

Reviews

Language Policy, Culture, and Identity in Asian Contexts.
**Amy B. M. Tsui and James W. Tollefson (Eds.). Mahwah,
NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007. ix + 283 pp.**

Reviewed by

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This book addresses Asian policy responses to the challenges posed by globalization and the concomitant need for English, both as a medium of international communication and as the primary language of information technology. Tsui and Tollefson point out that language policy subsumes the three areas of language planning, language ideology, and language practice. The 14 articles in the book focus on these three themes. The chapters on Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Cambodia address the extent to which policy manages the potentially deleterious impact of the spread of English on indigenous languages and the cultural values and belief systems they embody, while promoting its positive benefits. The chapters on Hong Kong, Brunei, and New Zealand examine the relations between language and the construction of cultural identities. The chapters on India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh explore the role of English in environments where there has emerged local resistance to linguistic homogenization. Each chapter has its merits. However, I will focus on the chapter of most relevance for *JALT Journal* readers.

Kayoko Hashimoto's contention in the chapter "Japan's language policy and the lost decade" is that "Japanese education is designed to reduce the danger of dependency on the West by restricting the introduction of Western ideas to technical matters" (p. 26). Hashimoto argues that Japanese policy is intended less to promote the official goal of ensuring that "all Japanese acquire a working knowledge of English," than to promote "Japaneseness" (p. 27). This is not a new concern. Former U.S. Ambassador to Japan (1966-1969) U. Alexis Johnson recalled the Japanese Vice Minister of Education encouraging school children to "learn foreign languages but not learn them too well, because their souls were embodied in their knowledge of Japanese" (1984, p. 459). There appears to be something of this fear in current policy prescriptions. Languages embody

cultural beliefs and values, and influence behavior. Social distinctions that are encoded in one language may not be in another. English carries the worldview and national practices of the Anglo-American world and as such potentially endangers indigenous cultures. Thus, Japanese official policy seems ambivalent between wanting the benefits of English while fearing the consequences of “too much” English.

As of March 2007, virtually all Japanese elementary schools (96%) offer some English instruction, in the form of songs, games, greetings, self-introductions, or pronunciation drills. The instruction is provided by homeroom teachers and amounts to 14.8 hours per year. Approximately 95% of these teachers lack qualifications as language instructors. However, Education Minister Bunmei Ibuki has recently expressed the view that Japanese students should first perfect their speaking and writing skills in their mother tongue before tackling a foreign language (Most Elementary Schools, 2007), which seems to imply a subtractive theory of second language acquisition, such that the second language impedes development of the native language, precisely as suggested by the official quoted by Johnson above.

In view of the official ambivalence, it is difficult to imagine schools devoting the resources needed to overcome more immediate and practical difficulties, such as the lack of qualified teachers and limited classroom time. Hashimoto’s conclusion is that the Japanese government’s policy is in fact a successful response to the perceived challenge posed by English, and that broadly based competence in communicative English is not an official objective.

Interestingly, Yim Sungwon arrives at essentially the same conclusion regarding South Korea based on a content analysis of middle school textbooks, and many of the other articles suggest that official ambivalence toward English is not confined to Japan.

Tsui and Tollefson’s introductory chapter does a good job of putting the subsequent contributions in perspective. However, although a wide variety of Asian countries are surveyed, the situations in Thailand, Vietnam, and the People’s Republic of China are neglected. Despite this, overall the collection is a useful addition to the literature on language policy in Asia.

References

- Johnson, U. A. (1984). *The right hand of power*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Most elementary schools teach English. (2007, March 3). *The Japan Times*, p. 2.

***Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language: A Teacher Self-Development and Methodology Guide, (2nd Ed.).* Jerry G. Gebhard. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006. xii + 268 pp.**

Reviewed by

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Jerry Gebhard offers a guided approach to the basic components of English language teaching in this book, which is intended primarily for preservice student teachers who are learning to teach EFL or ESL, but can also be used as a text for those in-service teachers who are on teacher development programs. The volume invites the reader not only to learn about teaching English but also how to explore teaching. Specific themes are: Part 1 (Chapters 1 to 3): Self-Development, Exploration, and Settings; Part 2 (Chapters 4 to 7): Principles of EFL/ESL Teaching; and Part 3: (Chapters 8 to 11): Teaching Language Skills.

