The Influence of Goal Orientation, Past Language Studies, Overseas Experiences, and Gender Differences on Japanese EFL Learners' Beliefs, Anxiety, and Behaviors

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The purpose of this study was to examine how Japanese students' past language studies, in formal classroom settings during their elementary school years and their overseas experiences before entering university, affected their affective and strategic aspects of English learning in university level English classes within the framework of Goal Theory (Dweck 1986). The participants consisted of 556 EFL learners at two national universities, who were asked to report their age, gender and experience – or lack thereof – with English learning during elementary school, the period of overseas experiences, goal orientations, learning strategy preferences, beliefs, anxiety, and how much time they spent learning English outside the classroom per week. The results of a categorical regression analysis indicate that, as Goal Theory presumes, students' goal orientation types determine their beliefs, anxiety, and behaviors. The results also suggest that the English learning experience in formal classrooms during elementary schools in Japan had little impact on the learners' current English learning at the university level. Conversely, overseas experiences not only had an effect on minimizing the fear of using English, but also act to predict the average time devoted to learning English outside the classroom. In summary, this study found that the real experience of using the target language overseas was a more significant factor than the age at which the participants actually started learning English.

Keywords: strategy, overseas experience, English as a Foreign Language, Goal Theory

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1 Introduction

Adult second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learners, as Bley-Vroman (1989) pointed out in the fundamental differences hypothesis, not only consciously study those linguistic features such as pronunciation and grammar, but think much of non-linguistic matters as their goals, anxiety, learning beliefs, and strategies for learning them effectively. In addition, a variety of past FL experiences influence their thoughts and behaviors in their L2 and FL learning. Specifically in FL settings, as an example, learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Japan lack the exposure of authentic English usage and materials, and thus take it for granted that it is necessary for them to sustain their motivation to study English for utilitarian purposes, as opposed to Japanese learners of English as L2 in the US.

In this study, this facet of EFL learning in Japan, i.e., the relationship among non-linguistic variables (e.g. goal orientations, beliefs, and anxiety), past language experiences, and gender differences, and their impact on learning behaviors (e.g. strategies) are to be examined within a framework of Goal Theory (Dweck 1986), which enables us to integrate those variables from an educational psychological perspectives. Goal Theory, as introduced by Irie (2003), is a relatively new explanatory theory in the field of SLA, but psychological constructs suggested in the theory (i.e. goal orientations) have been empirically investigated in connection with a wide range of affective and cognitive behaviors in educational psychology (cf. Pintrich & Schunk 1996). By reviewing several motivational theories and studies in the Japanese EFL context (e.g. McGuire 2000; Yashima 2000), Irie (2003) also stated that goal orientations should be of value toward interpreting the findings of previous studies on Japanese EFL learners' L2 motivation.

The strength of adopting Goal Theory is that the theory directly explains the relationship between learning orientations of the learners as affective factors and their beliefs and behaviors (i.e. strategies are a part of behaviors) as cognitive factors, while some other theories frequently referred to in SLA research indirectly deal with these relationships. For example, attribution theory (Weiner 1986) focuses on the reasons of outcomes of one's study, and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan 1985) focuses mainly on explaining the transition and variation of people's affective state, (not trait) i.e., motivation, from the state of amotivation to intrinsic motivation by accounting for the interactions among basic psychological needs.

This article begins with a brief overview of Goal Theory, a review of goal orientation studies in the field of L2 and FL acquisition, and an attempt of the integration of the aforementioned variables including the background information pertinent to the adoption and the revisions of the survey instruments. Next, the statistical results are discussed with an emphasis on their relationship to the theoretical background. Finally, the implications and limitations of this study are addressed.

2 Review of the literature

2.1 Goal Theory in educational psychology

Goal Theory, developed by Dweck (1986), is a theory on goal orientations toward achievement in academic tasks. Dweck (1986: 1040) sums up Goal Theory by stating,

> It has long been known that factors other than ability influence whether children seek or avoid challenges, whether they persist or withdraw in the face of difficulty, and whether they use and develop their skills effectively.

In Goal Theory, individual behaviors are thought to be rational and economic so as to achieve certain goals (Miyamoto & Nasu 1995). That is, based on what kind of goals an individual student has, Goal Theory can be used to make predictions about that student's learning behavior and learning outcome (Dweck 1986). In general, Goal Theory is used to explain the development of young learners' behaviors in academic tasks, but the theory assumes that the foundation of their goal orientations, which is called theory of intelligence, has been internalized in his or her infancy, somewhat like a personality trait (cf. Dweck 1999; Pintrich 2000; Smiley & Dweck 1994), which is in turn relatively stable over the course of a person's lifetime. Therefore, the premise allows us to apply the theory to deal with adolescent and adult learners' behaviors (cf. Kubo 1999; Tanaka & Yamauchi 2000).

