

**English in the Air:
An Ecological Approach to English Language Development in Japan**

by

**Dwayne Christopher Cover
B.A. University of Victoria, 1997**

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Requirements for the Degree of**

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between English in the environment and English language development in Japan. Although the English language enjoys a significant presence in the country, it has rarely been given consideration in previous research looking at second language development for Japanese learners. The study adopts Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model to conceptualize the levels of the total learning environment in which the individual is immersed.

The participants for this study were 99 Japanese university students attending Doshisha University in Kyoto. Participants were required to fill out a questionnaire and five students volunteered for interviews regarding the learners' perception of English in the surrounding environment.

The findings from this study revealed little relationship between English in the environment and English language development for Japanese learners. In fact, the results indicate that a sharp divide between English taught in the classroom and English found outside of the classroom remains. Learner attitude was identified as the most significant factor influencing English language development.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

*Anyone who has ever even had an airport layover in Tokyo –
or even a cursory exposure to Japanese people – will instantly
realize that English in Japan is like air: it is everywhere*

(Stanlaw, 2004, p. 1).

This study examines the inter-relationship between English in the environment and the development of English language ability in Japanese learners. It utilizes an ecological approach to consider the individual's perception of their surrounding environment and the way in which this environment might influence language development. Although there have been numerous research projects looking at factors that affect English language development for Japanese students, few have moved outside of the classroom setting to include the broader learning environment. Thus, this project is intended to be exploratory in nature, recognizing the importance of the unique social context in which the Japanese learner is immersed.

1.1) Background

The project was born of my own experiences and observations as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructor in Japan. While living in the country it became apparent that the English language was ubiquitous in many areas of Japanese life. It has a strong

presence in popular culture, in music, movies, and television, and is frequently visible on billboards, shop signs, and consumer products. English loanwords also comprise a significant part of the vocabulary employed by Japanese speakers in everyday conversation. Perhaps most importantly, English holds a position of importance as a gateway to education, in the form of high school and university entrance exams, and to the job market after graduation. Developing one's English ability has become so popular that *eikaiwa* ("English conversation") schools are now a billion dollar a year industry in Japan (Reesor, 2003) with large chains such as NOVA, GEOS, AEON, and Berlitz surrounding commuter hubs in both urban and suburban areas. However, despite its prevalence, popularity, and pragmatic value in Japanese society, learners have demonstrated great difficulty in developing English language ability.

Japanese learners have, as a whole, performed poorly on standardized tests such as TOEIC and TOEFL regularly finishing far behind their counterparts in neighboring countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, and China (ETS, 2003, 2004). This trend has given rise to increasing pressure from the public and media prompting the government to institute a series of reforms to improve English language education (MEXT, 2002). For all concerned, the question remains, given the significant amount of time, effort, and money dedicated to the study of English, why do Japanese learners continue to struggle in developing language skills? Although there is little empirical evidence regarding difficulties with communicative ability, it is also informally acknowledged that Japanese learners do not often have strong spoken English skills. My own experience with students from Japanese has found this assertion to be generally accurate.

This phenomenon has become the focus of a great deal of research. Some of the explanations that have been offered to account for the difficulties include the linguistic distance between English and Japanese (Hughes, 1999), psychological barriers stemming from the “Japanese character”, marked by extreme shyness and a sense of embarrassment in making errors (Brown, 2004), and a history of isolation as a result of geographic location (Koike & Tanaka, 1995; Hughes, 1999). The English education system has also been singled out as a frequent target of criticism charged with having inadequately trained teachers and a reliance on outdated translation-based learning methods (Gainey & Andressen, 2002; McVeigh, 2004). However, the vast majority of this research has focused on the individual and the classroom and has excluded a consideration of the total learning environment. Reesor supports this observation stating,

There is no dearth of theories postulating sources behind the inability of the Japanese to master English. However, the problem with these theories is that they make the mistake of seeking to neatly compartmentalize cause and effect. That is, there is an attempt to simplify a very complex issue by narrowing a multitude of variables to one prime source to determine a sole, linear cause (Reesor, 2003, p. 58).

The current project approaches the study of English in Japan with this issue firmly in mind.

1.2) Purpose of Study

This study examines the relationship between English in the environment and English language ability in Japanese learners. It is primarily motivated by the following question: *To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to the development of English ability in Japanese learners?* For many, English in the environment may seem a

somewhat extraneous consideration and, thus difficult to conceptually reconcile with the process of language development. However, the ecological approach to second language research provides a theoretical basis which specifically addresses this concern.

The ecological perspective acknowledges a range of settings that influence the development of language skills beginning with the individual in the center and expanding outward. It emphasizes the total learning environment rather than privileging a single setting (e.g., the classroom) or relationship (e.g., student-teacher). In this vein a number of factors identified in previous research with Japan learners, such as experience with primary study settings and additional study settings, relationships with English, and attitude toward English, have been included alongside English in the environment. These considerations then present two secondary questions of interest: *To what extent are additional factors, such as experience with English study, relationships involving the use of English, and attitude toward English, related to the development of English ability in Japanese learners? To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to these additional factors?* This project should not be seen as an attempt to claim primacy for exposure to English in the environment over other factors in the process of language development. It is likely that the classroom setting plays a primary role in the development of English language skills for Japanese learners. However, the ecological framework provides a holistic model in which to account for external settings within the complex whole.

Another critical consideration in the ecological approach is the value of the learners' perspective. The surrounding environment is not seen as a static and objectively-defined setting, but as something that is subject to interpretation. That which an individual learner determines to be dominant or significant in a particular setting may vary greatly even from fellow classmates. Interpretation may then have a profound influence on development. This is particularly relevant to the case of English in Japan. Stanlaw (2004) and Loveday (1986, 1996), among others, have explored in great detail the complex manner in which English is employed and received in Japan. Stanlaw specifically differentiates between "English" and "Japanese English" – that which is modified in either form or meaning to fit the particular Japanese context in which a term may be used. With regard to this distinction, the current study also poses the following question: *What is the learners' perception of "English" in their surrounding environment?* A greater understanding of the learners' perception is directly relevant to the relationship between English in the environment and English language ability.

1.3) Methodology

The methodological design for this study was influenced by previous research investigating English language development in Japan. Hinenoya and Gatbonton's (2000) work examining attitude and motivation in Japanese learners and Loveday's (1996) exploration of the social reception of English in Japan were among the most significant. Both employed a questionnaire-based approach comparing a range of relevant factors against English ability. Thus, a similar method was selected as the primary component of the current study. A secondary component comprised of a set of semi-structured

interviews was also included. The interviews provided a more detailed understanding of the learners' perspective with regard to the surrounding environment as discussed above. Although items addressing this concern were included on the questionnaire, they could not offer the same level of in-depth data for thorough analysis.

Data was collected during a research trip to Doshisha University in October and November of 2005. The questionnaire was administered to 100 first, second, and third year university students looking at a diverse range of aspects related to language development including previous study experience, relationships in which English might be used, exposure to English language media, perception of English use in Japanese media, and attitude toward English language study. A number of measures were utilized attempting to gauge English language ability. Interviews were conducted with a limited number of participants focusing on the learners' perception of English in the environment.

1.4) Significance of Study

This project will contribute to two primary areas of study: second language development, specifically with regard to Japan, and language and culture contact. Firstly, it will offer a more complete understanding of the total learning environment for Japanese learners. The study will explore the importance of English in the surrounding environment and may identify a significant consideration that has thus far been overlooked in the study of English language development in Japan. This could be beneficial for both curriculum development and for teaching methodology. English teachers in Japan could either

establish or strengthen existing connections between English in the classroom and English outside of the classroom to improve learner motivation and to connect students to a real-world language resource that is at present being underutilized. This study may also be seen as a preliminary attempt to compare English language development in “English-rich” environments (i.e., English language media enjoys great popularity and English ability is valued) and “English-poor” environments (i.e., English is rarely encountered and is irrelevant for the majority of inhabitants).

The second major area to which this study may contribute is that of language and culture contact. The World Englishes paradigm (Kachru, 1986, 1992; Smith & Foreman, 1997) raises questions regarding the impact of English on local level populations. The current study will explore the manner in which Japanese learners perceive English around them. This question relates directly to the debate over how great an impact English actually has upon Japanese society. Those opposed to the presence of excessive foreign influence have branded English a neo-imperialistic tool imposed by external forces (Tsuda, 1994). Others have taken a more moderate approach suggesting that the English in Japan, although it may once have been foreign-dominated, is now very much dictated by the Japanese in both use and form (Stanlaw, 2004). The current project may suggest that English in Japan is either a strong, unavoidable presence or, conversely, part of the background where it goes unnoticed despite being outwardly prevalent. Although much more research would be necessary, these findings would offer a departure point for further inquiry.

1.5) Definition of Terms

The first term that must be defined for use in this study is *English as a Second Language (ESL)*. Crystal (2003) suggests that a *second* language generally enjoys official status within a country, “to be used as a medium of communication in such domains as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system” (p. 4). Technically, English does not hold an official position in Japan and would be correctly termed a *foreign* language, or EFL. However, this distinction is often blurred when referring to the ESL industry, as a whole. Crystal (2003) also points out, “in many parts of the world the term [*second* language] is not related to official status, but simply reflects a notion of competence or usefulness” (p.4). The discrepancy over the use of the term *second language* is acknowledged and for the purposes of this thesis will be employed throughout to refer to English in Japan.

The second term that requires clarification is *development*. Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggests that development is “the person’s evolving conception of the ecological environment, and his relation to it, as well as the person’s growing capacity to discover, sustain, or alter its properties” (p. 9). This broad definition leaves a great deal of room for interpretation, but is applicable to the study of English in Japan. English is an integral part of the surrounding environment and an important subject of study in public schools. It is also extremely valuable for accessing the job market and connecting to the global community. Thus, for Japanese learners having success with regard to achievement in academic English (i.e., improving one’s English grade) and improving one’s communicative English ability both fit within the parameters of Bronfenbrenner’s

definition. Although the primary measures of English ability included in this study would be considered academic (e.g., high school and university grade, as well as standardized tests), it should be acknowledged that it is difficult to clearly differentiate between the two. The university English class from which the participant group was drawn included a grammar component, a listening component, and a spoken component. Standardized tests have also attempted to broaden their focus. Therefore, in the course of this thesis the use of the term English language *development* is intended to reflect this trend and should not be narrowly confined to grammar skills alone.

1.6) Organization

This thesis is presented in five parts. Chapter Two offers a literature review of previous work relevant to the current project. This leads into a presentation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model, which composes the primary theoretical framework, in the following chapter. Chapter Four lays out the methodological approach employed in carrying out data collection. Results are presented in Chapter Five along with an analysis and discussion of some of the major findings from the study. In conclusion, Chapter Six offers a brief summary and some potential paths for future research projects.

Chapter 2

Project Background

This chapter will present a literature review from areas of study relevant to the current project. As articulated in the introduction, the project examines the relationship between English in the environment and English language ability in Japanese learners. Although English now enjoys a consistent presence in the surrounding environment, its possible influence upon language development has rarely been considered. Toward this end, the project adopts an ecological perspective of the learning environment acknowledging a broad range of factors that may be significant. The primary areas to be covered in this review include English in Japan, previous research on English language development in Japan, and the ecological approach to second language research.

The first section will begin with an historical overview of English in Japan, leading up to a description of the current contact environment with respect to popular culture, language borrowing, and education. This will be followed by an examination of various research projects that have looked specifically at English language development for Japanese learners. These studies are predominantly recent (within the past 20 years), reflecting the contemporary nature of scholarly interest in this area, and are limited to English language publications. The final section will look at the ecological approach to second language research - a relatively young, but burgeoning area of study. This will lead into a

discussion of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model (1979) in the following chapter.

2.1) English in Japan

Although the influx of the English language is often thought to have been a more recent occurrence, it has a relatively lengthy history in Japan. A number of surveys have traced this path as far back as the arrival of the "black ships" with Commodore Perry in 1853 and even before. One of the most comprehensive accounts is offered by Loveday in *Language Contact in Japan: A Socio-Linguistic History* (1996), with others by Ike (1995), Hughes (1999) and Stanlaw (2004) also worthy of note. This brief overview is intended to provide a historical context to better comprehend the relationship between the English language and the Japanese.

2.11) History

The presence and popularity of English in Japan has ebbed and flowed in what has been a decidedly tumultuous relationship. Prior to the arrival of the U.S. warships, English had virtually no presence in Japan; however, shortly afterward, in the lead-up to the Meiji Restoration¹, the language enjoyed strong growth as part of Japan's push to industrialize and adopt the scientific and military technology of Western nations. Increased trade was

¹ The *Meiji Restoration* refers to the period of 1866-9 in which ruling power was restored to the Emperor from the hands of the Tokugawa *bakufu*. The arrival of the American "black ships" and Commodore Perry is frequently cited as one of the primary motivating events behind the shift in power. Before the Meiji era (1868-1912) Japan had little contact with European or American language and culture, aside from the influence of the Dutch who maintained a minimal trading relationship in Nagasaki throughout the period of isolation (1633-1853). See Hane (1986) for a more detailed account.

also significant leading to the creation of pidginized versions of Japanese English around ports such as Yokohama and Nagasaki (Stanlaw, 2004; Loveday, 1996). This trend continued throughout the early Meiji era with English becoming the primary language of instruction at post-secondary institutions and a mainstream subject in public schools. In the 1870s Japan's first minister of education, Mori Arionori, was an advocate of the radical step of abolishing the Japanese language altogether and replacing it with English (Loveday, 1996). Although this never occurred, the suggestion alone illustrates the strong foothold that English had established by this early date.

The tides turned around the close of the century and the language faced opposition from the rising nationalist movements that culminated in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) and the subsequent Russo-Japanese War (1904-5). By 1890, Japanese had replaced English as the language of instruction at all educational institutions and foreign instructors, who had been earlier recruited to bring in scientific and technical knowledge in a range of fields, were replaced by native Japanese (Loveday, 1996). Another shift occurred at the beginning of the Taisho era (1912-26) – described as “the heyday of Japanese-English language contact and borrowing” by Stanlaw (2004, p. 68) - which saw the introduction of mass media forms such as the radio and cinema. The new technology greatly contributed to an increase in the presence of English in Japan - even greater than that seen in early Meiji. Print forms, such as newspapers and monthly magazines, also served to facilitate this influx and familiarize the Japanese with English terms and Western ideas. A number of Western-inspired urban trends emerged during this period, such as the popularity of the ice cream parlour, the department store, the Charleston, and jazz music

(Loveday, 1996). However, the increased presence was not necessarily an indication that the language had been wholly embraced. Detractors argued that the overwhelming presence and acceptance of English “made Japan into a British colony, stifled the mind of an independent nation, and cultivated a ‘second-class’ mentality” (Loveday, 1996, p. 73). Thus, there were repeated calls to remove English from the school system and the term *eigo-zukai* (“English user”) took on a pejorative meaning (Hughes, 1999).

In the years leading up to the Second World War, the nationalist - and correspondingly anti-Western - movement gained even more momentum. Building confidence through their victories on the mainland, the Japanese government took measures to cleanse the country of foreign influence. Attempts were made for language purification as the teaching of English was restricted and terms with an English origin were replaced by Japanese equivalents (Loveday, 1996). This campaign was further extended to Japan’s occupied territories, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines, where English was forcibly removed from school curriculums. However, the crushing loss and catastrophic events that closed the Second World War had an indelible impact upon the Japanese with regard to English. A complete loss of faith in the “Japanese way” and occupation by American forces (1945-52) brought about another high period for English in Japan. Even after the U.S. withdrawal, relative stability for the language endured.

Although it may not currently enjoy the fervor that periods of fad-popularity brought in the past, it could be argued that the overall presence (i.e., lexical terms, advertising use,

and mass culture) and penetration (i.e., urban to rural) of English in Japan is greater now than ever.

2.12) Current Contact – Popular Culture

The current contact environment can definitely be characterized as “English rich”. Tsuda Yukio, a staunch critic of English in Japan, offers the following observation:

The Japanese craze for English is reaching epidemic proportions. Disc jockeys on FM radio talk in English. Satellite broadcasting is crowded with U.S. programs. Shops and products bear English names. Companies spell their names in English. Even government documents are sprinkled with English words (as cited in Kobayashi, 2001, p. 35).

In fact, English has become so pervasive that it would be clearly evident even to a casual observer with little knowledge of Japanese. The clearest indications of this phenomenon can be found in the realm of popular culture.

According to the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, foreign films have out-grossed domestic productions every year from 1987 to 2005 (MPPAJ, 2006). The number of foreign films released has also consistently exceeded those by Japanese companies over the same period. All of the “Top 10 Foreign movies of all-time” are English titles, as are the Top 8 of the most recent survey for 2005 (MPPAJ, 2006). Although domestic music, particularly *J-pop* (“Japanese popular music”), has a strong following in Japan, English music is equally in demand. As an example, approximately half of the songs on the 2003, 2004, and 2005 “Top 100” lists for a popular Tokyo radio station were in English (J-Wave Inc., 2006). In addition, many of the Japanese singers and bands had Anglicized names and the song titles were given in English. The use of

English by Japanese singers in both band names and lyrics has appeared as the focus of multiple studies (Kachru, 1992; Tobin, 1992; Craig, 2000; Stanlaw, 2004). English television programs make up only a fraction of those found on basic cable channels, however, they have become very popular as DVD rentals. Video rental stores, including *Blockbuster* and *Video in America*, typically offer at least half of their titles in English, if not more. Satellite TV, which offers much greater access to English programming, has enjoyed rapid expansion with over 12 million subscribers across the country (NHK, 2005).

The persistent increase of English in the media has garnered the attention of academic research. In his work *Language in Ethnicity*, Haarmann (1986) includes a detailed breakdown of the prominent use of foreign languages in the Japanese mass media and the relative influence this use might have on the population. He asserts that foreign languages, and particularly English, take on a prestige function in the mass media that is not transferred to the daily-use of spoken Japanese (Haarmann, 1986). The view of English as a prestige language has often been employed in analyzing the contact environment; although, it may now be considered too reductionist to explain the widely varying functions present today (Stanlaw, 2004). This argument is supported with findings from a large-scale study conducted by researchers at Hiroshima University.

The study, cited in Kobayashi (2001), examines the attitude of Japanese high school students toward English in three areas: as a school subject, as a part of daily communication, and as a useful skill for their future. The investigators found significant

changes in the manner in which English was perceived across a 30-year period from 1966-96. Kobayashi offers the following summary: “These results...reflect the thirty-year transition of the status of English in Japan from a special language for the elite to the most popular global language for ordinary Japanese people” (2001, p. 32). The popularity of English language media and the study of English by learners of all ages at *eikaiwa* (‘English conversation schools’) appear to confirm these findings.

