

Motivational Profiles of Japanese University Learners of English: A case of Policy Studies majors in rural Japan

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Abstract

This paper reports on an exploratory study that aimed to depict English learning motivational dispositions of first- and second-year university students in a rural area in Japan. This study partially replicates a previous study by Papi and Teimouri (2014). Motivational dispositions were obtained using a questionnaire, which was created within the framework of the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005). The results showed that the students' overall motivational dispositions tended to be instrumentally oriented. Follow-up cluster analysis extracted five more homogeneous subgroups and revealed a relatively small number of students who were highly motivated and susceptible to demotivation.

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1. Introduction

According to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), the number of scientific articles regarding second language (L2) learning motivation has been increasing in recent years. Only about ten L2 motivation-related articles were published in 2005, while around ninety were published in 2013. This large increase clearly highlights the growing demand for a more comprehensive understanding of learning motivation by researchers and practitioners. As suggested by the popularity of this topic, many teachers believe motivation to be a major contributor toward the success or failure of L2 learning and that it remains a challenge to motivate students.

A more modern theory on L2 learning motivation, called the L2 Motivational Self

System (Dörnyei, 2005), has been attracting a lot attention and has contributed to the surge in publications. A number of studies aimed to validate this framework and reveal the relationship among the various affective factors within it (e.g. Papi, 2010; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). Each of these studies yielded tremendous insights into the L2 learners' motivation. However, for teachers to become aware of their students' motivational tendencies in detail, additional context-specific studies need to be carried out. The present exploratory study was undertaken to provide local practitioners with more information on the motivational profiles of English language learners at a university located in rural Japan.

2. Theoretical background of the study

The L2 Motivational Self System

The L2 motivational self system emerged in response to the shortcomings of “integrative motivation” proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1972). The central concept of this predominant theory was “integrativeness,” which is “individual's willingness and interest in social interaction with members of other groups” (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993, p.159), and the concept was an attractive resolution into L2 learning motivation when there were manifest boundaries of target language societies. In other words, the concept of “integrativeness” is useful in contexts where a L2 speaker is merging with native speakers. However, English is often used as an international language. The boundaries of the target language society are unclear and speakers of English do not necessarily represent a particular social group. As a result, it became difficult to explain the L2 motivation in terms of the integration into a target language society. Rather it is pertinent to explain it as an integration process into one's future self (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002). In short, whether one can clearly imagine being an English speaker in the future is very important for motivation. In this sense, mental representation of one's future self works as a “future-self guide” and it regulates a student's motivated behavior (Dörnyei, 2005).

The foundations of the L2 motivational self system is based in the possible-selves theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) from general psychology. The former postulates three mental future self-image: self-image that one might become (probable self), that one would like to become (ideal self), and that one is afraid of becoming (feared self). All of these selves are considered to work as powerful motivators. Higgins (1987) asserted that not only possible selves, but also current self, plays an important role. The discrepancy between ideal self and current self causes discomfort and people try to reduce the gap between them, which leads to motivated behavior. Later, Dörnyei (2005) adopted these theories into his framework, the L2 motivational self system. The framework consists of three components: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and learning experience. The ideal L2 self is the idealized mental representation of oneself as a fluent L2 speaker, and the ought-to L2 self is a representation of self that meets others' expectation and obligation. Some studies showed that ought-to L2 self did not have as much impact on the motivated learning behavior as ideal L2 self (e.g. Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). The last component

of the framework is learning experience. It “concerns situated ‘executive’ motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success)” (Dörnyei, 2009, p.29). In Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009), this component was the most influential factor affecting motivated behavior for their Japanese participants rather than ideal L2 self or ought-to L2 self. Recognizing the importance of the mental self-images and learning experience, some studies attempted to enhance students’ future self-images through classroom learning including activities, materials, or through an entire program. (e.g. Fukada et.al, 2011; Magid, 2014).

Factors that can influence ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self have been investigated in the course of the validity study of the framework. Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) investigated the relationship between the framework and other affective factors in Japanese, Chinese, and Iranian contexts respectively. Their data supported Dörnyei’s (2005) advocacy of two kinds of instrumentality: instrumentality-promotion and instrumentality-prevention. Instrumentality is the motivation to learn a second language for pragmatic benefits, such as learning English to get a good job or to pass an exam. Instrumentality promotion corresponds to achieving a positive pragmatic goal, while instrumentality prevention deals with avoiding negative outcomes. Taguchi, Magid and Papi’s (2009) data showed the strong connection between ideal L2 self and instrumentality promotion, and between ought-to L2 self and instrumentality prevention. However, it should be noted here that the contribution of instrumentality promotion to ideal L2 self was not very strong within Japanese contexts, likely because English ability is just a qualification to get a better job and has no strong connection with professional success in Japan. Alternatively, attitudes toward L2 culture and community had a strong influence on ideal L2 self for Japanese students (Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009). In Papi (2010), the relationship between these selves and anxiety was reported. In that study, ought-to L2 self increased students’ L2 anxiety, while ideal L2 self and positive learning experience decreased L2 anxiety.

As briefly reviewed, the framework, which centered the self concept, was proposed as a novelty resolution into L2 learning motivation and included other affective variables such as L2 anxiety. Using this framework, this study tries to identify the motivational profiles of university students majoring in Policy Studies in rural Japan.

