MOTIVATIONAL TRAJECTORIES OF SUCCESSFUL FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS: SIX BIOGRAPHICAL CASE STUDIES

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Tsuyuki Miura
ABSTRACT

Motivational Trajectories of Successful L2 Learners:

Six Biographical Case Studies

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Doctoral Advisory Committee Chair: Dr. David Beglar

This study concerns foreign language learners’ motivational changes over a long period of time; it is an investigation of the learning histories of six learners who have achieved high proficiency in English. Unlike a large body of conventional foreign language learning motivational research, which has primarily been conducted using quantitative methodologies, this study employs two non-conventional approaches, a combination of learners’ biographies and case study research. The primary purpose of the study is to holistically explore successful English learners’ motivational trajectories and their learning histories in the Japanese context. To this end, foreign language learning motivation is conceptualized and illustrated as a dynamically changing construct that plays an important role in the process of foreign language learning. In the literature review, longitudinal studies concerning foreign language learning motivation and autobiographical studies and case studies that are relevant to this study are examined.
The central research question is what motivational trajectories and learning histories these highly proficient learners have had, and how these learners have sustained their learning motivation over time and eventually achieved high proficiency while in an EFL (English as a foreign language) environment. The participants are six Japanese adults who have achieved high levels of English proficiency and who use English in their jobs. The design used in this case study involves both holistic and specifically focused analyses, by which each participant’s learning history is collected through individual interviews. The author reports each participant’s learning history, and the initial proposition concerning motivational change and salient motivational sources found in the participants’ learning histories are collectively analyzed and discussed. Exploring the data concerning how the participants have maintained foreign language learning motivation resulting in the idea that sustained motivation is not always present in successful foreign language learning and that the key to success involves a cognitive change from a state in which motivation is present to one in which a more intentional psychological force, commitment to learning, develops. Based on this thought, a model illustrating the key to success in foreign language learning in the EFL context is presented.

The results provide new, engaging, and important information to people who are seriously involved in foreign language learning in EFL contexts, where the majority of learners fail to attain high levels of foreign language proficiency after receiving years of formal education.
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Tsuyuki Miura

Hyogo, Japan

March 23, 2011
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Background of the Issue

Motivation has been considered important for successful foreign language acquisition\(^1\) and has been investigated actively in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) for nearly 40 years. Motivation is generally conceptualized as a multidimensional psychological construct, and foreign language motivational research has been conducted primarily within three psychological frameworks found in the fields of social psychology, cognitive psychology, and educational psychology. The most influential research framework is socio-educational model of motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), which has been considered the conventional motivational research framework in SLA. The model was developed based on research conducted with Francophones in Canada (i.e., in an English as a second language [ESL] context), and the central concept, integrativeness, was hypothesized to be the primary form of learner motivation and a major determinant of learning in ESL contexts. Since the introduction of Gardner’s model, motivational variables derived from different theoretical perspectives have been investigated and new models have been developed in the field of SLA. Because Gardner and Lambert’s model was developed in an ESL context and does not

\(^1\) I use “foreign language,” instead of “second language” because the former includes the latter and is more appropriate in the Japanese context, in which the acquisition of the second language is not a crucial requirement.
necessarily explain foreign language learning motivation in non-English speaking countries (i.e., English as a foreign language [EFL] contexts), researchers have sought other models more applicable to their research contexts. Attribution theory and Goal theory, which are focused on the thinking that underlies affective variables, arose within a cognitive processing framework (Ushioda, 1994, 1998); the interactive model of motivation was developed based on a social constructivist point of view, emphasizing the social and contextual influences on learners’ motivation (Williams & Burden, 1997); the process model of motivation was designed to capture the dynamic nature of motivation by comprehensively describing motivational influences and the detailed steps of actions that occur in the motivational process (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998) inspired by the action control theory (H. Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1985); the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) consists of two motivational reasons: intrinsic reasons and extrinsic reasons. This dichotomy was further developed to a continuum construct according to the level of internalization that learners achieved in foreign language learning (Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerand, 2000); international posture was proposed as an important antecedent to learners’ willingness to communicate and learning motivation in EFL contexts (Yashima, 2002); motivation as a lifelong developmental process and multi-dimensional construct, involving cognitive and affective components and social and individual aspects (Nakata, 2006); second language (L2) motivation perceived as a context-inseparable construct was investigated concerning the interrelationship between motivation and autonomy within a framework of
Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Ushioda, 2007); and, an L2 motivational self system, in which foreign language learning motivation is reconceptualized as a learner’s part of self system, that perceives learning process involves the learners’ identity transformation (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei, Csizér & Németh, 2006) by utilizing the idea of the ideal self and ought self (Higgins, 1987), which is related to possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). These developments in the field of motivational research are synthesized in the four challenges of motivational research (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011), “cognition vs. affect, time, context, and reduction vs. comprehensiveness” (pp. 4-10), which provide an indication of the complex and multi-dimensional nature of motivation. Because of this complexity and multi-dimensionality, “no existing motivation theory to date has managed—or even attempted—to offer a comprehensive and integrative account of all the main types of possible motives” (ibid, p.4). Instead, researchers have focused on one or several of these dimensions when conducting studies of the complex construct known as motivation. However it is conceptualized, the idea that motivation is a central determinant of the degree of achievement in foreign language learning has been unchanged, and investigating motivation remains an important and interesting research area that must be investigated further if we are to understand foreign language learners and their learning.

My interest in motivation and motivation research has developed gradually as I have accumulated more experience learning English, studying in the field of TESOL, and teaching English. The onset of interest might go back to an
unsuccessful English learning experience when I was an adolescent: English was not special or important to me, I did not study English seriously, and I lived comfortably without using English for the next 10 years. After a 10-year break, I resumed studying English in my early 30s’ and tried whatever I thought effective to improve. English became important to me, and I engaged with activities involving English learning. I was interested in my own orientational, attitudinal, and behavioral changes toward the same activity, learning English, and assumed that such changes could happen to anybody. When I encountered *Teaching and Researching Motivation* (Dörnyei, 2001) and learned about learning motivation as a psychological construct in one of my master’s courses in 2002, it intrigued me, as I felt that it might explain the changes that occur in foreign language learners. Since 2004, I have taught English at several Japanese universities and met many Japanese university students who appeared to be relatively unmotivated to become proficient in English. I imagined that the majority of the students were likely to terminate their English study when graduating from the universities before attaining high levels of proficiency. These experiences led to the idea that sustained motivation might be an important determinant to successful foreign language learning. When choosing a topic for my dissertation study, motivational change in foreign language learning was most appealing to investigate further. To shed light on a part of the construct—even it is only a tiny bit—was the thing for me to do.
Statement of the Problem

Two problems are addressed in this study. The first problem concerns foreign language learning in non-English speaking-countries. Unlike the situation in English-speaking countries, foreign languages are not an everyday necessity in these counties, so most people live without using them with little or no trouble. In spite of its status as the international language of business and success, English is no exception to this rule. Under such circumstances, the majority of Japanese learners of English fail to achieve high levels of proficiency in English. One reason for this lack of success concerns certain realities of foreign language acquisition: attaining high levels of foreign language proficiency takes years of effort, and because of the long-term challenge, which is an inherent part of this process, the majority of learners lose learning motivation at some point. Moreover, English learners in Japan need to make an effort to maintain gains in proficiency because they generally encounter few opportunities to use the language. In addition, a large proportion of the English learners in Japan experience a common obstacle to sustaining long-term learning motivation: a university entrance examination. Past studies have suggested that entrance examinations play a major motivational role in the study of English for high school students, and a large number of students lose their primary reason to study English after entering a university (See Berwick & Ross, 1989; Miura, 2010 for examples), notwithstanding the fact that English studies that occur after entering and graduating from a university are a crucial part of becoming a functional English user. Under the circumstances described above,
only a small percentage of Japanese learners appear to maintain long-term motivation and eventually attain high levels of proficiency in English.

Another problem concerns a research gap in the field of foreign language learning motivation. Foreign language learning motivation has increasingly been investigated with a focus on its dynamic nature, and the value of longitudinal research has started to be acknowledged by those interested in understanding how learner motivation changes over the long process of foreign language learning. Nevertheless, in-depth and holistic investigations of individual learners’ motivational changes, particularly Japanese learners’ cases, have scarcely been conducted. Methodologically, the majority of motivation studies have been conducted by researchers using quantitative methods involving a one-shot administration of questionnaire. As a reaction to the large number of quantitative studies, the importance of using a variety of research methods to investigate foreign language learning motivation has been encouraged (Benson, 2004; Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Spolsky, 2000). In addition, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) have suggested that a comprehensive and more context-based approach should be taken in future foreign language motivation research, rather than conceptualizing and investigating motivation as a reduced set of variables and seeking a cause-effect relationship among these variables. An increasing number of recent researchers, such as Irie (2005) and Nakata (2006), have employed a mixed-method approach. These recent movements indicate that the use of qualitative approaches, especially in the case of longitudinal investigations, is more widely and frequently
acknowledged to be important in order to understand foreign language learning motivation in-depth and holistically.

**Purposes and Significance of the Study**

The primary purpose of this biographical multiple case study is to understand successful English language learners’ motivational trajectories and their learning histories over a long period of time. Inspired by Ushioda’s (1994, 1998) qualitative study, and utilizing Yin’s (2006, 2009) case study approach, this qualitative case study is also designed to: (a) focus on the learners’ experience in order to illuminate their learning histories and motivational trajectories; (b) provide data that allows me to conduct a collective analysis among multiple learners, and (c) reconsider the notion of sustained motivation. The last point led to the development of a new concept, commitment to learning, which emerged while conducting the exploratory study. This concept provides a novel view of the key to successful foreign language learning.

A qualitative approach is employed in order to investigate the long-term motivational processes of individual learners. Successful learners’ learning stories play a meaningful part in attempts to understand the complex and dynamic process of long-term learning motivation; this is one area that quantitative approaches have been unable to shed light on. Findings in this area can illuminate the keys to success in foreign language learning. Although a particular emphasis is placed on one of the four challenges listed by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), time and change
in motivation over time, other dimensions (i.e., cognition, affect, time, context, and comprehensiveness) are also inevitably involved in this exploratory investigation. This study is fundamentally theoretically unbound, which is appropriate given that the purpose here is to explore the complex construct, foreign language learning motivation in an open way.

**The Audience for the Study**

Reflecting my wish that research in the field of SLA is presented in a manner that is comprehensible for foreign language learners, this manuscript is intended to be comprehensible to many English language learners. As this study provides insights into successful foreign language learners’ motivational change over long periods of time and their commitment to learning, the results might prove beneficial for foreign language learners, foreign language teachers, and researchers.

Foreign language learners can know about possible paths that successful learners—who appeared to be unexceptional learners at the onset of their learning—have taken. All foreign language learners share both the positive and negative experiences that the six participants experienced while acquiring English. Reading the engaging learning histories of the six participants, learners will be able to obtain important information concerning becoming proficient in a foreign language.

Foreign language teachers can benefit from this study, as it will help them understand their students and their motivation from a long-term learning
perspective. In particular, this study is beneficial for foreign language teachers who have never seriously attempted to acquire a foreign language. The six participants’ learning histories and their motivational trajectories indicate that language learners’ motivation fluctuates and that teachers frequently play an important role in the motivational fluctuation. The six case studies provide clues regarding how teachers can contribute to their students’ learning in a classroom today, in a one-semester course, and throughout an entire language program.

Third, researchers investigating motivation in EFL contexts can obtain food for thought from the findings of this study. The learning histories and motivational trajectories of the six participants, discussion of important motivational sources, the reconsideration of the concept of sustained motivation, and the interaction of motivation and commitment, most of which are novel insights in the field of SLA, are potentially helpful to those investigating foreign language learning motivation.

**Organization of the Study**

In Chapter 2, I review two types of literature relevant to this study. The first group of studies concerns longitudinal research on foreign language motivation, which is subdivided by the length of learning time. The second group of studies concerns learners’ stories of foreign language learning. This section is subdivided into two categories, autobiographies and case studies. After providing a summary of the literature, I introduce the purpose and the research questions that guide this study.
In Chapter 3, I describe the methods employed in this study. First, I discuss general issues concerning case study research. I then describe the approach to case study research advocated by Yin (2009), as this was the approach utilized in this study. Third, I provide the case study protocol, the methodological information concerning the participants, the instrumentation, data collection, case study questions, analysis, and the case study report.

In Chapters, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, I present the case studies for the six participants. Each chapter consists of four sections: the participant’s profile, their English learning history, their motivational changes, and their self-perceived changes.

Chapter 10 provides a collective analysis of the six case studies. First, three fundamental issues concerning the participants and their motivational development are discussed. Second, seven salient motivational sources are presented. Third, the key to successful foreign language learning is discussed. I first examine the initial proposition concerning sustained motivation in each participant. Next, I propose a new concept, commitment to learning, which is based on the data gathered in this study. I then explore the concept of commitment in psychology. Finally, I discuss commitment in foreign language learning by defining the concept, discussing the reason for the emergence of commitment, proposing a model of the interaction between motivation and commitment, reexamining the participants’ data for indications of their commitment to learning, and discussing prevailing issues.
concerning Japanese students’ English learning in the light of the motivation-commitment interaction model.

In Chapter 11, I summarize the findings of this study, discuss its potential pedagogical implications, present its limitations, and provide suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this section, two groups of studies are reviewed. The first group (12 studies) concerns foreign language learning motivational changes over time, which has direct relevance to the primary research focus, the dynamic nature of foreign language learning motivation. They were mostly conducted in Japan or other countries where the L2 is learned as a foreign language. The participants in most of the studies were university students, but the participants in two studies were junior high school students. I have divided these studies into two subgroups according to the length of the participants’ learning histories.

The second group of ten studies concerns learners’ stories of language learning. These studies are also divided into two subgroups, autobiographical studies and case studies. These studies are relevant to the methodology used in this study.

**Longitudinal Research on Foreign Language learning Motivation**

**Studies of Motivational Change after a Specific Course**

Six studies that were focused on motivational changes before and after a specific course are reviewed in this section. Course lengths varied from one to three academic years. The results of these studies generally indicated the ways in which taking a specific course influenced the participants’ motivation, and patterns of
motivational change over the course were identified in some studies.

The first study was conducted by Berwick and Ross (1989) who investigated the relationship between the changes in 90 Japanese university students’ motivation and their English learning before and after the students had completed their first-year university courses (a total of 150 hours of reading, composition, English conversation, language seminar, and language laboratory classes). The researchers were concerned with the lack of motivation and positive attitudes toward learning that were widely observed among the first-year students.

The researchers used a pretest-posttest design in which a 50-item attitudes and motivation survey was administered and the students’ English proficiency was assessed at the beginning and end of the school year. The survey items were entered as predictors in a series of stepwise regression analyses that were performed in order to identify the best predictors of change in the test scores on the CELT Form A and B Listening and Structure subtests (Harris & Palmer, 1986). In the pretest survey, three items on the motivation survey accounted for 20% of the variance in the participants’ performance on the CELT A Structure subtest, and two items accounted for approximately 10% of the variance on the CELT A Listening subtest. The strongest predictor of the structure test scores was Learning English is not Interesting ($R^2 = .143$), while I Would Like to Study in a Foreign Country in the Future was the strongest predictor of the listening scores ($R^2 = .068$). In the posttest survey, six items accounted for 43% of the variance on the gain scores from the CELT A Structure to the CELT B Structure subtests, and six items accounted for
28% of the variance on the gain scores of the listening subtest. These results indicated that 150 hours of classroom instruction resulted in an increase in the number of predictors, for example, *I Would Like to Study in a Foreign Country in the Future* ($R^2 = .187$) and *I Think Studying English Will Widen my Horizons* ($R^2 = .271$) for the structure gain scores, and *I Don’t Think I want to go to an English-Speaking Country as an Exchange Student* ($R^2 = .086$) and *I Would like to Study a Second Foreign Language Because I like Studying Foreign Languages* ($R^2 = .130$) for the listening gain scores. The researchers interpreted the emergence of the larger number of predictors as an indication that the students’ initial motivational attitudes and intensities were only temporary. One problem with the study was that the gain scores on the listening tests were small and statistically nonsignificant, $t = .68$, $p = .494$, while the gain scores on the structure tests were relatively large and statistically significant, $t = 2.06$, $p = .042$, ($df$ was not reported). The researchers pointed out that the participants’ listening skills did not improve sufficiently over the academic year to suggest meaningful motivational predictors.

Overall, Berwick and Ross reported that the motivational intensity of the participants was low and that there was a weak relationship between the students’ motivational changes over time and their performance on the proficiency measures. Berwick and Ross attributed these results primarily to the university entrance examination system in which Japanese students’ motivational intensity to learn English peaks in the last year of high school. After successfully passing the entrance examination, many university freshmen appear to have little motivation
for foreign language learning. The researchers introduced the idea of an L2 learning motivational surge among Japanese adults, which they named the “motivational paradox” (p. 207): Contrary to “the motivational wasteland” (ibid.) among university freshmen, a large number of Japanese adults identified a variety of reasons to study English, such as making foreign friends, acquiring job skills, and preparing for traveling; these individuals were studying English at a number of private schools. The researchers interpreted this phenomenon as a developmental characteristic of motivation, and suggested that universities should contribute to cultivating learners’ potential motivation between high school graduation and the resurgence of these adult learning needs.

This study was prominent because the researchers recognized the methodological limitation of traditional motivational research (i.e., a cross-sectional survey) nearly two decades ago; even twenty years after this study was published, it is still relevant to the current English learning situation in Japanese universities where most students fail to maintain L2 learning motivation and in most Japanese high schools where succeeding on university entrance examinations is a major practical reason to study English. The results of this study suggest that sustaining motivation after entering a university is important if Japanese learners are to attain high English proficiency and that longitudinal studies are needed in the field of L2 learning motivation.

The second study was Koizumi and Matsuo’s (1993) one-year investigation of Japanese seventh-grade junior high school students’ motivational and attitudinal...
changes. The researchers regarded motivational and attitudinal changes in the seventh-graders as particularly important because formal English education began in that grade in the Japanese public education system\(^2\) and at that time the students experience great environmental changes as they transfer from elementary school to junior high school. Thus, the primary purpose of the study was to investigate motivational and attitudinal changes during the seventh grade, but the researchers also investigated the influence of initial levels of English knowledge and gender on motivation, attitudes, and achievement. A final purpose was to investigate whether integrative motivation and instrumental motivation could be identified in the students. The participants were 296 seventh-grade Japanese junior high school students (150 male students and 146 female students), attendees of two public junior high schools in western Japan. In order to investigate the participants’ motivational and attitudinal changes, the researchers constructed a 36-item questionnaire, the Scale of Attitudes and Motivation in Learning English (AMLE) by adapting a previous questionnaire (Yoneyama, 1979) and administered it four times in the first class (T1), the third month (T2), the seventh month (T3), and the 11th month (T4) of the school year. The participants’ initial knowledge of English was assessed by requiring them to write as many English letters (i.e., the alphabet) as possible and to relate their English-related experience. The participants’ achievement were assessed by tests written by English teachers at each school and

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\(^2\) This practice was changed. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology determined to introduce an English curriculum into public elementary schools in 2008 and completely implemented in 2011.
administered four times one week to a few weeks later than T1, T2, T3, and T4.

Factor analysis of AMLE responses at T1 was performed and five factors were extracted: *Interest and Emotion* (.86), *Parental Encouragements* (.78), *Perceived Utility of English and Familiarity with English Speaking People* (.77), *Study Habits* (.75), and *Extroversion* (.53). Repeated-measures ANOVAs were performed to analyze students’ AMLE scores and English achievement test scores with *Initial English Ability: Low Group and High Group, Gender: Male and Female, and Time: T1, T2, T3, and T4* as the independent variables. The ANOVA results indicated a declining tendency in the participants’ motivation and attitudes: The mean AMLE scores by Time were: 3.88 (T1), 3.72 (T2), 3.30 (T3), and 3.27 (T4) for *Interest and Emotion*; 3.77 (T1), 3.61 (T2), 3.57 (T3), and 3.63 (T4) for *Parental Encouragement*; 4.34 (T1), 4.12 (T2), 3.93 (T3), and 3.93 (T4) for *Perceived Utility of English and Familiarity with English Speaking People*; 3.86 (T1), 3.58 (T2), 3.28 (T3), and 3.23 (T4) for *Study Habits*, and; 3.25 (T1), 3.28 (T2), 3.25 (T3), and 3.20 (T4) for *Extroversion*. These results suggested that a motivational and attitudinal decline occurred in the participants during the first three to seven months. Koizumi and Matsuo attributed the declines that occurred in the beginning of the students’ English learning to increasing difficulties in English study in Japanese junior high school caused by an emphasis on acquiring explicit knowledge of English grammar, a reliance on translation tasks, and tests. In addition, the results suggested that the higher proficiency students’ experienced a sharper decline than the lower proficiency students. For example, the mean scores
of Interest and Emotion were 4.10 (T1), 3.38 (T2), 3.39 (T3), and 3.31 (T4) in High Group while 3.66 (T1), 3.61 (T2), 3.21 (T3), and 3.24 (T4) in Low Group. Koizumi and Matsuo speculated that the higher proficiency students might be more intrinsically motivated when their English learning began than the lower proficiency students, and their intrinsic motivation were negatively affected by the increasing difficulties and test-oriented style of Japanese junior high school English education.

This study indicated that young Japanese learners’ motivational decline took place within the initial half year of their English learning. Though the reasons given for the decline (i.e., increasing difficulties in learning, emphasis on grammar, translation, and tests) were speculative, the study sheds light on the purpose and methodological problems of this phase of English education in Japan.

The third study is Ushioda’s (1994) qualitative study, in which she investigated the characteristics of effective motivational thinking in 20 ‘motivated’ Irish college students learning French. She initially aimed to complement the largely quantitative L2 motivation research tradition with a qualitative study. While motivation is conceptualized as a set of measurable affective variables, such as motivational intensity, desire to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning the language in the traditional quantitative approach, and research has largely been conducted in the socio-psychological framework, Ushioda conceptualized motivation within a cognitive processing framework and qualitatively focused on the learners’ thinking and the beliefs that underlie those affective variables and
shape learners’ engagement in their learning. To that end, Ushioda conducted individual interviews twice with a 15-16 month interval between the interviews during the 1991 and 1993 academic years. The first interview was open-ended and utilized a loosely structured format that allowed her to explore the participants’ working conceptions of motivation. The follow-up interview was more highly structured in order to elicit the participants’ specific motivational experiences over time, including motivational evolution, motivational perspectives on L2 development, factors affecting the participants’ motivation negatively, and the motivational strategies they employed.

In the data acquired from the first interview, Ushioda identified 63 motivational reasons and only a small number of overlaps among the participants. Ushioda classified the reasons into eight categories. Loving and enjoying the L2 and Having a positive learning history were the two most common motivational factors, while Meeting desired language-learning goals and Personal goals were the next most commonly mentioned motivational factors. The most successful students perceived their positive learning experiences, such as Being in France or a francophone country, as the main factors for their positive motivation, and the less successful students tended to perceive their future goals as the main motivating factors. Ushioda concluded that the participants’ perceived L2 learning motivation was shaped in a temporal frame that included both past learning experiences and future goals. Ushioda proposed that effective motivational thinking by her participants was related to their own L2-related self-concept: The students who
were able to sustain their motivation had positive perceptions of their past learning experiences and performances. Based on her findings, Ushioda (1998) later proposed a motivational development model that illustrated the dynamic nature of L2 learning motivation (Figure 1). In the model, shifts take place within individual learners, from goal-oriented motivation to intrinsic motivation (Learner A) and vice-versa (Learner B) as learning proceeds.

Figure 1. Learner conceptions of motivation: A theoretical framework (Ushioda, 1998, p. 82).

Notwithstanding her consistent emphasis on the importance of using qualitative methodology, Ushioda (2001, pp. 107-109) recently reported additional quantitative analyses that supplement the conclusions drawn from her original study (Ushioda, 1994, 1998). The participants were the same 20 Irish college
students learning French. She calculated Spearman rank correlation coefficients between the participants’ past learning experiences and their level of proficiency in order to evaluate to what extent motivational attributions to positive learning experiences were related to a successful learning history and resulting proficiency. The participants’ past learning experiences were quantified using the data obtained and coded in the original study, while the participants’ French proficiency level, which was measured using their post-primary average grades in French and French C-test scores, were newly obtained data. The results indicated moderately positive correlations between a positive learning history and the participants’ average grades and C-test scores (Spearman correlations of .49, \( p = .001 \), and .46, \( p = .05 \), respectively), but negative correlations between personal goals and the average grades and test scores (Spearman correlations of -.55, \( p = .001 \), and -.61, \( p = .05 \), respectively).

The results Ushioda obtained in the quantitative follow-up analyses confirmed her original conclusion: Effective motivational thinking is a selective thinking pattern in which some participants filter their learning experiences by focusing on and foregrounding positive experiences and deemphasizing negative experiences; this strategy appeared to help the more successful learners to sustain long-term involvement in L2 learning.

Ushioda’s study opened my eyes to the possibility of a new approach to conducting L2 motivational research because of a number of compelling ideas embedded in it, which provided a different picture of L2 motivation from the
conventional research. She perceived motivation as taking place within an individual learner’s cognitive processes and focused on its dynamic nature. Viewing motivation as a dynamically changing construct implied that longitudinal investigations would be necessary. In addition, Ushioda used a qualitative approach to investigate the motivated learners’ motivation-related thinking. Specifically, she individually asked these relatively successful learners what they were thinking in terms of their own foreign language learning and how they perceived themselves in relation to the learning process. Using this approach, she directly obtained and analyzed the learners’ thinking on the topic.

The next longitudinal study was conducted by Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant and Mihic (2004) in which they investigated 197 Canadian university students’ motivational changes in learning French by focusing on the dynamic nature of L2 learning classrooms. They measured five affective variables considered to be important in the socio-educational model (R. C. Gardner, 1985): integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, motivation, language anxiety, and instrumental orientation, with the Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) at the beginning and end of a one academic year course ($N = 91$). A single-factor repeated-measures ANOVA of the absolute change scores on the 11 AMTB measures was performed in order to identify statistically significant differences among these variables, and a significant effect was obtained, $F(10, 900) = 11.26, p < .001$. Post hoc tests of the mean absolute-change scores using the Tukey HSD tests identified three overlapping groups of variables according to the levels of
changes. The first group consisted of seven variables that showed relatively low levels of change: *Interest in Foreign Languages* (.399), *Attitudes Toward French Canadians* (.447), *Instrumental Orientation* (.560), *Desire to Learn French* (.564), *French use Anxiety* (.613), *Attitudes Toward Learning French* (.617), and *Integrative Orientation* (.708). The second group consisted of six variables, five of which were the last five variables from the first group, plus *French Class Anxiety* (.820). The third group consisted of five variables, the last three variables from the second group plus *Motivational Intensity* (.975), *French Teacher Evaluation* (.992), and *French Course Evaluation* (1.013). Based on these results, the researchers reported that there were statistically significant changes for *French Class Anxiety*, *Motivational Intensity*, *French Teacher Evaluation*, and *French Course Evaluation*, whereas there was very little change for *Interest in Foreign Languages*, *Attitudes Toward French Canadians*, *Instrumental Orientation*, *Desire to Learn French*, *French use Anxiety*, and *Attitudes Toward Learning French*.

Gardner et al. (2004) also assessed whether the participants’ language achievement affected changes in the affective variables. The students’ final grades, which were determined by three course examinations and other course assessments, were used as determinants of their language achievement. Using these grades, the participants were split into three grade groups: A (*N* = 34), B (*N* = 26), and less than B (*N* = 21). A two-way MANOVA was performed with these three grade groups and two times of testing (i.e., fall and spring) as independent variables. Statistically significant multivariate effects were obtained for Grade Group: *F* (22,
138) = 1.99, \( p < .01 \); Time of Testing: \( F(11, 68) = 9.57, \ p < .001 \); and the interactions of the two: \( F(22, 138) = 1.66, \ p < .05 \). The corresponding univariate effects were examined, and statistically significant \( F \) ratios for the main effects of Grade Group were found for three variables: Motivational Intensity: \( F = 3.67, \ p < .05 \); French Course Evaluation, \( F = 3.48, \ p < .05 \); and French Class Anxiety, \( F = 5.87, \ p < .01 \). Post hoc Turkey HSD tests indicated that the main-effect mean (5.19) of the group A students was larger than that for the less than B group (4.94). Five statistically significant variables for Time of Testing were also obtained:

Motivational Intensity, \( F = 49.59, \ p < .001 \); Desire to Learn French, \( F = 12.20, \ p < .001 \); Attitudes Towards Learning French, \( F = 24.97, \ p < .001 \); Integrative Orientation, \( F = 5.86, \ p < .05 \); French Course Evaluation, \( F = 17.22, \ p < .001 \); and French Class Anxiety, \( F = 15.42, \ p < .001 \), indicating that the means decreased from the fall to the spring. These MANOVA results suggested that overall changes in more general trait-like components, such as Interest in Foreign Languages, Attitudes Toward French Canadians, or Desire to Learn French, were very slight, while classroom-specific variables, such as French Class Anxiety, Teacher Evaluation, and French Course Evaluation, showed larger changes.

With regard to the relationship between language achievement and affective changes, the MANOVA indicated different patterns of affective changes in the three grade groups: The A grade students started the course with relatively high levels of motivational intensity, positive attitudes, and low levels of anxiety, and tended to maintain these levels through the year. The B grade group students began the year...
with similar attitudes and levels of motivation as the A grade group students, but their level of motivational intensity and desire to learn French decreased and they showed less positive attitudes toward learning French at the end of the year. The less than B grade group had lower levels of motivational intensity, less positive attitudes towards the course, and higher levels of French class anxiety than the participants in the other two groups at the beginning of the course, and they became even more negative by the end of the course. Based on these results, Gardner et al. concluded that the affective changes were moderate over the one-year course and greatly influenced by the course evaluation and associated with the students’ success in the course (This conclusion is weakened because of the small N-size of each grade group). The researchers also reported that there was a clear tendency for students’ attitudes, motivation, and anxiety to decrease from the beginning to the end of the course.

An important implication from this study was that, even in an ESL context, motivation decreased from the beginning to the end of the course, and course achievement, as measured by course grades, can influence changes in students’ affective dispositions. This further implied that extrinsic goals, such as earning a good grade, can be salient factors influencing learners’ success in both ESL and EFL environments. If this is the case, being in an EFL environment should not be considered a motivational disadvantage for learning a foreign language.

In the last two studies reviewed in this section, the researchers employed a mixed-method approach. Though the participants in the first study conducted by Irie
(2005) were junior high school students, not young adults, I included this study because the length of the period investigated was three years. This is much longer than the time frames in the other studies, and the implications drawn from the results are relevant to my study. Irie investigated the motivational dynamics of a cohort of Japanese junior high school students learning English over three years as a part of her doctoral dissertation ($N = 84$, which later decreased to 76, 40 males and 36 females). The study was primarily framed in the traditional socio-psychological model that was complemented by a qualitative interpretive methodology. Irie combined the two methods to overcome the shortcomings of both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies when investigating motivational change over time. The primary quantitative part of the study showed trends in the participants’ motivational profile change and their language achievement, and the qualitative part helped Irie identify detailed reasons for the quantitative trends.

In the quantitative part of the study, Irie administered four achievement tests and surveys at the beginning of the three-year course (T1, April 2000), and at the end of each of the three school years (T2, T3, T4, in March in 2001, 2002, and 2003, respectively). She developed a 44-item questionnaire, the Japanese Junior High School Motivation Battery (JJMB), mostly by adapting items from the AMTB. In the qualitative part of the study, she conducted individual interviews at the end of each year with 15 students in the cohort and the course instructor and observed the class at least once each semester of the study. In order to achieve data triangulation, Irie also collected the class and students’ information from documents, such as the
end of semester notes written by the students and newsletters in which the teacher and the students’ parents wrote comments. In the data analyses, the researcher coded and categorized data in an effort to identify the most common themes that took place chronologically in the cohort’s English learning experiences. Her purpose was to investigate the dynamic process of L2 motivation in that particular context.

Figure 2 illustrates the changes in the participants’ JJMB mean scores over the three years. One of the main findings was that these Japanese junior high school students generally maintained their English learning motivation although some

Figure 2. Longitudinal study: changes of JJMB score over time (Irie, 2005, p. 202). Note. ANX= Anxiety; EE = Enjoyment of English; ET = Attitudes Towards English Teacher; EX = Expected Attainment; INST = Instrumental Orientation; INTE = Integrative Orientation; SM = Strength of Motivation; PE = Parental Encouragement.
students experienced decreases in motivation from T1 to T2 due to the shift from the more enjoyable activities in the beginning of the course to the more form-focused instruction later in the course (See SM [Strength of Motivation] in Figure 2).

Irie explained that the relatively stable degree of motivation displayed by the participants throughout the three-year course was largely due to the skill of the classroom teacher who acted as a good role model of a non-native English user and whose enthusiasm and commitment to her students created a positive classroom atmosphere over the three-year period. This interpretation is supported by the trend lines shown by EE (Enjoyment of English) and ET (Attitudes Towards English Teacher) in Figure 2.

Irie’s study illustrated the positive influence that teachers’ attitudes can exert on younger Japanese learners’ motivation to learn English; this influence might affect the students’ subsequent learning as they mature. This influence is plausible because the initial impact given from the first English teacher is potentially large for individuals in their early teens who experience English learning for the first time in their lives. Unfortunately, the results are not easily applied to other young learners whose first English teacher is less talented or committed; this is an undesirable consequence in terms of the generalizability of the research.

The last study reviewed in this section is another mixed method study conducted by Nakata (2006), who investigated how learning experiences affected the developmental process of motivation among 288 non-English major Japanese university first-year students. Nakata perceived motivation as a lifelong
developmental process and a multi-dimensional construct, involving both cognitive and affective components as well as social and individual aspects. Reflecting his conception of motivation, Nakata employed a social constructivist framework (Nakata, 2006, p. 139), in which, social interaction plays a crucial role in the learning and developmental processes and a community or a social group develops as the members of the community or the group grow. He also proposed that there are two levels of intrinsic motivation: a weaker surface level and a stronger, long-lasting core level. He assumed that when learners achieve the core level of intrinsic motivation, they internalize the reasons for learning and become autonomous learners; he referred to this as “crossing the autonomy threshold.” Figure 3 displays his model of motivational development.

Nakata hypothesized that attaining a core level of intrinsic motivation is the key to success and that it involves connecting the individual learners to the community beyond the classroom. He also suggested that English educators need to provide learning experiences by which learners can gain such intrinsic motivation.

Nakata’s study had two parts. The first part was a one-shot survey that was administered to 288 freshmen (193 male and 95 female) in order to assess the participants’ general patterns of English learning motivation. The purpose of the survey was to design a teaching project that would promote the students’ intrinsic motivation and autonomy and act as a starting point for the subsequent qualitative study. For the survey instrument, Nakata developed a questionnaire with 50 items and ten categories: attribution, self-confidence, anxiety, effort, goal, autonomy,
international orientation, language learning belief, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. These items, which differed from the AMTB, reflected the researcher’s focus on the multi-dimensional nature of motivation and English education in an EFL context. He administered the questionnaire in the beginning of the 2000 academic year, and subsequently, conducted the teaching project through the academic year. In the first semester (April–July 2000), the instructor (i.e., the researcher himself) taught writing strategies, such as essay organization and outlining, in order to prepare the students to communicate through English writing for the subsequent project. In the second semester (September 2000–January 2001), he introduced a computer-mediated group project, in which the students chose a topic to discuss in a group on a web bulletin board and made an in-class oral presentation. In short, the students experienced a student-centered, project-based course, which was distinctly different from their high school English classes. In the
analyses, five factors were extracted from 44 items, after six skewed items were eliminated. They were: *Autonomy/Intrinsic Motivation* (14 items), *Language Learning Beliefs* (4 items), *Instrumental Motivation* (5 items), *Language Use Anxiety* (3 items), and *International Orientation* (4 items). The factor loading threshold was set at .55, and these five factors accounted for 47.58% of the variance for a total of 30 items (14 items were eliminated presumably because they had low factor loadings). Based on these results, Nakata concluded that his participants generally enjoyed learning English though they had some anxiety about doing so. He did not interpret the results as indicating that the participants had attained the core level of intrinsic motivation because he suspected that they were merely self-determined to succeed on the university entrance examination (i.e., internalization of an extrinsic goal) and completed the questionnaire immediately after successfully passing the test.

The second part of the study involved longitudinal qualitative case studies that were conducted after the one-year project had been completed. The primary purpose of this part of the study was to investigate how the one-year project-based learning experiences affected the participants’ motivation and how intrinsic motivation changed in each learner. This part of the study featured five participants (three female and two male students) selected from the students who had taken part in the project. These participants were members of the two successful groups who took part in regular message exchanges on the bulletin board, had good group cohesion, and made a good oral presentation. Although the primary method of data
collection was the interviews that were conducted after the project ended, Nakata collected data in multiple ways and at various times. First, he administrated an open-ended questionnaire in April 2000, a closed questionnaire in April 2000, the same closed questionnaire was used again in January 2001, and two types of open-ended questionnaires in November 2000 (regarding goals, anxiety, and perception toward the project before the project began) and January 2001 (regarding sense of group cohesiveness, achievement, anxiety over oral presentation, and level of confidence in self-expression after the project finished). He also video-recorded the oral presentations in January 2001, and conducted interviews in May and June 2001. In the case studies, Nakata described each of the five participants with a special focus on the development of intrinsic motivation, applying his motivational development model (Figure 3) to each of the participants. According to Nakata, all five learners crossed, “the autonomy threshold,” after they experienced the learner-centered group project, because they all developed intrinsic motivation. Among them, learner M, whom Nakata described as “a goal-directed learner,” and learner A, “a reflective learner,” further developed their intrinsic motivation. These two learners changed the goal they had in high school, passing the university entrance examination, to a new goal, developing communicative abilities. In other words, they came to connect their learning of English with its use in the real world. Nakata suggested that learners M and A acquired the core level of intrinsic motivation, and the other three gained only the surface level of intrinsic motivation. He concluded that language learners’ motivation is strongly influenced by their learning
experiences and by the way and degree to which they internalize what they have experienced.

The significance of this study was that Nakata framed his study using his conception of the multi-dimensional nature of L2 motivation, rather than relying on the conventional socio-psychological model, and specifically targeted the English education of non-English majors in a Japanese university. Because of his primary focus on environmental influences and intrinsic motivation, the survey results suggested that the first-year university students generally liked to learn English, though it was uncertain whether they were intrinsically motivated. Contrasting these results with the results from Berwick and Ross (1989), it appears that using a different framework reveals different pictures of L2 motivation. While Berwick and Ross concluded that Japanese university students were weakly motivated to learn English because most students’ primarily studied English to pass a university entrance examination, Nakata obtained results suggesting that his participants enjoyed learning English even after successfully passing a university entrance examination. Based on the results of the qualitative study, Nakata suggested an important role of learning experiences in university English courses by which the learners developed intrinsic motivation and became autonomous learners. If the researcher had conducted contrast case studies with relatively unsuccessful students in the project, he could have determined whether learner-centered learning experiences positively influenced these learners as well.
Studies of Motivational Change over an Extended Period of Time

Six studies that were focused on motivational changes over extended periods of time (from seven years to several decades) are reviewed in this section. Due to investigating one variable over such a long period of time, five of the six researchers employed questionnaires and interviews in which data were collected retrospectively. The results from these studies generally illustrate that dynamic changes in L2 learning motivation occurs at various times in learners’ lives. Overall tendencies of motivational change were also identified. Three studies were conducted in Hungary, and three studies were conducted in Japan.

The first study was conducted by Nikolov (2001), who focused on demotivation in language learning and demotivated learners. The study was conducted in Hungary, where the need to acquire foreign languages has been increasing, and early language programs in primary schools have became increasingly common. Notwithstanding these trends, many Hungarian learners have failed to acquire a sufficient level of foreign language proficiency. The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the reasons underlying those undesirable outcomes, rather than investigating long-term learning; however, this study is relevant to longitudinal motivational research because the researcher asked the participants about their past foreign language learning experiences in primary and secondary schools in relation to their unsuccessful states after they became adults. The participants were 94 young Hungarian adults (ages 19-27, 23.4 average) who perceived themselves as unsuccessful learners in learning foreign languages, such
as Russian, English, or German. The researchers conducted structured interviews based on 39 questions that were designed to elicit information regarding the participants’ background and their foreign language learning experiences. The participants were not told that their unsuccessful learning experiences would be the primary focus of the study.

The interviews revealed the following points. The participants tended to have positive attitudes toward learning the foreign language even though they perceived themselves as unsuccessful language learners. Many of the participants believed that only persons who studied with strong determination and who had motivation, enthusiasm, and aptitude could succeed, and that they failed because they neither studied hard nor were they able to sustain their motivation. They also mentioned that they liked speaking activities, such as conversation and role-plays. On the other hand, they disliked speaking and writing tests, grammar drills, memorizing tasks, and translation, tasks that greatly demotivated many of the participants.

The findings implied the importance of positive learning experiences in early learning because negative learning experiences that occurred when the learners were in primary and secondary school were so powerful that they were not overcome by their later positive learning experiences. Because some tasks that the learners disliked are necessary in the foreign language learning process, considering how to connect these tasks with positive learning experiences is important in order to avoid demotivation and failure to achieve reasonably high levels of proficiency that commonly occur with many foreign language learners.
In the second study, Shoaib and Dörnyei (2004) conducted interviews with 25 English learners in order to investigate how foreign language learning motivation evolves over “about two decades” (p. 22). Like Nikolov’s (2001) study, the length of foreign language learning and the number of years since terminating learning appeared to vary among the participants. The participants were English learners of mixed nationalities (i.e., European, Asian, and Middle Eastern) aged between 18 and 34 (15 female and 10 male students), and acquaintances of the recruited interviewers who were students in the School of English Studies, at the University of Nottingham. The researchers were inspired by Dörnyei and Ottó’s process model of L2 motivation (1998, p. 40. See p. 381 in the Discussion chapter): (a) Preactional phase (generating motivation), (b) Actional phase (maintaining motivation), and (c) Postactional phase (retrospective evaluation), but they did not frame their study within the model. Rather, they perceived motivational change as occurring over an extended span of time, such as in life-long learning. Shoaib and Dörnyei selected 25 out of 47 interviews that met their criteria. Each participant had one interview session that lasted from 15 to 20 minutes. One interview consisted of two parts. The first part was semi-structured and consisted of background questions, such as their attitudes towards English and their satisfaction with their current level of language proficiency. The second part focused on the learners’ stories of motivational changes. The interviews were tape-recoded, transcribed, and systematically coded using a prepared “template” (p. 28), by which, I presume, the data collected through the interviews were reduced and organized.
into various motivational factors.

Shoaib and Dörnyei identified the most frequent motivational factors in seven motivational dimensions. For example, the most frequent factor was a negative influence, the debilitating affective influence within the Self-Concept-Related Dimension. They also identified five temporal patterns of language learning motivation in the participants’ extended learning, “motivational transformation episodes” in the participants’ stories:“(a) maturation and gradually increasing interest, (b) stand-still period, (c) moving into a new life phase, (d) internalizing external goals and ‘imported visions,’ (e) a relationship with a ‘significant other,’ and (f) time spent in the host environment” (p. 31). The researchers concluded that these periodic motivational transformation episodes illustrated the temporal progression of L2 motivation and that process-oriented and long-term motivational research were promising future research directions.

The importance of the study was that the researchers perceived motivational change as occurring over a long span of time, and they identified frequent motivational experiences and episodes that occurred during that extended period of time. Most of the learners experienced frequent motivational changes and different learners had similar motivation-related experiences in their learning histories. These episodes and motivational factors were identified in an exploratory way that differed from the conventional survey studies in which researchers predetermine possible factors. In this study, the factors were embedded in the stories told by the learners and were subsequently extracted by the researchers. In this exploratory
approach, the motivational factors were not theory-bounded, which might be appropriate when investigating life-long experiences of language learning. A possible methodological problem of this study was the relatively short interview time; 15- to 20-minute sessions appear to be too short to adequately understand the life-long learning experiences of a foreign language learner.

The next three studies are similar in that Japanese university students’ past motivational intensity dynamics were investigated in a similar time frame (junior high school to university) and retrospective data were collected. Because of the similarities of these studies, I discuss the implications of the three studies together at the end of the third study. The first study was conducted by Hayashi (2005), who investigated patterns of motivational change among 481 Japanese college students over nine years. He explained how these patterns emerged using Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The participants responded to questionnaire items asking about: (a) their L2 motivational intensity for a nine-year period from junior high school through university, (b) the periods when their motivational intensity was the strongest and the weakest, and (c) the reasons why it was strong and weak during these periods (i.e., an open-ended question). Hayashi used cluster analysis to identify patterns of motivational development among the participants.

He identified four patterns: high-high, low-low, high-low, and low-high. The participants displaying the high-high pattern showed consistently high motivational intensity, while the low-low pattern indicated poor motivational intensity
throughout the nine-year period. The high-low pattern was distinguished by an initially high level of motivational intensity that dropped by the second year of high school, while the low-high pattern was distinguished by low initial motivational intensity that increased around the first year of high school. Three out of the four patterns were identical to the three patterns found by Gardner et al. (2004, pp. 21-26, see pp. 18-22 in this study): the A grade group, B grade group, and less then B grade group displayed high-high, high-low, and low-low motivational intensity patterns, respectively, while the low-high pattern, in which the students who displayed initially weak motivation shifted to a more highly motivated state, was unique to Hayashi’s study.

Hayashi tentatively proposed that different levels of internalization of extrinsic motivation caused the different patterns in the SDT framework. He argued that initial motivational intensity was the result of intrinsic motivation, and that initial motivational intensity could be sustained if the students internalized extrinsic reasons for studying English, such as succeeding on an entrance examination. In other words, the students who failed to sufficiently internalize extrinsic motivation experienced decreased levels of motivation. Although Hayashi did not statistically analyze the overall pattern of the nine-year change in the participants’ motivational intensity, a line graph that he provided illustrated that these students’ motivational intensities declined moderately from junior high school to university; however, slight increases occurred twice when the students were in their final years of junior
high and high school, and a relatively sharp decline occurred after they entered the university. Figure 4 represents these patterns.

![Figure 4](image-url)

*Figure 4. Changes in motivational intensity over time (Hayashi, 2005, p. 5).*

Sawyer (2007) reported part of a preliminary mixed-method study exploring motivational fluctuations of Japanese learners over eight years of English instruction in Japanese schools (i.e., three years in junior high school, three years in high school, and two years in a university) with 120 non-English major junior students in a private university in western Japan (104 female and 16 male students). The participants’ mean score on a paper-based TOEFL was 460, which was not particularly high, but they were relatively highly motivated students. The primary purpose of the study was to identify general motivational tendencies and salient or frequent reasons for the motivational fluctuations among these students over their
eight years of learning. The researcher created an instrument called, “My English Motivational History” (ibid. p. 4 and p. 9), in which the participants were asked to mark their levels of motivation (i.e., very low, low, average, high, and very high) to learn English at the beginning and end of each year in one column. These quantified motivational levels were later statistically analyzed with repeated-measures ANOVAs. The participants also wrote comments concerning their learning or learning motivation in the other column of the instrument. A preliminary analysis of these qualitative data was conducted by the researcher.

Sawyer reported that the ANOVA results supported three previous findings: (a) motivation is high at the onset of junior high school but decreases; (b) motivation decreases from the first to second year in high school, but increases in the third year, and; (c) motivation is high immediately before the university entrance examinations but then decreases upon entry into university. In addition, concerning two hypotheses, (a) motivation is influenced by teachers, and (b) motivation is influenced by peers and group dynamics, Sawyer stated that hypothesis (a) gained a number of supportive comments in the junior high school period, while hypothesis (b) was more salient in the high school period based on his coding and classification of the participants’ written comments. Sawyer concluded that Japanese learners’ English learning motivation changes a great deal during the course of their studies, and suggested that learners’ relatively high levels of motivation in the beginning of their learning in junior high school should be
maintained by initiating curriculum change and educating teachers concerning motivational strategies.

The final of the three studies (Miura, 2010) was an investigation of the motivational changes that 196 freshmen non-English majors attending a private Japanese university experienced over seven years as they moved through secondary school into their first year of university. This study was conducted with a population of students similar to that in Sawyer’s (2007) study. The researcher tested five a priori hypotheses: (a) The participants’ motivational intensities have frequently changed since they started learning English; (b) The participants’ motivational intensities were affected by two entrance examinations in their final years of junior high school and high school; (c) The patterns of motivational change between high and low proficiency university students differ; high proficiency students have maintained a generally higher level of motivational intensity in secondary school than low proficiency students have; (d) The rank order of motivational reasons has changed over time, and; (e) The rank order of motivational reasons between high and low proficiency students differ. The researcher selected the six reasons based on past research and her own experience as a teacher and learner of English. Hypotheses (a), (b), and (c) concerned motivational intensity level changes (motivational level, hereafter), and hypotheses (d) and (e) concerned the rank orders of motivational reasons at different times in school (motivational rank order, hereafter). Data were collected with a questionnaire in January 2005. The first part of the questionnaire concerned the
students’ motivational level: the students drew their perceived motivational levels over the seven years by indicating their level of motivation on a five-level scale. The last part of the questionnaire concerned the motivational rank order. The students ranked six motivational reasons: two intrinsic motivational reasons (i.e., liking English and liking studying English), three extrinsic motivational reasons, (i.e., a short-term goal, a mid-term, specific goal, and a long-term goal), and one social motivational reason (i.e., the influence of significant others). Hypotheses (a), (b), and (c) were tested by a series of repeated-measures ANOVAs. Hypotheses (d) and (e) were tested using non-parametric tests, i.e., Friedman’s test and Mann-Whitney U test, because the rank data were non-interval. The students’ April 2004 paper-based TOEFL scores were used as a proficiency grouping variable for hypotheses (c) and (e). The mean score was 436.01; the scores in the higher proficiency group (N = 111) ranged from 437 to 532 and those in the lower proficiency group (N = 83) ranged from 330 to 433.

The repeated-measures ANOVA results supported hypotheses (a), (b), and (c), related to motivational level, and the non-parametric test results supported hypothesis (d) and partially supported hypothesis (e). These results suggested the following four conclusions. First, the students’ L2 learning motivation greatly fluctuated during the seven years of English learning. Second, there was a general tendency for the participants’ motivation to increase over the seven years, with a tendency for motivation to increase relatively strongly before high school and university entrance examinations and decrease relatively sharply after these
examinations. Figure 5 displays these tendencies. Third, the students current
proficiency and their past motivation levels were positively correlated and most of
them were goal-oriented, rather than intrinsically motivated. The higher proficiency
students had a generally strong future goal-orientation, such as studying abroad or
getting a good job; in contrast, the lower proficiency students had a generally more
proximal goal-orientation, such as succeeding on entrance examinations. Finally,
the influence of significant others was generally small. This might be related to the
facts that the participants were mostly younger than 20, they had spent all or most
of their lives in the Japanese school system, and they had not met people who had
influenced them strongly yet.

![Figure 5. Change of motivational levels (Miura, 2010, p. 40).](image-url)
Hayashi, Sawyer, and Miura found that their participants generally perceived that their English learning motivation fluctuated frequently and dynamically while they were moving from junior high school to university. Perceived motivational patterns and the factors that appeared to cause these patterns showed both differences and similarities. With regard to the differences, Hayashi identified a declining motivational pattern over the nine years (Figure 4), while Miura found an increasing motivational tendency over seven years (Figure 5) (an overall tendency was not presented in Sawyer’s study). Hayashi, who used the Self-Determination Theory framework, claimed that the degree of internalization of extrinsic goals differentiated the students’ motivational patterns. He stated that sufficient internalization was the key to long-term motivation, which sustained learning after the initial intrinsic motivation had diminished. Sawyer confirmed that the influence of teachers and peers were salient motivational factors among his participants, while Miura found minimal influence of significant others in her students; rather, they were by and large goal-oriented.

Regarding similarities, all three researchers found that the students’ motivation levels tended to increase when they were high school seniors and decrease after they became first-year university students. This pattern confirmed the major impact of university entrance examinations on Japanese students’ degree of English learning motivation. The results suggested that the ways in which students can overcome the huge impact of entrance examinations in order to sustain their learning motivation and eventually become proficient English users remains
an important area of inquiry for both learners and teachers.

The final study in this section was conducted by Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh (2006), who investigated the change of Hungarian students’ dispositions toward foreign language learning over time. As Hungary was experiencing ongoing drastic political, cultural, and economic reconstructions after the communist regime collapsed in 1989 and the country became a member of the EU in 2004, the primary purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of the transformation of the learning environment on teenage students’ attitudes and motivation toward foreign language learning. Nationwide surveys were administered three times in 1993, 1999, and 2004 to 13,391 primary school children, concerning five target foreign languages: English, German, French, Italian, and Russian. The researchers used the Language Disposition Questionnaire, a 37-item questionnaire adapted from the AMTB. The questionnaire was comprised of four parts: 10 items concerning the five target languages (i.e., English, German, French, Italian, and Russian), 11 items concerning the six target language communities (i.e., the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and Russia), eight items were not specific to a particular L2, and eight open-ended questions concerning the participants’ background. Factor analyses were conducted for each data set obtained with the questionnaire, and the researchers extracted the same seven latent motivational variables for each data set: five variables, *Attitude Towards the L2 Speakers/Community, Instrumentality, Vitality of L2 Community, Cultural Interest,* and *Integrativeness,* were extracted from the 21 items concerning five target
languages and six target language communities, and two variables, *Milieu* and *
*Linguistic Self-Confidence*, were extracted from the eight items concerning not
specific to a particular L2. The rank order of preferred language to learn in all the
three surveys was consistent: English was most preferred, followed by German,
French, Italian, and Russian. The pattern of the changes of the latent variables
concerning the five target languages and six target language communities displayed
in the three surveys was a declining tendency over time, while *Milieu* and
*Linguistic Self-Confidence* were almost unchanged. From these results, Dörnyei et
al. summarized that young Hungarian students perceive the five primary foreign
languages in a stable way. English was the most important foreign language, and
their attitudes/motivation toward the foreign languages, including English, was
declining over time. The researchers attributed the declining trend to the reality that
learning English had became common and self-evident for the students, as English
was increasingly recognized as a global language in Hungary and that contact with
foreigners possibly declined during the period as the number of tourists declined
after passing the initial period of political, cultural, and economic transformation.

Dörnyei et al. applied a theoretical framework named the L2 Motivation
Self System (Dörnyei, 2005) to the three data sets to empirically evaluate the
framework. Their goal was to illustrate the directional relationship among the seven
latent motivational variables obtained from the factor analysis and the two criterion
measures, *Language Choice* and *Intended Effort*, using structural equation
modeling (SEM). First, the researchers drew three measurement models based on
the results from the factor analysis that provided the correlation between the latent variables and questionnaire items: (a) a model concerning the non-language specific variables and two latent variables, Milieu and Linguistic Self-confidence, (b) a model concerning country–specific variables, Attitude Towards the L2 Speakers/Community, Vitality of L2 Community, Cultural Interest, and (c) a model concerning two latent variables, Integrativeness and Instrumentality, and seven language-specific variables. Next, the researchers combined these three models and tested the full structural models in which language-specific, country-specific, and non-language-specific variables with each of the five language choices were included. Based on the SEM results, Dörnyei et al. proposed a hypothetical model of the interrelationship of the motivational variables (Figure 6) in which directional relationships were presented among all seven latent variables. The researchers emphasized the importance of Integrativeness in the model, as it mediates other variables and criterion measurements, and they proposed that Integrativeness could be seen as Ideal L2-Self in the L2-self framework because, “If one’s ideal self is associated with the mastery of an L2, that is, the person that we would like to become is proficient in the L2, we can be described as having an integrative proposition,” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 102). With this rationale, they proposed that the L2 Motivation Self System, a comprehensive theoretical framework of foreign language learning motivation that includes the idea of Integrativeness and is applicable to both ESL and EFL contexts.
Learners’ Stories of Foreign Language Learning

In this section, two types of studies, autobiographies and case studies are reviewed in order to explore those two research methodologies. Because foreign language learning motivation has been infrequently investigated by researchers using autobiographies or case studies, the scope of the review in this section is expanded to include other topics, primarily concerning learners’ foreign language development, rather than being limited to foreign language learning motivation.
**Autobiographies**

An autobiography is a life story of a single individual, retrospectively written by the first person (i.e., author) about his/her own life experiences. In the case of language learners’ autobiographies, the learners write about their own learning after the learning took place.

Prominent autobiographies concerning language acquisition exist; examples for English acquisitions include *Hunger of Memory* (Rodriguez, 1982), the story of a man born to the second generation Mexican immigrant parents in the United States, and *Lost in Translation* (Hoffman, 1989), an autobiography of a Polish woman who immigrated to the United States. Both authors described the details of changes in their lives in relation to the process of English acquisition and education. Examples for American authors learning a foreign language are *French Lessons: A Memoir* (Kaplan, 1993), a life-long French learning story of a woman of the third generation in a Yiddish family in the United States and became a French professor of an American university, and *The Philosopher’s Demise: Learning to Speak French* (Watson, 1995), a one-year learning story of 55-year old American Cartesian professor, who had already been a skillful reader of French practiced speaking French. While both authors are academics, and Kaplan succeeded while Watson did not in their French learning, Ortega (2009) compared the two cases in order to introduce issues concerning learner individual differences, such as aptitude and motivation. These autobiographies are all outstanding book-length pieces of literature that were read by a wide-ranging audience.
In this section, I review two autobiographies concerning foreign language learning that were written primarily for research purposes. The first autobiography is *The Multilingual Self: An Inquiry into Language Learning* (Lvovich, 1997). Natasha Lvovich, the author, was born into a well-educated and relatively wealthy Jewish family in the former Soviet Union in the late 1950s, immigrated to the United States in the late 1980s, and became an English teacher in an American university. This autobiography is a story about her life and the identities she developed, which were told through her experiences learning Russian, French, Italian, and English. This 14-chapter autobiography written in English was originally created as her doctoral dissertation in 1995. She had two rationales for writing this autobiographical dissertation. The first reason concerned her professional life. As an English teacher and doctoral student, she perceived that her experiences as an immigrant and foreign language learner would be helpful to her fellow ESL students whom she was dealing with in her classroom everyday. As she was aware of the gap that existed between the research/theories and learners/classrooms realities, she aimed to bridge the gap by revealing her own experiences as a foreign language learner to other SLA researchers and teachers. Another reason concerned her personal achievement. As a person who had fled her native country and immigrated to a new country, America, writing her own history in the new country’s official language meant acquiring a sense of liberty in the new land. She expressed this in the Preface:
Finding courage—or even the nerve!—to write creatively in a foreign language ... is challenging. This is the choice of those who want to be heard and read, and it is also a desire to be free. Learning and using language is a way toward freedom. (p. xv)

The story is not organized in a purely chronological way; rather, it is organized so that readers can shift their attention from one language-related identity to another as they move back and forth on a chronological axis. For example, the story started when Lvovich left the Soviet Union and arrived in Paris in 1988, then she flashed back to episodes in her childhood and young adulthood when she was in the Soviet Union with her family, friends, and teachers. Another example is that she introduced Frank, who was an American visitor to Moscow whom she met as a teenager, in Chapter 12, close to the end of book. In that chapter, she retrospectively wrote about several interactions with Frank: their initial meeting in Moscow, their second meeting in which he directly visited Lvovich’s family in Moscow a few years after his first visit, and a later reunion in Brooklyn, New York soon after she immigrated to the United States. This part of her story vividly illustrated her transformation from French self to English self, using Frank as a medium. Recollecting the time when her whole family (Lvovich, her husband, and their a five-year daughter) was invited to Frank’s house, she wrote:

I was the main interpreter, the only real speaker in the family during the conversations with Frank, his wife, and other people we met at their house. This role overwhelmed me because I did not feel that it was okay anymore to have such a poor command of English in the English-speaking country as opposed to my performance back in Moscow. I suppose that is how the difference between a foreign and a second language feels like. I am always hard on myself as far as language performance is concerned. Is it because I
considered myself a linguist in all the aspects of this word’s semantics? (p. 86)

This back-and-forth chronological organization is related to the most unique and striking feature of Lvovich’s autobiography: the transformation of self in relation to her new language development, such as, “My French Self” (Chapter 1) and “My Italian Self” (Chapter 7). With regard to her French self, it was a sort of fantasy-self, a tool for her to psychologically escape from the difficult realities she faced while she was living in the Soviet Union. She was fascinated by everything related to France, particularly the language and culture. She wrote:

The story of my fluency in French is the story of building a language identity. It was generated by my love of French culture, traditional historical ties between the two countries, but most of all by my personal way of dealing with political regime and the sociocultural bias it created. (p. 2)

As Stalin purged Jewish people in the 1950s, she grew up confused in her childhood, realizing that being Jewish was considered a shameful thing by some people, and wishing to become Russian, just like everybody else. The anti-Semitism, however, caused her to develop anti-Soviet feelings, and learning French, which she started at the age of five, helped her to establish her non-Russian identity.