2.13) Current Contact – Language Borrowing

Measures of English terms used by the Japanese have been rare given the difficulty of accurate estimation; however, some studies have been attempted. Stanlaw (2004) cites data gathered by the *Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyuujo* (“The National Institute for the Japanese Language”), for consecutive years between 1970 and 1973, of word counts from newspapers that found 5 to 10% of daily use vocabulary derived from English. He comments that, “[t]his set of studies has never been duplicated and today the percentage of loanwords would almost certainly be substantially higher” (Stanlaw, 2004, p. 310). Loveday also records a similar word-count study from a popular dictionary – the 1995 edition of *Gendai-yougou*. Looking at specialized technical terms, he found 75% of marketing, 67% of engineering, and 99% of computer terms were English-based (Loveday, 1996). Tomoda (1999) points to a 1982 survey that recorded 42 hours of spoken language from seven native Japanese speakers which revealed 10.1% of word types and 3.2% of word tokens to be *gairaigo* (“foreign-derived terms” - but not necessarily English). Currently, *gairaigo* compose up to 10% of Japanese vocabulary, or

over 13,000 terms (taken from the 1989 Nihongo-daijiten dictionary), and of these approximately 94% are English-derived (Tomoda, 1999).

Although these studies do offer empirical evidence to support the assertion that English loanwords make up a significant part of everyday Japanese conversation, it is still difficult to convey their full impact. Matsumoto Toru, author of *The Random Dictionary: A Glossary of Foreign Words in Today's Spoken Japanese*, offers the following quotation to demonstrate the utility of English in daily Japanese speech:

We, that is, the Matsumoto family, live in a *manshon* ('mansion') too. At this moment, I am watching *beisu-booru* ('baseball') on *terebi* ('television'). My wife is out shopping at a *depaato* ('department store'), and later she will stop at a *suupaa* ('supermarket') to get *pooku choppu* ('pork chops'), *pan* ('bread'), *bataa* ('butter'), *jamu* ('jam'), and perhaps some *sooseiji* ('sausage') for breakfast. My daughter has gone to the *byuutii saron* ('beauty salon') to get a *paama* ('permanent'). Oh, the *terehon* ('telephone') is ringing. We [the Japanese] cannot live a day in Japan without these loanwords (Stanlaw, 2004, p. 1).

With such examples it may be possible to grasp at least an initial understanding of how pervasive and functional English terms, or derivatives thereof, have become for the Japanese.

2.14) English in Education

English may have the greatest impact upon school-age Japanese, since they encounter it not only in the popular environment and in the form of loanwords, but as a regular part of their daily activity in the classroom as well. Most high school graduates are enrolled in English classes – although other language electives are available – and have at least six years of English study by graduation. Historically, English became a part of the

curriculum in Boys' Middle Schools in 1871 and was offered as an elective at the primary level (Reesor, 2002). It made its first appearance on university entrance examinations, with a focus on translation and complex grammar, around the same period. And, as previously mentioned, English was the language of instruction at the country's first post-secondary institutions.

In the current educational environment, many Japanese learners begin English study from the first year of elementary school. In 2001 legislation was passed to provide English lessons for all elementary students in the country; however, there is some debate as to the extent to which this initiative has been successfully implemented (Reesor, 2003; McVeigh, 2004). Although English is officially an "elective" in public schools, it should in many ways be considered compulsory given its importance in entrance examinations for secondary and post-secondary study. Gaining entry to a high profile institution is viewed as imperative in Japanese society since it can virtually guarantee career success for an individual (Kobayashi, 2001; Gainey & Anderssen, 2002, McVeigh, 2004). For those learners who are accepted to post-secondary study, English is then required for the first two years of all university programs, regardless of the discipline studied. In the near future, it is conceivable that Japanese university graduates will have 14 years of English study by the time they complete their post-secondary education.

From the earliest date, the predominant pedagogical approach for teaching English in Japan has been the grammar-translation method (Loveday, 1996; McVeigh, 2004). This teaching style has often been identified as one of the primary barriers preventing

Japanese learners from attaining a high level of English proficiency. Kobayashi (2001) claims that English taught within the public school system is solely intended for passing entrance examinations into colleges and universities. This creates a divide between English in school – identified as *juken eigo* ('English for entrance exams') – and "real English" – that used outside of the school environment for communication and in popular culture (Kobayashi, 2001, p. 23). Kobayashi also suggests that Japanese learners are fully aware of this division. She provided the following quotation from a high school informant: "*Juken eigo* is of no practical use. We cannot speak English and we can only write something on a piece of paper. I am very sure that *juken eigo* is useless" (italics in the original, Kobayashi, 2001, p. 93). Again, this supports the argument that English in school can be clearly differentiated from that found in the surrounding environment.

The distinction between the two "Englishes" – English as a school subject and English outside of the school environment – is closely reflective of another characterization that has been employed with regard to Japan: the metaphor of *uchi* and *soto*. Narrowly defined, *uchi* may be translated as "house" or "home" and *soto* as "outside". However, Quinn (1994) and Makino (2002, 2003) have suggested that the implicit meaning of these terms is much broader. *Uchi* is associated with the familiar, internal, comfortable, and local, while *soto* is identified with the external and foreign (Quinn, 1994). Makino (2002, 2003) has employed these concepts to analyze the Japanese language and it is not inconceivable that it could be extended to an interpretation of English in Japan: English as a school subject would be located in *uchi* space, while English found in the surrounding environment would remain in *soto* space. Given the considerable level of

exposure to English and the extensive experience with in-school study, there is some question as to whether or not this characterization would be appropriate for younger Japanese. In addition, a number of policy changes have been adopted in English education that would serve to close the gap between *juken eigo* and English outside of the school environment.

The Ministry of Education has attempted multiple reforms to encourage a more communicative approach to language instruction – most significantly with the implementation of the JET program² and with the drafting of the “Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities” (MEXT, 2003). Although these measures are consistent with the government’s stated goal to improve English ability in Japanese learners, their sincerity has been questioned. In his investigation of educational policies relating to English in Japan, Reesor (2002) suggests that the ineffectiveness of educational reforms is due to an underlying resistance to foreign influence. He states,

While the rhetoric of *kokusaika* (‘internationalization’) encourages the promotion of foreign language education and the fostering of international perspectives, actual policy points toward only partial acceptance of this creed, an acceptance which is not at all different from how foreign languages have been viewed over the past four hundred years. While stated objectives stress the commitment to the development of communicative skills, barriers exist to prevent this from happening (p. 51).

² The JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) program brings native English speakers from Canada, the United States, England, Australia, and New Zealand to participate as teaching assistants in junior high and high school classrooms throughout Japan. It was originally implemented in 1987 as part of the *kokusaika* (‘internationalization’) movement to familiarize the Japanese with foreign cultures and people, and vice versa. There are as many as 6000 JETs active in Japan at one time. See McConnell (2000) for a more complete description.

McVeigh (2004) offers support for Reesor's position, commenting, "Presently, Japanese state nationalism still casts a suspicious eye on the internalization of genuine foreign language education" (p. 214). Although an overt prejudice against English is not evident, particularly with the popularity of English language media and *eikaiwa* schools, Japanese learners continue to have difficulties despite the significant amount of time dedicated to English study.

2.15) Learner Performance

Japanese learners have overall failed to achieve a high level of proficiency as measured by standardized tests such as TOEIC and TOEFL. Stanlaw (2004) provides examples from the 1991 global TOEFL results where Japanese nationals averaged a score of 493 in comparison to Singapore at 583, India at 571, and the Netherlands at 601. Reesor (2002) offers 1997 TOEFL results where Japan finished 180th out of 189 countries that participated. In the 2001-2 TOEFL rankings released by ETS (Educational Testing Service - the institution administering both TOEFL and TOEIC) Japan finished 143rd globally on the computer-based TOEFL exam (ETS, 2003, pp. 8-9). They finished 29th out of 30 countries in Asia, ahead of only North Korea and behind Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Japanese test takers also had difficulty with TOEIC ending up 10th out of 11 countries in Asia and significantly trailing China, South Korea, and Taiwan (ETS, 2004, p. 5). Although questions have been raised about the value of these standardized tests in accurately assessing English proficiency (Herriman, 2004), the results are nonetheless surprising given its degree of importance toward scholastic success. Tsuneyoshi (2005) offers an explanation for the lack of English proficiency

stating that, “English is never necessary, except when one sits for high school and university entrance examinations,” (p. 67); however, her observation does not take into account learners who seek to improve their English skills for future career goals, communication with foreigners, travel or personal enjoyment with relation to English in popular culture.

The communicative abilities of Japanese learners have also been cited as particularly weak. Empirical evidence is difficult to produce with regard to communicative proficiency, however, a good deal of anecdotal evidence is available from researchers and other professionals engaged in English education in Japan. Tsuneyoshi (2005), in her examination of study abroad programs at Japanese universities, observes that, “The Japanese are known for their lack of communicative English skills” (p. 67). She goes on to say, “Japan’s English education has been the target of criticism for decades, as the Japanese wonder how it is possible for students to learn English for six to ten years, and yet fail to speak simple English” (p. 67). Kobayashi (2001) also states that, “The number of Japanese people who attain an intermediate or higher level of English proficiency is limited. Visitors from overseas have a hard time finding a Japanese person on a street who can handle simple English” (p. 26).

The opinions expressed by Tsuneyoshi and Hinenoya are further supported by other scholars. An article by Reesor (2003), in the *Nagoya University Journal of Language, Communication, and Culture*, is particularly unambiguous in its title “Japanese Attitudes to English: Toward an Explanation of Poor Performance.” In the article, Reesor observes

that, “For many years, Japan has been held up as a poster child for industrialized countries that have been largely unsuccessful in regards to English language education” (p. 57). McVeigh (2004) also questions the effectiveness of English education in Japan. He adds, “Hundreds of thousands of Japanese students every year attempt to master English, not just in formal schools, but in commercial school.” “Despite all the time, effort, expertise, and money poured into acquiring English, few actually do” (p. 212). Although Stanlaw (2004) feels that the phenomenon of English in Japan is much more complex than it may appear, he observes that, “Even today, among ESL teachers, the inability of Japanese students to be able to actually speak English – in spite of half a dozen years of study – is taken as fact, and commonly joked about” (p. 276).

Although my own experience with Japanese learners may not be as extensive as that of the researchers above, I would tend to agree with many of their observations. I would also suggest that the difficulties of Japanese students become even more evident in mixed classes with learners from a wide range of nationalities. There are undeniably Japanese who do attain an impressive level of fluency in English, but in general Japanese students typically struggle with communicative language skills.

This puzzling phenomenon (i.e., the difficulties experienced by Japanese learners) has generated a great deal of interest in academic research. The following section looks at a sample of studies that have approached this question. All of the studies cited were published in English and are directly related to the current project, either in terms of content or methodological approach.

2.2) Research on English language development in Japan

Kobayashi (2001) conducted a multilayered study looking at a range of factors that influence the attitude of Japanese students from academic high schools toward English. Within her research she adds a component that examines “exposure to English outside of the classroom”. The variables include the amount of English encountered on Japanese TV, radio, and in newspapers, along with a consideration of English music, movies, TV programs, and books. Many of these variables mirror those included in the present study. Her research included a questionnaire completed by 651 respondents who provided their answers on a six-point Likert scale ranging from “never” to “very often”. Kobayashi found a negative relationship between exposure to English outside the classroom and academic English grade (p. 88). She explained her finding as follows:

...most students are exposed only to the Japanese culture-mediated English or ‘Japlish’. Thus students’ high exposure to such commercially oriented English implies that they spend more time in watching TV and listening to music and presumably less time in studying English and other academic subjects at home, resulting in the students’ lower academic grade (p. 89).

Kobayashi also determined that there was no significant relationship between exposure to English outside the classroom and the learners’ attitude toward English (pp. 75-6). This study was the lone example located that focused on the relationship between English media and English language development for Japanese learners.

In his work *Language Contact in Japan: A Socio-Linguistic History* (1996), Loveday investigates the social reception of foreign languages in Japan (pp. 157-188). The study is comprised of a questionnaire administered to 461 participants at Doshisha University

in Kyoto – incidentally, the same location as the current project. He considers the acceptance and comprehension of “foreignisms”, focusing on attitude and ethnocentricity as major variables. These are then compared against sex, geographic location, occupation, education level, and self-rated English ability. His results were summarized as follows:

As a first conclusion, one can say that sex appears not to be a significant variable. On the other hand, informants with higher educational backgrounds and higher occupations, and those aged between 18 and 29, do indicate a stronger tendency to accept and adopt English-based innovations...Generally, a broad level of tolerance and reserved approval for language contact with English is observable in the community (Loveday, 1996, p. 187).

Loveday was unable to provide an accurate account of English ability since 54% of his respondents considered themselves as having “no competence in English”. This prompted the suggestion that a self-rating scale might not be the most suitable method of measurement for language ability. The broad age range of respondents (9 to 92) was also problematic. Loveday states, “[a]lthough nearly three-quarters of the informants had received as much as six years of instruction in English, one has to allow for the effects of attrition over time” (p. 175). Both of these difficulties were taken into consideration when choosing the participant group and the method of measurement for English ability in this study.

Following a topic similar to that of Loveday, Hogan (2003) looked at the social reception of English in Japan. She focused upon a community in rural Hokkaido and spoke with a broad range of informants regarding the employment, connotations, and social reception of English-derived vocabulary. Hogan reported, “some townspeople suggested that the

use of English-derived vocabulary marked a divide between rural and urban in Japan, [however,] most suggested that it marked the line between generations” (p. 48). She also found English was employed to show professional expertise, intelligence (i.e. education level), and social standing (pp. 49-50), while alternatively appearing with reference to taboo subjects such as sexual acts and crimes (pp. 51-2). One informant revealed, “People are impressed when you can speak English, even just one word here or there” (p. 50), while another felt, “People in the big cities don’t even notice [English-derived words]. But in rural areas, like Aoyama, people don’t like these words. They say, ‘Why do you use so much English?’” (p. 48). Hogan’s conclusions illustrate the complex and often contradictory manner in which English is intended and interpreted within Japan. Furthermore, her findings highlight the importance of eliciting the individual’s perception and evaluation of English rather than generalizing across the entire population.

Benson (1991) also considered attitude and motivation toward English surveying 311 Japanese university freshmen. Building on the work of Gardner and Lambert (1972), he considered the “instrumental” (i.e. utilitarian) and “integrative” (i.e. belonging to a specific or broader language community) motivations for study, along with a third definition labeled “personal” (self-development or enjoyment) (Benson, 1991). Alongside these, Benson included a self-rating for English ability, experience with English (in years of classroom instruction), regular use of English (with friends, family), parents’ use of English (at work, with friends), and experience in English-speaking countries. The results of the survey revealed a low level of motivation in all three

measures – *instrumental, integrative, and personal* – and little involvement with English in most areas of the students' lives. In his concluding discussion, Benson suggested:

Only at certain levels of business, government and social interaction is English useful and/or necessary. For those who need such skills, ample opportunities exist to acquire them, either after completing university or simultaneous with it. For most, possibly including the group represented in this survey, English remains a “broadening” experience, but not one to be taken too seriously (p. 45).

Mirroring the difficulties of Loveday, Benson (1991) found the self-rating of English ability revealed little in four skill areas (*understanding, speaking, reading, and writing*). Eighty percent of students answered negatively (“a little” or “not well” vs. “fairly well” and “very well”) for *understanding*, 91.6% for *speaking* - with 50% giving the lowest response, 62.1% for *reading*, and 69.8% for *writing*. These results offered even greater support for the suggestion that the self-rating of English ability is not the most appropriate for measuring English proficiency in Japanese learners.

Hinenoya and Gatbonton (2000), employing many similar concepts, surveyed 108 Japanese (39 mothers, 52 ESL students, and 17 university students) living in Montreal, Canada. The work of Gardner and Lambert was again cited as heavily influential for theoretical approach. The study utilized measures for proficiency (*cloze test and self-assessment*), personal background (*age, years of English study, and years in Canada*), ethnocentricity (*general and group, or Japanese, specific*), and cultural traits and values (*groupism, shyness, inwardness, and evaluation of native myths and proverbs*). Hinenoya and Gatbonton found “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” and “no significant relationships between the respondents’ cloze test

scores and any of the predictor variables” (pp. 234-5). In suggestions for future research, they stated,

In a future study of 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) (p. 237).

Presented with the findings of Loveday (1996), Benson (1991), and Hinenoya and Gatbonton (2000), the self-proficiency rating and Cloze test were rejected as appropriate measures of English ability for the current project.

Another study that was particularly informative for the current project was conducted by Landry, Allard, and Henry (1996). They investigated the role of English (and French) media sources in Louisiana, although their focus was on language maintenance and not on language development. They employed a questionnaire format quite similar to the current project, inquiring as to how often participants encountered various types of English and French media. Variables included television, radio, movies, music, books, magazines, and even road signs and advertising posters. With this study, Landry, Allard, and Henry acknowledged the possibility that exposure to English (or French) in the surrounding environment could have an impact upon language ability.

The next section will include a brief outline of the field of Second Language Research and provide an introduction to the ecological approach. This overview is not intended to be comprehensive, but it does offer some insight into the complementary value of ecological research toward the broader field of Second Language development. The final

subsection highlights the two motivating concerns behind ecological research that are then clarified in Bronfenbrenner's work, which follows in Chapter 3.

2.3) Second Language Research

2.31) Introducing the field

Second language study has garnered increased interest in the past three decades. One of the most contentious topics revolves around the primacy attributed to cognitive-based language acquisition research:

The field of second language acquisition (SLA) is in a state of turmoil. Heated exchanges are published in our journals, and internecine feuding is widespread. For while an individual/cognitive perspective on language acquisition prevails in SLA research, this "mainstream" view has been under increasing attack, and a more socially situated view of language use/acquisition is increasingly finding favour (Kramsch, 2002, p. 33)

Cognitive theories, which see the human mind as possessing a "specialized language engine" (Leather & van Dam, 2003, p. 3), analogous to the way in which a computer functions, have been very influential. Krashen's comprehension hypothesis model posits a complex process through which a learner is presented with comprehensible input worked through an affective filter (Krashen, 1981, p. 2). This is then processed in the mind (i.e. human brain) and, after being regulated by learned grammatical patterns, becomes speech output. Although Krashen allows for the influence of external factors, he gives primacy to the cognitive process as a focal point for his theory. In contrast, sociocultural research opts for a differing point of departure.

Sociocultural theory in second language research is most often associated with the pioneering work of Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky believed that human thought could not be

explained by the internal structure of the brain, but must be explored in “people’s interaction with reality” (Lantolf & Appel, 1994, p. 4), or in other words *actions*. He further claimed that, “biological factors constitute the necessary prerequisite for elementary processes to *emerge*, [however] sociocultural factors, in contrast, constitute the necessary condition for the elementary, natural processes to *develop*” (*italics in original*, Lantolf & Appel, 1994, p. 5). Vygotsky saw this process unfolding as humans employed both physical and psychological tools to mediate and thus control their relationship with the external world. A shift from object-oriented (where the individual gains direction from an object) to other-oriented (where the individual receives verbal directions from another) to self-oriented (where the individual achieves independent strategy) psychological functioning allowed the individual to develop language skills.

