

A Study of Native English Teachers' Perception of English Teaching:  
Exploring Intercultural Awareness vs. Practice in Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language

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by

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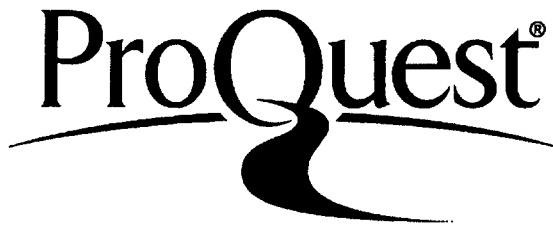
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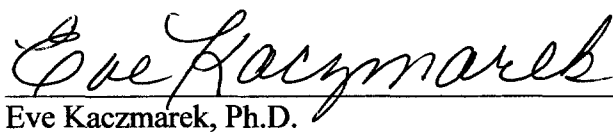
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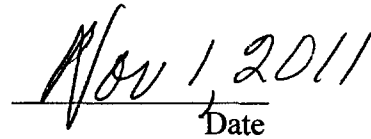
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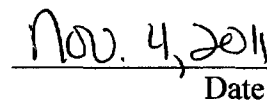
  
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## **Abstract**

Intercultural awareness as part of English language learning is pivotal because English is currently the most-studied foreign language in many countries in the world. The use of English to bring understanding as well as social and economic exchange between countries is well recognized and is the reason for its importance in the compulsory education of many non-English-speaking countries. In Japan, English-as-a-foreign language is an important part of the educational process, and the cross-cultural aspect of English learning is recognized among language educators in Japan. The Ministry of Education in Japan promotes the learning of other cultures and English language competency in order to be able to communicate with people of different cultures. However, although there is recognition by educators on all levels, the actual practice of integrating issues and awareness of different cultures is left to each individual teacher. This qualitative multiple-case study was designed to identify the discrepancies between the perceptions of English-as-a-foreign language (EFL) education with a world view multi-cultural focus and the instructional behavior among the native-English-speaking university teachers in Japan. In-depth interview with the native-English-speaking university teachers, focus group interview with students and course syllabi were analyzed. Twenty-five native-English-speaking university teachers from different universities were the main participants for the in-depth interview. Focus group interview with the students of the participants' institutions and the syllabi used in their classes were studied to evaluate the gap between the main participants' perceptions and their actual class instruction. Six themes were revealed, providing evidence for the perceived need for incorporation of a worldview in EFL instruction in Japan, the potential benefits of greater

levels of inclusion of cultural awareness, and English as a global language in teaching materials and texts. Results of the study suggest that teacher preparation and professional development as well as more culturally based instructional materials, reflective of this need, should be incorporated into the EFL instruction in Japanese universities, aligning with government recommendations. This study catalyzes teachers of EFL globally to review and align their own perceptions of EFL teaching with their instructional behavior.

## Acknowledgement

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

English is the most-spoken second language in the world (Herther, 2006). Both native and non-native English speakers often communicate in English, as do non-native English speakers with each other (Alptekin, 2002; Byram, 2008). In addition, English is the most studied language and the most-used international language in business and travel (Herther, 2006). The English language significantly affects today's world economy and acts as a world language for global communication on all levels (Tochon, 2009). There is no denial of its place and significance in cross-cultural understanding and economic development. Despite some claims that English is a dominant language, its place not as a language in the inner circle of native- English-speakers but as a tool for global communication has suggested other important considerations (Tochon, 2009). An English-as-a-foreign-language instruction containing intercultural awareness, cross-cultural learning, and communication is not only necessary but vital in global language instruction. These courses can potentially assist learners in developing social and cultural competence and can foster intercultural awareness (Savignon, 2006).

English as a foreign language was adopted at least 50 years ago by many countries throughout the world as the main foreign language in their educational instruction (Brumfit, 2004; Byram, 2008). Japan has an even longer history of English-as-a-foreign-language study in its compulsory education program—over 150 years (Sasaki, 2008). Since the adoption of English instruction in non-English-speaking countries, the four skills of language—reading, listening, writing, and speaking—have been emphasized (Butler, 2007). Recently, however, scholars have recognized the importance of the intercultural aspects of language learning (Tochon, 2009). The native-

English-speaking teachers of English-as-a foreign-language in non-English-speaking countries are said to be the students' initial contact with foreign cultures and have a great influence on how students see the world, significantly affecting their interest in future interaction with different cultures (Young, 2008). Native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of how English is taught are critical in today's globalizing world. The recognition of the English language's importance as a communicative tool between people of different cultures in today's language instruction needs exploration.

The purpose of this research was to understand the native English-as-foreign language teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool with a world view multi-cultural focus in an international context and to investigate whether there was a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction. This research involved the study of current native-English-speaking university teachers, students and the teaching materials (course syllabi) to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life situations, which contribute to new knowledge (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) wrote, "Case studies can cover multiple cases and then draw a single set of 'cross-case' conclusion."(p.20). This is also referred to as multiple-case studies.

This research employed the qualitative multiple-case studies methodology of collecting and studying three types of data: in-depth interview with the native-English-speaking university teachers, focus group interview with the students, and teaching materials (course syllabi). Data were analyzed to discover the native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions, their instructional activities, and the materials they use in class. Student focus group interviews were conducted to confirm the teachers' claims about

their teaching instruction.

## **Background**

English language instruction in Japan has traditionally focused primarily on grammar, reading, writing, and translation (Sullivan & Schatz, 2009). Although students in grades seven through 12 and in the first two years of university are required to study English as a foreign language, the compulsory instruction does not involve any emphasis on intercultural awareness (Okuno, 2006). In response to a rapidly changing global society, there has been a recent shift to communicative competence in the teaching of English (Igawa, 2008), but many teachers have not adjusted their instruction accordingly.

English-language learning in Japan began in the middle of the nineteenth century, when people in Japan first made contact with the West (Sullivan & Schatz, 2009). Over time, English became part of the compulsory requirement for university entrance examinations and university graduation. Officials of the Japanese Ministry of Education have proposed various methods to improve the compulsory English instruction, such as a five-year action plan implemented in junior and senior high schools in 2003 (Butler, 2007; Igawa, 2008). The purpose of that plan was to prepare students to have daily English communicative skills upon graduating high school.

After the plan was examined in detail, however, it was concluded that the goals set by the Ministry officials could not possibly be attained for several reasons (Butler, 2007). The Ministry proposal was vague, and Japanese teachers voiced that they needed further professional development for designing practical instruction for English communication (Butler, 2007). Surveys conducted among Japanese English teachers showed that the teachers still emphasize teaching English for the purpose of university

entrance exams (Butler, 2007). The outcomes of the various action plan proposals were not successful primarily because of the influence of these exams, which focus on the traditional reading, writing, and grammar (Hagerman, 2009). Junior and senior high schools did add oral communication to adhere to the action plan but still emphasized preparing students for the university entrance exams. It was eventually concluded that the goals set by the Ministry of Education were not able to be obtained (Hagerman, 2009).

