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PETER GERALD LUTES

**THE BELIEFS OF JAPANESE SCIENCE MAJORS ON LEARNING ENGLISH AND
THE INFLUENCE OF COMMUNICATION IN STUDENT PERSONAL NETWORKS**

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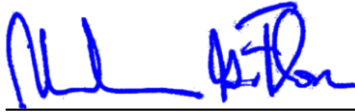
This dissertation titled The Beliefs of Japanese Science Majors on Learning English and the Influence of Communication in Student Personal Networks is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Communication (DCOMM).



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Dedication

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Abstract

English is the *lingua franca* in academia, business and international relations, and as such can act as gatekeeper to opportunities in the increasingly globalized world. The importance of English language competence is difficult to overstate. Consequently, English language education has been an important area of focus in education. In Japan, learning English as a second language has proven to be a difficult challenge for learners in spite of the extensive educational resources made available.

Success in language learning has been linked to learner beliefs, a key affective factor, and since learner beliefs influence learner behaviors, they may impact language learning success. Therefore, the language learning beliefs of unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners, as determined by standardized testing, were investigated. Following this, the impact of student personal communication networks on the language learning beliefs of the successful language learners were examined in focused interviews.

Participants shared beliefs, but also differed significantly in some beliefs according to their success as language learners in five groupings of beliefs: (1) foreign language aptitude; (2) the difficulty of language learning; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) learning and communication strategy; and (5) motivation.

This study found that the unsuccessful learners blamed the lack of success to outside factors that were beyond their control, did not expect to succeed, relied on traditional ways of learning and were passive learners. Successful language learners used non-traditional learning styles, made opportunities to use the language, and took responsibility for their learning and expected to succeed.

Two successful learners, Fumiko and Masahiro, had their learner beliefs influenced by their student personal networks through face-to-face communication, SNS software, and Facebook communication. These communications led to increased motivation, self-awareness in language learning, and provided more opportunities to use language.

Beliefs can influence behaviors, and behaviors, in turn, can influence outcomes. The socially created knowledge in personal communication networks can lead to beliefs that encourage good learner behaviors, and student personal communication networks play an important role in helping students achieve language learning success.

This study identifies a correlation between student beliefs and English language learning successes in Japanese non-English majors in Japan. Furthermore, it shows that for two of the successful language learners, student persona communication networks played an important role in influencing their beliefs.

Keywords: Language learning beliefs; English as a foreign language (EFL); Japanese university students; non-English majors

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In this chapter, I present an overview of the importance of English language competencies to the non-native speaker and the global dominance of the English language as the *lingua franca*. I explain the importance of learner beliefs and how they may affect learner performance, thus showing the need to investigate them. Finally, I explain the objectives of this research.

Background

The English language is the most broadly spoken language globally with an estimated 1.35 billion speakers, including native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS), worldwide (Ethnologue, n.d.). Additionally, English is the dominant language in academia for publishing research. In higher education in countries where English is not the native language, the use of English as the language of instruction is increasing (Dearden, 2014). English has been increasingly recognized and accepted as the *lingua franca* for global business (Gofluent, 2017; Neeley, 2012). While no longer the main language of the internet, accounting for about 80% of content in the 1990s, English is still the dominant language, especially in consideration of other dominant software, such as Twitter and the google search engine (Young, n.d.).

English language proficiency allows access to the increasingly globalized world that is not only the domain of the NS. Early on, Crystal emphasized the important role of NNS as users of English, noting the ratio of NNS to NS was 3:1 (1997), and that since a quarter of speakers are NS, most interactions in the English language as the *lingua franca* took place among NNS (2003).

As such, a lack of English proficiency may become a barrier to opportunities in education, and in employment. Globalization has led to an increased awareness of a

need for English language proficiency. This is reflected in the global English language learning demand. In 2018, the English language learning market was valued at 33.5 billion USD and was forecasted to grow to 54.8 billion USD by 2025 (Adroit Market Research, 2019). Interestingly, while the Chinese language is a close second to English as the language with the most speakers at 1.12 billion (Ethnologue, n.d.), the biggest growth in English language learning is in the Chinese market (Adroit Market Research, 2019). It may be said that the access to globalized business, education, and resources has increased the importance of learning the English language. Consequently, improving English language education and English language communication is not only an issue in education but also across the entire spectrum of human activities in the globalized world.

While it is difficult to definitively state when and how English language education for speakers and users of other languages began, it might be said that modern theory about language education began with Saussure (1916) when he made the distinction between language performance and language competence, shifting the paradigm from a focus on a measurable performance to a less easily measured paradigm: language competence. Since then, both linguists and psychologists have played leading roles in the development of the current understanding of language learning and the ongoing debate (Brown, 2014).

In the fields of psychology, this put the behaviorists in opposition to the cognitivists that aligned with the structural and descriptive schools of linguistics and the generative and transformational schools of linguistics, respectively. Since then, many theories of language learning have emerged. First language acquisition, language theories and approaches (behaviorism, nativism, and functionalism) led and contributed to the development of theories and approaches applied to second language learning. Focusing on second language acquisition, several important areas of research have emerged focusing on neurological considerations, psychomotor considerations, cognitive considerations, linguistic considerations, and affective considerations (Brown, 2014).

Problem Statement

This research focuses on learner beliefs in English as a foreign language (EFL) education and how these beliefs may be affected by communication in student personal networks. Learner beliefs may be broadly categorized as an affective factor (Gardner, 1985). Affective factors have been a topic of intensive investigation since the early 1980s. It is thought that learner beliefs play a significant role in language acquisition. However, there has been little research on the effect of learner beliefs with regard to foreign language acquisition in the context of Japan. Furthermore, to date, there have been no published findings examining the effect of learner beliefs and the impact of communication in their personal networks on these beliefs among science majors in Japan.

Since beliefs can influence behaviors, an understanding of these beliefs may lead to the design of a more informed curriculum that encourages students to emulate behaviors of successful language learners. Although, a definition of the “good language learner” is a topic of much debate, the behaviors of successful language learners are well understood (Ellis, 2015; Ellis 2015; Nunan, 1999). Good language learners pay attention to language form, focus on communication, are active in their approach to language tasks, have a high awareness of how to learn languages, and use their learning strategies flexibly (Ellis, 2015). As noted above, these behaviors are influenced by their language learning beliefs and as educators, we should try to encourage beliefs that lead to behaviors that have been shown to lead to language learning success.

During their university years, many students are still developing beliefs and attitudes which are subject to great influence from their peers and during the developmental stages, students look to their peers for affirmation of their values and beliefs (Erikson, 1963) and as such, peer leadership is critical in developing positive behaviors (Goethals, 1999). Students are strongly influenced by their peer groups, and the peer group can strongly influence academic progress by modeling and/or encouraging behaviors (Epple & Romano, 2011 Frank et al., 2008). Since many students rely on their peers and easily accessible sources of information (Biddix, 2011;

Flanagin & Metzger, 2010), it is important to consider the role that communication in their personal networks may have had in influencing their learning beliefs.

While there is some uniformity in English language education (MEXT, 2016a), at the high school level, students elect either the science track or humanities track to specialize in. It is reasonable to expect that the beliefs of Japanese science majors with regard to learning a foreign language may differ to those held by their peers from other majors. It is important to note that there have been no studies to date. A better understanding of the beliefs held by Japanese science majors about learning a foreign language, will allow both learners and educators to address how to best encourage behaviors that will aid learners in language acquisition. Furthermore, an investigation of the influence of peers on the beliefs of successful language learners may also offer some guidance on how these beliefs have led to language learning success.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are two-fold:

- i) To gain a better understanding of the language learning beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science through:
 - a. An investigation of the language learning beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science using a Likert-type scale based on the Sakui Gaies instrument (1999);
 - b. An investigation the beliefs of successful language learners, as determined by standardized testing (TOEIC LR), that had graduated from the same faculty;
 - c. Determination if there is a relationship between the students' language learning beliefs and their English language proficiency;
- ii) To investigate how student language learning beliefs may have been influenced or changed by communication in their personal networks and what good learner behaviors may have been influenced.

Importance

The investigation of the language learning beliefs, through the quantitative findings, of this study can provide a baseline for discussion of the importance of student networks on successful language learners, contribute to a better understanding of science majors' study of EFL and may be useful for comparison in programs for science majors at Japanese universities since these beliefs influence their behaviors. Furthermore, the results may offer educators, curriculum developers, and program administrators insights on how to develop a language program that is best suited to the learners. The focused interviews, through qualitative findings, offer insight into the impact of student personal networks and may offer some insights on how students can be guided by the information they receive from their personal networks toward positive learning beliefs and potentially more positive language learning outcomes.

EFL education for science majors has been an overlooked area of research in Japan, and the findings of the present study are the first large-scale examination, of the beliefs of science majors in Japan and the first investigation of the impact of informal student networks among science majors that have been successful language learners as students.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Framework

Connectivism learning theory calls for ignoring the set boundaries of behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. It proposes that educators need to reevaluate instruction frameworks in light of the interconnectivity that the digital age offers and consider how various aspects of education relate to each other (Siemens & Downes, 2009). Connectivism is socially networked learning. Downes (2007) states:

“...knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and therefore that learning consists of the ability to construct and traverse those networks.”

Since the 1970's the most important instructional theories, have been behaviorism and cognitivism. Behaviorism holds that learning is essentially unknowable because we cannot understand what occurs inside a person. Gredler (2001, as cited in Siemens, 2017) summarizes behaviorism as based on three assumptions related to learning. The first is that observable behavior is more important in attempting to understand unknowable internal processes. Behavior should focus on the basic components such as specific stimuli and specific responses and learning consists of behavior change.

In education, behaviorist theories were widely accepted because they were much easier to evaluate than cognitive learning results (Black, 1995). In contrast, the universal instructional theory formulated a proposal for a universal instructional theory that considered the learner, the learning tasks and outcomes, the conditions and instructional methodology, and a frame of reference to achieve the desired learning outcome (Schott & Driscoll, 1997 as cited in Dijkstra 2012). This theory is prescriptive and supposedly could provide the key principles, which if applied correctly could assure learning (Driscoll, 2000).

Gagne codified set requirements and the sequences for instruction (Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2020):

1. Gain attention of the students
2. Inform students of the objectives
3. Stimulate recall of prior learning
4. Present the content
5. Provide learning guidance
6. Elicit performance (practice)
7. Provide feedback
8. Assess performance
9. Enhance retention and transfer

This instructional design is a behaviorist approach in that it focuses on the result-specific training. The emphasis is not on how learning occurs, the forte of the cognitivists, but on how to achieve the desired learning outcomes. As described above, we see this strongly reflected in the idea of the “good language learner” (Ellis, 2016).

Cognitivism is often described using an information processing model where learning is composed of various inputs that are dealt with in short-term memory and finally process into long-term memory where it is available for recall and use in the future. Knowledge may be seen as symbolic mental constructs in the mind of the learner and learning how the constructs are entrenched in memory (Siemens, 2017).

Cognitive theory plays a role in instructional planning, and as such, there is an overlap in the strategies and teaching methodologies used by behaviorists and cognitivists. Therefore, in general, educational design can be viewed from either a behaviorist lens or the cognitivist lens without contradiction. We will see later that this also applies to second language acquisition. This calls upon educators to set targets after an analysis of the situation from either of the two viewpoints, following which an assessment is made according to whether or not the criteria have been met.

In the constructivist approach, a facilitative outcome is the goal rather than a specific outcome. Evaluation is more subjective because it is not reliant on quantitative criteria, such as a performance test or a knowledge-based test. It holds that the successful learners would be more able to cope with real-life occurrences. Driscoll (2000) states that constructivism suggests that knowledge is created as learners try to understand experiences. While both behaviorists and cognitivists perceive knowledge as external, and the internalizing of this knowledge is the process of learning, constructivism holds that learners are not blank slates or empty vessels to which knowledge is transferred. In fact learners actively seek to create meaning and knowledge from their own experiences and therefore select and seek their own knowledge. Real-life learning is complicated and messy with classrooms that emulate the atmosphere of real life being better in preparing learners (Siemens, 2017). As described above, we see this lack of clarity occurring in language education with the Japanese government calling for very subjective outcomes of the cultivation of Japanese with English Abilities” (MEXT, 2003).

While these three learning theories differ, they have provided an important conceptual framework and the terminology to observe and explain learning and then to disseminate this knowledge and further develop learning.

Connectivism challenges the divisions of these learning theories in because society has become more complex and more interconnected and undergoing rapid change as technology changes. Knowledge and ways of knowing come from a wide variety of opinions and input over which the individual does not exert control. In fact, an important skill of the learner is connecting their sources of information and using these connections to facilitate their learning.

These social networks exist because the members have a common goal, and this commonality promotes and sustains the network and the knowledge (Siemens, 2004). Members may join and leave the network freely and the bond of the network is the commonality of goals. In this way, student learning is with additional knowledge and perspective from their networks. Having a potentially unlimited amount of data to access may empower learners to further learning (Siemens, 2004). Connectivism

relies on the creation and maintenance of networks by linking people and resources in an interconnected fashion (Bell, 2011). Learners manage interaction by using networking tools and resources to make and build networks within their network. As Chen (2004) notes, it is this empowerment of learners to participate which in turn becomes the basis for interactions (Chen, 2004b). Accordingly, models have been developed.

Models

The conceptual framework of interaction for connectivist learning and cognitive engagement (Anderson model et. al., 2000) is useful as a starting point because it is easily adapted according to the requirements of a framework. Bloom's cognitive taxonomy (1956), later revised by Anderson, shows four levels of interconnect interaction (Anderson et. al., 2000) (See Fig. 3 Conceptual framework of interaction for connectivist learning and cognitive engagement):

1. Operation Interaction is the stage in which learners build their personal learning environment (PLE). Learners choose different options based upon the level of technological know-how and availability of various platforms to use, contribute, and filter content. This forms the basis of their connectivism learning experience (Downes, 2011).
2. Wayfinding Interaction is the stage in which connection of the knowledge pipeline, with importance placed upon forming connections and an awareness of these connections and knowledge (Siemens, 2006), and forms the most basic level of connectivist learning.
3. Sensemaking Interaction is the stage whereby meaning and knowledge are discussed, shared, negotiated, and reflected upon which then can lead to decision-making based on this knowledge.
4. Innovation Interaction is the highest stage in which the active participation results in the creation of artifacts, that is to say, knowledge growth through reflection, refinement, and presentation throughout the network. This artifact

knowledge can live and grow interpedently of the initial creators, even if the originally creators have left the network.

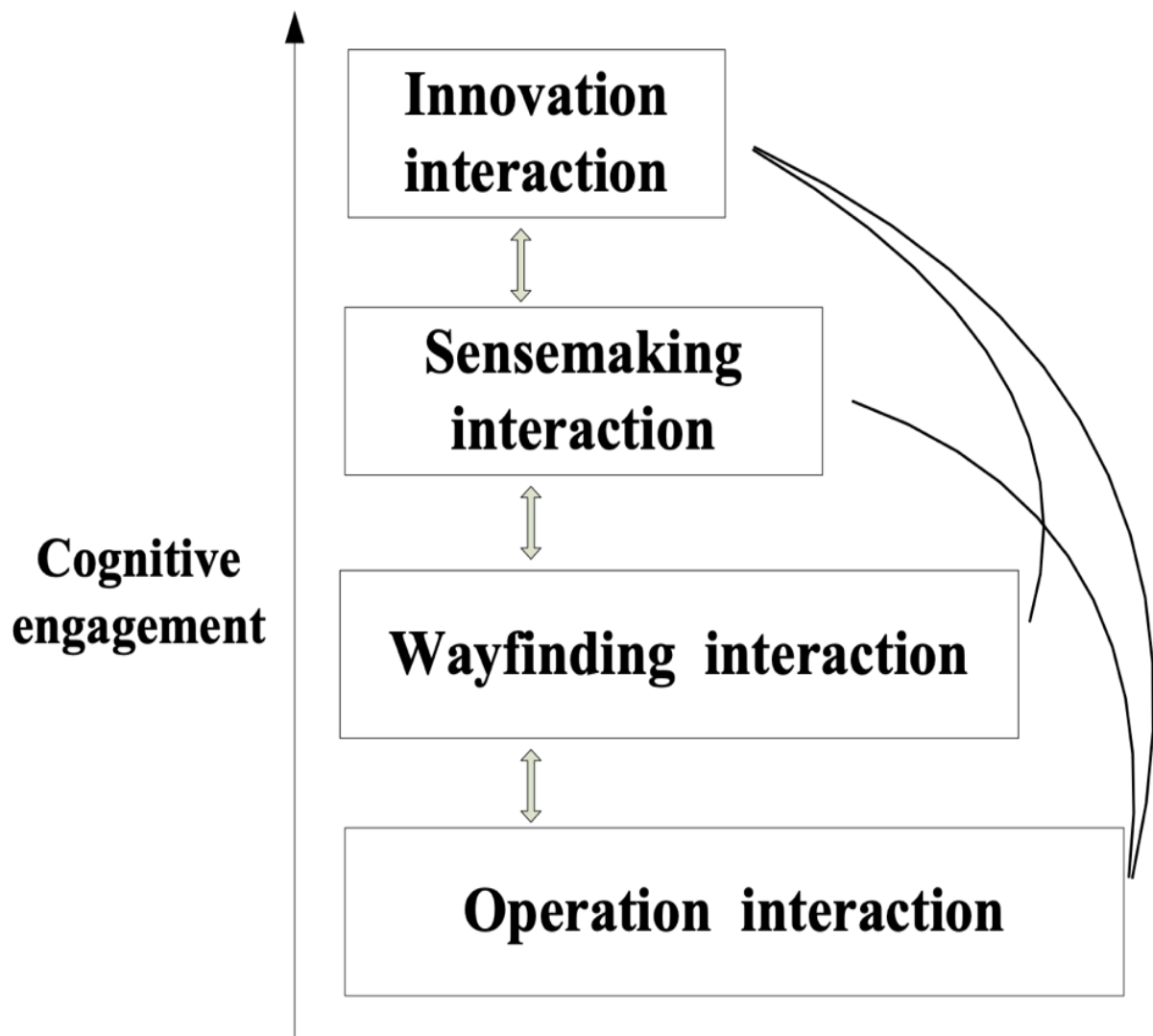


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of interaction for connectivist learning and cognitive engagement (Anderson et. al., 2000)

Laurillaard's conversation framework adds the dimension of a teacher in an online environment. However, because it is a model for distance learning, it places the teacher in a very active and dominant role, much like the teacher-centered learning models moved online. The teacher is very important in the feedback loop and the students are ultimately performing to meet the grading requirements.

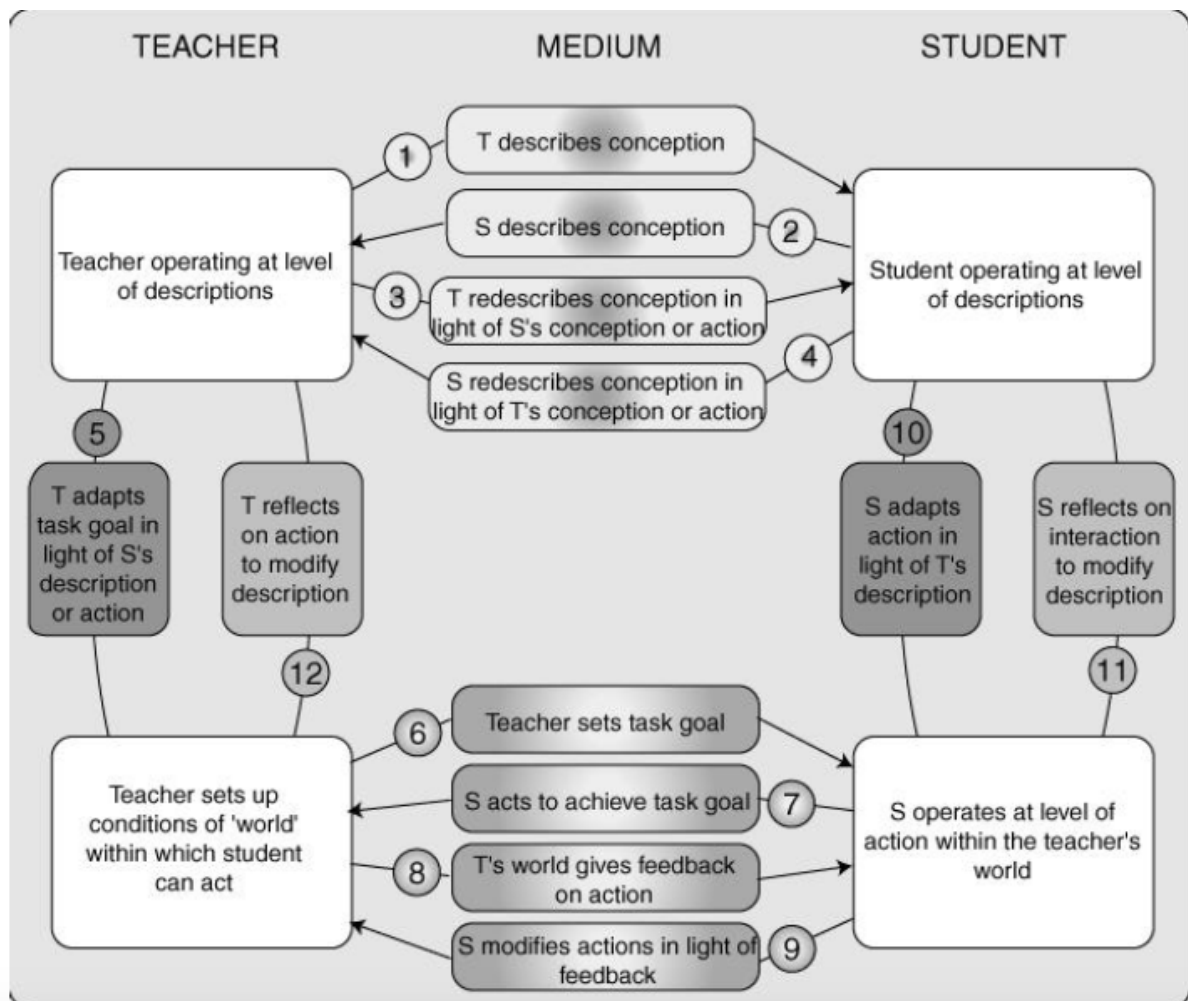


Figure 2 Laurillard's Conversational Framework

Conversely, Salmon's five-stage model of teaching online (Salmon as cited in Berge, 2013) focuses more on the online aspects rather than the teacher being a key facilitator. The technology takes over as a more important factor than any one particular agent or player.