Leontiev, a colleague of Vygotsky, extended the former framework into what is termed “Activity Theory”. Allowing for the influence of individual motivation, Leontiev moved away from Vygotsky’s purely symbolic mediation to an action-based model. Within this model, he included *activity* (an individual’s sociocultural interpretation of a setting and dependent on motive), *actions* (directed toward a preconceived goal), and *operations* (the means, physical or mental, to reach the goal) (Lantolf & Appel, 1994, pp. 17-20). For Leontiev, an explanation for the mental process behind (language) development in the individual could be located within these socially- and culturally-defined boundaries. The ecological approach to language development, while differing in some respects from sociocultural research, clearly shares overlapping similarities with Vygotskian theory.

2.32) The Ecological Approach

The ecological approach adopts a more holistic perspective of the learning environment and acknowledges the interactive nature of language development. It was originally derived from a number of predecessors including Bateson in systems theory and cybernetics, Gibson and Lewin in psychology, Bronfenbrenner in educational development, and Haugen and Makkai in linguistics (Kramsch, 2002, p. 3). This diversity continues to be reflected in its application today. There are, however, two major tenets that are common to the general ecological approach: a broad, flexible view of the learning environment and the value of the phenomenological stance.

Within the ecological perspective, the learner and the environment are envisioned as a total system with each constituent part interconnected to the whole. A single factor cannot be identified as primary, since it is simply one of many that collectively contribute to the complex process of language development. Van Lier (in Lantolf, 2001) offers the following characterization:

An ecological approach to language learning avoids a narrow interpretation of language as words that are transmitted through the air, on paper, or along wires from a sender to a receiver. It also avoids seeing learning as something that happens exclusively inside a person's head. Ecological educators see language and learning as relationships among learners and between learners and the environment. (p. 258)

Kramsch (2002) adds that, "the general ecological perspective...strives to encompass the totality of the relationships that a learner, as a living organism, entertains with all aspects of his/her environment" (p. 8). Although it is not possible to comprehensively incorporate all relevant considerations, the current project has attempted to include a number of factors that have been identified in previous studies with Japanese learners.

A second major consideration in ecological research is the importance of the phenomenological perspective. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues forcefully for the value of the individual's perception of the environment over, or at least equal to, an objective determination. Glossop (1988) offers further clarification commenting that, "ecological research is primarily interested in understanding how the processes of human development are influenced by the interrelations of the developing person and the multiple contexts in which he or she lives *as these contexts are experienced by the person*" (p. 10). Kramsch (2002) identifies the particular applicability of this approach toward second language development in suggesting that,

...foreign language learners do not just learn the language, they are also constantly engaged in judging the relevance, validity, pertinence, or usefulness of this or that bit of knowledge, this or that assignment, thus staking out the phenomenological field of their learning endeavor (p. 11).

For those who have experience in the classroom environment, Kramsch's insight is both obvious and undeniable: two individuals may have a significantly different learning experience in the same classroom, depending upon their perception of that particular environment. Thus, ecological research necessarily entails a component to explore this very consideration.

As suggested by Kramsch (2002), the recent emergence of the ecological approach to second language development has been encouraged by two prominent trends affecting much of the current world: first, that of globalization, and second, that of multicultural education. The focus of the current study, English in Japan, would be considered a product of the former, although English (and other languages) in the Japanese education

system may take on a significantly different meaning in the near future if immigration into the country increases as predicted (Gainey & Andressen, 2002).

The literature review began with a look at the history of English in Japan and then outlined the current contact environment. Despite the considerable presence of English in the country, Japanese learners have had great difficulty in developing English ability. It has been suggested that English in the classroom and English in the environment remain sharply divided for many Japanese; however, there has been little research examining this separation. The ecological approach to second language development provides a theoretical basis from which to explore the relationship between English in the environment and English ability in Japanese learners. The next chapter will further elaborate upon this approach by taking an in-depth look at the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner and his Ecological Systems Model.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

This chapter will present Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model (1979). The model is particularly suitable for this project because it acknowledges the strong interconnection that exists between the developing individual and their surrounding environment. The chapter will begin with an explanation of Bronfenbrenner's original intent in conceiving the model and then move on to outline the framework itself. The following section will look at the importance of the learner's perceptions as a critical element of this approach. Next, examples of previous studies that have applied the Ecological Systems Model will be offered. The specific applicability for the current research project will close the chapter and lead into an explanation of the methodology employed in Chapter Four.

3.1) Background

Urie Bronfenbrenner's seminal work *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* was published in 1979. In this, Bronfenbrenner charged that much of the research conducted in his field had swayed toward a regrettably one-sided approach. He believed that too much of the focus was placed upon the individual subject and that the environment in which the individual developed was, for the most part, underestimated or simply ignored:

What we find in practice...is a marked asymmetry, a hypertrophy of theory and research focusing on the properties of the person and only the

most rudimentary conception and characterization of the environment in which the person is found (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 16).

As an alternative, Bronfenbrenner presented a model with a much broader conception of the learning environment. He argued for the inclusion of external influences outside of the primary developmental setting (e.g., the classroom) that had received little attention in previous studies: "Rarest of all is the recognition that environmental events and conditions outside any immediate setting containing the person can have a profound influence on behaviour and development within that setting" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 18). Bronfenbrenner saw development as a dynamic process of interaction between the individual and their surroundings. From his perspective, the process could not be validly approached without acknowledging this reciprocal influence.

Bronfenbrenner also believed that an attempt should be made to study *development in context*. Elaborating on this tenet of Bronfenbrenner's work, Glossop (1988) observes that, "The notion of context, then, replaces the more conventional notion of a particular stimulus acting as a singular cause to produce a predictable outcome or change in the state or properties of a discrete phenomenon" (p. 7). Glossop's statement offers an appropriate summary tying together Bronfenbrenner's twin goals of refuting research that focuses on a single factor and that removes development from the environment in which it occurs. In his original monograph, Bronfenbrenner (1979) leveled a strong critique against mainstream laboratory research as, "*the science of the strange behavior of children in strange situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time*" (emphasis in the original, p. 19). Although he later softened in his stance and acknowledged the complementary value of controlled study environments

(Bronfenbrenner, 1988), his principal argument was that naturalistic settings deserved, at the very least, equal attention since they were the locations in which development actually occurred.

The Ecological Systems Model was established to combat the deficiencies Bronfenbrenner cited and to incorporate a fuller understanding of the influence of the total learning environment upon the developing individual. In many ways, the author intended his work as a challenge to rethink the manner in which development was conceived rather than to provide *the* answer to explain this complex process.

Bronfenbrenner explained,

It is with the aim of contributing to theoretical and empirical discovery that I have written this book. It will have achieved its objective not if the ideas presented prove to be precisely correct, which is improbable, but if their investigation offers new, revealing vistas for the scientific understanding of the forces shaping the development of human beings in the environments in which they live (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 15).

His goal is shared by the current project. This study is not intended to demonstrate the *primacy* of the environment in influencing language development, but to provide a fuller understanding of the settings in which the learner is immersed. As observed by Skehan (1989), research in the area of second language development rarely supports strong linear causation between a single factor and learner success. This should not necessarily be attributed to poor research design, but instead reflects “the multi-causal nature of language learner success” (Skehan, 1989, p. 14). Second language development does not occur in a vacuum and it is relatively obvious that the surrounding environment will have an impact upon this process. Japan presents an intriguing setting - considering the strong presence of English in various forms, the time and effort dedicated to English study, the

relative importance of the language for scholastic and, subsequently, job success, and the surprisingly poor results of the majority of learners – for the inclusion of the environment as a potentially important influence. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model provides a framework with which to explore this relationship.

3.2) The Ecological Systems Model

The Ecological Systems Model was intended to incorporate a multitude of environmental settings and the interconnections between those settings into a fuller understanding of the process of human development. Bronfenbrenner stated, “the developmental processes taking place in the immediate settings in which human beings live, such as family, school, peer group, and workplace, are profoundly affected by conditions and events in broader contexts in which they are embedded” (Bronfenbrenner, 1988, p. x). To address this concern he conceived a model of concentric circles representing ecological settings, each nested within the next outlying level. The settings were defined as the *microsystem*, the *mesosystem*, the *exosystem*, and the *macrosystem*.

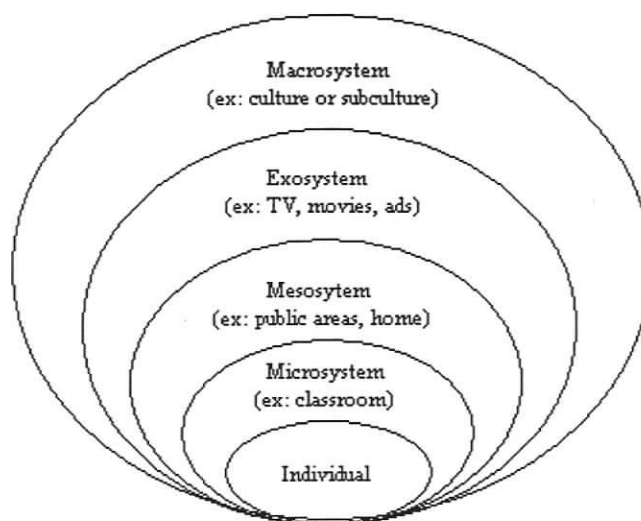


Figure 3.1: Ecological Systems Model

3.21) *The Microsystem*

At the center of the model, Bronfenbrenner (1979) placed the individual in a primary learning setting, or a *microsystem*. This level included activities, roles, and interrelationships in which the individual might engage with a direct impact upon development. For the current project the classroom environment is, for the majority of learners, the critical developmental setting for English ability. In fact, for many it may be the only primary learning environment. However, as mentioned in the literature review, the effectiveness of English instruction in Japanese classrooms has been heavily questioned. Thus other primary settings such as *juku* (commonly known as “cram schools”), *eikaiwa* (“English conversation schools”), and study with a private tutor also deserve attention.

Attendance at *juku* is very common for Japanese students, particularly during the junior high and high school years. *Juku* can appear in a number of different forms: at opposite ends of the continuum there are *juku* which are very structured with a trained instructor and set curriculum in contrast to *juku* which are fairly informal with no instructor and only a class assistant who acts as a tutor while students are free to work on their own and ask questions when needed. Attending an *eikaiwa* school is also common and can fluctuate with regard to curriculum, hours of attendance, and quality of instruction. Private tutoring is less common as it can be prohibitively expensive for many families. This is particularly true when a native English-speaking tutor is employed. Again, each of these options is available for Japanese students and would constitute a primary learning environment; however, the extent to which these settings may contribute to learner success could vary widely depending on the situation.

3.22) *The Mesosystem*

Outside the microsystem, Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified the *mesosystem* as interrelations between environmental settings in which the learner was actively participating that could influence development. He further clarified this definition adding, "other persons who participate actively in both settings, intermediate links in a social network, formal and informal communications among settings and...the extent and nature of knowledge and attitudes existing in one setting about another" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 25). In Japan, classmates who attend public school and either *juku* or an *eikaiwa* school together would constitute an interrelation between microsystems. Conversation in

English with classmates outside of the school setting, or with family members in the home setting, could also be significant.

It would not be entirely inappropriate to include exposure to English media as a component of the mesosystem, as well. Listening to English music, reading English books, and watching English movies would constitute a link between the language studied in the classroom and the language encountered out of the classroom although the extent to which the learners *consciously* recognize this connection is certainly debatable. It is also possible that students engage in these activities with their classmates (e.g., attending an English movie together or discussing the lyrics to an English song), which would also fulfill the criteria for inclusion at the level of the mesosystem.

3.23) *The Exosystem*

The next level defined was the *exosystem*, which contains factors that do not immediately engage the learner but may still have an *indirect* impact upon the individual or upon the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 237). In his original monograph, Bronfenbrenner recognized the role of television as an exosystem factor. He observed, “Since the television program enters the home from an external source, it constitutes part of the child’s exosystem...[t]o the extent that this powerful medium exerts its influence not directly but through its effect on the parents and their interaction with their children (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 242).” Again, the author’s conception of the developing individual is a young child and his reading of the influence of television may appear somewhat dated. Jordan (2004) also questions this in her study of the role of media in

child development outlined below (Section 3.5). For university-age learners in Japan, it is highly unlikely that their experience with television would be mediated through their parents. This becomes even less likely with reference to other forms of English media such as music or access to the Internet. Therefore, media has a much more *direct* impact on the individual, despite the fact that it originates from an external source. This strengthens the argument that exposure to English media may be more appropriately placed within the mesosystem.

One consideration that would fit within Bronfenbrenner's conception of the exosystem is the role of governmental policy with regard to English language instruction in public schools. As previously explained, the Japanese government has been active in attempting to improve the quality of teaching *and* teachers in the face of public criticism. To combat the perceived deficiencies with English instruction, MEXT instituted an "Action Plan to Cultivate Japanese with English Abilities".¹ One measure, amongst many included in the plan called for increased attendance by native-speaking ALTs (Assistant Language Teacher) to junior and senior high school classes throughout the country.² The students are obviously not involved in the decision making process, and in most cases neither are teachers, although the impact upon both of these groups is evident. The presence of an ALT could change the way in which the teacher designed the lesson and influence how the students approached the class (i.e., attitude) and exercised their language skills. This

¹ See MEXT, 2003, for a more complete description of proposed measures.

² Native-speaking assistant language teachers (ALTs) are employed and placed around the country by the Central government through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program. Individual prefectures and municipalities with the resources have also taken to recruiting and employing their own ALTs, independent of the central government.

could be either positive or negative, but it is evident that the original decision, occurring at the exosystem level, would have some impact upon the learners.

3.24) *The Macrosystem*

The outermost stratum of the Ecological Systems Model is the *macrosystem*.

Bronfenbrenner cited the influence of the macrosystem as originating at a broad social or cultural level and filtering down through all other levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 258).

Japan's current economic and political relationships with English speaking countries could be cited at this level. As relations improve or degrade, the overall social reception of English could fluctuate creating a profound effect upon all system levels: the microsystem, in terms of an individual's approach toward and development of language skills; the mesosystem, with fluctuating levels of English in the popular environment; and the exosystem, with regard to government policy decisions and the overarching economic impact felt by the society as a whole.

In presenting the structure of the Ecological Systems Model, it becomes evident that Bronfenbrenner advocates a holistic approach to learner development that recognizes numerous factors. It would, of course, be impossible to include all environmental influences within one research design. Bronfenbrenner recognized this and suggested, "that it is neither necessary nor possible to meet all the criteria for ecological research within a single investigation. Provided the researcher recognizes which qualifications are and are not met, useful scientific information can be gained" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.

14). Every attempt has been made to respect this proposition in developing the current project.

3.3) The Learners' Perception

Another aspect included in both the ecological approach, in general, and Bronfenbrenner's work, in particular, was an attempt to incorporate the individual's subjective perception of their surroundings. Bronfenbrenner repeatedly stressed the importance of considering the "perceived" rather than the "objectively-defined" conditions of the environment. Citing what he felt may be "perhaps the only proposition in social science that approaches the status of an immutable law," he offered, "If men perceive situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas and Thomas, as cited in Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 23). Bronfenbrenner argued that the individual's perception could have either a negative or positive impact upon development, dependent on his particular interpretation. This led to his definition of "ecological validity", given as "the extent to which the environment experienced by the subjects in a scientific investigation has the properties it is supposed or assumed to have by the investigator" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 29). Alongside his call for understanding the learner's perception, Bronfenbrenner did acknowledge the difficulties inherent in achieving this goal. He advises that,

[E]cological validity is a goal to be pursued, approached, but never achieved. The more closely it is approximated, however, the clearer will be the scientific understanding of the complex interplay between the developing human organism and the functionally relevant aspects of its physical and social environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 33).

This focus upon the learner's perception is particularly significant with regard to the presence of English in Japan.

Although English appears prevalent in the surrounding environment, the level to which it is recognized remains somewhat unclear. There are an abundance of English billboards, posters, shop signs, and other forms of advertising throughout the country (Moeran, 1989). However, for Japanese who have grown up immersed in this environment, it may go virtually unnoticed. The same idea may be applied to English loanwords that are commonly used in daily speech or heard on television, radio, and other forms of media. The particular question that is posed in the current study investigates how learners differentiate between what they consider English and what they consider Japanese. The results from this component of the study may also be helpful in interpreting the relationship between exposure to English media and English ability. However, it should be noted that perception is not the primary focus of this study. It is included to fulfill the criteria established by Bronfenbrenner and inherent in the ecological approach.

3.4) Applications of the Ecological Systems Model

Although Bronfenbrenner's original focus for the Ecological Systems Model was the field of child development, his work has been influential on research in a number of different fields. In addition to younger children, the model has been applied to the development of high-school learners (Eldering, 1997; Koss-Chioino, 1999) and college-age students (Renn, 2004). It has also appeared in studies examining public policy (Shera, 1988; Wharf, 1988) and second language research (Noro, 1987; Goelman, 1988).

In establishing the Ecological Systems Model, Bronfenbrenner was brashly confident for the application of this framework. He stated, "The ecology of human development lies at a point of convergence among the disciplines of the biological, psychological, and social sciences as they bear on the evolution of the individual in society" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 13). In the years that have passed since its birth, the Ecological Systems Model has confirmed this prediction. Brief summaries have been offered from two studies to demonstrate the breadth of application that the model enjoys, as well as its specific relevance to language development and the role of the media.

Goelman (1988), along with his research associate Alan Pence, conducted a study on day care settings in Victoria examining the effects of a broad array of variables within two microsystems – day care and the home - to determine the impact upon language development in children. Structured within the Ecological Systems framework, the two researchers developed their study with two components: first, a quantitative component, which focused upon both process and structural aspects of the day care environment and also included measures for receptive and expressive language development; and second, a qualitative component that involved conducting interviews with parents regarding their perceptions of the day care provider and also with caregivers. They found that family background, type of day care, and interaction within the day care were associated with differences in language development. Activities undertaken in the different types of day care did not reveal significant findings. In conclusion, Goelman states that,

The patterns of results revealed by the quantitative and qualitative analyses reported above strongly suggest that main effects or mono-causal explanations for the children's performance on measures of expressive and receptive language development cannot accurately reflect the complex

interactions of factors in the microsystems, mesosystems, and exosystems of day care that appear to have an impact on aspects of the children's development (Goelman, 1988, p. 27).

Although he does recommend further research, specifically with regard to mesosystem interaction, his comments clearly demonstrate support for the Ecological Systems Model as a tool with which to examine a multitude of variables and their impact on language development.

