
Ethnocentrism, Cultural Traits, Beliefs, and English Proficiency: A Japanese Sample

KIMIKO HINENOYA

TESL Centre

Concordia University

1455 Blvd. de Maisonneuve Ouest

Montreal, Quebec

Canada H3G 1M8

Email: kimikohw@hotmail.com

ELIZABETH GATBONTON

TESL Centre

Concordia University

1455 Blvd. de Maisonneuve Ouest

Montreal, Quebec

Canada H3G 1M8

Email: gatbonto@vax2.concordia.ca

This article reports on a study investigating the role in second language (L2) learning of ethnocentrism, cultural and personality traits, and acceptance of values and beliefs expressed in myths and proverbs. Although scholars have conjectured that these factors may play an important role in L2 proficiency, there has been very little empirical investigation of this issue. In our study, 108 adult Japanese living in North America were asked how much they agreed with or accepted statements expressing ethnocentric views about Japanese culture and language that described their shyness, inwardness, and groupist tendencies and that indicated certain Japanese values and beliefs as expressed through myths and proverbs. Three sets of variables were tested: (a) participants' ethnocentrism, (b) willingness to acknowledge certain cultural traits as being characteristic of Japanese as a group, and (c) willingness to accept the validity of Japanese-oriented myths and proverbs. The participants' responses on these variables were correlated with their levels of English proficiency as measured by a cloze test, a self-rated ability scale, and a self-rated performance scale. It was hypothesized that the higher the participants' responses on these variables, the lower their proficiency levels in English would be. Results suggest that these cultural traits and beliefs play a role in L2 learning but provide little evidence for an effect of ethnocentrism as the term is commonly defined.

THE ROLE OF SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS in determining second language (L2) proficiency has been widely examined in the field of L2 teaching (Ellis, 1994). Many of these studies, however, have focused largely on factors arising from the learners' relationships with their target language groups and less on factors arising from their relationships with their own ethnic groups. Thus, in studies of the role of attitudes and motivation, what have been examined are the learners' attitudes towards and willingness to interact with speakers of the target language (Gardner, 1991; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Although there are some exceptions (e.g., Au, 1988; Oller, Hudson, & Liu, 1977; Svanes, 1988), the classic find-

ing of these studies is that the higher the learners' desire to interact and integrate with the target group (integrative motivation) or to find employment, seek advancement, and so on (instrumental motivation), the better their performance in their course work and the higher their proficiency levels (e.g., Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Gardner, Smythe, & Brunet, 1977). Learners with these motivations also seem to maintain their achieved proficiency levels for longer periods of time (e.g., Gardner, Lalonde, & MacPherson, 1985).

However, because L2 learners are subject to pressures from members of their own social group, there is reason to believe that the in-group, too, may influence their ultimate L2 proficiency. Ellis (1994) speculated that learners' perception of their own group's ethnolinguistic vitality might influence their L2 proficiency. Eth-

nolinguistic vitality (Giles & Johnson, 1981) refers to a group's view of its strength and viability as measured by perceptions of its status, demographics, and institutional support. Ellis suggested that people who attribute high ethnolinguistic vitality to their group, but who have insecure feelings about their relationship with other groups, may view learning a L2 (particularly that of a rival group) with caution, if not disapproval. This caution may be motivated by fear that an increase in the number of members learning the L2 might lead to a decrease in the number of those left to defend the in-group. This speculation may have a basis in a study by Taylor, Meynard, and Rheault (1977), in which threat to group identity and personal contact with the out-group were found to be highly related to L2 skills, in fact, more so than motivational factors. Heller (1987) also stressed that shared ways of speaking and shared culture and knowledge serve as a shared social identity, and a shared identity consolidates the social network in which in-group members live. If members of a group choose to speak one code over another, this decision becomes a determinant of which social group they would like to belong to, and this constrains their interaction outside their own network. Similar findings are reported by Ogbu & Simons (1994) in the context of minority education in the United States.

Gatbonton (1975) also suggested that loyalty to the in-group may be another motivational variable affecting L2 proficiency (see also Segalowitz & Gatbonton, 1977). Using a modified matched guise technique, she found that francophone students listening to fellow francophones speaking English associated increasing levels of proficiency in English to increasing loyalty to English Canadians and decreasing loyalty to French Canadians. In other words, the more fluent the speakers were in English, the more they were perceived to be less pro-French Canadian and more pro-English Canadian. She also found that francophones who manifested strong in-group loyalty were less willing than those with less strong loyalty to accept francophone speakers with fluent English as leaders. They were reluctant to select the francophone speakers with fluent English, particularly in in-group interaction situations, that is, when only francophones were involved, preferring instead both the moderate and poor English speakers. In extragroup situations where both francophones and anglophones were involved, they significantly preferred fluent English speakers over poor speakers but not significantly more so than moderately accented speakers. These find-

ings and those attained from a replication of some aspects of the study 20 years later (Gatbonton, 1996) suggest that loyalty to the in-group may impose added barriers to francophones learning English.

Ethnocentrism is another factor that has been suggested to exert important effects on L2 proficiency. Kalin & Berry (1994, pp. 301–302) defined ethnocentrism as “the tendency to make ‘we-they’ distinctions, accompanied by a relatively positive evaluation of ‘we’ and a negative evaluation of ‘they.’” It includes “the tendency to judge others by the standards and values of one’s own group” (p. 302). Although a link between L2 proficiency and ethnocentrism has yet to be established, many researchers have speculated about its possible existence. Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) hypothesized that learners’ ethnocentric tendencies and attitudes toward the other group can determine their success in learning the new language. A study by Wiseman, Hammer, and Nishida (1989) also suggested this link, although in an indirect way. In their study of 887 Japanese and Americans, they found that the more ethnocentric the participants were, the less understanding they showed for the other group’s culture and for world culture in general. Given that cross-cultural understanding leads to better communication and that improved communication skills facilitate L2 learning, one can speculate that difficulties in cross-cultural communication arising from ethnocentrism could also affect L2 learning.

Some scholars who have tried to explain Japanese learners’ alleged difficulty in learning English have suggested that ethnocentrism may be a relevant factor (e.g., Hayes, 1979; Miller, 1982; Reischauer, 1981). The strongest formulation of this hypothesis was presented by Hayes, who wrote,

The inward nature of the Japanese, the periods of ethnocentricity, ultranationalism and xenophobia all augur against the teaching of English. It may very well be that the Japanese do not want to learn English or, for that matter, any foreign language, as the bilingual and those having spent any time abroad are “deviant” in the Japanese eye, not to be entirely trusted . . . [they] may be “contaminated” and no longer “pure” Japanese. And, too, this ethnocentricity contributes to the implied wish for others to learn Japanese rather than for the Japanese to learn English. (p. 372)

Although many scholars may not have agreed with or even questioned Hayes’s fairly strong formulation of the hypothesis, there has been to date no formal repudiation of his claim. A few scholars

continue to hint at this possible link between ethnocentrism and the English teaching system in Japan. Koike and Tanaka (1995) identified seven factors characterizing foreign language education policies in Japan; the second of these factors was "the Japanese social psychology characterized by group consciousness, which often discriminates against outside people . . . Japanese people feel comfortable within their group, but they feel uneasy outside the group" (p. 23).