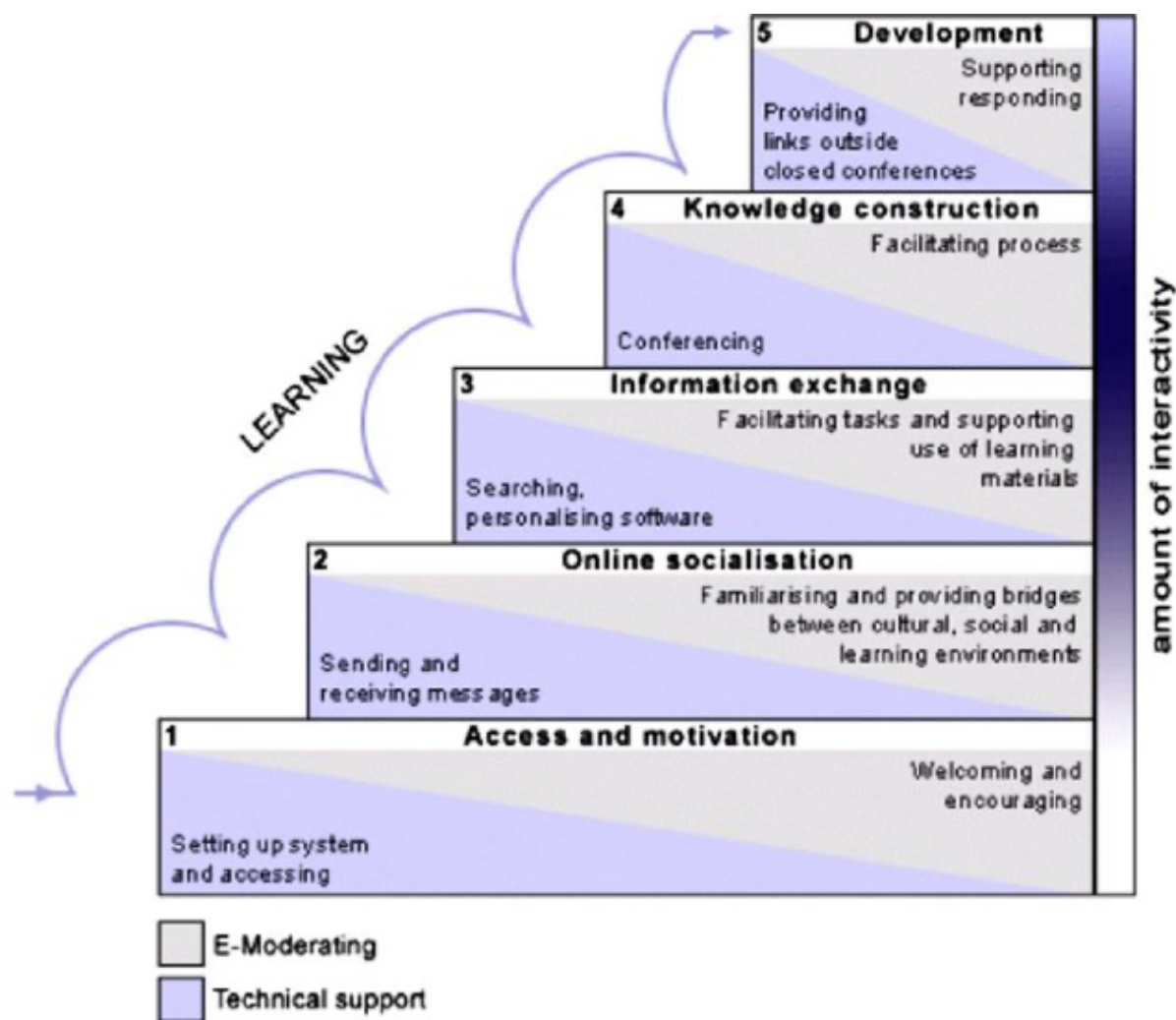


Figure 3 Salmon's five-stage model of teaching online (Salmon, as cited in Berge, 2013)

However, for the purpose of this study, the teacher role is not central as this study does not focus on a formal structure such as provided by online learning. Rather, this study examines the personal student networks where knowledge is developed and shared in a network that is essentially limited to the students. They may bring their knowledge from outside influences into the network, but their personal networks are not guided by the teachers or the teachers' educational priorities or goals. Consequently, a modified model that considers a limited teacher's role and the addition of face to face communication, i.e. a blended model of face to face communication and online communication, is used based on Salmon's model (Figure 4).

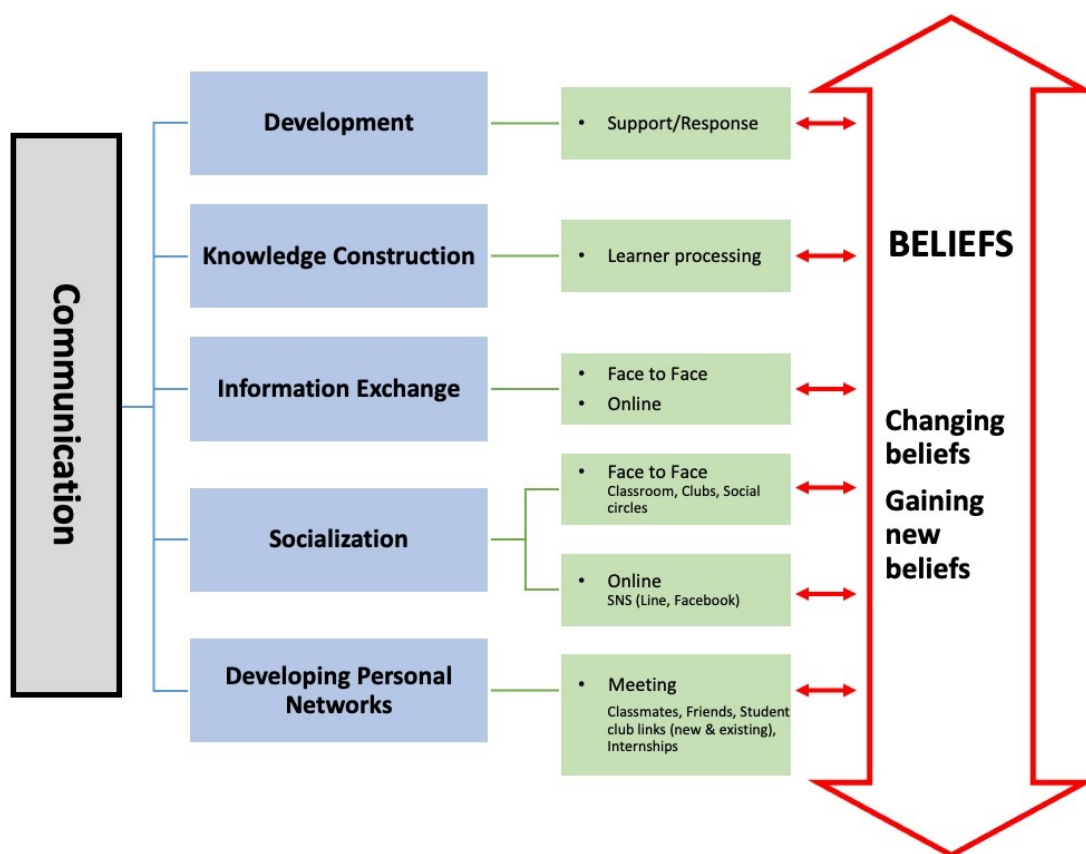


Figure 4 Five-stage model of communication in blended personal communication networks

Hypothesis

Some language learners have been able to become successful language learners while others have not. It is my hypothesis that the unsuccessful language learners have different beliefs about language learning from successful language learners. Furthermore, I hypothesize that the beliefs about language learning were affected by communication in their student personal networks.

Research questions

As such this study investigates these two key questions:

- 1) Is there a difference in the language learning beliefs between unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners?

- 2) Did communication in student personal communication networks change the language learning beliefs of the successful language learners?

Variables

To address the first hypothesis, the independent variable is language proficiency. There are two levels of language proficiency: successful and unsuccessful, that are used to reference the dependent variables. The 44 differing belief indicators were divided into five subcategories: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategy, and motivation (Nakano, 2021).

Operational Definition of Terms

Successful language learner refers to a learner that has achieved a score of 730 or higher on the TOEIC Listening and Reading test.

Test of English for International Communication: Listening and Reading (TOEIC LR) test: “The test measures the everyday English listening and reading skills needed to work in an international environment. Test questions simulate real-life situations that are relevant to the global workplace. TOEIC Listening and Reading scores provide meaningful feedback about a test taker's strengths and weaknesses, along with a description of the skills typical of test takers at various levels.” (TOEIC, n.d.).

Unsuccessful language learner refers to a learner that has not achieved a score of 730 or higher on the TOEIC Listening and Reading Test.

Chapter III

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

In this chapter, I discuss the importance of learner beliefs, closely related to learner attitudes, in second language learning, as one of the most important affective factors which included learner anxiety and learner attitudes (Cook, 2016; Ellis, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Krashen, 1981; Lightbrown & Spada, 2013; Nunan, 2009). I outline the research on learner beliefs, including the Sakui Gaies Instrument (Sakui & Gaies, 1999) used for the qualitative investigation. Following this, symbolic interactionism in communication and language learning is described to provide the lens from which the focused interviews are examined.

The background of English language education is explained with a focus on the admissions system for Japanese national universities. The effects of this high-stake testing on English language education leading up to university, and the impacts on the students that have successfully navigated the system to enter a national university are discussed. Since the study participants are from the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University, the specific conditions for admission to this institution are described in detail.

I discuss the definition of the successful language learner used in this study and explain how and why it was defined for the purposes of this research in the context of Japan. Finally, I outline the research on the how the student personal networks may impact their academic outcomes and their beliefs.

Review of Related Literature

Affective factors in EFL

Foreign language acquisition has been extensively studied with a strong focus on individual learner differences (Cook, 2016; Ellis, 2008; Fujiwara, 2011; Krashen,

1981; Lightbrown & Spada, 2013; Nunan, 2009). Learning is thought to be dependent on several factors: cognitive factors, affective factors, metacognitive factors, and demographic factors (Olivares-Cuhat, 2010). Affective factors have been found to have a significant impact on language learners with regard to attitudes towards learning the target language and on their attitudes about the most effective ways of learning the target language (Ellis, 2008; Fujiwara, 2011; Lightbrown & Spada, 2013; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006; Peng, 2011; Sakui and Gaies, 1999; Yang, 1999). Affective factors include learner motivation, learner anxiety, and learner attitudes.

Of these affective factors, motivation has been considered to be an important (Gardner, 1985a), if not the most important factor, in success in foreign language acquisition (Dornyei, 1994a). Gardner's socio-educational model of language is based on the relationship between motivational and attitudinal variables with learning a foreign language. The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (Gardner, 1985b) was developed which led to Masgoret & Gardner (2003) suggesting that motivation was a key driver of integration with, and attitudes towards the learning environment, which they called integrative motivation (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Dornyei (2001), and Pintrich and Schunk (2002) identified intrinsic and extrinsic motivators as playing an important role in foreign language acquisition. This has also been a widely studied area since intrinsic and extrinsic factors can be easily identified and investigated (Brown, 2014; Lin et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2017; Williams & Lutes, 2007). There remains a strong research focus on motivation, and it can be concluded that motivation is a major factor in foreign language acquisition (Boo, et al., 2015; Brown, 2014; Dornyei, 1994b; Ellis, 1994; Poulin et al. 2018).

A second affective factor, language anxiety, plays a contrary role, in that it can interfere with foreign language acquisition, which is particularly evident in oral communication, may reoccur in a particular situation (Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Woodrow, 2006). Foreign language acquisition can be grouped with situation-specific anxiety (Krashen, 2002a). Krashen (2002a) proposed that there was an affective filter that influenced success in foreign language acquisition. He identified three key affective factors: anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence. Anxiety or

language anxiety continues to be an area of active research in foreign language acquisition.

A third affective factor, learner attitude is thought to be very important in foreign language acquisition (Brown, 2014; Dornyei, 1994b; Ellis, 1994). Ellis (1994) noted that foreign language acquisition can be affected by social factors, including learner attitudes.

However, the behavioral intention is reflected in a learner's attitude toward a specific behavior, as suggested by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TORA), (Fishbein, 1967). Therefore, attitudes towards a behavior are in fact behavioral beliefs and subjective norms (Aizen, 2002; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975 as cited in Guyer & Fabrigar, 2015; Miller, 2005). In foreign language acquisition, research on learner attitudes has focused on training attitudes since attitudes can affect behavioral intention, and therefore, a negative attitude and lack of motivation are barriers to language acquisition (Csizér & Dornyei, 2005; Ellis, 1994).

Smith (1971) focused on the importance of attitudes in language learning. He makes three important claims about attitudes in language acquisition:

1. Since attitudes could be learned, they could be taught;
2. Since attitudes are situational, they could be generalized; and
3. Since attitudes are formulated within a frame of reference, if an event or object does not elicit an attitude, then the context will generate the learner's attitude.

In second language acquisition, there is a clear distinction between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL). EFL refers to “the role of English in countries where it is taught as a subject but not used a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication (e.g., in government, business, or industry) within the country (Richards et al., 1992). EFL refers to “the role of English in countries where it widely used within the country (e.g., as a language of instruction at school, as a language of business and government, and of everyday

communication by some people) but it is not the first language of the population (e.g., in Singapore, the Philippines, India and Nigeria)” (Richards et al., 1992).

EFL learners have differing attitudes about English, English language speakers, the cultures that they associate with English, the social value of learning English, the uses of English, and their own self-image (Ellis, 1994; Smith, 1971). Furthermore, when the language learner’s expectations and beliefs about effective language learning do not coincide with their language learning experience, a decrease in motivation and an increase in learner anxiety may result. (Abdi & Asadi, 2015; Asbjornson, 1999; Barcelos, 2000; Bernat, 2008; Horwitz, 1988; Mori, 1999; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). So, gaining a better understanding of these expectations may provide a basis for planning for educators, curriculum developers, and program administrators in the development of language programs since these attitudes, as noted above, can play an important role in the success of foreign language acquisition, and as such, merits deeper investigation.

While as stated above, there has been much research of affective factors in language learning, studies of the beliefs of foreign language learners are limited in number (Wenden, 2001). However, it is these beliefs that shape learners’ attitudes and hence, may exert a significant influence on learning behaviors (Como, 1986; Cotterall, 1995). Furthermore, these beliefs become change-resistant (Alexander & Dochy, 1995) and they play an important role in the outcomes of learning (Martin & Ramsden, 1987; Weinert & Kluwe, 1987). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate these beliefs.

Initial research on English as a Second Language (ESL) and EFL learner beliefs was conducted using a novel research instrument, the Beliefs about Language Learning (BALLI) Instrument (Horwitz, 1988). The study investigated the learning beliefs of ESL and EFL learners and found that they were not in agreement with the beliefs held by their instructors. Furthermore, Horwitz (1988) concluded that learners had clear, preconceived ideas about language learning, some of which were erroneous and could act as a barrier to language learning. Therefore, understanding

if behaviors are influenced by student networks may provide additional avenues in encouraging behaviors that support language learning.

The Sakui Gaies Instrument

Sakui and Gaies (1999) developed a modified BALLI instrument, tailoring it to Japanese students in consideration of cultural differences. Accordingly, the instrument was developed in the Japanese language, and administered in Japanese. Establishing the validity and general reliability of their BALLI instrument was a key focus of their research because this was the first instrument developed specifically for Japanese ESL/EFL learners.

They conducted a factor analysis after grouping responses into four belief categories: beliefs about communicative English language learning, beliefs about the traditional way of teaching and learning English, beliefs about the quality of classroom instruction and beliefs about language aptitude and the difficulty of learning English.

Sakui and Gaies (1999) found that Japanese students had a wide variety of beliefs which was in stark contrast to previous assumptions that Japanese learners had very strong and homogeneous beliefs about language learning. As noted above, because of the homogeneity of education, these results were important in clarifying that assumptions of educators and curriculum developers may not accurately reflect the beliefs of the target language learners.

While beliefs have been thought to be fairly resistant to change (Alexander & Dochy, 1995), in an investigation of 661 first-year university students, Riley (2009) found a shift in approximately one quarter of the responses to a 45-question survey on their beliefs over a nine-month period, using the Sakui and Gaies (1999) instrument with only one question (See Table 4. No. 12) slightly modified from an open ended question to a Likert-type question. This shift in beliefs is noteworthy because it opens a new line of inquiry as to how the participant beliefs were shifted and this shift was a result of communication in their personal networks. It should be noted that other researchers have used varying belief groupings (Chawhan & Oliver, 2000; Kuntz,

1996; Mohebi & Khodadady, 2011) in the investigation of second language learners. Most recently, Nakano (2021) developed a grouping according to five themes:

1. Foreign language aptitude,
2. The difficulty of language learning,
3. The nature of language learning,
4. Learning and communication strategy, and
5. Motivation.

Addressing learner beliefs and their consequent learning expectations is important because inaccurate beliefs or expectations can negatively impact student learning (Ellis, 1996; Mantle-Bromley, 1995), and can cause learner anxiety (Young, 1991), thus negatively affecting language production (Sheen, 2008). Pajares (1992) suggested that learner beliefs were a summary of their attitudes, values, and preconceptions about language learning and that learner beliefs are a construct of interest.

In light of this, if shifts in belief do occur, I believe that the factors that contribute to these shifts may also be very important constructs in ESL/EFL. One leading candidate that has not been investigated is the role of communication in student personal networks.

Symbolic interactionism in communication and language learning

Ontology may be defined as the nature of reality of our view about reality that creates our reality. This allows for the existence of differing realities that may not factually match each other (Griffin, 2012). Epistemology can be described as the views on the nature of knowledge and these epistemological assumptions are important because they shape the understanding and interpretation of knowledge (Lichtman, 2006). In communication studies, the creation of knowledge has been considered of great importance. In the sociocultural tradition, importance is placed on how meaning is created through interactions between people in real life situations (Craig, 2007). The sociocultural creates knowledge based upon the interactions of people and is, as such, necessarily under the umbrella of social construction. Symbolic interaction holds that

in the social environment, meaning emerges from social interaction between people, and the symbols that they use in these interactions (Littlejohn, 2009). Shared symbols form the basis of communication and society is socially constructed by meanings that people attach to social interaction and the occurrences, which they in turn share with others.

Symbolic interaction theory originated with Mead and Blumer (Craig, 2007). Mead proposed that that our thoughts, self-concepts, and our wider communities were created through communication and symbolic interaction and that without language, a symbolic interaction, the critical human characteristics could not develop. Furthermore, in Mead's viewpoint, individual people made their own choices and aligned themselves with other to form societies' systems (Mead, 1934). Blumer (1969) summarized the core characteristics of Mead as having to deal with meaning, language, and thinking.

Meaning stems the interaction of people and the meanings that the people involved in the interaction understand and begin to formulate from the interaction. It is these meanings that in turn form the basis of the construction of their social reality. However, these meanings are not static, are influenced and formed in conjunction with language and the thinking.

Language is important because the meaning of language is negotiated by the actors in a language exchange. Language, or the words that are used are symbolism for other things, which Blumer (1969) termed symbolic interactionism. Language does have not an absolute meaning but in fact, the meaning of language is negotiated by the people involved in the discourse.

After, and even during, the language exchange, the individual interprets and construes the meaning of these language symbols through the filters of their own experiences and socially constructed reality. The socially created world is a result of the communication of the members of the particular society, group or sub-group. Thereby the participants' construct comes from communication.

In research, Becker (1996) states that all social scientists describe a viewpoint of people and attempt to interpret the actions of these people. The emerging description allows us to find out the meaning that people give to events and interactions with other people in their lives. This can be achieved by interviews which the researcher observes or participates in. Becker (1996) further stresses it is important to avoid the pitfall of assigning what we think we would feel under the same circumstance, to the participants as a conclusion. The implication is that we must find a way to let the people express their own voice and not impose our social and cultural perspectives upon them. He proposes open-ended questions in questionnaires or interviews as a way of getting a better understanding of the meanings and interpretations that participants give to their experiences.

In the fields of language studies, this has been analyzed from various viewpoints, but particularly from the lens of semantics, and pragmatics. Semantics focuses on meaning in language. It can generally be defined as studying the relationship between the language expression and the phenomena that they attempt to describe (Cowie, 2013). Pragmatics can be said to focus on the study of what choices language users make, and the constraints they face in language interactions and the impact of their language utterances on the other participants of the language exchange (Yule, 2011).

Symbolic interaction is a social construction. Social construction addresses how knowledge or truth is developed in a social context. This knowledge or truth, or social constructs, have been developed by human interaction in a variety of social situations. Berger and Luckmann (1966) assert that 'knowledge' in society must focus on whatever is accepted as knowledge regardless of its accuracy or validity. This knowledge is what affects the behavior of the holders of the knowledge.

Therefore, if a language learner believes that they cannot learn a language, then they may have created a self-fulfilling prophecy. Language "objectivates" these personal experiences and forms a shared database of knowledge which is then reinforced. It is these "objectivated meanings of institutional activity are conceived of as 'knowledge' and transmitted as such" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; p 88). However, this knowledge is fluid and can be re-affirmed, accepted, challenged, or refuted as it

is passed through the society, group, or sub-group. In the context of this investigation, the information shared in the communication is evaluated and can be accepted or rejected by the members of these networks.

van Zoone (2010) also describes constructionism as based in the assumption that knowledge is not fixed, and that it is created by context and by the participants. Although there is an undeniable reality that exists, “we can only define the meaning and make sense of that experience through language” (p. 55). Therefore, the importance of language is not limited to lexicon and grammar but can be found in the discourse and the context of the discourse creates the reality. van Zoone (2010) further points out that, “It is important to realize, however, that these processes are equally accessible to everyone (p. 56), and therefore communication within a group can be in itself a power. It is this communication power that might be harnessed to help language learners develop behaviors that will lead them to more successes. And as such, the investigation of the beliefs and the effect of communication networks can provide important information to educators to help language learners and better inform their teaching practices.

Background of English Education in Japan

There are many competing demands on students as they navigate the Japanese education system, such as university ranking, the selection system, university costs, and the type of language testing, all of which determines which university they will ultimately attend. To have a better understanding of the importance of English language in Japan and the experiences of Japanese science majors in general, and in particular of the participants in this survey, it is important to understand the educational pressures that influence their beliefs and behaviors.

In Japan, education, including English language education, falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). With the increasing need to foster a more globalized workforce, MEXT began to focus more on developing English language communicative abilities beginning with discussion on the establishment of a plan cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities” (2003). A 6-3-3-4-year (elementary, junior high school, high school, tertiary) system of

school education, with English language education at the junior high school, high school, and tertiary levels, was established by the Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Law (MEXT, 2010). In a 2011 white paper, “Five proposals and specific measures for developing proficiency in English for international communication,” were outlined to advance English language communication skills (MEXT, 2011).

In 2013, after several revisions, a concrete plan, “Toward Implementation of Educational Rebuilding”, to revitalize education was established (MEXT, 2013a). Japan has always viewed English language proficiency as an important factor in economic growth. Rapid globalization led to calls for further policy revisions by then Japanese Prime Minister Abe (Mie, 2013). Consequently, the “English Education Reform Plan corresponding to Globalization” was adopted (MEXT, 2016a). The most significant change was the elimination of the standard national university entrance English examination as a component of the National Center Test for University Admissions.

However, there has been resistance in the education sector to this change, including the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious and influential university in Japan (Brasor, 2018). The English language component was to be replaced by testing from private standardized testing services (Cambridge English Exam Series, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), the Global Test of English Communication (GTEC), Test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP), Test of English for Academic Purposes Computer Based Test (TEAP CBT), Test in Practical English Proficiency (Eiken), and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The national entrance exams have been modified, renamed the Common Test for University Admissions, and as of 2022, still include an English language component (MEXT, 2020). The English language component is similar to the National Center Test for University Admission component and still retains the listening and writing sections (MEXT, 2020).

Students that were admitted to university for the 2021 academic year used the new entrance test. However, it should be noted that the participants in this survey

entered university under the previous system first established in 1979 (National Center for University Entrance Examinations, n.d.), which is accordingly outlined below.

In Japan, there are three types of university: national (86), public (83), and private (467) (e-Stat, 2018). Because of the limited number of national universities, and the high quality of education at these institutions, admissions to national universities are very competitive. All applicants for national universities must undergo a nationally administered entrance exam, which is one element of the admissions process to national universities. The entrance exams are held on set days, usually in mid-late January, over a two-day weekend. Students must take examinations on subjects related to their intended area of studies, as well as the compulsory exams for entrance to national universities, one of which is English.

After the national entrance tests, applicants then choose up to two national universities to apply for admission, a first-round entry choice, and a second-round entry choice. If they are not admitted to their first-round entry choice for admissions, they then begin second round entry choice admissions procedure. The requirements are likely to differ from the first round according to the university and faculty. Applicants that are unsuccessful in the second round of admissions may either seek admission at private universities or wait one year and re-attempt the national university examinations and university specific examinations in the following year, becoming one of the so-called *ronin*. *Ronin* refers to students that failed to gain admission and retake the entrance exams in the following year.

Students that have not gained admission to national universities may elect to go to a private university. In fact, MEXT (2016b) in “White Paper on Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology”, touted the importance of private education:

In a society based on global knowledge and learning, private schools are required to promote distinctive education and research in accordance with the increasingly diverse demands of its people, with each actively conducting unique activities based on their own philosophies. Private schools thus play important roles, both qualitatively and quantitatively in the development of Japan’s school education.

Accordingly, by establishing the “promotion of private schools” as a basic policy in the Second Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, MEXT (2016b) positions the promotion of private schools as an important policy goal, under which it strives to maintain and improve these schools’ educational and research conditions and reduce the financial burden of learning for students enrolled in them.