In her article "The Role of Media in Children's Development: An Ecological Perspective", Jordan (2004) utilizes Bronfenbrenner's approach to critically review existing literature in the field of media studies. Like Goelman and Pence, she identifies a narrow focus in her field and a dearth of research on the contexts that shape child development, as a whole. She observes that,

...neither Bronfenbrenner nor the scholars who have worked within this paradigm [developmental psychology] write much about the role of media in these systems; perhaps because the research tradition focuses on relationships between human beings. Yet the media must be recognized for the critical role they play in shaping the contexts of childhood (Jordan, 2004, p. 2).

Looking specifically at the role of television, she classifies previous studies into a systems framework (micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-) and examines relationships to children's physical development, social development, and school performance. Jordan identified a number of connections between the microsystem (parental influence) and the macrosystem (media stereotyping) with regard to children's eating disorders and between the microsystem (parental influence) and macrosystem (violence in the media) with regard to children's prosocial and antisocial behaviour. She also found a confluence between microsystem (teacher's role), mesosystem (connections between home and

school settings), and exosystem (television exposure) factors with school achievement. Jordan's review did not include any phenomenological studies factoring in the learner's perception of the environment. The article concludes with preliminary recommendations for parents and caregivers to moderate children's television viewing, demonstrating the benefits of the ecological approach for informing research application.

3.5) Current Application

It is by now hopefully evident that the Ecological Systems Model advocates a broad, rather flexible approach to developmental analysis. However, it is for exactly this reason that it is particularly well-suited for an investigation of English in Japan. The basic framework established by Bronfenbrenner and many of his primary tenets, including an interdisciplinary approach and a conscious attempt to incorporate the learner's perspective, have been utilized in this study. But, as mentioned above, it is simply not possible to account for every environmental concern that may have bearing on the course of development for students studying English in Japan. The significant factors included in this study have been chosen based on previous studies conducted with Japanese and with SLA learners. The limitations inherent within these choices are acknowledged. There may also be other relevant factors that were not included due to limitations of time, space, and theoretical cohesiveness. However, the hope remains that this study will be beneficial in providing a more holistic view of English language development in Japan, specifically, and in the field of second language research as well.

Chapter 4

Research Design

The research design for this project was heavily influenced by the theoretical framework established by Bronfenbrenner (1979) with the Ecological Systems Model. Although Bronfenbrenner suggests that there is no specific methodology to accompany his model, the nature of the approach offers implicit instruction toward this end. The original intent of the Ecological Systems Model was to examine the complex range of environmental factors that influence development, without losing sight of the importance of the learner's perception of their surroundings. Commenting on the widespread implementation of the Ecological Systems Model in the decade after its conception, Bronfenbrenner (1988) offered the reminder that,

[the ecological approach] requires that investigators, while making full use of a phenomenological perspective, give equal priority to the recognition and analysis of the objective conditions, events, and processes taking place in the life of the developing person...it is the interaction between these two domains that shapes the developmental course and its outcomes (p. xiv).

Heeding this warning, the current project considers both the objective conditions of the surrounding environment, from the investigator's perspective, and the learners' perception of English in the environment.

This chapter will begin with a description of the participant group and the ethical considerations for conducting research of this type. It will then proceed to a detailed

examination of the instruments and the procedures employed in this study. The conclusion will cover the limitations of this particular methodological approach.

4.1) Participant Group

The participant group for this study was drawn from the Department of Education at Doshisha University in Kyoto. This group was selected given that they were still actively engaged in the study of English, had already gained a significant amount of experience with the language, and were in the age range most readily associated with the consumption of English language media. Due to the obstacles outlined below, it was not possible to follow proper sampling procedures and thus the participant group was a sample of convenience.

A number of factors contributed to the selection of this group as an appropriate age range for this project. All university students are required to take a second language – with the vast majority choosing English - for their first two years of study. This experience, combined with junior high and high school classes, gives each learner relatively extensive experience with the language. It is reasonable to assume that for many Japanese, their university years may in fact represent the peak of their English abilities. Younger Japanese (i.e., high school age or under) would, presumably, have less study experience and correspondingly lower levels of English ability. For those who had already graduated from university, their English skills would begin to regress unless they had the benefit of working in an environment in which English was necessary or had continued to study on their own. In both of these situations, it is likely that English

would have less relevance for the individual and thus would be more likely to go unnoticed in their surrounding environment.

Another factor taken into consideration relates to the popularity of English language media in Japan. English movies, music, and television tend to find their largest audience with younger Japanese (Stanlaw, 2004). This fact would become immediately evident if one were to attend a concert in Japan given by an American or British rock star or join the line up for the latest Hollywood blockbuster. In addition, much of the advertising associated with these forms of popular culture is directed at the younger generation (Moeran, 1989). Advertising is often identified as one of the major areas in which English is employed (Haarmann, 1986; Moeran, 1989; Loveday, 1996; Stanlaw, 2004). Given the importance of English as a school subject along with the popularity of English language media sources, it seems highly probable that university age Japanese would be the most sensitive to English in the environment.

After identifying the target group, the difficulty of recruiting participants became immediately apparent. Gaining access to a participant group in Japan can be very challenging for foreign researchers, particularly at the graduate level (Kobayashi, 2001; Bestor et al., 2003). Fortunately, the University of Victoria and Doshisha University have a reciprocal relationship that provides an exchange opportunity for students and scholars. With the assistance of my supervisor, Dr. Hiroko Noro, a six-week exchange was arranged during which I was able to collect data. While at Doshisha, Dr. Tomoyoshi Inoue agreed to act as a host supervisor and granted access to his own first year English

class. Although this situation provided me a tremendous opportunity, it did not allow for a random selection of participants.

The class to which I had access consisted of 117 students. Following the Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) guidelines at the University of Victoria, only students aged 19 and above could participate without additional consent from their parents. Subtracting those learners aged 18 and under, the remaining group held 100 learners. However, prior to administering the questionnaire, all students were informed that their participation should be completely voluntary and that there would be no detrimental effects if they chose to decline. One student opted not to answer and handed in a blank questionnaire, leaving 99 as the total participant group. From this group, 40 students were in their first year, 53 in their second year, and 6 in their third year.

4.2) Ethical Considerations

In accordance with the ethics requirements for research conducted by an investigator from the University of Victoria, an application for human participant research was submitted prior to departing for Japan. The application contained a detailed description of the study procedure, which will be outlined below. It also required a careful consideration of any possible inconveniences, risks, or harms that might be suffered by the participants. The only possible inconvenience cited was a limited time commitment of 10 to 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and an additional 20 to 30 minutes for those participating in interviews. The subject matter was not considered controversial and any foreseeable risk or harm as a result of participation in the study was not

anticipated. Nonetheless, all measures were taken to protect the anonymity of the respondents and to ensure that they did not feel undue pressure to participate. Approval to conduct research was granted on October 7, 2005.

4.3) Questionnaire

4.31) Variables

The questionnaire was made up of 35 multiple choice questions covering eight areas of focus: general background (BACKGROUND), experience with English study (STUDY), relationships involving English (RELATIONSHIPS), exposure to English language media (EXPOSURE), awareness of English use in the Japanese media (AWARENESS), attitude toward English (ATTITUDE), differentiation between script forms (PERCEPTION), and English language ability (ABILITY). Again, the primary focus is on the relationship between English in the environment, specifically the media, and English ability; this is clearly reflected in the composition of the questionnaire with the categories EXPOSURE and AWARENESS getting much of the attention. For the majority of questions participants were asked to indicate their answer by filling in a circle below their selected response. The English version of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. Table 4.1 presents the questions that are associated with each variable.

Table 4.1 – Questionnaire variables

Variable	Questions
BACKGROUND	1, 2, 3
STUDY	4a, 4b, 4c, 5a, 5b, 5c, 6a, 6b, 6c, 7, 7a, 7b, 8, 8a, 8b, 9, 9a, 9b
RELATIONSHIPS	11, 12, 12a, 13, 14
EXPOSURE	10, 10a, 10b, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24
AWARENESS	16, 21, 23, 25, 27
ATTITUDE	26, 28
PERCEPTION	29, 30, 31
ABILITY	32, 33, 34, 35

BACKGROUND was limited to three questions: year of study (Q1), age (Q2), and sex (Q3). The expected age range was between 18 and 22 years, although this could not be ensured; thus, participants were asked to supply their answer in written form beside “years of age”. Age was included to satisfy the ethics requirement that no participants were under the age of consent (19), as stipulated by the HREB.

STUDY addressed primary settings that could influence English language development. These included elementary, junior high, and high school classes (Q4-6), along with *juku* (Q7), *eikaiwa* (Q8), and private tutoring (Q9). Participants were asked to identify how many years and hours per week of English study they had had, along with the size of their classes. If they had additional study outside of public school (Q7-9), they were asked to identify the age at which they had begun (Q7a, Q8a, and Q9a), with regard to the “Critical Period Hypothesis”¹ (CPH), and the number of years of study in each of these

¹ The “Critical Period Hypothesis” makes the assertion that there is a biologically determined “window of opportunity” that exists at a younger age in which it is easier to develop language skills rather than later in life. The CPH has created a great deal of

settings (Q7b, Q8b, and Q9b). Despite the inclusion of questions regarding the CPH, it should not be considered a focal point in the present study. It was included as one possible factor among many influencing English language development and the findings here are not intended to definitively prove or disprove this theory.

RELATIONSHIPS included both friends and family members with whom the learner might converse in English outside of the primary developmental setting. The questions referred to the parents use of English at work (Q11), native-English speaking friends (Q12), how often English was spoken with family (Q13) and how often English was spoken with friends (Q14). The variable parents use of English at work was selected since participants may have had difficulty in answering a more ambiguously worded question such as “Can your parents speak English well?” or “How often do your parents use English?” With regard to native-speaking friends, participants who responded “yes” were also asked to indicate at what age they first met the native speaker. There was no qualitative measure attached to this question to determine the length or strength of the friendship. The final two questions, inquiring as to how often English was spoken, were answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *never* to *very often*.

EXPOSURE covered sources from television (Q15), movies (Q17, 18), music (Q19, 20), books and magazines (Q22), and the Internet (Q24). Lived in an English speaking country was also included in this category, although it was not related to English

debate in second language research, although findings to this date are inconclusive. Birdsong (1999) offers an informative collection of chapters specifically in relation to second language acquisition with arguments from both supporters and detractors.

language media in Japan. This component was a major consideration for the current study and was therefore given a great deal of emphasis in the questionnaire. Participants were asked to rate their exposure level along a 5-point Likert scale from *never* to *very often*. The majority of the questions were derived from previous studies examining the influence of media on language development (Kobayashi, 2001; Landry, Allard, and Henry, 1996; Jordan, 2004; Weyers, 1999; d'Ydewalle and Van de Poel, 1999; Parameswaran, 1999).

The next variable addressed was labeled AWARENESS. These questions referred to the use of English loanwords, or "English-derived terms" (Stanlaw, 2004) by native-Japanese speakers on television (Q16, 27), in music (Q21), in magazines (Q23), and on websites (Q25). They were intended to address the experience of participants with regard to English in their environment as a point of confluence between the theoretical approach expounded by Bronfenbrenner and the objective conditions of English in Japan. Again, participants were asked to express their answer along a 5-point Likert scale from *never* to *very often*.

ATTITUDE was examined with regard to English as a school subject (Q26) and English used in television and movies (Q28). Originally, this section contained additional questions (e.g., *English is important for finding a good job; Japanese students learning English is detrimental to Japanese culture; I will continue to study English after I graduate*) that would have allowed for a broader examination of learners' attitudes; however, they were ultimately removed to fit within the time constraints imposed by the

research setting. For this section, participants expressed their answers along a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.

Attitude was included as a relevant factor since it is an area of study that has received significant attention in second language research. Gardner and Lambert (1972), who are widely credited with founding this theory, argued that the sociocultural background of learners would influence the manner in which they approached second language study (i.e., with a positive or negative attitude) and, in turn, the level of success they would ultimately achieve in developing their second language abilities. Attitude has often appeared in studies looking at English language development with Japanese learners (Benson, 1991; Loveday, 1996; Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; Kobayashi, 2001). The issue of *Nihonjinron*² has also been raised as another strong argument for the inclusion of attitude as a potentially important factor in the Japanese context (Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; McVeigh 2004).

Questions placed under the heading PERCEPTION were included to meet the requirements laid out by Bronfenbrenner in his ecological approach. They dealt with the distinction between *katakana* and *romaji* in written form (Q29, 30) and a general question regarding English in Japan (Q31). The questions were modeled around Loveday's more comprehensive study of the Social Reception of Contact with English in Japan (1996).

As discussed above, the interview component directly addresses the learner's perception

² *Nihonjinron*, or theory of "Japaneseness", is a highly debated topic addressing the innate qualities that differentiate the Japanese from other races and make them "uniquely Japanese". This theory has been presented as a defense of Japanese society by supporters and as a blatant example of ethnocentrism by critics (Dale, 1986; Benedict, 1946).

and offers supporting evidence - potentially with much greater detail – for the findings in this section of the questionnaire.

4.32) English Ability

The final section, ABILITY, included four different measures. Participants were asked for their university English grade (Q32), finishing high school English grade (Q33), highest level of *Eiken*³ achieved (Q34), and highest score achieved in the Test of English for International Communication (Q35), or TOEIC. Four separate measures were included to offer a range of possible indications of English ability and because it was not known how many participants had actually completed standardized tests, such as *Eiken* and TOEIC, prior to administering the questionnaire. It should be noted that a typing error was present in the final copy of the questionnaire. For university grade (Q32), the final category read 0-50 (F) and should have read 0-59 (F). It is unlikely this error affected the final response given that all participants would be familiar with the university's grade range, which extends from 0-59 for F grades.

While at Doshisha I was able to observe three separate English classes: one focused on debate and thus primarily communicative skills; the second also involved aspects of debate with speaking, listening, and grammar components; the third class was primarily grammar and translation but required one oral presentation as well. The remaining

³ The *Eiken*, also known as STEP (Society for Testing English Ability), is a test of English Proficiency authorized by MEXT for students in Japan. It was first offered in 1963 and focuses on communicative ability testing all four skill areas – reading, writing, listening, and speaking. More information can be found on the official STEP website (<http://www.eiken.or.jp/english/index.html>).

classes were characterized as predominantly grammar-based (Inoue, 2006). These observations suggest that the university English grade in this department may reflect a relatively balanced measure of a combination of language skills (e.g., reading, writing, listening, and speaking) rather than being skewed toward grammar knowledge alone. No additional information was collected regarding the grading procedure at the high school level, although the classes are generally intended as preparation for final examinations and university entrance examinations, both of which are predominantly grammar-based (Loveday, 1996; McVeigh, 2004).

In previous studies on second language development two other types of measure have frequently been employed, a self-rating of English ability and a Cloze test. However, as explained in Chapter Two, investigators have questioned the adequacy of these measures with Japanese learners. In Loveday's (1996) study of the social reception of English, the majority of participants revealed little confidence in their language skills, which made it exceedingly difficult to test for relationships between English ability and predictor variables. Benson's (1991) study on attitude and motivation for university freshmen, also included in the literature review, yielded a similar result. Thus, these findings suggest that a self-rating scale, while useful in some contexts, may not be appropriate for Japanese learners.

The suitability of the Cloze test has also been debated. Hinenoya and Gatbonton (2000) questioned the adequacy of the Cloze test for assessing English ability and participants from their study were apprehensive when faced with an impromptu test of their English

abilities. This sentiment was echoed by the Japanese students who participated in the first pre-test for the questionnaire in the current study – explained in greater detail below. Since there would be no clear benefit for the participants, they suggested that most students would lack the motivation to put forth a sincere effort or simply choose not to complete the section. It is acknowledged that regardless of which measure is chosen, debate over the actual level of accuracy is likely since this has become a central issue in second language research (Norris and Ortega, 2003).

4.33) Translation

The questionnaire was originally drafted in English by the chief investigator with input from the project assistant, Ms. Chisato Suzuki. Due to my own limited language skills in Japanese, Ms. Suzuki's contributions were truly indispensable. She is a graduate student in the Department of Social Welfare at Doshisha University and was on official exchange at the University of Victoria during the initial planning stages of this study. Having undergone all of her public schooling in Japan, her experience and insight into both the translation and logic behind the questions included were invaluable. In any situation where cross-cultural research is being conducted, great sensitivity to translation and interpretation must constantly be at the forefront. Although I have lived in Japan, teaching English in both the public and private settings, and gained further experience working with Japanese learners in Canada, the assistance of an individual with intimate knowledge of the local setting was extremely beneficial. As mentioned, Ms. Suzuki was present from the very early stages of this project in Canada and remained heavily involved during its implementation in Japan.

After the English version was complete, the questionnaire was translated by a third-party, native Japanese speaker who was fluent in English having lived in Canada for six years and graduated from the University of Victoria. She also had previous translating experience. The third-party translator was employed to bring in a separate perspective on the questions chosen and to reduce the burden upon the project assistant. The questionnaire was then checked by my supervisor and by the project assistant for accuracy and clarity in question construction. Before departing Canada, it underwent the first of two pre-test stages with an explicit focus on the accuracy of the translation and the appropriateness of the questions selected. A second pre-test was conducted in Kyoto and my host supervisor at Doshisha was able to view the questionnaire before it was administered to the participants.

4.34) Pre-testing

A small group of Japanese students studying English at a local ESL school in Victoria were asked to participate in an informal, open-group discussion of the questionnaire. Through my position as a part-time instructor at the school I had either taught or been previously introduced to each student in the group. I offered an outline of the project and explained that I was hoping to get feedback on the clarity of the translated questions and the overall reception of the questionnaire as a whole. Participation was entirely voluntary and it was made very clear that there would be no expectations beyond a short time commitment of no more than 30 minutes. Three students volunteered, all female, aged 19, 23, and 26. Two had completed study at the university level and had upper

intermediate English ability. The third had recently completed high school in Japan and was waiting to begin post-secondary study in Canada. Her English level could be considered upper intermediate to advanced, with a TOEIC score over 850 and excellent communicative skills. All had been studying English in Victoria for more than 3 months.

After looking through the questionnaire, the volunteers agreed that there were no major difficulties with the Japanese translation and that the format was relatively easy to read. However, they commented that the questionnaire was likely too long (45 questions) to complete within 20 minutes – the estimated length of time participants at Doshisha would have available. Their insight was also particularly helpful with regard to the section on English ability. First, they suggested that the Test of English as a Foreign Language, or TOEFL, would not be a useful measure to include since it was only applicable for students who intended to study at an overseas post-secondary institution. Collectively, they had few Japanese classmates who had actually written the test. Secondly, they recommended against the inclusion of a short Cloze test to gauge English ability, stating that it would undoubtedly make students uncomfortable and that the majority, if given the option, would not complete the section. Both of these suggestions were taken into consideration in subsequent drafts of the questionnaire.

