

Descriptive Quantitative Study Investigating Japanese Perceptions About  
English Language Usefulness in Singapore

by

Annemarie de Villiers

Dissertation Submitted to the Doctoral Program

of the American College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

December 2020

Descriptive Quantitative Study Investigating Japanese Perceptions About  
English Language Usefulness in Singapore

by

Annemarie de Villiers

Approved by:

Dissertation Chair: Jeff Roach, Ed.D.

Committee Member: Rita Deyoe-Chiullán, Ph.D.

Copyright © 2020

Annemarie de Villiers

## Abstract

Research suggests negative perceptions about English usefulness are adversely impacting motivation in English learning of Japanese students. The study contributed to the understanding of how expatriate Japanese living abroad perceive English and the value of learning English. Research on the Japanese community in Singapore was limited, offering a unique opportunity to expand knowledge and fill a gap in the research literature. Transformational leadership and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, both strongly founded in a sensitive approach to empowering and supporting growth through active participation, underpinned the research. Four questions guided the research: (a) What are perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore? (b) What are perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore? (c) How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore? and (d) What are the changes in perception about English learning and the usefulness of English of the Japanese community since living in Singapore? The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Through an online survey quantitative data were collected from parents of a private preschool to understand the perceptions about the usefulness and value of learning English outside of Japan. Major findings of the study were positive perceptions regarding the early introduction of English to Japanese children, enthusiasm about learning English, and the regular use of English for daily tasks and business communication. Statistically significant positive changes in perceptions about English usefulness and English learning were reported by the Japanese community since living in Singapore.

## Dedication

To my dad who taught me the value of education, perseverance, and hard work.

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to my best friend and husband, DJ, for your patience, support, encouragement, ideas, feedback, love, and financial support throughout this journey. You know I wouldn't have survived without you; I love you, thank you for always being there.

Thank you to my encouraging and supportive sons, Bailey and Ethan. Thank you for understanding when I missed major events, when you had to organize your own meals, had to keep quiet and give me time. I appreciate you so much. I hope this journey might inspire you in your studies, as Oupa's studies inspired me.

Thank you to my inspirational mom and dad, Anne-Marie and Johan, who were always just a phone call away to support me in my challenges, celebrate my triumphs, and encourage me along the way. Thank you to my encouraging sisters, Jorita, Roline, Laetitia, thank you for always showing great interest and for supporting me when I needed you.

Thank you to my dissertation committee, Dr. Jeff Roach and Dr. Rita Deyoe-Chiullán. Thank you for your enthusiasm, patience, hard work, quick responses, dedication, and kind feedback. Thank you for your kind acceptance of this little girl from Africa.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	x
List of Figures .....	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Background of the Problem .....	2
Statement of the Problem .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	5
Significance of the Study .....	6
Research Questions .....	6
Theoretical Framework .....	7
Definitions of Terms .....	8
Limitations .....	9
Scope and Delimitations .....	11
Assumptions .....	12
Chapter Summary .....	13
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	14
Literature Search Strategy .....	14
Theoretical Framework .....	16
Research Literature Review .....	18
Motivation .....	19
Globalization .....	27
Policies on English Learning in Japan .....	34

Japanese Culture .....	41
Counterarguments .....	46
Gap in Literature .....	48
Chapter Summary .....	48
Chapter 3: Methodology .....	50
Research Design and Rationale .....	51
Research Procedures .....	54
Population and Sample Selection .....	54
Instrumentation .....	56
Data Collection .....	59
Data Preparation .....	60
Data Analysis .....	61
Reliability and Validity .....	64
Ethical Procedures .....	66
Chapter Summary .....	67
Chapter 4: Research Findings and Data Analysis Results .....	68
Data Collection .....	68
Data Analysis and Results .....	70
Research Question 1 .....	73
Research Question 2 .....	74
Research Question 3 .....	75
Research Question 4 .....	77



Reliability and Validity .....	79
Chapter Summary .....	81
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions .....	83
Findings, Interpretations, and Conclusions .....	85
Findings Related to the Literature .....	85
Findings Related to the Theoretical Framework .....	88
Conclusions .....	89
Limitations .....	90
Recommendations .....	91
Implications for Leadership .....	93
Conclusion .....	96
References .....	98
Appendix A: Participant Informed Consent Form .....	111
Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Letter .....	117
Appendix C: Survey .....	123
Appendix D: Research Request to School Director .....	131
Appendix E: Research Permission Granted .....	132
Appendix F: Statement for the Reviewer .....	133
Appendix G: Feedback From Subject Matter Experts .....	134

## List of Tables

## Table

1. Demographic Profile of Participants .....	70
2. Mann–Whitney U Tests Summary .....	77
3. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Test Summary .....	78

## List of Figures

## Figure

1. Perceived importance of the early introduction to English for long-term success  
reported by Japanese men and women in Singapore ..... 74
2. Perceived usefulness of English only while participants lived in Singapore ..... 75
3. Use of English by Japanese men and women in Singapore ..... 76
4. Frequency of English usage by Japanese men and women in Singapore ..... 76

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Japan has entered a new era of unprecedented challenges, including a diminishing workforce, mounting debt, low birth rates, an aging population, and growing demand for economic globalization (Jones & Fukawa, 2017; H. Nakata, 2017; Nanhe, 2019). Active inclusion of foreign workers and the expansion of large organizations to external markets were identified as solutions, yet stringent immigration laws and the low standard of English have hampered such efforts (H. Nakata, 2017). The government introduced various formal English-learning programs to promote the internationalization of the workforce to meet industry demands (Kondo, 2016; Ota, 2018; Otsu, 2017). Driven by the need to expand into foreign markets, a growing number of large Japanese organizations introduced basic competency in English as a minimum requirement for employment (Rose & McKinley, 2018). Despite large financial investment and revision of education policies by the government to accelerate English learning, Japanese students continue to obtain low results in national and international standardized tests (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017; Nuttall, 2019). Several studies examining the low achievement in English concentrated on English education in Japan, while others focused on the attitude of Japanese toward English, lack of motivation, fear of foreign influence, and strong cohesion of the Japanese culture (Agawa & Ueda, 2017; Kondo, 2016; MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017; Morita, 2015; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017).

Findings from an annual national survey suggested negative attitudes about English as a global language and the perceived threat toward Japanese culture, language, and tradition may have contributed to the lack of progress (Herniwati, 2018; Terasawa, 2017). Motivation, perceptions, and other emotional factors influencing English learning in Japan have been studied

extensively, but little is known about the perceptions of Japanese expatriates living abroad (Bećirović, 2017; Fukuda, 2017; Shimauchi, 2018). Improved understanding of perceptions of expatriate Japanese highlighted key differences worth exploring to improve negative perceptions of Japan-based citizens (Goharimehr, 2018). The globalization of the Japanese economy for long-term prosperity was in part dependent on improved functionality in English (Jones & Fukawa, 2017).

A unique opportunity was presented in Singapore to examine how the Japanese community's real-life experiences in the English environment influence attitudes. Perceptions about the need to learn English, perceived usefulness, internationalization, and measurement of regular use of English were of particular interest (Morita, 2015). The sections of the chapter include the background of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, theoretical framework, definitions of terms, limitations, scope and delimitations, and assumptions of the research.

### **Background of the Problem**

Japan was the only developed nation in Asia to consistently rank in the bottom three countries in international English tests (International English Language Testing System [IELTS], n.d.). Japanese students reported perceptions of low usefulness of English, demotivation to learn English, high levels of anxiety, and strong general disinterest in learning English (Agawa & Ueda, 2017; Kikuchi, 2019). The Japanese public strongly opposed exposure to foreign influence, resulting in the lowest immigration numbers of all Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, at 1.8% (H. Nakata, 2017). Despite looming economic challenges, including increasing labor shortages and a shrinking population, the

Japanese public persisted in resisting immigration and globalization. Government debt was 219% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2016, and the population was projected to decrease from 127 million to 87 million by 2060 (Jones & Fukawa, 2017).

With the largest population of persons over the age of 75 in the world, Japanese outlived any of those in OECD nations (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). Negative growth rates led to a diminished workforce ultimately responsible for a significant proportion of elderly residents (H. Nakata, 2017). The increased cost of age-related expenditure, health care, and long-term care, by 7 percentage points of GDP in 2060, will be the highest of any OECD nation (H. Nakata, 2017). Without concerted effort toward a fundamentally prepared workforce comprising improved flexibility to accommodate foreign workers and enhanced motivation to acquire a functional level of English, how Japan will manage the looming challenges was not clear. The rising debt and increased costs of age-related expenses required significant investment in globalization and improved competitiveness in the global arena, requiring effective use of English as the language of business (Kawai & Moran, 2017; Nanhe, 2019). Despite large investment and effort from the government and private sector, the youth of Japan were displaying a wave of strong nationalism, resisting foreign influence, and limited compliance with the demand for improved English ability.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem was the negative attitude and lack of motivation to learn English as a global language despite the growing demand for the internationalization of the Japanese community in Singapore. Despite growing evidence of the need for improvement of the standard of English proficiency in Japan, especially of the youth and workforce, a strong wave of nationalism and

preference to look toward Japan for long-term career and life prospects were discovered (Hammond, 2016). The strong focus on formalized English assessment as a requirement for university acceptance has led to grammar-based rote learning with a lack of focus on the practical use of the language for everyday business communication (Kikuchi, 2019; Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). Findings of a national survey focused on the perceived usefulness of learning English uncovered a discrepancy between the perceptions of the theoretical usefulness of English and the practical use of English (Terasawa, 2018).

Japanese users of English without significant practical interaction in English were positive, while Japanese speakers who used English daily for business communication were generally negative (Terasawa, 2017). Regular users of English also preferred the later introduction of English to children. The reason for the negativity of regular users of English is not clear. An array of reasons for negativity toward English learning, cited from studies, were lack of opportunity to use English in Japan; the complex nature of English; lack of confidence; the inexperience of Japanese teachers in English; and Japanese-specific traits, including shyness, silence as a means of communication, and aversion to making mistakes in public (Goharimehr, 2018; Machida, 2016; Shimauchi, 2018).

Japanese attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of the usefulness and importance of English and English learning, especially of students and young adults, have been studied at length (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). As Japanese businesses expanded into foreign markets, especially in Southeast Asia, proficiency in English became increasingly important (Kawai & Moran, 2017; Nanhe, 2019). Little was known about the impact of living in an English-speaking country on the perceptions of Japanese nationals. Improved understanding of the influence and

possible change of attitude toward English once immersed in an English environment could have proven vital to improving support for the business and government initiatives in Japan (Kondo, 2016). Filling the gap in the literature by studying the perceptions of Japanese in Singapore would offer an opportunity to create awareness and educate the community about the impact perceptions may have on motivation to learn English for adults and children.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Even though attitudes, motivation, and perceptions toward English of Japanese people living in Japan have been studied, studies exploring perceptions of Japanese people living in Singapore have been limited. Improved understanding of how living in an English environment impacts previously held perceptions of the usefulness and learning of English might broaden knowledge. The descriptive quantitative research was conducted by utilizing an online survey presented in Japanese. An online survey consisting of 20 closed-ended questions gathering quantitative information regarding perceptions of Japanese parents of students at a private preschool in Singapore was administered.

The study was conducted in Singapore and focused on a segment of the expatriate Japanese community. As a result of the study, Japanese living in Japan and abroad might gain an improved understanding of the importance of English as a global language and the result of real-life experiences on attitude (Morita, 2016; Terasawa, 2017). The study contributed to the knowledge base by improving understanding of the perceptions of a Japanese community living outside of Japan concerning the usefulness and value of learning English. A gap in the literature



was filled as very little was known about perceptions of the Japanese community in Singapore and few studies have focused on the perceptions of a general adult population as opposed to high school and university students actively enrolled in English-learning environments (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Fukuda, 2017; Oga-Baldwin & Nakata, 2017).

### **Significance of the Study**

Studies conducted in Japan continued to report a lack of motivation and resistance toward learning English and the negative impact on academic achievement, globalization, immigration, and competitiveness in industry (Kondo, 2016; MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017; Morita, 2016). The decreasing labor force of Japan needed a new approach to increase global competitiveness. Resistance to English learning had become a major concern in need of investigation for the development of a revolutionary, practical solution (H. Nakata, 2017). Understanding the perceptions of the Japanese community in Singapore on learning and the usefulness of English in an environment outside of Japan could provide new insights into changes to current English-learning policies in Japan. The results might empower and educate Japanese learners of English on the impact perceptions may have on motivation, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn English not only in themselves but also in children or other learners. Findings were shared in an online summary to highlight observed patterns concerning perceptions and the use of English by the community in Singapore.

### **Research Questions**

Four fundamental research questions aligned with the stated purpose, problem, and data collection method led the research. Due to the complex nature of cross-cultural studies, alignment of the questions with restricted responses from the closed-ended survey questions was

assessed by cultural experts to establish clarity and accurate results (Kiyama, Choung, & Takiura, 2019). Individual questions enabled a descriptive analysis of collected data by focusing on isolated, measurable variables (Rahman, 2017). The following research questions guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 2: What are perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 3: How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 4: What are the changes in perception about English learning and the usefulness of English of the Japanese community since living in Singapore?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The two theories underpinning the study were transformational leadership theory (McCleskey, 2014; Yokota, 2019) and Vygotsky's (1934/1978) sociocultural theory. Transformational leadership theory advocates for leaders as negotiators of positive change and agents of empowerment for the improvement of communities (McCleskey, 2014). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory accentuates the influence of social and cultural environments on learning and perceptions, supporting a fundamental principle of the study (Pathan, Memon, Memon, Khoso, & Bux, 2018). Transformational leadership theory supported the goal of the descriptive quantitative study to identify and describe behavior, characteristics, or trends in datasets collected from the Japanese community in Singapore regarding perceptions of English usefulness

and learning (McCleskey, 2014). A subtle, cooperative approach of information distribution without submission or forced adaptation was an effective leadership style commonly used in Japan (Yokota, 2019) and was the approach to strengthening the study.

Vygotsky's (1934/1978) sociocultural theory concentrates on cognitive development and features the impact more knowledgeable others, including leaders and adults, have on knowledge development and the influence culture has on the attitude, tools, and principles of the community toward learning (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015; Pathan et al., 2018). Japan was a strong collectivist society, rendering a grounded foundation on a culture-based theory essential to studies involving Japanese communities (Kiyama et al., 2019). The importance of cultural mindsets, principles, and opinions were vital components to the accurate collection and interpretation of data, establishing the importance of the sociocultural theory in the study (Lantolf et al., 2015).

### **Definitions of Terms**

As a guide to lead the understanding of readers, the following definitions are provided. Some definitions are valuable within the cultural context of the research. Establishing commonly shared definitions supported an accurate understanding of terminology.

***English as a second language:*** The use, study, or acquisition of the English language by nonnative-speaking students and mother-tongue speakers of languages other than English (Kikuchi, 2019; Nakamura, 2018).

***English language usefulness:*** The benefits or practical use attained through proficiency in English as a global language (Terasawa, 2017).

***Globalization:*** Progression or internationalization through contact, collaboration, communication, and integration among individuals, groups, companies, nations, organizations, and governments worldwide, often through the use of a commonly understood world language, for instance, English (Morita, 2015; O'Neill & Chapman, 2015).

***Japaneseness:*** Possessing a trait or quality seen as unique to Japanese culture, including Japanese nationality, heritage, lineage, language, food, traditions, history, beliefs, culture, festivals, customs, and all other aspects of being, supporting and encouraging the survival of all aspects of Japan (Goharimehr, 2018; Imoto, 2017).

***The medium of instruction:*** The language in which instruction or teaching of students is conducted. Often the first language or home language of students living in a specified country or territory, the language is used for all instruction or in addition to another language (Rose & McKinley, 2018).

***Motivation:*** In English language learning, the dynamically changing amalgamation of internal or external factors of inspiration leading learners to initiate, direct, prioritize, and persevere during the acquisition of a language (Dörnyei, 2014a).

### **Limitations**

*Limitations* describe weaknesses of research; in most cases, limitations are aspects outside the control of the researcher (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Language and cultural barriers might have hampered the credibility of the study (Dörnyei, 2014b). To address possible complications with misunderstanding and translation errors, a quantitative study offering limited responses was an optimal solution (Loeb et al., 2017). Even though a qualitative research approach might have gathered greater depth in responses, accuracy would have been

compromised in the translation of lengthy responses from Japanese to English (Kim, 2015). Preventive measures toward bias in sampling consisted of the application of a purposive nonrandom sample, where the population was participants. Personal involvement with the Japanese community was another bias, controlled by presenting the survey online and collecting quantitative data less susceptible to subjective interpretation (Rahman, 2017).

*External validity* is the ability to apply the study findings to other settings (Abramson, 2015). A challenge to the external validity of the research was the homogeneous nature of the Japanese community in Singapore (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Due to strict work permit regulations imposed by the Ministry of Manpower (2019) in Singapore, most employed parents participating in the study were required to possess a bachelor's degree. Accompanying spouses were not involved in the arrangement. The private Japanese preschool was situated in an affluent suburb of Singapore, increasing the chances of a higher-than-average number of high-socioeconomic status (SES) families. Similar requirements for employment are upheld by many jurisdictions around the world (H. Nakata, 2017).

Even though the Japanese community in Singapore might not have reflected the demographic profile of Japan, the community may correlate closely to other Japanese expatriate communities living outside of Japan. Limited demographics may have lessened the generalizability of the study to Japan but may be foundationally interesting for further studies including other expatriate communities of Japanese nationals. To improve dependability, potential participants were supplied with detailed information in Japanese explaining the aim and expectations of the study through the distribution of an information brochure and informed consent form (Rahman, 2017). Internal validity was improved by incorporating the feedback

provided by four Japanese subject matter experts (SMEs) to ensure cultural sensitivity and appropriateness of the survey (Kim, 2015; Mertin, 2014).

### **Scope and Delimitations**

*Scope* refers to the subject matter or area deemed as relevant in a research study (Abramson, 2015). The study covered the perceptions of Japanese parents of children attending a private Japanese preschool in Singapore. To draw conclusions about causation was not the objective of the study. Identifying and describing key patterns observed in collected numerical data regarding the perceptions about the usefulness and use of English as experienced in Singapore were the major aims (Rahman, 2017). The study also examined how perceptions may have changed since living in Singapore.

*Delimitations* describe limitations or boundaries set by a researcher to ensure accurate assessment of an issue, ensuring timely results aligned with the original purpose and objectives of the study (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The four research questions combined independent demographic data with dependent perceptions by collecting numerical data through closed-ended questions. Delimitations prevented possible complications with translation and cross-cultural issues to improve the accuracy of the data gathered. Due to the high turnover rate of the Japanese community and travel complications regarding the Coronavirus situation in Asia, a time limit of 3 weeks was placed on completion of the online survey. The online survey was made available to participants in Japanese for 3 weeks.

Presenting the survey in Japanese was intended not only to avoid misunderstanding due to language issues but also to prevent non-Japanese volunteers from participating. The survey was available upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in 2020. A total population and

target population comprised 160 Japanese parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore. Participation was on a volunteer basis rather than using randomized sampling techniques (Garg, 2016). Statistical inferences on the purposive nonrandom sample were utilized (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009). A descriptive quantitative analysis was conducted on the collected data. The small sample size and homogeneity of the population might have limited the generalizability of the study.

### **Assumptions**

*Assumptions* are aspects accepted as plausible or true by researchers when considering the population, chosen research design, statistical processes, or delimitations (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). Such aspects are often out of the control of investigators and may be remedied through the implementation of specific counterbalances (Kivunja, 2016). Assumptions impact the possible inferences drawn from a study. The research in Singapore utilized an online survey and was therefore based on an assumption the participants answered truthfully and honestly (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). To encourage trust in participants, extra precautions were taken to protect anonymity and privacy by allowing completion online and excluding any sensitive personal information from the survey (Hazel, Newman, & Barrett, 2016).

Grounded on postulating globalization of English remained an important factor in Japan, enthusiasm for English continued to be an issue worth investigating. Despite a decline in local demand for English proficiency in major business sectors (Terasawa, 2017), indications from the government and global industries in Japan suggested an increasing demand for improved ability in English of the Japanese workforce (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). The third assumption hinged on the design of the online survey as a suitable data collection tool to understand perceptions of the

Japanese community (Hazel et al., 2016; Moy & Murphy, 2016). Online surveys were often used in Japan to collect data for governmental and large-scale community projects. Perceived as a reliable collection method and presented in Japanese, the online survey was perceived as a reliable tool (Liu & Wronski, 2018). To counterbalance possible complications, four Japanese SMEs were consulted to evaluate the content and cultural appropriateness of the survey.

### **Chapter Summary**

An introduction to the study in Singapore was offered in Chapter 1. The problem was a negative attitude and lack of motivation to learn English as a global language, despite the growing demand for the internationalization of the Japanese community in Japan and abroad. Aligned with the problem, the purpose was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Four research questions were presented, followed by an explanation of the importance of transformational leadership and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory as the fundamental theoretical framework for the research. Important definitions were provided, and key limitations, scope and delimitations, and assumptions of the research were reviewed. The problem and purpose of the research before examining the search strategies and theoretical framework employed were restated in Chapter 2. An in-depth analysis of relevant literature concentrated on four major components: motivation, globalization, English in Japan, and the influence of Japanese culture.



## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The problem was the negative attitude and lack of motivation to learn English as a global language despite the growing demand for the internationalization of the Japanese community in Singapore. Transformational leadership theory was applied to advocate for change in attitudes and perceptions, while understanding the fundamental components of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory supported the investigation of the impact culture had on the perceptions of the Japanese community toward internationalization and the usefulness of English (Lantolf et al., 2015; McCleskey, 2014). The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Major sections of the literature review include a description of search strategies and the theoretical framework underpinning the research; a review of existing literature on factors influencing the motivation to learn English, English learning and globalization; policies on English learning in Japan; the influence of Japanese culture on English learning; and counterarguments from the literature.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

Careful analysis of the topic resulted in the identification of several key concepts, words, and phrases to guide an extensive search across multiple platforms. A comprehensive search for relevant recent sources and information from an array of repositories was launched on Japan-based and global websites, databases, academic libraries, search engines, and academic source depositories. Suitable sources were searched on the Child Research Net of Japan; National Institute for Educational Policy Research of Japan; Center for Social Research and Data Archives of Japan; Library of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology

of Japan; ERIC; Sage Journals; JSTOR; Google Scholar; Taylor and Francis Online; EBSCO; and the OECD database. Considering the duality of the research topic encompassing a global and Japanese component, the inclusion of relevant Japanese sources and research was essential to ensuring comprehensive discovery. The globalization and influence of English learning had a significant impact on economic inclusivity and growth (Lin, 2018). A key issue underlying the problem identified for the study necessitated the investigation of sources from world organizations including World Bank Open Data and the OECD database on education.

