. (Hsieh, 2010; Jeon 2009). The argument is based on the fact that English language has been dominant in the world of politics, economics, cultural influences and academics (Phillipson, 2001). The viewpoint of continued dominance is reinforced by government policy and decision makers who are complicit in furthering the discourse of globalization for their own agendas. One common discourse is that by becoming competent English speakers, the people of country can gain a competitive advantage and improve the economic standing of their country in the world. There are a number of examples in which many Asian countries reformed their English language education policy and goals in hopes of making their economies more competitive in the world (Block, 2004; Hui, 2010; Jenkins, 2006; Paik, 2008).

Example of the discourse of globalization and the English language

In order to understand the power of the discourse there are two examples from South Korea and Japan. In South Korea, Paik's (2008) article argues that becoming proficient in English will not only improve the chances of obtaining a higher paying job, power, prestige, but also one can become a globalized citizen of the world and gain an understanding of different cultures. This despite the fact that English is not used in everyday life and South Korea is considered to be a monolingual country (Jeon, 2009). A common theme throughout Japan and encapsulated by a study by Kubota and McKay, (2009) conducted in a rural town, is that the advancement of globalization leads to the importance of learning English. Advancing globalization is connected to a belief that in order to communicate with people in the world, whether tourism, business and social media sites, learning English is the key. Regardless of the fact that in the town in their study, besides the population consisting of Japanese, there are immigrants from Brazil, Korea, Peru and China, and English is never really used. The outcome of the study is that there is a gap between what residents see as the need to continue to learn English and the reality of the diversity of languages that are within the community. In the study there was a range of responses to the question "why is English important," which were mainly related to differences to age and gender. For example, older women surveyed responded from an historical and privileged perspective. They learned the language from a young age and continued to study, but not necessarily communicatively. Young respondents thought that English allowed them the potential to speak with other people in the world and a chance for a better life (Kubota & McKay, 2009).

In order to understand the differing viewpoints between the older and younger generations, it is necessary to understand why English language study was introduced, and the history of the development of the English language. The older generation did not necessarily contend with globalization as an issue and communicative ability was not a required skill when learning the language. It was mainly about utilizing the language as part of testing. In the 1990s, young people learning English had become the focal point for policy decisions and the implementation of costly programs related to teaching communicative English (Nunan, 2003). The policy decisions simultaneously evolved in conjunction with the narratives of globalization and the requirement to learning communicative English (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008).

The history of English language development in South Korea and Japan

There are remarkable historical similarities between Japan and South Korea's connection to the English language. Japan's hosting of the 1964 Olympics thrust them squarely into the international spotlight, and due to their lack of English speaking ability needed to reform English language learning (Paik, 2008). What's more, World War II was still fresh in the people's minds, and perhaps Japan saw that being in the spotlight was an opportunity to re-enter the global community. In the 1980s South Korea hosted the Asian games and Olympics, and because of their international exposure, English education reform related to communicative ability also became part of the discourse of policy makers. However, after the international attention on both countries dissipated, the focus of English returned to its original intent, which was to be used for testing purposes for entrance exams.

In the 1970s in Japan and the late 1980s in South Korea, the emphasis on the English language as a tool of communication was virtually nonexistent. It was meant only as a testing tool for entrance examinations. Consequently, the education system was built up around English as a testing tool. Policy goals and main objectives in both countries had to do with making sure that students passed entrance exams (Browne & Kickuchi 2009). Textbooks were written specifically to aid in helping students pass entrance examinations. Teaching and classroom practices relied on the grammar translation method in which written English is translated verbatim in Japanese or Korean with grammatical explanations given in the first language. Grammar translation helped to assure that students would understand exactly what was being taught in order to increase their chances of passing entrance exams (Nunan, 2003). The focus on grammar translation and passing entrance exams became so ingrained in the system that by the time the discourse of globalization became one of the motivating factors for implementing new policy measures related to English communicative ability, change was slow, especially in Japan.

In the 1980s in Japan, internationalization became an accommodation strategy in response to Japan's economic strength in order to avoid economic conflicts and isolation in the world (Kubota, 2002). In South Korea it was the decrease in their competitiveness after a long period of economic growth that led to a change in policy. In the 1990s *Kokusaika* or internationalization in Japan and *segyehwa* or globalization efforts in South Korea was at the forefront of the debate about how best to implement English education reform (Kubota, 2002; Jeon, 2009). South Korea was more proactive about implementing new policies and adding a communicative component to the curriculum, whereas Japan took a more conservative approach continuing to rely on English as a means of entrance exam testing. But it slowly took on a new importance; that is to foster national identity through learning English. According to Yamagami and Tollefson (2011) "The process of 'internationalization' can be interpreted as one of deconstructing English so that Japan can continue to be successful in maintaining cultural independence by removing English from the core identity of Japan without excluding the language from society" (p. 22). Prior to the discourse of globalization and the need to be competitive, internationalization had more to do with presenting the country and its culture to the world without letting an outside language impede upon its identity.

South Korea's response to English reform was quite different. English gained significant importance and was considered a motivating force for reform in part due to the international exposure of the Olympics, but also in large part to an economic crisis. In order to help further the growth of the economy, the government issued new policies that would introduce English language education and focus on fluency and communicative competence, rather than accuracy. The new policy was introduced from the third year of elementary school (Jeon, 2009).

The divergence between Japan and South Korea is seen in the effort of the South Korean government to become more global and improve their economy by educational reform. Whereas Japan used the idea of globalization to enhance nationalism (Kubota, 2002) and focus on accuracy, which was directly related to entrance exam testing, South Korea reformed their education and implemented fluency and communicative competency as goals (Paik, 2008). South Korea also implemented their program immediately. Japan, on the other hand, debated long-term about what changes to make, how to incorporate the communication component into the curriculum and alter the ways in which teaching practices would be done.

Teaching practice examples in both Japan and Korea are emphasized in two studies. The first study was conducted in Japan by Nishino and Watanabe (2008) which reviewed the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, Sports and Technology (MEXT) 1999 "Course of Study Guidelines." Highlighted in the study was the educational reform plan created for the 21st century that would introduce oral communication as part of an overall goal. The plan was expanded and a pilot program was conducted in which native English speaking Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) were introduced into the classroom from the junior high school level. The goal in a five-year time span was to have the students become communicatively functional with the English language (Ohtani, 2010). South Korea also introduced a plan to include native English speaking teacher (NEST) in classrooms as part of plan their reforms and implemented programs in 1997 without a pilot program, at the elementary level and nearly 2 years earlier than Japan (Paik, 2008.) The main difference between the two countries based on the study done by Paik is that the South Korean central government was a strong proponent of implementation, (centralized policy) and put pressure on local governments to implement the policies. While in Japan, despite policy requirements from the central government, it was left up to the local governments and boards of education (decentralized policy) to choose whether or not to implement the policies (Butler, 2004, p. 4). The difference in centralized and decentralized policy requirements resulted in a strong emphasis on communicative English language learning in South Korea and less so in Japan. Both policies would have implications in the future as the countries revised and introduced new policies.

In 2005, South Korea's Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development introduced a "Five Year Plan for English Education Revitalization" in which there would be a NEST in each public elementary and junior high school by 2010, amounting to 2,900 total. It is important to clarify that NESTs were not considered teachers, but rather assistants to the "real" teachers. (Jeon, 2009). The main reason for introducing NESTs into the program was to help support the Teaching English Through English (TETE) program that was implemented in 2001. The long term objectives would be to provide students with more input from native English speakers, a more authentic native speaking environment and a greater cultural understanding. With these new policy changes, textbooks also changed in order to reflect a need for communicative language learning (Nunan, 2003).

Although introducing communicative language into the curriculum was a major part of reform in both countries, there were differences. One major difference had to do with Japan's decentralized policy implementation and South Korea's centralized policy decisions. In addition, Japan introduced the language at the junior high school level, whereas South Korea at the elementary level. The reason for Japan's decision had in large part to do with concerns that introducing English at an early age would have adverse affects on national identity and literacy while learning the first language. The potential adverse affects on the first language were one of the main reasons that policy debates and decisions had been mostly rhetoric and not serious about actual implementation (Hashimoto, 2011; Butler, 2004). The concern over national identity and literacy sent mixed messages to the general public and counter to the discourse of globalization **-** on the one hand we need English in order to improve our economic status in the world **-** but on the other hand we do not want it to impede upon our national identity nor affect first language learning.

Maintaining national identity was just one of the many factors attributable to Japan's failure to be competent English speakers. Additional factors had to do with the late implementation of the language from junior high school. Furthermore, the problem was that entrance examination testing did not include a communicative component, resulting in a lack of teaching practices related to communicative language. In addition, there was a lack of motivation by the students due to the fact that they were never tested on their speaking ability and as a result rarely if ever needed to speak English (Howard & Millar, 2008). Consequently, communicative English has had little importance in terms of an academic subject and in fact is considered a nuisance due to the pressure of entrance exams.

In South Korea, there were a number of reasons contributing to its success in having English competence. The first reason is that South Korea was not so concerned about a second language impeding upon the first language and in fact aligned identity with learning English. The second reason is that students began their English language education from the elementary school level. Additionally, English is considered to be an academic subject. And finally, English in South Korea occupies an important place in society and held in high esteem. With all of these factors taken together, the result has been a positive view of the English language.

In South Korea, the impact of introducing language at an early age and not connecting it with testing was a contributing factor to a positive attitude toward the language for both students and teachers. According to Butler, (2004) "motivation is related to the approach and attitude of the language from the teacher who receives 120 hours of in-service training" (p. 267). This support for the teachers has had a positive effect toward attitude and motivation. When compared to Japan, teachers receive less training and the legacy of exam testing still influences teaching practices and attitudes (Gorsuch, 2000). Although successful in many ways in South Korea, both countries have had to contend with problems related to English language programs.

Understanding the problems: A comparison between the EPIK and JET programs

The result of the discourse of globalization is that there have been major English language policy decisions, language reform and costly language programs in both countries. In order to better understand the issues, there will be a comparison between two programs EPIK in

South Korea and JET in Japan, how they were implemented and also a highlight of some of the main problems.

In South Korea, EPIK, a government-sponsored program was developed in response to globalization and the country's need for economic survival (Jeon, 2009). In Japan's case, the JET program was established more than twenty years ago as a response to economic imbalances in the 1980s meant to restore relations between the United States and Japan by promoting international exchange and eventually language education (Kubota, 2002). Both the EPIK and JET programs are examples of programs that have had some success in language education, but fraught with a number of issues.

On the front lines of teaching, the programs in both countries, although well intentioned, had a number of unforeseen problems with implementation. ALTs in Japan and NESTs in South Korea were introduced into the classroom to help the homeroom teachers teach English language classes, but the policy stated that all teachers must teach English through English (TETE). The main problem had to do with the fact that many Japanese and South Korean teachers of English have only received degrees in English literature or equivalent, resulting in very little training in how to teach communicative English (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). In some cases teachers were unable to speak English at all. The lack of ability to teach communicative English hindered the relationships between the ALTs and NESTs when discussing curriculum requirements, objectives or planning classes with homeroom teachers. With a lack of communication between the regular teacher and assistant teachers, when team teaching, often there were disconnects during the communicative English class (Ohtani, 2008). Additionally, both the ALTs and NESTs received inadequate training prior to their teaching resulting in misunderstandings of their job requirements and objectives in the classroom in which they were placed. The problems in turn caused confusion and animosity from both school administrators and homeroom teachers (Jeon, 2009).

Although considered to be successful based upon the perspective of the ministries of education of both countries, the amount of money spent on such programs as the JET and EPIK and the rate of return on the investment is considered to have been a failure if the objective was to develop communication skills. The main crux of the problem lies with the policy decisions, implementation and the fact that the ALTs and NESTs in Japan and South Korea require minimal qualifications to be an English teacher. Furthermore, ALTs and NESTs tend to be young, recent undergraduates, have very little to no teaching experience or training and are viewed by their Japanese or South Korean counter parts as not legitimate teachers (Jeon, 2009; Ohtani, 2010).

ALTs and NESTs sometimes lack legitimacy in the eyes of the students, which affects the student's view of the English communication class. One such example is from the Jeon (2009) study in which the author states that, "Although EPIK teachers are 'teachers' in English conversation classes, their legitimacy as teachers is systematically limited, because what they teach is rarely an integral part of the assessment of students' English proficiency" (p. 239). As a result, from the student's perspective, the communication class is not considered to be a real class and consequently a host of classroom management problems arise. Again these problems relate back to the fact that the legacy of English courses has had very little to do with communication, and mainly with reading, writing and exam testing. However, at the front lines of education, teachers are committed to attempting to teach communicative English. But there are many challenges the homeroom teachers have had to contend with such as high social expectations and a heavy workload resulting in very little time to work with the ALTs and

NESTs to determine lesson plans and how best to team-teach the class (Ohtani, 2010). Both the JET and EPIK programs are indicative of the contrast between policy and reality.

A reason for the contrast between policy and reality has to do with a lack of an official study of the programs. For example, since its inception in 1987 there has not been an official comprehensive review of Japan's JET program other than independent studies and academic research papers (Hashimoto, 2011). In addition, South Korea's EPIK program has not had an official government sponsored study on the efficacy and success of the program, which if done could influence the decisions made in redesigning and re-implementing a more successful program (Kim, 2006). Conducting studies of both programs would determine whether or not language policies are succeeding and show proof of a commitment to improving communicative language education programs.

Policy and Implementation Gaps

Systemic issues surrounding English language in both Japan and South Korea were one of the main reasons behind the gaps between policy and implementation. From a policy standpoint, a study conducted by Howard and Millar (2008) having to do with the challenges with language curriculum innovations revealed the "continued perceptions by teachers in South Korea of multiple interrelated constraints on the implementation of the English language curriculum account for the high level of frustration reported, and also signal an ongoing lack of alignment between the goals of the English curriculum reform in South Korea and the reality of classroom practices" (p. 69). The vision of policy makers and the reality of implementation in the classroom create a gap between the perceived value of communicative English skills and the policy. The results are teachers relying on previous methods of teaching, such as grammar translation and teaching to pass examinations. Two other studies reinforced that the reality and challenges in the classroom had mostly to do with decades of grammar translation, teaching for tests, inadequate teacher training and the teachers own lack of confidence in their own English speaking ability (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Butler, 2004).

The previous studies were viewed from the teacher's perspective. In order to be able to see the larger picture it is also important to look at communicative language from the student's viewpoint. In a study conducted by Browne and Kikcuhi (2009), they looked at the issues surrounding communicative English language study from the perspective of Japanese students. Questions posed to the students had to do with how they perceive teaching practices in their junior and senior high school classrooms, and whether or not classroom practices support the goals of English for communicative purposes. The results also revealed a gap between policy and what actually takes place in the classroom. The reactions were quite strong and tended towards the negative. A representative answer for example for the question, "our teacher put a strong emphasis on how English should be used in real situations and helped us do so," "53% strongly disagreed with the statement" (p. 187). The attitudes of students along with the legacy of a policy having to do with students passing entrance exams still influenced teacher and student attitudes and motivation.

Teaching for entrance exams has been so ingrained in the system. These tests placed an exceedingly large amount of pressure on both teachers and students to pass the entrance examinations. The pressure not only comes from the educational ministry and schools, but also at the societal level from the student's parents. What further complicates the issue in Japan is that

the course of study guidelines does not state that students must pass entrances exams, but rather according to Gorsuch (2000), "the exams are the creations of public and private schools and collectively are an institution in Japanese education" (p. 681). Essentially, testing is so systematized that even policies written in which there is a requirement to add a communicative component are often implemented. What the future holds has to do with how best to approach teaching communicative skills while meeting the needs of the discourse of globalization, policy, teachers and students.

The Future and Solutions

In order to come up with solutions to improving student English language communicative competency, both countries need to admit there are issues. In this case the issues are gaps that lie between the stated goals of the ministries of education and teaching practices - mainly the focus on preparing students to pass entrance exams (Howard & Millar, 2008; Nishino & Watanabe, 2008; Hatori, 2005; Gorsuch, 2000). Teachers of English, along with the ALTs and NESTs have not been very successful in teaching communicative English, although there have been areas of success and things are slowly changing. For example in Japan, a requirement is in the works for university students to pass a minimum level of a foreign language by adding interview and listening comprehension tests with a focus on meaning (Kikuchi & Browne 2007; Gorsuch, 2000). There are also policy changes that will have a direct affect on junior and senior high school students with a focus on improving communicative ability. The policy changes will however put pressure on teachers to improve their own proficiency level in order to be able to communicate and teach the language (Butler, 2004). The changes will need to be reinforced with in-service teacher training and development so as not to lose focus and resort back to what many have been doing, which is preparing students to pass entrance exams. Additional training related to pedagogical methodology and English instructional contexts, as well as how to team-teach with ALTs would also be beneficial.

Prior to any new policy decision, Japan and South Korea's Ministries of Education and policy makers need to consider the actual uses of English by determining whether the scope of the policies on a practical level is what is really needed and best for the development of the nations (Hsieh, 2010). One viewpoint, as stated by Hatori (2005), is that both countries "could go beyond the notion of development, efficiency, and economic progress as primary objectives" (p. 60). This can be achieved by changing attitudes toward learning English and promoting language as a communicative tool (Kubota, 2002).

There is clearly a call for an international language in order to meet the needs of globalization. English is the language of choice for communicating across borders in the context of business, technology and tourism, to name a few examples. What needs to be reviewed in order to narrow the gap between policy and teaching practices are policy changes that take into consideration the contextual background and whether or not what is decided is what is really needed (Hsieh, 2010). The results of policy decisions can come at a significant financial cost by taking money from one area of education and allocating it towards another (Clyne & Sharifian, 2008). A clear intention and rationale is necessary to address the costs and benefits of policies (Nunan, 2003). In the case of Japan and South Korea, prior to making policy changes, a thorough review is needed of ELT (English Language Teaching) policies, as well as an official analysis and review of what occurs in classroom teaching practices. For example, by auditing the human

and material resources that are allocated to English language instruction, (Nunan, 2003), policy makers can set up guidelines for ALT requirements. Rather than just having a bachelor degree, they can require a teaching certificate, training and experience. Although in many cases initial training has been provided, what is needed is on-going professional developmental support for ALTs, NESTs and Japanese and Korean teachers of English (Kikuchi & Browne 2009).

There is an alternative viewpoint to address the policy issues, which is exemplified by Hashimoto (2011) who argues that rather than making blanket policy decisions, one needs to look at multiple ways to implement policy changes that meet the needs of the students by offering choices. For example, if English testing continues to be part of the system, the implementation of one policy can address the needs of test taking as a tool for entrance examinations. Another policy can be directed at students interested in utilizing the English language as a means of communication. One question that has not been addressed is whether or not prior policy decisions and implementation have taken into consideration how many people in both Japan and South Korea are going to actually use English after completing their schooling. Language needs to be looked at in context and understanding the needs of the language learner. Perhaps in the past, the context of English was one that had to do with test examinations. But with the advent of technology a new alternative viewpoint is needed, one highlighted by Pennycook (2008) in which "there is a need to escape the predefinition of a language user based on geographical location or variety and instead deal with the contextual use of the language" (p. 30). Pennycook is referring to language use in context - meeting the needs of the user by letting the user define their needs rather than having them pre-defined.

If Japan wants to develop communicative English ability, prior to any changes taking place, the system built up around English as a tool for examination purposes would need to change. Although difficult to change, the teaching for-test-taking narrow way of thinking has permeated the perspective of teachers who have only had experience with preparing their students to pass exams. Furthermore, the students themselves strive to perfect outdated grammar structures and phrases that are only studied as a means to pass the test, never to be used for communicative purposes. However, there are noticeable areas of improvement. A new program is in place that allows for Japanese teachers of English to travel overseas to improve their English speaking ability, and also to learn new techniques of teaching communicative English. In addition, various entrance examination tests are beginning to include speaking sections. Also there has been a decrease in the amount of grammar translation methodology of teaching that has been so prevalent in the classroom and replaced with more communicative related activities (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008).

In South Korea, programs have been in place for the last few years, specifically, the in-service training programs. In Butler's (2004) study, 120 in-service training and subsequent on-going follow-ups have improved the teacher's proficiency ability (p.267). Additionally, in Igawa's (2007) study results showed three main differences regarding the reasons why South Korea student's language ability has improved. First, age of instruction begins at the elementary level, second, equity, meaning every child has access to learning the language, and finally, professional development for the teachers (p. 267).

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored how globalization directly affected the shaping of English education policies in Japan and South Korea. Common themes in the discourse have been that by becoming proficient at English one can improve the country's economic standing in the world and increase opportunities for social and upward mobility. The results of policy decisions in South Korea have met with some success with students being able to speak English, whereas in Japan it has been somewhat unsuccessful consequently leaving a majority of the population unable to communicate, and diligently working to catch up with the rest of the world. While policy decisions at the top are partly to blame, the entrance examination mentality has also played a significant role.

REFERENCES

Block, D. and Cameron D. (2002). Globalization and language teaching. London: Routledge

Browne, C & Kikuchi, K. (2009). English educational policy for high schools in Japan: Ideals vs. Reality. *RELC Journal, 40,* 172-191.

Butler, Y.G. (2004). What level of English proficiency do elementary school teachers need to attain to teach EFL? Case studies from Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38, 245-278.

Clyne, M. & Sharifian, F., (2008). English as an International Language: Challenges and Possibilities. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 31, 1-15.

García, O. Flores, N. and Chu, H. (2011). Extending Bilingualism in U.S. Secondary Education: New Variations', *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 5, 1-18.

Gorsuch, G. (2000). EFL Educational Policies and Educational Cultures: Influences on Teachers' Approval of Communicative Activities. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 675-710.

Hashimoto, K. (2011). Compulsory 'foreign language activities' in Japanese primary schools, *Current Issues in Language Planning*,10, 1-18.
Hatori, R. (2005). A policy on language education in Japan: Beyond nationalism and linguicism. *Second Language Studies,* 23, 45-69.

Hornberger, N. & McKay, S. (2010). Sociolinguistics and language education. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Howard, J. & Millar, S (2008). Ongoing challenges with curriculum innovations in Asia: A South Korean case study. *Pacific Asian Education Journal*, 20, 59-75.

Hsieh, J. (2010). The impact of globalisation on foreign langauge education policy in Taiwan–policy initiatives and industrial demand. *The International Journal of Education and Psychological Assessment,* 5, 237-254.

Hui, D. (2001). The globalization of the English language: Reflections on the teaching of English in China. *International Education Journal,* 2, 126-133.

Igawa, K. (2007). Issues in English Language Education at Korean Elementary Schools Retrieved from http://www.shitennoji.ac.jp/ibu/toshokan/

Jeon, M. (2009). Globalization and native English speakers in English programme in Korea. *Language, Culture and Curriculum 22*(3), 231-243.

Kikuchi, K & Brown (2009): "English Educational Policy for High School in Japan: Ideals vs. Reality." *RELC Journal*, 40, 172-191.

Kim, Y.H. (2006). *The discourses of English in Korea: A critical discourse analysis of the 7th National curriculum on English education for middle school students.*(unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Hawaii, Manoa Hawaii.

Kubota, R & McKay, S (2009). Globalization and language learning in rural Japan: The role of English in the local linguistic ecology. *TESOL Quarterly* 43, 593-619.

Kubota, R. (2002). The impact of globalization on language teaching in Japan.
Block, D. & Cameron, D. (Eds.), *Language teaching in Japan. Globalization and language teaching.* (pp.13-28). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lee, I. (2011). Teaching How to Discriminate: Globalization, Prejudice, and Textbooks. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 38, 47-63.

McKay, S.L & Bokhorst-Heng, W.D., (2008). *International English in its Sociolinguistic*

Contexts. (pp 1-26). New York: Routledge.
Nishino, T. & Watanabe, M. (2008). Communication-oriented policies versus classroom realities in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly* 42, 134-138.
Nunan, D. (2003). The Impact of English as a Global Language on Educational Policies and Practices in the Asia-Pacifc Region. *TESOL Quarterly,* 37, 589-613.
Ohtani, C. (2010). Problems in the assistant language teacher system and English activity at Japanese public elementary schools. *Educational Perspectives,* 1*,* 38-46.
Paik, J. (2008). "Learning English, Imagining Global": The Narratives of Early English Education Experiences in South Korea. *The International Journal of Learning,* 15, 71-78.
Park, J.S. (2011). The promise of English: linguistic capital and the neoliberal worker in the South Korean job market. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 14, 443-455.
Pennycook, A. (2008). Translingual English. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics,* 31, 1-9.
Phillipson, R. (2001). English for globalization or for the world's people? *International Review of Education,* 47, 185-200.
Shohamy, E. (2007): Language tests as language policy tools. *Assessment in Education,* 14, 117-130.
Tollefson, J. W. & Yamagami, M. (2011): Empirical Research on Restrictive Language Policies in the United States. *Educational Studies* 53, 125-132.