More recently, Kubota (1999) criticized these cultural labels, which are often taken for granted. She argued that current conceptions about culture in the applied linguistics literature tend to draw a rigid boundary and create a dichotomy between East Asian and Western cultures. Japanese culture is characterized as traditional, homogeneous, and group oriented, whereas Western culture emphasizes self-expression, creativity, and critical thinking. She even suggested that the Japanese themselves adopt this dichotomy in order to support their own cultural nationalism and struggle for power against Westernisation through *nihonjinron* ('theories on the Japanese'). Meanwhile, there is new evidence that educational practices are changing in Japan (and in the West) and that these labels are not as applicable as they once were. However, there has been little or no empirical inquiry that relates the possible influence of cultural labels on English as a Second Language (ESL) proficiency of the Japanese.

The present study took as a starting point the alleged difficulty of learning English for the Japanese and explored some factors that could possibly explain this phenomenon. The factors explored are those relating to that attitude of the Japanese towards their own group and language as reflected in their beliefs, myths, and valorization of certain aspects of Japanese culture. One particular attitude that has been attributed by certain scholars to the Japanese is their alleged ethnocentrism. We included this trait in our investigation because it has already been put forward as a possible factor affecting Japanese L2 proficiency. We felt that it would be important to investigate its role and to determine whether it does indeed affect L2 proficiency. Before investigating how these factors affect Japanese L2 proficiency, however, a brief discussion of the Japanese learning situation is in order.

LANGUAGE LEARNING BY THE JAPANESE

The Japanese reputation for being unsuccessful ESL learners has been acknowledged by both Japanese and foreign language educators and

scholars (Hayes, 1979; Ike, 1995; Matsumoto, 1994; Miller, 1982; Ota, 1994; Reischauer, 1981). Hayes, for example, claimed that "students, even after instruction in the language from 6 to 10 years, still cannot comprehend or compose more than the simplest English sentences and cannot read, write or speak with any kind of fluency" (p. 366). More recently, Japanese researchers have also commented that "English language competence in Japan is poor despite much schooling in English" (Ota, 1994, p. 201).

Following the language distance between Japanese and English (Odlin, 1989), the reason most readily presented to explain low levels of proficiency in English among Japanese learners is the inferior quality of English teaching in Japan (Hayes, 1979; Matsumoto, 1994; Miller, 1982). Matsumoto, for example, stated that

English education in Japan is troublesome. It is a source of much criticism, blame, and debate. . . . Although English teachers have been doing their utmost to improve and respond to criticisms, nevertheless, student attitudes and proficiency remain negative and criticism has not diminished. (p. 209)

Whether right or wrong, the judgement of inferior quality is often attributed to the fact that teaching is basically oriented toward helping students pass college and university entrance examinations, with their focus on grammar and text translation, instead of toward promoting oral communication. Nevertheless, although this explanation may be true, some writers, such as those quoted above (e.g., Koike & Tanaka, 1995), continue to speculate that factors relating to Japanese cultural values may also be at play. Below, we discuss social factors such as ethnocentrism, cultural labels such as shyness, inwardness, groupism, and acceptance of beliefs and values expressed through myths and proverbs in order to clarify precisely how they are seen to affect L2 proficiency.

ETHNOCENTRISM AND ETHNOSPECIFICITY

Japanese ethnocentrism, according to Reischauer (1981), can be defined as distinctions that emphasize a feeling of uniqueness or separateness from other groups in the world. Normally, a sense of distinctiveness is associated with attitudes reflecting better-worse, positive-negative, or even superior-inferior comparison with others. However, one can think of Japanese ethnocentrism without necessarily positing the superior-inferior element (Reischauer, 1981). The uniqueness or distinctiveness that characterizes Japanese-style

ethnocentrism seems to be limited to a feeling that there is something positive about being Japanese or, at the very least, that being Japanese is a focal point from which all things are to be viewed or interpreted. Perhaps a more appropriate term to capture the essence of Japanese-style ethnocentrism is "Japanese ethnospecificity." This term carries no connotation with regard to superior-inferior comparisons. Although there is no doubt that some individual Japanese may blend generalized negative evaluations of non-Japanese with their feelings of distinctiveness, as a group label, Japanese ethnospecificity seems to be a suitable term. In this article, we will use this term to distinguish general ethnocentrism as defined above (Kalin & Berry, 1994) from the less value-laden Japanese-style ethnocentrism.

Japanese ethnospecificity seems to manifest itself in different ways. The Japanese scholar Watanabe (as cited in Ike, 1995) stated that "the purpose of learning English is to cultivate the learner's mind . . . the learning of English should also be regarded as an opportunity to bring out the realization of the value of the learner's mother tongue and culture" (p. 7). This statement may illustrate an ethnospecific feature characterized by viewing everything through Japanese eyes. Thus, the purpose of learning English is to be viewed not only as gaining another means of expressing oneself but also as gaining another means by which the Japanese can appreciate Japanese language and culture and nurture the values held in Japanese society.

Another example of Japanese ethnospecificity was seen in the phenomenon described as "peeling-off of foreignness" (Lincicome, 1993, p. 136) from children returning to Japan from a long stay overseas and reentering the Japanese school system. In 1985, the Center for Education of Children Overseas reported that many returnee children were encouraged by their teachers and peers to become Japanese and to speak English with a Japanese accent in choral recitation in class. Carson (1992) stated that in Japan "language teaching encourages children to express what is socially shared rather than what is individual and personal" (pp. 41–42). Lincicome saw a contradiction between the Japanese government's attitude of promoting internationalization and recognition of these Japanese returnee children as "a valuable asset to the future Japan," on the one hand, and the de-internationalization of them for reentry into the Japanese mainstream on the other hand. For many Japanese, however, the contradiction did not seem evident.

A further example of Japanese ethnospecificity

is reflected in the Japanese practice of making a distinction between parts of the Japanese language that have a foreign origin and parts that have a Japanese origin (Miller, 1982; Moeran, 1988; Ramsey & Birk, 1983). The Japanese, for example, conventionally use the *katakana* syllabary for foreign words, but the *hiragana* syllabary for Japanese words. Also, Japanese ships carry the suffix *-maru* (e.g., *Fuji-maru*), whereas foreign ships carry the suffix *-go* (e.g., *Elizabeth-go*).

The Japanese also maintain a distinction between themselves and foreigners by assigning different names for the Japanese language that they learn, *kokugo* ('national language') and the Japanese language that foreigners learn, *nihongo* ('Japanese language'). By making a "psychological and semantic" distinction between *nihongo* and *kokugo* (Befu, 1981, p. 25), the Japanese underscore their distinctiveness from others. Ramsey and Birk (1983) suggested that underlying this distinction is a belief that only the Japanese can truly learn Japanese. Foreigners may understand Japanese language and culture but never to the extent that the Japanese themselves do. By the same token, some Japanese believe that they cannot learn foreign languages to the extent that others can.

If, as many language scholars and educators have claimed in the past, attitudes play an important role in shaping L2 achievement (Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 1991; Lambert & Tucker, 1972), it is reasonable to hypothesize that Japanese learners of English holding ethnocentric views about the world or ethnospecific views about themselves, such as those described above, may achieve lower levels of English proficiency than those holding less ethnocentric or ethnospecific views. One purpose of the present study is to ascertain if this hypothesis is still valid today.

CULTURAL TRAITS

Other factors have also been suggested to explain the purported difficulty of the Japanese in attaining high levels of English proficiency. These include cultural traits such as the alleged Japanese tendency to be shy, inward looking, and to be group oriented. In this article, the term cultural traits will denote both cultural and personality traits.

Shyness

Shyness as a Japanese trait has been noted by Hayes (1979), Matsumoto (1994), Reischauer (1981), and Zimbardo (1977), among others.