Keywords and phrases guiding the searches were *Japanese English learning, motivation in English learning, anxiety in English learning, Japanese policy on English learning, globalization of English, Japanese economic indicators, economic pressure in Japan, economic challenges of Japan, internationalization in Japan, perceptions of English in Japan, English learning in Asia, obstacles to English learning, attitudes towards English learning in Japan, Japanese community of Singapore, Japanese learning culture, changes in English learning in Japan, English in Japanese schools, English in Japanese universities, Japan and English learning, globalization of English in Asia, business English in Japan, introduction of English in Japan, benefits of English learning, global economy and English ability, attitudes of Japanese students and English learning, Japanese and resistance to change, English learning and collective Asian nations, fear of English and Japanese, English and the Japanese public, and changes in attitude and English in Japan.*

Searches were gradually adapted from general information on central topics to specific information, including descriptive quantitative research conducted explicitly in collective environments with Asian and Japanese participants (Aveyard & Bradbury-Jones, 2019). The

reference lists of relevant articles with a concentration on Japan were examined for leads on additional articles. A reference calculator was employed to ensure a sound balance of contemporary sources reflecting findings on the latest available research and trends. To enable the construction of a well-organized, methodical literature review, articles were analyzed according to preset requirements and categorized according to four key themes (Aveyard & Bradbury-Jones, 2019). Preset requirements included peer-reviewed articles, published within the past five years, published in English, and articles where the full text was available. Emerging themes from the extensive search on literature were directly linked to the problem and research questions identified.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The two theories supporting the study are transformational leadership theory (McCleskey, 2014; Yokota, 2019) and Vygotsky's (1934/1978) sociocultural theory. Transformational leadership theory focuses on the leader as an agent for positive change and empowerment of the community (McCleskey, 2014). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the impact of social and cultural environments on learning and perceptions supporting the study on the Japanese community (Pathan et al., 2018). Japan was heading toward an economic crisis exacerbated by a shrinking workforce and an aging population (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). Traditionally, the Japanese had been inward-looking and self-reliant for economic development and innovation (H. Nakata, 2017). Globalization, a strong reliance on world markets, and English as the language of business were increasingly affecting economic growth in Asia (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). Despite growing pressure, Japan as a nation continued to resist a shift toward the early introduction and regular use of English as a language of business

(Terasawa, 2018). An intricate combination of two foundational theories underpinned the phenomenon.

Strong transformational leadership in Japan to inspire change and guide Japanese people away from traditionally held beliefs toward recognition of the pending crisis was needed (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). Transformational leadership theory was based on a combination of four basic principles: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and personal consideration (McCleskey, 2014). The theory supported the purpose of the descriptive quantitative study to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore (McCleskey, 2014). Drawing accurate conclusions from an in-depth study on perceptions of the usefulness and value of English for internationalization increased understanding and allowed for the empowerment of the Japanese community. To motivate a change of perceptions, factually based information and well-researched findings were key factors valued by the Japanese community (Kiyama et al., 2019). An indirect, collaborative approach of information sharing without the application of direct pressure to conform was an effective leadership style commonly used in Japan (Yokota, 2019) and the intended approach to strengthening the study.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of cognitive development highlighted the influence of more knowledgeable others, including adults, parents, and leaders, on learning and the impact culture had on the attitude, tools, and beliefs of the community toward learning (Lantolf et al., 2015; Pathan et al., 2018). The study was conducted to investigate and describe the perceptions about learning and the perceived usefulness of English in the Japanese community in Singapore. Cultural conformity played a vital role in collective societies where the pressure to adhere to the

broader community was greater than in individualistic societies (Kiyama et al., 2019). Japan was one of the strongest collective societies of Asia, making underlying grounding on cultural theory vital to a study on Japanese people (Kiyama et al., 2019).

The focus of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory was the influence culture played in the behaviors and perceptions of members within a specific community (Pathan et al., 2018). In collective societies, the importance of group coherence and cultural perceptions formed by the overarching society undermine and surpass the perceptions of individual members (Pathan et al., 2018). The cultural attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions were vital components to the accurate collection and interpretation of data, establishing the value of the sociocultural theory in the study (Lantolf et al., 2015).

### **Research Literature Review**

Literature review as a crucial component to research studies and the starting point to education on existing topics within a field of study, especially for first-time researchers or doctoral dissertation writing, was often underestimated (Van Wee & Banister, 2016). In education, research topics were often more convoluted and complex than in other fields, making a substantial review of recent literature even more important (Loeb et al., 2017). A literature review not only inspired and informed researchers but also provided valuable information about the complexities, challenges, frameworks, relevant theories, and suggestions for methodology design before the commencement of substantial projects (Aveyard & Bradbury-Jones, 2019). An investigative analysis of peer-reviewed articles to integrate findings provided doctoral researchers the opportunity to build a robust foundation when developing new research projects.

The review of contemporary relevant sources analyzed and synthesized key findings from peer-reviewed articles investigating the importance of English for the Japanese community. Findings are presented under four central themes: motivation in English learning, English learning as a means of globalization, policies on English learning in Japan, and the influence of Japanese culture on perceptions and attitudes toward English. To establish a well-rounded, balanced discussion, counterarguments and conflicting views discovered in findings were incorporated.

### **Motivation**

Motivation in second- and foreign-language acquisition had consistently been identified as a determining factor of long-term success (Dörnyei, 2014a; Oga-Baldwin, Nakata, Parker, & Ryan, 2017). General motivation was commonly divided into intrinsic factors related to a sustained internal sense of enjoyment from participating in an activity or experienced due to curiosity, natural ability, interest, cooperation, innate drive, or appreciation of the challenge (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). Internal motivation was highlighted as a reliable predictor of sustained success, while external motivators produced less secure results (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Factors influencing extrinsic motivation include environmental factors outside of an individual, for instance, positive attention, favorable results, public recognition, financial gains, social acceptance, or improved status (Nakamura, 2018; Oga-Baldwin & Nakata, 2017).

English education in Japan was conducted through formal English teaching rather than natural environmental acquisition (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Explicit, structured instruction and assessment of formal language learning influenced the experience, engagement, motivation, and autonomy of participating students and teachers (Mertin, 2014). Through large-

scale studies of English-learning environments, students reporting personal engagement, interest, and perceived benefits exhibited higher motivation and improved learning (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017).

**Factors influencing motivation.** Personal characteristics and personal learner attributes in adult English foreign language learning were of growing interest in research (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). The realistic and positive judgment of capabilities in English learning were associated with motivation, self-esteem, achievement, and reactions (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Correlations between increased exposure and increased perceived value of English provided valuable findings to the study in Singapore (Nakamura, 2018).

**Family and teacher support.** Japanese societal issues, including the family's attitude toward English speakers, opinions on the usability of English, and enthusiasm about language learning, were relevant to the study in Singapore (Agawa & Ueda, 2017). The influence of parental support and encouragement were associated with the motivation of students to learn English in Japan. Ought-to-self, a positive attribute of the ideal language learner consisting of positive parental pressure and optimistic perceptions of capabilities, was a strong predictor of constructive motivation (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Positive teacher involvement and support were highlighted as an important contributing factor to motivation in English classrooms in Japan (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). A study on foreign-language environments revealed the importance of incorporating factors from home communities into learning environments (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). Especially relevant to collective societies, formal learning environments should involve traditions, beliefs, values, culture, celebrations, and opportunities for class-based parental involvement (Bone, 2015).

***Gender and age.*** Potential correlations between motivation, achievement, and gender in foreign-language learning were explored in a study in Japan (Bećirović, 2017). The youngest participants, age 10, displayed the highest level of motivation, while the oldest students, age 18, scored the lowest on motivation to learn English (Kikuchi, 2019). Female students were more motivated to study than male students, and achievement was linked to motivation level (Bećirović, 2017). A study on Japanese elementary students revealed a similar pattern of decreased motivation along age and gender lines (Oga-Baldwin & Nakata, 2017). Students became increasingly demotivated in English learning while progressing through elementary school, and girls were more motivated to learn English than were boys (Kikuchi, 2019).

Studies have suggested a lack of adaptability in male students as a distinct feature contributing to decreased motivation (Kikuchi, 2019; Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). Theorizing about the possible strength teacher influence might have over student engagement and motivation, Oga-Baldwin and Nakata (2017) suggested a conscious willingness of teachers to create environments of higher autonomy in language learning may result in sustained motivation. Findings were significant, especially for Japanese students lacking motivation due to gender or age.

***Engagement.*** Often cited as the most vital of all predictors of motivation in English students, engagement had become an important issue (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). From a study on Japanese students, a division along gender lines suggested male students were generally less engaged in language lessons, less able to adapt internal motivation, and more dependent on external motivation than were girls (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). The correlation between level of engagement reported by students and level of engagement observed by external parties was



significant (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). The suggested connection between motivation and engagement, coupled with the ability to measure engagement through observation could have had a significant impact on the development of improved classroom activities (Kikuchi, 2019).

Internal motivation through engagement was supported through the creation of an inviting classroom atmosphere where children were free to express ideas, engaged in relevant and level-appropriate tasks, and were actively encouraged to take risks (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). Japanese students were inherently shy and averse to taking risks and making mistakes (Mertin, 2014). Creating engaging activities provided an opportunity for teachers to shift focus away from issues of language by encouraging children to share ideas and experiences. Active participation was linked to enjoyment in learning, positive feelings of engagement, and a sense of belonging. Optimism in students resulted in improved focus and sustained effort (Oga-Baldwin & Nakata, 2017). Involving the innate autonomous, competitive spirit of boys and including activities based on topics of interest of the group were elements English teachers in Japanese environments should consider (Oga-Baldwin & Nakata, 2017).

**Motivation in English learning.** Two major considerations motivating the decision to study English as a foreign language (EFL), especially in adult learners, were instrumental and integrative drivers (Shimauchi, 2018). Instrumental motivation describes a situation where proficiency in a target language offers practical opportunities or benefits for the learner, such as acceptance into a prestigious university, residency in the desired country, or improved employment opportunities (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). In Japan, where an English proficiency examination for college acceptance had become the norm, instrumental motivation dominated (Shimauchi, 2018). Integrative motivation, as the name suggests, supports a desire of learners to

integrate into a community where the target language is spoken (Imoto, 2017). Often coupled with positive perceptions and attitudes toward the target language and community, researchers suggested integrative motivation might have been a strong indicator of sustained motivation and successful acquisition of EFL (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). Understanding whether the Japanese community is driven by instrumental or integrative motivation was fundamental to the study in Singapore.

***Formal language learning.*** Language students engaged in the learning process through curiosity, work satisfaction, and a drive to achieve were characterized as autonomous learners (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2018). Such students employed more innovative problem-solving strategies, greater perseverance, interest in the topics studied, and were more disciplined in learning (Dörnyei, 2014a). According to Fukuda (2017), students who had attained an autonomous level of study achieved goals and reported a sense of satisfaction from learning. A strong link between engagement, autonomy, and sustained motivation was suggested by Oga-Baldwin and Fryer (2018). The fluctuation of motivation in language learners was partially dependent on personal drivers, interaction with study leaders, and engagement in the classroom (Bećirović, 2017). Improved understanding of motivation in the classroom offered insight into the achievement and engagement of students (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2018).

***Anxiety.*** Anxiety in formal learning environments could be classified into three categories: fear of negative evaluation, assessment anxiety, and interaction anxiety (Agawa & Ueda, 2017). Even though general findings revealed excessive anxiety was detrimental to motivation in language learning, the cause of anxiety was debated (Dörnyei, 2014b). Some research suggests the learning of any second or foreign language is complex and results in

uncertainty, raising levels of anxiety in learners. Alternate findings revealed anxiety is an innate characteristic, more dominant in specific learners (Agawa & Ueda, 2017; Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2018). Inherent shyness and a drive for perfection, commonly observed in Japanese students, made anxiety a key feature to consider in studies on language learning focused on the Japanese community (Bone, 2015; Fukuda, 2017). Appropriate support and encouragement from parents might have not only decreased levels of anxiety in Japanese learners but also, due to the strong collective culture, promoted better learning results and motivation (Bone, 2015; Mertin, 2014).

**Measuring motivation.** With the rapid globalization of English, the publication of studies on factors influencing second-language learning had skyrocketed (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). More than 70% of studies published on motivation in language learning in the past decade have focused on English learning environments (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). The strong polarizing effect globalized English had on the study of second- and foreign-language acquisition produced a large body of knowledge for the study in Singapore. Consequently, a gap in the literature to investigate or assess alternative factors of motivation and demotivation in language learning, in general, emerged (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017).

**Self-determination theory.** Self-determination theory came from the field of psychology on intrinsic motivation and focused on personality traits, inherent needs of individuals, and growth (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). Eliminating external interference and impact from the environment, self-determination theory is concerned with determining the extent of self-determination and motivation present in individuals. Often employed in studies of motivation and needs in EFL environments, self-determination theory became a standard industry assessment tool (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). The ability of the tool to accurately assess

motivation and needs in Japanese students was investigated in a study involving 317 EFL students in Japan (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). Of specific interest was the issue of the validity of the tool within the Japanese realm and whether analysis of findings accurately reflected the actual motivation and experiences of Japanese students (Fukuda, 2017).

After administering an adapted structural equation model, results indicated increased intrinsic motivation from positive evaluation results and increased motivation from level-appropriate study materials (Dörnyei, 2014b). The need for and influence of autonomy in Japanese students was not accurately reflected by self-determination theory. Unlike students in the United States and Europe, Japanese students reported a negative impact of autonomy in English-language learning on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Lieb, 2019). Findings of the impact of Japanese culture on motivation raised issues on the validity of external assessment tools for Japanese environments and the importance of cultural understanding in motivation assessment (Lieb, 2019). Agawa and Takeuchi (2016) advocated for an update of the theory and future study on the relevance of autonomy for specific cultural settings to improve globalized use.

**Motivation in Japanese foreign language classrooms.** Motivation in Japanese students of EFL differed from European students (Lieb, 2019). Due to the strong collective nature of Japanese culture, learners appeared to be more susceptible to the influence of parents, teachers, classmates, or opportunities for collaboration (Bone, 2015). Teachers were well advised to consider learner-centered factors, including exhibited ability toward the sustained effort, intensity of effort, and fundamental reasons for study, when investigating motivation in language classrooms (Kikuchi, 2019).

***Self-regulated learning.*** A study of the differences in attributes of self-regulated learning in high- and low-capability learners of English in Japan was conducted on 97 Japanese students (Fukuda, 2017). Self-regulated learning was a structured process, including goal setting, self-supervision, and self-reflection of emotional and intellectual components to learning (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016). Requiring high-order academic functioning of learners, self-regulated learning was judged to reach academic competence by developing and employing academic strategies, sustaining high levels of motivation, and achieving realistic goals (Fukuda, 2017). Japanese students with well-developed capabilities in the four phases of a well-rounded academic approach encompassing planning, supervising, monitoring, and reflection were most successful (Mertin, 2014). Self-control and self-regulation were attributes encouraged and honed from a young age in Japanese society (Fukuda, 2017). The employment of effective cognitive approaches to English learning was associated with strong motivation. Self-reliance, positive cognitive commitment, and motivation were strong predictors of English achievement (Agawa & Ueda, 2017).

***Socioeconomic status (SES).*** Parental influence on extrinsic motivation in Japanese students of English was linked to SES. Terasawa (2017) explained the emerging and growing trend of English learning as a measure of high social standing in large Japanese cities. Affluent parents were increasingly motivated to introduce and support English learning in children to improve social standing in society (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). Similarly, students from high-SES households in China and South Korea were more likely to be encouraged to actively study English (Lin, 2018; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017).

Engagement in after-school programs, summer camps, and tutoring to promote the learning of English from native speakers, often at a large financial cost, was undertaken by parents (Terasawa, 2017). Increased active encouragement encompassed the acquisition of English-language-learning materials, books, videos, and supplementary materials (Lin, 2018). Overt interest and active participation of parents in English activities outside the home improved motivation in Chinese children and were strongly correlated to high economic means (Lin, 2018). In Japan, active participation in English tuition and native-speaker-led activities improved the status of families (Terasawa, 2017). Affluent parents reported confidence in improved educational and employment opportunities due to engagement in such activities (Lin, 2018).

***Demotivators in Japanese learners.*** Factors impacting the motivation to learn English as a second language and strategies college students employed to overcome feelings of demotivation were studied in a large-scale study in Japan (Agawa & Ueda, 2017). Factors of demotivation were classified as student-specific, teacher-centric, and environmental (Dörnyei, 2014a). Demotivating factors in Japanese learners played a key role and included a perception of English learning as complex, negative feelings about the instructor and class environment, weak self-esteem in language learning, and reported high anxiety levels in the use of English (Agawa & Ueda, 2017).

## **Globalization**

*Globalization* is the increase in the interconnectedness of separate regions of the world through the development and expansion of international economic, political, and globally shared interests (O'Neill & Chapman, 2015). The rapid growth of the World Wide Web was cited as a major contributor to the internationalization and integration of people, countries, and services. In

2015, 55% of Internet content was published in English even though only 20% of the world population possessed a basic understanding and a comparatively small 5% used English as a first language (Dörnyei, 2014a; Nanhe, 2019). English emerged as the international language of business communication and academic publishing (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). The SCImago (n.d.) journal ranking, the world's most prestigious ranking of scientific journals, reported the top 50 academic journals were published in English, originating from the United States and the United Kingdom.

An estimated 80% of academic articles published worldwide from 239 countries were published in English in 2015 (SCImago, n.d.). The norm was to incorporate an English abstract in all academic papers regardless of the language of publication. Despite large economic, academic, and global competitiveness benefits resulting from the pursuit of English as the language of education and business, many nations and leaders have expressed concerns about the possible detrimental effects on the preservation of culture, traditions, lifestyle, and national identity (Dörnyei, 2014a; Rose & McKinley, 2018). To understand the effects, resistance, and development of English as a global language in Japan, a thorough investigation of literature was required. The examination was on factors of English as the medium of instruction (Dörnyei, 2014a), globalization of higher education in Japan (Hammond, 2016; Rose & McKinley, 2018), English for the elite (Terasawa, 2017), and resistance through nationalism (O'Neill & Chapman, 2015).

**English as the medium of instruction.** English learning in formal education had become a worldwide phenomenon. Described and categorized in a plethora of different ways from World English, to distinctions between native, first, English as a second language, EFL users, and

English as an international language, the learning of English became a complex science (Dörnyei, 2014a; Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017; O'Neill & Chapman, 2015; Wilkinson, 2015). With an abundance of linguistic approaches, selecting the best strategy for a student body who were not native speakers presented composite challenges.

***Selecting a form of English for instruction.*** English in educational settings could be presented as a separate subject or English might have been the medium of instruction. For the medium of instruction, standardized English was no longer the only available option with increasing numbers of universities opting to teach English as an international language (O'Neill & Chapman, 2015). Increased pressure from the government and industry for the need for an English-proficient workforce increased English as the medium of instruction courses in higher education in Japan (Wilkinson, 2015).

***The complexity of English as the medium of instruction.*** Lack of experience with the implementation of English curricula, unrealistic expectations of high proficiency levels, irrelevant study materials, and a lack of local context led to negative experiences and ineffective English teaching (Wilkinson, 2015). The goal of English as a subject in Japan had traditionally been toward academic writing and proficiency as a basic requirement of university admission (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). A shift toward real-life requirements of effective communication, globalization, international trade, and daily interaction with native speakers required the development of skill sets more commonly acquired in natural native-English-speaking settings (Wilkinson, 2015).

**Globalization of higher education in Japan.** Challenges in teaching effective use of English within different levels of the Japanese education system had become increasingly



worrying for politicians, parents, the business sector, and the Japanese public in general (Wilkinson, 2015). The perception of favorable conditions in Japan with promising careers, fair work conditions, and protection of the home country strongly influenced the resistance to study abroad (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). Lack of drive to pursue career opportunities or a wider study of the field to integrate the English world was increasingly isolating the Japanese (Sugimura, 2015). A broader combination of factors, including the low success rate of Japanese students in international examinations, decreasing interest from international students in exchange programs, falling interest in studying abroad for Japanese students, and the low standard of English programs presented in Japan, spurred the need for new initiatives to improve English in higher education (Wilkinson, 2015).

***Global 30.*** One large-scale project launched by the Japanese government to improve English education in higher education was the Global 30 project, operational from 2009 to 2014 (Shimauchi, 2018). The plan depended on perceived benefits to local students and the raising of English standards in Japanese universities. A major goal was to attract an estimated 300,000 foreign exchange students for temporary studies (Rose & McKinley, 2018). Thirteen selected universities received significant financial and logistical support to increase exchange potential. Widely criticized and seen as a failure by the corporate arena, the initiative failed to reach targets with an average increase of 12,000 students per year (Shimauchi, 2018).

***Positive results.*** Two long-term positive advancements from the program were the resulting development of 155 new English medium of instruction degree programs and adaptations to university entrance examinations (Sugimura, 2015). The new English-language degree courses increased academic English proficiency, encouraged a positive change toward

seeing internationalization as a positive, offered the opportunity to gain personal experience in an English-native environment, and increased readiness for postgraduate studies in English environments abroad for Japanese exchange students (Wilkinson, 2015). Renovation of the previous English university entrance assessment entailed steering away from structured grammar, language, and reading comprehension evaluation, instead assessing the communication skills of students (Dörnyei, 2014a).

**English for the elite.** In Japan, division in education along economic lines was becoming increasingly dominant. Initially known as the digital divide, highly educated families with access to the Internet and the ability to comprehend English, often derived from superior private school education, reaped the benefits from better quality and quantity of global information (Terasawa, 2017). Access to more information elevated the elite's ability to be competitive. Effective communication and comprehension of English became synonymous with wealth. Access to quality English education led to the second wave of inequality, known as the English divide (Rose & McKinley, 2018). Learning English from native speakers in private school settings offered students the opportunity to learn in a more natural environment when compared to the rigid grammar-based textbook-centered approach followed by public schools (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017).

Affluent students who were presented with personalized English environments as offered in high-end schools continued to benefit from international studies in elite universities and colleges in the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). The ability of the affluent to ensure superior English education through financial means gave students unparalleled access and opportunities when compared to public school students

(Wilkinson, 2015). Wealthy parents reportedly enrolled children in extracurricular activities, tutoring, summer camps, supplementary learning facilities, and dedicated significant financial means toward the active encouragement and stimulation of interest in and learning of English (Terasawa, 2017). English proficiency had become a status symbol.