However, the national entrance exams are very high-stake examinations, both for the students and their families, because average tuition fees at private universities in general are significantly higher than national universities (Japan Study Support, n.d.). If the fees are calculated over the duration of a 4-year undergraduate program, fees at a national university would be ¥ 2,425,200 versus ¥ 4,647,522 a difference of ¥ 2,222,322 (See Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1 First year fees for undergraduate programs in science (JPY)

UNIVERSITY TYPE	TUITION FEES	ENROLLMENT FEES	FACILITY & MAINTENANCE FEES	TOTAL
National Universities	¥ 535,800	¥ 282,000	*	¥ 817,800
Private Science University	¥ 1,048,763	¥ 262,436	¥ 190,034	¥ 1,501,233

(Costs in Japanese Yen)

**Additional fees may be required*

Table 2 Total estimated fees for a four-year undergraduate program in science (JPY)

UNIVERSITY TYPE	TUITION FEES	ENROLLMENT FEES	FACILITY & MAINTENANCE FEES	TOTAL
National Universities	¥ 2,143,200	¥ 282,000	*	¥ 2,425,200
Private Science University	¥ 4,195,052	¥ 262,436	¥ 190,034	¥ 4,647,522

(Costs in Japanese Yen)

**Additional fees may be required*

Despite the importance of the national admissions system, the National Center for University Entrance Examinations was, and the current Common Test for University Admissions and the entrance system for specific national universities in Japan is a black box process. Students are not informed of their scores on the national tests until long after they have applied and tested for their chosen national universities, and the admission results have been announced. Each national university has its own admission tests, the results of which are added to the scores of the national entrance

test to determine if admission will be offered to the applicant. Each faculty of each university determines the scope and content of the university and their faculty specific entrance exam. They also determine the weighting of the past test, the National Center Test for University Admissions, and the weighting of the current Common Test for University Admissions, and their own admission examinations. Furthermore, the weighting differs according to each university and may even differ according to faculty.

Comparative data is not available because each national university determines what data that they will make public and there is no publicly available data for the results of National Center Test for University Admissions, nor for the newer Common Test for University Admissions, according to subject. Because candidates have only two attempts based on the same national entrance examination score to gain admissions, they are very cognizant of the factors that will determine if they can gain admission. In fact, there is a supporting shadow system of preparatory schools and cram schools that guide examinees on their likelihood of gaining admission at universities. The most important factors in determining the likelihood of admissions are:

- 1) The ranking of the university, since the higher ranked universities will be more competitive;
- 2) The weighting of the faculty admission examination, which is generally considered to be more challenging than those of the National Center Test for University Admissions, or the Common Test for University Admissions;
- 3) The subjects that are tested in the faculty admission examination which varies (whether English is tested is of particular importance to science and technology students, since science students specialize in the second-year of high school and take more challenging science classes, but less challenging English classes).

This research was conducted in the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University, a national university. Of the 86 national universities, 27 have a faculty of agriculture or a cross-disciplinary faculty, including agriculture. The Times Higher Education (THE) university rankings show that in Japan, all ranked national universities scored in the top 100 universities of the 213 universities ranked in Japan which supports the notion

that national universities offer a consistently high level of education (THE Rankings, 2019a). However, the Japanese rankings suggest that universities of similar ranking, but examining the world ranking (THE Rankings, 2019b) shows the wide range in their ranking with the University of Tokyo ranking 42nd, while the 13 universities (Ehime University, Gifu University, Iwate University, Kagawa University, Kagoshima University, Saga University, Shimane University, Shizuoka University, Tottori University, University of Miyazaki, University of the Ryukyus, Utsunomiya University, and Yamaguchi University) ranked 1000th+ (See Table 4) (Pasunavi, 2019).

The top eight ranked universities in Japan (Hokkaido University, Kobe University, Kyoto University, Kyushu University, Nagoya University, Okayama University, Tohoku University, and the University of Tokyo) had a 53% or higher weighting on their faculty admission examination. Nine universities (Ehime University, Iwate University, Kagawa University, Kochi University, Shinshu University, Shizuoka University, University of the Ryukyus, Yamagata University, and Yamaguchi University) do not require English for their faculty admission examination.

In consideration of these factors, with the omission of Kochi University, since data is not available, Kagawa University stands out as a good option for students with lower English scores in that it has the highest ranking (801-1000) among universities with no English test for the faculty admission examination. Furthermore, it has the lowest weighting of the faculty admission examination. Therefore, of the 82% of the national examination results, 200 points out of 1100 points (approx. 22%) are for English language and the remaining 18% is dependent on a science test. So, overall English testing would account for 18.2% of the score needed for admissions.

This makes the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University particularly attractive to science majors with that have not been successful English language learners.

Table 3 Key metrics for likelihood of gaining admission in agriculture faculties at national universities

UNIVERSITY	THE JAPAN RANKING	THE WORLD RANKING	FACULTY ENGLISH EXAM	WEIGHT of UNIVERSITY EXAM
Kochi University	Not ranked	801-1000	No	None
Kagawa University	88	801-1000	No	18%
Shinshu University	=46	801-1000	No	22%
Yamaguchi University	52	1001+	No	25%
Yamagata University	59	801-1000	No	25%
Iwate University	85	1001+	No	25%
Ehime University	64	1001+	No	31%
Shizuoka University	68	1001+	No	31%
University of the Ryukyus	=89	1001+	No	31%
University of Miyazaki	=92	1001+	Yes	19%
Utsunomiya University	=75	1001+	Yes	25%
Shimane University	100	1001+	Yes	25%
Gifu University	55	1001+	Yes	31%
Tottori University	=60	1001+	Yes	31%
Niigata University	45	801-1000	Yes	36%
Obihiro University of Agriculture & Veterinary Medicine	Not ranked	Not ranked	Yes	40%
Saga University	63	1001+	Yes	40%
Kagoshima University	65	1001+	Yes	42%
Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology	98	801-1000	Yes	44%
Kobe University	16	601-800	Yes	53%
Okayama University	24	801-1000	Yes	57%
Hokkaido University	=5	401-500	Yes	60%
Nagoya University	=5	301-350	Yes	61%
Kyushu University	4	401-500	Yes	63%
Kyoto University	1	65	Yes	67%
Tohoku University	3	251-300	Yes	67%
University of Tokyo	2	42	Yes	80%

The national admission examinations require applicants to prioritize which subjects to concentrate, which has washback on the high school system where students are beginning to concentrate in either humanities or science, as noted above. Washback is the influence of testing on teaching and learning (Gates, 1995). In spite of this de-emphasis of certain subjects, including English, English language proficiency is still an important factor in obtaining employment and advancement in the new globalized Japanese economy. Therefore, an investigation of their beliefs about learning the English language may offer a better understanding of how to assist students that have been less successful with English language studies. At the same time, some graduates of the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University had become successful English language learners, so their attitudes and insights of how they were developed are equally of interest.

The successful language learners

The term successful language learner has long been used in second language acquisition, but is an undefined, vague, and general term to which an individual definition of a successful language learner would be presumably applied. For the purpose of this research, a successful language learner is defined as a learner that has achieved a score of 730 on the TOEIC Listening and Reading Test, while the unsuccessful language learner is a learner that did not achieve a score of 730.

The TOEIC Listening and Reading Test is a widely accepted and used standardized test of English language proficiency by both educational institutions and industry. According to the latest available data, between 2010 and 2019, over 2.2 million people took the test each year. There are two types of tests: the TOEIC Listening and Reading (LR) Test, and the TOEIC Writing and Speaking (SW) Test (See Fig. 1). In 2019, over one million people took the TOEIC Listening and Reading (LR) Test, hereafter TOEIC LR, including unofficial tests.

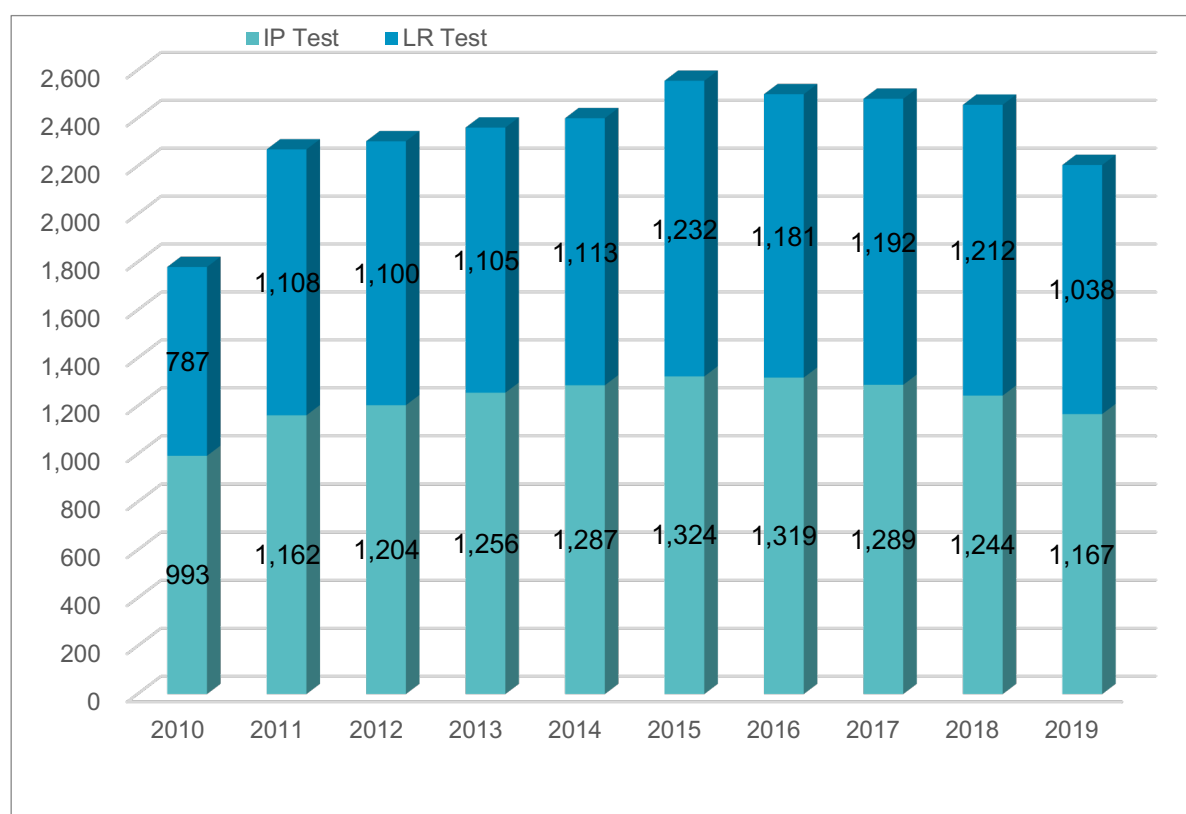


Figure 5 TOEIC test takers in Japan from 2010 – 2019

There were 830,954 official test takers and only 15.6% of the attendees scored above 700. Of the 416,191 undergraduate university students that sat for the test, the mean score was 455 (TOEIC, 2020) with only a slight annual increase for each academic year, where the scores were, 438, 452, 490, and 520 from first to fourth year, respectively (See Fig. 2).

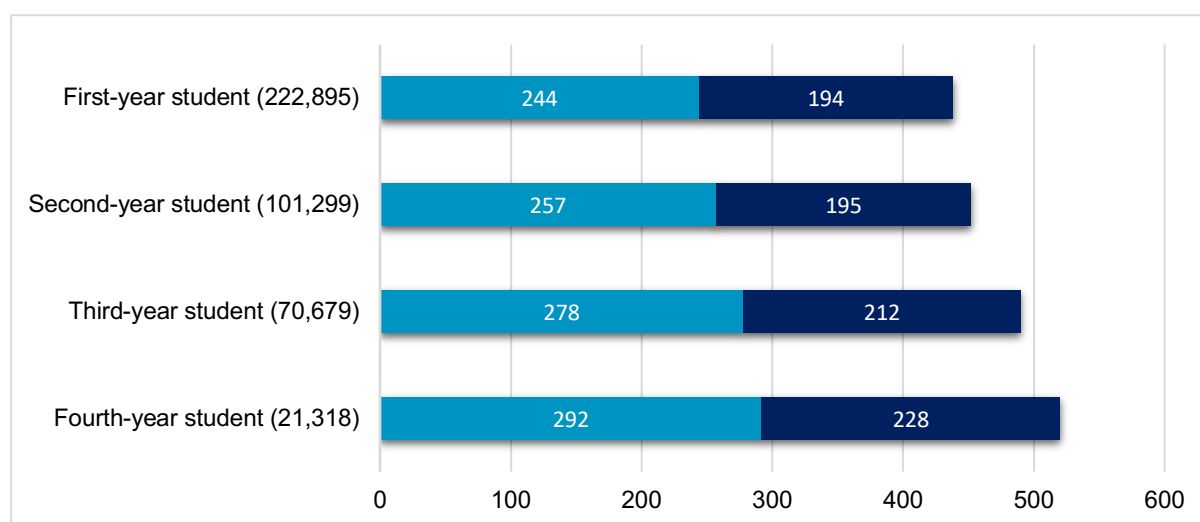


Figure 6 TOEIC scores of university students in 2019: Listening and Reading Test

A TOEIC LR test score of 730 or higher indicates a suitable language proficiency for the workplace, and TOEIC LR 860 indicates high professional competence. TOEIC LR scores are used by companies for recruiting and are widely known among the working population and by university students. TOEIC LR is used by many Japanese universities and companies for admissions and recruiting, respectively (Okuda, 2017). Companies use TOEIC LR scores indicators of the ability to work in English designating a score of above TOEIC LR 600 as desirable (Chapman, 2003; Nikkei Asia, 2018;). Nippon Keidanren (2004), the pre-eminent and influential business federation, stated that most companies have adopted a ballpark standard of TOEIC LR 600, with a desired target of TOEIC LR 730 (2004). TOEIC LR 730 is considered to be the equivalent of high level B1 of the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages (Tannenbaum & Wylie, 2008).

TOEIC LR 730 is a target for English language students, a benchmark for companies and in Japan is relatively hard to achieve. Success needs to be determined in the context of the students, and since TOEIC LR 730 is a target for English language

students, a benchmark for companies and in Japan is relatively hard to achieve, it was selected as the quantitative definition of a successful language learner for this study.

Student personal networks

The role in academic success of predicative factors has long been an area of interest for educators. Academic performance at university has been directly linked to several factors, which are good predictors of future academic achievement. Successful performance at the high school student level has been linked to university performance in that those that performed well in high school will usually perform well in university (Bruinsma, 2003; Jansen, 2004; Pustjens et al., 2004, Zeegers, 2004). It has also been shown that younger students tend to perform better than older students (Bruinsma, 2003; Jansen, 2004). Gender plays an important role with females generally outperforming their male counterparts in academic performance, and in speed and rate of graduation (Bruinsma, 2003; Jansen, 2004).

As mentioned above, motivation, as an affective factor, plays an important factor; with motivation to achieve being directly related to their achievement at university (Pustjens et al. 2004; Smith and Naylor, 2005). A relationship between personal networks and academic performance has been suggested, but there is little research to confirm the relationship among university students. Personal networks can include many actors, such as peers, parents, educators, and so on, and may affect student motivation to achieve by placing expectations on performance. The strength of these relationships may also affect the pursuit of higher academic performance (Ryan 2000, 2001; Wentzel, 1999; Wentzel et al., 2001).

One of the possible mediating factors between personal networks and performance is achievement motivation. Wentzel (1999) found that network members can motivate students' desire to achieve academically by providing them with standards and expectations for performance and also found that the quality of these relationships can also influence the likelihood that these goals will be pursued (Wentzel 1999; Wentzel et al. 2004). This suggests that the communication in students' personal networks may play an important role in their language learning.

Furthermore, since personal communication has been regarded as necessary for teamwork (Elliott, 2006), a look at the influence of communication in the students' personal networks is important. As there are varying types of networks, there are varying types of communication within the networks. The students' social network consists of a social structure which is comprised of the group of people and their relationships and the purpose of the relationship, such as group study, teamwork and friendship, to name a few (Majchrzak et al., 2005).

Chapter IV

METHODOLOGY

Overview

This research uses the mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative. In this section, I outline the rationale for the mixed methods approach. I further describe the research instruments used.

Research Focus

The purposes of this study, as noted above, are two-fold:

- iii) To gain a better understanding of the language learning beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science through:
 - a. An investigation of the language learning beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science using a Likert-type scale based on the Sakui Gaies instrument (1999);
 - b. An investigation the beliefs of successful language learners, as determined by standardized testing (TOEIC LR), that had graduated from the same faculty;
 - c. Determination if there is a relationship between the students' language learning beliefs and their English language proficiency;
- iv) To investigate how student language learning beliefs may have been influenced or changed by communication in their personal networks and what good learner behaviors may have been influenced.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated and are grouped into two parts according to the method of investigation:

Part 1 Survey

- i) What beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science have towards learning the English language?

- ii) What beliefs successful language learners, as determined by standardized testing (TOEIC LR), that have graduated from the same faculty have towards learning the English language?
- iii) Are there significant differences in the beliefs of unsuccessful language learners and of successful learners, and if so, what are these differences?

Part 2 Interviews

- i) What beliefs and behaviors were influenced by communication in the participants' peer networks?
- ii) What new beliefs emerged, and did they lead to new behaviors?

Research Overview

This study is in part a replication study because it utilizes a widely accepted (Assaf, 2015; Hismanoglu, 2016; Riley, 2009; Yonesaka & Tanaka, 2013) survey instrument in the Japanese language (Sakui & Gaies, 1999). This instrument has been used in studies at both the secondary (Richard, 2011; Yonesaka, 2008) and tertiary level of education (Asbjornson, 1999; Riley, 2006; Yonesaka & Tanaka, 2013) in Japan.

However, it has been used only with first year students and has not been applied specifically to science majors in Japan. This investigation helps to fill this gap in the literature and adding to the current understanding. There are few published replication studies in foreign language learning research, even though replication studies are considered important (Porte, 2002).

The qualitative data of this data represents the first detailed analysis learning beliefs among Japanese science majors at university. The secondary part of this research explores the attitudes of the successful language learners. However, because of the small sample size, focus interviews were utilized to provide a qualitative view of their student beliefs and of the impact of their experiences with student networks in the shaping of their attitudes.

In language research, the mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods may offer richer and more in depth information (Bryman, 1988; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and are “complementary rather than as rival camps” (Jick, 1983:135). This flexibility in the approach and choice of methodology according to what is most appropriate to each research question may create a fuller picture (Stainback & Stainback, 1988).

This is the first study to date that investigates beliefs about language learning of Japanese science major graduates that had been actively involved in student personal networks, and were successful language learners. The mixed method approach offers a deeper understanding of the impact of learner attitudes and how they may be influenced by student personal and communication networks.

Instruments

Part 1 Survey

- i) A survey for all second-year students on an opt-in basis.
- ii) A survey of graduates of the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University that were successful language learners and were actively involved in student personal networks.

Part 2 Focused Interviews

- i) An interview with two graduates of the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University that were successful language learners and were actively involved in student personal networks.

Design of the Research

Instruments

Part 1 Survey. The instrument used was a modified Sakui and Gaies Survey (1999). It was modeled after the widely adopted BALLI (Horwitz, 1985) instrument. However, the Sakui and Gaies instrument is unique in that was specifically designed for Japanese learners of English (Sakui & Gaies, 1999). This instrument employs a 45 item survey, with 44 items as four-point forced choice Likert-type scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree) questions. As a forced choice survey, there was

no mid-position which means that the difference between a 2 or 3 selection (agree, disagree) may be more meaningful than the one stop interval suggests. That is to a 1, 2 variation reflects a consensus answer of agreement (strongly agree, agree), and similarly a 3, 4 (disagree, strongly disagree) reflects a consensus answer of disagreement. The median score of the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language learners are compared rather than the mean since Likert scale is a non-parametric scale and the median accounts for outliers, and the areas where successful language. The remaining 1 item question a 6-point choice of time required to become a good speaker.

The survey was conducted in the Japanese language using the google survey platform (ANNEX A) with two groupings, second year students at the time of the survey and successful language learners that had graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University. Participants were invited to participate in an opt-in basis.

The survey was administered online using google forms to 132 participants with two groupings:

Group 1: Second-year students. The first grouping consisted of 119 second-year students majoring in science at the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University. There were 62 males and 56 females, with 1 person opting not to disclose their gender, between the ages of 19 and 22, with two participants opting not to disclose their age. As noted, they were not English majors but took English classes as compulsory subjects at university.

Group 2: Students that had graduated. The second grouping consisted of 13 successful language learners that had graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture and had achieved TOEIC LR 730 while undergraduates. There were 7 males and 6 females, between the ages of 24 and 32, that had graduated from the undergraduate program at the university. They were also not English majors but took English classes as compulsory subjects at university.

An English translation of the survey is in Table 4. The questions are listed in alphabetical order but were randomized for the survey.

Table 4 Learning beliefs survey English translation

NO	BELIEF
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.
2	English class should be enjoyable.
3	Females are better than males at learning English.
4	I am satisfied with the English education I received.
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.
6	I can improve my English by speaking English with my classmates.
7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.
9	I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.
10	I study English because it is useful to communicate with English speaking people.
11	I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.
12	If a person studies English by himself for one hour a day, how many years will it take to become fluent?
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.
14	If I learn to speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.
15	If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get a good job.
16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.
17	If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.
19	In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.
20	English education at school is sufficient to be able to speak and understand English.
21	In order to speak and understand English very well, English education at school is enough.
22	It is easier for children than adults to learn English.
23	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
24	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.
25	It is easier to speak English than to understand it.
26	It is embarrassing to speak English in front of other Japanese students.
27	I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.
28	It is useful to know about English-speaking countries in order to speak English.
29	It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.
30	Japanese people are good at learning foreign languages.
31	Japanese people think it is important to speak English.
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.
33	Learning English is different from learning other subjects.
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.
35	Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.
36	Listening to CDs and podcasts and watching English programs on television are very important in learning English.
37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
39	Some languages are easier to learn than others.
40	Some people are born with a special ability which is useful for learning English.
41	The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.
44	You can learn to improve your English only from native speakers of English.
45	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.

Part 2 Focused Interviews

Participants

The two participants were one female, and one male. They have been assigned the aliases of Fumiko and Masahiro, respectively. In addition to the focused interviews,

demographic information and an overview of their English language study experiences were also collected in a brief discussion. This was not recorded but the participants were asked to confirm the information after the interviews. Teachers or classmates that were named in the focused interviews were either anonymized or assigned aliases.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain an understanding of the experiences of some of these successful language learners. The successful language learners were invited to participate. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in person in Tokyo, Japan on October 10, 2021, and October 9, 2021, were recorded with permission of the participants, and were later transcribed. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were modelled on qualitative interviewing guidelines (DeCarlo, 2018; Department of Sociology, Harvard University, n.d.; McNiff, 2017; McGrath et al., 2019).

The interviews were transcribed using Otter AI Translation (Otter, Mountainview, CA, USA). After that, they were checked manually, for accuracy, and formatted according to transcription Cielo24 Transcription Guidelines (Cielo24, n.d.). Transcripts were sent to the participants to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts, and to confirm that the participants felt the transcripts accurately reflected what they said or had intended to say and that there was no discrepancy between what they said and what they had intended to say. Upon receiving the transcripts, they were reminded that they could opt out of the research.

Informed Consent

For both the survey and the interview, informed consent was obtained by asking participants to opt-in to the study. For the survey, participants were provided with the details of informed consent in the Japanese language (ANNEX B). An English translation of the consent form is below (ANNEX C). For the interview, a Japanese language consent form was not used because the participants were successful

language learners and the participants indicated that an English consent (ANNEX D) was sufficient.

Limitations

Likert scale surveys have limitations because some beliefs held by the participants may not be addressed in the survey (Dornyei, 2003). Furthermore, the honest responses of the participants and clear understanding of the survey items are needed to obtain accurate data. However, as Dornyei (2003) points out, for questions on attitudes, these limitations may be balanced by the ability to investigate the beliefs of a large group, in this case over 100 participants. Furthermore, these surveys might identify attitudes that participants were not fully cognizant about or aware of, which may in fact increase the reliability and accuracy of the data (Bryman, 2008).

Deeper insight into student belief could be obtained through interviews. However, the interviews with the successful language learners in this study were held in English, which is not the native language of these learners. This may be offset by the fact that they were successful language learners. As defined in this study and had a high level of both English language proficiency and communication competence. Additionally, the interviewer asked for clarification in their native language, Japanese, in the post-interview.