Each chapter follows the same format. Starting with an insightful remark, typically from a prominent figure in language teaching, it has two major sections. The first section discusses a set of questions posed at the beginning. Almost all of them are either *what* or *how* questions. The second section offers groups of tasks for the reader's development as an EFL or ESL teacher. A variety of specific functions are implied in the tasks (e.g., becoming aware of one's own ideas and creating a lesson plan). The chapter ends with an updated list of recommended readings and notes in this second edition.

Part 1, including the teacher self-development tasks in each chapter, should be highly beneficial to those who are in contexts where pre- and in-service programs do not provide any systematic instruction on how teachers themselves might explore their classroom teaching. This may be the case with many Japanese teachers of English. There are some methods of teacher development that have been commonly practiced in official situations, such as the pervasive method of lesson demonstration and observation. However, I personally feel that it is rare to find language teachers who are learning such a range of methods for teacher self-development as those presented in this volume, unless they have been involved in a graduate school program or a research association.

The issues discussed in Part 1 include: seven key factors in teacher self-development (e.g., “*problem solving*” and “*exploration for exploration’s sake*”), a comprehensive list of ways to explore teaching (which is related to the appendices containing a list of journals and of publishers), and a modeled cycle of actions involved in the self-observation method. Chapter 3, a new entry in this second edition, describes and discusses a variety of EFL and ESL settings around the world, with some reservations about this distinction. While presenting setting-by-setting descriptions, the chapter touches upon several factors highlighting differences between EFL and ESL and those within the ESL setting. Behind this lies the assumption that “teaching English is context dependent” (p. 55). Some setting-specific suggestions are also made in this chapter and other parts of the volume.

Three methods are utilized for the teacher self-development tasks: observation of oneself and other teachers, talking with other teachers, and writing in a teaching journal. These methods are not new to many teachers but are revitalized here in the form of guided tasks which would lead to ongoing exploration. Some values developed in the field of teacher education appear in the volume: cooperative work among teachers, non-judgmental attitudes toward teacher performance, and the teacher’s own informed decisions.

Throughout the volume, discussions are fairly instructive and informative. They are largely built on teachers’ work experiences, which I suppose derive from Gebhard’s long-term association with students and teachers as a teacher educator. Thus the reader may get the feeling of being in a community of teachers. A fairly large portion of each chapter in Parts 2 and 3 is dedicated to common problems facing EFL/ESL teachers (e.g., “How do I get students to use English in class?”) and suggestions on possible solutions. Further, instructional ideas abound. Gebhard presents some of his experiences and teaching ideas developed as a teaching practitioner over many years (e.g., his personal experience of learning Japanese through developing relationships with people in a community in Japan). This feature should make his discussion more approachable and enjoyable to teachers.

As for the conceptual aspect of the volume, the first thing to note is that, in his endnotes, Gebhard makes transparent to the reader the way in which his thinking on a particular issue has been formed in relation to the sources he has drawn on. Second, the volume is a crafted work to be treasured in light of its concise, yet comprehensive and enriching manner of dealing with the basics of classroom instruction. Part 2 encompasses

four essential aspects of language teaching practice: teaching English as communication and interaction, classroom management, teaching materials/media/technology, and cultural issues (i.e., defining culture, adjusting to another culture, and cultural concepts to teach and ways of teaching them). Part 3 discusses the nature of each language skill (including “conversing” rather than speaking) and ways of teaching them. An integrated approach required for general-English types of classes can be explored with the help of Gebhard’s discussions on communicative classroom and language skills together with some of his recommended readings.

Finally, some conceptual developments in language education are incorporated, for example, the concepts of precommunicative and communicative activities coined by Littlewood in 1981 (Chapter 4), the active nature of listening (Chapter 8), and process writing (Chapter 11). The selection of those items seems to be just right for preservice teachers, and may be appropriate for in-service teachers as well on the assumption that many teachers are deprived of such developments in research and the literature.

