Assessing Motivational Factors in Japan SALCs through the L2 Motivational Self System

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Author Biography

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Abstract

Given the 'self-access' nature of Self-access Language Learning (SALL), studies on the motivational factors for participating in such services have been at the forefront. In recent years, researchers have begun addressing the place of various L2 theories within the context of SALL. Nevertheless, the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005), which has gained much popularity within research focusing on classroom environments, remains relatively unexplored in SALL research. This is especially so in Japan, and most of the currently available studies employ only quantitative methods. This paper addresses the L2 Motivational Self System in Japan SALL services by using quantitative and qualitative methods in the form of a questionnaire and follow-up interviews on university students' visits to a voluntary SALL desk. The main findings indicate a more prominent influence from the *ideal self* compared to the *ought-to self*. The students also focused on utilizing English as a tool for achieving external gains while possessing a linguistic interest in learning the language. Additionally, compelling the students to use their English abilities in authentic environments allowed them to develop an accurate understanding of their current ability and gain an appreciation for English as a tool for communication or personal development. Finally, the students reported that they felt more anxiety when speaking English to Japanese peers.

自律学習の「自律」の本質として、自律学習支援施設などを利用する学生の動機づけに関する研究が昨今、盛んに進められてきた。一方で、理論に基づいた研究の蓄積はまだ少ない。また、L2 Motivational Self System に関する研究は、教室環境に焦点を当てたものが多く、特に日本国内の SALL におけるもののほとんどが定量的調査である。本稿では、自律的に自律学習支援施設を利用する大学生・大学院生を対象に、L2 Motivational Self System に関するアンケートおよびフォローアップインタビュー調査を行い、定量的および定性的に考察した。結果、*ideal self* の影響が、*ought-to self* と比較して有意に大きく、学生は言語を学ぶこと自体に関心を持ち、外発的動機づけにより英語をツールとして利用することに焦点を当てていることが明確になった。また、学生が生きた環境で実際に英語を使う経験を持つことで、現在の自分自身の英語能力を正確に把握し、ツールとしての英語に対する理解を深める機会となることが分かった。さらに、日本人学生は英語を話す際、日本人同士で英語を話す方が、外国人を相手に話すより、緊張することも明らかとなった。

Keywords: L2 Motivational Self System, Self-access Language Learning, Self-access Learning Centers, Japan

The Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is pushing for programs that foster global citizens who will be able to meet international challenges. A pivotal part of this plan includes moving away from the traditional test-taking environment and promoting English communication skills (MEXT, 2014). Self-access Learning Centers (SALCs) have become an essential part of fostering these communicative skills, and we can see their annual growth in Japan (LSS Registry). Within the growing body of research, motivation has been a topic at the forefront. Motivation and learner autonomy have been shown to share a close connection (Ueki & Takeuchi, 2013), and students with higher motivation are generally more successful and efficient at learning an L2 (Gardner, 2000).

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p. 3) define motivation as something that "moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action." Studies on the motivational factors for L2 learning have occupied a significant portion of L2 research, and various theories have been postulated. Among these, Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System has gained much recent attention. Yet most research on L2 theory focuses on classroom settings; there has been comparatively little research on SALC environments (Morrison, 2005).

Given the self-access nature of SALCs, students' motivation to engage in their services is paramount. Unfortunately, SALCs oftentimes have difficulty engaging students (Johnston, Yodisha, & Cornwell, 2010). Furthermore, most studies are anecdotal or not based on L2 motivational theories because SALC researchers are often too busy to conduct large-scale empirical studies (Hall, 2017). Japan SALCs have implemented various schemes to encourage engagement ranging from offering comfortable café-like environments (Murray, 2017), hosting cultural events (Kindai Activity Calendar), and utilizing stamp cards (Talandis Jr. et al., 2011). However, a common practice is to create compulsory attendance policies. Irrespective of this method's merits or issues, it may become challenging to measure motivational factors given the obligatory aspect.

To further gauge motivational factors in SALCs, researchers have begun exploring various L2 motivational theories. Among these, the L2 Motivational Self System is gaining attention. Nevertheless, it remains underexplored in Japan.