It is commonly believed in Japan that studying the English language leads to native-like fluency. In Europe, some learners have the misconception that the purpose of English learning is to conform to the native-English speakers (Hulmbauer, Bohringer, & Seidlhofer, 2008). Although such beliefs are misconceptions, the development of intercultural communicative competence is seen as an attainable and reasonable goal (Bryam, 1997, 2008). Goals to foster intercultural awareness and communicative competence can be implemented by selecting textbooks and material containing materials on the cultural aspects of other countries (Elola & Oskoz, 2008). Using technologies in our current educational practices, such as the Internet, I-pod, email, and many other new inventions can facilitate global learning and enhance learning on topics (Albrini, 2006; Davis, Cho, & Hagenon, 2005). The emergence of English as a global language and the advancement of communication technology present both the technology and a challenge to English language educators to expand their current teaching methods (Savigon, 2006).

In Japan, as in other East Asian countries such as Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea, English learning begins as early as grade seven, and in most universities, it is part of the compulsory education (Jeon & Lee, 2006). However, the teaching of English as a tool to learn about other cultures, as well as the gathering of

information through the Internet to communicate with people of different cultures, is still marginalized in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction (Yamanaka, 2006). In addition, the role of intercultural communication via language study remains relatively unexplored (Sakuragi, 2008).

### **Problem Statement**

The rapid increase in the rate of globalization is influencing cross-cultural relations and increasing the need for international cooperation. Cooperation involves communication; thus, foreign language study is now recognized as more than just acquiring linguistic proficiency but also includes learning about other cultures to develop intercultural competence (Dimitrova, 2006). As such, the focus of foreign language studies is evolving from simply acquiring language skills to achieving a depth of understanding that can lead to tolerance, acceptance, and awareness of the broader world (Knutson, 2006; Sercu, 2006).

The importance of using English to learn about other cultures has been recognized by many educators, including the native-English-speaking teachers, but this recognition has not reached the students in the English as foreign language courses (Yamanaka, 2006). Native-English-speaking teachers' perspectives and values, with regard to the importance of English language for their students, influence the decisions they make in their instruction (Ligget, 2009). The degree of the native-English-speaking teachers' cultural understanding and the recognition of the importance of English language, used in the international context as a communication tool with a global view, can positively influence the English learners' intercultural competence (Harris, 2008).

English is taught as the main foreign language in Japan and many other Asian

countries, but today's English-as-a-foreign-language teachers have not yet achieved competence in the cultural context of foreign languages (Sercu, 2006). In Japan, this is evidenced by the overall lack of English communication skills, inclusive of both verbal and non-verbal communication and nuances of the spoken language, among Japanese university graduates, despite years of instruction (Kikuchi, 2009). Further evidence is that the attitude of Japanese university-level English learners' contrasts greatly with that of Asians and Europeans (Kobayashi, 2010). The notion that English is used only to communicate with native-English speakers such as Americans still holds true in many university English programs in Japan (Iida, 2007).

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology stated that the English language plays a central role in linking different people around the world (Dimitrova, 2006). The instructional practice to use English as a tool for international communication proposed by the Japanese Ministry's policy is expected in Japanese English Education, but the level of intercultural awareness in foreign study is still low (Sakuragi, 2008). The relationship between the native-English-speaking university teachers' perceptions of English teaching with the importance in cultural learning and communication, and their instructional practice needs to be investigated to add to the current literature regarding English-as-a-foreign-language.

The problem to be addressed by this study is the gap between the native-English-speaking university teachers' perception or recognition of the need for English as foreign language teaching in an intercultural context and their actual instructional practice (Xiao, 2006; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004; Enping, 2007). This problem results from the notion of the importance of investigation into the English teachers, who are ultimately



responsible for interpreting and executing the instructional practice and learning environment for the students.

The need to investigate teacher practices and beliefs derives from the notion that teachers are not transparent entities who fulfill curriculum plans and goals as prescribed by their authors, but who filter, digest, and implement the curriculum depending upon their beliefs and environmental contexts. (Sakui, 2004, p. 155)

Although there has been much research on English teachers' perceptions of teaching and students' English learning progress, currently there is no literature available investigating the discrepancy between the native-English speaking teachers' perceptions of teaching English within a global, multi-cultural perspective and their actual instructions, using multiple cases study approach. This research has added to the literature in the studies of English teaching by the native-English-speaking teachers in Japan and internationally.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to understand the native-speaking English-as-foreign language teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool with a global perspective and multi-cultural focus in an international context and to investigate whether there was a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction. In a global context, the English language is widely accepted as a tool for international communication; however, the instructions of the native-English-speaking teachers in English-as-a-foreign-language classrooms have not sufficiently developed to accommodate this recognition (Sakuragi, 2008). It is important for English-as-a-foreign language learners to understand as wide a variety of cultures as possible for

effective intercultural interaction as the “cultural dimensions” of English usage continue to expand internationally (Yamanaka, 2006). This required the study of the native-English-speaking teachers’ claims of the importance of English learning and teaching.

The current native-English-speaking teachers’ claims of the importance of English learning and teaching and the variance of their instruction from this perspective of importance required exploration through an in-depth interview method to analyze the inconsistencies between what is claimed and what is practiced. The importance of English learning and teaching, serving as tools of international communication in a global context as well as serving to foster the understanding of variety of cultures may or may not be claimed by the native-English-speaking teachers. The claims of native-English-speaking teacher participants were verified by analyzing the data from the focus group interview with the students and the data collected from the teaching materials (course syllabi). Results from the analysis enabled further understanding of the reasons for the lack of instructional practice that emphasizes the importance of English as a tool for international communication in a wide a variety of cultures. Discrepancies between the native-English-speaking teachers’ instructional practices and these teachers’ claimed perception of English importance (i.e., whether they believe English should be taught as an international communicative tool in a global context) were indicated in the results of the analysis of all three types of data collected in this research (teacher interviews, student focus groups, and instructional materials).

A qualitative multiple-case study methodology was used to collect and analyze the data from the teacher interviews, student focus group interviews, and the teaching materials(course syllabi). This methodology was selected to strengthen the findings to

answer the research questions. The three kinds of data were chosen to deliberately compare and contrast the data collected (Yin, 2009). These data also acted as triangulation to understand whether the teachers' claimed perceptions of English teaching and its purpose as an international communicative tool align with the data collected from the student focus group interviews and the teaching materials (course syllabi) collected.

The first type of data were collected through the in-depth interviews with approximately 25 native-English-speaking teachers, currently teaching English-as-a-foreign language in compulsory university courses in several regions of Japan. Individual, semi-structured interviews were conducted to determine the participants' views of the importance of the English language in an international context as a communication tool, within a global, multi-cultural focus, and the participants' individual instruction in English-as-a-foreign-language courses. Questions were asked about the participants' perceptions of English language teaching, classroom content, instruction for a particular class, and whether they thought English was important as an international communicative tool with a global, multi-cultural focus. Responses were coded into themes for further analysis.