A growing trend in Japan was the enrollment of school-age children in English summer camps to enrich and encourage language acquisition in a natural setting (Noguchi, 2019). Despite limited time spent at camps, students reported positive changes in attitude toward English, increased motivation, improvement of appreciation of foreign culture after spending time with native English speakers, and increased confidence and decreased anxiety in using English (Dörnyei, 2014a). Findings suggested natural exposure to English during camps allowed students to focus on tasks and use English to communicate rather than being preoccupied with correct grammatical structures and feeling anxiety about possible errors (Terasawa, 2017). Students reported increased interest in using English to express ideas as well as increased motivation and confidence to speak. The costs involved with English camps as an extracurricular activity hosted by private schools and for-profit organizations have been criticized as another example of affluent children receiving disproportionate opportunities to improve and develop superior English skills (Terasawa, 2017). Considering the positive outcome reported by students, natural settings where interaction with native-speaking teachers centered on real-life situations could have been beneficial to more Japanese learners, including those of disadvantaged backgrounds (Noguchi, 2019).

**Resistance through nationalism.** Globalization through English at a national level to improve international competitiveness added the final level of complexity to the English divide

of Japan (Terasawa, 2017). To propagate the advancement of Japanese scientific innovation and academic excellence around the globe, the Japanese government introduced several revolutionary English programs in higher education (Shimauchi, 2018). Officials hoped the introduction of English programs would not only draw international students but also familiarize Japanese students with English, present opportunities of inclusion, and offer English learning as an attainable goal to all students regardless of financial background; offering an opportunity for Japan to introduce innovation to the world (Sugimura, 2015). Japanese decision-makers did not consider the rapid increase of competitiveness in education among industrial nations in Asia, including South Korea, Taiwan, China, and Singapore (Wilkinson, 2015). Aggressive policies to increase the standard of English instruction and decrease the introduction age of English, elevating English as a medium of instruction faster than expected in the region, once again threatened Japan's capabilities to compete in English education (Shimauchi, 2018).

O'Neill and Chapman (2015) argued to truly understand the difference reported in openness and success of globalization through English between Japan and Southeast Asian countries, including Hong Kong and Singapore, the dominance of English in the colonial past needed to be examined. Experience with the dominant British power, sharing a country with native English speakers, and firsthand understanding of English culture may have contributed to a smoother transition for English as the medium of instruction for Southeast Asian countries (Lieb, 2019). Japan remained uncolonized by a Western power; the nation had not been forced by foreign rule to acquire a language other than Japanese and had lived for centuries in relative isolation and homogeneity (Hammond, 2016).

***Resistance of the youth.*** In contrast to government expectations since the overhaul of policies on English learning, the youth of Japan continued to display an increase in national pride. Findings were increased appreciation for the Japanese language, declining demand for foreign study exchange programs, low motivation and interest in the study of English, and an overall tendency to look inward to Japan for education, career, and long-term prospects (Hammond, 2016; Shimauchi, 2018). Strong national sentiments were of great concern to the government and industry. The demand for a global, internationalized workforce able to navigate international issues through effective communication in English in Japan was growing rapidly with little support or urgency from the future labor force (Lieb, 2019). Despite growing awareness of English as an essential tool for global competitiveness, the youth of Japan showed little interest in and understanding of the requirements to fulfill industry needs (Terasawa, 2017).

***Factors influencing resistance.*** Strong national pride, a fear of losing national identity, negative perceptions of English culture and language, the strength of the Japanese economy, denial of the need for globalization, living within a homogeneous society, and ineffective English education were listed as possible reasons for resistance to globalization (Hammond, 2016; Wilkinson, 2015). Despite many changes to the policies, activities, and requirements of English teaching in Japan, the system still presented EFL where understanding the rules was more important than developing effective communication skills (Lieb, 2019).

### **Policies on English Learning in Japan**

Japanese students of English as a second language consistently underperformed in English assessments, including the IELTS examinations, resulting in the title of the lowest scoring developed nation in Asia (IELTS, n.d.). Despite being one of the highest performing

nations in mathematics and science, Japanese students underperformed in the international Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test administered by the OECD and in the Japanese Eiken test (Mito, 2019; OECD, 2016). English learners in Japan faced many challenges, including starting to learn English at age 10, exceptionally limited exposure to languages other than English, grammar-centered lessons, outdated rote-learning practices, and inexperienced non-English-speaking teachers (Machida, 2016; Otsu, 2017; Wilkinson, 2015). Recent graduates of high school had been exposed to six years of formal English teaching, yet basic conversational skills in English were lacking (Nae & Kim, 2018).

Despite drastic adjustments to English policies initiated by the Japanese government to promote English and internationalization in Japan, recent scores on the PISA test indicated a sharp decline in English reading comprehension of 15-year-old students (Mito, 2019; OECD, 2018). The challenges to gain momentum in the growth of English language proficiency in Japan were akin to the public debates on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics found in the United States and southern Europe (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2018). To investigate the condition of English in Japan, a review of literature focused on the Japanese school system (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017; MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017), teachers in Japan (Machida, 2016; Nae & Kim, 2018), and English outside of the classroom (Otsu, 2017; Terasawa, 2018) was required.

**The school system.** Formal schooling in Japan started from a young age; whenever possible, children were enrolled in full-day daycare from the age of 2 (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). A shortage of daycare facilities had plagued early childhood education in Japan with a reported 47,738 children on waiting lists across Japan in 2017 (Terzuolo, 2018). Large

cities, including Tokyo, Oita, Osaka, and Okinawa, were impacted most. Competition to eventually attend top high schools was fierce and started from kindergarten (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). Academically oriented preschools with a strong focus on learning, expecting children to wear uniforms, and pride in the school community were fostered. Attending a well-established preschool significantly improved acceptance into a good elementary, middle, and secondary school (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017). The Japanese school system required six years of elementary school, three years of middle school, and three years of high school (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017).

Traditionally, English was a compulsory subject offered twice a week to children starting from middle school (Machida, 2016). Gradually, changes to the status of English as a subject in elementary schools commenced in 2009, with the age of introduction gradually becoming younger (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Starting in 2020, English was introduced as a formal subject to elementary school children from the fifth grade. Proficiency in English was required for entry into elite high schools (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). The demand for students with high test scores in English had become the norm, with renowned universities driving the demand for English cram schools and test preparation centers (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017).

Tsuneyoshi (2018) discussed the dangers of the Japanese education system where English was equated to foreigners, which could be at the expense of true multiculturalism. Arguing the use of foreign language and English as interchangeable entities in the Japanese curriculum undermined understanding and preparation for diverse international work and study environments. A study by the Ministry of Education exploring upper elementary and middle school students' perceptions and imagined interaction with foreigners supported some of the

apprehension (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018). Students indicated, in situations where a foreigner approached, 54.4% of middle schoolers and 47.3% of elementary school students would speak in English.

**Teachers.** In language classrooms, the level of proficiency of teachers in the target language and ability to communicate were crucial (Nae & Kim, 2018). Teachers needed to speak with an internationally neutral accent to ensure students who were nonnative speakers could create meaning from the message communicated. Enthusiasm, praise, and positive feedback were important ways to encourage participation and create a safe environment where students felt supported (Y. Nakata, Ikeno, Kimura, Naganuma, & Andrews, 2018). Directed feedback steered students' learning toward correct pronunciation and offered opportunities to highlight areas of improvement. A major aim of all language teachers was the encouragement of confident participation and ultimate proficiency for students to become effective communicators in the target language (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Many teachers who were required to teach English in Japan were not confident English users (Inada & Inada, 2019). To meet the prerequisites for empowering students, specific personality traits and training were required in the foreign-language classroom (Y. Nakata et al., 2018).

***The anxiety of teachers.*** Elementary teachers in Japan were anxious about teaching English to students due to a personal lack of English proficiency (Machida, 2016). Following the new curriculum, teachers were expected to consolidate songs, activities, and games in English lessons. The requirements were new to teachers who had attended traditional lessons as middle or high school students and had no experience with the introduction of the innovative approach (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). A lack of experience combined with a lack of confidence in



English caused high anxiety in Japanese teachers. Only 3.1% of surveyed Japanese teachers reported confidence in conducting a conversation with a native English speaker (Machida, 2016). Absence of extensive formal training and preparation, as English teaching had not been integrated into university credential courses or licensing, added to the stress. Before 2009, English was not presented as an elementary school subject, leaving schools without a clear purpose or leadership to guide teachers in the expectations of English education (Inada & Inada, 2019).

***Characteristics of teachers.*** Five characteristics of teachers were investigated for correlations to anxiety. English proficiency level, formal training, and years of elementary teaching were linked to anxiety, while gender and years of English teaching experience did not appear to influence anxiety (Machida, 2016). Male and female Japanese educators reported similar levels of anxiety when confronted with the new English curriculum. English teaching experience did not appear to contribute to anxiety, but English oral proficiency had a significant impact (Inada & Inada, 2019). Contrary to expectations of the benefits, Japanese teachers with native-speaking assistants reported added levels of pressure when speaking English in class (Machida, 2016).

Teaching experience of elementary school teachers made a difference in levels of anxiety in teaching English (Y. Nakata et al., 2018). Experience in teaching unfamiliar topics and coping with curriculum changes were skills seasoned teachers benefit from to improvise new classroom activities (Machida, 2016). Length of teaching and confidence in personal ability appeared to be related. In-service training improved elementary school teachers' confidence in English teaching (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017).

Demonstrations of other teachers during training sessions assisted teachers in comparing personal English ability and alleviating the pressure teachers felt about speaking native-level English (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). Receiving instructions on classroom activities, discussing issues with colleagues, and improved collaborative development of classroom strategies with native-speaking assistants were potential benefits from training opportunities. Anxiety was closely linked to personal confidence in English proficiency (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Strategies to improve spoken English and confidence in leading English learning with students should have been merged in updated training for elementary teachers required to teach English under the new curriculum model (Machida, 2016).

***Language classroom techniques.*** Focusing on classroom activities, discussing strategies to engage students through play-based activities, and improved collaboration with native-speaking assistants were possible tactics to improve teacher confidence (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). Another approach advocated by Otsu (2017) considered strategies implemented by professional language instructors and observed in real-life English communication situations. The closer classroom activities and approaches replicated natural interaction, the greater the benefits for learners (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). In natural communication, body language, utterances, head nodding to acknowledge receipt of information, and rise in intonation or pitch may have been utilized to express understanding between speakers in a conversation (Otsu, 2017). Positive affirmation was expressed through nonverbal and verbal channels, including proximity, facial expressions, hand gestures, and taking turns to share information.

**Outside the classroom.** Despite widely held assumptions about the value of English and the globalization of the world, Terasawa (2018) discovered the use of English was declining in

Japan. From 2006 to 2010, the use of English decreased by 5%. When asked about the usage of English in Japan, reading in English and listening to music fell by 3%. The decline in the use of English could be due to the financial crisis of 2007, as statistics highlighted the largest drops in usage per industry occurred in restaurants, dropping by 18.2%, and transportation by 16.2% (Jones & Fukawa, 2017).

During the economic crisis, visits from foreigners dropped from 8.1 million to 7.6 million between 2006 and 2009. International trade in Japan was impacted by a 25% decrease in foreign trade, from 14.3 billion Japanese yen to 10.6 billion Japanese yen during the same period (Jones & Fukawa, 2017). A decrease in the use of English in Japanese cities correlated with a decline in foreign exposure in industries requiring regular communication between Japanese workers and foreigners. English use was not impacted in local industries such as medicine, fisheries, and agriculture (Terasawa, 2018).

***English assessment in the workplace.*** A few international Japanese retailers introduced English as the language of business. Companies including UNIQLO, Honda, Nissan, Rakuten, and Shiseido implemented a change to English policies (Nae & Kim, 2018). To ensure a strong foundational command of English for business purposes, Rakuten was the first to demand baseline competence assessed through the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). The TOEIC was an industry standard used internationally to assess everyday English communication skills of foreign-language users and was ideal to evaluate the language skills required in international settings (TOEIC, n.d.).

Fast Retailing followed suit in 2012 and required a minimum score of 700 on the TOEIC for employment, Takeda Pharmaceuticals expected a minimum score of 730 (Nae & Kim, 2018).

Ujiie offered conversation lessons to employees twice a week and deemed an English policy with a measurable entry point such as a TOEIC test score a positive step toward integrating foreign staff while aiming to build a multinational company. Companies hoped to alleviate strong Japanese ethnocentrism within closed groups of Japanese staff (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). Universities responded by including TOEIC preparation courses to generate graduates well prepared for the changing employment challenges (Nae & Kim, 2018).

***Classroom versus vocational training.*** A gap existed between effective business communication skills and academically correct English taught in formal settings. To highlight the discrepancies between English education and the required skills in the workplace, Otsu (2017) conducted a comparative study. Teaching the English language as a stable entity with one standard accent, in predictable question-and-answer format, had left the workforce unprepared (Tsuneyoshi, 2018). Other issues highlighted by the study were a supportive and collaborative learning environment with active participation from all parties observed in the business environment but not seen in classrooms. Conversational environments fostered effective communication and mutual understanding, while a strong focus on relationship building without emphasis on the rules of language encouraged participation (Y. Nakata et al., 2018; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018).

## **Japanese Culture**

Japan was one of the most homogeneous societies in the world (Hammond, 2016). In a study, compared to six other nations, Japan ranked highest in institutional collectivism and future orientation (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018). The country scored lowest on assertiveness and performance orientation, while uncertainty avoidance was featured as a cultural phenomenon

strongly observed in Japanese. Strong institutional collectivism and future orientation resulted in a culture where the interests of the group trumped personal goals; the interests of the group, organization, and community were highly regarded; long-term impact of decisions was carefully considered; and cooperation and cohesive teamwork were prevalent traits (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018). Low assertiveness might have led to low accountability, shyness, and a substantial need to save face, coupled with assimilation into the crowd rather than taking on leadership roles (Hammond, 2016).

**The influence of culture on English learning.** Considering the vast amounts of research conducted on English as a second language acquisition and the factors influencing success for students, the impact of culture, and specifically Japanese culture, in research was underrepresented (Mertin, 2014). Research concerned with success in the language classroom considered factors including age, motivation, length of studies, and effort revealed a correlation to the first language, gender, and experience with language studies (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018). Research studies on the impact of culture on language learning were found to focus on the culture of the target language rather than the home culture of students (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). In Japan, studies have focused on EFL and the impact of the culture of native-speaking teachers rather than students. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory indicated the importance of anchoring studies of learning on the fundamental understanding of the influence and impact of culture (Pathan et al., 2018). Large differences between cultures of teachers and learners were identified as predictors of low success in students. Cultural differences and linguistic differences had been recognized as barriers for English learners (Mertin, 2014).

**Unique characteristics of Japanese learners.** Japanese students learning EFL reported a few commonly shared traits including shyness (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). Performance anxiety (Mertin, 2014; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018) and a fear of negative judgment (Rose & McKinley, 2018; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018) were additional characteristics common to Japanese learners. Anxiety about the use of English in spoken language including presentations, debates or interviews was commonly reported (Mertin, 2014).

***Shyness.*** Researchers suggested shyness could underpin the larger issue of communication apprehension, especially when communicating in front of a group in formal classroom environments (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). In contrast with traditional Japanese methodology in classrooms, a recent shift in English-language teaching introduced public speaking and a stronger conversational approach (Rose & McKinley, 2018). A strong fear of failure was the second trait and manifests as assessment anxiety in Japanese students. The fear of failing in formal assessments led to decreased enjoyment of English classes (Noguchi, 2019).

***Performance anxiety.*** Performance anxiety was heightened by foreign-language classroom activities often involving formative assessment of learning through quizzes or short exercises (Mertin, 2014). The drive to perform well in every task and fear of failure in tests were linked to perfectionism. Traditional test-driven environments where the main goal was achieving favorable results toward university entrance or acceptance to a multinational organization created negative conditions for Japanese students suffering from self-doubt and unrealistic expectations (Rose & McKinley, 2018).

***Negative judgment.*** Fear of negative evaluation describes the characteristic fear of Japanese students regarding the perceived negative evaluation or judgment by peers and teachers

(MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). The apprehension was centered around anxiety about inadequate English communication ability in spoken language and involved oral activities including speeches, presentations, interviews, and debates (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018). Strongly influenced by Japanese culture, classrooms in Japan had large power differentials between students and teachers. Teachers' influence on the attitude and experience of students rendered careful consideration of motivation and evaluation techniques critically important (Mertin, 2014). Even though teachers went to great lengths to create acceptance and a nonjudgmental environment, sensitive students still feared negative evaluation and judgment of classmates (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017).

**Japaneseness.** *Japaneseness* is defined as the quality of being Japanese, encompassing Japanese heritage, lineage, language, food, traditions, history, beliefs, culture, festivals, customs, and all other aspects of being, supporting and encouraging the survival of all aspects of Japan (Goharimehr, 2018; Imoto, 2017). Parents expressed apprehension of children losing their heritage and culture due to foreign influences, with English learning seen as a possible threat to the acquisition of Japanese (Imoto, 2017). Families living abroad hoped to acquire new skills in host countries but held in higher regard the ability to retain Japanese identity, values, and heritage. Japanese parents believed learning English and Japanese at the same time would slow the development of language ability. Parents appreciated the time and effort required to ensure the Japaneseness of children when living in foreign environments (Imoto, 2017).

**Reactions toward threats.** Uncertainty stemmed from being in a new environment, being confronted with unfamiliar circumstances, or experiencing pressure to reach a decision without adequate information (Goharimehr, 2018). Ambiguous situations led to uncertainty and,

in extreme cases, to perceptions of external threats. Researchers suggested the Japanese had a low tolerance for uncertainty and preferred to avoid external threats more than other nations (Kimura & Nishikawa, 2018; Terashima & Takai, 2018). Japanese was one of the most collective nations, seeking out the familiarity and predictability of like-minded fellow Japanese in times of perceived threat. Membership in a large group motivated by rules and structure, with clearly set regulations and expectations, was common practice to avoid the threat of the unknown (Terashima & Takai, 2018).

A major threat Japanese living abroad contended with was the perceived threat of loss of national identity (Goharimehr, 2018). The greater the perceived threat and the possibility of Japanese losing Japanese culture, language, heritage, perspectives, or traditions to those of the host nation, the stronger the nationalistic reaction and need for interaction with compatriots (Terashima & Takai, 2018). Unlike many expatriates of other countries who report a level of willingness to assimilate into host countries, the Japanese strongly rejected the foreign culture and increased patriotism toward Japan. During times of perceived threat, Japanese based decisions on the preferences of friends or the group rather than individual choice (Terashima & Takai, 2018).

A study comparing attitudes toward foreign migrant workers in Singapore and Japan revealed the perception of the threat of foreigners to Japaneseness was not limited to Japanese living abroad. In Singapore, the government created several policies to encourage the inclusion of foreign talent into Singaporean society. With an aging population and limited natural resources in Singapore, Chinese and other foreign workers contributing to the economic growth and prosperity of the country were regarded as a significant asset (Morita, 2016). Japan was



contending with similar challenges, including a shrinking economy and an aging population, yet the attitude toward foreign nationals was negative. Strong resistance was expressed against the assimilation of foreign national members of society. In 2016, the total population of Japan was 126,740,000, and foreigners totaled 2,382,822. Despite being less than 2% of the total population, foreigners were perceived as a threat to the homogeneity and Japanese culture in Japan (Morita, 2016).

### **Counterarguments**

Despite the positive view of the internationalization of the Japanese government, Rose and McKinley (2018) highlighted the potential loss of cultural values. Students were introduced to effective communication in English, but at a suggestible age, the introduction of a culture foreign to home beliefs and values could unduly influence traditional values held by communities (Goharimehr, 2018). A strong case could have been made against haphazard approaches to internationalization where the introduction of English might have been to the detriment of preserving traditional values and culture (Rose & McKinley, 2018). Evidence of cultural, environmental, and intrinsic challenges Japanese students faced in the quest to learn English were teachers with insufficient English skills, lack of opportunities for real-life experience with English, perfectionism, shyness, and fear of social embarrassment (Machida, 2016).

Hammond (2016) argued another powerful reason for the failure of internationalism in Japan was a modern form of national pride especially prevalent in the youth. Contemporary nationalism reinforced the idea the Japanese were proudly different from all other nations, and the differences were what set them apart as an exceptional nation (Goharimehr, 2018). The

introduction of English to young children offered a possible solution to encouraging earlier acquisition and possibly motivating an improved positive view regarding English learning in Japan. Language educators argue regular contact with the English-speaking world could have reinforced the notion of early introduction of English to children, yielding positive results for international trade and business (Rose & McKinley, 2018; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). Yet survey results suggested the more Japanese had regular contact with English in the workplace, the stronger the support for the late introduction of English to children became (Terasawa, 2018).

Another counterintuitive result came from English classrooms in Japan where English assistant teachers were placed to support Japanese teachers in the implementation of English lessons (Hammond, 2016). The presence of English teachers resulted in higher levels of stress and anxiety for Japanese teachers who felt added pressure to speak native-level English rather than feeling more confident because of the added support in the classroom (Machida, 2016). Efforts by the Japanese government to improve English teaching and increase foreign-study opportunities have been met with increased national pride and declining interest in learning English on the part of students (Hammond, 2016; Shimauchi, 2018).

The success of assessment tools, programs, and policies in other parts of the world was no indication of success in Japan, as Agawa and Takeuchi (2016) reported. Even though the questionnaire based on the self-determination theory was considered the industry standard in assessing self-efficacy in English learners, the validity of the instrument was low in Japan. Autonomy in learning was commonly considered a positive requirement for English learners, but in Japan, learners did better with external controls and structure. Adjustment to the definition and

measurement of self-determination theory was required to truly effectively assess motivation and efficacy in Japan (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016).

### **Gap in Literature**

Studies on the perceptions of Japanese communities living abroad on the benefits, usefulness, and necessity of English learning while living in English-speaking countries were limited (Imoto, 2017; Kawai & Moran, 2017). A substantial understanding of the fears of Japanese living abroad about the loss of Japanese heritage and language did not extend to the perceptions and motivation of the Japanese community living in Singapore. Despite mounting pressure from the Japanese government and industry, the public and students continued to resist embracing the learning and use of English (Agawa & Ueda, 2017; Hammond, 2016). Limited information was available on the reasoning of the Japanese on perceptions of a future economic crisis and the importance of English learning (Terasawa, 2018). The study provided knowledge and data on the perceptions about English of Japanese expatriates living in Singapore. Findings on similar studies in Singapore were not found.