Matsumoto, for example, described the Japanese as "introverted, and . . . shy to express themselves in public" (p. 210). He traced this shyness to Confucian conformity that encourages reticence to speak out. He claimed that "in Japan, individualization and outspoken behaviour have been regarded as vices, rather than virtues" (Matsumoto, 1994, p. 210). Reischauer has also observed that

Japanese as a whole are less inclined than Westerners to enter into casual contacts and are likely to seem forbiddingly formal in any new encounter. Pauses in conversation can be agonizingly long, at least to the Western participant. . . . This self-consciousness, of course, makes Japanese often ill at ease with others and may help account for the tendency of young girls to giggle and simper, and men to suck in air while speaking. (pp. 143–144)

Shyness, however, is not necessarily viewed in the same way in Japan as in Western societies. In a study involving different ethnic groups in different parts of the world, Zimbardo (1977) found that although all the groups viewed shyness as problematic, significantly more Japanese participants than other nationals reported that they liked being shy. Shyness, then, is not only attributed to the Japanese by outsiders, but it seems also to be one trait that the Japanese positively attribute to themselves. As another illustration of Japanese shyness, Oshima-Takane and Muto (1993) reported that Japanese students in Japan, as compared to Canadian students in Canada, seldom raise their hands to ask questions in class. How might the alleged shyness of the Japanese affect their L2 learning? Shy people are usually less inclined to enter into casual contacts with strangers. They are less likely to avail themselves of opportunities to interact with members of the target language group. As a result, they miss opportunities to further their language learning through heightened interpersonal contact. If shyness affects L2 learning, one can hypothesize that Japanese who are shy have lower levels of proficiency in English than those who are not.

Inwardness

In addition to being shy, the Japanese are also considered inward or introverted (e.g., Hayes, 1979; Matsumoto, 1994). Matsumoto related this trait to inhibition of outward self-expression. Zimbardo (1977) viewed shyness, awkwardness, and inwardness as lying on a psychological continuum: "At one end of the continuum are those who . . . are largely introverts, and association with others holds limited appeal compared to their

needs for privacy and solitude" (pp. 16–17). This study also investigated the effect of an introverted nature on L2 learning. Note here a distinction between being shy and being introverted. Shy people cannot express themselves or behave as they would like, whereas inward people can express themselves, but prefer not to. It has been hypothesized by many authors that extroversion and introversion are related to L2 learning (Ellis, 1994, p. 520). In the present study, two hypotheses are made regarding the role of inwardness in L2 learning: (a) extroverted learners will do better at acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills than developing cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1983), whereas (b) the reverse will be true of introverted learners.

Groupism

Groupism is defined as harmonization within the in-group, achieved when members downplay their individualism for the well-being of the group. Reischauer (1981) stated that "there can be no doubt that the Japanese are more group-oriented than most Westerners, and have developed great skills in cooperative group living" (p. 137). Triandis, Bontempo, and Villareal (1988) cited Japan as an example of a society "with long traditions [where] the collectivism elements may persist even though the societies have become very complex" (p. 324). Hamaguchi (1980) and Tsuneyoshi (1992, p. 31) agreed that Japanese society is often described as a "herd society" by non-Japanese, and that Japanese people appear to demonstrate groupism tendencies more than other groups do, at least on a superficial level. For example, Sayeki (as cited in Inagaki, 1989) reported how two Japanese college students failed to solve a physics problem because they both tried to avoid confrontation. They agreed on a superficial response in order to maintain better interpersonal relations. In this case, harmonization prevailed over scientific argument, even within an in-group. Thus, the hypothesis that groupism may affect L2 proficiency is based on the notion that individuals who are group-oriented are likely to elect to function within the confines of their in-group and to shy away from socializing with members of other groups. As a result, they cut themselves off from the social interactions needed in order to succeed in L2 learning.

BELIEFS AND VALUES

Beliefs about learning Japanese and English and the value placed on silence and economy in

using language have also been adduced as affecting L2 learning by Japanese speakers.

Beliefs about Language Learning

Japanese have been reported to hold various beliefs or myths concerning their language and their language learning abilities (Miller, 1982). According to Miller, there is a widespread belief among the Japanese that the distinctiveness and sincerity of their language, largely supported by *kotodama* ('spirit of the language'), makes the Japanese assume that the language is exceptionally difficult to learn. According to this belief, not only is the language complex and intricate, but it is also so spiritual that no one but the Japanese can truly understand it. An equally popular belief is that the Japanese brain functions neurologically in a different manner than those of other peoples; it is specially adapted to the Japanese language and emotions (Tsunoda, 1978) and not to any other language. These myths are often used as an excuse for why the Japanese are unsuccessful in learning English (Miller, 1982). The present study makes the following hypothesis concerning the role of beliefs about language learning: Japanese learners who strongly endorse such beliefs about the Japanese language and language learning will have lower English proficiency than those who do not.

Values about Language Use Expressed through Proverbs

It has been claimed that, traditionally, Japanese tend to mistrust language and place a high value on silence or nonverbal communication and economy in using language (Clancy, 1985, p. 495; Toyama, 1976). Reischauer (1981) described this phenomenon as putting "great trust in nonverbal understanding and [looking] on oral or written skills in handling language and on sharp and clever reasoning as essentially shallow and possibly deceitful" (pp. 226–227). This view of language is captured in many Japanese proverbs and sayings, such as "Feelings show through" or "Silence is a virtue." Although proverbs about silence exist in English (e.g., "Silence is golden"), the Japanese proverbs differ from their English counterparts in that they signify more than the value of silence at a particular time. The main message of these Japanese proverbs is that language is often not adequate to convey meaning, and so understanding without language is highly valued. Brownell (1967, p. 20) underscored this point when he stated that the Japanese "value

not-speaking even to the extent of leaving the most fundamental things unspoken, accessible only by intuition" because they believe that the message should be understood through actions and feelings. It is reasonable to think that Japanese who endorse myths and values such as these are not likely to be very communicative and as a result will have lower levels of proficiency in the L2 than Japanese who do otherwise.

The present study thus hypothesizes that ethnocentrism or ethnospecificity, cultural traits, and values and beliefs expressed through proverbs and myths may affect how well the Japanese learn English. In order to test this hypothesis, we operationalized and measured these factors and related them to measures of English proficiency of a group of Japanese learners and users of English in Montreal.

THE STUDY

Participants

The participants included three groups ($N = 108$) of Japanese adults living in Montreal. The first group ($n = 39$, mean age = 41.7 years) consisted of Japanese women (Mothers) whose children were attending a Saturday only Japanese supplementary school and whose husbands were Japanese businessmen temporarily in Canada for overseas duty. The women were selected because it was likely that they were learning English at their own initiative, whereas their husbands were learning English out of necessity, for business reasons. Effects of ethnocentrism and ethnospecificity, cultural traits, or values and beliefs on English proficiency would therefore likely be more evident with the women than with the men. The second group ($n = 52$, mean age = 23.3 years) were young Japanese students registered in a special ESL program at a local continuing education institute or at a university (ESL Students). The third group ($n = 17$, mean age = 28.6 years) were graduate students enrolled at a Montreal English university (University Students). The main difference between the ESL Students group and the University Students was that the former were studying English as a subject whereas the latter were studying content subjects in various disciplines (e.g., linguistics, psychology) in English. These two groups were included because they offered different age groups that could be compared to the Mothers group. There was also a sufficiently large number of them to permit inclusion in the study.

Materials

Three sets of materials were used: a Biographical Data Questionnaire, Proficiency Measures, and a Social Factors Questionnaire.¹

Biographical Data Questionnaire. The Biographical Data Questionnaire contained questions about the participants' age, length of stay in Canada, education level, and years of learning English.