The second type of data were collected through conducting focus group interviews with the students attending university compulsory English courses. Volunteer students from the same universities as the native-English-speaking teachers were interviewed in groups regarding the knowledge they learned in their English class. Similar questions with the native-English teachers and the students regarding the materials and textbooks used in their English-as-a-foreign-language classes were part of the interview questions. The third type of data, course syllabi were requested of the

native-English-speaking teachers and collected if they are available.

Data collected from all sources were coded into the same theme and summary in order to triangulate the teachers' interview responses and allowed the analysis of possible discrepancies between the teachers' beliefs and practice. Qualitative coding by taking key words from the data, and using descriptive coding by summarizing parts of interview data into topics were used to assist the consistency of coding (Saldana, 2009). Careful consideration of the selection of key words and summarization were given due to the required recognition of relevant themes for later interpretation, which supported the research purpose (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The purpose of this research was to understand the native English-as-foreign language teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool within an international context (world view) and with a multi-cultural focus as well as to investigate whether there was a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction. The link between language studies and intercultural awareness is well recognized (Tochon, 2009). The English language, in particular, has become a part of the core studies in many non-English-speaking countries due to rapidly globalizing societies.

The teaching of English is vital to students' language skills and their awareness of other cultures (Dimitrova, 2006). This study involved native-English-speaking teachers in Japanese universities who have had teaching experience both in Japan and in other non-native-English-speaking countries. These teachers' perceptions with regard to English language teaching and the connection between the language and other cultures were

explored in this research.

Native-English-speaking teachers' instructional plans are typically formed by the requirements of the administration and by their personal experiences, culture, values, beliefs, and customs (Harris, 2008). Although the importance of English as a global communication tool is widely recognized (Tochon, 2009), in practice, English instruction may still be affected by the teachers' choices, which have been formed by the various factors of their personal history (Harris, 2008). The intention of the research results was to provide a reference to the native-English teachers teaching English-as-a-foreign-language in any part of the world, rather than only in Japan.

Interviews were conducted with each teacher using open-ended questioning, in order to allow participants to expand upon their answers without constraints. In addition, three to five English-as-a-foreign-language learners attending universities of the teacher participants were interviewed for triangulation and verification. Furthermore, the material used by the teachers as identified through the class syllabus and through the interviews with students were documented and analyzed for connections to the teachers' perceptions. Incorporation of the three types of data collected (teacher interviews, student interviews, and teaching material documentation) served the purpose of achieving a more accurate and valid result for this particular construct (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006). The study result allowed the reflection of teachers on their perceptions of the importance of English and whether their instructional behavior aligns with their perceptions.

### **Research Questions**

This qualitative multiple case study was designed to investigate issues of current native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of English language teaching as a

communication tool with a global view and multi-cultural focus in an international context and their actual classroom instructional practice. The following research questions served to guide this research:

RQ1. How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?

RQ2. To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?

RQ3. What are the lived educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context?

### **Nature of the Study**

This qualitative multiple-case study research analyzed data from teacher interviews, student interviews, and documentation of the materials teachers use in class to answer the research questions of this study. The native-English-speaking teachers were the main participants of the in-depth interviews. Individual interviews were conducted with 25 English-as-a-foreign-language, native-English-speaking teachers using open-ended questions. The interview questions were to explore the native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of the importance of English language used as an international communicative tool in the world, their instructional behavior, and materials they use.

Focus groups of three to five volunteer students from the same universities from

which the teacher participants were recruited and given a short interview. Student interview questions were on students' English learning and their learning of other cultures and issues of the world in their English-as-a-foreign language classes. The name of the textbooks used and teaching materials indicated in the syllabi were questioned in both the in-depth interviews with the native-English-speaking teachers and the focus group interviews with the students. Possible teaching materials were gathered by requesting a copy of the course syllabi received from the native-English-speaking teachers. The contents of the teacher interviews were first be read and coded, which allowed further analysis of their perceptions of the importance of English teaching and their instructions. Some examples of the code concepts likely to appear are "focus on grammar," "focus on communication," "communicative exercises," "world issues," "different cultures," and "comparative cultures."

The data from the student interviews and from the materials used in class used the same coding strategies as the data from the teachers. Summarizing parts of interview data into topics, "descriptive coding," (Saldana, 2009) was also be employed as part of the data analysis process. An important step after coding was the organization of codes from the interview data. Organization of the codes for further analysis is necessary in the research process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The organization of codes were determined after the data are coded to prevent personal bias by predicting the kind of categories that may exist before the interviews. Repeated codes in certain key words or summarizations assisted in understanding the native-English-speaking teachers' claimed perceptions of English teaching. The number of repeated codes from the student interviews and the materials teachers use in the same key words and summarizations

were verify the consistency of the teachers' interview data.

Codes and summary mismatches between the teachers' interview data, the students' interview data, and the materials collected indicated a possible discrepancy between the teachers' perception of English teaching and their actual instruction. A discrepancy occurs when the teachers' claimed perception is different from their teaching instruction and the materials they use; this was verified by comparing the codes from the student interviews and the materials used as data documents. Charts were developed to further explain the alignment between the interview questions that gathered relevant data and the research questions (Table 1 & 2.) The first column of the chart included the research questions, and the second column of the chart included the interview questions for the teachers and the students; articulation of the reasoning of alignment between the research questions and the interview questions were written below each table.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is to identify any discrepancies between the native English-as-foreign-language teachers' perceptions of the importance of English in an international context as used among different nationalities with a multi-cultural focus and the teachers' actual classroom instruction. As a result of rapid globalization, English learning is expanding in many countries, is spoken by more people as a foreign language, and has become a prominent core course of educational instruction worldwide (Herther, 2006; Wedell, 2008; Yamananka, 2006). Furthermore, English is now spoken by more people in Asian countries than those in western countries of English native speakers (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Many terminologies, such as "world Englishes" and "English as lingua franca," have been used to describe how English is used as an international



communication tool. The emphasis of English as a communication tool is prevalent in the literature and seemingly recognized by the English teachers in this study. However, the recognition of the importance of English should be aligned with the teachers' instruction to not only teach the skill of the language but to also develop students' broad cross-cultural awareness and to encourage tolerance for other cultures (Harris, 2008).

This study provides information for university native-English teachers, other English educators, and school administrators regarding the current English-as-a-foreign language education reality. This information applies not only to the native-English-speaking teachers in Japan but also to those who teach in other non-English speaking countries. This study also provides teachers an opportunity to reflect on how their perceptions of teaching English and its importance on a global scale are derived and whether their instruction is conducted according to their perceptions.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

The following terms are commonly used within literature related to the study:

Action plan. A government action plan was proposed and implemented in 2003 to raise the English competence of Japanese citizens to the level found in international settings (Taguchi, 2006).