At Doshisha, a second round of pre-testing was made possible through the efforts of my research assistant, Ms. Suzuki. She arranged for a group of her colleagues - fellow graduate students in the Department of Social Welfare – to each fill out a copy of the questionnaire on their own time and to return it when they were finished. They were

asked to make comments in written form and, again, to focus on the clarity of the questions and the translation for any difficulties. Six questionnaires were returned - five from female graduate students and one from a male graduate student. The respondents did not suggest any major changes or problems in understanding the questions. In speaking with Ms. Suzuki, they informed her that everything seemed straightforward and that they had not been uncomfortable in providing their answers. They also reported that the questionnaire, reduced to 34 questions, had taken them approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete – within the acceptable estimated period. Following the final pre-test, one question was added regarding participant age to ensure that no students aged 18 or under were included in the survey.

4.35) Procedure

During my first week in Kyoto, I was able to attend Dr. Inoue's class and was introduced to the students as a visiting researcher. Dr. Inoue then allowed me to speak briefly to the class about my project in English and the students were given an opportunity to ask questions. This type of "official" introduction and initial meeting was critical toward ensuring a sincere response from the participants throughout the balance of the project. Citing years of experience as a foreign researcher in Japan, White (2003) strongly recommends establishing a relationship before attempting to conduct research with Japanese participants. She provides an example from her own work with Japanese teens stating, "Many times the questionnaires would be returned with only a few questions treated and most left blank" (White, 2003, p. 33). White (2003) attributed this difficulty

to a “lack of prior engagement and face-to-face encounters to provide a ‘relationship’” (p. 33).

The following week, all of the questionnaires were administered in one sitting at the end of a regular class period. This method was selected to ensure the highest possible response rate and to provide participants the opportunity to ask for clarification if there were any problems. Arising from her own experience at a Japanese high school, Kobayashi (2001) offered the following recommendation for conducting research in a Japanese school setting:

it is important to administer a survey questionnaire at school in order to secure sincere, thoughtful responses from the students. Due to the constant time pressure and stress affecting students and the preciousness of their limited private time at home, it is difficult to expect them to take a serious attitude toward an external, possibly uninteresting, questionnaire irrelevant to their academic achievement, and respond to it in a focused manner at home (p. 61).

Although the current project was conducted with university age participants, many could still be expected to have limited time to dedicate to a voluntary questionnaire. Therefore, the in-class procedure was determined to be most effective.

The class instructor was not present while the participants were filling in their questionnaires. Ms. Suzuki, reading from a prepared script, reiterated that participation was to be completely voluntary and asked participants to carefully read through the consent form before signing. Participants were also asked not to write their name or student number anywhere on the questionnaire, as a method of protecting their anonymity. Ms. Suzuki remained in the room while students were completing the

questionnaire and they were encouraged to ask questions if there were any areas that were unclear. When they had finished, participants dropped off their questionnaires and consent forms in separate envelopes at the front of the classroom.

4.36) Analysis

The results from the questionnaires were coded numerically and entered into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), Version 12.0 for Windows. I then ran procedures yielding basic descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, range, and frequency distribution). The next stage involved creating a correlation matrix and then running Student t-tests and multiple regression analysis to explore the relationship between English ability and the systems variables. These procedures will be explained in greater detail in the following chapter.

4.4) Interviews

4.41) Participants

Participants for the interviews were drawn from the same class that completed the questionnaire section of the study. On the bottom of the questionnaire consent form, any respondents interested in volunteering for an interview were asked to leave their email address. This method was selected in the interests of protecting the anonymity of the individuals, as per recommendations from the HREB. Twelve participants originally expressed an interest, however, due to scheduling difficulties, only five interviews were successfully completed. Of this group, four were female and one was male. The exact age of the participants was not requested, however, they were asked to verbally

acknowledge that they were 19 years of age or older to comply with the HREB age of consent.

4.42) Mediated Interview Format

All interviews were conducted in Japanese by the research assistant and were recorded with the participant's consent. The chief investigator was available both before and following the interview, but was not present during the interview. Initially, the option of conducting the interviews first in Japanese, with the research assistant, and then in English, with the chief investigator, was considered; however, the majority of participants did not have a sufficient level of communicative English to respond in detail. It was also felt that participants could be uncomfortable speaking with a foreign, native-English speaking interviewer, particularly regarding their personal feelings in differentiating between English and Japanese. Loveday (1996), in his study of similar subject matter, commented that, "such interviewing could not be conducted by the investigator who, as a non-Japanese asking about attitudes towards the West and English, would have had a nullifying effect on the validity of the responses" (p. 163). Lebra (1976) also discusses the use of "mediated communication" to avoid the difficulties with insider/outsider group association characteristic of the Japanese. In this case, Ms. Suzuki was quite close in age to the respondents and attended the same university, further legitimizing her as an "in-group" confident.

Before the interviews began, Ms. Suzuki was presented with an outline of possible questions (Appendix B) to guide the process. However, she was free to deviate from the

outline if the participant was uncomfortable responding to a particular question, offered an unexpected response that required further clarification, or was only available for a limited period of time. The interviewer was made aware that the final two sections were the primary focus and were to be given priority.

To ensure that the interview instructions were clear for both the research assistant and potential participants, an informal pre-test was conducted with a fourth-year, male student from Doshisha. He had recently returned from a one-year study abroad program and had very strong English abilities. Thus, we were able to first conduct an interview in English allowing the chief investigator to ask the majority of questions and guide the discussion and then again in Japanese with the research assistant selecting questions. This provided an opportunity for Ms. Suzuki and myself to openly discuss the interview process and determine the most appropriate manner in which to proceed. Some of the topics covered were the use of open-ended questions, the selection or omission of questions from the interview guide, and the degree of latitude involved for following interesting or unusual answers provided by the participants. Our volunteer was also extremely helpful offering advice on the translation of questions and the use of the visual references. He did note that despite being relatively comfortable with speaking in English, he found it much easier to respond in greater detail in Japanese, particularly with regard to explaining his reasoning on the differentiation between English and Japanese for Sections 4 and 5 of the interview.

4.43) Interview Guide

A semi-structured format was selected to provide a general framework for the interviewer, but also to allow her the opportunity to adjust to the participants' responses. Bernard (1988), in his guide to conducting social research, strongly suggests the use of this format in situations where the chief investigator is not present. He points out, "The interviewer still maintains discretion to follow leads, but the interview guide is a set of clear instructions" (Bernard, 1988, p. 205). Thus, Ms. Suzuki's role as the lone interviewer necessitated the use of semi-structured interviews to ensure that relevant data were collected.

The first section of the interview guide was intended to allow the participants to adjust to both the interview setting and to the interviewer. The questions addressed general experience with English study including in-class and additional primary settings (*juku*, *eikaiwa*, or tutoring), travel and/or living abroad. The interviewer was free to select one area of focus or a general approach, depending on the comfort level of the particular respondent.

Sections two and three addressed the participant's experience with English outside of the classroom, either in the home or public spaces with particular regard to media sources (i.e., movies/rental videos, television, music, books). If participants had little experience with English outside of the classroom settings, the interviewer was free to move on to the following sections.

The fourth part asked the participants to make a distinction between English and Japanese from a set of pre-selected terms. Participants were encouraged to ask for clarification if they were unclear as to the directions. Each term was written onto a flashcard in either *katakana* or *romaji*. The approach was modeled after a previous study conducted by Loveday (1996) and a number of the terms were selected from a list of English words commonly found in Japan (Stanlaw, 2004). The remaining terms were drawn from my own experience and observations in the country. Participants were asked if they considered the term to be either English or Japanese and to elaborate on their responses. This part of the interview corresponds with questions 29 and 30 from the questionnaire described above.

Section five involved visual references in the form of Internet web pages and magazine advertisements. The selected sources were current, displayed a mix of English and Japanese, and covered a range of topics that would presumably be familiar to potential participants. The websites selected included the Sony Japan homepage, the Japan Professional Baseball homepage, and the Sony Playstation main page. Magazine advertisements included a music review in the Japanese version of HMV magazine for the popular Japanese band Mr. Children and an advertisement for the latest Harry Potter movie opening in Japan. Participants were asked to provide their overall impression of English used in the advertisements and then to focus on specific terms included in each. The interviewer was instructed to elicit as detailed an explanation as possible for each answer provided.

4.44) Procedure

As previously explained, the students who had indicated an interest in participating were contacted via email by either the research assistant or chief investigator. A convenient meeting time and location was then scheduled. Interviews were conducted in a private meeting room at the Doshisha Kyotonabe campus arranged by my host supervisor. Each participant was met by the chief investigator and accompanied to the interview location. This allowed for a brief period (5 to 10 minutes) of informal conversation, in both English and Japanese, providing an opportunity for the participants to ask any questions they had regarding the overall project, the interview format, or any other topic of interest. Participants were asked to sign a consent form before the interview began. They were also informed that they could refrain from answering any questions that made them uncomfortable and ask for clarification whenever they were unclear. The interviews were conducted in Japanese by the research assistant and the chief investigator was not present. All interviews were taped with the participant's consent.

4.45) Analysis

Given the relatively modest number of interviews conducted, data were analyzed manually without the use of computer software. Section 1, covering English study and experience abroad, provided a general background to gain an understanding of similarities and differences between participants. However, as previously explained, the interviewer was free to be selective with regard to which questions were chosen, so comparison was not possible in every case. Sections 2 and 3, examining English encountered in the environment, were approached in a similar manner looking for

commonality and difference in the participants' responses. Sections 4 and 5 were analyzed for consistently dominant themes, which were recorded and utilized for subsequent comparison. Through all of the sections, the participants' selection of terms and phrases to describe their perceptions of English were lifted as supporting evidence for broader findings in the questionnaire data.

4.5) Limitations of Study Design

The present study has three primary limitations: (1) lack of previous research with regard to English in the environment, (2) restricted exploration of the variables labeled RELATIONSHIPS and ATTITUDE, and (3) non-random sampling procedures.

One significant limitation of this study is that media exposure has rarely appeared as a factor in previous studies with Japanese learners. Although similar concepts were employed by Kobayashi (2001) and Loveday (1996), the scales used to measure exposure to English in the media and awareness of English in the Japanese media have not been previously tested. Therefore, it is not possible to guarantee the reliability of the measure in comparison to existing examples.

Secondly, a strong focus has been placed upon the variables relating to English media sources and associated forms of English in the environment while other variables have received only a cursory treatment. Therefore, this study should not be viewed as a comprehensive investigation of variables relating to attitude toward English study or to relationships outside of the school environment. These items have been included as

possible relevant factors deserving consideration, but could not be fully explored given the particular constraints placed upon this project.

Thirdly, given the limitations on time and access to the participant group in Japan random sampling practices could not be followed. As is common knowledge, random sampling is necessary to ensure statistical validity. Therefore, caution should be exercised in attempting to generalize the results of this study to all university students in Japan or in other EFL contexts.

This chapter has presented the methodological approach adopted for the current study. The research design was strongly influenced by the Ecological Systems Model and by previous studies conducted with Japanese learners. Data collected from the questionnaire and from the interviews will be presented in Chapter Five, along with a discussion of significant findings.

Chapter 5

Research Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the results from both the questionnaire and the interview components, along with a discussion of the main findings. The first part presents basic descriptive statistics for all of the variables covered in the questionnaire. The second section addresses the main question posed in this thesis regarding the relationship between English in the environment and English ability. The next part looks at all variables within the Ecological Systems Model and their relationship to English ability. The following section examines the correlation between English in the environment and the remaining systems variables. A short summary of the interviews presenting the main themes that emerged completes the presentation of research findings. A discussion of the main findings from this project will then conclude the chapter.

5.1) Findings - Descriptive

The first step in data analysis with SPSS was the generation of descriptive statistics – frequency, mean, and standard deviation.

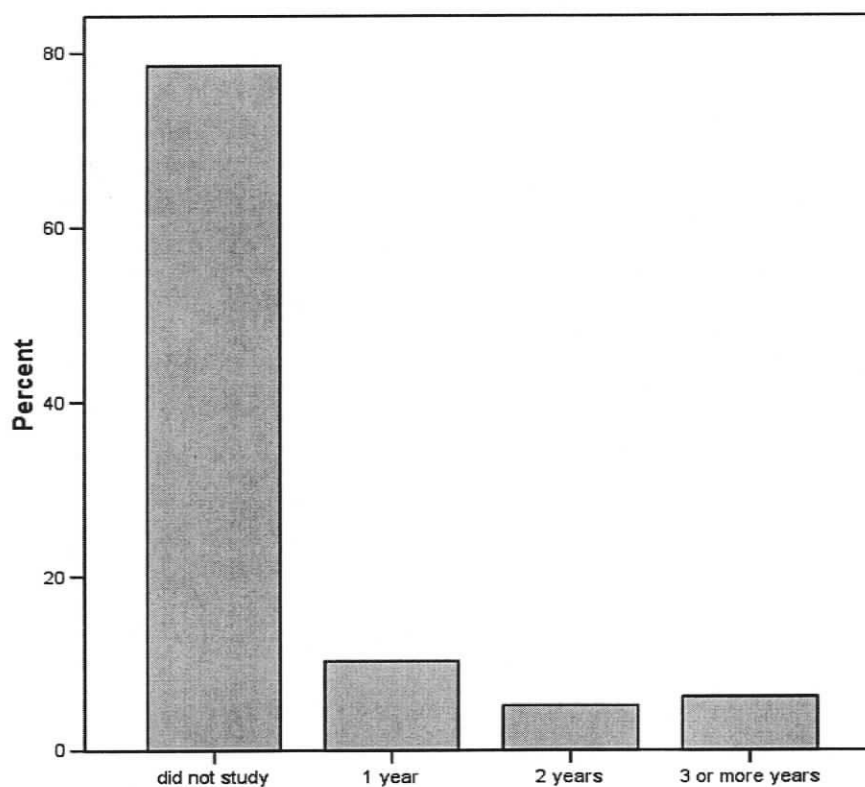
5.11) BACKGROUND

Q1, *university year*, indicated that the participant group was composed of 40 first year students, 53 second year students, and 6 third year students. They ranged in age (Q2) from 19 to 25, with the vast majority being 19 (40.4%) and 20 (41.4%) years of age. Q3 revealed that 45 participants were male and 54 were female.

5.12) STUDY

Q4a, Q4b, and Q4c looked at the *number of years of English study in high school*, *number of years of English study in middle school*, and *number of years of English study in elementary school*. Q4a revealed that 100% of the participants had 3 or more years of English study at the high school level. Similarly, 99% had 3 or more years at the junior high level with the remaining 1% having 2 years of study. Finally, 78.6% of participants reported no English study in elementary school with only 6.1% having 3 years or more. Figure 5.1 presents the frequency distribution for Q4c.

Figure 2 – (Q4c) number of years of study in elementary school



Q5a, Q5b, and Q5c focused on the *number of hours of study per week* at the high school, junior high, and elementary levels. 75.8% of participants reported 5 hours or more of English study time per week in high school, while 40.4% reported 5 hours or more per week in junior high. Of the 22 students who had experience with English in elementary school, 81.8% reported less than 3 hours per week with only 9.1% having 7 hours or more. In terms of class size (Q6a, Q6b, Q6c), 74.7% had between 21 and 40 students in high school and 84.8% in junior high. 60.0% of respondents reported a class size of 20 and under at the elementary level with only 5.0% at 41 or more.

Q7, Q7a, and Q7b looked at *juku* attendance while Q8, Q8a, and Q8b inquired about *eikaiwa* attendance. 71.7% of respondents indicated that they had studied English at *juku*, with 57.7% beginning between 13 and 17 years of age. 49.3% had attended for a period of 4 years or more. 26.3% had attended an *eikaiwa* of which 34.6% began at the age of 6 or under and another 38.5% between 7 and 12. 46.2% studied for a period of 1 year or less.

Q9, Q9a, Q9b, and Q9c inquired about *study with a tutor*. 14.1% had studied English with a tutor and for 30.8% of those the tutor had been a native-English speaker. The majority, at 64.3%, had engaged in study between the ages of 13 and 17, but 57.1% had only continued with tutoring for 1 year or less.

5.13) RELATIONSHIPS

Q11, which addressed the *parents' use of English at work*, revealed 84.8% of respondents said that neither parent used English at work. Three percent indicated mother only, 10.1% father only, and 2% both.

Q12 and Q12a asked about *native English speaking friends*. 27.3% indicated that they had had such a relationship with 50% having first met their friend between the ages of 13 and 17. 15.4% had their first meeting between 7 and 12 years with 11.5% at the age of 6 or under.

Q13 and Q14 looked at *English spoken with friends* and *English spoken with family*. Respondents provided their answers along a scale from *never* = 1 to *very often* = 5. With regard to English spoken with family members, 91.9% indicated they never did so and none of participants indicated often or very often. The mean score was 1.11 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.401. In terms of English spoken with friends, 77.8% indicated never and, again, none of the participants selected often or very often. The mean was 1.29 with SD = 0.593.

5.14) EXPOSURE

Q10, Q10a, and Q10b asked about *experience living in an English speaking country*. From the total group, 9.1% indicated that they had lived in an English speaking country - with half of them beginning at the age of 12 or under and half at the age of 13 or over. One respondent who had lived in an English speaking country opted not to answer parts

10a or 10b. The experience lasted less than one year for 4 of the respondents, but four years or more for 3 other respondents.

Q15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 24 explored how often learners encounter various forms of English language media. Respondents selected an answers from *never* = 1 to *very often* = 5. Q19, *listen to English music*, returned the highest mean score at 3.18, falling between sometimes and often, with a SD = 1.213. The lowest mean was for Q22, *read English books or magazines*, at 1.85 with a SD = 0.896. Table 5.1 presents the questions in ranked order with the associated number of respondents, mean, and standard deviation.

Table 5.1 – Exposure to English Language Media

Question	Rank	N	Mean	SD
Q15 – watch Eng movies or TV programs	5	99	2.24	.991
Q17 – see Eng movies at the theatre	3	98	2.61	1.136
Q18 – rent Eng movies	2	99	2.79	1.172
Q19 – listen to Eng music	1	98	3.18	1.213
Q20 – buy Eng music	4	99	2.40	1.332
Q22 – read Eng books or magazines	7	99	1.85	.896
Q24 – visit Eng Internet websites	6	99	2.09	1.031

5.15) AWARENESS

Q16, 21, 23, and 25 were related to the awareness of English use in Japanese media.

Again, respondents were asked to give their answers along a scale from *never* = 1 to *very*

often = 5. Q21, *often hear Japanese singers use English lyrics*, revealed the highest mean score at 3.78 with a SD = 1.197. Q16, *often see Japanese speak English on TV*, received the lowest mean score at 2.15 with a SD = 0.882. Table 5.2 illustrates the results with rank, number of respondents, mean, and standard deviation. Q27 also referred to the perception of English in Japanese media, however, the question was formed as a statement and respondents were asked to choose their answer on a scale from strongly *disagree* = 1 to *strongly agree* = 5. For this question, the mean was 3.22 with a SD of 1.074.