Proficiency Measures. The respondents' proficiency in English was measured by a cloze test and a 15-item self-assessment questionnaire. The cloze test was adapted from those of Lightbown and Halter (1989) and Oller, Hudson, and Liu (1977). It consisted of a simple text in which every seventh word was deleted, for a total of 60 deletions. A respondent's score was the number of blanks he or she correctly filled in (the maximum score was 60). Other types of proficiency measures could have been used in this investigation; however in a pilot study of a small group of Mothers it became very clear that the Mothers group participants were uncomfortable about having their English assessed. They were wary about having their speech recorded and evaluated, and they indicated that they would refrain from participating if any elaborate tests were given to them. In interacting with them, the first author determined that an acceptable compromise would be a simple questionnaire such as a cloze test. Although some researchers question the cloze test's efficacy as a measure of proficiency, many have found support for it. Bachman (1982) found that cloze tests are highly correlated with almost every other type of language test. In a recent study, Jonz (1990) concluded that cloze tests are generally consistent in the ways they measure language knowledge.

The self-assessment questionnaire contained two measures: a measure of self-rated ability to use English in different situations and a self-rated measure of the scope of use of this language. The first measure contained nine questions designed specifically to measure the respondents' feelings about their ability to use English on certain occasions and for specific purposes (self-assessed Ability; $\alpha = .92$).² Examples are "What proportion of the newspaper do you understand?" and "I can speak English enough to: (a) do my banking, (b) buy a car, (c) explain my medical problems." Respondents indicated their answers either by checking a scale from 0% to 100% or by checking *yes* or *no*. Each question was weighted equally and the total was scaled from 0 to 60 in order to match

the scores on the cloze test. The second set of self-assessment measures contained questions designed to measure the scope of English use of the respondents (self-assessed performance; $\alpha = .76$). Examples are "Overall, what percentage of time do you spend speaking English?" and "What proportion of your friends are English speakers?" These items were scored in a way similar to the self-assessed ability questions.

Social Factors Questionnaire. The Social Factors Questionnaire consisted of 56 questions measuring the respondents' attitudes and beliefs toward various aspects of Japanese culture, language, and life. Each question contained a statement (e.g., "Japanese who are fluent in English have lost part of their Japanese culture") followed by a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from *Do not agree at all* to *Strongly agree*. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of acceptance of the statement using these scores. The 56 items in this questionnaire were divided into the following eight sets.

General Ethnocentrism (Genethno; $\alpha = .58$). This set consisted of nine statements extracted from a collection of standardized psychological tests that were used to measure general ethnocentrism in Wiseman, Hammer, and Nishida (1989) who, in turn, derived them from Sampson and Smith (1957). The items were chosen because they were reported to reflect general ethnocentrism, prejudice, and general attitude towards the other culture. A sample Genethno statement is "I suppose foreigners are all right, but I've never liked them." Reliability and validity of the items were considered acceptable based on past intercultural research (e.g., Gudykunst, 1983).

Japanese Ethnospecificity (Japethno; $\alpha = .49$). This set contained 10 statements similar to the ones above but were designed to measure specifically Japanese-style ethnocentrism or Japanese ethnospecificity (e.g., "On the whole, the Japanese way of life is the best" and "Foreigners who are born in Japan should automatically become Japanese citizens"). They were inspired by comments such as "Japanese seem to have a sharp awareness at all times of themselves as Japanese and of others as being, first of all 'not Japanese'" (Reischauer, 1981, p. 403).

Language Ethnospecificity (Langethno; $\alpha = .51$). This set contained nine statements such as "Japanese who are fluent in English have lost a part of Japanese culture" and "The Japanese language is just as expressive as any other language." These

items were designed to measure ethnospecific attitudes specifically directed toward language use.

Groupism (Groupism; $\alpha = .42$). This set contained five statements based on definitions provided by Hamaguchi (1980) and Triandis, Bontempo, and Villareal (1988), among others. Examples include "I feel secure when I am with other Japanese, rather than with foreigners" and "I prefer individualism and competition to security and conformity."

Shyness (Shyness; $\alpha = .75$). In order to formulate the shyness questions, an attempt was made to distinguish shyness from inwardness, given that an individual can be inward but not shy. Inwardness is the characteristic specifically addressed to self, whereas shyness is the characteristic directed to others. Five shyness questions were formulated based on Zimbardo's (1977) definition of shyness. Examples of statements used here are "I feel uncomfortable talking to strangers" and "During a seminar or meeting, I would hesitate to raise my hand and ask questions."

Inwardness (Inwardness; $\alpha = .30$). Zimbardo's (1977) description that inward people prefer reading or self-reflection to socializing was used as a guide in designing the five statements used in this set of questions. Examples include: "I prefer to consult a map rather than ask for directions" and "I do not mind not talking to anybody all day."

Acceptance of Myths about Language (Myths; $\alpha = .62$). Eight test items were constructed, most of which were extracted directly from the writings of authors cited in Miller's (1982) book on modern myths in Japan. Examples include: "The Japanese brain is actually different from the brain of other people" and "The Japanese are poor at mastering other languages."

Values expressed through Proverbs (Proverbs; $\alpha = .67$). Five proverbs expressing the Japanese value that words are not adequate and that silence is preferred to speaking were selected from collections of well-known Japanese proverbs and sayings (Fujii, 1940; Ishida, 1975). Examples include: *Chinmoku wa bitoku* ('Silence is a virtue') and *Ishindenshin* ('Feelings show through').

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data, various analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures and multiple regression analyses were conducted using the statistical package S-PLUS (Becker, Chambers, & Wilks, 1995). In these analyses, 15 variables were

examined: 4 background variables, 3 dependent variables, and 8 predictor variables. The background variables consisted of the respondents' age (Age), length of stay in Canada (Stay), level of education (Education), and years of learning English (Learn). The values in the variables of Age, Stay, and Learn were all expressed in years. Because the values in the Stay variable were highly skewed, they were log transformed in the statistical analysis, but those reported in Table 1 are the original untransformed scale in years. Education was scored as High School = 1, College = 2, Undergraduate university = 3, and Graduate university = 4.

The dependent variables were the respondents' scores on the cloze test (Cloze), self-assessed ability measures (Ability), and self-assessed performance measures (Performance), scored as described earlier.

Finally, the predictor variables were the respondents' scores on the social factors questionnaire. Eight predictor variables were used: Genethno, Japethno, Langethno, Groupism, Shyness, Inwardness, Myths, and Proverbs. In scoring the Social Factors Questionnaire, the points on the seven-point scale were assigned integer values from -3 to +3. A respondent's score for each of the eight sets mentioned above was the average of his or her scores on the specific scales that made up each measure (e.g., averaged over nine scales for Genethno, over ten scales for Japethno). Scoring was adjusted to ensure that higher scores indicated more evidence of whatever was being measured (e.g., higher ethnocentrism, more inwardness).

A preliminary analysis of the data showed that the three groups of participants (Mothers, ESL Students, and University Students) responded differently to the questionnaires. Because of this observation, separate analyses were performed on their scores. For each group, the participants' scores on the three English proficiency variables were subjected to a multiple regression analysis. The effect of background variables, such as Stay, which had a strong effect on English proficiency, were removed by including Age, Stay, Education, and Learn as background variables in the multiple regression analyses. A multiple regression analysis using all background and all predictor variables was reported in Hinenoya (1997). Because of the small sample sizes and large number of variables, the degrees of freedom were considered too low to provide useful results, so this analysis is not reproduced here.