The interviews were held with only two participants that were successful language learners, and not with the early-stage learners, through interviews, could provide further insight into the beliefs. It is important to note that survey, or investigations of beliefs, is actually a survey of the participants' perceptions of their beliefs and there is a possibility that their behavior in language learning may not always be consistent with these stated beliefs. The themes from the focused interviews can only be said to represent the stories of the participants and how their experiences may have influenced their beliefs. Again, further studies may shed light on the constant themes in their stories of how they developed as successful language users.

This research focused on two groups: a large homogenous group of second-year students and a small, also homogenous group of graduates from the same science faculty, which is in itself a limitation. These results reflect the beliefs of the students at this institution and cannot be extrapolated to the population at large. The balancing factor was of course, the accessibility to the participants and the ability to survey a homogenous group of participants. It is hoped that this study and similar studies will lead to a better overall understanding of science majors' beliefs at Japanese universities. Additionally, the number of participants in the second group of successful language learners was very limited.

Chapter V

RESULTS

Overview

In this section, the results of the general beliefs are presented for both the unsuccessful language learners and the successful language learners. The statistical data of the relationship between the unsuccessful and successful language learners and their beliefs are shown. Additionally, the main themes that emerged from the focused interviews are presented.

Part 1 Survey: General beliefs of the participants

The general survey utilized a forced choice Likert survey, meaning that participants were required to choose their degree of agreement or level of disagreement and could not remain neutral. These results allow us to see the general views of the two groups, and furthermore, to show us where there is a direct correlation between language proficiency and their beliefs.

Group 1: Unsuccessful language learners

As noted above, the first grouping consisted of 119 second-year students. They were asked to self-report their TOEIC LR scores. No participants in this group reported a score of TOEIC LR 730 or higher. It is important to note that although not part of the research design, there were no participants that were classified as successful language learners, according to their TOEIC LR score among the 119 second-year students surveyed. This means that the beliefs of the unsuccessful language learners are synonymous with the second-year students and are referred to as unsuccessful language learners.

The results are grouped according to the five themes of: 1) Foreign language aptitude (Nos. 2, 22, 23, 30, 37, 38 and 40), 2) The difficulty of language learning (Nos. 5, 12, 24, 25 and 39), 3) The nature of language learning (Nos. 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 16, 20,

21, 28, 32, 33, 34, and 35), 4) Learning and communication strategy (Nos. 6, 13, 17, 18, 19, 26, 27, 29, 36, 42, 43, 44, and 45), and 5) Motivation (Nos. 1, 9, 10, 14, 15, 31, and 41). Participant responses were *Strongly Agree (SA)*, *Agree (A)*, *Disagree (D)*, or *Strongly Disagree*. All survey items received 119 responses, with the exception of No. 4, which received 118 responses.

Foreign language aptitude. As Table 5 shows, the unsuccessful language learners showed a strong belief that there were innate advantages in learning languages for children (No. 22, 94.12%, 26.05% and 68.07%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), multilingual learners (No. 23, 73.95%, 21.85% and 52.10%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and that successful language learners were highly intelligent (No. 38, 85.72%, 31.93% and 53.78%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). Conversely, they overwhelmingly disagreed that Japanese were good at learning foreign languages (No. 30, 94.12%, 46.86% and 11.76%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

They were divided on the point that, with a slight majority in agreement, being good at math and science (No. 37, 60.5%, 27.73 and 11.76%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) was a disadvantage in learning while having a natural language ability (No. 37, 54.62%, 42.86% and 11.76% overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) was advantageous.

The difficulty of language learning. As Table 5 shows, the unsuccessful language learners disagreed that they would not be able speak English well, (No. 5, 82.35%, 68.91% and 13.45%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) and that speaking was easier than understanding (No. 25, 60.51%, 43.70% and 16.81%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). They believe that it was easier to read and write (No. 24, 67.23%, 24.37% and 42.86%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). Most believed that some languages were less difficult than others to learn (No. 39, 91.60% 37.82% and 53.78%, overall agreement, A and A, respectively).

The unsuccessful language learners believed that with daily effort, English could be mastered with only 1.68% stating that they could never learn it (No. 5), with almost half believing that with daily study of 1 hour, but almost half thought it could be mastered within 5 years (47.06%), and most (85.72%) believing mastery was attainable within 10 years as shown in Table 6.

The nature of language. As shown in Table 5, the unsuccessful language learners thought that language learning should be enjoyable (No. 2, 98.32%, 52.94% and 45.38%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), wanted more support from their teachers (No. 11, 56.31 %, 15.97% and 40.34%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), specifically wanted support in Japanese, (No. 16, 94.96%, 45.54% and 50.42%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and relied on Japanese in their learning (No. 32, 64.70%, 11.76% and 52.94%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). In contrast, they thought that English was a unique subject, (No. 33, 77.31% 20.17% and 57.14%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) and believed that translation was not necessarily an effective way to learn (No. 35, 68.08% 54.62% and 8.40%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). They expressed disagreement with the belief that school education was not sufficient to learn speak and understand English, (Nos. 20 & 21, 87.40%, 57.98% and 22.69%, overall disagreement, D and SD, & 87.40%, 60.50% and 26.89%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

Learning and communication strategy. As shown in Table 5, the unsuccessful language learners thought that peer learning would help them to learn English (No. 6, 77.31%, 17.65% and 9.66%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), but were shy to speak in front of their peers (Nos. 26 & 27, 84.87%, 30.25% and 54.62%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively & 84.87%, 29.41% and 55.46%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They used Japanese as a part of their learning strategy, using translation (Nos. 18, 42 & 43, 76.47%, 17.65% and 58.82%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively, 87.40%, 22.69% and 64.71%, SA and A, respectively & 68.91%, 16.81% and 52.10%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They believed in the importance of practice (No. 19, 99.16%, 33.61% and 65.55%, overall agreement, SA

and A, respectively) but were reluctant to do so outside of the classroom (No. 13, 75.63%, 57.78% and 21.85%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

Motivation. As shown in Table 5, the beliefs of the unsuccessful language learners related to their motivation are positive. They show that the participants were extrinsically motivated, studying to enter university (No. 9, 88.24%, 37.82% and 50.42%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), to have English as useful tool (No. 14, 88.24%, 39.50% and 48.74%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) for communication (No. 10, 78.15%, 21.85% and 56.30%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), to get a better job (No. 15, 88.24%, 42.22% and 43.70%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) and to get social status (No. 31, 10.92% and 57.98%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). However, the unsuccessful language learners were not satisfied with their progress (No. 1, 66.39%, 52.94% and 13.45%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively) and were divided on enjoyment with a slight majority enjoying studying English (No. 41, 52.94%, 11.76% and 41.18%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively).

Table 5 Language learning beliefs of unsuccessful language learners

	No.	BELIEF	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL
Foreign Language Aptitude	2	Females are better than males at learning English.	6 5.04%	14 11.76%	20 16.81%	63 52.94%	36 30.25%	99 83.19%
	22	It is easier for children than adults to learn English.	31 26.05%	81 68.07%	112 94.12%	6 5.04%	1 0.84%	7 5.88%
	23	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	26 21.85%	62 52.10%	88 73.95%	27 22.69%	4 3.36%	31 26.05
	30	Japanese people are good at learning foreign languages.	1 0.84%	6 5.04%	7 5.88%	83 69.75%	29 24.37%	112 94.12%
	37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	33 27.73%	14 11.76%	47 39.50%	71 59.66%	1 0.84%	72 60.50%
	38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	38 31.93%	64 53.78%	102 85.72%	12 10.08%	5 4.20%	17 14.28
	40	Some people are born with a special ability which is useful for learning English.	51 42.86%	14 11.76%	65 54.62%	12 10.08%	42 35.29%	54 45.38%
	5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	6 5.04%	15 12.61%	21 17.56%	82 68.91%	16 13.45%	98 82.35%
Difficulty of Language Learning	24	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	29 24.37%	51 42.86%	80 67.23%	34 28.57%	5 4.20%	39 32.77%
	25	It is easier to speak English than to understand it.	12 10.08%	35 29.41%	47 39.49%	52 43.70%	20 16.81%	72 60.51%
	39	Some languages are easier to learn than others.	45 37.82%	64 53.78%	109 91.60%	6 5.04%	4 3.36%	10 8.40%

No.	BELIEF	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL
Nature of Language Learning	2 English class should be enjoyable.	63 52.94%	54 45.38%	117 98.32%	2 1.68%	0 0.00%	2 1.68%
	4 I am satisfied with the English education I received.	4 3.36%	49 41.18%	53 44.54%	61 51.26%	4 3.36%	65 54.62%
	7 I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	29 24.37%	68 57.14%	97 81.51%	21 17.65%	1 0.84%	22 18.49%
	8 I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	11 9.24%	57 47.90%	68 57.14%	46 38.66%	5 4.20%	51 42.86%
	11 I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.	19 15.97%	48 40.34%	76 56.31%	48 40.34%	4 3.36%	52 43.69%
	16 If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	53 44.54%	60 50.42%	113 94.96%	6 5.04%	0 0.00%	6 5.04%
	20 English education at school is sufficient to be able to speak and understand English.	3 2.52%	20 16.81%	23 19.33%	69 57.98%	27 22.69%	98 87.40%
	21 In order to speak and understand English very well, English education at school is enough.	2 1.68%	13 10.92%	15 12.60%	72 60.50%	32 26.89%	95 87.40%
	28 It is useful to know about English-speaking countries in order to speak English.	39 32.77%	70 58.82%	109 91.59%	7 5.88%	3 2.52%	10 8.41%
	32 Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	14 11.76%	63 52.94%	77 64.70%	33 27.73%	9 7.56%	42 35.30%
	33 Learning English is different from learning other subjects.	24 20.17%	68 57.14%	92 77.31%	24 20.17%	3 2.52%	27 22.69%
	34 Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	8 6.72%	73 61.34%	81 68.06%	8 6.72%	30 25.21%	43 31.94%
	35 Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.	8 6.72%	36 30.25%	44 36.97%	65 54.62%	10 8.40%	75 63.02%
Learning and Communication Strategy	6 I can improve my English by speaking English with my classmates.	21 17.65%	71 59.66%	92 77.31%	24 20.17%	3 2.52%	27 22.69%
	13 If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	4 3.36%	25 21.01%	29 24.37%	64 53.78%	26 21.85%	90 75.63%
	17 If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.	14 11.76%	63 52.94%	77 64.70%	37 31.09%	5 4.20%	42 35.30%
	18 In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	21 17.65%	70 58.82%	91 76.47%	25 21.01%	3 2.52%	29 23.53%
	19 In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	40 33.61%	78 65.55%	118 99.16%	0 0.00%	1 0.84%	1 0.84%
	26 It is embarrassing to speak English in front of other Japanese students.	36 30.25%	65 54.62%	101 84.87%	12 10.08%	6 5.04%	18 15.13%
	27 I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.	35 29.41%	66 55.46%	101 84.87%	12 10.08%	6 5.04%	18 15.13%
	29 It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	28 23.53%	82 68.91%	110 92.44%	8 6.72%	1 0.84%	9 7.56%
	36 Listening to CDs and podcasts and watching English programs on television are very important in learning English.	39 32.77%	73 61.34%	112 92.44%	7 5.88%	0 0.00%	7 5.89%
	42 To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	27 22.69%	77 64.71%	104 87.40%	13 10.92%	2 1.68%	15 12.60%
	43 To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	20 16.81%	62 52.10%	82 68.91%	34 28.57%	3 2.52%	31.09%
	44 You can learn to improve your English only from native speakers of English.	2 1.68%	18 15.13%	20 16.81%	81 68.07%	18 15.13%	99 83.19%
	45 You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	4 3.36%	10 8.40%	14 11.76%	63 52.94%	42 35.29%	105 88.24%

No.	BELIEF	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL
Motivation	1 Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	5 4.20%	35 29.41%	40 33.61%	63 52.94%	16 13.45%	49 66.39%
	9 I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	45 37.82%	60 50.42%	105 88.24%	10 8.40%	4 3.36%	14 11.76%
	10 I study English because it is useful to communicate with English speaking people.	26 21.85%	67 56.30%	93 78.15%	18 15.13%	8 6.72%	26 21.85%
	14 If I learn to speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.	47 39.50%	58 48.74%	105 88.24%	12 10.08%	2 1.68%	14 11.76%
	15 If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get a good job.	55 46.22%	52 43.70%	107 89.92%	11 9.24%	1 0.84%	12 10.08%
	31 Japanese people think it is important to speak English.	13 10.92%	69 57.98%	82 68.90%	29 24.37%	8 6.72%	37 31.10%
	41 The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	14 11.76%	49 41.18%	63 52.94%	43 36.13%	13 10.92%	56 15.39%

Table 6 Beliefs about the difficulty of language learning of unsuccessful language learners (non-Likert item)

No.	BELIEF	1	1-2	3-5	6-10	10+	NEVER	TOTAL
12	If a person studies English by himself for one hour a day, how many years will it take to become fluent?	6	23	56	17	15	2	119
		5.04%	19.33%	47.06%	14.29%	12.61%	1.68%	100%

Summary

As we saw above (See Table 5), the unsuccessful language learners placed emphasis on the importance of language aptitude with themselves as Japanese learners of English inherently disadvantaged. They believed speaking to be the most difficult, and that some languages were more difficult than others. Most of them held the belief that they would not be able to speak English very well, and they thought that it could be mastered with daily effort (See Table 6). When we look at the beliefs of nature of language learning, we see that unsuccessful language learners wanted to rely on using Japanese to study, even though it was not an effective way to study. The unsuccessful language learners showed contrasting views on how to study English, recognizing the importance of practice and peer study, but being reluctant to use English in front of others. They thought that English was unique but seemed to want to study passively relying on translation and grammar. The unsuccessful language learners generally were motivated by extrinsic factors, such as test results, better jobs, and status, were not satisfied with their progress.

Group 2: Successful language learners

The second grouping consisted of 13 successful language learners that had graduated from the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University which has been defined as having achieved TOEIC LR 730 or higher while at university. Since the participants that had graduated from the program were chosen based on being successful language learners, that group is also synonymously categorized as successful language learners.

The results are grouped according to the five themes of: 1) Foreign language aptitude (Nos. 2, 22, 23, 30, 37, 38 and 40); 2) The difficulty of language learning (Nos. 5, 12, 24, 25 and 39), 3) The nature of language learning (Nos. 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 16, 20, 21, 28, 32, 33, 34, and 35), 4) Learning and communication strategy (Nos. 6, 13, 17, 18, 19, 26, 27, 29, 36, 42, 43, 44, and 45), and 5) Motivation (Nos. 1, 9, 10, 14, 15, 31, and 41). Participant responses were: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD).

As noted above, while not part of the survey design, among the second year students, there were no students that had achieved TOEIC LR 730. Therefore, this group is comprised only of participants that had graduated from the university with TOEIC LR 730 or higher.

Foreign language aptitude. As Table 7 shows, the successful language learners thought that children (No. 22, 92.30%, 15.38% and 76.92%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and multilingual learners (No. 23, 84.61%, 15.38% and 69.23%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) had an advantage in learning, while Japanese learners had disadvantages because they are not good at learning languages (No. 30, 84.62%, 61.54% and 23.08%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). They did not credit intelligence as a factor (No. 38, 53.85% , 23.08% and 30.77%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). They disagreed with the contention that science students were at a disadvantage (No. 37, 100.00% 23.08% and 76.92%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

The difficulty of language learning. As shown in Table 7, the successful language learners believed that they would be able to speak English well, (No. 5, 176.92%, 5.38% and 61.5%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), even though they disagreed with the statement that speaking was easier than understanding (No. 25, 769.23%, 38.46% and 30.77%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively) and agreed that some languages were more difficult than others (No. 39, 100.00%, 38.46% and 61.54%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). As Table 8 shows, the successful language learners believed that with daily effort, English could be mastered with only 1 respondent (7.69%) stating that they could never gain mastery (No. 5), with almost half believing that with daily study of 1 hour, but over half thought it could be mastered within 5 years (61.54%), and most (84.62%) believing mastery was attainable within 10 years.

The nature of language. As shown in Table 7, the successful language learners thought that language learning should be enjoyable (No. 2, 84.62%, 23.08% and 61.54%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), with over half wanting support in Japanese, (No. 16, 61.54%, 7.69% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) and did not rely on Japanese in their learning (No. 32, 76.93%, 61.54% and 15.38%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively), nor on translation (No. 35, 84.62%, 53.85% and 30.77% overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). They believed that their school education was sufficient to learn, speak, and understand English, disagreeing with the contrary statements (Nos. 20 & 21, 92.31%, 53.85% and 38.46%, %, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively & 92.31%, 46.15% and 46.15%, %, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

Learning and communication strategy. As shown in Table 7, the successful language learners thought that peer learning would help them to learn English (No. 6, 84.61%. 38.46% and 46.15%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) but were not comfortable speaking in front of their peers (Nos. 26 & 27, 100.00%, 92.31% and 7.69%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively & 69.23%, 7.69% and 61.54%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They did not translate from Japanese (Nos. 18, 42 & 43, 53.85, 48.15% and 7.69%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively, 61.54%, 61.54% and 0.00%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively & 84.62%,

46.15% and 38.46%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively). Over half of them showed that they were willing to make chances to use English (No. 13, 61.54%, 0.00% and 61.54%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), use outside resources (No. 36, 92.30%, 46.15% and 46.15%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and were willing to make mistakes (No. 45, 100.00%, 7.69% and 92.13%, overall disagreement, D and SD, respectively).

Motivation. As Table 7 shows, the beliefs of the successful language learners related to their motivation are positive. They saw English as a useful tool (84.62%, 38.46% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) for communication (No. 10, 92.31%, 38.46% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively) to get a better job (No. 15, 84.61%, 46.15% and 38.46%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and to get status (No. 31, 61.54, 7.69% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They also believed that English skill would lead to more opportunity to use English (No. 14, 84.62%, 38.46% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They were also satisfied with their progress (No. 1, 69.23%, 15.38% and 53.58%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and the longer they studied, the more enjoyable they found English (No. 41, 100.00%, 30.77% and 69.23%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They also believed that English skill would lead to more opportunity to use English (No. 14, 84.62%, 38.46% and 53.85%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively). They were also satisfied with their progress (No. 1, 69.23%, 15.38% and 53.58%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively), and the longer they studied, the more enjoyable they found English (No. 41, 100.00%, 30.77% and 69.23%, overall agreement, SA and A, respectively).

Table 7 Language learning beliefs of successful language learners

	No.	BELIEF	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL
Foreign Language Aptitude	2	Females are better than males at learning English.	0	0	0	7	46.15	13
			0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	53.85%	%	100.00%
	22	It is easier for children than adults to learn English.	2	10	12	1	0	1
			15.38%	76.92%	92.30%	7.69%	0.00%	7.70%
	23	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	2	9	11	1	1	2
			15.38%	69.23%	84.61%	7.69%	7.69%	15.39%
	30	Japanese people are good at learning foreign languages.	0	2	2	8	3	11
			0.00%	15.38%	15.38%	61.54%	23.08	84.62%
Difficulty of Language Learning	37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	0	0	0	3	10	13
			0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	23.08%	76.92	100.00%
	38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	0	6	6	3	4	7
			0.00%	46.15%	46.15%	23.08%	30.77	53.85%
	40	Some people are born with a special ability which is useful for learning English.	3	5	8	2	3	5
			23.08%	38.46%	61.54%	15.38%	23.08	38.46%
	5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	2	8	10	3	0	3
			15.38%	61.54%	76.92%	23.08%	0.00%	23.08%
Nature of Language Learning	24	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	2	7	9	3	1	4
			15.38%	53.85%	69.23%	23.08%	7.69%	30.77%
	25	It is easier to speak English than to understand it.	1	3		5	4	9
			7.69%	23.08%	30.77%	38.46%	30.77	69.23%
	39	Some languages are easier to learn than others.	5	8	13	0	0	0
			38.46%	61.54%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	2	English class should be enjoyable.	3	8	11	1	1	2
			23.08%	61.54%	84.62%	7.69%	7.69%	15.38%
Nature of Language Learning	4	I am satisfied with the English education I received.	0	8	8	5	0	5
			0.00%	61.54%	61.54%	38.46%	0.00%	38.46%
	7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	2	5	7	4	2	6
			15.38%	38.46%	53.84%	30.77%	15.38	46.16%
	8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	1	2	3	9	1	10
			7.69%	15.38%	23.07%	69.23%	7.69%	76.93%
	11	I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.	0	5	5	7	1	8
			0.00%	38.46%	38.46%	53.85%	7.69%	61.54%
	16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	1	7	8	4	1	5
			7.69%	53.85%	61.54%	30.77%	7.69%	38.46%
	20	English education at school is sufficient to be able to speak and understand English.	0	1	1	7	5	12
			0.00%	7.69%	7.69%	53.85%	38.46	92.31%
	21	In order to speak and understand English very well, English education at school is enough.	1	0	1	6	6	12
			7.69%	0.00%	7.69%	46.15%	46.15	92.31%
	28	It is useful to know about English-speaking countries in order to speak English.	3	9	12	1	0	1
			23.08%	69.23%	92.31%	7.69%	0.00%	7.69%
Nature of Language Learning	32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	1	2	3	8	2	10
			7.69%	15.38%	23.07%	61.54%	15.38	76.93%
	33	Learning English is different from learning other subjects.	2	6	8	4	1	5
			15.38%	46.15%	61.53%	30.77%	7.69%	38.47%
	34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	0	3	3	8	2	10
			0.00%	23.08%	23.08%	61.54%	15.38	76.92%
	35	Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.	0	2	2	7	4	11
			0.00%	15.38%	15.38%	53.85%	30.77	84.62%

No.	BELIEF	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL
Learning and Communication Strategy	6 I can improve my English by speaking English with my classmates.	5 38.46%	6 46.15%	84.61%	2 15.38%	0 0.00%	15.39%
	13 If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	0 0.00%	8 61.54%	61.54%	4 30.77%	1 7.69%	38.46%
	17 If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.	1 7.69%	6 46.15%	53.84%	5 38.46%	1 7.69%	46.16%
	18 In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	1 7.69%	5 38.46%	46.15%	6 46.15%	1 7.69%	53.85%
	19 In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	0 0.00%	1 7.69%	7.69%	4 30.77%	8 61.54%	92.31%
	26 It is embarrassing to speak English in front of other Japanese students.	12 92.31%	1 7.69%	100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0.00%
	27 I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.	1 7.69%	8 61.54%	69.23%	3 23.08%	1 7.69%	30.77%
	29 It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	8 61.54%	5 38.46%	100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0.00%
	36 Listening to CDs and podcasts and watching English programs on television are very important in learning English.	6 46.15%	6 46.15%	92.30%	1 7.69%	0 0.00%	7.70%
	42 To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	1 7.69%	4 30.77%	38.46%	8 61.54%	0 0.00%	61.54%
	43 To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	0 0.00%	2 15.38%	15.38%	6 46.15%	5 38.46%	84.62%
	44 You can learn to improve your English only from native speakers of English.	1 7.69%	0 0.00%	7.69%	8 61.54%	4 30.77%	92.31%
	45 You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0.00%	1 7.69%	12 92.31%	100.00%
Motivation	1 Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	2 15.38%	7 53.85%	69.23%	4 30.77%	0 0.00%	30.77%
	9 I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	0 0.00%	8 61.54%	61.54%	3 23.08%	2 15.38%	38.46%
	10 I study English because it is useful to communicate with English speaking people.	5 38.46%	7 53.85%	92.31%	1 7.69%	0 0.00%	7.69%
	14 If I learn to speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.	4 30.77%	7 53.85%	84.62%	1 7.69%	1 7.69%	15.38%
	15 If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get a good job.	6 46.15%	5 38.46%	84.61%	1 7.69%	1 7.69%	15.39%
	31 Japanese people think it is important to speak English.	1 7.69%	7 53.85%	61.54%	3 23.08%	2 15.38%	38.46%
	41 The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	4 30.77%	9 69.23%	100.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0.00%

Table 8 Beliefs about the difficulty of language learning of successful language learners (non-Likert item)

No.	BELIEF	1	1-2	3-5	6-10	10+	NEVER	TOTAL
12	If a person studies English by himself for one hour a day, how many years will it take to become fluent?	3	3	2	3	1	1	13
		23.08%	23.08%	15.38%	23.08%	7.69%	7.69%	100%

Summary

The successful language learners did not place importance on language aptitude (See Table 7) but thought that Japanese learners of English were disadvantaged. They believed that they would be able speak English well, even though speaking was

the most difficult task, and that Japanese people were at a disadvantage when learning English. Most believed that English could be mastered within 10 years of daily study and slightly over half of the respondents thought that it could be achieved in 5 years or less. (See Table 8). The successful language learners' beliefs of nature of language learning were that they thought that language learning should be enjoyable but did not rely on Japanese for learning. Furthermore, they thought that their school English language education was adequate. This may be because they succeeded within the school system and were able to become successful language learners as students. When we look at the beliefs of nature of language learning, we see that successful language learners did not want to rely on Japanese and were somewhat willing to create chances to speak outside of the classroom and were willing to make mistakes as part of learning. The successful language learners had extrinsic motivators, such as use of English as a communication tool, an avenue to better jobs and social status. Additionally, they were satisfied with their progress and all of them reported that studying English was enjoyable.

