

## **THE MOTIVATIONAL MODEL OF YOUNG JAPANESE EFL LEARNERS: AFTER GETTING LESSONS BY HOMEROOM TEACHERS**

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on Japanese pupils' motivation with other attitudinal attitudes about learning English. The writer surveyed the 5th and 6th grade pupils' motivation and its effect factors at an elementary school in Japan at the end of the school year 2007 and 2008. The main focus of this study is to find the relationship between motivation and effect factors using both the 2007 and 2008 data and to examine differences of the pupils' attitudes between 2007 and 2008. Since the 2008 school year, pupils have received lessons by not only an assistant language teacher (ALT) but also their home room teachers (HRTs). The finding showed that the 2008 and 2007 results were similar in most valuables, but the value of "Motivation" increased in 2008 compared to the previous year. Furthermore, "people around the learner" influenced on motivation more positively. Finally, this study presented a model which could be suggested as one of the motivational models of Japanese pupils for English activities. The writer concluded that the involvement of HRTs brought about generally good effects on pupils' attitudes in this elementary school at this point.

**Key words:** motivation, foreign language activities, communicative attitudes, home room teachers

**Abstrak:** Kajian ini fokus pada motivasi siswa Jepang dengan perilaku atitudinal dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Penulis melakukan survey terhadap motivasi siswa kelas 5 dan 6 dan faktor-faktor pengaruhnya di sebuah sekolah dasar di Jepang pada akhir tahun ajaran 2007 dan 2008. Fokus utama kajian ini adalah untuk menemukan hubungan antara motivasi dan faktor-faktor pengaruh menggunakan data dari tahun 2007 dan 2008 dan meneliti perbedaan sikap siswa antara kedua tingkat tersebut. Sejak tahun ajaran 2008, siswa telah menerima pelajaran tidak hanya oleh asisten guru bahasa (ALT), tapi juga oleh guru wali kelas mereka (HRT). Temuan menunjukkan bahwa hasil di tahun 2008 dan 2007 sama dalam semua nilai, tapi nilai "Motivasi" meningkat di tahun 2008 dibanding tahun sebelumnya. Lebih dari itu, "orang-orang di sekitar pembelajar" mempengaruhi motivasi dengan lebih positif. Akhirnya, kajian ini menghadirkan model yang bisa disarankan sebagai salah satu model motivasi untuk siswa Jepang dalam aktivitas bahasa Inggris. Penulis menyimpulkan bahwa keterlibatan wali kelas secara umum memberikan pengaruh yang baik pada sikap siswa di sekolah dasar ini.

**Kata kunci:** Motivasi, pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing Jepang, aktivitas bahasa asing, perilaku komunikatif, guru wali kelas

In Japan, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) revised its curriculum guidelines in 2008, and it mandated that a new foreign language curriculum would officially start in Japanese elementary

schools in 2011. In accordance with other Asian countries like Korea, China, and Taiwan, where English education has already begun in their elementary schools, the new curriculum guidelines for English education in Japan were revised, and many

elementary schools started to implement foreign language activities, with most of schools implementing substantial English lessons. The globalization of business is also behind the background of this curriculum revision; there are not enough Japanese elementary school teachers who can teach English. Because of this, it is expected that elementary school teachers will conduct lessons with getting support ALTs or Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs).

However, many researchers point out the difficulty to acquire English in Japan because English is a foreign language (FL), not a second language (L2) (Uchida, 2005, etc.). Tremendous time and infinite effort are essential to master an FL in the society where Japanese is the sole domain language, and it would be very difficult for pupils to acquire the necessary skills only because they start learning English earlier than starting at junior high school.