Instead, separate multiple regression analyses using all background variables and just one pre-

TABLE 1
Means and (Standard Deviations) of the Variables and Fisher's *F* Ratio Statistics for Differences between Mothers, ESL Students, and University Students

Variable	Mothers (<i>n</i> = 39)	ESL (<i>n</i> = 52)	University (<i>n</i> = 17)	<i>F</i> (2,105)
Background				
Age	41.17 (7.37)	23.35 (4.27)	28.62 (6.18)	104.11**
Stay	6.35 (7.43) ^a	.67 (.61)	4.02 (2.35) ^a	28.48**
Education	2.26 (.88) ^a	1.96 (.82) ^a	3.18 (.88)	13.09**
English proficiency				
Cloze	34.49 (12.69) ^a	28.85 (11.34) ^a	49.06 (6.15)	20.74**
Ability	25.49 (14.07) ^a	30.57 (12.65) ^a	49.71 (9.76)	21.60**
Performance	15.71 (8.48)	27.09 (10.72)	35.56 (10.16)	27.85**
Ethnocentrism				
Genethno	-.77 (.88) ^a	-1.12 (.64) ^a	-1.23 (.84) ^a	3.06
Japethno	.11 (.57) ^a	-.19 (.79) ^a	-.69 (.74)	7.61**
Langethno	-.43 (.85) ^a	-.55 (.84) ^a	-.76 (.85) ^a	.96
Cultural traits				
Groupism	.23 (1.06) ^a	-.24 (.81) ^{ab}	-.86 (1.06) ^b	8.12**
Shyness	.77 (1.39) ^a	.51 (1.30) ^a	.59 (1.50) ^a	1.31
Inwardness	-.37 (.99) ^a	-.55 (.99) ^a	-.65 (.87) ^a	.63
Values and beliefs				
Proverbs	.19 (1.14) ^a	-.19 (1.25) ^a	-.22 (1.30) ^a	1.31
Myths	-.32 (1.00) ^a	-.75 (.98) ^{ab}	-1.40 (.92) ^b	7.36*

Note. For a given variable, group means designated with the same superscript letter are not statistically different from each other (*p* > .05) by the Tukey Studentized range test with parameters 3 and 105.
p* < .01. *p* < .001.

dicator variable at a time are reported here. The effect of each predictor variable was then assessed by its partial correlation with the English proficiency variables, removing the effect of the four background variables only, and not removing the effect of the other predictor variables. In each case, it was predicted that English proficiency would decrease with increasing support for ethnocentrism/ethnospecificity, cultural traits, values, and beliefs, implying a negative partial correlation between English proficiency and the predictor variables. The significance of the partial correlation was assessed by a one-tailed *t* test.

FINDINGS

Table 1 summarizes the results of ANOVAs performed in order to discover differences among the three groups of participants. The table shows the respondents' means and standard deviations broken down by group, together with a Fisher's *F* ratio statistic for group differences. The three groups differed in their background variables, English proficiency, and three of the predictor variables.

Our main hypothesis in this study was that ethnocentrism, ethnospecificity, and other social variables, such as stereotyped qualities and acceptance of beliefs and values expressed in myths and proverbs, would affect the proficiency levels of the Japanese respondents. In particular, we predicted that the higher the levels of general ethnocentrism, Japanese ethnospecificity, and language ethnospecificity the respondents had, the lower their scores would be on each of the self-rated proficiency measures. We also predicted that the greater their levels of shyness, groupism, and inwardness, the lower their scores on the proficiency measures would be. Likewise, the more the participants accepted beliefs about learning Japanese and English and the more they showed approval for the values of silence and economy of language use, the lower their scores would be on each of the proficiency measures.

Table 2 shows the partial Pearson product-moment correlations from the separate multiple regression analyses for each group, focusing only on one predictor variable at a time (e.g., Genethno, Myths, etc.), the four background variables (Age, Education, Stay, and Learn) and the three proficiency measures (Cloze, Ability, and

TABLE 2
Partial Pearson Product-Moment Correlations of the English Proficiency Variables with Predictor Variables, Removing the Background Variables Age, Stay, Education, and Learn

Predictor	Mothers			ESL Students			University Students		
	Cl ^a	Ab	Pr	Cl	Ab	Pr	Cl	Ab	Pr
Genethno	.08	.28	.03	0	-.17	-.20	-.17	-.06	-.20
Japethno	-.15	.03	.01	-.11	.09	.03	-.09	-.01	-.70**b
Langethno	.03	.28	.15	-.16	0	.02	-.44	-.38	-.50*
Groupism	.20	.21	-.09	-.16	-.06	-.12	-.14	-.10	-.44
Shyness	.15	-.24	-.47**b	-.02	-.15	-.09	-.29	-.52*	-.07
Inwardness	-.10	-.40**	-.46**b	.31	.04	-.13	-.09	-.37	-.47
Proverbs	-.23	-.33*	-.26	.08	.09	.14	-.19	-.15	-.38
Myths	-.26	-.38*	-.39*	-.03	-.09	.03	-.35	-.55*	-.46

^aEnglish Proficiency Variables: Cl = Cloze, Ab = Ability, and Pr = Performance.
^b $p < .05$ Bonferroni corrected for the eight tests in each column or the nine tests in each row.
* $p < .05$ (one-tailed). ** $p < .01$ (one-tailed).

Performance). Table 2 shows 72 tests, of which 10 showed statistically significant ($p < .05$) negative correlations that supported the hypotheses. This number exceeds the number of such correlations expected by chance alone, which is $72 \times .05 = 3.6$ (even if the tests are correlated), so it appears that these correlations were not all due to chance. A Bonferroni correction for the eight predictor variables in each column or the nine dependent variables in each row leaves three tests significant at the $p < .05$ level. The findings revealed in Table 2 can be summarized as follows:

Ethnocentrism

With regard to ethnocentrism and its relation to language proficiency, there were three main findings:

1. No significant correlations obtained between the respondents' general ethnocentrism scores and their scores on any of the proficiency measures for any of the three groups.
2. A significant negative correlation obtained between the University Students' self-assessed performance scores and their Japanese ethnospecificity and language ethnospecificity. The negative correlation means that the lower the students' ethnospecificity scores were, the higher their self-assessed performance scores.
3. No significant correlations obtained between the Mothers' and the ESL Students' proficiency scores and their general ethnocentrism, Japanese ethnospecificity, and language ethnospecificity scores.

Social Factors

The investigation of cultural traits and values and beliefs yielded six main findings:

1. The shyness and inwardness scores were significantly negatively correlated with self-assessed ability and performance scores for the Mothers group. The higher the Mothers' scores were, the lower their performance and ability scores. The correlation between inwardness and ability obtained even when the effect of shyness was removed by adding it as an additional covariate to the multiple regression ($r = -.33, p < .05$).
2. Shyness scores were also significantly negatively correlated with ability scores for the University Students group. The correlation between shyness and ability obtained even when the effect of inwardness was removed by adding it as an additional covariate to the multiple regression ($r = -.52, p < .05$).
3. Myths about language learning scores were significantly negatively correlated with the Mothers' self-assessed ability and performance scores, indicating that the more they accepted the myths, the lower their ability and performance in English. In the case of the University Students group, given the actual means and range of scores involved, the results suggest that the lower their acceptance of the myths, the higher their self-rated ability scores. The range was -2.75 to $-.125$, where 0 represents the midpoint between acceptance and nonacceptance of myths.
4. The Mothers group's acceptance of the values of silence and lack of verbosity as expressed in proverbs was significantly negatively correlated with their abilities. This means that the higher

their acceptance of these values was, the lower their ability scores were.