Doi, T. (2014). Reconsidering the Noticing Hypothesis. *Accents Asia, 6(2), pp.14-24.*

Reconsidering the Noticing Hypothesis

Taeko Doi[1]

Globist English School

ABSTRACT

In acquiring second language speaking skills, the Noticing Hypothesis claims that the learners need to notice the gap between what learners can say in their inter-language and what they want to say in the target language. This paper deals with three questions which arose from my teaching practice about the hypothesis: At what point during the time of articulation does noticing occur? What conditions allow the learners to notice the gap? Are there any unnoticeable formal elements? The review of the literature shows that learners can notice the gap only when they have sufficient grammar knowledge, enough time to monitor their production, and the intention to review their own production. Second, while phonological and morphological errors are easily noticed, major structures of the utterance are unable to be noticed and are not restructured. Third, content words are more easily attended to than function words. Finally, exactly when the noticing can occur in one articulation is left unmentioned in the Noticing Hypothesis, namely at the onset or in the middle of or after the articulation. Based on these findings it can be concluded that noticing can occur only under certain conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Quite a few SLA theories have been introduced over the past years. Among them is the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986), which posits that

[1] Taeko Doi received an MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University and MA in Education from Rikkkyo University. Her interests include: writing training through reading and listening, speaking training through writing based on reading and listening. Correspondence should be sent to Taeko Doi, taeko@globist.co.jp

noticing the gap in language form between the target language (TL) and inter-language (IL) leads to second language acquisition (SLA), and when the gap is noticed, it becomes intake. In other words, through noticing the gap and then closing it, learners become able to acquire the second language. The notion of the Noticing Hypothesis has been accepted in the community of SLA; however, in applying this theory to classroom practice, three questions arise. First, when do learners notice the gap? Is it before their articulation, in the course of articulation, or after that? Also, are the learners able to notice the gap under any condition? Lastly, are the features of noticed formal elements in the gap noticeable by all learners at every level? This paper reconsiders the Noticing Hypothesis, looking for the answers to the three questions above, in the hope that teachers can better apply the knowledge from the Noticing Hypothesis to our classroom practice.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Noticing Hypothesis

The Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) offers three major claims: "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning" (Schmidt, 1994, p.17), "what must be attended to and noticed is not just the input in a global sense but whatever features of the input are relevant for the target system", and "attention is what allows speakers to become aware of a mismatch or gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce, as well as between what they produce and what proficient target language speakers produce" (Schmidt, 2001, p.6). It has been pointed out that the main focus of the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) has been on whether conscious attention is necessary or not for the acquisition of the targeted form of input (Robinson, 1995). This is what Schmidt (1990) claims in his own words, "If noticed, it becomes intake" (p.139).

With regard to whether the auditory input processing does or does not require consciousness in one's brain, cognitive studies provide some theories that may help us understand how auditory input and consciousness are connected. According to Anderson (2009) auditory input information first comes into an auditory sensory store called echoic memory only for a brief period of time. Sams, Hari, Rif and Knuutila (1993) note that information in the sensory store is easily lost within 10 seconds unless attended to. According to Baddeley (2002), information in an auditory sensory store then gets into the working

memory, which has a limited capacity with a memory span of four chunks. Here, important information is selected by attention. When the capacity of the working memory is filled, recently input information pushes out old information, which is then lost forever. After being attended to and rehearsed in the working memory, the information is stored in long-term memory, where it remains in reserve and available for the learners' future use of language. Thus, attention promotes learning.

Critical Views on the Noticing Hypothesis

The Noticing Hypothesis has gained positive attention; however, it has received objections as well. The first three are on whether conscious attention is necessary or not for the acquisition of the targeted form of input. As stated in the previous section, Schmidt (1994) claims that input process needs consciousness, while Tomline and Villa (1994) do not agree with that. Also Gass et al. (2003) demonstrate that noticing does not take effect in the SLA process in some areas of language. Furthermore, it shows some diminishing effect on the proficiency of advanced learners. They investigated how focused attention takes effect in three linguistic areas: syntax, morphosyntax, and lexicon, and also on proficiency in different points of language development. The result showed that attention had the greatest effect on syntax and the least on lexicon. With regard to proficiency, attention had the most diminishing effect on advanced level learners and the least on beginner level learners. The third objection is posed by Truscott (1998), who argues that, "the acquisition of metalinguistic knowledge is tied to noticing, while development of competence is not" (p.124). Truscott claims that both conscious and unconscious knowledge play equally important roles in the study of language and not every aspect of second language acquisition needs noticing. This view is also supported by Cross (2002).

The other criticism comes from a cognitive perspective by Tomline and Villa (1994). They express their doubts about the use of a diary study for the purpose of researching how noticing operates during the course of learners' L2 input processing. They point out that the cognitive processing of L2 input occurs in brief spans of time such as seconds or even parts of seconds, while the diary study encompasses a large span of time such as several weeks.

As reviewed, the focus of most of the discussions, either negative or positive, is whether SLA does or does not require conscious processing of incoming information. Three questions still remain: When are learners able to notice the gap? What conditions allow learners to notice the gap? And what language features can be noticed depending on the developmental levels of learners? In order to explore the answers to the questions,

self-monitoring theories will be visited.

Three Questions about the Noticing Hypothesis

At What Point during Articulation does Noticing Take Place?

The self-correction process, as part of closing the gap between the TL and IL, is tied to learners' attention on language form in their own production; however, the time when noticing takes place is left unmentioned in the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986). With regard to the timing of noticing, there are three levels of monitoring introduced: covert self-correction, overt self-correction, and online planning. Covert self-correction is introduced by Green, and overt self-correction by Hecht (1993), and online planning by Ellis (2005). Covert editing or self-correction occurs in a planning process at the pre-articulatory level, while overt editing or self-correction takes place at the post-articulatory level, and online planning is conducted in the middle of articulation. Ellis more precisely presents two levels of planning: pre-task planning and online planning. The first one consists of actions taken to plan the propositional content and the linguistic formulations of a message, which precedes actual articulation and can be taken as equivalent to covert self-correction, whereas online planning involves the within-task planning, which takes place during the articulation. The Noticing Hypothesis does not clearly tell us which level of monitoring is required to notice the gap in formal elements between the TL and IL.

What Conditions Allow L2 Learners to Notice the Gap?

Noticing, or self-monitoring, requires certain conditions (Krashen, 1985). In order to self-monitor output learners have to have explicit grammatical knowledge. Also conscious linguistic knowledge functions as a monitor and the monitor can take place under certain conditions that are present when there is enough time to reflect and when learners have explicit knowledge of the rule. Morrison and Low (1984) support this view that monitoring occurs only when the communication events allow the speakers to have sufficient time for doing online planning. Another condition for monitoring is that learners monitor their output in terms of how their linguistic forms successfully convey their intended meaning (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000). In other words, monitoring for meaning is a necessary condition for monitoring form. Another significant condition for monitoring is learners' intention to monitor their IL, but unless learners find their IL problematic, they do not attend to their grammatical form while they are exposed to input (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000).

Schmidt says, "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning" (Schmidt, 1994, p.17). However, monitor theory suggests that noticing does not always occur to every language learner. Grammatical knowledge is a presupposition, and time, intention to communicate, and intention to improve the IL are necessary to notice the gap between the TL and IL.

Are there Any Unnoticeable Formal Elements?

Learners at different linguistic development levels manage to monitor their own L2 oral output in different ways. The more advanced L2 learners become, the more capable they are of correcting a large percentage of their own errors (Green and Hecht, 1993). Advanced L2 learners monitor and then self-repair discourse-level errors more frequently than pre-intermediate learners. The more advanced learners notice complex errors and then correct as opposed to beginners who focus on simple errors (Van Hest, 1996). Also, L2 learners are unable to notice their own errors in every aspect of linguistic forms in their L2 output. Phonological and morphological errors are easily corrected, while major structures of the utterance cannot be restructured (Lennon, 1994). Content words are easier to attend to than function words (Poulise and Bongaerts, 1994).

Therefore, it can be concluded that there are some conditions which do not allow learners to notice the gap between the TL and Il. Also, there are some aspects of language form and language developmental stages in which learners do not readily notice the gap in form. Namely, noticing does not guarantee a full range of SLA because noticing only occurs under certain conditions. How are these aspects covered in classroom teaching and how can teachers best support learners to promote noticing the gap between the TL and IL?

How grammatical knowledge can be best taught in a classroom is reviewed in the next section.

Implications for Teaching

As previously reviewed, there are certain aspects learners do not notice in practical L2 conversation, especially for learners in the early stages of their language development. Then, learners need to be provided grammatical knowledge in the classroom in order to be able to be aware of formal elements in communicative tasks. On the other hand, advanced learners need to be exposed to more communicative input, as they are more ready to notice formal elements both in their input and output when they have sufficient time and intention to

practice self-monitoring. In order to enhance the learners' noticing of formal elements in the oral production through communicative tasks, learners need to be properly scaffolded in the classroom setting.

One way to provide intermediate level students with scaffolding can be the focus-on-form approach, which helps learners to notice formal elements in their oral production by shifting their attention from meaning to form in the middle of their speech production. Focus-on-form is a method that has been used in recent years to facilitate the learners' noticing of formal elements in the IL. This method entails a focus on meaning with attention to form arising out of the communicative activity (Ellis, 2006). Historically, focus-on-form has arisen from the reflection on and criticism of immersion programs such as those conducted in Canada. The students in immersion programs fail to acquire proper verb tense markings even after many years of study (Swain, 2003). Swain (1995) proposes the need for L2 learners to do more than simply engage in communication, such as attending to form in order to acquire second language competence.

Another way to teach grammatical knowledge to elementary level students is focus-on-forms, which is instruction in activities which are directed intensively at a single grammatical structure (Ellis, 2006). It is a traditional approach based on explicit explanation and drill-like practice, and its drawback is that the focus-on-forms approach if used by itself is unlikely to result in SLA with fluent and accurate communication ability (Ellis, Basturkme, et al., 2002). This approach has much less evidence to show that it results in learning that enables learners to perform the target form in their oral free production (Ellis, Baturkmen, et al., 2002). In other words, declarative knowledge needs to be turned into procedural knowledge in order for L2 learners to use it properly. Teaching grammatical points without a context requires practical application.

There is a third view on how formal elements should be taught in the classroom. DeKeyser (1997) claims that instruction with explicit knowledge followed by communicative practice is more effective on the grounds that grammar knowledge should be taught explicitly and discretely, as it is gradually learned through automatization of explicit knowledge.

As reviewed, knowledge of formal elements needs to be taught explicitly in order for the learners to clearly see the gap between the TL and IL especially for elementary level learners; however, formal knowledge by itself is not sufficient for learners to become fluent speakers. Learners need to be ready to notice the gap between the TL and IL, and further practice is needed in order to acquire fluent speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

This paper has reconsidered whether the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993;1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) is valid for the SLA process and has concluded that it does not guarantee a full range of SLA. Current research shows that there are some aspects of language form and developmental stages in which learners do not readily notice the gap between their IL and the TL. Furthermore, major structures of their utterance tend not to be noticed, although phonological and morphological errors are easily noticed. Also, non-salient features such as function words tend not to be noticed, while salient features such as information words are noticed.

With regard to learners' developmental stages, elementary level students notice few formal elements, while more advanced students are able to notice more complex formal elements, and consequently self-repair when they have sufficient time and intention to do it. The studies reviewed in this paper show that noticing does not always occur in some formal aspects of L2 for some learners at certain language developmental levels. In practice, the noticing does not guarantee that input becomes intake for every L2 learner.

In order to effectively bring formal elements to learners' attention, it may be necessary to provide scaffolding based on the learners' language developmental levels. Instruction with explicit knowledge followed by communicative practice can be effective for elementary level leaners, focus-on-form for intermediate level learners, and maximized exposure to the TL through communicative tasks for advanced level learners.

The noticed formal elements vary depending on the language developmental levels of the learners. Also, there are some formal elements unable to be noticed by the learners at certain developmental levels. The act of noticing the gap between what the learners can say and what they want to say requires considerable time and effort on the part of both students and their teachers.

Future Study

This discussion of the Noticing Hypothesis leads to several areas of future study.

First, since, originally, the Noticing Hypothesis was based on oral output and oral input only, it would be important to expand research to focus on the application of the Noticing Hypothesis to the gap between written output and visual input. For example, the role of time available to learners needs to be explored since some findings say that learners self-monitor their own production when they have sufficient time.

Second, task-based learning activities which employ the Noticing Hypothesis that students find fun and enjoyable need to be developed, especially for those who already have substantial grammatical knowledge. Intermediate and advanced-level learners more effectively notice the gap in formal elements than elementary level learners. If learners enjoy working on finding and closing the gap between the IL and TL, they are likely to learn their L2 more effectively both inside and outside the classroom.

Finally, new learning activities based on the Noticing Hypothesis need to be developed not only for students but also for their teachers. L2 teachers who become familiar with and enjoy the learning method and who improve their language fluency are more likely to become better role models and teachers for their students.

REFERENCES

Anderson, J. R. (2009). *Cognitive psychology and its implications* (7th ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

Cross, J. (2002). 'Noticing' in SLA: Is it a valid concept? *TESL-EJ, 6*(3). Retrieved from http://tesl-ej.org/ej23/a2.html

Baddeley, A. (2003). Working memory and language: an overview. *Journal of communication disorders, 36*(3), 189-208

DeKeyser, R. (1997). Beyond explicit rule learning. Automatizing second language morphosyntax. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19*, 195-221.

Ellis, R. (2005). Principles of instructed language learning. *System*, *33*(2), 209-224. doi:10.1016/j.system.2004.12.006

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 83-107. doi:10.2307/40264512

Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., & Loewen, S. (2002). Doing focus-on-form. *System*, *30*(4), 419-432. doi:10.1016/S0346-251X(02)00047-7

Gass, S., Svetics, I., & Lemelin, S. (2003). Differential effects of attention. *Language Learning*, *53*(3), 497-546. doi:10.1111/1467-9922.00233

Green, P. S., & Hecht, K. (1993). Pupil self-correction in oral communication in English as a foreign language. *System*, *21*(2), 151-163. doi:10.1016/0346-251X(93)90038-I

Izumi, S., & Bigelow, M. (2000). Does output promote noticing and second language acquisition? *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(2), 239-278. doi:10.2307/3587952

Krashen, S. (1985). The input hypothesis: Issues and implications. NY: Longman.

Lennon, P. (1994). Self-correction and error in advanced learner spoken narrative. In G. Bartelt (Ed.), *The dynamics of language processes. Essay in honor of Hans W. Dechert*. Tubingen, Germany: Gunter Narr Verlag.

Morrison, M., & Low, G. (1984). Monitoring and the second language learner. In Richards, J.C. and Schidt, R. W. (Eds.), *Language and Communication* (pp. 228-250). London: Longman.

Poulisse, N., & Bongaerts, T. (1994). First language use in second language production. *Applied Linguistics, 15,* 36-57.

Robinson, P. (1995). Attention, memory, and the "Noticing" Hypothesis. *Language Learning*, *45*(2), 283-331. doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1995.tb00441.x

Sams, M., Hari, R., Rif, J., & Knuutila, J. (1993). The human auditory sensory memory trace persists about 10s: Neuromagnetic evidence. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 5, 363-370

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *11*(2), 129-58.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Awareness and second language acquisition. *Annual Reviews of Applied Linguistics, 13*, 206-226.

Schmidt, R. (1994). Deconstructing consciousness in search of useful definitions for applied linguistics. AILA Review, 11, 11-26

Schmidt, R. W.(2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp.3-32). New York: Cambridge University Press

Schmidt, R., & Frota, S.N. (1986). Developing basic conversational ability in a second language: a case study of an adult learner of Portuguese. In R. R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to learn: Conversation in Second language acquisition*. (pp.237-326). Rowley, MA: Newbury Hous

Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidelhofer (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 125-144). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (2003). French immersion research in Canada: recent contributions to SLA and applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *20*, 199-212. doi:10.1017/S0267190500200123

Tomlin, R. S., & Villa, V. (1994). Attention in cognitive science and second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *16*(2), 183-203.

Truscott, J. (1998). Noticing in second language acquisition: a critical review. *Second*

language Research, *14*(2), 103-135. doi:10.1191/026765898674803209

Van Hest, E. (1996). Self-repair as a measure of language proficiency. Paper presented at the 18th Annual Language Testing colloquium in Tampere. Finland.

Suzuki, S. (2014). Language learners' belief change. *Accents Asia. 6(2),* pp. 40-53.

Language Learners' Belief Change

Sakae Suzuki[1]
Shonan Institute of Technology

ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study is designed to provide an orderly account of how beliefs about English language learning change among seven high school students in Japan. Beginning when the students were first-year high school students (10th graders), the investigation takes a qualitative multiple-case-study approach that includes in-depth interviews, responses to open-ended questions, and written reports. Data gathering ended when each student, in the third year of high school, chose a university. Conclusions include: (1) factors that influence changes in learners' beliefs and (2) implications for teachers and educators.

INTRODUCTION

Learner beliefs are one type of individual learner difference (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006). Researchers have investigated their potential effects on learners' strategies and motivation in the classroom (Horwitz, 1987; 1988 Wenden, 1986a, 1987; Yang, 1999), the process and outcomes of learning (Dweck, 2006; Schommer, 1994), and attitude change (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

One of the problems of belief studies is the lack of studies investigating the sources, development, and changes of learners' beliefs (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The results of previous studies have indicated certain tendencies concerning students' beliefs, but they did not explain why and how those students developed, held, or changed certain beliefs. SLA researchers have investigated individual difference variables that learners bring into the classroom, such as aptitude, anxiety, motivation, and working memory. Beliefs are not included in those categories, but they are a type of individual difference (Cotterall, 1999) that can influence the variables listed above; therefore, researchers should strive to shed light on the sources, development, construction, and change of learners' beliefs and their effect on learning. By knowing how beliefs change and what variables change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that positively influence learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs. One problem, however, is that detecting change requires the ability to discern "from" and "to" conditions: belief states that have recognizable forms and consequences**.** Also, with respect to changes of beliefs

---

1. Sakae Suzuki is a professor of English at Shonan Institute of Technology in Japan. She obtained a MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University and an Ed.D in TESOL from Temple University. Her research interests include learners' beliefs, motivation, and learners' stories. Correspondence should be sent to Sakae Suzuki, E-mail: sakaes@center.shonan-it.ac.jp

about foreign language learning, it is important to investigate how various factors bring about belief change (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). In addition, few studies have been focused on younger learners, such as secondary school students. Because adolescents must manage major biological, educational, and social role transitions (Bandura, 1997), I assume that their beliefs change. By knowing how and what can change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that affect learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs.

Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how learner beliefs change and what factors cause change. Change, as Bailey (1992) and Jackson (1992) pointed out, occurs in many forms, including knowledge, attitudes, understanding, and self-awareness. Change itself can have positive, neutral, and negative meanings: effective learners can change their attitudes and give up learning, while previously unsuccessful learners can focus their energies on the pursuit of worthwhile learning objectives. In this study, I investigate changes among high school students who find their own way of learning, make sense of their learning, and develop learning goals (Dweck, 1986). I investigate how their beliefs change through educative experiences (Dewey, 1938) at school and in social interactions and to what they attribute their learning.

METHOD

Multiple Case Studies

A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of rich information in a context (Creswell, 1998). Thus, multiple-case studies involve collecting and analyzing data from two or more cases within the same study. The bounded system is bounded by time and place and it is the case studied (Creswell, 1998). In this study, the bounded system is a public Japanese high school and cases are individual students. Yin (2003) indicated that multiple cases should be selected so that they replicate each other by either predicting similar results or contrasting results for predictable reasons (p. 5). In this study, the seven participants had the desire to study English in the beginning of the investigation. Some of them might follow a similar process of learning and others might not.

Research Site

The research site, Rokkaku High School (pseudonym) is located in Yokohama, a major port city close to Tokyo, in Japan. The school was founded eighteen years ago as an experimental and pioneer school with a credit system for classes which give students more choices than usual choice of classes. The school policy has been to accept a variety of students: regular students who graduated from Japanese junior high schools, returnees who lived abroad, foreign students living in Japan, and restarters who quit other high schools.

Participants

There are seven participants in this study. One of the students entered Rokkaku high school as a first-year student in 2005, five of them entered Rokkaku High School in April, 2006, and one entered as a second- year student in September, 2006 after quitting another private high school. The first-year students were chosen in order to investigate their English learning history before high school. The second-year student was included in order to observe how studying for entrance examination (*juken*-style learning), which emphasizes rote memorization, influences her beliefs. Table 1 summarizes the backgrounds of the seven participants.

TABLE 1
Study Participants

Name	Gender	Country of origin	Background before attending Rokkaku High School
Maiko	Female	Canada	• Born in Montreal, Canada • Attended a preschool (8 months) and kindergarten (2 months) in Vancouver, Canada • Attended a kindergarten in Japan • Attended a public elementary school and a junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Satsuki	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Went overseas briefly every year since childhood • Attended a Japanese elementary school and junior high school • English grade in junior high school: 5
Kazuo	Male	Peru	• Born in Peru • Came to Japan at age 15 • Went to a Japanese school in Peru • Went to a cram school in Peru • English grade in junior high school: 5
Fumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public junior high school • Attended a cram school • Went to Canada for 2 weeks • English grade in junior high school: 5
Honey	Female	Myanmar	• Born in Myanmar • Attended a local kindergarten and elementary school • Attended an international school for 2 years • Came to Japan at age 14 • Attended a public junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Rumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public elementary school and junior high school • Attended a cram school • No overseas experience • English grade in junior high school: 5
Natsuko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a public Japanese elementary school • Attended a cram school • Attended a private Japanese junior high school • Attended a private Japanese high school

	• Quit the private Japanese high school and entered a public high school • Went to Asian countries briefly (5times) before starting junior high school • Went to the Philippines to study English twice before attending the second high school • English grade in junior high school: 5

Note. English grade in junior high school: 5 = highest possible grade, 1 = lowest possible grade.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was taken place both during and after data collection from 2006 to 2009, in line with Creswell's (1998) emphasis on a zigzag approach between data gathering and analysis. Interpretation of interview data was presented to the participants immediately after the first interview (Kanno, 2003). Each time I met a participant; I went over the previous data and discussed possible interpretations. After I finished each participant's story, I identified changes in their beliefs and factors that affected their beliefs. Those changes and impetus for changes were put into a matrix (see table 2).

Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

1. What factors influence changes in learners' beliefs?
2. What are implications for teachers and educators suggested by the present study?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question concerned what factors influence changes in their beliefs. The participants' stories indicated that their beliefs changed as they experienced personal growth and changes in their learning contexts. The belief changes found in the present study are summarized in Table 2.

Factors Leading to Belief Changes

TABLE 2
Summary of Belief Changes

From	To	Impetus for change
Natsuko		
Getting good grades and going to a prestigious university are the goals of study.	Doing whatever you like is best.	Studying for entrance examinations. Attending acting school/visiting the Philippines
Speaking like a native speaker of English is good.	English is spoken with different accents.	Experiences in non-English speaking countries
Studying English for tests is a	English is a tool for	Experiences in the Philippines

goal of study.	communication.	
Sitting at a desk and doing exercises is learning English.	There is another way of learning English.	Class presentations
Making mistakes is shameful.	It is important to speak up without being afraid of what other people think.	Meeting people from different countries
Speaking is more important than writing.	My English is not good enough to communicate with people. *Juken*-type study might be important.	Speaking English with foreign people
Foreign cultures and going overseas are interesting.	Lack of knowledge of Japan.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Going to a university in a foreign country is the best choice for study.	Going to a university in Japan to learn English and Japanese history is best.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Decisions are made by someone else.	I must make decisions myself.	Forced learning at Sakura High School
Rumiko		
I am good at English because I get good grades on English tests.	I am not good at English anymore.	Experiences in high school/returnee students
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being good at English means speaking English well.	Meeting with returnee students
Studying English is studying language.	Learning something through English is important.	An English teacher
Memorization is the only way to learn words.	There is another way of learning words.	Workshop by a professor.
I have to take English classes to learn English.	I can study English by myself.	Older students' advice
I want to be an English teacher like Mr. Oshima.	Maybe I do not want to be a teacher. My pronunciation is not good and I can not speak English well.	Meeting with returnees who spoke fluent English
Kazuo		
English is not fun. I don't like English.	Speaking English is fun.	Speaking English with a Korean woman on an airplane
Speaking English is more important than studying grammar.	Grammar is also important.	Talking with foreign students
Maiko		
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being satisfied only with good grades is shameful. It is important to improve oneself constantly.	Inspiration from older students
I should not criticize what a	I can negotiate with a teacher.	OCI class with an American

teacher does.		teacher
I have to listen to my teachers.	I can make decisions myself.	Studying for entrance examinations
I have to do *juken benkyo* to pass the entrance examination.	Studying only for entrance examinations is meaningless.	Yobiko (prep-schoo) experiences
Honey		
I am shy.	I am active.	Studying at an international school and learning English
Language is one of subjects at school.	Language is a weapon for survival.	Studying in an international school/Living in Japan
English is the most powerful language.	Japanese is currently more important than English.	Living in Japan
Satsuki		
English is useful everywhere.	English is not used everywhere , so I have to learn another foreign language.	Traveling in Mexico
Fumiko		
English is a subject at school.	Studying English would give me a stable identity.	Being bullied at junior high school.
English is an important school subject.	English should not be a compulsory subject.	Learning experiences and observation
I cannot speak English naturally with native speakers of English.	I can speak in English about topics I like (music).	Staying in England and talking with British students

Sources of belief change

What factors contribute to belief changes? Under what circumstances do adolescents resist change even though well-meaning adults try to promote belief change? The results of the present study indicate that adolescents' beliefs are rather fluid mental constructs.