Previous Attempts at Motivational Profiling

Motivational profiles may vary depending on students’ learning environment. For example, Lamb (2012) described the motivational differences of 527 Indonesian junior high school students who lived in a metropolitan area, provincial area, and rural area. In his findings, all aspects of the L2 motivational self system, except for learning experience in school and L2 use anxiety, were statistically lower for the rural area students than those in metropolitan and provincial areas. The field of expertise students are pursuing is another variable that could lead to differences in L2 learning motivation. Apple, Falout, and Hill (2013) investigated the L2 motivation of 690 high school or technical college, undergraduate

school, and graduate school students pursuing careers in science and engineering in Japan. As mentioned in the previous section, ought-to L2 self is not considered to be as influential on L2 motivation as ideal L2 self, but Apple, Falout, and Hill (2013) reported that ought-to L2 self contributed to the learning behavior of the students majoring in science and engineering, especially as their academic career ended and job hunting began. These results gave the researchers context-specific data and practical insight into learning motivation for students in their science programs. The analysis yielded specific points in need of improvement and enabled eight courses of action to be recommended (Hill, Falout, & Apple, 2013). This study demonstrates the value of conducting context-specific studies on motivation.

In addition to identifying overall motivational dispositions, cluster analysis can be used to classify more homogeneous subgroups. Cluster analysis is a useful statistical analysis for multivariate exploratory studies because it can examine within-group differences (Staples & Biber, 2015). This form of analysis can extract more homogeneous subgroups from a whole group without determining groups on an a priori basis. In other words, it makes small groups, or clusters, based on each response pattern. The results obtained are shown using a mathematical configuration called a “dendrogram,” and researchers can identify subgroups in meaningful ways based on the distance that is indicated by the length of the lines in the dendrogram.

Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) used this technique with 8593 L2 learners; age 13 or 14. In this study, they were able to identify participants as belonging in one of four subgroups based on the response patterns of the motivational constructs measured within the L2 motivational self system. The first group was the least motivated group whose responses were lower in all the motivational aspects investigated than other three groups. The second group showed high scores on all the motivational variables investigated. The third group was one of the two interim groups and the group showed higher scores on cultural interest and attitudes toward L2 speakers than the other interim group. The last group was also an interim group with relatively low scores for cultural interest and attitudes toward L2 speakers, but high on instrumentality. Since the score of the intended effort was significantly higher than those of other groups, the authors argued that the members of the second group had developed ideal L2 self and it was the antecedent of actual motivated behavior. Again, these results gave practitioners insight into potential areas of improvement for each subgroup.

Papi and Teimouri (2014) investigated 1278 Iranian middle school and high school students learning English. They used eight motivational variables from the L2 motivational self system as well as learning experience and intended learning effort. Those motivational variables were ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention, family influence, attitudes to L2 community, cultural interest, and language anxiety, and the researchers extracted five distinct more homogeneous subgroups. The first group (hereinafter, Group-A: N=222 (17.4%)) showed the lowest score on all the variables except for the two instrumental orientations. Even those two instrumental scores were just above the half point on the scale. The second group (hereinafter, Group-E: N=308 (24.1%))

showed high scores on all the motivational variables with modest family influence. The third group (hereinafter, Group-B: N=308 (24.1%)) showed the low ideal L2 self and even lower ought-to L2 self, but moderately high on learning experience, cultural interest and positive attitudes to L2 community. The fourth group (hereinafter, Group-C: N=286 (22.4%)) showed moderately high ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and family influence, and high instrumental orientation. The last one (hereinafter, Group-D: N=154 (12.0%)) was a unique group that had strong ideal L2 self, weak ought-to L2 self, and high instrumental promotion and relatively low instrumentality prevention. In relation to intended learning effort, Groups D and E were higher than the other three groups. The least motivated group was Group A followed by Groups B and C. Interestingly, a group with strong instrumentality were more motivated than a group with high cultural interest and attitudes to L2 community in Iranian context. These results are not intuitive and teachers would have remained unaware had it not been for the contextually specific study.

Using successful methods outlined in the studies above, this current study seeks to profile first- and second-year university students majoring in Policy Studies in a rural area in Japan and to classify them into subgroups using cluster analysis.

Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

Before introducing the current study, it should be noted here that Group D in Papi and Teimouri's (2014) study had other interesting points. First, this group showed the lowest L2 anxiety and the highest self-assessed proficiency of any group. Papi and Teimouri argued that even though both Group D and E showed highly motivated behavior, there might be some differences in the quality of their effort, which is Willingness to Communicate (MacIntyre, et. al., 1998; MacIntyre, 2007). According to Papi and Teimouri (2014), a high ideal self with a low ought-to self indicates a high WTC. Students of this type are likely to try to use English to get closer to their ideal L2 self rather than just studying.

WTC is a concept originated in first language communication studies to reveal individual's personality-trait to initiate communication with others (McCroskey, 1992). Later, MacIntyre, et. al. (1998) brought this concept into second language acquisition studies, and conceptualized WTC for use with a second language. They claimed that WTC in L2 is not necessarily a limited personality-trait, but will vary with the situation. It is defined as "the probability of speaking when free to do so" (MacIntyre, 2007, p.564). If the goal of L2 learning is being able to use the L2, willingness to communicate with others is definitely worth monitoring. Since attaining a certain level of proficiency in a L2 requires actual use of it in a communication, MacIntyre, et. al. (1998) "suggest a suitable goal of L2 learning is to increase WTC" (p.558). Following this, Yashima (2002) investigated what factors can influence Japanese university students' WTC, and found that L2 communication confidence and international posture, which is defined as "a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group" (Yashima, 2009, p.145), have a direct impact on WTC. International posture also relates to the motivation to learn English.