5. There were no significant relationships between the respondents' cloze test scores and any of the predictor variables.

6. For the ESL Students, there was no evidence of any effect of any of the social factors variables on English proficiency.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Ethnocentrism/Ethnospecificity

Because of the conjectured link between ethnocentric attitudes and attained proficiency levels in English, we expected to find strong and straightforward evidence for this relationship in the present study. The results, however, indicated no such strong links. No correlations involving general ethnocentrism and any measure of proficiency yielded significant results for any of the groups examined. This finding suggests that perhaps ethnocentrism does not affect proficiency in the L2, at least, for Japanese participants.

The results do provide some evidence of a relationship between Japanese ethnospecificity and language ethnospecificity and self-assessed performance. For example, there was a significant negative correlation between the University Students' self-assessed performance scores and their Japanese ethnospecificity scores. There was also a significant negative correlation between their language ethnospecificity scores and their performance scores. The negative correlations, in each case, indicate that the lower the Japanese and language ethnospecificity scores were, the higher their performance scores. This result is interesting. Examination of the means and ranges indicated that the correlation obtained here was between low ethnospecificity levels and high performance levels, and not between high ethnospecificity and low performance. Moreover, it was found only in the University Students' data and not in the Mothers' and ESL Students' data. The University Students group, it must be remembered, was the group with the lowest ethnospecificity scores and the highest education scores. The fact that a link was found only in the University Students group suggests that this link may only occur when the ethnospecificity levels are low, tempered as they already were by the effects of higher education.

Of course, it is necessary to rule out range restrictions in the scores of the Mothers group or the ESL Students group as the reason for the failure to find significant correlations in their

scores. Range restriction refers to a narrow spread in the scores. The presence of a range restriction in any set of scores in the Mothers' or the ESL Students' data and its absence in the University Students' data could explain why there are no significant correlations between Japanese ethnospecificity and language ethnospecificity and self-assessed performance in the former group's data, but there were significant ones in the latter group's data. Examination of the standard deviations (see Table 1) of the three groups on the Ability and Performance measures, however, suggests that the spread of the scores is roughly equal among the three groups (the largest Fisher's F ratio statistic for comparing the standard deviations, 1.72, was not significant, $p > .05$). This rules out a range restriction explanation for the correlation pattern obtained.

Other Social Factors

Another interesting finding was the significant negative correlations obtained with the other social factors. The Mothers' higher acceptance of themselves as being shy gave a significant negative correlation with self-rated performance. In other words, the more Mothers viewed themselves as shy, the lower they rated their performance. The Mothers' higher acceptance of themselves as inward-looking was likewise negatively correlated with self-rated ability and performance. Higher acceptance of their own shyness correlated negatively with self-rated ability for the University Students. Finally, greater endorsement of the myths correlated negatively with self-rated ability for the University Students. These results provide some evidence for the hypothesis about the role of these social factors in L2 proficiency.

It is interesting to note that it was the Mothers, followed by the University Students, who showed strongest susceptibility to the effects of social factors other than ethnospecificity. Of the eight significant negative correlations obtained, six were found in the Mothers' data, and only two in the University Students' data. The six significant correlations in the Mother's data involved four of the five factors investigated here. These factors implicated both ability and performance in this group of participants. The two factors that were involved in the University Students' data correlated with Ability only. No significant contributions of any factors were detected in the ESL Students' data.

At first glance, this pattern of results can be interpreted as a consequence of the group's different levels of exposure to factors shaping social attitudes as a function of age. Being the oldest,

the Mothers (mean age = 41.2 years) had the longest exposure to these attitudes and consequently would be more deeply affected by these attitudes than would the others. The University Students (mean age = 28.6 years), being next in age, had significantly less such exposure and would thus be less affected. The ESL Students (mean age = 23.3 years), being the youngest group, were least exposed and would therefore be the least affected of all. Examination of the scores of the three groups on the shyness, inwardness, and values variables, however, indicates that there were no significant differences among the groups in terms of their degree of shyness and inwardness, as well as their acceptance of the values expressed through proverbs. Only on the beliefs in myths variable did the University Students score significantly lower than did the Mothers. The lack of other significant differences between the groups on shyness, inwardness, and value variables indicates that all three groups had been exposed to these social attitudes long enough to internalize them equally despite their different ages.

An alternative explanation may simply be the role played by factors such as education and length of time learning the L2. We have already seen that these factors were among the major factors distinguishing the Mothers from the University Student groups, with the Mothers group having significantly lower levels of education and shorter time learning English. The ESL Students' level of education did not differ significantly from that of the Mothers, but it was significantly lower than that of the University Students. The ESL students and the Mothers also had significantly fewer years learning English than the University students. It is possible that these differences account for the differences in the number of social factors that affected proficiency and the nature of the effects in each group.

Social change has occurred over the last few decades in Japan, and educational reform for promoting self-expression and individuality in schools might have created a new type of Japanese student who can think and behave more independently and objectively than Japanese who were educated a few decades ago. Stereotypical cultural values once highly regarded by elders may no longer have the same effect (Kubota, 1999). In the case of the ESL Students, it is possible that education and more contact with target speakers had reduced the effects of exposure to traditional values so that the attitudes and values did not affect proficiency as much as expected. With this group, other factors may also have been

at play. Although the ESL Students had lower levels of education than did the University Students, they were young and belonged to a new generation of Japanese. Thus, they might have been exposed to the same attitudes and values of their society, but they might have internalized these values in a way that resulted in little impact on their proficiency. In other words, the ESL Students may feel as strongly attached to beliefs and stereotypes as their elders, or they may feel themselves as shy and inward looking, but they do not feel that these attitudes need affect their learning of the L2.

In recent years, internationalization has been the focus of national attention in Japan. This was especially true in the planning and implementation of language education programmes for both Japanese and English, given that the number of foreign residents and students has dramatically increased in Japan (Gerbert, 1993; Lincicome, 1993; Tanaka & Tanaka, 1995). It is possible that this move toward internationalization has also influenced younger Japanese so that they think about matters of culture and identity differently than did past generations. Recognition that there may be generational differences in Japan is supported by the fact that Japanese born after 1970 are often addressed by the Japanese themselves as *shin-jinrui* ('new mankind').

Cloze Test

Most of the significant correlations found in this study were between social factors and self-assessed ability and performance. No correlations were obtained with the cloze measure. An explanation for the lack of correlation may be that cloze tests focus on skills that are targeted by "examination English." Cloze tests are one of the measures used in university entrance exams in Japan (Miller, 1982, p. 243). Thus, the pressure to do well in examination English may outweigh any effects of ethnocentrism, traits, values, and beliefs. That a correlation obtained between social factors and self-rated ability and performance is intriguing. The ability measure used in this study assessed how well the respondents felt they could carry out certain tasks in English (e.g., letter writing, reading newspapers); the performance measure assessed the social uses they made of the language (e.g., make friends, have contact with target speakers). Both measures focused on the social aspect of the language as opposed to more academic uses as measured by tests such as the cloze. This finding suggests that perhaps the social factors studied here are correlated to profi-

ciency in the social uses of language and not to the academic aspects of language such as grammatical knowledge and text comprehension.