The participants in this study changed their beliefs in different contexts. Some of their belief changes are consistent with the results described in earlier studies (Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J., 1999; Suzuki, 2006; Takayama, 2003) in which beliefs are regarded as relatively permanent, existing before and after their elicitation by a research instrument and unaffected by the instrument itself. In the present study, however, beliefs seemed to exist most strongly at the moment of elicitation, and could be observed to undergo change, although the changes were not always acknowledged by the learners. Three factors leading to belief change were identified: experiential factors, interpersonal factors, and contexual factors.

Experiential factors

The stories of the learners in the present study indicate that overseas experiences give them chances to communicate in authentic ways in foreign languages and enhance their interest in

foreign cultures and people. Through those experiences, the participants become aware of the various roles of language, and the purposes and benefits of learning foreign languages. Overseas experiences were a trigger for some students to change their values and beliefs toward English. Natsuko went to the Philippines and changed her beliefs about school, learning, her values, and her choice of university. One of Kazuo's belief changes occurred when he met a Korean woman and talked with her in English on an international flight. The experience led him to believe that speaking is the most important element in language study. Satsuki believed that English was spoken everywhere in the world because of experiences speaking and listening to English in foreign countries before starting high school, However, in Mexico, she found that English was not understood. She changed her belief and thought that it is important to learn other foreign languages in addition to English.

Facing difficulties, problems, or crises that shake their identities and confidence can also cause learners to modify their beliefs or develop new ones. Natsuko's journey to the Philippines induced her to modify her beliefs about school and studying. Fumiko, who was bullied in junior high school, came to believe that studying would provide her with a stable identity and sustain her confidence. For them, hardships led to new experiences, which played a role in overcoming the hardships. In this, new beliefs emerged.

Interpersonal factors

People are sources of belief change. Previous studies of learners' beliefs suggest that they change their beliefs because of teachers and educators' use of a number of strategic means, or by input given by teachers (Woods, 1996, p. 218). In this study, however, the agents of change were often persons other than teachers and educators. For example, Maiko was influenced by older students in her high school who were her role models. Her "fixed mindset" (Dweck, 2006), a belief that getting good grades in school meant being good at English, was challenged by those older students. After listening to them, Maiko felt ashamed that she had thought that good grades at school were evidence of adequate learning. She then developed a "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006) that she should not be satisfied with her current English proficiency and should constantly strive to improve. In this case, the older students were near peer role models (Arao & Murphy, 2001) who allowed the younger learners to identify with them, become inspired, and themselves become more effective learners (p. 9).

A developmental trait of adolescents is that they question adult authority. In the present study, Maiko at first accepted the advice of well-meaning teachers that she should study for examinations in order to gain entrance to a prestigious university. She later rejected this idea as stereotypical and not applicable to her personally. She experienced stress in disregarding the strong advice of a teacher, but she did it. Parents as well as teachers also experience rejection by their adolescent children, as in the case of Satsuki, who no longer wanted to accompany her parents on overseas trips.

In spite of an inclination to question the conventional wisdom of many adults, the students in the present study readily accepted the advice of a few highly trusted adults. Rumiko was influenced by her cram school teacher, who was a good teacher who showed that he cared about his students. By observing what he did and being impressed with his attitude as a teacher, Rumiko developed a belief that teaching can influence students positively and thus teaching is rewarding. She also changed her perceptions toward English by teachers. For a student to trust an adult seemed to require two perceptions: The adult sees the student as an individual rather than a

stereotype, and the adult is pursuing no personal agenda but has only the student's best interests at heart.

Influence by others sometimes led to a loss of confidence. For example, Rumiko had never been abroad. She had studied in EFL contexts in Japan and described herself as a product of Japanese English education. She attributed her lack of speaking ability to her lack of overseas experience. Meeting with students who had lived in foreign countries and spoke English fluently reinforced her belief that studying abroad was the only way to improve her speaking ability. This belief was not shaped by her own experience but by a second-hand belief. Such beliefs can be changed by more experience. Rumiko was just one of many Japanese learners who believe that only going abroad will make them fluent speakers of English. Maiko's belief that students majoring in international studies are shallow was developed through Maiko's observations on students at Rokkaku High School.

Contextual factors

This study also shows that the context in which learners are living and staying can cause beliefs to develop and change. This notion is in accord with sociocultural theory, which states that ideas begin as an external social activity and eventually become internalized (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 48). Students such as Honey, who are put into foreign language communities without sufficient preparation, tend to look for survival skills by themselves, through involvement with the target language. Honey acquired English and Japanese by collaborating and interacting with other speakers. Her strategy for learning foreign languages was based on her personal beliefs of learning, which was very much a response to the situation she found herself in. Natsuko, changed schools, and in doing so changed her beliefs about learning. All of the participants changed their beliefs because of the environment at Rokkaku High School, where they met many returnee students and foreign students. Those students were inspirations for Maiko, Kazuo, and Natsuko, who themselves had lived overseas. On the other hand, Rumiko, who did not have foreign experiences at all, felt intimidated in front of returnee students. The school context was certainly one of the factors that caused Rumiko to overestimate the importance of speaking English while observing returnee students who could speak: Rumiko developed a belief that she would be able to speak fluently if she went overseas. Rumiko's low sense of speaking self-efficacy caused her to develop a stereotypical fixed mindset (Dweck, 2006), a belief, that people who speak English fluently are superior.

Direction of belief change

According to Walsh (2004), high school students in general have not developed concrete beliefs about self or identity. They are easily influenced by peers and external factors, such as the media. Thus, they often develop second-hand beliefs (beliefs not developed through their own experiences), and are easily swayed. Beliefs that emerge from their own experiences are stronger and resist modification. For example, Natsuko, Kazuo, Maiko and Satsuki's belief that English is interesting was shaped by their foreign experiences. This belief remained unchanged throughout the study. Being a teenager is typically a process of finding one's own identity in a particular social context. Teenagers often listen to older students, not to their parents, as Rumiko did when she decided not to take English classes because of the advice she received from older students. She later changed this belief about the unimportance of English classes. In general, as Walsh

suggested, adolescents change from holding vaguely formed beliefs about self to more mature beliefs.

While high school students are developing cognitively, they change their beliefs and their perceptions. Kazuo's decision that knowledge of grammar is important is an example. Such decision-making, according to Howard (2006) is one sign of maturity.

In the present study, many belief changes were in the direction of greater maturity in terms of decision-making. For example, Maiko decided not to take an entrance exam to a national university recommended by her teachers and Natsuko decided to go to a university in Okinawa even though her friends did not agree with her decision. Honey changed her belief when she faced the reality that she could not be a doctor. At that time, Honey made a decision about her future by herself.

The results of this study show that well-meaning teachers and other adults are not always influential in changing students' beliefs. It is, however, encouraging to find that students themselves, taking charge of their own assessments, usually change their beliefs in the direction of beneficial beliefs. Autonomy is something many adults encourage at least in theory; however, adults are not always comfortable when they find that their influence over adolescents is diminished as they pursue greater autonomy. This finding does not suggest that teachers should retreat from implementing their teaching beliefs. On the contrary, as Rumiko's case suggests, teachers' belief are a springboard for some learners to become aware of their deficiencies in learning and to become more independent learners.

Belief changes can be summarized with three observations. First, adolescents often resist deliberate attempts by adults to change their beliefs. They seem to suspect adults of trying to impose ideal or stereotypical beliefs when their own desire is to establish beliefs valid for their unique personalities and situations. Second, even while resisting the efforts of adults to influence their beliefs and behaviors, adolescents seem to be on the alert for circumstances, experiences, and interpersonal encounters they can regard as valid and significant sources of beliefs. Often these are chance encounters: adolescents change their beliefs although people encountered outside of one's circle of friends and acquaintances do not intend to change one's intentional states. Third, in general, beliefs about learning English change positively, that is, in the direction of greater effectiveness in governing language-learning activities.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The second research question concerned what implications for teachers and educators the present study suggest.

As this study suggests, teachers can learn a great deal from students' stories about themselves. In this sense, learners themselves contribute to the development of the field (Breen, 2001). Teachers should consider students' backgrounds and how they came to be where they are. Larsen-Freeman and Cameron described "learner factors" (p. 151) that each learner holds such as previous learning experience, aptitude, and gender. By doing so, teachers are able to avoid making hasty judgments (Kanno, 2003, p. 141) about students and to thereby avoid narrowing their potential. The present study suggests that students have a great deal to teach us if we chose to learn (Bailey, 2001).

One consequence of a longitudinal study is that the researcher has sufficient time to reflect on the relationship between the emerging findings and the nature of the learning context. In the present study, such reflection has led to six implications for teachers and schools.

First, it is important that teachers get to know their students' skills, preferences, and experiences, particularly the changes they have experienced in different learning contexts. Quite a few Japanese students quit one school and reenter another. They bring their learning backgrounds and beliefs about learning with them when they arrive at the new school. They do not often talk openly about the reason(s) why they quit a school. If I had not had chances to talk with Natsuko, I would have never known why she quit the previous private high school, and this knowledge was beneficial for me as a teacher responsible for providing Natsuko's career guidance. As doctors need to know detailed information about their patients, such as their habits, occupation, age, gender, and previous illnesses, teachers should know about their students to better understand their situations and facilitate their becoming good learners. In order to know more about learners' backgrounds, language learning histories (LLH) (Murphey & Li-Chi, 2004, p. 83; Murphy & Carpenter, 2008) are helpful. Teachers can also encourage learners to write journals or reflections about the class and their learning. It is beneficial for teachers to have students record their experiences, as this allows the teachers to see how learners develop and change their beliefs about language learning. These days teachers are not always allowed to know students' personal backgrounds because of a concern for student privacy. Teachers do not always know where students have lived, what their family is like, how many brothers and sisters they have, or what their parents do. I believe that teachers should know what stories students bring to the class in order to enhance learning.

Second, teachers should know about students' overseas experiences, as such experiences can strongly impact young learners. The beliefs they develop during their stays in foreign countries are strong and often resist modification. Students with and without overseas experiences differ in terms of their beliefs about foreign language and cultures; thus, teachers and school administrators should consider what programs and classes can best enhance their curiosity and motivation to learn English. Students who have lived overseas are often more comfortable in communicative classrooms and they typically do not find memorization-oriented study meaningful. Thus, teachers should, as far as possible, offer varied classroom experiences. The students' narratives show that Japanese schools do not function to maintain students' foreign heritage experiences. Teachers and schools might well develop methodologies to do so. Students like Kazuo and Honey, who acquired English by using English, arrived at junior high schools in Japan far ahead of their fellow students in terms of their speaking proficiency of English. Japanese schools were prepared to accept those students only if they conformed to what other students did. School administrators might consider the higher proficiency levels of returnee students and develop curricula for them.

Third, teachers should introduce various activities and learning strategies in foreign language classrooms so that learners with different characteristics (Sternberg, 1996) can try them and find their own preferred strategies, as this can help empower the learners and allow them to find meaning in studying English. Otherwise, learners, especially high school students, have little interest in English aside from its being a graduation requirement (Tweles, 1996). Teachers should keep in mind that small events can sometimes generate a chain of reactions that produce a significant change. By implementing various ways of teachings and offering various experiences and learning opportunities for students, teachers can hope that learners will find aspects of

English that engage them. It is a teacher's responsibility to provide as many learning opportunities as possible (Shimoyama, Isoda, & Yamamori, 2002).

Fourth, considering the centrality of university entrance examination in the educational culture in Japan (Gorsuch, 2000, p. 699), teachers and educators who are involved with English education should consider meaningful goals of learning English and implement teaching that inspires learners to enjoy learning and helps them find meaning in learning English. The students in the present study felt considerable stress when studying for entrance examinations as they were required to memorize a great deal of information. Students with foreign backgrounds seem especially to dislike studying for entrance examinations. Studying for entrance examinations should not be the only goal of studying English. Teachers and educators can implement exchange programs, for example, so that students can learn to use English as a tool for communication. In classrooms, teachers can include communicative activities such as journal writing, discussions, and presentations. Through those activities, students can better understand how English is used and what they should do to convey their thoughts in English.

Fifth, students need experiences that enhance their curiosity to learn English and find meaning in learning English. The present study demonstrates that no one can tell a child's future potential from his or her current behavior. Adolescent learners, especially, can change their beliefs, goals, and dreams. As Dweck (2000) wrote, "we do not know exactly what someone is capable of with the right support from the environment and with the right degree of personal motivation or commitment" (p. 155). Thus, I think teachers need to offer learners as many opportunities as possible to interact with the global community via English. They can create classroom conditions for learners to engage in communities of practice (Menezes, Barcelos & Kalaja, 2008, p. 228) so that the learners can exchange their ideas via group work or cooperative learning. Examples include exchanging e-mail in English with foreign students attending sister schools overseas, editing English news (introducing school events in English) in English classes and English Day Camp, visiting local international schools, and inviting their students to take part in extra-curricular activities. Those opportunities are "educational experiences" (van Lier, 2004, p. 5). In order to identify experiences that are educational for certain learners, teachers can listen to stories of their past and the present and find out what experiences they need. This study also suggests that teachers should be tolerant of young learners' confused behavior and support them in their efforts to change their interfering beliefs.

Sixth, this study suggests that learners' decisions should be respected. Young learners are often hindered from following their inner voices. They negotiate their tentative ideas with parents, teachers, and others in their lives; however, this process causes frustration and uneasiness among some learners. Learners find their best learning paths when their motivation has an internal locus (Taylor, 1992). In the present study, if Natsuko and Maiko had been allowed to be themselves, they might not have wasted so much time and effort before finding their destinations. Thus, teachers should pay attention to learners' voices and provide them with opportunities to make their own decisions. Teachers can help students foster a sense of personal identity by encouraging them to make decisions for themselves and by helping them express their individuality in constructive ways.

CONCLUSION

The present study indicated that adolescent learners' beliefs change over time, and this change appears to be a natural and healthy tendency of teenage minds. Many beliefs change as

learners become older and change learning contexts. Some beliefs change rapidly, and others begin when learners initiate learning English and remain stable for many years.

Learners develop personal theories about learning English within which beliefs are idiosyncratic rather than predictably patterned. Individual differences and changes of beliefs are consistent with a dynamic systems view within developmental psychology (Thornton, 2008, p. 566), which allows that different children follow subtly different paths, even if they all end up at a similar destination.

Finally, three limitations of the present study deserve comment. First, a primary limitation is the representativeness of the participants of this study. They were high school students in Japan who were motivated and who succeeded at learning English. Six of the seven participants were girls, and six of them had overseas experiences before coming to the research site. While the findings can not be generalized to other students and other sites, it is my belief that the findings can help teachers plan treatments for discouraged and disaffected students, primarily by widening their acceptance of nonstandard beliefs and means.

Second, I chose the participants from within my teaching context, Rokkaku High School. It is possible that a study of participants from other educational institutions might have produced different conclusions given the characteristics defining those institutions.

Third, considering data collection, the concentration in the present study was on the students themselves. Data were not systematically collected from parents, siblings, peers, or cram school teachers. Doing so would have permitted an investigation of students' beliefs from different perspectives and triangulation would have been possible. This would have provided corroborating evidence for the findings (Creswell, 1998, p. 202) and greater breadth to the results.

REFERENCES

Bailey, K. M. (1992). The process of innovation in language teacher development: What, why and how teachers change. In J. Flowerdew, M. Brock, & S. Hsia (Eds.), *Perspective on second language teacher education* (pp. 253-282). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic.

Bailey, K. M. (2001). What my EFL students taught me. *The PAC Journal, 1,* 7-31.

Breen, M. P. (2001). *Learner contributions to language learning.* New York: Longman.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them? *System*, *27*, 493-513.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. *The Kappa Delta Pi lecture series*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Dweck, C. S. (1986). Motivational processes affecting learning. *American Psychology, 10,* 1040-1048.

Dweck, C. S. (2000). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*. New York:Ballantine Books.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Gorsuch, G. J. (2000). EFL educational policies and educational cultures: Influences on teachers'

approval of communicative activities. *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(4), 675-710.
Howard, P. J. (2006). *The owner's manual for the brain: Everyday applications from mind-brain research.* Austin, TX: Brad Press.
Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). New York: Prentice Hall.
Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal, 72*, 283-294.
Jackson, P. W. (1992). Helping teachers develop. In A. Hargreaves & M. G. Fullan (Eds.), *Understanding teacher development* (pp. 62-74). New York: Teachers College Press.
Kalaja, P., & Barcelos, A. M. F. (2006). *Beliefs about SLA*. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic.
Kanno, Y. (2003). *Negotiating bilingual and bicultural identities.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned* (Rev. ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Menezes, V., Barcelos, A. M., & Kalaja, P. (2008). Narrativising learning and teaching EFL: Concluding remarks. In P. Kalaja, V., Menezes & A. M. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL* (pp. 199-231). New York: Palgrave.
Murphey, T., & Carpetner, C. (2008). The seeds of agency in language learning histories. In A. Barcelos, P. Kalaja & V. Menezes, (Eds.). Narratives of learning and teaching EFL (pp.17-34). New York: Palgrave
Murphey, T., Jin, C. & Li-Chi, C. (2004). Learners' constructions of identities and imagined communities. In P. Benson, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Learners' stories* (pp. 83-100). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
Murphey, T., & Arao, H. (2001). Reported belief changes through near peer role modeling. *TESL-EJ, 5,* 1-15.
Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J. (1999). Investigation Japanese learners' beliefs about language learning, *System, 27*, 473-492.
Schommer, M. (1994). An emerging conceptualization of epistemological beliefs and their role in learning. In R. Garner & P. A. Alexander (Eds.), *Beliefs about text and instruction with text* (pp. 134-141). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
Shimoyama, Y., Isoda, T., & Yamamori, K. (2002). Learner beliefs in language learning in the CALL environment. *JALT Journal*, *24*(2), 155-165.
Sternberg, R. J. (1996). Matching abilities, instruction and assessment: Reawakening the sleeping giant of ATI. In I. Dennis & P. Tapsfield (Eds.), *Human abilities: Their nature and measurement* (pp. 167-181). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Suzuki, S. (2006). A study of Japanese high school students' beliefs about learning English. *English Education Study, 42,* 10-21.
Takayama, Y. (2003). Japanese learners' beliefs about learning English. Paper presented at Rikkyo University English education open seminar.
Tanaka, K., & Ellis, R. (2003). Study-abroad, language proficiency, and learner beliefs about language learning. *JALT Journal*, *25*(1), 63-85.
Taylor, L. (1992). Relationship between affect and memory: Motivation-based selective generation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62*, 876-882.
Thornton, S. (2008). *Understanding human development.* New York: Polgrave MacMillan.
Tweles, B. (1996). Motivational differences between Chinese and Japanese learners of English as

a foreign language. *JALT Journal*, *18*(2), 210-228.
van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer.
Walsh, D. (2004). *Why do they act that way?* New York: Free Press.
Wenden, A. (1986a). Helping language learners think about learning. *English Language Journal, 40*, 3-12.
Wenden, A. (1987). How to be a successful language learner: Insights and prescriptions from L2 learners. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 103-117). London, UK: Prentice-Hall.
Woods, D. (1996). *Teacher cognition in language teaching: Beliefs, decision-making and classroom practice*.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27*, 515-535.
Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brown, J. (2014). Considering the Interaction Hypothesis: Clarification, elaboration and paraphrasing. *Accents Asia, 6(2),* pp. 54-59.

Considering the Interaction Hypothesis: Clarification, Elaboration and Paraphrasing.

Jonathan David Brown[1]
Toyo University, Tokyo, Japan

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the Interaction Hypothesis is considered in an analysis of a short script between a native English speaker and three Japanese ESL learners (non-native English speakers). Through this analysis, the roles clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing play in creating and improving comprehensible input and output are identified and discussed, thus providing support for the Interaction Hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION

A very common practice in the ESL/EFL classroom is for the instructor to teach and focus on target language structure and then, after the students have learned or at least comprehended the language, apply the newly acquired language in the context of conversation. In other words, students practice what they have learned through talking to one another (Byrne 1976; Hall 2011; Richards and Rodgers 1986). However, Evelyn Hatch (1978) proposed a revolutionary educational concept for the field of ESL/EFL: "One learns how to do conversation, one learns how to act verbally, and out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed" (p. 404). Hatch (1978) suggested that students should not only practice (through conversation) what they learn, but that they may learn through their conversations and theorized interaction leads to comprehensible input. Later, Michael Long (1981; 1983; 1996) expanded on Hatch's proposition, suggesting that interaction facilitates acquisition because it "connects input . . . and output in productive ways . . . " (Long 1996, p. 452), which led to the Interaction Hypothesis.

THE INTERACTION HYPOTHESIS

According to the Interaction Hypothesis, the interaction between a non-native speaker (NNS) and a native speaker (NS), or even between a lower and higher non-native speaker, creates a natural environment for L2 acquisition because it is in the context of interaction that the NNS learns about the correctness and/or incorrectness of their utterances (Ehrlich, Avery & Yorio, 1998; Gass & MacKey, 2007). The Interaction Hypothesis presents several strategies a NS or higher-level NNS may use to communicate to a NNS that help bring about improved comprehension, such as speaking slowly or clearly, elaborating, requesting clarification, repairing the NSS's

1 Jonathan Brown is a full-time lecturer at Toyo University. Jonathan's research interests are in second language acquisition, L2 writing, rhetoric, and intercultural communication. Correspondence should be sent to brown@toyo.jp

speech, or paraphrasing (Brown, 2000). For the purposes of this paper, clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing will be the primary focus.

Clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing in context

In order to test the Interaction Hypothesis and the roles elaboration, clarification, and paraphrasing play in bringing about improved communication, a short script between three Japanese ESL learners (NNSs) and myself, a native English speaker (NS), is analyzed. In this script, the NNSs read a number of questions from a script to the NS. The NS then attempted to freely answer these questions. In several instances, the NNS was unable to understand the NS's response and thus requested clarification. The NS then employed elaboration and/or paraphrasing to help bring about understanding in the NNSs.

Example 1

NNS: There has been a lot of talk lately about additives and preservatives in food. In what ways has this changed your eating habits?
NS: Uh, I avoid them, I d-, I don't buy prepackaged foods uh, as much…Uh, I don't buy…say…potato chips that have a lot of flavoring in them…And uh, I eat better, I think.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: Ummmm, I, I eat better, I think. I, I don't buy so much food that's prepackaged.

In this first example, the NNS requested clarification immediately after the NS's answer. It should be noted that the NNS's request, "Pardon me?" is indicative of a novice, and therefore, despite the awkwardness of the clarification request, the NS responded without hesitation, restating his original statement, but, this time, leaving out the less important information, i.e., "Uh, I don't buy…say…potato chips that have a lot of flavoring in them… " The NS simply restated his main point: "I eat better . . . " and ". . . I don't buy so much food that's prepackaged." In other words, he paraphrased. Though not visible in the script, following the paraphrase, the NNS indicated comprehension by nodding and putting the script down on the table. Therefore, it seems that the extra information the interlocutor provided in his original answer may have been difficult for the NNS to follow—the NNS may have had difficulty understanding the interlocutor's main point. Thus, in this example, it seems that input comprehension very likely was improved after the NSS's clarification request and the NS's subsequent paraphrasing.

Example 2

NNS: How have increasing food costs changed your eating habits?
NS: Well, we don't eat as much beef as we used to. We eat more chicken, and uh, pork, and uh, fish, things like that.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: We don't eat as much beef as we used to. We eat more chicken and uh, uh pork and fish. We don't eat beef very often. We don't have steak like we used to.

Again, the NNS request for clarification was unnatural, but as in the first example the NS attributed the clumsy request to NNS's language ability. However, unlike the first example, where the NS condensed his original answer in order to paraphrase, the NS actually elaborated, presenting the NNS with more information.

This strategy, i.e., elaboration, is designed to better help the interlocutor understand a previous utterance and seemed to help the NNS understand because following the elaboration the NNS showed satisfaction with the answer by enthusiastically smiling and not pursuing the question any further. The increased amount of information very likely helped the NNS better understand the NS's answer because the interlocutor provided an example of how his eating habits have changed: "We don't have steak like we used to." Thus, the NS did not provide extra information, but simply elaborated on the information he had already stated.

In this last example, the NS, much like in the previous example, elaborated on his original answer after the NNS requested clarification:

Example 3

NNS: There has been a lot of talk lately about additives and preservatives in food. In what ways has this changed your eating habits?
NS: I try to stay away from nitrites.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: Uh, from nitrites in, uh, like lunchmeats and that sort of thing. I don't eat those.