This motivation affects L2 communication confidence, which has a direct impact on WTC. From these findings, Yashima (2002) suggested improving students' international posture and reducing L2 anxiety are essential to enhance students' WTC. Given that the factors introduced in this section have such useful implications, the current study will monitor them as well.

Motivational strategies and pedagogical applications

With the development of motivational theories, researchers and practitioners have shown a greater interest in the empirical application of these theories to actual classroom practices (Kojima, Ozeki, & Hiromori, 2010). Dörnyei (2001) described motivational teaching practices and organized various motivational strategies into stages, which can be seen in Figure 1 below. Basic motivational conditions should be met to begin the cycle, as motivational strategies do not work effectively if appropriate basic conditions are not established first. Initial motivation begins to emerge when attitudes toward learning are stimulated. Generated motivation needs to be maintained and learners need to review what they did in order to move forward. Different motivational strategies should be implemented for learners during the respective stages. The keys to effectively implementing this framework are to identify the motivational orientation of each student and to use the appropriate strategies.

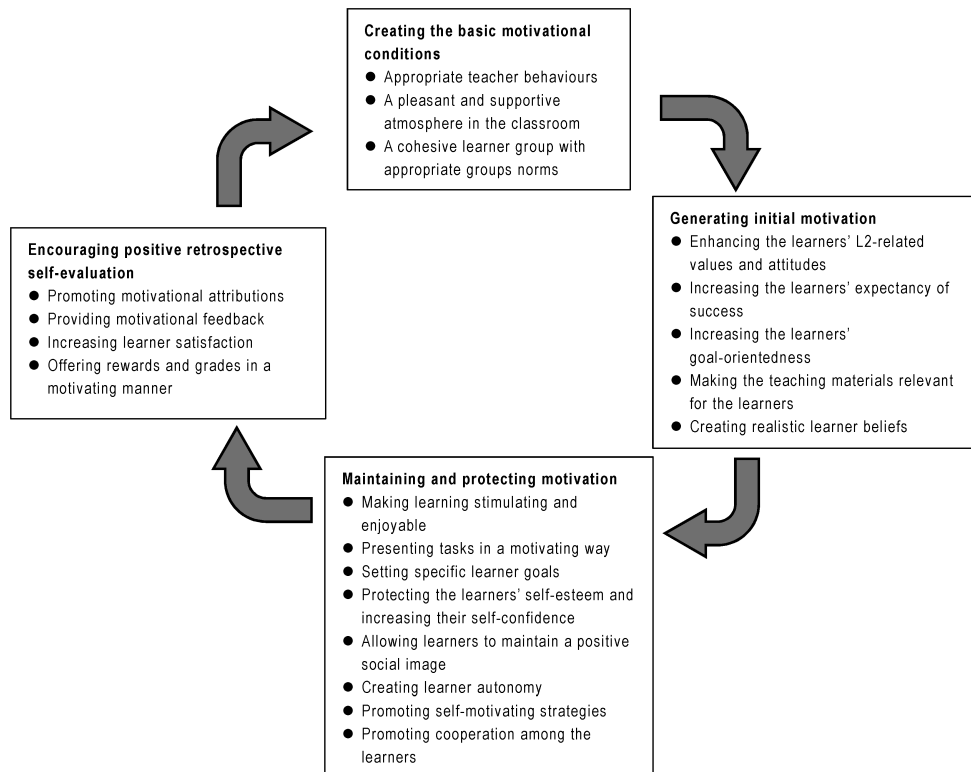


Figure 1. Motivational Teaching Practice (Dörnyei, 2001, p.29)

Hikomori (2006) investigated effectiveness of educational interventions with motivational strategies within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and showed that the strategy use improved students' motivation. He also reported that there were individual differences in the motivational strategies required by students depending on students' motivational orientations. Fukada et.al. (2011) asked their Japanese students to imagine a future L2 self through various classroom activities and they reported their students improved motivation to learn English both in and out of class. Their students reported that their motivation increased. Sampson (2012), in his action research, collected data about his students' motivational status within the L2 motivational self system using free writing activities and implemented self enhancement activities. After completing these self-enhancement activities, he reported that the students' perception of themselves changed and that it had a positive impact on their motivation. He asserted that understanding the initial state of students' L2 self status was useful for implementing more motivating lessons.

3. Research questions

As outlined in the literature review above, recent motivational theory centers on the perception of self. Furthermore, implementing self-enhancement strategies can be an effective approach to improving pedagogy. Awareness of student motivational orientation is crucial for successful intervention (Dörnyei, 2001, Sampson, 2012). Following this line of inquiry, this study aims to depict the motivational profiles of English language learners at a university in a rural area in Japan. The specific research questions are as follows.

1. What are the overall characteristics of motivation to learn English of first- and second-year university students majoring in Policy Studies in a rural area of Japan? Are there any differences between first and second year students?
2. How many and what types of distinct groups will emerge using cluster analysis? What are the characteristics of these groups?
3. Are there any differences between the groups obtained by the cluster analysis in terms of learning intention, attitudes toward learning English and WTC?