Her American self, which developed after immigrating to the United States, involved the most significant transformation of her life. Chapter 8 consisted of a number of her diary entries, in which her feelings of disappointment, stress, and frustration that occurred after she started her new life in Brooklyn, were expressed. She did not know much English and failed to find work that she wanted using her
French skills. The contrast between her French self and American self was clearly represented: while her French self was a device that she had used to escape from her unpleasant Soviet life, and by which she could be “the Me I liked” (p. 9), her American self was based in the reality that she faced in the United States in which she was struggling to survive. In order to achieve her American dream, she recognized the key, realistic role that English could play in her life.

Another important message from Lvovick’s story involves her unique and fascinating linguistic talent. She appeared to be born linguistically gifted because her grandmother and her sister learned French before the communist revolution and they maintained their linguistic knowledge for almost their entire lives. Lvovich’s language learning aptitude might have been reinforced as she moved from one country to another and was constantly provided opportunities to learn a new language. One example of her unique way of learning foreign words was associating a word with a color, (a phenomenon that no SLA researchers have ever investigated), for example, “Monday—got orange-red; Tuesday—almost black, dark navy; Wednesday—watery silver; Thursday—grayish airy transparent; and Friday—dark purple” (p. 12). She analyzed these word-color associations after she became fluent in English. She also learned Italian in only six months while she was waiting to fly to the United States. She called her learning strategy “a fascinating game” (p. 47) in which she tried to systematically understand the syntactic, lexical, and phonological rules of the Italian language through reading, listening, and using her Latin, French, and limited English knowledge as references.
Finally, and related to the previous point, this autobiography was written in the author’s third foreign language. Like Eva Hoffman’s English in *Lost in Translation*, Lvovich’s clear sentences, sophisticated word choice, and creative sense of humor expressed in the book—even though some parts of her story concerned her gloomy experiences—are inspiring for everyone seriously involved in foreign language learning.

The second autobiography was written by Danling Fu (1995) in the introduction of her book concerning her case studies involving four Laotian refugee siblings’ learning experiences in a secondary school in the United States. That study was conducted for her doctoral dissertation. I initially selected this book for the following case study review, but the author’s 16-page introduction provided her fascinating language learning related autobiography. Fu wrote this autobiographical introduction to provide the rationale for conducting her case studies. In the introduction, she revealed her own problematic experiences she had had as a student in a master’s program in the United States. The challenges she faced were relevant to the problems that the Laotian and other immigrant students were facing in an American secondary school, a place where they were marginalized in many ways. The purpose of her study was to help these students who were literate in their own culture but who appeared illiterate in America.

Fu’s autobiography illustrated a native Chinese author’s transformation concerning her perception of English literature, American people, and the use of English. For example, she had wonderful memories of reading English books when
she was in China, even during the Cultural Revolution when Western cultures, including English books, were considered “ideologically poisonous” (p. 1). However, she had an unexpectedly disappointing experience in her master’s program in an American University where she was majoring in English literature. Eventually, she regained her love and passion for English by taking part in a novel, uplifting curriculum in her doctoral program at the University of New Hampshire where she shifted her major from English literature to Education and learned about reading and writing instruction.

The contrast between her master’s program and doctoral program illustrated a number of important educational issues. In her master’s reading courses, the professors and students rarely discussed their interpretations of the literature; rather, they always discussed the art of composition. It was disappointing for Fu because she was eager to know how American students’ interpreted the meaning of the texts and the ways in which those interpretations might differ from her own. Even when discussing their interpretations of literature, they were focused on issues that were largely different from her expectations. For example, when the class discussed *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*:

I wanted to learn in what way the character Finn represented American youngsters at the time, what American values Mark Twain conveyed through the characterization of Finn, how American people identified themselves with Finn and other characters in the story, and how black Americans interpreted Mark Twain’s characterization of Jim. But when we studied this book in class, the discussion was either on the possible homosexual relationship between Huck and Jim, or on the black dialect used in the writing. (p. 6)
And what was worse, from her point of view, the teachers and students did not care how she interpreted American literature from her different cultural viewpoint. Being surround by others who did not appreciate her differences, she felt isolated and kept silent in the reading class. She suffered in the writing class as well. She had to write her assignments by relying heavily on “Cliff’s Notes” and other reference books that taught her the “right way” to write and the proper tone to adapt for American literature majors. With these miserable and stressful experiences, she felt almost illiterate in English even though she had been an excellent student in her undergraduate English courses in her Chinese university.

In stark contrast to her overall frustrating and humiliating experience in her English literature master’s program, her doctoral program in Education was a positive experience. The students’ own experiences were given center stage. In the reading class, the professors tried to connect the readings with the students’ own experiences, and discussions were focused on how the students felt about what they read. Furthermore, her classmates showed great interest in Fu’s culturally different experiences and Chinese point of view. Because she was constantly being asked questions by her classmates, she could never remain quiet and isolated in the reading class. In the writing class that she took in the doctoral program, Fu wrote poems and stories as well as academic papers in her own style. This allowed her to abandon the custom of relying on reference books and imitating the way of writing English literature she had practiced in the master’s writing courses for two years. She explained why she did so:
The essential thing was to be yourself. Instead of relying heavily on outside references, I had to go deep inside myself, to find what I knew and who I was. Instead of sounding like someone else, I had to sound like me. (p. 9)

In the doctoral program, Fu read and wrote all the time. By doing so, she felt as if she had returned to her childhood in China when she used to love reading English books and freely expressing herself.

Fu’s autobiography conveys important messages to Japanese English learners and educators. Language learning should be an interesting and challenging experience, rather than one in which learners have to feel humiliated or as if they are illiterate in the language. It should also be a tool by which learners are helped to understand and respect people from different cultures and cultural diversities.

In addition to genuine autobiographies, autobiographical studies in which researchers used a learner’s autobiography as a research tool can be found. Two examples of such studies are reviewed below. The first was a collaborative study in the field of L2 teacher education (Bailey et al., 1996), in which seven teachers-in-training (i.e., co-authors) wrote and analyzed their own language learning autobiographies. The purpose of the autobiographical writing was to uncover potential influences of each person’s learning experiences on his or her teaching philosophy and practice, based on the idea that people teach as they have been taught. Those autobiographies revealed what language learning experiences these teacher trainees had received and how successful they had been as students.

Another study involving learners’ autobiographies was conducted by Tse (2000), who investigated the influence of language courses and teaching methods
that the learners had received in the past on their perceptions of their foreign language learning. The researcher asked 51 university undergraduate and graduate students (14 male and 37 female) with an average age in their early 20s, to write responses to ten open-ended questions concerning their foreign language learning experiences, including their desired level of proficiency, attributions of success and failure, and affective/motivational issues. Over two thirds of the participants had studied Spanish and ten had studied more than one foreign language. After coding and categorizing their responses, the researcher reported that the learners had low estimations of their proficiency level and they tended to attribute their failures to their own lack of effort. Both Bailey et al. and Tse acknowledged that the writing process as well as the outcome of producing the autobiography were useful and effective tools for introspecting into one’s learning experiences.

**Case Studies**

Seven case studies ranging from classic studies to relatively new studies are reviewed in this section. Four are multiple case studies, and three are single case studies. The first study is Schumann’s (1978) prominent study, in which he investigated the non-instructed English acquisition of six native speakers of Spanish living in the United States. It was a ten-month longitudinal study, in which he met the participants every week in order to examine the development of three linguistic forms: negatives, WH-questions, and auxiliaries, primarily in their natural speaking. Schumann found that Alberto, a 33 year-old Costa Rican male, showed
little development of these linguistic forms compared with the other participants. Alberto remained in the initial stages of development and used reduced forms and simple sentences when he spoke English. Schumann characterized Alberto’s language as similar to a pidgin language, and discussed why pidginization occurred in his English development. Schumann discounted the participant’s age and intelligence as the causes of pidginization after considering Alberto’s test results, and hypothesized that the learner’s social and psychological distance caused the pidginization of the target language. Because Alberto belonged to a group of lower class Latin American immigrants, he was not close to the center of the mainstream social group and was affectively distant from the target language group, spending his time with native Spanish friends and having little contact with English speaking people and English language culture, such as English TV, magazines, and newspapers.

This case study with Alberto was the source of Schumann’s later development of the pidginization hypothesis or acculturation model (Schumann, 1978), in which he proposed that the degree of a foreign language development is attributable to the degree of interaction with the target language group, including the people, culture, and values associated with that group. The idea of social and psychological distance is related to learners’ attitudes toward a target language group and motivation to learn the L2.

A few years after Schumann (1978) developed the acculturation model, Schmidt’s (1983) conducted another longitudinal case study with an adult
immigrant’s non-instructed English acquisition in order to examine the acculturation model when a person’s social and psychological distance from target language group was relatively close. The participant was Wes, a 33-year old Japanese successful artist in Tokyo who later immigrated to the United States. Schmidt observed and analyzed the development of Wes’s English speaking ability over five years from his first visit to Honolulu in 1977 and to his immigrating there in 1981. According to the acculturation model, Wes would likely succeed in his English acquisition because he exhibited very low social distance from the English community in Honolulu and low psychological distance, as he was an extravert with high self-confidence and low anxiety, and had an immediate and regular access to the target community. Schmidt analyzed the development of Wes’s English speaking ability in terms of a grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence (i.e., appropriateness of meaning and form), discourse competence (i.e., appropriately carrying on conversations), and strategic competence (i.e., strategy use to compensate for linguistic weaknesses, such as using formulaic phrases). The analysis revealed that Wes had acquired little grammatical competence as his use of grammatical features fossilized to a certain extent while he developed great deal of sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Though Wes was a great conversationalist in many aspects, he could rarely correctly use progressive forms of verbs (e.g., “so yesterday I didn’t painting,” p. 147) and auxiliary “be” (e.g., “I’m cry,” p. 148) during the period studied. Because Wes, whom Schmidt perceived as a person with a strong Japanese identity, regarded English as
something to use rather than something to learn, his focus was always on the messages he conveyed rather than linguistic forms he used. Wes had a perfectionist disposition as an artist but not as an English user. Based on the findings, Schmidt concluded that learners’ social and psychological distance to the target language group was not the primary determinant for foreign language acquisition and the acculturation model could only partially explain success/failure in foreign language acquisition.

In this study, Schmidt used case study methodology in an explanatory fashion; he tested a prior hypothesis (i.e., the acculturation model) that had emerged from a previous case study in a new case. Schmidt’s carefully conducted case study also illustrated the complex interaction of a number of factors that affected Wes’ foreign language acquisition.

The next two studies are so-called good language learner studies. The first study was conducted by Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Tedesco (1978) in Canada. The purpose of the study was to gain detailed information about the characteristics and strategies of successful and unsuccessful foreign language learners. This study had two parts: The first part was the adult interview study, and the second part was the main classroom study. In the first part, three case studies were conducted. The researchers conducted two semi-structured interviews from February to May in 1974 with 34 adult learners. The majority of the interviewees were English native speakers, who perceived themselves as successful foreign language learners: 59% were male and 41% were female, 68% were in the 26-35 age group, 15% were
between 19 and 25, and the rest were in the 35-50 and 51-65 groups. The researchers also attempted to investigate a large number of unsuccessful learners, but only two female learners who perceived themselves as unsuccessful were willing to participate. As a result, the purpose of the interviews primarily developed into a detailed investigation of good learners. The first set of interview questions elicited the participants’ foreign language learning experiences, and the second set of questions elicited their reactions in a hypothetical language learning situation. (Because of the purpose of this study, I do not mention the interview results. See pages 9-39 of the original study for the results). Examining the interview results, Naiman et al. selected three participants for the subsequent case studies. These participants had learned a large number of foreign languages and had interesting learning experiences that illuminated some of the interview results. The specific interview methods were not specified. I will briefly introduce two of the three case studies involving Ms. B and Mr. C’s foreign language learning experiences.

Ms. B was a doctoral student majoring in Special Education (aged between 26 and 35), whose native language was English though she was brought up in an English-Yiddish bilingual family and was fluent in Yiddish until she was seven years old, a language that she did not remember as an adult. She had learned Hebrew, French, Latin, German, and Italian. Ms. B learned the first four languages in a classroom setting in her homeland, mainly by reading and studying grammar, both of which she perceived as lifeless academic studies, while she learned Italian during her one-year stay in Italy in order to become a Montessori teacher. These
different kinds of learning experiences led to different learning outcomes: While she acquired knowledge of Hebrew, French, Latin, and German but rarely used those languages, she became fluent in listening and speaking Italian within one year even though she started with absolutely no knowledge of the language. Ms. B attributed her quick initial progress in Italian to Signora, the person with whom Ms. B stayed. Ms. B stated:

I found Signora was a very fine language teacher.... she was teaching me the way you would teach a younger child to speak the language. She’d be giving me words when I’d stumble. She’d say them for me, I would try and repeat it; it wouldn’t be quite right, she’d say it again. She had tremendous patience. (p. 46)

There were two other important contributions to Ms. B’s Italian proficiency after the initial learning stage passed. The first concerned a formal language course she took. She was aware of her limited knowledge of Italian expressions and structures before taking the course. The formal classroom instruction that followed her use of Italian outside the classroom facilitated her progress. The other important experience, which Ms. B called a “linguistic breakthrough” (p. 47), occurred when she was traveling with her Italian and American friends during a vacation. During the trip, she acted as an interpreter between her Italian friend and American friend, which forced her to overcome her inhibitions and anxiety using the foreign language. After returning from the trip, she realized that an unfamiliar person’s talk could be understandable, an understanding that she did not have before the trip. For success in foreign language learning, Ms. B emphasized the importance of self-imposed immersion in the target language community and motivation to learn to
speak, as well as having formal instruction in the language. Regarding language learning aptitude, she perceived herself as having the ability to remember aural input, and she liked looking at language as a system.

Mr. C was a professor of Anthropology (aged between 26 and 35), who had learned an astonishing number of foreign languages: German, French, Rumanian, Icelandic, Italian, Spanish, Albanian, classic and modern Greek, Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Latin, Mohawk, Swahili, Gaelic, Hungarian, Hittite, Japanese, and Lithuanian. The first four languages became his main languages even though his childhood environment was predominantly English speaking. His rich history of foreign language learning started with formal instruction in Latin in the ninth grade, and continued informally with Greek. At Harvard, he learned both Russian grammar and conversation. He was personally obsessed with the grammar of languages although he did not learn grammar in class. After failing to succeed in the subject related to his major, math and science, he decided to take two more language courses: Rumanian and Hittite. Because he used a Hittite textbook written in German and a Hittite/German dictionary, he concurrently learned German. He became highly proficient in French at Harvard because he had a French-speaking girlfriend. He also learned Icelandic with his first baby daughter during his first marriage. Mr. C appeared to learn foreign languages in a fairly short period of time. Through all his relatively effective language learning experiences, he commented on a number of important aspects underlying his learning: rote memorization of texts that helped him to acquire a “minimum corpus” (p. 51), being immediately
corrected when he made mistakes, always using a dictionary, selecting different strategies and materials depending on the language, and having good teachers. Among them, he emphasized the importance of teachers that positively affected his motivation. He stated:

The methods have changed from time to time, but when the motivation changes the amount of what I learn changes. This is an important thing and I think it is much more important than pedagogical methods in the long run. (p. 53)

He perceived himself to be not especially gifted in terms of language learning, but he recognized that he was highly motivated, stating:

Motivation means a lot, whether it is dedication to people you know, or to even an abstract idea—like my Indian ancestors—or whether it is to a teacher you like. (p. 57)

After conducting the three case studies, Naiman et al. concluded that there were several common factors observed in the three good language learners. The first factor involved an “emotional bond” (p. 58) to the target language, stating that after the learners developed an interest in a language, they naturally engaged in learning. Second, the good language learners used common strategies, such as having a systematic view to a language and actively using it as a communication tool. Finally, all three participants felt affective demands, such as inhibition or shyness, when using a new language, but they overcame them at some point in their learning history. In other words, their success could not be attributed only to their language learning aptitude; their interest in the language, effort, and involvement played crucial roles.
Another good language learner study was conducted by Stevick (1989). This study was designed to investigate what worked for successful foreign language learners and to identify common elements found in successful learners. He presented the study primarily for other language learners so that they could learn from the participants’ experiences. He initially conducted a one-hour long interview with seven adults who had achieved high proficiency in one or several foreign languages, and who became his primary case study participants. Subsequently, Stevick interviewed a number of other learners whose data were included in the case studies in order to compare or contrast them with the main participants’ learning behaviors. Stevick valued the self-report method and believed in his participants’ honesty though he stated cautiously that he and readers need to keep in mind that what the interviewees said was what they perceived they had done, and what they actually had done might differ from their perceptions to some degree.

The first seven chapters were made up of seven case studies: Ann learning Norwegian, Bert learning Chinese, Carla learning Portuguese, Derek learning German, Russian, and Finnish, Ed learning Korean, Rumanian, and Swahili, Frieda learning Arabic and Hebrew, and Gwen learning Japanese. Each chapter opened with a brief discussion of SLA theories, hypotheses, or assumed good practices that were underpinned by research, relevant to the following dialogues between the participant and the researcher that had taken place during the interview. Following this, Stevick commented on what the participants had said in relation to the theories
and hypotheses, or sometimes to other interviewee’s comments. Finally, he posed several questions to readers, inviting them to reflect on their own language learning in terms of the ideas introduced in the chapter. I will introduce one of the seven main participants, Gwen, “a self-aware learner,” learning Japanese in order to introduce Stevick’s reader friendly and pedagogically focused presentation of the case study.

Gwen was a professional linguist, who was responsible for Japanese instruction in her workplace and who was also learning Japanese herself. In the beginning, Stevick presented three good practices or theories in the SLA research community: “Consciously introducing specific points of grammar into real conversations, exchanging practice sessions with speakers of another language, and the primacy of the social relationship” (p. 127). In the following section, Gwen talked about how she was practicing Japanese. She was spending half a day every weekend speaking half in Japanese and half in English with her friends, a Japanese couple. During her conversations with them, she consciously used one particular grammar form, such as present-progressive, that she wanted to learn on that particular day. Although her fluency dropped when she was paying attention to the specific language feature that she was attempting to use, which she expressed as “pushing the edges of your linguistic security” (p. 128), she could still feel secure when uttering the target form, even though she became disfluent or made a number of mistakes, because her relationship with the Japanese couple was good, and they were very patient with her Japanese. In his follow-up commentary, Stevick pointed
out the importance of the strong relationship between Gwen and her Japanese friends and that her trust in them allowed her to try out new grammatical forms in the conversations without hesitation or inhibition, to concentrate on communicative language use, and to develop her productive knowledge.

Next, Stevick referred to “the value of a bird’s eye view” (p. 129) specifying a characteristic of Gwen’s learning. In the subsequent dialogue, Gwen stated her preference for knowing the whole linguistic system at once because being taught a piece here and there on separate occasions was a very frustrating practice for her. For example, she believed that it was effective to see the overall tense system in the language before using one particular form in the weekend conversations with her friends. In one sense, her conversations with her friends were a drill, but not a mechanical one; rather, they included drills of a language feature that she had chosen for the day’s lesson embedded in a real communicative context. Stevick commented that her preferred approach, understanding the whole picture first and consciously using specific forms in real, meaningful contexts, emerged in interviews with other participants, such as Derek, Ed, and Frieda, who also tended to rely on their intellectual strength in their language learning. This approach was in stark contrast to the naturalistic acquisitional ability of two other participants, Ann and Carla. Stevick presumed that this intellectual strength was probably a special talent that Gwen and the other learners had, and for these people, being taught through only one method, for example, only a communicative approach in which form-focused instruction and drills are omitted, might mean,
“throwing the baby out with the bath water” (p. 131).

After conducting the case studies, Stevick emphasized learner diversity, stating:

As a group, these interviewees differ from many other language learners. I think, however, that the most significant lesson to be learned from them is their diversity. I assume that comparable contrasts in special abilities and individual preferences would be found among any group of language learners, no matter what their ages or occupations. (p. xii)

He, therefore, suggested that no single method, strategy, or insight would work with every learner, despite his initial hope to identify such a secret. Nevertheless, he described emerging overall patterns that the seven participants shared using three key words, “image,” “nonverbal,” and “verbal” (p. 139). Stevick implied that successful language learning involves cognitive connections between nonverbal and verbal images. Finally, he concluded by providing his ideas concerning the best approach to learn a new language after conducting the case studies. Stevick’s proposal included the ideas that learners should receive massive exposure to the language before speaking, express what they want to say in real contexts, make real sentences in families (i.e., sentences that are related each other), understand the linguistic connections of these family sentences, try out what they think they understood by using it, use drills to automatize what they understand, speak out loud, talk to native speakers of the language, and obtain immediate feedback from the native speakers.

The value of this case study is that it allows learners to think about how they can succeed in their foreign language learning by comparing and contrasting
themselves with the seven successful learners’ cases. Also, Stevick’s conclusion that successful learners are diverse and that one single path to success in foreign language learning does not exist holds simple but profound implications for foreign language learners and teachers.

Kanno (2003) described her study as narrative research, but I have included this study in this section because it involves four case studies and has relevance to my study as it concerns Japanese learners’ L2 learning and identity. Kanno investigated four kikoku-shijo (returnee) students’ identity changes over approximately three years for her doctoral dissertation. Because of the returnees’ relatively long stay overseas in their childhood, they received influences from both Japan and overseas countries, including their native and second languages, and attended local schools both in the foreign country and Japan. In addition, they often attended a hoshuko, an overseas branch of a Japanese school, on the weekends while they were living overseas in order to catch up academically with Japanese students living in Japan. In short, they grew up in two counties using two languages and receiving influences from two cultures. The purpose of the study was to examine the long-term process in which Japanese adolescents transform and develop their bilingual and bicultural identities. The participants were four Japanese students, Sawako (female), Kenji (male), Kikuko (female), and Rui (male), aged between 12-15, who Kanno met at a hoshuko in Toronto, where she was working as an instructor. The study was conducted from March 1992 to December 1995. The primary data collection method was interviews with each
student. Several open-ended interviews were conducted in the hoshuko in Toronto while the students were in Canada, and then four more interviews were conducted over the next two years after the participants had returned to Japan. Kanno collected other information through journals, letters, telephone conversations, e-mail exchanges, and the participants’ acquaintances. Kanno analyzed the interview data by forming narratives.

Kanno partially used the perspective of communities of practice (COP) (Wenger, 1998), which emphasizes “the role of the community and negotiability of participation in the community” (Kanno, 2003, p. 12), as her theoretical framework. From the COP perspective, she conceptualized the foreign and Japanese schools as communities in which the Japanese students participated and developed their identities. Their positions in these communities were likely peripheral in the initial stages, and the students moved themselves toward the center of the community through their interaction with other members. This process involved the negotiation of their identity within the community. She also assumed that the students developed their agency to choose their own way, degree of participation, and their identities in the community through negotiations with members of the communities. Using this theoretical framework, Kanno concluded that the returnees’ bilingual and bicultural identities were multifaceted and subject to dynamic change and that the participants’ narratives would reveal the process by which their identity transformations took place.

Kanno presented each participant’s narratives from Chapter 2 through
Chapter 5 in which each student’s experiences, feelings, and thoughts as ESL learners overseas and as returnees in Japan were elaborated. She analyzed the participants’ identity transformations in the following chapters, which provided a good summary of her case studies. Kanno divided the participants’ experiences into three phases: the sojourn to North America, reentry to Japan, and later adaptation. In the sojourn period, English learning was the major task facing the Japanese students. Except for Rui, who was already bilingual at the time of his arrival in Canada, English was a major challenge for Sawako, Kenji, and Kikuko, and a large part of their identity was determined by the degree to which they had acquired English. For instance, Sawako and Kikuko experienced relative failure and isolation in the main English community due to their limited English abilities. Consequently, they became closer to other ESL students and Japanese students at the hoshuko. Kanno pointed out that this situation highlights an ironic reality that sojourn students face: They need English skills that they do not have at their arrival in order to become members of the target language community. Kenji also experienced difficulty in English, but he became a popular student among his Canadian peers because of his superior athletic ability. His linguistic development stopped as a result of being accepted without high-level English proficiency. Though Rui encountered few difficulties with his English in the Canadian school, he was deeply concerned about losing his Japanese identity. He was academically talented and did not enjoy hanging around his hoshuko friends and doing activities, such as spending all night at karaoke, but hoshuko represented Japan for Rui. Being
accepted by his Japanese peers in the hoshuko was extremely meaningful to him as it helped him to maintain his Japanese identity.

All four participants returned to Japan at the age of 18 in order to enter prestigious Japanese universities. Concerning reentry to Japan and their identity shift, Kanno identified two patterns that the students experienced. Kenji and Kikuko pretended that they were not different from other students by playing down their returnee identity while Sawako and Rui took the opposite approach by playing up their returnee identity. As an extreme case, Kenji decided to join a taiikukai baseball team, a university baseball team where a military-like rigid hierarchical system and strict rules and punishments were applied. He believed that joining the traditional Japanese community would help him to assimilate back into Japanese society quickly. Kikuko imitated her Japanese friends by adopting their attitudes, clothing, and hair styles, as well as their topics of conversations so that she did not appear to be a returnee. In contrast to Kenji and Kikuko, Sawako, and especially Rui, emphasized his returnee status after reentering Japan. When in Canada, Rui wished to maintain his Japanese identity and Japanese language skills, but he shifted his desire to maintain his returnee identity and English language skills after entering the Japanese university. This occurred because he had so many disappointing experiences in his new university. These included meeting apathetic Japanese students and unenthusiastic teachers and living in what he felt was a disgusting dormitory room. One common aspect that all four students were proud of was their English proficiency. Though they were ESL students and their English
was considered nonnative-like in Canada, the value they placed on their English skills suddenly increased after returning to Japan. They were amazed by the change, but did not perceive it negatively.

Finally, Kanno discussed the adaptation phase that took place within the one and a half year period following the four students’ reentry to Japan. All four started to socialize with a different group of students from their initial group. For example, Kenji left the taiukukai baseball club and meet with other returnees more frequently, and Rui started to attend a church and later became Christian. Kanno explained that these students expanded their own social networks and found communities in which they could participate more comfortably and perceive their returnee identity more positively. Although Japanese culture is frequently stereotyped as being homogeneous and collective, it consists of a large number of small communities, each of which has slightly or largely different “ordinary” practices from one another. The researcher concluded that each of the returnees developed flexible ways to negotiate their returnee, bilingual, and bicultural identities as they were searching for communities where they could feel comfortable while engaged in the process of growing up from adolescents to young adults.

Kanno’s study highlights two issues that are relevant to my own study. First, her study suggested that learners’ identity shifts might be inevitable in the process of foreign language learning. In a returnees’ case, it occurs because the students experience radical environmental changes: They physically leave Japan and are immersed in a L2 community where they have to use the foreign language in
school, and years later they return to Japan and reenter the Japanese community where they need to catch up academically with other Japanese students. Through that process, the students have ample opportunities to encounter identity-related questions, such as who they are and which country they identify with. In contrast to the returnees’ cases, Japanese learners who have developed high levels of English proficiency without experiencing dynamic environmental changes can experience identity shifts that are more mild, gradual, or even unconscious.

Second, the learners’ language- and cultural-related identity changes were explained in the COP framework. Kanno conceptualized a school in sojourn, hoshuko, and the Japanese university after the sojourn as different communities, in which the students participated while continually negotiating their identities. The notion of COP has been used in other studies concerning ESL students identity change and their language learning (e.g., Morita, 2004). This suggests the possibility that the notion of COP can be applied as a theoretical framework to the pseudo-English communities found in EFL contexts in order to explain EFL learners’ identity change. Because a real L2 community does not exist outside of the EFL classroom, an imaginary community, such as an English-speaking country that the learner would like to visit some day, can be substituted for the real L2 community.

The next two single case studies concern foreign language learning motivation. Squires and Kawaguchi (2004) examined one learner’s narrative of her own foreign language learning experiences in order to understand how learners
make sense of their own learning experiences and their motivation to learn over time. Using a postmodern perspective, the researchers questioned the epistemology and methodology that have conventionally been used by motivational researchers, and perceived motivation as a subjective, socially constructed individual account, rather than a numerically replaceable objective construct. They also emphasized the essence of language—possessing multiple meanings, which conventional survey instruments have largely ignored. To this end, Squires and Kawaguchi chose one learner’s own narrative (i.e., language) as a research instrument, and positioned themselves as “readers” of the learner’s narrative instead of objective observers.

The participant was Ayumi, a female Japanese foreign language university student, who was majoring in comparative culture and who had studied Vietnamese for two years. The researchers provided a worksheet to the participant in which she reflected on her motivational changes and wrote other notes prior to telling her learning story. Several weeks later, the researchers met Ayumi and asked her to talk in her first language (L1) (Japanese) about her foreign language learning experiences and learning motivation in as much detail as possible. The length of her narration was less than 30 minutes. The data were transcribed and salient discourse features were added.

Squires and Kawaguchi discussed three dimensions of Ayumi’s story: the contextual dimension, retrospective dimension, and transformational dimension. In the contextual dimension, the researchers identified several important points about Ayumi’s relationship to the university. For example, she said, “it was a system in
which their major language was chosen automatically by the school,” which indicated that Ayumi recognized that the way that the school chose the students’ language of study was “the way things are” (p. 190). Another example for contextual dimension was her passivity in the university, which was expressed in her narratives by using passive constructions. The researchers stated that the passive constructions allowed her to imply that the primary decision maker was the university and to position herself as a subordinate actor in terms of the power relationship. In the retrospective dimension, the researchers pointed out that narratives were subjectively created stories expressed through the act of narration. Therefore, there is no way to evaluate the “reality” or “truth” in narratives. In Ayumi’s story, she first constructed herself as separated from the other students who had chosen to study Vietnamese autonomously, but after she gained learning motivation, she stated that “when I had the motivation, that feeling of being out of place disappeared,” and, “I felt that the class became a little bit more close-knit” (p. 192). These were subjective accounts that Ayumi created retrospectively. Finally, the researchers argued that the participant narratives illustrated transformational elements. Ayumi narrated two transformational experiences. The first one was that the meaning of learning Vietnamese changed for her after visiting Vietnam during a school break. She stated, “until that point it was something that I just had to do or it was like something I was forcibly made to do, just simply, it was only like a school subject” (p. 193). The second transformation occurred as a result of her strong desire to impress her professor. She once failed to make a good speech in front of
him, which later motivated her strongly. She stated, “definitely, definitely I thought I wanted him to approve [of my speech]” and, “I started to study seriously.” (p. 193). These lines indicated Ayumi’s motivational transformation, from instrumental motivation to intrinsic motivation.

Squires and Kawaguchi concluded that Ayumi’s narrative illuminated her developing awareness that her learning goals needed to develop into socially important goals, such as communicating with native speakers of the target language and understanding language-related aspects of culture. Supported by this conclusion, the researchers proposed that documenting learners’ narratives is an important research tool for understanding foreign language learning motivation.

The last study is my own introspective case study (Miura, 2007a), a combination of autobiography and case study, in which I reflected on my own 30-year long English learning history. I was an unsuccessful foreign language learner in my teens and strongly believed that English was not relevant to my life, but I restarted learning English in my 30s and eventually became a relatively successful learner. Through this success-after-failure experience, I become convinced that motivation is important to success and traced my own learning process in relation to my motivational trajectory. The purpose of the study is, therefore, to illustrate one learner’s motivational change and learning history and to suggest that every learner possesses the potential to achieve high levels of English proficiency. I divided my entire learning process into three periods. Figure 7 illustrates these three periods: (a) the six year early learning period (1975-1981) that started with
formal English study in junior high school and a relatively high level of motivation and continued with learning in high school, a time when I experienced a sharp decrease of motivation; (b) the no/little motivation period (1982-1993), which lasted for about ten years, and; (c) a late ten-year learning period (1994-2003) during which time I regained motivation and studied intensively until becoming a relatively successful learner.

*Figure 7*. Changes in motivational intensity over 29 years (Miura, 2007a, p. 32).

I assume that the episodes that are likely to draw readers’ interest are the reasons why I lost learning motivation in my teens and regained motivation in my 30s, and the contrast between my early and late learning attitudes that clearly illustrated how the same person could behave differently depending on the level of motivation. I discussed two factors as the reasons of these occurrences: whether I had interest in learning, and whether I had access to a good mediator. Recollecting my English learning in high school, I did not clearly understand why I was studying English though it might have been in order to get good grades and pass university entrance examinations. My memories of high school English classes were of the
great difficulties I faced and my feeling that every day was a “survival game” (p. 33). The reading classes (four days a week), in which translating English passages into Japanese were the dominant tasks, were especially problematic to me. The entire class proceeded as the teacher called on one student after another to stand up, read one or two paragraphs of the English text, and read the translation that the student had prepared as homework. I spent hours at nights preparing for the next day’s class, and frequently felt hopeless when I could not understand the meaning of the texts for the next day even though I studied all the unknown words. I remember sitting in class feeling anxious and praying that the teacher would not call my name. My wish was to be free from this daily time-consuming, unproductive homework as well as from the anxiety associated with the class. This wish came true in a negative way because of a single teacher-related event:

On that day, the teacher, Y, asked me to translate part of text that I was not able to understand. When she found that I had not sufficiently prepared for the class, she told me with an emotionless voice that I would not have a second chance. Her comment sounded like “You are just hopeless” to me ... as she had promised, the second chance by which I could redeem my previous failure and demonstrate my effort to improve did not come for a long time ... I was disappointed day after day as the second chance never arrived. She made me feel as if I did not exist in her class... after a while, a question arose in my mind—why am I studying English? I stopped studying hard, and instantaneously, my test scores and grades started to drop. (p. 34)

My English learning motivation was terminated in this way. It was easy for me, as a sixteen year-old high school student, who perceived English as one school subject, to determine that I was not good at English and English was not important to me.
In contrast, after I resumed learning in my adulthood, I studied English with my own volition, and used a number of learning strategies that I thought would effectively improve my English skills. At the time I started, I stayed in the United States for a few months. Though it was not completely clear to me why I made up my mind to study in the United States, the determination to do so was very strong:

... a number of intertwining reasons accounted for my decision, my determination was rather definite. I couldn’t help thinking, “I have to go; I don’t know what to do otherwise.” Recollecting my feelings and thoughts around the time, profound motives for my action stemmed from a serious of personal problems that I had been dealing with for more than ten years since my late teens... The resolution of these problems took many years to reach and had put me under a certain amount of stress for a long period of time. However, I believe that the prolonged pressure that I experienced during this period gave me a strong impetus to move forward my life—as if a rubber ball under a strong stress reacts also strongly when it is released. I wished to make my life better... (pp. 35-36)

While I was in the United States, I lived with a person, J, whose positive words and attitudes influenced me greatly. Though my linguistic skills might not have improved a great deal because of a short length of my stay with her, a number of important lessons that J embodied in her own life, such as, “it is never too late to learn; enjoy every day of life; do what interests you; and take responsibility for your own life” (p. 38) exerted a striking impact on me that I had never received in the environment I had dwelled in Japan. Her ideas had the power to change my values and perceptions of my life. Because of this experience, I was strongly determined to become a good user of English.

This introspective study indicated the importance of self- and social-motivational factors that can radically change one learner’s learning attitudes
regardless of the age and timing that the learning takes place. The study also provided evidence concerning the potential value of autobiographical studies and case studies to understand foreign language learning motivation.

**Summary of the Literature Review and Gaps in the Literature**

In the first half of the literature review, 12 studies focused on changes in foreign language learning motivation were examined. A variety of theoretical frameworks (i.e., the conventional socio-educational model, cognitive psychology, social constructivism, mixtures of these, and L2 motivation self system) represented the researchers’ different conceptions of foreign language learning motivation by which different pictures of this complex construct were illustrated. In this section, I summarize what has been understood through the use of particular research methods concerning long-term foreign language learning motivational change.

With regard to study findings, three patterns of foreign language learning motivational level change over time can be identified: (a) foreign language learning motivation was relatively stable or declined moderately from the beginning to the end of the course (Gardner et al., 2004; Irie, 2005; Koizumi & Matsuo, 1993); (b) It changed frequently and dynamically over extended periods of learning (Hayashi, 2005; Miura, 2010; Sawyer, 2007); and, (c) A clear increase in motivation occurred before entering a university and a decline occurred after entering a university in the case of Japanese university students (Berwick & Ross, 1989; Hayashi; Miura;
Sawyer). In addition to these three patterns, some researchers confirmed that motivated learners further increased their motivation (Miura, ibid.; Nakata, 2006; Ushioda, 1994, 1998). Researchers proposed possible reasons concerning what differentiated the students whose motivation increased from those whose motivation decreased. For example, successful learners were found to focus on positive learning experiences and self-perceptions (Ushioda, ibid.), strongly internalize extrinsic goals (Hayashi, ibid.), achieve a core level of intrinsic motivation by experiencing autonomous learning (Nakata, ibid.), and focus on immediate goals, such as earning a good grade, in order to achieve longer-term goals, such as obtaining a good job (Miura, ibid.). The general picture of EFL students is that they tend to be initially motivated to learn a foreign language because of the excitement of meeting the new language, but the initial intrinsic motivation does not last long and the students become increasingly goal-oriented as learning proceeds. The most important goal for most English learners in Japan appears to be passing university entrance examinations (Berwick & Ross, ibid.; Miura, ibid.; Sawyer, ibid.). Declining motivation is likely to occur soon after achieving this goal. Successful students might be those who can focus on their positive learning experiences and perceive themselves as competent, sufficiently internalize external goals after their initial interest wanes, gain intrinsic motivation through autonomous learning experiences, or perceive that immediate goals are a means of achieving future goals.
With regard to research methods, the primary methodology was quantitative. Different from the traditional one-shot cross sectional survey, Berwick and Ross (1989), Koizumi and Matsuo (1993), Gardner et al. (2004), and Irie (2005) administered questionnaires two or more times and assessed how the learners’ motivation changed over time in relation to their proficiency development. Dörnyei et al. (2006) also administered multiple surveys in order to investigate the learners’ dispositional changes over time while Hungarians were experiencing a nation-wide transformation. In addition to the use of multiple surveys, surveys designed to collect retrospective data were used by Hayashi (2005), Sawyer (2007), and Miura (2010) to investigate students’ perceived motivational levels since their learning started. Qualitative methods were used by Irie (2005), Nakata (2006), and Sawyer (2007) as a follow-up or complement to the primary quantitative analyses. Completely qualitative studies were conducted by Ushioda (1994, 1998), Nikolov (2001), and Shoaib and Dörnyei (2004).

In the second half of the literature review, four autobiographical studies and seven case studies concerning foreign language learning development were examined primarily for methodological exploration. With regard to autobiographies, genuine autobiographies and studies that used an autobiography as a research tool were reviewed. Lvovich (1997) and Fu’s (1995) autobiographies provide details about two individual learners’ foreign language development process and profound reflections on their language learning. Though they wrote the documents for research purposes, their real-life stories are engaging both to general language
learners and SLA researchers. The high quality of their writing is a testimonial to their high levels of language learning achievement, which is an encouraging fact for all language learners, as the authors acquired English as adults.

With regard to the studies in which autobiographies were used as a research tool, Bailey et al. (1996) and Tse’s (2000) studies were introduced. In these studies, the participants wrote about their learning experiences using an autobiographical format that was later analyzed as a data source by the researchers. Both Bailey et al. and Tse acknowledged that writing the autobiographies effectively facilitated the learners’ reflection on their own L2 learning. These four studies suggest that autobiographies can provide an engaging and effective means to investigate individual learners’ learning histories.

Case studies report on learners’ experiences in depth and over time. A reviewed above, Schumann (1978) investigated a Costa Rican immigrant to the United States and identified reasons for his difficulty in learning English. Based on this case study, Schumann formulated the pidginization hypothesis or acculturation model. In the same line of research, Schmidt (1983) conducted a case study with a Japanese immigrant to the United States in order to examine the acculturation model and found that acculturation was the only one of the factors determining foreign language acquisition. These two case studies indicate that a single, carefully conducted case study can provide a substantial amount of high quality information that allows for the development of and test a substantive theory. Naiman et al. (1978) and Stevick (1989) had similar purposes in their investigations of good

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language learners’ learning experiences and strategies. Both case studies provide ample practical information for language learners and highlight the fundamental importance of learner diversity to SLA researchers. Kanno (2003) analyzed four returnees’ identity transformations in the process of their development and negotiation practices in foreign and Japanese communities employing the notion of COP as her research framework. Her study suggested the usefulness of applying COP to EFL contexts to investigate EFL learners’ identity changes that occur as they develop foreign language proficiency. Squires and Kawaguchi (2004) used a learner’s narrative in order to examine a Japanese student’s Vietnamese learning and her learning motivation over a year. They criticized quantitative research methods in L2 motivational research, and proposed that learners’ narratives could present learner’s perception of their learning and motivation most appropriately. Miura (2007a) used a combination of autobiography and case study and introspectively illustrated her own motivational and English learning history. Conducting this study, I have been convinced that motivation is the key element to success in L2 learning and that long-term investigation is necessary. At the same time, this study provided the idea of investigating foreign language learning motivation using learners’ biographical case studies.

Based on the first half of the literature review, it appears that foreign language learning motivation has increasingly been investigated with a focus on its dynamic nature, and the value of longitudinal research has started to be acknowledged by those interested in understanding how learner motivation changes
over the long process of foreign language learning. The literature review revealed patterns of motivational changes and possible reasons for these patterns; however, in-depth, holistic investigations of individual learners’ foreign language learning motivational changes, particularly Japanese learners’ cases, have not yet been carried out. Moreover, the majority of studies have been conducted by researchers using quantitative methods involving a one-shot administration of questionnaires. Although a number of researchers, such as Crookes and Schmidt (1991), Spolsky (2000), and Benson (2004), have encouraged the use of a variety of research methods, the use of qualitative approaches in L2 motivational research has still been limited, especially in the case of longitudinal investigations.

The second half of the literature review demonstrated the educational and research value of learners’ stories, such as autobiographies, in tandem with the effective use of case studies. A combination of biographical studies and case studies can allow researchers to approach foreign language learning motivation from a methodologically novel angle, illustrating the whole motivational picture, rather than presenting only a few scattered pieces, and highlighting individual learner differences. This combination might prove effective, especially for longitudinal foreign language learning motivational research, because it allows for in-depth investigations of motivational change over the long-term learning process, based on the learners’ voices in their own learning contexts. However, this combination has not been used yet with the exception of my preliminary introspective case study (see Miura, 2007a).
Despite the strengths of this approach, there are two research-related concerns. The first concern is that this type of study relies on retrospective data collection. Retrospectively collected data are often criticized as being not entirely reliable and consistent. Though this criticism is plausible to some extent, such methods appear to be appropriate for investigating long-term learning motivational change because motivation is widely acknowledged to be an important aspect of learning that is extremely complex, somewhat unstable, and unobservable. As a matter of fact, most research examined in the literature review to a greater or lesser extent involves participants’ retrospective accounts concerning their foreign language learning that took place in the past. In other words, without retrospective data collection, one type of longitudinal motivational research is difficult to conduct.

The second concern is that the findings of a study with a small number of participants are not generalizable to a larger population. This claim, however, does not decrease the value of case study research; rather, it is an appropriate approach to investigating foreign language learning where learner diversity is a key part of the very nature of language acquisition. As Stevick (1989) has stated, each learner who attains high levels of proficiency takes a unique path. Although one learner’s learning story cannot be generalizable to everyone, successful learners’ experiences are meaningful resources that other learners can learn a great deal from. This is especially true when the learner’s learning history is presented holistically, as readers can select information relevant to their own learning and reflect on their
own learning by comparing and contrasting their approaches and attitudes with those of successful learners. Furthermore, when employing a systematic approach (Yin, 2006, 2009) in which a researcher presents initial propositions and conducts a case study in order to support the propositions, analytic generalization—rather than statistical generalization—can be achieved. Consideration for reliability, validity, and practicality in this study are further discussed in Chapter 3.

In recent years, advocacy of the use of qualitative approaches has been expressed in the foreign language learning motivation literature more frequently than before. Ushioda (2008, 2009) has suggested a person-centered perspective and person-in-context perspective as desirable directions for future foreign language learning motivation research. The following quotes from two recent essays by Ushioda concern (a) motivation and good language learners, and (b) motivation and L2-self:

… perhaps the most promising line of inquiry lies in enabling language learners’ own voices and stories to take centre stage, either in person (for instance, Lim, 2002) or minimally mediated by the researcher (for instance, Lamb, 2005). Good language learners have much to teach us about motivation (Ushioda, 2008, p. 29).

Let me summarise then what I mean by a person-in-context relational view of motivation. I mean a focus on real persons, rather than on learners as theoretical abstractions; a focus on the agency of the individual person as a thinking, feeling human being, with an identity, a personality, a unique history and background, … My argument is that we need to take a relational (rather than linear) view of these multiple contextual elements, and view motivation as an organic process that emerges through the complex system of interrelations (Ushioda, 2009, p. 220).
Furthermore, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) have proposed a necessary shift in foreign language motivation research: from a traditional reductionistic and linear cause-effect view to more comprehensive, dynamic, and situational view. They have suggested that motivation, cognition, and affect should be investigated integratively, and that qualitative approaches can produce data that faithfully represent the breadth and depth of the topic. The following quotes convey some of their key ideas:

In the present state of L2 motivation research, characterized by searches for a new understanding for the intricate and multilevel construct of motivation, the increased adoption of qualitative research methods seems highly beneficial and timely (p. 237).

The task then, is to find the level of analysis that captures the right combination of these three ingredients in a given situation… It suggests that qualitative exploratory investigations of language learners’ self-reports might contain sufficient clues about the right angle to motivation and motivated behaviors to adopt. The dynamic systems approach predicts that no behavioural phenomenon has a single explanation… all these and many other potential motives might have contributed to producing the final outcome, but only a carefully executed deep interview study would have the chance to get to the bottom of this. Thus, all we need to do is ask the right questions! (pp. 98-99)

These quotes clearly indicate the need for qualitative investigations that are conducted not as a supplemental but as the primary research approach. This approach can greatly increase our understanding of foreign language learning motivation.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate successful learners’ motivational changes and their learning histories from the commencement of their English learning to the present. I explore aspects of the participants’ motivational trajectories and learning histories in ways that are inaccessible to other methodologies.

In this study, I define foreign language learning motivation using the characteristics agreed upon by most researchers: Motivation is the direction and magnitude of the foreign language learning and concerns a person’s choice, persistence, and effort (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 4). Further, taking account of the multi-dimensional nature of motivation, Dörnyei and Ushioda have suggested four challenges of motivational research: “cognition vs. affect, time, context, and reduction vs. comprehensiveness” (pp. 4-10). I place a particular emphasis on the time dimension: foreign language learning motivation is subject to dynamic change. However, because motivational change is investigated holistically, other dimensions, cognition, affect, time, context, and comprehensiveness are also inevitably involved in this investigation. In this study, I do not rely on a particular theoretical framework so that successful learners’ motivational and learning histories are explored using an exploratory and theoretically unbounded approach using case study methodology.
Preliminary Study

Prior to the main study, I conducted a closely related study concerning advanced learners’ lexical development and their motivational change (Miura, 2007b) (called the preliminary study hereafter). The purpose of the preliminary study was to investigate high proficiency learners’ foreign language (English) lexical development in relation to their learning motivation over time. Because I had already formulated the idea for current study, another important purpose of the preliminary study was to examine research methods that involve collecting retrospective data, administering the research instruments, and analyzing learners’ learning histories. I also determined the degree to which I, as an interviewer, could create a relationship with each participant that would encourage them to be willing to tell their learning histories, an act that frequently required them to talk about personal life events. The study provided me with confidence in the methodology, as well as a number of lessons useful for the current study, such as the criteria for the selection of participants, opportunities to practice interviewing, especially asking effective questions with appropriate timing, writing the participants’ learning histories, and producing a list of possible research questions. Furthermore, I established favorable relationships with six participants who provided a substantial body of data concerning their long-term learning histories. It seemed reasonable to ask these people also to participate in the dissertation study and to utilize the previous data that I gathered as a base for the main study. For this reason, the
participants, instrumentation, and procedures I describe in the next chapter include and overlap those I utilized in the preliminary study.

Research Questions

The central research question of the study is: (a) What motivational trajectories and learning histories do highly proficient learners display? and (b) How have these learners sustained learning motivation from the onset of their English study and the point they terminated their study and eventually achieved high levels of English proficiency while studying in an EFL environment? This central question guides the overall study. More specific subquestions associated with the central question emerged after conducting the preliminary study. The subquestions concern the following issues: the period(s) when the most intensive learning took place, the learning strategies they employed, the reasons why intensive learning took place during those particular period(s), and other relevant or interesting issues that might have influenced their learning, such as their family environment, meeting influential persons, and their interests other than English. Although this study is primarily exploratory, I have two underlying propositions concerning successful learners’ foreign language learning motivation that I examine through the multiple case studies so that analytical generalizations are also achieved. Details of the initial propositions are described in the case study protocol presented in Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

General Issues Concerning Case Study Research

Case study research is conceptualized differently by different researchers. Yin (2006, 2009) has argued that it is a comprehensive research strategy, while Stake (2007) has claimed that it does not refer to a methodological choice but rather a researcher’s choice regarding what to study. Both researchers have agreed that case studies can be employed both in quantitative and qualitative approaches and used for both exploratory and explanatory studies. Creswell (2007) has stated that case studies are one of five frequently used qualitative approaches, (i.e., narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study). This assertion is supported by the fact that case studies are conducted in a wide variety of fields, such as psychology, medicine, law, and political science. A case refers to a unit of study, which can vary widely; examples include individuals, decisions, a program, or an organization.

Case study research possesses both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of the case study is that it allows researchers to investigate contemporary phenomena in-depth within a real-life context (Yin, 2009) where multiple variables are complexly embedded (Merriam, 1998). Reports from case study research often possess a high degree of readability (Duff, 2008). Because of these strengths, case study research contributes to knowledge in a field, and sometimes researchers
generate completely new insights from case studies findings, which possibly question, challenge, and redirect conventional thoughts (Duff, ibid.) and might move the entire field forward. Formulating and examining the acculturation model based on case studies about a Costa Rican adult’s acquiring English (Schumann, 1978) and about a Japanese adult’s acquiring English (Schmidt, 1983) are well-known examples in the field of SLA (See Chapter 2 for details of these two studies). However, these advantages can also be regarded as some of the drawbacks of case studies. Because of the basic objective of investigating and understanding a small number of cases embedded in particular contexts, the findings from case studies are not always robust in terms of their generalizability and applicability to a larger population and are not free from researchers’ and participants’ subjectivity (Duff, ibid.). Increasing the robustness of a case study is important; this, it is discussed below.

Case study research can contribute to foreign language learning and motivation research. One learner is generally regarded as a case (Naiman et al., 1978). The learner always exists in a real-life context and her learning always occurs in a real-life context where multiple variables are embedded in a complex way. These multiple variables and their interactions inevitably affect the learner and her learning and can particularly affect psychological factors, such as foreign language learning motivation. Foreign language learning and foreign language learning motivation are inseparable from the learning context, and case study research can shed a great deal of light on the learner, her learning, and her learning
motivation in the particular context being investigated. It is especially advantageous for the investigation of a learner’s long-term foreign language learning, where the learner, the type of learning, and the context itself are changing over time. Researchers frequently conduct case study research when investigating how and why certain results occurred after administering surveys or after conducting experimental studies (i.e., a mixed-method research) (e.g., Irie, 2005; Nakata, 2006). In such research, a small number of participants are selected from a larger group who participated in the quantitative study conducted previously.

Autobiographies can be regarded as case studies because they involve one learner’s in-depth description of a phenomenon occurring within a real-life context (e.g., Fu, 1995; Lvovich, 1997; Miura, 2007a). A general difference between autobiographies and case studies concerns who conducts the research: either the learner herself (autobiographies) or a different person acting as a researcher (case studies).

Robustness of Case Study Research

Notwithstanding its frequent application in various fields and its advantage of allowing the in-depth investigation of contextualized phenomena, case study researchers have not completely established research conventions, and there is a general perception that case studies are merely a supplemental research method. In order to improve this perception, it is necessary to conduct case studies so that its
robustness is amplified by enhancing its reliability\(^3\), validity (Duff, 2008), and practicality. Duff (ibid.) stated that (a) the reliability of a case study can be strengthened by achieving consistency in all the procedures, such as selecting participants, interviewing, and data analysis, “coder check” (p. 163), and “member check” (p. 171), and (b) external validity can be enhanced by carefully selecting cases and conducting multiple case studies, rather than a single case study, and by investigating heterogeneous cases. Furthermore, using a systematic approach, as introduced below, is one way to improve practicality.

**Yin’s Approach to Case Study Research**

Yin (2006, 2009) has developed a systematic approach to case study design and methodology. Figure 8 presents his classification of basic case study designs (ibid, p. 46), which is based on the number of cases studied: a single case design and a multiple case design, and the number of unit(s) of analysis within a case (i.e., a holistic type and an embedded [focused] type). Figure 8 is divided into single case designs versus multiple case designs by the vertical line, and the holistic types and focused types are divided by the horizontal line. While a single case design is appropriate when investigating an extreme or a typical case, a multiple case design is generally desirable over the single case design because it provides researchers with analytic advantages by allowing them to compare and contrast several cases and examine the initial propositions in greater detail. Researchers use the holistic

\(^3\) There is some disagreement about applying the concepts of reliability and validity to qualitative research (Duff, 2008, pp.176-178).
type when “there is no specific subunit to investigate, while a focused type is chosen when specific subunits are investigated.

Figure 8. Basic types of designs for case studies (Yin, 2009, p. 46).

Yin (2009) also suggests presenting a detailed and clear case study protocol. A case study protocol allows the researchers to prepare and focus the case, helps the audience to understand the case study, and validates the case study findings. The protocol also allows the case study to be replicable. In a case study protocol, researchers generally present:
- an overview of the case study project (project objectives and auspices, case study issues, and relevant readings about the topic being investigated, field procedure (presentation of credentials, access to the case study “sites,” language pertaining to the protection of human subjects, sources of data, and procedural remainders), case study questions (the specific questions that the case study investigator must keep in mind in collecting data, “table shells” for specific arrays of data, and the potential sources of information for answering each question, and, a guide for the case study report (outline, format for the data, use and presentation of other documentation, and bibliographical information) (Yin, 2009, p. 81).

In this study, I employed the systematic approach Yin (2009) suggested, as it assisted me in conducting an extended qualitative study and allowed the procedure and process of the research project to be as transparent as possible to readers. To this end, presenting a comprehensive case study protocol is crucial. In the following sections, I present a case study protocol describing the process I followed throughout the study; this includes aspects of the study that were added and altered as the study proceeded. Specifically, information concerning the case study design, participants, instrumentation, interviews, follow-up e-mail messages, case study questions, analysis, and case study report, are presented in the protocol.

**Robustness of This Study**

The overall robustness of this study was enhanced by considering the reliability, validity, and practicality of the study. These considerations include (a) conducting a preliminary study, (b) selecting the participants along with the criteria for choosing them, (c) having the participants complete the motivational charts
twice after a long interval of time, (d) interviewing each participant multiple times, (e) asking the participants to review their English learning history, (f) having e-mail communication with the participants, (g) creating a detailed case study protocol and using the protocol consistently, and (h) examining initial propositions over six cases. These points are elaborated in the related sections of the case study protocol.

**Case Study Protocol**

**Case Study Design**

In this study, I used a multiple case design with six cases. Figure 9 schematizes the design adapted from Yin’s (2009) basic types of case study design. In Figure 9, each of the six participants was counted as one case, given that each one was in a unique English learning context. The study involved both holistic and focused analyses: The participants’ overall English learning stories were explored holistically, while their English learning motivational trajectories and changes of perceived self were two focused subunits. Concerning the second focused unit of analysis, though I collected that part of the data from the participants in the interviews and present the results in each individual case study, I decided not to analyze that aspect of the data collectively because focusing on motivational change appeared more appropriate than investigating two major topics in a single study.
Figure 9. The schematized multiple case study design.
In accordance with the holistic-focused combination design, this study possesses both exploratory and evaluative characteristics. The study was primarily exploratory as the participants’ learning stories were revealed through a series of interviews and presented in the form of biographical stories. Meanwhile, the six cases were collectively examined for the initial proposition. In this way, both in-depth descriptions of each participant’s learning history and analytical generalization over all the participants’ motivational characteristics were achieved.

Regarding the two focused units of analysis that had originally been considered, two initial propositions were formed for both focused units of analysis: (a) successful learners have experienced one or more motivational declines but have overcome such experiences in their learning processes, and (b) change of perceived self occurred for successful foreign language learners. As noted above, both initial propositions were examined in each case study while only the former (called initial proposition 1, hereafter) was examined in the collective analysis.