Table 5.2 –Awareness of English use in Japanese media

Question	Rank	N	Mean	SD
Q16 – see Japanese speak Eng on TV	4	97	2.15	.882
Q21 – hear Japanese singers use Eng lyrics	1	98	3.78	1.197
Q23 – see Eng in Japanese magazines	2	99	3.17	1.204
Q25 – see Eng on Japanese Internet sites	3	99	3.22	1.255

5.16) ATTITUDE

Q26 and 28 focused on the learner's attitude toward English. Participants were asked to read the statement provided and to select their answer from a scale of *strongly disagree* = 1 to *strongly agree* = 5, with *neutral* = 3. The first statement (Q26) was positively phrased (“enjoy studying English”) and yielded a mean of 2.79 with a SD = .982. The

second statement (Q28) was negatively phrased (“too many English movies and TV programs”) and, thus, reverse-coded yielding a mean of 4.10 with a SD = 0.851. This suggested that the overwhelming majority of participants did *not* feel there was too much English language media in Japan.

5.17) PERCEPTION

Q29, 30, and 31 referred to the learner’s general perception of English. Q29 and 30 ask participants to differentiate between English and Japanese in terms of script representation. Both are presented in the form of a statement and again participants are asked to select their answer from a scale of *strongly disagree* = 1 to *strongly agree* = 5, with *neutral* = 3. Q29 returned a mean of 3.20 with a SD = 1.010 and Q30 a mean of 3.09 with a SD = 0.914. Q31, a general question about English in Japan, revealed a mean of 3.52 with a SD = 1.024. All of these items returned a modal number of neutral responses with Q29 receiving 37, Q30 receiving 42, and Q31 receiving 21.

5.18) ABILITY

Q32, 33, 34, and 35 asked for class and test results as an indication of the participant’s English ability. For Q32, *university English grade*, respondents chose from one of five possible grades – A (90–100), B (80–89), C (70–79), D (60–69), and F (0–59). The results were reverse-coded (i.e. A = 5, B =4, etc.) and the mean was 3.23 – just above the C level – with a SD = 0.913. The frequency results are presented in table 5.3.

Table 5.3 - (Q32) university English grade

Grade	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	6	6.1	6.1
B	34	34.3	40.4
C	39	39.4	79.8
D	17	17.2	97.0
F	3	3.0	100.0
Total	99	100.0	

For Q33, *high school English grade*, respondents again chose from a list of grades given as 5 (A), 4 (B), 3 (C), 2 (D), and 1 (F). Again, the results were reverse-coded and the mean was 3.84 with a SD = 1.076. The frequency results are presented in table 5.4.

Table 5.4 - (Q33) high school English grade

Grade	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	30	30.3	30.3
B	39	39.4	69.7
C	18	18.2	87.9
D	8	8.1	96.0
F	4	4.0	100.0
Total	99	100.0	

Q34, *Eiken score*, was given by highest level achieved – level 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, or never written. 24.5% of respondents indicated they had never written the test and 36.7% had passed only level 3, which is suggested as appropriate for a junior high school graduate.

Q35, *TOEIC score*, was given by highest score achieved in intervals at 900+, 801-900, 701-800, 601-700, 600- and never written. 83.8% of respondents indicated that they had never written the TOEIC test and 3% had achieved a score of 701 or over.

The descriptive statistics presented above offer an overview of the participant group and the variables considered in this study. These findings will be utilized in selecting index measures for the inferential procedures conducted below.

5.2) Findings - Inferential

5.21) English in the Environment and English Ability

The first question to be addressed through the generation of inferential statistics was, *To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to the development of English ability in Japanese learners?* Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to test the strength of relationships between these variables. A perfect relationship is indicated at +1, a perfect inverse relationship at -1, and no relationship at 0 (Agresti, 1986). As explained by Skehan (1989), “second language learning studies yield correlations whose maximum values rarely approach +1, and are more likely to be of the order of 0.30 to 0.60” (1989, p. 13). Skehan goes on to suggest, “correlations which are typical in language learning studies do not account for very high proportions of variation in scores, reflecting the multi-causal nature of language learning success” (Skehan, 1989, p. 14). It should be noted that correlation does not indicate the direction of the relationship (i.e., X influences Y or Y influences X) and, thus, is not intended to prove causation (Agresti, 1986). The alpha level for findings of significance was set at 0.05.

Individual items from EXPOSURE and AWARENESS were run against three measures of ABILITY, *university English grade (Q32), high school English grade (Q33), and*

highest Eiken level passed (Q34). *TOEIC score* (Q35) was dropped from further analysis since the majority of participants indicated they had never written the test.

Pearson correlation revealed few relationships between individual items in the groups EXPOSURE and ABILITY (displayed in Table 5.5). Q10a was significant with regard to *university English grade* (Q32) $p = 0.039$, but the correlation was relatively weak with $r = 0.208$. The relationship between Q18 and Q32 was significant at $p = 0.024$, however, the correlation was also weak with $r = 0.199$. *High school English grade* (Q33) revealed similar results with only Q22 significant at $p = 0.030$ but a modest correlation with $r = 0.218$. Results from the *Eiken test* (Q34) held a higher number of significant findings with Q10a, 15, Q22, and Q24 under the 0.05 level. However, none of the correlation results were strong with all finishing under 0.3.

Table 5.5 – Correlation Results for EXPOSURE and ABILITY

Item		Q32- university English grade	Q33- high school English grade	Q34- highest Eiken level passed
Q10a	Pearson Correlation	.208*	.164	.287**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.106	.004
Q15	Pearson Correlation	.118	.066	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.246	.517	.007
Q17	Pearson Correlation	.085	-.002	.164
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.407	.987	.108
Q18	Pearson Correlation	.199*	.070	.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.048	.493	.420
Q19	Pearson Correlation	.054	.080	.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.601	.433	.472
Q20	Pearson Correlation	-.112	-.061	.036
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	.550	.723
Q22	Pearson Correlation	.093	.218*	.212*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.358	.030	.036
Q24	Pearson Correlation	.010	-.005	.219*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.923	.961	.030

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Items from the category AWARENESS also showed little relation to English ability (Table 5.6). *University English grade* (Q32) held no significant results. *High school English grade* (Q33) yielded two significant results, but with relatively weak correlation. Q21 returned $r = 0.210$, $p = 0.038$, while Q27 was slightly stronger at $r = 0.252$, $p = 0.012$. *Eiken results* (Q34), like those from University grade, did not have a significant relationship to any of the items from AWARENESS.

Table 5.6 – Correlation Results for AWARENESS and ABILITY

Item		Q32- university English grade	Q33- high school English grade	Q34- highest Eiken level passed
Q16	Pearson Correlation	.143	-.081	-.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.162	.433	.487
Q21	Pearson Correlation	.083	.210*	-.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.414	.038	.960
Q23	Pearson Correlation	.028	.085	-.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.781	.405	.412
Q25	Pearson Correlation	.144	.135	.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.154	.182	.588
Q27	Pearson Correlation	.082	.252*	-.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.419	.012	.563

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Individual items from EXPOSURE and AWARENESS were then combined to form a scale measurement. A reliability analysis, calculating Cronbach's Alpha, was conducted to test the extent to which each item was contributing to the scale. Cronbach's Alpha is an index of reliability that tests if a set of questions actually measures the same underlying construct (Skehan, 1989). Generally 0.7 is considered an acceptable level of internal consistency (Santos, 1999).

EXPOSURE included questions 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 24. Q10a did not address English language media and was not included in this measure. For the entire group,

Cronbach's Alpha was 0.814, suggesting a relatively strong internal consistency. Thus, each of the questions in the scale appears to measure the same underlying construct. The results from the reliability analysis are presented in table 5.7.

Table 5.7 – Average Item-Total Correlation and Coefficient Alpha for EXPOSURE

Exposure to English Language Media	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q15	.566	.801
Q17	.601	.794
Q18	.681	.780
Q19	.674	.781
Q20	.634	.789
Q22	.393	.825
Q24	.421	.822

AWARENESS included questions 16, 21, 23, 25, and 27. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated at 0.745, marginally above the 0.7 level. Q16 and Q21 had the lowest level of correlation to the other items at 0.384 and 0.344, respectively. Results are displayed in table 5.8 below.

Table 5.8 – Average Item-Total Correlation and Coefficient Alpha for AWARENESS

Awareness of English Use in Japanese Media	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Q16	.384	.741
Q21	.344	.763
Q23	.657	.640
Q25	.528	.694
Q27	.672	.641

Pearson correlation was again conducted with the scale measures for EXPOSURE and AWARENESS in addition to the three measures for ABILITY (Table 5.9). Neither EXPOSURE nor AWARENESS revealed a significant correlation with the three measures of ABILITY. However, the relationship between EXPSOURE and AWARENESS was modestly correlated with $r = 0.333$, $p = 0.001$.

Table 5.9 – Correlation Results for EXPOSURE, AWARENESS, and ABILITY

Variable		Q32- university English grade	Q33- high school English grade	Q34- highest Eiken level passed
EXPOSURE	Pearson Correlation	.089	.057	.198
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.388	.578	.053
AWARENESS	Pearson Correlation	.130	.139	-.014
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.208	.178	.893

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.22) Systems Variables and English Ability

The next set of statistical procedures was intended to address the question, *To what extent are additional factors, such as experience with English study, relationships involving the use of English, and attitude toward English, related to the development of English ability in Japanese learners?* The first step in testing for relationships between the systems variables and English ability involved the creation of a correlation matrix. The correlation matrix was utilized to identify the strength of relationships between items from the variables STUDY, RELATIONSHIPS, ATTITUDE, PERCEPTION, and

ABILITY. Index items were then selected for each variable to represent the levels of the Ecological Systems Model.

The variable STUDY represented the microsystem level, which was defined as a primary learning environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As previously mentioned, the public school setting is undoubtedly the primary setting for English study for the majority of students. Therefore, the *number of years of study in elementary school* (Q4a), *middle school* (Q4b), and *high school* (Q4c) were summed for each individual to determine total number of in-school English study. This total was entered for the variable STUDY.

A Student t-test procedure was also conducted with additional study at *juku* (Q7), *eikaiwa* (Q8), and *with a private tutor* (Q9) to determine if these settings were significantly related to English ability (Q32, Q33, Q34). The Student t-test compares the mean scores from two samples to determine if they are drawn from the same population (Madrigal, 1995). The participant group was divided by the student responses (Yes/No) to the items regarding *juku* attendance, *eikaiwa* attendance, and study with a tutor. The null hypothesis is that there is no relationship between study experience in these settings and English ability. Experience studying at a *juku* (Q7) was not significantly related to any of the measures for English ability, so the null hypothesis was accepted. Study at an *eikaiwa* (Q8) was significantly related to *High school English grade* (Q33), but not to *University grade* (Q32) or *Eiken level* (Q34). As with Q7, *Study with a tutor* (Q9) was not related to any of the measures for English ability. Results from the Student t-tests are provided in Appendix C.

The variable RELATIONSHIPS is intended to represent the second level of the Ecological Systems Model, the mesosystem. The mesosystem included settings and relationships that served to connect primary developmental settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). After consulting the correlation matrix, the item *Often speak English with friends* (Q14) was selected as the index for RELATIONSHIPS. This item was modestly correlated to *University English grade* ($r = 0.263$, $p = 0.009$) and to *Eiken level* ($r = 0.238$, $p = 0.018$) and statistically significant for both.

The scale measures for EXPOSURE and AWARENESS, explained in section 5.21, were included as exosystem factors. The exosystem was identified as factors that do not directly engage the learner, but may still have an impact on development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A Student t-test was also conducted with the item *Lived in an English speaking country* (Q10) to determine if a relationship with English ability was apparent. The results were significant for both *University English grade* ($t = 2.313$, $p = 0.023$) and with *Eiken level* ($t = 3.938$, $p = 0.000$).

ATTITUDE and PERCEPTION were also included as individual factors that might impact this model. For the variable ATTITUDE, *Enjoy studying English in school* (Q26) was selected as an index. This item revealed the strongest correlation to *University English grade* ($r = 0.340$, $p = 0.001$), and to *High school grade* ($r = 0.363$, $p = 0.000$). *English is everywhere in Japan* (Q31) was selected as an index for PERCEPTION. Both of the remaining items in PERCEPTION (Q29, Q30) received a high number of neutral

responses suggesting that they were either not understood or participants did not have a strong opinion.

After identifying the index items for each system level, a multiple regression procedure was conducted. Multiple regression tests the extent to which a combination of variables are able to predict the dependent variable (Skehan, 1989). ABILITY was selected as the dependent variable based on previous research (Benson, 1991; Hinenoya & Gatbonton, 2000; Kobayashi, 2001) and for the purpose of further exploration. This is not intended to suggest that the independent variables should be interpreted as causative. University English grade (Q32) and Eiken level (Q34) were selected to represent English ability. High school grade (Q33) was dropped from further analysis given that the participant group had completed study at this level and many of the factors would not longer be considered relevant. Raw data output for these multiple regression procedures are provided in Appendix C.

Setting *University English grade* (Q32) as the dependent variable and entering independent variables from each level of the Systems Model returned a value of $R^2 = 0.157$. This suggests that the model, as a whole, has a relatively low predictive ability for University English grade. The F-score did indicate that the model was statistically significant with $F = 2.739$, $p = 0.017$. The only independent variable with a significant effect on the dependent variable was ATTITUDE with $t = 2.874$, $p = 0.005$. Figure 5.2 provides a graphic representation of this model, while Table 5.10 summarizes the data output.

Figure 5.2 - Scatterplot for University Grade and Standardized Predicted Value

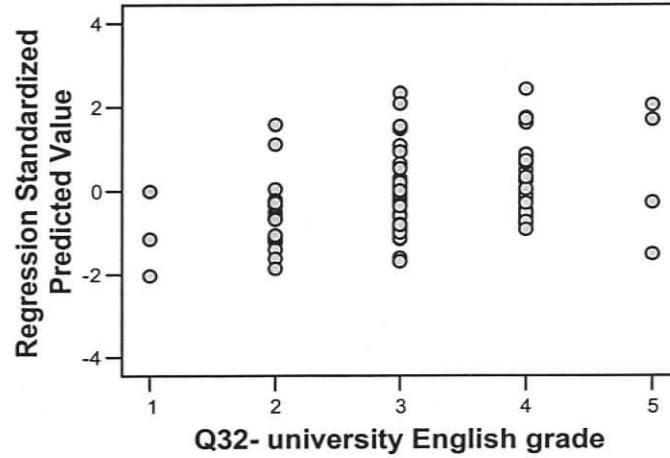


Table 5.10 – Regression Output for System Variables and University English Grade (Q32)

Model	R ²	F	Sig.
1	.157	2.739	.017

	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.439	1.018	1.413	.161
STUDY	.106	.103	1.026	.308
RELATIONSHIPS	.243	.154	1.580	.118
EXPOSURE	-.018	.018	-1.036	.303
AWARENESS	.019	.033	.569	.571
ATTITUDE	.281	.098	2.874	.005
PERCEPTION	-.069	.094	-.730	.467

With *Eiken Level* (Q34) as the dependent variable and independent variables from each level of the Systems Model entered the regression procedure returned an identical $R^2 = 0.157$. Again, the model was overall significant with $F = 2.739$, $p = 0.017$. The variable ATTITUDE also factored significantly within this model yielding $t = 2.194$, $p = 0.031$. Figure 5.3 offers a graphic representation and Table 5.11 summarizes the data output.

Figure 5.3 - Scatterplot for Eiken Level and Standardized Predicted Value

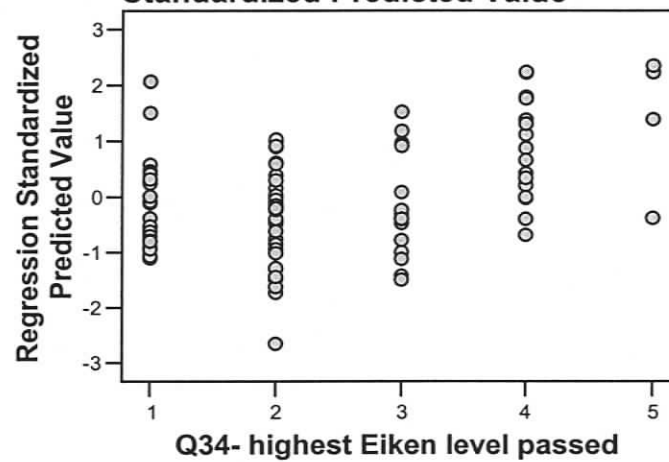


Table 5.11 – Regression Output for System Variables and Eiken Level (Q34)

Model	R ²	F	Sig.
1	.157	2.739	.017

ATTITUDE	.278	.127	2.194	.031
PERCEPTION	-.157	.122	-1.286	.202
STUDY	.206	.133	1.546	.126
RELATIONSHIPS	.272	.199	1.368	.175
EXPOSURE	.024	.023	1.050	.297
AWARENESS	-.041	.042	-.956	.342

5.23) English in the Environment and Systems Variables

The final set of statistical procedures explored the question, *To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to additional factors (e.g., STUDY, RELATIONSHIPS, ATTITUDE, and PERCEPTION)?* Pearson correlation was conducted and the alpha level was set at 0.05. The relationships between PERCEPTION and AWARENESS returned the strongest result with $r = 0.357$, $p = 0.000$. The relationship between ATTITUDE and AWARENESS approached the 0.300 level with $r = 0.296$, $p = 0.003$. The relationship between ATTITUDE and EXPOSURE was not as strong, but it was statistically significant with $r = 0.226$, $p = 0.026$. Both measures with RELATIONSHIPS were also statistically significant, but relatively weak with $r = 0.232$, $p = 0.022$ for EXPOSURE and $r = 0.213$, $p = 0.037$ for AWARENESS. STUDY was not correlated to either EXPOSURE or AWARENESS.

Table 5.12 – Correlation Results for Systems Variables

Variable		EXPOSURE	AWARENESS
STUDY	Pearson Correlation	.109	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.286	.701
RELATIONSHIPS	Pearson Correlation	.232*	.213*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.037
ATTITUDE	Pearson Correlation	.226*	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.003
PERCEPTION	Pearson Correlation	.000	.357**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.999	.000

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Student t-test was also conducted with English study in additional settings such as *juku* (Q7) and *eikaiwa* (Q8) schools, as well as *study with a tutor* (Q9) and *with a native English speaking tutor* (Q9c). Again, the participant group was divided between those who had study experience in these settings and those who did not. The t-test suggested that the relationship between EXPOSURE and *eikaiwa* study ($t = 2.009, p = 0.047$), EXPOSURE and *study with a tutor* ($t = 2.262, p = 0.026$), and EXPOSURE and *study with a native English speaking tutor* ($t = 2.801, p = 0.017$) were all significant not due to chance. AWARENESS did not return any significant results and the null hypothesis (i.e., no relationship) was accepted.