4. The study

Participants

The participants included 416 university students in a rural area of Japan. All were first- and second-year students majoring in Policy Studies. There were 220 first-year students and 196 second-year students who participated in the study. A survey item to identify gender was not included. However, out of 465 first- and second-year students attending the university, 64.7% (N=301) are male and 35.3% are female (N=164). Of the 425 samples were initially collected, nine samples were eliminated due to either incomplete answers or set response patterns. The numbers of valid cases in each analysis varies due to the missing values in the original data.

Instruments

The questionnaire contained 53 items in total: thirty-six items measuring motivational variables, eight items regarding to Willingness to Communicate in English (WTC), and nine distractor items. The questionnaire used a 6-point Likert scale, with 1 being strongly disagree and 6 being strongly agree, to measure participants' motivational dispositions. It also included self-assessed language proficiency scales developed by CEFR-J (Tono, 2013), as well as a consent form and a few questions regarding past experiences of learning English. There were four versions of the questionnaire with the same question items with different order to reduce the contamination due to the fatigue effect.

The motivational variables measured included the following with the number of items and Cronbach's α for internal consistency of each category.

1. Learning intention (hereinafter, LI: 3 items, $\alpha = .81$)
2. Attitudes toward English classes (hereinafter, AE: 3 items, $\alpha = .83$)
3. Ideal L2 self (hereinafter, IS: 3 items, $\alpha = .85$)
4. Ought-to L2 self (hereinafter, OS: 3 items, $\alpha = .74$)
5. Instrumentality promotion (hereinafter, PRO: 3 items, $\alpha = .74$)
6. Instrumentality prevention (hereinafter, PRE: 3 items, $\alpha = .78$)
7. L2 confidence (hereinafter, CON: 4 items, $\alpha = .77$)
8. L2 anxiety (hereinafter, ANX: 4 items, $\alpha = .86$)
9. Cultural interest (hereinafter, CI: 3 items, $\alpha = .78$)
10. Attitude toward English speaking community (hereinafter, EC: 3 items, $\alpha = .88$)
11. International posture (hereinafter, IP: 4 items, $\alpha = .80$)

Procedures

The questionnaire was administered during a freshman orientation in April 2015. Teachers in charge of regular courses administered the questionnaire for second-year students during their second or third class meeting at the end of April or beginning of May, 2015.

Analysis

For the first research question, a Welch *t*-test using SPSS was administered to monitor for difference between first- and second-year students as well as to obtain descriptive statistics for all participants. To avoid a Type I error due to multiple testing, the significance level was set at $p < .0045$ using Bonferroni adjustment.

To answer the second research question, a hierarchical cluster analysis employing Ward's method and squared Euclidean distance using SPSS was conducted to see how many clusters would emerge. After identifying possible cluster solutions, K-means clustering was performed. The motivational variables used were IS, OS, PRO, PRE, CON, ANX, CI, EC, and IP. In order to see if the obtained subgroups were sufficiently different from each other, between-group mean differences were subject to Kruskal-Wallis test. The significance level

was set at $p < .0055$ for the same reason as mentioned above.

For the third research question, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to see if there are between group differences. Dependent variables in this analysis were IL, AE, and WTCE; therefore, the significance level was set at $p < .017$. After that, post-hoc analysis using Mann-Whitney test was conducted to identify which groups have differences for each variable.

5. Results

Table 1 shows the overall motivational profile of the participants. The mean scores of LI, AE, OS, CON, CI, and IP are around the median score of the scale, 3.5. The mean score of IS was lower than the median of the scale. This indicates that participants of this study do not have a strong future self-image with English ability. This is an interpretation from the mean score, so there are some students who have higher IS values, but they do not make up the majority. What motivates these participants to study English can be explained by instrumentality. Both instrumentality promotion and instrumentality prevention were relatively high. L2 anxiety was also high and this predicts low WTC in English. Nevertheless, they had positive feelings toward native English speakers.

Figure 2 illustrates the Welch *t*-test results, which compared the first- and second-year students. The results indicate that first-year students and second-year students were different in terms of instrumentality. The mean score of PRO of the first-year students was 4.61 and that of the second-year students was 4.28. The difference was statistically significant ($t(410.518) = 3.467, p = .001, r = .17$). Similarly, the mean score of PRE of the first-year students was higher than that of the second-year students ($t(401.407) = 4.385, p = .000, r = .21$). The small effect size indicates that the differences were small.

In order to answer research question 2, homogeneous subgroups from the participants were extracted by using the cluster analysis. The obtained dendrogram is shown in Figure 3. Either line A or line B seemed appropriate. Since the purpose of this analysis was to

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
LI	414	3.35 (1.076)	.052	.184	.005
AE	415	3.38 (1.142)	.056	.017	-.336
IS	413	2.90 (1.132)	.056	.394	.053
OS	415	3.17 (1.102)	.054	.333	.064
PRO	413	4.46 (1.005)	.049	-.502	.351
PRE	415	4.45 (.987)	.048	-.509	.479
CON	416	3.62 (1.016)	.050	.082	-.353
ANX	414	4.54 (1.077)	.053	-.706	.070
CI	416	3.67 (1.048)	.051	-.181	-.125
EC	415	4.20 (1.096)	.054	-.430	-.085
IP	414	3.22 (.499)	.025	-.052	.026