According to Derwing (1996) and Loschky (1994), NSs modify their language (output) when addressing NNSs, and this is observed in this final example. Very likely, the NNS did not understand the word "nitrites." Therefore, the request for clarification is very natural in this final example. The NS clearly modified his output for the NNS because rather than explaining that nitrites are a salt or ester of nitrous acid containing the nitrite ion chemical compound NO_2 , he simply gave an example of something that contains nitrites and explained that he does not eat it: ". . . [Nitrites] in . . . lunchmeats and that sort of thing. I don't eat those." The NNS then signaled she understood by nodding her head and ending the conversation.

The NS's modified output, i.e., giving an example of something with nitrites rather than giving the definition of nitrites, assisted in improving comprehension (Carroll, 1999). Though it is possible the NNS went away from that conversation still not knowing what nitrites are, the learner at least gained an understanding of something that contains nitrates, and, more importantly, how the interlocutor's eating habits have changed.

Implications for the classroom

The Interaction Hypothesis rests on the notion that "conversation is not only a medium of practice, but also the means by which learning takes place," especially when it comes to the negotiation of meaning (Gass p. 234). Therefore, it is a natural proponent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and other similar approaches. Taking the Interaction Hypothesis into consideration, educators must begin incorporating such approaches into their classrooms. By providing their students with opportunity to communicate in meaningful conversations that encourage such strategies as clarification requests, educators foster growth and skills that provide students with opportunities to engage in their own learning (Brown 2012). Since the Interaction Hypothesis encourages learners to essentially take hold of the reigns of their own learning by identifying input they need to understand and then pursuing it through clarification requests, learners are given the chance to consciously register their misinterpretations and learn more quickly, in accordance with the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt 1990).

Though the Interaction Hypothesis advocates communicative activities and provides learners the opportunity to notice the areas in which they need further comprehension and then seek out that comprehension, educators must be careful not to push students too far beyond their internal learner capacities. As Krashen's (1981) Input Hypothesis states, acquisition occurs when L2 learners receive comprehensible input (*i+1*), *i* representing language competence and *+1* representing input above this level. Students need to be challenged, but only slightly beyond their levels. Therefore, educators must keep in mind that the Interaction Hypothesis' strategies, i.e., both the input and output, should not exceed the *+1* needed to help language learners grow.

CONCLUSION

Considering Long's (1996) statement " [Interaction] facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (pp. 451-452) in juxtaposition with the three examples presented in this paper, it is clear how the interaction between the NS and NNS accomplished this.

First, in example one, the NS focused on or gave "selective attention" to the fact that he eats better because he does not eat so much prepackaged foods. The NNS could have then inferred from the NS's statement that prepackaged food is unhealthy, whether or not the NNS understood the word "prepackaged." In example two, the NS elaborated on his original answer by providing the NNS with an example: "We don't eat steak as much as we used to." The use of the example did two things: 1) It helped the NNS better understand the NS's point, and 2) it showed the NNS how examples may be used to bring about comprehension.

Lastly, we saw how the NS modified his input to connect to the NNS at the NNS's comprehension level. The NS and NNS accomplished comprehensible input/output because the NNS first requested clarification and the NS then provided clarification by recognizing the NNS level and avoided impeding comprehension through an explanation of nitrites by simply giving an example of a food that contains nitrites and a food he no longer eats. Therefore, in the three examples presented in this paper, we have seen how, in fact, it is very possible that clarification requests followed by elaboration and/or paraphrasing can bring about comprehensible input.

It is important, however, that educators consider both the Noticing Hypothesis and Input Hypothesis when incorporating clarification, elaboration, and/or paraphrasing in communicative activities. Though through such strategies learners have the opportunity to take control of their on learning and progress further, this can only occur if the elaboration and/or paraphrasing that follows the clarification request does not extend too far beyond the NNS's comprehension.

REFERENCES

Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New York: Pearson.

Brown, J. (2012). Feedback: What is it good for? *Humanising Language Teaching, 14*(5).

Byrne, D. (1976). *Teaching Oral Communication*. Hong Kong: Longman.

Carroll, S. (1999). Putting "input" in its proper place. *Second Language Research*, 15, 337-388.

Derwing, T. (1996). Elaborative detail: help or hindrance to the NNS listener? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 283-298.

Ehrlich, S., Avery, P., Yorio, C. (1989). Discourse structure and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11, 397-414.

Gass, S.M. Input and interaction. In C.J. Doughty and M.H. Long (Eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Gass, S. M., and Mackey, A. (2007). Input, interaction, and output in second language acquisition. In B. VanPatten and J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 175-199). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hall, G. (2011). *Exploring English language teaching: Language in action*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hatch, E.M. (1978) 'Discourse analysis and second language acquisition', in E.M. Hatch (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition: A Book of Readings*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House. pp. 401–35.

Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction, and second language acquisition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 379, 259-278.

Long, M. H. (1983). Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation and negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics*, 4 (2), 126-141.

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. Ritchie and T Bhatia (eds), *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition.* San Diego: Academic Press, 413-468.

Loschky, L. (1994). Comprehensible input and second language acquisition: What is the relationship. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 303-323.

McDonagh, J. & McDonagh, S. (2008). Learning to talk, talking to learn. In J. Marsh and E. Hallet (Eds.) *Desirable literacies: approaches to language and literacy in the early years.* (2nd ed.) (pp. 1-17). London: Sage.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The Role of Consciousness in Second Language Learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11,* 129-158.

Doi, T. (2014). Reconsidering the Noticing Hypothesis. *Accents Asia, 6(2), pp.14-24.*

Reconsidering the Noticing Hypothesis

Taeko Doi[1]

Globist English School

ABSTRACT

In acquiring second language speaking skills, the Noticing Hypothesis claims that the learners need to notice the gap between what learners can say in their inter-language and what they want to say in the target language. This paper deals with three questions which arose from my teaching practice about the hypothesis: At what point during the time of articulation does noticing occur? What conditions allow the learners to notice the gap? Are there any unnoticeable formal elements? The review of the literature shows that learners can notice the gap only when they have sufficient grammar knowledge, enough time to monitor their production, and the intention to review their own production. Second, while phonological and morphological errors are easily noticed, major structures of the utterance are unable to be noticed and are not restructured. Third, content words are more easily attended to than function words. Finally, exactly when the noticing can occur in one articulation is left unmentioned in the Noticing Hypothesis, namely at the onset or in the middle of or after the articulation. Based on these findings it can be concluded that noticing can occur only under certain conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Quite a few SLA theories have been introduced over the past years. Among them is the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986), which posits that

[1] Taeko Doi received an MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University and MA in Education from Rikkkyo University. Her interests include: writing training through reading and listening, speaking training through writing based on reading and listening. Correspondence should be sent to Taeko Doi, taeko@globist.co.jp

noticing the gap in language form between the target language (TL) and inter-language (IL) leads to second language acquisition (SLA), and when the gap is noticed, it becomes intake. In other words, through noticing the gap and then closing it, learners become able to acquire the second language. The notion of the Noticing Hypothesis has been accepted in the community of SLA; however, in applying this theory to classroom practice, three questions arise. First, when do learners notice the gap? Is it before their articulation, in the course of articulation, or after that? Also, are the learners able to notice the gap under any condition? Lastly, are the features of noticed formal elements in the gap noticeable by all learners at every level? This paper reconsiders the Noticing Hypothesis, looking for the answers to the three questions above, in the hope that teachers can better apply the knowledge from the Noticing Hypothesis to our classroom practice.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Noticing Hypothesis

The Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) offers three major claims: "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning" (Schmidt, 1994, p.17), "what must be attended to and noticed is not just the input in a global sense but whatever features of the input are relevant for the target system", and "attention is what allows speakers to become aware of a mismatch or gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce, as well as between what they produce and what proficient target language speakers produce" (Schmidt, 2001, p.6). It has been pointed out that the main focus of the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) has been on whether conscious attention is necessary or not for the acquisition of the targeted form of input (Robinson, 1995). This is what Schmidt (1990) claims in his own words, "If noticed, it becomes intake" (p.139).

With regard to whether the auditory input processing does or does not require consciousness in one's brain, cognitive studies provide some theories that may help us understand how auditory input and consciousness are connected. According to Anderson (2009) auditory input information first comes into an auditory sensory store called echoic memory only for a brief period of time. Sams, Hari, Rif and Knuutila (1993) note that information in the sensory store is easily lost within 10 seconds unless attended to. According to Baddeley (2002), information in an auditory sensory store then gets into the working

memory, which has a limited capacity with a memory span of four chunks. Here, important information is selected by attention. When the capacity of the working memory is filled, recently input information pushes out old information, which is then lost forever. After being attended to and rehearsed in the working memory, the information is stored in long-term memory, where it remains in reserve and available for the learners' future use of language. Thus, attention promotes learning.

Critical Views on the Noticing Hypothesis

The Noticing Hypothesis has gained positive attention; however, it has received objections as well. The first three are on whether conscious attention is necessary or not for the acquisition of the targeted form of input. As stated in the previous section, Schmidt (1994) claims that input process needs consciousness, while Tomline and Villa (1994) do not agree with that. Also Gass et al. (2003) demonstrate that noticing does not take effect in the SLA process in some areas of language. Furthermore, it shows some diminishing effect on the proficiency of advanced learners. They investigated how focused attention takes effect in three linguistic areas: syntax, morphosyntax, and lexicon, and also on proficiency in different points of language development. The result showed that attention had the greatest effect on syntax and the least on lexicon. With regard to proficiency, attention had the most diminishing effect on advanced level learners and the least on beginner level learners. The third objection is posed by Truscott (1998), who argues that, "the acquisition of metalinguistic knowledge is tied to noticing, while development of competence is not" (p.124). Truscott claims that both conscious and unconscious knowledge play equally important roles in the study of language and not every aspect of second language acquisition needs noticing. This view is also supported by Cross (2002).

The other criticism comes from a cognitive perspective by Tomline and Villa (1994). They express their doubts about the use of a diary study for the purpose of researching how noticing operates during the course of learners' L2 input processing. They point out that the cognitive processing of L2 input occurs in brief spans of time such as seconds or even parts of seconds, while the diary study encompasses a large span of time such as several weeks.

As reviewed, the focus of most of the discussions, either negative or positive, is whether SLA does or does not require conscious processing of incoming information. Three questions still remain: When are learners able to notice the gap? What conditions allow learners to notice the gap? And what language features can be noticed depending on the developmental levels of learners? In order to explore the answers to the questions,

self-monitoring theories will be visited.

Three Questions about the Noticing Hypothesis

At What Point during Articulation does Noticing Take Place?

The self-correction process, as part of closing the gap between the TL and IL, is tied to learners' attention on language form in their own production; however, the time when noticing takes place is left unmentioned in the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993; 1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986). With regard to the timing of noticing, there are three levels of monitoring introduced: covert self-correction, overt self-correction, and online planning. Covert self-correction is introduced by Green, and overt self-correction by Hecht (1993), and online planning by Ellis (2005). Covert editing or self-correction occurs in a planning process at the pre-articulatory level, while overt editing or self-correction takes place at the post-articulatory level, and online planning is conducted in the middle of articulation. Ellis more precisely presents two levels of planning: pre-task planning and online planning. The first one consists of actions taken to plan the propositional content and the linguistic formulations of a message, which precedes actual articulation and can be taken as equivalent to covert self-correction, whereas online planning involves the within-task planning, which takes place during the articulation. The Noticing Hypothesis does not clearly tell us which level of monitoring is required to notice the gap in formal elements between the TL and IL.

What Conditions Allow L2 Learners to Notice the Gap?

Noticing, or self-monitoring, requires certain conditions (Krashen, 1985). In order to self-monitor output learners have to have explicit grammatical knowledge. Also conscious linguistic knowledge functions as a monitor and the monitor can take place under certain conditions that are present when there is enough time to reflect and when learners have explicit knowledge of the rule. Morrison and Low (1984) support this view that monitoring occurs only when the communication events allow the speakers to have sufficient time for doing online planning. Another condition for monitoring is that learners monitor their output in terms of how their linguistic forms successfully convey their intended meaning (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000). In other words, monitoring for meaning is a necessary condition for monitoring form. Another significant condition for monitoring is learners' intention to monitor their IL, but unless learners find their IL problematic, they do not attend to their grammatical form while they are exposed to input (Izumi and Bigelow, 2000).

Schmidt says, "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning" (Schmidt, 1994, p.17). However, monitor theory suggests that noticing does not always occur to every language learner. Grammatical knowledge is a presupposition, and time, intention to communicate, and intention to improve the IL are necessary to notice the gap between the TL and IL.

Are there Any Unnoticeable Formal Elements?

Learners at different linguistic development levels manage to monitor their own L2 oral output in different ways. The more advanced L2 learners become, the more capable they are of correcting a large percentage of their own errors (Green and Hecht, 1993). Advanced L2 learners monitor and then self-repair discourse-level errors more frequently than pre-intermediate learners. The more advanced learners notice complex errors and then correct as opposed to beginners who focus on simple errors (Van Hest, 1996). Also, L2 learners are unable to notice their own errors in every aspect of linguistic forms in their L2 output. Phonological and morphological errors are easily corrected, while major structures of the utterance cannot be restructured (Lennon, 1994). Content words are easier to attend to than function words (Poulise and Bongaerts, 1994).

Therefore, it can be concluded that there are some conditions which do not allow learners to notice the gap between the TL and Il. Also, there are some aspects of language form and language developmental stages in which learners do not readily notice the gap in form. Namely, noticing does not guarantee a full range of SLA because noticing only occurs under certain conditions. How are these aspects covered in classroom teaching and how can teachers best support learners to promote noticing the gap between the TL and IL?

How grammatical knowledge can be best taught in a classroom is reviewed in the next section.

Implications for Teaching

As previously reviewed, there are certain aspects learners do not notice in practical L2 conversation, especially for learners in the early stages of their language development. Then, learners need to be provided grammatical knowledge in the classroom in order to be able to be aware of formal elements in communicative tasks. On the other hand, advanced learners need to be exposed to more communicative input, as they are more ready to notice formal elements both in their input and output when they have sufficient time and intention to

practice self-monitoring. In order to enhance the learners' noticing of formal elements in the oral production through communicative tasks, learners need to be properly scaffolded in the classroom setting.

One way to provide intermediate level students with scaffolding can be the focus-on-form approach, which helps learners to notice formal elements in their oral production by shifting their attention from meaning to form in the middle of their speech production. Focus-on-form is a method that has been used in recent years to facilitate the learners' noticing of formal elements in the IL. This method entails a focus on meaning with attention to form arising out of the communicative activity (Ellis, 2006). Historically, focus-on-form has arisen from the reflection on and criticism of immersion programs such as those conducted in Canada. The students in immersion programs fail to acquire proper verb tense markings even after many years of study (Swain, 2003). Swain (1995) proposes the need for L2 learners to do more than simply engage in communication, such as attending to form in order to acquire second language competence.

Another way to teach grammatical knowledge to elementary level students is focus-on-forms, which is instruction in activities which are directed intensively at a single grammatical structure (Ellis, 2006). It is a traditional approach based on explicit explanation and drill-like practice, and its drawback is that the focus-on-forms approach if used by itself is unlikely to result in SLA with fluent and accurate communication ability (Ellis, Basturkme, et al., 2002). This approach has much less evidence to show that it results in learning that enables learners to perform the target form in their oral free production (Ellis, Baturkmen, et al., 2002). In other words, declarative knowledge needs to be turned into procedural knowledge in order for L2 learners to use it properly. Teaching grammatical points without a context requires practical application.

There is a third view on how formal elements should be taught in the classroom. DeKeyser (1997) claims that instruction with explicit knowledge followed by communicative practice is more effective on the grounds that grammar knowledge should be taught explicitly and discretely, as it is gradually learned through automatization of explicit knowledge.

As reviewed, knowledge of formal elements needs to be taught explicitly in order for the learners to clearly see the gap between the TL and IL especially for elementary level learners; however, formal knowledge by itself is not sufficient for learners to become fluent speakers. Learners need to be ready to notice the gap between the TL and IL, and further practice is needed in order to acquire fluent speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

This paper has reconsidered whether the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990; 1993;1994; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) is valid for the SLA process and has concluded that it does not guarantee a full range of SLA. Current research shows that there are some aspects of language form and developmental stages in which learners do not readily notice the gap between their IL and the TL. Furthermore, major structures of their utterance tend not to be noticed, although phonological and morphological errors are easily noticed. Also, non-salient features such as function words tend not to be noticed, while salient features such as information words are noticed.

With regard to learners' developmental stages, elementary level students notice few formal elements, while more advanced students are able to notice more complex formal elements, and consequently self-repair when they have sufficient time and intention to do it. The studies reviewed in this paper show that noticing does not always occur in some formal aspects of L2 for some learners at certain language developmental levels. In practice, the noticing does not guarantee that input becomes intake for every L2 learner.

In order to effectively bring formal elements to learners' attention, it may be necessary to provide scaffolding based on the learners' language developmental levels. Instruction with explicit knowledge followed by communicative practice can be effective for elementary level leaners, focus-on-form for intermediate level learners, and maximized exposure to the TL through communicative tasks for advanced level learners.

The noticed formal elements vary depending on the language developmental levels of the learners. Also, there are some formal elements unable to be noticed by the learners at certain developmental levels. The act of noticing the gap between what the learners can say and what they want to say requires considerable time and effort on the part of both students and their teachers.

Future Study

This discussion of the Noticing Hypothesis leads to several areas of future study.

First, since, originally, the Noticing Hypothesis was based on oral output and oral input only, it would be important to expand research to focus on the application of the Noticing Hypothesis to the gap between written output and visual input. For example, the role of time available to learners needs to be explored since some findings say that learners self-monitor their own production when they have sufficient time.

Second, task-based learning activities which employ the Noticing Hypothesis that students find fun and enjoyable need to be developed, especially for those who already have substantial grammatical knowledge. Intermediate and advanced-level learners more effectively notice the gap in formal elements than elementary level learners. If learners enjoy working on finding and closing the gap between the IL and TL, they are likely to learn their L2 more effectively both inside and outside the classroom.

Finally, new learning activities based on the Noticing Hypothesis need to be developed not only for students but also for their teachers. L2 teachers who become familiar with and enjoy the learning method and who improve their language fluency are more likely to become better role models and teachers for their students.

REFERENCES

Anderson, J. R. (2009). *Cognitive psychology and its implications* (7th ed.). New York: Worth Publishers.

Cross, J. (2002). 'Noticing' in SLA: Is it a valid concept? *TESL-EJ, 6*(3). Retrieved from http://tesl-ej.org/ej23/a2.html

Baddeley, A. (2003). Working memory and language: an overview. *Journal of communication disorders, 36*(3), 189-208

DeKeyser, R. (1997). Beyond explicit rule learning. Automatizing second language morphosyntax. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19*, 195-221.

Ellis, R. (2005). Principles of instructed language learning. *System*, *33*(2), 209-224. doi:10.1016/j.system.2004.12.006

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 83-107. doi:10.2307/40264512

Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., & Loewen, S. (2002). Doing focus-on-form. *System*, *30*(4), 419-432. doi:10.1016/S0346-251X(02)00047-7

Gass, S., Svetics, I., & Lemelin, S. (2003). Differential effects of attention. *Language Learning*, *53*(3), 497-546. doi:10.1111/1467-9922.00233

Green, P. S., & Hecht, K. (1993). Pupil self-correction in oral communication in English as a foreign language. *System*, *21*(2), 151-163. doi:10.1016/0346-251X(93)90038-I

Izumi, S., & Bigelow, M. (2000). Does output promote noticing and second language acquisition? *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(2), 239-278. doi:10.2307/3587952

Krashen, S. (1985). The input hypothesis: Issues and implications. NY: Longman.

Lennon, P. (1994). Self-correction and error in advanced learner spoken narrative. In G. Bartelt (Ed.), *The dynamics of language processes. Essay in honor of Hans W. Dechert*. Tubingen, Germany: Gunter Narr Verlag.

Morrison, M., & Low, G. (1984). Monitoring and the second language learner. In Richards, J.C. and Schidt, R. W. (Eds.), *Language and Communication* (pp. 228-250). London: Longman.

Poulisse, N., & Bongaerts, T. (1994). First language use in second language production. *Applied Linguistics, 15,* 36-57.

Robinson, P. (1995). Attention, memory, and the "Noticing" Hypothesis. *Language Learning*, *45*(2), 283-331. doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1995.tb00441.x

Sams, M., Hari, R., Rif, J., & Knuutila, J. (1993). The human auditory sensory memory trace persists about 10s: Neuromagnetic evidence. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 5, 363-370

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, *11*(2), 129-58.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Awareness and second language acquisition. *Annual Reviews of Applied Linguistics, 13*, 206-226.

Schmidt, R. (1994). Deconstructing consciousness in search of useful definitions for applied linguistics. AILA Review, 11, 11-26

Schmidt, R. W.(2001). Attention. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Cognition and second language instruction* (pp.3-32). New York: Cambridge University Press

Schmidt, R., & Frota, S.N. (1986). Developing basic conversational ability in a second language: a case study of an adult learner of Portuguese. In R. R. Day (Ed.), *Talking to learn: Conversation in Second language acquisition*. (pp.237-326). Rowley, MA: Newbury Hous

Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidelhofer (Eds.), *Principle and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 125-144). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (2003). French immersion research in Canada: recent contributions to SLA and applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *20*, 199-212. doi:10.1017/S0267190500200123

Tomlin, R. S., & Villa, V. (1994). Attention in cognitive science and second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *16*(2), 183-203.

Truscott, J. (1998). Noticing in second language acquisition: a critical review. *Second*

language Research, *14*(2), 103-135. doi:10.1191/026765898674803209

Van Hest, E. (1996). Self-repair as a measure of language proficiency. Paper presented at the 18th Annual Language Testing colloquium in Tampere. Finland.

Nishimura, C. (2014). Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of English as an international language.
Accents Asia, 6(2), pp. 25-39.

Japanese EFL Learners' Perceptions of English as an International Language: The Gap between the Societal Demands and the Classroom Realities

Chie Nishimura[1]
Koka-gakuen Junior and Senior High school, Tokyo

ABSTRACT

Although EFL learners are now being exposed to various types of English that are used in actual international communication, students of EFL in Japan have not yet been widely exposed to concepts such as EIL (English as an International Language), World Englishes, and Globish. This is due to the fact that in English Language Teaching in Japan, there seems to remain a preference for English spoken by native-speakers, and a lack of awareness amongst students as well as teachers of how diverse the English language really is. Currently, EFL learning contexts in Japan do not necessarily expose learners to the type of English that is recognized at the societal level as a tool for international communication. In this article, I explore Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of English, and address several problems in Japanese classrooms with respect to reconciling the gap between English as a tool for international communication and English as an academic subject. I conclude with suggestions on how to close the gap between societal demands and the realities that exist in Japanese schools.

INTRODUCTION

With the rise of globalization accompanying the strong demand for English as a fundamental tool for international communication, the concepts of EIL (English as an international language), ELF (English as a lingua franca), and WE (World Englishes)

---

[1] Chie Nishimura has been teaching English at a private junior and senior high school in Tokyo. She received an MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University in May 2013. Her research interests include teaching English as an International Language in classrooms. Correspondence should be sent to chienishimura330@gmail.com

are spreading worldwide. Consequently, new varieties of localized English are now emerging and used worldwide for the purpose of international communication. In terms of Japan, however, despite the increase in opportunities to encounter various types of English in different domains, English spoken by non-native speakers is not perceived positively by Japanese learners overall (Chiba, Matsuura, & Yamamoto, 1995). Such perception might be due to classroom practices in Japanese EFL (English as a foreign language) contexts, which have been sometimes criticized for their "insufficiency of contact hours, lack of intensity, and few chances to make use of what children have learned" (Yano, 2009, p. 246). Whereas the Japanese society, especially business sector, demands *functional* English used as a communication tool, school institutions seem to present it just as a school subject for meeting high-stakes exams. In other words, there is a gap between "the stated goals of educational policies" which seems to reflect the societal demands on the one hand and "actual teaching practice" on the other (Kikuchi & Browne, 2009, p. 172).

Regarding this gap between inside and outside of the classroom, Matsuda (2009) has argued that although English proficiency as an essential skill for Japanese people is demanded quite strongly in the business sector, "it is played down" in the educational sector (p. 37). The gap between these two sectors might imply the difference in terms of what aspect of English is valued; whereas the former may value the functional aspect of English, the latter might value the linguistic or cultural assets believed to be involved in this language.

McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008) have mentioned that "the distinction between English-medium instruction versus learning English as a subject often resulted in different standards of pedagogy, learning and proficiency for different sectors of society" (p. 182). Indeed, recently, more and more Japanese parents are sending their children to English conversation schools on the ground that these schools "provide language instruction that differs from that based on the grammar-translation method that is traditionally used at school" (Seargeant, 2005, p. 335). This phenomenon can be viewed as a criticism toward Japanese EFL classrooms in schools, where English is presented as an *ends* which is only assessed on high-stakes exams, rather than a *tool* for the international communication.