For these several years, many studies have investigated pupils' motivation, affective attitudes and their English abilities to find whether a foreign language education at Japanese elementary schools will yield any positive effects or not and in what aspects it will produce good effects. Some research at several pilot schools for research purposes in the past indicated that the experienced pupils got better performance than non-experienced pupils (Ishihama, 2010, JASTEC, 1988, Shizuka, 2007). On the other hand, other studies showed that there was not so much difference between experienced and non-experienced pupils (Shirahata, 2002, Takada, 2004). Besides, it could be said that the experienced pupils' better performance is not just attributed to learning English in elementary school, but that it results from just much more time to learn. Then, if students can get more English classes in their junior high school days by their English teachers, it might

create more effects on them. Since they have already developed enough cognitive abilities, they could more easily understand the syntax of a foreign language and more clearly find their own reasons why they need to learn English.

Furthermore, some researchers and educators pointed out that the students who started English education at elementary school tend to lose their interests in English activities when they enter junior high school. For example, according to NIEPR (2009), the sixth grade pupils' attitudes to questions like "Do you like English lessons?" and "Do you participate in English activities positively?" declined compared to the fifth graders.

In addition, most common elementary school teachers in Japan neither have the qualification as a teacher of English nor have experience in teaching English. Therefore, the guidelines of MEXT note that the objective of this new curriculum is "to form the foundation of pupils' communication abilities through foreign languages." Even though it is not to develop students' communication abilities, some teachers are really worried about how to practice these activities, and HRTs in elementary schools do not have much time for preparing only for English activities. As a result, they tend to depend on foreign ALTs or JTEs. Therefore, we should consider that the purpose of the foreign language activities in Japan is not to have pupils improve English abilities but to enhance their awareness of English learning and their motivation.

### **Motivation and Orientations**

Gardner (1985, pp.156-159) presented the socio-educational model for empirical tests. In this model, the motivation was described as comprising three elements: motivational intensity, desire, and favorable attitudes. On the other hand, Gardner (p.11) defined orientation as

something that represents ultimate goals for learning a second language, which is “a concept distinct from motivation.” According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003, pp.174-175), the Integrative Orientation scale presents reasons for learning a second language that emphasize the notion of identification with the community, and the Instrumental Orientation scale presents practical reasons without implying any interest in getting closer socially to the language community.

Concerning the relationship with language achievement, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) investigated the relationship of second language achievement to the five attitude/motivation variables (Attitudes toward the learning situation, Integrativeness, Motivation, Integrative Orientation and Instrumental Orientation) by meta-analysis. Their result indicated that, as they had remarked (p.176), the Integrative orientation itself did not have a significant relationship with achievement. They concluded that it is motivation that has a higher correlation with achievement (the mean corrected correlations of grades;  $r = .37$ ) than the other variables, though the integrative orientation (ditto  $r = .20$ ) was higher than instrumental orientation (ditto  $r = .16$ ) (pp.193-198).

The term “integrative” in most studies is presupposed essentially aiming for the target language community only (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2002, p.452, Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, etc.). However, some researchers had some suspicions about the definition of the term “integrative” (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991, Csizér and Dörnyei, 2005, etc.). For example, Dörnyei and Csizér (2002, p.437) showed that Hungarian students’ values of integrativeness toward five target languages (English, German, French, Italian, and Russian) decreased significantly, except for English, and explained the reason for this decrease

being attributed to their endorsement of English as a “world language”. Thus, they claimed that the term “integrativeness” and its definition should be reexamined. They suspected the motivation dimension captured by this term is not strongly related to any actual integration into an L2 community (p.453).

Because of the ambiguity of the definition of Integrative orientation, and in order to adjust learning objective of English to Japanese society, in this study, another orientation was proposed as one of the goals of learning a foreign language: “intercultural orientation.” It represents a willingness to be associated with second language learners or FL learners of English. While the integrative orientation was premised toward native speakers, the intercultural orientation is defined as a reason for learning to communicate with various people around the world using English as L2 or FL (Adachi, 2009b, 2009c). This orientation is aimed at not so much integrating learners with the target language people who are limited to native speakers, but interacting with various people around the world, including non-native English speakers, using English as a lingua franca.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