Literature Review

Early L2 Motivational Theories

Early L2 social psychological theory was driven by Gardner and Lambert's (1972) assertion of integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation refers to individuals' sincere interest in the people and culture of other countries, while instrumental motivation stems from

people's perceptions of the potential personal benefits that can be gained from learning an L2. In this way, an L2 acts as a tool to achieve tangible benefits outside of cultural and linguistic interests.

Gardner (1985) later proposed the Socio-educational Model, arguing a distinction between the two attitudes of integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation. Together, these factors support the motivation to learn an L2, while motivation is responsible for L2 achievement. Markus and Nurius (1986) then added the concept of the *possible self* and *future self* guides. These represent an individual's self-images of what they might become, want to become, and are afraid of becoming. Together, these self-images act as future self-guides.

Higgins (1987) then proposed an explanation of the *possible selves* through the Self-discrepancy Theory. This theory postulates an emotional discomfort stemming from gaps between one's current and future perceived abilities. Accordingly, people compare their actual self to the standards of the *ideal* and *ought-to* self. Any discrepancies between these will lead to emotional discomfort.

The L2 Motivational Self System

Dörnyei (2005) proposed the L2 Motivational Self System by adopting or adapting the above-mentioned theories. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) questioned the relevance of integrativeness in situations where learners had no access to international communities. In such cases, exposure to movies, videos, and music can play a larger role in familiarizing L2 learners with the L2 community (Dörnyei, Csizer, & Nemeth, 2006). Dörnyei (2005) also believed that integrativeness might be better explained by the learner's *possible self* concept, where positive attitudes towards L2 speakers lead to a stronger *ideal self*. Therefore, Dörnyei adopted Markus and Nurius' (1986) concept of *possible selves*.

Dörnyei (2005) also adopted Higgins's (1987) Self-discrepancy Theory and argued for three components that influence motivation: The *ideal self* and *possible self*, the *ought-to self*, and learning experiences. The *ideal self* is what one wants to become, while the *possible self* is what someone can become based on their perception of achievable goals. The *ought-to self* is the perception of what one should become due to external pressures of meeting expectations and avoiding negative outcomes.

The third factor is the appraisal of one's own learning experiences. Dörnyei (2005) argues that not everyone is initially motivated by self-images, and that early positive learning experiences play an essential role in the beginning. Learning experiences include situational and environmental aspects of language learning as well as subjective learning experience.

Dörnyei (2005) reinterpreted Gardner's (1985) integrative and instrumental orientations and incorporated them into the *possible self*. First, integrative orientation is classified under the *ideal self*, while instrumental orientation is divided into two categories: instrumentality promotion and instrumentality prevention. Instrumentality promotion motivates via having the learners bridge the gap between their current and the potential tangible benefits of becoming their *ideal selves*. As with integrative orientation, promotional instrumentality is also placed within the *ideal self*. Next, instrumental prevention refers to an L2 learner attempting to avoid the negative consequences of not meeting the linguistic expectations of others. It is placed within the *ought-to self*.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) argue that maximum motivation occurs when the desired *future self* is counterbalanced with a clear idea of the negative feared *possible self*. Therefore, both negative and positive factors motivate students, and having a clear vision of one's *future self* (*ideal self* and *ought-to self*), combined with positive L2 learning experiences, will maximize motivation.

Yashima (2002) addressed Japan's situation and proposed replacing integrativeness with international posture since Japanese students typically have minimal exposure to the international community. Instead, international posture gauges students' willingness and eagerness to travel abroad and converse with people from different countries. Various studies have since explored international posture and found a significant relationship between international posture and the *ideal self* (Aubrey, 2014; Aubrey & Nowlan, 2013; Yashima, 2009). International posture has also been shown to improve through study abroad programs (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008), conducting international volunteer work (Yashima, 2010), and partaking in domestic classes with global themes (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008).