In addition to examining initial proposition 1 over the six participants’ cases collectively, the participants’ learning stories were also examined for salient motivational sources as a collective analysis.

**Participants**

The participants were the following six persons (five of the names are pseudonyms and one is a real name, which was used based on that participant’s request): Taeko, Sakiko, Haruka, Shin, Chie, and Takayuki. The order of the cases
was organized according to the length of their learning periods, from the shortest to the longest. Table 1 presents the backgrounds of the six participants.

**Selection criteria.**

Through the experience of conducting the preliminary study, I established the following three criteria for the selection of the case study participants: (a) they have achieved a high degree of English proficiency as indicated primarily by their scores on a standardized English test, such as the TOEFL and TOEIC, their

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Participants’ Backgrounds 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taeko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haruka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takayuki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. NA = No standardized test scores were available.*
Table 2. Participants’ Backgrounds 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Undergraduate and graduate school major(s)</th>
<th>Entrance examination results</th>
<th>Past and current employment</th>
<th>Length in English speaking countries</th>
<th>Other foreign language learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taeko</td>
<td>Commerce, International Communication</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>University English instructor, worker at a foreign traveler center</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Chinese, Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakiko</td>
<td>English Literature &amp; Linguistics, TESOL</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>English instructor at language school and universities</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
<td>Chinese, French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haruka</td>
<td>Embassy worker, English instructor, gospel singer</td>
<td>Not success for high school</td>
<td>Embassy worker, English Instructor, gospel singer</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shin</td>
<td>Aesthetics, English Literature</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Telex operator, document digitization project, university lecturer</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Garman, French, Middle English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chie</td>
<td>Japanese Literature, Translation Studies</td>
<td>Not success for university</td>
<td>Public worker, interpreter, textbook writer, English school owner, English instructor</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takayuki</td>
<td>English Education, Linguistics</td>
<td>Not success for high school and university</td>
<td>Interpreter, translator, textbook writer, English instructor, university professor</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>German, Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

estimated written receptive vocabulary size using the Vocabulary Size Test (Nation, 2007), and their use of English in their professions. Additionally, the participants’ oral proficiency in English was informally assessed by a colleague, who is a native speaker of English. He stated that they have a good command of spoken English; (b) they have long-term English learning experience, but they did not live in an English-speaking country in childhood; (c) they have an interest in English learning.
and education; and, (d) they are willing to discuss their learning experiences. I decided to include six participants in the study because it allowed me to investigate a variety of perspectives, and that amount of data was manageable for the collective analysis.

Selectng the participants.

All the participants I selected are native speakers of Japanese who were English instructors working in the same English faculty in a private university located in western Japan. Some of them are tenured professors or lecturers, and others are part-time university instructors in more than one educational institution. The following is an explanation of how and why I selected these six participants.

I met the participants for the first time in 2006 at a faculty meeting in the university. Although English education used to be provided by the foreign language education department, the university administrators decided to organize a new faculty specializing in English education in the department in 2006 to enhance the students’ acquisition of English. The department hired more than 30 new Japanese part-time instructors that year, and I was one of them. I attended the opening meeting in February 2006, and I met the full-time and part-time faculty for the first time then. In the meeting, everyone introduced him/herself. Hearing their self-introductions, I recognized that this was a group of successful English learners with a variety of interesting backgrounds. Throughout 2006, I was considering my research questions and the methodology for this study—a qualitative investigation
of how Japanese learners of English motivation has changed over time—and I
started to consider asking my Japanese coworkers to become my research
participants. Because I was establishing good relationships with some of them, I
was confident that they would participate in my study and that they were desirable
participants. In the next annual faculty meeting held in February 2007, I asked 11
of my colleagues (six male and five female teachers, whose ages ranged from their
late 20s to late 50s) to participate in a preliminary study (Miura, 2007b) and
received positive replies from six of them. From 2007 to 2009, I conducted the first
interviews with three male and three female participants. The data gathered at this
time were considered part of the preliminary study. I asked five of the six
colleagues who participated in the preliminary study, as well as one new colleague,
to participate in this study, and all of them agreed with my request. I obtained their
written consent (See Appendix A for a Japanese version and Appendix B for an
English version) to participate in the study when we met for the next interviews.

In order to achieve a similar degree of rapport with all the participants, I
avoided asking my friends to become participants in the study. Vis-a-vis, I
maintained an appropriate distance—neither very close nor very distant—with the
participants while conducting the study.

Although all the participants took part in the study primarily on a voluntary
basis, I expressed my gratitude for their participation by giving small gifts, such as
vouchers and pre-paid book cards (approximately 5,000 yen each), and by paying
for their food and drinks at the interviews.
Characteristics of the six participants.

A salient characteristic of the six participants was their advanced English speaking ability. Some Japanese university English instructors are unable to speak English well even though they are able to teach English (e.g., grammar and reading), but this was not the case with the English faculty in the department. This occurred because of the head of the department had extensive experience teaching English in a number of language schools before becoming a university lecturer, and he recruited most of the new instructors utilizing his own personal network when he was put in charge of creating a new faculty, not through publicly posting the positions. As a consequence of this unique recruiting process, the new faculty members had advanced English-speaking proficiency. Furthermore, they came from a variety of backgrounds, which was another advantage of choosing research participants from this group.

Instrumentation

Vocabulary Size Test.

A form of the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) (Nation, 2007) (Appendix C) was used as one of the indicators of the participants’ English proficiency. The test is designed to estimate test takers’ written receptive lexical size of English up to the first 14,000 word families. The initial validation of the VST was confirmed (Beglar, 2010). An example item is as follows:
1. adobe: They have an <adobe>.
   a type of racing dog
   b house made from sun-dried bricks
   c small farm
   d low bed that can also be used for a seat (p. 431 in Appendices)

   The test takers identify the meaning of the target word in a short sentence with no clue from the context by selecting one of four multiple-choice options.

   The VST results presented in Table 1 indicate that the participants’ breadth of written receptive lexical knowledge is between 10,000 and 13,200 word families. Considering the estimates that non-native doctoral students know about 9,000 word families, and well-educated native English speakers have acquired 20,000 words families by the time they reach age 20 (Nation, 2001, p. 9), the results suggest that the participants had acquired exceptionally large written receptive vocabularies.

   **The English Learning History Questionnaire.**

   The English Learning History Questionnaire (See Appendix D for the Japanese version and Appendix E for the English version) was an open-ended questionnaire designed to assist the participants to recall their long-term English learning histories. The participants wrote about their job experience, standardized test results, and English learning histories in chronological order before the interviews were conducted. The questionnaire responses were used as a guide for the first interview.
The Motivational Level Chart.

The Motivational Level Chart (See Appendix F for the Japanese version and Appendix G for the English version) was adapted from a similar instrument designed by Sawyer (2007) for use in an earlier introspective study I conducted (Miura, 2007a) and further developed for a study of retrospective motivational change (Miura, 2010, p. 51).

When administered, the participants read the descriptions provided on the chart and drew their perceived motivational fluctuations concerning their English learning on the chart using five plots that indicate low to high motivational levels. I asked the participants to estimate the strength of their motivation in a relative manner by assessing the highest level of motivation in their learning history as a benchmark 5 and lower levels of motivation than the benchmark as 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0. The participants also wrote notes on the chart during the interviews concerning their English learning and other life events related to their motivational changes, such as the names of the teachers they had had, names of the institutions they had attended, or the names of the communities and countries they had stayed in while studying abroad. These notes provided important information for forming the participants’ learning stories in addition to the oral information recorded during the interviews.

In order to examine to what degree the participants’ memories concerning their English learning and motivational changes were reliable, each participant was asked to complete the chart twice (The two charts are presented in each case study
in Chapter 4 through Chapter 9). The participants drew the first chart at the beginning of or during the first interview and drew the second chart at the beginning of the second interview, which was conducted with at least a one-year interval. The underlying assumption was that the participants would be able to duplicate the task if they remember their past motivational levels well. Because the participants were not informed that they would draw the charts twice, they did not expect to draw the same chart again and reacted to my request at the second interview with a little surprise. When I explained the purpose of completing the chart a second time, they understood and complied with my request. Most participants were curious about how similar or different the two charts were. Most of the participants drew either identical or charts that were quite similar to the first ones. This indicated that the participants’ memories about their English learning histories and their perceptions of motivational changes were relatively stable, which partially validated the retrospective approach used to gather data in this study to a certain extent.

**Interviews**

A series of interviews were the primary means for gathering data. Table 3 presents information concerning the dates, length, and location of the interviews. The interviews were conducted primarily during the spring and summer breaks from 2007 to 2010. Four participants had two interviews and two participants had three interviews. Each interview took from one to four hours depending on the
The interviews proceeded in an open-ended, flexible, and relaxed manner, frequently over something to eat and drink. The interviews were recorded on an Apple iPod Nano IC recorder in the first interview. Because the quality of the recordings was not particularly good, I used a Sony ICD-UX70 IC recorder and the iPod as a back up in the second interview.
The language used during the interviews depended on the participant, but most of the interviews were conducted in Japanese, the participants’ and the interviewer’s native language. Using Japanese was effective as it allowed me to gather higher quality information and a greater quantity of information. Because the interviews required the participants and me to concentrate for several hours at a time, talking in their native language allowed the participants to feel comfortable, and to recall and describe past events in considerable detail. Using Japanese also allowed me to better recall the course of the conversation and to ask questions that allowed me to gather important information. However, some parts of the interviews were conducted in English: sometimes the participants code-switched, and at other times I asked questions in English. The code-switching was natural and appropriate considering the participants’ high English proficiency.

Because effective interviewing requires practice, my interview skills have gradually improved since conducting the preliminary study. Consulting with a number of books that present interview techniques and skills, such as “listen more, talk less, and ask real questions (Seidman, 2006, pp. 78-86), I developed the following interview strategies and followed them when appropriate: (a) Listen carefully to the participants, (b) Let the participants talk about the past events in chronological order, that is, start the interview with the oldest event and end with the latest event, (c) Elicit specific examples, (d) Keep asking questions until I understand the issues and, (e) Create as comfortable an atmosphere as possible for the participants.
The first interview

The primary purpose of the first interview was to obtain information concerning each participant’s overall motivational trajectory and some of the memorable events that occurred in their learning histories. The interview typically began with my explanation of the purpose of the study. I then asked the participants to read and sign the consent of participation in the study, and requested that they complete the Motivational Level Chart. The following is an example transcription of the beginning of the first interview with Sakiko and the English translation (S refers to the participant, and I refers to the interviewer):

(グラフを書き終えて)
S: うーん、わたしはほとんどのだろうですね。
I: ずっと。
S: はい。
I: これは小学校の 3 年生。
S: えっとね、5 年生のときから ECC。
I: 小 5 からですね。ここでもういいきなり英語に興味をもったそのきっかけは。
S: あー私ね、うち親二人がすごく洋画が好きで、もう小学校の 2、3 年くらいのときから、2、3 年くらい。記憶があるときからですね。洋画をよく観てたんですね。字幕付きで。
I: 例えばどんな。
S: えっとね、オズの魔法使いとか、メリーポピンズと、サウンド・オブ・ミュージック。サウンド・オブ・ミュージックとかは、多分ね、もう何十回と観てました。
I: じゃあ、字も読めないうちからもう。
S: でもまあだいたいわかりますし、読めないといってもだいたい。
I: じゃあ、もう英語の音はどんどん入って来てますもんね。
S: うん。で、すごいなんでしょうか。ジュリー・アンドリュースの英語がすごいきれい。
I: 好きになった。
S: そうそうそう。
I: 英語。
S: はい。
(After drawing the chart)
S: Umm… I think my motivation has been like this.
I: Always?
S: Yes.
I: This was when you were a third grader?
S: This was when I was a fifth grader at ECC.
I: It’s from when you were a fifth grader. You had already developed an interest in English at this point. Why was that?
S: Well, my parents really liked western movies, and I watched western movies since the second or third grader, or since my first memories, with (Japanese) subtitles.
I: Could you give me some examples?
I: So you listened to English a lot.
S: Yes, and I thought Julie Andrews’s English was very nice.
I: You liked it.
S: Yeah, yeah.
I: English.
S: Yes. (Case 2: 1-2)

The excerpt provides some ideas for how the interview began and proceeded. It began immediately after the participant completed her motivational chart, on which she indicated that her English learning motivation level had been high when she was 10 years old. I asked her to clarify why this happened, and she began talking about her childhood experience of watching western movies. The excerpt also shows the colloquial and reciprocal characteristics of the interview.

Throughout the first interviews, The Motivational Level Chart guided the participants to recall and talk about their English learning histories. For the interviewer, The Motivational Level Chart, The English Learning History Questionnaire, and a list of case study questions (presented below) were guiding tools that helped me ask questions and obtain necessary information while listening
to the participants. Though conducting the interviews so that the participants told their stories in chronological order was an important strategy for listening to the participants’ talk while asking questions at an appropriate time, it was not always the case; sometimes the discussion moved to various points in time when talk of one particular event prompted the participant to discuss a past event. The information obtained from the first interviews was used to form the first draft of the participants’ English learning stories.

The second and third interviews.

A second and third series of interviews with each participant was conducted subsequent to the first interview. As mentioned above, the participants were asked to draw another motivational chart at the beginning of the second interview so that I could better determine the validity of this approach to retrospective data gathering. In the second interview, I asked follow-up questions specifically focused on the events that I had limited information about. These questions arose as I was transcribing the first interviews and writing the participants’ learning stories. The following excerpt is an example of asking for more information about a certain event in the second interview with Taeko (I refers to the interviewer, and T refers to the participant):

I: 後はリーダーシップキャンプのところ。
I: はい。
T: ただちょっとはっきりしなかったのは、リーダーシップキャンプはリーダーシップを勉強しに来たところなので、具体的に何をやったかというところがま、ひとつはきりしていたのは、フィールドアスレチックのところで、英語が話せない子がいるんだと分かった後でも、彼らは、
I: And at the leadership camp.
T: Yes.
I: I didn’t get what activities the students actually did in the camp as the students came to learn about leadership. One thing that is clear is that they were cooperative and solved the problem in the field athletics by using you well after they learned that you couldn’t speak English, right?
T: Yes, yes.
I: That I’ve written in the story, but it’d be helpful if you could give me some more specific examples for what they did, like the field athletics.
T: Well, the field athletics were outdoor activities, but we had also indoor activities.
I: I see, you had two kinds of activities, outdoors and indoors.
T: Yes, when doing indoor activities, we formed a circle with chairs.
I: With how many people? Twenty? Five?
T: More. About 15 or 20 people. Yes.
I: 200 people were divided.
T: Then each council (i.e., group) had 20 people, plus a leader and sub leader, and the leader gave (each group) topics to each council (i.e., group) to talk about.
I: What topics?
T: Well, what I remembered... I understood almost nothing. What were they talking about. Even the topics. It’s like an hour worrying what I should do if I was asked to talk. (Case 1: 27)
In the excerpts, I asked the participant to provide more specific examples about the activities in the leadership camp she had attended in the Unites States by referring to the field athletic activities she had mentioned in the first interview. Because she stated that attending the leadership camp provided a significant impact on her learning motivation and only briefly mentioned the field athletic activities in the first interview, I imagined that there must have been other activities she had participated in with the American high school students. Responding to my question, she stated that there were both indoor and outdoor activities, and they had had a series of group discussions during the indoor activities. She also stated that engaging in the discussion was difficult because she did not understand the discussion topics. Asking follow-up questions in the second interview prompted the participant to provide more details concerning why attending the camp strongly affected her English learning motivation.

In addition to the follow-up questions concerning the participants’ motivational change, I also asked questions concerning the participants’ change of perceived self after intensively studying English in the second and third interviews.

**E-mail follow-up and feedback.**

When additional questions emerged after the interview sessions were completed, I asked these questions via e-mail. The participants responded to these questions by e-mail. New questions were added to the list of case study questions as the interviews proceeded. For example, a question concerning the influence of
learning other foreign languages on some of the participants’ English learning and
English learning motivation emerged after the second interviews were completed.
To ask these questions, I wrote them in an MS Word document and attached the
document to an e-mail message. The participants responded to each of the questions
by directly typing their responses in the document. Because some of the
participants changed their residence after the final interview, e-mail correspondence
was indispensable for collecting necessary information.

When a draft of each participant’s learning history was ready, I asked each
participant to read the draft and to inform me if any facts or interpretations were
inaccurate. I sent the draft either as a hard copy or as an e-mail attachment to each
participant for revision. The participants edited the hard copy by writing on it
directly and edited the mail attachment using the comment function in Microsoft
Word. This process was repeated in some cases until the participants agreed that the
manuscript was accurate.

Regarding the accuracy of the data, the participants had multiple
opportunities to reflect retrospectively on their learning histories. They responded
to The English Learning History Questionnaire and The Motivational Level Chart,
talked about their learning stories using these questionnaires as guides during the
interviews, and they read their own learning histories when the manuscripts were
ready. These facilitated the participants’ retrospection and contributed to the
accuracy of the data.
Case Study Questions

The following questions and statements functioned as a checklist for the interviews, they were used when writing the learning histories. As noted above, new questions were added and old ones were revised as the data gathering and writing the learning histories proceeded.

1. Issues investigated in the individual case studies

   A. Motivational changes of each participant in chronological order

   B. A learning history of each participant in chronological order

      - How and when they started learning English

      - Events that positively/negatively affected learning motivation

      - How and where they studied English

      - Influential persons who affected their learning motivation

      - Family environment in childhood

      - The influence of learning another foreign language (L3)

      - The influence of high school/university entrance examinations

      - Current state of English study

      - Future goals

      - Other interests

   C. Motivational characteristics of each participant

   D. Changes of perceived self occurred with English study

      - Whether such changes took place

      - What specific events triggered self-perceived changes
What changes emerged
- Whether these self-perceived changes could have occurred even if the participants had not studied abroad

2. Issues investigated in the collective analysis.

A. The initial proposition 1: Successful learners have experienced one or more motivational declines but overcome those declines
- Self-perceived change occurs in successful learners

B. Salient motivational sources
- Positive motivational sources
- Negative motivational sources
- The keys to sustained motivation

Analyses
Two types of analyses were conducted. The first type was an individual case study analysis that was used to investigate each participant’s learning history and motivational changes. This was done by transcribing the interview recordings and writing the learning histories of each participant. This document constituted a case study of each participant. The second type was a collective analysis of the six case studies. After the individual case studies were completed, initial proposition 1 concerning sustained motivation was examined and salient motivational factors were analyzed for all the case studies.
Transcribing the interviews.

The recordings gathered in the interviews were transcribed for case study analysis. I played the MP3 files and transcribed the recordings into Microsoft Word files. The transcriptions for each case study were compiled as one file, and the page numbers of these files were used for direct citations. Both the questions I asked and the participants’ responses were transcribed. Situational descriptions were added in parentheses to the documents when necessary. These descriptions clarified the meaning of pauses and the reasons for the topic changes that appeared in the transcription (See an example in the interview section above).

Writing the learning histories.

I began each case study by describing each participant’s background. I then read the transcriptions of the first interview and highlighted the important events in each participant’s learning history that were related to their motivational changes. I also highlighted parts of the transcription that could be used as excerpts in the participants’ learning history. These excerpts illustrated and highlighted important events and experiences in the participants’ lives. Next, I made pre-writing notes in which these events were ordered chronologically because sometimes the order of events in the transcription moved back and forth in time. After the notes were ready, I started to write each participant’s learning history guided by the pre-writing notes, transcriptions, and the motivational chart.
Comprehensible and readable excerpts.

Information obtained from multiple sources, that is, the first, second, and third interviews, the follow-up e-mail communication, and feedback from the participants, was integrated when writing the excerpts that appear in the manuscript. In the process of creating the case study manuscripts, I took liberty with the transcriptions in order to make the case studies more comprehensible and readable. The rationale underlying this decision was that the original transcriptions were made up of colloquial linguistic forms embodied in question-response interactions between the participant and interviewer; for this reason, they were not entirely comprehensible and readable (See the transcription examples on pp. 106-107 and pp. 108-109). In the same light, when translating the excerpts into English, direct translations were not entirely comprehensible, and the order of the ideas was sometimes changed to better reflect the organizational and grammatical patterns of English. The following excerpt is a paragraph from the final version of a case study that shows how the information obtained in the original transcription of the first interview (shown on pages 112-113 of this chapter) was transformed, integrated with more specific and detailed information obtained in the second and third interviews and e-mail correspondence, and written to represent one part of the participant’s learning history:
Her interest in English was nurtured by her parents’ entertainment choices when she was a child. They were big fans of American movies and regularly enjoyed watching a variety of movies at home. Because of the family environment, Sakiko started watching English-language films with Japanese subtitles from around the age of five or six. Her favorite movies were The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Mary Poppins, Gremlins, Goonies, Never Ending Story, Willow, and, The Sound of Music. Although she also enjoyed animated films, such as those by Walt Disney and Hayao Miyazaki, her favorites were the classic movies, such as Sound of Music.

特に『サウンド・オブ・ミュージック』なんて大好きで。ジュリー・アン ドリュースの英語もきれいだなと思ったし。何十回も繰り返して観たので、 シーンで出てくる台詞を覚えて言えるほどでした

I especially liked Sound of Music. The beautiful scenes and Julie Andrews’s beautiful English voice were attractive. As I saw the same film dozens of times, I remembered some scenes from the film and could recite some exact phrases from the films. (Case 2: 1-2) (Chapter 5, p. 161)

In this excerpt, I stated the reason why the participant became interested in English in her childhood—she watched western movies as a child because of her parents’ influence. I described her parents’ affection for American movies, listed a number of movies that she liked, and used her own comment about her favorite movies in order to convey her enthusiasm about watching movies. An English translation of the comment was added. Information from two interviews and follow-up e-mail correspondence were blended to create the excerpt, colloquial utterances were transformed to a more readable form, and the interviewer’s questions were eliminated. The outcome is a comprehensible and readable excerpt, which effectively conveys the participant’s meaning.
While writing the participants’ learning histories, sketchy or unclear information was sometimes identified. In these cases, I took notes on the manuscript so that I could ask follow-up questions. In the second interview, I used the first draft and asked the follow-up questions to elicit further information.

After transcribing the second and third interview recordings, the first draft was revised by reorganizing the order of events, adding new information obtained during those interviews, correcting any misunderstandings, and using more appropriate expressions. After each learning history was completed, the sections focusing on each participant’s motivational change and their change of perceived self were written. All the manuscripts were proofread by a native speaker of English.

**Collective analysis of the six case studies.**

Initial proposition 1 concerning sustained motivation was examined over the six case studies. I identified the points in the participants’ learning histories when their motivation clearly dropped and resurged and discussed underlying reasons for these motivational fluctuations. These reasons were further discussed as common reasons among all the participants.

Next, salient motivational sources were identified for the six case studies in order to identify the keys to sustained motivation. “Salient” here meant that the motivational source appeared (a) in four or more of the six case studies, or (b) in fewer than four case studies, but in this case, the issue was important to those participants.
The analysis was carried out using the following labeling process. First, I read each of the six case studies, and put labels in the margin of manuscripts when identifying motivational sources. Examples of the labels are “parents’ influence,” “watching western movies,” “competing with friends,” “liking English,” “liking teacher,” “reading paperbacks,” “study abroad,” “independent,” “entrance exams,” and “interest in speaking.” During this process, I noticed that some labels were repeated over several case studies. For example, “parents’ influence,” “communication experience,” “study abroad,” and “entrance exam” appeared repeatedly. When a label appeared in several of the case studies, that motivational source was considered salient. Furthermore, some labels were grouped under an umbrella label that bound the subordinate labels. For instance, “parents’ support,” “parents’ attitudes,” and “role models” were placed in a more inclusive category “influence of people;” “Self-understanding,” “independent,” and, “optimistic” were grouped under “personality.” The entire labeling process proceeded in an extended back-and-forth manner in which the names of labels and groups were revised repeatedly. Consequently, seven motivational sources, each of which was made up of several subordinate items, were identified.

The collective analysis of the six case studies resulted in a new conclusion concerning sustained motivation and the emergence of a new construct.
Case Study Report

The six case studies, which constitute Chapters 4 through Chapter 9, are composed of three sections. The first section provides background information about each participant, including a description of how I met the participant, my impressions of the participant, and general information concerning the participant’s English learning achievement. Each participant’s background information is summarized and presented in a table. The second section is each participant’s English learning history, which constitutes the primary section of the case study. The participants’ learning histories were written based on The English Learning History Questionnaire, The Motivation Level Chart, the transcriptions of the interviews, interview notes, e-mail correspondence, and the participants’ feedback. Proper nouns were changed to preserve anonymity. The participants’ Japanese quotes precede the translations wherever Japanese excerpts are presented in the case studies. Even considering that the audience for this study is primarily English readers, this order is appropriate; the original quotes should be placed first followed by the translations. The third section concerns the focused analysis of each participant’s motivational changes and self-perceived changes. For the motivational changes, the Motivational Level Charts obtained in the first and second interviews and duplicated using Microsoft Excel are presented in the section, and the differences and similarities of the two charts, and the salient characteristics of each participant’s motivational changes are discussed.
The collective analysis of the six case studies is presented subsequently in Chapter 10, which is composed of three sections: (a) Fundamental issues concerning the participants and their learning motivation, (b) Salient motivational sources that appeared in the participants, and (c) Key to success in foreign language learning. The analysis concerning initial proposition 1 is included in the last section.
CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY 1: TAEKO

*A considerate communicator good at adapting herself*

Profile

Taeko, who was 25 years old when I met her in 2006, was probably one of the youngest members in the group of teachers whom I met in the opening faculty meeting. In her self-introduction, she said that she had just finished her master’s degree. I started to talk with her because we taught on the same day of the week. She was a little worried about meeting the students on the first day of the first semester, but her nervousness was understandable because that day was the start of her teaching career. After finishing the first class, she told me that a male student said that she was younger than he had expected and he asked her about her salary immediately after she entered the classroom. I suppose that Taeko’s sweet and friendly attitude probably allowed him to ask such a rude and inappropriate question to her in the first class. She appeared to gradually become accustomed to teaching at the university over the next two years. It was about one year since my first meeting with her that I asked her to talk about her English learning.

Table 4 presents a summary of Taeko’s profile. She started studying English at age 13 after beginning mandatory English classes in junior high school. Before that, she attended English lessons for small children conducted by her mother’s Japanese friend once a week for approximately two years when she was a
kindergartener. She remembers enjoying the lessons because, unlike other lessons, such as the piano lesson that she was taking, she did not have to practice English at home and the other students in the class were her kindergarten friends. Going to the

Table 4. Summary of Taeko’s Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of starting learning English</td>
<td>Age 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years studying English</td>
<td>13 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Major</td>
<td>Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School Major (MA)</td>
<td>International Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Employment: University English instructor, worker at a foreign traveler center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length in English speaking countries</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest CBT TOEFL score (Year)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEIC score (Year)</td>
<td>920 (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated written receptive vocabulary size</td>
<td>11,500 word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foreign language learning experience</td>
<td>Chinese (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean (1.5 years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

class primarily meant visiting her friend’s house and playing games with her friends. However, considering the small amount of English used in the lessons, she believes that she has been studying English for only 13 years, starting with junior high school. After finishing junior high school, she chose an English major course in high school, but she majored in non-English subjects, commerce and
international communication, both as an undergraduate and in graduate school. She has a large written receptive English vocabulary of approximately 11,500 word families considering the relatively short length of her total learning history.

The first interview, which lasted about two hours, was conducted in the evening of April 7, 2007 at a relatively busy restaurant in Osaka. The second interview was conducted in the afternoon on September 9, 2008 at my apartment and at a quiet restaurant near the apartment. This interview lasted about four hours. Both interviews were conducted completely in Japanese.

**English Learning History**

Taeko’s memories of junior high school English classes were by and large unremarkable. English was a relatively easy subject for her, so she was able to obtain good grades without studying very hard. The teacher conducted the class primarily using a grammar-translation approach. The textbook featured one grammar rule in the beginning of each unit, and the teacher described that rule in detail in Japanese. The students read the text aloud. The featured grammar point was embedded in conversations between Ted, an English boy, and Mika, a Japanese girl. Relatively young Japanese teachers taught her cohort throughout the three years of junior high school, and their instruction was mostly in Japanese. About once a semester, a native English instructor was sent by the city board of education to teach the class. However, the teacher’s visits were so infrequent that she did not remember his or her face. Her feelings toward English in junior high school were
not notably different from other school subjects when she started studying—it was not yet a favorite subject, but one that she just liked. Her enthusiasm toward English grew gradually during the three-year period, and this led her to choose to attend a public high school that place a greater emphasis on English than ordinary public high schools.

Although Taeko entered a high school that offered a special English program, she was not particularly enthusiastic about learning English in her first year at the high school. Her Japanese teachers conducted the reading course primarily using the grammar-translation method, and a team of two assistant native English-speaking teachers and one or two Japanese teachers taught the communication practice course. The students varied considerably in terms of their English proficiency levels and liking of English:

Some top students were, of course, really good, but others were average. There were even some students who said, “I don’t like English,” and there were some students who soon quit the program. Although only the students who were good at English had enrolled, some students developed a dislike for English because they couldn’t keep up with the coursework after enrolling in the program. (Case 1: 6, 22-23)

Taeko’s performance was not outstanding in her high school English classes, but she did not fall behind even though the levels of English courses became

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4 I present the participants’ Japanese quote prior to the English translation in excerpts throughout the chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 as described in Chapter 3.
increasingly challenging. Obtaining a little confidence, she enjoyed learning English more as a high school student compared with when she was in junior high school.

Taeko changed her attitude toward English in the summer of her sophomore year. One day, she found a notice on the bulletin board in her high school about a two-week study abroad program in Seattle hosted by the prefectural board of education. She was interested in the program and asked her parents if she could apply for it. After gaining her parents’ approval, she applied for the program and was selected as one of the ten participants. Applying for the program was unusual behavior for her, as she neither had a strong intention to go abroad nor had she been looking for a study abroad program. Moreover, she usually preferred to be with her friends, for example, when eating lunch, walking from one class to the next, and even going to the bathroom; however, it was entirely her decision to apply for the program. The other participants in the program were all unknown to her, as they were selected from other high schools in the same prefecture.

This two-week homestay experience in Seattle exerted an extremely strong impact on her attitude toward English and resulted in changes in her behavior. She talked about the importance of the experience in her first interview:

ものすごく影響を受けた出来事でしたね。そのあとで性格変わったんですねよ。母にもそう言われました。それまではどちらかというとおとなしくて、ネガティブなことも言ったりしたんですけど、「無理かも。」とか。もっと積極的にいろんなことを自分からやるようになりましたね。
It was one of the most influential events in my life. My personality even changed after that. My mother acknowledged the change too. I used to be relatively quiet and occasionally said negative things, such as, “I may not be able to do it.” I became more active and positive, and I’ve tried many things since then. (Case 1: 4, 7, 23, 30)

Taeko described her two weeks in Seattle by saying, 「花の一週間、あとに地獄の一週間。」 “The first week was like heaven, and the second week was like hell” (Case 1: 5). Although she said it jokingly, it was not a joke in some sense.

In the first week, the program participants stayed with their host family, which was enjoyable for Taeko. Communicating with her host family was not problematic as her host mother spoke some Japanese; Taeko even had to ask her to speak English so that she could practice English more.

In the following week, however, the Japanese students had to join a leadership camp for about 200 local high school students, who were board members of a students’ committee in their respective high schools. These American students were divided into groups of 20, each of which had one Japanese student as a group member. Each group was given a series of discussion topics as in-door activities and a series of problems to solve as outdoor activities. Neither the Japanese nor the local students were informed that they would have to spend the week together. It was almost the first experience for the Japanese students to use English with American teenagers in a truly communicative context, and for most of the American students, it was the first time to deal with non-native, non-proficient English users. All the Japanese students gathered together and everybody cried at
the end of the first day because they did not feel that they would be able to survive the rest of the week. Taeko was no exception. She was unable to comprehend the American students’ English on the first day, and she was able to speak only a very short sentence even though she had been studying English for about five years in junior and senior high school. She expressed her struggles on that first day in the following excerpt:

I didn’t understand most of the discussion topics, so I don’t remember so much… One topic I remember was “The biggest injury in life.” I vaguely understood the topic as I read the word “injury” on the board and heard other students saying something like, “Sounds painful!” When my turn came, I thought about getting my ears pierced in a mall during the previous “heaven week.” I thought that it was a kind of injury, so I said, “I got pierce holes … in America,” with pointing out my earlobe with my fingers. That’s the only thing I could say. (Case 1: 28)

Although joining the discussion was a miserable experience for her, at the same time, she was impressed by the American students’ patient and open-minded attitudes after they understood her insufficient English abilities. They repeated what they had said when she did not seem to understand and always reacted in a friendly manner when she expressed her opinion. Furthermore, they always treated her as a part of the team. For example, when they had a problem to solve in field athletics, they discussed how to use Taeko effectively.
For example, when all the members had to stand on a certain size of wooden stump, because I was the smallest, I was told, “You’ve got to get on someone’s back, in order to get everyone on” (Case 1: 28).

In addition to their friendly attitudes, their behavior at the closing party on the last day of the camp also impressed Taeko.

They dressed formally and behaved as if they were already adults. They were very good at dancing, too. They looked relaxed and appeared to enjoy the party. We have a typical image of Japanese good students, who are student committee members, very serious, and don’t hang out with friends, but these elite American students were able to shift their attitudes from work mode to recreation mode. The Japanese students, including myself, looked immature even though all of us were the same age. They gave us a standing ovation when we presented a bon-odori (a traditional Japanese dance) even though we hadn’t practiced much. I didn’t expect such a reaction, and I thought that they were very mature. (Case 1: 8-9, 28)

Meeting these mature, sophisticated students, “I learned that there were much greater people in the world. I wished to grow up and be like them and communicate with them again using better English” (Case 1: 4, 29).
These strong feelings that emerged inside of Taeko affected her behavior after coming back to Japan. She was determined to study harder, and especially to study English more seriously. One example of her determination to improve herself was that she immediately told her boyfriend that she had to leave him because she thought that being with a person like him, who did not appear serious about studying and who often stayed out at night, was not good for her.

Because of her experience in Seattle, Taeko’s motivation to study English primarily concerned communicating with others. She wanted to communicate more effectively with her host family and the American students whom she had met in Seattle if she had the opportunity to meet them again. In order to become a more skilled English communicator, she started doing her homework carefully everyday. She explained her rationale as follows:

Every unknown English word was a constituent of the language of my host family and the students in Seattle, so I would need to know it some day when I spoke to them again. I thought, “This will be needed someday,” and “That will be needed someday, too.” So I didn’t leave any unknown words that I encountered each day without looking them up in a dictionary (Case 1: 8).

Using the same rationale, she reread the English materials that she was given in the leadership camp. She wanted to understand what they said, even though they had been largely incomprehensible when she was actually at the camp.
She gradually developed the habit of studying English vocabulary regularly; thus, her newfound ability to make a little progress in her English studies everyday started around the time she returned from Seattle.

Even though her main goal was to become a good English communicator, she needed to focus on preparing for the university entrance examinations around the spring semester of her sophomore year of high school, so she started attending a cram school once a week where she studied three subjects tested on the entrance examinations, English, history, and Japanese.

Despite the intensity with which she was studying English after returning from the United States, she did not choose an English related university major, such as English literature or linguistics, based on the advice that she received from her high school and cram school teachers. They suggested that choosing a more general major would be preferable because this would allow her to have more options in the future compared with majoring in some aspect of English. However, Taeko’s hope was to study English communication, and she wanted to have time to do so at the university. As a result, she selected commerce as her undergraduate major. She considered commerce to be a non-technical major; therefore, she thought that she would have time to study English, and that included studying abroad in the exchange program offered by the university.

Taeko studied hard for the next one and a half years in order to pass the entrance examination of the prestigious private university she hoped to enter. Because university entrance examinations in Japan involve multiple subject areas,
she needed to study classical Japanese and history in addition to English. Though she was not particularly interested in those two subjects, she studied hard because she understood that studying them would allow her to pass the examination. She thought that once she was in the university she would be able to fully and freely focus on studying English.

I studied eight to nine hours a day for one and a half years in order to pass the university entrance examination. After finishing the examination, I thought I could use all the time that I was using for studying history and classical Japanese for studying English. I thought I had to enter the university in order to do so. (Case 1: 10)

After about 18 months of intensive study, Taeko passed the entrance examination of the prestigious private university; however, she did not study English very much in the first two years in the university in part because the commerce department only provided English as a general subject, and one that was not considered to be particularly important in the department. Taeko described one of her English courses as follows:

英文読のクラスが週2日でありました。先生は日本人で、90分間完全な訳読でした。先生が、「はい、何々君。」と当てて、当てられた子が読んで訳す、その繰り返しでした。先生と学生の間に何のコミュニケーションもなく。一応、学習していたので優を取りましたが、授業は退屈で苦痛でした。
There was an English reading course offered twice a week that was taught by a Japanese teacher. It was 90-minute reading by translation. The teacher called on one student after another, and the appointed student read the text and translated the sentences one after another. That’s all. No communication took place between the teacher and students. I studied for the class and got an A, but it was a boring and even painful class for me. (Case 1: 10)

A second reason that Taeko failed to study English to the degree that she had planned was that she felt that it was appropriate to enjoy the newly acquired freedom that she had in the university; thus, she spent a considerable amount of time with her new friends and doing club activities. For example, she enjoyed going skiing and snowboarding in the winter, and playing tennis and camping in the summer with the club members. She also enjoyed staying overnight with her friends from time to time. It seemed that Taeko wanted to enjoy herself in ways that had not been possible during the one and half years that she devoted to studying for the entrance examination. It was ironic that even though Taeko had been inspired by the students in Seattle and she had tried to become like them, she temporarily forgot about her initial inspiration after finally achieving her goal of entering the prestigious university.
I was very tired after studying very hard for the whole year for the entrance exams, and afterward, I was totally free for a year. I had a part-time job for the first time, made new friends came from other areas, and visited these friends to eat meals together at their apartments. It’s a totally new world. I joined a club, went skiing and snowboarding with my friends in winter, and played volleyball in the gym. It’s very free and very different from high school, and I thought this might be interesting compared with the last year… as I entered the department in the university I aimed, I thought it’s OK to have a rest for a while (Case 1: 10-11)

In addition to the above two reasons, her personality, which she acknowledged was strongly influenced by her environment, contributed to this outcome. She explained this in the following way:

基本的に環境に流されやすいです。人からもよく言われます。特に、高校と大学の初めの頃はそうだったと思います。最近でも、パリに行ったらヨーロッパいいなとすごく思うし、韓国ドラマ観たら韓国語覚えたいなと思うし。逆に自分の興味のないことは全然聞いてないと、よく親に言われます。でも一度火がついたら止められないと。

Basically, I’m easily influenced by my environment. People often tell me that, too. This was especially true around the time when I was in high school and when I started going to the university. Even recently, I felt that Europe was great when I visited Paris, or I started to want to learn Korean when I watched a Korean television series. My parents often say that I don’t listen when I’m not interested in something but that I can’t stop once something strongly captures my attention. (Case 1: 33-34)

This facet of her personality was relatively clearly illustrated in her reactions after staying in Seattle when she met the elite students, after entering the university when she spent two years without studying English, and after the event described below. In each situation, she was placed in a completely new environment that she liked a great deal.
Another opportunity in which she experienced a new environment that influenced her motivation to learn English occurred unintentionally: Taeko and her mother visited her mother’s friend in Melbourne, Australia during spring break at the end of her sophomore year in the university. It had been more than three years since her memorable visit to Seattle. By visiting another English-speaking country, she had an opportunity to use English again. This trip provided a second chance for her to revive her English learning motivation. 「私はいったい何をしてたんだろうと思いました。やりたかったことがあったのに、英語がちゃんとできるようになりたいと思っていたのにとって。」“I regretted what I had been doing. I remembered what I wanted to do: study English and become a good English communicator” (Case 1: 11-12) During the trip, she thought that she would like to return to Australia—she wanted to be able to order food at a café perfectly when she failed to smoothly order at a restaurant and to make a telephone call in good English when she saw a Japanese student who was studying in Melbourne talking to someone on a cell phone. Although her overall reaction—she hoped to become proficient in English and return to Australia—was similar to the one that she had after her experiences in Seattle in which she had hoped to become proficient in English and return to Seattle, she felt more determined to achieve her goals than three years previously.

After returning from her trip to Australia, Taeko started her junior year at the university. This is a time when the majority of Japanese students start to search for a job; however, unlike the other students, she decided to study in Australia after
graduating rather than finding a job in Japan. She chose Australia rather than Seattle or another American city because she learned that the city was relatively safe and had a low cost of living when she visited there. Her parents also preferred Australia because it had a gun control law; this was one of the conditions that the country must meet if Taeko was going to be able to stay there for a long period of time. Initially, she thought that studying at a language school would be fine, but her parents, older brother, and other people around her suggested that she should go to graduate school because she would have already finished her undergraduate studies in Japan.

Once her goal of going to graduate school in Australia was set, she concentrated on realizing that goal. In order to prepare for the English language demands that she would face, she began taking private lessons to pass the IELTS, a commonly used English proficiency test that foreign students who want to enroll in academic institutions in England and Australia need to pass. She studied approximately four hours a week to further develop her essay writing and speed reading skills. She also attended an English course once a week at a different university, which was introduced to her by her private English tutor. Simultaneously with all of her other activities, she worked part-time in order to save money for the trip, found an agent that arranged her study-abroad plan, and attended seminars concerning studying abroad that helped her prepare for studying at a graduate school in a foreign country.
 Taeko flew into Australia soon after graduating from the Japanese university in March at the age of 22. She studied English in an ESL program in a language school affiliated with a university in southeast Australia. She attended the general English courses four hours a day, five days a week, for over 25 weeks. After the six months of intensive English study, she enrolled in the School of International Communication in the university. She chose that major because she could study with individuals from many different countries. She primarily studied communication concerning cultural differences, such as, international public relations, media, and cross-cultural communication. In the international public relations course, for example, she discussed how to reinvigorate the deteriorating tourism industry in Thailand, which had been seriously damaged by a terrorist attack in 2004. She clearly remembered some of her experiences in the media course:

Each student wrote a feature article. I wrote about English abbreviations. I was interested in the young people’s abbreviations, such as “c” or “u” and more and more new words were appearing. I started using them, too. I thought that the older generation didn’t understand these new words and that a similar phenomenon may be happening in Japan. I asked one of my native English-speaking friends to write a paragraph full of those abbreviations, and used it as the introduction of my article. (Case 1: 38-39)
Studying subjects that she had never studied in Japanese, and doing it all in English, was challenging for Taeko. As a matter of fact, she went home crying after the first several sessions of the program. She explained her tears as, 「やっていけるのかなっていう不安な涙と、自分はまだまだなのに、こんなところに来てしまったという悔し涙かな。」 “They would be tears of anxious feelings if I could survive in this program, and tears of bitter feelings that I am still not able to catch up with the class though I joined this program” (Case 1: 39). She also felt that the other foreign students’ English skills were better than hers, though her perception of the situation probably differed from the reality.

For the next two years, she always felt that she needed more time to comprehend the lectures, prepare for the discussions, and complete the assignments. However, she never wanted to quit the program, however hard the every day work was. This was because she knew that she was finally doing what she had wished to do for a long time: study English in an English-speaking country. She talked about that time as follows:

I studied there (Australia) as much as I had studied for the university entrance examinations, but this time it was all in English. It was very hard, but I never wanted to quit. It was different from studying for the entrance exams. Because basically I liked it, or it’s what I wanted. I have never disliked English. I have never thought about how to increase my motivation to learn English. (Case 1: 16)
During the two-year stay in Australia, Taeko lived with the same host family. One reason for this long homestay was that it allowed her to maintain an environment in which she had to use English out of class everyday. The other, and more important reason was because of her extraordinary host mother, Rose, who educated Taeko for the two years she spent in Australia. Rose, a single mother with two children, was Singaporean and bilingual in Singaporean and Chinese. She taught Chinese in a local high school. Because Rose was a foreign language teaching specialist, she treated Taeko like her own students—very strictly. For example, Rose frequently corrected Taeko’s errors, such as the difference between /n/ and /ng/, and had Taeko repeat the same word over and over until she could pronounce it correctly. Rose was also very concerned about the people to whom Taeko was talking everyday. She believed that spending time only with Japanese friends was harmful to Taeko’s progress in learning English and that Taeko should always be with at least one foreign or local student so that she would be communicating in English. In order to make sure that Taeko always used English, Rose pressured her to do what was necessary to improve her English: ‘今日は誰とどこに行くの。’ いつも聞かれました。「日本人だけと出かけちゃダメ。」 とか、日本人の友達と電話してたら、「もう切りない？」 とか言われてました。「Where are you going, with whom?’ I was frequently asked by Rose. ‘Don’t go out with only Japanese friends,’ and, ‘Hang up soon,’ when I was talking on a phone with my Japanese friend’ (Case 1: 17, 18).
Rose also encouraged Taeko to use English as much as possible, for example, by letting her answer the house phone, taking her to many different places, such as local events, church, and family friends’ parties, and doing part-time work in order to communicate with a wide variety of people.

“Ask people,” Rose said, for example, when I don’t know where the jam section is at a supermarket, “It’s a chance to practice. Ask people before trying to find the section by yourself. Ask even when you know where it is.” (Case 1: 17)

Some of Taeko’s friends felt that Rose was too strict and they openly wondered why Taeko stayed with her for such a long time. However, Taeko understood why Rose educated her so strictly; Rose’s approach matched Taeko’s purpose for coming to Australia, so Taeko did not mind Rose’s extreme strictness. Moreover, Taeko’s tendency to be easily influenced by her environment worked positively in the time that she spent with Rose because she adapted herself and behaved in the ways that Rose preferred. Consequently, Taeko’s ability to communicate in English developed a great deal during the two years that she lived with Rose. Also, Rose pointed out that Taeko’s degree of improvement was much greater than her friends who shared a room with other Japanese friends. Taeko recognized that Rose was right.

Rose was not only a strict educator; she also played the role of a powerful motivator:
Initially, I could only say, “Yes,” to everything that Rose said even though I wanted to disagree with her. But, I could say at the end of the homestay, “I need to meet her today because she has some problems to talk about,” when Rose tried to stop me from meeting my Japanese friend. It motivated me to communicate better with Rose and understand one another more through communication. Though Rose has a Singaporean accent, she is a native English speaker, so I wanted to speak like her. I also admired her because she speaks several dialects of Chinese and worked hard as a single mother. Thanks to her, my motivation to learn English can never decrease. (Case1: 36, 37)

Taeko believes that if Rose had been an ordinary, more business-like person, she would have probably not continued her homestay for over two years and that her communication skills would not have developed to the same degree.

Besides English, Taeko also had an opportunity to study Korean for about a half year while she was in Australia. She had a number of Korean friends and wanted to communicate with them in Korean. During her stay, she worked as a waitress at a Japanese restaurant managed by a Korean owner. While mastering English was her primary goal, she was motivated and enjoyed learning Korean—it was a refreshing “hobby” at a time when she was immersing herself in English. She also liked Korean pronunciation, which differed completely from English. Because of these reasons, her Korean developed beyond a survival level; she was able to
communicate with her Korean friends on a variety of topics. This outcome was clearly different from when she had studied Chinese twice a week as a required foreign language in her freshman and sophomore years as an undergraduate. At that time, she learned little Chinese and stopped learning so quickly that she failed to achieve even rudimentary speaking skills. Although her ability to speak Korean was extremely limited when compared with her advanced level of proficiency in English, this experience further enhanced her English learning motivation, because it made her realize that she had truly learned a great deal of English.

Taeko returned to Japan when she completed her master’s program at the age of 23. Just before finishing the program, she received an unexpected offer from a Japanese university to teach English. The professor from whom she had taken courses in a different university before going to Australia was looking for a number of new part-time instructors to teach in his department (where Taeko and I met), which was undergoing curriculum renewal. Although it was an abrupt decision, Taeko accepted the offer to become an English teacher because she felt that it was a very unusual opportunity for her. It has now been three years since she started to teach at the university. In addition to her university teaching position, Taeko also works at an information center for foreign tourists in Kyoto, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Japan. These two jobs require Taeko to use English on a daily basis.

Even after becoming confident in her ability to communicate in English, Taeko has continued to make an effort to improve her English. For instance, she has
been building her vocabulary using an electronic dictionary. She randomly reads the words and example sentences in the dictionary and adds a word to the electronic word list when she does not know its meaning. When she has a free moment, such as when riding a train or before going to sleep, she frequently studies the list of words in the dictionary. If she can recall the meaning, she deletes the word from the list. When she finds the same word again and finds that she does not recall its meaning, she adds it to the list again. She enjoys learning new words in this way because of the convenience—she can study anytime and anywhere. This method of studying English vocabulary, which she developed based on her “little by little” learning habit after returning from Seattle, also provides her with a rewarding feeling when she eliminates a word from the list. Her large receptive vocabulary size indicates the effectiveness of her lexical learning strategies.

Recently, Taeko admitted that her learning motivation has slightly declined:

"Although I still like English, I don’t look up English words and read English texts as frequently as before. I’m thinking about my teaching job and whether it’s OK to keep doing it” (Case 1: 43). One of the reasons for her dissatisfaction concerns her career choice. Because her career in English education started suddenly and unexpectedly when she was contacted by her previous teacher, and because she had not taken time to seriously consider another career, such as working at a trading company or some other business where English use is required..."
more regularly and seriously, she has doubts about her current path. Though she thinks that teaching English is not a bad profession, and she is accustomed to it, she appears to be confused about whether continuing teaching is what she should do. Teaching English in the university does not require advanced speaking skills because the speaking courses are taught primarily by native English-speaking instructors. She also has few opportunities to use what she learned in her master’s program at the graduate school.

Taeko began to feel this way after meeting a group of students in a lower-level class who appeared unmotivated to learn English. Because of their lack of desire to learn, Taeko sometimes feels that she is wasting her time and not helping them. As a result, she is considering changing her career path from education to another business in which she can use English in a way that she feels can truly help people. For this reason, her motivation toward English learning is subtly fluctuating as she is deciding her future career.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 10 and 11 show Taeko’s self-perceived motivational levels that she drew at the first and second interviews with a 15-months interval. The charts display a similar pattern, which indicates that her perceived motivational trajectory in her learning history is relatively coherent. However, one noticeable difference appears in the additional year in Figure 11: Her motivational level dropped slightly at the age of 26, information that was added at the second interview.
The Use of Communicative English Abroad

Taeko’s English learning motivation has risen and fallen even though she has never disliked English. The sharpest increases occurred when she faced situations involving the use of communicative English abroad. Because of her tendency to be influenced easily by her environment and her powerful ability to concentrate on achieving a goal once she is motivated to do so, living in English-speaking countries and/or having opportunities to use English for communication appear to be the most powerful sources of her long-lasting English learning motivation.
Taeko’s motivation was moderate during the first four years even though she stated that she liked English and English classes and her choice to enter a high school that placed a greater emphasis on English than ordinary Japanese high schools. However, her learning motivation suddenly surged because of the two-week stay in Seattle in her second year of high school. It was her first trip to an English-speaking country, and she used English communicatively for the first time. Furthermore, the American high school students whom she met in the leadership camp provided her with a great source of learning motivation. This experience was shocking to Taeko as it was at that time that she discovered how limited her ability to communicate in English was. At the same time, the experience was uplifting because she was touched by the kindness and maturity the elite American students had demonstrated. As a result of that experience, she strongly wished to become like them and to improve her English skills, and her goal to become a proficient user of English, and to focus particularly on developing her oral communication skills became salient in her mind.

Taeko’s motivation might have diminished if her mother had not taken her to Melbourne at the end of her sophomore year in the university. That trip reawakened in Taeko the realization that she wanted to become a proficient communicator in English. At the same time, she regretted how little she had learned the previous two years, and she reassured herself that she would achieve her primary goal. Her motivation resurged after the trip, and this led to her decision to study in graduate school in Australia after finishing her undergraduate studies. She
successfully completed the master’s degree in International Communication after devoting herself fully to the two years of hard work that it entailed.

**Negative Washback of the University Entrance Examinations**

An obvious motivational decrease occurred in Taeko between the two visits to English-speaking countries, and was in part due to negative washback of the university entrance examinations. She had to study intensively for the university entrance examinations, and this meant that she had to focus primarily on passing reading and writing tests. Although she believed that she would be able to focus on studying communicative English after passing the entrance examination, her motivational level dropped sharply immediately after successfully enrolling in the prestigious private university she had worked so hard to enter. Her low level of motivation, which continued for the next two years, occurred for a number of reasons: she majored in Commerce, a subject in which English was not highly valued, she found the university English courses boring, and she felt that it was reasonable to take a break from intensive study after achieving her primary goal of entering the prestigious university. Her experience in the first two years in the university is observed all too frequently among university students in Japan: They study intensively to pass the university entrance examination and then their motivation to continue studying after enrolling in the university decreases dramatically or is lost altogether.
The Influence of Taeko’s Host Mother

One of the most powerful factors contributing to her sustained high motivation throughout Taeko’s master’s program and beyond that period was her host mother, Rose. Rose had an attractive and strong personality, she enforced a strict educational philosophy on Taeko, she was multilingual, and she evinced an independent attitude toward life. After living and communicating with Rose for two years, Taeko’s communicative abilities in English flourished and her learning motivation never faltered during that period of her life. Meeting Rose was a remarkably powerful motivator in her learning history.

Change of Perceived Self in English Learning

Taeko communicated with a number of foreign students who came to Australia from various countries in her MA in the international communication program. These experiences have been the most influential determinants of her self-perception. Even though she was interested in English communication and studied English intensively while in Japan, she had not had opportunities to perceive what she learned and experienced through English learning from cross-cultural or international points of view. One of the changes that occurred concerned her patriotism. In her master’s program, she met a number of students from other Asian countries, such as China and South Korea, and had opportunities to discuss controversial historical and social issues, such as the Japanese invasion and occupation of those counties during WWII and Japanese whaling practices. When
the discussion topic involved WWII, for example, these Asian students openly expressed their anger toward what the Japanese army did to their countries and people. In these discussions, Taeko listened to the voices of the other Asian students, and she played a role in which she represented Japan and Japanese people, which gave rise to various thoughts in Taeko:

I learned that Chinese and South Korean students did not have positive emotions toward Japan. I felt offended hearing their criticisms of Japan. I didn’t clearly understand why I felt offended by their criticisms. It was a new experience for me. I knew that the Japanese army did harmful things in the past, but I wished that these Asian students would look forward rather than persisting in talking about what had happened in the past. I also thought that the Chinese government provided their people restricted information. I was ashamed that I was not able to defend my country by referring to certain historical facts. I could only suggest that they should look toward the future instead of sticking to the past events. Later, I became good friends with a Chinese student, who said, “I slightly changed my view to Japan (after knowing me).” I was pleased to hear that. At the same time, (It’s regrettable that) I didn’t have so much to say about my own country even after becoming proficient in English because I had been so concerned about the English-speaking world. This is commonly said (about English learners in Japan), and I experienced it myself. I thought I should instead learn more about my own country. (Case 1: 45)
Taeko also felt a sense of appreciation toward Japan as her home country after staying in Australia for two years. She said, 「長い間海外にいて、日本はいいなと思うようになりましたね。日本語を使うことも心地よく感じました。日本に家族いて、友達もいて、帰るところがあるということを嬉しく思いました。」 “I started feeling that I like Japan after staying overseas for a long time. I enjoyed speaking Japanese, too. I was glad that my family was there, my friends were there, and Japan was a place to go home” (Case 1: 46). These newly emerged patriotic feelings might have influenced her to choose a part-time job at the information center for foreign tourists in the traditional Japanese city of Kyoto. She wants to help foreign visitors to visit many interesting places in the city, which the majority of guidebooks ignore. She believes that the visitors whom she is helping will tell their acquaintances what they experienced in Japan after returning home. If they have good experiences in Japan, their family and friends might have good impressions about Japan and visit the country some day.

Another change that emerged in Taeko after staying in Australia concerned her perceptions of the universality of people. She had had a good image about people in foreign countries, in contrast to her negative feelings toward some stereotypical Japanese characteristics, such as collectivism and spiteful behavior, which, in some instances has led to bullying in various contexts in Japanese society. Although she had never been bullied, she did not like such stereotypes. In Australia, however, Taeko witnessed similar behaviors among both Australian and foreign students. 「ずっと向こうの人はしっかりしていてクールだと思い込んでいたんで
I had believed that Australians were frank and cool, but they also excluded persons from the group just like some Japanese do. I realized that people behave the same wherever they go” (Case 1: 47).

These two changes, which concerned her Japanese identity, happened to Taeko as a result of looking at Japan from the outside. Before this experience, she was a typical university student in Japan: she dyed her black hair to a brighter brown color and used an expensive European brand-name handbag when going to school. Even though she did not question that behavior at the time, she now sees it as inappropriate and even embarrassing. I asked Taeko, whose hair has returned to its natural color of black since returning from Australia, if these self-perceived changes could occur without a long-term stay overseas. She replied that it is probably possible. She thinks so because when a learner becomes reasonably fluent in English, she will seek the opportunity to use it even if she stays in Japan. If she can find a place or job where she regularly interacts with foreigners, she has opportunities to think about Japan from the outsider’s point of view. She added, “I had never imagined that there’re such occasions (where she regularly interacts with foreigners) inside Japan when I was a college student though” (Case 1: 48).
CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY 2: SAKIKO

A sensible, consistent, and independent learner

Profile

Sakiko is a 29 year-old female English instructor at two universities and a foreign language school in western Japan. I saw her once a week in the part-time teachers’ room in the university where both native and non-native English teachers spent their breaks. She was not particularly talkative, but she engaged in conversations on a variety of topics with many of the teachers. She talks in a clear, low-pitched voice, and the way she speaks both Japanese and English gives the impression that she is confident and independent. The way she dresses is neat and chic, and her long straight black hair and shiny, slightly tanned skin emphasize her natural beauty. When she smiles, a hidden cuteness appears out of the coolness of her demeanor. Overall, she conveys the atmosphere of a person who has grown up in a good family and has developed a high degree of independence.

Table 5 presents a summary of Sakiko’s background. She had been studying English for 19 years at the time that this study was conducted, and her English test scores as measured by the CBT TOEFL (2005) and TOEIC (2006) were exceptionally high.

The first interview with Sakiko was conducted on March 28, 2007, one year after I had first met her, and the second interview was held on March 12, 2008, five
Table 5. Summary of Sakiko’s Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of starting learning English</td>
<td>Age 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years studying English</td>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Major</td>
<td>English Literature &amp; Linguistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate school (MA) Major</td>
<td>TESOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School (MA) (PhD in progress) Major</td>
<td>Applied Linguistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Employment: English instructor at a language school and universities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length in an English speaking country</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBT TOEFL score (Year)</td>
<td>283 (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEIC score (Year)</td>
<td>980 (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated receptive vocabulary size</td>
<td>10,000 word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foreign language learning experience</td>
<td>Chinese (1 year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French (2 years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

months before she left for the United States to study in a PhD program. The interview site was a relatively quiet tearoom located in her hometown. The first interview lasted about two hours, and the second interview lasted about three hours. Both interviews were conducted mostly in Japanese; a small percentage of the interviews took place in English.