According to Seargeant (2008), people's perceptions of a language are "framed by public discourse about the language" (p. 122). That is, how Japanese people perceive English is constructed by the representation of English in overall society. Furthermore, in EFL contexts where English exposure outside the classroom is limited, the impact of how school institutions treat English is significant. Given this strong influence of classroom practices on learners' perceptions of English, there is no doubt that teachers need to be more sensitive to the existing gap between what the society demands and what the classroom provides.

Thus, in order to reduce the gap between the societal demands and the classroom realities, this article attempts to unpack the complexities of Japanese EFL classrooms, in which Japanese learners are not necessarily presented with English as a tool for international communication. First, I explore Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of

English by paying attention to how they perceive English spoken by native speakers and non-native speakers respectively. Then, I focus on classroom practices which have a great impact on learners' perceptions of English and address problems that hinder innovative changes in Japanese EFL classrooms. Following that, I conclude with pedagogical implications in terms of how teachers can increase learners' awareness that various types of English are now being used internationally and should be equally tolerated as they all play a significant role in international communication.

JAPANESE PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH AS A LANGUAGE OF THE INNER CIRCLE

Under globalization in which "a multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdepencies and exchanges" (Steger, 2003, p. 13) is taking place, a common tool is essential for international communication. With economic and technological progress, Japan is no exception; more people have encountered various types of English on various occasions, which would result in the overall social demand for EIL, or *English for international communication*. According to Yano (2001), *English for international communication*, which seems fundamentally equivalent to EIL, refers to English that is "free from the sociocultural constraints of any English-speaking society's norms of communicative behavior" and that "accommodates any varieties of English as far as they are comprehensible to the educated speakers of any other varieties" (p.129).

However, despite the fact that English is not just spoken by native speakers, most Japanese seem to regard English as a language of the people in the Inner Circle under Kachru's classification (i.e. the people speaking English as a native language, such as in the U.S., and the U.K.). Indeed, the previous study on Japanese learners has shown that native speakers' English tends to be perceived as *the standard* and that the closer to native-English, the better (Evans & Imai, 2011; Rivers, 2011; Yoshikawa, 2005). As Rivers (2011) has argued, the English language represented by native English speakers plays "an influential role in the shaping of an idealized linguistic model within Japan" (p. 388).

Contrary to this strong association of English with the Inner Circle, English spoken by non-natives, or the people in "the Outer or Expanding Circle" under Kachru's classification (i.e. the people speaking English for intra-national communication, or people speaking it as a second / foreign language), is not perceived positively (Chiba et al. 1995; Matsuda, 2003b). According to Shibata's (2009) study, JTEs (Japanese teachers of English) at senior high school are reluctant to approve of non-native ALTs (assistant language teachers from the Outer or Expanding Circle) in terms of teaching English in classrooms even though their English is grammatically correct. Such reluctance seems to be derived from the pedagogical view point that

learners should be provided with a *role-model* input (i.e. native speakers' English). That is, as Yano (2009) has pointed out, the "functional clarity and international intelligibility" of newly emerging varieties of English particularly used in the Expanding Circle has not got enough attention in Japan (p. 248).

The JTEs' preference for native speakers' English seem to be consistent with the Japanese learners' perceptions of English; Yoshikawa's (2005) study on his university students in the department of World Englishes has shown that even though students learn about the concept of WE (World Englishes) as a requirement and attend the language seminars held in the Outer Circle countries, they have "a stronger preference for traditional English varieties" while showing "lower tolerance of New Englishes" (p. 360). Considering that these students have more opportunities to know the concept of WE by being exposed to various types of English than students majoring other subjects, this finding may suggest that the association of English with the Inner Circle has taken firm hold among Japanese people.

This tendency to regard English as the language of the Inner Circle could be interpreted to mean that "nonnative speakers are viewed as lacking skills in comparison with native English-speaking teachers" (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008, p. 183). The people's indifference or intolerance of English in the Outer or Expanding Circle is assumed to be affected by the lack of conscious exposure to English spoken by non-natives. In other words, classroom practices in school settings, which seem to unconsciously provide native speakers' English, might contribute to the present reality that the concept of EIL, which attempts to "legitimize a pluricentric view of English" (McKay, 2010, p. 91), has not yet been ingrained among Japanese people.

Outside school contexts, however, the demand for EIL seems to be growing as globalization proceeds. Thus, what is occurring in the outside world is not reflected in the Japanese EFL classroom at school. If "the diversity of Englishes owes much to the ongoing contact among diverse users of Englishes with users of other Englishes and languages" (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2010, p. 373), the educational emphasis in current Japanese EFL classrooms appear to be contradictory to what is occurring worldwide. It seems that *homogeneity* rather than *diversity* is being promoted at school. In this sense, our current EFL classrooms should be criticized for the lack of opportunities for learners to know what varieties of English are being used in actual international communication. Given such insufficient exposure to diversity of English in the classroom, it could be a natural consequence that the perception of English as the property of people in the Inner Circle is further fortified among Japanese people.

This lack of consideration about the concept of EIL in the classroom practices is partly due to high-stakes examinations such as universities' entrance examinations. Indeed, in order to put more emphasis on the communicative aspects of English, there have been some changes in terms of the format or assessment approach, such as the introduction of listening tests to the National Center Test since 2006, and the use of essay-writing or face-to-face interviews for the recommended admission test, or so-called AO (Admission Office) test taking place in some universities. However, these are not enough to change the overall tendency to mainly assess examinees' linguistic

knowledge represented by grammatical knowledge and reading comprehension. As a consequence, in order to get learners ready for these tests, most teachers end up in using a conventional *yakudoku* or a grammar-translation approach while they feel the necessity of teaching English for communicative purposes. This pressure to get learners ready for high-stakes tests prevent them from implementing CLT (communicative language teaching), which the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is trying to promote in its government language education policy for the enhancement of communicative skills in English among secondary students.

These classroom practices not only contradict the societal demands, but invites learners' mistrust towards EFL classrooms at school. In Kikuchi's (2009) study, one college student criticized the *yakudoku* method, looking back on the lessons at his senior high school, saying that this conventionally used method deprived learners of "any chance to engage in genuine communication in the target language" (p. 466). This student's criticism of classroom practices implies that the existing discrepancy between the *demand* from society or even learners and the *supply* from the EFL classrooms is an issue that must be addressed immediately. If the use of the *yakudoku* method is mainly due to high-stakes examinations, changes should be considered in designing the tests. As Matsuda (2003a) has suggested, the innovative mode of assessment which can assess communicative effectiveness in an international context (e.g. role play, oral presentation) "may encourage students to focus on language functions that include but go beyond grammatical accuracy" (p. 724). Such innovative changes should be made in the high-stakes exams in the future.

Given that various types of English are currently used in international communication, efforts to raise learners' awareness of various types of English should be immediately considered. As Chiba et al (1995) have stated, it is "a rather arduous task to arouse students' attention to world Englishes" (p. 77). However, the classroom reality is quite opposite. Matsuda (2003b) has pointed out that most of the English used in teaching materials is American or British English, and that examples of English used in the Outer or Expanding Circle is "absent" in the main textbooks (p. 438). As Matsuda (2002) has argued, unless there is any attempt to change these phenomena, the absence of diversity of English would lead learners to internalize "some stereotypes and prejudices against part of the world that they were not even familiar with" (p. 437).

So far, this article has explored Japanese learners' tendency to regard English as a language of the Inner Circle, and has pointed out that this tendency might be attributed to EFL classroom practices at school. From the necessity of preparing learners for high-stakes exams, English tends to be presented as a chunk of de-contextualized knowledge isolated from the English used in actual communication, and with the overemphasis on native speakers' English in most cases. This absence of exposure to various types of English and the lack of association between English outside the classroom and English inside the classroom could be the reason why the concept of EIL has not yet permeated Japanese people.

In the next section, given the significant impact of classroom practices on learners' perceptions of English, I explore the mechanism of how learning contexts

influence learners' perceptions more in depth, especially by focusing on 1) the role of teachers, 2) teaching materials, and 3) teaching methods.

THE IMPACT OF LEARNING CONTEXTS ON JAPANESE LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH

This section attempts to explore the mechanism of how language classroom practices, from which learners get most of the input of a target language, have an impact on their perceptions of English. A language classroom is, so to speak, a *community* where learners can acquire knowledge through interaction with others. It could be the very place where what Duff (2010) calls *language socialization* takes place. Duff (2010) defines *language socialization* as a process of newcomers' learning linguistic or social norms of a specific community "on the basis of observations and interactions with more experienced members of that community" (p. 428). When it comes to English classrooms, *newcomers* (i.e. learners) are expected to acquire both linguistic knowledge (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) and non-linguistic knowledge about English (e.g. how, where, why, or by whom English is used) through interacting with *more experienced members* (i.e. teachers or other classmates with experience of using English).

Besides serving as a place for acquiring knowledge, language classrooms are also a place for influencing learners' perceptions of English. Seargeant (2008) has mentioned that the reason why someone wants to learn the language relates to "how they perceive the language" and that these perceptions are "framed by public discourse about the language" (p. 122). In EFL settings, where English input is scarce outside the classroom, the public discourse which frames people's perceptions seems to have a close relation with school education. Therefore, whether learners can find any meaning in learning English is significantly affected by what their language classrooms are like.

Thus, given that EFL classrooms are a place for language socialization as well as for the shaping of learners' perception of English, key variables of classroom practices, such as 1) the role of teachers, 2) the representation of English in teaching materials, and 3) the teaching methods, are worth analyzing in exploring the gap between the societal demands and the actual classroom practices.

The Role of Teachers

Teachers are responsible for designing, managing, and leading classroom practices based on both the national and the school curriculums. However, as Sakui (2004) has pointed out, teachers are "not transparent entities who fulfill curriculum plans and goals as prescribed by their authors, but who filter, digest, and implement the curriculum depending upon their beliefs and environmental contexts" (p. 155). In

Japanese schools, where teacher-centered classrooms are still main-stream, the impact of how teachers teach or behave in classrooms on learners is quite significant. Sometimes, how teachers manage the classroom would be taken more seriously than what is stated in the curriculum. Indeed, Kikuchi's (2009) study on learners' motivation has shown that an individual teacher's behavior in the classroom is the most significant factor for depriving learners of their learning motivation. This finding may imply that teachers' self-awareness of their own impact on learners and their confidence in their rationale for their own teaching should be seriously addressed.

In EFL settings, not only the exposure to English outside the classroom is limited, but also the majority of input available to learners in the classroom is, in many cases, determined based on teachers' selection. However, as Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) have pointed out, although such a selection must be made after much consideration about "learner goals, teachers' background, local attitudes toward English(es), and the material availability," the reality is that "American or British English is selected simply because that is the way it has been, and their appropriateness for a particular course of action in some contexts is rarely questioned" (p. 338). Considering the significant impact of classroom practices on learners' perceptions, teachers' own language and literacy practices, as well as ideologies in the classroom might sometimes "prevent students from participating more fully, equitably and competently" (Duff, 2010, p. 447). Thus, in designing and implementing classroom practices, teachers should be more conscious of their own beliefs about English, particularly about how tolerant they are of *Englishes* deviant from the English in the Inner Circle, and what kind of attitude they would like their learners to have towards exposure to a wider range of English.

Teaching Materials

In addition to teachers' beliefs or ideologies about English, the teaching materials, which are, a major resource of knowledge to most EFL learners, greatly affect learners' perceptions of English as well (Schneer, 2007; Matsuda, 2002b). How English is represented or what kinds of English are provided in the textbooks may have a great influence on learners' perceptions of English because "classroom lessons tend to be constructed closely around the textbooks" (Matsuda, 2002b, p.185).

However, it has been pointed out that many textbooks involve problems in terms of how they represent the English language (Cook, 1999; Matsuda, 2002a; Matsuda, 2002b; Matsuda, 2003a; Schneer, 2007). Matsuda (2002a) has criticized the treatment of English in major textbooks endorsed by MEXT. She has stated that "the current representation of English in textbooks is problematic from the perspective of *international understanding*" which MEXT itself has attempted to ingrain among Japanese people (p. 438). According to her, major textbooks in Japan tend to focus "almost exclusively on the Inner Circle" by making native speakers play key roles whereas the use of English as an international language in the Outer Circle is *absent* (Matsuda, 2002a, p. 437). Her other study on state-endorsed textbooks, particularly the ones for the 7th graders, has shown more specific findings that the number of characters from the Outer or Expanding Circle other than Japan is limited, and that although

Japanese characters outnumber inner circle characters, "they produce fewer words" (Matsuda, 2002b, p.189).

A similar argument can be found in Cook's (1999) argument about fundamental differences lying between native and non-native speakers. He has stated that the status of L2 *users*, or the English speakers *not* in the Inner Circle, is in need of redress in that "they are virtually never represented positively" (Cook, 1999, p. 200). Thus, the overall negligence or intolerance of the wider use of English by major Japanese state-endorsed textbooks has been pointed out.

In addition to this lack of presentation of the diversity of English, textbooks by MEXT have also been said to reinforce the discourse of nationalism or *Nihonjinron*, leading to the tendency to regard English as the language of *others* (Hashimoto, 2000; Schneer, 2007). The concept of *Nihonjinron* is the idea that Japanese people should recognize their national identity and enhance their own *Japaneseness* in order to be internationally understood, especially by the Western countries. Schneer's (2007) study on major state-endorsed textbooks in Japan has revealed that the textbooks tend to "locate Japan in opposition to a Western counterpart or constituency" probably for the purpose of raising the students' self-awareness of Japanese identity (p. 605). However, as he has pointed out, the stronger self-awareness of the national identity would lead to the reinforcement of "us-and them" mentality. In other words, English might continue to be regarded as a language of *others*, not as *our* own language.

Therefore, the insufficient provision of information on the use of English in the Outer or Expanding Circle as well as the representation of English as if it were the language of the West or *others* in the textbooks reinforce learners' association of English with the Inner Circle. Unless these textbooks present English as a language which looks familiar, relevant, and essential to the students, it might be difficult for them to find any meaning and become motivated in learning English. However, it is true that tremendous time is required for any changes to happen in the representation of textbooks. For one thing, how the textbook represents English might significantly depend on how English is perceived by the textbook writers, who are not necessarily familiar with the concept of EIL. Besides this, many bureaucratic procedures should be taken to make any revision in the nationally-endorsed textbooks. Therefore, in terms of how to overcome those deficits about the current textbooks, McKay & Bokhorst-Heng's (2008) have made the realistic suggestion, stating that teachers should "achieve more diversity in the uses and users of English by supplementing the textbook" by assessing their representation to see what is missing in the textbook in terms of exposure to the diversity of English (p. 189). Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) have made a similar argument that rather than relying exclusively on the existent materials, "teachers can supplement them with textual, audio, and visual samples of other varieties of English" (p. 338).

Teaching Methods

Other than teachers' belief or ideology about English and the teaching materials, teaching approaches could also be an influential factor for learners' perceptions of

English. As mentioned in the previous section, although the MEXT tries to promote CLT in its language education policy, the reality is that a *yakudoku* or grammar-translation remains as the *de facto* method most commonly used by JTEs in the classroom.

Indeed, this gap in teaching methods between the stated curriculum and the actual implementation in the classroom might reflect a push-pull relationship between *jitsuyo Eigo* or practical English (i.e. the one which regards English as a communication tool, valuing a functional aspect of English) on the one hand, and *kyoyo Eigo* or liberal arts English (i.e. the one which regards English as a subject of academic study) on the other. It has been said that the current MEXT's promotion of CLT is a response to the strong critics from the business sector advocating *jitsuyo Eigo* that the English taught at school institutions is useless (Yanase, 2006, p. 37-38).

Despite this social pressure to put more emphasis on practical English, the preference for the *yakudoku* method over CLT in the classroom remains entrenched for various reasons. Sakui (2004) has pointed out that "grammar-oriented entrance examinations, time constraints, classroom management problems, and rigid curriculum schedules" are the factors behind the use of the *yakudoku* method (p. 162). Besides these factors, Nishino & Watanabe (2008) have added that teachers have low English proficiency and lack confidence in speaking. They have related teachers' tendency to resist CLT methods to their dignity, stating that "their authority might be tarnished if they make mistakes in front of their students" (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008, p.134).

In addition, it is also possible that the concept of CLT itself has not yet become accepted amongst most of the teachers. As Kikuchi & Browne (2009) have mentioned, "the severe lack of teacher training" may have brought about teachers' little understanding about what CLT is, leading to reliance on the *yakudoku* method (p.175). Given that most of JTEs learned English through the *yakudoku* method as learners, it could be quite natural that they teach in the same way as they were taught unless they are provided with any opportunities to know about other teaching approaches. However, as Matsuda & Friedrich (2011) have stated, "it would be unfortunate if teachers resorted back to their familiar ways of teaching not because they believed they were effective but because they were unsure what else could be done" (p. 333).

Classroom practices along with the overuse of traditional teaching methods might be inviting mistrust toward school English education. As previously mentioned, Kikuchi's (2009) study has shown that the "grammar-translation method used in the instruction" is one factor for learners' demotivation (p. 466). However, there is also a contrasting finding with this; Matsuura et al's (2004) study has found out that while most students appear to believe that English education should aim toward teaching practical uses of English, "many express reluctance to participate in English-only classes" (p. 486). These findings imply that even though feeling the necessity of teaching or learning practical English, both teachers and learners have difficulty shifting from the method they have been familiar with to any other method which for them is unknown, and seems more challenging.

This implication involves an important issue: the necessity of always making the

rationale for a specific method explicit. Unless any reasonable and persuasive rationales are given, learners might not be fully engaged in learning. Since classroom language teachers are "the ones most familiar with local expectations regarding the roles of teachers and learners" (McKay, 2008, p. 113), a careful but strategic choice of a teaching method based on their comprehensive understanding about various teaching methods and their consideration about their own learners' needs and learning contexts should be necessary.

In summary, the overall Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of English and the impact of classroom practices (i.e. the teachers' roles, the teaching materials and the teaching methods) have been explored so far in this article, and it has been pointed out that Japanese EFL learners' tendency to regard English as the language of the Inner Circle might be mainly due to how English is taught in the EFL classrooms. Based on these findings, in the next section, pedagogical implications are discussed in order to consider how to overcome the gap between the societal demands and classroom realities, especially by focusing on what teachers should do to address their own classroom practices.

DISCUSSION

As explored so far, even though the concept of EIL is spreading worldwide, a tendency to associate English with the Inner Circle still exists among Japanese EFL learners, and this tendency might be particularly attributed to the classroom practices at school settings where the exposure of varieties of English is limited. If this learners' tendency is only derived from the lack of exposure to various types of Englishes, the solution could be "to increase the exposure to different varieties" and "more personal contact with people from other cultures, especially non-US/European" (Matsuda, 2003, p. 494).

However, it doesn't seem that it is just a matter of *quantity* of exposure. As Chiba et al. (1995) have pointed out, "unless the appreciation of diverse English varieties, especially non-native varieties, is endorsed, familiarity does not always affect positively Japanese subjects' attitudes toward non-native varieties" (p. 84). In other words, not only sufficient exposures to various types of English, but attempts to cultivate learners' respect toward the diversity are required for the concept of EIL to ingrain among Japanese EFL learners. Thus, as Matsuda & Friedrich (2011) have suggested, teachers should be responsible for increasing learners' "meta-knowledge about Englishes" by making it a lesson focus (p. 339).

In terms of imparting *meta-knowledge about Englishes* to learners and cultivating their respect toward various types of English, non-native English teachers could play an important role. Indeed, it has been said that learners may "prefer the fallible nonnative-speaker teacher who presents an achievable model" (Cook, 1999, p. 200). Varieties of English which non-native teachers use confidently in communication could give learners a chance to consider whether being a native speaker is really necessary to

become an EIL user.

This argument, on the other hand, is not reflected in the reality of the classroom. According to Matsuda (2003a), the majority of AETs (Assistant English teachers) recruited through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program is from the Inner-Circle (p. 720). Indeed, the current data from the JET program (2012) has shown that as of July 2012, out of 3,986 people recruited as ALTs through this program, the majority are from the Inner Circle countries (i.e. 2,232 from the U.S., 458 from Canada, 419 from the U.K., 242 from Australia, 237 from New Zealand, and 101 from Ireland). Although the number of AETs from the Outer Circle countries has been increasing, this data seems to reflect the overall tendency to prefer native-speakers' English as a role model.

In terms of "native-speaker authority," on which such recruitment prioritizing native-speakers is assumedly based, Matsuda (2003a) has stated that it "threatens to undermine Japanese learners' agency as EIL users" (p. 722). Rivers (2011) has also made a similar argument by saying that reliance upon the native-English speaker model would lead to Japan's inferiority complex, driven by "a failure to match up to an unrealistic, and wholly unsuitable standard" (p. 388). Thus, non-native English teachers including JTEs might be an important resource of varieties of English which learners can realistically seek for, and could play an important role. Therefore, English teachers should be worthwhile making diverse in terms of ethnicity, cultural background, and their first language.

With respect to globalization, English is an essential tool not only for communication, but for economic achievement in that it enables us to "access parts of the world that are not accessible otherwise" (Matsuda, 2002a, p. 436). In terms of the power of English, Tsuda (2006) has made an even stronger argument by regarding it as a language directly linked with individual financial profits, which might amplify our *egoism* (p. 82). However, while such privileged status is given to this language, as Yanase (2006) has pointed out, English is not the one and only or a perfect language per se (p. 45). It seems, this *not the one and only* aspect of English is embodied by the concepts of EIL or WE, the idea that various types of English should be tolerated as long as they are comprehensible.

However, it is doubtful whether the government's language education policy as well as teachers who implement the policy are aware of, or seriously consider these concepts. In terms of the government's policy, Hashimoto (2009) has shed a critical view by stating that their policies tend to focus on "how TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) contributes to the nation's economic success and to the formation and maintenance of national identity in an era of globalization" (p. 23). Taking the current Courses of Study for senior high school as an example, there is a statement which *appears* to embrace the concepts of EIL and WE; it says, "*contemporary standard English* should be used" in conducting language activities in the classroom, but "consideration should also be given to the reality that different varieties of English are used to communicate around the world" (MEXT, 2009). According to MEXT's explanation of the Courses of Study for senior high schools (2009), this *contemporary*

standard English refers to "English currently used worldwide as a daily communication tool and not the one used only in a specific region or community". However, considering the deep-rooted tendency among Japanese people to perceive English as the property of the Inner Circle, the overall impression many people are likely to have from this statement could be that this *contemporary standard English* means native speakers' English and that it is the only language they should learn.

English has been considered an important language not only for the survival in the globalization, but for Japan's *kokusaika* or internationalization, that is, the establishment of the national identity which could be internationally understood (Hashimoto, 2000; Schneer, 2007). For this purpose, "critical consciousness" about English is required, let alone "practical skills in English" (Kubota, 1998). However, although "practical skills in English" is given focus by the government's language policy, issues such as the function of English or the diversity of English seem to be underestimated.

As Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer (2002) have stated, the impact of the representation of policy document on teachers' sense-making processes in interpreting and implementing the policy in their own classroom is significant (p. 420). Therefore, in order for every teachers to understand the importance of raising learners' awareness of the diversity of English and cultivating the tolerance and respect toward various types of English, the policy document needs some improvement by clarifying the definition of *contemporary standard English*, and spreading the information on what kind of English is being used in the world, or on for what purpose varieties of English are being used. Improvements should be made not only in terms of the messages that the policy documents convey, but from the perspectives of teachers. As Matsuda & Matsuda (2010) have pointed out, teachers need to fully embrace the complexity of English in order "to prepare students adequately in the era of globalization" (p. 373). That is, they should be more conscious of the impact of their own ideologies, the teaching materials and the teaching methods on their learners. In order for learners *not* to have an extreme worship toward English in the Inner Circle, or negative stereotype or prejudice about English used in the Outer or Expanding Circle, reflection on their own ideology and teaching method as well as the exchange of the opinions among teachers should be necessary.

In summary, it can be said that the overall effort to cultivate learners' critical awareness about English is insufficient at both the macro-level (i.e. the current language education policy) and micro-level (the actual implementation in the classroom) in the current Japanese EFL context. *English as an international language* is a language which "belongs to all those who learn and use it," and it will become "socioculturally more hybrid, more accommodating, and more comprehensive" in the future (Yano, 2009, p .253). Yano has even stated that the individual English proficiency "will be judged not by being a native speaker or not, but by the individual's level of cross-cultural communicative competence as an English-knowing bi- or multi-lingual individual" (2009, p.253). If this argument is correct, English education is not just a matter of learning a language itself. Rather, it should cultivate the awareness of cultural

differences and the importance of mutual-understanding between peoples in learners' mind. Therefore, for learners to become competent *users* of English, teachers should empower them with "critical lenses that would allow them to use English effectively to meet their own needs while respecting the needs of others" (Matsuda and Friedrich, 2011, p. 341).