Cross-cultural understanding. Personal growth of understanding the self and the world; challenges of how we believe things "are" or "should be" (Montuori, 2004).

English as a foreign language. The study of English by non-native speakers, with a focus on language learning and pedagogy (Venema, 2009).

Globalization. A concept synonymous with internationalization, liberalization, universalization, westernization, and deterritorialization; the removal of boundaries

separating peoples, states, and cultures, as well as boundaries created by physical obstacles (Chapagain, 2006).

Intercultural awareness. The awareness that oral and cultural practices in different cultures are associated with different conversational patterns and that, therefore, the same statements serve different purposes to different groups of people; taught so that the conversant does not appear to be rude, insincere, or socially inept (McConachy, 2008).

Oral communication. An essential, learned skill consisting of clear, eloquent, and effective speech and involving the interaction between people across cultures, circumstances, conflicts, and resolutions; essential for success in modern society (Emanuel, 2007).

Traditional English instruction. English language studies focus on grammar, reading and translation (Sasaki, 2006).

## **Summary**

English as a foreign language has evolved from just a language tool into a bridge for the learning of different cultures. Cultural learning has been added to the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking of the English language by many scholars (Tochon, 2009). Due to technological advancement, borders between countries are becoming less distinct. English is a major contributor to this globalizing development as people use it to communicate for business and social exchange. Today, English is used to a greater degree *among* non-native English speakers than it is *between* non-native and native-English speakers. This phenomenon calls for the recognition of integrating cultural learning in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction. The speed of global development has created a challenge for many English-as-a-foreign language teachers to acknowledge

the need of cultural input in their class instruction that aligns with international society.

This study examined the English-as-a-foreign-language teachers' recognition of their teaching purposes and teaching practice in their actual instruction.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to explore the native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers' perceptions of the purposes of English teaching and learning in a global context, literature relevant to English as a foreign language as well as the theoretical concept of cultural psychology, lay theory, and topics on English teachers' identities and perceptions of teaching English are reviewed. Cultural psychology and lay theory are reviewed in this literature because human behavior is influenced by our culture, values, beliefs, and customs (Harris, 2008), and this behavior is also evident in the way teachers approach the teaching of English. Because there are no previous studies or literature on the perception of English teaching by native English-speaking teachers teaching abroad, this literature is relevant when considering the nature of the study. The review begins by discussing how English language instruction and learning evolved and its current relevance among Asian countries, particularly Japan. The historical background of how English became the most important foreign language in Japan and nearby Asian countries is in this part of the literature review, which also specifies the framework of the study.

The second consideration is combined with several disciplines. This part of the literature begins with the teaching of English today, including a brief review on the negative feelings toward using English as lingua franca, race factors and textbook selection, integrating technology in instruction, and English teachers' identity. The literature following that involves a consideration of the subconscious mind and the psychological factors that form individual (particularly teachers') beliefs, behavior, and action. This part of the literature will discuss the theoretical concepts of cultural psychology and implicit theory. Psychology is a branch of science that categorizes and

gives human behavior explanations. Implicit theory sheds light on the conscious and subconscious decisions human make in response to the complex elements we experience. Actions and behaviors that cannot be fully explained by science will be complemented by lay theory.

The third consideration is how intercultural awareness is defined and has changed over time. In 2005, Sercu asked, “What is the intercultural competence today, taking into consideration actual political and cultural development on the global scene?” (p. ix). Intercultural competence is a necessary skill and a humanistic virtue in our ever-globalizing society. This skill should be possessed by teachers and carried out in lectures, cross-cultural activities, and other attempts to teach about other cultures. This part of the literature review will first focus on the theoretical concept of cultural psychology to understand how teachers’ thoughts are formed. Following that, the literature reviewed will explore various definitions of intercultural awareness, the psychology of foreign teachers teaching their native languages abroad, and their recognition of teaching English as an international language.

Finally, the most important question is asked: “What are the teachers’ attitudes toward the aspects of intercultural competence that focus on critical cultural awareness and development of students as citizens?” (Sercu, 2005, p. ix). Teachers’ classroom practice will be explored in this part of the literature review. The use of technology to bring intercultural issues and cross-cultural interactions into the classroom will also be touched on in the latter part of this literature.

The importance of integrating cultural awareness and learning in English-as-a-foreign-language courses in non-native English countries has long been recognized and

studied. Various researches focus on the results of students' changes in their intercultural awareness due to specific course designs, which include cross-cultural activities. A shift in understanding the English-as-a-foreign-language teachers' self-recognition, awareness, and classroom activities is needed. This research was conducted with extensive background information gained from exploring available literature. Sources of the literature are from university databases and scholarly databases such as Sage Online Journal and Google Scholar. With the highest effort and intentions, the literary sources are primarily within the last five years.

### **Historical Background of English as a Foreign Language in Japan**

To understand the perceptions of the teachers of English as a foreign language in non-native-English-speaking countries, literature on the current phenomenon of English education and evolving trends in English language learning is relevant to the general background knowledge of this study. The literature research on English as a foreign language will be limited to countries that have adopted the study of the language in their general or compulsory education instruction. Countries that were once or are still colonized by English-speaking countries are given the same consideration as those countries that have adopted English as their official language or compulsory foreign language. Literature regarding Japanese English education will be heavily focused on because of the physical setting and parameters of this research. Other literature on English studies will also be reviewed to grasp the broad spread of the language and its significance in the world.

English is the most studied language in the world today (Johnson, 2009); it has also become one of the major compulsory courses in many non-English speaking

countries (Mufwene, 2010). In Japan, the study of English as a foreign language began as early as the Meiji period (from 1868 through 1912), when Japan decided to end its isolationist policy and open up to the West (Butler & Iino, 2005). Japanese people began learning English as a result of the British HMS Phaeton's appearance in Nagasaki Bay in 1808 (Sasaki, 2006). Studying English at that time was for the purposes of absorbing information and reading foreign documents. This was due to the Japanese intention to modernize, and modernization was associated with westernization at the time (Butler & Iino, 2005); for a short period, other European languages such as French and German were also employed in the attempt towards modernization (Sasaki, 2008).

From 1860 on, English was taught to children of middle to upper classes in Japan, and it became the primary foreign language, a decision by the Japanese government in 1873 (Sasaki, 2006). As early as the 1890s, Japan introduced English as part of its core education in more competitive middle schools, but English education in Japan had a brief setback during World War II, when English study was discouraged. English language learning was formally introduced again as a major subject in the education reform of 1947 ((Butler & Iino, 2005), when English was introduced to middle schools and up, nationwide (Sasaki, 2006). Currently, English is a core subject in most Japanese middle schools from grade seven. Although the compulsory education in Japan is nine years, students taking the high school entrance exams and pursuing higher degrees must face the challenge of passing the English grammar and reading proficiencies. English is now one of the most important subjects among Japanese on high school entrance exams (Butler & Iino, 2005).