One of the hypotheses of this study was that shyness and inwardness would have negative effects on the acquisition of basic interpersonal skills but not on cognitive academic language proficiency. If one takes the cloze test used here as assessing cognitive academic language proficiency, the performance measure as assessing basic interpersonal skills, and the ability measure as assessing both, then the hypothesis would predict a negative correlation between performance and shyness and inwardness, but not between cloze and shyness and inwardness. The results of this study revealed this pattern. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Cloze was in fact positively correlated with inwardness for ESL students ($r = .31, p < .05$). This suggests that inward or introverted ESL students may actually perform well at the sort of reading and comprehension skills that are measured by cloze tests.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the present study supported the hypothesis that certain social factors may influence ESL learning outcomes by Japanese learners of English. Significant effects obtained for some forms of ethnocentrism (e.g., Japanese ethnospecificity and language ethnospecificity), self-attribution of shyness and inwardness, and endorsement of myths and values about language learning on English proficiency. The exceptions were general ethnocentrism and acceptance of the groupism label, neither of which showed effects. Views about one's language, one's social group, the attribution of traits (e.g., shyness, inwardness) to groups, as well as the prevalence of myths about language are likely to be developed in individuals mainly through their membership in a group. The major findings of this study confirm that learners' acceptance and endorsement of these group-developed ideas and values may affect the general nature of their L2 learning.

Although the results suggested that ethnospecificity, cultural and personal traits, and values and beliefs are related to English proficiency, the present study does not consider the issue of causality. Do the social factors affect the respondents' level of proficiency, or does their attained level of proficiency cause them to be less ethnocentric, to have reduced belief in myths, and so on? Finally, in this article we raise the possibility that if ethnocentrism plays a role at all in L2 proficiency, it is not ethnocentrism as commonly defined (with its

superior-inferior connotations) that operates, but a neutral version of ethnocentrism (which we have defined here as ethnospecificity). Furthermore, it is not a high degree of ethnospecificity but a low degree, tempered by education and other factors, that makes the difference.

LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has only begun to explore the relationship between proficiency attained in a L2 and social factor variables such as ethnocentrism, ethnospecificity, cultural traits, and values and beliefs expressed through myths and proverbs. We need an improved methodological investigation of the issue. In future studies, three aspects, in particular, should receive close attention.

First, the measures of proficiency should be examined. In this study, we used three measures of proficiency: a cloze test and two self-assessment measures. These three measures were chosen in order to assess L2 proficiency in a way that included not only the actual levels obtained but also how well the learners saw themselves doing specific tasks in their L2 (e.g., writing letters, reading the newspaper) and how likely they were to engage in different social interactions in their L2. We thought it fitting that a study exploring the relationship of social factors and L2 proficiency focus on different facets of proficiency and investigate which of these facets relate to which social factor. The results of the study indicate that social factors such as ethnospecificity and belief in myths may not have their effects directly on the levels of proficiency attained, but indirectly by way of other aspects of language use. This conclusion is based on the fact that most of the significant correlations obtained involved performance or ability measures, or both, and seldom the cloze measures.

The lack of significant results with the cloze test is itself interesting to those researchers who have advocated for its efficacy. This finding suggests that the cloze test might not be sensitive enough to assess overall proficiency. As explained earlier, however, the cloze test was used because of the Mothers' reluctance to be tested. In a future study of the issues investigated here, it might be appropriate to use other measures of proficiency instead of, or in addition to, the cloze test (e.g., TOEFL, Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency, native speaker ratings of samples of the respondents' speech).

A revised version of the self-rated proficiency measures should be used again given that it seems

to be productive in depicting which aspects of proficiency are susceptible to social forces. The challenge is to find a method of testing that is not restricted by the participants. Future research could focus on the common and distinct components of objective proficiency and self-assessed proficiency in a L2 and how they are related to sociocultural traits.

Second, the social questionnaire should also be reexamined and refined in order to increase the efficacy of each set of measures. Except for the general ethnocentrism scales, which were selected from an already existing measure, most of the other scales were constructed by piecing together items that were revealed as potentially relevant in our literature review. We attempted to distinguish between shyness and inwardness, taking them as two different measures. We were prompted to do so by a distinction suggested by Zimbardo (1977), that inward people can control their behavior and shy people normally cannot. Therefore, we chose shyness items that revolved around one's willingness to interact with others, and we chose inwardness items revolving around a person's choice of behavior in a given situation. The distinction that we have made may not be obvious, so further refinement of these questions might be helpful.

Third, it would be interesting to investigate the generalizability of the present results to a greater and more varied population than the one studied here. Further insights could, for example, be obtained by looking at Japanese learners of English in Japan as well as at other ethnic groups (e.g., Korean). Also, most of the participants in this study were women. Although the exclusion of Japanese fathers was deliberate for reasons explained earlier, in a future study, male and female Japanese should be compared for possible gender effects. Further studies of generational differences should include younger participants such as high school students.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the many people who made this article possible: the Japanese mothers and students who participated in our study and P. Charles Brown and his colleagues, who helped us gain access to our student respondents. We want particularly to thank Norman Segalowitz and Keith Worsley, who provided us with generous assistance in preparing this manuscript. We thank Keith Worsley for his valuable advice in the statistical analyses of the data. Finally, we would like to thank four anonymous reviewers for their

very helpful comments on an earlier version of this manuscript, which led to a much improved article.

NOTES

¹ The original questionnaires and an English translation are available from the first author.

² Except for the ability and performance measures, the Cronbach alpha values were low for some of the social factors measures, suggesting that the items within some sets of measures were diverse. This selection of items was deliberate because in the present study the goal was to represent each variable as comprehensively as possible with as few items as possible. Note that very similar questions could have been added to the questionnaire which would increase alpha, but this would have made the questionnaire too long. As further validation of the self-assessment questionnaire, the 15 questions that made up Ability and Performance were correlated with Cloze. There was a clear distinction between the two: the nine Ability questions all correlated reasonably well with Cloze ($.40 < r < .52$, $p < .001$ in 9/9 cases), whereas the six Performance questions were almost uncorrelated ($.02 < r < .26$, $p < .01$ in 1/6 cases). This suggests that Ability and Performance measures behaved reasonably consistently with respect to Cloze, and differently from each other.