In order to effect a breakthrough in the current Japanese EFL classrooms, Tsuda (2006) has suggested the necessity of *jinkaku-kyouiku* or character/identity–building education through English learning. He has proposed what he calls "Meta-English education" for the purpose of cultivating learners' *jinkaku* or character/identity through learning English (p. 73), which might result in not just the acquisition of English proficiency, but the development of self-consciousness about their own identity. As the world gets more and more interconnected by the medium of world Englishes, this might be a model teaching approach, which most of the teachers are currently missing or even unaware of, but which is definitely worth exploring for the sake of young learners in the future.

CONCLUSION

In terms of Japanese EFL contexts, there is a huge gap between what the overall society demands for English language education and what teachers in the language classroom at school are offering (i.e. the actual implementation of the curriculum in the classroom). Given the significant and direct impact of learning contexts, particularly the teachers' roles, the teaching materials, and the teaching methods, on learners' perceptions of English, both policy-makers and their practitioners (i.e. teachers) should be more sensitive to how English is currently being used in the actual communication and how English should be provided in the classroom to reflect the reality of *English as an international language* in the outside world. In order to resolve the current discrepancies between what is called for from the society and what is currently offered in classroom practices, the establishment of a system in which voices from both the macro-level and micro-level can be actively exchanged should be seriously considered.

REFERENCES

Chiba, R., Matsuura, H. & Yamamoto, A. (1995). Japanese attitudes toward English accents. *World Englishes, 14*, 77-86.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*, 185 – 209.

Duff, P. A. (2010). Language socialization. In N.H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (Eds.), *Linguistics and Language Education* (pp. 427-451). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Evans, B.E. & Imai, T. (2011). 'If we say English, that means America': Japanese students' perceptions of varieties of English. *Language Awareness, 20,* 315-326.

Hashimoto, K. (2000). 'Internationalisation' is 'Japanisation': Japan's foreign language education and national identity. *Journals of Intercultural Studies, 21*, 39-51.

Hashimoto, K. (2009). Cultivating "Japanese who can use English": Problems and contradictions in government policy. *Asian Studies Review, 33,* 21-31

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme. (2012). Retrieved from http://www.jetprogramme.org/e/introduction/statistics.html

Kikuchi, K. (2009). Listening to our learners' voices: what demotivates Japanese high school students? *Language Teaching Research, 13*, 435-471.

Kikuchi, K. & Browne, C. (2009). English educational policy for high schools in Japan: ideals vs. reality. *RELC Journal, 40,* 172-191.

Kubota, R. (1998). Ideologies of English in Japan. *World Englishes, 17,* 295-306.

Matsuda, A. (2002a). "International understanding" through teaching World Englishes. *World Englishes, 21*, 436-440.

Matsuda, A. (2002b). Representation of users and uses of English in beginning Japanese EFL textbooks. *JALT Journal, 24,* 182-200.

Matsuda, A. (2003a). Incorporating World Englishes in teaching English as an international language. *TESOL Quarterly, 37,* 719-729.

Matsuda, A. (2003b). The ownership of English in Japanese secondary schools. *World Englishes, 22*, 483-496.

Matsuda, A. & Friedrich, P. (2011). English as an international language: a curriculum blueprint. *World Englishes, 30,* 332-344.

Matsuda, A. & Matsuda, P. K. (2010). World Englishes and the teaching of writing. *TESOL Quarterly, 44*, 369-374.

Matsuura, H., Fujieda, M., & Mahoney, S. (2004). The officialization of English and ELT in Japan: 2000. *World Englishes 23*, 471 – 487.

McKay, S. L. (2010). English as an international language. In N.H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (Eds.), *Linguistics and Language Education,* (pp. 89-115). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

McKay, S. L., & Bokhorst-Heng, W. D. (2008). *International English in its Sociolinguistic Contexts: towards a Socially Sensitive EIL Pedagogy.* New York: Routledge.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). (2009). *Koto gakko gakushu shido yoryo* [Courses of study for senior high school]. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/eiyaku/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/04/11/1298353_9.pdf.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). (2009). *Koto gakko gakushu shido yoryo kaisetsu* [Interpretation of courses of study for senior high school]. Retrieved from http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2010/01/29/1282000_9.pdf#search='%E5%AD%A6%E7%BF%92%E6%8

C%87%E5%B0%8E%E8%A6%81%E9%A0%98+%E8%8B%B1%E8%AA%9E+%E8%A7%A3%E8%AA%AC'

Nishino, T., & Watanabe, M. (2008). Communication-oriented policies versus classroom realities in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly, 42,* 133 – 138.

Rivers, D. J. (2011). Intercultural processes in accented English. *World Englishes, 30,* 375-391.

Sakui, K. (2004). Wearing two pairs of shoes: language teaching in Japan. *ELT Journal, 58,* 155-163.

Schneer, D. (2007). (Inter)nationalism and English textbooks endorsed by the Ministry of Education in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly, 41*, 600-607.

Seargeant, P. (2005). More English than England itself: the simulation of authenticity in foreign language practice in Japan. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 15*, 326 – 345.

Seargeant, P. (2008). Ideologies of English in Japan: the perspective of policy and pedagogy. *Language Policy, 7*, 121-142.

Shibata, M. (2010). How Japanese teachers of English perceive non-native assistant English teachers. *System, 38*, 124-133.

Spillane, J. P., Reiser, B. J., & Reimer, T. (2002). Policy Implementation and cognition: reframing and refocusing implementation research. *Review of Educational Research, 72,* 387-431.

Steger, M. B. (2003). *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tsuda, Y. (2006). Eigo shihairon ni yoru meta eigokyoiku no susume. [A proposal of meta-English education from the perspective of the imperialism of English]. In Y. Otsu. (Ed), *Nihon no eigokyoiku ni hitsuyo na koto: shogakko eigo to eigo kyouiku seisaku*. [What English education in Japan needs: English at elementary school and English education policy], (pp. 70-88). Tokyo: Keio gijuku daigaku shuppankai.

Yanase, Y. (2006). Eigokyoiku no genri ni tsuite [About the basics of English education]. In Y. Otsu. (Ed), *Nihon no eigokyoiku ni hitsuyo na koto: shogakko eigo to eigo kyouiku seisaku*. [What English education in Japan needs: English at elementary school and English education policy], (pp. 33-52). Tokyo: Keio gijuku daigaku shuppankai.

Yano, Y. (2001). World Englishes in 2000 and beyond. *World Englishes, 20*, 119-131.

Yano, Y. (2009) English as an international lingua franca: from societal to individual. *World Englishes, 28*, 246 - 255.

Yoshikawa, H. (2005). Recognition of World Englishes: changes in Chukyo University students' attitudes. *World Englishes, 24*, 351-360.

Suzuki, S. (2014). Language learners' belief change. *Accents Asia. 6(2),* pp. 40-53.

Language Learners' Belief Change

Sakae Suzuki[1]
Shonan Institute of Technology

ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study is designed to provide an orderly account of how beliefs about English language learning change among seven high school students in Japan. Beginning when the students were first-year high school students (10th graders), the investigation takes a qualitative multiple-case-study approach that includes in-depth interviews, responses to open-ended questions, and written reports. Data gathering ended when each student, in the third year of high school, chose a university. Conclusions include: (1) factors that influence changes in learners' beliefs and (2) implications for teachers and educators.

INTRODUCTION

Learner beliefs are one type of individual learner difference (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006). Researchers have investigated their potential effects on learners' strategies and motivation in the classroom (Horwitz, 1987; 1988 Wenden, 1986a, 1987; Yang, 1999), the process and outcomes of learning (Dweck, 2006; Schommer, 1994), and attitude change (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

One of the problems of belief studies is the lack of studies investigating the sources, development, and changes of learners' beliefs (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The results of previous studies have indicated certain tendencies concerning students' beliefs, but they did not explain why and how those students developed, held, or changed certain beliefs. SLA researchers have investigated individual difference variables that learners bring into the classroom, such as aptitude, anxiety, motivation, and working memory. Beliefs are not included in those categories, but they are a type of individual difference (Cotterall, 1999) that can influence the variables listed above; therefore, researchers should strive to shed light on the sources, development, construction, and change of learners' beliefs and their effect on learning. By knowing how beliefs change and what variables change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that positively influence learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs. One problem, however, is that detecting change requires the ability to discern "from" and "to" conditions: belief states that have recognizable forms and consequences**.** Also, with respect to changes of beliefs

---

1. Sakae Suzuki is a professor of English at Shonan Institute of Technology in Japan. She obtained a MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University and an Ed.D in TESOL from Temple University. Her research interests include learners' beliefs, motivation, and learners' stories. Correspondence should be sent to Sakae Suzuki, E-mail: sakaes@center.shonan-it.ac.jp

about foreign language learning, it is important to investigate how various factors bring about belief change (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). In addition, few studies have been focused on younger learners, such as secondary school students. Because adolescents must manage major biological, educational, and social role transitions (Bandura, 1997), I assume that their beliefs change. By knowing how and what can change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that affect learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs.

Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how learner beliefs change and what factors cause change. Change, as Bailey (1992) and Jackson (1992) pointed out, occurs in many forms, including knowledge, attitudes, understanding, and self-awareness. Change itself can have positive, neutral, and negative meanings: effective learners can change their attitudes and give up learning, while previously unsuccessful learners can focus their energies on the pursuit of worthwhile learning objectives. In this study, I investigate changes among high school students who find their own way of learning, make sense of their learning, and develop learning goals (Dweck, 1986). I investigate how their beliefs change through educative experiences (Dewey, 1938) at school and in social interactions and to what they attribute their learning.

METHOD

Multiple Case Studies

A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of rich information in a context (Creswell, 1998). Thus, multiple-case studies involve collecting and analyzing data from two or more cases within the same study. The bounded system is bounded by time and place and it is the case studied (Creswell, 1998). In this study, the bounded system is a public Japanese high school and cases are individual students. Yin (2003) indicated that multiple cases should be selected so that they replicate each other by either predicting similar results or contrasting results for predictable reasons (p. 5). In this study, the seven participants had the desire to study English in the beginning of the investigation. Some of them might follow a similar process of learning and others might not.

Research Site

The research site, Rokkaku High School (pseudonym) is located in Yokohama, a major port city close to Tokyo, in Japan. The school was founded eighteen years ago as an experimental and pioneer school with a credit system for classes which give students more choices than usual choice of classes. The school policy has been to accept a variety of students: regular students who graduated from Japanese junior high schools, returnees who lived abroad, foreign students living in Japan, and restarters who quit other high schools.

Participants

There are seven participants in this study. One of the students entered Rokkaku high school as a first-year student in 2005, five of them entered Rokkaku High School in April, 2006, and one entered as a second- year student in September, 2006 after quitting another private high school. The first-year students were chosen in order to investigate their English learning history before high school. The second-year student was included in order to observe how studying for entrance examination (*juken*-style learning), which emphasizes rote memorization, influences her beliefs. Table 1 summarizes the backgrounds of the seven participants.

TABLE 1
Study Participants

Name	Gender	Country of origin	Background before attending Rokkaku High School
Maiko	Female	Canada	• Born in Montreal, Canada • Attended a preschool (8 months) and kindergarten (2 months) in Vancouver, Canada • Attended a kindergarten in Japan • Attended a public elementary school and a junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Satsuki	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Went overseas briefly every year since childhood • Attended a Japanese elementary school and junior high school • English grade in junior high school: 5
Kazuo	Male	Peru	• Born in Peru • Came to Japan at age 15 • Went to a Japanese school in Peru • Went to a cram school in Peru • English grade in junior high school: 5
Fumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public junior high school • Attended a cram school • Went to Canada for 2 weeks • English grade in junior high school: 5
Honey	Female	Myanmar	• Born in Myanmar • Attended a local kindergarten and elementary school • Attended an international school for 2 years • Came to Japan at age 14 • Attended a public junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Rumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public elementary school and junior high school • Attended a cram school • No overseas experience • English grade in junior high school: 5
Natsuko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a public Japanese elementary school • Attended a cram school • Attended a private Japanese junior high school • Attended a private Japanese high school

	• Quit the private Japanese high school and entered a public high school • Went to Asian countries briefly (5times) before starting junior high school • Went to the Philippines to study English twice before attending the second high school • English grade in junior high school: 5

Note. English grade in junior high school: 5 = highest possible grade, 1 = lowest possible grade.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was taken place both during and after data collection from 2006 to 2009, in line with Creswell's (1998) emphasis on a zigzag approach between data gathering and analysis. Interpretation of interview data was presented to the participants immediately after the first interview (Kanno, 2003). Each time I met a participant; I went over the previous data and discussed possible interpretations. After I finished each participant's story, I identified changes in their beliefs and factors that affected their beliefs. Those changes and impetus for changes were put into a matrix (see table 2).

Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

1. What factors influence changes in learners' beliefs?
2. What are implications for teachers and educators suggested by the present study?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question concerned what factors influence changes in their beliefs. The participants' stories indicated that their beliefs changed as they experienced personal growth and changes in their learning contexts. The belief changes found in the present study are summarized in Table 2.

Factors Leading to Belief Changes

TABLE 2
Summary of Belief Changes

From	To	Impetus for change
Natsuko		
Getting good grades and going to a prestigious university are the goals of study.	Doing whatever you like is best.	Studying for entrance examinations. Attending acting school/visiting the Philippines
Speaking like a native speaker of English is good.	English is spoken with different accents.	Experiences in non-English speaking countries
Studying English for tests is a	English is a tool for	Experiences in the Philippines

goal of study.	communication.	
Sitting at a desk and doing exercises is learning English.	There is another way of learning English.	Class presentations
Making mistakes is shameful.	It is important to speak up without being afraid of what other people think.	Meeting people from different countries
Speaking is more important than writing.	My English is not good enough to communicate with people. *Juken*-type study might be important.	Speaking English with foreign people
Foreign cultures and going overseas are interesting.	Lack of knowledge of Japan.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Going to a university in a foreign country is the best choice for study.	Going to a university in Japan to learn English and Japanese history is best.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Decisions are made by someone else.	I must make decisions myself.	Forced learning at Sakura High School
Rumiko		
I am good at English because I get good grades on English tests.	I am not good at English anymore.	Experiences in high school/returnee students
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being good at English means speaking English well.	Meeting with returnee students
Studying English is studying language.	Learning something through English is important.	An English teacher
Memorization is the only way to learn words.	There is another way of learning words.	Workshop by a professor.
I have to take English classes to learn English.	I can study English by myself.	Older students' advice
I want to be an English teacher like Mr. Oshima.	Maybe I do not want to be a teacher. My pronunciation is not good and I can not speak English well.	Meeting with returnees who spoke fluent English
Kazuo		
English is not fun. I don't like English.	Speaking English is fun.	Speaking English with a Korean woman on an airplane
Speaking English is more important than studying grammar.	Grammar is also important.	Talking with foreign students
Maiko		
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being satisfied only with good grades is shameful. It is important to improve oneself constantly.	Inspiration from older students
I should not criticize what a	I can negotiate with a teacher.	OCI class with an American

teacher does.		teacher
I have to listen to my teachers.	I can make decisions myself.	Studying for entrance examinations
I have to do *juken benkyo* to pass the entrance examination.	Studying only for entrance examinations is meaningless.	Yobiko (prep-schoo) experiences
Honey		
I am shy.	I am active.	Studying at an international school and learning English
Language is one of subjects at school.	Language is a weapon for survival.	Studying in an international school/Living in Japan
English is the most powerful language.	Japanese is currently more important than English.	Living in Japan
Satsuki		
English is useful everywhere.	English is not used everywhere , so I have to learn another foreign language.	Traveling in Mexico
Fumiko		
English is a subject at school.	Studying English would give me a stable identity.	Being bullied at junior high school.
English is an important school subject.	English should not be a compulsory subject.	Learning experiences and observation
I cannot speak English naturally with native speakers of English.	I can speak in English about topics I like (music).	Staying in England and talking with British students

Sources of belief change

What factors contribute to belief changes? Under what circumstances do adolescents resist change even though well-meaning adults try to promote belief change? The results of the present study indicate that adolescents' beliefs are rather fluid mental constructs.

The participants in this study changed their beliefs in different contexts. Some of their belief changes are consistent with the results described in earlier studies (Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J., 1999; Suzuki, 2006; Takayama, 2003) in which beliefs are regarded as relatively permanent, existing before and after their elicitation by a research instrument and unaffected by the instrument itself. In the present study, however, beliefs seemed to exist most strongly at the moment of elicitation, and could be observed to undergo change, although the changes were not always acknowledged by the learners. Three factors leading to belief change were identified: experiential factors, interpersonal factors, and contexual factors.

Experiential factors

The stories of the learners in the present study indicate that overseas experiences give them chances to communicate in authentic ways in foreign languages and enhance their interest in

foreign cultures and people. Through those experiences, the participants become aware of the various roles of language, and the purposes and benefits of learning foreign languages. Overseas experiences were a trigger for some students to change their values and beliefs toward English. Natsuko went to the Philippines and changed her beliefs about school, learning, her values, and her choice of university. One of Kazuo's belief changes occurred when he met a Korean woman and talked with her in English on an international flight. The experience led him to believe that speaking is the most important element in language study. Satsuki believed that English was spoken everywhere in the world because of experiences speaking and listening to English in foreign countries before starting high school, However, in Mexico, she found that English was not understood. She changed her belief and thought that it is important to learn other foreign languages in addition to English.

Facing difficulties, problems, or crises that shake their identities and confidence can also cause learners to modify their beliefs or develop new ones. Natsuko's journey to the Philippines induced her to modify her beliefs about school and studying. Fumiko, who was bullied in junior high school, came to believe that studying would provide her with a stable identity and sustain her confidence. For them, hardships led to new experiences, which played a role in overcoming the hardships. In this, new beliefs emerged.

Interpersonal factors

People are sources of belief change. Previous studies of learners' beliefs suggest that they change their beliefs because of teachers and educators' use of a number of strategic means, or by input given by teachers (Woods, 1996, p. 218). In this study, however, the agents of change were often persons other than teachers and educators. For example, Maiko was influenced by older students in her high school who were her role models. Her "fixed mindset" (Dweck, 2006), a belief that getting good grades in school meant being good at English, was challenged by those older students. After listening to them, Maiko felt ashamed that she had thought that good grades at school were evidence of adequate learning. She then developed a "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006) that she should not be satisfied with her current English proficiency and should constantly strive to improve. In this case, the older students were near peer role models (Arao & Murphy, 2001) who allowed the younger learners to identify with them, become inspired, and themselves become more effective learners (p. 9).

A developmental trait of adolescents is that they question adult authority. In the present study, Maiko at first accepted the advice of well-meaning teachers that she should study for examinations in order to gain entrance to a prestigious university. She later rejected this idea as stereotypical and not applicable to her personally. She experienced stress in disregarding the strong advice of a teacher, but she did it. Parents as well as teachers also experience rejection by their adolescent children, as in the case of Satsuki, who no longer wanted to accompany her parents on overseas trips.

In spite of an inclination to question the conventional wisdom of many adults, the students in the present study readily accepted the advice of a few highly trusted adults. Rumiko was influenced by her cram school teacher, who was a good teacher who showed that he cared about his students. By observing what he did and being impressed with his attitude as a teacher, Rumiko developed a belief that teaching can influence students positively and thus teaching is rewarding. She also changed her perceptions toward English by teachers. For a student to trust an adult seemed to require two perceptions: The adult sees the student as an individual rather than a

stereotype, and the adult is pursuing no personal agenda but has only the student's best interests at heart.

Influence by others sometimes led to a loss of confidence. For example, Rumiko had never been abroad. She had studied in EFL contexts in Japan and described herself as a product of Japanese English education. She attributed her lack of speaking ability to her lack of overseas experience. Meeting with students who had lived in foreign countries and spoke English fluently reinforced her belief that studying abroad was the only way to improve her speaking ability. This belief was not shaped by her own experience but by a second-hand belief. Such beliefs can be changed by more experience. Rumiko was just one of many Japanese learners who believe that only going abroad will make them fluent speakers of English. Maiko's belief that students majoring in international studies are shallow was developed through Maiko's observations on students at Rokkaku High School.

Contextual factors

This study also shows that the context in which learners are living and staying can cause beliefs to develop and change. This notion is in accord with sociocultural theory, which states that ideas begin as an external social activity and eventually become internalized (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 48). Students such as Honey, who are put into foreign language communities without sufficient preparation, tend to look for survival skills by themselves, through involvement with the target language. Honey acquired English and Japanese by collaborating and interacting with other speakers. Her strategy for learning foreign languages was based on her personal beliefs of learning, which was very much a response to the situation she found herself in. Natsuko, changed schools, and in doing so changed her beliefs about learning. All of the participants changed their beliefs because of the environment at Rokkaku High School, where they met many returnee students and foreign students. Those students were inspirations for Maiko, Kazuo, and Natsuko, who themselves had lived overseas. On the other hand, Rumiko, who did not have foreign experiences at all, felt intimidated in front of returnee students. The school context was certainly one of the factors that caused Rumiko to overestimate the importance of speaking English while observing returnee students who could speak: Rumiko developed a belief that she would be able to speak fluently if she went overseas. Rumiko's low sense of speaking self-efficacy caused her to develop a stereotypical fixed mindset (Dweck, 2006), a belief, that people who speak English fluently are superior.

Direction of belief change

According to Walsh (2004), high school students in general have not developed concrete beliefs about self or identity. They are easily influenced by peers and external factors, such as the media. Thus, they often develop second-hand beliefs (beliefs not developed through their own experiences), and are easily swayed. Beliefs that emerge from their own experiences are stronger and resist modification. For example, Natsuko, Kazuo, Maiko and Satsuki's belief that English is interesting was shaped by their foreign experiences. This belief remained unchanged throughout the study. Being a teenager is typically a process of finding one's own identity in a particular social context. Teenagers often listen to older students, not to their parents, as Rumiko did when she decided not to take English classes because of the advice she received from older students. She later changed this belief about the unimportance of English classes. In general, as Walsh

suggested, adolescents change from holding vaguely formed beliefs about self to more mature beliefs.

While high school students are developing cognitively, they change their beliefs and their perceptions. Kazuo's decision that knowledge of grammar is important is an example. Such decision-making, according to Howard (2006) is one sign of maturity.

In the present study, many belief changes were in the direction of greater maturity in terms of decision-making. For example, Maiko decided not to take an entrance exam to a national university recommended by her teachers and Natsuko decided to go to a university in Okinawa even though her friends did not agree with her decision. Honey changed her belief when she faced the reality that she could not be a doctor. At that time, Honey made a decision about her future by herself.

The results of this study show that well-meaning teachers and other adults are not always influential in changing students' beliefs. It is, however, encouraging to find that students themselves, taking charge of their own assessments, usually change their beliefs in the direction of beneficial beliefs. Autonomy is something many adults encourage at least in theory; however, adults are not always comfortable when they find that their influence over adolescents is diminished as they pursue greater autonomy. This finding does not suggest that teachers should retreat from implementing their teaching beliefs. On the contrary, as Rumiko's case suggests, teachers' belief are a springboard for some learners to become aware of their deficiencies in learning and to become more independent learners.

Belief changes can be summarized with three observations. First, adolescents often resist deliberate attempts by adults to change their beliefs. They seem to suspect adults of trying to impose ideal or stereotypical beliefs when their own desire is to establish beliefs valid for their unique personalities and situations. Second, even while resisting the efforts of adults to influence their beliefs and behaviors, adolescents seem to be on the alert for circumstances, experiences, and interpersonal encounters they can regard as valid and significant sources of beliefs. Often these are chance encounters: adolescents change their beliefs although people encountered outside of one's circle of friends and acquaintances do not intend to change one's intentional states. Third, in general, beliefs about learning English change positively, that is, in the direction of greater effectiveness in governing language-learning activities.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The second research question concerned what implications for teachers and educators the present study suggest.

As this study suggests, teachers can learn a great deal from students' stories about themselves. In this sense, learners themselves contribute to the development of the field (Breen, 2001). Teachers should consider students' backgrounds and how they came to be where they are. Larsen-Freeman and Cameron described "learner factors" (p. 151) that each learner holds such as previous learning experience, aptitude, and gender. By doing so, teachers are able to avoid making hasty judgments (Kanno, 2003, p. 141) about students and to thereby avoid narrowing their potential. The present study suggests that students have a great deal to teach us if we chose to learn (Bailey, 2001).

One consequence of a longitudinal study is that the researcher has sufficient time to reflect on the relationship between the emerging findings and the nature of the learning context. In the present study, such reflection has led to six implications for teachers and schools.