Survey Results Mann-Whitney U Test

A Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to determine if a relationship between the unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners and their beliefs existed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 for Mac (IBM, New York, USA). For the unsuccessful language learners, there were 119 valid responses and 1 missing response, No. 4. For the successful language learners, there were 13 valid responses and no missing responses. A significant correlation for beliefs was ($P \leq 0.05$) found between both groups for 21 beliefs, Nos. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 16, 18, 19, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, and 45 as shown in Table 17 (See Appendix D for full results).

Table 9 Mann-Whitney U Test correlation of the beliefs of successful and unsuccessful language learners (Significant Results)

No.	BELIEF	MANN-WHITNEY U	WILCOX ON W	Z	ASYMP. SIG. (2-TAILED)
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	448.5	539.5	-2.716	0.007
2	English class should be enjoyable.	495.5	7635.5	-2.417	0.016
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	300	391	-4.245	0.001
7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	536	7676	-2.014	0.044
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	527	7667	-2.057	0.04
9	I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	383	7523	-3.288	0.001
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	512	603	-2.185	0.029
16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	356.5	7496.5	-3.56	0.001
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	193	7333	-4.882	0.001
19	In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	566	657	-1.961	0.05
27	I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.	459	7599	-2.68	0.007
29	It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	457	548	-2.903	0.004
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	472	7612	-2.499	0.012
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	390.5	7530.5	-3.324	0.001
35	Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.	503.5	7643.5	-2.288	0.022
37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	370.5	7510.5	-3.467	0.001
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	337	7477	-3.669	0.001
41	The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	374.5	465.5	-3.254	0.001
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	387.5	7527.5	-3.392	0.001
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	263.5	7403.5	-4.213	0.001
45	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	325.5	7465.5	-3.785	0.001

Grouping Variable: TOEIC LR score 1 successful 2 unsuccessful ($p \leq 0.05$)

As Table 18 shows, there was agreement among the beliefs that showed significant correlation ($P \leq 0.05$) between the successful language learners and the

unsuccessful language learners in Nos. 2, 7, 9, 16, 19, 29, 37, 41, and 45. Because the Mann-Whitney U Test is a non-parametric test, the median is shown below as this indicates the most common response, with the values of 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, respectively.

Table 10 Mann-Whitney U Test correlation of shared beliefs of successful and unsuccessful language learners (Significant Results)

NO.	BELIEF	MANN-WHITNEY U	WILCOXO N W	Z	ASYMP. SIG. (2-TAILED)
2	English class should be enjoyable.	495.5	7635.5	- 2.41 7	0.016
7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	536	7676	- 2.01 4	0.044
9	I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	383	7523	- 3.28 8	0.001
16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	356.5	7496.5	- 3.56	0.001
19	In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	566	657	- 1.96 1	0.05
29	It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	457	548	- 2.90 3	0.004
37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	370.5	7510.5	- 3.46 7	0.001
41	The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	374.5	465.5	- 3.25 4	0.001
45	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	325.5	7465.5	- 3.78 5	0.001

Grouping Variable: TOEIC LR score 1 successful 2 unsuccessful ($P \leq 0.05$)

As shown in Table 19, there was a disagreement among the beliefs that showed significant correlation ($P \leq 0.05$) between the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language learners in Nos. 1, 5, 8, 13, 18, 32, 34, 35, 38, 42, and 43. Because the Mann-Whitney U Test is a non-parametric test, the median is shown below as this indicates the most common response, with the values of 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, respectively (See Appendix E for full results).

Table 11 Disagreements in beliefs between of successful and unsuccessful language learners that had a relationship between language proficiency and belief

NO.	BELIEF	Successful language learners		Unsuccessful language learners		TOTAL	
		Std. Deviation	Median	Std. Deviation	Median	Std. Deviation	Median
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	0.689	2.00	0.736	3.00	0.751	3.00
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	0.641	2.00	0.676	3.00	0.715	3.00
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	0.725	3.00	0.713	2.00	0.721	2.00
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	0.776	2.00	0.751	3.00	0.764	3.00
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	0.599	3.00	0.696	2.00	0.766	2.00
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	0.801	3.00	0.778	2.00	0.794	2.00
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	0.641	3.00	0.623	2.00	0.652	2.00
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	0.899	3.00	0.758	2.00	0.823	2.00
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	0.66	3.00	0.632	2.00	0.659	2.00
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	0.725	3.00	0.729	2.00	0.792	2.00

Grouping Variable: TOEIC LR score 1 successful 2 unsuccessful ($P \leq 0.05$)

Part 2 Focused Interviews

Focused interviews were conducted with two of the successful language learners, who were assigned aliases. Fumiko, female; Masahiro, male, were both 27 at the time of the interview (See Table 20) and both of whom had graduated from the undergraduate program at the university. As noted previously, there were no successful language learners among the second-year students, as defined in this study, so the participants in the interviews were necessarily chosen from the “students that had graduated” group.

Table 12 Participants demographic information

NAME	TOEIC LR INCREASE	GENDER	AGE
Fumiko	415	F	27
Masahiro	315	M	27

The first participant, Fumiko, completed an undergraduate degree and continued on to a doctoral program at another university. Fumiko is Japanese and from a large urban city with a population of approximately 1.5 million. She is a native speaker of Japanese and was a successful language learner (TOEIC LR score over 730) while

an undergraduate student at university. She had never lived abroad but took part in three short-term international internships for a total of 6 weeks of experience abroad. At university, she studied English only through the university English language courses. She is in her first year of employment and uses English at her job, as a leader of an overseas development project. In addition to daily communication, such as email and Zoom communications, she also does face to face meetings, presentations, and negotiations in English.

The second participant, Masahiro, completed an undergraduate degree and a master's degree. Masahiro is Japanese and from an isolated, rural area with a population of approximately 20,000. He is a native speaker of Japanese and was a successful language learner while an undergraduate at university (TOEIC LR score over 730). He had never lived abroad but took part in two short-term international internships for a total of five weeks of experience abroad. At university, he studied English only through the university English language courses. He is in his third year of employment and uses English at his job, primarily communicating through email and Zoom. He occasionally acts as a translator for his managers in meetings with international clients.

Table 21 lists the themes that emerged from the interviews with Fumiko and Masahiro.

Table 13 Fumiko and Masahiro Themes and Sub-themes in changes to beliefs

THEME	SUB-THEME
Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Achieved success Communication tool Competition New goal Self-awareness Admiration Interest in language Self-awareness
Communication	Communication tool
Independent learning	Do not like typical way
Peer support	Being around good students Communication tool Contribution to peers Network Self-awareness Study support
Role model	Admiration Competition Negative model Self-awareness Self-improvement Pride

Chapter VI

Discussion

Overview

In this section, the general views of the participants, both successful and unsuccessful learners, are discussed with regards to my hypotheses that the unsuccessful language learners have different beliefs about language learning from successful language learners that have not yet become successful language learners and that the beliefs of successful language learners about language learning were affected by communication in their student personal networks. Here I address my two key questions:

- 1) Is there a difference in the language learning beliefs between unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners?
- 2) Did communication in student personal communication networks change the language learning beliefs of the successful language learners?

In this discussion, I address the first question of whether there is a difference in the language learning beliefs between unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners with a focus on the language learning beliefs that are statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) disagreements in beliefs between successful and unsuccessful learners. Finally, the dominant themes of the focused interviews are discussed with particular focus on the implications of behavior changes. I address the second question of whether the beliefs of successful language learners about language learning were affected by communication in their student personal networks in a detailed analysis of the interviews from the framework of connectivism.

Part 1 Survey: General beliefs of the participants

As noted above, the general survey was a forced-choice Likert survey, meaning that participants were required to choose their degree of agreement or level of

disagreement and could not remain neutral. As Dornyei (2003) pointed out, honest responses are necessary to obtain accurate data. The use of forced choice Likert surveys is one way to address this as it resists fake answers, choosing a neutral position to please the administrator of the survey, and obtains acceptable reliability (Xiao et al., 2017). Consequently, the forced-choice format has become widely used as an alternative format to the traditional Likert survey (Brown & Maydeu-Olivares, 2011, 2012 as cited in Watrin et al., 2019). These results allow us to see the general views of the two groups, and furthermore, show us where there is a direct correlation between language proficiency and their beliefs.

Also as stated above, we can see that the beliefs were grouped according to the five themes of: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategy and motivation. These overviews can offer a snapshot of the general beliefs to researchers and the differences between the unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners.

Foreign language aptitude. Among the beliefs related to foreign aptitude, there were some shared beliefs between the unsuccessful language learners and the successful learners. As Table 5 and Table 7 show that the unsuccessful language learners and the successful language learners believed that gender was not important (83.19%, 100%, respectively), children (No. 22, 94.12%, 92.30%), multi-lingual learners (No. 23, 73.95%, 84.61%), and multi-lingual learners (No. 23, 73.95%, 84.61% respectively), had advantages.

The most interesting general point of disagreement is that the unsuccessful learners credited intelligence (No. 38, 85.72%) as an important factor while the successful learners did not credit intelligence (No. 38, 46.15%). This suggests that the successful learners took more responsibility of their learning and while the unsuccessful learners may have looked at their lack of succession as related to factors beyond their control, such as intelligence. We might be inferred that generally unsuccessful language learners tended to believe that there were some factors that were not under their control that affected their language learning outcomes. This is a

salient point in relation to behaviors. Successful language learners use active approaches to language tasks, now a pillar of active learning, and success may be attributed, at least in part to having control (Litchfield, B. & Dempsey J., 2015). This important difference may have led the successful language learners toward their successes while this partly held back the unsuccessful language learners.

The difficulty of language learning. Among the beliefs related to the difficulty of language, there were some interesting divergences in the beliefs between the unsuccessful language learners and the successful learners, as Table 5 and Table 7. As Table 5 shows, the unsuccessful language learners believed that they would not succeed (No. 5, 82.35%), and furthermore, the ease of learning the was an important factor (No. 39, 91.60%). This is in agreement with the overall finding above where the unsuccessful language learners tend to look to external factors that are beyond their control and abdicating responsibility for learning. On a positive note, as Table 6 shows, we do see that 71.66% of unsuccessful language learners believe that English can be learned within 5 years if learners apply themselves to learning.

In contrast, differing with the unsuccessful language learners, the successful language learners believed in their learning success 76.92%, even though the difficulty of learning English was also important (No. 39, 100.00%). The notable difference is that the successful language learners have an expectation of further success. However, it is not clear if this expectation of future success stems from their already having achieved some success (TOEIC LR 730) or from their overall expectations for success.

We do see that 61.99%, less than the 71.66% of unsuccessful language learners, believe that English can be learned within 5 years if learners apply themselves to learning as shown in Table 8. However, 85.07% responded that it would be possible within 10 years. This may be accounted for by their awareness of the difficulty of becoming fluent, which is a significantly higher goal than TOEIC LR 730. As noted above, the expectation of success is an important factor which also may be related to their responses regarding motivation to learn.

The nature of language learning. The participants' beliefs on how to best learn a language are shown in Table 5 and Table 7. The unsuccessful language learners believe language learning should be enjoyable (No. 2, 98.32%). However, they tended to blame themselves for failure because they did not study enough (No. 7, 81.51%) or could not adequately learn (No. 8, 57.14%). About half of them were comfortable with traditional learning styles in Japan, such as teacher-centered classrooms, had a desire for the teacher to correcting all mistakes (No. 11, 56.31%), to use L1 in class (No. 16, 94.96%), and a reliance on grammar translation (No. 32, 64.70%; No. 34, 68.06% and No. 35, 36.97%). However, in spite of being in agreement with the teaching style of Japanese education, they still felt that they were not well served by English language education (No. 20, 80.67% and No. 21, 87.40%).

As described above, students have received a minimum of 6 years of English language education before entering university and had completed at least 2 required English. They had received type of education that they believed was suitable to learn language but had a strong belief that the responsibility for their lack of success lies within the education system.

While the successful language learners also believe that language learning should be enjoyable (No. 2, 84.62%), they tend to look at mistakes as part of the learning process and are less inclined to place blame upon themselves because they did not study enough (No. 7, 53.84%) or could not adequately learn (No. 8, 23.07%). Fewer of them showed a comfort in traditional learning styles, such as teacher-centered classrooms, with the desire for the teacher to correcting all mistakes (No. 11, 38.46%), to use L1 in class (No. 16, 61.54%), and a reliance on grammar translation (No. 32, 23.07%; No. 34, 23.08% and No. 35, 15.38%).

As with the unsuccessful language learners, they felt that they were not well served by English language education (No. 20, 92.31% and No. 21, 92.31%), but were cognizant of the type of learning practices that they felt did not contribute to their success. The difference is a reflection of the importance of being aware of language learning, which is a trait of good language learners (Ellis, 2015).

Learning and communication strategy. The beliefs of the unsuccessful learners and the successful learners towards learning and communication strategies are shown in Table 5 and Table 7. The unsuccessful language learners believed that peer learning was helpful (No. 6, 77.31%), relied on L1 (No. 42, 87.40%; No. 43, 68.91%), and were reluctant speakers (No. 13, 24.37%; No. 26, 84.87%; No. 27, 84.87%). This group seems reluctant to use English in a natural context, and outside of the classroom. It may be because they are not confident communicators or because of their low L2 proficiency, or the perception of L2 as something that can only be mastered by interaction with native speakers (No. 44, 83.19%) which they seem unwilling to do (No. 13, 24.37%). Again, we see that the unsuccessful learners have beliefs about how to learn English but are not willing to follow up on some of these beliefs with actions.

The successful language learners believed in peer learning was helpful (No. 6, 84.61%), were less reliant on L1 (No. 42, 38.46%; No. 43, 15.38%), and were active speakers (No. 13, 61.54%). However, they were reluctant to speak in front of their peers (No. 26, 100.0%; No. 27, 69.23%). This group was more willing to use English outside of the classroom in a natural context, and outside of the classroom. However, they also recognized the value of communicating with non-native speakers (No. 44, 7.6%) which they seem willing to do (No. 13, 61.54%). Learner anxiety among Japanese learners of English and a reluctance to speak in front of their peers are well-documented phenomena (Aida, 1994; Cutrone, 2009; Kitano, 2001; Ohata, 2005; Sumiyoshi & Svetanant, 2017).

Again we see that successful learners have beliefs that may transmit into direct behaviors of good language learners such as seeking out opportunities to use language (Ellis, 2015), including with non-native speakers and outside the classroom.

Motivation. The beliefs of the unsuccessful language learners and the successful language learners are shown in Table 5 and Table 7. Not surprisingly, the unsuccessful language learners had high agreement with extrinsic motivators (No. 9, 88.24%; No. 10, 78.15%; No. 14, 88.24%; No. 15, 88.24%). Extrinsic motivators can be described as motivators that are considered independent of instruction (Williams & Lutes, 2007) and is the motivation that comes from the use of external rewards or the

expectation of external benefits (Ng & Ng, 2015). However, approximately two thirds (No. 1, 66.39%) of the unsuccessful language learners were unsatisfied with their progress, which is an important factor in developing intrinsic motivation (Dornyei, 2001; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Only about half of the respondents reported enjoying English studies as they studied more (No. 41, 52.94%).

The successful language learners also had a higher agreement with the extrinsic motivators (No. 10, 92.31%; No. 14, 84.62%; No. 15, 84.61%). However, the rate was lower than that of the unsuccessful language learners suggesting more intrinsic motivation (No. 9, 61.54%). Furthermore, successful language learners were more satisfied with their progress (No. 1, 69.23%) which may be reflected in their intrinsic motivation. All of them reported enjoying English studies as they studied more (No. 41, 100%).

Summary

The unsuccessful language learners placed emphasis on the importance of language aptitude with themselves as Japanese learners of English inherently disadvantaged. They believed speaking to be the most difficult, and that some languages were more difficult than others. Since most of them held the belief that they would not be able to speak English very well, and they thought that it could be mastered with daily effort, it may possibly be inferred that they had given up.

When we look at the beliefs of nature of language learning, we see that unsuccessful language learners wanted to rely on using Japanese to study, even though it was not an effective way to study. This may be related to their purpose in learning English from elementary school through to High school, which was to pass the national university examinations. According to their ability to gain entrance, they may have already achieved their goal.

The unsuccessful language learners showed contrasting views on how to study English, recognizing the importance of practice and peer study, but being reluctant to use English in front of others. They thought that English was unique but seemed to want to study passively relying on translation and grammar. The unsuccessful

language learners generally were motivated by extrinsic factors, such as test results, and better jobs.

The successful language learners did not place importance on language aptitude but thought that Japanese learners of English were disadvantaged. They believed that they would not be able to speak English well, even though speaking was the most difficult task, and that Japanese people were at a disadvantage when learning English. Most believed that English could be mastered within 10 years of daily study and slightly over half thought that it could be achieved in 5 years or less. Since they were all successful language learners, we could infer that even given their high level of language achievement, they still believed that they had not yet mastered English.

The successful language learners' beliefs of nature of language learning were that they thought that language learning should be enjoyable but did not rely on Japanese for learning. Furthermore, they thought that their school English language education was adequate. This may be because they succeeded within the school system and were able to become successful language learners as students. When we look at the beliefs of nature of language learning, we see that successful language learners did not want to rely on Japanese and were somewhat willing to create chances to speak outside of the classroom and were willing to make mistakes as part of learning. The successful language learners had extrinsic motivators, such as English as a communication tool, and as an avenue to better jobs and social status. Additionally, they were satisfied with their progress and all of them reported that studying English was enjoyable, which are important intrinsic motivators.

Comparison of beliefs: Mann-Whitney U Test

A Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to determine if a relationship between the unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners according to their responses on the survey. Beliefs were found to be statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) between both groups for 21 beliefs, Nos. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 16, 18, 19, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, and 45 (See Table 9) which have been discussed above with regards to the general beliefs of the participants.

Table 10 shows that there was agreement among the beliefs that showed significant correlation ($P \leq 0.05$) between the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language learners in Nos. 2, 7, 9, 16, 19, 29, 37, 41, and 45 which was also discussed above.

However, the beliefs that are of primary interest are the beliefs that differed between the unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners. As Table 11 shows, there was disagreement among the beliefs that showed statistical significance ($p \leq 0.05$) between the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language learners for Nos. 1, 5, 8, 13, 18, 32, 34, 38, 42, and 43, which are grouped as above: 1) Foreign language aptitude (No. 38), 2) The difficulty of language learning (No. 5), 3) The nature of language learning (Nos. 8, 32, and 34), 4) Learning and communication strategy (Nos. 13, 18, 42, and 43), and 5) Motivation (No. 1).

As Table 14 shows, the learners showed disagreement in their beliefs about the foreign language aptitude. A majority (53.85%) of the successful language learners do not equate intelligence with language proficiency in contrast to the belief of most (85.71 %) of the unsuccessful language learners (No. 38 People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent).

Intelligence has been viewed as important in language acquisition (Brown, 1994; Mayer & Salovey, 1995;) but as a singular factor, the role has been widely debated, with some crediting the important of cognitive intelligence (Appelbaum & Tuna, 1982; Grossman & Johnson, 1982;) and others crediting emotional intelligence, Golemn, 1996; Salvoy & Grewal, 2005). In EFL, there has long been a focus on the emotional aspect of language learning (Hogan et al., 2010; Murphy & Dornyei, 2010; Swain, 2013). However, it should be noted that neither the definition of intelligence nor whether intelligence is an important factor, is not critical. What is important is not the actual impact of intelligence on learning, but that highly intelligent learners will be more likely to succeed among the unsuccessful language learners which suggests the possibility that unsuccessful language learners may think that they cannot succeed because they are not “highly intelligent”. This may provide the unsuccessful language

learners a reason for their lack of success and may lead to the belief that even though language learning is possible after some years of study, it is out of reach for these unsuccessful learners.

Table 14 Significant disagreement beliefs about foreign language aptitude

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	%	Agree	Strongly Agree	%
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	4	3	53.85	64	38	85.17

As Table 15 shows, there was disagreement about future success with most (82.23%) of the unsuccessful language learners believing that they would not ultimately be able to speak English very well, while the majority (76.92 %) of the successful language learners believed that they would be able to speak English very well in the future (No. 5). As mentioned above, it appears that most of the unsuccessful language learners believed that English was too difficult for them, perhaps in their view, an inadequate level of intelligence. If they believe that they will never become a good speaker of English, this belief is likely to impact their motivation to study as well. This may allow them to abdicate responsibility, not only for their language learning, but also for their lack of their success.

Self-efficacy, which is the belief in having the capability to do the necessary action to produce the desired result (Bandura, 1997), is important to language learners because it affects how they approach learning a foreign language (Horwitz, 1987, 1998; Wenden, 1986). Furthermore, student belief in their ability can influence their language learning outcomes (Rahimi & Abedini, 2009). So, the difference in this belief may have been a contributing factor in the lack of success or the success of the survey participants.

Table 15 Significant disagreement beliefs about the difficulty of language learning

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	%	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	2	8	76.92	82	16	82.23

As Table 16 shows, the disagreement between the successful and unsuccessful language learners was more pronounced in beliefs about the nature of language learning. The successful language learners had realistic expectations of themselves and their performance as language learners with (76.92%) disagreeing with No. 8, “*I should be able to learn everything I am taught*”, in contrast to the majority (57.14%) of unsuccessful language learners that thought that they should be able learn everything. Student expectations play an essential role in EFL learning (Haque, 2014). Both realist expectations and expectations of some success are important to maintain student motivation to learn English (Bandura, 1986; Haque, 2014).

Furthermore, the successful language learners showed strong disagreement with the unsuccessful learners about the importance of translation, grammar rules and tenets of the grammar translation method (Brown, 2014). They showed disagreement (76.92%) with No. 32, “*Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation*”, and No. 34, “*Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules*”, while the unsuccessful language learners showed agreement with these statements at 64.71% and 68.01 %, respectively. While grammar translation is still commonly used globally in second language teaching, there is no scientific evidence to demonstrate its efficacy, and furthermore, there is “no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory” (Richards & Rogers, 2001). Conversely, recent approaches on second language acquisition focus on meaning and communication of meaning which are in direct opposition of the tenets of grammar translation (Ellis, 2015).

Table 16 Significant disagreement beliefs about the nature of language learning

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	%	Agree	Strongly Agree	%
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	1	9	76.92	57	11	57.14
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	2	8	76.92	63	14	64.71
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	2	8	76.92	73	8	68.01

With regards to beliefs about learning and communication strategy, as Table 17 shows, the successful language learners are more likely to engage a foreign person

to speak English, with 53.85% claiming a willingness to engage. No.13: *“If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking”*. However, the unsuccessful language learners with 75.63 % indicated that they would not. While this may reflect a higher emphasis on communication or willingness to make opportunities to communicate among the successful language learners, it may also be a reflection of a lack of confidence in their ability to communicate because of their lower language proficiencies among the unsuccessful language learners.

However, it should be noted that the successful language learners and unsuccessful language learners showed strong differences in the role of Japanese in learning and communication, with 92.31%, 61.54%, and 84.62 of the successful language learners expressing disagreement, and 76.47%, 87.39% and 68.91% of the unsuccessful language in disagreement with No.18: *“In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese”*, No.42: *“To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English”*, and No.43: *“To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese”*, respectively.