T-tests with EXPOSURE and *lived in an English speaking country* (Q10) returned a significant relationship ($t = 3.266, p = 0.002$), as did EXPOSURE and *native English speaking friends* (Q12) ($t = 3.163, p = 0.002$). AWARENESS returned a significant result with the item *lived in an English speaking country* ($t = 2.346, p = 0.021$), but not with *native English speaking friends*.

This section has presented the results from the inferential statistical procedures.

Correlation results between the variables EXPOSURE and ABILITY, as well as AWARENESS and ABILITY, revealed a number of findings that were statistically significant, but no strong relationships. With regard to the additional variables considered, ATTITUDE returned the strongest correlation to ABILITY. Somewhat surprisingly, primary developmental settings (i.e., variables from the category STUDY) did not appear related to measures of English ability. In the final correlation procedure,

the relationship between ATTITUDE and both variables regarding English in the environment – EXPOSURE and AWARENESS – proved to be statistically significant. These findings will be further considered in the Discussion Section (5.4). Data collected from the interview component is presented in the next subsection.

5.3) Findings - Interviews

5.31) Informants' Background

Interviews were conducted with five volunteer participants out of the original 99 from the group that completed the questionnaire. For the purposes of this analysis, the informants have been given a letter to correspond with the order in which they were interviewed (i.e., the first interviewee appears as informant A). A brief background will be provided for each of the informants. Informants were not officially evaluated for English language ability, but a short period of 10 to 15 minutes was available before interviews in which to casually speak with those participating. In this brief time, it was possible to offer a rough approximation of each individual's English level.

Informant A did not have any overseas English study experience, but had spent brief periods of time in Australia and the United States as a tourist. She was currently enrolled at an *eikaiwa* and was taking English classes at university. With regard to English media, she suggested that she watched more English movies than the average Japanese and often listened to English music. In conversation, her English ability appeared to be around the upper elementary level.

Informant B had studied for one year in Canada during high school. She reported that she found it difficult to adjust to the atmosphere of a foreign school, but acknowledged that the experience was very helpful for her English language skills. She was currently teaching English part-time at a *juku* in Kyoto. Her English level could be considered intermediate to upper intermediate.

Informant C had no experience studying English outside of public school. Although she had done well in English as a school subject, she reported, "I can listen, read, and write, but I cannot speak". She had great difficulty understanding basic questions in English and responded with predominantly one-word answers. Her English level was equivalent to that of a lower elementary student.

Informant D had never studied abroad, but had traveled to English speaking countries for short periods. With regard to media, she often watched television in English with Japanese subtitles and listened to English music. She reported that she did not consider herself to have strong English ability, but enjoyed studying. In discussion, her English level appeared comparable to a lower intermediate speaker.

Informant E had studied abroad on two occasions, the most recent experience for one full year in grade 12 in the United States. He reported that he often watched English television and movies as well as listened to English music in an effort to maintain his English skills while back in Japan. He was very comfortable speaking in English and his English ability could be considered upper intermediate to advanced.

5.32) *Katakana and Romaji*

After a short discussion on their background with English (i.e., study, experience abroad, etc.) and interest in English language media, informants were asked to look at a set of terms, half written in *katakana* and half in *romaji*, and to identify each term as either Japanese or English. They were then asked to elaborate upon their answers, explaining which factors contributed to their decision.

Informant C offered the clearest distinction between Japanese and English suggesting that terms written in *katakana* appeared Japanese while those in *romaji* were English. She explained, “if it’s changed to *katakana*, it is accepted as commonplace in Japan, so anything that’s in the dictionary as Japanese, they are Japanese.” The origin of the term and familiarity arising from frequent use or contact were irrelevant. However, the distinction between Japanese and English was not nearly as clear for the other participants.

Informants A and B had similar responses for the terms written in *romaji* identifying all as English, except for *tsunami* which they strongly identified with Japanese regardless of script form. Informant A suggested that both ホテル (‘hotel’) and チョコレート (‘chocolate’) were Japanese, while Informant B saw both as English because of their foreign origin regardless of *katakana* script form. She commented, “It *feels* like they came from foreign countries.”

Informant D felt that “t-shirt” in *romaji* was an English term, but “sale”, also in *romaji*, was Japanese because of frequent contact. She stated, “I often see ‘sale’ posted in stores...And I use it often [in speech].” JAL was interpreted as Japanese because it was a Japanese company, despite being an acronym derived from English terms. She also felt that all of the terms in *katakana* were Japanese, regardless of their English origin.

Informant E identified the majority of the terms as English. He did suggest that パソコン (‘personal computer’) could be considered Japanese since it was a truncation of two English terms that created a new word found only in Japan. He also included チョコレート (‘chocolate’) as Japanese despite being aware of its English origin. When asked how this term differed from ホテル (‘hotel’) and ガソリン (‘gasoline’) – both of which were grouped as English - he explained, “I don’t have the *image* of Japan for *hoteru*. Somehow I feel like *gasorin* is not Japanese.” Notably, the two informants with the strongest English ability identified the majority of terms as English – Informant B identifying 5 out of 7 as English and Informant E identifying 6 out of 8.

5.33) *Emerging Themes*

In exploring the differentiation between English and Japanese, three similar factors were apparent in the informants’ responses: first, the identification of *katakanaized* English loanwords as Japanese due to increased familiarity from regular contact or use; second, the identification of English as connoting a feeling of modernity or “coolness”; and finally, a difference in physical location and situation in which English loanwords were

more frequently employed, as opposed to those where the equivalent Japanese terms were favoured.

As outlined above, the informants offered a range of opinions regarding the distinction between English and Japanese. However, associating individual terms with frequency of use and appearance was a recurrent theme. Informant D explained, “Anything simple and if I can understand the meaning with one glance, I may feel it is Japanese, and I think it is English if I have to think of the meaning.” Informant A also cited a feeling of familiarity, however, she saw this relationship as fluid: “If I study more, from now on, I may think that these phrases are also Japanese. They may become my words.”

Informant C suggested, “For people who do not understand, it [the term *online*] is totally English, and I think that it’s considered an incomprehensible word. For the word *komyunikeeshon* (‘communication’), we use it often in our speech, so I think that people who are not studying English can also understand it, so I think that it is Japanese.”

A second recurrent theme was the feeling that English is often employed in Japan because of the connotation of modernity, sophistication, and “coolness”. With regard to the use of English in song titles and lyrics, Informant A responded, “I think it [English] is cool, [but *katakana*] I think it’s heavy. I feel English is more stylish.” Informant D expressed the identical sentiment with regard to the use of English, stating “[it’s used] because it’s cool.” Informant B offered further support stating, “...young people think it [English] is cool and feels easier to approach.” A strong association between the use of English and the projection of a “cool” image has been identified in past research looking

at the social reception of English in the country (Loveday, 1996; Hogan, 2003; Stanlaw, 2004).

Informants specified that location and situation were also significantly associated with the use of English loanwords in Japan. The Informant C offered the following comparison between *romaji* and *katakana*: “I’d say that I feel childlikeness from *katakana*. For example, if there is a book with *monsutaa* (‘monster’) and there is a book with the title “Monster”, I feel that the one written with *katakana* has a lower target age.” She went on to explain, “I think many computer companies also use many English company names to present a sophisticated image.” She also saw a distinction in location, observing, “a place like a grocery store, where older ladies go, has a fair amount of *katakana*. In comparison, bars and fashionable restaurants where young people go use English and Italian. They use it for their image.”

Informant E, the individual with the strongest English ability, had a very different impression of *katakana* and *romaji*. Referring to the use of English for song titles and band names, he felt, “if it is *katakana*, I think that the person who is singing is trying to produce something Japanese-like.” “I feel *katakana* is more fashionable...I say that English is normal. There is an impression that using English is cool, isn’t there? I say that the coolness [of using *katakana*] surpasses it.”

The findings from both the questionnaire component and the interview component were presented in the sections above. The correlation results revealed almost no relationship

between English in the environment and English language ability. The interview component yielded a number of different perspectives regarding the learners' perception of English in the surrounding environment. The next section will discuss these findings in the context of the Ecological Systems Model and address their relevance for English language development in Japan.

5.4) Discussion

The discussion section will focus on four main findings from this study: first, the limited relationship between English in the environment and academic English ability; second, the apparent distinction between English taught as a school subject and English outside of the school environment; third, the ineffectiveness of primary developmental settings (e.g., in-school study, study at a *juku*, study at an *eikaiwa*, and study with a tutor) in Japan; and, finally, the importance of the individual's perception of *foreign* and *familiar*.

The primary question motivating this study addressed the relationship between English in the environment and English language ability. The questionnaire component revealed little, if any, relationship between these two variables. This suggests that despite the significant levels of English surrounding Japanese learners, there remains a sharp distinction between English as an academic subject and English outside of the school setting. As covered in the literature review, this assertion has been put forth in previous research (Kobayashi, 2001; Reesor, 2003; Tsuneyoshi, 2005) and appears to hold true. Both the historical conditions surrounding the initial appearance of English in Japan and the insular nature of the Japanese people have been cited to account for this division.

Participants with greater exposure to English language media did not demonstrate stronger academic English ability. Neither did those with greater awareness of English use in the Japanese media. However, exposure was moderately correlated to awareness. From this, it may then be inferred that Japanese who *enjoy* various forms of English language media – “enjoy” being an appropriate characterization since these activities (watching movies and television, listening to music, reading books and magazines, and using the Internet) are generally voluntary – have greater ability to *recognize* English in the surrounding environment. This association appears unrelated to academic English ability, which is presumably motivated by another set of factors. Again, this would support the assertion that English taught in school remains separated from English in the environment.

It should also be noted that the lack of correlation between English language media and Academic English ability is not consistent with that of the Kobayashi study (2005), which concluded a negative relationship between these two variables. Kobayashi suggested that students who spend a greater amount of time watching television and listening to music, in either English or Japanese, would then spend less time studying and, consequently, have a lower English grade. Q17, *See English movies at a theatre*, and Q20, *Buy English music*, from the questionnaire did reveal a negative relationship with English ability, however, the remainder of the items did not. It is interesting that both Q17 and Q20 are activities that occur outside of the home environment, while the other activities could conceivably be confined within the home. This interpretation would partially agree with

Kobayashi's assertion, but remain limited to those students who spend a greater amount of time away from home as a result of media consumption. However, the instruments used in this study did not address *where* the participants were engaging in these activities. Participants watching English programs on television and/or listening to English music, both activities that could take place within the home, would contradict Kobayashi's findings. In fact, the item *rent English movies* demonstrated a moderately positive relationship with *University English grade*. This may suggest that when learners have control over the *content* of the media source (i.e., it is possible for them to choose materials in which they have an interest) the relationship may be stronger.

The apparent division between English in and out of the classroom is somewhat surprising. Framed in a historical context, it is not entirely difficult to see from where this division arose. English skills in Meiji-era Japan were originally required specifically for translation and the Japanese have long been cautious regarding the integration of foreign elements (Reesor, 2003; McVeigh, 2005; Seargeant, 2005). However, given the current popularity of English language media and the *value* of English skills (e.g., for entry into university, foreign study opportunities, job opportunities, and travel) in the modern setting, those barriers seem no longer relevant. Findings from exposure to English language media supported the observation that it is quite popular with regard to music and movies. Participants also revealed a positive attitude toward English media, specifically to television and movies. But the deeply ingrained barriers identified by Reesor (2003) and McVeigh (2005) appear to persist.

The disjuncture between English in the classroom and English out of the classroom is immediately relevant for teachers of English in Japan. English media sources are readily available and provide a real-world connection around which to base a lesson. The English that is currently taught in the Japanese public school system has been frequently criticized as out-of-date and lacking in practical function. Participants in this study have indicated a moderately negative attitude toward in-school study; however, English language media remains popular. The deluge of English in its many forms, particularly those associated with music and movies, offer English instructors a link through which learners may find the language more accessible. Thus, it is possible that the inclusion of media sources in the curriculum could improve the learners' *approach* (i.e., attitude and motivation) to language study.

Attitude was the lone variable to significantly factor in both regression models for *University English grade* and *Eiken level*. It also revealed the strongest correlation results for measures of English ability. This finding was not surprising since attitude has been identified as an important consideration in previous work with Japanese learners (Benson, 1991; Hinenoya and Gatbonton, 2000; Kobayashi, 2001; Reesor, 2003; Mimura, Monk, and Ozawa, 2003). Unfortunately, attitude was not comprehensively explored in this study; it was allotted only two items on the questionnaire. A broader approach toward the study of attitude and the inclusion of items exploring learner motivation would have been helpful. However, it is still notable that attitude demonstrated the only significant relationship to Academic English ability.

The levels (micro-, meso-, and exo-) from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model all returned insignificant results when measured against Academic English ability. This does not definitively mean that the model is inappropriate for the analysis of second language development. Bronfenbrenner did not dictate which factors were to be included at each level of the model – with the exception of the microsystem as the primary developmental setting. Each of the factors incorporated in this study was drawn from previous research with Japanese learners. However, there are many others which could have been included, such as general aptitude for academics (i.e., current G.P.A.), other foreign languages studied, parents attitude toward English, and negative experiences with English to mention but a few. Although the Systems Model did not reveal many strong relationships, some of the findings are noteworthy.

The lack of relationship between experience with in-school English study and English ability was particularly surprising. Participants with as much as three years of additional in-school study at the elementary level were not significantly different from those with no study at the elementary level. Presumably, learners beginning at a younger age (with elementary instruction generally beginning around the age of six) would gain some benefit; however, this assumption was not corroborated by the data from this study. In fact, none of the items associated with in-school experience - *Hours of study* and *Class size* - were significantly correlated with Academic English ability. This finding does appear to support the assertion that English instruction in Japanese public schools is, for the most part, ineffective (Gainey & Andressen, 2002; Reesor, 2003; McVeigh, 2004). It is, however, important to note that this study did not involve an in-depth exploration into

the *quality* of in-school instruction. No measures were included regarding the type of public school attended (i.e., an international school, a highly ranked institution, an English-focused school, etc.), the curriculum employed, the qualifications of the instructors, or the presence of a native-English speaker in the classroom. Including items of this nature may have allowed for a more accurate estimation regarding the effectiveness of the primary developmental setting.

Additional settings for English instruction also returned predominantly insignificant results. Participants who had studied at *juku* were not significantly different from those who had not studied at *juku*. This result was not particularly surprising given that my own experience at this type of school revealed it to be more of a social setting than one for serious study. There are, however, many types of *juku* schools ranging from very large with a structured curriculum and professional instruction to quite small and informal. English study at an *eikaiwa* and study with a tutor also returned few significant relationships. *Eikaiwa* schools are advertised as communicative settings focused on English conversation, so the lack of relationship to Academic English ability might be expected; however, these schools generally offer prep courses for TOEIC and TOEFL, and grammar lessons are part of their communicative curriculum. Overall, the impact of English study outside of public school was not strong.

Since the majority of the findings discussed thus far have proven insignificant with regard to English ability, it is necessary to also address those that do appear related. As could be expected, participants who had lived in an English speaking country fared very

well with regard to *university English grade* and to *Highest Eiken level passed*.

Immersion in an English-speaking environment apparently provided benefits unequalled by any amount of in-school study in Japan. Given the average age of the participant group, it is likely that those who had lived abroad would have attended public school with native English speakers. Participants with native English speaking friends were also relatively successful with regard to academic English ability.

Both of these experiences – living in an English speaking country and having English-speaking friends - would allow the individual a closer, more intimate knowledge of native speakers than that found with simply classroom study or exposure to English language media. It may then be inferred that this type of experience may reduce the *distance*, identified earlier, between English in the classroom and English out of the classroom for these learners. With the benefit of a personal experience or relationship as a referent, these students would then feel an affinity with the language that their classmates did not enjoy. This reading is further supported by findings from the interview component.

Multiple informants associated terms with frequency of use – often used terms were considered Japanese, while unfamiliar terms were identified as English. In addition, regularly encountering specific words in the surrounding environment (e.g., *sale*, *JAL*, *etc.*) was cited as a method of differentiating between Japanese and English. Thus, the distinction between the two languages was a fluid concept, subject to a combination of individual experience and general exposure in the environment. These methods of

association strongly reflect the concept of *uchi* and *soto* touched upon in the literature review.

As identified by Makino (2002), *uchi* refers to that which is close to the individual and familiar, while *soto* is left on the outside, foreign, and distant. Makino (2002) also suggests that *uchi* and *soto* are not concretely determined, but are free to vary and shift subject to the interpretation of appropriate social, spatial, and temporal distance. The findings from this study, with regard to the learners' perception of English and the division between English in school and out of school, definitely exhibit characteristics of the *uchi* and *soto* metaphor. Since students have a great deal of experience with in-school English study, it may be placed in *uchi* space. English found outside of the school environment, particularly in English language media, would be identified as foreign and remain in *soto* space. A shift from foreign to familiar could be motivated by a relationship with a native speaker or experience in an English-speaking country, both of which would bring the foreign closer and reduce the division between English in the environment and English as a school subject.

In summary, the findings from this study did not provide the anticipated results. There was virtually no relationship between English in the environment and English ability. In fact a strong division between English as a school subject and English in the environment appears to endure, despite the significant presence of the latter. The Ecological Systems Model was useful for analyzing the learning environment for Japanese students, although it produced a number of unexpected findings. Primary developmental settings had little

impact on academic English ability, while an individual factor, attitude, returned the most significant result. Experience living in an English speaking country and relationships with native English speakers were also notable. The metaphor of *uchi* and *soto* proved useful in interpreting the findings and in potentially explaining the separation between English as a school subject and English in the environment.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This study was primarily concerned with exploring the relationship between English in the environment and English language ability. The concluding chapter will offer a summary of the findings with regard to this relationship and look at the broader implications with respect to second language development in Japan and the phenomenon of language and culture contact. It will also offer recommendations for future research and discuss limitations for the findings in this study.

6.1) Summary

The central question posed in this study was: *To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to development of English ability in Japanese learners?* The findings revealed little evidence of a relationship between these two considerations. Despite the significant presence of English in many areas (e.g., popular media and advertising, borrowed terms, etc.) there was no apparent connection to any of the included measures for language ability. Notably, participants responded positively toward English in the media, but held a moderately negative attitude toward the in-school study of English. These results offered support for the argument that English taught as a subject in the public school system may be divided from English found off the campus grounds. However, relationships with native English speakers and experience living in English speaking countries both demonstrated a significant relationship to English ability.

It was suggested that these experiences might serve to bridge the split of “Englishes” in Japan. If Japanese learners had the benefit of close contact with English speakers and foreign cultures, those cultures might then seem less foreign. This could in turn facilitate a shift for English in the environment from the foreign (*soto*) to the familiar (*uchi*) and, thereby, benefit the development of English ability.