First, it is important that teachers get to know their students' skills, preferences, and experiences, particularly the changes they have experienced in different learning contexts. Quite a few Japanese students quit one school and reenter another. They bring their learning backgrounds and beliefs about learning with them when they arrive at the new school. They do not often talk openly about the reason(s) why they quit a school. If I had not had chances to talk with Natsuko, I would have never known why she quit the previous private high school, and this knowledge was beneficial for me as a teacher responsible for providing Natsuko's career guidance. As doctors need to know detailed information about their patients, such as their habits, occupation, age, gender, and previous illnesses, teachers should know about their students to better understand their situations and facilitate their becoming good learners. In order to know more about learners' backgrounds, language learning histories (LLH) (Murphey & Li-Chi, 2004, p. 83; Murphy & Carpenter, 2008) are helpful. Teachers can also encourage learners to write journals or reflections about the class and their learning. It is beneficial for teachers to have students record their experiences, as this allows the teachers to see how learners develop and change their beliefs about language learning. These days teachers are not always allowed to know students' personal backgrounds because of a concern for student privacy. Teachers do not always know where students have lived, what their family is like, how many brothers and sisters they have, or what their parents do. I believe that teachers should know what stories students bring to the class in order to enhance learning.

Second, teachers should know about students' overseas experiences, as such experiences can strongly impact young learners. The beliefs they develop during their stays in foreign countries are strong and often resist modification. Students with and without overseas experiences differ in terms of their beliefs about foreign language and cultures; thus, teachers and school administrators should consider what programs and classes can best enhance their curiosity and motivation to learn English. Students who have lived overseas are often more comfortable in communicative classrooms and they typically do not find memorization-oriented study meaningful. Thus, teachers should, as far as possible, offer varied classroom experiences. The students' narratives show that Japanese schools do not function to maintain students' foreign heritage experiences. Teachers and schools might well develop methodologies to do so. Students like Kazuo and Honey, who acquired English by using English, arrived at junior high schools in Japan far ahead of their fellow students in terms of their speaking proficiency of English. Japanese schools were prepared to accept those students only if they conformed to what other students did. School administrators might consider the higher proficiency levels of returnee students and develop curricula for them.

Third, teachers should introduce various activities and learning strategies in foreign language classrooms so that learners with different characteristics (Sternberg, 1996) can try them and find their own preferred strategies, as this can help empower the learners and allow them to find meaning in studying English. Otherwise, learners, especially high school students, have little interest in English aside from its being a graduation requirement (Tweles, 1996). Teachers should keep in mind that small events can sometimes generate a chain of reactions that produce a significant change. By implementing various ways of teachings and offering various experiences and learning opportunities for students, teachers can hope that learners will find aspects of

English that engage them. It is a teacher's responsibility to provide as many learning opportunities as possible (Shimoyama, Isoda, & Yamamori, 2002).

Fourth, considering the centrality of university entrance examination in the educational culture in Japan (Gorsuch, 2000, p. 699), teachers and educators who are involved with English education should consider meaningful goals of learning English and implement teaching that inspires learners to enjoy learning and helps them find meaning in learning English. The students in the present study felt considerable stress when studying for entrance examinations as they were required to memorize a great deal of information. Students with foreign backgrounds seem especially to dislike studying for entrance examinations. Studying for entrance examinations should not be the only goal of studying English. Teachers and educators can implement exchange programs, for example, so that students can learn to use English as a tool for communication. In classrooms, teachers can include communicative activities such as journal writing, discussions, and presentations. Through those activities, students can better understand how English is used and what they should do to convey their thoughts in English.

Fifth, students need experiences that enhance their curiosity to learn English and find meaning in learning English. The present study demonstrates that no one can tell a child's future potential from his or her current behavior. Adolescent learners, especially, can change their beliefs, goals, and dreams. As Dweck (2000) wrote, "we do not know exactly what someone is capable of with the right support from the environment and with the right degree of personal motivation or commitment" (p. 155). Thus, I think teachers need to offer learners as many opportunities as possible to interact with the global community via English. They can create classroom conditions for learners to engage in communities of practice (Menezes, Barcelos & Kalaja, 2008, p. 228) so that the learners can exchange their ideas via group work or cooperative learning. Examples include exchanging e-mail in English with foreign students attending sister schools overseas, editing English news (introducing school events in English) in English classes and English Day Camp, visiting local international schools, and inviting their students to take part in extra-curricular activities. Those opportunities are "educational experiences" (van Lier, 2004, p. 5). In order to identify experiences that are educational for certain learners, teachers can listen to stories of their past and the present and find out what experiences they need. This study also suggests that teachers should be tolerant of young learners' confused behavior and support them in their efforts to change their interfering beliefs.

Sixth, this study suggests that learners' decisions should be respected. Young learners are often hindered from following their inner voices. They negotiate their tentative ideas with parents, teachers, and others in their lives; however, this process causes frustration and uneasiness among some learners. Learners find their best learning paths when their motivation has an internal locus (Taylor, 1992). In the present study, if Natsuko and Maiko had been allowed to be themselves, they might not have wasted so much time and effort before finding their destinations. Thus, teachers should pay attention to learners' voices and provide them with opportunities to make their own decisions. Teachers can help students foster a sense of personal identity by encouraging them to make decisions for themselves and by helping them express their individuality in constructive ways.

CONCLUSION

The present study indicated that adolescent learners' beliefs change over time, and this change appears to be a natural and healthy tendency of teenage minds. Many beliefs change as

learners become older and change learning contexts. Some beliefs change rapidly, and others begin when learners initiate learning English and remain stable for many years.

Learners develop personal theories about learning English within which beliefs are idiosyncratic rather than predictably patterned. Individual differences and changes of beliefs are consistent with a dynamic systems view within developmental psychology (Thornton, 2008, p. 566), which allows that different children follow subtly different paths, even if they all end up at a similar destination.

Finally, three limitations of the present study deserve comment. First, a primary limitation is the representativeness of the participants of this study. They were high school students in Japan who were motivated and who succeeded at learning English. Six of the seven participants were girls, and six of them had overseas experiences before coming to the research site. While the findings can not be generalized to other students and other sites, it is my belief that the findings can help teachers plan treatments for discouraged and disaffected students, primarily by widening their acceptance of nonstandard beliefs and means.

Second, I chose the participants from within my teaching context, Rokkaku High School. It is possible that a study of participants from other educational institutions might have produced different conclusions given the characteristics defining those institutions.

Third, considering data collection, the concentration in the present study was on the students themselves. Data were not systematically collected from parents, siblings, peers, or cram school teachers. Doing so would have permitted an investigation of students' beliefs from different perspectives and triangulation would have been possible. This would have provided corroborating evidence for the findings (Creswell, 1998, p. 202) and greater breadth to the results.

REFERENCES

Bailey, K. M. (1992). The process of innovation in language teacher development: What, why and how teachers change. In J. Flowerdew, M. Brock, & S. Hsia (Eds.), *Perspective on second language teacher education* (pp. 253-282). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic.

Bailey, K. M. (2001). What my EFL students taught me. *The PAC Journal, 1,* 7-31.

Breen, M. P. (2001). *Learner contributions to language learning.* New York: Longman.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them? *System*, *27*, 493-513.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. *The Kappa Delta Pi lecture series*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Dweck, C. S. (1986). Motivational processes affecting learning. *American Psychology, 10,* 1040-1048.

Dweck, C. S. (2000). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*. New York:Ballantine Books.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Gorsuch, G. J. (2000). EFL educational policies and educational cultures: Influences on teachers'

approval of communicative activities. *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(4), 675-710.
Howard, P. J. (2006). *The owner's manual for the brain: Everyday applications from mind-brain research.* Austin, TX: Brad Press.
Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). New York: Prentice Hall.
Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal, 72*, 283-294.
Jackson, P. W. (1992). Helping teachers develop. In A. Hargreaves & M. G. Fullan (Eds.), *Understanding teacher development* (pp. 62-74). New York: Teachers College Press.
Kalaja, P., & Barcelos, A. M. F. (2006). *Beliefs about SLA*. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic.
Kanno, Y. (2003). *Negotiating bilingual and bicultural identities.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned* (Rev. ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Menezes, V., Barcelos, A. M., & Kalaja, P. (2008). Narrativising learning and teaching EFL: Concluding remarks. In P. Kalaja, V., Menezes & A. M. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL* (pp. 199-231). New York: Palgrave.
Murphey, T., & Carpetner, C. (2008). The seeds of agency in language learning histories. In A. Barcelos, P. Kalaja & V. Menezes, (Eds.). Narratives of learning and teaching EFL (pp.17-34). New York: Palgrave
Murphey, T., Jin, C. & Li-Chi, C. (2004). Learners' constructions of identities and imagined communities. In P. Benson, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Learners' stories* (pp. 83-100). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
Murphey, T., & Arao, H. (2001). Reported belief changes through near peer role modeling. *TESL-EJ, 5,* 1-15.
Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J. (1999). Investigation Japanese learners' beliefs about language learning, *System, 27*, 473-492.
Schommer, M. (1994). An emerging conceptualization of epistemological beliefs and their role in learning. In R. Garner & P. A. Alexander (Eds.), *Beliefs about text and instruction with text* (pp. 134-141). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
Shimoyama, Y., Isoda, T., & Yamamori, K. (2002). Learner beliefs in language learning in the CALL environment. *JALT Journal*, *24*(2), 155-165.
Sternberg, R. J. (1996). Matching abilities, instruction and assessment: Reawakening the sleeping giant of ATI. In I. Dennis & P. Tapsfield (Eds.), *Human abilities: Their nature and measurement* (pp. 167-181). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Suzuki, S. (2006). A study of Japanese high school students' beliefs about learning English. *English Education Study, 42,* 10-21.
Takayama, Y. (2003). Japanese learners' beliefs about learning English. Paper presented at Rikkyo University English education open seminar.
Tanaka, K., & Ellis, R. (2003). Study-abroad, language proficiency, and learner beliefs about language learning. *JALT Journal*, *25*(1), 63-85.
Taylor, L. (1992). Relationship between affect and memory: Motivation-based selective generation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62*, 876-882.
Thornton, S. (2008). *Understanding human development.* New York: Polgrave MacMillan.
Tweles, B. (1996). Motivational differences between Chinese and Japanese learners of English as

a foreign language. *JALT Journal*, *18*(2), 210-228.
van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer.
Walsh, D. (2004). *Why do they act that way?* New York: Free Press.
Wenden, A. (1986a). Helping language learners think about learning. *English Language Journal, 40*, 3-12.
Wenden, A. (1987). How to be a successful language learner: Insights and prescriptions from L2 learners. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 103-117). London, UK: Prentice-Hall.
Woods, D. (1996). *Teacher cognition in language teaching: Beliefs, decision-making and classroom practice*.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27*, 515-535.
Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Suzuki, S. (2014). Language learners' belief change. *Accents Asia. 6(2),* pp. 40-53.

Language Learners' Belief Change

Sakae Suzuki[1]
Shonan Institute of Technology

ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study is designed to provide an orderly account of how beliefs about English language learning change among seven high school students in Japan. Beginning when the students were first-year high school students (10th graders), the investigation takes a qualitative multiple-case-study approach that includes in-depth interviews, responses to open-ended questions, and written reports. Data gathering ended when each student, in the third year of high school, chose a university. Conclusions include: (1) factors that influence changes in learners' beliefs and (2) implications for teachers and educators.

INTRODUCTION

Learner beliefs are one type of individual learner difference (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2006). Researchers have investigated their potential effects on learners' strategies and motivation in the classroom (Horwitz, 1987; 1988 Wenden, 1986a, 1987; Yang, 1999), the process and outcomes of learning (Dweck, 2006; Schommer, 1994), and attitude change (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

One of the problems of belief studies is the lack of studies investigating the sources, development, and changes of learners' beliefs (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The results of previous studies have indicated certain tendencies concerning students' beliefs, but they did not explain why and how those students developed, held, or changed certain beliefs. SLA researchers have investigated individual difference variables that learners bring into the classroom, such as aptitude, anxiety, motivation, and working memory. Beliefs are not included in those categories, but they are a type of individual difference (Cotterall, 1999) that can influence the variables listed above; therefore, researchers should strive to shed light on the sources, development, construction, and change of learners' beliefs and their effect on learning. By knowing how beliefs change and what variables change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that positively influence learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs. One problem, however, is that detecting change requires the ability to discern "from" and "to" conditions: belief states that have recognizable forms and consequences**.** Also, with respect to changes of beliefs

---

1. Sakae Suzuki is a professor of English at Shonan Institute of Technology in Japan. She obtained a MA in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University and an Ed.D in TESOL from Temple University. Her research interests include learners' beliefs, motivation, and learners' stories. Correspondence should be sent to Sakae Suzuki, E-mail: sakaes@center.shonan-it.ac.jp

about foreign language learning, it is important to investigate how various factors bring about belief change (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). In addition, few studies have been focused on younger learners, such as secondary school students. Because adolescents must manage major biological, educational, and social role transitions (Bandura, 1997), I assume that their beliefs change. By knowing how and what can change learners' beliefs, teachers can create learning experiences that affect learners' thoughts and help them develop positive beliefs.

Purpose of this study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how learner beliefs change and what factors cause change. Change, as Bailey (1992) and Jackson (1992) pointed out, occurs in many forms, including knowledge, attitudes, understanding, and self-awareness. Change itself can have positive, neutral, and negative meanings: effective learners can change their attitudes and give up learning, while previously unsuccessful learners can focus their energies on the pursuit of worthwhile learning objectives. In this study, I investigate changes among high school students who find their own way of learning, make sense of their learning, and develop learning goals (Dweck, 1986). I investigate how their beliefs change through educative experiences (Dewey, 1938) at school and in social interactions and to what they attribute their learning.

METHOD

Multiple Case Studies

A case study is an exploration of a "bounded system" or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of rich information in a context (Creswell, 1998). Thus, multiple-case studies involve collecting and analyzing data from two or more cases within the same study. The bounded system is bounded by time and place and it is the case studied (Creswell, 1998). In this study, the bounded system is a public Japanese high school and cases are individual students. Yin (2003) indicated that multiple cases should be selected so that they replicate each other by either predicting similar results or contrasting results for predictable reasons (p. 5). In this study, the seven participants had the desire to study English in the beginning of the investigation. Some of them might follow a similar process of learning and others might not.

Research Site

The research site, Rokkaku High School (pseudonym) is located in Yokohama, a major port city close to Tokyo, in Japan. The school was founded eighteen years ago as an experimental and pioneer school with a credit system for classes which give students more choices than usual choice of classes. The school policy has been to accept a variety of students: regular students who graduated from Japanese junior high schools, returnees who lived abroad, foreign students living in Japan, and restarters who quit other high schools.

Participants

There are seven participants in this study. One of the students entered Rokkaku high school as a first-year student in 2005, five of them entered Rokkaku High School in April, 2006, and one entered as a second- year student in September, 2006 after quitting another private high school. The first-year students were chosen in order to investigate their English learning history before high school. The second-year student was included in order to observe how studying for entrance examination (*juken*-style learning), which emphasizes rote memorization, influences her beliefs. Table 1 summarizes the backgrounds of the seven participants.

TABLE 1
Study Participants

Name	Gender	Country of origin	Background before attending Rokkaku High School
Maiko	Female	Canada	• Born in Montreal, Canada • Attended a preschool (8 months) and kindergarten (2 months) in Vancouver, Canada • Attended a kindergarten in Japan • Attended a public elementary school and a junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Satsuki	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Went overseas briefly every year since childhood • Attended a Japanese elementary school and junior high school • English grade in junior high school: 5
Kazuo	Male	Peru	• Born in Peru • Came to Japan at age 15 • Went to a Japanese school in Peru • Went to a cram school in Peru • English grade in junior high school: 5
Fumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public junior high school • Attended a cram school • Went to Canada for 2 weeks • English grade in junior high school: 5
Honey	Female	Myanmar	• Born in Myanmar • Attended a local kindergarten and elementary school • Attended an international school for 2 years • Came to Japan at age 14 • Attended a public junior high school in Japan • English grade in junior high school: 5
Rumiko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a Japanese public elementary school and junior high school • Attended a cram school • No overseas experience • English grade in junior high school: 5
Natsuko	Female	Japan	• Born in Japan • Attended a public Japanese elementary school • Attended a cram school • Attended a private Japanese junior high school • Attended a private Japanese high school

	• Quit the private Japanese high school and entered a public high school • Went to Asian countries briefly (5times) before starting junior high school • Went to the Philippines to study English twice before attending the second high school • English grade in junior high school: 5

Note. English grade in junior high school: 5 = highest possible grade, 1 = lowest possible grade.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was taken place both during and after data collection from 2006 to 2009, in line with Creswell's (1998) emphasis on a zigzag approach between data gathering and analysis. Interpretation of interview data was presented to the participants immediately after the first interview (Kanno, 2003). Each time I met a participant; I went over the previous data and discussed possible interpretations. After I finished each participant's story, I identified changes in their beliefs and factors that affected their beliefs. Those changes and impetus for changes were put into a matrix (see table 2).

Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

1. What factors influence changes in learners' beliefs?
2. What are implications for teachers and educators suggested by the present study?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question concerned what factors influence changes in their beliefs. The participants' stories indicated that their beliefs changed as they experienced personal growth and changes in their learning contexts. The belief changes found in the present study are summarized in Table 2.

Factors Leading to Belief Changes

TABLE 2
Summary of Belief Changes

From	To	Impetus for change
Natsuko		
Getting good grades and going to a prestigious university are the goals of study.	Doing whatever you like is best.	Studying for entrance examinations. Attending acting school/visiting the Philippines
Speaking like a native speaker of English is good.	English is spoken with different accents.	Experiences in non-English speaking countries
Studying English for tests is a	English is a tool for	Experiences in the Philippines

goal of study.	communication.	
Sitting at a desk and doing exercises is learning English.	There is another way of learning English.	Class presentations
Making mistakes is shameful.	It is important to speak up without being afraid of what other people think.	Meeting people from different countries
Speaking is more important than writing.	My English is not good enough to communicate with people. *Juken*-type study might be important.	Speaking English with foreign people
Foreign cultures and going overseas are interesting.	Lack of knowledge of Japan.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Going to a university in a foreign country is the best choice for study.	Going to a university in Japan to learn English and Japanese history is best.	Staying in Chicago as part of an exchange program
Decisions are made by someone else.	I must make decisions myself.	Forced learning at Sakura High School
Rumiko		
I am good at English because I get good grades on English tests.	I am not good at English anymore.	Experiences in high school/returnee students
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being good at English means speaking English well.	Meeting with returnee students
Studying English is studying language.	Learning something through English is important.	An English teacher
Memorization is the only way to learn words.	There is another way of learning words.	Workshop by a professor.
I have to take English classes to learn English.	I can study English by myself.	Older students' advice
I want to be an English teacher like Mr. Oshima.	Maybe I do not want to be a teacher. My pronunciation is not good and I can not speak English well.	Meeting with returnees who spoke fluent English
Kazuo		
English is not fun. I don't like English.	Speaking English is fun.	Speaking English with a Korean woman on an airplane
Speaking English is more important than studying grammar.	Grammar is also important.	Talking with foreign students
Maiko		
Getting good grades means being good at English.	Being satisfied only with good grades is shameful. It is important to improve oneself constantly.	Inspiration from older students
I should not criticize what a	I can negotiate with a teacher.	OCI class with an American

teacher does.		teacher
I have to listen to my teachers.	I can make decisions myself.	Studying for entrance examinations
I have to do *juken benkyo* to pass the entrance examination.	Studying only for entrance examinations is meaningless.	Yobiko (prep-schoo) experiences
Honey		
I am shy.	I am active.	Studying at an international school and learning English
Language is one of subjects at school.	Language is a weapon for survival.	Studying in an international school/Living in Japan
English is the most powerful language.	Japanese is currently more important than English.	Living in Japan
Satsuki		
English is useful everywhere.	English is not used everywhere , so I have to learn another foreign language.	Traveling in Mexico
Fumiko		
English is a subject at school.	Studying English would give me a stable identity.	Being bullied at junior high school.
English is an important school subject.	English should not be a compulsory subject.	Learning experiences and observation
I cannot speak English naturally with native speakers of English.	I can speak in English about topics I like (music).	Staying in England and talking with British students

Sources of belief change

What factors contribute to belief changes? Under what circumstances do adolescents resist change even though well-meaning adults try to promote belief change? The results of the present study indicate that adolescents' beliefs are rather fluid mental constructs.

The participants in this study changed their beliefs in different contexts. Some of their belief changes are consistent with the results described in earlier studies (Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J., 1999; Suzuki, 2006; Takayama, 2003) in which beliefs are regarded as relatively permanent, existing before and after their elicitation by a research instrument and unaffected by the instrument itself. In the present study, however, beliefs seemed to exist most strongly at the moment of elicitation, and could be observed to undergo change, although the changes were not always acknowledged by the learners. Three factors leading to belief change were identified: experiential factors, interpersonal factors, and contexual factors.

Experiential factors

The stories of the learners in the present study indicate that overseas experiences give them chances to communicate in authentic ways in foreign languages and enhance their interest in

foreign cultures and people. Through those experiences, the participants become aware of the various roles of language, and the purposes and benefits of learning foreign languages. Overseas experiences were a trigger for some students to change their values and beliefs toward English. Natsuko went to the Philippines and changed her beliefs about school, learning, her values, and her choice of university. One of Kazuo's belief changes occurred when he met a Korean woman and talked with her in English on an international flight. The experience led him to believe that speaking is the most important element in language study. Satsuki believed that English was spoken everywhere in the world because of experiences speaking and listening to English in foreign countries before starting high school, However, in Mexico, she found that English was not understood. She changed her belief and thought that it is important to learn other foreign languages in addition to English.

Facing difficulties, problems, or crises that shake their identities and confidence can also cause learners to modify their beliefs or develop new ones. Natsuko's journey to the Philippines induced her to modify her beliefs about school and studying. Fumiko, who was bullied in junior high school, came to believe that studying would provide her with a stable identity and sustain her confidence. For them, hardships led to new experiences, which played a role in overcoming the hardships. In this, new beliefs emerged.

Interpersonal factors

People are sources of belief change. Previous studies of learners' beliefs suggest that they change their beliefs because of teachers and educators' use of a number of strategic means, or by input given by teachers (Woods, 1996, p. 218). In this study, however, the agents of change were often persons other than teachers and educators. For example, Maiko was influenced by older students in her high school who were her role models. Her "fixed mindset" (Dweck, 2006), a belief that getting good grades in school meant being good at English, was challenged by those older students. After listening to them, Maiko felt ashamed that she had thought that good grades at school were evidence of adequate learning. She then developed a "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006) that she should not be satisfied with her current English proficiency and should constantly strive to improve. In this case, the older students were near peer role models (Arao & Murphy, 2001) who allowed the younger learners to identify with them, become inspired, and themselves become more effective learners (p. 9).

A developmental trait of adolescents is that they question adult authority. In the present study, Maiko at first accepted the advice of well-meaning teachers that she should study for examinations in order to gain entrance to a prestigious university. She later rejected this idea as stereotypical and not applicable to her personally. She experienced stress in disregarding the strong advice of a teacher, but she did it. Parents as well as teachers also experience rejection by their adolescent children, as in the case of Satsuki, who no longer wanted to accompany her parents on overseas trips.

In spite of an inclination to question the conventional wisdom of many adults, the students in the present study readily accepted the advice of a few highly trusted adults. Rumiko was influenced by her cram school teacher, who was a good teacher who showed that he cared about his students. By observing what he did and being impressed with his attitude as a teacher, Rumiko developed a belief that teaching can influence students positively and thus teaching is rewarding. She also changed her perceptions toward English by teachers. For a student to trust an adult seemed to require two perceptions: The adult sees the student as an individual rather than a

stereotype, and the adult is pursuing no personal agenda but has only the student's best interests at heart.

Influence by others sometimes led to a loss of confidence. For example, Rumiko had never been abroad. She had studied in EFL contexts in Japan and described herself as a product of Japanese English education. She attributed her lack of speaking ability to her lack of overseas experience. Meeting with students who had lived in foreign countries and spoke English fluently reinforced her belief that studying abroad was the only way to improve her speaking ability. This belief was not shaped by her own experience but by a second-hand belief. Such beliefs can be changed by more experience. Rumiko was just one of many Japanese learners who believe that only going abroad will make them fluent speakers of English. Maiko's belief that students majoring in international studies are shallow was developed through Maiko's observations on students at Rokkaku High School.

Contextual factors

This study also shows that the context in which learners are living and staying can cause beliefs to develop and change. This notion is in accord with sociocultural theory, which states that ideas begin as an external social activity and eventually become internalized (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 48). Students such as Honey, who are put into foreign language communities without sufficient preparation, tend to look for survival skills by themselves, through involvement with the target language. Honey acquired English and Japanese by collaborating and interacting with other speakers. Her strategy for learning foreign languages was based on her personal beliefs of learning, which was very much a response to the situation she found herself in. Natsuko, changed schools, and in doing so changed her beliefs about learning. All of the participants changed their beliefs because of the environment at Rokkaku High School, where they met many returnee students and foreign students. Those students were inspirations for Maiko, Kazuo, and Natsuko, who themselves had lived overseas. On the other hand, Rumiko, who did not have foreign experiences at all, felt intimidated in front of returnee students. The school context was certainly one of the factors that caused Rumiko to overestimate the importance of speaking English while observing returnee students who could speak: Rumiko developed a belief that she would be able to speak fluently if she went overseas. Rumiko's low sense of speaking self-efficacy caused her to develop a stereotypical fixed mindset (Dweck, 2006), a belief, that people who speak English fluently are superior.