Relevant Studies

Most studies on the L2 Motivational System have been conducted within classroom environments and provide support for the theory while debating the impact of its elements. These studies generally indicate the significant role that the *ideal self* has in motivating L2 learners, while the *ought-to self* has been shown to have less of an impact. Csizér and Kormos (2009) studied Hungarian students and found that both the *ideal self* and *ought-to self* led to motivated learning behavior, but that the *ought-to self* did so to a much weaker degree. Kormos, Kiddle, and Csizér (2011) observed students in Chile and found that the *ideal self* and L2 learning attitudes influenced motivation significantly, while the effect of the *ought-to self* was negligible. Kormos and Csizér (2008) also discovered that language learning attitudes and the *ideal self* were the strongest predictors of motivation, while the *ought-to self* was not relevant.

Other varying results include You and Dörnyei (2016), whose study in China showed that the attitude toward learning an L2 was a stronger indicator of intended effort. Nakamura's (2018) comparative study between Australian and Korean university students learning Japanese showed that the *ideal self* is associated with interest in popular culture and positive L2 learning experiences.

Much of the related research in Japan also predominantly involves classroom settings. Some researchers such as Munezane (2013) and Papi (2010) found a significant influence of both L2 learning experiences and the *ideal self* on motivated behavior. Aubrey and Nowlan's (2013) study also found a weak connection between the *ought-to self* and motivated behavior.

Nevertheless, several studies indicate the importance of the *ought-to self*, and Kormos et al. (2011) contend that Japan and China have a stronger influence from the *ought-to self* due to the test-taking environment. Hill, Apple, and Falout (2019) also support the importance of the *ought-to self* in their study of Japanese EFL students. Finally, Aubrey (2014) found that Japanese EFL students showed a strong *ought-to self* influence on motivation if they had exposure to other cultures.

Other papers have explored the *ideal self* and *ought-to self* in relation to external factors. Yashima, Nishida, and Mizumoto (2017) found that communication-oriented students are influenced more by the *ideal self*, while grammar-oriented students are more affected by the *ought-to self*. They conclude that the *ought-to self* has significant motivating power in Japan. Ryan (2009) explored gender differences and showed that Japanese women have a higher sense of the *ideal self*, integrativeness, and intended learning effort compared to men. Ueki and Takeuchi (2013) investigated differences among majors and found that students majoring in English were affected more by the *ideal self*, while the non-English majors were more affected by the *ought-to self*.

Several classroom studies have also assessed international posture and cross-cultural experiences. Munezane (2013) showed evidence of a link between international posture and the *ideal self* for Japanese students. Yashima (2000) found that students perceived instrumental and intercultural friendship orientations as the most crucial for motivational behavior. Aubrey and Nowlan (2013) discovered that L2 learning experiences and international posture had a greater influence on motivation, and that the *ought-to self* led to motivation only in situations where learners could interact with people from other countries. Moritani and Manning (2016) showed that studying abroad improved Japanese students' *ideal self*, L2 confidence, and integrativeness, but that it had no effect on L2 anxiety. Finally, Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009) conducted a cross-country study on Japan, China, and Iran and found that instrumental and intercultural friendships were the most important predictors for motivation.

Most of the available related research for SALCs has been conducted outside of Japan. Zaragoza (2011) studied a SALC in Mexico and found that both the *ideal self* and *ought-to self* have a strong influence on students' language learning motivation and that SALCs help to discover the links between the students' selves. Gardner and Yung (2017) studied students in Hong Kong and saw evidence of motivation through both the *ideal self* and *ought-to self*, but more so towards the *ought-to self*. The students were able to generate a future L2 image but were unable to sustain it. Lastly, Magid and Chan (2012) showed how a motivational program in Hong Kong enhanced students' *ideal self* vision.

Researchers have begun addressing the topic in Japan, and the majority of research consists of quantitative studies. For example, Murray (2011a) surveyed students in a SALC, and his findings suggested the importance of using metacognition and imagination for motivation. He also found that SALCs can help develop L2 selves. Imagination facilitated the learners' L2 selves, while metacognitive knowledge controlled the steps taken to realize them. Murray (2011b) reiterated this finding by interviewing a student who acquired multiple *ideal selves*. Once again, metacognition was important in helping the student create the steps to pursuing his goals. Murray (2011a) suggests that SALCs be used in such a way that they can help to develop the L2 self. Gillies (2010) interviewed SALC users in Japan with very high and low motivation for participating in the SALC. The results showed that students with a robust *ideal self* were motivated to use SALCs and preferred them over classrooms because there is more freedom of choice. Conversely, students with a strong *ought-to self* saw the classrooms as a safe shelter.