### **Chapter Summary**

The literature review started with a description of search strategies and the theoretical framework underpinning the research. A review of existing literature consisted of factors influencing the motivation to learn English, English learning and globalization, policies on English learning in Japan, the influence of Japanese culture on English learning, and counterarguments from the literature. The importance of motivation as a key to success in second- and foreign-language acquisition had consistently been reported (Dörnyei, 2014a; Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017; Shimauchi, 2018).

The investigation of globalization through English learning were factors of English as the medium of instruction (Dörnyei, 2014a) and globalization of higher education in Japan (Hammond, 2016; Rose & McKinley, 2018). English for the elite (Terasawa, 2017) and resistance through nationalism (O'Neill & Chapman, 2015) highlighted domestic issues preventing national progress in English learning in Japan. A combination of factors, including low motivation to learn English, a high failure rate of Japanese students in domestic and international assessments, and outdated policies in English teaching, prompted the internationalization of higher education in Japan (Wilkinson, 2015). Investigating English in Japan, a review of literature focused on the Japanese school system (Krechetnikova & Pestereva, 2017; MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017), teachers in Japan (Machida, 2016; Nae & Kim, 2018), and English outside the classroom (Otsu, 2017; Terasawa, 2018). Elementary teachers in Japan reported high anxiety about teaching English to students due to personal lack of English proficiency, lack of experience with English, and lack of formal training in teaching English (Machida, 2016). A contributing factor to the continued failure of English education in Japan was the resistance of the Japanese youth and lack of support from parents and the community (Hammond, 2016).

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the research methodology and research design. An explanation of the instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and validity and reliability of the research is provided. The development of the survey, involvement of SMEs, and procedures to attain informed consent are detailed.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. With experts of Asian economies and leaders of Japan expressing growing concern for the decline of the Japanese workforce, an aging population, and a shrinking economy, the internationalization of the workforce was becoming critical (Jones & Fukawa, 2017; H. Nakata, 2017; Nanhe, 2019). Despite the need for international expansion, the Japanese public remained opposed to a transformative, conscious shift toward English learning (Terasawa, 2018). The resistance to change in Japan, researched by the government through yearly national surveys, indicated long-term negative impact and potential economic isolation (Jones & Fukawa, 2017; Terasawa, 2018).

Limited information was available on the perception of the usefulness and formal learning of English by Japanese nationals living abroad (Morita, 2015). To investigate how perceptions about English differed in the Japanese community in Singapore, research was conducted. The following research questions were investigated.

Research Question 1: What are perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 2: What are perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 3: How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore?

Research Question 4: What are the changes in perception about English learning and the usefulness of English of the Japanese community since living in Singapore?

The chapter includes the research design, rationale, and research procedures. An explanation of planned research practices reviews sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data preparation. Data analysis, validity, reliability, and ethical procedures are discussed as well.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

Due to the exploratory foundations of the purpose and research questions, a descriptive quantitative design was implemented (Garg, 2016). Descriptive quantitative research is a sound nonexperimental method to collect objective numerical data to answer questions related to the how and what of real-life situations, as was the case in the study (Bergmann et al., 2018). Variables in the research are objects, feelings, perceptions, conditions, length, or any category occurring in a study researchers intend to measure (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Dependent variables change according to conditions or factors governed by independent variables. The research investigated the reaction and changes measured or observed in independent variables (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009). Independent variables were controlled by the researcher and did not fluctuate. The independent variables guiding the quantitative study were time lived in Singapore, highest education level achieved, parental status, and gender. The study was conducted to investigate changes of dependent variables, including elements of the use of English, the regularity of use of English, perception of the usefulness of English, perception of English learning, age of introduction to English, and perception of the impact of English learning.

The establishment of clear independent and dependent variables enabled the development of a targeted online survey leading to an accurate examination of the research questions (Loeb et al., 2017). Ensuring each research question concentrated on one specific topic allowed the isolation of measurement of perceptions, resulting in accurate data collection (Barnham, 2015). A major rationale for choosing a descriptive quantitative study was the collection of accurate numerical data to measure real-life behavior without focusing on causality, the relatively short time required for data collection, and the large available sample size (Rahman, 2017). Quantitative research offers the additional benefit in a cross-cultural study of collecting targeted information describing the inherent characteristics, opinions, or behaviors of the target audience independent of the researcher (Rahman, 2017). Cross-cultural research, especially in multilingual environments, presents potential threats of misunderstanding and miscommunication, driving the need for a reliable, objective method of data collection (Kim, 2015).

Major constraints on the study were time, cross-cultural complications due to differences in culture and language, and funding. For Japanese expatriates, living in Singapore is largely dependent on the provision of work visas by the Singaporean Ministry of Manpower (2019). Highly skilled workers are allowed to gain international experience by working for local subsidiaries or branches of Japanese owned companies (Ministry of Manpower, 2019). Contracts to fulfill such positions commonly allow residency for two-year periods, making the Japanese community in Singapore a highly transient community. Due to potential pending transitions, Japanese participants of the study expected to see the results of the study as soon as possible. The situation put time pressure on the research. The aim was to complete and report findings as soon as possible, while participants were still in Singapore.

To address possible complications with misunderstanding and translation errors, a quantitative study offering limited responses was an optimal solution (Loeb et al., 2017). Even though a qualitative research approach might have gathered greater depth in responses, accuracy would have been compromised in the translation of lengthy responses from Japanese to English (Kim, 2015). Avoiding exorbitant costs for transcription and translation was factored into the choice of a quantitative rather than a qualitative research design.

Quantitative research design utilizing surveys rather than face-to-face interviews could be effective for cross-cultural studies (Moy & Murphy, 2016). Online surveys are growing in popularity to collect data for social science studies, especially when assessing opinions, perceptions, and experiences (Majima, Nishiyama, Nishihara, & Hata, 2017). Electronic surveys are commonly used by governmental agencies, schools, companies, and service providers in Japan. The combination of protecting the privacy and confidentiality of participants while collecting accurate, useful data makes the survey an ideal collection method (Majima et al., 2017).

Respect for the privacy of participants extends to anonymity in informed consent. Requiring participants to fill out forms divulging confidential information, including names or contact details, would have hampered the Japanese community's willingness to participate (Majima et al., 2017). An effort was made to introduce necessary information, including the provision of contact information in case of inquiries, before the commencement of the research. The participating private school community was not required to provide confidential information as part of the informed consent process (Appendix A). Japanese people are information-driven



and generally interested to participate in studies provided risks are minimized and privacy is guaranteed (Terashima & Takai, 2018).

### **Research Procedures**

To ensure high repeatability of a study, a detailed account of the research procedure is required. Essential fundamental considerations are thoughtful alignment of how chosen activities, strategies, and procedures led to solving the research problems and answering the research questions (Andrade, 2018). Five crucial procedural stages for survey research are determining the boundaries, purpose, and research questions; developing or finding an appropriate assessment instrument; implementing the survey; deciding on and administering appropriate data analysis; and reporting findings to participants and other interested parties (Taherdoost, 2016). The discussion on research procedures includes the chosen population, sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data preparation.

### **Population and Sample Selection**

The total population and target population comprised 160 Japanese parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore. Potential participants were informed about the study participation opportunity through a recruitment letter distributed to parents of the school students and verbal communication within the community (Appendix B). The target population was 160 Japanese adults, and participation was on a volunteer basis rather than using randomized sampling techniques (Garg, 2016). As is often the case with a population with specialized characteristics, the study focused on members of the school community (Barnham, 2015). A sample calculator revealed, for a population of 160 with a confidence level of 95% and intervals

of 5, the sample size needed to be 113 participants (Creative Research Systems, 2017; DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009).

To streamline studies on large populations, smaller samples are selected to ensure efficient, cost- and time-effective execution of research (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Establishing limitations on participation according to specific criteria contributes to the precision of data collected; determining the eligibility of participation of individuals or groups was established through inclusion and exclusion factors (Barnham, 2015). Inclusion criteria are predetermined qualities used to classify and select individuals for participation in a research study. Exclusion criteria are used to establish characteristics or conditions under which individuals may not be admitted to a study.

Eligibility for participation for individual members of a population was established according to inclusion and exclusion criteria (Garg, 2016). The inclusion and exclusion of participants according to predetermined criteria ensured the collection of relevant data (Loeb et al., 2017). For the study in Singapore, participation was inclusive of adults connected to the private school who were Japanese nationals living in Singapore. Participation required access to the Internet and the ability to read Japanese. Members of the school community who were not Japanese nationals and were unable to read Japanese were excluded.

An initial recruitment letter informing the target population of the study was sent in paper and electronic formats to the private school community (Appendix B). In the letter was an information page explaining informed consent and providing contact details of the researcher, dissertation chair, and IRB. Informed consent introduced the online survey as an initial entrance requirement (Appendix A).

The agreement included information on the research, participation selection, benefits, risks, and confidentiality (Appendix A). Participants confirmed receipt and comprehension of informed consent information by clicking on the appropriate button, at which time the survey commenced. If parents chose not to agree to informed consent, the survey did not commence, and a message thanking volunteers for interest in the research appeared. No personal contact with participants was initiated by the principal investigator. Participants' demographic information was collected in the first section of the online survey (Appendix C). A request for permission to conduct research at a Japanese private preschool was sent to the school director (Appendix D). The school director acknowledged receipt of the request and granted permission for the research, pending IRB approval (Appendix E).

Respect for the privacy of participants extends to anonymity in informed consent. Requiring participants to fill out forms divulging confidential information, including names or contact details, would have hampered the Japanese community's willingness to participate (Majima et al., 2017). An effort was made to introduce necessary information, including the provision of contact information in case of inquiries, before the commencement of the research. The participating private school community was not required to provide confidential information as part of the informed consent process (Appendix A). Japanese people are information-driven and generally interested to participate in studies provided risks are minimized and privacy is guaranteed (Terashima & Takai, 2018).

### **Instrumentation**

Even though survey research does not enable conclusions regarding causality, a survey is an ideal tool to examine and describe participants' feelings, attitudes, and perceptions (Hazel et

al., 2016). Surveys enable one to determine trends and patterns across different dependent and independent variables while collecting data from a large group of respondents (Andrade, 2018). The survey used in the study was newly developed, specifically catering to the situation of the Japanese community in Singapore. The tone and style of questions echoed the questions used in national surveys in Japan with a specific focus on the annual Japanese General Social Survey (Terasawa, 2018). All questions were closed-ended with limited responses; questions included multiple-choice and Likert-style questions.

The survey consisted of 20 questions in total, spanning five sections: demographic information, use of English, perceptions on usefulness and English learning, age of introduction to English, and the impact of English learning on Japanese culture (Appendix C). The survey was developed in English, but the final product was presented in Japanese. The translation was conducted by a Japanese national who had more than 10 years of experience as a professional freelance English-to-Japanese translator and studied linguistics at Dokkyo University in Saitama prefecture, Japan.

Survey questions were closely related to the four research questions, and combinations of independent demographic data and dependent data gathered in the subsequent sections allowed for a thorough analysis of perceptions expressed by participants (Loeb et al., 2017). The survey was designed to collect numerical data of ordinal strength. Best practice for the design of a survey demanded a field test to establish reliability and validity before administering the instrument (Hazel et al., 2016). Field tests were conducted to establish functions relative to data collecting measures. Field tests assessed whether questions were clearly worded and yielded the

desired outcome, and whether the instrument gauged real-life issues accurately (Bergmann et al., 2018). For the study in Singapore, field tests were conducted with five SMEs (Appendix F).

The SMEs field tested the survey to assess usability, relevance, and cultural suitability for the Japanese sample. Considering the alignment between research questions and the survey and analyzing the complexity of concepts for translation into Japanese were two major responsibilities of the SMEs. Feedback was received via e-mail. The group of SMEs had one English professor on location in South Africa contributing expertise in all aspects of development and design of online surveys. Four Japanese nationals with experience living as Japanese expatriates in the United States, Singapore, and Malaysia provided feedback and recommendations on the relevance, appropriateness, understandability, and cultural sensitivity of the survey.

Due to the complex nature of the cross-cultural study, the five SMEs assisted in field testing the developed survey (Majima et al., 2017). Translation of survey questions to gather numerical data in cross-cultural studies needed to be overseen by members of the target culture as the translation of text encompassed the conversion of values, establishing the appropriateness of questions and tone, and to ensure the precision of questions for exact results (Rajan & Makani, 2016; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, Van Dyne, & Annen, 2011). The feedback encompassed critical analysis of the online survey as an assessment tool, validity and accuracy of the questions, translatability of the language used, reliability of the instrument, and repeatability of administering the survey (Andrade, 2018). Feedback received from SMEs (Appendix G) was carefully considered, and the survey was updated accordingly.

## **Data Collection**

Data were collected through the completion of an online survey consisting of 20 closed-ended questions offering multiple-choice and Likert-scale responses (Loeb et al., 2017). Several advantages to posing closed-ended questions are clear communication in cross-cultural environments, effective analysis and ease of statistical interpretation, accuracy, speed, efficiency, and higher reported response rates compared to open-ended questions (Moy & Murphy, 2016; Rajan & Makani, 2016). Members of the Japanese school community completed the survey presented in Japanese, from any location, using the link provided. Background information on the study was provided with contact information before informed consent was required (Carruthers, 2018). Participation was voluntary. A short set of instructions led participants through key definitions and basic information on how to complete the survey.

The survey was administered using SurveyMonkey software. SurveyMonkey is an Internet-based survey design and implementation software service offering different levels of capabilities. Services range from free-of-charge basic online survey design with limited storage facilities for captured data to a paid membership with assistance in survey design, complex data analysis, and large secure data storage facilities. SurveyMonkey is not only a popular publicly available survey platform but also regarded as one of the most reliable (Halim, Foozy, Rahmi, & Mustapha, 2018). For studies involving online survey design, the American College of Education recommends using SurveyMonkey. For the study in Singapore, a paid membership option, where additional services such as skip logic and larger data storage solutions are offered, was selected. Skip logic is a feature in online programs allowing users to skip ahead and avoid the regular sequence of questions, depending on specified criteria.

For the study, skip logic was utilized to determine informed consent. Informed consent information shared on the survey was the same as the information contained in the previously distributed recruitment letter. When users selected the agree button on the informed consent page, the survey commenced. In cases where volunteers declined consent by choosing the no consent option, skip logic circumvented the survey and displayed a thank-you page instead. The survey was available to the Japanese community for three weeks (Liu & Wronski, 2018). After the closing date for participation, responses were downloaded from the SurveyMonkey database to an external hard drive for safe storage and analysis. No confidential information of participants was requested in the survey, resulting in anonymous participation (Majima et al., 2017). Three years after completion of the study, securely stored data will be destroyed through a factory reset of the external hard drive.

### **Data Preparation**

The data preparation process included two distinct steps. Completion restrictions as a special feature within SurveyMonkey were placed on the survey (Halim et al., 2018). Constraints ensured participants were not able to leave questions unanswered. The complete set of 20 questions had to be completed for a dataset to be accepted as complete by SurveyMonkey. Surveys exited or left before completion were not entered into the database of completed surveys. After the end date of the survey, the database of responses was downloaded to Microsoft Excel. Excel is a software package offering researchers and statisticians an array of functions to enable the statistical analysis of data organized in electronic worksheets (Halpern, Frye, & Marzzacco, 2018). The Scientific Data Analysis Toolkit (SDAT) is an additional data

analysis application created for Excel, designed to perform analytical computations needed in smaller to medium-sized research.

SDAT enables functionality to perform descriptive statistics, differentiate, integrate, plot, spline, and do regression analysis (Halpern et al., 2018). Setting dependent and independent variables of the study as parameters in SDAT enables accurate descriptive analysis of collected data. The importance of conducting statistical analysis on full datasets to avoid skewing, comparison of incomplete sets, and inaccurate calculations is well established (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009; Liu & Wronski, 2018; Loeb et al., 2017). Incomplete datasets discovered during this process were automatically removed to ensure the analysis was conducted on full datasets (Liu & Wronski, 2018).

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive quantitative analysis explores real-world concepts by classifying distinguishable patterns from collected data and linking them back to research questions often concerned with what, where, and when (Loeb et al., 2017). Descriptive statistical methods are implemented to describe relationships between dependent and independent variables assessed in data collected (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Descriptive methods often concentrate on mean, mode, range, and mean of datasets (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). The strength of data collected in the study were ordinal. Normal distribution of the sample could not be assumed, thereby calling for nonparametric statistics focused on range and median while eliminating *t*-tests as a suitable statistical method (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016).

To eliminate incomplete datasets and avoid missing and suspicious values, data protection measures were built into the survey (Moy & Murphy, 2016). Questions were closed-



ended, presenting limited responses, and the survey was designed to prohibit participants from leaving questions unanswered. Restrictions minimize the risk of incomplete datasets. Data from completed surveys were downloaded from SurveyMonkey to Excel where another check on incomplete datasets was performed through SDAT (Halpern et al., 2018). Statistical analysis was conducted through Excel statistical applications and nonparametric calculations of independent and paired data (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Each research question resulted in the convergence of different variables, requiring different statistical analyses.

For Research Question 1, basic descriptive analysis of the dependent and independent variables was implemented (Liu & Wronski, 2018). Total scores per Likert-scale option, mean, and range of data gathered on perceptions of the age of introduction, the dependent variable, were combined with demographic data as the independent variables to investigate patterns (Moy & Murphy, 2016). Combinations of different independent variables with perceptions of introductory age yielded results on underlying concepts, for example, the difference in perception between postgraduate and school-educated members, the difference in selection between long- and short-term residents, and gender-related preferences. Investigating the data collected on introductory age revealed the most and least popular ages chosen by respondents (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009). The calculations for Research Question 1 were conducted in Excel through SDAT descriptive analysis applications.

Analysis of Research Question 2 considered perceptions of the usefulness of English, a dependent variable, in combination with demographic independent variables, including time lived in Singapore, education level, gender, and parental status (Liu & Wronski, 2018). Total scores per Likert-scale option were examined to assess the general perception. Furthermore, the

range and mean of data when combined with independent variables were explored, for instance, differences in perception of usefulness between genders (Moy & Murphy, 2016). Other combinations of descriptive analysis could have investigated the perceived usefulness in combination with regularity of the use of English. The calculations for Research Question 2 were made through SDAT statistical analysis in Excel.

Descriptive analysis of Research Question 3 required the implementation of a recognized statistical method to determine rank and describe statistical patterns (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009). General use of English, a dependent variable, offered participants 10 separate response options. Total scores of the 10 “use of English” options were ranked using Mann–Whitney *U* test calculations for independent nominal samples (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Unlike other research questions of the study, gender was the demographic independent variable used for comparison to scores of use of English.

Research Question 4 required a specific statistical procedure, but unlike Research Question 3, the data were paired. The question examined how perceptions about English learning and usefulness have changed since living in Singapore, dependent variables. Wilcoxon rank test was an ideal method to examine data before and since living in Singapore of each participant (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Combinations of demographic data with the paired variables might have yielded further information on how perceptions have changed according to time lived in Singapore, gender, education level, or parental status (Barnham, 2015). Ranges and means were explored using SDAT descriptive statistical calculations in Excel.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Two measures of quality in quantitative research are reliability and validity. *Reliability* concentrates on the accuracy of a measurement tool and how consistently an assessment tool yields the same results from repeated testing (Haele & Twycross, 2015). *Validity*, a term used to describe the accuracy with which a research tool tests the concept set out to test, can be separated into internal and external factors. To ensure the reliability of the survey developed in Singapore, a strong alignment was established between the research questions and survey questions. The inclusion of closed-ended questions with multiple-choice and Likert-style responses increased the repeatability of measurement (Appendix C). The internal consistency of the instrument was expected to be high due to the rigid, structured design of the instrument designed to collect quantitative data (Taherdoost, 2016).

Factors reducing the generalizability of a study constitute external threats. For the study, selection bias, operational definitions, real-world representation, and experimenter bias were the largest potential threats. In studies where volunteer sampling was used, a real possibility exists the participating sample might not have been representative of the population (Taherdoost, 2016). The best way to minimize selection bias with the Japanese school community was to notify the entire membership to encourage large-scale participation. Another way to encourage participation was to present the survey and request for participation in Japanese to reach the population through the first language and ensure potential volunteers experienced cultural sensitivity (Kim, 2015). Narrowly defining the constructs studied to contain different possible interpretations and perceptions was a sound practice to minimize operational bias. In the survey,

each question needed to be confined to assessing one concept, and unambiguous terminology needed to be used (Andrade, 2018).

For quantitative studies to be generalized to a bigger population, data collection and subsequent findings must go beyond representing experimental scenarios to reflect real-world situations (Andrade, 2018). Ensuring the data collected from the research reflected real-world perceptions of the Japanese community was established through practical questions resembling real-life perceptions of experiences in Singapore. Dependent variables potentially threatened by experimental versus real-world generalization were the perceived usefulness of English, perceptions of the best age to introduce English to children, and the need to learn English (Haele & Twycross, 2015). Unintentional researcher bias might have threatened the external validity of the research. Personal characteristics including appearance, gender, race, and nonverbal signals, including facial expressions, emphasis, tone of voice, or hand gestures of the researchers, could have influenced participants (Haele & Twycross, 2015). To eliminate researcher bias from the equation, the study in Singapore was conducted anonymously online without any personal contact between the principal investigator and participants.

Three common threats to internal validity are a single group, numerous groups, and social interaction (Taherdoost, 2016). Even though the study was conducted with a single group, a course of treatment was not considered and therefore a testing threat, with posttest and pretest conditions not needing to be considered. No social interaction occurred between participants and the principal investigator, thereby minimizing internal threats to validity. The threat of insufficient preoperational clarification of constructs confusing participants about the definition and meaning of key concepts was reduced in the instructions of the online survey (Andrade,

2018). The research design included administering a one-time survey, leaving the research open to potential mono-method bias (Haele & Twycross, 2015). The implementation of a field study with five SMEs providing feedback and the subsequent updating and redesign of the survey to accommodate suggested improvements minimized the internal risk of the mono-method approach (Appendix G). Receiving factual critique on the suitability, design, cultural sensitivity, reliability, and accuracy of the survey design and wording from objective SMEs decreased potential objectivity issues (Kim, 2015).

### **Ethical Procedures**

Ethical researchers are those who consider the consequences of studies well beyond the limitations IRBs and ethics committees place on research. Especially in cross-cultural studies, the need for thoughtful practices in foreign cultural environments urge studies toward embracing morality and protection (Zhang, 2017). The need for the protection of human subjects in research studies is not new (Zhang, 2017). Stringent guidelines of expected behavior and procedures to ensure the ethical treatment of participants in several countries are underpinned by commonly shared ideals. Practices introduced by the 1974 National Research Act and the 1979 *Belmont Report* lay foundations guiding contemporary ethical research (Carruthers, 2018). Additionally, the Common Rule, updated in 2018, urges the full disclosure of relevant information to ensure informed consent from research participants before commencement of the research.