Two types of goal orientations are proposed in Goal Theory: learning goal (LG) and performance goal (PG) orientations (Dweck 1986). The former refers to the orientation to increase competence and understand something new, and the latter refers to the orientation to gain positive judgment (PG-positive), or to avoid negative judgment of his or her competence (PG-negative). For example, students with LG orientation are more likely to view obstacles to learning favorably and to use such obstacles as incentives to increase their efforts to learn something, while students with PG orientation are more likely to view the same obstacles negatively (Ames 1984; Elliot & Dweck 1985 quoted in Dweck 1986; Leggett 1986 quoted in Dweck 1986). This is simply because those who have PG orientation fear obstacles and failure in general, and attribute any errors that they make to a lack of ability on their part. Furthermore, unlike students with LG orientation, students with PG orientation, if they think they are more likely to fail, are more likely to withdraw from the challenge that a difficult task poses. Therefore, whether students feel more or less confident in a certain task depends on their judgment of their present abilities to succeed at that task. Task choice as a learning behavior is affected by the degree of confidence in present ability.

In short, students with LG orientation, even if their ability is low, choose challenging tasks that foster learning. They are willing to risk displays of ignorance and incompetence in order to acquire skills and knowledge. For them, learning is more important than success or positive recognition by others. On the other hand, students with PG orientation need to perceive their ability to be high and their chance of success to be great before they will attempt a challenging task. If their goal is to obtain a favorable judgment of ability, rather than to learn, they will choose tasks in which they are likely to obtain a

favorable judgment, even if they do not learn anything from doing the task (Bandura & Dweck 1985 quoted in Dweck 1986; Elliott & Dweck 1985 quoted in Dweck 1986).

2.2 Goal Theory in EFL study in Japan

In the Japanese context, Hayamizu, Ito, and Yoshizaki (1989) developed a questionnaire, the *Mokuhyo Tassei Keikou Shakudo* to measure young Japanese students' goal orientations in accordance with the basic tenets of Goal Theory. The results of their study supported the basic categories of two different types of goal orientations and also found two sub-categories in the PG orientation: PG-positive and PG-negative in the Japanese context. In a study of EFL learners in a Japanese university, Nakayama (2006) also reached the same factor solution with a high reliability using a modified version of the inventory for university students.

Within the framework of Goal Theory, Nakayama (2005) investigated the relationship between goal orientations, beliefs, and learning strategies and concluded that not only learners' goal orientations, but also their beliefs play an important role when students are choosing language learning strategies. More concretely, Nakayama (2005) showed that students with LG orientation and rating high in beliefs about their competence prefer to use metacognitive strategies, pronunciation strategies, and organization strategies. On the other hand, students with PG and rating high in beliefs about traditional English learning styles, tend to use guessing strategies. Though this study suggested the importance of taking those variables (goal orientations and beliefs) into account when we teach FL for EFL students, the influence of the other variables such as anxiety, past learning experiences, and gender differences on the strategy choice were not considered, which means that the study potentially lacked the ratio of the other variables explaining the variance of the strategy. Therefore, there is a need to examine the impact of all of the variables on the choice of strategy in one study.

2.3 Motivation and use of strategies in the L2 and FL learning models

Most research on affective variables in language learning (e.g. Chen et al. 2005; Dörnyei 1990; Gardner 1985; Kondo & Yang 2003; Liu & Jackson 2008) has dealt with the role of motivation and the debilitative role of anxiety, but has denied the direct relationship between affective variables and proficiency. Conversely, several studies on cognitive variables of learning strategies (Gardner et al. 1997; Kubo 1999) have indicated that strategy use has both positive and negative impacts on proficiency, depending on the socio-cultural and educational contexts where the target language is taught or learnt. For an L2 environment, Gardner et al. (1997) examined a latent factor model called the Socio-Educational Model, the original model of which was proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1959). By using structural equation modeling (SEM), Gardner et al. (1997) reported an integrative motivation of French learners in Canada toward the target language (French), and that the L2 community had a significant positive impact on L2 achievement. Unexpectedly, this research also indicated that strategy variables (e.g. remembering more effectively, using mental processes, organizing and evaluating learning, managing emotion, and learning with

others, adopted measures from Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), developed by Oxford 1990) had a significant negative impact on L2 achievement (e.g. cloze test, theme test and thing category test adapted by Lalonde & Gardner 1984; French achievement test and grades in French from the institution of the participants).

Alternatively, in an EFL environment, Kubo (1999) proposed the Orientation-Appraisal Model, which indicated that orientations had a significant positive impact on the two strategy variables (e.g. general strategies and comprehensive strategies which were adopted and modified items from the three strategy inventories from SILL developed by Oxford 1990, and from Politxer & McGreoarty 1985) and, in turn, the latent factor of the two strategies had a significant impact on EFL achievement (e.g. multiple-choice vocabulary test by Brown et al. 1986; Cloze test by Shimizu 1989).