**English Learning History**

「私の場合、モチベーションはずっと高いです。」 “In my case, my learning motivation has always been high” (Case 2: 1). The first interview with
Sakiko started with this comment. She began studying English when she was 10 years old, a fifth grader in elementary school. This is three years earlier than most Japanese students, as formal English education in Japan begins in the first year of junior high school, when students are 12 or 13 years old. She attended a private English course for children once a week where she practiced simple conversations taught by a Japanese housewife, who was also a part-time English teacher. Her mother found the English class after the family moved to their current home and asked Sakiko if she wanted to attend it. She thought that it sounded interesting, so she began taking classes and continued doing so for two years.

Sakiko’s interest in English was nurtured by her parents’ entertainment choices when she was a child. They were big fans of American movies and regularly enjoyed watching a variety of movies at home. Because of the family environment, Sakiko started watching English-language films with Japanese subtitles from around the age of five or six. Her favorite movies were The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, Mary Poppins, Gremlins, Goonies, Never Ending Story, Willow, and The Sound of Music. Although she also enjoyed animated films, such as those by Walt Disney and Hayao Miyazaki, her favorites were classic movies, such as Sound of Music.

I especially liked Mary Poppins. The beautiful scenes and Julie Andrews’s beautiful English voice were attractive. As I saw the same film dozens of times, I remembered some scenes from the film and could recite some exact phrases from the films. (Case 2: 1-2)
Her mother also liked American musicians, such as Elvis Presley. Although her mother was not good at speaking English, Sakiko commented that her mother preferred western music and films because the culture associated with them reminded her of when she was teenager (Sakiko’s mother was 61 at the time of the first interview). Thus, Sakiko became familiar with the sound of the English language when she was a child.

Her father often listened to classical music at home. Because of her father’s influence, Sakiko started to take electric organ lessons when she was a kindergartner. Similar to the English class she attended as an elementary school student, her father did not force Sakiko to take the organ lessons; from her point of view, taking the organ lessons was natural because she liked them. She shifted from the organ to the piano when she was a first grader and continued taking piano lessons for more than 10 years until she completely stopped when she became a university sophomore. In the 10 years she studied the piano, her ability to play reached an advanced level, so she was able to play pieces by major classical composers, such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Rachmaninoff.

Sakiko’s parents’ frequently encouraged her and her younger brother to become skilled in one area:

親の方針として、「何か一つ専門を持ちなさい。」というのは小さい頃から言われてました。３つ下の弟はスポーツ、私は英語と言楽。何かをしなさいというのではなく、興味のあることがあれば、応援するという感じでした。

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My parents have frequently told me to become a specialist in a particular field since I was a small child. My younger brother was interested in sports, and I was interested in English and music. They didn’t ask us to do anything but encouraged us to do what we’re interested in. (Case 2: 5, 21)

Furthermore, Sakiko’s father sometimes told her and her brother that he did not have a chance to study at college. Although he did not tell Sakiko and her younger brother to go to college, he did encourage them to pursue what they were interested in and he was willing to support their efforts to do so. As a result of the encouragement she received from her parents, Sakiko’s brother worked hard at swimming, playing handball, and practicing rugby when he was a middle school and university student; he eventually became an elementary school teacher and a referee at rugby games. Sakiko responded to her parents’ encouragement by continuing to study English and play the piano, until the time came when she needed to choose only one of those pursuits.

Having taken the private English class for children in the neighborhood, Sakiko wanted to learn more English when she became a junior high school student when the mandatory English classes began. Sakiko always wanted to be the top student in English in her school, and although she did well, she did not always earn a 5 (the Japanese equivalent of an A). In order to improve her English skills further, Sakiko stopped attending after-school English classes from the small neighborhood branch school and began attending classes at the headquarters of the language school. The curriculum in the language school for junior high school students was focused on the four skills of English and the support skills of grammar and
vocabulary. Speech contests were also held occasionally. The class, which met twice a week, was taught by Japanese instructors. Sakiko remembers meeting two exceptional teachers in the program.

They were very good teachers with good English pronunciation, and they taught me a great deal of conversation, grammar, and listening. I liked them a lot. I would probably not have chosen this profession without meeting these language school teachers when I was in junior high school. (Case 2: 4, 36)

In contrast to these talented language school teachers, Sakiko had a teacher who she thought was very unqualified to teach when she was in her final year of junior high school. She said, 「その先生の発音があり得ないほどひどくて。」

“The teacher’s English pronunciation was unbelievably bad” (Case 2: 3-4). Sakiko was determined not to become like that teacher, as she considered her an extremely undesirable model of an English speaker. Perhaps in part because of practicing the piano since the age of six, Sakiko is sensitive about English pronunciation and considers native-like pronunciation an important quality of good English teachers.

After graduating from junior high school, Sakiko enrolled in a high school that had a specialized English program. Because the new English course was begun in the same year that she entered the school, the curriculum was being implemented for the first time with her cohort. A team of instructors was formed from the conventional English teachers of the school. There were seven or eight English
classes per week, a 50-minute class or sometimes two classes everyday. Although English received greater emphasis in the specialized program than in the regular programs, it was not an intensive program in which the students studied only English.

Sakiko’s enrollment in the English program meant that she abandoned the possibility of a piano-related career. She explained her rationale as follows:

.piアノで一番になるのはすごく難しいです。ものすごくお金がかかりますし、競争もすごいです。仮にいい音大を出ても、ピアノの先生どまりで、音楽家として演奏できないかもしれません。でも英語だったら、かなりいいところまで行けるかもしれないと思ったんですね。

It’s extremely difficult to become one of the top piano players in the world. It takes lots of money and lots of competitions. Even if I graduated from the top music university in Japan, I might end up as a piano teacher and rarely play in front of large audiences as an artist. Choosing English as a future career might have more potential to make a pretty good accomplishment (Case 2: 3, 42).

The decision she made at age 15 was realistic. Even though she liked playing the piano, she understood the limitations of trying to become a professional musician, and selected a future career related to English.

In order to further improve her English, Sakiko enrolled in extra English courses in addition to the regular school course while in the high school. For example, she took an English conversation course in a language school as a first-year student, she hired a private tutor in the second year, and she attended a cram school in her final year. These extra courses required Sakiko to study English for long periods of time, but she did not mind because being good at English was an
important goal for her. Her parents supported her efforts to improve her English by paying for the after school courses.

“Let me talk about an important occasion that I tried to think of improving my English skills seriously” (Case 2: 7), Sakiko said when she was talking about learning English in high school. She took part in a three-week home stay program in San Diego, which was a requirement of the high school program, when she was a sophomore in high school. During the homestay, although she experienced some difficulty comprehending what the host family members said, she generally managed to communicate with them successfully. However, one day, she was invited to a dinner with her host family and their friends; she was the only non-native English speaker and the only teenage guest. Unlike the success she felt when engaged in everyday communication with her host family, she suddenly became aware of her limitations in comprehending English that evening at the dinner table: “I didn’t understand their English at all. They’re talking really quick. I was sort of shocked” (Case 2: 7). At that moment, she realized that her host family adjusted their speech rate and decreased the range of the lexis they used when speaking to her. Part of her surprise might have been due to the fact that her English communication skills and her course grades, which were always among the top 10 in the class of 37-38 students, were better than most of her classmates who went to San Diego at the same time. However, the slightly negative event at the dinner table did not suppress her learning motivation; rather, it fueled her willingness to improve. After coming back to Japan, she studied even harder than before.
When Sakiko recently had the opportunity to talk about the homestay experience with a high school friend who went to San Diego with her, her friend mentioned the difficulty she experienced communicating with the members of her host family. The family’s conversations moved so quickly that she did not even try to understand what they were saying. However, she mentioned that Sakiko’s attitude was different from hers. In contrast to her friend, who was mentally blocked from making an effort to understand, Sakiko was always trying to understand even when the conversation went extremely fast. This episode is one indication of Sakiko’s enthusiasm to learn English and the efforts she made to improve her English skills even in the face of a difficult situation.

Another impact of the homestay experience concerned the host family that she lived with. Sakiko thought that the whole family, especially the parents’ educational attitudes toward their three children, was impressive. The parents believed that providing a good education and allowing the children to find their own interests by trying many kinds of activities were extremely important; therefore, even though they were a middle class family, her parents were willing to spend money for the children’s educational activities, such as karate, swimming, track and field, the piano, chorus, figure skating, and basketball. Understanding the parents’ idea, the children studied hard and put a great deal of effort into other activities, such as sports. These attitudes toward the children’s education were similar to the ones that Sakiko had experienced with her own parents.
Sakiko also studied Chinese, as her high school required students to study a second foreign language in their sophomore year. She could have chosen Spanish, in which she had more interest than Chinese, but she chose Chinese because her father believed that Chinese might be useful for her in the future, and he strongly recommended that she should study the language. Because her wish was to study Spanish, her interest in the Chinese language and culture was not very high from the beginning of her studies. In addition, writing everything in Chinese characters and trying to acquire the complex Chinese pronunciation further decreased her learning motivation. Unlike her experience studying English, she was not successful.

Sakiko’s paper and pencil TOEFL score, which was 400 before the homestay, increased to 485 by the time she finished high school. In her case, studying for the university entrance examination accounted for only a small part of the improvement. Because she was able to receive her high school principal’s recommendation, she was able to enroll in a university specializing in foreign language education without taking a regular entrance examination. Instead, she studied English in order to achieve her long-term goals: majoring in English literature and linguistics and engaging in an English-related career.

Despite her strong motivation to learn English, Sakiko spent a disappointing freshman year before experiencing intensive, challenging, and interesting English learning the following year. That year was the only period in her learning history in which her motivation to learn English slightly decreased. Because her TOEFL score was 483, a little below the required 500, she had to enroll in the regular required
English courses for first-year students, and even though the school specialized in foreign languages, most of the other students in the courses seemed to have much lower English proficiency and much less enthusiasm for learning than she had expected:

Really, I was shocked. I studied English very hard for three years in high school. Now I got into the university, and I expected the level of the university must be higher, of course, than the level of the high school. It wasn’t. Also, the level of my classmates wasn’t good. They didn’t understand, for example, the meaning of “it depends on.” Even high school students know that. (Case 2: 8)

In the classes, even those taught by a native English-speaking instructor, the students rarely spoke in English and unenthusiastically participated in group work. The teachers also appeared unenthusiastic about the classes and their attitudes contributed to the demotivating class atmosphere. For example, Sakiko’s partner did not or could not speak during pair-work tasks, so Sakiko became reluctant to continue trying to talk to her unresponsive partner. Working hard in the course did not seem appropriate, as it seemed to Sakiko that neither her teachers nor her classmates were doing so, but even worse, she felt embarrassed to perform well because she would have stood out in a way that would have made everyone feel uncomfortable. The teachers did not seem to try to change the reluctant students’ attitudes because they appeared to hold low expectations of the students. Sakiko thought that the teachers believed that the students would not work hard even if they encouraged them. Because of these discouraging circumstances, she thinks that
she might have lost her English learning motivation to a great extent if she had stayed in the same program for the rest of her time in the university.

Somewhat surprisingly, Sakiko’s TOEFL score increased from 483 to 543 after studying in the discouraging first-year courses. Even though she was strongly disappointed with the course, she did not stop learning. This was because she was aware of a number of possibilities that would allow her to move to a better learning environment if she kept studying. For example, she could apply to the Intensive English Studies (IES) program, where 100 students studied linguistics and English literature in small classes (25 students per class), or study abroad programs if her TOEFL score increased to 500. These possibilities likely led to her improved TOEFL score.

Fortunately, Sakiko was able to enroll in the IES program in her sophomore year. She was satisfied because the IES program was the desirable learning environment she had hoped to find at the university: It had an effective and interesting curriculum, the students’ English proficiency levels were high, and all the teachers had TESOL qualifications. Sakiko remembered some of the positive aspects of the program as follows: 「1年のクラスとは全く違って、クラスメイトはすごくやる気のある人ばかりでしたし、頑張ることは恥ずかしくないし、むしろ、羨望のまなざしで見られるような。」 “In stark contrast to the first-year classes, all of the students were highly motivated, and anybody who was hard-working received praise from the teachers and other classmates, rather than being humiliated” (Case 2: 32).
The course work was demanding; the teachers assigned a large amount of reading, for example, by authors, such as William Faulkner, Shakespeare, Flannery O’Connor, and Arthur Miller in the literature courses, and linguistic textbooks written in English were used. Sakiko studied intensively in order to succeed in the program where the competition among the students was intense.

In her first and second years, Sakiko studied French in a required second foreign language course. She chose French because she had a positive image of the French language and culture and thought that learning French would possibly prove useful when she traveled in European countries in the future. She initially enjoyed the course; however, she gradually became demotivated and completely lost interest in French in her sophomore year. This happened because she did not enjoy the classes for three reasons. First, she found the French verb conjugations overwhelming and complicated to learn. Second, she was not convinced that the primarily non-communicative class activities were useful for developing communicative competence in the language. Third, she found the class uninteresting. Especially, her second-year teacher, an older man over 60, appeared to make no effort to motivate the students. He used a thin grammar book that had no illustrations and conducted the class using a translation approach, which Sakiko found excruciatingly boring. During his French class, she always sat at the very back of the classroom where she frequently studied English by herself. She did not study French at home, either. As a consequence, she learned little French during the
two years; she felt that she had only picked up some French vocabulary while watching French movies.

Sakiko had studied two foreign languages besides English: Chinese in high school and French in the university, and she stopped studying both of them after the courses finished. In both cases, she did not have a specific goal, such as studying in a country where people spoke the language and using the language for communication outside class. The unsuccessful experiences in learning Chinese and French worked as another driving force to master English. She found that studying English was relatively easy compared with studying Chinese and French, and she was convinced that it would be very difficult for her to acquire high proficiency in Chinese and French. She confirmed her belief concerning the importance of English and further focused on studying English.

Studying abroad had been Sakiko’s long-term dream since deciding to pursue an English-related career, and the dream came true when she was a university sophomore at the age of 20. She moved to an academic town located in north Florida and attended regular university courses with the local students for one year. However, the process of becoming certified as a candidate for the program was not straightforward. Because almost everybody in the IES program hoped to study abroad, the screening process was demanding and competitive: First, the students needed to obtain a TOEFL score of 500 and read an assigned book and write an essay for the preliminary screening. Next, they took an English test, and only those who passed the test were permitted to take the interviews. The primary
interviews were conducted in English, and only those who passed the English interviews were qualified to take the final interview conducted in Japanese.

Although Sakiko was confident of success and her grades were excellent, she failed the initial screening because she could not pass the final Japanese interview. Sakiko talked about the reason for her failure:

In the interview, I didn’t explain my purpose for studying abroad sufficiently clearly even though I had a clear goal to study linguistics. Failing the Japanese interview was shocking, as I was confident that I would pass. I knew that some of my classmates, whose English abilities were obviously lower than mine, had passed. (Case 2: 33, 34)

Sakiko perceived the experience rather positively. She commented: 「このおかげで、留学の目的や自分自身について見直すことができました。もし何もなく通っていたら、自分を過信していたかもしれません。」 “Because this happened, I had a chance to carefully rethink my purposes for studying abroad and some issues about myself. If I had been accepted into the study abroad program at that time, I might have been too confident” (Case 2: 33). After the failure, she prepared again, applied at the next opportunity, and succeeded.

Sakiko’s unsuccessful first try in the interview was a blessing in disguise, as it resulted in her being transferred to an university in Florida, one of the largest, universities in the state. In contrast to Sakiko’s case, some of her classmates who won the certificate that Sakiko initially hoped to obtain were transferred to smaller
universities in Alabama and Tennessee, for example. Furthermore, one of her classmates was sent to a very small religious-oriented university, and another had a horrible experience when one of her teachers was shot to death at school. Compared to these cases, Sakiko felt lucky. She also thought that she would not have pursued an MA degree in the United States if she had experienced anything unpleasant in her first experience studying abroad.

In her one-year stay in Florida, Sakiko took linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and communication courses. Though it was her first experience studying abroad, and she was in regular university courses rather than the ESL courses that she had taken in Japan, Sakiko did not experience much difficulty in the program.

I don’t think it’s very hard for me. I was kind of confident to probably finish the program without a problem. I understood the lectures and mostly got As. It is often said that the first semester is difficult for foreign students. I read some students cry because it’s so hard, but it didn’t happen to me (Case 2: 35).

Sakiko’s success at the university in Florida indicated that her English proficiency was sufficient to handle challenging academic tasks in English. Her TOEFL score was approximately 550 when she first applied for the program (which increased to 570 on the test she took before leaving Japan), which was probably higher than the scores of the students who were selected. In addition, her experiences studying in the IES, including taking the linguistics course, and the
preparation course for studying abroad, where she studied with other foreign students, prepared her to take regular courses with American students. Although she did not remember meeting particularly impressive teachers at the university in Florida, she made some good friends and enjoyed becoming somewhat Americanized while in Florida. With her first study abroad experience completed with a high degree of satisfaction, Sakiko felt motivated to take the next step: earning a Master’s degree in TESOL in the United States.

After finishing her undergraduate studies at age 22, Sakiko immediately began studying in a master’s program in TESOL at a university on the west coast of the United States. Studying in a graduate school, rather than working in a company, was what she was determined to do. She selected that university because one of her favorite teachers in the IES program had earned her masters degree from there and recommended that Sakiko go there. During the two and half years that Sakiko spent in California, she maximized her opportunities, and she developed her academic knowledge of the field of second language teaching and learning, her English skills, and her ability to make and sustain positive human relationships.

Sakiko worked hard to achieve success in the masters program during this period of her life. The program had previously required either passing comprehensive examinations or conducting research for a master’s thesis as graduation requirements; however, the assessment policy had been altered when she was in the program to a more holistic approach, eliminating the comprehensive examinations from the graduation requirements. Instead, the students need to
construct a portfolio in order to exhibit their achievements. In addition to constructing her portfolio, Sakiko conducted research for her master’s thesis. The research topic that she chose was the relationship between improvements in language proficiency, the effects of preparation prior to studying abroad, and the actual number of years spent studying abroad. Although it was not a program requirement, she thought that a master’s thesis would be necessary in order to apply for a teaching position at a Japanese university, which was her career goal at that time.

Sakiko met a number of mentors in graduate school. She recalled three of them in particular: "I was picky about which courses I took, and I especially wanted to take courses taught by Professor S, Professor P, and Professor B. I received a large impact from these three and admired them a lot" (Case 2: 14, 38-40)

Although Professor S, who taught Psycholinguistics, was her primary thesis advisor, he was not just a teacher in school but a person whom she respected and admired great deal. He shared his extremely difficult life experiences in class and invited Sakiko to his house for dinner on special occasions, such as Christmas and Thanksgiving. Sakiko felt both profound dignity and kindness from him through these experiences.

Sakiko reported that Professor P, her practicum supervisor, always provided elaborate and precise feedback on Sakiko’s assignments. She told Sakiko that she
should find a good marriage partner and spend her life the way she (Professor P) does: working hard during the semesters and enjoying long vacations traveling to many different places during the breaks. When Professor P attended a conference held in Kyoto, Japan in 2006, Sakiko provided a tour of the city, where she grew up and was living.

Professor B was Sakiko’s secondary thesis advisor on her master’s thesis committee. She asked him to become an advisor even though she was not taking any courses with him at that time. He listened to her study plan and agreed to be the second advisor. In reality, however, he provided a great deal of help to her, giving detailed advice and encouragement. For instance, although she needed to use quantitative methodology, she knew nothing about statistical analysis, and there were few teachers who were good at statistics in the program. Professor B helped her conduct statistical analyses even though it was not his specialty. Receiving his encouragement throughout the thesis writing process, she was able to finish her master’s thesis successfully.

Sakiko also developed a number of important relationships while in California. She met people from different countries both on campus and outside the school as she was living in an international, ethnically diverse city. She had friends of different nationalities: Chinese American, Korean, Thai, American, Japanese, as well as American. Sakiko and her female friends, mostly in their early 30s, became close, so they had a regular get together after the end of each semester and took a trip together. Sakiko and an American student, became especially close. Because
the friend was born and grew up near the bay in the city, she knew the area well. Staying with her, Sakiko was able to explore the city. Their friendship continued even after finishing the program and living a long distance from one another: They have kept in touch with and visit each other from time to time.

After graduating with her master’s degree, Sakiko returned to Japan and took the first step in her academic career—she became an English instructor in a language school and two universities. When talking about her chosen career, she stated, “I love teaching.” と は 言 わ ない け れ ど、 ”I like teaching very much.” と は 言 え ます ね。特に学 生 と 出 会 える の が 楽 し い で す。 “I don’t say, ‘I love teaching’, but I can say, ‘I like teaching very much.’ I especially enjoy meeting with students” (Case 2: 22).

After teaching for three and half years in universities and a language school in Japan, Sakiko decided to return to the United States in August 2008 in order to begin her doctoral studies in applied linguistics at a university in the southwest United States. She decided to focus on language testing in her doctoral studies as she felt that the quality of both regular term tests and the high-stakes entrance examinations used in Japanese universities should be improved. She said,「私にしかできないことをやりたいですね。仕事やリサーチを通じ社会に貢献したいという気持ちもあるし、自分の人生も楽しみたい。」 “I want to do something unique: something that other people can’t do but only I can do in order to make social contributions through my work and research and enjoy my life” (Case 2: 51).
Regarding her own English learning, Sakiko expressed a desire to further improve her English skills during her doctoral studies, which will likely take four or five years. She feels that a number of aspects of her speaking skills, such as fluency and accuracy, decreased in the past three and half years of teaching in Japan, so she wants to regain her previous level and improve further.

After finishing her Ph.D., Sakiko plans to return to Japan and become an English professor in a Japanese university, but if she has an opportunity to work in the United States, she might do so. Whichever path she chooses, it is certain that she will pursue her goals steadily with her parents’ firm support, as she has been doing since she was a little girl.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 12 and 13 show Sakiko’s self-perceived motivational levels that she drew in the first and second interviews conducted with a one-year interval. They are identical: She perceived her own English learning motivation as being at a constantly high level since she started studying English at the age of 10. This indicates that her perceptions of her English learning motivation over the past 19 years are consistent.
Interest in English Nurtured by the Environment

A notable factor for Sakiko’s sustained English learning motivation is the environment; especially, her family and home environment have influenced her motivation to study English. Sakiko’s parents’ enjoyed watching American movies at home, so Sakiko had numerous opportunities to watch those movies with her parents; as a result of these experiences, she seemed to naturally develop a liking for American movies. In addition to her exposure to the movies, her father listened to classical music at home, and Sakiko started organ and piano lessons at the age of six. This helped her to develop a sensitivity to sounds, which might have
contributed to her above average ability to perceive and produce the phonemes that make up native English pronunciation.

Sakiko’s parents’ contributed to her English learning motivation in a number of ways. Her parents consistently provided a nurturing and supportive climate in which Sakiko and her brother felt free to pursue their interests. In that environment, she discovered her love of English and playing the piano, while her younger brother immersed himself in the world of rugby. Sakiko autonomously chose her future course, and at the same time, she received constant encouragement to become a specialist in a particular area. They were never reluctant to pay for her education. As a result of receiving the constant support of her parents, she developed feelings of gratitude toward them. This family environment strongly contributed to her English learning motivation.

Outside her family, meeting a number of talented and dedicated teachers throughout her learning history was another reason that Sakiko was able to sustain her motivation. For example, she had skilled teachers at the private language school she attended when she was in junior high school, in the intensive English courses in her college, and she was fortunate to work with respected and distinguished professors in the field of TESOL at a university in California. They were role models when she was young and mentors when she grew up. These teachers provided her with a number of positive, challenging, and motivating experiences as she pursued her path of English learning and teaching. These experiences created and maintained her perception that learning English is interesting.
Future Goal and Self-Understanding

Another important reason for Sakiko’s sustained high-level motivation concerns the fact that she decided on her future goal at a relatively young age. She was determined to have an English-related profession when she was in junior high school. Although it is common for many children to have a dream for the future, such as becoming a pilot, athlete, or musician, they also frequently abandon their dreams as they grow up. This did not happen to Sakiko; she felt compelled to choose one of two future courses: English or the piano, both of which she had been studying since she was a child. Furthermore, she was able to make her choice relatively easily because she knew that starting the piano at age six was too late to become a top-level pianist; pursuing an English-related career was the more practical and achievable choice. Deciding on her future goal relatively early in life permitted Sakiko to be almost always clear about what she needed to do. For example, studying abroad as an exchange student and earning a MA in TESOL and a PhD in Applied Linguistics in the United States were actions that moved her closer to realizing that goal. The ability to make choices relatively easily might have also stemmed in part from her personality. She described herself as a person who usually knows what she likes and quickly decides what to do.

Demotivating Class Environment

Sakiko’s learning motivation decreased slightly when she was a freshman in the university because of her disappointment with the required English courses in
which the other students and teachers were unenthusiastic about learning. The
discouraging classroom atmosphere was something she had never experienced in
high school. Because of the decrease in her motivation that year, staying in the
same environment the following year might have had negative consequences for
her ability to achieve her future goals. However, she did not completely stop
learning during that year as the gain in her TOEFL score clearly indicates. Even
though she was discouraged to study by her classmates and teachers, she
understood that it was possible to make positive changes to her situation in the next
year if she kept studying. She enrolled in the Intensive English Studies in her
sophomore year, and her learning motivation increased to an extremely high level
once again. This episode suggests that her goal of mastering English was not easily
jeopardized by a temporary, undesirable change in her environment.

Change of Perceived Self in English Learning

When asked if she had experienced any self-perceived changes in her
English learning history, Sakiko mentioned two periods in her learning history, both
of which occurred while she was staying in the United States: The first took place
in Florida and the second in California. She was willing to be Americanized and
enjoyed immersing herself in American culture during the time that she stayed in
Florida, while she was strongly aware of her Japanese identity and emphasized her
Japanese ethnicity while living in California. These differences might have been
partly caused by the cultural differences between the two cities: few Asians were
living Florida, while California was a cultural melting pot with a large Asian population.

Another possible reason for the differences concerns her maturity and the experiences she had had before living in Florida and California. Since she was a child, Sakiko had held idealized images of America as she watched American movies with her parents. She dreamed of marrying an American and having a half-American and half-Japanese child because she felt that a racially mixed child was cuter than a Japanese child. Even after discarding that girlish dream, America still represented a dream for her, as she had long nurtured positive images of the country that was most closely associated with her English learning. These feelings compelled her to assimilate herself into the new culture when she first encountered it in Florida. A simple example was the music she listened to. She came to enjoy some popular western pop music, such as “Survivor” and “Love Don’t Cost A Thing,” in Florida while she had preferred classical music when living in Japan. Another example was her choice of clothing while living in Florida. People in the university area mostly wore casual clothing, such as tank tops, shorts, and sunglasses. Though she had never preferred to wear very casual clothing when living in Japan, she thought that the students looked fashionable and that Japanese clothing styles were inappropriate. “You look like a Chinese American!” Sakiko was told by her friends when she returned from Florida to Japan.

In contrast, while studying in California for her MA, Sakiko generally wore Japanese style clothing, partly out of a desire to distinguish herself from the other
ethnic groups in the city. Although her closest friend was American and she also had many friends from different countries, she did not like to be classified in one Asian group, even with Japanese-Americans. This was because she had learned a great deal about America, both good and bad, during her the previous stay in Florida, so she no longer held the fantasy that America was paradise. As a matter of fact, she has developed mixed feelings toward America. For instance, although she considers the American educational system to be superior to the one in Japan and has chosen to pursue her doctorate in the Unites States, she disagrees with the American government’s political interventions in other nations’ affairs. In addition, she happened to be living in the United States twice when presidential elections took place. She watched the nation become politically divided when she was in Florida in 2000 and in California in 2004. These experiences provided Sakiko with firsthand opportunities to learn more about the country. Learning about American culture increased her awareness of the value of her own culture and intensified her sense of her own ethnic identity.

Sakiko’s self-perceived changes took place when she studied abroad. Stated differently, even though her English proficiency had reached an advanced level before studying abroad and experiencing a number of interactions with native English speaking instructors at a university in Florida, she did not experience self-perceived changes while living in Japan. Thus, in her case, the environmental change that occurred when she moved from Japan to the United States was a powerful factor affecting her perception of her own identity. Staying in a foreign
country where the target language is used can strongly influence a person’s identity (Kanno, 2003; Lvovich, 1997; Morita, 2004). However, Lvovich (ibid.) nurtured her French-self even when she was learning the French language without leaving Russia. I wondered whether Sakiko would have had similar experiences even if she had not studied abroad. When I asked her this question, she immediately replied that that “if” was impossible for her to imagine because she was so strongly determined to study abroad when she chose her future career.
CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY 3: HARUKA

A tireless goal seeker using English as a tool

Profile

In the opening faculty meeting held in February 2006, Haruka was one of the persons whom drew my attention because of the air of confidence she projected. In her self-introduction, she said in her clear voice that she hoped to teach 「生きた英語」“living English” to her students. Hearing that, I imagined that she had lived in an English-speaking country until relatively recently. Because she and I taught on the same day, I saw her regularly at lunchtime in the part-time instructors room in our first year of teaching in the university. She frequently spoke in English to both native English teachers and some Japanese teachers. Her English sounded very natural and she looked comfortable when speaking English. One day, I happened to learn that she was a gospel singer when I saw a billboard on the campus advertising her on-campus talk and live performance. Her photograph showed her in a long, elegant dress, which convinced me that she was a professional entertainer. One day, she brought flyers advertising her concert to the instructors’ room. I thought it would be interesting to go to her performance, but my long commute from Nagoya did not allow me to do so. During 2007 and 2008, I did not see her in the teachers’ room very frequently because she was spending her lunchtime in a small library located in the same building. One day in the
summer of 2008, however, I had an opportunity to listen to her sing. It happened when a foreign teacher brought his guitar to the teachers’ room and played some songs. One of the teachers told him that Haruka was a singer. She told him, “I can sing ‘Georgia.’ Can you play that?” and started to sing the song with the guitar accompaniment; her voice, which was obviously professional quality, echoed throughout the room. About 10 teachers sitting in the room listened to her sing and clapped after she finished the song.

Because I thought that Haruka’s English learning history might be intriguing, considering her unique English career as a gospel singer and university lecturer, I had been thinking about asking her to participate in my study for over two years. However, I did not ask her to do so until spring 2009. I had hesitated because I imagined that she was very busy because of her two jobs. In February and March 2009, when I was reconsidering who to select as my last participant, I still wished to know about her learning history, so I decided to contact her by e-mail. Because I did not receive a response for two months, I began to believe that she could not participate in the study. When I saw her next in April 2009 at the university, she told me that she found the e-mail in a junk mail file and apologized for not replying. She promised to participate in my study and to have an interview during the Golden Week holidays, even though she was quite busy. The first interview with her took place on May 2, 2009.

Table 6, a summary of Haruka’s background, illustrates her active work situation. Although her primary job is singing, she has a variety of other work, such
as running her own music production company, promoting her music and herself, teaching English in a university, providing lectures concerning human rights, taking care of foreign musicians during their concert tours in Japan, translating, interpreting, and producing a radio program. She lived in the United States for seven years, the longest overseas experience among all the participants. Her variety of English related activities and extended stay in an English-speaking country, as well as her 630 TOEFL score in 1995 and estimated written receptive vocabulary size, 12,700 word families, indicate her advanced English proficiency.

Table 6. Summary of Haruka’s Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of starting learning English</td>
<td>Age 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years studying English</td>
<td>26 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Major</td>
<td>Journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School (MA) major</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past employment: teaching English conversation, assistant in the Pakistan Embassy, think tank researcher, legal office staff</td>
<td>Current jobs: musician, manager of her own music production company, university English lecturer, DJ, interpreter, translator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length in an English-speaking country</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEFL (paper version) (Year)</td>
<td>630 (paper version)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEIC (Year)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated written receptive vocabulary size</td>
<td>12,700 word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foreign language studies</td>
<td>Spanish (2 years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first interview, which was conducted May 2, 2009, lasted approximately three hours. The interview took place in the living room in her apartment, a part of which she uses as her office. In the afternoon, Haruka was waiting for my arrival while making some cinnamon rolls. The interview began in English. Her English, especially her clear articulation, quick responses, and natural rhythm were impressive, and her slightly husky voice was attractive. As the interview proceeded, she code-switched to Japanese; therefore, the interview was conducted in half English and half Japanese.

**English Learning History**

Although Haruka started learning English formally at age 12, which is one year earlier than most Japanese students, she also had contact with English when she was an elementary school student. Her earliest English-related experience occurred at approximately age six with an English picture book. The story was about a bunny traveling around the countryside. The bunny found various interesting things, such as a strawberry field, where it picked some strawberries. Scratching the picture of the strawberries on that page, Haruka could smell strawberry. She liked that book even though she sensed that the smell differed from that of Japanese strawberries. The picture book was her first foreign cultural experience in which she experienced things that she had not known previously, such as gingerbread, pickles, and the somewhat odd smelling strawberries. Further contact with English occurred when she met foreign students in her cousin’s parents’ house located in a neighboring prefecture. Her aunt and uncle regularly
hosted foreign students in their home, and Haruka had opportunities to meet these students and traveled with them in western Japan several times. Because she believes that she can learn a foreign language more effectively through people than from books, this early exposure to English speaking people was meaningful for her. Even though this early exposure resulted in little English learning, it was an event that triggered her English learning motivation at a later time.

“I’ve never thought that I really like English” (Case 3: 55). This comment by Haruka clearly expresses her instrumental orientation toward English even though English has played an important role in her life.

Haruka’s attitude toward English was influenced by her family when she was a child. Her parents provided her with the opportunities to engage in various new activities, and English was one of these choices:

My parents didn’t force us (Haruka, her young sister, and brother) to do a certain thing, but gave us many options, such as music, art, sports, and English, and let us chose what we liked among them (Case 3: 56).

In particular, her mother has been one of the most influential persons in Haruka’s life, as she has frequently provided advice on a number of important occasions. It was her mother who introduced Haruka to an English class:
My mom was a flight attendant and could speak just a little bit (of English). She was very eager to get us (i.e., Haruka and her younger sister) to be able to speak English. She put me in an English class when I was age 12 at a YMCA. So I started studying English a year earlier than other kids, and I liked that (Case 3: 4).

Haruka took an English conversation class with about 20 other students in the YMCA class. The instructor was a middle-aged Japanese woman who used English all the time in the class. Though Haruka does not remember her name, Haruka loved her and her class:

I liked the teacher. She was very nice and treated us very nicely. She was Japanese, but she used English all the time. So for example, she brings an apple and oranges, and then, we’re supposed to say, “There’s an apple between two oranges,” or something like that. So we could say very basic things. Even without grammar, we’re still able to say that. I enjoyed the class a lot. (Case 3: 4)

However, the joy of using English disappeared soon after Haruka entered a public junior high school and her formal English education in the Japanese secondary school system started at age 13. Her English teacher was a Japanese man who spoke almost only Japanese when he conducted the class. Although she liked reading the English in the textbook because it allowed her to feel the language, she had difficulty adjusting to the Japanese style of studying English found in the junior high school classroom.

It’s so boring because they forced us memorization. There was one competition, and we’re supposed to memorize whole one paragraph (from the textbook) and recite it to other people. That scared me off. I had a hard time. For instance, in our class (in the university where she teaches), there is a Japanese phrase something like, 「昨日はクラブがあり、帰るのが遅くなりました。」 and we make the students translate it into English, right? How am I supposed to answer that because I could not do that (laughter). If you
say, “OK, this is present tense, and change it to past tense,” it would be easy to process that. But when it comes to a conversational phrase like that, I always had a hard time to understand what I am asked to answer. (Case 3: 4-5)

Her early English experiences were communicative, direct, and natural; she learned by communicating with foreign students in her cousin’s house and by speaking in the YMCA class. In contrast, she was required to translate Japanese into English and vice versa in her junior high school English class, an approach that devalued meaning and entirely eliminated face-to-face communication. This radically different approach confused and demotivated her.

At the same time that her junior high school English class started, the YMCA class changed into a typical Japanese cram school type of class, which Haruka found boring. The new teacher was a Japanese man who had his students memorize a lot of grammatical constructions and sentences instead of helping them to develop their ability to speak English. This was not the kind of class that she liked and wanted. For this reason, Haruka told her mother in the summer of 1983 when she was 13 years old that she would not take the class anymore.

Interestingly, Haruka instead started to take a real cram school class after quitting the YMCA English class. She decided to do so of her own volition in order to succeed on the upcoming high school entrance examination. She described studying English as a game:

The game changed. I was looking for a game to be able to speak at first, and that changed, so I lost interest. But now, the game has changed to get into high school. The style of game changed, and my play, how I play, also changed. (Case 3: 6)
Haruka studied hard in the cram school class everyday after her junior high school classes. In addition to English, she took other classes at the cram school, such as Japanese, mathematics, social studies, and science. She did not have to encourage herself to study hard because there was a system by which the students were supposed to study hard, and she just followed the system. Because the quality of the students and the atmosphere in her public junior high school started deteriorating, many of her classmates who hoped to go to a good high school were taking the same cram school classes. Under those circumstances, the meaning of studying English changed for her. English was a tool that could be used to win a game—the high school entrance examination “game”—it was no longer a way to communicate with people from other countries.

The meaning of English changed. It’s no longer for speaking but for passing (the test). I studied it for passing the test. But I liked studying languages, so it’s not so hard for me to study that. (Case 3: 7)

As a consequence of playing the game well, she passed the entrance examination of one of the top ranked public high schools in western Japan.

In addition to her desire to win the game, Haruka was strongly motivated to study hard to enter a good public high school for another reason: she wanted to study abroad as an exchange student. The idea of studying abroad emerged from a talk she had with some older students living near her house who had previously
studied abroad. After hearing about their experiences overseas, Haruka dreamed about doing the same thing after becoming a high school student. Her hopes were strengthened because her mother promised her that she could study in America after she entered a good public high school.

After arriving at the high school, Haruka found that most of her classmates were serious about studying in order to go to a good university. They worked hard studying for a quiz every morning, for example, an English quiz today and a math quiz tomorrow. However, in the aftermath of her intensive study to pass the high school entrance examination and the daily grind of taking quizzes, she lost interest in studying hard in her high school classes. When I asked her if she studied hard at high school, her response was as follows:

No, I didn’t. I was bad. So they tried to continue, right? Exactly the same thing what’s happening here (i.e., in the university where Haruka teaches). We don’t want them to lose motivation to study, right? So we give the tests, right? But eventually, we wear them off (laughter). If you force them too much study, just wear their motivation off badly. I didn’t want to study anyway, so I didn’t. But I wanted to go to study abroad. So that started around here, but I didn’t study at all. Isn’t that crazy? I wanted to study abroad but then I hated to study English. (Case 3: 7)

Instead, Haruka turned her attention to a new goal, studying abroad as an exchange student. She took the test administered by Youth for Understanding (YFU), an organization that ran study abroad programs for Japanese students. After passing the writing test, she took an English interview test with the YFU administrators. At the interview, she was asked some basic questions, such as, “Tell me about your family.” When the interviewer asked, “What made you think
of studying abroad?” Haruka’s humorous answer was, “I want to eat a big hamburger!” Even though she was not able to speak English well, she was able to express herself in English well enough to pass the interview. She could choose to go to Australia, Canada, or the United States. Though she was indifferent to what was going on in the world and did not have any particular bias against any of the three counties, her preference was to go to America. She thought that America was the leading country in the world, and she wanted to learn what she thought was standard English. In this way, she got a ticket to study in Minnesota, the United States at age 15 in the summer of her freshman year in high school. She took a year off from her Japanese high school and studied in a public high school in Wadena, Minnesota for the next year.

Until she began studying in the United States, Haruka described herself as being a relatively passive, quiet girl. When she was in elementary school, every one in her family and school was worried about her because she was so quiet—she went to school and often came back without talking to anybody. She preferred staying home, making something, drawing pictures, and singing, rather than playing outside with her friends. She especially enjoyed music and painting. Her love of music was a result of her father’s influence. He was a music professor in a Christian university in western Japan, and she started to play the piano and violin with him at age two. She had also liked singing since she was a child. She also took oil painting lessons when she was an elementary school student. Haruka was most comfortable when doing something by herself, such as singing and drawing, and
she always felt uncomfortable dealing with other students in her junior high school. She particularly did not like the way that other girls formed cliques and how they always stayed in their groups. Although she joined the chorus in elementary school and junior high school because of her love of music, she was never interested in joining any of the other clubs. She was primarily interested in what was going on in her mind rather than the outside world in her childhood and early teenage years.

This aspect of her personality largely changed when studying in the United States. She said:

> In high school, everybody would have social skills to be able to become friends, and I think I became really good at that after I studied in America. I had to be very active to talk to other people in the US; otherwise, they never talk to me seeing me just as a stranger. If I hadn’t gone to America I might have been still timid and quiet—Maybe not (laughter). (Case 3: 9-10)

She also stated:

> They (i.e., the people whom Haruka met in the United States) gave me kind of skills, how to start off conversation with someone you don’t know: what they like, what kind of social group you’re in, or making complements on their clothes or hair, you know, some tips to start off the conversation. So, I think my motivation, it was more of survival skill-wise. It’s not like, “I wanted to study English.” (Case 3: 10)

Haruka’s host family in Minnesota had three girls: The oldest one was one year older than Haruka, the middle sister was the same age as Haruka, and the youngest sister was three or four year younger than Haruka. She thought that she needed to learn survival skills in order to deal with them. She also needed to deal with both male and female classmates in her co-educational high school. Her home stay began with an unforgettable cross-cultural experience. Haruka attended an
end-of-summer party in the community with her host sisters a few days after her arrival in the United States.

They said that they don’t have any problem because I was not the first foreign student in that town. So, we went to the dance party, and I was asked to dance (by a boy whose name was Steve), a slow dance! I didn’t know anything about it, so I said OK. But, it was the very first experience, and it freaked me out so badly! I felt so embarrassed and so shocked! I couldn’t say anything about it. When we got home, my sister told mom, “Haruka danced with Steve!” It’s so embarrassing! Then the next day, while I was still shocked, the phone rang, and my mom said, “Steve is calling you!” I shouted, “No! No! No!” I couldn’t speak anything and I shut it up right in front of my mom’s face. Then, she got mad, saying, “If you don’t want to talk to him, you can say you don’t want to talk to him. People are not supposed to hang up like that as a matter of manner!” I couldn’t process that very well, neither, so I stated to cry, and ran out the door! I was running thinking, “This is the only the third day and I have this problem with my family. What am I going to do? How am I going to overcome this?” I was running and running a mile or so. And of course there’s nothing but cornfield out there (laughter). (Case 3: 10-11)

After experiencing culture shock in the very beginning of her new life in America, Haruka was determined to overcome the cultural differences and improve her communication skills in English. She stated: 「But I overcame.このままではいけないと思って、なんとかしなければ、このままおいてもしようがないし。この置かれた状況で自分がなんとかするしかないし。」”But I overcame because I thought that I couldn’t be helpless like this. I have to work out myself in this present situation.” (Case 3: 11)

In the local high school, Haruka studied hard, and she soon found that the people around her were supportive and cooperative. For example, the teachers took her developing English abilities into consideration and assigned her classes that did not require a great deal of English proficiency, such as art, music, crafts, typing,
and a computer course. In addition, some subjects, such as math and science, were very easy for her because she had already learned what the American high school students were studying in her Japanese junior high school and cram school classes. She suffered the most in her American History class. The teacher provided her with a one hour extra lesson at 7:30 in the morning before the regular class started. He acknowledged her efforts and let her pass the class at the end of the semester.

Haruka’s host family also constantly supported her while she was in Minnesota. The family had hosted another foreign student before Haruka, so they were accustomed to supporting overseas students. Her host mother, in particular, who had been a nurse and was teaching the piano to children in the neighborhood at the time Haruka was staying with her, was a supportive person who exerted an educational influence on Haruka. For example, she was patient with Haruka’s attempts to speak English even when she only used single words and short phrases to express herself in the first few months. However, she progressively asked Haruka to speak in complete sentences using an appropriate subject and verb and to increase the pace of her utterances little by little. In this way, Haruka could practice speaking English without feeling overwhelmed in the beginning and gradually built up her ability and confidence to speak English.

Furthermore, the family members and Haruka had a common interest in music, and this helped them forge stronger bonds with one another. Her host mother played the piano, and her three host sisters played the clarinet, saxophone, and trumpet in the high school brass band. As Haruka had played the flute in her
Japanese high school orchestra, she joined the same brass band and enjoyed practicing with her host sisters.

Haruka’s art talent helped her first stay in America, where the teachers acknowledged each student’s individual talent.

As soon as the teacher understood that I had a talent for drawing pictures, my art teacher Mr. Burns told me, “Haruka is good at drawing,” and gave me a chance to draw students’ portraits for “The star student of this week.” Some students did a great job, for example, in a soccer competition that the school displayed in a showcase. The drawings helped the other students know about me, as they wondered, “Who drew that?” I think that acknowledging the students’ good points other than their academic performance was a wonderful thing about the high school. (Case 3: 15)

After spending one year in the United States, Haruka returned to Japan in the summer of 1986 when she was 16 and became a sophomore in her high school. Having been impressed with the American education system’s emphasis on individual student’s strengths, she had to face a sort of reverse culture shock in her Japanese high school. One example was Japanese test-oriented education and its effect on the students’ attitudes. Because the primary goal for most of her classmates was to get into a good university, they studied hard to earn high scores on the examinations, and English was one of the most important subjects for passing the university entrance examination. The school administrators posted the top 100 students’ names after every term test for the five important subjects,
English, Japanese, math, history, and science, so the students knew who ranked
where on each test every time it was administered. Haruka was in the top 10 on the
English tests, and some of the academically aggressive students, who also had high
English test scores but who had never studied abroad, openly challenged her and
strove to be better than her on the English tests (She was the second student who
had studied abroad in the high school).

After coming back, the students who were good at English challenged me. I
wasn’t thinking about competing with anyone, so I just studied at my own
pace and took the tests, but they challenged me, saying, “I’m better than you
this time.” The school posted the students’ names, and I didn’t want to hear
them saying, “She isn’t good at English even though she studied abroad.”
So I kind of studied like other students did. (Case 3: 16)

In addition, Haruka frequently had difficulty answering the questions that
appeared on the tests administered in her Japanese high school. She felt that she did
not understand what the questions were asking. This prevented her from quickly
answering when taking a test. After hearing about this problem, her father told her
that she should not think about the meaning of the questions but just answer the
questions. These episodes suggest that she failed to adapt to the test-centered
orientation in Japanese academic system to some extent.
Another form of reverse culture shock that Haruka felt after returning to her Japanese high school concerned the teachers’ attitudes and their inflexible ideas toward the concepts of education and intelligence.

I wondered why they didn’t praise anyone, and why they force us to do what we don’t like. They’re creating the worst educational situation. See, when children helped her mother and said, “I did this, mom,” the mother would usually replies with positive words, “Thank you, good job, or good girl!” then we think we’ll do it again. But if she replies, “Oh, will you do that again?” then we take it negatively, like, “Do I have to do that again?”

This may be repeated in the Japanese test-oriented education. Especially, I didn’t like that they didn’t value art, music, and sports in most schools.

(Case 3: 16)

Because Haruka felt disappointed with the Japanese high school education she received after returning from the United States, she did not study as seriously as her high school classmates. Still, she decided to enter a Japanese university in her senior year, and in order to pass the university entrance examination, she studied at a cram school everyday after her high school classes finished. Through January and February 1988, she took the entrance examinations of the 10 most prestigious universities in western Japan. She was not able to concentrate completely on studying for the examinations; as a result, she found that she had not passed even one of the tests one month later at age 18.
When Haruka’s parents learned that she had failed all of the entrance examinations, they suggested that she remain in Japan and go to a cram school from April (the beginning of the Japanese academic year) in order to take the Japanese university entrance examinations again the following year, or go to the United States and enroll in a university there in September. Her choice was clear and immediate: She was going to America. She thought, “I never imagined such a (good) way existed!” (Case 3: 18). She had had a number of good experiences in her previous stay as an exchange high school student in Minnesota, and she could not imagine studying another year for the Japanese university entrance examinations. Even though she had never thought about going to an American university, she liked the idea immediately and was glad that her parents had provided her with that option.

Haruka was interested in majoring in journalism for a number of reasons. First, she liked reading and writing, so majoring in journalism matched her interests. She had written about her American life and sent the articles to the YMCA bulletin while she was studying in the high school in Minnesota. Second, she was familiar with working for communities because of her experience in church since she was a child (Her parents were Christian and worked for the church, and she was baptized Protestant when she was a child). Third, becoming a journalist was an ideal job for her because it would allow her to discuss social issues and was a profession in which men and women were able to work equally. Also, journalism was useful because writing skills could be applied in different jobs in the future. Finally, she
liked the exciting image of the mass media, which had been emphasized during the Japanese bubble economy at the end of the 1980s. Haruka asked her host mother in Minnesota to look for a university close to her house where Haruka could study journalism. Her host mother suggested one state university, where the mass media communication department had a television broadcasting facility at which the students produced actual television broadcasts. There were a number of specializations in the department, such as television and radio broadcasting, photography, advertising, and newspaper. Haruka was most interested in majoring in public relations because she could study the broad field of mass communications, including issues concerning public relations and its relationships with the United Nations and the governments of various countries.

Haruka’s new goal—studying journalism in America—was set, and her determination to go to the state university in Minnesota was very strong. She obtained information about the application procedures. First, she needed to take a standardized academic test (ACT), and second, she needed to earn over 500 points on the TOEFL. Because the application deadline was in June, she only had three months to study for both tests. She maximized her efforts by studying several textbooks and taking practice tests everyday until she achieved perfect scores for all of the practice tests. Her strategy for taking the ACT was to choose questions that she had a high probability of answering correctly. She knew that she should avoid using time answering some questions, such as ones concerning American history, on which foreign students had a disadvantage. With regard to the TOEFL,
she was relatively good at the listening section because of her previous experience studying in America, so she focused on improving her performance on the reading section.

As a consequence of studying intensively for three months—Haruka recalled that she studied harder than ever—she increased her score by more than 100 points and earned 550 on the TOEFL by the application deadline. This allowed her to study journalism in the state university for the next four years from the summer of 1989 when she was 19 to the summer of 1993 when she was 23.

Studying in an American university with native English-speaking students was very challenging for Haruka in the beginning, but she overcame various difficulties with a great deal of courage and determination. Because her TOEFL score of 550 was considered sufficiently high, she was able to take the regular undergraduate courses and did not need to take the ESL classes to improve her English. Still, she found it difficult to understand lectures that were delivered for students whose native language was English. Political Science was one of the most challenging courses for her in the first year. The English terminology in the field...
was new to her. For example, when she heard the professor say “hierarchy,” it sounded like “higher rocky” to her, and she thought that it was probably about something related to a mountain. After receiving an F on the first test, she went to meet the professor because she thought that she might not be able to pass the course.

The teacher said, “You can come and see me any time,” and I went to see him everyday after class. As I went to see him so often, he said, “You don’t need to come anymore, because you already understand quite well. I have to teach other students!” (laughter). He also told me that he had never met such a diligent student, and, “Seeing how hardworking you are, I’ve understood why Japanese car makers developed cars that are superior to the ones produced by American car makers in the high growth period after World War II.” I was very glad to hear that. (Case 3: 20-21)

Haruka studied so hard in her first year that she sometimes had health problems. For example, she developed eating-disorder-like symptoms in the first year. Because of the pressure of studying in the challenging learning environment and living in a completely new environment, in which she was living in a school dormitory and eating American meals in the school cafeteria everyday, her cholesterol level surged, and she repeatedly gained and lost large amounts of weight. She had to see a school doctor and list everything she ate every day under the supervision of the school nutritionist. This episode indicates that her stress level
was high and suggests how intensively she was studying in the beginning of her American college life.

Because of her hard work, Haruka gradually understood how to study effectively in the American university, and her grades were improving. In her sophomore year, she was on the Dean’s List; this distinction indicated how good her academic performance was among her English-speaking schoolmates. Although she had not known what would happen if a student appeared on the Dean’s List, she soon found out that these students received an award of reduced tuition. Because Haruka was an out-of-state student, she had to pay double the tuition of her in-state counterparts. Now that her name was on the Dean’s List, she only had to pay one half of her previous tuition. She was greatly encouraged by this award and strove to be on the Dean’s List for the rest of her time at the university. It was a new goal and a new game for her to play and win. The consequence was that she won the game—her name appeared on the Dean’s List every semester until she graduated.

I didn’t want to lose the game to the American students. I didn’t want to resort to the excuse that I’m not a native English speaker. If I can make it by studying hard, I studied desperately… I thought that American students didn’t study as much as some people said. For example, when I wanted to improve my pronunciation and took a speech practice course, we learned
the phonetic alphabet in “Voice in Diction.” I studied it and got an A for the course, but some American students got a C because they didn’t study. Of course, I can’t pronounce some of the English sounds completely correctly, but I simply thought that I could overcome most challenges by hard work, especially when hard work is the only thing that matters. (Case 3: 26-27)

While studying journalism, Haruka appeared to regard English not as a subject to study in its own right, but as a survival tool she needed to use to win the game in the American university, and as a result of the intensive effort she made to win the game, her English improved.

Because of her major, she constantly had a large number of writing assignments. For example, every student was assigned to be a writer for the campus newspaper and was responsible for writing featured articles and news after conducting interviews. Like all journalism students, she learned how to write and edit in the way used by the Associated Press. For four years, a writer’s reference book was her important writing partner—she constantly used and depended on it while in her university. She learned appropriate ways of writing in different genres, such as expository essays, journalism, and creative writing. Though it was not easy to write in English, she enjoyed writing and learning to write. This was probably because of one of her psychological traits since she was a child—her natural interest in solitary work and her love of reading and writing. In addition to the writing course assignments, she regularly contributed essays about her college life from a Japanese student’s perspective to the college newspaper, and her essays were frequently accepted and published in the paper. By working hard on the
writing assignments and other writing activities, she improved her reading and writing skills to a great extent during the four years.

Despite her successes at the state university, Haruka often encountered difficulties studying in English.

I told my (native English speaking) friend—he’d already decided to study political science in the graduate school—that I don’t understand English so I met lots of unknown words when I’m reading. Then, he said, “We also have lots of unknown words in reading, but we just skip these words and keep going.” When I heard this, I was kind of relieved. I had looked up all the unknown words in my dictionary and couldn’t see the forest for the trees. After that, I came to see the forest by reading the words I knew and read a lot more than before. (Case 3: 24-25)

Haruka also studied a second foreign language, Spanish, in her first two in the university. She took a Spanish reading and speaking course once a week taught by two Spanish-speaking teachers, one Spanish and the other Mexican. She liked the courses, and after two years, she became reasonably good at speaking Spanish by the end of the course. She was also able to read Spanish newspapers after taking the course. She thought that learning Spanish was easier than learning English because she had already developed effective strategies for studying foreign languages. After finishing the class, she forgot a large part of her Spanish because she did not have any opportunities to use it though she believes that she could get it
back if she started using it again. She believes that practicing music since she was a child helped her learn foreign languages as she can comprehend and reproduce the sounds of a new language relatively easily.

Haruka was very active while she was in her university. In addition to her primary major, she minored in International Relations and participated in various extracurricular activities. For instance, she took a seminar led by a former ambassador to the United Nations in which the students traveled to the former Soviet Union. They visited Leningrad with the group at the end of her freshman year in 1990, one year before the collapse of the communist regime and the rise of democracy. During the trip, she studied international students’ life in the USSR, primarily, how the country accepted and treated foreign students. She also participated in a study tour to the United Nations in New York, where she learned about the basics of diplomacy and international negotiations. Furthermore, she attended the Model United Nations as a representative of Egypt and proposed an agenda concerning the conflict between Palestine and Israel.

Not only was Haruka active in her studies but she was also enthusiastic about volunteer work while she was at the state university. The volunteer work started as a school requirement when she was a junior. The state law was amended in that year, and students had to pay a new tax as part of their tuition; however, the new law was not applied to foreign students; instead, they were required to work as volunteers in the community for 30 hours per semester. There were several programs that the foreign students could join. For example, in one program, the
students helped to build houses for low-income people. Haruka worked with a refugee resettlement program in the local community, in which the volunteers helped refugees to settle in the United States by obtaining and furnishing houses for them, delivering food from food drives, and raising funds.

In the beginning, I said that I didn’t want to make a phone call for fund raising because I can’t speak (English) like other people, but they said, “That’s wrong. Your non-native English works perfectly. People hear your English and they think that they have to help.” So I did that (fund raising) work for a while. Some students didn’t do it (the community work) though. I did it because I have guts (laughter), and I worked more than 30 hours per semester. Later, I asked them if I could have a job in which I directly met refugees. They said yes, and I did work in which I took refugees from Bosnia Herzegovina to get immunization shots. I felt sympathy for them because they were separated from their families and had nothing but what they were wearing. As I was also a foreigner, I thought that I should work for them. I got an award because of my work. (Case 3: 22)

The award she received from her university, “Outstanding service, contributions and leadership in the Fargo-Moorhead Community” acknowledged Haruka’s commitment to the volunteer work she did with the refugees. She was proud of herself when she received the award. It was uplifting for her to help people who desperately needed help by doing a type of work that she had never done before. This hands-on experience had a powerful impact on her. She
understood the serious problems and injustices that exist in the world, and her passion to help people in a difficult situation was awakened. This understanding later developed into her future work and her studies in the field of international affairs.

Haruka completed her undergraduate studies in four years and returned to Japan in 1993 when she was 23 years old. Because her father was diagnosed with a serious illness, she had to return to Japan. She looked for a job in which she could use the knowledge and experience she had acquired in the United States while she was taking care of her father in the hospital. One day, she found an advertisement for a full-time position in the press section in the Pakistani Embassy in Tokyo in an English-language newspaper. She had an interview and she was selected out of 80 applicants. She worked as an administrative assistant and secretary at the embassy. One of her jobs was to report to the Pakistani government how news about Pakistan, such as the nuclear missile race against India, was reported by the Japanese mass media. A high level of English proficiency was crucial to carrying out these jobs; however, because she did not have to improve her English skills to do the work, her English learning motivation decreased and remained low while she was working there for two years until she became 24 years old in 1996.