Table 17 Significant disagreement beliefs about learning and communication strategy

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	%	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	1	6	53.85	64	26	75.63
NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	%	Agree	Strongly Agree	%
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	4	8	92.31	70	21	76.47
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	0	8	61.54	77	27	87.39
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	5	6	84.62	62	20	68.91

There was significant disagreement in the beliefs that affect motivation based upon their satisfaction with their learning progress (Table 18). Satisfaction with success is an area of interest. Relative to the efforts that they had made, the

successful language learners expressed a high level of satisfaction (69.23%) with their learning, while the unsuccessful language learners were almost equally unsatisfied (67.73 %), (No. 1: *Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress*). Satisfaction with academic success has been linked to academic achievement (Bean & Bradley, 1986), and self-validation, a supportive process that leads to student success, and is an important factor in learning success (Rendon, 1999). As such, this positive belief may not only be a predictor of academic success (Bean & Bradley, 1986), but may also lead to positive behaviors because of the impact on motivation (Kuh, 1995).

Table 18 Significant disagreement beliefs about motivation

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS			UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	%	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	2	7	69.23	62	16	67.73

Summary: Differences in belief according to language proficiency

While the general beliefs stated can offer a general view of the learners' beliefs, it is important to identify differences in beliefs according to language learning success. From an analysis of the unsuccessful learners and successful learners' responses, we see statistically significant correlation of their TOEIC grouping and some beliefs. Therefore, we can conclude that language proficiency is related to beliefs in that either language learning success or a lack of language learning success has an effect on beliefs or that beliefs have an effect on language learning success or lack of language learning success.

While causation in either direction cannot be claimed, that is not of critical importance. What is important is that we can say successful language learners have certain beliefs, and that unsuccessful language learners also have certain beliefs which differ as the finding show. This is similar to the situation of the so-called good language learner and the so called 'good language learner' studies. Studies have tended to either interview the successful language learners, or to contrast the successful learner with the less successful language learners to identify behaviors of the 'good language learners' (Ellis, 2015). It has been pointed out that while there was

variation in the behaviors of successful language learners, i.e., learner strategies, there was also a commonality (Hardan, 2013; Krashen, 2002b; Stevick, 1989).

By grouping this commonality in a series of learning strategies, or language learning behaviors, language educators can encourage the behaviors among learners that successful language learners do undertake. From there, pedagogy may be developed based upon action based research in the classroom (Ellis, 2015).

In a similar fashion, identifying a commonality of beliefs in the successful language learners means that educators can attempt to expose their learners to these beliefs and create a learning environment where these beliefs may be fostered. However, it should be noted that there would be ethical concerns involved with excessive molding of any beliefs.

While identifying that a commonality of beliefs exists is important according to success in language learning, it is more important to establish that there is a contrast between the beliefs of successful language learners and the beliefs of less successful language learners. If in fact all language learners hold the same beliefs, then it cannot be claimed that these beliefs may have played any role in learners' success of the language learning. Therefore, there would be no value in propagating the spread of these beliefs.

Consequently, the items that showed significant correlation were then compared to each other. As stated previously, data was collected by forced-choice Likert scale survey. It bears repeating that data is ordinal scale but is calculated on an interval scale (Wu & Leung, 2017). As a forced-choice survey, there was no mid-position which means that the difference between a 2 or 3 selection (agree, disagree) may be more meaningful than the one-stop interval suggests (see Table XX). That is, a 1, 2 variation reflects a consensus answer of agreement (strongly agree, agree), and similarly a 3,4 (disagree, strongly disagree) variation reflects a consensus answer of disagreement. Conversely, 1, 2 and 3, 4 mixes reflect varying levels of disagreement. As noted above, the median score of the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language

learners are compared rather than the mean since Likert scale is a non-parametric scale and the median accounts for outliers.

The successful language learners are willing to create opportunities to use language (No. 13: *If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking*) whereas the unsuccessful language learners are not. With the successful language learners, we note the tendency to take responsibility for their learning. This is considered to be an important teaching and learning strategy for both educators and learners (Hang, 2008).

Furthermore, successful language learners are more accepting of their fallibilities and do not blame themselves for failures (No. 8: *I should be able to learn everything I am taught*), which again differs from the unsuccessful language learners.

We can see that successful language learners are generally more satisfied with their results (No. 1: *Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress*), and expect that they will reach their goal of proficiency (No. 5: *I believe that someday I will speak English very well*). This may be more of a reflection of the realistic expectations of the successful language learners as none of them have reached native-like language proficiency according to their TOEIC LR scores. In spite of this, they expect to reach their goals. This further indicates that they have taken active management of their learning process.

Belief about self-efficacy, or a positive belief about being able to do a task, is important because in general it leads to better performance and motivation to attempt more challenging tasks (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). The successful language learner expressed this belief in contrast with the unsuccessful language learners (No. 5, *I believe that someday I will speak English very well*) is an important belief in both their present success and future success.

Furthermore, they show a willingness to study and learn in the target language English, and do not rely on their first language, Japanese (No. 18: *In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese*; No. 32: *Learning a word*

means learning the Japanese translation; No. 42: To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English; and No. 43: To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese). They do not equate language competency with translation, and do not feel the need to fall back on L1. Also, they seem to recognize the fluidity of language learning and do not confine their learning focus on grammar rules (No. 34: *Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules*).

Up to this point, we have seen the overall beliefs of the learners and have examined the key differences in beliefs between the successful language learners and the unsuccessful language learners do not. Now, we turn our attention to how these beliefs may have been influenced by their networks as university students.

Part 2 Focused Interviews

These emerging themes related to extrinsic motivation, communication, independent learning, peer support, and role models in the focused interviews, lead us to consider how these beliefs may have been developed. While it is not possible to extrapolate the experiences of these particular learners to all learners, it is possible to gain an understanding of how these beliefs were formed for these particular learners. This in turn, may offer insights to educators on how to foster a better learning environment for language learners.

So, to consider how these particular learners' beliefs were affected by their personal communication networks while at university, I focused on their experiences at university, investigating what influences in their university lives helped them develop beliefs that differed from their peers. To investigate this, two learners that became successful language learners while at university were interviewed in an open session for approximately 40 minutes.

Themes

While both participants had differing views on their language learning and how they succeeded in learning, they shared some perspectives and various themes can

be derived from this. In particular, their personal networks from the university played an important role in their success. Their university networks consisted of friends, batchmates, juniors, seniors and their English language professor. It is apparent that in their opinions, their individual experiences, beliefs, and successes were influenced by these student networks, particularly with regards to their motivation to succeed. Their comments are grouped in themes and sub-themes based upon the changes to, and influences on, their beliefs from interaction and communication within their personal networks (Table 19). From a lens of symbolic interactionism, we can see how their communication with significant people in their personal networks, small circles of friends, assisted them to act upon their world rather than being acted upon by it (Herman & Reynolds, 1994). In their personal networks, the connection and interaction of the participants of the network act as important feedback loops that influence their existing beliefs or even lead to the creation of new beliefs which may in turn lead to differing behaviors.

Table 19 Fumiko and Masahiro Themes and Sub-themes in changes to beliefs

THEME	SUB-THEME
Extrinsic Motivation	Achieved success Communication tool Competition New goal Self-awareness Admiration Interest in language
Communication	Communication tool
Independent learning	Do not like typical way of study
Peer support	Being around good students Communication tool Contribution to peers Network Self-awareness Study support
Role model	Admiration Competition Negative model Self-awareness Self-improvement Pride

Fumiko

During the interview with Fumiko, it was clear that she had developed a strong network that was independent of her family. Her university life centered on her relationships and interactions with people at university, and they played a significant role in her becoming a successful learner of English by the impact that they had on her beliefs which in turn affected her behaviors. Fumiko had structured her social world from the interaction with key people in her university life, primarily her close Japanese friends, international friends and one professor. In the interview, she repeatedly spoke about how her communication with these people influenced her beliefs about language learning. We discuss these experiences from her point of view, from her comments in the interview to gain insight into how they have helped her to develop the beliefs that made her a successful language learner.

Table 20 Grouping of Fumiko's comments by theme and sub-theme

EXCERPT	THEME	SUB-THEME
But for changing the motivation or interest, I think I'm the best at change.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Achieved success
I met many people there (Thailand) and I studied. My motivation became high to learn English. So, I thought it's a one, one of communication, communication tools to communicate with others.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
I want to communicate with others, others, foreigners.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
So, I had to speak English to communicate.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
(To succeed) I think (people) need to know why they need the high score and another one is study friends or competitor.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
So, some of my classmates were better than me in English. So, they affected me, and motivated me to study English.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
(To succeed) I think (people) need to know why they need the high score and another one is study friends or competitor.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	New goal
Goal? Now my goal is to communicate in English, at the same level as my Japanese.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	New goal
I have a clear goal, but if we don't have a clear goal, we cannot keep high motivation for a long time.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	New goal
So, my teacher told me, we need a score to get a good job, and also enter the university, graduate University.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	New goal
English mainly. So, they influenced me - speaking English, talking in English is important to, to expand (my) world.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Self-awareness
My world and expand the community. Mine is only Japanese, only this community. If I can speak English, it gets bigger, yeah gets bigger.	Changed Intrinsic Motivation	Self-awareness
I learned only getting the high score is not enough for studying English, I think if we cannot use the skill for - in our life.	Changed Intrinsic Motivation	Self-awareness
I thought I want to learn more about English. And after I studied English, I thought learning English is interesting.	Changed Intrinsic Motivation	Interest in language
Just my interest.	Changed Intrinsic Motivation	Interest in language

EXCERPT	THEME	SUB-THEME
I have foreign friends in university, international students, so I introduce them to other four members and give them the chance to communicate with foreigners. So, we had lunch, dinner, travel to other prefectures.	Peer support	Contribution to peers
You need somebody to study with and also somebody to motivate you, to encourage you. To show the goal always.	Peer support	
In my case, I cannot study hard by, by myself. So, if I don't have a competitor or friends with the same goal. I cannot work and continue for so long a time.	Peer Support	Self-awareness
We worked on homework together. So, we have lots of time, not to, we have lots of time to not study, but communicate with English.	Peer Support	Study support
And my friends are talking about her, so I know the information from what they say.	Role model	Admiration
Before entering university, I didn't have a chance to meet native speakers. And after entering my university, I met Mr. A (professor) and he only use English, in lectures. So, I thought I wanted to speak like him. His talking style, his words, impressed me. So, I thought I wanted to speak.	Role Model	Admiration
My English teacher is in university is still my role model. And in career place, not exactly role models, but my colleagues are all good.	Role model	Admiration
My teacher showed me a clear goal and a clear purpose, to study English and to get a good score. And he also inspired me. English communication is pretty interesting and just communicating with my teacher English is interesting. And keep me highly motivation to use English.	Role model	Admiration
So, I thought - I learned that constantly studying is important to get high score, from him.	Role Model	Admiration
So, my professors talked about her.	Role model	Admiration
(My classmates) study English constantly. So, I joined their group and study English to get TOEIC score, a high TOEIC score.	Role model	Competition
And for studying English also, he always wants to get the best score and tell us his score.	Role model	Competition
And then I forgot one point about like what's need to be successful. The third point is to find, to join, to find the, the good person or team, better level than me.	Role model	Competition
Four other people, well, one of them is, like, perfect (laughs) guy. He can do anything very easily.	Role model	Competition
He didn't he didn't directly tell me or - the easiest way to study English, but his- Basically, we stayed together in university from his lifestyle, I could see his actions.	Role model	Competition
In my case, I cannot study hard by, by myself. So, if I don't have a competitor or friends with the same goal. I cannot work and continue for so long a time.	Role Model	Competition
Int: So, and then did your you continue to compete with your friends? And so, they kept on telling you their new score or their studying?	Role Model	Competition
Yes.		
Int: So, he was a very strong competitor?	Role model	Competition
Yes, but not a supporter.		
So, there was a model. One of my seniors is intelligent and high communication and high English scores. She's a role model. So, I wanted to become better than her.	Role model	Competition
They tell me their score and also the English teachers said the goal.	Role Model	Competition
He originally has good talent- good, good at studying something like textbooks... But communication and other - using the skill for others was not so good. So, we could keep that balance for each other.	Role model	Negative model
The girl is originally a high level person. Even if she doesn't study hard or work hard, she always keeps the high score.	Role model	Negative model
The one guy, always want to get going up - increase his level. He has also interest in many directions and always wants to get better. So yeah, he introduced me to a new side - wanting to get better.	Role model	Self-awareness Self-improvement

Fumiko saw the most changes in her beliefs in relation to motivation from communication with her network. Her extrinsic motivation was improved through interaction with her network.

I met many people there (Thailand) and I studied. My motivation became high to learn English. So, I thought it's a one, one of communication, communication tools to communicate with others.

I want to communicate with others, others, foreigners.

So, I had to speak English to communicate.

As Fumiko expanded her communication network to include international students, her belief about the practical need for English language competence changed as she began to perceive the English language as a tool to communicate, and thereby her motivation to study increased.

But for changing the motivation or interest, I think I'm the best at change.

Her success in learning also motivated her to study more.

So, some of my classmates were better than me in English. So, they affected me, and motivated me to study English.

(To succeed) I think (people) need to know why they need the high score and another one is study friends or competitor.

Her motivation was also impacted by competition, which is a reoccurring sub-theme with other main themes. Supporting her competitive outlook, she is also motivated by having a goal.

So, my teacher told me, we need a score to get a good job, and also enter the university, graduate University.

Goal? Now my goal is to communicate in English, at the same level as my Japanese.

I have a clear goal, but if we don't have a clear goal, we cannot keep high motivation for a long time.

Her goals emerged from the input from her networks, and she was continually revising her goals based upon her communication within her network.

English mainly. So, they influenced me - speaking English, talking in English is important to, to expand (my) world.

My world and expand the community. Mine is only Japanese, only this community. If I can speak English, it gets bigger, yeah gets bigger.

I learned only getting the high score is not enough for studying English, I think if we cannot use the skill for - in our life.

Her sense of self-awareness in relation to the inputs from her network also contributed to her intrinsic motivation. As her beliefs changed her extrinsic motivation, she also began to value the experience of language learning.

I thought I want to learn more about English. And after I studied English, I thought learning English is interesting.

Just my interest.

The influence of the support and the influence of her peers in her network is a reoccurring theme with sub-themes of contributing to her peers, and peer support as a study support mechanism.

I have foreign friends in university, international students, so I introduce them to other four members and give them the chance to communicate with foreigners. So, we had lunch, dinner, travel to other prefectures.

You need somebody to study with and also somebody to motivate you, to encourage you. To show the goal always.

In my case, I cannot study hard by, by myself. So, if I don't have a competitor or friends with the same goal. I cannot work and continue for so long a time.

However, one of the biggest influences and perhaps the most impactful theme that emerged was the importance of role models that she encountered in her personal networks. One main sub-theme is that of a positive role model whom she wanted to emulate, which was countered by the negative role models who were not successful language learners. Among the positive role models were a professor, a senior student, and her peers, all of whom were either part of her personal network or known to her through her network.

Before entering university, I didn't have a chance to meet native speakers. And after entering my university, I met Mr. A (professor) and he only use English, in lectures. So, I thought I wanted to speak like him. His talking style, his words, impressed me. So, I thought I wanted to speak.

My teacher showed me a clear goal and a clear purpose, to study English and to get a good score. And he also inspired me. English communication is pretty interesting and just communicating with my teacher English is interesting. And keep me highly motivation to use English.

And my friends are talking about her (senior student), so I know the information from what they say.

So, my professors talked about her (senior student).

So, there was a model. One of my seniors is intelligent and high communication and high English scores. She's a role model. So, I wanted to become better than her.

Both the professor and senior students are role models based on admiration, but the senior student also demonstrates an important part the influence of communication in her personal network, that is, her beliefs were strongly influenced by the drive to compete with people in her network. While we can see this in her comments about her peers that were not so successful, these comments focus mostly on behaviors rather than influence on her beliefs. Her beliefs change from the influence of her stronger competitors.

So, I thought - I learned that constantly studying is important to get high score, from him.

The third point is to find, to join, to find the, the good person or team, better level than me.

In my case, I cannot study hard by, by myself. So, if I don't have a competitor or friends with the same goal. I cannot work and continue for so long a time.

They tell me their score.

So yeah, he introduced me to a new side - wanting to get better.

In the interview with Fumiko, her beliefs and why she was studying English changed because of the communication in her personal networks. There was a shift from not being interested in English studies to gaining an interest for extrinsic reasons and finally for intrinsic reasons. As motivation is a very important factor in language

acquisition, this is a significant impact in her journey to becoming a successful language learner.

Furthermore, her beliefs about how to successfully study changed as she did more self-reflection and gained more self-awareness about her strengths and weaknesses as a language learner from her network. Her network allowed her to fuel her competitiveness but adapting the learning beliefs of her peers to improve her learning outcomes and ultimately became not only a better language learner, but a successful language learner.

Masahiro

In the interview, Masahiro also discussed the network that he developed, and the key peers were his Japanese batchmates and international friendships that he made in the overseas internships and among international students in his faculty. He states that he did not think that his seniors or his professors had a significant impact on becoming a successful language learner, but rather this was a product of his own efforts. However, his interaction in his network showed that his beliefs and also his behaviors were in fact influenced by the people in his network, perhaps more than he credits them with.

Table 21 Grouping of Masahiro's comments by theme and sub-theme

EXCERPT	THEME	SUB-THEME
And in the SUIJI (program), I need to speak English, I have to use English because the Indonesian people cannot speak Japanese.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
I think normal Japanese, normal Japanese people have (interjection in Japanese) stereotype about overseas people. Almost (all) Japanese people hesitate to talk English or communicate with people from overseas. But in university, I, we have to talk to talk with them. And we need to talk with them. And that makes us became open minded.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
I was forced to communicate with people from overseas.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Communication tool
Did you help each other study? No. (laughs)	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
I think (my friends) are like competitor, I just compete with them about the TOEIC score already say I have, I think 600 score. And after I take the first TOEIC test in the university, I got around 700 and then my friend compete with me and he got over 700.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
Other reasons, competition... With my Japanese friends	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
Yeah, they are competitor but I think they are no - they didn't influence my English learning, I think.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
Yes, then we get more motivation to study (if I went to another university). And I have more competitors and the new community, I think, and that makes better relationship with other people, I think.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	Competition
That is one reason for - that influenced me that I want to, I want to live in overseas, or go just travel overseas.	Changed Extrinsic Motivation	New goal
And that kind of- He motivates me to communicate with people overseas. And he let me knows the... fun point to communicate with people from overseas.	Changed Intrinsic motivation	Admiration
My private (life) became I don't know how to say but rich became rich. And that makes better effort to better effect on my English learning, I think the motivation and the time.	Changed intrinsic Motivation	Self-awareness
And I think gesture is one of the key tools to communicate with people.	Communication	Communication tool
And in the community, we need we also need to talk English, and that helps me learning.	Peer support	Communication tool
Did you win? I don't know what is the definition of meaning in this case, but as far as the TOEIC score, I can say, of course, yes. But. But I think the very important things in speaking English is how, how much I can tell them my feelings or my thoughts. And that's the most important point. And in that point, I think I was defeated or lose.	Peer support	Self-awareness
I just noticed that in Indonesia people don't speak English very well. And that's, that's what I noticed, and I shouldn't be ashamed of speaking English.	Role model	Negative
And after I speak something, I noticed that it's not need to be ashamed that I cannot speak, but that I can't speak English.	Role model	Self-awareness
But I think but I don't have a role model to learn English but for (other students). I can be a role model kind of role models for an English, I think.	Role model	Self-awareness Pride
I will say just speak, just say something in English. Don't hesitate to speak English, I think. Even I get the over 900 to score. I think I can't speak English very fluently. And we do not being ashamed to speak English, I think.	Role model	Self-awareness Pride
Juniors? Obviously, I don't care about the juniors but (laughs) I just pretend that I am the role model.	Role model	Self-awareness Pride

Masahiro's motivation to speak and to use English as a tool for communication is where we can see the first shift in his beliefs.

I think normal Japanese, normal Japanese people have (interjection in Japanese) stereotype about overseas people. Almost (all) Japanese people hesitate to talk English or communicate with people from overseas. But in university, I, we have to talk to talk with them. And we need to talk with them. And that makes us became open minded.

I just noticed that in Indonesia people don't speak English very well. And that's, that's what I noticed, and I shouldn't be ashamed of speaking English.

And in the SUIJI (program), I need to speak English, I have to use English because the Indonesian people cannot speak Japanese. I was forced to communicate with people from overseas.

I will say just speak, just, just say something in English. Don't hesitate to speak English, I think. Even I get the over 900 to score. I think I can't speak English very fluently. And we do not being ashamed to speak English, I think.

He alluded to the communication in his network changing him from what he termed a normal or typical Japanese person to an active speaker of English as his belief changed. He was motivated by English as a tool to accomplish his tasks, and to change his beliefs about being ashamed to make mistakes.

Similar to Fumiko, his network exposed him to new potentials and his beliefs about language learning also shifting to realization that communicative competence not only offers more opportunity but also has value in itself.

That is one reason for - that influenced me that I want to, I want to live in overseas, or go just travel overseas.

Yes, then we get more motivation to study (if I went to another university). And I have more competitors and the new community, I think, and that makes better relationship with other people, I think.

And that kind of- He motivates me to communicate with people overseas. And he let me knows the... fun point to communicate with people from overseas.

In the themes of peer support and role models, competition is his main focus. Again, like Fumiko, he learned from communicating with his network about what not to do, but he focused on competition with his peers which also may have had an influence his beliefs.

Yes, then we get more motivation to study (if I went to another university). And I have more competitors and the new community, I think, and that makes better relationship with other people, I think.

think (my friends) are like competitor, I just compete with them about the TOEIC score already say I have, I think 600 score. And after I take the first TOEIC test in the university, I got around 700 and then my friend compete with me and he got over 700.

Other reasons, competition... With my Japanese friends. And in the community, we need we also need to talk English, and that helps me learning.

In spite of being a successful learner that had been in full competition with his peers, in his network, he was not fully satisfied, believing that he still needed to improve, which is also an important belief for successful language learners. When asked if he won the competition, he responded:

I don't know what is the definition of meaning in this case, but as far as the TOEIC score, I can say, of course, yes. But. But I think the very important things in speaking English is how, how much I can tell them my feelings or my thoughts. And that's the most important point. And in that point, I think I was defeated or lose.

In the interviews with Fumiko and Masahiro, there were some similar themes and sub-themes. Their network influenced their beliefs on the reasons to learn, how to learn, and the enjoyment of learning. Furthermore, they used what they learned through their networks to fuel their efforts through competition which influenced their self-awareness as language learners. Their communication with their personal networks were face-to-face, using SNS software, and Facebook. Their networks influenced their beliefs and helped them to be successful language learners.

CONCLUSIONS

The English language has a global reach and a global impact. English language is widely spoken, widely studied and has significant impacts on the lives of English language learners. It is not only the most widely used language for communication, but English proficiency can lead to wider social and economic opportunities for its users. Conversely, English language proficiency is also used as a global gate keeper which can also deny less proficient users of opportunity in the global economy.

The global hegemony impacts Japan at all levels of society, from the arguably outsized role that it plays in Japanese society, in employment and in access to education. At national universities, English language proficiency impacts university admission, even for non-English majors. Upon graduation, English language proficiency affects employment and promotion. In spite of having the world's third largest economy and extensive spending on English language education, Japan has not been successful in developing the targeted global citizenry (At the national level, there is a lack of policy direction and implementation of national education policy).

As such, I set to determine if there were differences in the language learning beliefs of unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners. I then sought to find out if communication in student personal networks played a role. I addressed these two key questions:

- 1) Is there a difference in the language learning beliefs between unsuccessful language learners and successful language learners?
- 2) Did communication in student personal communication networks change the language learning beliefs of the successful language learners?

This research focused on English language acquisition from the learner beliefs of English language learners and the role of individual communication networks for successful language learners. The language learning beliefs of second-year Japanese university students majoring in science at the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University, and graduates, that had successfully learned English while at the Faculty of Agriculture of Kagawa University were investigated using a Likert-type scale instrument. The degree of success was measured by standardized testing, which TOEIC 730 set as the divider between unsuccessful and successful learners.

By this analysis, we could obtain an overview of the general beliefs of the learners. It was found that among the participants, there were shared beliefs, but also differences in beliefs about language learning. Some of these beliefs significantly correlated with the degree of success that they had as language learners. Although, they shared many general beliefs about language learning, there were differences in their beliefs in the five groupings of beliefs: 1) Foreign language aptitude, 2) The difficulty of language learning, 3) The nature of language learning, 4) Learning and communication strategy, and 5) Motivation.