The contribution of the Socio-Educational Model developed by Gardner and his colleagues was an attempt to account for a wide number of variables and their interactions simultaneously, and demonstrated the close relationship between motivation and achievement in an L2 situation. On the other hand, the contribution of the Orientation-Appraisal Model developed by Kubo (1999) was that it viewed L2 learning from a Japanese EFL perspective, and exhibited how this strategy perspective might play a much greater role in the EFL classroom in Japan than in the ESL context of North America. The detailed strategies focused on in the Orientation-Appraisal Model included Organization strategy (to connect words and phrases to the context and categorize them into parts); Guessing strategy (to guess the meaning of words and phrases using the context); Repeating strategy (to memorize words and phrases in different ways); Imaging strategy (to make visual images of words when memorizing them); Media strategy (to study the target language by using audio-visual aids); Metacognitive strategy (to monitor and plan how to study the target language); and Social strategy (to practice the target language with friends).

2.4 Beliefs about FL learning

However, neither of these models states that there are any related variables between goals, anxiety, and strategy – the role of *learner beliefs*. With regard to learner beliefs, by using *Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory, BALLI,* developed by Horwitz (1987), Yang (1999) examined the relationship of college EFL learners' beliefs about language learning and the strategies they used, and reported their beliefs were related to certain types of learning strategies. From this, Yang (1999) concluded that learner beliefs might be one of the factors that influence learning behaviors. On the other hand, in the Japanese EFL context, Tanaka and Ellis (2003) examined changes in Japanese university students' beliefs about language learning and their proficiency before and after studying abroad, and reported statistically significant changes in the students' beliefs related to learning behaviors and self-efficacy (confidence) during the study-abroad period. Taken from these viewpoints, the current study includes the variable of learner beliefs and examines the roles and interactions among these variables.

2.5 Anxiety in FL learning

Matsuda and Gobel (2001) explored whether there are differences in types of anxiety based on the Japanese school year, and reported that anxiety in an oral-reading class was greater among first-year Japanese university students than among second- or third-year students. Matsuda and Gobel (2001) suggested that this might be due to the attention devoted to accurate grammar and vocabulary in the previous year when first-year (Japanese university) students are preparing for college entrance exams in Japanese high schools. Focusing on assessing Japanese high school and college students' anxiety in a communicative English class, Mori (2003) developed the *Language Learning Anxieties Scale* and reported that there are two types of anxiety in the English class: in-class anxiety and future use anxiety. The former refers to the fear of making mistakes in English pronunciation and generally feeling stress when making presentations in front of others. The latter refers to the whether they can use English when abroad in the future. Unlike the anxiety reported by Matsuda and Gobel (2001), these two types of anxiety are specific to university students who do not need to think much of college entrance examinations.

2.6 Past EFL experience in Japan

Since some variables of past experience have not been included in the studies reviewed in previous sections thus far, and the influence of these models still remains unexamined, these variables were included in the present study. As a past language experience, overseas experience in a country where the target language is spoken is considered to be one of the most important factors for being a successful language learner (Falk & Kanach 2000; Wilkinson 1998). In our increasingly globalized world, students have easy access to foreign countries, furnishing them with significant experience both while they travel and when they come back to their home country. Thus, this impact needs to be researched further.

Another past language experience is English learning in elementary schools in Japan. The virtues of this type of study have been emphasized in the literature (Higuchi 1999; Ito 1990, 1997; Kuniyoshi 1996; Nakayama 1990), with researchers finding positive outcomes from learners who have experienced this type of learning. The impact of learning in elementary school will also be discussed in the current study.

2.7 Gender differences and strategies

Some studies (e.g. Bacon 1992; Bacon & Finnemann 1992; Gass & Varonis 1986) have reported that there might be gender differences in the use of language learning strategies. According to Bacon (1992), male university students use more translation strategies than female university students; on the other hand, women use monitoring strategies more than men. That is, women tend to monitor their understanding and comprehension during using and learning the target language. Along a similar line, Bacon and Finnemann (1992) reported that women use more "private/non-oral mode" in language learning than men, which means that women rely on their L1 to make their L2 more meaningful by

rehearsing in their minds. As Ellis (1994) described, this also means that women rely on their L1 to make the L2 meaningful, rehearsing in their heads before they spoke and guessing at what might be going on. In addition, in terms of interactions, Gass and Varonis (1986) reported that men use opportunities to interact to produce more output, while women use it to obtain more input.

3 Target issues and purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the roles and interactions of the selected variables of affective factors (goal orientations, beliefs, and anxiety), behavioral factors (strategies and learning time), past FL language experiences (English learning at elementary school and overseas experiences), and gender differences that have had an impact upon how Japanese university students learn English; all within the framework of Goal Theory. The second purpose is to delineate some implications for practice and further research.

In the present study, the primary assumption is that the types of goal orientations students possess, their past FL language experiences, and gender differences will influence their types of FL learning beliefs, their level of FL anxiety, and their behaviors. More concretely, this study aims to examine the following research questions:

1. Can we predict FL learning beliefs by students' goal orientations, past FL experiences, and gender differences?
2. Can we predict FL learning anxiety by students' goal orientations, past FL language experiences, and gender differences?
3. Can we predict students' behaviors (strategies and learning time) by students' goal orientations, past FL language experiences, and gender differences?