While working at the Pakistani Embassy, Haruka began to think about studying in the United States once again.
I think a person’s degree of (three vectors:) professionality, language ability, and knowledge about certain areas can determine her job and what she can do. I wanted to develop my professionality more. I already had journalism as my professional area, but I wanted to improve it (my professional qualifications) further, because I thought that only having good English ability wasn’t enough to allow me to develop my career. I wanted to study international affairs and I was interested in military issues most, so I decided to go to America again. (Case 3: 29)

After making up her mind to go to the United States once again, Haruka started saving 50,000 yen (approximately $500) every month from her salary in order to go to graduate school. Because she was saving a large portion of her salary from her job at the embassy, she did not have enough money for her daily expenses, so she got a part-time job teaching TOEIC and TOEFL classes at a language school for a year.

Haruka chose the school of international affairs at a university in Washington D.C. for her master’s studies. Working for the refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina as an undergraduate had provided her with opportunities to think about victims of war and human rights issues. Also, while working at the Pakistani Embassy, she became interested in the nuclear standoff between India and Pakistan as well as tensions in other parts of the world. She had visited the school before she applied to the program and had seen with her own eyes that it was in the center of American politics adjacent to the White House and that many of the professors had
held positions in the federal government, the Pentagon, and NASA. The school was an ideal place for her graduate studies.

In order to apply for the program, Haruka had to get the required scores on the TOEFL and GRE. Just like she had studied for the TOEFL and the ACT when she had applied for her undergraduate studies, she studied intensively for the tests again. English became the main subject to study once again. As Haruka was a full-time embassy employee, she studied everyday after coming home. The graduate school’s admission requirements stated that non-native speakers of English needed a minimum TOEFL score of 600, and she achieved a score of 630 in a short time. The GRE was more challenging test, and Haruka found the vocabulary that appeared on the GRE extremely difficult. She encountered a large number of unknown words, such as abhor in the very first section of the GRE word list, even though she had studied in an American university for four years.

Haruka was able to overcome these difficulties and was accepted into the master’s program. She left the Pakistani Embassy after working there for two years and flew to Washington D.C. to enroll in the MA program in 1996 when she was 25 years old. The program was intensive, and even though the length of the graduate program was only half that of the undergraduate program, she felt that the level and amount of study was five or six times more challenging. In order to succeed in the program, she studied intensively again, and inevitably, her learning motivation was at an all time high level for the two years. The courses were offered at night and she took four courses per semester. In order to pass a course, she had to read an average
of approximately 10 books, at least five books as a course requirement and an additional five books for writing the course paper. Therefore, she was always reading books when she had a little time, and she took several books and a second-hand laptop computer, which she bought from a classmate, wherever she went.

Courses concerning her major, such as statistics, were challenging, but she also took some general courses, such as economics, which she found relatively easy. Sometimes she even taught her native English-speaking classmates.

Some American students asked me, “Let’s study together!” Funny, isn’t it? I thought, “You guys had no problem with English so it’s easy to get As. I’m studying very hard in order to get As. I’m busy. No time left for you!” (laughter). It seems that hardworking is always important, whenever and wherever you’re studying and whichever language you’re using. (Case 3: 32)

As a result of studying extremely hard, Haruka received straight As for the courses she took in her first year in the program.

In addition to taking graduate courses, Haruka joined an internship program in the second year of her studies. She worked at a local publisher specializing in military affairs. Although foreign students were not allowed to work directly for the national government, she could work at this publisher because it was a subsidiary of the government. She worked as a research assistant for the market research section and collected data about biochemical weapons, defense technology
development, and the defense budget of the United States. She worked from 9:00 am in the morning to 5:00 pm in the evening three days a week, and after finishing work, she attended classes at night.

Because she devoted a considerable amount of time to the internship work, Haruka received some Bs in her second year in the program; still, she kept producing high quality research. She conducted research on the Korean War, and her master’s thesis was titled “Military and Japanese Society.” In this paper, she examined the purposes of the Japanese Self-Defense Force and the possibility of Japan’s remilitarization. She also joined a group graduation project titled “Resolution for the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina.” While conducting the group research project and writing a paper with the group, she learned to negotiate with other members, which is an indispensable skill in the field of international affairs.

Haruka wanted to continue to live in Washington D.C. after completing her studies at age 27. She was ready to do so as she was allowed to work another year with her student visa; however, she had to return to Japan because of a health problem. Her health was seriously compromised, and she suffered from various symptoms. Returning to Japan was unexpected and unwanted, but she had no choice. She returned to Japan in May 1998 with a strong feeling of disappointment.

For six months after returning from America, Haruka stayed home and spent her time living at a much slower pace than she had been doing for a number of years. Initially, she became fatigued so quickly that it was difficult for her to walk for 15 minutes to get to the nearest train station. Her doctor ordered her to
stop studying and working until she recovered fully. Determined to regain her health, she stopped applying the medicine that she had used frequently in the United States in order to suppress the dermatitis symptoms that exploded all over her skin; instead, she took Chinese herbal medicine, maintained a healthy diet, exercised regularly, and received a great deal of emotional support from her family.

I should get back to a normal life, shifting to a lower gear, like a normal person. I never spent my time as other college students do. I didn’t hang out with friends. (Case 3: 35)

Haruka gradually recovered her health over a period of about half a year and resumed working. During the next six years from the age of 28 to 33, she changed jobs several times, utilizing her knowledge that she had learned from her previous job to find the next job. Her first job after returning to Japan was a part-time position in the legal section of a retail company. She made drafts of and translated English contracts and other documents for the one and half years that she worked there. She learned about contracts and retail business law through the work. Next, she worked full-time in the legal section of a computer software company for about one year. Because the company had both domestic and overseas customers, the working environment was bilingual, and her English skills and knowledge of the law were useful. She learned about computer services while working in that company. A year later, she found another full-time position at an Internet server
service company and worked there for two and half years. She talked to people in
the United States in order to obtain permission to sell Internet domains because the
Department of Commerce in the United States was the control center of Internet
servers worldwide. In sum, during this period of her life, she gained a great deal of
useful knowledge and continuously had opportunities to use her advanced English
skills while working at the different companies. After intensively studying in the
master’s program and taking part in the internship at the publisher, her English
skills were so well developed that she could carry out her work in the Japanese
companies relatively easily; as a result, she was not motivated to learn more
English during this period.

Another important development in Haruka’s life took place during this
period. She started to sing.

きっかけは、自分がしたいことしようと思った。それまではテンションの
高いような仕事ばかりしていたけれど、ほんとうに自分が魂のレベルで喜
べるようなことをしようと思った。楽しいことをしようと思った。しんど
いことはもう全部やってきたから。で、歌を歌いたいなって。

I tried to do what I wanted to do. I had had challenging and stressful jobs,
but I wanted to do something that my soul enjoys. I wanted to do something
that would make me feel happy. I’ve already done all the hardworking
things. I thought I wanted to sing. (Case 3: 37)

Haruka explained why she chose gospel music:

家族がキリスト教やから、というのもあるし。ワシントンから帰って家でし
ょうぼりしている時、父と母に、「歌を歌いたい。」と言われたら、今日本
ではゴスペルが流行ってる、と言われて、ちょっと待ちなさいよ、英語や
し、キリスト教やし、音楽やし、（私以外の）誰がやるよ、と思った
（笑）。

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Because my family is Christian. And when I was feeling down after coming back from Washington, I told my parents, “I want to sing.” They said, “Gospel is popular now in Japan.” When I heard that, I thought, wait a minute, it’s English, it’s Christianity, and it’s music! I thought who could do this other than me! (laughter). (Case 3: 38)

Singing gospel music provided Haruka with a new goal and a new game to play. It was a different type of game; it was not a game to win an academic competition, but a dream to please her soul. In order to make her dream come true, Haruka searched the Internet and found a group of semi-professional gospel singers. When she visited the group, they welcomed her as a new member in part because they had invited an American singing teacher from New York. None of them were good at communicating in English, so Haruka’s English skills were very helpful. Initially, she enjoyed singing with the group. She discovered that she liked singing gospel, and from time to time, she performed at events, such as wedding receptions, with some of the group members. Singing became her part-time job, as she already had a full-time job. Later, she became a solo singer and left the group, as she gradually gained popularity and her own network of supporters developed.

Two years later at age 32, Haruka established her own music company while continuing to sing part-time. She decided to release her first CD and learned that she needed a corporate body when making a contract with the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC). Because she had some knowledge of the law and contracts, she decided not to join an established music production company. Instead, she formed her own company and wrote her
own contract. She produced music, both songs and CD recordings, coordinated with foreign gospel and other kinds of musicians when they toured Japan, and acted as an interpreter at the concerts. When she produced her first CD, she maximized her use of the skills and knowledge that she had learned from her previous experiences. She played the piano, an instrument she had practiced in her childhood; she used English when writing lyrics and liner notes and singing; she used the desktop publishing techniques that she had acquired in her journalism courses for designing CD jackets and flyers; she used her knowledge of the law when making a contract with a sales company and JASRAC, and; she used her knowledge of computers and the Internet when creating the company homepage. Her multiple talents flourished in her career as a singer.

Haruka became a professional singer when she had a tour in Switzerland in the winter of 2004. The tour came about when a Swiss person heard her sing at one of her live performances in Japan; he became a fan of her music and introduced her to John Black, a Swiss gospel country singer. John also liked her music very much and invited her to be part of his concert tour the following winter. As they found a sponsor for the tour, she quit her job and made her professional debut in Switzerland. The tour was successful and she has released two CDs since then. Singing gospel is about music, Christianity, and English, all of which are related to her passions. She hopes to extend the areas where she conducts tours both in Japan and overseas and to further develop her talent as a gospel singer.
Besides her hope to flourish as a gospel singer, Haruka appears to be constantly seeking new, interesting goals that allow her to develop her talents further. One of these goals concerned teaching English at a university. After finishing the Swiss tour successfully, Haruka heard from one of her old cram school teachers, whom she had met when she was a high school senior, that the department of the university where he taught was recruiting a number of new part-time teachers. As the opportunity to teach English at a university was unexpected, Haruka consulted her mother before deciding what to do. Haruka’s mother told her that it was not the kind of opportunity that Haruka should turn down, so Haruka applied for the job in 2005. She was hired in 2006 and has been teaching in the same university for the past four years (This is where I met her). She has enjoyed interacting with the students, and she hopes that her experiences stimulate the students to have an interest in studying English. However, she believes that teaching English well requires skills that are distinct from high English proficiency. Because she acquired English largely naturally and implicitly while working to achieve a number of academic goals in her undergraduate and graduate studies in the United States, she has had limited experience studying English in classrooms in Japan. As most Japanese students primarily study using the grammar-translation approach, their experiences differ from her own greatly. In order to teach more effectively, she has been reviewing English grammar in a more explicit way. Teaching English at the university is important to her in terms of social status and financial stability.
Another recent development in Haruka’s life is her re-engagement with human rights activities. This activity is an integration of her interests: gospel music, English, journalism, and world peace. She has been providing lectures on human rights to local community groups and junior high school and high school students.

The history and transformation of gospel music was associated with human rights, so I talk about them. Because local communities have a duty to provide their people with human rights education, they often invite me to speak. If it’s only study, the audience will fall asleep, but I sing, and they listen to my songs. It’s interesting for them to listen to gospel music. (Case 3: 42)

Haruka feels that her level of speaking fluency and accuracy peaked when she was in graduate school and have declined gradually since then, in part because of the influence she received from the Japanese language after returning to Japan. For example, sometimes she realizes that she speaks English with unnatural word order, her control of some grammatical elements, such as the singular/plural distinction and the third person singular -s, has weakened, she uses passive voice more often than before, and her pronunciation has become less accurate. In order to maintain her oral English skills, she has tried to actively use English regularly by speaking in English in her university classes, in the teacher’s room in the university, and when talking on the phone with her American friends. On the other hand, she believes that her overall communication ability has improved because she has become more skilled at analyzing and understanding new situations and solving
problems as she has matured; these skills seem to compensate for decreases in English proficiency.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 14 and 15 show Haruka’s self-perceived motivational levels that she drew at the first and second interviews conducted with a 13-month interval. They show similar motivational fluctuations that suggests that she remembers the past events relatively well.

*Figure 14. Haruka’s self-perceived motivational level throughout her learning history (May 2, 2009).*

*Figure 15. Haruka’s self-perceived motivational level throughout her learning history (July 26, 2010).*

**Instrumental Orientation**

As Haruka stated that she had never particularly liked English, her fundamental motivation to study English throughout her entire learning history has
been instrumental, or as a “survival tool.” The only exception to this occurred when she was interested in communicating in English in the beginning of her learning history when she was taking an English class at the age of 12. Her initial intrinsic motivation was transformed into instrumental motivation, as she perceived English as a tool she could use as she played a series of “games.” She was motivated to pass the high school entrance examination when she was in junior high school, and next she studied English intensively in order to survive as an exchange student in the public high school in the United States. After returning to Japan, she studied to pass a university entrance examination and after failing all ten examinations that she took, she turned her attention to studying the TOEFL in order to be accepted in an undergraduate program at a state university in America. After entering the university, she immersed herself in her undergraduate studies and competed with American students. After returning to Japan, she used English as a tool in her job at the Pakistani Embassy. She studied intensively to pass the TOEFL and GRE when she decided to go to a graduate program in the United States. She studied at the graduate school in order to become a professional in the field of international affairs. Most recently, she has reviewed English grammar in order to teach her university English courses more effectively. In all of the above phases of her life, she has studied English in order to achieve a specific purpose.
Goal-Oriented and Self-Determined

Even though Haruka studied English for instrumental reasons, she achieved highly advanced proficiency. Although research has suggested that an instrumental orientation is weaker than an intrinsic orientation when seeking to achieve difficult goals, it is not true in her case. A possible reason why she achieved such high English proficiency was because of her determined, goal-oriented attitude; she has worked extremely hard to achieve challenging goals in her life in a limited period of time. She consciously chose her goals and consistently displayed a strong determination and concentration to achieve them, and if she needed to improve her English skills in order to achieve those goals, she focused intensively on studying English. For example, she chose to go to a cram school to prepare for the high school entrance examination even though she was disappointed with the non-communicative approach used in the junior high school and cram school classes. She also focused on improving her standardized test scores and achieved the required scores after a short period of time when she was applying to her undergraduate and graduate programs. These episodes suggest that even though she did not enjoy studying for the tests, she understood what was important for her and shifted her focus onto studying English as it was one of the skills necessary for achieving her long-term goals.
Supportive Parents

Her parents’ influence and support were important factors for Haruka throughout her English learning history, especially in her childhood. They provided her with many opportunities to try a variety of new activities, such as playing the piano and violin, singing, and oil painting in her early ages. She was able to develop interest in these activities, as her parents did not force her to do any of them. In particular, her mother played an important role for Haruka’s English development in the sense that she first introduced English to Haruka and provided her with the advice to study in the United States. In addition, her father’s involvement with a Christian church resulted in her experiences at church since childhood, and these experiences contributed to the development of her interests in gospel music and human rights activity.

Frequent Fluctuations

In contrast to her goal seeking-orientation, Haruka’s English learning motivation declined quickly and sharply when she lost sight of her goals, and this is why her motivational trajectory fluctuated repeatedly. For instance, after entering junior high school and high school and after finishing her undergraduate studies and graduate studies, her motivation dropped and remained low until she oriented herself to a new goal. Her motivation resurged over and over as she has repeatedly found a new goal throughout her learning history, which, consequently, led her to achieve high-level English proficiency.
Change of Perceived Self in English Learning

In Haruka’s English learning history, she identified three experiences that affected her self-perception, and all of them took place when she was in the United States. The first experience occurred when she went to the United States as an exchange student when she was 15 years old. She was exposed to American culture through her interactions with her three host sisters and the local students during her home stay. The culture shock that she had at the dance party in the very beginning of her stay clearly illustrates her confusion. She had been a quiet, private girl through her childhood and adolescence, and always preferred to be by herself rather than interacting with other students. In order to survive in American culture, she encountered considerable pressure to interact with others; she understood that she had to transform herself by overcoming her shyness and becoming more social.

The second experience took place when Haruka participated in the community program for helping refugees during her second stay in the United States for her undergraduate studies. Meeting the refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina, she inevitably compared their difficult situations with her own, and realized how different they were even though both they and she were foreigners in America. The refugees had fled to America because their very lives had been threatened, while Haruka had come to the United States to pursue a good education. This hands-on experience with the refugees had a significant impact on her; she realized that many people suffer because of injustice in the world and that she should do something for those people.
In addition to being an eye opening experience, helping the refugees was a personally satisfying and rewarding experience for Haruka. She received an award by the organization where she worked acknowledging her work for the refugees.

This award meant that my hard work had been valuable for other people. It’s different from receiving an award because your calligraphy was good. This award was like a Nobel Peace Prize to me. I believe that (working for other people) is the most important. I work for human rights and sing gospel, and everything I do is because of that. I look for things I do best and what I can enjoy most that helps people. I think this is the meaning of my life. This award was the starting point. (Case 3: 48)

Another identity-related experience occurred when Haruka had a serious health problem in the last phase of her graduate studies. She called it a “nervous breakdown” that had emerged as a consequence of her enormously intensive work and study for two years. Though extremely painful, it was an indispensable experience for her because of the doors that opened as a result; that experience made her change the pace of her life and think about who she was and what she wanted to do. Eventually, she encountered the world of gospel music. Singing gospel music differed from what she used to do, and she realized that her soul might have been looking for something more peaceful and rewarding after studying and working so intensively in the United States. If she had not suffered from health problems, she would have had a very different life in America. Even if she had
been working to help other people, she might have done it by negotiating, arguing, and fighting with the world that allows injustice to exist. Instead, she is helping people by conveying the thoughts, representing the voices, and expressing the feelings of other people—she calls this work “a soul messenger.” She does this by engaging in her favorite activity, singing.
CHAPTER 7

CASE STUDY 4: SHIN

An English learner pursuing his interest

Profile

Shin is a full-time English teacher in the university. He appears to have good knowledge about computer systems and other classroom technology, and provides help to the part-time instructors when necessary. I came to know Shin when I asked him how to use an iPod in class as a source of English input in the first year of my work at the school. In addition to helping with the iPod, he taught me the basics of using the CALL system installed in some of the classrooms in the following year. His responses to my questions were quick and clear, and he always exhibited a cooperative attitude when explaining how to use the system. After getting to know him better, he gave me an offprint of an article that he published in Japanese, which was an analysis of Romantic literary theories. Even though I did not have any previous knowledge of the field, I thought that the article was interesting; the organization and logic of the essay were clear and that helped me comprehend the article. The article provided me with evidence of his profound knowledge of the topic and his translation ability.

Like other full-time teachers in the department, Shin appeared to possess his own style that he expressed, for instance, through his choice of clothing. He sometimes came to work in casual clothes, such as jeans and a polo shirt; this stood
in contrast to the other teachers, who were wearing suits or casual business clothing. In addition to his somewhat unusual mode of dress, Shin’s office seemed more spacious than the other teachers’ offices even though the full-time teachers’ offices are all exactly the same size. This effect was created because he had fewer furnishings in his office and what he had was well organized; the majority of the other offices were cluttered with huge piles of papers that imparted a chaotic impression. One of the most distinctive objects in his office was his mug collection, which was placed neatly on a small sideboard. All the mugs were from a series manufactured by a European tableware company. Each mug was distinguished by its own unique color scheme and patterns. He told visitors to choose their favorite cup while he was brewing coffee to serve them. The atmosphere of his office, which was created by his furnishings and the way that he organized them, suggested that his world was not limited only to English teaching and learning. I was interested in how he had learned English and asked him to participate in my study in spring 2007.

Table 7 shows that Shin has been learning English for over 30 years and that he has a great deal of experience in academia, earning dual undergraduate diplomas, an MA, and finishing a three-year Ph.D. course, as well as working as a research fellow and English lecturer in his university. Although he has held several different jobs, he appeared to be consistently interested in English literature throughout his academic history.
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<th>Table 7. Summary of Shin’s Background</th>
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The first interview with Shin, which lasted about 1.5 hours, was conducted on February 27, 2007 at a busy café in Osaka. The second interview, which lasted two hours, was conducted on December 17, 2008 in his office in the university. The third interview, which lasted about one hour, was conducted on August 5, 2009, at the same café used for the first interview. The interviews were conducted entirely in Japanese.

\(^5\) Though Shin’s highest TOEIC score was 950 in 2004 at the time of the last interview, it increased to 990 in 2010.
English Learning History

In the beginning of the first interview, Shin articulated what he saw as the key to succeeding in English learning, which he appeared to have embodied throughout his English learning history.

Try not to work too hard. I’ve kept my interest in English, but I’ve never worked too hard. Just like a diet, too much effort can’t last long. I can’t make the kind of effort necessary to memorize a whole vocabulary book (Case 4: 1).

Shin began studying English at age 12 in a public junior high school. Because he was born in January, he became a junior high school student one year earlier than the students who were born between April and December. The English classes that he took there were conducted in the style that was typical in Japan in the 1970’s, in which the focus was on reading and grammar and all of the English classes were taught by Japanese teachers. He was motivated when he started to study, but he gradually lost interest in English as the number of words that he was supposed to memorize and the difficulty of grammar that he was required to learn increased. Despite this decrease in motivation, he was able to summon the energy to study a little harder before taking the entrance examination at a prestigious high school. Because his brother, who was one year older, had passed the examination at a private high school, his parents allowed him to take the examination for a private high school. In order to prepare for the examination, he attended a cram school for
about a year. Consequently, he passed the very competitive examination and enrolled in a private high school that was affiliated with one of the top universities in Tokyo. Almost all the students were guaranteed entry to the prestigious university after graduation from the high school.

Shin was not enthusiastic about the schoolwork that he was assigned to do in high school, even though the school provided a number of unique classes. For example, he took an oral communication class taught by a native speaker of English, and a reading class in which the students read simplified versions of some of Shakespeare’s plays; neither of these were very common in Japanese high schools in the 1970s.

In regards to his high school English studies, Shin stated:

I hardly studied the textbooks in high school, so I can say that I didn’t learn any more grammar in high school than I had learned in three years of junior high school. Instead, I translated the lyrics of western music that I liked. I also liked movies, so I bought a lot of second-hand paperbacks of the original stories of the movies that I had watched. They’re too difficult for a high school student to read, so I often read only the first two pages or so using a dictionary and then I stopped reading. For example, the Japanese translations of *Anne of Green Gables* series were some of my favorite books, and I wanted to read the original, but I stopped reading when I got to Mrs.
Rachel Lind’s house, which was before reaching Green Gables (laughter). I also read the first few pages of other books before I wanted to read the previous books again. In this way, I read a total of 100 or 200 pages in English without realizing it. (Case 4: 1-2, 31-32)

Even though Shin was not very enthusiastic about studying English in his middle school years, his interests were related to English. When he was a junior high school student, he became a movie fan and was almost obsessed by his desire to watch movies. He watched a variety of American and European movies almost every day on midnight TV programs at home and sometimes went to movie theaters where the old movies were showing. When he was a high school freshman, he bought a comprehensive book, *The History of the Academy Awards*, and he used the book as a guide for his movie watching. He learned a lot about movies that had been produced since the 1920s, including information about the actors, production, music scores, and scripts; he tried to watch all the movies introduced in the book. While watching these films, he also came to like the music used in these movies, and as a result, he began listening to radio programs broadcasting music scores.

In addition to his enthusiasm for movies, Shin developed an interest in jazz piano when he was a high school senior. An essay written by Yosuke Yamashita, a Japanese free-style jazz pianist, inspired him. He listened to Yamashita’s piano recordings and nurtured the wish to play music like him. Even though he had never taken any music lessons as a child, he was intent on learning to play music that he liked. Initially, he attempted to play saxophone because becoming a saxophonist appeared more realistic than becoming a pianist. He thought so because he knew
that a large number of children started to play the piano at a very young age. In
order to buy a new saxophone, he worked part-time at a warehouse in the factory
area close to his neighborhood; however, his parents were against his playing the
saxophone in the house because it was too loud. They instead allowed him to
practice the piano and introduced him to his aunt, who was a classical piano teacher.
He practiced Beyer’s basic books with his aunt for about a year, and after becoming
a university student, he took jazz piano lessons for five years.

Besides English, Shin studied German as a second foreign language once a
week in senior year in his high school. His high school required the students to
complete another foreign language course other than English, which was an
unusual practice at that time in the foreign language education for high school
students. Though French was more popular among his classmates, he enrolled in
the German course. The class was taught by a Japanese teacher. Shin learned the
basics of German grammar, verb declensions, and pronunciation of German. He
passed the course but did not really think that learning German was very interesting.
Fundamentally, he took the course because he had to take it.

After Shin enrolled in the university, he did not attend school very
frequently and instead focused on playing the piano. Though he did not particularly
value academic achievement at that time, he majored in aesthetics, a field related to
philosophy. He had a clear reason why he selected that major:
I’m inclined to think rationally. When I was a high school student, I didn’t understand the criteria used in some critiques in which one thing was judged good while another was considered bad, so I wanted to think about what beauty and art were. I found out that there was a field called aesthetics in the university, and I thought that I needed to study it in order to develop my own criteria for judging things. I liked certain types of music and movies, which not all people would like. For example, Yoshida Hidekazu, an art critic, said that Beethoven’s *Kreutzer Sonata* was wonderful because of its diabolical sound. However, I listened to *Kreutzer Sonata* and thought, “Why is this wonderful?” On the other hand, I was touched by *Anne of Green Gables*, even though some people say that it’s just womanish or childish. I really wondered why these differences occurred. I wanted to know the reasons. (Case 4: 35)

I wanted to understand philosophy books after choosing my major, so I systematically read the books in connected schools, such as Kant and Kierkegaard. For example, I read Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, but I couldn’t comprehend the meaning of what I read, as I couldn’t visualize it in my head. I didn’t give up though, as I thought I could understand it some day. (Case 4: 36)

Because Shin was absorbed in music but not serious about schoolwork, he failed his first-year courses and had to repeat them the following year. However, a
slight change occurred in his second freshman year at age 19 in terms of his attitude
toward studying English. He enrolled in an English reading course where the
Japanese professor asked the students to read three Roald Dahl books, including
*Tales of the Unexpected* and *More Tales of the Unexpected*, over the course of the
academic year. Shin described the class as follows:

週に短編を一つ読んで、先生が学生に、「読んできたか。」と尋ねて、「じゃあ、感想を述べようか。」と言うだけなんです。「何々についてはどう思う。」と聞かれ、読んであれば答えられる。すごく面白い授業で、
僕はそういう授業が好きなんです。英語の解釈とか語彙についてはまったく
やらなかったです。それは素晴らしい授業でした。

We read one story every week. The teacher asked the students, “Have you
read the text?” and then only said, “Let’s talk about what you thought.” He
also asked, “What do you think of...?” and the students were able to answer
if we read that part of the text. It was a very interesting class, and I liked
that kind of class. The teacher didn’t explain the meanings of the sentences
and vocabulary at all. That was a great class for me. (Case 4: 3-4)

This was the first time that Shin had enjoyed an English class in school, so
he worked hard in the class. However, this did not mean that he was strongly
motivated to learn English, as his dream of becoming a jazz pianist took
precedence over studying the subjects that he was majoring in. English appeared to
play the role of a medium that conveyed information about the things that he was
interested in—music, movies, and literature.

Even though Shin was passionate about becoming a professional jazz
pianist, he made no attempt to realize that dream when he graduated from the
university. The difficulties of becoming a professional musician were clear to him,
as he knew that he did not have the musical talent to do so.
Concerning other foreign language studies, Shin took once a week German courses for four years as an undergraduate. He chose the German course because it was useful for reading texts necessary in aesthetics, and he had already learned the basics of German when he was a high school senior. The first-year course was grammar practice, and the second-year course was short text reading; both were required foreign language courses. In his junior and senior years, the courses involved reading original German texts, such as Kant’s, required for the aesthetics courses. All these course instructors were Japanese, and the courses were conducted primarily with the grammar-translation method. Because the instructors conducted the classes in Japanese, Shin was not certain about the English proficiency level of these instructors. As the courses proceeded, he was eventually able to read German texts with the aid of a dictionary. He did not think that German was a particularly interesting language to learn; he took the courses because of practical reasons: they were required and or useful for his major. As he stopped studying aesthetics when he graduated, he had no intention to continue learning German any further.

After finishing his undergraduate studies, Shin temporarily worked part-time as a telex operator. He called this two-year period his freeter period. In Japanese society, a freeter is a person who lives in a kind of easygoing way by occasionally working part-time and who therefore has a great deal of free time to enjoy other pursuits. In this case, his job as a telex operator was mostly irrelevant to what he had studied at the university. Fundamentally, at this point in his life, he had no desire to work on anything he was not interested in. For instance, he was
uninterested in working full time in a company, which was what many of his friends had chosen to do.

The reason why Shin became a telex operator was pure happenstance. He happened to purchase an electronic typewriter at a half-price sale at his university co-operative because he thought that he might be able to teach himself how to use it, as he had been practicing the piano for so long. He soon discovered that the quick movements of his fingers when typing were enjoyable. After developing his ability to use the telex, he found a telex operator job near the campus and became a competent operator. It was a relatively high-paying job in which he earned 300,000 yen per month, which was enough to sustain his life. At that time, only a limited number of people in Japan possessed the ability to operate a telex machine competently, so he also had a measure of job security. He especially enjoyed the direct telex operation with persons overseas with whom he communicated.

After his two-year freeter period came to an end, Shin returned to the university at the age of 26. Around this time, one small event convinced him that he needed to abandon his freer lifestyle and redirect his life to a more conventional course, which the majority of the people his age were taking. One day, his friend gave him a flier published by Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese religious cult, in which the cult leader was described as,「今世紀最後の解脱者」 “The last salvation in this century” (Case 4: 39). Though Shin had never been interested in the cult, he suddenly and acutely felt that the end of century was coming in a little more than
one decade—it was 1988—and that he needed to leave the freeter world and return to the ‘real’ world of a career.

It was the first time in my life that I intended to get a job as a regular member of society. I had never understood what it’s like to be a member of society. I mean having a job and doing what I’m not interested in, like doing business. I had never been interested in that. (Case 4: 39-40)

When thinking about my possible future jobs in the areas of my interest, I thought that English was the only possibly occupation that would work for me and that I might be able to become an English teacher, so I majored in English literature this time. I wanted to study English literature from the viewpoint of aesthetics. (Case 4: 4-5)

This was the moment when Shin finally became serious about his academic work and, as a result, he studied intensively. In addition to studying English literature, he self-studied generative-transformational grammar in order to better understand the grammatical structure of English. He felt that this combination would allow him to discuss English literature deeply and teach English properly to his future students. This intensive push to study, which stood in direct contrast to his behavior when getting his first undergraduate degree, indicated the strength of his determination to establish a career. Indeed, the decision to pursue a future career appeared to push him to study English intensively.
After obtaining his second undergraduate degree, Shin started a master’s program in English literature when he was 28 and then went on to a Ph.D. program in English literature when he was 30. It was possible for him to become an English instructor at his university after acquiring the MA, but he chose to study in the Ph.D. program in order to follow his interest in Coleridge, an English interpreter of Kant, who claimed that art was an organic unity where every part was united in the whole.

Coleridge を読んでいて、ある時、有機的統一性というのは思い込みであるということに気づいたんです。19世紀には、あるものに有機性を見るということは、非常に宗教的で、そこに神を見ているということだったんです。それが見えない人は知性や感受性がまだそこには至っていないと。20世紀後半においてもこの考え方は残っていて、自分でもずっとそう思っていたんです。でも、有機的統一性は、人がいるからこそイメージできるのであって、客観的に存するものではないということに気づいて、私の哲学は終了しました。「芸術とは何か。」という問いの答えが出てたんです。ここに至るために10年くらいかかりました（笑）。

Reading Coleridge, one day, I came up with the idea that the organic unity is based on one’s conviction. Back in the 19th century, seeing organic unity in one piece of art meant that one was seeing God there, and those who were not able to see it haven’t attained sufficient knowledge and sensitivity. This idea remained until the late 20th century, and I had been convinced by that argument. But I realized that organic unity could only subjectively exist when one was seeing it; it couldn’t exist objectively. When I understood this, my philosophical studies were finished. I had found the answer to my question, “What is art?” It took approximately 10 years for me to get that answer (laughter). (Case 4: 37-38)

Through all the intensive studies that Shin had engaged in since returning to the university, his English abilities, and especially his reading and writing skills, had developed to an advanced level. He comprehended difficult texts and expressed his thoughts in academic research papers in English.
During his graduate studies, Shin took a required course, the History of English, in which the participants read texts in French and German. Though his major was English literature, the professor had the students familiarize themselves with other foreign languages in order to better understand the relationship between English and those languages. He was able to read the German texts because he had studied German for five years in high school and in his undergraduate studies, but French was new to him, so he just listened to other students’ reading French. Although this was not a purely language learning course, it had significance for his later English learning because it helped him understand the formation of the English language and loan words from other languages, especially from French, which were important aspects of English.

Shin also took a required course in which he read works by Chaucer written in Middle English in the first year of his master’s studies. This course was more interesting for him compared with the reading English history in the French and German courses.

Reading Chaucer’s original texts was difficult, but I sometimes came across partial forms of modern English here and there in the texts, for instance, “when” appeared as “whan” and “that” appeared as “thon.” I thought it’s interesting. I used modern English translations in order to understand the original version. When I found a good translation, I thought, “Ah ha.” I then understand how easy modern English was. I thought, “English might be

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relatively easy,” after I read Middle English texts, so this was a positive experience for my English learning. (Case 4: 62-63)

先生がよかったというのもあります。授業は基本的に日本語ですが、（現代）英語の発音は名人級で、中英語もチョーサーの朗読なんて聞くと、「この人は何人だろう。」と思うほど素晴らしい。私の直接の先生はブラティカルな人で、哲学や思想やセンチメンツとは無縁の人でしたが、この先生は基本的に哲学者で、授業でも英米の哲学書や美術書を読むので、趣味が合ったんです。

(I was interested in the course) because I liked the teacher, too. He conducted the class primarily in Japanese, but he pronounced English almost perfectly. His Middle English was also marvelous. I even wondered, “What is his nationality?” when I heard him read Chaucer’s poetry aloud. While my thesis advisor was a practical person and indifferent to philosophy and any sentiments, this teacher was fundamentally a philosopher; he read American and British philosophy and aesthetics in his class that I liked. (Case 4: 63-64)

Finishing his Ph.D. program at the age of 33, Shin became a research fellow in his graduate school and was placed in charge of a special project involving digitizing old printed documents, such as a print of Gutenberg’s first Bible, of which his university library possessed one copy. It was a five-year project. Shin worked for the project leader, the professor whom Shin had met at the Roald Dahl reading class when he was getting his first undergraduate degree and who became his Ph.D. advisor. As a result of his involvement with this project, Shin had several opportunities to visit England to work at other universities. Because of his need to speak English at this time, his aural and oral English communication skills began to develop, though they were still slightly behind his reading and writing skills. Shin did not feel that his speaking ability was particularly good, in part because the project leader spoke almost perfect British English. When Shin and his professor
had a business trip together to England to promote the project, the professor
genuinely enjoyed conversing with his local acquaintances at noisy pubs and
restaurants, but Shin was unable to follow their conversations. As a result, he felt
that his English was not good enough when compared with his teacher’s native-like
competence.

Shin attempted to learn Latin when he started becoming involved in the
digitization project. He thought that it was more desirable for the project that he
was able to understand Latin because the old documents that he was digitizing were
primarily written in Latin. He purchased a Latin grammar book and dictionary for
self-study; however, approximately six months later, he stopped studying Latin.
One reason for stopping was that his job became too busy to continue studying.
Moreover, stopping studying was not particularly problematic for the project
because many of his colleagues, who had majored in middle English literature,
understood Latin. Unlike English speaking ability, understanding Latin was not
immediately necessary, so he did not strive to study it harder.

Five years later, the digitization project was successfully completed, and the
faculty planed to promote this innovative technology to other parts of the world.
Shin was assigned as the head of the British branch office, and he started to prepare
for the upcoming long-term stay in England. However, the plan was suddenly
terminated because of a political problem that emerged at his university. The
election of a new President took place, and the head of the project had been the
vice-President in the previous administration. However, when the previous
President lost the election, many members of his administration were dismissed, and the newly elected administration enacted severe economic reforms, such as, “No more new buildings,” and, “No more new projects.” Under these circumstances, the digitization project was cancelled.

Shin appeared to be upset when he knew that the project would not continue. He complained to his project leader and asked what he should do. When the leader jokingly responded to Shin by saying, 「いっぱいやめてみるか。」 “Why don’t you quit (your job) once?” Shin replied, 「じゃあやめます。」 “OK, I’ll quit” (Case 4: 8). In this way, he abruptly left the university where he had spent his late teens and almost all of his 20s and 30s: five years in the first undergraduate program, two years in the second undergraduate program, two years in the master’s program, five years in the doctoral program, and five years as a research fellow. He was 39 years old when he quit, and he did not even bother to find a new job before leaving.

Shin felt that his decision to leave the university so abruptly could be explained by his personality. On one hand, he could be extremely enthusiastic about something when he was interested in it. He can name a number of examples of this in his life: watching movies as a teenager, playing the piano from 18 to 24, typing for two years in his early 20s, and reading philosophical literature in his late 20s. On the other hand, he could relatively easily abandon a situation or an activity when he felt that he had had enough of it. In the past, for example, he had thrown away a number of music discs or photo albums that he had collected for a number
of years when he grew tired of it. Another possible reason he could leave the university was because he was confident he could find a new job where he would be able to use the knowledge he had acquired in the university project. He was the only person among the project members in the department of English literature who could competently use computers and work with photographers.

Shortly after leaving his university, Shin found a digitization consulting job in England and left Japan at the age of 39. He went to a city located a little north of London, where he spent two and half years until the age of 41. He worked for universities, such as Hertfordshire, Oxford, and London, digitizing old documents stored in their libraries. Because he did not meet any other Japanese at work or in his private life, he spent the two and half years using almost only English in his communication with his colleagues and friends, as well as when reading books and listening to music. He particularly enjoyed reading novels, such as Dick Francis’s horse racing series, David Lodge’s academic comedies, and Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes series. He became able to read books in English without being bothered by unknown words.

In contrast, even though Shin was living and working in a fully English environment for the first time in his life, he recalled that he did not make any impressive progress in his ability to speak English during the period in England. He appeared to have already been a proficient English user and did not have difficulty in terms of living in England using only English.
I didn’t think that my English speaking abilities made any progress at all while I was staying there. I had already acquired a certain level of speaking ability, so I didn’t experience any significant improvement in my pronunciation or new vocabulary knowledge. I had already moved beyond the stage that I could learn more as I spoke more. I wished to improve my ability to speak English but it didn’t happen. The only improvement that took place was in terms of writing business e-mail and providing telephone consultation. (Case 4: 49-50)

Shin took French lessons once a week for two years while he was working at a university in England. The school provided the lunchtime class for the employees for a small fee, and as he thought that it was a good opportunity to study French, he decided to take it. He sometimes visited France in order to meet a friend who lived in Paris and to do his work. British teachers taught the class using a thin textbook for beginners that presented useful expressions for traveling and business, and the participants read the text and practiced the dialogues. Approximately 10 people were taking the class, and all the participants were middle-aged female workers except Shin. He was the best student among them as he had already studied several Indo-European languages and was able to understand the grammatical terminology the teacher used. Compared with his own progress, Shin thought that British were poor foreign languages learners probably because they had received little foreign language education in school. Because he took the class
as a hobby rather than as a job obligation, he was able to enjoy studying French. As a result of taking the class, he became able to speak a little French while he was working in France for a month, though his proficiency never progressed beyond a beginner’s level. He stopped studying French and other languages after leaving England in 2003, but he still hopes to study French, German, and Italian someday.

Shin returned to Japan when he was 41 years old. He looked for a position at a university either teaching English or working in a document digitization project. One year later, he became an English lecturer in the university where he currently works; he has been engaged in this job for the past four years. Since then, he has been interested in producing pedagogical materials, such as a vocabulary book, grammar rulebook, and listening materials using motion pictures. He has also established a study group and published his studies in the group bulletins. Recently, he has been interested in utilizing the TOEIC as a tool to allow students to expand their world. Because the university has promoted the use of the TOEIC, increasing the students’ scores on the test is regarded an important goal in his department. In response to this goal, he sought a way to combine the university’s goal and his own goal as an English teacher. He found that the TOEIC uses a large number of expressions that are potentially useful for the students when they enter the work world and that studying for the test could help them learn about the world that they are going to enter after graduation.⁶

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⁶ As a result of pursuing his work goals and because of his interest in English, Shin has taken the TOEIC test several times since the last interview; as a result, his highest score improved from 950 in 2004 to 990 in 2010.
Notwithstanding his already advanced English proficiency, Shin has started to take a private pronunciation class recently:

Concerning pronunciation, for my students, correct phrasing and distinguishing the different articulation between content words and function words are enough, but for myself, I wanted to pronounce English sounds correctly because I teach them. When I played the piano, I was often out of rhythm and was told that I was kind of tone-deaf. I’m not good at reproducing the exact sound that I hear, so I searched for a personal pronunciation trainer on the Internet, and I am taking a lesson with the trainer once every two weeks. (Case 4: 56-58)

Shin is positively dealing with the TOEIC and taking pronunciation lessons, which indicates his enthusiasm for teaching English. At the end of the interview, he commented that he would probably not change his work situation radically or suddenly like he did when he was younger.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 16 and 17 present Shin’s self-perceived motivational levels that he drew in the first and second interviews conducted with nearly a two-year interval. The two charts look similar; however, the changes between ages 23 and 25 differ. In Figure 16, the motivational level decreased at age 24 and stayed at the same level at age 25 before surging upwards at age 26, while in the Figure 17, the motivational level increased at age 24 and remained at the same level before
increasing to an all time high at age 26. At the first interview, he stated that his motivation probably decreased at this particular period because he became a freeter. In contrast, in the second interview, he thought more carefully and determined that he must have maintained a certain degree of motivation during the freeter period, which led him to major in English literature when he finished being a freeter. This difference suggests that his perception of his English learning motivation was somewhat unclear during the period of time between first graduating from his university in 1985 and when he enrolled in the same university to pursue his second undergraduate degree in 1988.

Figure 16. Shin’s self-perceived motivational level throughout his learning history (February 27, 2007).

Figure 17. Shin’s self-perceived motivational level throughout his learning history (December 17, 2008).
Interest Related to English

Shin’s learning history illustrates his learning style and preferences: He enjoyed studying while working hard to achieve a goal that he was naturally interested in. For example, he enjoyed reading novels of movies when he was a secondary school student, practicing jazz piano, and learning typing by himself while he was a university student, and reading English literature and philosophy while he was in graduate school. Importantly, his interests were always related to the English language to a certain degree. This appeared to be the primary reason why he was motivated to learn English. Furthermore, he did not believe that he had language learning aptitude. Compared with his older brother, who has learned several foreign languages, such as French and Portuguese, to a high proficiency level, Shin stated that he kept pursuing his interests, rather than learning the language itself, and worked hard to achieve his goals. Consequently, he attained a high level of English proficiency.

Future Career Goal and English

During the two-year period Shin was working as a telex operator after graduating from the university, the perception of his motivational level was vague. After that period, his interest in English finally flourished when he determined to reenter the university to study English literature at age 26. At that time, he was motivated as a result of thinking more seriously about his future. It was the first time for him to choose a concrete future career that would lead him to become what
he considered to be a good member of society. After considering possible jobs that captured his interest, he thought that he could probably become an English teacher.

**Change of Perceived Self in English Learning**

Shin has never felt himself to have near-native English ability in spite of his advanced proficiency and experiences using English both in Japan and England: He was able to achieve 80% of what he want to express and he was able to understand academic lectures in his field of study and participate in question and answer sessions. Importantly, he has never striven to be seen in that way. In answer to my question regarding whether he has experienced any self-perceived changes in the process of becoming an advanced English learner, he stated, 「それはないと信じたい。多分ないと思う。」 “I don’t believe that it happened. I don’t think that I’ve ever had that kind of experience” (Case 4: 16). He thinks so because:

I always use Japanese (when I use English). If I think of something in my head automatically in English, and speak or hear it as it is, I’m probably close to a near-native English learner. However, just like typing very quickly, I quickly translate English into Japanese and vice versa in my head. I always translate everything. So, I always think as a Japanese. (Case 4: 16, 59)

In addition, Shin had been studying English consciously since he started intensively learning relatively late at the age of 26. For example, he felt that he
needed to understand the logic of sentence structure so he studied generative-
transformational grammar. He always tried to understand the structure (e.g.,
SVOC) of English sentences. Furthermore, he is motivated to consciously and
mechanically acquire native-like pronunciation, which he did not acquire in a
naturalistic way in the two and half years while he was in England. Similarly, he
has been in western Japan for four years, but he has never acquired the dialect
peculiar to that region of Japan. He might learn the regional dialect some day when
he decides to learn it in a conscious and mechanical way.
CHAPTER 8

CASE STUDY 5: CHIE

*A diligent goal seeker with a love of writing in her heart*

Profile

I first came to know Chie’s name around 2004, as she was one of the authors of a book describing how to develop and express thoughts in English in academic essays. That was a helpful book for me at that time, especially when writing essays, because I was working on my master’s studies in an American university. Because I was a Japanese literature major as an undergraduate, academic discourse in English was new to me, and the only books on that topic available at that time were written in English. About one year later, I saw Chie via a TV meeting at a language school—she was delivering a presentation about using the reading aloud and dictation techniques at the Osaka office, and I was watching her televised presentation at the Nagoya office. Though I did not know it at the time, she was working as an advisor for the language school. Because I was teaching a TOEIC preparatory course at a university that I was sent to by the language school, she and I had been coworkers for a short period of time. Her presentation at the meeting, which was applicable to my class, as well as her essay writing book that I had read the year before, gave me a good impression of her. In February 2006, I met Chie at an opening meeting at a university where I was starting to teach in the coming spring semester. It was at that time that I learned that Chie and I would
become colleagues in the university. I knew that she had published several more books concerning learning English, including popular vocabulary and conversation books, which were components of a series for beginning learners of English. At the meeting, she looked energetic and cheerful, but she was modest about her successful career. She looked cute, and her round eyes emitted something bright and strong that attracted people who talked to her even for the first time. She appeared to be a desirable candidate for this study as she constantly used English in her professional life, she is highly proficient in English, and she displayed a cooperative attitude about becoming a research participant.

Table 8 shows a summary of Chie’s background. She has been studying English nearly 40 years. During that time, she has visited English-speaking countries several times for a total of approximately six months. Considering her relatively limited experience overseas, her accomplishments are outstanding as she has established an English-related career in a variety of ways: running her own English school, acting as professional interpreter, working as an advisor to a language school, and writing textbooks. She has also achieved perfect scores on the TOEFL and TOEIC, two commonly used standardized English proficiency tests. Furthermore, her estimated written receptive vocabulary size of 13,200 word families is the largest among the participants of this study. These accomplishments indicate the tremendous effort that she has made learning English.
Table 8. *Summary of Chie’s Background*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of starting learning English</td>
<td>Age 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years studying English</td>
<td>39 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Major</td>
<td>Japanese Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School (MA) Major</td>
<td>Translation Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past employment</td>
<td>public worker at a city hall, English teacher in a cram school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current employment</td>
<td>university lecturer, owner and teacher of a language school, textbook writer, interpreter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length in an English speaking country</td>
<td>Approximately 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest CBT TOEFL score (Year)</td>
<td>270 (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEIC score (Year)</td>
<td>990 (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated written receptive vocabulary size</td>
<td>13,200 word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foreign language learning experience</td>
<td>French (two years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first interview with Chie, which was conducted on March 10, 2007, lasted about two hours. The second interview, which was conducted on March 18, 2009, lasted about two hours, and the third interview, which was conducted on March 21, 2009, lasted about one hour. All the interviews were conducted at the classroom in her English school. Some parts of the interview were conducted in English.
English Learning History

Chie started studying English in junior high school at age 13. She recalled that she was not a hardworking junior high school student, including English class. She joined the chorus and tennis club, but she spent much of her time with her male and female friends after school in the first year of junior high school. Few Japanese students went to cram school in the 1960s and 1970s. She and her friends frequently got together at a park or went to a swimming pool and often came home after dark. She remembers her mother’s complaint, “You’d better not stay outside so long—you’ll get too tanned!” (Case 5: 45). Around the time she became an eighth grader, her friends were gradually going their own ways, and her interests moved toward in-door activities, especially reading and writing.

Chie loved reading and did so constantly as a child; her interest in reading appeared to begin when she was quite small. Even before learning Japanese in elementary school, she was interested in the shapes of letters, such as hiragana, one of the Japanese writing systems. She was eager to read the titles of the books on her father’s bookshelves. Because her father was a police officer, issues of special journals published for the police were some of the first books she was aware of. Chie recalls asking her father when she found unknown Japanese characters in the titles of the journals. After enrolling in a public elementary school, her parents bought her a series of books about Japanese myths, and she enjoyed reading them. She also read many books in her school library. For example, she read a Japanese
version of The Secret Garden one morning when she was a fifth or sixth grader—she was so fascinated with the story that she could not put it down until she reached the last page. Although Hermann Hesse and the Anne of Green Gables series were her favorite books, she read great deal of Japanese literature from in her father’s bookshelf, such as Soseki Natsume, Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Ogai Mori, and Osamu Dazai, while she was in secondary school. Moreover, she bought paperbacks of Japanese literature using the money that she saved from her monthly allowance.

Chie loved writing even more than she loved reading. She first showed signs of her writing talent when she was an elementary student—her Japanese composition, titled 『風邪の注射』 “A Preventative Shot” won a title at a major competition for children’s compositions when she was a first grader. She began writing a diary when she was a seventh grader, and it soon became an everyday necessity for her. Immediately after coming home, she sat at her desk, opened her diary, and spent approximately one hour writing in great detail about what had happened that day, for example, events that occurred in school and how she felt about the events. She sometimes tried to figure out solutions to problems she faced by writing in her diary. Diary writing became a habit, and she continued it for the next 20 years until she was in her early 20s when she could not continue it anymore.

Chie had another writing habit: writing letters.

中三のとき友達になった子に、毎日、少なくて便箋２～３枚、多い時は１０枚くらい書いてました。毎日、「はい、今日の手紙。」と学校で手渡しで、彼女の手紙も受け取って（笑）。好きな男の子のこととか、将来のこととか。誇ることが好きだったんです。中三のとき、書いてる現場を親に見つかったので、「（受験）勉強しないで、何考えてる。」とひどくしかられました。彼女とは、高校に入ってもしばらく文通していました。
I was writing to my friend who I met when I was a senior, three pages at the shortest and 10 pages at the longest everyday. I gave my letter to her, saying, “Here’s today’s letter for you,” and I received her letter, too (laughter). We wrote about something like boys we liked and about our future. I liked telling her things in the letters. My parents scolded me when they saw that I was writing letters instead of studying, saying, “You’re not studying (for the entrance examination)! What are you thinking about?” I kept exchanging letters with her for a while after we went to different high schools. (Case 5: 47).

Chie rarely consulted her parents when she had a problem with her friends (she was the oldest child in her family); instead, she found solutions by writing in her diary and writing letters to her friend about her problems. Presumably, her intensive writing habit in secondary school reinforced her writing ability. She was always at the top in her Japanese class even though she did not study the textbook at all; she believes that this was the result of her regular reading and writing practices.

Unlike Chie’s Japanese grades, her other grades in junior high school were average. English was not an exception. One good memory concerning English in junior high school was that she was elected as a representative of her school in an English recitation competition held in her school district. She believes that she was elected as a representative because her English pronunciation sounded relatively good compared to her classmates. In the competition, representatives from different junior high schools in the same district competed with each other by reciting, “Knock, Knock, Knock,” a several-minute-long excerpt from their school textbook. On the day of the competition, she was nervous and recited the text that she had
memorized too quickly, so she did not win. Though she could not win the competition, her English teacher gave her an English-Japanese dictionary as a reward, which was a good memory for her. This competition was a relatively clear memory concerning learning English in junior high school, but the impact of the event was not particularly strong, so her attitude toward English did not change significantly after that.

In stark contrast to her unenthusiastic attitudes toward studying while she was in junior high school, Chie had a positive attitude after enrolling in high school. She describes her change as 「人が変わったように。」 “as if I became a different person,” (Case 5: 51) and believes, 「今の土台（まじめに取り組む姿勢）は、高校のときに築いたと思います。」 “I think the foundation of my current diligent work ethic was built when I was in high school” (Case 5: 15, 50).

I was determined to be good at Japanese in my class. I asked my father to buy a thick Japanese grammar book, and I had read a large part of the book in the spring holidays before the high school class started. Soon after the class started, one of my classmates told me, “Did you know that we’re paying this much for a one-hour lesson.” I thought, “Wow, it’s quite expensive!” and I should study hard. (Case 5: 25-26, 51)

The primary reason for her change was that she entered a private women’s high school rather than the local public high school that the majority of her friends attended. She liked the high school because it was a highly regarded women’s high school affiliated with a well-established women’s university, and the majority of the students were serious about their studies. In addition, her mother strongly hoped that Chie could attend the high school because her mother firmly believed that the
women’s school was better suited for Chie than coeducational public high schools. This was true—she enjoyed the atmosphere of the girl’s school, and she was able to concentrate on her studies without thinking about male students.

On the other hand, Chie wanted her old friends in junior high school to understand that her high school was good and that she was a good student in her school. She felt this way because some of her close friends, who went to public high schools, viewed her high school as inferior to theirs for no particular reason. Some people living in rural areas appeared to believe the conventional wisdom that public schools—whatever the students’ levels—were superior to any private high school. Chie was upset to learn that one of her close male friends believed this idea when she met him and other friends during the final spring break when she was in junior high school. Just like Anne in *Anne in Green Gables*, whom Chie loved when she was a junior high school student, she was determined to improve her situation through her own efforts.

Chie’s determination to study hard was not simply an abstract wish. She was almost always at the top in her class and ranked in the top 50 students in her grade on the end-of-term tests among the 500 students in her freshman and sophomore years; by her senior year she was ranked in the top 5 students in her grade. Her teachers regarded her as a serious and outstanding student. Her performance was especially outstanding in Japanese and English classes, which was a direct consequence of her tremendous efforts to excel in those subjects. For example, in her high school English classes, taught by a Japanese teacher who used
a grammar-translation approach, Chie made complete notes and memorized everything. In her notebook, she copied all the English sentences from the textbook on one half of the page and wrote corresponding Japanese translations on the other half of the page. She did this at home prior to the class. Because making such a perfect notebook was time consuming, she slept an average of four hours every night on weekdays. In her English class, she listened to her teacher’s and her classmates’ translations and checked her own translations, and corrected any mistakes that she had made in her notebook. When the mid-term and final examinations approached, she utilized her notebook—everything she needed was already there. She memorized all the translations and reproduced the original English sentences by looking only at the translations in her notebook. As a consequence of her efforts, she was almost always able to answer to all the questions that appeared on the exams perfectly.

When Chie was choosing a university in her senior year of high school, she wanted to try other universities even though she could enter the women’s university affiliated with her high school without taking the entrance examination. She thought that graduating from a more prestigious university would help her find a better job. Although she took entrance examinations for several prestigious universities in western Japan, she was only successful on the examination for the Philosophy department in one prestigious university. Her parents strongly opposed her wish to study at that university because they were concerned about the rumor circulating at that time that female students who study Philosophy are more likely
to commit suicide. They tried to convince Chie not to go to that school by telling her that she could only become a social studies teacher after graduating from the Philosophy department, and this was not an attractive career choice for Chie. Consequently, she ended up attending the women’s university that was affiliated with her high school, as that was her only remaining choice. Although she could have felt devastated by the thought that she made a useless effort to pass the highly competitive university entrance examinations, she felt that the women’s university would not be bad.

This episode demonstrated an important aspect of Chie’s personality: she is optimistic and positive. She described her personality as, 「一週間くらい落ち込むうとしても一過二日で疲れるんですよ。『悩んでも仕方ない。』ってね （笑）。」 “When something unpleasant happens to me, I think, ‘Oh, this is terrible. OK, I’d be depressed for at least one week!’ However, I get tired being down after one or two days, thinking being depressed won’t get me anywhere (laughter)” (Case 5: 68).

Chie majored in Japanese literature in her university. Though she studied English intensively for three years in high school, she did not choose English literature as her major. Her reason was, “I liked English, but I choose Japanese because I wanted to write stories and I had no idea to write something in English at that time. English was only one of the school subjects that I was good at” (Case 5: 26).

Chie had little to do with English during her time in the university. Although she took required English courses for the first two years, the classes were such an
insignificant part of her life that she remembers little about them. The instructor, who was Japanese, used a grammar-translation approach, so Chie had no opportunity to use English communicatively. She took part in few English-related activities during the four years. Besides the English course, she studied French as her second foreign language. She thought that French pronunciation was difficult and did not develop a great interest in French. She studied Japanese literature reasonably hard, and the topic of her graduation thesis was Izumi Shikibu, one of most famous female authors in classical Japanese literature.

One activity that Chie had enthusiasm for during her university years was her part-time job. A friend introduced her to a job in the liquor section in a department store when she was freshman. Chie worked there several days a week. Doing a part-time job was a new experience for her, and she found it interesting, in part because selling liquor required a great deal of knowledge. Even though she was a part-time worker, she was enthusiastic about learning about the products, such as different kinds of wines and whiskies. “アルバイトだから聞いても分からないというのではなく、お客様の質問に答えられるようになるのが楽しかった。” “I disliked people thinking that I couldn’t answer the customers’ questions because I was a part-timer. I liked to answer their questions” (Case 5: 55). Eventually, she became a popular part-time employee on the food floor, and the managers of other sections tried to persuade her to work for them. For example, she was asked to help a French pâtissier, whom the department invited for a promotion and crepe-making demonstration. It was interesting for her to be asked to help with various events,
something she did regularly in the food section. She continued working in the same department for several years. The pay was relatively high compared to her friends’ part-time jobs, and she could spend the money she earned in whatever way she liked. Even though she liked buying clothing and dating, she used a large portion of her earnings buying books by her favorite authors, such as Shusaku Endo, Morio Kita, Kobo Abe, Rolland Romain, and Herman Hesse.

It was after summer vacation in her senior year when Chie decided to become a public worker. She did not have a strong career goal. Instead, her parents, who were relatively conservative, suggested to Chie that she pursue that work because they believed that it was a stable job that was immune to economic downturns and one of the jobs most open to women; she was convinced by their advice to a certain extent. Because she had only a few months to prepare for the national qualification test, she studied intensively. She passed the examination, and became a public worker in the city hall where her parents lived. After graduation, she was assigned to a secretary department for the Mayor at the age of 22.