All in all, *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language* by Jerry Gebhard is an excellent source of enrichment for those who are seeking to become better teachers of English. Appreciating the opportunity to get back to the basics, I would like to share this book with my undergraduate students in the secondary school teacher license program at my university and with those in-service teachers who have recently launched their teaching careers.

Reference

- Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

***The Experience of Language Teaching.* Rose M. Senior.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. xiii + 301**

Reviewed by
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As the orthodoxy slowly continues its shift from “teacher-fronted” to “student-centred” approaches, concepts of learner autonomy are becoming a well-established part of the mainstream and technology. This shift seems to offer students new directions for nontraditional learning. At the same time, job insecurity, low pay, and a lack of professional status are issues many teachers live with. Are teachers becoming marginalised in language education? In her broad longitudinal study, Senior places the teacher firmly at the centre of the learning process and formulates theories of what actually occurs in communicative language classrooms based on group dynamics and social-constructivism.

The book begins with a précis of the research methodology used in the study and an overview of the motivation behind the enquiry and the contexts in which it occurred. Senior utilises data from five interlinked studies comprised of extended interviews with over 100 teachers over 12 years following a grounded theory approach in which researchers use data to generate theory rather than gather information to support or refute hypotheses (Nunan, 1992). Grounded theory is often misunderstood, but the methodology and the thinking behind it are clearly explained here. For anyone considering embarking on a research project of this nature, Senior provides a valuable starting point and a number of helpful suggestions for further reading.

The author goes on to explore what motivates people to enter intensive language teaching training courses at the entry level (specifically the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults), and examines their early steps towards maturity and expertise as teachers of English. It soon becomes apparent that the study centres on a particular kind of language teaching career; indeed, the author explicitly points this out. Although the book specifically draws on the experiences of native English speakers teaching multilingual classes in a broadly “communicative” style in English-speaking countries, the author expresses a hope that it will resonate with teachers in other areas. In the central section of the book, Senior focuses on the social aspect of language teaching, discussing such topics

as classroom management, flexibility, rapport, and the development of learning communities within classes, effectively honing in on the ways in which teachers build and maintain group cohesion and positive environments. I believe that much of what is reported in the book will ring true in the wider teaching community, as the author hopes.

In two interesting and particularly pragmatic chapters near the end of the book, the author contextualises the conditions in which many language teachers work and considers how these might affect classroom practice. The rewards and frustrations of a career in English language education, as described by participants in the study, may well have the reader nodding in recognition. Senior also advises prudence in interpreting teachers' perspectives as research data. In particular, she sounds a note of caution to those attempting interviews for qualitative research; for example, interviewees may claim motivations which do not actually exist in an attempt to sound more professional.

In the final chapter, Senior proposes a model of classroom behaviour based on a balance between the social and the pedagogical. Although teachers often find it difficult to express exactly why they have taken certain actions in the classroom, and experienced teachers often appear to act intuitively, by analysing the reams of narrative generated over the course of the study the author is able to suggest "a teacher-generated theory of classroom practice" (p. 270). This theory is in a sense a localised solution which may have a general application. Senior returns to grounded theory to draw together her research and fits the data to existing theories, namely chaos theory and systems theory, in an attempt to find a match. She maintains that she finds her best fit in the work of van Lier and the metaphor of the classroom as a complex organism. This metaphor uses homeostasis in biological organisms—the process by which organisms adjust their functions in response to feedback—to represent the constant and often subconscious adjustments teachers make to maintain harmony and balance. But balance between what and what? Senior posits that social cohesion and effective learning are intertwined, and the flexibility of experienced teachers is intuitively informed by an understanding of group dynamics and pedagogy. A teacher will thus select the best course of action to serve both factors. This is perhaps described most pithily by the aphorism "Drawing the class together according to its social needs; Drawing the class along by attending to its learning needs; Drawing the class both together and along" (p. 280).