Research Question

Given the aforementioned background information and necessity, the following research question has been created: Within the scope of the L2 Motivational Self System, what motivates students who participate in voluntary SALC services?

Research Method

This study was conducted on students who visited the Language Support Desk at Osaka University's Center for International Affairs within the Graduate School of Engineering. The desk offers help with Conversation, Writing, and Presentations, and since its opening in 2015, many students have continued to utilize the services despite it being voluntary. For further explanation, please refer to Andersson and Nakahashi (2017).

Data Collection

The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods via a questionnaire and interviews. Students who visited the Language Support Desk were asked to take the survey. Afterward, the students were asked to participate in an interview to allow further elaboration. The interviews ranged from 30–60 minutes.

The survey consisted of a six-point Likert scale questionnaire based on Taguchi et al. (2009) and Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) update. Following the recommendations of Yashima (2002, 2009), Integrativeness was replaced with International Posture. In total, there were 11 factors including Criterion Measures, which gauges the current level of commitment towards learning the L2; Ideal L2 Self; Ought-to L2 Self; Family Influence; Instrumental (promotion); Instrumental (prevention); Attitudes to Learning English; Interest in the English Language; Cultural Interest; English Anxiety; and International Posture. Each factor consists of multiple question items.

The interviews consisted of open-ended questions related to the 11 factors to allow for some deviations while still ensuring the collection of pertinent data. Altogether, 50 students completed the survey, and eight agreed to be interviewed in either English or Japanese. The interviews were recorded with the students' permission, transcribed into English by a Japanese native speaker if conducted in Japanese, and coded into themes to develop discoveries.

Of the 50 survey participants, 34 were males and 16 were females, and the eight interviewees consisted of six males and two females. The students who elected to write their English proficiency scores averaged 747 for the TOEIC and 6.35 for the IELTS. Most students majored in Engineering (28) and Human Sciences (6), probably due to the desk being located close to these departments, followed by Foreign Language/Language Culture (4), Medicine (3), International Public Policy (2), Law (2), and one student each for other majors (Engineering Science, Dentistry, Science, Literature, Pharmacy Sciences). Almost half of the participants were undergraduates (44%), 38% were masters students, and 18% were doctoral students.

Table 1

Total Visits

Sessions	Students
First time	9
2-5 sessions	25
6-10 sessions	5
11-15 sessions	6
16-20 sessions	1

21-25 sessions	1
> 26 sessions	3

Table 2

Average Sessions Per Month

Sessions	Times
< 1 session	11
1 session	5
2 sessions	15
3 sessions	8
4 sessions	9
> 4 sessions	2

Regarding the types of sessions that students participated in, almost all students had utilized the conversation sessions (82%), while nearly half had done writing sessions (46%). Only a small percentage of students (10%) had participated in presentation sessions. The majority of students answered that they had learned about the desk through the Online Bulletin Board (23) and Printed Advertisement Brochure (9). Other responses were: Introduced by a Teacher (9), Electronic Bulletin Board (6), Mail from the Administrative Staff (5), Introduced by a Friend (4), and Other (1). Note that students had the option to write more than one source.

Data Analysis

Questionnaire Results

Each of the 11 factors represents a group of multiple six-point Likert-scale questions (6 being strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree). Table 3 displays each of the factors' group means ranked highest to lowest.

Table 3

Ranking of the 11 Factors by Group Mean

Factor	Group Mean
Attitudes to Learning English	4.96
Interest in the English Language	4.75
Cultural Interest	4.65
Instrumental (promotion)	4.64
Criterion Measures	4.48
Ideal L2 Self	4.45
International Posture	4.45
Ought-to L2 Self	3.50
Instrumental (prevention)	3.47
English Anxiety	2.95
Family Influence	2.74

First, in looking at the students' general results, we see evidence of a high level of commitment to learning English while also having L2 confidence. Criterion Measures was relatively high at 4.48. This, combined with the fact that the sessions are voluntary, indicates a high level of motivation. At the same time, English Anxiety was low (2.95), showing that the students had little anxiety when communicating in English.