After working at the city hall for one year or so, Chie started to feel that the job was not ideal for her and that she would not continue working there for long. The work she was assigned, such as serving tea and making photocopies, was relatively unimportant. She had asked her boss for more challenging jobs, such as writing a draft of the Mayor’s speech or participating in making a budget for the next year, but these kinds of jobs were assigned only to higher-ranking male employees. Disappointingly, even if she had carried out these tasks, her boss

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always turned them into his own work. It was a common practice in the city office that female employee’s work was anonymous and a male employee took credit for the work. Generally, gender discrimination was common and there was little chance for promotion for female employees. This was frustrating for women like Chie, who were competent and hardworking. Because Chie lived with the frustration caused by this unfair situation for a number of years, she developed some troubling physical and psychological symptoms, such as feeling smothered, difficulty waking up in the mornings, and a reluctance to drive to work in spite of her fundamentally optimistic and positive personality. Around this time, the frequency with which she made entries in her diary gradually decreased because she felt that it was difficult to write them. She eventually stopped writing in her diary completely, thus ending her long-term custom that she began when she was 13 years old. Although her doctor did not find any physical problems and told her that she was perfectly healthy, she sensed that she might develop some illnesses if she continued her work at the city hall. She recently found that both the physical symptoms she developed and her loss of interest in writing, an activity that she used to have great enthusiasm for, are often indications of depression. She started to look for something else to do.
I had been making “a journey to search for myself.” I was still young and had lots of energy after working nine-to-five. I tried many different things and looked for another way to make a living. I got married at around this time, but I didn’t want to be a housewife who was completely dependant on my husband. I tried to get an instructor’s certificate for tea ceremony, flower arrangement, aerobics, and personal computer. In particular, I seriously worked on flower arrangement and aerobics. I earned an advanced level certificate as a flower arrangement instructor and seriously thought about becoming an aerobics instructor. Among the things I was trying, I started studying English again when I was about 28 years old. I thought that having a second level Eiken certificate might be useful to get a new job. (Case 5: 15, 57)

English did not emerge as a possible option for a long time for the following reason:

I was looking for a job that I could immediately start after quitting. In contrast to becoming a flower arrangement or aerobics instructor, I needed training in something like interpreting or translating in order to become an English professional. Because all the people around me (except my husband) said that being a public worker was the best job for a woman and they disagreed when I said I was quitting the job, I looked for an alternative to being a public worker. (Case 5: 57)

Chie’s parents, who held conservative views concerning women’s jobs, influenced Chie to postpone leaving her job. However, her husband and his family were constantly supportive and respected her choice. In particular, her husband, whom she had met in the city hall, always told her that she could quit her job any time and that she could do anything that she liked after quitting. Moreover, her mother-in-law demonstrated her understanding and respect for Chie’s desire to do
what she really wanted to do. Even though Chie was supported and respected by her husband and his mother, it was still difficult for her to leave her job.

Chie’s initial goal for studying English was relatively small: She wanted to pass the second level of the Eiken examination, as one possibly useful qualification for finding a new job. In order to achieve this goal, she resumed studying English at the age of 28, after a 10-year break. She worked hard, as always, and passed the test less than a year after starting to study. As her initial goal was achieved, she realized that studying English was interesting and wanted to study more. She continued studying in order to pass a higher level of the Eiken test, and joined an English conversation class with a British teacher near her house at the age of 29.

A British female teacher in the school, who later became a good friend of Chie, regularly took her students to England, and Chie decided to participate in the program when she was 30 years old. This was her first stay overseas. She had to pay approximately 700,000 yen and took a 30-day paid holiday from her work in order to participate in the program. The extremely high cost and the difficulty of taking a long holiday did not stop her. The participants in the program studied English at a language school in England, and had a homestay at a beach town located in southwest England.

I think that I was thinking about many things during this stay. I was the oldest person in the group and the younger participants relied on me. But I
had just started studying English, so my English was still insufficient. For example, when our group was standing in line at a pizza shop, we had to wait unreasonably long, and I tried to complain to the shop clerk that we were in line for a long time, but they didn’t understand me. (Case 5: 58)

After returning from England, Chie finally quit her job at the city hall; she had been doing that job for eight long years.

I felt free after coming back. I thought, “What was I worried about? I’ll just quit.” I hadn’t decided on my goals at all, but I thought that I was free from the idea, “I should quit after finding a new job.” I was able to think, “It’s fine to start with what I can do. I don’t have to keep earning the same amount of income.” (Case 5: 58-59)

In this way, Chie’s long journey to search for a better way to earn a living came to an end, and she appeared to enjoy learning and teaching English for the next 10 years. She started to teach English to a few junior high school students in her home and at a cram school at the age of 31. She also met a British female colleague in the language school, who became her good friend. Chie was much happier doing what she liked compared to when she had been working in the city hall. However, she had not completely devoted herself to English yet—she imported British goods, such as Teddy bears, mugs, and post cards, from England and opened a shop to sell them. She also practiced tool painting. She started a tool painting class for housewives in her neighborhood, and she practiced lacework and
embroidery; however, teaching English was gradually becoming her primary work and assuming a central position in her life.

Three years later at age 34, Chie stopped teaching at the language school and focused on teaching at her own English school because the number of students had increased to 50 by word of mouth, and their ages ranged from children to adults. She rented a larger room near her house to accommodate the greater number of students. She prepared for class in the mornings and taught in the evenings. Because both her English abilities and teaching skills were still not completely sufficient—a situation that caused her to feel sorry for her students around this time—she had to spend hours for class preparation.

In addition to the classes she taught, Chie started taking her students to a language school in London, England where her British friend was teaching. Her students studied English in an English-speaking environment for four weeks, and Chie also attended the advanced-level classes with European teachers. She conducted the tour three times from 1988 to 1999.

Chie was enthusiastic about improving her English abilities in order to provide good classes to her students. She listened to cassette tapes in which English stories were recorded, in order to improve her listening proficiency and expand her knowledge of English expressions. Even while she was doing other activities, such as lace work or tool painting, she was always listening to tapes. In addition, she read two or more English novels per week. She initially read novels for children, such as the *Dr. Dolittle* series, Puffin Books, and *Daddy-Long-Legs*. She moved on
to novels for adults and became especially interested in horror stories, such as those written by Steven King and Clive Barker. Her love of reading (in English this time) expanded her vocabulary knowledge and reading fluency. Furthermore, she invited two foreign women to stay in her house during the 10-year period, a British woman, stayed with her for two years and an American woman stayed with her for one year. Living with them helped her improve her communication skills and her understanding of other cultures. As a result of teaching English and making efforts to improve her communicative English skills in a number of ways, she made steady progress; she passed the pre-first level of the Eiken at age 31 and her TOEIC score, which had been about 600 at age 31, increased to 780 at age 35.

Another breakthrough took place when she was 40. She took the test to become a licensed guide. The license for tour guides administered by the Japan National Tourism Organization is a national certificate to become a guide and interpreter for foreign tourists at famous sightseeing places in Japan, such as temples, shrines, and castles. Chie had never focused on studying English to earn the licensed guide certificate; rather, she took the test because of her friend’s suggestion. Her friend, who had just finished studying in the United States and who wanted to pass the test, asked Chie to take it with her. The test, which consists of reading, writing, and interview subsections, has a reputation as one of the most challenging English tests in Japan, as it assesses both the examinees’ knowledge about various aspects of Japan, such as culture, society, economy, politics, and geography, as well as their English proficiency. Few examinees pass the test on the
first attempt. She had only one month to prepare for the test, and despite the extremely short period of time, Chie passed the reading and writing test, while her friend who took the test with her failed. Although it was an unexpected outcome, Chie studied intensively to pass the interview test, which was administered one month later. She took a preparatory course specifically designed for the interview test takers and studied with other students in the course. Furthermore, in the final week before the test was administered, she cancelled all her teaching work in order to concentrate on preparing for the test. During the interview test, a native English speaking professor, a tour guide interpreter, and a travel company employee, asked her opinions about both domestic and international issues, such as North Korea’s launch of a ballistic missile in 1998. She successfully passed the interview test on her first attempt when she was 40 years old.

Because of the intensive study for the licensed guide examination, Chie’s English abilities had improved, which led to another success in the following year: She passed the first level of the Eiken test at the age of 41. The intensive study that she had engaged in to pass the two challenging English tests had boosted her English abilities.

I used to take things that happened in the past in Japan for granted and didn’t think about them so much. (After practicing expressing my opinions for the test,) I started to think about past events and was able to express my ideas about them, for example, when watching the news, I can tell my views
about why the event happened and how we should deal with it in English. (Case 5: 65)

Studying intensively for the tests also broadened Chie’s social network. By studying with other students, she realized that a large number of good English learners existed, and she was inspired by meeting them. She had opportunities to exchange information about learning and teaching with the proficient and enthusiastic English learners whom she met. One of these exceptional learners was Mr. Uchida, a Japanese male English teacher, who had a charismatic reputation among her study group members. He was running his own English school, and one of her study group members introduced her to his school.

His English lexical knowledge seems impossible to estimate. He said that my vocabulary knowledge was much too small. He was critical of people who taught English with the level of knowledge needed to pass only the first or pre-first level of the Eiken. He says it’s wrong to teach English with such limited knowledge and with such little study. Because most people don’t have the guts to learn much, much more, they stay average. I was convinced by what he said to a certain extent. Also, his learning style of focusing on one goal, such as passing the first level of the Eiken, was stimulating, as it was different from my learning style (in which I try to learn as many aspects of English as possible by doing things, such as reading novels and talking to my foreign friends). (Case 5: 7)

Notwithstanding Mr. Uchida’s opinion about Chie’s English abilities, he appeared to recognize her talent because he asked her to teach at his school. At
around the time she received a job offer from him to teach at his school, she was taking a course at an interpreters’ training school to practice simultaneous interpretation for conferences. After considering the two schools, she stopped attending the interpretation course and took the teaching job at his English school for two reasons: Mr. Uchida had strongly persuaded her to work with him, and she thought that she could learn more from working with him than by taking an interpretation course. She taught preparatory courses for the pre-first and first level of the Eiken in his school for two years when she was 42 and 43 years old. Around that same time, she co-authored a textbook with Mr. Uchida about how to write English academic essays. This has been a best selling textbook in Japan because of its quality and uniqueness—few Japanese books were available in the genre (I first saw Chie’s name by reading this book). Working at his school allowed her to publish more books as she got to know some of the editors working at publishers specializing in English education.

Further expanding her English abilities and social network, her life appeared to become completely devoted to teaching English and writing textbooks. In 2002, she left Mr. Uchida’s school and restarted her own English school at the age of 44 where she has been teaching preparatory courses for students wishing to pass the first level of Eiken test. She has published several more textbooks with different publishers, and also served as an advisor for a well-established English school, where she was responsible for planning courses and recruiting and training instructors. She worked with the company for about six years between the ages of
43 and 48 (I saw her at the TV meeting during this time). Furthermore, she has worked as a freelance interpreter for the past nine years. She passed the interpreter’s test for the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) and actively worked part-time for JICE for about three years. She served as an interpreter and trainer for foreign members of the organization who were primarily from developing countries, such as the Philippines, Malaysia, and China, when they came to Japan. The length of the training sessions varied from one week to a few months. She also worked as a simultaneous interpreter at business meetings.

Chie’s interest in learning has appeared to never stop. She was interested in earning a master’s degree while teaching in Mr. Uchida’s school. Knowing about her interest to earn a graduate degree, he recommended that she focus on translation studies. As it sounded interesting and useful for her, she looked for an on-line graduate program in translation studies and found a program provided by a university in England. The school provided a good program and the tuition was more reasonable than the graduate programs provided by American universities; therefore, she enrolled in the graduate program in the fall of 2003 at age 46. She had to complete six required courses, such as translation approach, grammar, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis. For each course, a reading packet was sent from the university, and she submitted an essay to pass the course. She could choose one out of three options for her essay in each course. A tutor was assigned to each student, with whom the student could consult about the courses and assignments.
Because Chie’s undergraduate major was Japanese literature, she had never written academic essays in English. Her first essay, on the topic of approaches to translation, received a grade of around 50 points out of 100. She remembers the professor’s comment, “You did not need to write this much at this stage.” In her later courses, her grades for the grammar and discourse analysis papers were over 70 out of 100. After completing the six courses, she wrote a master’s thesis on the topic of “Translation as a tool for advanced learners for their further improvement.” She had nurtured this research idea from the early stages of her graduate studies and had collected data from her study group where the participants practiced translation (further described below). However, as she was working full time, she wrote the last part of her thesis in an extraordinary rush. She completed the thesis in only three weeks, which was an extremely short period of time. She spent two weeks for the literature review and one week for other components. Her friends who had studied in graduate programs were more worried about her thesis than she was and encouraged her to finish. The moment she finished writing the thesis, her husband dashed to the nearest airport with the document in order to get it on the last FedEx flight of the day. This was not the first time that she had faced this kind of extremely intensive study with a tight deadline; they had occurred twice previously: when she took the examination for a public worker’s certificate in her senior year at college and when she took the test for the licensed guide, and both times, she had successful outcomes. Likewise, she accomplished a passing grade
(57 out of 100) on her thesis and completed the Masters program in 2006 fall at the age of 49.

It was quite challenging, but I was glad I did it. The merit was that I could understand what academic studies were like, and I learned that I had not learned a lot yet. Also, I understood my students’ situation that they were studying with a limited amount of time. I can make any tight deadlines for writing books after experiencing that (laughter). (Case 5: 42, 67)

After earning her MA, she started teaching at a Japanese university as a part-time lecturer at the age of 49.

Chie believes that her desire to learn English will continue because teaching and writing textbooks require depth and breadth of English knowledge as well as the ability to use English. She stated that she has recently felt no distinction between class preparation and learning because she feels that she learns a great deal from class preparation. However, her learning opportunities have extended far beyond class preparation; she has been participating in a number of English-related activities besides teaching. One such activity is holding a translation study group. The participants have been practicing translation and writing English once a month for the last three years. She invites a journalist to lead the workshops. The 70-year old journalist is very competent in both writing and speaking English and gives feedback to each participant about their writing. Even though she acknowledges that she can write better than the other members, she always learns something new.
from his feedback. For example, her writing flows more smoothly when she takes his advice. Another activity that helps her improve her English is her volunteer work for the Osaka branch of the Japanese Red Cross. In 2007, she served as the group leader of the Japanese youth division and acted as his interpreter when the group went to Malaysia for a one-week exchange program.

Furthermore, Chie attended a summer program for two weeks in 2008 provided by a college of a university in Oxford, England. She stated that she attended the workshops ʻ自分に喝を入れるため。ʼ “In order to give a stimulus to myself” (Case 5: 39). About 50 English teachers from 25 countries participated in the program, and the majority of the participants stayed in the on-campus dormitory. She attended a variety of teaching workshops on topics such as pronunciation, contemporary English, grammar, creative writing, reflective teaching, and materials development. She thought that some of the workshops, such as the one on reflective teaching taught by Professor U, and material development, led by Professor K, were particularly informative. Participating in the program motivated her to improve her speaking ability. She participated in the small group discussions more actively than the other three Japanese participants; However, even if she was ready to talk in front of the entire group of participants (about 50 people), she did not dare to raise her hand to become a group representative. She is hoping to break this overly modest behavior commonly observed in many Japanese learners when attending the program again in summer 2009.
Chie has another powerful reason to improve her English: Her long-term dream is to write and publish a story in English. In contrast to her conventional publications, this book is special considering her love of writing since she was a child. Writing this book would also be extremely challenging because it would not concern English learning nor would it be written in Japanese. She has been developing the idea for the past several years. At the first interview, she said, "I have a dream to write a story in English, like Harry Potter" (Case 5: 13). At the second interview, she said:

Recently, I’m thinking about writing a book introducing Japanese women to the world. I’d like to introduce resilient, smart, and modest Japanese women who have appeared in our history. I came up with this idea because we’ve seen a lot of western women in history, such as Elizabeth I and II, but there have also been a number of marvelous women in Japan, for example, Umeko Tsuda and Shoen Muramatsu. I’d like to introduce them to the world in the form of a book. This can be a 10 or 20-year project. (Case 5: 43-44)

Her goal is to publish this book in a clear, accurate, and creative English writing style. In this regard, she stated the following:

日本語を見るように、英語を書けたらいいなと。自分で文を書いて、日本語だったら、厳しい目で自分で見るじゃないですか。その感じっていうのは、英語では、なかなか難しいですね。これでいいのかな、どうかなっていう迷いなく見たいです。英語をやって行く上で、日本語との差を縮めたいと思うと思っています。
I wish to be able to write English at the same level at which I write Japanese. When we write Japanese, we can look at it with critical eyes, right? Doing the same when we write in English isn’t achieved easily. I want to see my English without wondering if it’s right or wrong. I’ve always wished to reduce the gap between my English and Japanese abilities. (Case 5: 13, 40)

Writing the book presents Chie with a powerful motive to further improve her English proficiency, and she can do it in a way that originated with her love of writing when she was a little girl.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 18 and 19 present Chie’s self-perceived motivational levels that she drew at the first and second interviews conducted at a two-year interval. The two charts demonstrate an almost identical fluctuation pattern. This indicates that she perceives her motivational level and the motivational changes over her 40-year period of English learning in a concrete, stable way.

Closely looking at the two charts, however, two differences can be observed. One difference concerns her motivational level when she was 15 years old. Figure 18 indicates that it increased from a low to a medium level, while Figure 19 shows that it stayed at a low level at age 15 and increased to the medium level at age 16. This difference emerged because at the first interview, she thought that her motivational level increased when she represented her school in the recitation
competition at the age of 15, in the summer of her final year in junior high school. However, at the second interview she thought that participating in the recitation competition was merely a memorable event concerning English learning in her junior high school, but not one that motivated her to study further. She recalled that she did not change her attitudes toward studying English nor did her English grades become higher for the rest of the school year. She confirmed at the second interview that her learning motivation increased when she entered the private women’s high school at age 16.

Another difference observed in her perceived motivational trajectory was the pace of the increase between ages 28 and 31. The increase occurred within a
year in Figure 17, while it took place gradually over a few years in Figure 18. This motivational increase took place in accordance with Chie’s career change, and at the first interview she thought that her interest toward English emerged from zero and sharply increased when she passed the second level of the Eiken test. At the second interview, however, she thought more carefully about the situation around her when she was changing her job and realized that her motivational increase gradually occurred over a few years until it reached a plateau at age 31.

**From Instrumental Reasons to More Profound Reasons for Studying**

In Chie’s learning history, two types of motivation toward English appeared. In her high school period, she studied hard and enjoyed learning English, but she saw English as just one of many school subjects. This is explained by the fact that she majored in Japanese literature, instead of English in her university. When comparing Japanese and English, studying Japanese and writing Japanese were more appealing to her. As a result, she had forgotten about English for the next 10 years while she was a university student and a public worker, and she did not mind forgetting English. Her motivation differed when she was shifting her career from being a public worker to an English teacher when she was 30 and has continued to the present time. In contrast to her level of motivation to study English in high school, her learning motivation from age 30 was much stronger and more enduring. The difference appeared to concern her unhappy work situation and experiences that she had during her public worker period. Even though her initial motivation
was relatively modest and strongly instrumental, the process and the reason for studying English was much more profound than the one when she was in high school: She was desperate to overcome her stagnant situation and transform her life. English helped her do this. Her flourishing English career since then is evidence of her sustained high-level motivation to learn and use English.

**Interest in Reading and Writing**

Love of reading and writing was Chie’s strong motive throughout her learning history. Interest in reading and writing was her consistent disposition since she was a child. She spent long hours engaging in these activities, such as reading books on her fathers’ bookshelf and from the library and writing diaries and letters every day, in her childhood and adolescence. She had also been good at Japanese since she was in elementary school. Her engagement with reading and writing shifted from Japanese to English after resuming her English study. Starting with children’s books, she kept reading English novels and has written a large number of English textbooks. She has a dream to write an interesting English story and publish it. Her engagement with the literacy activities is a powerful and consistent motivator as it has to do with her internal motives, rather than external goals.

**Change of Perceived Self in English Learning**

Two self-perceived changes can be identified in Chie’s learning experience. First, learning English provided her with opportunities to think about herself from
an outsider’s point of view, which appeared to affect her perceived identity. Soon after restarting her English study at the age of 28, she became free from the conventional idea that had bound her for a long time. Specifically, she had been postponing making the decision to quit her job in the city hall for more than six years, even though she had known in her heart that she wished to leave. After studying in England for a month, she finally decided to leave her job.

I had been bound by conventional ideas about woman’s work. It’s 20 years ago, and people around me were saying, “Being a public worker is ideal for a woman,” and, “Work is supposed to be hard.” My friends who were around the same age were saying, “You can’t make living doing what you like.” When I complained about my job and said that I wanted to quit, it sounded immature to others at that time. I had also believed that I had to find another job before quitting. (Case 5: 17, 57)

In addition to the social pressures and expectations concerning women’s work, her parents’ influence was substantial. They were relatively conservative about women’s roles and told Chie that a woman should always prioritize her husband and family. She remembers that her mother told her that she had to prioritize a date with her fiancé even when she had a prior engagement with someone else on the same day. She could not be free from her parents’ conservative ideas even though she married a relatively liberal person. She was able to temporarily separate herself from the things that had bound her when she stayed in
England for a month. Under those circumstances, she could look at herself more objectively, and this allowed her to recognize that her problem was relatively small and that it was fine to leave her “ideal” job before figuring out what she should do next.

Second, Chie’s awareness of her Japanese identity was strengthened by learning English. It occurred in both negative and positive ways. In her first stay in England at age 30, she and three younger Japanese students, studied with students from European countries. On one hand, she felt that Japanese were less sophisticated compared to many of the Caucasian students in terms of English proficiency and physical appearance. The European students’ English proficiency was much higher than that of Japanese students, and the Japanese students, including Chie, could not completely follow the discussions. Moreover, one of the European female students in her class was exceptionally attractive; her long blond hair and nice legs, which she always showed off by wearing short pants that emphasized her legs, caught the attention of her male teacher, who clearly showed favoritism toward her. The young Japanese students were outraged with the teacher’s discriminative behaviors, and Chie had to complain about the teacher’s favoritism to the administrative office on behalf of the young Japanese students. Because the office staff appeared to believe that Asians were quiet students who rarely complained about their class; thus, they reacted to Chie with surprise and helped the teacher stop his unfair attitudes in the class. While she understood the
outrage of the Japanese students and fought against the unfairness for them, she also recognized the difference of physical appeal between Caucasians and Asians.

On the other hand, Chie felt that the Japanese were beautiful in their own way among the European students.

Studying with the European students who asserted their opinion in English fluently, I thought that Japanese was a beautiful nationality. Japanese are modest and care for each other, which, I thought, was a beautiful aspect of Japanese culture. Trying not to assert ourselves but keeping quiet, a silent expression of respect for others, even if we have a lot to say, which, I strongly thought, is an aspect of Japanese culture that I should be proud of. (Case 5: 68)

In a somewhat contradictory account, Chie had intentionally presented herself more assertively when communicating in English than when communicating in Japanese after becoming proficient in English. Her rationale for this change was based on her understanding that being modest was not acknowledged as a positive characteristic and that expressing her opinions as clearly as possible was necessary when in an English-speaking culture. In line with this idea, she tried to express her opinions and logically argue in the group discussions when she participated in the teaching workshops in the university in Oxford in 2008. Furthermore, she plans to express herself more assertively in her participation in the discussions when she attends the same workshops in 2009.
On one hand, Chie acknowledged the beauty of Japanese modesty; on the other hand, she understands the need to be assertive in English communication. She appears to be both modest and assertive. This oxymoronic identity has emerged, or an assertive aspect of her personality has been developed through the process of learning English. Her hope to introduce prominent Japanese women to the world in English might also be a reflection of her fundamentally strong Japanese identity.

Chie believes that these changes in her identity would have occurred sooner or later in the process of learning English even if she had not stayed overseas because she believes that the process of learning English cannot be isolated from the process of learning different values associated with the language. Staying outside Japan was a hands-on experience that merely facilitated the changes that happened to her.
CHAPTER 9

CASE STUDY 6: TAKAYUKI

An independent, intrinsically motivated learner who studied only in Japan

Profile

Takayuki is an associate professor and the leader of the English team in the economics department at a university where I have worked for the last three and half years. He is also known as being an English textbook writer—finding his name on a number of book titles is not a difficult task when people go to the English textbook section of any bookstore. His books cover a broad range of topics, such as grammar, vocabulary, speaking, writing, listening, and English test preparatory materials, such as for the TOEIC. I first met him while I was taking an interpreter’s course in Osaka around 1995, 10 years before I began to work in the university. Although the course was designed to teach simultaneous interpretation for English-Japanese bilingual conferences, one of my classmates was interested in earning a national certificate as a tour guide for foreign tourists, and after some searching, she found a study trip to Kyoto. She asked me to join her on the trip. As it sounded interesting, I decided to go with her. I learned that Takayuki was the organizer of the study group when I saw him on the day of the trip. We visited Daikakuji Temple and the Sagano area, which are well-known historical sites in Kyoto, and Takayuki provided cultural explanations about these places in Japanese. His explanations were detailed and interesting, so I understood that he was a competent certified tour
guide. On the day we visited the temple, it was raining slightly, unexpected repairs were being made to the temple, and the small restaurant where we had lunch was crowded, so we had to wait for about half an hour. Despite these undesirable events, Takayuki did not express any annoyance to the other participants. He was calm the entire time and appeared to enjoy presenting his knowledge about Japanese history and culture. Ten years after that trip to Kyoto, I met Takayuki again in 2006 at the job interview when I applied for the part-time position in the university. When I met him, I was surprised partly because he had become a professor in the economics department, an area that has nothing to do with Japanese history and culture, and because he looked as if he had not aged in the 10 years since I had first met him.

After working in the same English program, I have come to know his personality to some degree. He is very busy and extremely hard working; he sleeps over at his office a few days a week, as he is the leader of the English team in the department and he has continued to publish a number of textbooks every year. I have also learned that, even though he is busy, he smiles when I see him on campus. A colleague who has worked closely with him since they established the English program says that she has never seen him upset or angry in the workplace. At the annual meeting with all the part-time teachers, he gives a short opening meeting speech as the group leader. He looks like he will keep on talking until other people stop him, and the meeting participants, most of whom have known him for some time, appear to understand his talkative nature. One year after joining the English
program, I asked him to participate in my study and he agreed to do so. He said that he liked to help people who were working hard. On the day of the interview, however, it appeared that he had not gotten enough sleep because of working over night. Despite any fatigue he was feeling, he smiled and was willing to talk about his English learning experience. Even though he had become a busy professor, his calmness and talkativeness had not changed since that rainy day in Kyoto 10 years earlier.

Table 9. Summary of Takayuki’s Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of starting learning English</td>
<td>Age 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total years studying English</td>
<td>40 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate major</td>
<td>English Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School (MA) Major</td>
<td>Linguistics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past employment: English instructor at an interpretation school/cram school/language school, interpreter
Current employment: university professor, textbook writer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length in an English speaking country</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest CBT TOEFL score (Year)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest TOEIC (Year)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eiken</td>
<td>The first level (1983)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated written receptive vocabulary size</td>
<td>13,200 word families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foreign language learning experience</td>
<td>German (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish (less than 1 year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Takayuki started learning English at age 13, so he has a 40-year English learning history, the longest among the six participants. He has had several jobs, all of which were English related and most of which concerned English education. He studied English in Japan throughout his learning history, as he has never lived in an English speaking country. His scores for the TOEIC and TOEFL tests were not available because he had never taken standardized English tests. Instead, he passed the test for certified guides (the English test evaluating examinees’ English proficiency and knowledge about Japan in order to lead sightseeing tours for foreign tourists to Japan) and the first level of the Eiken in his 20s. A summary of his profile (See Table 9) indicates that he began his English related career and that he achieved an advanced level of English proficiency in his early 20s without studying abroad.

The first interview with Takayuki was conducted on March 27, 2007, and the second interview was conducted on August 20, 2009. Both interviews lasted about two and half hours and were conducted entirely in Japanese. His talk was detailed and prolonged. He recalled other issues related to what we were currently talking about one after another. It appeared inappropriate to frequently stop the flow of his talk, so I asked fewer questions to him during the interviews than with any of the other participants.
English Learning History

In his childhood, Takayuki was an introverted child who rarely communicated with other people. He spent time largely by himself rather than playing with friends. He liked things that he could do by himself, such as making crafts, in his early years in elementary school. He remembers that one of his elementary school teachers praised the paper train he made using boxes when he was second grader. In his late elementary school years, he liked looking at a series of books of Japanese maps and memorized the names of places in Japan. His school grades were not impressive, 3 out of 5 on average, but he always received 5s in art class and 2s in P. E. class. According to him, his lower grades in P. E. were because he did not cooperate with other students. For example, when playing dodge ball, he did not receive and pass the ball with other students.

Though Takayuki was a quiet boy, he was independent and not timid. When he was about six years old, his mother took him and his younger brother to the first large-scale supermarket in Osaka when the store opened. The store was very crowded and he got lost while his mother was shopping. He thought that his mother might have already gone home with his younger brother, so he walked back home by himself successfully despite it being a 30-minute walk along roads that he did not know. While his mother was frantically looking for him, he arrived at home safely without crying. He believes that he inherited this independent trait from his father, who has an independent, critical, and very confident personality.
Takayuki started studying English at age 13 when he became a junior high school student. Before the English class started, he had never received any English input, such as listening to English music or watching English movies. Thus, the English class in junior high school was his first experience with English. Soon after the class began, he thought that English was interesting; this was because of Mr. S, his first English teacher.

He was a very precise and organized teacher. For example, he began the 50-minute class at the exact time the bell rang, of course. He had a regular class routine: reviewing the last class for 10 minutes, teaching a new grammar point, having the students practice the grammar, reading the day’s text, having the students practice the text, and giving a summary of the day’s lesson for 10 minutes. He completed his class in exactly 50 minutes, not shorter nor longer than that. Everything covered in the class was written on the blackboard in an organized way when the class ended, and he never erased what he had written during the class. I was impressed with his class, and thought that English might be interesting. I liked the English teacher’s personality, which motivated me to study English. (Case 6: 31)

Takayuki liked Mr. S’s way of teaching, and Mr. S taught English grammar clearly, which helped Takayuki understand English. This helped him to maintain an interest in studying English even though he had a different English teacher in the following year in junior high school. He studied hard by reading texts aloud quickly,
memorizing as much English vocabulary as he could, and participating in English
speech contests.

Takayuki’s hardworking style emerged in his junior high school days.
Although he had few friends, he had a good rival male classmate, Mr. Ueda, whom
Takayuki competed with on the term tests. For example, when Takayuki earned a
very good score on his Japanese test, Mr. Ueda tried to do better on the next test,
and Takayuki also worked hard to keep ahead of Mr. Ueda. Mr. Ueda told Takayuki
that he studied 18 hours a day, all the time he was awake, and Takayuki was
impressed with and imitated that.

Takayuki had to take the high school entrance examination in his third and
final year in junior high school, but studying only for tests was not his style:

I don’t like studying for tests, so I don’t think I studied for the entrance
examinations. Or, I don’t think I studied for mid-term and finals, either. My
style is to study everyday, so I didn’t have to study especially before tests. I
studied only because it was interesting to me, so studying to get a good test
score wasn’t interesting for me at all. (Case 6: 32)

Although Takayuki did not want to study for the high school entrance
examination, he hoped to enter a prestigious public high school and he was
confident that he would pass the examination. However, he made a mistake on the
mathematics section of the test and unexpectedly failed to enter the high school he
had hoped to attend. Consequently, he had to enter a less prestigious public high school, which was a disappointing outcome for him. His father was also disappointed with Takayuki’s failure, which Takayuki did not want to see. Because Takayuki’s father has a very strong personality, telling his family that he is always correct and the smartest person in the world, Takayuki did not want to disappoint him.

In his new high school, he found that many of his classmates ended up entering that some high school after they had failed the examination for the same prestigious public high school. Therefore, the majority of the students were disappointed to be in the school and were unenthusiastic about studying. In this environment, he also felt disappointed and temporarily lost his enthusiasm to study hard when he was a first-year student.

Takayuki’s low level of learning motivation did not last long for a number of reasons. First, he found that his grades were much higher than average in his high school: His English grade on a mock test he took in the beginning of his first year was within the top 20 in the high school. He understood that if he worked hard in his high school, he could be better than most of the students in the high school he wanted to enroll in. He thought:

行きたかった高校は家の近くだったから、自分が入った高校へいくには横を通って行かないと行けないんです。で、ぼっと見ると、（そこの高校の生徒が）楽しそうにしているんです。この悔しさがぱねになったかなと思います。自分の好きな勉強に集中して、「この人たちには負けないぞ。」と思ったんです。
Because the high school I wanted to go to was close to my house, I had to walk past the high school everyday in order to go to my high school. I glanced at the students in the high school, and they looked happy. I think that this feeling motivated me. I thought, “I don’t want to lose to them.” So, I concentrated on studying what I liked. (Case 6: 2)

Another reason was an interesting English reading teacher he met in his high school. He was Takayuki’s relatively aged homeroom teacher who had unforgettable large ears. In contrast to Mr. S, the organized English teacher in junior high school, the high school teacher was less organized but told jokes in class. For example, the teacher told the students in the beginning of class, 「今日はくぁわんけいでえーめーし（関係代名詞）をやるよ。」 “We are going to study relative pronouns [which he pronounced in a strange and funny way] today” (Case 6: 32). The teacher intentionally pronounced the grammatical term relative pronoun strangely in order to give the students a strong impact. Takayuki thought that the teacher was interesting and that that helped increase his English learning motivation.

Furthermore, Takayuki possessed an optimistic personality and forgot bad things quickly.

My classmate—he was almost my only friend—invited me to a glee club so that we could change our feelings of disappointment (about the high school). Even though I had not been interested in singing, singing at the club was refreshing, and I began studying hard again. (Case 6: 3)
Takayuki thought that he could compete with the students in the prestigious high school if he achieved the top academic performance in his high school, so he studied English hard. One episode that illustrated his hard work was that he put a vocabulary book on the handle of his bicycle so that he could study vocabulary when he stopped at red lights without wasting any of his commuting time. As a result, he was one of the top students in his high school for three years.

Although Takayuki studied English hard, English was not his favorite subject. He was most interested in science, especially physics. He vaguely thought that he might become a scholar in the future because he liked to study the subjects he was interested in deeply. Though he thought that English would probably be important in the future, he never thought that he would become an English teacher. The reason why he studied English hard was, first of all, it was interesting for him, and second, he thought that most science majors were relatively weak at English and that he could have an advantage over them by learning English.

When Takayuki became a high school senior, he decided to enroll in the science department in one of the top national universities. Partly because he liked physics, and partly, he thought that he would rather easily pass the entrance examination as, he thought, most science majors were as not good at English as he was. Because studying for the entrance examination was not his style, he studied only what he liked. For example, he read *The Theory of Relativity* in English instead of studying test preparation books. However, this strategy did not work, as he failed the entrance examination of his first choice university.
After failing the examination, Takayuki still had another chance to take the secondary entrance examinations offered at less prestigious national universities. He decided to take the examination for the English major this time, as English was his second favorite subject after science. Changing one’s major in the middle of the examination period was not common for high school students. When he consulted with his high school homeroom teacher, Takayuki insisted that he would take the examination for English major; otherwise, he would not go to university at all. The teacher suggested another option: He could attend a preparatory course at a private cram school and take the entrance examination again the following year. Takayuki did not want to go to a cram school for another year because of financial reasons—his father’s small business was not going well when Takayuki was a high school student, and he did not want his parents to pay the tuition for him to go to school for an additional year. Eventually, the teacher had to allow Takayuki to change the major because he thought that Takayuki should attend a university. These examinations were held one month after the primary entrance examinations in January. Even though he had only about one month to prepare, he passed the examination of the secondary English education in a national university that specialized in education. Most students in the program earned a teaching certificate for becoming a junior high school or high school English teacher after finishing their undergraduate studies. Though the university was not his first choice, it was not a disappointing outcome for him.
Takayuki’s reactions to the two unsuccessful experiences with entrance examinations, one for high school and the other for university, indicates his optimistic tendency, as he stated, 「落ち込みから立ち直るのは早いほうです。」”I usually recover quickly from a shock.” (Case 6: 4).

Enrolling in the university, Takayuki planned to be financially independent from his parents. Moreover, he wanted to repay the entire cost of his high school education including the fees for meals, several million yen, to his parents, as he understood that his parents had to work hard to pay his high school tuition. In order to do so, he worked long hours at a part-time job, primarily tutoring secondary school students in English, mathematics, and other subjects while he was a university student. This challenge drove him to work hard.

Because he majored in English education, Takayuki encountered the need to speak in English in the university courses for the first time, and he was determined to improve his oral proficiency in the spring semester of his first year. He was enthusiastic in part because he thought that was what he should do as an English major, and in part, he was shocked by the reality that he could not speak well even though he had learned lexical and grammatical knowledge to a certain degree in high school. Although he had liked English and been good at grammar and vocabulary in junior and senior high school, he had never practiced speaking English. He thought that he could practice speaking if he made an English conversation group, so he reestablished the English speaking society (ESS) in the university, which had been disbanded for a few years because of the lack of
members, in the fall semester of his freshman year. He put out a call for new members and about 10 students joined the club. Becoming the leader of the ESS in his freshman year further increased his desire to speak English well.

When we started the club, I should say everything in English, shouldn’t I, say, “Bring the conversation textbook of a radio program next time.” But I wasn’t able to say it well. Seven members left the club, as they might have thought what a bad chief (of the English club) I was. I kept the club going with only about three members. (Case 6: 6)

While seeking more effective ways to improve his speaking ability, one day, Takayuki found Bob, a foreign exchange student from the United States and took as many classes as possible with him. Takayuki started to sit together with him in class, and realized how good Bob’s English was compared with his own. Takayuki wanted to become better than Bob and decided to use only English for the next half a year.
When I heard (Bob’s) English, it sounded so good to me, I wondered how I could speak better than him. I thought that I should do the same as he did, so I tried to use only English even when I was in school for half a year. When I asked questions in English in English class, a few teachers responded to my questions, but most teachers said something like, “You don’t have to do this much.” I also tried to ask questions in English in my other classes, after telling the teachers that I was practicing speaking in English and asking their permission. But most teachers avoided replying. I also talked to my classmates in English, so they thought that I was strange. In the end, only Bob stayed with me because it just ordinary for him. I thought that knowing a lot of words is the only way to be better than a native speaker, so I memorized difficult words and asked him, “Do you know this word?” When he didn’t know the word, I felt that my English was superior to his. He said, “You’re funny.” (Case 6: 6-7)

By sitting next to Bob in class frequently, Takayuki had numerous opportunities to speak English, such as explaining the Japanese lectures and translating what the Japanese lecturer wrote on the blackboard. He prioritized taking courses that allowed him to sit with Bob; as a result, he failed to take some required courses necessary for graduation. (This was one reason he took an extra year to complete his undergraduate studies.)

The relationship between Takayuki and Bob was not exactly a friendship even though they sat side by side in numerous classes:

最初は（英語が）うまくなりたいなと思って（ボブと）いっしょにいたんですやけど、だんだんと変わってきましたね。友達というか、ほとんど義務的にこの人のためにしてあげるという、サービスを施しているゲスト、ゲストとして迎えてる感じなんですよ。彼の方からみたら便利屋さんみたいになってしまいました。困ったときに全部翻訳してくれるから。

I spent time (with Bob) because I wanted to be better (at speaking English) in the beginning, but my reason gradually changed. Our relationship wasn’t a real friendship. I almost felt that he was a guest. I should serve and help the guest. From his side, I might have been a convenient person who translated everything when he needed help. (Case 6: 39)
In addition to practicing speaking English at his university, Takayuki also began practicing English outside of the campus to develop his English abilities further. He attended a local ESS club in the same area where his university was located in the fall semester of his freshman year. A junior in his university who had just returned from the United States introduced the club to Takayuki. He suggested that Takayuki should practice speaking with other proficient students if he were a leader of the ESS club in his university. A number of members in the local ESS club were relatively good at English and were attending several different universities in western Japan. They gathered once a week and practiced English conversation.

When I was taken (by the junior student to the ESS club) for the first time, the members were practicing discussion in a group, and a leader let them talk. One student spoke English well. When we talked with him later, I found that he came from my university. I asked him, “What’s your major?” and he said math. He was able to speak English well even though he was majoring in math, and I wasn’t able to speak English at all even though I was majoring in English. I thought it’s not good, and I was motivated. I thought I should be better than him. (Case 6: 35)

Takayuki tried to study English whenever he was awake, sometimes 18 hours a day, which was the strategy used by his hardworking junior high school
rival Mr. Ueda. In a sense, Takayuki sacrificed many ‘normal’ things in his college life in order to study English. For instance, he never socialized with other students in his university, and he presumed that the other students might have felt that he was somewhat strange, as they often saw him muttering to himself in English. However, he did not mind not having friends. He felt that what other people were saying about him was unimportant because he was focusing on what he was interested in and what he was doing seemed natural to him. By concentrating on speaking English in his freshman year, Takayuki felt that his speaking ability improved; he thought that he could be confident when he spoke English, though he still did not feel that he could say everything he wanted.

In his sophomore year, Takayuki joined another local English club, Nara Student Guide, a volunteer organization made up of local university students who provided voluntary tour guide services to foreign tourists visiting western Japan. Unlike the ESS club, the primary activity of the members of the organization was studying Japanese culture and history and acting as volunteer English tour guides to foreign visitors in cooperation with Nara City. Because high levels of English proficiency and comprehensive knowledge about Japanese culture and history were required, only select members from the local ESS circle could join the organization. The members took study trips to historical sites several times a year. They also stayed in the tourist information office of the city in order to provide tours when foreign visitors signed up. The students acted as tour guides several times a week.
Joining the organization was meaningful for Takayuki not only because he
gained fluency and confidence in speaking but also he started to believe that what
he talked about was important:

I wanted to have English conversations when I was a freshman, so I joined
the ESS club, worked hard, and became the head. Gradually, I started to
think that only speaking English fluently was not enough, and I wanted to
talk about something meaningful. When I thought about what I should say
to foreign visitors, because Nara is a sightseeing spot, I thought it’d be nice
if I could guide foreign tourists in Nara and I should study Japanese culture.
(Case 6: 36-37)

Takayuki was enthusiastic about the work with Nara Student Guide. He
got to the office about three times a week. Even when he did not have any
opportunities to guide tourists, he enjoyed the time he spent at the office talking to
foreign visitors and playing English games, such as Scrabble. He also studied
English vocabulary with an English-Japanese dictionary while he was at the office.
For instance, he randomly chose one word from the dictionary and wrote a word
map on a piece of paper, in which all the words were associated one another.

In the next year, his work at Nara Student Guide became the center of
Takayuki’s life; he was elected president of the organization when he was in his
junior year in the university.
There were only two male junior students in the club, I and a student from Kobe University. The president was traditionally a male student’s role at that time. I thought that Kobe University was a much more prestigious university than my university, so being elected president, I had to work very hard. I felt a lot of pressure, and my motivation to improve my English was at an all time high. (Case 6: 36)

While working hard as the president of Nara Student Guide, Takayuki decided to earn the official certificate for being a tour guide. The test for certified guides, administered by the Japan National Tourism Organization, one of the national agencies in Japan, was made up of reading and writing sections including translation in a foreign language, a section concerning the geography, history, economy, politics, and culture of Japan, and a speaking section, part of which assesses test takers’ personal appropriateness as a tour guide. Because of the high level requirements, it is regarded as one of the most difficult foreign language tests in Japan. (Takayuki told that only three percent of the examinees passed the test on the first attempt.) Because the test required broad knowledge of Japanese culture and history as well as a high degree of English proficiency, university students rarely passed the test. Takayuki organized a study group with two university students and prepared for the test. The three members of the study group took the test together in 1978 and only he passed. This happened when he was a senior in the university at age 22. He gained confidence as a result of this success.
After successfully earning the tour guide certificate, he still knew that he needed to improve further to become a professional and sought another way to improve his English. 「英語力を高めるためには教えに行ったらいいんやとは。習うことよりもね。それで語学学校の門をたたいて、募集していないのに教えたいと言ったんです。」 "I thought that I should teach English in order to improve more, rather than taking a class. So I went to a language school and asked them to give me a teaching job even though they weren’t recruiting new instructors” (Case 6: 9). During the interview, the interviewers figured out that Takayuki was still a university student. Because they usually did not hire university students as English instructors, the interviewers were initially reluctant to offer any teaching positions. However, they suddenly changed their attitudes when he showed them the tour guide certificate, and offered him a job teaching conversation courses for junior high school students. He also taught conversation courses for adults. He worked part-time at the school for two years, but because teaching English conversation became routine, and he felt satisfied with his success on the certified guide test, his English learning motivation temporarily declined.

Although Takayuki was clearly immersed in the English language while at the university, he did not take advantage of university-sponsored opportunities to study abroad. Takayuki believes that it is quite common that Japanese students majoring in English wish to study abroad at some point while at a university. As a matter of fact, Takayuki had a chance to study abroad while he was a university student, but he decided not to do so.
Actually, I had a chance to do that, but I missed the opportunity because I was working as the president of Nara Student Guide and felt to be responsible for the work. I might have felt some frustration about not going, but I wanted to go against the conventional wisdom that people have to go abroad in order to become proficient in English, so I decided to study English without studying abroad. (Case 6: 59)

In contrast to Takayuki’s enthusiasm about his work with Nara Student Guide, he did not attend his university courses very frequently. He liked interesting classes and teachers, but he thought that his university classes and teachers were less interesting than his high school classes and teachers.

For example, the phonetics teacher I had when I was a junior was too serious, so it wasn’t a very interesting class for me. I was absent most of the time and forgot to take the final exam. The teacher gave me a phone call and said that the course was required and that it was offered only every two years, so if I failed this year, I could take it only in my fifth year. He kindly offered to give me a make-up exam on a certain day, but I didn’t take his offer, saying, “I have a very important obligation on that day.” What is more important than taking a final exam for a student? Actually, I had to guide some tourists on that day. Guide work was so important for me at that time. (Case 6: 10, 38)
Takayuki was particularly interested in two courses in his undergraduate studies. One was a linguistics course offered in his junior year, in which he studied generative grammar. The teacher had studied English grammar and loved Chomsky. When the teacher talked about English, even English literature, he analyzed it from a linguistic point of view. Though the lectures were complicated, Takayuki was interested in the teacher’s analyses and generative grammar.

Another course Takayuki was interested in was a German course that he took to fulfill a second foreign language requirement when he was a freshman and sophomore. The students studied German grammar in the beginning and later practiced reading and speaking German. An enthusiastic Japanese male teacher conducted interactive classes characterized by the use of pair-work activities. Takayuki thought that he should attend every class because his classmates would be in trouble if he were absent when they were doing pair-work activities. The teacher sometimes invited his German friends to the class. The class was interesting to Takayuki and he was fascinated with German grammar.

Compared with English grammar, I understood that German has stricter rules. I thought it’s an interesting language, with disjunctive verbs, for example. As a science-oriented person, I thought that German is an attractive language that has the most scientific grammar, fewer exceptions to rules (than English grammar), and a magnificent tradition. I might have
studied it further, but the guide work was more important to me. I might have got into German if I hadn’t had the guide work. (Case 6: 51)

Although Takayuki was fascinated with German and received an S, the highest grade possible in the course, he did not continue studying German after finishing the course because the tour guide work was more important for him. However, studying German positively influenced his English learning. For example, because English originated from German, he started to think about the roots of English words, which facilitated his gaining a clearer understanding of English vocabulary. Moreover, he understood that English was a dynamic language that was the result of historically repeated influxes from several other languages. Consequently, his interest in English increased further after learning German.

Because Takayuki failed a few required university courses as a result of pouring a great deal of his energy into the tour guide work, it took him five years—one year longer than usual—to finish his undergraduate studies. Unlike most Japanese university students, spending one extra year in the university was not problematic for him. This was partly because he already had a part-time teaching job in the language school and was financially independent. More importantly, he believed that he should study what he was interested in exhaustively once he started it. Acting as a volunteer tour guide was meaningful for him; therefore, he regarded the extra year as an opportunity to study English for another year.
I never thought that I had to graduate in four years and start work immediately after graduation. I like thinking differently (from the ordinary way). I think many people try to avoid new things because they’re afraid of them. I don’t like the idea that it’s not safe to try new things. I like to try new things. If I fail, it’s my own responsibility though. (Case 6: 38, 40)

After graduating from the university at age 23, Takayuki started to teach certified tour guide test preparatory courses full-time at an English language school. He obtained the job without job-hunting because he had become acquainted with the principal of the language school when he had studied for the tour guide test and was offered a teaching position. While the majority of the graduates from his university became teachers in Japanese junior high schools and high schools, Takayuki ended up not completing the requirements for a teaching certificate. Though he was interested in English education, he wanted to be involved with higher-level education, rather than teaching at middle schools. He wanted to improve himself while helping other people. The students enrolled in his course were more mature, and their proficiency level was much higher than both secondary school students and the students in the language school where he had previously taught part-time while he was a university student. In order to teach these mature, more proficient students, who had a specific goal of becoming
certified tour guides, he hid his age from his students. He needed to work hard to prepare for the course, and this pushed him to improve his English even further.

In his second year of teaching at the language school, Takayuki was promoted and became the headmaster of the Osaka branch when the school established a new branch in Tokyo. It was a major promotion for him, and he was still 25 years old. However, he stayed in the new position for only a few months and had to leave the school abruptly. He had an argument with the school administrator, which was very unusual for him. This happened because he made several suggestions to the school owner from an educator’s point of view; however, these suggestions conflicted with the owner’s view because he perceived things from an administrator’s point of view. For instance, when a five-day workweek was introduced, the administrators decided to reduce the teachers’ salaries by 20,000 yen a month in accordance with the reduced number of workdays. Other workers disliked the pay cut and complained about it. On behalf of his subordinates, Takayuki suggested to the owner that he should keep the original pay even if the five-day workweek was implemented, so that the workers would work harder and more efficiently than before. This suggestion led to the fight between the owner and Takayuki and resulted in Takayuki being forced to leave the school.

After quitting the teaching job, Takayuki looked for a job in a different field because he wanted to leave—either temporarily or entirely—the field of English education. He felt that he had seen part of the dark side of the English education industry in Japan. He understood that providing ideal education was difficult in
language schools because they had to prioritize financial success frequently. He found a translation job in the international section of a company that manufactured, installed, and maintained elevators. He was selected for the position out of nearly 200 other candidates when he was 25 years old. He believed that the employer was impressed by the fact that Takayuki had earned the tour guide certificate at such a young age. Although he was not greatly interested in translation, he wanted the job anyway and thought that working as a translator might help him become an English professional. Several multilingual individuals were working in the international section. He joined the other two people who were responsible for translating English manuals about elevators into Japanese. The job was not interesting to him at all because he did not completely understand the technical terminology for mechanical engineering. He could not completely understand what he was translating even if he was able to translate it. He even asked his senior translator, 「この仕事の何が楽しいんですか。」“What is interesting about doing this job?” (Case 6: 46). He also started to miss the interaction that he had with students in his teaching job. One day, when he visited an elevator installation site, he looked through the window of an English conversation school and saw that a teacher and students were having a class. He thought that they looked happy. On the next day, he secretly brought an English wordbook under the helmet that he had to wear when he visited the construction site, and looked at it during his breaks. Because he was not enjoying the translation work, he felt that he was working almost only to
earn money. Because of his unwillingness to continue that sort of life, he left the company after working there for only ten months.

While Takayuki was working at the elevator company, he did not completely stop studying English. Because he had suddenly left the language school, his former students there wanted to have the opportunity to meet him sometimes, so he formed a study group for those who wanted to earn the tour guide certificate. This study group is still active today (As mentioned above, I met him for the first time in 1996 during one of the study trips to Kyoto with this study group.)

Soon after Takayuki left the translation job in the elevator manufacturer, his apartment was robbed, and he lost approximately three million yen, which was almost all the money he had saved for the past few years. He had less than 20,000 yen in his bank account.

I didn’t have a job, and I had to live on 20,000 yen. I had to pay my rent. I didn’t know what to do, but I didn’t want to tell anybody because I didn’t want to rely on anyone. I spent the whole next week in great anguish. The day that I had to pay the rent was getting closer. I thought I could probably find a day laborer job but I knew that it wouldn’t be good for me and that I shouldn’t do it. After suffering for a week, I was suddenly free from my
agony. I looked at myself objectively and thought that it’s meaningless to be angry because it’s impossible to know who stole my money. I tried to be calm, like meditating. I felt that whatever would be would be. Even though I had failed the entrance exams twice, I thought I might have been proud of my successful English career too much, and this was a divine punishment. It’s a sort of little enlightenment. (Case 6: 13, 48)

Right after Takayuki had calmed down, he received a telephone call from one of his former students in the certified tour guide test preparatory course in the language school. It was a headhunting call—the former student had become a vice headmaster of a foreign language school in Osaka and was looking for a new teacher who could work for him. The caller believed that Takayuki was still working as a headmaster at the language school and asked Takayuki whether he would leave the current job and join his school. It was an amazing experience for him—when he became calm and objectively looked at his bad luck, good luck emerged and helped him. In this way, Takayuki was offered a new teaching job in what he felt was a desirable working environment, and he was rescued from his difficult situation. He was 26 years old.

Takayuki became an English teacher again. The work was busy, but he enjoyed it much more than translating elevator manuals. He initially worked as a part-time instructor, but he was quickly promoted to the leader of a sub-section and became a full-time teacher in the company. He taught many different classes, such as reading and speaking. The students’ proficiency level was not as high as in the previous teaching work at the certified tour guide test preparatory course, because the students in the school were mostly high school graduates who had not attended
a university. The pay was good and the school provided health insurance, so his life became stable while he was teaching in this school for seven years, when he was 26 to 33 years old. He married when he was 28. Because English more or less had become his profession, it provided financial support for his family. As the job was busy, his teaching motivation increased during this time while his learning motivation decreased after teaching several years.

While he was working at the language school, he tried to study Spanish for about a year, as his Japanese wife was proficient in Spanish and he was interested in the language. He thought that Spanish sounded beautiful. He bought a Spanish textbook and studied by himself, but he could not continue studying because his work became too busy.

Takayuki ended his stable life at the age of 33, when he decided to go to graduate school to study linguistics. He made this decision for two reasons.

専門学校で教えることが面白くなかった訳じゃないんだけれども、少しマンネリ化していて、このままだとあまり変わらないと思った。英語力を極めることは大事だけれども、英語そのものを学問的に学びたいと思ったんです。学位を取って専任になるとか、そういうことじゃなくて、純粋に学びたかったんです。それから通訳ガイド研究会の会長だったときに出会った若い友人で、今外大の助教授の人が、当時筑波の博士に通ってたんです。彼はウルドゥー語やペルシャ語や英語以外の言語もできるんだけど、専門はアラビア語で一般言語学の研究者です。彼から筑波の先生は熱心だとかしい話をいろいろ聞いたり、彼の学問を追究する姿勢に触発されました。彼は英語だけでなくほかの言語もできないといけないと主張していましたね。

(First,) Teaching at the language school wasn’t so bad, but the job became sort of routine and I felt slightly bored. I thought I wouldn’t change so much (if I keep doing this job). I thought it’s important to further improve my English proficiency, but I wanted to study the English language academically. I had never thought about earning a MA and getting a full-time position at a university. Rather, I was intrinsically motivated to study
linguistics. Second, one of my friends, whom I met at my study group and who became an assistant professor at a gaidai (a university specialized in foreign language studies), was in the doctoral program at Tsukuba University. He was able to speak other foreign languages, such as Urdu and Persian, and was a linguist and a scholar of Arabic. He told me about the advantages of the Tsukuba program, such as the teachers’ enthusiasm. I was inspired by his scholastic attitudes to study his subject deeply. He also argued that we should be proficient in other foreign languages besides English. (Case 6: 50, 55)

Takayuki applied for the master’s program in linguistics in the same graduate school that his friend was attending and was accepted when he was 33 years old. He talked about his plan to go back to school with his wife after he had already made a decision. When he talked to her, she did not oppose his decision but asked, “What will we do for money?” In addition to the tuition, he had to pay the transportation from Osaka to Tsukuba and his accommodation every week. Because Tsukuba was located approximately 600 kilometers from Osaka, the transportation costs were quite expensive. Furthermore, his wife was staying home taking care of their two children, so he was the only breadwinner in the family of four. In order to attend the masters program and earn enough money to pay his tuition and the household expenses, he left the language school and started to teach as a part-time instructor in several educational institutions, two cram schools and an interpreter’s school, before applying for the program. He told his wife that he could manage all the costs for his graduate studies and for his family by himself without financially depending on his family. She told him that he would go even if she said not to go, which was exactly what he did. His determination was strong; he was going to
study linguistics however hard he had to work, rather than earning a master’s
degree in order to obtain a full-time position at a university.

In his master’s studies, Takayuki was immediately fascinated once again by
enerative grammar, as the first course he took was taught by a professor who
ocused primarily on generative grammar.

I had studied generative grammar in the junior year of my undergraduate
udies, but I didn’t understand it very well. Taking the class at the graduate
chool, I understood it easily because I think the teacher taught it well. I
nderstood what my old teacher had said, so I wanted to study it more. I
ent to the graduate school as I wanted to study English academically, but
at I study was open. I choose generative grammar because I remembered
he teacher in the undergraduate course. (Case 6: 54)

Takayuki thought that his interest in theoretical linguistics and generative
ram might stem from his interest in science and physics when he was a high
chool student:

理論言語学は理論物理学に近いことを発見したんです。生成文法という分
野の考え方が非常に科学的であることに気づいたんです。科学的な考え方
であるから興味を引いたということですよ。理系に興味がある人が、文法
というもの面白さに目覚めると言語学者になると思いますよ。理系の人
は必ずしも英文法が得意とは限らないでしょう。でも理論が好きなんですよ、
理系の人。文法が、実はとてもなく深い理論だということがわかつ
ったら、おそらく生成文法に行く人多いんちゃうかなと思いますね。だか
ら、言語学を志したのは、高校のときに理系を選んだからかもしれないで
すね。
I realized that theoretical linguistics is similar to theoretical physics. I found the way of thinking in generative grammar was very scientific. In other words, it drew my interest because it’s scientific. I think if science-oriented people get interested in grammar, they would become (theoretical) linguists. People who like science are not necessarily good at grammar, but they usually love theories, so if they realize that grammar consists of fantastically profound theories, I think a lot of them may be hooked on generative grammar. I chose (theoretical) linguistics because I took science-major courses in high school. (Case 6: 33-34)

Takayuki was an active student in his graduate school courses. Other students—mostly Japanese students younger than him—were quiet and modest; they rarely asked questions or criticized other people’s studies, except for one Chinese student, who sometimes attacked the teachers.

I don’t think that I was modest. I radically criticized a famous scholar’s study from the beginning. I said, “Because this theory is insufficient to explain the whole, I created an alternative,” and submitted the paper to my teacher. The study I criticized was written by my teacher’s colleague, and my teacher told me, “You should write something like this after studying more than 10 years.” He said that I should start with a small, much more modest suggestion. I responded with something like, “That’s not true. Chomsky largely denied conventional theories from the beginning.” I was not a modest student at all. (Case 6: 53)
Because of studying at the distant graduate school and working to earn enough money to pay for both his study and family, Takayuki’s life was extremely busy for about three years from 33 to 36 years old.