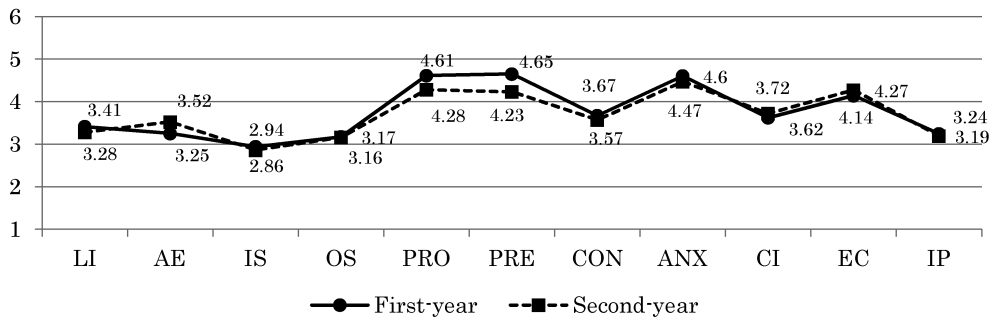


Figure 2. Comparison of first-year students and second-year students

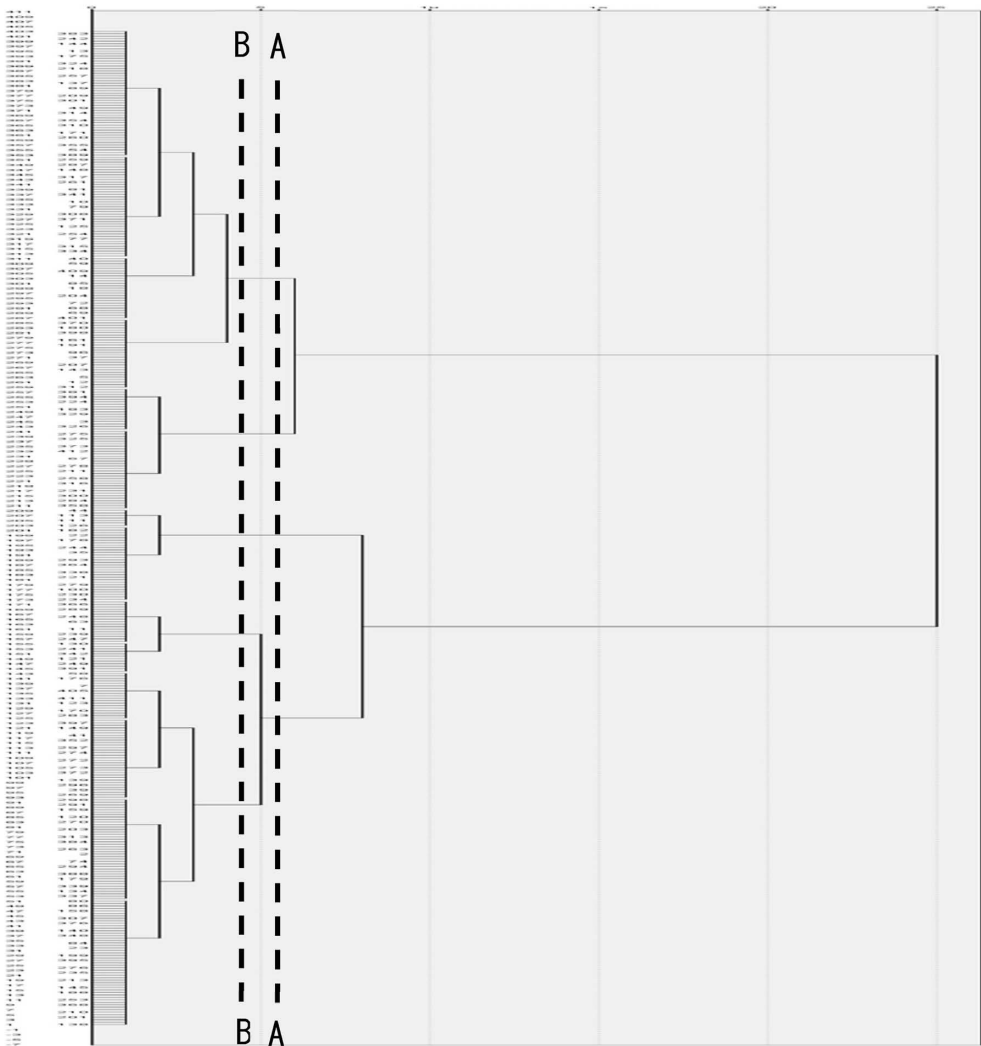


Figure 3. Dendrogram

extract more homogeneous subgroups, the number of clusters was determined at five (line B).

Figure 4 shows the characteristics of these five groups in terms of nine motivational variables measured. As shown, the participants in Group A (N=49, 11.8%) were predicted to be the least motivated students and Group E (N=37, 8.9%) was considered to be the most motivated group. The interim groups consist of Group B (N=145, 34.9%) and Group C (N=143, 34.4%). The last group is Group D (N=29, 7.0%). Kruskal-Wallis test results showed all the group differences were statistically significant (IS: $\chi^2=206.98$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; OS: $\chi^2=192.48$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; PRO: $\chi^2=183.06$, $df=4$, $p=.000$, PRE: $\chi^2=98.93$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; CON: $\chi^2=183.18$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; ANX: $\chi^2=113.33$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; CI: $\chi^2=154.58$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; EC: $\chi^2=211.01$, $df=4$, $p=.000$, IP: $\chi^2=61.46$, $df=4$, $p=.000$), which means each group is considered to be sufficiently different from each other.