The survey was conducted at a public elementary school in a medium-sized city in Aichi prefecture. Aichi is in the middle of Japan and the fourth most populous prefecture with some big companies. The school is located in a suburb area and the emigration rate of the city is a little higher than other medium-sized cities in Japan, and the number of young families is relatively large. The survey was made at the end of February in 2009 (at the end of the 2008 school year). Previously, an equivalent survey was conducted at the same school in March in 2008. Since this school was not designated as a special

school for “English education at elementary school,” it is considered that the result could be generalized and applied to other average Japanese elementary schools to some extent. As it was a larger school in 2007, it has since spun off a new school at the beginning of April in 2008. The surveyed population decreased slightly: 124 5th grade and 97 6th grade pupils, compared with the number in 2007. Pupils who did not have Japanese nationality or did not specify their nationality were excluded. The final number of participants in 2008 was 214 (Table 1).

Although an ALT mainly has implemented the English activity at this school, HRTs also have started to instruct some activities since the beginning of the 2008 school year. An ALT had taught English pupils of all graders for about one hour per month (about 10-12 classes a year) until 2007. Since school year 2008, the HRTs handling the fifth and the sixth graders also have conducted several English activities. In 2008, HRTs used a

textbook adopted from a private company, though the number of classes was different (from 10 to 20) depending on the capability of each HRT. The textbook includes various activities, such as games, songs, chants and so on and aims to help students learn English through these activities. All pupils at the elementary school had experienced English activities by an ALT since they were in.

In addition to these English activities, the school was designated as “a pilot school for research purposes of international understanding education” by the Aichi Prefectural government between 2006 and 2007. Since then, students have experienced some programs focused on understanding other cultures, such as planting rice with international school students as an international exchange program, learning about other cultures from some foreign invited guest speakers, and going on an excursion to a museum where students can learn about many different countries in the world.

Table 1 Respondents

| N    | 5th grade | 6th grade | Total |
|------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 2007 | 151       | 159       | 310   |
| 2008 | 122       | 92        | 214   |

### Objectives and Instruments

The purpose of this study is to examine differences in the pupils’ motivation and other attitudes between the data of school year 2007 and 2008 and to investigate the relationship among the motivation and other attitudes. In Adachi (2010a), the difference in each item was already analyzed and there was not so much difference except for a few items. Therefore, in this study, subscales calculated from presupposed items were focused on.

The followings are the research questions of this study; What differences

are seen in the value of motivation and other attitudinal dimensions between 2008 and 2007 and what kind of relationships is seen between motivation and other attitudinal dimensions?

The items of the questionnaire came from several sources and the detailed descriptions of motivational variables and some other variables can be found in Adachi (2009a, 2009c). The identical questionnaire was also adopted in Adachi (2009c, 2010a and 2010b). Though it has originally a total of 34 items, in this study, 29 items concerning motivation and

attitudes toward learning English were analyzed and they are outlined below:

1. Motivation (5 items) based primarily on the concepts of Gardner (1985): This included effort, desire, and favorable attitudes; “FA Enjoyment” refers to enjoyment of lessons in foreign language activities, “E Audio-visual” refers to learning English at home using audio-visual materials, “FA Learning more” refers to a favorable attitude toward the increase in the number of classes, “E Vocabulary” refers to making an effort in order to build up vocabulary, and “D Improvement” refers to a desire to improve in English.

2. Orientations (9 items) included instrumental orientation, integrative orientation, and intercultural orientation:

Instrumental orientation (3 items): “Information from the Internet” refers to getting information from the Internet, “Work abroad” refers to traveling or working abroad, and “For future career” refers to entering a good college or a good company in the future.

Integrative orientation (3 items): “Learn U.S. and U.K.” refers to learning about and understanding the culture and people from the U.S. and the U.K., “Ex with U.S. and U.K.” refers to exchanges with people in the U.S. and the U.K., and “Native speaker” refers to speaking English like native speakers.

Intercultural orientation (3 items): “Learn L2 culture” refers to learning and understanding the culture and people from India, the Philippines and Hong Kong, “Ex with L2 people” refers to exchanges with people from India, the Philippines and Hong Kong, and “Ex with FL people” refers to exchanges with people from China, Russia and Brazil.