Because of his intense study and work schedule, Takayuki’s level of learning motivation did not stay at an extremely high level during this period, but he never thought that he wanted to quit the master’s program regardless of the lack of rest he had for three years. He worked on his master’s thesis “Style disjunction of honestly.” In the study, he focused on why only honestly, among a number of other adverbs, can be followed by a question (e.g., “Honestly, what did you do?”),
and analyzed the patterns and reasons. He completed the master’s program in 1994 when he was 36 years old, which was a very satisfying accomplishment for him.

Takayuki never stopped working hard even after finishing his graduate studies even though he did not have any specific plan afterward. As he finished the long-term commute to his graduate school, he was able to focus on teaching. He taught at several English language schools and became an advisor in one language school. One of his previous colleagues in one of the language schools introduced him to a part-time English teaching position at a women’s university, and gradually, the places to teach English shifted from language schools to universities as he began teaching part-time at different universities every year.

In 1997 at the age of 40 he applied for another part-time position in the university where he works currently shortly before the English faculty was launched in the economics department. The administrative office asked him if he could introduce several part-time instructors who could possibly work in the new faculty. He introduced a large number of instructors whom he had known in his previous jobs. The university appreciated this contribution, and asked him to join the new faculty as a full-time instructor rather than a part-time instructor in the university.

I never thought that I should teach at universities after finishing my master’s degree. I also never attended academic conferences to meet people and exchanged name cards (in order to get a job at universities). I just worked hard and everything happened naturally. (Case 6: 43)
After becoming a professor, Takayuki has had a serious of personal issues that cause him a great deal of concern. Because these issues are inappropriate to include in this study, his learning history from the age of 40 to now is not described in detail. Under those circumstances, Takayuki has poured his enthusiasm largely into writing and publishing.

I have my own theory that a person’s life is divided into four phases of 20 years each, and if he lives for 80 years, and listening, reading, writing, and speaking are the key words for each phase. I learn by listening to my parents and other people around me in the first 20 years and by reading in the next 20 years. I hadn’t read so much during my undergraduate studies but read a lot in my master’s studies. However, listening and reading are all receptive, so when wanting to produce next, I found what I could do was writing. After age 40, I thought I should express what I had learned and experienced for the benefit of other people, and writing was the way to do that. (Case 6: 57)

In accordance with his theory, he started producing a large number of publications in his 40s. Initially, he published a few English related books privately at his own expense. He wrote his first English textbook, the TOEFL test preparatory course book, in 1998. He has published approximately 100 titles since then including a number of edited books. He continues to publish more than three
books and one research paper a year. While he sees learning English as a lifelong work and believes that he will not stop studying, it is even more important to him now to contribute to other people’s education using the knowledge of English that he has accumulated over the last 40 years.

**Motivational Change**

Figures 20 and 21 show Takayuki’s self-perceived motivational levels that he drew at the first and second interviews conducted with a 19-month interval. The charts indicate that his English learning motivational trajectory fluctuated frequently throughout his 40-year learning history.

*Figure 20. Takayuki’s self-perceived motivational level throughout his learning history (February 27, 2007).*
Unlike the other participants’ motivational charts, the two charts Takayuki drew differed notably from each other at certain points in his learning history. For instance, Takayuki’s overall motivational level is higher in Figure 20 than in Figure 21. This is particularly true in his junior high school and high school periods between the ages of 13 to 18. His self-perceived motivation fluctuated between 4.5 and 2 in Figure 20 and between 3 and 2 in Figure 21. In addition, the drops of his motivational level were sharper in Figure 20 than Figure 19: from 5 to 1 in Figure 21 and from 4 to 3 in Figure 20 when he changed his job from English teacher to translator between the ages of 24 and 25, and from 4 to 2 in Figure 21 and from 4 to 3 in Figure 20 when he had a relatively stable life teaching English at a language school before deciding to study at graduate school. These differences suggest that Takayuki has some difficulty accurately recalling events concerning his life-long motivational trajectory that occurred 20 to 30 years previously. In addition, it should be noted that Takayuki had the longest and most complicated learning history among the six participants.
Despite the above differences in motivational intensity, the overall patterns in the two charts are similar. For example, his learning motivation was relatively high when he started studying English in junior high school but decreased when he was studying for the high school entrance examination. His motivation increased again when he started studying in high school, but dropped again when studying for the university entrance examination. These fluctuations took place between the ages of 13 and 19. Even though the year when his motivational level sharply decreased slightly differed between Figure 20 (i.e., the declines occurred at age 16 and 19 after he entered high school and university, respectively) and Figure 21 (i.e., the declines occurred at age 15 and 18 when he faced the high school and university entrance examinations, respectively), both cases concerned the entrance examinations. Another similar pattern concerns when his motivational level increased sharply at several points in his learning history: when he was elected as the president of the Nara Student Guide at age 21, when he started to teach the certified guide test preparatory course at age 24, when he started to teach the preparatory course for certified guides at the language school at age 26, and when he started his graduate studies at age 33. These similarities suggest that he accurately remembered important events in his learning history that positively impacted his English learning motivation.
Intrinsic Motivation

Even though some extrinsic reasons, such as meeting good English teachers in junior high school and high school and becoming the leader of the student organization, led Takayuki to study English very hard, the primary source of his motivation has been internal. For example, he studied everyday in junior high school and senior high school because English was interesting to him; he did not study for the entrance examinations (consequently, he failed the high school and university entrance examinations). Also, he was intrigued with guiding foreign tourists and studying Japanese culture. He was more enthusiastic about the guide work than his undergraduate studies (consequently, he had to stay in the university one extra year). Moreover, he went to graduate school at the age of 33 because he wanted to study the English language academically; he was not strongly motivated to earn a higher academic degree or to teach at a university. Somewhat unusual strategies that he took to improve English, such as putting a vocabulary book on his bicycle handle and using only English in university, also suggest his enthusiasm for English and the depth of his intrinsic motivation. His intrinsic motivation was occasionally fueled by extrinsic reasons, and this combination helped his long lasting English learning motivation.

Cyclical Fluctuations

Takayuki’s motivational trajectory shows frequent fluctuations. One common pattern was that he was highly motivated when facing a new situation, for
example, starting to study English in junior high school and high school, when he was elected as the president of the student volunteer tour guide organization, and when he started to teach the certified guide test preparatory course. That high level of motivation did not last for long and dropped slightly, typically in the next year. These ups and downs were repeated in a short cycle; therefore, his learning motivation has been characterized by the occurrence of repeated short cyclical motivational fluctuations.

**Change of Perceived Self in English Learning**

Takayuki described his self-perceived change experiences through studying English as follows.

I might be able to confirm my own identity by studying English. It’s like I thought that I had to become a good Japanese. It’s probably related to my awareness of my own Japanese identity. I had never thought about that before. I want to embody Japanese culture; I want to be a person culturally very different from people in English-speaking countries. I also think that I should do that. (Case 6: 59-61)

This awareness of his own Japanese identity emerged after he joined the student guide volunteer organization when he was a second-year university student. Takayuki had wanted to be able to speak English well—even better than native
English speakers—when he was a first-year university student. His goal changed when he began working as a tour guide to foreign tourists.

I came to like seeing foreign visitors enjoy the tours I guided. I didn’t care so much about how well I spoke English any more. It’s an interesting change. I thought that it’s important to communicate well with foreigners, rather than I should speak well. (Case 6: 38)

It’s good of course if a person speaks English with good pronunciation. If he speaks fluently, he may be close to a native English speaker. Some Japanese speak with native-like pronunciation, but I think that what a person says is more important. For example, if he doesn’t know much about Japanese culture, he may be close to an American or other English-speaking people. Non-Japanese may prefer Japanese who know a lot about Japan and/or have an interesting personality even if their English isn’t fluent. I thought this way, and I stopped regarding native-like proficiency as admirable when I was university senior. (Case 6: 38)

As a volunteer tour guide, Takayuki introduced Japanese culture and history to foreign visitors and realized that what he said was more important that how he said it in English. This experience helped him become more aware of his own Japanese identity.
CHAPTER 10
DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I discuss three issues that emerged from the collective analyses of the six case studies of the participants’ English learning histories. First, I emphasize fundamental issues concerning the characteristics of the participants, their motivational development, and their learning. Second, I explore seven motivational sources salient in the participants’ English learning histories. Third, I examine the initial proposition concerning the participants’ sustained motivation and discuss a new concept, commitment to learning.

Fundamental Issues

The Participants: Originally Six Unexceptional Learners

The six case studies revealed that the participants were not special learners who were destined to consistently possess high levels of learning motivation and become highly proficient in English. Rather, at the onset of their English study, they were indistinguishable from many Japanese students found in English classrooms across Japan: They were from middle class families, their parents were not proficient in English, and they did not visit or live in an English-speaking country in their childhood. Most of them began studying English as a school subject at age 13 in a Japanese junior high school, and they studied to pass entrance examinations in their final years in junior high school and high school.
Academically, they were generally not exceptional students who were the top of their class in elementary and secondary school. English was not their only interest; they were involved in many other activities, such as playing music and sports, watching movies, painting, reading, writing, studying science and Japanese, and spending time with their friends. The participants’ broad interests indicate that English learning represented just one of their interests. Despite the impression that they were unexceptional in most respects, the participants became exceptional English learners. Why was this possible? Did this happen partially because of the participants’ innate traits and partially something they learned from the environment? Though the issue concerning the ratio between the inherited and the learned is hard to speculate and beyond the scope of this study, research on the development of expertise provides a clue to the answer to the question; a number of researchers have reported that an extended number of years of intensive practice of an activity is essential to achieve expertise in a field (Bloom, 1985; Erricsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). This was true with the participants in this study; they prioritized acquiring English and they studied intensively for an extended period of time, both of which differentiated them from most other Japanese learners of English. The participants’ perseverance was a primary reason for their exceptional achievement.
Unique Motivational Pathways

Just as learner diversity in choices and pathways was salient in various good language learner studies (e.g., Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern & Tedesco, 1978; Stevick, 1989), the six case studies indicate that the motivational pathways chosen by the participants were fundamentally unique. Each participant has had a number of unique motivational sources and the way in which these motivational sources emerged, the order of their emergence, the timing of their emergence, and the ways in which these sources interacted with one another were unique to each participant. Judging by the experiences of the six participants, unique motivational pathways are a fundamental characteristic of foreign language learning motivation, and this is particularly true when considering how learning motivation develops over a long period of time. The participants’ unique motivational trajectories suggest that the motivational theories and models that have been proposed in the foreign language motivational literature can only partially explain a learner’s motivation both for any particular moment in time and in terms of longitudinal development. This supports Dörnyei and Ushioda’s (2011) contention that “it may well be the case that devising an integrative ‘super theory’ of motivation will always remain an unrealistic desire… and it is very doubtful that the complexity of this issue can be accounted for by a single theory” (p. 4), and the L2 Motivation Self-System (Dörnyei, 2005. See a review of this in Chapter 2) is no exception.
Learning is Unlikely to End

Initially, the purpose of the study was to understand the motivational trajectories and learning histories displayed by the participants from the onset of their study to the time they terminated their study, but it was found that none of the participants had completely terminated their English learning when the last interviews were conducted. Even though they have achieved high levels of English proficiency, which allow them to use the language for academic and professional purposes, they are unlikely to stop studying; all of them plan to continue to make efforts to further improve their English skills, such as speaking, writing, pronunciation, communication, vocabulary, teaching, or the performance on a standardized English proficiency test. In other words, the participants are not completely satisfied with what they have achieved yet; they believe that their English proficiency is not sufficient and that they need to develop their skills further.

In the following sections, I discuss how and why the learning trajectories of these six ordinary people have moved forward and have led them to achieve high levels of English proficiency, and how and why it appears they will continue moving further forward.

Salient Motivational Sources

In this section, seven salient motivational sources in the six participants’ learning histories are discussed. Salient means: (a) the motivational source
appeared in four or more of the six case studies, or (b) fewer than four but the issue was important to those participants. Five of these motivational sources, personal disposition, key people, internally emergent motivation, external goals, and authentic communicative experiences using English, played generally positive roles. In contrast, the final two motivational sources, entrance examinations and classroom experience, influenced the participants generally negatively. Excerpts from the interviews that illustrate these salient motivational sources are presented.

**Personal Disposition**

Though not a purpose of the study originally, the case studies inevitably illuminated each participant’s personal disposition, including their personalities and personal tendencies, both explicitly and implicitly. While the six participants have distinctly different personality characteristics, four personal dispositions common to all or most of the participants that plausibly facilitated their learning are identifiable: self-understanding, independence, optimism, and an ability to concentrate intensively. These personality characteristics are probably partly inherent in the participants, but partly, they developed new personality characteristics in the process of acquiring English, as two participants, Taeko and Haruka, in particular, experienced the emergence of new or possibly latent personality characteristics through their English study.

First, the participants displayed a high degree of self-understanding, even at relatively young ages. In this study, I define self-understanding as an ability to
know about the self and to use that knowledge to make decisions and solve problems in a favorable and satisfying way. This definition overlaps with the concept of intrapersonal intelligence, one component of Multiple Intelligences, which concerns a person’s ability to understand oneself, especially one’s own emotions (H. Gardner, 2006). Although intrapersonal intelligence primarily focuses on the ability to understand and utilize one’s own emotions, in this study, self-understanding concerns the participants’ ability to understand themselves in a more general sense: what they prefer and choose to do. The participants displayed this ability when making decisions about the direction they wanted their lives to take and when transforming undesirable events and situations into desirable outcomes. They were able to do these things in part because of their self-understanding and their ability to understand areas where they were likely to be successful. For instance, Sakiko made a decision when she was 15 concerning her future career; she had to choose between focusing on English or the piano, and she rationalized that a career using English was a more achievable goal. Her rationale is presented in the following excerpt:

It’s extremely difficult to become one of the top piano players in the world. It takes lots of money and lots of competitions. Even if I graduated from the top music university in Japan, I might end up as a piano teacher and rarely play in front of large audiences as an artist. Choosing English as a future career might have more potential to accomplish something pretty good (Case 2: 3, 42).
Another example is Haruka. After failing to pass the Japanese university entrance examinations, she made a nearly instantaneous decision to go to an American university for her undergraduate studies. She understood her own preference for studying in an American university rather than attending a Japanese university, which was still unclear while studying for the university entrance examinations. In other words, she was unable to concentrate completely on studying for the Japanese university entrance examinations because she sensed that studying to enter a Japanese university was not what she really wanted to do. Also, after returning to Japan from graduate school in the United States suffering from serious health problems, Haruka encountered gospel music and immediately knew that she wanted to sing that type of music. Singing gospel music differed from previous activities that she had devoted herself to learning while in the American university in the sense that at the university she had always tried to win “academic games.” Gospel music had nothing to do with such games; instead, it helped her to heal herself as well as her audience. Through her effort, she became a professional gospel singer. Shin made a quick decision to leave the university when the university terminated the digitization project. Even though he had built an academic career for over 10 years at that institution, he flew to England immediately to start a new job in which he could use the skills and knowledge he had obtained in his previous work at the university. He knew that he disliked the decision that the university made and that he was potentially able to find similar jobs in other institutions. These three examples indicate the participants’ degree of
self-understanding. They had the ability to understand areas where they were likely to be successful and to quickly make important decisions that led them to achieve their goals.

Second, the participants were generally independent. Haruka, Chie, and Takayuki displayed independence in their childhood by engaging in tasks they liked by themselves. These included drawing, singing, writing, and studying maps. After growing up, behaving differently from others did not bother these participants a great deal, an aspect that many Japanese children do not commonly develop in the Japanese educational system, where good behavior and the proper attitude are defined largely as doing what others do or doing what one is told to do. One clear example of independence occurred when Shin did not seek full-time work after graduating from a prestigious university; even while his classmates took the traditional and expected path and started working in well-established companies at that point in their lives, he choose to work part-time as a telex operator, a period he called his “freeter” days. Sakiko also displayed independence when she decided to quit teaching in Japanese universities and start a Ph.D. program in the United Stated at the age of 29, a time when many Japanese women think about getting married and having children and when in many cases, they are pressured to do so. Takayuki’s independent attitude remained salient throughout his learning history. He has never been concerned about how he is perceived by others when he decides to do something that is important to him, even when it differs markedly from ordinary practice. The following excerpt illustrates this feature of Takayuki:
I never thought that I had to graduate in four years and start work immediately after graduation. I like thinking differently (from the ordinary way). I think many people try to avoid new things because they’re afraid of them. I don’t like the idea that it’s not safe to try new things. I like to try new things. If I fail, it’s my own responsibility though. (Case 6: 38, 40)

Takayuki was also financially independent at the age of 18 when he became a university freshman. This differs from the majority of Japanese university students, who suspend financial independence until graduating from a university at 22.

Third, the participants are relatively optimistic individuals, and as a result, they never remained mired in the physically or psychologically problematic situations that emerged in their lives for long. For instance, when Takayuki and Chie did not pass crucial entrance examinations, they made a decision to move forward in their lives by concentrating on studying what they liked rather than focusing on their feelings of failure. Chie commented, 「一週間くらい落ち込むうとしても一日二日で疲れてるんですよ。『悩んでも仕方ない。』ってね（笑）。」

“When something unpleasant happens to me, I think, ‘Oh, this is terrible. OK, I’d be depressed for at least one week!’ However, I get tired being down after one or two days, thinking being depressed won’t get me anywhere (laughter)” (Case 5: 68).

When Takayuki lost almost all his money in the robbery at the age of 25 after quitting the translation job with the elevator manufacturer, he did not become
depressed for long; after spending about one week in agony, he perceived his no-money and no-job situation objectively, accepted the reality of the situation, and adopted the belief that what would be, would be. This approach to his disastrous situation allowed him to deal calmly and effectively with a favorable job offer he received soon after that.

Optimistic traits generally imply a positive mood embracing a hope in the future. Such traits have been discussed in the positive psychology literature, in which optimism has been regarded as an important construct; it underlies optimal functioning, the development of abilities, and a sense of well-being, and optimistic individuals are likely to have future hope and are willing to accept hard work (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Researchers (e.g., Pajares, 2001) have also identified a close association between optimism and academic motivation, and it has been suggested that an optimistic personal disposition is an advantage in learning English. Notwithstanding the counterargument that optimism can constitute a false rejection of actual difficulties (Peterson, 2000), none of the participants displayed such a tendency; rather, they understood the reality that they needed to study hard in order to accomplish their English-related goals.

Finally, the participants displayed the ability to concentrate intensively when necessary. This contributed to steady improvements in their English proficiency and differentiated them from many other Japanese learners of English. For a number of different reasons, such as problems with family, friends, and health,
learners sometimes fail to concentrate sufficiently even if they understand that their goal is important to them. The participants were able to do this when necessary. For instance, when preparing for study abroad programs or earning an academic diploma from an overseas university, Taeko, Sakiko, and Haruka concentrated intensively on their required studies and overcame a number of demanding challenges they faced. They did not waste time worrying about their difficulties or trying to escape from them. In particular, Haruka best illustrates intense concentration. She studied intensively after failing the Japanese university entrance examinations in order to obtain the TOEFL score (500) necessary for enrollment in the undergraduate program in the United States that she wanted to enter. As a result, she increased her TOEFL score by approximately 100 points in only three months, which is a remarkable increase in such a short period of time. Shin displayed a high level of concentration throughout his learning history. He tried to acquire comprehensible knowledge and to become competent in whatever captured his interest: movies, jazz piano, typing, or philosophy, and worked intensively. Because what he was interested in frequently required English skills, his intensive work on these activities led him to boost his English proficiency (especially reading). Chie is another good example of intense concentration. She prepared almost perfectly for every English class in high school, and in order to do so, she slept only four or five hours at night on weekdays for three years. After deciding to pursue a profession using English at around age 30, she concentrated on improving her English abilities by studying intensively. She successfully passed challenging English tests in a short
period of time by studying primarily by herself and by developing her own personal network that helped her improve her English abilities.

Because personality is widely considered to be the most salient individual difference among learners, a number of researchers have investigated the relationships between personality variables, such as extroversion-introversion, and foreign language achievement. Some of these researchers utilized the personality taxonomical frameworks developed by psychologists, such as the Big Five model (e.g., Verhoeven & Vermeer, 2002) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (e.g., Dewaele & Furnham, 1999; Ehrman, 1994; Lawrence, 1997). However, the results of these studies fail to identify clear relationships between certain personality characteristics and foreign language achievement. This appears plausible because the same personality characteristic can function either positively or negatively depending on what specific aspects of language (e.g., reading or speaking) are learned in what learning contexts. What constitutes personality characteristics largely depends on the learning situation and what aspects of the language they learn (Dörnyei, 2005).

As with the case of the relationship between personal dispositions and foreign language learning achievement, a direct relationship between personal dispositions and foreign language learning motivation might not be plausible, as all persons have the capacity for motivation. However, personal dispositions are inseparable from motivational behaviors, such as decision-making, taking action, and intention to learn a foreign language, because they are fundamental aspects of
cognitive and emotional functioning that affect a person’s thoughts and feelings, and it is these thoughts and feelings that underlie motivational behaviors. In particular, when considering the development of motivation over time, the impact of personal tendencies cannot be overlooked because all learners must deal with a series of cognitive and emotional challenges and make a large number of decisions. Thus, it is plausible that personal dispositions influence foreign language learning motivation. In this study, the participants’ self-understanding was an important factor underlying their ability to produce satisfying personal outcomes, and their independent tendencies and ability to concentrate helped them focus and pursue their personal goals in practical and effective ways. In addition, their tendency toward optimism produced positive perceptions of the challenges they faced, a willingness to work hard to meet those challenges, and a belief that they would achieve their goals. In sum, all of these characteristics served as sources of subsequent motivation.

**Key People**

Key persons had a strong impact on each of the six participants’ learning motivation. For the most part, they received positive influences from these key people, who can be divided into two categories: family members and non-family members.

The participants’ family environment was a primary source of support and encouragement. Sakiko and Haruka’s cases were the most salient examples of a
supportive family environment. They grew up in similar family environments in the sense that both environments laid the foundation for their future English development. Both sets of parents exposed their children to music since they were small and introduced them to English before their formal English education began in junior high school. Both sets of parents encouraged their children to pursue their interests and generously provided financial support for their children’s educational pursuits. In both families, the parents and children maintained a good relationship in which they communicated with one another frequently, and the parents provided useful suggestions that were attuned to the children’s interests when they faced problems. For example, Haruka’s mother suggested that she apply to an American university when she failed the Japanese university entrance examination, an idea that Haruka immediately embraced. The parents supported their children financially, too. As noted earlier, all the participants are from middle class families, and despite the fact that all the parents’ income was limited, they never failed to support their children when they started to pursue something new because of financial reasons.

A second salient feature of the participants’ family environment was the liberal attitudes of the parents. None of the participants were told what particular activities to do or not to do by their parents; rather, their parents introduced activities, such as taking English or piano lessons, and let their children pursue what they liked. For example, although Sakiko’s parents consistently encouraged her to become a specialist in a particular field, they never specified the field. Haruka’s parents adopted a similar approach, as shown in the following excerpt:
My parents didn’t force us (Haruka and her young sister and brother) to do a certain thing, but gave us many options, such as music, art, sports, and English, and let us choose what we liked among them (Case 3: 56).

Shin recollects that his parents always let him do what he wanted to do. For example, when he talked about his dream to become a professional jazz musician when he was 18, his parents never discouraged him, even though they could have easily made the point that his chances of achieving such a goal with his late start was extremely unlikely, if not impossible. Instead, they arranged for him to take piano lessons with his aunt, who was a piano teacher.

The supportive and liberal family environment was not a feature found only in the participants’ birth families; it was also present in the new families they gained after marriage. Chie’s husband and his mother and Takayuki’s wife respected their decisions concerning changing jobs and studying at graduate school after marriage. They rarely discouraged their partners’ decisions and they provided both mental and emotional support. The spouse’s attitudes were particularly important when the participants resumed studying English after marriage. Chie is the prime example of this. She commented, "My husband always said, ‘Do what you like to do. It’s fine to quit (your job) and do something else if you have something you want to do’" (Case 5: 59). Her husband was consistently supportive.
while she was searching for a new career option while working at the city office, and after she resumed and pursued her English career. His unwavering support and liberal attitude toward her and her career change was certainly a motivational source underlying her subsequent achievement.

In addition to the more obvious benefits of the families’ supportive and liberal attitudes, they also influenced the participants’ personal dispositions, such as their degree of self-understanding and independence. This occurred because the participants were provided the freedom to think about what they liked and the reasons they liked it when considering choices in life. Consequently, they grew confident about the choices they made and became comfortable following their own interests, which helped them develop internal motivation and pursue self-selected goals. However, this was not true for all the participants. In Chie’s case, her parents held conservative ideas about women’s jobs. Though they did not compel her to follow their ideas, she was strongly influenced by them, and it took her a number of years to develop the independence to finally leave her job in the city office and began pursuing her real interests.

The participants’ family environment can be summarized as the place where their autonomy was nurtured. The heart of learner autonomy is the ability to be responsible for one’s own learning. Even though the value of autonomy might vary from culture to culture, (e.g., western culture or Asian culture [Benson, 2006]), its importance in education has been widely recognized by researchers: autonomy, as well as competence and relatedness, is one of the three basic human needs that
people need to satisfy for fulfillment (Deci & Flaste, 1996); the development of learner autonomy and the development of language proficiency are integrated (Little, 2007), and autonomous learning nurtures intrinsic motivation and self-regulation (Ushioda, 2007). Benson (ibid.) states that autonomy is primarily an attribute of learners, rather than learning situations, and if this is the case, learners’ family environment are plausibly the primary source for the development of their autonomous disposition.

Outside of the family environment, the participants interacted with key people who exposed them to new and valuable ideas. For instance, Takayuki encountered a number of skilled English teachers in his junior high school and high school whose instruction captured his interest and stimulated his motivation to learn and teach English. He decided to study linguistics at the age of 33 because he was inspired by one of his friends who spoke several foreign languages and who had a clear vision of his academic career. Yet another example of this concerns Shin, who enjoyed English class for the first time and engaged in reading authentic English novels when he was a university freshman because he liked the lecturer’s teaching style and the way he spoke English. Shin recalled his experience with that teacher in the following excerpt:
We read one story every week. The teacher asked the students, “Have you read the text?” and then only said, “Let’s talk about what you thought.” He also asked, “What do you think of...?” and the students were able to answer if they had read that part of the text. It was a very interesting class, and I liked that kind of class. The teacher didn’t explain the meanings of the sentences and vocabulary at all. That was a great class for me. (Case 4: 3-4)

These key people also frequently served as role models for the participants. Taeko is the best example: She regarded the American high school students whom she encountered in Seattle as powerful role models and strongly wished to emulate them. She felt that they had many desirable personal characteristics, such as a sense of responsibility, maturity, intelligence, and caring attitudes, stating, 「世の中にはすごい人たちがいるなと思いました。彼らのようになりたい憧れました。もっと英語うまくなって、もう一度彼らと話してみたいと思いました。」 “I learned that there were much greater people in the world. I wished to grow up and be like them and communicate with them again using better English” (Case 1: 4, 29). Taeko’s host-mother in Australia, Rose, whom Taeko lived with for two years while studying for her Master’s degree, was also a role model because of her enthusiasm as an ESL teacher, her multilingual abilities, and her strength of character as a single mother with two children. Taeko wished to become strong like Rose and to communicate with her in English as an equal. Taeko commented about Rose:
Though Rose has a Singaporean accent, she is a native English speaker, so I wanted to speak like her. I also admired her because she speaks several dialects of Chinese and worked hard as a single mother. Thanks to her, my motivation to learn English can never decrease (Case 1: 37).

Sakiko is another example of a participant who was positively influenced by her teachers. She had a number of good teachers whom she perceived as role models for her future career, such as her English teacher in the language school when she was a secondary school student and the professors she became acquainted with in the graduate school she attended.

Even when the participants encountered English teachers who were not desirable role models, they were generally able to use the negative experience with those people in a way that pushed them forward. For instance, when Sakiko met teachers whom she perceived as unqualified, such as her junior high school English teacher whose pronunciation sounded extremely non-native and the unenthusiastic English instructors in her first year in the university, she considered them undesirable models for her future career and worked hard to avoid becoming like them.

These key people in the participants’ lives were important motivational sources who strongly influenced the participants through their interactions with them. The family environment was indispensably involved in laying the foundation for foreign language learning for each participant. Little research into the impact of significant others has been conducted in the field of foreign language learning and foreign language learning motivation; however, these few reports indicate a
relatively insignificant impact of the people around the learners. For example, parents’ proficiency in foreign language was not important for their children’s motivation to learn a foreign language (Dörnyei et al., 2006), which was true in the case of the participants in this study as none of their parents were highly proficient in English. It has also been reported that the relationship between Japanese English learners and the milieu (i.e., the attitudes of the people around the learners toward foreign language learning) is weaker than that of Hungarian students (Ryan, 2009).

In stark contrast to these findings, the impact of key people, especially the role of parents, has been considered crucial in other fields. For example, research on the acquisition of expert performance (Bloom, 1985; Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer, 1993) has shown that the parents of most expert performers provided their child with favorable and supportive learning conditions, and the parents’ own interest in the activity, their work ethic, and their motivation to engage in the activity helped lay the foundation for their child’s extraordinary achievements, and their ability to sustain intensive practice for a long period of time. Another explanation for why parental influence is important is provided by hope theory (Snyder, 2000), which postulates parents’ (or caregivers’) essential contribution to the development of goal-directed and hopeful thinking in children. Hope theory suggests that children who are raised by good caregivers who provide a supportive environment are likely to develop the capacity to identify multiple ways to achieve goals (pathway thought), energetically pursue those goals (agency thought), and alter the pathway or goal when facing obstacles; in contrast, children who
experience psychological hardships, such as abuse and parents’ divorce, frequently do not develop such important life skills. The participants in this study were raised in a supportive environment in their childhood and appeared to develop the life skills indispensable for achieving high-level accomplishments. These research insights support the contention that the participants’ parents made a considerable contribution to the participants’ English achievement. In addition to the parents’ contribution, other people in the participants’ lives, such as teachers, friends, and home stay family members were also important, as they provided new ideas and served as both positive and negative models for them. These individuals the participants met in different learning situations influenced their learning motivation directly and immediately.

**Internally Emerged Motivation**

All six participants possessed an internally emergent motivational source that took a number of forms, including feelings of liking and interest in English, using English as a communication tool, and learning English as a school subject. Internal motivation emerged both in their childhood (for Taeko, Sakiko, and Haruka) and after they became junior high school students (for Shin, Chie, and Takayuki). Sometimes the internal motivation directly concerned English study (for Taeko and Sakiko), while at the other times, English was connected to the motivation to learn other skills and subjects (for Haruka and Shin).
Some participants nurtured their internal motivation when they were children by engaging in enjoyable English-related activities, such as watching English movies, reading English picture books, listening to English songs, and communicating in English with non-Japanese and their English teachers. Sakiko was the most salient case of those who developed a form of internal motivation in childhood that influenced their future course. She mentioned how the English movies she watched in her childhood inspired her interest in English. She naturally became interested in English while watching English-language films with her parents and sustained high level learning motivation throughout her English learning history.

As noted above, the role of parents was important in the development of the participants’ internal motivation. Through the English experiences they had in their childhood, the participants generally developed internal motivation, as they enjoyed working on English-related activities rather than obtaining external reinforcers, such as praise or good grades. Experiencing a sense of joy in the initial phases of practicing has also been identified as being common among people who became expert performers. The credit for this partly goes to the parents, as they introduced the children to the activity in a favorable way (Bloom, 1953).

Internal motivation also developed after the participants passed from childhood to adulthood. A salient example is Chie, who resumed studying English in her 30s. She quickly improved and overcame her approximately 10-year non-English period by reading and writing large quantities of English. While she
adopted this strategy in order to improve quickly, she clearly enjoyed these English literacy activities, in part because of her love of reading and writing in Japanese she had developed as a little girl. Takayuki is the most salient example, as his primary motivational source was almost always based on his interest, which is illustrated in the following short comment he made, 「勉強が好きというより、ただ面白いからやってているだけなんです。」 “I studied only because it was interesting to me” (Case 6: 32). Although his primary interest was science, English eventually captured his attention because of his junior high school English teacher. He disliked studying only for external reasons, such as getting good grades on term tests; rather, he studied everyday in junior high school and high school (e.g., he memorized new English vocabulary while commuting by bicycle) primarily because of his interest in the language. He also practiced speaking English and worked as a volunteer guide and interpreter with tremendous enthusiasm while a university student because he was intensely interested in those activities.

In some cases the internally emerged motivation that drove the participants’ learning did not directly concern English; however, it fed the participants’ subsequent motivation to study English because the English language was a necessary tool for other interests or goals. The most striking case involved Haruka, who never particularly liked English. She stated, 「英語がものすごく好きだと思ったことは一度もないんだけどね。」 “I’ve never thought that I really like English” (Case 3: 55); rather, English was always a tool to achieve other goals, such as studying abroad, singing gospel music, and taking part in human rights activities;
all of these activities were based on her internal interest. Another example in which the English language was in a secondary position can be found with Shin, who was not particularly enthusiastic about studying English in school; however, he has been interested in western music and movies since he was in junior high school and he autonomously chose to read a number of original stories in English that were the basis of western movies.

The internally emerged motivation that the participants displayed has relevance to constructs from two psychological frameworks. The first construct is intrinsic motivation, which refers to motivation based on internal factors, such as enjoyment and satisfaction, and which constitutes a dichotomy with extrinsic motivation in Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Intrinsic motivation has been further classified into three sub-categories: Intrinsic knowledge, Intrinsic-accomplishment, and intrinsic-stimulation, according to the degree of self-determination (Noels et al., 2000), and the relationship between the motivational components postulated in Robert Gardner’s socio-educational model and the sub-categories of intrinsic/extrinsic motivations have been examined (Noels, 2001).

Although intrinsic motivation has long been regarded as important for language learning, researchers whose primary concern is long-term motivational development have recently investigated intrinsic motivation from a developmental point of view. This view concerns the interactions between initial intrinsic motivation and subsequently developed self-determined extrinsic motivation (Hayashi, 2005), and the development of a deeper level of intrinsic motivation,
which can be contrasted with the initial, shallow level of intrinsic motivation, for autonomous development (Nakata, 2006).

Another construct relevant to internally emerged motivation is interest. Interest has been recognized as a crucial motivational source in educational psychology (e.g., Dewey, 1913; Thorndike, 1935), and more recent research (e.g., Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp, 2004) suggests that interest is a key concept in the interaction among motivation, learning, and emotions, based on the idea that these three constructs are inseparable and interrelated. Though interest has been conceptualized in a variety of ways, it has recently been conceptualized as a dynamic construct situated in specific contexts. Some researchers have viewed interest as being made up of developmental stages, which include the initial emergent form of interest and a more developed stable form of interest (Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp, 2004). Despite the close association with motivation, the relationship between interest and foreign language learning motivation has not been explored yet.

In line with the research findings on intrinsic motivation and interest, internally emerged motivation was a powerful motivational source for the participants in this study. It both directly influenced the participants’ immediate interest, and that possibly affected their future interest, and it constituted an underlying motivational source for subsequent English learning by providing the participants with a positive affective orientation toward English. Because internal motivation represented the participants’ inner voice from their heart, it was
primarily unintentional and uncontrollable. However, it was nurtured by the
learning environments they were exposed to, especially those they experienced in
their childhood.

**External Goals**

As motivation and goals frequently go hand in hand, all six participants
were by and large goal-oriented. They consciously or unconsciously set different
kinds of goals throughout their English learning histories. For example, when they
began studying English in junior high school, their goals frequently concerned
academic performance. When they faced the entrance examinations, passing the
tests became the primary goal. When they studied abroad, acquiring communicative
skills became the paramount goal. When they finished school, using English
effectively in their jobs became the primary goal. The participants’ perception of
any particular goal determined the power of that goal as a motivator.

First, external goals involving a vision of the future, and especially those
related to the participants’ future careers were the most salient motivational source.
These goals always involved a long-term perspective. For example, because Sakiko
selected a career goal relatively early in her life, she was able to maintain a high
level of motivation throughout her English learning history. In contrast, other
participants made decisions about their future careers much later in life than Sakiko,
and their English learning motivation fluctuated a great deal until they selected an
English-related career goal. Taeko’s case clearly illustrated the difference in the
sustainability of a goal with and without a vision of a future career. When she was a high school student, her goal of becoming a skilled English communicator was not related to her future career, and she temporarily forgot about the goal after focusing on the short-term external goal of passing the university entrance examination. In contrast, the decision to improve her communicative English skills she made after visiting Australia at the age of 21 was based on a vision of a future career; this led to her sustained motivation. The same motivational effect can be seen with Chie and Shin; their English learning motivation became much more consistent after they made a decision to pursue English related careers.

Second, the participants’ motivation was intense when they autonomously identified goals important for them. In these cases, they focused on studying whatever was necessary to achieve the goals by regulating their behaviors. Haruka is perhaps the best example of a person who internalized initially external goals. She disliked losing the academic “game” she was participating in and recognized that English was an important survival tool she needed to use to achieve other important goals. In order to “win the game,” she studied English intensively and strategically when necessary. As she repeated this learning process when she studied in the United States in her high school, undergraduate, and postgraduate studies, she achieved an advanced level of English proficiency with native-like English pronunciation. Though she attained native-like fluency and pronunciation as a consequence of the internalization of what were originally external goals and she outwardly appears to be enamored with the English language, in fact, her true
passion has always been pursuing academic goals and career goals. Though she has never particularly liked English, she needed a good command of the language in order to achieve her primary goals.

How the participants perceived their goals was an important determinant of motivational sustainability and goal attainability because the goals they perceived as external to themselves motivated the participants only temporarily. In contrast, when the participants viewed the external goals as being associated with their future career or they became internalized goals, the external goals became powerful motivational sources. This is best explained by the Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) introduced in the previous section. The degree of self-determination, or internalization of external goals, largely differentiates motivational sustainability.

**Authentic Communicative Experiences Using English**

The participants’ hands-on experience with authentic English communication was a salient motivational source. Communicative interactions in English, which typically took place while they were studying abroad, provided a strong positive impact on the participants’ motivation. Though relatively rare, the participants communicated in English in English classes in Japan, which also provided them with a positive motivational influence.

Studying abroad allowed the participants to communicate with native English speakers in natural contexts, an experience that undoubtedly constituted a powerful motivational source. Using English in this context improved the
participants’ English communicative abilities, an opportunity that Japanese English learners do not regularly have in the Japanese EFL environment. In addition, the use of English in natural contexts influenced the participants emotionally. Taeko’s experience studying abroad for the first time best illustrated this influence. She commented on the influence of studying in Seattle for two weeks as follows:

It was one of the most influential events in my life. My personality even changed after that. My mother acknowledged the change too. I used to be relatively quiet and occasionally said negative things, such as, “I may not be able to do it.” I became more active and positive, and I’ve tried many things since then (Case 1: 4, 7, 23, 30).

Interacting with American high school students was a significant experience for her, and it provided an impact that changed her life, including part of her personality, by making her more independent and proactive.

The positive impact of studying abroad does not mean that the participants had only positive communicative experiences while overseas; rather, they all faced communicative challenges they had never experienced before. For example, Taeko was shocked about what she perceived as the immaturity of Japanese high school students, including herself, in comparison with her American counterparts and about her limited ability to speak English during her first stay in a foreign country. Sakiko learned that, despite studying intensively for 10 years, her communicative abilities were insufficient to carry on conversations with native English speakers in
authentic contexts. She was unable to understand conversations produced at a natural speed by native English speakers during her home stay in the United States when she was a university junior. Because of this experience, she realized that she needed to improve much more in order to communicate effectively with native English speakers. Haruka also experienced culture shock with her host family and American friends that occurred because of a lack of communicative abilities at the beginning of her first home stay at age 18. In order to succeed academically and compete successfully with native English-speaking students in high school and in her undergraduate and postgraduate studies, she made a tremendous effort and developed her personality in more social and independent directions.

I didn’t want to lose the game to the American students. I didn’t want to resort to the excuse that I’m not a native English speaker. If I can make it by studying hard, I studied desperately… I thought that American students didn’t study as much as some people said. For example, when I wanted to improve my pronunciation and took a speech practice course, we learned the phonetic alphabet in “Voice in Diction.” I studied it and got an A for the course, but some American students got a C because they didn’t study. Of course, I can’t pronounce some of the English sounds completely correctly, but I simply thought that I could overcome most challenges by hard work, especially when hard work is the only thing that matters. (Case 3: 26-27)

Chie, as the most mature student in the study abroad program to England, became the group leader, but her English was insufficient to communicate...
effectively with native English speakers. Importantly, these negative experiences fueled the participants’ learning motivation remarkably, and they studied English intensively afterward; this burst of energy boosted their English proficiency noticeably.

When in Japan, the participants’ opportunities to communicate in English occurred primarily in formal English classes. Even though most of the communication did not involve native English speakers, communicative English activities in the classroom affected their learning motivation positively. For instance, Haruka enjoyed speaking English in the YMCA English class she attended when she was 12. Her Japanese female teacher, who spoke English fluently, encouraged the students to practice speaking. Haruka liked her teacher and her way of speaking English very much and thought that speaking English was interesting. Takayuki spoke English for the first time in his university class and quickly became fascinated with speaking the foreign language. This love of speaking English was the basis of his subsequent English-related activities: establishing an ESS club in the university in his sophomore year, becoming the leader of the club, and joining the student volunteer organization for guiding foreign tourists, an activity involving frequent interactions with foreign visitors in English. In particular, his involvement in the guide work helped him not only improve his communicative English abilities but also provided him with the insight that speaking English fluently was not sufficient; acquiring knowledge about
Japanese culture and traditions and the ability to describe them in an understandable way to the foreign visitors was crucial.

Using English communicatively was an important motivational source for the participants because it satisfied a fundamental need of English study. Research has confirmed the advantages of study abroad experiences and the importance of high exposure to a target language in a content-based curriculum (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008). Because that fundamental need is not usually fulfilled when studying in an EFL environment, studying abroad served as an essential opportunity to use English in authentic contexts for most of the participants. How the participants perceived the communicative challenges they faced when studying abroad determined their subsequent motivation and learning. Some learners feel overwhelmed by the challenge of communicating in a foreign language in an authentic context. This is likely to occur because what the students have experienced as “communicative practice” in EFL classrooms differs significantly from authentic communication in terms of, for example, lexical choice, pronunciation, the rate of utterances, and the required speed and length of the interactions. All of these must be adjusted appropriately for real communicative contexts. Feelings of being overwhelmed can lead to diminished motivation; however, this did not happen to the participants; they were motivated further when faced with communication difficulties.
The Entrance Examinations

The participants’ motivation was strongly influenced by university entrance examinations. Taeko, Haruka, Chie, and Takayuki’s motivation increased before the test because passing the test of the school where they wished to attend served as a strong motivator for them. In contrast, after finishing the tests, their motivation decreased both when they passed and failed the tests (Sakiko and Shin were exceptions as they did not have to take the public examination to enroll in their universities). For instance, Taeko passed the test of the prestigious university that she desired to attend, and her motivation almost disappeared for the next two years because of the intensity and length of study; she described the feelings at that moment as follows:

I was very tired after studying very hard for the whole year for the entrance exams, and afterward, I was totally free for a year. I had a part-time job for the first time, made new friends came from other areas, and visited these friends to eat meals together at their apartments. It’s a totally new world. I joined a club, went skiing and snowboarding with my friends in winter, and played volleyball in the gym. It’s very free and very different from high school, and I thought this might be interesting compared with the last year… as I entered the department in the university I aimed, I thought it’s OK to have a rest for a while (Case 1: 10-11)
Chie failed all the examinations she took except the one for the university affiliated with her high school. As she majored in a non-English subject in the university, she lost the motivation to study English intensively, even though she had studied English very hard for three years in high school and it was still a required subject for the first two years in the university. Haruka, who always understood the importance of English and internalized her motivation to study English, failed her Japanese university entrance examinations, and Takayuki, who always studied English based on internally emerged motivation, failed his high school and university entrance examinations. They too were not free from the negative washback as Takayuki experienced motivational decreases afterward because of the emotional shock that accompanied these failures. The participants in this study, all of whom achieved high-level English proficiency, were not free from the influence of the entrance examinations.

Washback is the influence and degree of the influence of tests—as well as the influence of curriculum, teaching practice, teachers, and students—on teaching and learning, which has been a frequent topic in the field of foreign language learning (e.g., Brown, 2005). The use of high-stakes screening examinations with university candidates has been an ideological and prevailing practice not only in Japan but also other Asian counties such as Korea and China for many decades. Both positive and negative effects have been discussed concerning this practice. While the entrance examinations served as a significant external goal and powerful motivator, they sometimes result in serious motivational decreases. Because
success on the examinations largely determines students’ future career success (i.e., passing the examination of a prestigious school is the traditional path to entering a prestigious company), passing the examination is the ultimate educational goal for many Japanese high school students. They experience an increase in motivation and study intensively before the test, by which their learning is increased. The problem is that this positive effect can be temporary and come at a high price—decreased motivation to study or in some cases a virtual refusal to study further once the examination is completed. When considering a long-term process of foreign language learning, especially when the learning goal is to achieve high-level proficiency, the negative impact of the tests cannot be underscored.

Why does the negative washback occur? In general, the constant external and internal psychological pressure that Japanese students receive for a minimum of one year, while studying intensively for the examination, is an overwhelming challenge for most. Studying for the examinations primarily involves a large amount of rote memorization over several different subjects, including those the students do not particularly like or have an interest in. Very little communicative English, if any, is presented in the examinations. As a result, many students force themselves to engage in a mind-numbing routine of memorizing large amounts of information that is of dubious future use and that entails sacrificing engaging in more meaningful activities. Despite the effort involved in this endeavor, only a limited number of students successfully pass the entrance examination for their first-choice university. Many students, including those who are ultimately
successful, have to live with constant frustration or anxiety while they are studying for the examination because the quantity and quality of study is not even close to what they originally planned or imagined. Consequently, by the time students take the examinations, and regardless of whether they are successful or unsuccessful, they are likely to feel burned out and desperate to be free from studying. They wish to do something enjoyable, and that rarely involves new academic goals. In a sense, negative washback is an inevitable aftermath of the entrance examinations.

Even though studying for the entrance examination involves achieving a goal, the goal is not necessarily self-selected and in many cases, the goal simply evaporates when the examination is finished. Moreover, the initial goal is generally not replaced with a subsequent goal. Although the participants eventually found subsequent goals before English was completely forgotten, the negative effects of the current practice of administering highly competitive entrance examinations in the English learning motivation of many teenage Japanese students appear more serious than the positive effects of them, as the students move through the secondary and tertiary English education system.

Classroom Experience

Although the participants enjoyed motivating experiences in their secondary school English classrooms, declines in their motivation to learn English also took place in the same English classrooms. For instance, Sakiko’s motivation decreased
slightly once in her English learning history when she became a university freshman. She stated:

Really, I was shocked. I studied English very hard for three years in high school. Now I got into the university, and I expected that the level of the university must be higher, of course, than the level of the high school. It wasn’t. Also, the level of my classmates wasn’t good. They didn’t understand, for example, the meaning of “it depends on.” Even high school students know that (Case 2: 8).

Contrary to her expectations, she had to attend a class with weakly motivated classmates whose English proficiencies were lower than her high school friends. The classes were also taught by what she felt were unenthusiastic instructors. Even though she had a clear goal concerning her future English career, she could not maintain the same level of learning motivation in that environment.

Haruka and Shin’s motivation decreased after their formal English education began at age 13. They felt that their junior high school English classes were uninteresting because they disliked memorizing vocabulary and grammar. Though Shin’s motivation decreased gradually, Haruka’s motivation dropped immediately because she had enjoyed the communicative English class she attended the previous year in which she had opportunities to speak English with the other students. She liked the female instructor, her approach to teaching, and her ability to speak English skillfully. Compared with that class and teacher, the English class in junior high school was boring. Haruka’s motivation also decreased because she experienced reverse culture shock upon returning to her Japanese high school class from her one-year study abroad experience in an American high school at age 16. After
knowing the bright side of an American high school, in which the teachers respected the individual differences of each student and strove to develop each student’s strengths, she was disappointed with the test-oriented Japanese high school curriculum.

The participants’ motivational declines that occurred in the Japanese English classroom illustrates a number of motivational challenges faced by Japanese students in Japanese English classrooms: the compulsory nature of English education, the test-oriented and relatively inauthentic, uncommunicative English curriculum, and the instructors’ frequently poor command of spoken English. They were not crucial sources of demotivation for everyone, as some participants, Taeko, Chie, and Takayuki, increased their motivation after their formal English education began; however, when combined with the subsequent effect of the high school and university entrance examinations, the impact of the English classroom can be significant for some students.

The Key to Success in Foreign Language Learning

In this section, the key to successful foreign language learning is discussed. In the first half, the initial underlying proposition of this study—successful learners have experienced motivational declines at least once, but they overcome such setbacks—is examined over the six case studies. After reconsidering the notion of sustained motivation, a new assumption concerning the key to successful foreign language learning is presented.
Examining Initial Proposition 1

The initial proposition 1 stated that successful learners have experienced one or more motivational declines but have overcome such experiences in their learning processes. In this section, I review each participant’s major motivational decline and resurgence and discuss the motivational sources that underlie these motivational fluctuations. I use the line charts the participants drew in the first interviews. In the charts presented in this section, the dotted lines indicate the times of motivational decline and the solid lines indicate the times when motivational resurgence took place in the participants.

Taeko.

Taeko’s motivation noticeably declined at age 18 (A) and began a resurgence at age 20 (B) (See Figure 22). Before this largest fluctuation occurred, her motivation increased to all time high at age 17 when she participated in a two-week study abroad program in the United States. Because of the impact from that study abroad program, she wished to study English intensively to become a good English speaker after enrolling in the university she wanted to attend; however, she temporarily postponed her desire because she had to study for the university entrance examinations for the entire next year. Her motivational decline happened because of the negative washback of the university entrance examinations. After being free from the intensive studying for the entrance examinations, she allowed herself to enjoy a more relaxed life as a university student. As a result, her English
learning motivation was weakened and she did not seriously study English for the next two years. At age 20, visiting Australia triggered her learning motivation again. Using English communicatively in an English-speaking country led her to regret the past two years during which her English did not improve at all; however, it also promoted her to recall her desire to become a good English speaker. This experience provided her with a strong impetus to study English, and she once again began to pursue her goal to become a good English communicator.

*Figure 22. Taeko’s motivational fluctuation.*

**Sakiko.**

Sakiko’s brief motivational fluctuation took place between the ages of 17 (A) and 18 (B) (See Figure 23). Her motivation has been constantly high because her interest in English had never dwindled and she had selected an English-related career goal at age 15 by choosing to focus on English rather than the piano; however, a motivational decrease occurred because of the disappointing classroom experience she had in her university. At age 18 when she became a university freshman, she had to take a general English course with relatively unmotivated and
lower proficiency students. Even though she had had a long-term English goal and had been motivated to study English in high school, her motivation was affected negatively when facing the demotivating class atmosphere. She felt that studying hard was neither encouraged nor appreciated in the class where few students tried to study hard. If she had experienced the same kind of course next year, her motivation might have been jeopardized further. However, her motivation resurged to its highest level the next year because she obtained the qualification to take the intensive English course in the university. The class atmosphere was entirely different from the course she took the previous year: The students were highly motivated, and a number of them aimed to study abroad. The course instructors were also enthusiastic, and hard work was rewarded and valued. In addition, taking the course was an important step in applying to the study abroad program in her junior year. Therefore, her English learning motivation returned to its previous high level.

![Motivational fluctuation](image)

*Figure 23. Sakiko’s motivational fluctuation.*
**Haruka.**

Unlike Taeko and Sakiko, Haruka stated that her motivation repeatedly increased and decreased, and that high levels of motivation were not sustained for longer than three years (See Figure 24). The primary pattern she displayed in her English study was based on goal achievement: she experienced a sharp motivational increase before achieving the goals and a sharp decline after attaining them. Haruka stated that she never particularly liked English, but she believed that English was a necessary tool in her quest to achieve other goals: enrolling in a good public high school (A), studying for the Japanese university entrance examinations (C), and enrolling in and academically succeeding in her undergraduate program (E) and graduate program (G) in the United States. She studied English with great intensity in order to achieve these goals. Therefore, her English learning motivation inevitably rose when she targeted a goal that required English skills and diminished when she achieved the goal (B, D, F, and H).

*Figure 24.* Haruka’s motivational fluctuations.
Shin.

Shin’s major motivational increase and decrease happened at ages 24 (A) and 26 (B) (See Figure 25). The first motivational decrease took place at age 24 after he graduated from his university. He abandoned his hope to become a professional musician, but he did not have a specific alternative in mind for a while. As he was not serious about a future profession, he worked as a telex operator for two years after graduating from the university. At age 26, his motivation resurged when he ended his moratorium period and decided to become a fully engaged in mainstream society. When considering a possible professional goal, he selected an English-related profession and reentered the university to study English literature. Because his academic and professional pursuits were related to English, he was motivated to improve his English skills.

Chie.

Chie’s motivational decrease took place at 18 (A) and her motivational resurgence occurred when she was 29 (B) (See Figure 26). The decrease occurred
when she enrolled in the Japanese literature department in her university. Even though English was her favorite subject and she liked and was enthusiastic to study it in high school, it was merely one of many school subjects to her. After completing the university entrance examinations, English became nearly irrelevant in her life, a situation that continued for the next 10 years. After finishing her undergraduate studies, she worked at the city office for eight and a half years but was never satisfied with the job. While searching for a more interesting and challenging career, she encountered English again and her motivation to study was revived. English once again captured her interest and provided her with a new profession, teaching English. Since that time, she has been motivated to improve her English skills for the sake of her profession.

Figure 26. Chie’s motivational fluctuations.

Takayuki.

Similar to Haruka, Takayuki stated that his learning motivation rose and fell periodically. His motivation to study English emerged primarily internally and was based on his interest in English, learning English, and English related activities.
Figure 27 illustrates his motivational fluctuations, which moved in accordance with the changes of his interest. Although his motivation temporarily decreased at age 16 after failing the high school entrance examinations (A) and at 18 after failing the university entrance examinations (C), his motivation resurged when he engaged in English-related activities that captured his interest, for example, studying English, especially memorizing a great deal of vocabulary in high school (B), speaking English and forming the ESS club at 20 (D), acting as a tour guide and interpreter and leading the student tour guide interpreter club at the age of 21 (E), passing the tour guide test and teaching English at a language school at 22 (F), and studying linguistics in graduate school at 33 (G).

Figure 27. Takayuki’s motivational fluctuations.

Each case clearly shows that every participant experienced at least one motivation decline followed by a subsequent resurgence in motivation. Thus, initial proposition 1 was supported by all six case studies. The participants potentially could have lost their learning motivation and not experienced its resurgence; consequently, they would not have achieved a high level of English proficiency, as is the case with the majority of English learners in Japan. This suggests that
successful learners’ advanced proficiency is a consequence of conquering motivational challenges that occurred in their long-term learning histories. The path to advanced proficiency in a foreign language is rough and winding, rather than smooth and straight.

The primary reasons for motivational resurgence varied with each participant: using English authentically in an English-speaking country (i.e., authentic communicative experience using English) for Taeko, attending an intensive English course where the students were motivated and the teachers were enthusiastic (i.e., classroom experience) for Sakiko, targeting a non-linguistic goal that required English (i.e., internalizing external goals) for Haruka, pursuing English-related academic and professional goals (i.e., an external goal related to a future career) for Shin, pursuing a more interesting and challenging job (i.e., an external goal related to a future career plus interest for Chie, and engaging in an English-related activity (i.e., internally emerged motivation) for Takayuki. These diverse reasons suggest that a key motivational reason common to all the participants might not be identifiable. This issue is further discussed in the subsequent sections.

A New Assumption

The motivational charts of the six participants presented above illuminate two distinctive patterns of motivational perceptions among the six participants. The first pattern is illustrated by Taeko, Sakiko, Shin, and Chie, who experienced one
major motivational decline, a motivational resurgence afterward, and sustained motivation for the rest of their learning histories. The second pattern is illustrated by Haruka and Takayuki, who perceived their own motivational level as constantly fluctuating and unstable throughout their learning histories. In particular, Haruka and Takayuki’s perceptions of their motivation was interesting, as primary motivational sources for these two participants differed completely—Haruka viewed English as an instrument to pursue her goals while interest in English and English related activities motivated Takayuki. The second pattern provides an important implication: Even if learners endure years of intensive study and consequently achieve advanced foreign language proficiency, their success might not occur necessarily because they sustained a high level of motivation over time. In other words, sustained motivation is not always crucial for successful foreign language learning. Although this finding does not support the proposed idea at the onset of this study that sustained motivation is the key to successful learning, it appears plausible when we consider the nature of motivation. If motivation is inherently dynamic, then sustained motivation might not be possible. This insight resulted in the emergence of a completely new idea regarding what underlies successful foreign language learning: If sustained motivation is not a prerequisite for achieving high proficiency in foreign language, an alternative psychological force might exist that inspires learners to make prolonged efforts to study English. While motivation generally fluctuates throughout an individual’s learning history, a relatively stable and long lasting psychological force can emerge that enables
learners to persevere with the challenging tasks they face over time. The presence of this force differentiates them from most other learners. I propose that this force is commitment to learning, and that salient motivational sources that interacted in the participants’ learning histories led to the emergence of their commitment to learning. In the following sections, I discuss this new concept.

The Concept of Commitment

While the notion of motivation has attracted the interest of many researchers, has been vigorously investigated, and has produced a number of plausible theories concerning human behavior, this has not been the case with commitment. Little is currently known about commitment and how it influences human behavior. Psychologists have not paid rigorous attention to commitment; it has been frequently regarded as an element of the motivational process, and the concept of commitment has been discussed in limited areas in the field of psychology concerning, for example, sports, employment, and personal relationships.

Little attention to commitment is also evident in the field of foreign language learning. For example, Aloiau (2001) noted the importance of commitment in relation to learning strategy training, but not a single study has been conducted with a primary focus on investigating learners’ commitment to learning. Furthermore, the concept of commitment has hardly been theorized and rigorously discussed in the field. In the process model of L2 motivation (Dörnyei & Ottó,
1998, p. 48), commitment appears merely as one of the motivational steps (which is further discussed below). In the following sections, I explore and discuss commitment to learning as an enduring psychological force that sometimes emerges a long-term process of foreign language learning. I view commitment to learning as an alternative to motivation rather than as one stage in the motivational process. I begin by exploring the concept of commitment. Because motivation is a more familiar construct, contrasting motivation and commitment allows us to understand commitment clearly.