The book as a whole is well written and very readable. There are commentary boxes throughout which point to further reading, along with a

thorough bibliography. The structure of each chapter is topped and tailed with summaries of what came before and signposts of what comes ahead. This enables the reader to select pages of particular interest at leisure. However, I read the book from beginning to end and feel that doing so enhances the power of the final chapter in bringing together the complex anecdotal messages from classroom practitioners. This is a very valuable and enlightening study for teachers striving to develop an understanding of why they do what they do.

Reference

Nunan, D. (1992). *Research methods in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

A Friendly Approach to English for Academic Purposes.
Sonia Sonoko Strain. Tokyo: Shohakusha, 2006. xiv + 246
pp.

Reviewed by

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The title, *A Friendly Approach to English for Academic Purposes*, nicely captures the hands-on, easy-to-understand essence of this book. Unlike other texts in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and its subfield English for Academic Purposes (EAP), this book focuses on the practical aspects of designing and implementing “an introductory academic English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) seminar in the English Department of a small private university” (p. vii).

The author’s motivation for creating an academic EFL seminar arose from the junior year abroad program at her university. It often is the case that general English education courses—centered around skills such as general conversation, newspaper and short-essay reading (possibly with translation), and informal writing—neglect the acquisition of academic skills which might be useful for long-term study abroad.

Strain rectifies this problem by implementing a program for seven 1st-year university students on the different aspects of EAP, over a period of 26 eighty-minute classes. *A Friendly Approach to English for Academic Purposes* is her step-by-step case study of the program. As the author admits, the teaching time is too short to be ideal, but she claims the seminar to be a success after evaluating it using the methods of action research.

Since EAP “is concerned with all of the English communication skills which are required for study purposes in formal educational settings,” quite a few skills need to be taught (p. 5). Strain divides the seminar into six modules: a) launching an academic life, b) interacting in academic discussions, c) lecture class simulations, d) academic English reading, e) academic English writing, and f) academic term papers. The modules are designed to be interconnected and progressive, so that each learned skill builds towards the next module. Typical of an EAP classroom, the skills involved in the above modules are not often practiced in general English courses. Furthermore, without these skills, students would not be able to fully participate in their year-abroad classes.

The text provides a detailed, chapter-by-chapter explanation of each module in practice. The general theoretical underpinnings for Strain’s course design can be derived from R. R. Jordan’s *English for Academic Purposes* (1997), among others. Strain does indeed strengthen her argument by applying previous scholars’ research.

However, the tendency in reviewing a utilitarian book like Strain’s is not to attack the theory behind her EAP seminar, but to find flaws in the specifics of her practical advice. For example, there are some teachers who would rather not follow Strain’s example of using brainstorming in the classroom. Note-taking, a skill which Strain teaches in the lecture class simulations module, also may not seem worthy of so much emphasis, especially considering that a) more and more Japanese students are becoming particularly well-versed in this skill, and b) Western education focuses on the overall picture and general critical thinking skills rather than stressing specific details.

However, to be fair to the author, Strain does require the students to take notes on other students’ presentations and then to use these same notes in writing a summary of each presentation, so the note-taking skill is rather nicely linked to other skills.

With a seminar of this length, of course there will be specifics to quibble over, yet there are also a few theoretical arguments which could be debated. While the author is usually scrupulous in her citations, there are

a few claims which go unsupported. For example, she states that Japanese students have a visual language orientation (p. 110). Furthermore, perhaps more disputably, she claims, "Plagiarism is not an easy concept for Japanese students to understand. One reason for this is that there is a cultural tradition of copying Buddhist sutra kanji characters one by one, as a way to meditate" (p. 178). This quote appears to be unsupported and an entirely conjectural personal opinion.

Another concern with the book is that the author occasionally makes claims without evidence. Perhaps this is a difficulty with action research methods that are based on an account of one class of seven students. For example, on page 102, she mentions that her "students engaged in the scanning activity seriously and seemed to enjoy the task." As another example, she states that during a mini-lecture phase, "a congenial sense of solidarity and serious co-learning prevailed" (p. 175). These statements, and other statements like these, may seem believable within the context of the text, but could benefit from some more specific examples and support.