3. People around the learner (3 items): This refers to descriptions of how much encouragement a pupil had from their “peers,” “parents” and “teachers” in order to study English intensively.

4. Vitality of English (3 items): This refers to how much they recognize English as an important and powerful language in their future social life (importance of English learning). English is more and more important because we will have more chances to “go and stay overseas,” or need to “get information,” or need to “avoid friction” with foreign people.

5. Attitudes toward learning (5 items): This refers to descriptions of positive attitudes, mainly concerning language learning. To become more understanding English (“Confidence in E”), to believe in the value of effort (“Belief in effort”), to be able to understand an ALT’s English (“ALT English”), to have a positive attitude toward learning in general (“Learning att”), and to have a positive attitude toward learning multiple languages (“Learning multi”).

6. Communicative attitudes (4 items): As the new curriculum guidelines emphasize “communication” as an important factor, Adachi (2011) examined some communicative attitudes labeled as “Willingness to communicate with outsiders”. Therefore, the communicative attitudes in this research were adopted to investigate how much pupils try to communicate with others who have different cultural backgrounds. “Make a compromise” refers to that “I try to make a compromise when we have a conflict in group in class”; “Nonverbal communication” refers to that “I tell the way using nonverbal communication when a foreigner gets lost”; “Acceptance of unfamiliarity” is that “I can talk with a foreigner with no caution even if he or she is unfamiliar”; and “Friendly attitude” refers to that “I try to make friends with a foreign transfer student when he or she comes to my class.”

### **Procedures**

Since the questionnaire was conducted by HRTs during class time, the collection rate

was 100 percent. The participants were asked to answer each item by choosing one from a 6-point Likert scale, most of which ranged from strong agreement (+6) to strong disagreement (1).

Comparative analysis was performed to compare the motivation and other attitudes in 2008 with the previous one in 2007, and a hierarchical linear modeling SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) was applied to evaluate the relationships among variables. The data were analyzed using SPSS Ver.18 and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) Ver.18. The procedure of the analysis was as follows: 1) Compute Cronbach alpha in accordance with the presupposed items for each subscale to check the reliability and sum up the values of each item and make up six subscales in 2008, 2) Compare the values of subscales between 2007 and 2008, 3) Carry out regression analyses to find the subscales which have significant effect on the motivation subscale in 2007 and 2008, respectively, and 4) Examine the relationship between motivation and subscales using both of the data in 2007 and 2008.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The comparative analysis of the values of each subscale in 2008 and 2007

First, to obtain a motivational subscale, the five items of motivation in 2008 were submitted to Cronbach Alpha coefficient calculation to check internal consistency. Though the reliability coefficient of the scale was acceptable ( $\alpha = .78$ ), “Audio-visual” indicated the floor effect and if this item would be omitted, the scale would have a higher reliability coefficient. Consequently, it was dropped from the study. Cronbach Alpha coefficient was, again, calculated with the motivation scale consisting of 4 items and a new coefficient score was obtained ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

Next, to gain other subscales, items belonging to each supposed dimension were aggregated, and Cronbach alpha coefficient of each subscale was computed to check for internal consistency. However, “Avoidance of uncertainty” was excluded from “Communicative attitudes” because Cronbach alpha coefficient did not have a positive reliability coefficient. Therefore, it was also dropped from the study. The reliability of each subscale was indicated in Table 2. All of these values were considered to be reliable and acceptable and were very similar to the values in 2007 obtained Adachi (2010b), which are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Cronbach alpha for Each Attitudinal Dimension

|                           | Number of items | 2008           | 2007           |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           |                 | Cronbach Alpha | Cronbach Alpha |
| Motivation                | 4               | 0.820          | 0.896          |
| Orientation               | 9               | 0.924          | 0.915          |
| People around a learner   | 3               | 0.881          | 0.896          |
| Vitality of English       | 3               | 0.863          | 0.860          |
| Attitudes toward learning | 5               | 0.748          | 0.754          |
| Communicative attitudes   | 3               | 0.731          | 0.726          |