4 Methods

4.1 Participants

The participants were 556 (male: 371, female: 185) non-English majors at two Japanese national universities; one is located in a metropolitan area in Kanto (375) and the other in a rural area in Kansai (181). All participants were first-year students, and were enrolled in compulsory English classes. Ranging in age from 18 to 32 years in age (96.5% were under 21), the majority of the participants (93.7%) had never visited a foreign country for more than 2 weeks, while 27.5% of them began learning English in elementary school (ELES), and their average English learning time outside the classroom per week was 1 hour and 30 minutes (Mean: 1.50; SD: 2.03).

4.2 Instruments

There were a total of 54 items (except for qualitative and open-ended questions) on the questionnaire given to the participants, all of which, except the ones

related to gender, age, majors and English-learning background, were accompanied by a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree.*

4.2.1 Goal orientation scale

This scale consists of nine items adopted from Nakayama (2005). Since the original version (the Mokuhyo Tassei Keikou Shakudo developed by Hayamizu et al. 1989) was designed for younger Japanese students, Nakayama (2005) modified the scale to make it more appropriate for Japanese university students. The revised version consisted of 9 items, each of which stated a possible reason for achievement or learning. Based on the framework of Dweck (1986), three items (G4, G5, and G6) were indicative of LG orientation, and six items referred to PG orientation (G1, G2, and G3 referring to avoiding negative judgment, and G7, G8, and G9 were on gaining positive judgment). Detailed item descriptions are shown in Table 1.

4.2.2 Language learning strategy scale

In order to assess the participants' strategies for studying English, the Language Learning Strategy Scale (Nakayama 2005) was used. The scale consisted of 21 items, each involving a statement describing the use of strategy and had seven categories. This was a revised version of SILL developed by Oxford (1990), which was modified for the present study for the EFL context (Nakayama 2005). SILL is composed of six categories of language learning strategies. The categories are memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Although Oxford (1990) introduced SILL as a generalized inventory, Robson and Midorikawa (2001) reported two problems with the factor construction of SILL. One is that despite the high degree of reliability of SILL as a whole, it still consists of six independent subsections in its factor construction. The other is that the results of factor analysis do not confirm Oxford's six strategy categories even when attempting to force the analysis into a six-factor solution (Robson & Midorikawa 2001). For the present study, the following seven categories were included in the inventory: Organization strategy (S1, S2, and S3), Guessing strategy (S4, S5, and S6), Repeating strategy (S7, S8, and S9), Imaging strategy (S10, S11, and S12), and Media strategy (S13, S14, and S15) for studying vocabulary in a reading and grammar class, Metacognitive strategy (S16, S17, and S18), and Social strategy (S19, S20, and S21). Detailed item descriptions can be found in Table 2.

4.2.3 Beliefs scale

First, in order to assess the participants' beliefs about English learning, an EFL version (Nakayama 2005) of the BALLI developed by Horwitz (1987) for North American learners of foreign languages was used. It consisted of 9 items on beliefs about language learning in Japan: Beliefs about Excellent Pronunciation (B1, B2, and B3), Traditional English Learning Beliefs (B4, B5, and B6), and Self Confidence Beliefs (B7, B8, and B9). Second, in order to assess general learning beliefs, Ueki's (2002) scale was used without modification. It consisted of 9 items

on General Learning Beliefs: Beliefs about Learning Environment (B10, B11, and B12), Beliefs about Good Learners (B13, B14, and B15), and Beliefs about Effort (B16, B17, and B18). Detailed item descriptions are shown in Table 3.

4.2.4 Anxiety scales

In order to assess the participants' anxiety in learning English, the Language Learning Anxieties Scale developed by Mori (2003) was used. It consisted of 6 items on anxiety in English language learning in Japan: Future Use Anxiety (A1, A2, and A3) and In Class Anxiety (A4, A5, and A6). Detailed item descriptions are outlined in Table 4.

4.2.5 Qualitative and open-ended questions

Concerning the participants' past FL experiences, an English learning background questionnaire was prepared. This questionnaire consists of the following items: (1) whether the participants had studied English before entering junior high school; and (2) whether the participants had studied English abroad before entering university. For the first question, the participants were asked to report their English learning experience during elementary schools in detail: for example, the institutions where they had received English instruction and the duration of the instruction. When the participants studied English more than 45 minutes per week regularly within the academic semesters at elementary school, those were assigned to the *Yes* category (1 = "Yes" or 0 = "No"). In the second question, the participants were requested to report the number of weeks they had stayed in the country.

Regarding one of the indicators on learning behavior, the questionnaire also included a question about how much time the participants spent learning English outside the classroom per week. The participants were requested to report the average time of studying English outside the formal university class periods.

4.3 Procedures

The questionnaires were administrated to general education English classes toward the end of the course. The participants filled out a consent form and completed the survey in 30 minutes at the end of a lesson. Of the 580 collected questionnaires, only 556 could be used; the others were discarded because they were incomplete.

4.4 Data analysis

As for a preliminary analysis, item analysis including exploratory factor analysis was performed to find out the value of Cronbach's α and factor loadings for the reliability of the scales, the mean (M), and the standard deviation (SD), which reveals the respondent's general tendency. Those items in each factor which scored more than .75 in Cronbach's α were summed for further analysis.