Nonetheless, even considering the above "minor problems," this book is a very welcome addition to the growing EAP library. With few textbooks and teaching materials directed towards the EAP market, Strain's work can serve as a practical reference in helping educators design and implement their own EAP courses. Coupled with more general and theoretical texts such as Jordan's *English for Academic Purposes*, Strain's book gives enough advice to the teacher in Japan who is a novice to EAP. The text will also be appreciated by the more seasoned EAP educator, as Strain has clearly put much thought and effort into her course design.

Reference

- Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for academic purposes: A guide and resource book for teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

***Connecting Speaking & Writing in Second Language Writing Instruction.* Robert Weissberg. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2006. xiii + 171 pp.**

Reviewed by
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The title of this work proposes the union of two distinct skills, one social, the other ostensibly solitary. This disparity notwithstanding, Robert Weissberg asserts on page 2 that writing “is fundamentally a social phenomenon,” and by the end of the book, argues a convincing if concise case for infusing the writing classroom with dialogue.

Weissberg writes with the practitioner in mind, including relevant theory but emphasizing application. Numerous anecdotes and dialogs illustrate in concrete terms how discourse in the L2 writing classroom works. The organization and accessible prose lend themselves to the translation of ideas into execution.

Chapter 1, “An Introduction to Dialogue and Second Language Writing,” offers a succinct justification for linking speech with writing and shows how the communicative language teaching approach provides conceptual underpinnings for dialogue in the writing classroom.

Chapter 2, “From Talking to Writing,” lays out the theory that links speech to the development of literacy. Theorists such as Vygotsky have observed that L1 writing skills are an outgrowth of L1 oracy and “inner speech.” Weissberg argues that social interaction can likewise serve as the “springboard” for developing L2 writing skills. The last section of the chapter is devoted to guidelines for injecting dialogue into L2 composition classes.

Chapter 3, “ESL Writers and Speakers: A World of Individual Differences,” profiles three L2 learners with varying degrees of speaking and writing proficiency. Instead of undergoing a definable transition from oracy to literacy as L1 writers do, L2 learners may well (be made to) take up literacy before becoming adequately grounded in the spoken language. Irrespective of their oral skills, L2 writers are distributed along a “continuum of modality preference,” with speech on one end and writing on the other. In other words, some students favor speaking over writing, and vice versa. Teachers must therefore take into account the

dispersion of L2 learners along this continuum when designing tasks for the writing class. For example, students that favor oral activities should have a chance to exploit the modality of speech in order to drive their own writing process forward. Properties inherent in speech, such as coherence, can be transferred to written work. Weissberg includes a sample of talk-write tasks tailored to a range of students.

Chapter 4, "Beyond Teacher-Talk: Instructional Conversations in the Writing Classroom," explores teacher-directed, though not teacher-centered, whole-class interaction. It describes specific techniques for getting students to speak more, as well as more meaningfully, in service of writing assignments, then shows how unproductive student-teacher interaction common to many classrooms can be transformed into authentic dialogue, free of a set-in-stone preplanned itinerary. Students are afforded more say over the direction of the discourse, helping to nurture the discretion they need for developing their own written voice. The chapter also furnishes examples of the style of teacher questions and comments that can act as a catalyst for student involvement.

Chapter 5, "Conversations in the Writing Tutorial" (cowritten by Gina L. Hochhalter), describes how to establish productive tutorial sessions. One-on-one student-teacher interaction calls for an atmosphere less formal than that of the teacher-led classroom. Tutors must adopt a less authoritative demeanor, putting themselves on an almost-even footing with the student. Otherwise, the student becomes passive and refrains from contributing to the dialog, which then deteriorates into a private lecture. The chapter closes with recommendations on how to train tutors for effective dialogue.

Written comments on student work figure prominently in the interaction between student and teacher. Teacher commentary is usually corrective, evaluative, and delivered with a finality that precludes response from the student. Chapter 6, "Written Response as Dialogue," provides detailed suggestions for crafting appropriate feedback to students to extend this written form of dialogue. The chapter also examines the potential of electronic communication and online classes, which lend themselves to repeated exchange (e.g., teacher response to student writing, followed by student response to teacher response).