Two further questions were also considered in the course of this project. The first being, *To what extent are additional factors, such as experience with English study, relationships involving the use of English, and attitude toward English, related to the development of English ability in Japanese learners?* As mentioned above, relationships with native English speakers and experience living in an English speaking country were both positively associated with English ability. Attitude also proved to be a significant factor, although it should be noted that the exploration of this variable was somewhat limited. Primary developmental settings, such as the classroom, *juku*, *eikaiwa*, and study with a tutor, revealed almost no correlation with measures of English ability. The second question considered was, *To what extent is exposure to English in the environment related to these additional factors?* Both relationships and attitude returned significant results with both measures regarding English in the environment – exposure to English language media and awareness of English use in the Japanese media. These findings suggested that attitude toward English was, again, an important factor for Japanese learners.

The results from this study should hold particular importance for second language educators in Japan: first, with regard to acclimatizing Japanese students to native English speakers and native English speaking cultures; and secondly, with the use of in-class materials which serve to connect English in and out of the classroom. The Ministry of Education (2003) has already begun to increase the number of Japanese students who are given the opportunity to study abroad and the JET program, bringing native English speaking teachers into Japanese classrooms, has continued to expand. Gainey and Andressen (2002) estimate that approximately 180,000 Japanese students studied abroad in 2000; however, this is still a very small number in comparison to the total number of students engaged in English study. The effectiveness of the JET program has also been questioned with critics citing the use of inexperienced assistant language teachers (ALTs) and the underutilization of the ALTs in the classroom (Kobayashi, 2001; Reesor, 2003). Despite these concerns, efforts should continue to provide these experiences for Japanese learners. Both of these situations offer students the opportunity for increased contact and, ideally, greater understanding of English speakers and English speaking countries.

The findings from this study also seem to suggest that the use of English language media as a teaching tool could be beneficial for Japanese learners. As previously mentioned, participants in the current study revealed an overall negative attitude toward in-school English study, but a positive attitude toward English language media. Many participants also indicated that listening to English music and watching English movies were already regular activities. Thus, the use of media in the classroom would likely improve learner motivation and utilize a resource with which students were relatively familiar. Moreover,

English language media is readily available, particularly since the majority of public schools have access to the Internet. The inclusion of a cultural lesson, covering not only language function but also accompanying social mores, might further encourage a shift from the foreign to the familiar.

In terms of language and culture contact, the findings were not particularly decisive. English language media is definitely popular with university age students, and many of the participants indicated that they were aware of English use in the Japanese media; however, they were not opposed to English use in Japan. The relatively low level of ethnocentricity (i.e., a negative attitude toward English) could be expected given that the participants have long lived in an environment where English was prevalent. The exploration of the learners' perception of the environment was informative suggesting that much is motivated by personal experience and individual interpretation. Thus it may be difficult, and inaccurate, to generalize the effects of English on Japan, as a whole. Blanket statements by critics such as Tsuda (1994), suggesting that English is being pushed upon the Japanese by the West, cannot be supported. In fact, the participants in this study argued against this assertion. There was significant differentiation between the responses of just five interview informants, which indicates that a larger scale survey might produce even more disagreement. Although the arguments against English in Japan will most likely endure in some form, the younger generation of Japanese appear to be comfortable with its presence.

6.2) Recommendations for Future Research

This project has yielded findings that could benefit future research in the area of second language development with regard to the social context of language study. First, the use of the Ecological Systems Model was beneficial for incorporating a wide array of factors into an analysis of language ability. As mentioned by Bronfenbrenner (1979), van Lier (2001), Kramsch (2003), and Reesor (2003), research that adopts a single linear model for second language development vastly oversimplifies the complexities involved.

Although the individual levels of the Ecological Systems Model returned relatively few significant relationships, the model as a whole was able to shed light on the complex nature of second language development. The inclusion of the learners' perspective of the environment, a critical component in the Systems Model, also proved beneficial. The data from this component of the study helped to clarify findings from the questionnaire that would have been otherwise overlooked. The Ecological Systems Model allows the investigator to step back and adopt a broader view of the process of language development before identifying a focal concern; this perspective should be utilized in future second language research, particularly in situations where external influences may have as much impact on language development as primary settings.

A broad ecological approach comparing English-rich environments with English-poor environments would also be recommended. According to Crystal (2003), over one billion individuals live in countries where English is studied as either a second or foreign language. Obviously these countries present significantly different learning environments for students of English. The ecological approach to second language

development would provide a useful tool for identifying similarities and differences in how the environment influences learner development.

Focussing specifically on Japan, a much larger scale version of the current project with more comprehensive measures for attitude, motivation, aptitude, and relationships with native English speakers would prove beneficial. This study was intended to be exploratory and was conducted with a sample of convenience. A future study that is able to follow proper random sampling procedures and that does not have the same restrictions on time would be preferable. The inclusion of a test of communicative English ability would also add a useful measure for more comprehensive analysis.

6.3) Limitations on Findings

The findings from this study are subject to a number of limitations. As previously mentioned, the use of a sample of convenience limits the extent to which these findings can be generalized. Participants were predominantly in their first two years of university study and all were currently enrolled in an English class. In addition, the questionnaire had not been previously employed and was conducted in one sitting. Cross validation was not possible through a second test given the constraints of time and access to the participant group. Thus reliability cannot be assured.

This study was intended to be exploratory focusing on a factor (English in the environment) that had not been given much attention in previous research. The results are not intended to be definitive, but are meant to suggest a path for future study. I feel

that the ecological approach is beneficial to the field of second language research and should be utilized to expand our understanding of this process in light of the increasingly complex social environment in which learners are immersed.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire (English)

NOTE: The original formatting for this questionnaire was altered to conform to the specifications for publication. All questions have been included, but the answer bubbles have been removed.

*Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.

*Please respond by filling in the circles.

1) (university) year of study 1st 2nd 3rd 4th

2) age _____ years of age

3) sex male Female

4) years of in-school English study

did not study 1 year 2 years 3 years or more

- a) high school
- b) middle school
- c) elementary school

5) hours of English study per week

3 or less more than 3 to 5 5 or more to 7 more than 7

- a) high school
- b) middle school
- c) elementary school

6) How many students were in your English class?

20 or less 21 to 40 more than 40

- a) high school
- b) middle school
- c) elementary school

7) Have you ever attended a juku?

Yes No

[If "yes"]

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------|----------|-----------------|
| a) starting age | 6 and under | 7 to 12 | 13 to 17 | 18 and over |
| b) how many years | 1 year or less | 2 years | 3 years | 4 years or more |

8) Have you ever studied at an English conversation school?

Yes No

[If "yes"]

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------|----------|-----------------|
| a) starting age | 6 and under | 7 to 12 | 13 to 17 | 18 and over |
| b) how many years | 1 year or less | 2 years | 3 years | 4 years or more |

9) Have you ever studied with an English tutor?

Yes No

[If "yes"]

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------|----------|-----------------|
| a) starting age | 6 and under | 7 to 12 | 13 to 17 | 18 and over |
| b) how many years | 1 year or less | 2 years | 3 years | 4 years or more |
| c) native English speaker | | Yes | No | |

10) Have you ever lived in an English speaking country?

Yes No

[If "yes"]

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------|----------|-----------------|
| a) starting age | 6 and under | 7 to 12 | 13 to 17 | 18 and over |
| b) how many years | 1 year or less | 2 years | 3 years | 4 years or more |

11) Do your parents use English for work?

Neither Mother only Father only Both

12) Have you had any native English-speaking friends?

Yes No

[If "yes"]

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---------|----------|-------------|
| a) starting age | 6 and under | 7 to 12 | 13 to 17 | 18 and over |
|-----------------|-------------|---------|----------|-------------|

- *Fill in the circle (from 1 to 5) with the best possible answer.
 *If possible, please give specific examples on the lines provided.

Never		Sometimes	Very Often	
	Rarely		Often	
1	2	3	4	5

- 13) How often do you speak English with your family?
- 14) How often do you speak English with your friends?
- 15) How often do you see English programs or movies on TV?
 Examples: (Friends) _____
- 16) How often do you see Japanese people use English on TV?
 Examples: _____
- 17) How often do you see English movies in a theatre?
- 18) How often do you rent English movies?
- 19) How often do you listen to English music?
 Examples: _____
- 20) How often do you buy English music? (CD, MP3, or others)
- 21) How often do you hear Japanese singers use English in songs?
 Examples: _____
- 22) How often do you read English books or magazines?
 Examples: _____
- 23) How often do you see English in Japanese magazines?
 Examples: _____
- 24) How often do you visit English Internet websites?
 Examples: _____
- 25) How often do you see English on Japanese websites?
 Examples: _____

*Please choose the answer that best reflects your personal feeling.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

26) I enjoy studying English in school.

27) There is a lot of English on Japanese television.

28) There is too much English on TV and in movies

29) An English word written in katakana is Japanese. (e.g. gasoline)

30) A Japanese word written in romaji is still Japanese. (e.g. tsunami)

31) English is everywhere in Japan.

*Please provide the closest answer possible.

32) University English grade

90-100 (A)	80-89 (B)	70-79 (C)	60-69 (D)	0-59 (F)
------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------

33) High school English grade

5 (A)	4 (B)	3 (C)	2 (D)	1 (F)
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

34) Eiken score

level 1	level 1.5	level 2	level 2.5	level 3	never written
---------	-----------	---------	-----------	---------	---------------

35) Highest TOEIC score

over 900	801 to 900	701 to 800	601 to 700	0 to 600	never written
----------	------------	------------	------------	----------	---------------

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Instructions for interviewer:

Try not to ask Yes/No questions (Did/do, Has/Have, Is/Are, etc.)

Try to ask open-ended questions (How, What, Where, How much, etc.)

Some of the questions will be similar to those from the questionnaire, but hopefully students will be able to give more detailed answers, particularly those that involve their own opinions

- 1) What previous experience do you have studying English?
 - a) What were your high school classes like?
 - b) How do you think the classes could have been better?
 - c) What are your university English classes like?
 - d) How could they be improved?
 - e) What additional experience do you have with English (ex: *juku*, *eikaiwa*, tutoring, travel and/or living abroad)?

- 2) Outside of the classroom, where do you usually hear English?
 - a) How often do you hear English?
 - b) How often are they native speakers?
 - c) How often do you have the chance to speak English?

- 3) Outside of the classroom, where do you usually see English?
 - a) How often do you see English?
 - b) How often do you watch English videos/movies, read books, etc.?
 - c) Where would you find English in your home?

4) From the following words, please give your opinion if you feel they are English or Japanese

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| a) ガソリン | b) tsunami |
| c) ホテル | d) T-shirt |
| e) チョコレート | f) J.A.L. |
| g) パソコン | |

** All terms were written on flash cards for the participants to view**

5) Look at the following web pages/advertisements and give your opinion about the English that you see:

- Do you feel that there is a lot of English on this site?
- What is your impression of the English (effective, cool, offensive, no feeling)?
- How would you feel if *romaji* were changed to *katakana*?
- Why do you think advertisers use English in their advertisements?

Appendix C

Statistical Output

Regression Output for Dependent Variable University English Grade (Q32)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.397(a)	.157	.100	.845

a Predictors: (Constant), Q31-English is everywhere in Japan, EXPOSURE, EXPERIENCE, Q14-often speak English with friends, Q26-enjoy studying English in school, AWARENESS

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.738	6	1.956	2.739	.017(a)
	Residual	62.851	88	.714		
	Total	74.589	94			

a Predictors: (Constant), Q31-English is everywhere in Japan, EXPOSURE, EXPERIENCE, Q14-often speak English with friends, Q26-enjoy studying English in school, AWARENESS

b Dependent Variable: Q32- university English grade

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Correlations				
		B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Part		
1	(Constant)	1.439	1.018			1.413	.161					
	EXPERIENCE	.106	.103	.104		1.026	.308	.060	.109		.100	
	RELATIONSHIPS	.243	.154	.164		1.580	.118	.233	.166		.155	
	EXPOSURE	-.018	.018	-.111		-1.036	.303	.028	-.110		-.101	
	AWARENESS	.019	.033	.067		.569	.571	.132	.061		.056	
	ATTITUDE	.281	.098	.307		2.874	.005	.334	.293		.281	
	PERCEPTION	-.069	.094	-.080		-.730	.467	-.061	-.078		-.071	

a. Dependent Variable: Q32- university English grade

Regression Output for Dependent Variable University English Grade (Q32)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.397(a)	.157	.099	1.090

a Predictors: (Constant), Q31-English is everywhere in Japan, EXPOSURE, EXPERIENCE, Q14-often speak English with friends, Q26-enjoy studying English in school, AWARENESS

ANOVA(b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.299	6	3.217	2.708	.019(a)
	Residual	103.339	87	1.188		
	Total	122.638	93			

a Predictors: (Constant), Q31-English is everywhere in Japan, EXPOSURE, EXPERIENCE, Q14-often speak English with friends, Q26-enjoy studying English in school, AWARENESS

b Dependent Variable: Q34- highest Eiken level passed

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Correlations				
		B	Std. Error	Beta				Zero-order	Partial	Part		
1	(Constant)	-.045	1.315			-.034	.973					
	EXPERIENCE	.206	.133	.158		1.546	.126	.131	.163	.152		
	RELATIONSHIPS	.272	.199	.143		1.368	.175	.213	.145	.135		
	EXPOSURE	.024	.023	.114		1.050	.297	.183	.112	.103		
	AWARENESS	-.041	.042	-.113		-.956	.342	-.018	-.102	-.094		
	ATTITUDE	.278	.127	.236		2.194	.031	.255	.229	.216		
	PERCEPTION	-.157	.122	-.141		-1.286	.202	-.167	-.137	-.127		

a. Dependent Variable: Q34- highest Eiken level passed

Student T-Test Results

Independent Samples Test for English Ability and Q7 – attended juku

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Q32- university English grade	Equal	.177	.675	-.608	97	.545	-.124	.204	-.530	.281
	Unequal			-.630	53.392	.532	-.124	.197	-.520	.271
Q33- high school English grade	Equal	.080	.778	1.349	97	.181	.322	.239	-.152	.797
	Unequal			1.410	54.459	.164	.322	.229	-.136	.781
Q34- highest Eiken level passed	Equal	.719	.399	-.488	96	.627	-.129	.264	-.652	.395
	Unequal			-.468	45.742	.642	-.129	.275	-.682	.425

Independent Samples Test for English Ability and Q8 – attended *eikaiwa*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
Q32- university English grade	Equal	7.670	.007	.991	97	.324	.207	.208	-.207	.620	
	Unequal			.833	33.831	.411	.207	.248	-.297	.710	
Q33- high school English grade	Equal	.099	.754	2.670	97	.009	.636	.238	.163	1.110	
	Unequal			2.795	48.113	.007	.636	.228	.179	1.094	
Q34- highest Eiken level passed	Equal	12.865	.001	1.649	96	.102	.439	.266	-.089	.968	
	Unequal			1.412	34.635	.167	.439	.311	-.193	1.071	

Independent Samples Test for English Ability and Q9 – study with a tutor

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Q32- university English grade	Equal	.132	.235	97	.815	.062	.265	-.463	.587	
	Unequal		.195	15.647	.848	.062	.319	-.615	.739	
Q33- high school English grade	Equal	.054	-1.002	97	.319	-.311	.310	-.927	.305	
	Unequal		-.861	15.932	.402	-.311	.361	-1.077	.455	
Q34- highest Eiken level passed	Equal	.544	.560	96	.577	.190	.340	-.485	.866	
	Unequal		.521	16.734	.609	.190	.366	-.582	.963	

Independent Samples Test for English Ability and Q10 – lived in an English speaking country

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means									
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
Q32- university English grade	Equal	.182	.671	2.313	97	.023	.722	.312	.102	1.342	
	Unequal			2.234	9.532	.051	.722	.323	-.003	1.447	
Q33- high school English grade	Equal	1.130	.290	1.793	97	.076	.667	.372	-.071	1.405	
	Unequal			2.488	11.945	.029	.667	.268	.082	1.251	
Q34- highest Eiken level passed	Equal	2.161	.145	3.938	96	.000	1.508	.383	.748	2.268	
	Unequal			3.153	8.966	.012	1.508	.478	.426	2.591	

Independent Samples Test for English Ability and Q12 – native English speaking friends

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Q32- university English grade	Equal	.204	.653	1.678	97	.096	.343	.204	-.063	.748
	Unequal			1.692	47.477	.097	.343	.203	-.065	.750
Q33- high school English grade	Equal	.327	.569	1.340	97	.183	.324	.242	-.156	.804
	Unequal			1.240	40.656	.222	.324	.261	-.204	.852
Q34- highest Elken level passed	Equal	8.245	.005	2.785	96	.006	.715	.257	.205	1.224
	Unequal			2.341	35.299	.025	.715	.305	.095	1.334

Independent Samples Test for EXPOSURE/AWARENESS and Q7 – attended *juku*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
EXP	Equal	.023	.880	1.108	95	.271	1.358	1.225	-1.075	3.790	
	Unequal			1.163	55.802	.250	1.358	1.167	-.981	3.696	
AWA	Equal	.041	.840	-.952	94	.344	-.681	.715	-2.100	.739	
	Unequal			-.957	50.986	.343	-.681	.711	-2.108	.747	

Independent Samples Test for EXPOSURE/AWARENESS and Q8 – attended *eikaiwa*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EXP	Equal	.723	.397	2.009	95	.047	2.483	1.236	.029	4.936
	Unequal			1.883	39.692	.067	2.483	1.319	-.183	5.148
AWA	Equal	.123	.727	.442	94	.659	.333	.753	-1.163	1.829
	Unequal			.440	39.128	.662	.333	.757	-1.198	1.865

Independent Samples Test for EXPOSURE/AWARENESS and Q9 – studied with a tutor

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
EXP	Equal	.080	.778	2.262	95	.026	3.504	1.549	.429	6.580	
	Unequal			2.325	18.070	.032	3.504	1.507	.339	6.670	
AWA	Equal	.944	.334	-.241	94	.810	-.238	.987	-2.198	1.722	
	Unequal			-.219	13.539	.830	-.238	1.089	-2.581	2.104	

Independent Samples Test for EXPOSURE/AWARENESS and Q10 – lived in an English speaking country

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
EXP	Equal	.069	.794	3.266	95	.002	5.965	1.826	2.339	9.591
	Unequal			3.113	9.516	.012	5.965	1.916	1.666	10.263
AWA	Equal	2.548	.114	.694	94	.489	.818	1.179	-1.522	3.158
	Unequal			1.011	10.498	.335	.818	.809	-.973	2.609

Independent Samples Test for EXPOSURE/AWARENESS and Q12 – native English speaking friends

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
EXP	Equal	2.774	.099	3.163	95	.002	3.796	1.200	1.414	6.179
	Unequal			2.751	35.451	.009	3.796	1.380	.997	6.596
AWA	Equal	3.791	.054	2.346	94	.021	1.697	.723	.261	3.133
	Unequal			2.059	34.271	.047	1.697	.824	.023	3.371