Group A has lower scores on most motivational variables. Their IS and OS scores are low, and CI, EC and IP scores are moderately low. Their PRO and PRE scores are around the median of the scale but lower than those of other groups. They do not imagine their future self as an English speaker, and they are not interested in the culture and society of English speaking countries. They learn English because they need to get credits to graduate from university. The members of this group are believed to be the least motivated of the five. Interestingly, L2 anxiety score of this group is also low.

Group E has the highest scores for almost all of the variables examined in this study. Their IS, OS, PRE, and CON scores are high and their PRO and EC scores are exceptionally high. All the motivational variables except for L2 anxiety were higher than those of other groups. These participants probably have an English speaking future self in mind. As high CI and EC scores show, they are interested in culture and society in English speaking countries, these social and cultural aspects seem to attract these students to learning

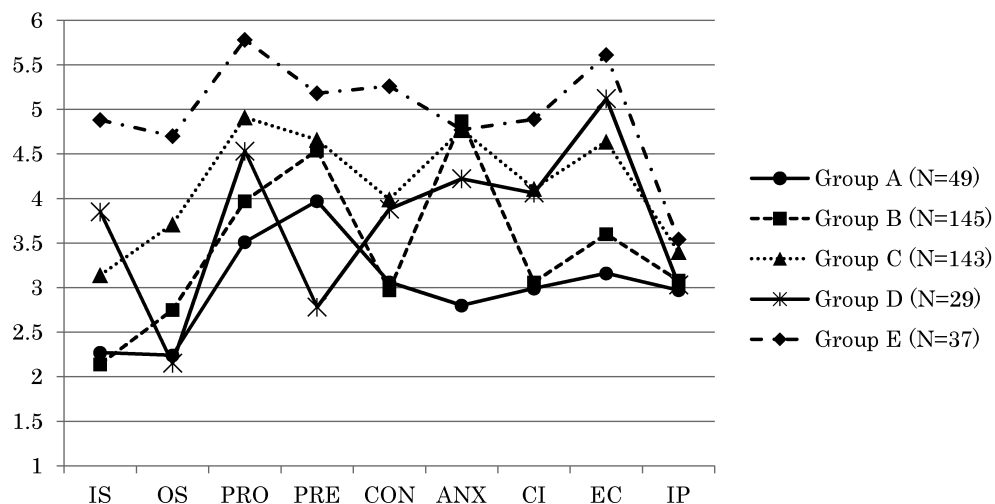


Figure 4. Five subgroups derived from cluster analysis

English. Their extremely high PRO score indicates they see English ability as an important quality for their careers, but they do not see themselves in an international setting. Even though they are confident to become fluent users of English, as indicated by their high CON score, their anxiety is as high as Groups B and C.

Groups B and C are the two interim groups between Groups A and E. They account for almost 70% of the whole population. Group B has low IS, OS, CON, CI and EC scores, but they have moderately high PRO and PRE scores, which indicates that they are instrumentally motivated. They do not imagine an English speaking future self and they do not think they can become a successful English learner. One probable explanation for this is that they are not interested in the culture and society in English speaking countries as indicated in relative low CI and EC scores. However, they think English is important to avoid undesirable consequences in the course of their education.

Group C had relatively high PRO, PRE, ANX, and EC scores and moderately high CON and CI scores. They have positive attitudes toward culture and society in English speaking countries. They value English as an important ability for their future, but their English speaking self is not very clear, as suggested in their moderately low IS score. They have a higher score on OS than IS, which indicates that they feel some kind of pressure. With their high PRO score, an assumption can be drawn that they learn English to gain advantage when they begin job hunting and to avoid disappointing people around them.

Group D has moderately high IS and PRO scores, while their OS and PRE scores are low as well. They had a moderately high CI score and high EC score. This group is unique in that they learn English for their own interests, evinced from low OS and PRE scores, but high EC score. They have an English speaking future self as indicated by the moderately high IS score. It should be noted that a group of this type appeared in Papi and Teimouri's study (2014). As shown and described here, five participant groups were extracted by the cluster analysis and each group was shown to have distinct characteristics.

As for the third research question, group differences for LI, AE, and WTC were examined. The Kruskal-Wallis test results (Figure 5) indicate that there are statistically significant between-group differences on all variables measured (LI: IS: $\chi^2=178.20$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; AE: IS: $\chi^2=185.63$, $df=4$, $p=.000$; WTC: $\chi^2=91.92$, $df=4$, $p=.000$). As expected, Group E has the highest scores on all variables, and Group D is the second highest. Groups A and B are almost the same as each other for most variables. Post-hoc Mann-Whitney tests revealed there were statistically significant differences on all pairs and on all the variables except for WTC between Groups D and E (Group A and B: LI: $Z= -7.66$, $p= .000$, $r = .55$, AE: $Z= -6.95$, $p= .000$, $r = .50$, WTC: $Z= -4.51$, $p= .000$, $r = .33$; Group B and C: LI: $Z= -9.48$, $p= .000$, $r = .56$, AE: $Z= -9.99$, $p= .000$, $r = .59$, WTC: $Z= -6.67$, $p= .000$, $r = .40$; Group C and D: LI: $Z= -5.40$, $p= .000$, $r = .41$, AE: $Z= -6.25$, $p= .000$, $r = .47$, WTC: $Z= -4.78$, $p= .000$, $r = .36$; Group D and E: LI: $Z= -4.33$, $p= .000$, $r = .53$, AE: $Z= -3.26$, $p= .001$, $r = .40$, WTC: $Z= -1.45$, $p= .147$, $r = .18$).