Although English has been the primary subject throughout the Japanese public

and private educational institutions from grade seven and higher, the purpose of its learning has mainly emphasized reading and writing rather than the actual use of the language (Butler & Iino, 2005). Grammar and reading translation methods have been the major part of the national curriculum since the beginning of English education in Japan (Sasaki, 2006). Prior to 1989, the Course of Study Guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education (now the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) was criticized for the lack of emphasis on English communication skills (Kikuchi, 2009).

Actions taken in 1989 by the Ministry were to make it official that English communication ability was to be the primary objective in English education (Yoshida, 2003; Sasaki, 2008). Oral communication classes were introduced following the change by the Ministry, and native-English speakers were hired to assist with this new development. English language teachers (ELT) and assistant English teachers (AET) were introduced to the Japanese junior high schools and high schools. The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program that started in 1987 also resulted in an increase in the number of native speakers of English teachers in Japan today (Kikuchi, 2009).

Despite the newly established emphasis on English communication, grammar and reading still weigh more than communication skills on the Japanese university entrance examinations (Butler & Iino, 2005), and thus in preparation for them. Sasaki (2006) and Butler and Iino (2005) offered details on the historical changes to English education in Japan and the current amendment to the oral communication from the traditional grammar, reading, and translation emphasis on English learning; however, they did not include the restrictions and limitations on what is taught by the native English teachers in the Japanese junior high and high schools. In most cases, native English teachers must be



accompanied by a Japanese teacher in class, and the instructional course is primarily decided by the Japanese teachers. Oral communication classes are not considered to be core courses, compared to English grammar, reading, and test preparation courses, which are taught by the Japanese teachers. Students' grade point averages are presented in two groups, core courses and non-core subject courses, such as physical education, art, music, home economics, and English oral communication. The condition of the oral communication classes is not clearly explained by these authors (Sasaki, 2006; Butler & Iino, 2005), but the addition of oral communication is criticized as not having improved overall English education.

English studies continue in Japanese universities. Native English teachers are employed for the university compulsory and elective English classes. It can be said that university students are exposed to the native-English teachers' personalities, philosophies, and beliefs as expressed in their university English classes. Native language teachers are in the position to develop students' broad cross-cultural awareness and to encourage tolerance for other cultures (Harris, 2008). This is an important step for the university students—to enter their first intercultural settings and develop cross-cultural understanding (Harris, 2008).

In the 1990s, Japan was affected by globalization, which made the government set a national goal for all Japanese to have a working knowledge of English (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). The Action Plan of 2003, carried out by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture and Science and Technology, states that all high school graduates should possess daily English communication skills. In addition, cultural learning as part of English instruction was also strongly encouraged by Japan's Minister

of Education (Sasaki, 2008). In spite of the spread of globalization and plans for how English is to be used as a communicative tool to learn different cultures, a majority of teachers in Japan still maintain the belief that English should be taught to imitate the natural or native-like English. Another view of English study is to categorize the skill and area of the language, and only the skill needed in that area is focused on; this is also called English for Special Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (Murray & Christison, 2010). Both ESP and EAP classes study vocabulary, sentence structure, and role-play situations according to the theme or purpose of the target. For example, if the purpose is for students who are pursuing a career in a travel industry, the contents of the material studied will cover travel-related words, phrases, and conversations. There are obvious limitations to students learning by such restrictive methods.

Murray & Christison (2010) explained what the teachers of English need to know to produce better English learners: “Teachers need to know the characteristics of the context in which they work—the nature of their learners, the features of their institution, the policies and expectations of their nation/states and the broader world with which their learners will engage” (p. xiv). Constant assessment is suggested, having teachers review their instructional goals and determine whether learners have achieved them (Murray & Christison, 2010). This literature indicates that the methods and suggestions for teaching English are suitable for all academic years, from elementary schools to universities, and in every country where English as a foreign language is taught. The methods used are for the purpose of improving the skill aspect of the language, and memorization is the main requirement for this kind of learning. This method is effective when learning English at

the beginning stage, but its effectiveness is questioned when students reach universities. The mono-lingual and mono-cultural classroom study of students of English as a foreign language needs to develop into a broader cross-cultural awareness with the input of various cultures from around the world (Harris, 2008). Utilizing the language for learning about global issues from cultural to economic aspects would give more practical purpose to the learning of English for university students.

### **English in Other Asian Regions Today**

As a result of rapid globalization, English learning is expanding in many countries and is spoken by more people as a foreign language and as a second language (ESL) (Yamananka, 2006; Herther, 2006). English as foreign language study is becoming more prominent as a core course of school curricula worldwide (Wedell, 2008). English is now spoken by more people in Asian countries than those in western countries of English native speakers (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007), a spread attributed to the rapid globalization phenomenon begun in the 1990s (Harvey, 1990; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007).

The impact of this socio-economic and political change in an international context catalyzed the increase in English learning among developing countries (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). Some example countries in Asia that have adopted English as part of their main university education instruction are Nepal, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Pakistan, and Cambodia (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), consisting of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, has established English as its official medium of communication (ASEAN, 2010). English became an essential tool for those countries to develop their business relations with cross-cultural partners and in turn

to build their own economies. In addition, Malaysia pushed using English as the medium of instruction (MOI), a strong language intervention, which proved to be practical in its economic development.

Some countries, such as Bangladesh, took the even more extreme stance of making English their official language or starting their compulsory English learning from grade three. These developing countries adopted English learning for economic development, and this also contributed to an increase in tourism, social welfare, and other humanitarian activities. Countries such as Vietnam replaced French, once the dominant foreign language in school, with English in the 1990s (Baker, 2008). In Thailand, English is not only essential to their tourism industry but also as a *de facto* communication tool among Thais of different languages (Baker, 2008).

A good command of English is also related to prestige in these countries (Jantraskul, 2010). Having English skills is believed to be the path of power and wealth, the main motive for English learning. Currently, English for pragmatic use is taught in schools, and it is the culture of Thailand to accept and respect the programs prepared by their teachers. Although the use of English to communicate with various cultures is widely understood there, the focus of the instruction in universities is still mostly grammar (Jantraskul, 2010).

It is more important to develop students' receptive abilities to learn and observe cultural differences, which will influence communication in cross-cultural situations, than to focus primarily on the learning of linguistic mechanics (Harris, 2008). It is therefore important to explore the native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers' perception of the use of English and their instruction of it, which will affect the development of their

students' intercultural awareness and the motivation to use English in a broader international context.

**English in China.** In China, English has become a major foreign language in most universities today. He (2007) conducted a study of the Chinese English learner's perceptions of the ideal pedagogic model of college English in mainland China; it introduced the term "world Englishes" and researched the teachers' and learners' preferences of English pedagogy. University English teachers and students were questioned on their views of English in the context of world Englishes. He's study showed that most teachers and students still insist on adopting "standard" English (i.e., American and British English) and prefer learning from the native English teachers over local English teachers.