On the upper end of the spectrum, the students ranked Attitudes to Learning English as the highest (4.96). This was followed by Interest in the English Language (4.75) and Cultural Interest (4.65). Instrumental (promotion) was also ranked high (4.64), indicating that the students believed learning English could lead them to tangible benefits in the future. The Ideal L2 Self and International Posture (both 4.45) were also somewhat high, meaning that the students had, to some degree, a desire to interact with the international community, as well as an image of their ideal future capabilities.

On the opposite side, Family Influence (2.74) was the lowest, followed by Instrumental (prevention) (3.47), and Ought-to L2 Self (3.50). These indicate low external pressure to meet the expectations of others and, therefore, do not appear to influence the student's reasons for using SALC services.

Next, the coefficient of variation was calculated for the 11 group factors, which measures the degree of variations in the students' responses and shows which answers had the greatest degree of agreement or disagreement. A higher number equates to a stronger variation of answers, and a lower number indicates more consistent responses. The group covariance of deviation is calculated

by dividing the group standard deviation by the group mean and multiplying by 100. Table 4 ranks the variation from highest to lowest.

Table 4

Ranked Group Coefficient of Variation (maximum: 100, minimum: 0)

Factor	Coef. of Variation
Family Influence	54.49
Instrumental (prevention)	46.75
Ought-to L2 Self	46.11
English Anxiety	41.02
International Posture	31.46
Instrumental (promotion)	29.73
Ideal L2 Self	28.41
Criterion Measures	26.2
Cultural Interest	25.3
Attitudes to learning English	23.94
Interest in the English language	23.67

The groups with the highest disagreement in answers included Family Influence (54.49), Instrumental (prevention) (46.75), and Ought-to L2 Self (46.11). There was also some variation for English Anxiety (41.02), International Posture (31.46), Instrumental (promotion) (29.73), and Ideal L2 Self (28.41).

The groups with the most consistent answers included Interest in the English Language (23.67), Attitudes to Learning English (23.94), and Cultural Interest (25.3). Students somewhat varied with Criterion Measures (26.2), meaning there were some differences in their perceived current English-learning efforts.

Interview Results

Table 5 shows the interviewees' demographics and given pseudonyms. The interviews were first transcribed and translated into English. They were then coded using content analysis to discover themes by applying a deductive methodology based on the questionnaire results. In total, five trends were found as follows.

Table 5

Interviewed Students

Student	Gender	Major	Grade
A	male	Engineering	Masters
B	female	Medicine	PhD
C	male	International Policy	Undergraduate
D	male	Engineering	Undergraduate
E	male	Engineering	PhD
F	female	Engineering	Masters
G	male	Engineering	Masters
H	male	Engineering	Undergraduate

Trend 1: Ideal Self Over the Ought-to Self

The interviewees echoed the survey results in answering positively toward their future *ideal self* image. One student (C) had very clear expectations of his future level in saying, "I can kind of imagine, but I still recognize how long it will take (to speak native-like English). Fifteen years later, my English can be kind of something... equivalent of native level, and I have no problems in communication." Another student (E) specified that it would take five years to get to the level of required proficiency communication and had a plan specific plan to reach that goal. Furthermore, (G) planned on using English extensively in the workplace the following year after graduation.

However, other students answered more vaguely about their future self images. When asked if he could imagine himself using English every day in the workplace, (A) said, "I would like to use English at work in the future, but for now, the department I will work at doesn't require me to use it." (B) responded, "I vaguely think it would be nice if I can use English since I like to travel... It would be nice if I can use English both in private and work."

For the *ought-to self*, the interviewees consistently stated that they did not feel pressure to meet the expectations of others. Even the interviewees' parents let them make their own decisions after entering college. While (C) stated, "I am expected to speak quite smoothly" when communicating with others through a volunteer position, he nonetheless felt the pressure was negligible by saying, "Basically, it's just from myself."