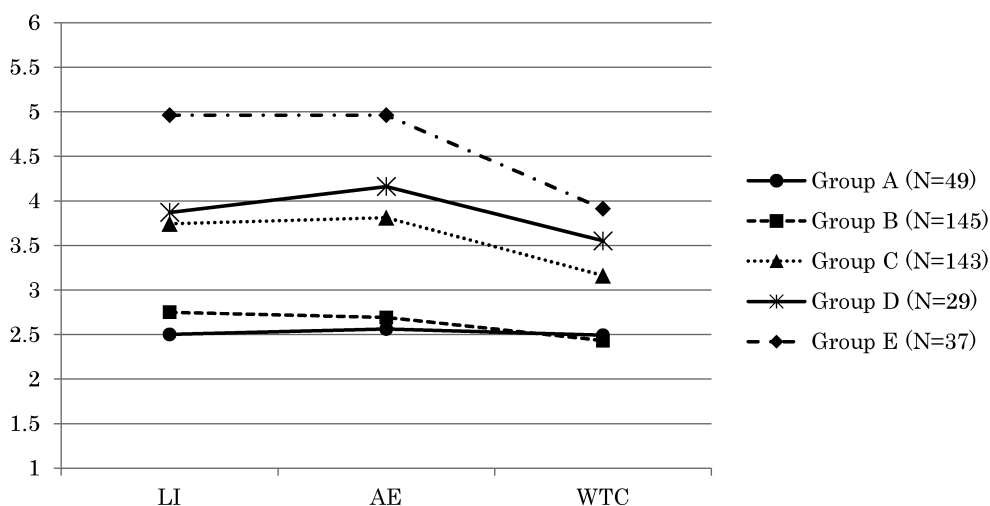


Figure 5. Group comparison on LI, AE, and WTC

6. Discussion

Overall motivational profile

One purpose of this study is to describe the overall motivational profile of first- and second-year university students majoring in Policy Studies in a rural area of Japan. The results showed they have strong instrumental orientation. Since both instrumental-promotion and instrumental-prevention are relatively high, these students study English for pragmatic benefits. Also, the score for IS is below the median score, which means they do not generally imagine their future selves as fluent English speaking individuals. This matches Taguchi, Magid and Papi's (2009) findings. Their data showed that the relationship between ideal L2 self and instrumentality-promotion is not as strong in Japanese contexts as in Iranian and Chinese contexts. They explained that English ability does not guarantee professional success in Japanese society, as it is more likely to do so in Iran and China. The students in this current study recognize the importance of English ability to create future opportunities, but they do not imagine themselves as speaking English in the future. This corresponds to their modest international posture. It indicates they do not seek a future career in an international setting, which is supported by their low IP score. Their high ANX score indicates that they do not enjoy using English, especially oral tasks, as speaking is considered to be the most anxiety provoking skill (Young, 1992). At this point in their lives, English is just a school subject and something they do on paper. This predicts low WTC, which will be discussed in the next section.

As for the difference between first- and second-year students, *t*-test results showed merely small differences in their motivational orientation. Second-year students showed lower instrumental orientation than first-year students. The difference could result from the experiences they had during the first year of university English courses, as well as other subjects. On the other hand, the first-year students who just arrived at university

after habitual test taking might consider earning an English certificate important. However, this current study employed a cross-sectional design and the participants were different individuals, which means first-year students in this study will not necessarily follow a similar pattern after experiencing one year at university. A follow-up study is needed to determine if this pattern is recurrent.

Five subgroups, learning intention, attitudes toward learning English, and WTC

Cluster analysis identified five subgroups and the following statistical analysis determined that each group had different motivational orientations. Group E (N=37(7.0%)) had higher scores on all the motivational variables and their LI and AE scores were the highest of the five groups as predicted from the motivational orientations. What underpinned this motivation seems to be instrumentality-promotion (PRO) and positive attitudes to the speaker of English (EC) rather than their ideal L2 self (IS). This assumption is also supported by modestly high WTC. It was not very high and in fact there was not a statistically significant difference between Groups D and E for this category ($Z = -1.45$, $p = .147$, $r = .18$). This modest willingness to communicate is suspected to result from high L2 anxiety as Yashima (2002) asserts that low L2 anxiety is a condition of high willingness to communicate.

In contrast, Group A (N=49 (11.8%)) indicated significantly lower ANX score than those of the other four groups. In general, low anxiety, ideally anxiety free, is considered to be a desirable condition because anxiety causes poor performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994) and is treated as an influential factor to L2 learning motivation (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Hence, low anxiety should be a good sign for L2 motivation. However, their LI and AE scores were lower than the other four groups. Obviously, this group is the least motivated group. In fact, this low anxiety score should be interpreted as a signal of demotivation and is supported by the lack of cultural interest (CI), the lack of interest in speakers of English (EC), and the lack of international posture (IP).