He (2007) concluded by suggesting that more native English teachers should enter the educational institutions in China and that local Chinese teachers should be given more opportunities to study and to be trained in a native-English-speaking country in order to give students a more conducive English environment. The study also concluded that native English is preferred over "world Englishes" or "China English" (He, 2007); however, using the term "world Englishes" interchangeably with "China English" seemed to confuse the research participants. This study failed to recognize that the meaning of "world Englishes" includes the concept that the English language is used by various non-native English speakers who include their cultural characters and accents.

A better definition and concept of "world Englishes" to be used as the medium of global communication should have been explained to the students and teachers in He's 2007 research. One element learned from He's research is the perception by the Chinese

teachers and students that English is only used and spoken in mainstream native-English-speaking countries. “World Englishes” and English usage in cross-cultural settings were not identified among the local Chinese teachers and their students in this study.

### **The Teaching of English Worldwide**

The number of English learners and eventual users of English for international communication is increasing at a remarkable rate (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Due to this extraordinary growth in the number of varieties of English and the number of English speakers, the term “world Englishes” indicates that this language is now used among different speakers of English as a foreign languages around the world. Another term, “English as lingua franca,” has been defined as the common language used by people of different language backgrounds to communicate (Kirkpatrick, 2007). A number of scholarly books have been published to introduce this concept and to serve as a guide to teaching English as an international communication tool (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

The realization that English learning needs to be practical is yet to be understood by most teachers of English around the world, both native and non-native English teachers. Further, the concept of linguistic prejudice, where a native variety of Englishes such as American English and British English are superior to other forms of English, still exists in the teaching of English as a foreign language today (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Some people even judge a speaker’s intelligence base on their English accent (Kirkpatrick, 2007). The mentality of a language superiority among many teachers and students makes the concept of using English as a medium of communication with other non-native English speakers difficult to accept. On the surface, teachers of English may agree to the need for intercultural awareness and learning about other cultures, but studies have not

been conducted on the teachers' actual practice in their classrooms.

Examining the English-as-a-foreign-language teachers' actual instruction will allow us to explore the teachers' perception of English usage and teaching in relation to cross-cultural communication. Kirkpatrick's *World Englishes* (2007) delved into the details of the different English languages spoken, as well as cultures, linguistic prejudice, and the implications for English teaching. While the book serves as a reference to the English used and its international considerations, it does not mention the native English teachers' personal theory of the English language and their understanding of English teaching in a global context.

Yamanaka (2006) stated, "As the 'cultural dimensions' of English usage expands, it is important for Japanese English learners to understand as wide a variety of cultures as possible for effective intercultural interaction" (as quoted in Kachru, 1989, p.16). This statement indicates the spread of English language usage from an inner circle to an outer one, and a still-expanding circle among diverse cultures. As a consequence, any English language instructional program should include as wide a variety of cultural elements as possible in teaching and learning English for the communication between speakers of English as a foreign language to be more effective (Yamanaka, 2006).

The importance of using English to learn about other cultures is recognized by many educators, as well as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Yamanaka, 2006). Although the recognition is widespread, clear instructions and the nations that should be included in the teaching of English are not specified by the Ministry (Yamanaka, 2006). Yamanaka (2006) pointed out several problems in the attempt to integrate the teaching of different cultures in current English

education in Japan.

One problem is that the teachers of English as a foreign language must select the materials and topics pertaining to various nations. The discretion is left to the teachers to gather appropriate teaching materials that suit their students' level of mental development (Yamanaka, 2006). An analysis of textbooks used was conducted by Yamanaka (2006) to find out the kind of material used and to provide insights on the cultures selected by the teachers. Nineteen different junior high and high school textbooks were evaluated; the results showed that most textbooks used in these schools covered American culture (Yamanaka, 2006). The study reflects the reality of English education in Japan today, in which the need for learning about different cultures is recognized in public, but the multicultural textbooks are not selected. This study mentions the insufficiency of specific guidelines for the teaching of English with the learning of different cultures and the lack of cultural content in the materials used in English classes.

One important element omitted by this study is the teachers; only a brief transition was given, suggesting that English teachers teach only the skills of the language in an attempt to integrate cultures (Yamanaka, 2006). Another crucial point is whether the teachers are interculturally aware enough to carry out these classes. Further studies on the teachers' perception of this required change in English education is necessary to better understand the teaching of English.

**English as lingua franca in Europe.** In today's globalized world, interconnectedness affects Europeans' daily lives as much as any other culture's, where cooperative efforts can be found in every level of society (Hulmbauer, Bohringer, & Seidlhofer, 2008). Because multiculturalism and multilingualism are realities in various



European communities, a common language to bridge people of different cultures is necessary (Hulmbauer et al., 2008). English as lingua franca plays a part in connecting many Europeans of different cultures and languages; Thus, Hulmbauer et al. (2008) emphasized that the notion that the English language is the property of native speakers should be changed to English as lingua franca for international use. In many cases, unfortunately, native-English-speaking teachers merely connect intercultural learning to the learning of the target-language culture. This mentality is counterproductive to the pursuit of intercultural learning and communication (Hulmbauer et al., 2008).

Hulmbauer et al. (2008) argued that English as lingua franca is to be distinguished from the pedagogic subject of English as a foreign language, and they emphasized that English should be studied and used to communicate and not to conform to native-speaker norms (Hulmbauer et al., 2008). Cross-cultural interaction is only efficient when English is used fairly, without judgment of the speaker's accents or mistakes; thus, a better understanding of English as lingua franca is needed for the purpose of intercultural communication (Hulmbauer et al., 2008). That the attitudes of native-speaking English are the norm and that non-native speakers' English is regarded as bad or deficient need to be corrected (Hulmbauer et al., 2008).

Valuable opinions are offered by Hulmbauer et al. (2008) regarding how the English language should be considered and utilized. Globalization is a continuous process, and the idea that English is to be adopted as a language separate from its origin seems to defeat the ideal of intercultural understanding. Both native speakers of English and non-native English speakers should attempt to understand each other with a global mindset. The push for an official clarification of the difference between English as lingua franca

and the English language indicates the reluctance to collaborate between some Europeans and native-English speakers. This phenomenon is the opposite of what native-English teachers believe, that native-like English is the “real” English. Both sides possess stereotyping and bias.

**English Studies in Europe: Adverse Feelings towards English Learning.** In Europe, English language studies are both consolidating and expanding. The European Union (EU) has integrated their economies and cultures in a U.S.-dominated world (Phillipson, 2008). Phillipson (2008) claimed that English is not a language for non-English speakers to communicate with, which is the common view of English as *lingua franca*. Instead, he said, the English language is a sign of American invasion from economic policies to recreational activities, such as Hollywood movies (Phillipson, 2008).