Then, the writer analyzed the differences of the mean values of the subscales between 2007 and 2008, and Table 3 shows the result of the two independent-samples t-test of six subscales

with the mean and standard deviation in both 2007 and 2008, respectively. Because of the repeated t-test, the writer adjusted the probability by Bonferroni. As can be seen in the following table, all subscales in

2008 show similar values with the previous year. In addition, all were normally distributed, and this proves that these subscales can be used as adequate measurement scales.

However, "Motivation" indicated a significant difference and the median value of 4.74 in 2008 showed a more positive attitude in comparison with the value 4.46

in 2007, since the median value is 3.5. Among the items subsumed into "Motivation," as "FA Learning more" showed a significant higher value in 2008 (Adachi, 2010a), it seemed that school children continue to have a pleasurable image of English and enjoyed lessons more after the HRTs started to involve in the foreign language activities.

Table3 Descriptive statistics of subsacale in 2007 and 2008

|                           | 2007 |      |      | 2008 |      |      |        |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|
|                           | N    | Mean | SD   | N    | Mean | SD   |        |
| Motivation                | 307  | 4.46 | 1.04 | 213  | 4.74 | 0.95 | 3.14 * |
| people around the learner | 304  | 3.89 | 1.31 | 209  | 3.92 | 1.30 | 0.24   |
| Vitality of English       | 306  | 4.64 | 1.11 | 212  | 4.68 | 1.19 | 0.43   |
| Attitudes toward learning | 303  | 4.08 | 0.96 | 212  | 4.20 | 0.95 | 1.45   |
| Communicative attitudes   | 304  | 4.32 | 0.99 | 211  | 4.30 | 1.09 | -0.23  |
| Orientation               | 304  | 4.65 | 0.91 | 211  | 4.65 | 1.00 | 0.06   |

\*  $p < .05$

Concerning "People around the learner," this study surveyed the degree of the encouragement of people around pupils and the subscale included not only "teacher" and "parents" but also "peers." The value in 2008 indicated 3.92, and it was, again, a little over the median value. Therefore, pupils kept getting some good influence from these people in 2008.

"Vitality of English," "Orientation," and "Attitudes toward learning" also indicated a comparatively high value (M=4.68, 4.65, and 4.20), and all of them were slightly higher in 2008 than 2007. This means pupils recognize English as a powerful and important language, have well-defined goals, and have generally positive attitudes toward participating in foreign language activities. As to the influence of HRT and ALT, according to Adachi (2010a), "ALT English" indicated higher value in 2008 (M=3.23) than 2007 (M=2.94). The result may be due to the instruction of Japanese HRT, in which pupils could understand English better, and it would be more important for pupils to get comprehensible input and to build their

confidence than to listen to difficult or puzzling English.

"Communicative attitudes" were also strong in 2008. As one of the aims of foreign language activities is "fostering a positive attitude toward communication," it was supposed to be a natural outcome. As Jandt (2004, pp.191-192) pointed out, since Japan is an island country and borders on no other countries, it had been little affected by foreign culture until the 19th century. Japanese ideas and information used to be easily shared, and the tradition of rice growing has contributed to a society based on cooperation, minimizing conflict, and enhanced cooperation, which were all necessary for survival. However, given the Japan's recent globalization, Japanese characteristics should be changed into open-minded and friendly ones with more of both verbal and nonverbal ability.

**Relationship between the motivational subscale and other subscales**

Then, in order to find out which attitudinal factors act as predictor variables toward the motivation of pupils in this school, I

submitted the gained subscales in 2008 into multiple regression analysis with the result appearing in Table 5, and the subscales in 2007 were also submitted into multiple regression analysis with the results in Table 4.