As readers peruse this book, they will undoubtedly have concerns about the feasibility of connecting L2 speaking and writing. In the final chapter, the author obliges his skeptics: taking a fresh hard look at the sort of dialogic stance he advocates, Weissberg questions the assump-

tions of the preceding chapters. He probes for shortcomings and risks in incorporating dialogue into writing instruction. This is an appropriate close to the book, since it underscores how the academic dialogue on this issue can never come to a close.

Connecting Speaking & Writing nicely complements other works in the Michigan Series on Teaching Multilingual Writers. Weissberg envisions the writing classroom as a community engaged in dialogue, and he has produced a compact volume on how to effect one.

***Motivation, Language Attitudes and Globalisation: A Hungarian Perspective.* Zoltán Dörnyei, Kata Csizér, & Nóra Németh. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2006. xiii + 205 pp.**

Reviewed by

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Dörnyei, the principal author of this book, is one of the leading researchers on L2 motivation, having published many insightful works for language teachers and researchers. His work covers a variety of topics, ranging from advanced research on the attitudes of language learners (aimed at academics in linguistic fields) and hands-on material for practical use (aimed at language teachers and fledgling researchers). Some of Dörnyei's work has been translated into Japanese and has been well received among Japanese teachers and researchers.

This book is based on the results of the largest national survey on language attitude and motivation available to date. The survey, which involved over 13,391 13 to 14 year old language learners in Hungary, was carried out on three successive occasions: 1993, 1999, and 2004. Five foreign languages were targeted: English, German, French, Italian, and Russian in six language communities in Hungary. This ensured that data were gathered from each region of the country. The results of the survey were not confined to the European environment, but had wider implications concerning changes in attitude, motivational dynamics, and the globalization of language.

If the reader is interested in the application of research on language learners' motivation, two other books of Dörnyei's are also highly recommended. His *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom* (2001) has been an especially helpful guide and provides many useful hints to motivate learners in the class. Additionally, Dörnyei's *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing* (2003) has been an indispensable step-by-step guide to designing questionnaires for my own research.

There are seven chapters in the book including the introduction, summary, and conclusion, as well as 16 appendices. In Chapters 1 and 2, the authors describe the theoretical background and basic information about the surveyed country, Hungary. These chapters make the book accessible not only for specialists but also nonprofessionals who may lack knowledge of Hungary or the study of language globalization, language attitudes, and language learning motivation. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the main findings of their survey. Chapter 3 deals with attitudinal and motivational dimensions and their changes over the 12-year period. Chapter 4 highlights the three modifying factors in language attitudes and motivation: gender, geographical location, and school instruction. Chapter 5 introduces a new motivation theory known as the "L2 Motivational Self System," which consists of three main components: "Ideal L2 Self," "Ought-to L2 Self," and "L2 Learning Experience." Chapters 6 and 7 analyze two issues: the motivational profiles of language learners and the effects of intercultural contact on language. Finally, the summary focuses on: a) the globalization of language, b) motivation and the self, and c) intercultural contact.

The survey presents detailed findings on the relationships between motivation, language attitudes, and globalization. It has caused me to rethink my current teaching situation. For example, language classrooms are no longer homogeneous. Each class I am currently teaching includes *ryugakusei* (students from overseas) and / or *kikokushijo* (Japanese returnee students). Further, the number of fellow language teachers from overseas working in Japan has been increasing. In addition, I have observed that the cultural content of course material used in English language classes has gradually shifted from Anglo-American English to World Englishes. These dramatic changes sometimes amaze those of us who are teaching in real-world classroom situations. This survey, therefore, provides me with insightful perspectives for my own classes in Japan. As a result, my own teaching environment has been globalized.

Despite the fact that Hungary is geographically distant from Japan, we who live in the era of globalization can learn a lot from this book, which is full of examples of surveys that have been carried out with a long-term perspective. The book can lead us to reassess foreign language education and its policy in Japan. It is recommended reading for individual foreign language teachers and researchers as well as language curriculum developers and policymakers serving as decision makers for language programs in school systems.