Basic elements of ethical research studies include adhering to the three major factors of respect for human subjects, beneficence, and justice (Carruthers, 2018). The participants of the study in Singapore deserved confidentiality; protection of privacy; and respect for the unique culture, language, and traditions beyond regular guidelines (Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Principles of

respect for people, beneficence, and thorough information sharing to ensure informed consent were key principles of conducting the study. Of specific significance was the concept of justice. Participants not only should receive respect as human beings but also represent a larger community deserving of careful consideration and respectful treatment throughout the research (Carruthers, 2018; Zhang, 2017).

Anonymous data were captured in the SurveyMonkey software and downloaded into Excel. Confidentiality of participants was ensured by not collecting private information and by storing completed surveys offline on an external drive (Barnham, 2015). The drive with collected data was secured in a safe in the school director's office for safekeeping. For three years after completion of the study, an electronic copy of findings will be stored securely in the safe, after which time the external hard drive will be cleared through a factory reset. Due to stringent measures to protect the confidentiality of participants, ethical conflicts in the workplace or power differential issues were not expected.

### **Chapter Summary**

The focus of the chapter was research design and rationale for a study on Japanese expatriates in Singapore. A detailed description of the procedures was provided through a description of the total and target population, sample selection process, instrumentation development, data collection, and data preparation. Analysis of data, factors influencing validity and reliability, and consideration of ethical research practices were presented. Data analysis results and findings from the analysis are presented in Chapter 4.

## **Chapter 4: Research Findings and Data Analysis Results**

Without cooperative effort from the Japanese public to improve proficiency in English and increased openness to welcome foreign workers, a strategy to manage the pending economic challenges of the future workforce of Japan had become unclear (Y. Nakata et al., 2018). Japanese organizations striving to expand presence into the global arena were struggling to find graduates with sufficient business English skills as rising national debt and old-age care continued to threaten the Japanese economy (Kawai & Moran, 2017; Nanhe, 2019). Concerted support from the private sector and large investment from the government to improve the English proficiency of the youth of Japan were met by resistance and a strong wave of patriotism. The problem was the negative attitude and lack of motivation to learn English as a global language despite the growing demand for the internationalization of the Japanese community in Singapore. The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to identify and describe perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore.

The statistical results of the data collected from an online survey completed by parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore are presented in Chapter 4. A description of the data collection with a summary of the demographic profile of the participants is provided. Data analysis and results are organized and discussed by research question, followed by a description of reliability and validity issues.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected through an online survey consisting of 20 questions divided into sections related to demographic information, age of introduction of English, usefulness of

English, use of English, and changes in perception about English usefulness and learning English (Appendix C). The survey was created using a paid membership on SurveyMonkey specifically utilized for the additional services of skip logic, larger data storage, and download of collected data directly into Excel. Skip logic was used to determine informed consent. The informed consent information presented in the survey was the same as the information contained in the original online recruitment letter. Participants could access the survey only by selecting the agree button on the informed consent page. In cases where volunteers declined consent by choosing the no consent option, skip logic circumvented the survey and displayed a thank-you page.

Participants were informed of the study and recruited to participate on a volunteer basis through an electronic recruitment letter distributed to Japanese national parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore (Appendix B). The electronic recruitment letters were circulated on May 27, 2020, and data were collected over three weeks from May 27 to June 17, 2020. A total of 160 parents were informed of the study, 127 of whom completed the online survey; six survey responses were disregarded because the surveys were incomplete. Applying the remaining 121 participants, the response rate was 76%, with nearly 70% of responses received within the first week. The original calculation of the required sample size for a population of 160 with a confidence level of 95% and interval of 5 estimated a required size of 113 participants (Creative Research Systems, 2017; DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009).

The number of months the 121 participants have stayed in Singapore was distributed in ranges of 0–12 months, 13–24 months, 25–60 months, and longer than 60 months. Data collected on the highest level of education revealed a range of participants with high school diploma, industry-required qualification, bachelor's degree, and master's or doctorate. A total of 97% of



participants had completed a form of tertiary education, with 88% being university graduates. A total of 121 participants constituted 29 males and 92 females. None of the participants was younger than 25. A total of 80% of participants reported being age 36 and over, with the majority over the age of 41, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

*Demographic Profile of Participants*

Variable	No. participants	%
Length of stay in Singapore		
0–12 months	7	6.0
13–24 months	17	14.0
25–60 months	38	31.0
60 months and longer	60	49.0
Highest level of education		
Not completed high school	0	0.0
High school	4	3.0
Industry qualification	11	9.0
Bachelor's degree	91	75.0
Master's/doctorate	16	13.0
Gender		
Male	29	24.0
Female	92	76.0
Age		
18–25	0	0.0
26–30	8	7.0
31–35	17	14.0
36–40	31	25.0
41 and older	66	54.0

### **Data Analysis and Results**

Applying statistical methods in the study encompassed the design, data collection and analysis, accurate interpretation, and reporting and dissemination of findings from the research results. Statistical analysis through the implementation of appropriate methods allows the

opportunity to create meaning from raw data, to identify and describe patterns discovered in the data, and to answer the research questions based on evidence-based conclusions (DeMoulin & Kritsonis, 2009). Inferences, results, and conclusions are dependent on the accurate application of correct statistical tests. Incorrect application of statistical tests might result in skewed results and flawed inferences, possibly undermining the validity and significance of the study (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Decisions based on inaccurate conclusions might lead to the implementation of unethical practices.

Data from an online survey consisting of 20 closed-ended Likert-style questions were collected for  $N = 121$  participating parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore. Access to the survey was dependent on participants reading and understanding Japanese and agreeing to informed consent. A question on parental status of participants served as another check for eligibility; skip logic eliminated nonparents from participation. The survey was divided into five major sections—demographic information, age of introduction of English, usefulness of English, use of English, and changes in perception—to allow for accurate alignment with the research questions. Descriptive analysis of dependent and independent variables was employed to identify and describe perceptions as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore.

Due to the inclusion of Likert-style closed-ended questions and involvement of a purposive nonrandom data sample, assumptions about the collected data were not normally distributed, the scale of measurement was ordinal, and results for Questions 17–20 focusing on changes in perception were paired datasets. The normal distribution of data could not be assumed; therefore, a paired sample  $t$ -test would have resulted in erroneous results (Social

Sciences Statistics, 2020c). As the application of distributed parametric tests was not appropriate, two nonparametric methods were used. To investigate changes in perception of usefulness and learning of English before living in Singapore compared to when living in Singapore, the distribution-free Mann–Whitney test, also known as the Wilcoxon rank sum test, was used.

The Mann–Whitney test compared data of Group X (perceptions before living in Singapore) with data of Group Y (perceptions when living in Singapore) to calculate the probability of Group X being greater than Group Y (Social Sciences Statistics, 2020a). For the study in Singapore, the alternative hypothesis results of the Mann–Whitney test were relevant. The Mann–Whitney test was conducted to establish whether data gathered on perceptions before and while living in Singapore showed statistically significant differences as independent, unpaired data. As a next step to understand the descriptive analysis of results from the Mann–Whitney test, an additional nonparametric test, the Spearman rank order correlation coefficient, was implemented (Laerd Statistics, 2018). The test further investigated the strength and direction of association of the nonparametric ordinal strength data gathered for before and after perceptions as paired sets (Social Sciences Statistics, 2020b). For accurate results using the Spearman correlation test, three general assumptions were relevant: (a) the two applicable variables needed to be ordinal, interval, or ratio scale strength; (b) the datasets were paired; and (c) a monotonic relationship existed between the paired variables (Drummond & Murphy-Reyes, 2018). Monotonic relationships exist where values increased together in datasets, or values of one variable increased while the values of the other variable decreased (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016).

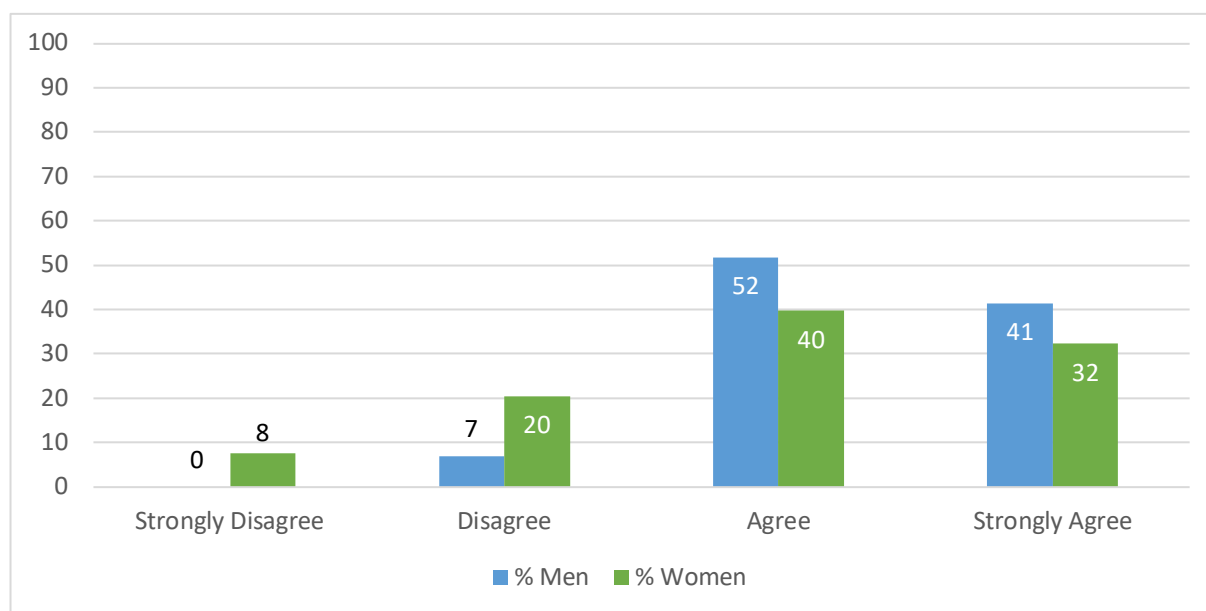
### Research Question 1

What are perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore? Participants reported being in favor of an early start to English learning for children, with the majority (52%) selecting an introduction age of 3 to 6. The second-largest selection was for children 0 to 2 years of age to receive an introduction to English (25%). A total of 77% of participants were in favor of an introduction to English before children turned 7. The introduction age of English in Japan is 10 (Y. Nakata et al., 2018). Three males and one female participant (3%) selected an introduction age of older than 10.

When asked about the perceptions of the possible negative impact of English learning on the acquisition of Japanese for children, the majority of participants (85%) selected *strongly disagree* (39%) or *disagree* (46%). Fourteen percent of participants reported a perception of English learning negatively impacting Japanese learning. One female respondent strongly agreed about the negative impact of English learning on Japanese acquisition for children.

Male respondents selected only two of the five possible sources for English learning: 72% perceived English friends to be the best way for children to learn English, while 28% perceived learning from teachers or tutors as the best option. No male respondents reported a preference for parents or movies as a suitable source for English learning. Overall, participants agreed friends were the best source for English learning (49%), followed by teachers and tutors (35%) and parents or family (8%); one female participant felt software was the best source for learning English.

Data regarding perceptions about the importance of early learning of English for children aged between two and six years for long-term success in the use of English showed the majority (93%) of male participants agreed (52%) or strongly agreed (41%). No male participants strongly disagreed about the importance of early learning of English. In contrast, a total of 28% of female participants strongly disagreed (8%) or disagreed (20%) about the importance of an early start to English learning for long-term success. The majority of women agreed (40%) or strongly agreed (32%) with the need for early learning of English for children, as summarized in Figure 1.

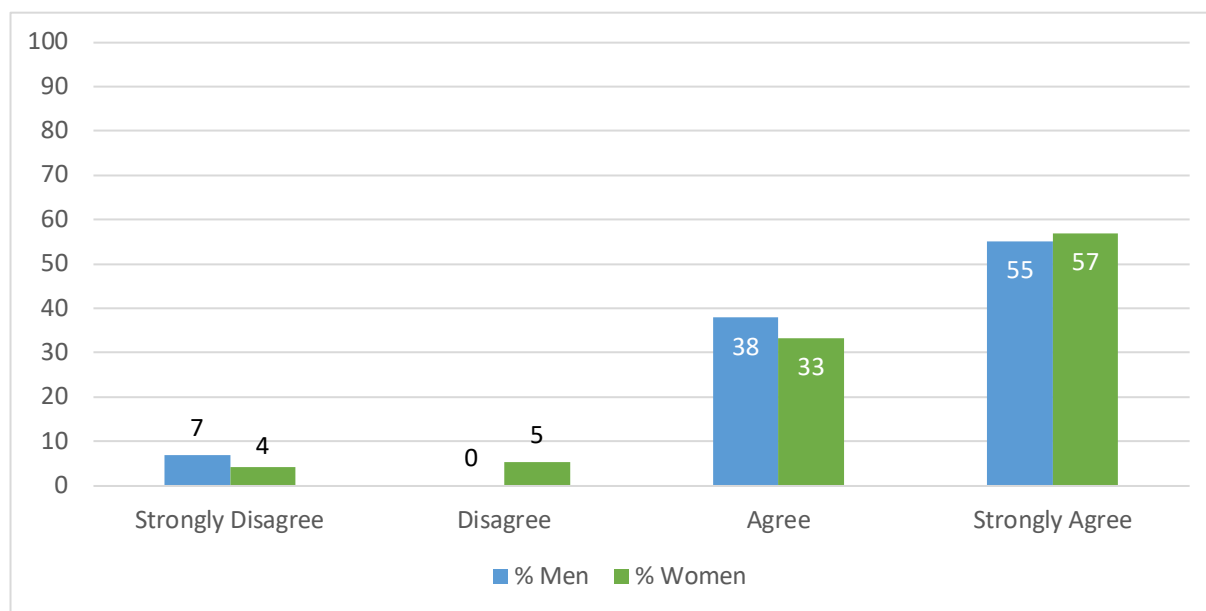


*Figure 1.* Perceived importance of the early introduction to English for long-term success reported by Japanese men and women in Singapore.

## Research Question 2

What are perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore? Considering perceptions of the usefulness of English, a third of participants (34% of males and 32% of females) reported English as useful only to specific Japanese people, for

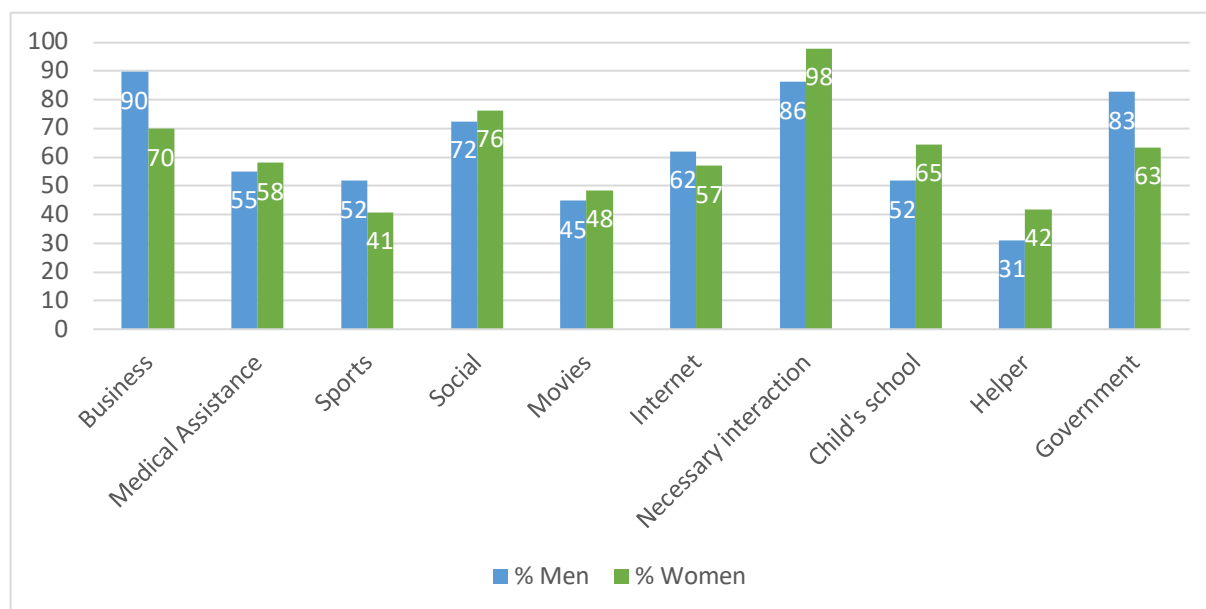
instance, those who need English for business or schooling. The large remainder (67%) strongly disagreed or disagreed. Three percent of participants perceived English as unimportant for long-term career success for children, while 97% of participants (98% of females) perceived English as important or very important. As highlighted by Figure 2, English was perceived as useful only as long as participants lived in Singapore.



*Figure 2.* Perceived usefulness of English only while participants lived in Singapore.

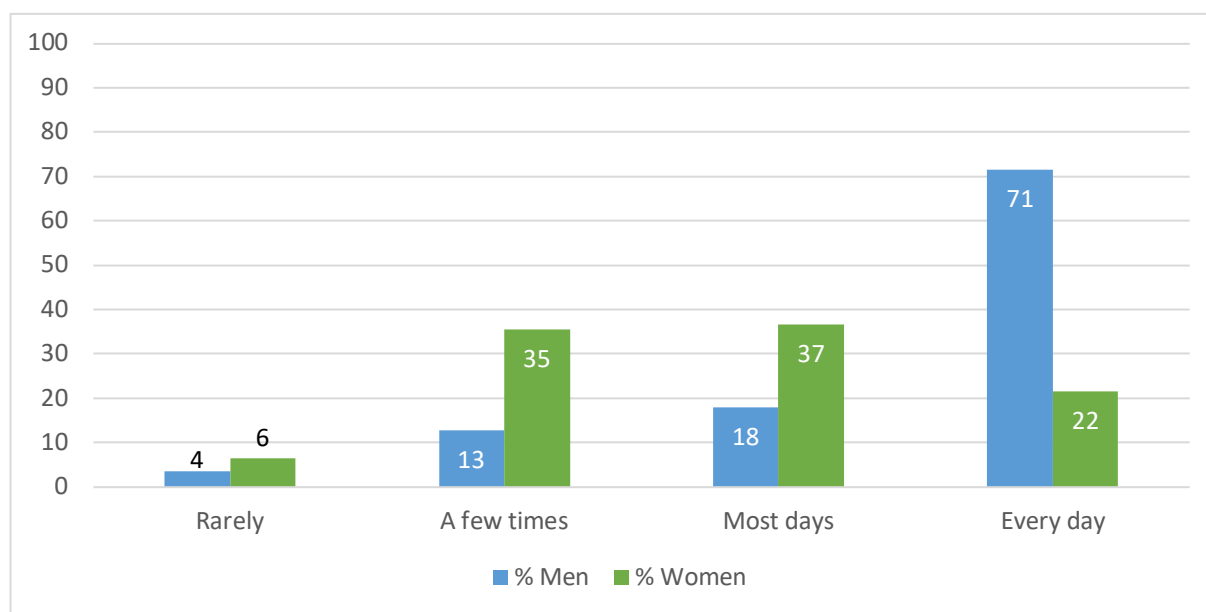
### Research Question 3

How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore? A summary of findings is presented in Figure 3 regarding the differences in the general use of English according to gender. Female participants use English in Singapore mostly for necessary daily interaction and social interaction (98%), while males used English mostly for business (90%). English was used least by male participants for communication with the domestic helper (31%), movies (45%), and sports (52%).



*Figure 3.* Use of English by Japanese men and women in Singapore.

While living in Singapore, 6% of females and 4% of males reported using English rarely. A large difference, in everyday use of English was reported (71% of males and 22% of females). The difference in frequency of use between genders is summarized in Figure 4.



*Figure 4.* Frequency of English usage by Japanese men and women in Singapore

#### Research Question 4

What are the changes in perception about English learning and the usefulness of English of the Japanese community since living in Singapore? Two tests were performed to investigate the correlation between nonparametric datasets collected involving the change in perceptions before and after living in Singapore. Two Mann–Whitney tests were conducted to test the probability of differences in datasets, possibly indicating a change in perception in the usefulness of English and the value of learning English. The results of the two tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

#### *Mann–Whitney U Tests Summary*

Test	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	<i>N</i>	<i>U</i> value
Perceptions about English usefulness				
Before living in Singapore	12674	104.74	121	9348.0
While living in Singapore	16729	138.26	121	5293.0
Result Z ratio (Test 1)				
<i>U</i> value	5293			
<i>Z</i>	-3.72			
<i>P</i>	.0002			
Perceptions about English learning				
Before living in Singapore	12448	102.88	121	9573.5
While living in Singapore	16954	140.12	121	5067.5
Result Z ratio (Test 2)				
<i>U</i> value	5067.5			
<i>Z</i>	-4.14			
<i>P</i>	.00001			

*Note:* Mann–Whitney *U* tests were conducted as two-tailed tests with significance levels of .05. Results are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Mann–Whitney *U* Test 1 indicated a statistically significant difference between perceptions about English usefulness before living in Singapore and while living in Singapore (*U*



= 5293,  $p = 0.0002$  with significance at  $< .05$ ). Mann–Whitney  $U$  Test 2 indicated a statistically significant difference between perceptions about English learning before living in Singapore and while living in Singapore ( $U = 5067.5$ ,  $p = 0.0001$  with significance at  $< .05$ ). Results of Tests 1 and 2 suggested a statistically significant change in perception of English usefulness before and after living in Singapore and a change in perception of English learning before and after living in Singapore. To further investigate the strength and direction of the association between paired sets of data by participant, two additional Spearman rank order correlation coefficient tests were conducted (Social Sciences Statistics, 2020b). The results of the tests are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

*Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Test Summary*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Test 1			
Perceptions about English usefulness			
Before living in Singapore	61	32.20	121
While living in Singapore	61	28.09	121
Covariance = $43037.5 / 120 = 358.65$ . $R = 358.65 / (32.2 * 28.09) = 0.397$ .			
Test 2			
Perceptions about English learning			
Before living in Singapore	61	32.99	121
While living in Singapore	61	28.41	121
Covariance = $51571.25 / 120 = 429.76$ . $R = 429 / (32.99 * 28.41) = 0.458$ .			