The results indicated that the most predictable subscale was “People around a learner” in 2008, which was the second

predictable subscale in 2007. Because some activities had also been instructed by HRTs since fiscal 2008, it is estimated that the influence of HRTs would be considered as a potential reason for the increase. In fact, the standardized beta of “People around a learner” ( $\beta=.283$ ) was slightly higher than the value of 2007 ( $\beta=.246$ ), so the results can naturally be accepted.

Table4 Results of the regression analysis of the attitudinal and motivational scales with the motivation scale as the criterion variable (2007)

|                           | $\beta$  |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Attitudes toward learning | .337 *** |
| People around a learner   | .246 *** |
| Vitality of English       | .180 *** |
| Communicative attitudes   | .166 **  |
| R2                        | .662 *** |

\*  $p<.05$  \*\*  $p<.01$  \*\*\*  $p<.001$

Table5 Results of the regression analysis of the attitudinal and motivational scales with the motivation scale as the criterion variable (2008)

|                           | $\beta$  |
|---------------------------|----------|
| People around a learner   | .283 *** |
| Attitudes toward learning | .244 *** |
| Orientation               | .234 *** |
| Communicative attitudes   | .180 **  |
| R2                        | .641 *** |

\*  $p<.05$  \*\*  $p<.01$  \*\*\*  $p<.001$

Attitudes toward learning had a significantly and highly effect on the motivation in both 2007 and 2008. This means pupils who have positive attitudes toward learning tend to learn English more. However, in 2008, “attitudes toward learning” had less effect compared to 2007. Further investigation will be necessary to find the reason. Since pupils were more affected by their HRTs and took part in some programs for understanding other cultures as well, it can be assumed that they were more influenced by the atmosphere of the classroom under the instruction of the HRTs, which would in turn increase their awareness of importance of intercultural communication.

Instead of “vitality of English” in 2007, orientation was put in as a predictor

variable in 2008. However, as these two subscales were highly correlated with each other ( $r=.84$ ), the result implies that the instruction of HRTs might contribute to raise students’ awareness of their aim to learn English slightly more.

And the “Communicative Attitudes” also contributed to the motivation more in 2008 ( $\beta=.180$ ) than in 2007( $\beta=.166$ ). As the items under “Communicative attitudes” are not assumed to be the attitudes toward English speaking people, it is noteworthy to find that the willingness to communicate with outsiders would also be an important element for Japanese attitudes toward learning a foreign language.

**Confirm the relationship between motivation and effect factors**

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was then applied to evaluate the relationships between motivation and other measures in both 2007 and 2008 using AMOS. The

final model appears in Figure 1. The summary of fit statistics for the model is as follows (goodness of fit measures): CMIN/DF=2.933, CFI = .943, NFI = .917, RMSEA = .061.