Direction of belief change

According to Walsh (2004), high school students in general have not developed concrete beliefs about self or identity. They are easily influenced by peers and external factors, such as the media. Thus, they often develop second-hand beliefs (beliefs not developed through their own experiences), and are easily swayed. Beliefs that emerge from their own experiences are stronger and resist modification. For example, Natsuko, Kazuo, Maiko and Satsuki's belief that English is interesting was shaped by their foreign experiences. This belief remained unchanged throughout the study. Being a teenager is typically a process of finding one's own identity in a particular social context. Teenagers often listen to older students, not to their parents, as Rumiko did when she decided not to take English classes because of the advice she received from older students. She later changed this belief about the unimportance of English classes. In general, as Walsh

suggested, adolescents change from holding vaguely formed beliefs about self to more mature beliefs.

While high school students are developing cognitively, they change their beliefs and their perceptions. Kazuo's decision that knowledge of grammar is important is an example. Such decision-making, according to Howard (2006) is one sign of maturity.

In the present study, many belief changes were in the direction of greater maturity in terms of decision-making. For example, Maiko decided not to take an entrance exam to a national university recommended by her teachers and Natsuko decided to go to a university in Okinawa even though her friends did not agree with her decision. Honey changed her belief when she faced the reality that she could not be a doctor. At that time, Honey made a decision about her future by herself.

The results of this study show that well-meaning teachers and other adults are not always influential in changing students' beliefs. It is, however, encouraging to find that students themselves, taking charge of their own assessments, usually change their beliefs in the direction of beneficial beliefs. Autonomy is something many adults encourage at least in theory; however, adults are not always comfortable when they find that their influence over adolescents is diminished as they pursue greater autonomy. This finding does not suggest that teachers should retreat from implementing their teaching beliefs. On the contrary, as Rumiko's case suggests, teachers' belief are a springboard for some learners to become aware of their deficiencies in learning and to become more independent learners.

Belief changes can be summarized with three observations. First, adolescents often resist deliberate attempts by adults to change their beliefs. They seem to suspect adults of trying to impose ideal or stereotypical beliefs when their own desire is to establish beliefs valid for their unique personalities and situations. Second, even while resisting the efforts of adults to influence their beliefs and behaviors, adolescents seem to be on the alert for circumstances, experiences, and interpersonal encounters they can regard as valid and significant sources of beliefs. Often these are chance encounters: adolescents change their beliefs although people encountered outside of one's circle of friends and acquaintances do not intend to change one's intentional states. Third, in general, beliefs about learning English change positively, that is, in the direction of greater effectiveness in governing language-learning activities.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The second research question concerned what implications for teachers and educators the present study suggest.

As this study suggests, teachers can learn a great deal from students' stories about themselves. In this sense, learners themselves contribute to the development of the field (Breen, 2001). Teachers should consider students' backgrounds and how they came to be where they are. Larsen-Freeman and Cameron described "learner factors" (p. 151) that each learner holds such as previous learning experience, aptitude, and gender. By doing so, teachers are able to avoid making hasty judgments (Kanno, 2003, p. 141) about students and to thereby avoid narrowing their potential. The present study suggests that students have a great deal to teach us if we chose to learn (Bailey, 2001).

One consequence of a longitudinal study is that the researcher has sufficient time to reflect on the relationship between the emerging findings and the nature of the learning context. In the present study, such reflection has led to six implications for teachers and schools.

First, it is important that teachers get to know their students' skills, preferences, and experiences, particularly the changes they have experienced in different learning contexts. Quite a few Japanese students quit one school and reenter another. They bring their learning backgrounds and beliefs about learning with them when they arrive at the new school. They do not often talk openly about the reason(s) why they quit a school. If I had not had chances to talk with Natsuko, I would have never known why she quit the previous private high school, and this knowledge was beneficial for me as a teacher responsible for providing Natsuko's career guidance. As doctors need to know detailed information about their patients, such as their habits, occupation, age, gender, and previous illnesses, teachers should know about their students to better understand their situations and facilitate their becoming good learners. In order to know more about learners' backgrounds, language learning histories (LLH) (Murphey & Li-Chi, 2004, p. 83; Murphy & Carpenter, 2008) are helpful. Teachers can also encourage learners to write journals or reflections about the class and their learning. It is beneficial for teachers to have students record their experiences, as this allows the teachers to see how learners develop and change their beliefs about language learning. These days teachers are not always allowed to know students' personal backgrounds because of a concern for student privacy. Teachers do not always know where students have lived, what their family is like, how many brothers and sisters they have, or what their parents do. I believe that teachers should know what stories students bring to the class in order to enhance learning.

Second, teachers should know about students' overseas experiences, as such experiences can strongly impact young learners. The beliefs they develop during their stays in foreign countries are strong and often resist modification. Students with and without overseas experiences differ in terms of their beliefs about foreign language and cultures; thus, teachers and school administrators should consider what programs and classes can best enhance their curiosity and motivation to learn English. Students who have lived overseas are often more comfortable in communicative classrooms and they typically do not find memorization-oriented study meaningful. Thus, teachers should, as far as possible, offer varied classroom experiences. The students' narratives show that Japanese schools do not function to maintain students' foreign heritage experiences. Teachers and schools might well develop methodologies to do so. Students like Kazuo and Honey, who acquired English by using English, arrived at junior high schools in Japan far ahead of their fellow students in terms of their speaking proficiency of English. Japanese schools were prepared to accept those students only if they conformed to what other students did. School administrators might consider the higher proficiency levels of returnee students and develop curricula for them.

Third, teachers should introduce various activities and learning strategies in foreign language classrooms so that learners with different characteristics (Sternberg, 1996) can try them and find their own preferred strategies, as this can help empower the learners and allow them to find meaning in studying English. Otherwise, learners, especially high school students, have little interest in English aside from its being a graduation requirement (Tweles, 1996). Teachers should keep in mind that small events can sometimes generate a chain of reactions that produce a significant change. By implementing various ways of teachings and offering various experiences and learning opportunities for students, teachers can hope that learners will find aspects of

English that engage them. It is a teacher's responsibility to provide as many learning opportunities as possible (Shimoyama, Isoda, & Yamamori, 2002).

Fourth, considering the centrality of university entrance examination in the educational culture in Japan (Gorsuch, 2000, p. 699), teachers and educators who are involved with English education should consider meaningful goals of learning English and implement teaching that inspires learners to enjoy learning and helps them find meaning in learning English. The students in the present study felt considerable stress when studying for entrance examinations as they were required to memorize a great deal of information. Students with foreign backgrounds seem especially to dislike studying for entrance examinations. Studying for entrance examinations should not be the only goal of studying English. Teachers and educators can implement exchange programs, for example, so that students can learn to use English as a tool for communication. In classrooms, teachers can include communicative activities such as journal writing, discussions, and presentations. Through those activities, students can better understand how English is used and what they should do to convey their thoughts in English.

Fifth, students need experiences that enhance their curiosity to learn English and find meaning in learning English. The present study demonstrates that no one can tell a child's future potential from his or her current behavior. Adolescent learners, especially, can change their beliefs, goals, and dreams. As Dweck (2000) wrote, "we do not know exactly what someone is capable of with the right support from the environment and with the right degree of personal motivation or commitment" (p. 155). Thus, I think teachers need to offer learners as many opportunities as possible to interact with the global community via English. They can create classroom conditions for learners to engage in communities of practice (Menezes, Barcelos & Kalaja, 2008, p. 228) so that the learners can exchange their ideas via group work or cooperative learning. Examples include exchanging e-mail in English with foreign students attending sister schools overseas, editing English news (introducing school events in English) in English classes and English Day Camp, visiting local international schools, and inviting their students to take part in extra-curricular activities. Those opportunities are "educational experiences" (van Lier, 2004, p. 5). In order to identify experiences that are educational for certain learners, teachers can listen to stories of their past and the present and find out what experiences they need. This study also suggests that teachers should be tolerant of young learners' confused behavior and support them in their efforts to change their interfering beliefs.

Sixth, this study suggests that learners' decisions should be respected. Young learners are often hindered from following their inner voices. They negotiate their tentative ideas with parents, teachers, and others in their lives; however, this process causes frustration and uneasiness among some learners. Learners find their best learning paths when their motivation has an internal locus (Taylor, 1992). In the present study, if Natsuko and Maiko had been allowed to be themselves, they might not have wasted so much time and effort before finding their destinations. Thus, teachers should pay attention to learners' voices and provide them with opportunities to make their own decisions. Teachers can help students foster a sense of personal identity by encouraging them to make decisions for themselves and by helping them express their individuality in constructive ways.

CONCLUSION

The present study indicated that adolescent learners' beliefs change over time, and this change appears to be a natural and healthy tendency of teenage minds. Many beliefs change as

learners become older and change learning contexts. Some beliefs change rapidly, and others begin when learners initiate learning English and remain stable for many years.

Learners develop personal theories about learning English within which beliefs are idiosyncratic rather than predictably patterned. Individual differences and changes of beliefs are consistent with a dynamic systems view within developmental psychology (Thornton, 2008, p. 566), which allows that different children follow subtly different paths, even if they all end up at a similar destination.

Finally, three limitations of the present study deserve comment. First, a primary limitation is the representativeness of the participants of this study. They were high school students in Japan who were motivated and who succeeded at learning English. Six of the seven participants were girls, and six of them had overseas experiences before coming to the research site. While the findings can not be generalized to other students and other sites, it is my belief that the findings can help teachers plan treatments for discouraged and disaffected students, primarily by widening their acceptance of nonstandard beliefs and means.

Second, I chose the participants from within my teaching context, Rokkaku High School. It is possible that a study of participants from other educational institutions might have produced different conclusions given the characteristics defining those institutions.

Third, considering data collection, the concentration in the present study was on the students themselves. Data were not systematically collected from parents, siblings, peers, or cram school teachers. Doing so would have permitted an investigation of students' beliefs from different perspectives and triangulation would have been possible. This would have provided corroborating evidence for the findings (Creswell, 1998, p. 202) and greater breadth to the results.

REFERENCES

Bailey, K. M. (1992). The process of innovation in language teacher development: What, why and how teachers change. In J. Flowerdew, M. Brock, & S. Hsia (Eds.), *Perspective on second language teacher education* (pp. 253-282). Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic.

Bailey, K. M. (2001). What my EFL students taught me. *The PAC Journal, 1,* 7-31.

Breen, M. P. (2001). *Learner contributions to language learning.* New York: Longman.

Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them? *System*, *27*, 493-513.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. *The Kappa Delta Pi lecture series*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Dweck, C. S. (1986). Motivational processes affecting learning. *American Psychology, 10,* 1040-1048.

Dweck, C. S. (2000). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*. New York:Ballantine Books.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Gorsuch, G. J. (2000). EFL educational policies and educational cultures: Influences on teachers'

approval of communicative activities. *TESOL Quarterly*, *34*(4), 675-710.
Howard, P. J. (2006). *The owner's manual for the brain: Everyday applications from mind-brain research.* Austin, TX: Brad Press.
Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). New York: Prentice Hall.
Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal, 72*, 283-294.
Jackson, P. W. (1992). Helping teachers develop. In A. Hargreaves & M. G. Fullan (Eds.), *Understanding teacher development* (pp. 62-74). New York: Teachers College Press.
Kalaja, P., & Barcelos, A. M. F. (2006). *Beliefs about SLA*. Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic.
Kanno, Y. (2003). *Negotiating bilingual and bicultural identities.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned* (Rev. ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Menezes, V., Barcelos, A. M., & Kalaja, P. (2008). Narrativising learning and teaching EFL: Concluding remarks. In P. Kalaja, V., Menezes & A. M. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of learning and teaching EFL* (pp. 199-231). New York: Palgrave.
Murphey, T., & Carpetner, C. (2008). The seeds of agency in language learning histories. In A. Barcelos, P. Kalaja & V. Menezes, (Eds.). Narratives of learning and teaching EFL (pp.17-34). New York: Palgrave
Murphey, T., Jin, C. & Li-Chi, C. (2004). Learners' constructions of identities and imagined communities. In P. Benson, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Learners' stories* (pp. 83-100). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
Murphey, T., & Arao, H. (2001). Reported belief changes through near peer role modeling. *TESL-EJ, 5,* 1-15.
Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. J. (1999). Investigation Japanese learners' beliefs about language learning, *System, 27*, 473-492.
Schommer, M. (1994). An emerging conceptualization of epistemological beliefs and their role in learning. In R. Garner & P. A. Alexander (Eds.), *Beliefs about text and instruction with text* (pp. 134-141). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
Shimoyama, Y., Isoda, T., & Yamamori, K. (2002). Learner beliefs in language learning in the CALL environment. *JALT Journal*, *24*(2), 155-165.
Sternberg, R. J. (1996). Matching abilities, instruction and assessment: Reawakening the sleeping giant of ATI. In I. Dennis & P. Tapsfield (Eds.), *Human abilities: Their nature and measurement* (pp. 167-181). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Suzuki, S. (2006). A study of Japanese high school students' beliefs about learning English. *English Education Study, 42,* 10-21.
Takayama, Y. (2003). Japanese learners' beliefs about learning English. Paper presented at Rikkyo University English education open seminar.
Tanaka, K., & Ellis, R. (2003). Study-abroad, language proficiency, and learner beliefs about language learning. *JALT Journal*, *25*(1), 63-85.
Taylor, L. (1992). Relationship between affect and memory: Motivation-based selective generation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62*, 876-882.
Thornton, S. (2008). *Understanding human development.* New York: Polgrave MacMillan.
Tweles, B. (1996). Motivational differences between Chinese and Japanese learners of English as

a foreign language. *JALT Journal*, *18*(2), 210-228.
van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer.
Walsh, D. (2004). *Why do they act that way?* New York: Free Press.
Wenden, A. (1986a). Helping language learners think about learning. *English Language Journal, 40*, 3-12.
Wenden, A. (1987). How to be a successful language learner: Insights and prescriptions from L2 learners. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 103-117). London, UK: Prentice-Hall.
Woods, D. (1996). *Teacher cognition in language teaching: Beliefs, decision-making and classroom practice*.Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27*, 515-535.
Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brown, J. (2014). Considering the Interaction Hypothesis: Clarification, elaboration and paraphrasing. *Accents Asia, 6(2),* pp. 54-59.

Considering the Interaction Hypothesis: Clarification, Elaboration and Paraphrasing.

Jonathan David Brown[1]
Toyo University, Tokyo, Japan

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the Interaction Hypothesis is considered in an analysis of a short script between a native English speaker and three Japanese ESL learners (non-native English speakers). Through this analysis, the roles clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing play in creating and improving comprehensible input and output are identified and discussed, thus providing support for the Interaction Hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION

A very common practice in the ESL/EFL classroom is for the instructor to teach and focus on target language structure and then, after the students have learned or at least comprehended the language, apply the newly acquired language in the context of conversation. In other words, students practice what they have learned through talking to one another (Byrne 1976; Hall 2011; Richards and Rodgers 1986). However, Evelyn Hatch (1978) proposed a revolutionary educational concept for the field of ESL/EFL: "One learns how to do conversation, one learns how to act verbally, and out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed" (p. 404). Hatch (1978) suggested that students should not only practice (through conversation) what they learn, but that they may learn through their conversations and theorized interaction leads to comprehensible input. Later, Michael Long (1981; 1983; 1996) expanded on Hatch's proposition, suggesting that interaction facilitates acquisition because it "connects input . . . and output in productive ways . . . " (Long 1996, p. 452), which led to the Interaction Hypothesis.

THE INTERACTION HYPOTHESIS

According to the Interaction Hypothesis, the interaction between a non-native speaker (NNS) and a native speaker (NS), or even between a lower and higher non-native speaker, creates a natural environment for L2 acquisition because it is in the context of interaction that the NNS learns about the correctness and/or incorrectness of their utterances (Ehrlich, Avery & Yorio, 1998; Gass & MacKey, 2007). The Interaction Hypothesis presents several strategies a NS or higher-level NNS may use to communicate to a NNS that help bring about improved comprehension, such as speaking slowly or clearly, elaborating, requesting clarification, repairing the NSS's

1 Jonathan Brown is a full-time lecturer at Toyo University. Jonathan's research interests are in second language acquisition, L2 writing, rhetoric, and intercultural communication. Correspondence should be sent to brown@toyo.jp

speech, or paraphrasing (Brown, 2000). For the purposes of this paper, clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing will be the primary focus.

Clarification, elaboration, and paraphrasing in context

In order to test the Interaction Hypothesis and the roles elaboration, clarification, and paraphrasing play in bringing about improved communication, a short script between three Japanese ESL learners (NNSs) and myself, a native English speaker (NS), is analyzed. In this script, the NNSs read a number of questions from a script to the NS. The NS then attempted to freely answer these questions. In several instances, the NNS was unable to understand the NS's response and thus requested clarification. The NS then employed elaboration and/or paraphrasing to help bring about understanding in the NNSs.

Example 1

NNS: There has been a lot of talk lately about additives and preservatives in food. In what ways has this changed your eating habits?
NS: Uh, I avoid them, I d-, I don't buy prepackaged foods uh, as much…Uh, I don't buy…say…potato chips that have a lot of flavoring in them…And uh, I eat better, I think.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: Ummmm, I, I eat better, I think. I, I don't buy so much food that's prepackaged.

In this first example, the NNS requested clarification immediately after the NS's answer. It should be noted that the NNS's request, "Pardon me?" is indicative of a novice, and therefore, despite the awkwardness of the clarification request, the NS responded without hesitation, restating his original statement, but, this time, leaving out the less important information, i.e., "Uh, I don't buy…say…potato chips that have a lot of flavoring in them… " The NS simply restated his main point: "I eat better . . . " and ". . . I don't buy so much food that's prepackaged." In other words, he paraphrased. Though not visible in the script, following the paraphrase, the NNS indicated comprehension by nodding and putting the script down on the table. Therefore, it seems that the extra information the interlocutor provided in his original answer may have been difficult for the NNS to follow—the NNS may have had difficulty understanding the interlocutor's main point. Thus, in this example, it seems that input comprehension very likely was improved after the NSS's clarification request and the NS's subsequent paraphrasing.

Example 2

NNS: How have increasing food costs changed your eating habits?
NS: Well, we don't eat as much beef as we used to. We eat more chicken, and uh, pork, and uh, fish, things like that.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: We don't eat as much beef as we used to. We eat more chicken and uh, uh pork and fish. We don't eat beef very often. We don't have steak like we used to.

Again, the NNS request for clarification was unnatural, but as in the first example the NS attributed the clumsy request to NNS's language ability. However, unlike the first example, where the NS condensed his original answer in order to paraphrase, the NS actually elaborated, presenting the NNS with more information.

This strategy, i.e., elaboration, is designed to better help the interlocutor understand a previous utterance and seemed to help the NNS understand because following the elaboration the NNS showed satisfaction with the answer by enthusiastically smiling and not pursuing the question any further. The increased amount of information very likely helped the NNS better understand the NS's answer because the interlocutor provided an example of how his eating habits have changed: "We don't have steak like we used to." Thus, the NS did not provide extra information, but simply elaborated on the information he had already stated.

In this last example, the NS, much like in the previous example, elaborated on his original answer after the NNS requested clarification:

Example 3

NNS: There has been a lot of talk lately about additives and preservatives in food. In what ways has this changed your eating habits?
NS: I try to stay away from nitrites.
NNS: Pardon me?
NS: Uh, from nitrites in, uh, like lunchmeats and that sort of thing. I don't eat those.

According to Derwing (1996) and Loschky (1994), NSs modify their language (output) when addressing NNSs, and this is observed in this final example. Very likely, the NNS did not understand the word "nitrites." Therefore, the request for clarification is very natural in this final example. The NS clearly modified his output for the NNS because rather than explaining that nitrites are a salt or ester of nitrous acid containing the nitrite ion chemical compound NO_2 , he simply gave an example of something that contains nitrites and explained that he does not eat it: ". . . [Nitrites] in . . . lunchmeats and that sort of thing. I don't eat those." The NNS then signaled she understood by nodding her head and ending the conversation.

The NS's modified output, i.e., giving an example of something with nitrites rather than giving the definition of nitrites, assisted in improving comprehension (Carroll, 1999). Though it is possible the NNS went away from that conversation still not knowing what nitrites are, the learner at least gained an understanding of something that contains nitrates, and, more importantly, how the interlocutor's eating habits have changed.

Implications for the classroom

The Interaction Hypothesis rests on the notion that "conversation is not only a medium of practice, but also the means by which learning takes place," especially when it comes to the negotiation of meaning (Gass p. 234). Therefore, it is a natural proponent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and other similar approaches. Taking the Interaction Hypothesis into consideration, educators must begin incorporating such approaches into their classrooms. By providing their students with opportunity to communicate in meaningful conversations that encourage such strategies as clarification requests, educators foster growth and skills that provide students with opportunities to engage in their own learning (Brown 2012). Since the Interaction Hypothesis encourages learners to essentially take hold of the reigns of their own learning by identifying input they need to understand and then pursuing it through clarification requests, learners are given the chance to consciously register their misinterpretations and learn more quickly, in accordance with the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt 1990).

Though the Interaction Hypothesis advocates communicative activities and provides learners the opportunity to notice the areas in which they need further comprehension and then seek out that comprehension, educators must be careful not to push students too far beyond their internal learner capacities. As Krashen's (1981) Input Hypothesis states, acquisition occurs when L2 learners receive comprehensible input (*i+1*), *i* representing language competence and *+1* representing input above this level. Students need to be challenged, but only slightly beyond their levels. Therefore, educators must keep in mind that the Interaction Hypothesis' strategies, i.e., both the input and output, should not exceed the *+1* needed to help language learners grow.

CONCLUSION

Considering Long's (1996) statement " [Interaction] facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (pp. 451-452) in juxtaposition with the three examples presented in this paper, it is clear how the interaction between the NS and NNS accomplished this.

First, in example one, the NS focused on or gave "selective attention" to the fact that he eats better because he does not eat so much prepackaged foods. The NNS could have then inferred from the NS's statement that prepackaged food is unhealthy, whether or not the NNS understood the word "prepackaged." In example two, the NS elaborated on his original answer by providing the NNS with an example: "We don't eat steak as much as we used to." The use of the example did two things: 1) It helped the NNS better understand the NS's point, and 2) it showed the NNS how examples may be used to bring about comprehension.

Lastly, we saw how the NS modified his input to connect to the NNS at the NNS's comprehension level. The NS and NNS accomplished comprehensible input/output because the NNS first requested clarification and the NS then provided clarification by recognizing the NNS level and avoided impeding comprehension through an explanation of nitrites by simply giving an example of a food that contains nitrites and a food he no longer eats. Therefore, in the three examples presented in this paper, we have seen how, in fact, it is very possible that clarification requests followed by elaboration and/or paraphrasing can bring about comprehensible input.

It is important, however, that educators consider both the Noticing Hypothesis and Input Hypothesis when incorporating clarification, elaboration, and/or paraphrasing in communicative activities. Though through such strategies learners have the opportunity to take control of their on learning and progress further, this can only occur if the elaboration and/or paraphrasing that follows the clarification request does not extend too far beyond the NNS's comprehension.

REFERENCES

Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New York: Pearson.

Brown, J. (2012). Feedback: What is it good for? *Humanising Language Teaching, 14*(5).

Byrne, D. (1976). *Teaching Oral Communication*. Hong Kong: Longman.

Carroll, S. (1999). Putting "input" in its proper place. *Second Language Research*, 15, 337-388.

Derwing, T. (1996). Elaborative detail: help or hindrance to the NNS listener? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 283-298.

Ehrlich, S., Avery, P., Yorio, C. (1989). Discourse structure and the negotiation of comprehensible input. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11, 397-414.

Gass, S.M. Input and interaction. In C.J. Doughty and M.H. Long (Eds.), *The handbook of second language acquisition.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Gass, S. M., and Mackey, A. (2007). Input, interaction, and output in second language acquisition. In B. VanPatten and J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 175-199). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hall, G. (2011). *Exploring English language teaching: Language in action*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hatch, E.M. (1978) 'Discourse analysis and second language acquisition', in E.M. Hatch (ed.) *Second Language Acquisition: A Book of Readings*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House. pp. 401–35.

Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction, and second language acquisition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 379, 259-278.

Long, M. H. (1983). Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation and negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics*, 4 (2), 126-141.

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. Ritchie and T Bhatia (eds), *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition.* San Diego: Academic Press, 413-468.

Loschky, L. (1994). Comprehensible input and second language acquisition: What is the relationship. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 303-323.

McDonagh, J. & McDonagh, S. (2008). Learning to talk, talking to learn. In J. Marsh and E. Hallet (Eds.) *Desirable literacies: approaches to language and literacy in the early years.* (2nd ed.) (pp. 1-17). London: Sage.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The Role of Consciousness in Second Language Learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11,* 129-158.