Results of Test 1 using the Spearman correlation test indicated there was a significant positive association between paired data on perceptions about English usefulness before living in Singapore and while living in Singapore ( $r_s[121] = .397$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Results of Test 2 using the

Spearman correlation test indicated there was a significant positive association between paired data perceptions about English learning before living in Singapore and while living in Singapore ( $r_s[121] = .458, p < .001$ ). Scores suggested perceptions of the usefulness of English and English learning positively increased in Japanese male and female participants after moving to Singapore. Correlation strengths of  $R = .397$  and  $R = .458$  were considered moderate (Akuglu, 2018).

Before moving to Singapore, a total of 89% of male respondents perceived English to be useful (43%) or extremely useful (46%); after living in Singapore, the total changed to 100%. Before moving to Singapore, a total of 84% of female participants perceived English to be useful (39%) or extremely useful (45%); after living in Singapore, the total changed to 98%. Male participants perceived the learning of English to be important (54%) or extremely important (32%) before living in Singapore, and important (54%) or extremely important (57%) after living in Singapore. Men's total positive perception of the learning of English grew from 86% to 93%, while women's total positive perception increased from 72% before living in Singapore to 89%. Overall, collected data suggested changes in females' perceptions of usefulness of English (up 14%) and English learning (up 17%) were greater than changes in males' perceptions.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Two measures of quality research are reliability, focused on the accuracy of a test or tool, and validity, describing the level of accuracy at which research concepts are tested by the chosen measurement tool (Haele & Twycross, 2015). Reliability was established through a strong alignment between variables included in online survey questions and research questions. The internal consistency of the online survey was high due to the collection of quantitative data

through a rigid structure and the inclusion of closed-ended Likert-style questions limiting response choices, increasing the repeatability of the study (Taherdoost, 2016). To decrease internal threats to validity and to remove possible researcher bias, there was no personal interaction between participants and the principal investigator.

External threats to a study constitute any factors reducing the generalizability of the study. To counterbalance the risks volunteer sampling posed to the generalizability of the study, the entire membership of the Japanese school community was notified of the study to promote large-group participation. Presenting the recruitment letter, informed consent, and online survey in Japanese, the first language of the community, was another tactic to encourage participation.

For the generalizability of the quantitative study data collection and subsequent conclusions needed to signify real-world conditions (Andrade, 2018). Dependent variables identified as sensitive to real-world generalization were the perceived usefulness of English, perceptions of the best age to introduce English to children, and the need to learn English (Haele & Twycross, 2015). To assist in the creation of shared meaning for the dependent variables, the wording of questions was reviewed by SMEs and possible responses were limited to minimize misunderstandings. A purposive non-random sample of Japanese national parents of students at a Japanese private preschool in Singapore based on volunteer participation was utilized. Due to strict employment visa regulations of the Ministry of Manpower of Singapore, including age restrictions and minimum degree qualification requirements for many employment opportunities, the Japanese community in Singapore does not reflect the public of Japan. Visa requirements imposed by Singapore, however, reflect general requirements shared by many first-world

countries. The demographic representation of the Japanese community in Singapore may show strong communality with other Japanese expatriate communities around the world.

### **Chapter Summary**

The online survey completed by 121 volunteer participants was conducted to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Collected data provided answers to four research questions: (a) What are perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore? (b) What are perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore? (c) How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore? and (d) What are the changes in perception about English learning and the usefulness of English of the Japanese community since living in Singapore?

The majority of participants (77%) expressed a wish for children to be introduced to English before reaching 7 years old. Eighty-five percent of participants did not perceive English learning to interfere with the acquisition of Japanese, and the largest number (49%) believed the best source of English learning was friends. Male respondents reported a strong need (93%) for children to start learning at a young age for long-term success in English. Almost a third of women (28%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the need for early introduction for long-term success in English. One-third of participants (33%) agreed or strongly agreed about the importance of English exclusively for specific obligations including business or studying. Participants reported a strong total perception (91%) of English considered useful only as long as

participants were living in Singapore, and 97% agreed or strongly agreed on the importance of English to children's future long-term career success.

Genders reported significant differences in the use of English, with men using English for business most (90%) and women using English for necessary daily interaction most (98%). Although rankings differed, men and women reported using English least for communication with domestic helpers, sports, and movies. The frequency of use of English differed between genders, with 71% of men using English every day in contrast to 22% of women.

Two statistical tests were implemented to determine whether a statistically significant change occurred in the perception of participants from before living in Singapore to after living in Singapore regarding the usefulness of English and the value of English learning. To determine the significance of the change in perception, the Mann–Whitney test was employed, and a statistically significant difference between datasets was reported. The Spearman rank order correlation test was conducted to determine the strength and direction of changes in the perception of paired datasets of participants. The Spearman test results suggested perceptions of participants living in Singapore showed a statistically positive change regarding the usefulness and learning of English when compared to perceptions held before living in Singapore. A synopsis of the study; a discussion of results, interpretations, and conclusions; limitations; recommendations; and implications for leadership are presented in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions**

The globalization of Japanese businesses into foreign markets created an increased need for English proficiency of the workforce. Despite extensive research and findings on Japanese experiences, choices, and perceptions on the usefulness and importance of learning English in Japan, little was known about the perceptions of expatriate Japanese on English learning and usefulness. The purpose of the descriptive quantitative study was to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. Even though attitudes, motivation, and perceptions toward English of Japanese people have been studied in Japan, studies exploring perceptions of Japanese people living in Singapore have been limited. Filling the gap in the literature by studying the perceptions of Japanese in Singapore offered an opportunity to create awareness and educate the community about the impact perceptions had on motivation to learn English for adults and children. Data gathered through an online survey consisting of 20 closed-ended questions provided insight into the four research questions.

The first question explored perceptions regarding the age of introduction of the English language in the Japanese community. Most participants (77%) agreed with the early introduction of English, before the age of 7. English friends were perceived as the best sources of English learning, and 85% of participants did not perceive English learning as a threat to acquiring Japanese. For long-term success in English, 93% of male respondents reported a strong need for early introduction. Twenty-eight percent of female respondents did not agree with a correlation between the early introduction of English and long-term success.

The second research question focused on perceptions of the usefulness of English. One-third of participants (33%) reported perceiving English being useful only for specific groups, including businessmen and students. The majority of participants (91%) expressed English was useful only while living in Singapore. A minority (3%) did not perceive English as vital to the long-term career success of children.

Research Question 3 investigated differences in the use of English according to gender. Men used English most for business (90%) and women used English most for necessary daily interactions (98%). Although rankings differed between men and women, both genders used English least for movies, sports, and communications with domestic helpers. The frequency of use differed between genders, with men (71%) using English every day significantly more than women (22%).

The focus of the fourth research question was on changes in the perception of participants before living in Singapore to after living in Singapore, focusing on the usefulness and value of learning English. Two statistical tests were applied to determine whether statistically significant changes had occurred. The Mann–Whitney test was utilized to determine the significance of the change, while the Spearman rank order correlation test was used to determine the strength and direction of the change. A statistically significant positive change was discovered between perceptions of both the usefulness and value of English learning in male and female participants since living in Singapore. The data suggested women's perception of the usefulness of English (increased by 14%) and perceptions of English learning (increased by 17%) changed more significantly than men's perceptions.

A discussion on the findings and interpretations of the analysis performed on the data collected from the online survey completed by parents of students at a private Japanese preschool in Singapore is presented in Chapter 5. A reflection on the findings, interpretations, and conclusions reached pertaining to the scope of the study is presented. The limitations, recommendations, possible impact for positive change, and other factors shaping implications for leadership are discussed.

### **Findings, Interpretations, and Conclusions**

A key theoretical framework underpinning the study was Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, supporting the impact culture had on the perceptions of the community toward internationalization and the usefulness of English. The influence of sociocultural drivers was especially strong in collective societies, rendering the inclusion of a cultural learning framework important in the study on the Japanese community. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory accentuated the influence of social and cultural environments on learning and perceptions, supporting a fundamental principle of the study (Pathan et al., 2018). Based on the analysis of collected data, several key differences and confirmations of findings from peer-reviewed literature were apparent.

#### **Findings Related to the Literature**

Traditional Japanese parents had distinct roles in the household, with mothers primarily tasked with the care duties of the household and children and fathers primarily spending long hours working at the office (Takahashi, Okada, Hoshino, & Anme, 2015). Japanese schools conveyed specific instructions, expectations, and requirements to parents, and in many cases, mothers were education decision-makers of the household. Traditionally, instructing and



communicating with mothers as primary decision-makers was common practice, and mothers in return diligently oversaw and performed expected tasks to support the education of children (Yamamoto, Holloway, & Suzuki, 2016). The involvement of mothers in the education of children might have supported the high response rate of mothers (92 out of 121), and the cultural diligence regarding education might have explained the speed at which mothers responded to the online survey (87 responses within the first 7 days) in the study.

Wealthy parents in Japan expressed high motivation to introduce and support English learning in children (Oga-Baldwin et al., 2017). High SES, access to quality English education, and active encouragement of formal English activities for children in Japan were linked (Terasawa, 2017). Lin (2018) reported high-SES parents describing the importance of English knowledge to improve future educational and employment opportunities. Findings from the study in Singapore focused on affluent families of students in a private Japanese preschool highlighted similar findings, with parents expressing interest in English learning for children and positive perceptions of the value of learning English for future career success.

In Japan, the perception of English acquisition as a threat to the Japaneseness of children was offered as a reason for the resistance to English learning and the early introduction of English (Terasawa, 2018). A general fear of children losing their unique Japanese identity, customs, language, traditions, and values as a direct result of learning English was one of the driving forces of parental and subsequent youth resistance to a variety of education policies implemented by the Japanese government (Imoto, 2017). Results from the online survey conducted in Singapore suggested significant differences in perception from results in Japan. From the survey, 80% of parents agreed everyone should learn English as a second language,

and 70% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed children should learn other languages in addition to English. A large difference between findings from Japan and the survey results of Singapore parents highlighted 85% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with English learning interfering with children's ability to learn Japanese.

Attempts by the government of Japan to lower the age of introduction to English in formal education continued to be a point of great resistance and controversy. A study by Terasawa (2018) considering some of the major trends in perceptions of English learning in Japan revealed two significant issues. Japanese who used English for business in Japan were more likely than Japanese who did not use English for business to opt for an introduction age of 10 or older for children. Japanese who were required to use English regularly chose higher introduction ages than counterparts who had little exposure to English. Based on study findings, Japanese who had regular exposure to English in real life for business were more cautious about exposure for children compared to Japanese who had limited exposure and based opinions on perceptions rather than real-life experiences. The study in Singapore was based on Japanese nationals who were living in an anglophone environment with regular voluntary and involuntary contact with English. Survey results indicated the vast majority of participants (77%) supported the early introduction of English to children between 0 and 6 years of age. Of the participants who used English for business, 75% supported early introduction, and another 75% of participants who used English regularly supported the early introduction of English to children. Results suggested a significant difference between Japanese in Japan with real-life experience of using English and the perceptions and attitudes of Japanese living in Singapore.

### **Findings Related to the Theoretical Framework**

A fundamental component of Vygotsky's (1934/1978) sociocultural theory is the vital impact culture has on the attitude and beliefs of the community toward internationalization and the usefulness of English. Consideration for the impact of culture was crucial for studies focused on collective societies, especially the Japanese community, to include a cultural learning framework to fundamentally understand the findings of a study. Understanding the impact collective culture played in findings developed improved understanding. Transformational leadership theory demanded a follow-up step of actualizing findings into actions to advocate for change in current attitudes and perceptions of Japanese people toward English learning. Structuring Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and transformational leadership theory into a two-step program where improvement of understanding led to the empowerment of the Japanese community in Singapore created possibilities for real-world application of findings.

Findings from the study highlighted positive perceptions and an openness to the value of English learning and usage of the Japanese community in Singapore. Implementation of a descriptive quantitative method with nonparametric statistical calculations strongly based on measurable, numerical results connected with the innate Japanese drive toward and trust of objective research findings. Creating awareness of the positive findings and areas of discrepancy possibly hindering progress in English learning was a subtle way to educate and empower the community. Sharing findings of the study in a culturally sensitive way through accessibility channels and proposing areas of focus highlighted the key findings from the study, further impacting positive perceptions and decisions made by the Japanese community in Singapore.

## Conclusions

The research conducted in Singapore was a descriptive quantitative study involving an online survey presented in Japanese to parents of students at a private Japanese preschool. Findings were limited to describing patterns; identifying characteristics, trends, and frequencies; and describing categories of collected data without drawing conclusions regarding causation. Descriptive research offered a unique perspective through objective data collection without external personal involvement or interference.

Demographic information from data collected suggested the Japanese school community in the study consisted of well-qualified, high-earning parents, primarily older than 35. Parents were in favor of an early introduction to English for children, supported English and foreign-language learning, and agreed English friends are the best source for English exposure. Participants did not interpret English learning as a threat to the acquisition of Japanese, and men expressed a strong belief in the advantages of an early start to English for long-term success. Parents concurred English was necessary for future career success, and women were more inclined than men to perceive English usefulness is restricted to specific groups of Japanese.

Data collected on frequency of use of English suggested men used English more frequently than women. Men tended to use English most frequently for business, while women used English for daily interactions in Singapore. Perceptions about English usefulness and the value of English learning changed statistically significantly since living in Singapore. The positive change in female participants' perceptions was larger than in men. Cause and effect of perceptions and changes were not studied; the study was therefore not generalizable to the population of Japan. Due to similarities in demographics with other Japanese expatriate groups,

findings may be valuable to other studies conducted on Japanese nationals living abroad.

Findings from the study conducted in Singapore differed from findings reported in peer-reviewed studies and literature focused primarily on perceptions of English in Japan.

### **Limitations**

Limitations to internal validity, including researcher bias, were largely contained by eliminating personal interaction between the principal investigator and participants. To prevent operational bias in the constructs studied, the dependent and independent variables were restricted to avoid differences in interpretation and perception. The survey was presented in clear, unambiguous short questions, each question restricted to a single concept using consistent terminology and presented in Japanese (Andrade, 2018). The approach was necessary to ensure the collection of accurate data but limited the depth and options of responses for participants.

Possible participation bias due to volunteer sampling and participants not representing the greater population was present (Taherdoost, 2016). The risk was minimized by notifying all members of the Japanese school community, to promote maximum participation. A large limitation to the external validity of the study was the homogeneity of the Japanese community in Singapore (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019) and strict work visa regulations imposed by the Singapore Ministry of Manpower (2019). Work permit restrictions for foreigners dictated most working Japanese parents participating in the survey possessed at least a bachelor's degree. Participants of the study in Singapore were not representative of the general public of Japan because participants were parents; gained access to Singapore through visas with specific income, education, and age restrictions; lived abroad; and benefited from access to private education for children. Requirements for employment in many Asian and foreign markets around

the world were similar, which meant comparability of the sample of Japanese expatriates in Singapore to other Japanese expatriate communities elsewhere (H. Nakata, 2017).

The generalizability of quantitative studies depends in part on the ability of findings to reflect real-life situations beyond experimental or controlled laboratory scenarios (Andrade, 2018). By investigating the real-life perception of a Japanese community in Singapore, the data collected and subsequent analysis reflected a real-world situation. Dependent variables potentially jeopardized by personal interpretation or generalization were the perceived age of introduction to children, the value of learning English, and the usefulness of English (Haele & Twycross, 2015). To ensure optimal reliability of the collected data and minimize misunderstanding, the survey was translated into Japanese and reviewed by four Japanese national SMEs; survey questions were short and concise, and responses were carefully considered to reflect real-world examples found in Singapore.

### **Recommendations**

The findings from and conclusions of the study created a basis for recommendations of future research and insight for changes in practices and policies for strategists, educators, researchers, and other interested parties. The study in Singapore focused on a specific community of Japanese expatriates connected to a private Japanese preschool. The preschool was well known in the Japanese community for using a well-designed and sensitive approach to the introduction of English for Japanese children. In Singapore are two large Japanese government-managed public schools for Japanese nationals. The public schools did not have English introduction programs for preschoolers, offering the same curriculum as presented in Japan with children starting English at age 10. A future study to compare differences in

perceptions of Japanese parents who support the private school versus parents who place children in the Japanese public schools in Singapore could improve knowledge of the perceptions of English of different groups of expatriates living abroad.

From the study, large changes in perceptions since living in Singapore became evident; why women's perceptions changed significantly more than men's remains unclear. A follow-up study to further investigate differences in exposure to English between genders, changes in patterns of usage, and regularity of use in women between living in Japan and living abroad may improve understanding. A descriptive quantitative approach was taken to collect accurate data and avoid cross-cultural issues or misunderstandings. A repeat of the research as a qualitative study, offering participants the option to share in-depth responses to questions, could contribute to overlooked or undiscovered issues. Matters of causation not addressed in the study could be investigated thoroughly in a qualitative study.

The study sample was limited to 127 volunteer parents; a large-scale research project to include large numbers of the Japanese expatriate population of Singapore with a more varied demographic, to include nonparents, for instance, could provide a broader point of view. Replication of the online survey with various Japanese expatriate communities residing in anglophone communities other than Singapore could provide new insights into differences and similarities of perceptions on English. The study indicated the differences in perception and usage between men and women. As Japanese mothers are the decision-makers regarding the education of children, a follow-up qualitative study on how the perceptions described in the study influence decisions and behavior could contribute significantly to understanding the impact perception has on actions regarding English education for Japanese children.

Perceptions of the usefulness and value of learning English expressed by parents of students at a private Japanese preschool differed from the findings of studies from Japan. Parents were more positive and open to the early introduction, the natural acquisition of English through English friends, learning of additional languages, and the use of English for a variety of purposes. The positive receptiveness offered a unique opportunity for educators and administrators in Singapore to introduce English to children in a natural way. Japanese schools should adapt the traditional curriculum to the unique circumstances presented in Singapore. The introduction of English through natural interaction was not to the detriment of Japanese language development; learning English added a layer of internationalized learning for children. More opportunities for natural interaction with English-speaking children should be created. From sporting events to interschool activities or international playgroups for young learners, Japanese schools should create positive experiences and opportunities for the introduction of English in nonthreatening ways.

### **Implications for Leadership**

Transformational leadership theory, the foundational leadership theory of the study, promotes leadership as the diplomatic drive toward positive change with leaders as agents of empowerment of individuals, groups, and communities (McCleskey, 2014). A cooperative, judicious, and considered approach of information sharing without aggressive modifications to drive radical change was an effective traditional transformational leadership style in Japan (Yokota, 2019). An approach of empowerment through knowledge and organic structuring of change was recommended to orchestrate positive change to perceptions of the Japanese public.



By conducting the study on perceptions regarding English, awareness increased with parents about perceptions held on English-learning practices, usefulness, and the frequency and reasons for use of English as topics of conversation for the Japanese preschool community in Singapore. Taking a leadership role to increase awareness and promote English education as a topic of interest was a step toward effecting positive change in a subtle, non-threatening approach. Another fundamental layer of leadership in the Japanese community involved parents and families. The request for participation, followed by the dissemination of findings from the study to families, presented parents with a unique opportunity to discuss and rethink perceptions regarding English. The result was, the Japanese community, in general, expressed positive views about the early introduction of English, the positive effect of English learning on future career prospects, and the large positive changes in perception since living in Singapore should positively influence parents' perceptions and decisions about English usage and learning.

Schools, organizations, and policymakers have a larger leadership role to play. Mothers are the key decision-makers regarding schooling for children, yet 28% did not agree about the importance of an early start of English learning for long-term success. Ninety-seven participants agreed English was only important as long as the family lived in Singapore. Even though a large budget was allocated to the globalization of higher education in Japan, mothers may not have been aware of the basic principles of English acquisition and factors needed for long-term success. Schools, organizations, and policymakers need to rethink policies to implement change in education and should start with mothers as education decision-makers in Japanese homes. The influence of mothers on children's education had been well established yet results from the survey suggested there were fundamental principles mothers did not know or understand.

In support of standardization, government-run schools of Japan offered the same Japanese national curriculum worldwide. Other nations operated international schools with international curricula or national curricula adapted to the local environment, for instance, the Stamford American International Schools, the Canadian International School of Singapore, the Korean International School of Singapore, and the German-Swiss International School offered a variation of the national curriculum adapted to conditions in Singapore. Living abroad is an unparalleled opportunity for families, children, and staff to learn from foreign cultures, points of view, methodologies, strategies, planning, structuring, pedagogies, curricula, activities, and languages. Japanese leaders in education in Singapore should encourage changes to activities and current practices to absorb and learn from the wealth of educational knowledge in Singapore. One change could be the early introduction of English to Japanese children in the government-run kindergarten where English is not offered. Living in Singapore presents a unique opportunity for Japanese staff to improve English-teaching skills and achieve efficient English-language skills while living in an anglophone environment.

Educational leaders hoping to improve the status quo of English education in Japan should utilize the skills, knowledge, and newly acquired experience of Japanese teachers returning from abroad. The knowledge and experience gained from being abroad should be developed into workshops and training materials to educate and inspire Japanese teachers without international experience. On the highest echelon, Japanese society needs leaders to take a similar course of action through a two-step program. Through the subtle empowerment of the Japanese public, the government should, on the one hand, harness the positive experiences, success, and knowledge of returning Japanese families and business leaders to improve

perceptions of English in Japan. Instead of forcing change through higher education policies and compulsory language tests for admission, a gentle approach of information sharing to educate the public and promote the advantages of English learning from real-life examples of the success of Japanese families living abroad or repatriated back to Japan should be applied. Empowering through knowledge sharing should be supported by creating greater accessibility of quality English-learning opportunities for all Japanese children regardless of socioeconomic standing and geographic location. The two-prong approach might mean the reallocation of funds currently assigned to failing overseas study programs and higher education globalization programs and a realignment of the education strategy to gain from the positive perceptions of expatriate Japanese.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion started with a synopsis of the previous chapters. The underlying problem, relevance, purpose of the study, and research design aligned with the four key research questions were discussed. The study conducted in Singapore highlighted many differences and some similarities in perceptions of the Japanese community in Singapore to what was previously found from studies conducted in Japan. Analysis of the data suggested statistically significant differences between perceptions of English usefulness and the value of English learning before living in Singapore and since living in Singapore. Differences in the frequency of use and reasons for use of English in Singapore between genders highlighted key differences. Results from the study on perceptions differed from studies discussed in the literature review mostly conducted in Japan.

Findings, interpretations, and conclusions were compared to findings from peer-reviewed literature and considered within the confines of the scope of the study. The limitations to external and internal validity were considered. Recommendations for further research and changes to improve strategies and guidelines for decision-makers and educators were presented. Implications for leadership, especially for decision-makers in education interested in improving the state of English education for Japanese children in Japan and those living abroad, were offered. Due to the inclusion constraints of the study to Japanese parents of students at a preschool in Singapore, the generalizability of the findings was limited. Nonetheless, the study provided a new perspective on perceptions of Japanese expatriates living in an English-speaking country and increased understanding of the perception of the Japanese community in Singapore on the usefulness and value of learning English.