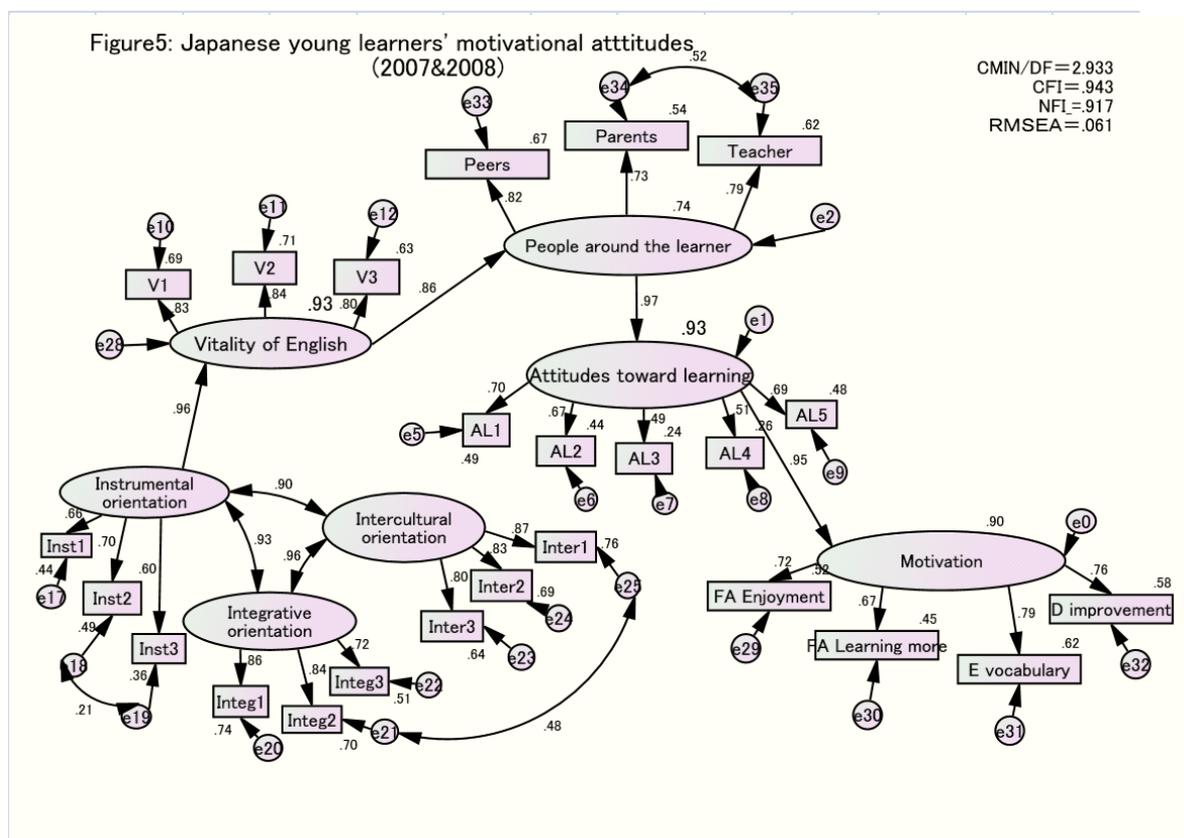


Figure 1 Structural equation modeling of Japanese young learners' motivational attitude(Standardized Parameter Estimates).  
 CMIN/df = chi-square divided by the degrees of freedom, p = probability, CFI = the comparative fit index, NFI = the Bentler-Bonett normed fit index, RMSEA = the root mean square error of approximation.  
 V=Vitality of English. Vitality of English consists of three items; Go and stay overseas(V1), Get information(V2), and Avoid friction(V3). AL=Attitudes toward learning. Attitudes toward learning consists of five items; Confidence in English(AL1), Belief in effort(AL2), ALT English(AL3), Learning att(AL4), and Learning multi(AL5). Inst=Instrumental orientation. Instrumental orientation consists of three items; Information of Internet(Inst1), Work abroad(Inst2), and For future career(Inst3). Integ=Integrative orientation. Integrative orientation consists of three items; Ex with U.S. and U.K.(Integ1), Learn U.S. and U.K.(Integ2), and Native speaker(Integ3). Inter=Intercultural orientation. Intercultural orientation consists of three items; Learn L2 culture(Inter1), Ex with L2 people(Inter2), and Ex with FL people(Inter3).

There was a direct path from “Attitudes toward learning” to “Motivation” as was expected, but “People around a learner” affected motivation indirectly. It can be said that the supportive attitudes of peers, HRTs and ALTs raise pupils’ awareness of learning English and provide a sense of reassurance at first, and then pupils try to learn English more. Though it has been widely acknowledged that the teacher or parents have a certain effect on students’ motivation (Bernaus &

Gardner, 2008, Masgoret, Bernaus, & Gardner, 2001), the effect of peers has not attracted much attention until now. Given the model in details, peers’ attitudes could have an important role on the learner’s motivation.

On the model, “Orientation,” “Vitality of English,” and “People around a learner” influenced Motivation indirectly, but “Communicative Attitudes” did not appear to affect Motivation. It can also be said that Motivation gets some influence from

“Communicative Attitudes,” but the influence is not large, and there is no strong relationship between “Communicative Attitudes” and Motivation. In the case of Japanese, the people who place an emphasis on ties between people and have tenacity to deal with people for good relationships may be suited to learn a foreign language, but holding higher levels of motivation in patience would be somehow a different thing.