**Boundary between motivation and commitment.**

Both motivation and commitment are psychological concepts that are proposed as the reasons for individuals’ behaviors and the activities they choose to engage in. The two concepts overlap with one another to a degree, but they are not identical. Three fundamental differences between motivation and commitment are identified in the psychology literature. First, motivation and commitment differ in terms of intentionality. While motivation refers to a naturally emerging force closely associated with one’s emotions, commitment refers to an intentionally emerging force more closely associated with cognition. For example, Corsini (1999) defined motivation as, “the process of initiating, sustaining, and directing psychological or physical activities, including internal forces, such as impulses, drives, and desires involving in this process” (p. 611), while he defined commitment as, “in general, an agreement or pledge to be obliged to do a particular
deed in the future” (p. 190). Sternberg (1985, 1986) views commitment as analogous to a decision, a cognitive activity that constitutes a crucial element in his model of love, which is elaborated below. Second, motivation and commitment differ in the degree of persistence displayed by an individual. Though both are subject to fluctuations, commitment is characterized by greater persistence than motivation. Commitment is defined as “the degree to which you feel bound to another person” (Coon, 2001, pp. G-4), or “the intention to remain in a relationship” (Nairne, 2000, p. 484). Both definitions imply dedication to the activity (i.e., the relationship). Furthermore, because commitment is associated with a decision that a person makes consciously, it is less likely to fade naturally. Even if a person reduces or abandons behavioral effort in the activity (e.g., overt behavior intended to maintain a relationship), it does not necessarily mean that the person has abandoned her commitment to the activity (Carver & Scheier, 1998). A final difference between motivation and commitment concerns the order of the emergence of the two forces. Motivation can precede commitment, while the opposite cannot occur. Benner and Hill (1999) stated, “Commitment may stem from both internal factors, such as feelings of respect, affection, and liking… Or it may stem from such external factors as family expectation, pressure from friends, social considerations, or business or financial interests and concerns” (p. 225). This indicates that commitment emerges when a person possesses certain motivational reasons; it does not emerge from a motivational vacuum. Generally, a person can have the motivation to do something without having commitment to the activity,
while the opposite is not possible. To summarize the differences between motivation and commitment, motivation is a naturally emerging, frequently unstable psychological force closely associated with emotions, while commitment is a more stable intentional psychological force closely associated with cognition, which emerges from underlying motivational sources.

**Two Characteristics of Commitment.**

Two characteristics of commitment are identified in the psychological literature. First, commitment strongly involves a person’s investment in a particular activity, including “emotional or material” (Benner & Hill, 1999, p. 225) and “time and effort” (Thompson & Holms, 1996, p. 515), especially when the person encounters a problem. It involves the desire to invest the time and energy needed to solve problems, the willingness to invest the resources required to solve problems (Sternberg, 2006), and the behaviors needed to maintain a relationship even when the investment is costly, to some extent unrealistic, and even when the person has lost her original interest (Thompson & Holmes, ibid.). Second, commitment inevitably involves prioritizing a particular activity over competing activities and frequently leads the person to sacrifice engaging in other important activities. It is relatively rare for a person to commit herself to more than one thing simultaneously because of time and energy limitations. In this study, the six participants’ attitudes toward learning another foreign language (L3) illustrate this feature of commitment. All six participants studied at least one L3: Chinese, French, German, Korean,
Spanish, Latin, and Middle English in high school and as university undergraduate and graduate students. The participants were initially motivated to study the L3s to a certain degree, but they did not study them with as much enthusiasm and dedication as they displayed toward English and they prioritized studying English over the L3. Consequently, they failed to achieve high proficiency in the L3.

Because commitment emerges based on a person’s conscious intention, the person commits to a particular activity and allocates a large portion of her capacity and large number of resources (e.g., time and money) to the activity. However, because each individual’s cognitive capacity and material resources are finite, they are unable to fully commit to a second major undertaking. Table 10 summarizes the characteristics of commitment contrasting with motivation. Intention (or volition) and obligation (or responsibility) reflect partial part of characteristics of commitment.

Table 10. *Characteristics of commitment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional drive</td>
<td>Cognitive drive, intentional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently fluctuates, likely to fade</td>
<td>More stable, unlikely to fade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds commitment</td>
<td>Not proceeds motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involves investment and prioritizing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Models That Draw on the Concept of Commitment.

Next, I look at models of two psychological constructs, action and love, that draw on the concept of commitment in order to understand how commitment is presented and functions in relation to these constructs. I also examine Dörnyei and Ottó’s process model of motivation (1998) as it draws on one of these models. The relevance of the concept of commitment presented in these models to the interaction of motivation and commitment in foreign language learning is also discussed.

The Rubicon Model of Action Phases

Heckhausen and Gollwitzer (1987, cited in Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008) proposed a model showing the process of taking action to achieve a goal (Figure 28). This model is important because it illustrates the intentionality of commitment. Motivation appears in the predicisional phase while intention (volition) is formed in the actional phase. A goal is a vague wish in the predicisional phase, but it becomes concrete in the actional phase through intention formation (i.e., decision making). The researchers labeled this point of intention formation as “crossing the Rubicon,” a phrase that indicates that the intention formation is an irreversible, significant point in the process in terms of goal actualization in which a decision is made and commitment toward the goal emerges. The model suggests that motivation alone is not sufficient to realize a goal; both
motivation and intention are necessary for action to occur and they operate hand-in-hand for goal attainment.

The relevance of this model to the interaction between motivation and commitment in foreign language learning is that it suggests that motivation is not sufficient to bring learners’ wishes to fruition; rather, learners need to make a conscious, autonomous decision, an important process for driving themselves powerfully toward goal achievement. It is at this point that their commitment to learning emerges. Heckhausen and Gollwitzer discuss a one-shot act, but the model is relevant to goals requiring long-term engagement, such as foreign language learning. Longer learning processes require greater commitment if the learner is to continue taking successive steps toward the goal.

![Figure 28. The Rubicon model of action phases (Heckhausen & Gollwitzer, 1987, cited in Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008, p. 273).](image)
The Process Model of L2 Motivation

Closely related to the Rubicon model of action phase (Heckhausen & Gollwitzer, 1987), Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) developed the process model of motivation (Figure 29) drawing on the action control theory (Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1985), which appears to share the similar base to the Rubicon model of action phase. It is the only model in the field of foreign language learning motivation where commitment is included. Dörnyei and Ottó constructed the model in order to design motivational interventions in foreign language learning classrooms and illustrated the comprehensive flow of the action sequence and the motivational influence while a learner is implementing classroom tasks. In the model, the motivational process is divided into three phases: preactional, actional, and postactional phases, and commitment constitutes one of the preactional steps, by which vague goals (or assigned tasks) are transformed to more concrete intentional goals. The intentionality of commitment is drawn on this step. Although Dörnyei and Ottó stated that it was an important step, the role of commitment appears relatively insignificant; the researchers’ focus was on showing the comprehensive motivational process of one-shot classroom tasks; the role of commitment involves one of the steps in the process. Also, in classroom settings, tasks are generally imposed by the instructor rather than self-selected by the learners, and commitment involves only one side of the dual aspects of the goal transformation—either as commitment (for self-selected tasks) or as compliance (for assigned tasks).
Figure 29. Process model of L2 motivation (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.40)
A Triangular Theory of Love.

Sternberg (1986, 1988) proposed the theory of love (or relationships) and postulated that falling in love (or having a relationship) is fundamentally a cognitive activity. He embodied this view in his triangle model (Figure 30). The model consists of three primary components of love: passion, intimacy, and decision/commitment, in which the intentional and persistent nature of commitment is implicated. Sternberg’s conception of love differs from previous researchers who viewed love as divisible into only two types: passionate love and compassionate love. Sternberg further divided compassionate love into two subcomponents: intimacy and decision/commitment. According to his model, passion is closely associated with emotion, while commitment is a genuinely cognitive activity that involves decision-making. The decision/commitment subcomponent is important because it allowed Sternberg to emphasize that love occurs based on a person’s conscious decision, suggesting that love is a cognitively controllable activity.

Sternberg’s triangle model and the three components differentiate several types of relationships, particularly close relationships, over time. For example, the size of the triangle represents the amount of love: the larger the triangle, the greater the amount of experienced love, and the shape of the triangle represents the balance of the love. This can vary from balanced love, in which all three components are equally matched, to unbalanced love, in which the three components play differentially important roles. Further, when using multiple triangles, real versus ideal love and self-perceived versus other-perceived love can also be explained.
The model illuminates the rational and realistic nature of commitment in terms of its intentionality and endurance. The Decision/Commitment subcomponent adds a realistic flavor to love, as it includes decision-making, intention, investment, and the effort necessary for sustaining love. Commitment stands in stark contrast to the passion and intimacy subcomponents, which represent motivational involvement and emotional investment.

The concept of commitment presented in Sternberg’s model is relevant to foreign language learning because both success in personal relationships and language learning inevitably involve individuals in a long-term process in which they have to deal realistically with decision-making, time and energy investment, sustained effort, and problem-solving in order to achieve a goal. It suggests that emotional drives, such as passion and motivation, are insufficient for the successful achievement of long-term goals like language learning. Learners need to make a
commitment to learning that leads them to think realistically about what they need and to constantly take action toward achieving their goals.

**Commitment to Learning in Foreign Language Learners**

In this final section, I define the concept of commitment to learning in foreign language learners, discuss the reason why commitment to learning emerges in foreign language learners, propose a conceptual model of the interaction between motivation and commitment in foreign language learning, apply the model to the six participants, and discuss other issues prevailing in Japanese English learners through the lens of the model.

**Definition of Commitment to Learning in Foreign Language Learners.**

I define commitment to learning in foreign language learners as a learner’s autonomous decision to improve and a dedication to learning. Commitment involves a conscious intention. Once commitment to learning has emerged, learners become autonomous, self-regulatory, and persevering: They are willing to invest time and energy in that activity, face and overcome the challenges they encounter, deal with problems rationally, and prioritize learning the foreign language over other activities. Such learners are likely to succeed in their learning. Certain motivational sources underlie the formation and emergence of commitment. Commitment to learning might not always directly concern learning the target language; it can arise for a number of reasons including, commitment specifically
to learning the target language, commitment to learning something associated with
the target language (e.g., music), commitment to acquiring a high skill level, or a
commitment to moving one’s life forward. Unlike Dörnyei and Ottó’s (1998)
perception of commitment as one of the motivational steps concerning learners’
implementation of one classroom task, commitment here is perceived as an
alternative psychological force to motivation that emerges in some learners in the
long-term process of foreign language learning.

**Why Does Commitment to Learning Emerge in Foreign Language Learners?**

Possible reasons for the emergence of commitment have not been discussed
in the psychology and foreign language acquisition literature; therefore, I utilize
insights from my own experience as an English learner to suggest why commitment
to learning emerges in some foreign language learners. The introspective case study
of my own English learning (Miura, 2007a) details the radical motivational
fluctuations that occurred in the learning history of one English learner (see
Chapter 2). My motivation resurged after a 10-year motivational break in which I
believed that English was irrelevant to my life. In this study, I explore my thoughts
and feelings concerning the radical motivational increase I experienced and my
subsequent intensive effort to acquire English. The following excerpt describes
why I made a rather abrupt decision to study English in the United States in my
30s:
... a number of intertwining reasons accounted for my decision, my determination was rather definite. I couldn’t help thinking, “I have to go; I don’t know what to do otherwise.” Recollecting my feelings and thoughts around the time, profound motives for my action stemmed from a series of personal problems that I had been dealing with for more than ten years since my late teens... The resolution of these problems took many years to reach and had put me under a certain amount of stress for a long period of time. However, I believe that the prolonged pressure that I experienced during this period gave me a strong impetus to move my life forward—as if a rubber ball under a strong stress reacts also strongly when it is released. I wished to make my life better... (pp. 35-36).

This excerpt explains that the increase in my motivation was based on a strong wish to change and improve my life. I wanted to engage with a challenging task that would help me gain confidence; I believed that studying English would help me to do so. At that time (in 1993), English became very important for me because I felt that it held some special value that would help me. I believe that this is a clue to the emergence of my commitment to acquiring English. Although the notion of commitment was not discussed in the case study, my constant effort to improve my English (and my life) over 17 years since then can be interpreted as my commitment to acquire English in the sense that I have worked to improve my English skills based on a conscious intention to do so, invested a great deal of time and energy in developing an English-related profession, and prioritized developing my English skills to other activities that I have been interested in, such as learning other foreign languages. Though I have experienced difficulty continuing to make an effort from time to time, I have not stopped moving forward in terms of improving my English. I still believe that English is important in my life and that my achievement has not been sufficient. In addition, in the excerpt, I mentioned a
series of prolonged personal problems provided me with a strong impetus to move my life forward. This can be interpreted that the previous difficulties or challenges can lead to or at least affect the formation and emergence of commitment. Though this is merely one learner’s case, it is plausible that people commit to something that they believe is important or that has a special value for them. I would argue that commitment to learning in foreign language learners is likely to emerge only after the target language becomes very important to the learner.

**The Motivation-Commitment Interaction Model.**

My conception of the roles and interactions of motivation and commitment in foreign language learning over long periods of time are shown in the Motivation-Commitment Interaction Model (Figure 31). The model illustrates the idea that motivation and commitment are two different dynamic forces: The wavy line represents motivation, and the arrow represents the formation and emergence of commitment. Motivation is a constantly fluctuating force for a number of reasons. For instance, motivation changes because of transitory experiences, such as studying abroad and taking entrance examinations. In contrast, commitment is more stable and persistent and it continues to exist even when a learner experiences temporarily demotivating events. Although motivation exists both before and after the emergence of commitment, once commitment has emerged, it orients learners toward a goal more powerfully than motivation.
Figure 31. Motivation-commitment interaction model of foreign language learning.

The model also illustrates the formation and emergence of commitment: Commitment is formed generally through the interaction of several motivational sources, rather than emerging abruptly, and the learner’s sense of commitment becomes clearer after learning the target language becomes important.

Though motivation plays a crucial role in orienting learners to acquire the target language, motivation alone is insufficient for creating the enduring effort needed to achieve long-term goals and to continue making progress after a goal has been achieved. The emergence of commitment greatly increases the probability of goal achievement in foreign language learning.
Applying the motivation-commitment interaction model to the participants.

Finally, let us reexamine the participants’ English learning histories, this time applying the motivation-commitment interaction model. The primary focus is on: (a) the important motivational sources that underlie the formation and emergence of commitment and, (b) when English became important to the participants, as this provides a clue to the emergence of commitment. In addition, the participants’ investment in activities involving studying English, prioritizing these activities over other alternatives, and the challenges they faced are also discussed. Because the concept of commitment emerged in the final phase of the data analyses, I have never asked the participants about their commitment to learning. Thus, the following discussions are based on my interpretation of their learning histories as viewed through the lens of the motivation-commitment interaction model. In the figures below, the arrows schematize the formation and emergence of commitment in the participants. The motivational source(s) in bold are directly and immediately involved in the moment when English became important to each participant.

Taeko.

English attained a special value for Taeko when she met and communicated with the American high school students at age 17 when studying abroad for the first time. Though she had liked English as a school subject in junior high school and
she enrolled in the English course in high school, the impact she received from the experience in the study abroad program changed her perception toward learning English. Because her English communicative ability had not developed yet, participating in the communicative activities with the American students was a great deal of challenging experience for her. After this experience, the American students became role models whom she perceived in an idealistic way, and acquiring a high degree of English proficiency became the goal that she most wanted to achieve. This goal was set autonomously and consciously by Taeko and was not based on encouragement from other people, such as her parents or teacher. Although it took Taeko several years to begin seriously pursuing her goal and investing a great deal of time and energy in English study due to the powerful negative washback from the university entrance examinations, her commitment to learning likely started sometime around this event (see Figure 32).

**Figure 32.** The formation and emergence of commitment in Taeko.
Sakiko.

English became special for Sakiko at age 15 when she decided that her future career options related to English were more practical and achievable than the career as a professional pianist, though she had enjoyed and enthusiastically engaged in both activities since she was an elementary school student. Because of her family environment and her parents’ support, she had been exposed to and had liked English since she was a child; however, her decision at age 15 to select an English-focused high school course increased the importance of English for her. While playing the piano became a hobby, increasing her English proficiency became a serious and concrete goal for her. After prioritizing English over the piano, Sakiko has invested a great deal of time and energy in developing her English skills. Thus, it is possible that her commitment to learning emerged after this event (see Figure 33).

Sakiko’s motivational sources
- Self-understanding and independent
- Family environment
- Parents’ support
- Key people
- Internally emerged motivation
- External goal with an academic and career vision
- Communicative experience
- Classroom experience

Figure 33. The formation and emergence of commitment in Sakiko.
Studying English became important for Haruka when she studied abroad at ages 17, 20, and 25. Her primary motivation was instrumental, as English was a tool for her to achieve her other goals that always required advanced English proficiency because she was competing with native speakers of English. When necessary, she exerted a tremendous effort and studied intensively to “win the game,” or to succeed in the academic programs in which she was enrolled. In particular, in the first one-year study abroad experience at age 17 and the second one when she attended the undergraduate program in the United States to study journalism at age 20, English was a crucial requirement, given that she would not have been able to participate in and complete these programs successfully without achieving advanced English abilities. In the beginning of both study abroad experiences, she faced linguistic, academic, and cultural challenges, which she overcame with unexceptional hard work. She prioritized achieving her goals to a degree that resulted in serious health problems. Although her commitment might not necessarily have been to learning English, I believe that commitment to achieving her goals likely formed and emerged during these periods of studying abroad (Figure 34).
Shin.

English became important for Shin at age 26 when he considered what academic and professional career he wanted to pursue. At the age of 26, he decided to return to his university to study English literature. Until that time, he had not considered his long-term goals realistically. He had valued English to a certain degree since he was a high school student, as he frequently read English novels and watched western movies, and he was inspired by his reading teacher in the university, but he studied English primarily to satisfy his own interest. In contrast, the decision he made at age 26 was more serious and associated with a professional goal, and he has continuously made an effort to improve his English skills. I believe that his commitment to learning emerged with this decision (See Figure 35).
English became important to Chie at around age 29 when she resumed studying English at the end of her prolonged period of job searching. She had had a stable job she was not satisfied with and wished to quit for eight years. Working in the unsatisfying and frustrating situation, her psychological challenges gradually developed into physical health problems. She encountered English at this time again. Though her initial motivation was merely instrumental—she thought that passing the second level of the English test might help her find a new job, English soon became interesting and important to her. Unlike her high school period, English was not just one of her favorite school subjects; acquiring English became an important goal that provided her with an interesting and challenging career. The intensive study, effort, and investment she made afterward to improve her English
skills and develop her English teaching career indicate that her commitment to learning emerged at this time (see Figure 36).

**Chie’s motivational sources**
- Independent and optimistic
- Ability to concentrate
- Family support
- Key people
- Internally emerged motivation
- **An external goal**
- Communicative experience
- University entrance exams

English became important at age 29 when she resumed English study while searching a new professional goal. Commitment to learning emerges.

*Figure 36. The formation and emergence of commitment in Chie.*

**Takayuki.**

English became special for Takayuki at age 19 when he began speaking English for the first time in his university course. Having only studied reading, grammar, and vocabulary in high school, speaking English was novel and fascinating to him. Even though he was a fundamentally science-oriented person and his favorite subject had been physics, speaking English captured his interest, and he made an extraordinary effort to improve his speaking skills. It was a starting point for him to participate in a variety of English-related activities in which he used and improved his English speaking skills to establish the ESS club, become a tour guide interpreter, teach English, publish English textbooks, and study
linguistics. His exceptional effort to improve his English skills has not stopped since then. Thus, his commitment to learning might have begun to form at this time (see Figure 37).

Table 11 presents a summary of the motivational sources that underlie the formation and emergence of commitment in each participant and the times that English became important or had a special value to them. The motivational sources varied among the participants. Though some of these motivational sources, such as communicative experience (Taeko, Haruka, Takayuki) and external goals with future academic and/or career visions (Sakiko, Shin, Chie), occurred multiple times, it was determined by the interaction of previous motivational sources and the experiences each participant had had. The key to the participants’ success in foreign language learning, therefore, was that they had motivational sources that

Figure 37. The formation and emergence of commitment in Takayuki.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Underlying motivational source</th>
<th>When English became important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Taeko       | Ability to concentrate, Family support  
**Key people**  
Internally emerged motivation  
**Communicative experiences**  
University entrance exams  | Age 17 when she studied abroad for the first time |
| Sakiko      | Self-understanding and independent  
Family support, Key people  
Internally emerged motivation  
**External goal with an academic and career vision**  
Communicative experience  
Classroom experience | Age 15 when she selected English related career goal |
| Haruka      | Independent and self-understanding  
Ability to concentrate  
Family support  
Key people  
**External goal required English**  
**Communicative experience**  
University entrance exams | Age 17 when she studied abroad for the first time, and age 20 when she applied for the undergraduate program in the United States |
| Shin        | Independent  
Ability to concentrate  
Key people  
Internally emerged motivation  
**External goal with an academic and career vision** | Age 26 when he considered his academic and professional goal |
| Chie        | Independent and optimistic  
Ability to concentrate  
Family support, Key people  
Internally emerged motivation  
**An external goal with a new career vision**  
Communication experience  
University entrance exams | Age 29 when she resumed studying English while searching for a new professional goal |
| Takayuki    | Independent and optimistic  
Ability to concentrate, Key people  
**Internally emerged motivation**  
External goal  
**Communication experience**  
University entrance exams  
Classroom experience | Age 19 when he became fascinated with speaking in English |

*Note.* Bold indicates the motivational sources that immediately underlie the participants’ recognition that English is important to them. That recognition directly and immediately underlies the formation and emergence of commitment.
caused them to think that English was important for them in their learning histories that led to the emergence of commitment.

**Applying the motivation-commitment interaction model to English learners in Japan.**

The motivation-commitment interaction model allows us to perceive motivational development in foreign language learning from a new angle, which can help us better understand learners’ motivational development and their eventual successes and failures in foreign language learning. For instance, important questions, such as why only a limited number of foreign language learners become proficient in English in spite of the fact that a large number of young learners are motivated to study the language, or why negative washback from taking the entrance examination occurs frequently in Japanese university students, can be explained by the model. Conventional wisdom suggests that these results occur because the learners’ learning motivation is too weak, but the model provides an alternative explanation: For the majority of English learners in Japan, English is not important in any realistic sense—they can carry on their lives without using English, and commitment to learning it is unlikely emerge in that context. Even if they are motivated to study English when they begin their formal education in the language or they think that English is important when studying for the entrance examinations while in middle school, they have not been intentional and autonomous about their learning to a degree that allows them to prioritize studying
English over other important activities, to persist in their efforts to develop their English skills further, and to overcome the challenges they inevitably encounter.

The motivation-commitment interaction model implies that acquiring a foreign language in an EFL context is not necessarily a task that “motivated” learners can achieve.
CHAPTER 11
CONCLUSION

It is not easy to talk about motivation in a simple way, is it? It’s complicated, and that’s why it’s meaningful to study. If it’s clear already, studying it isn’t so meaningful. (One of the participants, 2009)

This multiple case study was an investigation of six highly proficient learners’ motivational changes and their learning histories. The primary purpose was to understand learners’ motivational changes and their learning in the long-term process of foreign language learning. To this end, the participants’ experiences and stories were the centerpiece in this qualitative case study unbound by conventional theoretical perspectives. While I was conducting this study, non-conventional approaches have become increasingly common in the field of foreign language learning motivation research. It might be a temporary shift or a long-lasting change in direction. In either case, the insights from this study might act as a bridge between conventional and future motivation research.

The results of this multiple case study illuminate the complex and dynamic development of the participants’ motivational trajectories in the long-term process of foreign language learning. Each participant’s learning history vividly shows that each individual’s motivational development and learning history was fundamentally unique because a number of motivational sources interacted with one another at different times, in different orders, and in different contexts. Second, the six case studies allowed me to confirm an underlying proposition concerning
successful learners’ foreign language learning motivation I made at the onset of the study: Successful learners have experienced one or more motivational declines but have overcome such experiences. All the participants experienced a series of events that caused their motivation to temporarily waver and decline. This indicates that the path to acquiring high proficiency in a foreign language is a dynamic and challenging one in which motivational fluctuations are a common occurrence.

Third, searching for the keys to the participants’ sustained motivation revealed seven salient motivational sources in their learning histories: the learners’ personal dispositions, their family environment, internal factors, especially interest, external goals, their communicative experiences, especially those that occurred while studying abroad, the entrance examinations, and their classroom experiences.

Finally, exploring the participants’ learning histories collectively led to the emergence of two new related findings regarding the key to successful foreign language learning. First, sustained motivation is not always a prerequisite for achieving high levels of proficiency and in some cases is insufficient. Second, the emergence of commitment, which is an intentional, enduring psychological force, is more important in the long term than what has been called motivation and is perhaps necessary in some learning contexts, such as those in which access to linguistic input and communicative opportunities are limited. The data gathered in this study suggest that one key to success in foreign language learning is commitment to learning, a cognitive change that emerged at some point in each of the participants’ learning histories through the interaction of several motivational
sources. This change always occurred after the participants perceived that English was important to them and sometimes involved challenges they had faced previously and wanted to overcome. Commitment is conceptualized as a key element in the motivation-commitment interaction model, and the participants’ learning histories were reexamined using the model. I propose that the model plausibly explains the tremendous effort and extraordinary achievements the participants made in their acquisition of English; motivation alone failed to completely explain these achievements. Centering the analysis on the learners’ voices and their stories made these new insights possible.

**Pedagogical Implications**

This study provides a number of educational implications. First, the learners’ family and the classroom environment is crucial in the sense that autonomous, independent, and hopeful attitudes can be nurtured there. Because these attitudes can determine the learners’ fundamental orientation toward perceiving and choosing goals, the influence from the home and the learning context on current and future motivation is significant. Furthermore, positive and supportive home and classroom environments plausibly play an important role in the emergence of commitment. The learners’ family and the classroom environment is also important, as this is the location where meaningful initial exposure to the target language frequently occurs. Recently, a considerable number of Japanese preschoolers take English lessons privately, and all Japanese fifth and sixth graders in elementary
school study English formally, practices probably implemented based on the the-
earlier-the-better belief. Though the timing of initial exposure to the target language
is considered important for acquiring the language, the quality of exposure should
not be overlooked, particularly if we take a long-term perspective of foreign
language learning. When children are exposed to the target language in ways that
elicit their interest in the language, that exposure can nurture children’s continued
engagement with the language, and this can serve as a motivational source for
studying the language immediately or at a later time. The effect of family and
classroom environment is significant and should not be underestimated. While a
learners’ family environment is uncontrollable, the classroom environment is not; it
needs to be a place where these desirable attitudes can be nurtured and effective
exposure to the target language is implemented.

Second, authentic communicative experiences in the target language are
important. For EFL learners, participating in a study abroad program can be a
transformational experience. Because human languages fundamentally serve
communicative purposes, speaking a foreign language is generally more appealing
to most students than reading it or studying for examinations. Although students
can engage in communicative tasks in English in Japanese English classrooms, the
experience they have in a country where the target language is spoken can provide
them with a tremendous impact. When students encounter communicative
challenges studying abroad, they can understand their weaknesses and resolve to
address them. In this way, they can better understand what it means to study the
foreign language seriously. Furthermore, studying abroad goes beyond the experience of using the target language; it can also be an opportunity for students to understand cultural differences associated with the target language and their own identity associated with their native language. Even though studying abroad is not always necessary for achieving high proficiency, as some of the participants in this study achieved high proficiency while studying only in Japan, students can generally have important experiences while studying abroad that they are unlikely to experience in Japan.

Third, the purpose and effect of entrance examinations on Japanese students should be examined further. The examination system should be changed in ways that encourage students to continue on a positive learning trajectory and set new goals after passing (or failing) an examination. Besides the negative washback from the tests, a problem with the present entrance examination system is the intensive focus placed on the written receptive knowledge of the foreign language. As a result of studying for the test, the majority of Japanese students’ written receptive knowledge and spoken productive knowledge of English are severely unbalanced. This imbalance in foreign language development promotes the idea that “We cannot speak English even though we have studied it for six years,” and this idea can negatively influence learners’ underlying motivation and prevent them from viewing the foreign language as important for their future.

This study provides simple but important messages to students: Learning a foreign language is a long process, in which learners must engage with the
language regularly and over a long period of time. High levels of proficiency can be achieved only by continued, focused engagement with the foreign language. Attending English class two, three, or even four times a week at school and doing the homework assigned by the teacher are insufficient for developing high levels of proficiency in the foreign language. In addition to prolonged engagement, students need to understand that the motivation they have today can diminish tomorrow. Thus, those who wish to achieve high proficiency levels must make a commitment to continue engaging with the foreign language while thinking about what they need to do today for further improvement.

Everyone has the potential to become highly proficient in a foreign language even while living in an EFL context. Some particular experience, such as being exposed to the foreign language early in life and communicating in the language while studying abroad, is not crucial; this is an encouraging message provided by the participants of this study. This idea is in fact not new. A meta-analysis of 67 books of successful Japanese English learners’ learning stories suggests that it is their variety of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategy use that made them successful (Takeuchi, 2003). Also Japanese history provides positive examples that a handful of Japanese who lived five generations ago achieved high proficiency in foreign languages: A number of people involved in the Meiji Restoration in the late 1800—after the previous policy in which the country had been closed to foreigners except for the Dutch and Portuguese for 260 years—achieved high proficiency in English, German, and French to carry out diplomatic
negotiations. They did this without sufficient time, linguistic input, communicative experience, or even an appropriate dictionary. Acquiring English is possible for those who study hard and consistently. Educators need to convey these messages to their students both implicitly and explicitly in their classrooms.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

I would like to suggest three areas for future research. First, the motivational sources found in this study, such as personal dispositions, parents’ role and family environment, and communication experience, should be further investigated. Although they are plausible motivational sources, they have not been rigorously investigated in the field of SLA and, as a result, they are not well understood.

The second research area concerns the concept of commitment to learning. Because this concept and the motivation-commitment interaction model are based on the six case studies and the participants’ perceptions on their past motivational histories and multiple analyses of those histories, they should be further examined in other contexts. Operationalizing the commitment construct and the model using a questionnaire is one way to test whether they are plausible in a large sample of learners. Exploring the construct and the model by conducting semi-structured interviews with a wide range of learners at different levels of proficiency is another approach that can shed further light on the reasons underlying the formation and emergence of commitment. In future studies, the construct of commitment can be
examined in greater detail by investigating sub-concepts such as intentionality, autonomous decision-making, persistence, investment, the prioritization of foreign language learning, and learners’ perceptions of the importance of the foreign language. Such studies are necessary to overcome the limitations inherent in this qualitative case study.

Third, learners’ change of perceived self that occur as they engage in the foreign language learning process is an important area to investigate. Though this study has provided a description of the six participants’ experiences concerning changes in their perceived self, further investigations are needed. Because changes of perceived self occur because of powerful learning experiences learners experience, their influence on learning, learning motivation, and commitment to learning should not be overlooked. Why and when changes of perceived self occur, in what sense and to what degree the changes of perceived self influence learning motivation, and whether the changes of perceived self occur while studying abroad or in an EFL environment, are promising areas for further investigation.

**Final Comments**

Acquiring a foreign language in EFL contexts is not an everyday necessity but is valuable as it provides learners with unique, interesting, and important learning opportunities that help them develop in many ways. Though the data presented in this study concern only six people, much of the information is new. I hope that the new insights provided by the six participants’ own voices, stories, and
their tremendous contributions to the study helps students, teachers, researchers, and others working in the field of English education better understand the development of foreign language motivation and achieve more desirable outcomes. If this happens, I can consider my commitment to this study, as both a TESOL researcher and foreign language learner, worthwhile and rewarding.
REFERENCES CITED


APPENDIX A

WRITTEN CONSENT OF PARTICIPATION (JAPANESE VERSION)

年月日

調査にご協力いただく皆様へ

この度は"Biographical Case Studies"の研究にご協力いただき誠にありがとうございます。このケーススタディの主たる目的は、大多数の日本人英語学習者が使える英語習得を達成できず終わる実験の中で、限られた人数の各々が適応的に英語を使用され、英語学習の成功者となっておられる、その理由をモチベーションの変化に焦点を当て質的に調べるもので、よって、ご協力いただく皆様には、英語学習開始以来現在に至るまでの長期的なモチベーションの推移、語彙習得、影響を受けた出来事人物など、学習過程における様々なエピソードをお話しいただきたいと思っております。成功者の長期学習史は、現在および将来の学習者にとって教育的示唆の宝庫であろうというのが、この調査を行うにあたり私が信ずるところです。

具体的な調査方法は、まず過去の英語学習に関するアンケートにご記入いただき、それをもとに私がインタビューをさせて頂きます。インタビューは録音させて頂きます。長期に渡るご経験をお話しいただく都合上、インタビューは複数回に渡る可能性があります。またインタビューでお聞きできなかった点を後日Eメールで質問させていただく可能性もあります。インタビューは、比較的自由な形式で行います（英語・日本語どちらでも結構です）が、特にモチベーションに大きな変化があったと思われる時期やその理由などは、最も詳しくお聞きしたいポイントになると思います。インタビューの内容を元に、私が皆様の学習史のようなものを匿名の用い、特にモチベーションの変化に焦点を当てながら英文でまとめます。皆様には草稿をお読みいただき、ご自身の学習史としての正当性を評価判断していただく、というの大まかな流れです。

調査は私の博士研究の一環として行うものであり、営利目的ではありません。調査過程で皆様からお話しいただく貴重なご経験など個人的な情報は、研究目的以外で使用することはありません。また論文として発表する場合、皆様のご承諾を頂いた後に行くこと、以上二点をご心配申し上げます。皆様のご理解とご協力に賜ります、外国語習得における学習者モチベーションの更なる理解、いわばはより多くの日本人学習者の英語習得に貢献できるような研究にまとめ上げる所存です。皆様のご理解とご協力をお心よりお願い申し上げます。

敬具

テンプル大学ジャパン博士課程
三浦つゆき

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上記をご理解の上、調査にご協力いただける場合、以下にご署名をお願い致します。同文章書が二部ありますので、二部ともご署名の上、一部をご自身の控えとして保管願います。

御氏名_________________________________________年月日_______年_______月_______日
御署名_________________________________________
Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your cooperation with my research, “Biographical Case Studies.” The primary purpose of the study is to qualitatively investigate the reasons why successful English learners have achieved high level of English proficiency by focusing on each learner’s English learning motivational changes. The background to this inquiry is that only a limited number of learners achieve high level of proficiency while the majority of English learners in Japan fail that goal. In order to accomplish the purpose, I would like you to talk about various episodes concerning your English learning, such as motivational changes, learning-related events, and people who influenced you. I believe that learning histories such as yours provide profound educational implications to current and future English learners.

Regarding the research procedure, I would like you to first fill out questionnaires concerning your English learning history. Next, I will conduct an interview with you based on the answers you provide to the questionnaires. The interviews will be recorded, and possibly be conducted more than once in order to record your long-term learning history. In addition to the interviews, I may ask some follow-up questions via e-mail. The interviews will be conducted in a relatively open manner (either English or Japanese), but the focus will be on when you mention a relatively large motivational change. After the interviews, I will write a biographical case study concerning your English learning. Your identity will be anonymous. I will ask you to read a draft of the case study and evaluate whether it accurately reports your learning history.

This study is for my dissertation, which is a partial fulfillment of the requirements for my doctoral degree; therefore, it is not for making financial profit. I promise that I will never use the data you provide for this study for other purposes and that I will ask your permission beforehand in case I publish the study. It is my hope, based on your cooperation and understanding, that this study can contribute to understanding foreign language learning motivation and increasing the number of successful English learners in Japan.

Sincerely yours,
Tsuyuki Miura, Temple University Japan

Please write your name and date and add your signature below if you understand the purpose and procedures of the research and will participate in this case study. There are two identical documents; please sign both and keep one for yourself.

Your name ____________________________ Date ____________________
Signature ____________________________
APPENDIX C

VOCABULARY SIZE TEST

First 1000
1. many: I have <many>.
   a  none
   b  enough
   c  a few
   d  a large number

2. where: <Where> did you go!
   a  at what time
   b  for what reason
   c  to what place
   d  in what way

3. school: This is a big <school>.
   a  place to keep money
   b  sea animal
   c  place for learning
   d  house

4. result: They were waiting for the <result>.
   a  right time
   b  question
   c  money
   d  answer

5. strong: She <is very strong>.
   a  can carry heavy things
   b  is very happy
   c  eats too much food
   d  is kind to other people

6. grow: All the children <grew>.
   a  made pictures
   b  spoke
   c  became bigger
   d  cried a lot

7. despite: He continues working there <despite> the pay.
   a  because of
   b  in order to get
   c  although he does not like
   d  without

8. past: It happened in the <past>.
   a  time before now
   b  time of fighting
   c  time when it is dark
   d  time of the year when it is hot

9. round: It is <round>.
   a  friendly
   b  very big
   c  very quick
   d  like a circle

10. gasoline: Do you have any <gasoline>?:
    a. liquid that makes cars go
    b. medicine to stop pain
    c. material made from man-made threads
    d. stuff put in walls of houses to stop heat escaping

Second 1000
1. behaviour: Look at <her behaviour>!
   a  the people who have come to listen to her
   b  the way she acts
   c  the large amount of money she has
   d  the land she owns

2. army: They saw the <army>.
   a  black and white animal
   b  place for keeping books
   c  person from the next house
   d  group of fighting men

3. attract: This <attracted me>.
   a  surprised me
   b  made me notice it
   c  gave me work to do
   d  made me feel safe

4. warn: They were <warned>.
   a  pushed away
   b  asked to come in
   c  told about the danger
   d  led into a war

5. impose: This was <imposed>.
   a  completely changed
   b  put in the middle of other things
   c  made to look like something else
   d  forced to happen by someone in power

6. handle: I can't <handle> it.
   a  catch
   b  look after
   c  deal with
   d  believe

7. stretch: It <stretched>.
   a  became longer
   b  slowly stopped
   c  ran very fast
   d  went under the water
8. knee: Take care of <your knee>.
   a your young child  
   b part of your leg 
   c your money 
   d something you own

9. independence: She <has too much independence>.
   a gets too many chances to decide things for herself 
   b likes to be alone too much 
   c too often uses her power to make others do what she wants 
   d shows a great lack of respect for others

10. camp: He is in the <camp>.
   a school for young children 
   b forest 
   c place for sick people 
   d place to stay for a short time

Third 1000
1. cure: Can you <cure it>! 
   a touch it gently 
   b understand it 
   c explain it in more detail 
   d make it well again

2. external: This problem is <external>.
   a very big 
   b extra 
   c outside 
   d past

3. lake: People like the <lake>.
   a large area of water 
   b very young child 
   c leader 
   d quiet place

4. leaf: He touched the <leaf>.
   a part of a plant 
   b soft shoe 
   c top cover 
   d glass in a window

5. rope: He found a <rope>.
   a long, very thick string 
   b tool for making holes 
   c thing to carry money in 
   d set of steps for reaching high places

6. brand: This is a good <brand>.
   a party with dancing 
   b first attempt 
   c place to sit and rest 
   d trade name

7. query: I have a <query>.
   a pain in my head 
   b large amount of money 
   c question 
   d good idea

8. mug: This <mug> needs a wash.
   a tall cup without a saucer 
   b old car that you are fond of 
   c piece of clothing worn next to the skin 
   d sheltered place in front of a door

9. conceive: Who <conceived the idea>?.
   a told the idea to others 
   b explained the idea 
   c first thought of the idea 
   d said the idea was bad

10. seal: They <sealed it>.
    a fixed it 
    b closed it tightly 
    c looked at it carefully 
    d opened it

Fourth 1000
1. competent: She was very <competent>.
   a efficient 
   b angry 
   c fond of winning 
   d easily hurt

2. depart: She <departed> yesterday.
   a said no 
   b went away 
   c went down a hill 
   d got worse

3. blast: They filmed the <blast>.
   a army building 
   b mountain snow slide 
   c explosion 
   d people refusing to work

4. spider: We caught the <spider>.
   a disease that gives red spots 
   b creature with eight legs 
   c small public bus 
   d oily fish

5. fragile: These things are very <fragile>.
   a precious 
   b hard to find 
   c popular 
   d easily broken

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6. circus: We went to the <circus>.
   a place for people who love God
   b traveling company of entertainers
   c place where people run races
   d show of marching and music
7. devastate: The city was <devastated>.
   a made beautiful for a special occasion
   b cut off from the rest of the world
   c turned into ruins
   d made dirty and unpleasant by small animals
8. withstand: He could not <withstand> it.
   a understand
   b go near
   c join
   d resist
9. jot: She <jotted it down>.
   a put the price of it down
   b swallowed it very fast
   c wrote it down quickly
   d threw it down with force
10. mash: We <mashed> the food
    a cooked
    b ate
    c crushed
    d threw out

Fifth 1000
1. marble: It was made of <marble>.
   a a kind of hard rock
   b a kind of hard wood
   c a kind of soft metal
   d woven pieces of string
2. diminish: It has <diminished>.
   a got darker
   b got smaller
   c become cloudy
   d grown colder
3. stag: They found a <stag>.
   a male deer
   b small three-sided flag
   c small problem
   d piece of money
4. skinny: The girl was <skinny>.
   a thin
   b attractive
   c weak and often sick
   d careful about spending money
5. crook: They were <crooks>.
   a dishonest people
   b people who prepare food
   c people who cannot walk
   d people with ordinary heads but very small bodies
6. gala: They went to the <gala>.
   a event to celebrate something
   b large shop
   c place where people can swim in special water
   d place where paintings can be viewed
7. volt: How many <volts> were used?
   a parcels with 25 sheets of paper
   b large iron beams for strengthening buildings
   c units measuring the force of electricity
   d small U-shaped pieces of metal with points at both ends
8. ambition: She has no <ambition>.
   a strong desire to succeed
   b sympathy for other people
   c idea about what to wear
   d enjoyment of life
9. weave: She knows how to <weave>.
   a make cloth from crossed threads
   b join pieces of metal together
   c persuade people
   d deceive people
10. hush: There was a <hush>.
    a a silence
    b a sudden bright light
    c shaking movement
    d a loud noise

Sixth 1000
1. lust: He was filled with <lust>.
   a very strong desire
   b angry feelings
   c shame and sadness
   d feelings of hate
2. discontent: She showed <her discontent>.
   a that she could be careful in what she said or did
   b her pain
   c that she did not approve
   d her unhappiness
3. wilderness: It is <a wilderness>.
   a an exciting event
   b an event that is not easily explained
   c a place in its natural state
   d a place for throwing rubbish away
4. prophet: He is a <prophet>.
   a person who entertains
   b person kept in a prison
   c person who tells what will happen
   d person who plays music
5. premature: He was <premature>.
   a born earlier than expected
   b able to guess what would happen in the future
   c likely to decide about things without knowing much about them
   d able to do things younger than usual

4. unilateral: The decision was <unilateral>.
   a the only possible one
   b far-reaching in its effects
   c made by only one of the people or groups concerned
   d agreed to by everybody

6. robe: She took off her <robe>.
   a ring worn round the arm
   b leather belt
   c square of cloth worn on the head
   d loose coat worn in the house

5. veranda / verandah: We stood under the <veranda>.
   a small umbrella to keep the sun off
   b large tree from hot countries
   c roof outside a building supported by posts
   d cold-water shower

6. perpetrate: How did they <perpetrate the crime>!
   a stop the crime from happening
   b solve the crime
   c do the crime
   d discover the crime

7. salmonella: They learnt about <salmonella>.
   a a white material from plants once used inside cushions
   b the cause of a type of food-poisoning
   c the young of a river fish with pink flesh
   d a poisonous plant

8. innocuous: This is <innocuous>.
   a cheap and poor in quality
   b harmless
   c not believable
   d very attractive-looking

9. archdeacon: We met the <archdeacon>.
   a man who draws plans for houses
   b man who shoots very well with arrows
   c leader of a group of men who do not obey the law
   d man of high rank in some churches

10. whine: Stop <whining>.
    a going around in circles
    b eating too quickly
    c complaining in a high voice
    d laughing secretly
2. hippopotamus: They watched the hippopotamus.
   a. South American dance
   b. very large animal that lives in rivers
   c. popular entertainment with many different kinds of events
   d. person who throws and catches many balls at one time

3. tangible: The rewards were tangible.
   a. not worth having
   b. very great
   c. pleasing
   d. real

4. ravage: The forest was ravaged.
   a. mapped carefully
   b. badly damaged
   c. protected
   d. increased in size

5. tripod: Where's my tripod!
   a. tool for moving things in a fire
   b. instrument for measuring how far you walk
   c. weapon with three points for catching fish
   d. stand with three legs

6. furore: This caused a furore.
   a. wild excitement
   b. a large, very hot fire
   c. a time when there is little food
   d. the complete failing of plans

7. harrier: That's a harrier.
   a. tool for making things smooth
   b. bird that hunts small animals
   c. small sharp hook for cutting long grass
   d. person who performs on the street to earn money

8. rampage: We were surprised at the rampage.
   a. escape of liquids or gases
   b. distance travelled
   c. wild or violent rushing about
   d. amount of a medicine to be taken

9. commodore: He was a commodore.
   a. an important officer on a ship
   b. person who sells manufactured goods
   c. church minister
   d. person who opens doors at expensive hotels

10. quack: It quacked.
    a. gave a loud cry of pain
    b. made a duck's noise
    c. broke into many small pieces
    d. flew away and came back to the starting place

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Ninth 1000

1. yearn: I yearn for it.
   a. vote for
   b. strongly support
   c. really want
   d. persuade people to give money for

2. furrow: We walked between the furrows.
   a. long narrow ditches
   b. seats in a church
   c. heavy blocks to stop cars going through
   d. small trees

3. tang: We enjoyed the tang.
   a. dried meat kept in salt
   b. wide view
   c. strong taste or smell
   d. dance with a special beat from South America

4. hustle: They were hustled out.
   a. told to leave
   b. very tired
   c. pushed out roughly
   d. stretched to their full length

5. podium: He walked to the podium.
   a. part of a forest where the trees have been cleared
   b. place for outdoor entertainment in the ancient world
   c. raised place to stand for speakers or musicians
   d. place of worship

6. irate: She was irate.
   a. very happy
   b. only just awake
   c. angry
   d. very strict

7. superstructure: The superstructure was in poor condition.
   a. upper part of a building or ship
   b. writing on the outside of a building
   c. very large sailing boat
   d. surface of the road

8. squelch: They squelched past.
   a. drove past very fast making a loud high sound with the wheels
   b. marched past with their weapons raised
   c. walked past making a sucking noise because of water
   d. danced past weaving in and out in patterns
9. concerto: They listened to the <concerto>.
   a. piece of music for an orchestra with an
      important part for one player
   b. long talk to persuade people to do something
   c. person from an eastern religion
   d. musical instrument with metal strips hit with a
      hammer

10. clinch: They <clinched> the deal.
   a. discussed
   b. decided against
   c. agreed on
   d. tried to make others interested in

**Tenth 1000**

1. spasm: She had a <spasm>.
   a. small drink
   b. sudden uncontrollable movement
   c. clever idea
   d. brown lump on her skin

2. accomplice: This man was <an accomplice>.
   a. a person who helps with a crime
   b. a person who is learning a job by helping
      someone who is good at it
   c. a person who pretends to be someone else
   d. person who enters a country against the law

3. compatriot: She was pleased to see some
   <compatriots>.
   a. members of her extended family
   b. animals that live in people's houses
   c. people from her country
   d. special policemen

4. lubricant: What kind of <lubricant> did you use!
   a. liquid that makes furniture shine again
   b. substance that feeds plants
   c. substance that burns easily
   d. substance used to stop things rubbing

5. babble: She started to <babble>
   a. say nonsense words
   b. walk in shallow water
   c. shake with cold
   d. run around with no purpose

6. wager: He lost his <wager>
   a. money earned for work
   b. race
   c. bet
   d. good reputation

7. alto: She is <an alto>
   a. a person who travels into space
   b. a singer with a low voice
   c. a person who cleans other people's houses
   d. a person who hates changes to their life

8. deface: The painting was <defaced>
   a. put back to its original condition
   b. put in a frame
   c. spoiled on purpose
   d. offered for sale to the person who is prepared to
      pay the most money

9. synthetic: That looks <synthetic>.
   a. complicated
   b. very expensive
   c. artificial
   d. very clean

10. rhinoceros: Come and see the <rhinoceros>.
    a. weapon once used by men riding horses
    b. large brass musical instrument
    c. picture that changes when you look at it from
       different places
    d. large animal with a thick skin

**Eleventh 1000**

1. curator: He is a good <curator>.
   a. doctor
   b. helper for a church minister
   c. person in charge of a place where important
      things are kept
   d. public speaker

2. manslaughter: They talked about the
   <manslaughter>.
   a. killing of people
   b. poisonous plant once thought to have magic
      powers in its human-shaped root
   c. man who hunts wild animals for fun
   d. jokes made in a cruel way

3. conjecture: It is <a conjecture>.
   a. a word which joins other words
   b. a serious
   c. an idea based on guessing
   d. something to aim for

4. devout: She was very <devout>.
   a. unlikely to trust other people
   b. modest
   c. religious
   d. poor

5. upholster: I'd like you to <upholster this>.
   a. give a value for this
   b. make the covering for this
   c. make this as good as new
   d. put this away into its case

6. curdle: Don't let it <curdle>.
   a. turn into a gas and disappear
   b. get a lot of knots
   c. separate into solids and liquid
   d. become very small tight curls
7. quip: He <quipped> back.
   a. said rude words
   b. made a clever or funny remark
   c. came slowly and quietly
   d. turned quickly

8. quench: It was finally <quenched>.
   a. fixed up
   b. stopped
   c. discovered
   d. decided on

9. enamoured: She was <enamoured of> him
   a. tired of
   b. filled with shame for
   c. filled with love for
   d. very frightened by

10. foxglove: They saw a <foxglove>.
    a. man dressed as a woman
    b. wild plant with purple flowers
    c. hole in the ground made by a small animal
    d. policeman wearing ordinary clothes

Twelfth 1000

1. adobe: They have an <adobe>.
   a. type of racing dog
   b. house made from sun-dried bricks
   c. small farm
   d. low bed that can also be used for a seat

2. dismount: He <dismounted>.
   a. got off a horse
   b. climbed down a mountain
   c. did not do what he was told to
   d. said that he had a different opinion

3. furtive: He gave me a <furtive> look.
   a. secret
   b. cruel
   c. kind
   d. angry

4. impel: She was <impelled> to do it.
   a. forced
   b. happy
   c. expected
   d. tempted

5. collude: He was <colluding with them>.
   a. working with them to plan a crime
   b. having a long argument with them
   c. working with them happily and with good results
   d. agreeing to some of their requests while they agreed to some of his

6. ameliorate: The situation has <ameliorated>.
   a. become worse
   b. got better
   c. stopped changing
   d. become clear

7. emaciate: They were <emaciated>.
   a. thin through lack of food
   b. allowed to go free
   c. covered with special substances to preserve their dead bodies
   d. shamed in public

8. cystitis: She often gets <cystitis>.
   a. an illness which makes it hard to breathe
   b. an illness which causes frequent passing of water
   c. small itchy red spots on the skin
   d. swelling of the glands in the neck

9. intestate: He <was intestate>.
   a. had not said who should get his things when he died
   b. was not able to control the waste water from his body
   c. usually drank too much strong drink
   d. could not be given a legal trial because of poor health

10. quarterback: He is a <quarterback>.
    a. person who keeps your things and lends you money instead
    b. sailor who cleans the sleeping places on a ship
    c. person who is not likely to succeed
    d. football player

Thirteenth 1000

1. scold: They were <scolded>.
   a. very tired
   b. spoken to angrily
   c. made to feel better
   d. badly hurt

2. melancholy: She was well-known for her <melancholy>.
   a. ability to guess the future
   b. kindness
   c. sadness
   d. habit of buying expensive clothes

3. rosary: He had a <rosary> in his hand.
   a. book of songs or poems
   b. bunch of flowers
   c. string of beads used in praying
   d. sharp knife with a long curved blade
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. rivulet: He noticed a <strong>rivulet</strong> on the floor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. thin stream of water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. metal thing used for joining things together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. dark spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. small needle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. receptacle: That's a useful <strong>receptacle</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. piece of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. payment of extra money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. container</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. tureen: I like the blue <strong>tureen</strong> best.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. material made from goats' hair and wool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. dish for holding food at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. bird from hot countries with a large beak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. cloth to wind round the head as a hat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. iridescent: It is <strong>iridescent</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. steeply-sloping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. easy for light to get through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. rainbow-coloured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. unable to be made solid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. loggerheads: They were <strong>at loggerheads</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. quarrelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. up the tallest pole on a sailing ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. unable to find a way to solve a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. making a bet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. torpor: She sank into <strong>a torpor</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. a deep soft chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. an inactive state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. a very unhappy state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. a bed-cover filled with feathers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. obverse: Show me the <strong>obverse</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. instrument used for measuring angles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. short piece of poetry written to complain about something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. tall tower with four sides getting narrower at the top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. side of a coin with the head on it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fourteenth 1000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. roundup: The <strong>roundup</strong> took a long time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. gathering of people or animals together by force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. race running many times round a circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. adding up of all the money taken in one day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. work of counting all the things in a shop once a year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. eschew: He <strong>eschewed</strong> the life of a rich man.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. wanted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. avoided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. copied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. thought deeply about the value of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. coolie: He employed many <strong>coolies</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. people who have just finished university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. children who are too young to be working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. people from the East employed in other countries to do hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. people who wave fans to make the air colder in hot countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. atheism: They discussed <strong>atheism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. the belief that there is no God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. he believe that the future is already decided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. the custom of a group of people sharing all their property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. the custom of having more than one wife</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. orthogonal: Draw an <strong>orthogonal line</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. a line which crosses a circle in two places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. a line which touches the outside of a circle at a single point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. a line at right angles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. a line which slopes the same way as another</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. mineralogy: She enjoys <strong>mineralogy</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. the science of hard substances found in the earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. the science of water with healing power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. the science of telling what will happen by looking into a glass ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. the science of caves and their creatures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. fillip: He hoped for <strong>a fillip</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. a large amount of money won by chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. a gold watch given to someone when they stop working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. something to excite him or increase his enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. a free drink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. homily: They listened to the <strong>homily</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. talk giving good advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. piece of music invented as it is played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. long and complicated story with no point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. plain brown bird with a beautiful song</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. headstrong: He was <strong>a headstrong child</strong>.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. a very clever child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. a child who has been given too many good things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. a very fat child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. a child that is determined to do what it wants</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. supercilious: She suddenly became <strong>supercilious</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. proud and scornful in her manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. extremely stupid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. able to think about only one thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. over-weigh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D
THE ENGLISH LEARNING HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE
(JAPANESE VERSION)

英語学習歴を大まかに把握し、インタビューの際参考にさせていただくものです。

お名前：____________________

1. お仕事の経験があればご記入ください。

| | 年齢：～ |
|----------------------------|
| | 年齢：～ |
| | 年齢：～ |
| | 年齢：～ |
| | 年齢：～ |
| | 年齢：～ |

2. 英語テスト（TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS, 英検など）受験経験についてご記入ください。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Score:</th>
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<tr>
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3. これまでの英語学習経験についてご記入ください。

1. 小学校入学前

2. 小学校時代

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
3. 中学校時代

4. 高校時代

5. 大学時代

6. 大学院時代

7. 海外、特に英語圏での生活、学習経験
8. 家庭での英語学習、使用経験

9. 上記以外での英語学習、使用経験

10. 上記期間で最も英語習得が進んだと思われる時期はいつですか。

11. 上記英語学習経験で、自分自身の見方や感じ方（アイデンティティ）に変化があったと思われることや時期がありましたか。もしあればそれについて書いてください。

ご記入ありがとうございました
APPENDIX E

THE ENGLISH LEARNING HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE
(ENGLISH VERSION)

This questionnaire is used to help me understand the gist of your English learning history.

Your name: ____________________________

1. Job experiences

___________________________________________________________________

Ages: ~

___________________________________________________________________

Ages: ~

___________________________________________________________________

Ages: ~

___________________________________________________________________

Ages: ~

___________________________________________________________________

Ages: ~

2. Standardized English test scores (e.g., TOEFL, TOEIC, IELTS, Eiken)

Test:_________ Date:_________ Score:_________

Test:_________ Date:_________ Score:_________

Test:_________ Date:_________ Score:_________

Test:_________ Date:_________ Score:_________

Test:_________ Date:_________ Score:_________

3. English learning experiences

1. Before elementary school

___________________________________________________________________

2. Elementary school period

___________________________________________________________________
3. Junior high school period

4. High school period

5. Undergraduate period

6. Graduate school period

7. Experiences overseas, especially living and learning in English-speaking countries
8. English use at home

9. Other English learning/using experiences

10. Among the periods above, when do you think your English learning made the greatest progress? Why?

11. Did you experience self-perceived changes (identity) through your English learning experiences? If so, when was it and why did it happen?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
APPENDIX F

THE MOTIVATIONAL LEVEL CHART (JAPANESE VERSION)

記入日 ____________________________ お名前 ________________________________

1. あなたが英語学習を始めた年～現在の英語学習に対するモチベーションの強さの変遷を、過去を振り返って現在どのように思うか、下のチャートに折れ線グラフでご記入ください。

Motivational level は相対的に 1 = 「低い」、3 = 「中くらい」、5 = 「高い」とし、2 は「中くらい」と「低い」の中間、4 は「高い」と「中くらい」の中間とお考えください。

英語学習史におけるモティベーションレベルの変化

2. 小学校前、小学校、中学校、高校、大学、大学院、仕事（複数ある方は 1. 事務職、2. 教員、3. ... など具体的に）、留学、海外滞在などの期間を、チャートの Age の下の空き部分に書き入れてください。

3. 英語学習が最も進んだと思う時期をチャートに赤色で示してください。

4. もし英語学習を通じ、自分自身に対する見方や感じ方（アイデンティティ）に変化があったと思う時期がありましたら、チャートに緑色で示してください。

ご記入ありがとうございました

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APPENDIX G

THE MOTIVATIONAL LEVEL CHART (ENGLISH VERSION)

Date ______________________  Name ________________________________

1. Think about how your English learning motivation level has changed since you started learning, and draw a line on the chart below.

Consider your motivational level using the following scale: 1 = low, 3 = middle, 5 = high, 2 is between middle and low and 4 is between high and middle.

2. Write your school times (preschool, elementary school, junior high school, high school, undergraduate, graduate school), job experiences (if you had more than one jobs, write specifically, e.g., 1. office worker, 2. teacher), and study and work overseas in the space under Age

3. Mark in red the period(s) when you think your English learning made the greatest progress.

4. Mark in green the period(s) when you think you experienced self-perceived changes (identity) because of English learning (if you think this took place).

Thank you very much for your cooperation.