Trend 2: Families Do Not Compel Students to Learn English but Show Its Importance

When asked if their families had any influence on their decision to study English, (H) said no, and (C, E) answered, "I don't think so... I'm doing it at my own pace," and "not at all." (D)

responded, “My parents always say that I can decide the way of studying or working in the future.” All interviewees were required to complete compulsory English courses as part of their grade school curricula. However, once they entered university, the overall external pressure to learn English overwhelmingly diminished.

Nevertheless, there was evidence that parents instilled a belief in the importance of learning English. (D) stated, “My parents were also interested in learning English... My mother’s major was English culture, so I was influenced by my mother in terms of learning English.” (B) said, “My family likes English and wants to talk (in English), so they study English as well.” And (A)’s mother played English audio tracks to him in her womb during pregnancy. However, (E) indicated that his parents had no influence on him and cannot speak English.

Trend 3: Promotional Instrumentality the Main Reason for Studying English

The interviewees frequently indicated that Instrumental (promotion) played a significant role in their motivation to study English and visit the SALL desk. Specifically, they mentioned three benefits of learning English. The first is the curiosity for global knowledge and the recognition of English as a gateway to it. (F) stated, “It would be limiting for me if I want to know something but can’t because of my English. That is why I want to study English.” (H) said, “Different countries have great ideas... English is necessary because I want to get ideas from other countries.”

The second benefit is using English as a communication tool for interacting with people around the world and understanding different cultures. (D) stated, “I found the English language as a way of learning a foreign culture,” and (A) said, “I came to have an interest in foreign countries after studying abroad, so I would like to use English to communicate with people or go abroad for work or leisure.” (G) mentioned, ”My purpose in studying English is to communicate with other people.”

The third benefit is using English as an opportunity to promote future access to various endeavors. This can be seen by (E) stating, “In the area of Computer Science, I have to search in English. Programming languages are in English, and if I can read English faster, then I can understand more.” (C) mentioned scoring high on the IELTS test to enter international universities. (H) said, “When I think about working in other countries, I don’t want to give up just because I can’t speak English.”

Some of the interviewees also mentioned linguistic enjoyment as a means of motivation. When asked if they enjoy learning English itself, (C) answered, “Yeah, I do... (it’s) quite interesting”, and (D) said, “Yes, of course. Learning a new thing makes me very happy.” When

asked to choose between learning English to use as a tool or for enjoyment, (C) replied, "I think it's difficult to say. I think it's half and half." (G) rated linguistic interest as his third-most reason to study English.

Trend 4: Anxiety in Front of Peers

The interviewees expressed minimal anxiety to speak English. For example, (D) said he felt natural communicating in both Japanese and English: "Basically, I like to talk with others, including foreigners." However, (C) mentioned, "I still feel a bit nervous to articulate my opinion in front of native speakers."

Interestingly, others mentioned heightened anxiety when speaking to Japanese peers. (A) explained, "I don't feel comfortable, especially with Japanese friends (because) it is embarrassing to speak imperfect English or make mistakes." (B) said, "I get more nervous speaking in front of Japanese people... I feel more nervous when I talk in front of Japanese friends rather than foreigners because Japanese friends might think 'oh, she can only talk this much.'" (H) also mentioned that he feels embarrassed speaking English with Japanese people who have a higher English ability.

Trend 5: Authentic English Scenarios Created Awareness of Actual Self and Instrumentality

Several students originally disliked learning English because they were forced to do so without knowing why. (A) explained, "Back... (before college), I felt like I was forced to study English... but I didn't enjoy studying it," and (E) said, "Compared to before... when I was forced to study for exams, my motivation is much higher now." Also, (G) said he hated learning English while studying it only to enter a study abroad program.