## References

- Abramson, G. T. (2015). Writing a dissertation proposal. *Journal of Applied Learning Technology*, 5(1), 6–13. Retrieved from <https://www.salt.org/>
- Agawa, T., & Takeuchi, O. (2016). Validating self-determination theory in the Japanese EFL context: Relationship between innate needs and motivation. *Asian EFL Journal*, 18, 7–33. Retrieved from <https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/>
- Agawa, T., & Ueda, M. (2017). How Japanese students perceive demotivation toward English study and overcome such feelings. *JACET Journal*, 56, 1–18. Retrieved from <https://www.jacet.org/publication/jacet-journal/>
- Akuglu, H. (2018). User's guide to correlation coefficients. *Turkish Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 18(30), 91–93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tjem.2018.08.001>
- Ali, Z., & Bhaskar, S. B. (2016). Basic statistical tools in research and data analysis. *Indian Journal of Anaesthesia*, 60(9), 662–669. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5049.190623>
- Andrade, C. (2018). Internal, external, and ecological validity in research design, conduct, and evaluation. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 40(5), 498–499. [https://doi.org/10.4103/IJPSYM.IJPSYM\\_334\\_18](https://doi.org/10.4103/IJPSYM.IJPSYM_334_18)
- Aveyard, H., & Bradbury-Jones, C. (2019). An analysis of current practices in undertaking literature reviews in nursing: Findings from a focused mapping review and synthesis. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 19(105), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0751-7>
- Barnham, C. (2015). Quantitative and qualitative research: Perceptual foundations. *International Journal of Market Research*, 57(6), 837–854. <https://doi.org/10.2501/IJMR-2015-070>

- Bećirović, S. (2017). The relationship between gender, motivation and achievement in learning English as a foreign language. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 6(2), 210–220. <https://doi.org/10.13187/ejced.2017.2.210>
- Bergmann, C., Tsuji, S., Piccinini, P. E., Lewis, M. L., Braginsky, M., Frank, M. C., & Cristia, A. (2018). Promoting replicability in developmental research through meta-analyses: Insights from language acquisition research. *Child Development*, 89(6), 1996–2009. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13079>
- Bone, C. (2015). Academic resilience through togetherness. *Psychologist*, 28(11), 859–859. Retrieved from <https://psyprjournal.com/>
- Carruthers, J. (2018). Ethical research and human subjects: The regulatory environment of institutional review boards. *Kentucky Libraries*, 82(4), 7–10. Retrieved from <https://www.kylibasn.org/>
- Creative Research Systems. (2017). *Sample size calculator*. Retrieved from <https://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>
- DeMoulin, D. F., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2009). *A statistical journey: Taming of the skew*. Murrieta, CA: AlexisAustin.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2014a). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 78(3), 273–284. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/journal/modernlanguagej>
- Dörnyei, Z. (2014b). Researching complex dynamic systems: “Retrodictive qualitative modeling” in the language classroom. *Language Teaching*, 47(1), 80–91. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261444811000516>

- Drummond, K. E., & Murphy-Reyes, A. (2018). *Nutrition research: Concepts and applications*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett.
- Fukuda, A. (2017). The Japanese EFL learners' self-regulated language learning and proficiency. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 22(1), 65–87. <https://doi.org/10.25256/PAAL.22.1.4>
- Garg, R. (2016). Methodology for research. *Indian Journal of Anesthesia*, 60, 640–645. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5049.190619>
- Goharimehr, N. (2018). Ethnocentrism, cultural traits and identity negotiations of Japanese EFL learners. *Bulletin of Advanced English Studies*, 1(1), 77–86. Retrieved from <https://www.refaad.com>
- Haele, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. *Evidence Based Nursing*, 18(3), 66–67. <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2015-102129>
- Halim, M. A., Foozy, C. F. M., Rahmi, I., & Mustapha, A. (2018). A review of live survey application: SurveyMonkey and SurveyGizmo. *International Journal on Informatics Visualization*, 2(4), 309–312. <https://doi.org/10.30630/joiv.2.4-2.170>
- Halpern, A. M., Frye, S. L., & Marzzacco, C. J. (2018). Scientific Data Analysis Toolkit: A versatile add-in to Microsoft Excel for Windows. *Journal for Chemical Education*, 95(6), 1063–1068. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jchemed.8b00084>
- Hammond, C. D. (2016). Internationalization, nationalism, and global competitiveness: A comparison of approaches to higher education in China and Japan. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 17(4), 555–566. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-016-9459-0>

- Hazel, C. E., Newman, D. S., & Barrett, C. A. (2016). Conducting rigorous survey research in the study of school-based consultation. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 26(2), 111–138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2015.1137762>
- Herniwati, N. A. (2018). Transformation of Japanese culture for increasing Japanese communicative competence. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran Bahasa Jepang*, 3(1), 51–59. <https://doi.org/10.17509/japanedu.v3i1.11240>
- Imoto, Y. (2017). Producing the “international child”: Negotiations of language in an international preschool in Japan. *Ethnography & Education*, 6(3), 281–292. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2011.610580>
- Inada, T., & Inada, T. (2019). Is frequent use of English outside class related to the degree of foreign language classroom anxiety? *International Medical Journal*, 26(6), 505–509. Retrieved from <https://seronjihou.com/>
- International English Language Testing System. (n.d.). *Demographic data*. Retrieved from <https://www.ielts.org>
- Jones, R. S., & Fukawa, K. (2017). *Ensuring fiscal sustainability in Japan in the context of shrinking and aging population* (OECD Economics Department Working Paper No. 1413). <https://doi.org/10.1787/6c1673d2-en>
- Kawai, T., & Moran, S. (2017). How do future life perspective and present action work in Japanese youth development? *Journal of Moral Education*, 46(3), 323–336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2017.1350150>



- Kikuchi, K. (2019). Motivation and demotivation over two years: A case study of English language learners in Japan. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9(1), 157–175. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2019.9.1.7>
- Kim, Y. Y. (2015). Finding a “home” beyond culture: The emergence of intercultural personhood in the globalizing world. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 46, 3–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.018>
- Kimura, T., & Nishikawa, M. (2018). Ethical leadership and its cultural and institutional context: An empirical study in Japan. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 151(3), 707–724. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-016-3268-6>
- Kivunja, C. (2016). How to write an effective research proposal for higher degree research in higher education: Lessons from practice. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 5(2), 163–172. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v5n2p163>
- Kiyama, S., Choung, Y., & Takiura, M. (2019). Multiple factors act differently in decision making in the East Asian region: Assessing methods of self-construal using classification tree analysis. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 50(10), 1127–1139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118815765>
- Kondo, T. (2016, September 5). Challenging government policy on English language teaching in Japan through collaborative action research. In T. Harrison, U. Lanvers, & M. Edwardes (Eds.), *Breaking theory: New directions in applied linguistics* (pp. 25–36). Paper presented at the 48th annual meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics, Birmingham, England. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/29393830/>

- Krechetnikova, K. G., & Pestereva, N. M. (2017). A comparative analysis of the education systems in Korea and Japan from the perspective of internationalization. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 6(1), 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.13187/ejced.2017.1.77>
- Laerd Statistics. (2018). *Spearman rank-order correlation*. Retrieved from <https://statistics.laerd.com/>
- Lantolf, J., Thorne, S. L., & Poehner, M. (2015). Sociocultural theory and second language development. In B. van Patten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition* (pp. 207–226). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lieb, M. M. (2019). Investigating the relationship between cultural dimensions of learning and English language proficiency. *Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 24(2), 1–22. Retrieved from <https://www-writing.berkeley.edu/TESL-EJ/>
- Lin, H. Y. (2018). The promotion of English in East Asia at the turn of the 21st century: A politico-economic and socio-cultural review. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 22(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.25256/PAAL.22.1.1>
- Liu, M., & Wronski, L. (2018). Examining completion rates in web surveys via over 25,000 real-world surveys. *Social Science Computer Review*, 36(1), 116–124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439317695581>
- Loeb, S., Dynarski, S., McFarland, D., Morris, P., Reardon, S., & Reber, S. (2017). *Descriptive analysis in education: A guide for researchers* (NCEE 2017-4023). Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>

- Machida, T. (2016). Japanese elementary school teachers and English language anxiety. *TESOL Journal*, 7(1), 40–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.189>
- MacWhinnie, S. G. B., & Mitchell, C. (2017). English classroom reforms in Japan: A study of Japanese university EFL student anxiety and motivation. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 2(7), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-017-0030-2>
- Majima, Y., Nishiyama, K., Nishihara, A., & Hata, R. (2017). Conducting online behavioral research using crowdsourcing services in Japan. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00378>
- McCleskey, J. A. (2014). Situational, transformational, and transactional leadership and leadership development. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 5(4), 117–130. Retrieved from <http://www.jbsq.org>
- Mertin, P. A. (2014). The role of the culture of Japanese students in acquisition of academic English: An ethnographic study. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 13(3), 230–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240914553388>
- Ministry of Manpower. (2019). *Requirements for skilled migrant pass*. Retrieved from <http://www.mom.gov.sg/>
- Mito, K. (2019, December 3). Japanese 15-year-olds rank high in math, sciences, but reading down: PISA exam. *The Mainichi*. Retrieved from <https://mainichi.jp>
- Morita, L. (2015). English, language shift and values shift in Japan and Singapore. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 13(4), 508–527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2014.967184>

- Morita, L. (2016). A comparison of co-ethnic migrants in Japan and Singapore. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2016.1189386>
- Moy, P., & Murphy, J. (2016). Problems and prospects in survey research. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 93(1), 16–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699016631108>
- Nae, N., & Kim, S. F. (2018). Is English-only policy effective?—A case study from Japan. *Euromentor Journal Studies About Education*, 9(1), 1–7. Retrieved from <https://euromentor.ucdc.ro/en/>
- Nakamura, S. (2018). How I see it: An exploratory study on attribution and emotions in L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 8(3), 553–574. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.3.2>
- Nakata, H. (2017). *Attitudes towards immigration in an ageing society: Evidence from Japan* (RIETI Discussion Paper Series 17-E-095). Retrieved from <http://rieti.go.jp/en>
- Nakata, Y., Ikeno, O., Kimura, Y., Naganuma, N., & Andrews, S. (2018). Assessing Japanese teachers' classroom English “internationally”: Implications for the development of classroom English language benchmarks in Japan. *Language Testing in Asia*, 8(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-018-0067-2>
- Nanhe, M. P. (2019). Impact of English language in interconnected world: A study of lingua franca in global business. *Indian Journal of Research*, 8(2), 158–162. Retrieved from <https://www.worldwidejournals.com/paripex/page/n/indexing>
- Noguchi, T. (2019). The impacts of an intensive English camp on English language anxiety and perceived English competence in the Japanese EFL context. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, 23(1), 37–58. <https://doi.org/10.25256/PAAL.23.1.3>

Nuttall, L. (2019). Comparative education: Why does Japan continue to struggle with English?

*The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*, 19(1), 74–92. Retrieved from <http://www.readingmatrix.com/journal.html>

Oga-Baldwin, W. L. Q., & Fryer, L. K. (2018). Schools improve motivational quality: Profile transitions across early foreign language learning experiences. *Motivation and Emotion*, 42, 527–545. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-018-9681-7>

Oga-Baldwin, W. L. Q., & Nakata, Y. (2017). Engagement, gender, and motivation: A predictive model for Japanese young language learners. *System*, 65, 151–163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.01.011>

Oga-Baldwin, W. L. Q., Nakata, Y., Parker, P., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Motivating young language learners: A longitudinal model of self-determined motivation in elementary school foreign language classes. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 49, 140–150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2017.01.010>

O'Neill, M., & Chapman, A. (2015). Globalisation, internationalization and English language: Studies of education in Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 42, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2191-5059-3-5>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2016). *Education GPS: Analyze by country* [Database]. Retrieved from <https://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2018). *PISA data*. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

- Ota, H. (2018). Internationalization of higher education: Global trends and Japan's challenges. *Educational Studies in Japan: International Yearbook*, 12, 91–105. Retrieved from <https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/>
- Otsu, A. (2017). The gap between educational policies and actual workplace communication in ELF: A Japanese case. *European Journal of Language Policy*, 9(1), 105–118. <https://doi.org/10.3828/ejlp.2017.7>
- Pathan, H., Memon, R. A., Memon, S., Khoso, A. R., & Bux, I. (2018). A critical review of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory in second language acquisition. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(4), 232–236. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v8n4p232>
- Rahman, M. S. (2017). The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language “testing and assessment” research: A literature review. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(1), 102–112. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v6n1p102>
- Rajan, M. N., & Makani, B. (2016). Methodological considerations in cross-cultural research: A discussion of the translation issue. *Journal of Business & Behavioral Sciences*, 28(2), 37–54. Retrieved from <https://asbbs.org/publications.html>
- Rockstuhl, T., Seiler, S., Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., & Annen, H. (2011). Beyond general intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ): The role of cultural intelligence (CQ) on cross-border leadership effectiveness in a global world. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67(4), 825–840. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01730.x>

- Rose, H., & McKinley, J. (2018). Japan's English-medium instruction initiatives and the globalization of higher education. *Higher Education*, 75, 111–129. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0125-1>
- SCImago. (n.d.). *Journal & country rank*. Retrieved from <https://www.scimagojr.com>
- Shimauchi, S. (2018). English-medium instruction in the internationalization of higher education in Japan: Rationales and issues. *Educational Studies in Japan*, 12(0), 77–90. <https://doi.org/10.7571/esjkyoiku.12.77>
- Social Sciences Statistics. (2020a). *Mann–Whitney U test calculator*. Retrieved from <https://www.socscistatistics.com/>
- Social Sciences Statistics. (2020b). *Spearman's rho (correlation) calculator*. Retrieved from <https://www.socscistatistics.com/>
- Social Sciences Statistics. (2020c). *T-test calculator for two dependent means*. Retrieved from <https://www.socscistatistics.com/>
- Sugimura, M. (2015). Roles of language in multicultural education in the context of internationalization. *Educational Studies in Japan*, 9, 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.7571/esjkyoiku.9.3>
- Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument; how to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*, 5(3), 28–36. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205040>
- Takahashi, Y., Okada, K., Hoshino, T., & Anme, T. (2015). Developmental trajectories of social skills during early childhood and links to parenting practices in a Japanese sample. *PLOS ONE*, 10(8), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0135357>

- Terasawa, T. (2017). Has economic development reduced the English divide? A statistical analysis of access to English skills in Japan. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 38(8), 671–685. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2016.1221412>
- Terasawa, T. (2018). The contradictory effect of the “global” on the “local”: Japanese behavior and attitudes towards English in local contexts. *Globalization, Societies and Education*, 16(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2017.1335595>
- Terashima, Y., & Takai, J. (2018). Effects of relational uncertainty in heightening national identification and reactive approach motivation of Japanese. *Journal of Psychology*, 53, 37–45. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12422>
- Terzuolo, C. (2018, February 18). The many flaws in how Japan approaches daycare. *Japan Today*. Retrieved from <https://japantoday.com>
- Test of English for International Communication. (n.d.). *Assessment development*. Retrieved from <https://www.ets.org/toeic>
- Theofanidis, D., & Fountouki, A. (2019). Limitations and delimitations in the research process. *Perioperative Nursing*, 7(3), 155–162. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2552022>
- Toyama, M., & Yamazaki, Y. (2018). Exploring the components of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale in the context of Japanese undergraduates. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 3(4), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-018-0045-3>
- Tsuneyoshi, R. (2018). The internationalization of Japanese education: “International” without the “multicultural.” *Educational Studies in Japan*, 12, 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.7571/esjkyoiku.12.49>



- Ushioda, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (2017). Beyond global English, motivation to learn languages in a multicultural world: Introduction to the special issue. *Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), 451–454. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12407>
- Van Wee, B., & Banister, D. (2016). How to write a literature review paper? *Transport Reviews*, 36(2), 278–288. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01441647.2015.1065456>
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1934)
- Wilkinson, D. (2015). Educational reforms and development in Japan: Language and culture education for global competitiveness. *International Journal of Higher Education Management*, 1(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.24052/IJHEM/10>
- Yamamoto, Y., Holloway, S. D., & Suzuki, S. (2016). Parental engagement in children's education: Motivating factors in Japan and the U.S. *School Community Journal*, 26(1), 45–62. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org>
- Yokota, H. (2019). Mapping four leadership styles in Japan: How has the role of the principal been shaped by policies? *Journal of Educational Administration*, 24, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-03-2019-0032>
- Zhang, J. J. (2017). Research ethics and ethical research: Some observations from the global south. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 41(1), 147–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03098265.2016.1241985>

## Appendix A: Participant Informed Consent Form

### Informed Consent Form for Doctoral Degree Dissertation Research

#### Project Information

**Project Title:** Investigating Attitudes of the Japanese Community Towards English in Singapore

**Researcher:** Annemarie de Villiers

**Organization:** American College of Education

**Email:** annie@anniesangels.asia **Telephone:** +65 8322 6341

**Researcher's Faculty Member:** Dr. Jeff Roach

**Organization and Position:** American College of Education, Dissertation Chair

**Email:** Jeff.Roach@ace.edu

#### Introduction

I am Annemarie de Villiers, and I am a doctoral candidate student at American College of Education. I am doing research under the guidance and supervision of my Chair, Dr. Roach. I will give you some information about the research and invite you to be part of the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research. This consent form may contain words you do not understand. If you have questions, please contact me on the email or phone number provided.

#### Purpose of the Research

You are being asked to participate in a research study which will be conducted to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. This quantitative study will examine and describe the perceptions of the Japanese expatriate community of Singapore regarding English. Through the investigation of perceptions, it is hoped that current knowledge about Japanese communities living abroad can be improved.

#### Research Design and Procedures

The study will use a quantitative methodology and descriptive research design. An online survey will be disseminated to willing participants within Singapore's Japanese community. The study will involve completing an online survey and can be conducted remotely at any site most convenient for participants.

#### Participant selection

You are being invited to take part in this research because of your experience as a Japanese national who can contribute much by sharing your perceptions of English to this study. Participant selection criteria are being 18 years or older, able to read Japanese, a Japanese national and living in Singapore.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate. If you choose not to participate, there will be no punitive repercussions and you do not have to participate. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

**Procedures**

We are inviting you to participate in this research study. If you agree, you will be asked to complete the online survey as honestly as possible. The type of questions asked will range from a demographical perspective to direct inquiries about the topic of the usefulness of English, the age at which English should be introduced, how your perceptions of English have changed, how often you use English and in which settings you use English.

**Duration**

The online survey portion of the research study will require approximately 5 minutes to complete. If you choose to participate in the survey, the time expected will be a maximum of 8 minutes.

**Risks**

There are no known risks associated with taking part in this survey.

**Benefits**

While there will be no direct financial benefit to you, your participation is likely to help us find out more about how Japanese people living in Singapore perceive English. The potential benefits of this study will aid researchers to improve understanding of the value of globalization through English learning.

**Confidentiality**

I will not share information about you or anything you say to anyone outside of the researcher. During the defense of the doctoral dissertation, data collected will be presented to the dissertation committee. The data collected will be kept in a locked file cabinet or encrypted computer file. I will not know your identity as this survey is completely anonymous.

**Sharing the Results**

At the end of the research study, the results will be available for each participant. It is anticipated to publish the results so other interested people may learn from the research.

**Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

Participation is voluntary. At any time, you wish to end your participation in the research study, you may do so without repercussions.

**Questions About the Study**

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me at the phone number or email address provided. This research plan has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the American College of Education.

This is a committee whose role is to make sure research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to ask questions of this group, email [IRB@ace.edu](mailto:IRB@ace.edu).

**Certificate of Consent**

By clicking on the YES button, you agree to the following.

I have read the information about this study, or it has been read to me. I acknowledge why I have been asked to be a participant in the research study. I have been provided the opportunity to ask questions about the study, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I certify I am at least 18 years of age. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

**インフォームドコンセントフォーム**  
**博士号論文作成を目的とする調査のためのインフォームドコンセント**

**研究内容**

**研究タイトル：**シンガポールにおける日本人コミュニティの英語に対する実態調査について

**研究者：**Annemarie de Villiers

**所属：**American College of Education

**Email:** annie@anniesangels.asia Telephone: +65 8322 6341

**指導教官：**Dr. Jeff Roach

**研究機関：**American College of Education, Dissertation Chair

**Email:** Jeff.Roach@ace.edu

**概要**

私は Annemarie de Villiers で、American College of Education の学生です。私は指導教官である Dr. Jeff Roach の下、研究をしています。これからご協力いただく調査について少し説明をさせていただきます。もしなにかご不明な点があればお気軽にご連絡ください。

**研究目的**

これから英語の有用性と価値、そして日本人のコミュニティへの影響についての認識を理解するための調査にご協力いただきます。この統計調査はシンガポールでの日本人コミュニティ内での英語に対する認識を検証するためのものです。英語学習に対する認識の調査を通じ、海外に住む日本人コミュニティの助けになることを願っています。

**研究計画および過程**

この論文は統計調査と記述的研究で構成されます。ウェブ調査はシンガポール内の日本人コミュニティへ任意で協力を呼び掛けています。この調査へは協力いただける方にとって遠隔という最も便利な方法で参加していただけます。

**調査対象の選出方法**

英語への認識を共有することで、海外経験がある日本人として貢献することができる為、この研究に協力していただけるようお願いしています。

協力者の選出の基準はシンガポール在住の 18 歳以上の日本人であり、日本語を読むことができることです。

**任意での参加**

協力者には完全に任意でお願いしています。ご協力の可否に関しては、ご判断にお任せします。拒否なさってもかまいません。一度参加していただき途中でお辞めいただいても、まったく問題はありません。

**過程**

この調査にお答えいただく際、できる限り正直にお答えください。質問の内容は統計学的な観点から、英語の有用性について、英語学習を導入すべき年齢、英語への認識がどのように変化したか、英語を使用する頻度および状況について等、直接的な質問にまで及びます。

**所要時間**

ウェブ上の調査は5分から、最長でも8分で終了します。

**リスク**

この調査にご協力頂く上でリスクはありません。

**利益**

ご協力いただくことで報酬等をご用意ございませんが、こちらにご協力頂くことでシンガポール在住の日本人が英語をどのように認識しているか、探ることができます。この研究で期待できることは英語学習を通してグローバル化を進める意味を理解することができるということです。

**個人情報管理**

お答えいただいた内容をこの研究目的以外で使用することは絶対にありません。論文を作成する過程で収集したデータは論文委員会に提示されます。データは鍵がかけられた棚に保管されるか、暗号化されたコンピューターに保存されます。この調査は完全に匿名であるため、個人情報が漏れだす危険性はありません。

**調査結果の共有**

研究結果は協力して頂いた方々にお知らせすることが可能です。また、そのほかにもこの調査結果に興味がある方がいらっしゃれば、開示することが可能です。

**調査への参加可否**

調査へご協力いただくか頂かないかは完全に任意です。調査研究への参加を終了したい場合は、いつ止めて頂いて構いません。それが引き起こす影響はございません。

**研究について質問**

質問がある場合はいつでもお訊ねください。その際、記載させて頂いたメールアドレスもしくは電話番号へのご連絡をお願いします。この研究計画は American College of

Education の審査委員会によって審査、および承認されております。この委員会によって研究に参加して頂いた方々に影響がないよう保護されています。委員会へご質問がある場合はこちらのメールアドレスまでご連絡ください。 [IRB@ace.edu](mailto:IRB@ace.edu)

### 同意書

[はい]ボタンをクリックすると、以下に同意したことになります。

この研究に関する情報をお読みいただいた、もしくは読んで聞かされました。この研究への協力が求められた理由を理解し、認めています。私はこの研究へ協力する機会を与えられ、すべての質問項目を満足に答えることができます。私は 18 歳以上であることを証明します。私は自発的にこの研究に参加することを認めます。

## Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Letter

### Front of Recruitment Letter

Dear parents of (name of school),

I am an English specialist teacher and consultant working on my doctoral dissertation at the American College of Education. I am requesting all Japanese national parents of the school to participate in an online survey of 20 questions. The survey is investigating the perceptions of the usefulness and need to learn English of the (name of school) community in Singapore. Please read the information on the research project carefully. Should you have any questions please contact me at [annemarie@devilliers.asia](mailto:annemarie@devilliers.asia) or +65 8322 6341. Inquiries will be handled in the strictest confidence and nowhere in the process will you be required to provide your name or confidential details.