References

- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Motivation and Experience in Language Learning. **Yoshiyuki Nakata. Bern: Peter Lang, 2006. 278 pp.**

Reviewed by
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Motivation and Experience in Language Learning began as a Ph.D. dissertation with the aim of showing that language learning motivation and experiences in language learning are clearly connected. Nakata uses qualitative and quantitative research approaches to help identify links between motivation and experience. The book consists of 11 chapters that can be divided into four sections. Chapters 1 to 3 deal mainly with the issue of motivation and look at it from different angles. Chapters 4 to 6 touch on theories in educational and cognitive psychology, especially as to how they relate to motivation and autonomy. Chapters 7 to 10 present an analysis of two studies and in Chapter 11, Nakata draws a summary of the discussion including pedagogic implications. Each chapter concludes with a summary of what was discussed in that chapter.

In the first section, the groundwork is laid for the rest of the book. Nakata begins in Chapter 1 by reflecting back on his own experience at different levels of his own language learning experience. He recounts times when he was really motivated at language learning as well as times when he was not motivated at all. With motivation being the central topic of the first section, great effort is used in Chapter 2 to try to identify what motivation is and if it can be defined at all. It is in this chapter that Nakata reveals that what this book is based on is the concept of social constructivism. Finally, in Chapter 3, the broad topic of motivation is narrowed down to primarily looking at language learning motivation. Attention is given to a brief history of language learning motivation and then to more recent studies that have tried to address its complexity.

In the second section on educational and cognitive psychology, Chapter 4 specifically takes up language learning motivation from an educational standpoint. Several theories are discussed to help the reader understand where the research in this book is going. These theories include the goal theory, self-determination theory, and the concept of learner autonomy. The discussion of these theories directly introduces the reader to Chapter 5, which attempts to provide a clearer picture of the language learning process as seen through a social constructivist view of learning and theories of social interaction. These theories help explain motivation in a deeper sense, which is very important when applying it to the context of Japanese English learners. Chapter 6 is completely dedicated to the Japanese learning context. Nakata explains that Japanese philosophy of thought is Confucian in nature, which is why Japanese students approach education and learning English the way they do. These aspects include the avoidance of public shame, respect for the teacher, making an effort, being persistent, and loyalty to the group (p. 152).

The third section, which includes Chapters 7 to 10, guides the reader from discussions in theory to recent research. In Chapter 7, this transition takes form. The first part of the chapter introduces the crucial elements which must be included in research of this kind. The last part of the chapter then outlines and explains the procedure that will be undertaken in the following chapters. Chapter 8 begins with a pilot study including a detailed account of the participants, materials, and results. The two research goals are a) to gain insight into the construct of foreign language motivation among first year university non-English-major EFL learners who study English as a part of their degree requirements, and b) to use the findings as a framework for an appropriate teaching approach with a sample of these learners (p. 203). The result of this pilot study formed

the basis of the more detailed research in the next chapter. Chapters 9 and 10 present the essence of Nakata's research. Chapter 9 explains the procedure of the project in great detail. Chapter 10 is a well-documented account of each of the five final participants involved in the research. The research focuses on the developmental process of the intrinsic motivation of each learner. The study employed both interviews and closed questionnaires to reveal past experiences in English language learning as well as to uncover changes in motivation. While this book is a good read for researchers who are currently employing these techniques, educators who are looking for practical suggestions and concrete ideas will find few in this book. In summary, it can be seen that some students like or dislike studying English for a variety of reasons. I respect the effort and time given to this research, but one would have to say that many changing factors which influence a student's motivation from day to day are out of an educator's control. It is very difficult if not impossible to accurately show the complexity of these findings in a graph or summary.

Chapter 11 serves as the conclusion to the book, and lists seven pedagogic principles. Nakata concludes by saying that this book may have only introduced the study of motivation and language learning and that there are still gaps to fill. Finally, Nakata provides a detailed bibliography, appendices of the materials he used, and two indexes—one on themes and the other of authors mentioned.

This book has inspired and challenged me to look at my own teaching in new ways. With reference to the numerous factors that influence students, how much do classroom dynamics play a role in motivation? Critically reflecting on my own teaching, I ask myself if there are things I say or do that leave a student with positive or negative impressions of English language learning.