REFERENCES

- Au, S. Y. (1988). A critical appraisal of Gardner's social-psychological theory of second-language (L2) learning. *Language Learning*, 38, 75-95.
- Bachman, L. F. (1982). The trait structure of cloze test scores. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16, 61-70.
- Becker, R. A., Chambers, J. M., & Wilks, A. R. (1995). S-PLUS (version 4.0) [computer software]. Seattle, WA: MathSoft, Inc.
- Befu, H. (1981). Internationalization of Japan and Nihon Bunkaron. Unpublished manuscript.
- Brownell, J. A. (1967). *Japan's second language: A critical study of the English language program in the Japanese secondary schools in the 1960's*. Champaign, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Carson, J. G. (1992). Becoming biliterate: First language influences. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 1, 37-60.
- Clancy, P. M. (1985). The acquisition of Japanese. In D. I. Slobin (Ed.), *The cross linguistic study of language acquisition* (Vol. 1, pp. 373-523). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Cummins, J. (1983). Language proficiency and academic achievement. In J. W. Oller (Ed.), *Issues in language testing research*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Fujii, O. (1940). *Japanese proverbs*. Tokyo: Board of Tourist Industry, Japanese Government Railways.
- Gardner, R. (1991). Attitudes and motivation in second language learning. In A. Reynolds (Ed.), *Bilingualism, multiculturalism, and second language learning: The McGill conference in honour of Wallace E. Lambert* (pp. 43–64). Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gardner, R., Lalonde, R., & MacPherson, J. (1985). Social factors in language attrition. *Language Learning*, 35, 519–540.
- Gardner, R., & Lambert, W. E. (1959). Motivational variables in second language acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 13, 266–272.
- Gardner, R., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Gardner, R., & MacIntyre, P. (1991). An instrumental motivation in language study: Who says it isn't effective? *Studies on Second Language Acquisition*, 13, 57–72.
- Gardner, R., Smythe, P., & Brunet, G. (1977). Intensive second language study: Effects on attitudes, motivation and French achievement. *Language Learning*, 27, 243–262.
- Gatlinton, E. (1975). *Systematic variation in second language speech: A sociolinguistic study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, McGill University, Montreal.
- Gatlinton, E. (1996, August). *Marking nationalism: Francophone Canadians' attitudes towards different levels of proficiency in English*. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Association of Applied Linguistics, Jyväskylä, Finland.
- Gerbert, E. (1993). Lessons from the *Kokugo* (National Language) readers. *Comparative Education Review*, 37, 152–180.
- Giles, H., & Johnson, P. (1981). The role of language in intergroup relations. In J. C. Turner & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup behaviour*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Gudykunst, W. B. (1983). Similarities and differences in perceptions of initial intracultural and intercultural encounters: An exploratory investigation. *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 49, 49–65.
- Hamaguchi, E. (1980). Nihonjin ni totteno shudanshugi [Collectivism and origin of Japaneseness]. *Gendai no Esupuri* [L'esprit d'aujourd'hui], 160, 5–21.
- Hayes, C. W. (1979). Language contact in Japan. In W. F. Mackey & J. Ornstein (Eds.), *Sociolinguistic studies in language contact, methods and cases* (pp. 106–113). New York: Mouton Publishers.
- Heller, M. (1987). The role of language in the formation of ethnic identity. In J. S. Phinney & M. J. Rotheram (Eds.), *Children's ethnic socialization: Pluralism and development* (pp. 180–200). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hinenoya, K. (1997). *A sociolinguistic study of the effects of ethnocentrism and cultural traits on proficiency of Japanese speakers of English*. Unpublished master's thesis, Concordia University, Montreal.
- Ike, M. (1995). A historical review of English in Japan. *World Englishes*, 14, 3–12.
- Inagaki, K. (1989). Questioning and acquisition of knowledge in Japan. *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition*, 11, 142–145.
- Ishida, H. (1975). *Koji seigo kotowaza jiten* [Dictionary of proverbs]. Tokyo: Yuzankaku.
- Jonz, J. (1990). Another turn in the conversation: What does cloze measure? *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 61–83.
- Kalin, R., & Berry, J. W. (1994). Ethnic and multicultural attitudes. In J. W. Berry & J. A. Laponce (Eds.), *Ethnicity and culture in Canada: The research landscape*. Toronto, Canada: The University of Toronto Press.
- Koike, I., & Tanaka, H. (1995). English in foreign language education policy in Japan: Toward the twenty-first century. *World Englishes*, 14, 13–26.
- Kubota, R. (1999). Japanese culture constructed by discourses: Implication for applied linguistics research and ELT. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 9–35.
- Lambert, W. E., & Tucker, G. R. (1972). *The bilingual education of children: The St. Lambert experiment*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Halter, R. (1989). *Evaluation of ESL learning in regular and experimental programs in four New Brunswick school districts: 1987–88* (Vol. 2). Research report prepared for the Ministry of Education of New Brunswick.
- Lincicome, M. (1993). Nationalism, internationalization, and the dilemma of educational reform in Japan. *Comparative Education Review*, 37, 123–131.
- Matsumoto, K. (1994). English instruction problems in Japanese schools and higher education. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 5, 209–214.
- Miller, R. A. (1982). *Japan's modern myth: The language and beyond*. New York: Weatherhill.
- Moeran, B. (1988). Japanese language and society: An anthropological approach. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 12, 427–443.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. (1994). *Final report: Cultural models of achievement: A quantitative test of Ogbu's theory*. (Report No. 143). Berkeley, CA: National Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 376 515)
- Oller, J. W., Hudson, A. J., & Liu, P. F. (1977). Attitudes and attained proficiency in ESL: A sociolinguistic study of native speakers of Chinese in the United States. *Language Learning*, 27, 1–27.
- Oshima-Takane, Y., & Muto, T. (1993). *Analysis of question-asking behaviours: A comparison between Japanese and Canadian students*. Poster session presented at the annual convention of the Canadian Psychological Association.
- Ota, Y. (1994). The “decline” of English language competence in modern Japan. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 5, 201–207.

- Ramsey, S., & Birk, J. (1983). Preparation of North Americans for interaction with Japanese: Considerations of language and communication style. In D. Landis & R. W. Brislin (Eds.), *Handbook of intercultural training*, (Vol. 3, pp. 227–259). New York: Pergamon Press.
- Reischauer, E. O. (1981). *The Japanese*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sampson, D. L., & Smith, H. P. (1957). A scale to measure world-minded attitudes. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 45, 99–106.
- Segalowitz, N., & Gatbonton, E. (1977). Studies of the nonfluent bilingual. In E. Hornby (Ed.), *Bilingualism: Psychological, social, and educational implications* (pp. 77–89). New York: Academic Press.
- Svanes, B. (1988). Attitudes and “cultural distance” in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 9, 357–371.
- Tanaka, S., & Tanaka, H. (1995). A survey of Japanese sources on the use of English in Japan. *World Englishes*, 14, 117–136.
- Taylor, D. M., Meynard, R., & Rheault, E. (1977). Threat to ethnic identity and second language learning. In H. Giles (Ed.), *Language, ethnicity and intergroup relations* (pp. 99–108). London: Academic Press.
- Toyama, S. (1976). *Nihongo-no kosei* [Features of the Japanese language]. Tokyo: Chuokoron-sha.
- Triandis, H. C., Bontempo, R., & Villareal, M. J. (1988). Individualism and collectivism: Cross-cultural perspectives on self-ingroup relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 323–338.
- Tsuneyoshi, R. (1992). *Ningen keisei no nichibei hikaku* [Comparative study of Japanese and American human development]. Tokyo: Chuokoron-sha.
- Tsunoda, T. (1978). The left cerebral hemisphere of the brain and the Japanese language. *Japan Foundation Newsletter*, 6(1), 3–7.
- Wiseman, R. L., Hammer, M. R., & Nishida, H. (1989). Predictors of intercultural communication competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 13, 349–370.
- Zimbardo, P. G. (1977). *Shyness: What it is, what to do about it*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Correction to Reply by Ron Sheen

In my “Response to the 1999 *MLJ* article of Spada and Lightbown, ‘Instruction, First Language Influence and Developmental Readiness in Second Language Acquisition’” (*MLJ*, 84, p. 105, endnote 1), there were two errors, one of my own making and one which I repeated from Spada and Lightbown. As to the first, it appears in the following sentence: “Yet, they fail to address the issue raised by the fact that Turkish, like English, permits inversion with both pronouns and nouns in yes/no questions.” Instead of writing “permits inversion” I should have written “has the same word order.” I thank Charles Nelson for pointing this out. As to the second, it occurred in the final sentence where I repeated Spada and Lightbown’s reference to Schwartz and Sprouse (1994) as being concerned with the learning of English by a Turkish native speaker. This study was concerned with the learning of German by a Turkish native speaker, as correctly indicated by the study’s title given in Spada and Lightbown references. I thank Bonnie Schwartz for informing me of this error.

Ron Sheen

Université du Québec in Trois Rivières