In order to examine the research questions, categorical regression analysis (CRA) was conducted as further analysis since the data of this study included

nominal factors such as gender. As Moss (2008) reported, in CRA, nominal and ordinal variables are effectively transformed into interval variables and it can help accommodate nominal, ordinal, and interval variables simultaneously.

5 Findings of preliminary analyses

From Table 1 through Table 4, the descriptive statistics, the results of the exploratory factor analysis, and the internal consistency (Cronbach's α) of each factor are reported, respectively.

As Table 1 demonstrates, the results of the exploratory factor analysis supported the original three categories of the goal orientation scales and indicated adequate reliability of each factor. Three factors were extracted, and 61.1% of the total variance was explained by them. The first factor (F1) was LG and showed high internal consistency (α= .839), the second factor (F2) was PG-positive and showed adequate internal consistency (α= .788), and the third factor (F3) was PG-negative and showed an adequate level of the internal consistency (α= .751). These three orientations were essentially the same three factor extractions that had been found in earlier studies (Hayamizu et al. 1989; Nakayama 2005; Nakayama & Yoshida 2003), including tertiary level students, and the results of our study supported these findings. This can be endorsed by the fact that those who scored high in PG-negative are not seriously interested in studying. Rather, because of their PG-negative orientation, they study in order to avoid negative feedback from others, and those who might rate high on the PG-negative would not try to take exams and enroll in university (i.e., possessing such study goals would not allow them to enter university).

Table 2 illustrates the final factor solution of the learning strategy scale. In the first factor solution, since the items (S16, S17, and S18) of Metcognitive strategy were not grouped together, they were not used for further statistical analysis. Six factors were extracted, and 58.76% of the total variance can be explained by this factor solution. It is inferred from Table 2 that the participants, as a whole, tended to use Organization strategy, Guessing strategy and Imaging strategy, and also tended not to use Repeating strategy, Media strategy, and Social strategy (the mean average of those strategy variables was < 4.00).

As is shown in Table 3, five factors were extracted but only the Traditional English Learning Beliefs (TELB) indicated more than .75 in Cronbach's α for reliability. Therefore, TELB was only used for further analysis (i.e., categorical regression analysis). It is, however, inferred from Table 3 that the participants, as a whole, tended to have a contradictory feeling that they rated positively on the item *Everyone can learn to speak English* (B9). On the other hand, they responded negatively on the item *I have an aptitude to acquire English* (B7). In addition, they believed that making an effort (B18) and having sheer willpower (B17) are important factors in language learning.

As Table 4 indicates, two factors (future use anxiety: α = .929; in class anxiety: α = .770) were extracted, and 69.84% of the total variance can be explained by this factor solution. It is inferred from Table 4 that the participants tended to feel anxiety at the prospect of using English abroad in the future as opposed to feeling anxiety in the classroom. When their situations and needs are considered, the results can be better understood. Since they will be soon

required to acquire foreign language skills before looking for employment after graduation, their anxiety originates from their lack of self-confidence in using English in the future (Future Use Anxiety), not in the fear of making mistakes in front of others in class (In Class Anxiety). This also can be endorsed by the results of goal orientations (see Table 1) that the participants, as a whole, do not display PG-negative, rather they have more LG and PG-positive.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of goal orientation scale（N=556）

Item Description	*M*	*SD*	F1	F2	F3	*h²*
LG: Learning Goal Orientation (α= .839)						
G4 I enjoy finding new means of problem-solving.	4.81	1.65	**.791**	-.037	.093	.64
G5 I enjoy knowing that I can do it.	5.17	1.52	**.909**	.026	.044	.83
G6 What I study now will in turn help me to understand new ideas.	5.19	1.52	**.698**	.032	.003	.49
PG-positive: Performance Goal Orientation (α= .788)						
G7 I don't want to fail a credit.	5.78	1.41	-.069	**.940**	.030	.89
G8 I don't want to repeat a year.	5.74	1.53	-.059	**.874**	.033	.77
G9 I want to get good marks in my exams.	5.46	1.50	.114	**.467**	.161	.26
PG-negative: Performance Goal Orientation (α= .751)						
G1 I don't want to be seen as foolish by others.	2.96	1.80	.116	.129	**.800**	.67
G2 I want to be noticed by my friends.	2.73	1.66	.121	-.052	**.778**	.62
G3 I don't want to be scolded by my parents and teachers.	2.89	1.70	-.082	.151	**.558**	.34

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of learning strategy scale（N=556）