Most higher education institutions in Europe have adopted English studies as their main core course, but the actual purpose of studying the language is more for economic and commercial reasons than for cross-cultural communication (Phillipson, 2008). European universities refer to language courses as “English courses,” defeating the notion of linguistic diversity. Some feel that this “language invasion” is a threat of cultural and linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 2008). English study is considered a project of establishing English as the language of power instead of a language of global communication. The voices reviewed in this article may be shared by many people, not only in Europe but also in other non-English-speaking countries. This mentality serves as a warning of how English is taught and of the importance of the need to increase cultural sensitivity among native English teachers around the world.

### **Japanese University Students' Attitude Toward English Studies**

Teachers' perceptions of how English should be taught are formed by their personal philosophies, experiences, education, environment, and many other factors (Harris, 2008). Teachers' perceptions also influence the way they plan and carry out their classroom instruction. The attitudes of English-as-a foreign language students towards learning are affected by their classroom experiences, interacting with their teachers, and being exposed to the new and different cultures of their English teachers. This study analyzed the attitudes of current Japanese university students of English toward learning English. English is the major compulsory Japanese foreign language, and very few people question the importance of the issue of language learning in intercultural communication (Sakurai, 2008).

The learning of a foreign language in other countries is discussed for comparison in order to understand how foreign language study is perceived among university students. A research study (Sakurai, 2008) on the correlations of student attitudes toward English learning and social distance, actual using the language between different nationalities is particularly intriguing and useful for future design of the instruction of English as a foreign language. The results of the study were compared to a U.S. study of students of foreign language learners. Sakurai (2008) explained that because foreign language study is compulsory in the U.S., universities offer various languages, and there is a strong correlation between the attitudes of the learners in the U.S. and social distance. This is partly due to the initial interest in the foreign language and the freedom students have to select a language in U.S. universities.

A weak correlation between the Japanese learners' attitudes and social distance

was explained with the reason that Japanese students are required to study English from junior high school onward (Sakurai, 2008). The purpose of English learning in Japan is primarily to pass university exams and for graduation; therefore, whether there is social interaction does not affect the students' attitudes toward English learning. Despite the weak correlation between Japanese students' attitudes and social interaction with foreign cultures, there is a strong positive correlation of students' motivation in English learning and their interest in possibly using English cross-culturally. This calls for further studies of teachers' instruction techniques in order to understand how their perceptions of English are used globally and how they implicitly or explicitly influence their students.

### **Textbooks and Content for College-Level English-as-a-Foreign-Language**

#### **Instruction**

There are many types of textbooks for college-level foreign language courses. Textbooks play an important role in the success of a course, parallel only to capable teachers. Yet, "despite the apparent key role of textbooks in language programs, there is a surprising lack of cohesive recommendations from the field on evaluating and selecting textbooks" (Angell, Dubrava, & Gonglewski, 2008, p. 334). Textbooks are the basis of language courses, especially for introductory courses. Some classes rely primarily on textbook use, but the textbook is often selected in haste without a guideline or procedures for reviewing the books and supplementary materials (Angell et al., 2008). In many cases, textbooks are selected based on the reputation of the author, the publishing company, publishers' recommendations, or what appears to conform to name of the class. The process of selection is made even more difficult and time consuming with the addition of workbooks, printable materials, CD-ROMs, tests, and even Websites for students and

teachers (Angell et al., 2008). The authors conducted a qualitative survey to determine the kind of process university teachers use to select their textbooks (Angell et al., 2008).

A few examples of the open-ended questions asked in the survey follow:

1. Describe briefly your basic language program.
2. Describe the process used in your program to select materials (textbooks and other materials).
3. What specific feature of your own program influences the selection process?
4. What feature of the materials themselves tends to play an important role in the consideration of materials for adoption?
5. What features of publishing, sales and/or services provided by publishers tend to influence the review process or adoption decision?

The voluntary survey was sent out to 235 university language department directors and teachers of several different foreign languages, such as French, German, Spanish, Arabic, and Asian. Among the only 32 responses, the answers indicated that textbooks play a significant role in the classes, and some teachers focus on a particular component of the language such as grammar, culture, or reading; according to the survey, fewer than half the teachers select their textbooks based on the publishers' recommendations (Angell et al., 2008). Angell et al. (2008) suggested that "greater transparency and discussion among professionals in language learning and teaching are necessary" (p. 562). Although transparency and teacher collaboration is important, materials other than textbooks alone should be considered in language courses.

The survey by Angell et al. (2008) opened up the questions of the actual contents in the textbooks, the reasons for selecting the particular contents, and how the contents

will be delivered in the classroom. Further explorations of the textbooks' selection and instructional plans are needed to understand the actual foreign language class procedure, teacher intention, and the outcome of students' learning. Finally, because the study was voluntary and had so few responses, the results do not yield any valuable information.

Harris (2008) suggested that the contents that should be integrated into English-as-a-foreign-language instruction are beliefs and values, lifestyles around the world, and the examination of stereotypes, racism, and discrimination. Despite the degree of abstraction and difficulty in introducing and examining different beliefs and values of others, teachers should include activities at least at a superficial level in their instruction to allow students to be exposed to various cultures (Harris, 2008). Lifestyles around the world of English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries should be introduced in reading and videos to arouse interest in new cultures among students (Harris, 2008). Various activities to bring sensitive issues such as racism, discrimination, and stereotypes into the English learners' own environment for later discussion about those issues in other countries are also recommended as part of the teachers' instructional plans (Harris, 2008), because the degree of cultural understanding positively influences the English learners' intercultural competence (Harris, 2008).

**Textbooks and Racial Factors.** In the field of English teaching in non-native-English-speaking countries, teachers constantly deal with intercultural and multilingual encounters. Issues of racialization and racism have been underexplored in academic discussions, perhaps due to the sensitivity of this topic, but the issues of race constitute a significant part of our knowledge of culture and identities (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Kubota & Lin (2009) suggested that "research should be conducted to examine the ways

racialization, white norms, racism, and other racial meanings are reproduced in the local and global educational practices” (p. 1). The current textbooks used in the English-as-foreign-language courses reflect the dominance of “inner circle” English standards as well as Anglo linguistic and cultural norms (Canagarajah, 1999; Penny-cook, 1998; Kubota & Lin, 2009). This phenomenon is contributed to by both the native English teachers and the learners who believe that English can only be learned from native-English speakers. The following questions were proposed by Kubota and Lin (2009) to teachers regarding their process when selecting textbooks and materials for English learning:

1. What teaching methodologies are deemed more legitimate and what epistemologies are they based on?
2. What aspects of culture and society are or are not taught in a second/foreign-language course?
3. Are any particular racial groups represented more than others?
4. What racial images are projected in second/foreign language and how do they influence the learners’ view of the target language, target-language-speaking world, and their identities?

Research results on the questions raised are that foreign language textbooks tend to reflect the white norm and the collaboration between scholars from all over the world is encouraged (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Language educators should understand the potential influence by racial factors when race is the determinant of textbooks and materials used in class. Documenting and examining the materials teachers use in their English classes are important in order to understand their perceptions of how and where the English

language is used.