For example, in Abe (2009, p.186-187), it was indicated that the more classes the pupils have, the more they tend to have willingness to communicate with peers, ALT and HRT. The attitudes of pupils who received more than 30 classes were not influenced much by ALTs. In conclusion, she indicated the importance of personal relationships and enhancement in-classroom communication both quantitatively and qualitatively. Therefore, it may be said that pupils understood the usefulness of English as a tool of intercultural contact better under the instruction of their Japanese teachers who are said to emphasize the cooperativeness of the class. Pupils would find the ultimate destination of learning English to have a good relationship with people from other cultures more clearly than before.

Therefore, even for HRTs who are not good at English, there is a possibility that pupils’ attitudes toward English, as well as their communicative attitudes, can improve through the experience of foreign language activities that focus on various personal communications.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, the school children kept to have a pleasurable image of English and enjoyed lessons more after the HRTs started to involve them in the foreign language activities. Besides, “Attitudes toward learning,” “People around a

learner,” “Vitality of English” and “Orientation” were considerably valid effect factors toward motivation. Among them, “Attitudes toward learning” was the most important dimension in both 2007 and 2008, and it was also influenced greatly by “People around a learner.” The strong influence of “People around a learner” on “Attitudes toward learning” means that the atmosphere of the classroom would be very important, which includes not only relationship between pupils and HRT or ALT, but also relationship among peers in the classroom. Therefore, in further studies, the attitudes of peers will also need to be investigated in details. Dörnyei (2003, pp.22-23) claimed that the learning process is important; and moreover, the result of Nishida and Yashima (2009) noted that a comfortable classroom atmosphere is crucial to reinforce learners’ motivation. Thus, in the classroom, not only the teacher but also the peers around the learners would become a key factor to change each pupil’s attitudes toward learning.

In addition, “Orientations” subsumed the intercultural orientations, and “Communicative Attitudes” presupposed communication not in L2 but with outsiders in this study. This model indicated that Japanese pupils’ motivation might be influenced by not only the native target language speakers or target language community, but also non-native people or strangers who have different cultural backgrounds. This may be due in part because ordinary Japanese people seldom have contact opportunities with native English speakers. Though some Japanese teachers are worried about their English speaking skills, this study demonstrates that Japanese HRTs could effectively instruct pupils, if they use several foreign languages and non-verbal communicative activities or sometimes get support from people of different countries.

Though the guidelines of MEXT prescribe the curriculum as “Foreign Language Activities,” the “Notebook of English” published by MEXT focused overwhelmingly on English as its name suggests. Most elementary schools are now conducting lessons using this notebook in 2011, and some teachers might emphasize on improving pupils’ English proficiency. At this point, the motivation of some pupils may begin to diminish as they get older because many studies suggested it (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément & Donovan, 2003, Cenoz, 2003, Carreira, 2006 and Nishida, 2008). Even for university students in Japan, Hayashi (2009, pp.206-207) implied that the students with low intrinsic motivation have not fully enjoyed a sense of English communication because they had little chance of “implementing” communication in English. Therefore, it may be necessary for HRTs to give pupils the opportunity for exchange with as diverse people as possible or to have them enjoy various experiences using English as well as other foreign languages and raise their interest in foreign countries since the guidelines aim for “developing the understanding of languages and cultures” and “fostering a positive attitude toward communication” (MEXT, 2008).

Concerning the main limitation of the current study, the participants were limited to one elementary school. Therefore, it is expected that investigations will be conducted in other schools to confirm whether the similar result could be found and to achieve a more substantial result. And since the school had not yet integrated the full 35 classes at that time, further research would be necessary to investigate how pupils’ learning or other communicative attitudes will change after the foreign language activities are conducted completely.

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