To ensure you have been informed of the important elements of the study you will be required to confirm informed consent before commencing the survey. The electronic survey will start with an initial page confirming important information pertaining to the survey and will require confirmation of informed consent. The survey is available here (SurveyMonkey URL) and will be available from (dates). Should you know of members of the (name of school) community who may be willing to take the survey, it would be greatly appreciated if you could please pass the message on to them.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.  
Annemarie de Villiers



## Back of Recruitment Letter

**Researcher's Faculty Member:** Dr. Jeff Roach

**Organization and Position:** American College of Education, Dissertation Chair

**Email:** Jeff.Roach@ace.edu

### **Purpose of the Research**

You are being asked to participate in a research study which will be conducted to understand perceptions regarding the usefulness of English and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. This quantitative study will examine and describe the perceptions of the Japanese expatriate community of Singapore regarding English. Through the investigation of perceptions, it is hoped that current knowledge about Japanese communities living abroad can be improved.

### **Participant selection**

You are being invited to take part in this research because of your experience as a Japanese national who can contribute much by sharing your perceptions of English to this study. Participant selection criteria are being 18 years or older, able to read Japanese, a Japanese national and living in Singapore.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate. If you choose not to participate, there will be no punitive repercussions and you do not have to participate. You are free stop participation at any time.

### **Procedures**

We are inviting you to participate in this research study. If you agree, you will be asked to complete the online survey as honestly as possible. The type of questions asked will range from a demographical perspective to direct inquiries about the topic of the usefulness of English, the age at which English should be introduced, how your perceptions of English have changed, how often you use English and in which settings you use English.

### **Duration**

The online survey portion of the research study will require approximately 5 minutes to complete. If you choose to participate in the survey, the time expected will be a maximum of 8 minutes.

### **Risks**

There are no known risks associated with taking part in this survey.

### **Confidentiality**

I will not share information about you or anything you say to anyone outside of the research. I will not know your identity as this survey is completely anonymous.

**Sharing the Results**

At the end of the research study, the results will be published by the school in a special edition newsletter.

**Right to Refuse or Withdraw**

Participation is voluntary. Should you at any time wish to end your participation in the research study, you may do so without repercussions.

**Questions About the Study**

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me at the phone number or email address provided. This research plan has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of American College of Education. This is a committee whose role is to make sure research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to ask questions of this group, email [IRB@ace.edu](mailto:IRB@ace.edu).

## 追記：ご協力依頼について

## 保護者の皆様

私はプロの英語教師で現在、アメリカンカレッジオブエデュケーションにて論文を書いています。それにあたり日本国籍をお持ちの保護者の方へウェブ上で簡単な20の質問にお答え頂くようご協力をお願いしております。質問の内容ですが、主に英語への認識と利便性、また(name of school)のコミュニティ内で英語を学ぶ重要性についてです。お答えいただく前に私の研究計画書をお読みいただくようお願いいたします。もし何かご質問がございましたら [annemarie@devilliers.asia](mailto:annemarie@devilliers.asia) or +65 8322 6341 こちらまでご連絡いただければ幸いです。ご入力頂いた個人情報は、論文以外には使用しません。ご本人の同意がなければ第三者に個人情報を提供することもございません。取得した個人情報は責任を持って紛失や漏洩などが発生しないよう積極的な安全対策を実施いたします。

アンケートにお答えいただくにはインフォームドコンセントにご同意いただく必要があります。こちらに同意されたのち、質問は最初のページから始まります。アンケートは(dates)から、こちらにてお答えいただけます。((SurveyMonkey URL))もし(name of school)に通っていらっしゃるお知り合いの方で興味がある方がいらっしゃれば、このアンケートをご共有頂ければ幸いです。

ご協力ありがとうございます。

Annemarie de Villiers

**インフォームドコンセントフォーム**  
**博士号論文作成を目的とする調査のためのインフォームドコンセント**

**研究内容**

**指導教官：**Dr. Jeff Roach

**研究機関：**American College of Education, Dissertation Chair

**Email:** Jeff.Roach@ace.edu

**研究目的**

これから英語の有用性と価値、そして日本人のコミュニティへの影響についての認識を理解するための調査にご協力いただきます。この統計調査はシンガポールでの日本人コミュニティ内での英語に対する認識を検証するためのものです。英語学習に対する認識の調査を通じ、海外に住む日本人コミュニティの助けになることを願っています。

**研究計画および過程**

この論文は統計調査と記述的研究で構成されます。ウェブ調査はシンガポール内の日本人コミュニティへ任意で協力を呼び掛けています。この調査へは協力いただける方にとって遠隔という最も便利な方法で参加していただけます。

**調査対象の選出方法**

英語への認識を共有することで、海外経験がある日本人として貢献することができる為、この研究に協力していただけるようお願いしています。

協力者の選出の基準はシンガポール在住の18歳以上の日本人であり、日本語を読むことができることです。

**任意での参加**

協力者には完全に任意でお願いしています。ご協力の可否に関しては、ご判断にお任せします。拒否なさってもかまいません。一度参加していただき途中でお辞めいただいても、まったく問題はありません。

**過程**

この調査にお答えいただく際、できる限り正直にお答えください。質問の内容は統計学的な観点から、英語の有用性について、英語学習を導入すべき年齢、英語への認識がどのように変化したか、英語を使用する頻度および状況について等、直接的な質問にまで及びます。

**所要時間**

ウェブ上の調査は5分から、最長でも8分で終了します。

**リスク**

この調査にご協力頂く上でリスクはありません。

**利益**

ご協力いただくことで報酬等をご用意ございませんが、こちらにご協力頂くことでシンガポール在住の日本人が英語をどのように認識しているか、探ることができます。この研究で期待できることは英語学習を通してグローバル化を進める意味を理解することができるということです。

**個人情報管理**

お答えいただいた内容をこの研究目的以外で使用することは絶対にありません。論文を作成する過程で収集したデータは論文委員会に提示されます。データは鍵がかけられた棚に保管されるか、暗号化されたコンピューターに保存されます。この調査は完全に匿名であるため、個人情報が漏れだす危険性はありません。

**調査結果の共有**

研究結果は協力して頂いた方々にお知らせすることが可能です。また、そのほかにもこの調査結果に興味がある方がいらっしゃれば、開示することが可能です。

**調査への参加可否**

調査へご協力いただくか頂かないかは完全に任意です。調査研究への参加を終了したい場合は、いつ止めて頂いて構いません。それが引き起こす影響はございません。

**研究について質問**

質問がある場合はいつでもお訊ねください。その際、記載させて頂いたメールアドレスもしくは電話番号へのご連絡をお願いします。この研究計画は American College of Education の審査委員会によって審査、および承認されております。この委員会によって研究に参加して頂いた方々に影響がないよう保護されています。委員会へご質問がある場合はこちらのメールアドレスまでご連絡ください。 [IRB@ace.edu](mailto:IRB@ace.edu)

## Appendix C: Survey

### Demographic Information

1. I have lived in Singapore for:
  - 0-12 months
  - 13-24 months
  - 25-60 months
  - More than 60 months (5 years)
2. My highest education level is:
  - Did not complete high school
  - High school
  - Vocational, business or industry expected qualification
  - Bachelor's degree or equivalent
  - Graduate degree (Master's or Doctorate)
3. I am a parent:
  - Yes
  - No
4. My gender is:
  - Male
  - Female
5. My age is:
  - 18-25 years
  - 26-30 years
  - 31-35 years
  - 36-40 years
  - 41 years or older

### Age of Introduction to English

6. I think Japanese children should start learning English from the age of:
  - 0-2 years
  - Between ages of 3-6 years
  - Between ages of 7-10 years
  - Older than 10 years
7. I think English learning for preschool-aged children will have a negative impact on their Japanese language ability:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree

8. Select all elements you find relevant. When children first learn English, they should learn from:

- English speaking friends
- Teachers or professional tutors
- Parents or family members
- Software applications or electronic games
- Television or movies

9. The earlier a child learns English, the more successful they will be at using English throughout their lives:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

### **Usefulness of English**

10. English is only useful for specific Japanese people (for instance businessmen, teachers, or school children):

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. English is only useful as long as I live in Singapore:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. Learning English will enable my child to be successful as an adult in their chosen career:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

### **Use of English**

13. I use English in Singapore for the following purposes. Select all the elements applicable to you:

- Business
- Medical Assistance
- Sports
- Socializing

- Movies
- Internet
- Necessary interaction including shopping /eating out/ taxis
- Communication with my children's school
- Communication with our helper
- Government agencies

14. I use English in Singapore on average:

- Rarely
- A few times a week
- On most days
- Every day

15. I believe that everyone should learn English as a second language:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

16. As a preschool parent, I would like to see my children learn other languages in addition to English:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

### **Changes in Perceptions of Usefulness and English Learning**

17. Before living in Singapore I thought English as a language was:

- Not useful
- Slightly useful
- Reasonably useful
- Useful
- Extremely useful

18. Since living in Singapore I think English as a language is:

- Not useful
- Slightly useful
- Reasonably useful
- Useful
- Extremely useful

19. Before living in Singapore I thought learning English was:

- Not important



- Slightly important
- Reasonably important
- Important
- Extremely important

20. Since living in Singapore I think learning English is:

- Not important
- Slightly important
- Reasonably important
- Important
- Extremely important

## 人口統計資料

1. 私はシンガポールに住んで
  - 12 カ月未満
  - 13 カ月から 24 カ月未満(1 年以上 2 年未満)
  - 25 カ月から 60 カ月未満(2 年以上 5 年未満)
  - 60 カ月以上です (5 年以上)
  
2. 私の最終学歴は
  - 中学校
  - 高等学校
  - 職業訓練学校、ビジネススクール、または専門学校
  - 大学、もしくはそれ相当の学位
  - 修士号または博士号
  
3. 私には子供がいます
  - はい
  - いいえ
  
4. 私の性別は
  - 男性
  - 女性
  
5. 私の年齢は
  - 18-25 歳
  - 26-30 歳
  - 31-35 歳
  - 36-40 歳
  - 41 歳以上

### 英語を使用し始める年齢について

6. 日本人の子供は英語を以下の年齢から習い始めるべきだと考えます。

- 0-2 歳
- 3-6 歳
- 7-10 歳
- 10 歳以上

7. 英語学習は未就学児の日本語能力への悪影響になると考えます。

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う
- 強くそう思う

8. 子供たちが英語を初めて学習する際に重要であると思われるものを以下からすべて選択してください。

- 英語話者の友人をつくる
- 教師やプロのチューター
- 両親や家族
- アプリや電子ゲーム
- テレビや映画

9. 英語学習を始めるのが早ければ早いほど、子供たちは英語を生活の中で使えるようになる。

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う
- 強くそう思う

### 英語の利便性について

10. 英語はある特定の日本人のみにとって利便性がある。

(例えば、ビジネスマン、教師や生徒たちなど)

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う
- 強くそう思う

11. 英語はシンガポールに住んでいる限りは役に立つと思う。

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う
- 強くそう思う

12. 英語学習は子供たちが選択したキャリアを成功させることを可能にする。

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う
- 強くそう思う

### 英語の使用について

13. シンガポールで英語を使う目的で該当するものを以下からすべて選択してください。

- 仕事
- 医療扶助
- スポーツ
- 社交
- 映画
- インターネット
- 日常生活で最低限必要な事：買い物、外食、タクシーなど含む
- 子供が通う学校とのコミュニケーション
- ヘルパーとのコミュニケーション
- 政府機関とのやりとり

14. シンガポールで英語を以下の頻度で使用する。

- ほとんど使用しない
- 週に数回
- ほとんど毎日
- 毎日

15. すべての人が第二言語として英語を学ぶべきだ。

- 全くそう思わない
- 思わない
- 思う

- 強くそう思う
16. 未就学児の親として、子供に英語の他にも異なる言語を学んでもらいたい。
- 全くそう思わない
  - 思わない
  - 思う
  - 強くそう思う

### 利便性への認識と英語学習の変化

17. シンガポールに住む前、英語は以下のような言語だと認識していた。
- 便利ではない
  - やや便利である
  - ある程度便利である
  - 便利である
  - とても便利である
18. シンガポールに住んでから、英語は以下のような言語だと認識している。
- 便利ではない
  - やや便利である
  - ある程度便利である
  - 便利である
  - とても便利である
19. シンガポールに住む前、英語を学習することは以下の内容だと認識していた。
- 重要ではない
  - やや重要
  - ある程度重要
  - 重要
  - とても重要
20. シンガポールに住んで、英語を学習することは以下の内容だと認識している。
- 重要ではない
  - やや重要
  - ある程度重要
  - 重要
  - とても重要

## Appendix D: Research Request to School Director



Annie de Villiers &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

## Requesting Research Permission - Coco-Ro

1 message

Annemarie de Villiers &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Thu, Apr 9, 2020 at 10:14 AM

To: Maya Takahashi &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Dear Mrs. Takahashi,

My name is Annemarie de Villiers and I am a doctoral candidate at the American College of Education (ACE). I am writing to request permission to invite parents of Coco-Ro to take part in an online survey. This information will be used for my dissertation research related to investigating attitudes of the Japanese community of Singapore towards English. I am planning to conduct a descriptive, quantitative study where an electronic survey will be distributed to the parents of the school community. Parents will be requested to complete the survey within three weeks for the collection of data. The methodology requires the completion of 12 closed-ended survey questions and the participation of at least 132 parents of currently enrolled students. The purpose of the study is to identify perceptions regarding the usefulness of English, and the value of learning English as reported by the Japanese community in Singapore. To ensure the research meets reliability, validity, and necessary cultural sensitivity needs as required, the protocols to protect participants will be shared with you. Participants will be provided with the necessary informed consent information and forms. All of the necessary information and survey will be offered in Japanese.

Important contact information for this study include:

Principal Investigator: Annemarie de Villiers

Email: [annemarie@devilliers.asia](mailto:annemarie@devilliers.asia)

Phone: +65 8322 6341

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Jeff Roach

Email: [Jeff.Roach@ace.edu](mailto:Jeff.Roach@ace.edu)

Should you require any further information regarding the planned research please contact me. Please note that written confirmation in response to my request is required to gain Institutional Review Board approval.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Annemarie de Villiers




1 message

Sat, Apr 11, 2020 at 1:57 PM

[illegible]

## Appendix F: Statement for the Reviewer

1/27/2020
devilliers.asia Mail - Survey on Japanese community of Singapore


Annie de Villiers

---

**Survey on Japanese community of Singapore**  
1 message

---

**Annemarie de Villiers**
Sat, Jan 25, 2020 at 10:15 AM  
To: TERASAWA TAKUNORI

Dear Dr. Terasawa,

Happy Lunar New Year! I hope it will be a very successful year for you.

I am conducting a descriptive quantitative doctoral study on the Japanese community of Singapore to investigate their perceptions of the usefulness of English, English learning, and use of English in Singapore. You are one of the leading experts on the topic and therefore a crucial subject matter expert for my study. The survey I have developed is currently in English but will be translated into Japanese. I wonder if you can please take a moment to look at my survey for me? It will be an online survey. Could you please provide some feedback on areas of improvement or changes you think I should make? The four research questions I will focus on are :

Q1: What are the perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore?

RQ3: How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore?


RQ4: What are the changes in perception about English learning and usefulness of the Japanese community since living in Singapore?

Please find the survey attached.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration! I appreciate your support and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards from Singapore  
Annemarie de Villiers


---


**Dr. Roach Survey Questions Draft v. 2.docx**  
16K



## Appendix G: Feedback From Subject Matter Experts

1/27/2020
devilliers.asia Mail - Doctoral study on Japanese in Singapore


Annie de Villiers <[REDACTED]>

---

**Doctoral study on Japanese in Singapore**  
2 messages

---

**Annemarie de Villiers** <[REDACTED]>
Sat, Jan 25, 2020 at 2:16 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Kotoyo,

Happy Lunar New Year! I hope it will be a very successful year for you.

I am conducting a descriptive quantitative doctoral study on the Japanese community of Singapore to investigate their perceptions of the usefulness of English, the introduction of English to children, and use of English in Singapore. As a Japanese-American educator who has lived and been part of the Japanese community of Singapore you are a leading expert for my study. The survey I have developed is currently in English but will be translated into Japanese. Would you please be willing to take a look at my survey for me? It will be an online survey. Could you please provide some feedback on areas of improvement or changes you think I should make?


Please find the survey attached.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration! I appreciate your support and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards from Singapore

Annemarie de Villiers  
Ed.S., M.Ed.

---


**Dr. Roach Survey Questions Draft v. 2.docx**  
16K

---

**Kotoyo** [REDACTED]
Sat, Jan 25, 2020 at 4:45 PM

To: Annemarie de Villiers [REDACTED]

Hi Annie,

I took a look at your survey, and I do believe it is culturally appropriate and no specific changes are necessary.

Please let me know if you need any other help or suggestion from my end.

Thank you and good luck!

Kotoyo  
[Quoted text hidden]

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=e4c622a6a1&view=pt&search=all&permthid=thread-a%3Ar4279237687216793165&simpl=msg-a%3Ar11516...> 1/1

### Doctoral study on Japanese in Singapore

#### Introduction

This report is a brief summary of the major points which emerged during a critical review of the proposed questionnaire to be employed during a study of the views of Japanese currently residing in Singapore about English – the use thereof and the need for learning it.

The request also asked for some feedback and recommendations about the questionnaire.

Since the questionnaire is in an advanced stage of development and has benefited greatly from wider consultation already, my comments and recommendations mainly addressed some minor matters (which could be seen as cosmetic) and they have been incorporated in the text of the questionnaire with the use of the Review functions of Word.

My conclusion is that the questionnaire could benefit from a few minor cosmetic actions and that it would then be totally appropriate for the purpose of data collection as part of the proposed study.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The candidate documented the purpose of the study as follows (verbatim):

The four research questions I will focus on are:

Q1: What are the perceptions regarding the age of English introduction to Japanese children expressed by the Japanese community in Singapore?

RQ2: What are the perceptions of the usefulness of English by the Japanese community in Singapore?

RQ3: How does the general use of English differ according to gender within the Japanese community in Singapore?

RQ4: What are the changes in perception about English learning and usefulness of the Japanese community since living in Singapore?

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was evaluated in the light of the four Research Questions listed above.

The associated questionnaire which was submitted to me, comprises 11 questions in English but will be translated into Japanese so that the respondents are able to answer in their own language.

The questionnaire was submitted in Word format and my specific comments and recommendations are indicated in the reviewed document through the use of Word Review Tools.

#### EVALUATOR'S REVIEW OF THE ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

##### 1. Are the questions related to the research problem and the research objectives as listed above?

The purpose of every question clearly has some research problem function: it serves to elicit information that can be used to address the objectives of the study.

Annemarie de Villiers Ed.S.; M.Ed. January 27, 2020

**2. Are the types of question right and appropriate?**

The choice of type of question suits the requirements of this study. The use of closed questions with two or more alternative choices will allow the researcher to obtain the required information most expeditiously.

**3. Are the items clear and unambiguous?**

The items are generally clear and unambiguous. Where I was of the opinion that the clarity of an item could be improved, a recommendation to this effect was included in the reviewed text of the questionnaire.

**4. Are any of the items leading questions?**

I did not encounter any instances of questions which could suggest (expected) answers to the respondent.

**5. Do the questions demand knowledge and/or information that the respondent does not have?**

The questions evidently ask for information which the respondents could reasonably be expected to have.

**6. Does any of the questions demand personal or delicate material that the respondent may resist?**

The version of the questionnaire that I had available for evaluation did not seem to contain any request for personal or "delicate" information

**7. Are any of the questions loaded with "social desirability"?**

Nothing in the questionnaire led me to conclude that respondents may feel influenced to provide responses that are socially desirable, response that indicate or imply approval of actions, attitudes or things that are generally considered to be good.

AJ. Smith  
D.Com., M.Sc.  
2020-01-27

2/6/2020

devilliers.asia Mail - Doctoral study on Japanese in Singapore



Annie de Villiers &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

---

**Doctoral study on Japanese in Singapore**

---

瑞穂 &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Thu, Feb 6, 2020 at 9:09 PM

To: Annemarie de Villiers &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Dear Annie,

Thank you for sharing your interesting project with me. I had a look at the survey you have designed. Reading it in English is easy to understand and the Japanese community of your school who are highly educated people should have no problem following the logic and questions. Translating the survey into Japanese will make it ever easier to understand. I think the lay-out is easy to follow and culturally appropriate. It shares a logic similar to national surveys often administered in Japan. I wish you luck on your upcoming project and hope you will have good participation from the community. I am sure they are all eager to learn from your findings.

Good luck and best wishes from Japan!  
Mizuho

2020年2月6日(木) 19:27 Annemarie de Villiers &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;:

[Quoted text hidden]

[illegible]