The lack of interest in L2 culture, L2 speakers and international community is shared with group B (N=145 (34.9%)), one of the majority groups. Their motivation (LI) and attitudes toward learning English (AE) are a slightly higher than those of Group A, the least motivated group, and the lower than the other three groups. They also have the lowest WTC score. Their anxiety level is high and instrumentality prevention is high. This can be interpreted that they want to do just enough on paper and avoid embarrassing experiences, such as speaking English. In fact, their future self does not have English speaking ability as suggested by a low IS score.

The other majority group is Group C (N=143 (34.4%)), which is more instrumental promotionally oriented than Group B. They are more motivated and have a more positive attitude toward leaning English than Groups A and B. Their IS scores indicate that they have a future self image with English ability. Even though it is not clear how vivid image they have, they seem to be ready to use English. Again, their anxiety hampers them to do

so, which is indicated in their WTC.

The group with the second highest score for willing to communicate in English is Group D (N=29 (7%)), trailing behind Group E. The members of this group have unique motivational orientation. This kind of group also appeared in Papi and Teimouri's study (2014). They have an English speaking future self, are more instrumental promotionally oriented, and feel slightly less anxiety than Groups B, C, and E. Their WTC is the same level as the most motivated group. This can be supporting evidence for that this kind of motivational orientation is universal even though the population of this group in each study is different: Group D in Papi and Teimouri (2014) occupied 12% of its whole population, while the counterpart in this study covers only 7%. This difference in population might derive from the difference of the participants employed in the two studies. In Papi and Teimouri (2014), their participants were middle school and high school students, while this current study investigates university students. In the case of university students, they can choose a university based on their academic interests. It is probable that students with similar academic interest gather, leading to less diversity than in junior high school and high school settings. This could explain why the size of this unique group is slightly smaller at the university level. Students with a strong interest in English might not choose to major in Policy Studies. If this is the case, as Apple, Falout, and Hill (2013) reported, academic subjects being pursued are related to students' motivational profiles. Another disagreement between Papi and Teimouri's (2014) findings and the current study is that their Group D showed the highest learning intention with no significant difference with Group E. It is presumed that the ideal self for Group D in this current study is not vivid and elaborate enough to create a high level of motivation. This could be supported by their modest IS score. If this is the case, educational intervention will work to improve their ideal self, which we will discuss next.

7. Pedagogical implications

The present study revealed the overall motivational orientation and classified the students into five subgroups. These findings can serve as a diagnostic tool to help teachers learn more about the students' motivational orientations and implement appropriate motivational strategies.

A relatively small number of the students were assumed to have a vivid future English speaking self. This reflects that English speaking ability does not guarantee their future professional success in the current Japanese society. Nevertheless, if teachers at this university think English is a "must-have" quality in the world in which the students will live in the future, then it is important to help students to generate their ideal L2 self (Fukada, et.al, 2011; Sampson, 2012). The future self image has to be vivid, elaborate, and plausible (Dörnyei, 2009); therefore, teachers and students should attempt to predict what plausible future English speaking selves for Policy Studies majors might be like. Exposing students to Japanese speakers of English in developing fields would be one way to do this. This could be accomplished by taking field trips, inviting guest speakers, or through appropriate use

of video. Enabling face-to-face interactions might be more beneficial, as students report more favorable impressions and greater satisfaction in face-to-face learning environments, as opposed to online mediums (Johnson et.al., 1999). Alternatively, asynchronous near-peer role modeling using video has also been shown to enhance student perceptions of future self (Murphey, 1998).

High anxiety levels detected during this study suggest that another beneficial adjustment would be the reduction of L2 anxiety “by providing learners with strategies to cope with anxiety-provoking situations” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). If speaking is the most anxiety provoking skill, as suggested by Young (1992), then classroom instruction should emphasize coping strategies for overcoming communication difficulties. Introducing simple expressions to overcome communication breakdowns, ask for more time, and abandon difficult topics might be beneficial. Teachers should also monitor anxiety levels during speaking tasks, asking students to reflect on their performance and that of their peers. In our past experience, students tend to rate themselves lower than their speaking partners. Using the data to show students that their partners thought they did well is another way to boost confidence and lower future anxiety.

As suggested in Papi and Teimouri (2014), motivational strategies to individuals should be selected based on the learner motivational orientations. A certain strategy might work for some and it might not work for others, especially if learning types are different. Strategies to create the basic motivational condition and to generate initial motivation in Dörnyei’s (2001) Motivational Teaching Practice (see figure 1) should be implemented more often for students who are demotivated and less motivated (Groups A and B in this study) while strategies to maintain and protect motivation and to encourage positive retrospective self-evaluation should be implemented more often for motivated students (Groups D and E). Those who are already instrumentally motivated student might not need to be primed with prevention strategies. To enhance motivation levels effectively, teachers must monitor students carefully and be mindful of how holidays, deadlines, exams, and upcoming events, such as study abroad, influence attitudes. This is no small task. In addition, students could be made aware of Dörnyei’s (2001) cycle and encouraged to monitor themselves and choose activities based on their current status. Providing an online diagnostic survey that suggested several activities based on the results of the survey would be an efficient way for students to self regulate.

8. Conclusion

The present study investigated students’ motivational profiles and classified them into five subgroups and depicted their characteristics. It gave insights into university students majoring in Policy Studies in a rural area in Japan. However, it should be noted here that qualitative study is also essential to understand students’ motivational orientation better. Documenting students’ motivational orientations qualitatively and how they develop will make a great contribution to both theory and practice.

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