Item	Description	M	SD	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	h^2
Social Strategy (α= .899)										
S19	In order for them to correct my mistakes, I study English with students who are good at English.	3.06	1.74	**.838**	.068	.349	.285	.124	.274	1.00
S20	I practice English with other students.	3.11	1.76	**.817**	.094	.262	.246	.148	.251	.89
S21	I study English with those who are good at English so that I can ask them for help.	3.14	1.78	**.944**	.060	.276	.257	.126	.269	1.13
Guessing Strategy (α= .800)										
S4	I guess the meanings of words by thinking of the relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English.	5.30	1.48	.064	**.849**	.181	.309	.119	-.032	.87
S5	I guess the meanings of words from the context and the meaning of a passage.	5.65	1.29	.061	**.799**	.125	.262	.125	-.033	.74
S6	I guess the meanings of words from a part of speech, a prefix, and derived forms of them.	5.05	1.52	.060	**.646**	.265	.281	.173	.043	.60
Media Strategy (α= .756)										
S13	I study English through movies.	3.30	1.91	.217	.171	**.674**	.257	.149	.179	.65
S14	I study English through radio programs or audio-CD materials.	3.51	1.93	.219	.200	**.692**	.242	.149	.228	.70
S15	I study English through TV news programs.	2.60	1.74	.280	.154	**.783**	.243	.164	.206	.84
Organization Strategy (α= .767)										
S1	I connect words to other words which can be used in the same context.	3.84	1.71	.289	.249	.347	**.627**	.150	.245	.74
S2	I categorize words into synonyms and antonyms.	4.18	1.69	.236	.284	.262	**.974**	.230	.228	1.26
S3	I associate words with their conjugated forms.	4.66	1.61	.195	.414	.237	**.621**	.223	.202	.74
Imaging Strategy (α= .752)										
S10	I look at new words and phrases over again and again so that I can make an image of the words in my mind.	4.59	1.71	.116	.212	.147	.241	**.840**	.012	.84
S11	I learn words by recalling the spelling of them in my mind.	4.17	1.74	.112	.079	.221	.163	**.696**	.059	.58
S12	I learn words by looking at the arrangement of the alphabet of each word and grasping the characteristics of them.	4.09	1.87	.098	.081	.095	.145	**.613**	.016	.42
Repeating Strategy (α= .686)										
S7	I learn words by heart by translating them from Japanese into English, and vice versa, several times.	3.35	1.81	.236	.003	.200	.223	.155	**.543**	.46
S8	I learn words by writing the words many times in order to recall them perfectly.	3.83	1.92	.194	-.092	.135	.146	-.101	**.904**	.91
S9	I learn words by writing and pronouncing them.	4.39	1.89	.254	.152	.377	.294	.124	**.567**	.65

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of learning beliefs scale（N=556）

Item	Description	*M*	*SD*	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	h^2
Traditional English Learning Beliefs (α= .783)									
B4	To study English is mostly to memorize as many words as you can.	4.08	1.59	**.712**	-.008	.011	.131	.056	.58
B5	To study English is mostly to memorize as many grammar rules as you can.	3.94	1.51	**.881**	-.015	.067	.043	.090	.87
B6	To study English is mostly to learn how to translate English into Japanese and vice versa.	4.26	1.54	**.608**	-.025	-.012	.100	.115	.50
Self Confidence Beliefs (α= .711)									
B7	I have an aptitude to acquire English.	3.17	1.68	.033	**.591**	-.012	-.103	.151	.51
B8	I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.	4.06	1.71	-.001	**.918**	.067	.009	.062	.91
B9	Everyone can learn to speak English.	4.57	1.76	-.076	**.541**	.083	.159	.020	.35
Beliefs about Good Learners (α= .650)									
B13	Those who can do well are good learners.	5.36	1.43	.004	.044	**.459**	.054	.202	.42
B14	It is effective to establish your own preferred strategy.	6.05	1.02	.002	.038	**.717**	.112	-.014	.51
B15	It is effective to find a good strategy by trial and error.	5.62	1.25	.046	.045	**.714**	.118	.021	.55
Beliefs about Effort (α= .746)									
B17	It is effective to study with sheer willpower.	5.48	1.39	.107	.067	.167	**.695**	.044	.57
B18	It is effective to make a steady effort.	5.39	1.49	.173	-.012	.120	**.800**	.056	.74
Beliefs about Learning Environment (α= .608)									
B11	If my teachers are good at teaching, I get a good grade.	4.55	1.73	.139	.029	.155	.046	**.582**	.63
B12	I get good grade when I am in an advanced learner class.	3.55	1.75	.089	.189	.013	.041	**.711**	.76

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of learning anxiety scale（N=556）

Item Description	*M*	*SD*	F1	F2	h^2
Future Use Anxiety (α= .929)					
A1 I feel anxious about how much I can use English when abroad.	5.80	1.46	**.881**	.203	.82
A2 I feel anxious about how much I can make myself understood in English when abroad.	5.79	1.46	**.945**	.196	.93
A3 I feel anxious about whether I can say what I want to say in English when abroad.	5.61	1.60	**.813**	.249	.72
In Class Anxiety (α= .770)					
A4 I fear making mistakes in English pronunciation in class.	4.28	1.85	.239	**.664**	.50
A5 I feel stressed when I make a presentation in class.	4.60	1.87	.157	**.943**	.91
A6 I never feel anxious in English class. (Reversed item)	4.02	1.88	-.130	**-.540**	.31

6 Results and discussion

6.1 Categorical regression analysis

Table 5 demonstrates the results of the CRA predicting the dependent variables (beliefs, anxiety, and behaviors) from the independent variables (LG, PG-positive, PG-negative, overseas experience, ELES, and gender differences). These results are discussed in relation to the research questions below.