It was the divergence of beliefs that was of most interest. By using a Mann-Whitney U Test, a significant relationship between language proficiency and some beliefs was identified.

We found that the unsuccessful learners looked more to outside factors that were beyond their control, such as innate intelligence or special language aptitude, to perhaps account for their lack of success, in contrast to the successful language learners. The unsuccessful language learners did not expect to succeed while the successful ones did. The successful language learners used learning approaches that were not only the traditional learning styles and made opportunities to use the language, while the unsuccessful learners tended to be more passive about their learning, relying on the traditional ways of learning even though they were not satisfied that their English language education provided them with the necessary skills, information, and education to succeed. The successful language learners, in direct contrast to the unsuccessful language learners, believed that learning was their

responsibility and that by taking responsibility for their learning, they would become fluent in English. They further believed that learning English in English was important, that they should take opportunities to use English. They were also satisfied with their progress, even though they had not reached what they thought to be “very good speaking abilities”.

It was of interest to find that there may be some linkage in the beliefs that the successful language learner held and the behaviors of good language learner (Ellis, 2015). They are cognizant of the forms of language form, focus on communication, take active approaches to language tasks, are aware how to learn languages, and are flexible in their learning strategies (Ellis, 2015). We saw that their beliefs were in line with these behavior. As such, these behaviors were influenced by their language learning beliefs and as educators, we should try to encourage beliefs that lead to behaviors that have been shown to lead to language learning success.

Having determined that differences in beliefs existed between the learners which were correlated to their language learning success or lack of, the role of student personal networks was examined. The influence on how two successful learners, Fumiko and Masahiro, may have been influenced by their student personal networks was investigated. At university age, student beliefs may still be in formation and subject to change. Furthermore, these networks may encourage students by adding the impetus to succeed.

This study found that there were some similar themes that emerged from the interviews with Fumiko and Masahiro regarding the influence of communication in their personal student networks, and possible learner behaviors were examined. Their student personal networks used various means of communication, including face-to-face, SNS software, and Facebook. These networks influenced their beliefs, but more importantly helped them to be successful language learners.

It was determined through the two focused interviews that their student personal networks influenced and shaped their beliefs. Through these networks, they shared results, methods of study, and reasons to study. This information helped to increase

their motivation especially with regards to their enjoyment of learning. They became more self-aware about their language beliefs. The student networks also played an important role in their motivation, and they expressed that competition with their friends was a key point for them in trying to succeed.

Fumiko and Masahiro appear to have been influenced by their networks to make opportunities to speak, which relates to the importance of using the English language to learn English. Fumiko stressed the importance of having a support network which encouraged her to succeed. Conversely, Masahiro downplayed the importance of a support network, even though he was influenced by it. They were both influenced by the peers' beliefs and behaviors especially in regard to beliefs about learning and how to study. Their beliefs about motivation were strongly influenced by their peers. This social knowledge acquired through the student networks helped them to succeed. A key theme from their interviews was that their personal communication networks helped to foster a positive and competitive environment.

The success of these two language learners may provide a model to encourage other learners to develop a network with successful language learners at school and gain from the socially created knowledge that has been developed in this connective network. It is noteworthy that both Fumiko and Masahiro did not study with their friends, or others in their personal communication networks. Rather, they used these networks as a source of knowledge and perhaps develop the important belief that they could succeed as language learners.

Their thoughts and conceptualization themselves and successful language learners were partially created by the socially created knowledge, including feedback loops in their personal communication networks, as they strove to emulate their successful seniors and compete with their successful rivals. It was the interaction of the participants, and what they brought to the network, that formed the building blocks of social reality. I have described some of the viewpoints of Fumiko and Masahiro and through this lens tried to interpret their beliefs and actions that helped them become successful language learners.

In this study, we have seen that English language education in Japan, through its structure, and the gatekeeping role that it plays in schools and in employment has created a stacked deck for most language learners, which is also reflected in the dismal results which are widely recognized by educators and the government.

Yet, in these student personal networks we have seen a different kind of knowledge. We have seen socially constructed knowledge that shows these learners that they can be successful and that they are successful because of the human interaction in their networks, and connectivism. Connectivism is socially networked learning, and by creating and navigating these networks, they have become more empowered learners. Their learning experiences and knowledge give educators and other members of their networks that have access to the stored and growing knowledge and directions on how to achieve success. We can hope that this means these successful learners will be better equipped to cope with real life demands for communicative competence in the English language.

Both Fumiko and Masahiro joined and contributed to social networks to achieve their common goals of achieving communicative competence in the English language which prompted and sustained the knowledge and network. Even though they have mostly withdrawn from these networks of their university day, as they no longer share the goals, their contributions still exists for others to draw upon. As Siemens stressed, members join and leave as it suits them or their goals but the knowledge remains to potentially empower future learners to emulate their success (2004). So in that sense, Fumiko and Masahiro have made an important contribution to future learners that join this connected network.

As a next step for educators, it is important to link these beliefs to behaviors. Beliefs will influence behaviors and behaviors will influence outcomes. If the socially created knowledge in these networks leads to beliefs that encourage good learner behaviors, the student networks can be potentially strong ally for educators. This raises some interesting questions for the future: If educators can influence student personal networks, would this lead to better outcomes? To what degree is consciously influencing a student network ethical? We have seen in recent years how social

networks have been used to influence political opinion. What are the ethical boundaries for educators?

Since educators are already part of the student personal networks, it is reasonable to suggest that we are already overtly influencing their networks. However, this is quite different from the covert influence that could be or may already be played by educators in how they provide information. Encouraging successful learners to positively influence their friends and fellow students is a common teaching method, and peer learning. However, with the increasing covert influence of student personal networks, serious ethical questions may arise. Is having successful learner share their stories, similar to using a social media influencer to promote a product, or a political point of view?

This study demonstrated that student personal networks influenced the learning beliefs and behaviors of two learners, Fumiko and Masahiro. While these results cannot be extrapolated to even a limited population, they certainly raise interesting practical and ethical questions for future research.

As educators, we hope to positively influence our students, teaching and modeling positive beliefs which will lead to positive behaviors and better learning outcomes for our students. Student personal networks play a role in influencing their beliefs. However, at the same time we need to be cognizant of the drawback and temptation of the new potential ability of inserting information into these networks. Student personal networks are formed by the students and are built of the trust of a social networks which gives these networks great potential for generating socially-created knowledge and influencing the beliefs of the members, but at the same time, educators must remember that we are not or should not be full members of these networks. And most certainly, we should not be covert participants or sources of information.

The importance of this network should not be underrated because it is at university that student beliefs can still be influenced by their university life, especially through their academic and social interactions with other students.

As educators, we can support this positive communication channel by encouraging students to share their experiences and successes in learning more widely through SNS. The limited or closed networks, such as LINE, are likely to be more important channels for Japanese students than the more broadly open social platforms, such as Facebook. Determining which networks are most influential in shifting students' beliefs about language learning and the boundaries that should exist are important area for furthers research.

This study has provided the first confirmation of a correlation of student beliefs and English language learning successes in Japanese non-English majors in Japan. Furthermore, it has shown that the communication networks of two of the successful language learners played an important role in their beliefs and even in their motivation to learn. However, most importantly, this study raises important questions for future research such as the influence of the communication tools of students within their social networks and how they create their own social knowledge which can then in turn influence their beliefs and ultimately their behaviors.

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APPENDIXES

ANNEX A:
Mann-Whitney U-Test correlation
of successful and unsuccessful language learners and their beliefs: full results

NO.	BELIEF	MAN N- WHIT NEY U	WILC OXON W	Z	ASYM P. SIG. (2- TAIL ED)
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	448.5	539.5	-2.716	0.007
2	English class should be enjoyable.	495.5	7635.5	-2.417	0.016
3	Females are better than males at learning English.	580.5	7720.5	-1.63	0.103
4	I am satisfied with the English education I received.	645.5	736.5	-0.866	0.386
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	300	391	-4.245	0.001
6	I can improve my English by speaking English with my classmates.	599.5	690.5	-1.499	0.134
7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	536	7676	-2.014	0.044
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	527	7667	-2.057	0.04
9	I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	383	7523	-3.288	0.001
10	I study English because it is useful to communicate with English speaking people.	583.5	674.5	-1.615	0.106
11	I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.	578	7718	-1.61	0.107
12	If a person studies English by himself for one hour a day, how many years will it take to become fluent?	683.5	774.5	-0.724	0.469
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	512	603	-2.185	0.029
14	If I learn to speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.	692	7832	-0.687	0.492
15	If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get a good job.	746	7886	-0.232	0.817
16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	356.5	7496.5	-3.56	0.001
17	If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.	623	7763	-1.264	0.206
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	193	7333	-4.882	0.001
19	In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	566	657	-1.961	0.05
20	In order to learn to read and write English very well, English education at school enough.	604	7744	-1.456	0.146
21	In order to speak and understand English very well, English education at school is enough.	622	7762	-1.319	0.187
22	It is easier for children than adults to learn English.	686	7826	-0.825	0.41
23	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	757.5	848.5	-0.135	0.893
24	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	729	7869	-0.362	0.717
25	It is easier to speak English than to understand it.	651.5	7791.5	-0.988	0.323
26	It is embarrassing to speak English in front of other Japanese students.	544	7684	-1.951	0.051
27	I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.	459	7599	-2.68	0.007
28	It is useful to know about English-speaking countries in order to speak English.	710	7850	-0.559	0.576
29	It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	457	548	-2.903	0.004
30	Japanese people are good at learning foreign languages.	709.5	800.5	-0.603	0.547
31	Japanese people think it is important to speak English.	688.5	7828.5	-0.729	0.466
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	472	7612	-2.499	0.012
33	Learning English is different from learning other subjects.	641.5	7781.5	-1.122	0.262
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	390.5	7530.5	-3.324	0.001

35	Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.	503.5	7643.5	-2.288	0.022
36	Listening to CDs and podcasts and watching English programs on television are very important in learning English.	685.5	776.5	-0.778	0.436
37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	370.5	7510.5	-3.467	0.001
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	337	7477	-3.669	0.001
39	Some languages are easier to learn than others.	728.5	819.5	-0.388	0.698
40	Some people are born with a special ability which is useful for learning English.	678	769	-0.775	0.439
41	The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	374.5	465.5	-3.254	0.001
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	387.5	7527.5	-3.392	0.001
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	263.5	7403.5	-4.213	0.001
44	You can learn to improve your English only from native speakers of English.	622	7762	-1.397	0.163
45	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	325.5	7465.5	-3.785	0.001

APPENDIX B:

Comparison of beliefs by language proficiency (successful vs unsuccessful language learners) with a relationship between language proficiency and beliefs

NO.	BELIEF	SUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		UNSUCCESSFUL LANGUAGE LEARNERS		TOTAL	
		Std. Deviation	Median	Std. Deviation	Median	Std. Deviation	Median
1	Considering the amount of time I have studied English, I'm satisfied with my progress.	0.689	2.00	0.736	3.00	0.751	3.00
2	English class should be enjoyable.	0.816	2.00	0.535	1.00	0.585	1.50
5	I believe that someday I will speak English very well.	0.641	2.00	0.676	3.00	0.715	3.00
7	I make mistakes because I do not study enough.	0.967	2.00	0.675	2.00	0.72	2.00
8	I should be able to learn everything I am taught.	0.725	3.00	0.713	2.00	0.721	2.00
9	I studied English only to pass the university entrance exam.	0.776	2.00	0.741	2.00	0.776	2.00
13	If I heard a foreigner of my age speaking English, I would go up to that person to practice speaking.	0.776	2.00	0.751	3.00	0.764	3.00
16	If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Japanese when necessary.	0.768	2.00	0.585	2.00	0.646	2.00
18	In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Japanese.	0.599	3.00	0.696	2.00	0.766	2.00
19	In learning English it is important to repeat and practice a lot.	0.277	1.00	0.533	1.00	0.519	1.00
27	I feel shy speaking English in front of other Japanese students.	0.66	2.00	0.77	2.00	0.776	2.00
29	It's O.K. to guess If you don't know a word in English.	0.506	1.00	0.562	2.00	0.572	2.00
32	Learning a word means learning the Japanese translation.	0.801	3.00	0.778	2.00	0.794	2.00
34	Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.	0.641	3.00	0.623	2.00	0.652	2.00
35	Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Japanese.	0.689	3.00	0.732	3.00	0.741	3.00
37	People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	0.439	4.00	0.642	3.00	0.651	3.00
38	People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.	0.899	3.00	0.758	2.00	0.823	2.00
41	The longer I study English, the more enjoyable I find it.	0.48	2.00	0.842	2.00	0.844	2.00
42	To say something in English, I think of how I would say it in Japanese and then translate it into English.	0.66	3.00	0.632	2.00	0.659	2.00
43	To understand English, you must first translate it into Japanese.	0.725	3.00	0.729	2.00	0.792	2.00
45	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can speak it correctly.	0.277	4.00	0.732	3.00	0.732	3.00

APPENDIX C:

Fumiko Interview (Full Transcript)

Interviewer: Peter Lutes (Int)
 Participant: Fumiko (F1) *Alias*
 Age: 27
 Gender: Female
 Date: October 10, 2021
 Time: 11:30 JST
 Location: Tokyo Japan

Int	Okay, so thank you for joining me this interview. If you want to stop the video or stop recording at any time, please tell me and I'll stop.
Int	Okay, I'd like to ask you to tell me about your beliefs, or how you formed your beliefs and change your beliefs in university. So firstly, can you tell me what you think after you entered university affected your beliefs about learning language?
F1	Okay, so after entering university, how did I, how my beliefs changed?
Int	Yes, if they changed.
F1	So just have the entire university. I didn't have interest to study English. But after I get the chance to visit Thailand, I met many people there and I studied. My motivation became high to learn English. So, I thought it's a one, one of communication, communication tools to communicate with others.
Int	Okay, but so in high school before you came to university, did you think you could learn English?
F1	Hmmm, no.
Int	Okay, so you said you went to Thailand? Is that in second year or third year? Or do you mean Indonesia in first year?
F1	Oh, it's first, first year.
Int	Oh, you went to Thailand? Okay, why did you go to Thailand?
F1	My friend invited me to go with her.
Int	Okay, is that a Japanese friend. Yes. Okay. And what was the purpose of going there?
F1	The purpose of the program?
Int	Why did you go to Thailand? For tourism?
F1	And it's a university's program for exchange.
Int	Okay. So and so you went because your friend asked you to go?
F1	Yes.
Int	Okay. All right. And then you went to Thailand and how was your communication? Or did you have any problem?
F1	I had lots of problems. They cannot speak Japanese - they only speak English. So, I had to speak English to communicate. So, I tried not to use verbal, but also non-verbal verbal communication.
Int	Okay, so then you came back to Japan? And what made you think you could learn why did you think you could become a successful learner of English?
F1	I think because, firstly [Japanese] just my interest about English. So before entering university, and I don't have interest to study or motivation to study English. So, one reason is interest in English and another one is, I want to communicate with others, others, foreigners, so okay, what was the question?
Int	How do you think - Did your thinking change about your - that you can learn English? Or what changed your thinking that you can learn English?
F1	So, first, I thought I want to learn more about English. And after I studied English, I thought learning English is interesting. So, yeah, a change in interest.
Int	Okay. And how about if you think you can learn English and but in first year did you learn English well?
F1	Not so.
Int	So, what, what made you do better in second and third year?
Int	So, many students in your school study English, but can't learn English well. So, why do you think you could learn English well?
F1	In my case, my English learning method is not a typical like reading the book or answering the textbook. I prefer to communicate with English teachers using my English. So, I didn't use a textbook to learn English.

Int	So, you focused on communication? And what about - who did you communicate with, your teachers? How about international students?
F1	Oh, yes.
Int	And how did they affect your thinking about how to learn English?
F1	So, I learned English is just a tool to communicate. So, I need to communicate with foreigners.
Int	These foreigners or these Americans or ?
F1	Any.
Int	Okay. And so, you communicated by learning by using English only?
F1	Sometimes, body language. But to express my feelings or my thinking I need to transfer to words. So, I wanted to express more using my own words. I need to, I wanted to learn English.
Int	All right. So, I understand your motivation.
Int	And about how you could be successful. Did you see some kind of some international students as a model, this person's good at speaking English, I want to be like this person or something like that? Okay, can you tell me about it, just about your thinking.
F1	Before entering university, I didn't have a chance to meet native speakers. And after entering my university , I met Mr. A (professor) and he only use English, in lectures. So, I thought I wanted to speak like him. His talking style, his words, impressed me. So, I thought I wanted to speak.
Int	Okay, so you had a teacher as a role model? What about your friends or your own network? Did your friends study English?
F1	Yes. So, some of my classmates were better than me in English. So, they affected me, and motivated me to study English. They study English constantly. So, I joined their group and study English to get TOEIC score, a high TOEIC score.
Int	So, do you mean you were motivated by competition?
F1	Yes.
Int	Okay. And how did you compete with them? So, you know, their TOEIC score. did they tell you their score or?
F1	They tell me their score and also the English teachers said the goal. So yeah, so my teacher told me, we need a score to get a good job, and also enter the university, graduate University. So, there is a clear image, clear goals to achieve.
Int	Okay, so and then did your you continue to compete with your friends? And so, they kept on telling you their new score or their studying?
F1	Yes.
Int	Did you study together?
F1	We didn't study - like - we didn't have a time to study at school in private time. But we joined the same English class. And also, we worked on homework together. So, we have lots of time, not to, we have lots of time to not study, but communicate with English.
Int	Why do you think you succeeded? Did all of your friends succeed?
F1	Not all.
Int	Okay, why do you think you succeeded, and some didn't?
F1	I have a clear goal, but if we don't have a clear goal, we cannot keep high motivation for a long time.
Int	Okay, and so were you the most successful among your friends?
Int	Could you repeat that?
Int	Were you the most successful learner among your friends by TOEIC score or?
F1	If we judge the highest score is the best, I don't think so. But for changing the motivation or interest, I think I'm the best at change.
Int	Okay. So, and do you think your friends have a big influence on you or your goal?
F1	My friends influenced me.
Int	Okay. So, what are some things that make a good language learner? How can other people be successful?
F1	First, they need to clear goal and a time limit. I think they need to know why they need the high score and another one is study friends or competitor. In my case, I cannot study hard by, by myself. So, if I don't have a competitor or friends with the same goal. I cannot work and continue for so long a time.
Int	Okay, so you, you focused on competition with your friends. Okay. And how did you join together in person? And also, did you use SNS? Or how did you communicate and study and talk with your friends?
F1	Basically, in person.
Int	And how about gathering using did you use SNS or LINE or something to talk with your seniors or batchmates? Can you tell me a little bit about that?
F1	So, you mean using English?

Int	Anything? For instance, communicating. So, why did you think you succeeded? Did that help you talking to your friends?
Int	Ahh, yes.
Int	Please tell me about it.
F1	So, there was a model. So, there was a model. One of my seniors is intelligent and high communication and high English scores. She's a role model. So, I wanted to become better than her.
Int	How did you know about her? Were you her friend? So why do you know this information?
F1	I don't, I'm not confident but she is pretty famous in my university. So, my professors talked about her.
F1	And my friends are talking about her, so I know the information from what they say.
Int	Okay, so you found a model from your friends' network?
F1	Yes. And then I forgot one point about like what's need to be successful. The third point is to find, to join, to find the, the good person or team, better level than me.
Int	Okay, so you made a team when you were-
F1	Team or just friends.
Int	Tell me about your team, how many people were in your team?
F1	Five, including me.
Int	So, tell me about the four other people.
F1	Four other people, well, one of them is, like, perfect (laughs) guy. He can do anything very easily.
Int	Okay.
F1	So, he is good at studying English, is good at communication. He is good as a person, a good person.
Int	Okay, so how did he help you or how did you work with him?
F1	Ahhhh.
Int	How did he influence you?
F1	He didn't he didn't directly tell me or - the easiest way to study English, but his- Basically, we stayed together in university from his lifestyle, I could see his actions.
Int	I see, so you watched his life and saw that he was good (inaudible). Okay, so spending time in a network. Okay, how about another person?
F1	Another person?
Int	You said that there's four. So, there are three more. Can you tell me about that?
F1	The girl is originally a high level person. Even if she doesn't study hard or work hard, she always keeps the high score.
Int	You mean in English?
F1	In any.
Int	In all subjects?
F1	Yes, so her words or her thinking affected me but, but - I am not exactly-
Int	Okay, let's just leave that for a minute. Okay. So ,and did she study English with you too.
F1	No.
Int	Okay, but she affected your study style. Okay. The other two people?
F1	The one guy, always want to get going up - increase his level. He has also interest in many directions and always wants to get better. So yeah, he introduced me to a new side - wanting to get better.
Int	Can you give me an example?
F1	He's also interested in overseas. So, he found like, a trip to go around, South-Asia by ship. And he recruited, he found by himself such an opportunity. And for studying English also, he always wants to get the best score and tell us his score.
Int	So, he will tell you his score?
F1	Yes.
Int	And be proud of his score like a challenge?
Int	Yes.
Int	So, he was a very strong competitor?
F1	Yes, but not a supporter.
Int	That's interesting and the last one?
F1	The last one. He originally has good talent- good, good at studying something like textbooks. But, yeah, normal ?
Int	Studying for a test?

F1	Yes, but his communication is not good. But communication and other study is - but using his skill for others, for communicating, was not good. But communication and other - using the skill for others was not so good. So, we could keep that balance for each other.
Int	So, what did you get from him about studying for English? What did you learn from him?
F1	No (laughs). Ahhh nothing. I learned only getting the high score is not enough for studying English, I think if we cannot use the skill for - in our life.
Int	I see, so before you came to university you thought that score is most important. Okay, so you could see someone with a high score who wasn't so successful?
F1	yes, because we need a score for entering university.
Int	Okay and then so again you said you succeeded because you have some goal and that you have some desire for communication and some rivals or friends supporting, right?
F1	Joining the group, better than by myself.
Int	So that group of four people were in some ways better at studying than you.
F1	Yes.
Int	Okay, so what was your contribution to the group?
F1	Contribution?
Int	Did you share something with them? Did they learn something from you?
F1	I have foreign friends in university, international students, so I introduce them to other four members and give them the chance to communicate with foreigners. So, we had lunch, dinner, travel to other prefectures.
Int	Okay. So, all those four friends are all Japanese. Okay. What about your foreign friends? How did they influence you? Are they from English speaking countries?
F1	Not native.
Int	So, how did you communicate with them in Japanese or in English?
F1	English mainly. So, they influenced me - speaking English, talking in English is important to, to expand the world.
Int	Expand your world?
F1	My world and expand the community. Mine is only Japanese, only this community. If I can speak English, it gets bigger, yeah gets bigger.
Int	Okay, so and you learn this from your friends at university?
F1	Yes.
Int	Okay. And then also, if you think about what was the biggest thing that affected how you think about studying English in university? What was the biggest thing to affect your thinking? They're Japanese friends, your high school teacher, sorry, your university teachers, or your international friends?
F1	My English teacher in university.
Int	One or many?
F1	One.
Int	And how did that person influence you?
F1	My teacher showed me a clear goal and a clear purpose, to study English and to get a good score. And he also inspired me. English communication is pretty interesting and just communicating with my teacher English is interesting. And keep me highly motivation to use English.
Int	So, you'd say that getting something interesting in English was helpful for study. And how about from your friends? Also, from your Japanese friends? Did you communicate in English or in Japanese? Or both?
F1	Japanese, except in class.
Int	Okay, and then, when you were doing some project that's related to English, how did they influence your thinking?
F1	Program?
Int	So, for example, you said before you went on some internship program, where you did some project together with your students in class. How did they help you think about how to study?
F1	So far. My friend had a vocabulary book. And he always checking key words and constantly checking and continue to study English, but it's not hard work for him. It's already - he's way of lifestyle. So, I thought - I learned that constantly studying is important to get high school, from him.
Int	He also was a model for you?
F1	I am not good at consistently doing one thing.
Int	Okay. And then how about some, were there any things that had a negative impact on your study from your networks? Or something like - I don't want to be like that. Or this. You have some positive examples. Do you have some negative examples from your networks? If I only do this, I wouldn't be a good learner.