Next, some students became motivated after they were exposed to authentic English scenarios. Specifically, two occurrences were apparent. First, they came to understand their true communicative abilities, which were often lower than their self-assessment. As (C) recalled, "Only after I enrolled in this university and I took a(n) international introduction course, I met some people who are from outside of Japan for the first time, and I had a lot of trouble with speaking English... So, that's the moment when I started concentrating more on English." (D) also said, "My gap (between my current situation and future goal)… was changed because I had no concrete idea to what extent that I could speak English. But after going abroad, I got a kind of idea to what extent I can speak English."

Second, exposure to authentic English environments showed some students the potential of using English instrumentally. (D) explained, "Before going to a foreign country, I didn't think English was essential for getting a job. But after my experience, I would like to work and study

abroad. I noticed the need to study English." Likewise, (G) became interested in learning English as a means to communicate with foreign people only after studying abroad.

Discussion

Researchers differ regarding the importance of the role that the *ideal self* and the *ought-to self* play in SALCs, and this research provides evidence of both a strong *ideal self* image and a minimal *ought-to self* influence. Therefore, this result supports Gillies' (2010) assertion that students with strong *ideal selves* may prefer SALCs more.

Next, while the *ideal self* appears to influence motivation, the students sometimes expressed vague ideas and goals for their L2 futures. This has also been shown in classroom settings with Yashima (2000) and Taguchi et al. (2009). Indeed, Dörnyei (2005) pointed out that there is some leniency in this regard. Thus, students with merely a broad notion of the level they can achieve may still be motivated.

Next, the students stated that their families put almost no pressure on them to learn English in the interviews and ranked Family Influence as the lowest factor in the survey. Nevertheless, some interviewees expressed the influence their parents' had on their appreciation of English. These counteracting factors may explain why the students ranked Family Influence low while also showing significant variation in their survey answers.

While the survey results show Attitudes to Learning English, Interest in the English Language, Cultural Interest, and Instrumental (promotion) as the highest, the interviewees frequently expressed their intent to use English for instrumental purposes to achieve exterior objectives. Nevertheless, the students showed an overlap between using English as a tool and learning English for linguistic enjoyment, and thus we may speculate that there are multiple factors at play.

English Anxiety ranked the second-lowest on the survey, and there was some variation in the respondents' answers. The interviewees also expressed minimal English anxiety, yet this changed depending on who they were communicating with. While some students possessed the confidence to express themselves in either language, others felt increased anxiety brought on by having to speak English in front of their peers. Thus, anxiety levels may be relative to who the interactors are.

Finally, the students ranked Attitudes to Learning English and Interest in the English Language as the highest factors, yet many of the interviewees did not initially enjoy learning English, nor did they see its importance. It was not until they were forced to use their English in real-world scenarios that they could assess their actual English level and grow an appreciation for

the potential instrumental benefits. Such interactions frequently occur through studying abroad, but campus environments can also suffice.

Given the above-mentioned observations, this paper can suggest practical applications for Japan SALCs. First, while it is important that SALCs help students to develop their *ideal self* image, we see that this does not need to be concrete. Students can still be motivated with only a general notion of their future possibilities. Next, exposing students to authentic English environments has the benefit of calibrating students' current capabilities and showing promotional instrumentality. SALCs can promote this through programs such as cultural events and English Café, where exchange students can meet Japanese students. Finally, given the potential anxiety that students may experience by speaking English in front of their peers, there may be ramifications to conducting group sessions or peer counseling.

Conclusion

SALC research is expanding significantly in Japan, yet ascertaining the motivational factors for engaging in such services remains somewhat elusive and debated. Despite an abundance of research on the L2 Motivational Self System in classroom scenarios, related research for SALC services in Japan remains limited. The students who participate in the Language Support Desk at Osaka University do so voluntarily and express great enthusiasm in continuing their English studies. This research was conducted in an attempt to assess the motivational factors of these students so that we can then address motivation in SALCs as a whole.

The limitations of this study include the following. First, the quantitative analysis of the data would benefit from the reliability and validity testing of the survey instrument. Next, the data consists of students from the same university with similar majors and higher English proficiency scores. Thus, future research would benefit from including a larger and more diverse sample size, as different majors may influence the degree of importance for the *ideal self* and *ought-to self* (Ueki & Takeuchi, 2013).

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