6.2.1 Research Question 1: Can we predict FL learning beliefs by students' goal orientations, past FL language experiences, and gender differences?

With regard to beliefs, as Table 5 demonstrates, about 11% of the variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .111), and all three types of goal orientations (LG, PG-positive, and PG-negative) help us to predict students' beliefs about traditional English learning (TELB) while the other independent variables (i.e., past language experiences and gender differences) were not significant for prediction. Especially, PG-negative was the strongest predictor among goal orientations and PG-positive was the second.

Table 5. Summary of categorical regression analysis for variables predicting beliefs, anxiety, and behaviors （N=556）

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables (β)					
	Goal Orientation			Past Language Experiences		Gender Differences
	LG	PG positive	PG negative	Overseas experience	ELES	
Belief						
Traditional English Learning Belief: R^2= .111	.093*	.166***	.252***	-.029	-.059	.047
Anxiety						
Future Use Anxiety: R^2= .115	.085*	.258***	.041	-.172***	-.014	.021
In Class Anxiety: R^2= .116	-.117**	.188***	.146***	-.125**	-.031	.134***
Behaviors						
I. Strategy:						
Organization Strategy: R^2= .086	.263***	.040	-.086*	.059	-.025	-.073*
Guessing Strategy: R^2= .101	.186***	.170***	-.169***	.043	.031	.047
Imaging Strategy: R^2= .037	.130***	.096**	.075	.035	.015	-.026
Media Strategy: R^2= .180	.283***	-.196***	.127***	.157***	.074*	.030
Social Strategy: R^2= .067	.150***	-.101**	.172***	-.012	-.004	.023
II. Average English Learning Time						
Outside the classroom: R^2= .092	.142***	-.165***	.059	.028	.060	.166***

*Note. *p< .05; **p< .01; ***p< .001*

That is, it is inferred from the results that students who are strongly aware of the evaluation from others and who want to get good grades tend to have traditional English learning beliefs, rather than those who have the orientation to increase their competence and understand something new. This finding is consistent with Goal Theory in that students with PG-negative will think that the key to learning English is mostly to memorize many words and grammar rules, and to translate English to Japanese because doing so directly results in good scores on achievement tests and also obtains favorable judgment from their friends, teachers, and parents.

6.2.2 Research Question 2: Can we predict FL anxiety by students' goal orientations, past FL language experiences, and gender differences?

Concerning the dependent variable of anxiety, roughly 12% of the variance of both types of anxiety: future use anxiety (FUA) and in class anxiety (ICA) were explained by each regression formula (R^2 = .115 for FUA and R^2 = .116 for ICA).

In relation to FUA, as significant predictors, PG-positive and overseas experience were stronger than LG and the other independent variables (i.e., PG-negative, ELES, and gender differences). This indicates that students with PG-positive will feel anxious about how much they can make themselves understood in English abroad in the future while students with overseas experience will not. This finding seems quite clear when it is considered that

students with PG-positive study English in order to gain good scores on their language tests, but they feel anxious about whether they can say what they want to say in English when abroad because they have never been there before. Students with overseas experience, on the other hand, realize they can speak English, and as a result, will feel less anxious about the future prospect of using English abroad because they had already experienced and survived such an experience in the past, for better or for worse (cf. Kato et al. 2009). This result also suggests that overseas experience has an effect on minimizing the fear of using English rather than the students' experiences with English studies during elementary school.

As for ICA, all independent variables, except for ELES, were significant predictors. Two different PG orientations help us to predict students' anxiety in class, and this seems plausible because, as Goal Theory assumes, students with PG have orientations to gain positive judgment and to avoid negative judgment of their competence. In addition, an English class full of communicative activities will potentially be a more stressful environment for them. On the other hand, LG and overseas experience tell us the role of diminishing the fear of making mistakes in class and the pressure of making presentations in front of the class. For students with LG, they are likely to view the same situation (the English class) positively and enjoy the challenging tasks with no stress. Table 5 also shows that there could be a gender difference in anxiety. Since, in the optimal scale level on the independent variable *gender differences* in the categorical regression analysis, the nominal scale *female* was charged as a positive value (1.416) of predictor (i.e., *male* was charged a negative value as -.706), female students will feel anxious in class more than male students. This finding is related to a study reviewed in the preceding section (Bacon & Finnemann 1992) in that women prefer more private and non-oral modes than men in language learning. It is possible that female students dislike oral-activities, especially in front of others, but there could be other factors to be considered such as personality, socio-cultural issues, and class atmosphere.

6.2.3 Research Question 3: Can we predict students' behaviors (strategies and learning time) by students' goal orientations, past FL language experiences, and gender differences?