Int	So, you mentioned one girl you said she's good at studying and everything, but she's not good at English. What happened with her?
F1	I think if we don't have motivation or the purpose - even if we are good at studying English, we cannot learn English.
Int	Yeah. Okay. Then so, we're going to wrap up soon. Do you have any comment you want to make about anything you want to add something - about any topic about what you think about learning English or how your thinking changed about learning English?
F1	In keeping studying anything, I think the goal and motivation is the biggest impact - our biggest factor. So, so in my case, getting high score is not so - is not the best motivation, not the best goal for now.
F1	So, I think it's okay depending on the person the goal or purpose. No need to just get high score. For me communicating in English is interesting. And I thought I wanted to talk with foreigners more than I thought I wanted to learn English.
Int	And English help you in your studies?
F1	Yes.
Int	Okay, more English - how, how did English help you? After you got better at English?
F1	How?
Int	So, you said you had some motivation maybe to go to graduate school? So how did English help you get that goal?
F1	I guess some high score I needed to get graduate school, for my job hunting, so in such purpose I need to get the high score. So, my score helped me to enter. But after that, high score is important but how to use the skill is more important.
Int	And are using English in your career now?
F1	Yes.
Int	And are you still learning English? Do you think you're a learner still? Or did you master English?
F1	Not yet, I am still learning. I still have motivation to get better and better.
Int	Okay. And you told me the reasons you can become good at learning is you have a goal, and you have motivation, and you have a good circle - is that three points? Was there one more? And a model - that's four points. So, what's your motivation now to learn English more?
F1	I want to tell my opinion to foreigners and for my business.
Int	And then for your, your goal, do you have some goal?
F1	Goal? Now my goal is to communicate in English, at the same level as my Japanese.
Int	And do you have good people around you?
F1	Yes.
Int	Tell me in the example for university you said that you've got people who are better at you in studying - how about the people now?
F1	Some are much better than me, so they speak English like a native. So, if we have the same idea, they can transfer their own thinking 100% but my case, I cannot transfer yet fully.
Int	Okay, and then the last one you mentioned was you have a role model? Do you have a model now?
F1	My English teacher is in university is still my role model. And in career place, not exactly role models, but my colleagues are all good. And my colleagues, some of my colleagues are good. So, I want to become much better than them.
Int	So, competition is still important for you.
F1	I think so.
Int	Alright, and do you want Do you have one to have any other comment that we can do anything you want to add?
F1	No.
Int	Okay, if you had some comment for your juniors who are just entering university, what would you say about how to study or why to study besides the four points do you want to add something else?
F1	You need somebody to study with and also somebody to motivate you, to encourage you. To show the goal always.
Int	Thank you very much.

APPENDIX D: Masahiro Interview (Full Transcript)

Interviewer: Peter Lutes (Int)
Participant: Masahiro (M1) *Alias*
Age: 27
Gender: Male
Date: October 9, 2021
Time: 15:30 JST
Location: Tokyo Japan

Int	Okay, Masahiro? If you want to stop the video anytime, please tell me and we can stop it.
	So, we're going to start the interview about the beliefs.
	There's no clear topic, you can say anything or talk about anything you want to, to do. And if you want to stop and take a rest or want to change something, you can do so - just tell me.
	Alright.
	Alright, so I'm going to, as I told you transcribe this so it's better for me if you speak English.
M1	Alright.
Int	Because there's no good software for Japanese for transcription.
M1	Ahhh. [Comment in Japanese].
	So, let's go.
Int	Okay, so firstly, I want to ask you about your learning. As a successful language learner, you were able to successfully learn English. Why do you think you could succeed in learning English?
M1	Oh, I think it's because of my ahhhh. [Comment in Japanese]. (hmmm Why did I do well?) I think I just enjoyed learning English. And that I think that's for communicating with people from overseas. And I think the key turning point was SUIJI
Int	Okay, can you explain what SUIJI is?
M1	Haha – What SUIJI is? I, I forget what that means. But the SUIJI is a program for, I think, just for volunteering in overseas.
Int	in Indonesia?
M1	In Indonesia and Japan.
Int	So how did that change your thinking?
M1	And in the SUIJI (program), I need to speak English, I have to use English because the Indonesian people cannot speak Japanese.
M1	So that's why I just tried to say something. At first, I have no skills and the ability to speak English.
M1	So I just start simple word, like, say hello, it's too simple, but something like that. And after I speak something, I noticed that it's not need to be ashamed that I cannot speak, but that I can't speak English.
M1	I mean, think Indonesian people also cannot speak English fluently. And that's why (I) just say something is very important to communicate with people from overseas. And I think gesture is one of the key tools to communicate with people.
M1	And that turning point, I think, and after I start to speak, English, step, step by step after that, and I was encouraged to learn English. And after that, after SUIJI I still communicate with SUIJI members. And that encouraged me to learn English. And that's a key point, I think.
Int	Are the SUIJI members that you continue to communicate Japanese people or Indonesian people or both?
M1	Both.
Int	Both. Okay, so how did your interaction or with Indonesian people, change your thinking, you mentioned it's, you shouldn't be ashamed of your English level. So you should just try to speak Was there any other thing that you're thinking started to change about?
M1	Oh, so one point is, I just noticed that in Indonesia people don't speak English very well. And that's, that's what I noticed and I shouldn't be ashamed of speaking English.
Int	Okay. And then you said you continue to keep contact with them. How did you keep contacting with them?
M1	I just exchanged our Facebook account or some SNS tools and I just keep in touch with them.
Int	Okay with that. So you used SNS network with Indonesians, are you still in touch with some of them?
M1	Yes, but only two of them.
Int	Okay. And then how about the Japanese people who joined the SUIJI program?

M1	What does that mean?
Int	You said Japanese friends and also so the Japanese people, how did they change your thinking?
M1	That they I think they are like competitor, I just compete with them about the TOEIC score already say I have, I think 600 score. And after I take the first TOEIC test in the university, I got around 700 and then my friend compete with me and he got over 700.
M1	And after that, I started learning hard so hard and I get higher score than him. And higher, higher, and we are interactively we just compete and interactively learning English and I can get higher score.
Int	Did you help each other study?
M1	No. (laughs)
Int	Full Competition? Okay.
Int	Are you talking about Mr. Masamune Tabuchi ¹ ?
M1	Yes. And sometime Mr. Nori Takata ² .
Int	And also, Mr. Nori Takata. Okay, I see. So did they both go to SUIJI?
M1	No, only Nori Takata.
Int	Okay.
M1	And Masamune Tabuchi, did not go to Indonesia.
Int	Okay. I think so when you went to you went to Indonesia with Nori Takata.
M1	and Taro Toyota ³ ? and Tomie Hirokawa ⁴ and? Okay.
Int	So, in that group? How did they affect you - by they became your friends from that group?
M1	Yeah.
Int	Or were they your friends before?
M1	I became friends with them in SUIJI.
Int	Okay, so how did affect you after you came back? You stayed in contact with those Japanese friends?
M1	Yes.
Int	And how did they affect your thinking? Besides the one person who was your competitor? How about the other people were they also your competitors?
M1	Yeah, they are competitor but I think they are no - they didn't influence my English learning, I think.
M1	We just became good friends and enjoyed private- enjoy my private and but one thing is just the friend from SUIJI became a good partners in private.
M1	And my private became I don't know how to say but rich became rich. And that makes better effort to better effect on my English learning, I think the motivation and the time.
Int	So why do you think your life got richer because they're, they're speaking English to you?
Int	Or because they're interesting people or what's special about them?
M1	I think the point is open minded. They have very open minded.
M1	I also have friends in university that who is from overseas, and I play soccer with them and I talked with them and also in the groups.
M1	In the groups, they are always in (my) group.
Int	Okay, let's go back to the -try and stick for the early years of university. And then after I'll ask you a little bit about your overseas friends in your later university career.
Int	So your you said they enrich your life and they had open minds. So how did they share their open mind with you? Like how did you understand their open mind?
M1	I think normal Japanese, normal Japanese people have (interjection in Japanese) stereotype about overseas people. Almost (all) Japanese people hesitate to talk English or communicate with people from overseas. But in university, I, we have to talk to talk with them. And we need to talk with them. And that makes us became open minded.
Int	So your your friends, your group was also open minded, so that helped you become more open minded.
M1	Yes.
Int	And so you can easily speak with foreign people.

¹ Male, batchmate

² Male, batchmate

³ Male, batchmate

⁴ Female, batchmate

Int	Hmmm (yes).
Int	Okay. And then Did you do any other internships or go overseas? Other times?
M1	Yes.
Int	Please tell me about that.
M1	I almost forget about the internship, but I maybe experienced three times.
M1	At first is SUIJI. And after that I went to Thailand.
Int	And what about the did you make get the same kind of network with Thai people, as you did with Indonesian people?
M1	Yes. But only one friend ⁵ I found in Thailand.
Int	Okay. And so in. You went to Indonesia when you were what year?
M1	Second year.
Int	And then Thailand was?
M1	Third year.
Int	Okay. So what did you learn from your friend? Did your friend from Thailand have any impact on your ideas? Well, Could your friend speak English?
M1	Yes.
Int	Was he a good speaker? Or average or?
M1	No, I think he's average. I think he's average. But he is very clever, I think. But I think he is he has no influence on my English learning.
M1	But one thing I feel is - I think he wants to live in Japan.
M1	And the people who want to leave the country that is not Mother, mother country, as a country. That is one reason.
Int	One reason for?
M1	That is one reason for - that influenced me that I want to, I want to live in overseas, or go just travel overseas.
M1	And actually, he wants to get a girlfriend who is Japanese. And that kind of- He motivates me to communicate with people overseas. And he let me knows the (Japanese -asks for clarification in English)
Int	The interesting or fun point?
M1	Yes, fun point to communicate with people from overseas.
Int	Okay. And then you said also at the campus, you played sports or had many international friends? Can you tell me about that?
M1	Ah, oh.
M1	We have a soccer team, Futsal team. And we played. So every week, and almost all people were from overseas, I think and Japanese is just four or five and the total people was 20 or 30. And in the community, we need we also need to talk English, and that helps me learning.
Int	Okay. So if you were I'm going to go back and ask you the same question again, now that you sort of explored a little bit.
Int	Why did you succeed in learning English? Why do you think you succeeded?
M1	I was forced to communicate with people from overseas.
Int	Okay.
M1	That's it. The most important point.
Int	Is the influence of your friendships with people overseas. Okay, most important, okay, what about some other reasons?
M1	Other reasons, competition.
Int	Competition with?
M1	With my Japanese friends
Int	Okay to get better English scores so how they also influence you? Okay, how about your, your research or your language classes at school? Did that have some influence?
M1	So of course, I learned a lot of things from class or my study. And but that is formal way to speak, I think. And from the intensive I learned very rough English, the rough way to speak English and formally, formal way is from my class or study, I think.
Int	Okay. And if you look at your, your English experience, what do you think was your best result in university? Like, oh, this was really a good result about learning English or ?
M1	The result is having friends from overseas.

⁵ Male, Thai Exchange student, same school year

Int	Okay, so English gave you power to meet more and more people?
M1	Yes.
Int	Okay, and you said you were competing with your friends, and maybe you have two friends mostly in mind. Did you win?
M1	I think yes. But my feeling is not Yes. I mean.
Int	Tell me more. What do you mean? How did you? How would you say yes? And then why is your feeling not "yes"?
M1	I don't know what is the definition of meaning in this case, but as far as the TOEIC score, I can say, of course, yes. But.
Int	So, that means you got the highest TOEIC score is that what you mean?
M1	But I think the very important things in speaking English is how, how much I can tell them my feelings or my thoughts.
M1	And that's the most important point. And in that point, I think I was defeated or lose.
Int	Okay. Okay, and how about when you're in school? Did you have any role models?
M1	Role models?
Int	I want to be like the senior or I want to be like this student to copy or to as a motivation or if I study hard, I can become like this person.
M1	I think I don't have any role models, I think.
Int	So mostly you're studying is a result, or your success is a result of your high motivation and your experience with other people?
M1	So, yes.
Int	Okay. Okay, what about when you study English? Or when you speak English? In when you're in university, you were able to communicate with foreign people? Did you feel like you got some status from that?
M1	Status? Is that kind of status I think, but I didn't feel like that in when I was University. But after I worked in company or recently, I feel I have a strong point, that is a strong point.
Int	Okay, so what about your juniors or your seniors at university? Because you had a very high score?
Int	Did you feel any, anything from their influence, like that they respected you or admired you or disliked you? Or something like that. So how did you feel about what people thought about your English in university?
M1	But I think but I don't have a role models to learn English but for them. I can be a role model kind of role models for an English, I think.
Int	okay, so you can be - were you are a role model. Were you did when you were a student? Did you act like a role model for your juniors?
M1	Ah, I didn't think like that, but I think so.
Int	And did you communicate something to them? to help them when you were a student?
M1	I wasn't intend to do so. But I did something like that.
Int	Okay, can you tell me what what you even if you didn't intend to do just what what did you do that you think positively affected your juniors?
M1	Just invite joining internship?
Int	I'm sorry?
M1	I just asked them to join internship.
Int	Okay, which internship was that?
M1	SUIJI but I forget the name of going to Thailand.
Int	Okay. Alright, so you invited some juniors or friends.
M1	Yes, juniors and friends.
Int	Okay. And what was your sales pitch? Or what did you tell them? Why they should join?
M1	That its interesting. And we got money from, from the Japanese government, so we can travel with little money.
Int	How many people did you invite?
M1	Ah, I think three or five.
Int	Three or five? And did these people become interested more interested in English?
M1	I think so.
Int	So in that sense, even if you didn't intend to, at the time, you've had an impact. What about your juniors? Not your batchmates, your juniors.
M1	Juniors? Obviously, I don't care about the juniors but (laughs) I just pretend that I am the role model.
Int	So, how do you pretend to be a role model?
M1	Just say something. Study more or learn English more or speak English more fluently. Something like that.

Int	Okay. All right. Thank you for your honest comments. Okay. Can you tell me if you were going to go back to university again? Is there something you would do differently to than you did?
M1	I think I went to the master's degrees at my university, but I think I will go to another university that is in Japan or in other country, I think I will go to somewhere else.
Int	And using your English ability to transfer. So did somebody else do that among your friends?
M1	Ahhh, yes.
Int	And what do you think? Do you feel some kind of regret that you didn't do that?
M1	I didn't regret but I just feel jealous about that. And think the environment in the same university, in Kagawa University, will be the same from the [Japanese].
M1	ahh bachelor course... How do you say [Japanese] (asks for clarification).
Int	Undergraduate students and graduate students. So if you change to a different university, you'd have a different environment?
M1	Yes, then we get more motivation to study.
Int	Okay. And how was your result from graduate school at your University? Did you get you said maybe I'd get a better result or something.
Int	Did you have a bad result in Kagawa University for your graduate degree?
M1	No, I, not bad result but I think I think a better result from another university.
Int	In what way in? So, I think you won the President's Award for graduate students, right?
M1	Yes.
Int	So that is the highest award for a master's student in the university.
Int	So If you went to another university, what would the different result be? That would be better? You think?
M1	I, I don't know about the results, but the process is different, I think.
M1	And I have more competitors and the new community, I think, and that makes better relationship with other people, I think.
Int	Okay, and I want to go back to when you were undergraduate student, you had a high sort of English level. But when you became a master student, it improved more. Yes. so if you went to another university, do you think your English would have improved as much?
M1	I think so.
Int	Okay. And then I have one more question, and I'll leave some open comments for you. If you're going to give some advice. If you cared about your juniors (laughs), if give some advice to them about how to have a good attitude for learning English, what would you say to them? Or if you were going to talk to yourself as a high school student? Oh, maybe you care about that. Right? If you could go back and you're a high school student just entering university? What advice would you give yourself?
M1	I will say just speak, just say something in English. Don't hesitate to speak English, I think. Even I get the over 900 to score. I think I can't speak English very fluently. And we do not being ashamed to speak English, I think.
Int	Okay, and that was a key point you learn from your international friends?
M1	Yes.
Int	Especially Indonesian?
M1	Yes.
Int	Okay. And then do you have some comment about anything you want to talk about your learning experience of English from your university days or compared to your high school days?
M1	I have no comment anything of any other. But this video will be proof of what I said before.
Int	Which is what? What's the proof? Proof that.
M1	I don't, I am not. I cannot speak English very fluently, even now.
Int	But proof, that you can communicate well?
M1	But I, just, communicate is very well, but the speaking, and the ability is not so high.
Int	Okay. All right. Thank you very much.
M1	Yes.

APPENDIX E: Learning Beliefs Survey (Japanese Language)

1 子どもの方が、大人より英語を習得するのが容易である。
2 英語の授業は楽しくあるべきだ。
3 英語を上手に読み書きできるようになるには、学校の英語教育だけで充分である。
4 将来、自分は英語をとっても上手に話せるようになると思う。
5 英語を話すために、英語圏の国々について知ることは必要なことだと思う。
6 正しく話せるようになるまで、英語を話すべきではないと思う。
7 英語を勉強した時間を考えると、自分の上達度に満足している。
8 英語のクラスでは、先生が日本語で説明してくれるほうがいい。
9 もし英語でわからない単語があったら、その意味を推測してもかまわない。
10 もし英語を毎日1時間ずつ勉強するとしたら、その人は何年で英語がりゅうちょうになると思いますか。
11 英語を習得するうえで、繰り返したり、練習をたくさんすることは重要なことである。
12 ほかの日本人の学生の前で英語を話すのは恥ずかしい。
13 もし初めの段階で、まちがいが許されたら、そのまちがいを後でなおすことは、むずかしいと思う。
14 英語を習得するということは、文法をたくさん学ぶことである。
15 CD やポドカスターを聞いたり、英語のテレビを見ることは、英語を学習するうえでとても大事である。
16 女子のほうが男子より英語を習得するのが上手である。
17 英語がとっても上手に話せるようになったら、英語を使う機会が数多くあると思う。
18 英語を話すほうが、聞いて理解するより易しいと思う。
19 英語の学習は、ほかの学科を学ぶこととは異なると思う。
20 英語を習得するということは、日本語から英語に翻訳するということである。
21 英語を上手に話せるようになったら、将来いい仕事をみつけることに結びつくと思う。
22 英語を読み書きすることのほうが、話したり聞いて理解することより、易しいと思う。
23 数学や科学が得意な人は、外国語を習得するのが上手ではない。
24 日本人は、英語を話すことが大事だと思っている。
25 外国語を話せる人は、頭がよいと思う。
26 日本人は、外国語を習得するのが得意である。
27 英語を上手に話せたり聞けたりするようになるには、学校の英語教育だけで充分である。
28 習得するのに簡単な言語と難しい言語があると思う。
29 外国人の先生から英語を習ってのみ英語が上手に話せるようになる。
30 生まれながらにして、英語を習得する才能を持っている人がある。
31 英語を話したり聞いたりすることのほうが、読み書きより役に立つ。
32 英単語を習うということは、それに対応する日本語訳を習うということである。
33 入学試験に合格するために英語を勉強した。
34 クラスメートと英語を話すことで英語が上達すると思う。
35 英語を充分勉強しないから、間違えるのだと思う。
36 英語で話すとき、まず日本語でどういうかを考えてから英語に訳す。
37 教えられたことは習得できるはずだ。
38 自分の間違いは、全部先生になおしてほしいと思う。
39 外国人の先生は、必要なとき、クラスで日本語を話せるべきだと思う。
40 英語を話す人達とコミュニケーションをするのに役立つから、英語を勉強している。
41 英語を理解するにはまず、日本語に訳さなければならない。
42 すでにある外国語を話せる人のほうが、そうでない人より別の言語を習得するのは易しいと思う。
43 英語を勉強すればするほど、楽しくなってきた。
44 同じ年頃の外国人が英語を話しているのが聞こえたら、英会話の練習をするために、その人のところに行 って、話しかけたい。
45 今まで自分が受けた英語教育に満足している。

APPENDIX F: Consent Form Survey (Japanese Language)

英語学習に関する意識調査

学生 みなさんへ

このアンケートの研究目的は、学生 みなさんの英語や英語教育に関する考え方、認識や意識についてわれわれの理解を深めるためのものです。

この調査研究は、45 項目のアンケートのみで構成されています。45 項目のそれぞれは、英語学習に関する考え方に関連しています。

このアンケートはあくまでも研究目的のためにのみ行われるものなので、誰も各個人の学生の名前、そしてアンケート結果がどれであることを知らされません。* 必要

この調査には、45 項目のアンケートが含まれることを理解しています。 *

理解しています。

理解してません。

私はこの研究からいつでも離脱できることを理解しています。離脱するために、理由や説明をする必要がないことを理解しています。 *

理解しています。

理解してません。

すべての個人情報是非公開とします; 名前または他の識別情報は、私が許可する場合を除き、決して公開されません。 *

理解しています。

理解してません。

私に関して収集された資料は、研究が完了した後に破棄されることを理解しています。 *

理解しています。

理解してません。

私に関するすべての情報は非公開とされ、研究の完了後に破棄されることを理解しています。ただし、第三者のプラットフォームを介して送られたデータには、研究者のコントロールを超えた電子メールアカウントなどのプライバシー規約があることを理解しています。 *

理解しています。

理解してません。

私はこの研究の同意書を読んで理解しています。私は自由意思でこの研究に参加することに同意します。 *

参加します。

参加しません。

APPENDIX G:
Consent Form Survey (English Translation)

Beliefs about English language learning

Dear Students,

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to deepen our understanding about your views and beliefs on the English language and English language education.

The questionnaire has 45 items. Each item is related to your way of thinking about English learning. To answer each questionnaire item please choose one of the four available answers that most closely matches your personal belief. This questionnaire is only for research purposes. All participants will remain anonymous and every effort will be made to ensure that participants' identities remain private.

Please first answer the following 7 consent questions. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required

I understand that this survey will include 45 questions. *

I understand.

I do not understand

I understand that I can withdraw from this research at any time. I understand that there is no need to explain the reason or explanation for leaving. *

I understand.

I do not understand

All personal information is kept private; the name or other identifying information will never be published unless I allow it. *

I understand.

I do not understand

I understand that the materials collected on me will be destroyed after the research is completed. *

I understand.

I do not understand

I understand that all information on me is kept private and will be destroyed after the research is completed. However, I understand that there is a privacy policy such as an e-mail account that exceeds the researcher's control in the data sent via the third-party platform. *

I understand.

I do not understand

I read and understand the agreement of this research. I agree to participate in this research freely.

I will participate in the questionnaire.

I will not participate in the questionnaire.

APPENDIX H: **Informed Consent Forms Focused Interviews**

Working Title: The Beliefs of Japanese Science Majors on Learning English and the Effects of Student personal networks

Investigator: Peter Gerald Lutes
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Contact: If you have any concerns that are not being addressed by the investigator, contact:
Prof. Dr. Melinda Dela Peña Bandalaria, PHD
University of the Philippines (OU)
mbandalaria@upou.edu.ph

You are asked for your consent to take part in a research study. This document provides a summary of the research. It outlines the information that you so that you can decide whether to take part in this research.

Overview

The purpose of this interview is to deepen our understanding about your views and beliefs on the English language and English language education and the effect of your student networks on your beliefs. This survey is for educational research purposes only.

This component of the research consists of a focus interview. The interview will be recorded for accuracy and transcribed, and you will have an opportunity to confirm that the transcription accurately reflects what you intend to communicate. After the accuracy in transcription and meaning has been confirmed by you, the recordings will be erased. You may ask questions at any time.

Your participation is fully voluntary, and you may decline to participate in the survey at any time. There is no cost or compensation for your participation. This survey involves no risks.

If you have questions or concerns now or after the survey, please contact the investigator.

Please first answer the following 7 consent questions (Circle Yes or No).

1) The research has been clearly explained to me.

- Yes
- No

2) I understand that the research will involve an interview survey about my English language learning beliefs.

- Yes
- No

3) I understand that I can withdraw from this research at any time. I understand that there is no need to explain the reason or explanation for leaving.

- Yes
- No

4) I understand that all personal information will be kept private; the name or other identifying information will never be published unless I allow it.*

- Yes
- No

5) I understand that the materials collected on me will be destroyed after the research is completed.*

- Yes
- No

6) I understand that I have the option of opting out at any time before the results have been made public.*

- Yes

- No

7) I read and understand this agreement. I freely give my consent to participate in this study.*

- Yes

- No

Your signature documents your consent to take part in this research.

Signature

Date

Printed name of participant

Signature of person obtaining consent
Peter Gerald Lutes

Date