Regarding behaviors, as Table 5 shows, five different strategies and students' average time of learning English outside the classroom were prepared as dependent variables. On five different strategies, at first, about 8% of total variance of Organization strategy was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .086), and the strongest predictor was LG. Organization strategy needs cognitive loads and require time-consuming work when students are categorizing words into synonyms and antonyms and associating them with their conjugated forms. Second, on Guessing strategy, 10% of the total variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .101), and all the three goal orientations were significant predictors while the other independent variables (i.e., past language experiences and gender differences) were not significant for prediction. Looking at the results in detail, students with LG and PG-positive tend to use Guessing strategy but on the contrary students with PG-negative tend not to use it. This finding seems informative when the results on beliefs are considered. That is, as in the discussion in RQ1, PG-negative easily relates to

TELB and students with PG-negative are likely to investigate the meaning of words and phrases they do not know in order to memorize them immediately, rather than guessing the meaning of them from the passage in context. Third, on Imaging strategy, less than 4% of the total variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .037), and the significant predictors were LG and PG-positive. Similar to the results on Organization strategy, Imaging strategy requires students to work on time consuming tasks such as recalling the spelling of new words and grasping the characteristics of the arrangement of new phrases. Fourth, on Media strategy, 18% of the total variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .180), and all the independent variables except for gender differences were significant for prediction. The finding indicates that LG, PG-negative, overseas experiences, and ELES contribute to enhance students' use of multi-media tools (e.g., TV, movies, and radios) for learning English, but the PG-positive tendency discourages students to use them. The findings demonstrate the function of overseas experience with the participants, which facilitate the use of multi-media tools like TV, movies, and radio programs, and also act to decrease the level of anxiety toward using English abroad in the future. Those who have overseas experience seek opportunities to expose themselves to authentic resources and learn the target language. Fifth, on Social strategy, roughly 7% of the total variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .067), and all the three goal orientations were significant predictors while the other independent variables (i.e., past language experiences and gender differences) were not significant for prediction. Finally, on the average English learning time outside the classroom, about 9% of the total variance was explained by the regression formula (R^2 = .092), and LG, PG-positive, and gender differences were significant for prediction. Although students with LG spend more time studying English outside the classroom, students with PG-positive will not study English after school. The findings also suggest that there is a gender difference in language learning. Female students appear to spend more time studying English than male students in the EFL context in Japan. This is in line with previous research studies that claim the superiority of females when it comes to language learning, and that females tend to have high consciousness and favorable attitudes toward learning new languages (Bacon 1992; Burstall 1975; Gardner & Lambert 1972; Labov 1991; Morizumi 2001; Spolsky 1989).

7 Implications

Three implications can be extracted from the present study. First, as Goal Theory assumes, the type of goal orientation students have helps us to predict their beliefs, anxiety, and behaviors. Since goal orientations are considered to be a personality trait, it is difficult for teachers to educationally intervene in students' goal orientations. However, as the results show, we can predict the tendency of our students' behaviors in learning English from their type of goal orientations. This provides room for us to prepare teaching plans based on the preference of the students' use of strategies. For instance, grasping students' FL learning tendencies and preferences beforehand by administering self-report questionnaires or if possible through guidance and counseling, can assist

teachers in effectively adjusting their teaching strategies according to the characteristics of their students in order to facilitate their FL learning (see Hiromori et al. 2012).

Second, as far as the results of the present study are concerned, the degree of anxiety would vary in proportion to the period of staying abroad. EFL learners, like Japanese university students at the intermediate level, generally feel anxious about the prospect of using English abroad. However, not all students are pessimistic about being successful learners of English. The students with LG orientation are more likely to try to learn English in more varied ways of using different strategies. In addition, even though only roughly 7% of the participants had overseas experience, the positive impact of overseas experience was found in Media strategy and the role of diminishing students' fear of using English abroad and making mistakes in class.

Third, ELES (27.5% of the participants) had no impact on any of the dependent variables, except for a slight impact on Media strategy. The findings indicate that, when compared with the impact of goal orientations and studying abroad on their strategies, ELES may not significantly contribute to their strategy choice and does not act to decrease their anxiety of using the target language in the future. Although we cannot deny the possibility that those who learned English from a young age have used unique learning strategies and have formed the habit of using them, the experience of learning English only in formal classroom settings from elementary school would not necessarily trigger an increase in self-confidence in, or a decrease in fear of, using English later on in life beyond the impact of actual language use outside the classroom.

8 Limitations and further study

There were some limitations to this study. First, although both the students in Kanto and Kansai were freshmen in Japanese national universities, the content of the classes, teaching methodologies, and curricula were different, which may have affected the results. In addition, as a whole, the characteristics of the students in tertiary level in Japan were described, but the results of this study only apply within the Japanese EFL context.

Secondly, inferences drawn from the results of this study are also limited by the nature of the methodology which consisted of several questionnaires, and which makes it impossible to mention the developmental changes of learner behaviors. Therefore, further longitudinal research with in-depth interviews and open-ended questionnaires in a qualitative manner need to be performed to follow up the results of this study in order to understand the individual differences in greater detail.

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