### **Technology Integration: More than Textbooks**

Many scholars have claimed that the current textbooks and material used in foreign language instruction are devoid of or contain outdated materials on the cultural aspects of other countries (Elola & Oskoz, 2008). In addition to the textbooks used in their classes, materials are often created by language teachers for clarifying certain topics, enhancing learning, or increasing practice. A portion of language teachers integrate technology either as the main source of teaching materials or in addition to the textbooks used. Technology is now integrated into many foreign language courses in universities world-wide. The use of technology such as the Internet, I-pod, email, and many other new inventions requires teachers to have computer capability—from training to accessibility and cultural perception (Albrini, 2006).

A study by Albrini (2006) showed that teachers provided with training and support are more willing to integrate technology in their classes. Teachers and educators agree that using technologies in our current educational practices can facilitate global learning and enhance foreign language learning and cultural knowledge (Davis, Cho, & Hagenson, 2005). This is an important finding because the attitude toward computer use affects the effectiveness of the class and the development of using technology in classroom instruction.

Forms of technology such as emails or blogs can be used to enhance the learning of communicative English (Elola & Oskoz, 2008), and their use suggests that technology can be a bridge to bring students closer to different cultures. There are many selections in today's advancing technology, and Elola and Oskoz's (2008) study focuses on using



blogging to foster intercultural competence. In an experiment involving the U.S. and Germany, the teachers chose a blogging theme for the students. All the activities involved cultural information exchange and research. Students were to write about their experience and receive feedback from the teachers for further self-study.

The result of the study showed a positive outcome in terms of students' new knowledge of both U.S. and German cultures and higher interests in foreign cultures (Elola & Oskoz, 2008). This type of technology integration acts as an aid to the core instructional practices and is necessary in promoting cross-cultural understanding and intercultural competence. In Elola and Oskoz's (2008) study, English was used as the medium of communication. The potential for this project to use English among speakers of different nationalities is greater as technology is more widespread geographically. It is also important to explore whether current English-as-foreign language teachers in Japan integrate technology to bring information and cross-cultural activities in their instructions. This is an important piece of the puzzle: to understand how English teachers perceive using English in intercultural contexts and their willingness to adopt it in this manner in their instruction.

### **Native Teachers' Identity**

Teachers' identities are formed by their perceptions as an educator and their roles in the teaching of English as a foreign language. Teachers' perceptions of English teaching are formed by various elements, from personal experiences, education, their own culture, upbringing, and many important events that form their adult behavior. Harris (2008) said, "We often forget how 'our own' culture influences us, and the assumptions, values, beliefs and customs that underpin everything we do" (p. 2). Teachers' ideology of

history, world view, beliefs, and attitudes manifest themselves through classroom instruction explicitly and implicitly.

Educators from teachers to administrators should possess an awareness of the multicultural orientation of teaching and consciously make an effort to foster their students' intercultural competence in today's international socio-economic society. One's inherent bias or preferences of cultures are due to ethnicity, which affects teachers' judgment in their teaching style and materials selected. Teachers' personal identity in terms of race and how they may subconsciously or consciously select materials to give certain racial identity preferences affect their teaching and pedagogy.

Liggett (2009) focused on racial identity and cultural positionality and investigates the lack of racial awareness on the part of "white" (Caucasian) teachers of English as a second language and how that negatively affects their interpretation of their students. It also influences their perspective and values about everyday life, as well as the decisions they make in their instruction (Liggett, 2009). This article argued that there is a need to examine the assumptions and perspectives that teachers hold based on being a member of the dominant group (Liggett, 2009).

The concept that teachers of white ethnicity make better teachers is widespread in Asian countries where native English teachers are hired. A majority of Japanese teachers and other teachers in Asia give strong preferences to English textbooks written about the American and English cultures. The subconscious and conscious white dominance is both inherent in the English teachers of European heritage and in the local teachers who look up to those particular cultures. Teachers of English as a foreign language abroad and local English teachers should initiate a self-reflective process that impels them to rethink

their individual beliefs and the effects on their teaching (Ligget, 2009).

An analysis of racial identity allows teachers to understand alternative conceptions and broaden their intercultural awareness. This article by Ligget (2009) focused on the English teachers in the United States but also shed lights on similar problems of the English-teaching pedagogy worldwide in both native and non-native-English-speaking teachers. This article contained a sensitive topic and is worded strongly regarding the racial factors influencing English education today; this factor should be kept in mind in exploring teachers' perception of the English language taught in non-native-speaking countries. The question of whether English learners should be educated to assimilate the white culture and to approach a native-like English proficiency or to learn the language as a tool for channeling world perspectives and communication needs to be answered.

### **Non-Native English Teachers' Perceptions**

It is important to investigate Japanese teachers' perceptions of teaching English in the context of an emerging international need to communicate for personal and economic reasons. Native-English-speaking teachers are employed in Japan and other non-native-English-speaking countries as assistant language teachers or as teachers of English as a foreign language (Butter, 2007). The native-English speakers are hired on one-year contracts, and the number of renewals each year is determined by their Japanese English teacher counterpart's evaluation. This situation is similar in other East Asian non-English-speaking countries, where native-English-speaking teachers are brought into their English programs (Butler, 2007).

A study of how Japanese English teachers perceive qualified and ideal native

English teachers in Japan was conducted in 2002 by Butler, a study that also applies to non-native-English-speaking teachers in East Asian countries where the hiring practice is similar to that of Japan. The number of native English teachers has increased in Japan and other Asian countries, from elementary schools to universities. Native speakers' instruction is structured differently from the Japanese teachers. The Japanese English teachers teach with textbooks selected by the government, local educational board, and the schools. Japanese English teachers have typically taught English to meet the purpose of passing entrance exams for junior high schools, high schools, and universities (Butler, 2007).

English classes conducted by native speakers have more freedom in textbook selections and instructional style. Japanese English teachers who have interacted or taught with the native-English teachers report that they feel the native-English teachers lack pedagogical qualifications and possess limited knowledge of the host culture and educational system (Butler, 2007). The lack of knowledge of the host culture and educational system could be a source of misunderstanding between the local English teachers and the native-English teachers (Butler, 2007). This could also be caused by a lack of intercultural competence or the lack of desire to understand different cultures for both the local English teachers and the native-English-speaking teachers.

The nature of this employment situation creates an unstable psychological work environment, and the native-English teachers' perceptions are likely to be affected by trying to meet the expectations of the Japanese English teachers and administrators. Butler's (2007) study further examined the teachers' attitudes toward perceived goals of English language education. The results showed that despite some reports on negative

experiences teaching with the native-English teachers, approximately 60% of the Japanese elementary school teachers who participated in this study agreed somewhat that English is best taught by native-English speakers (Butler, 2007). Japanese or local English teachers' own perception of their English proficiency levels, their attitude towards nonstandard forms of English, and their sense of pride in their language and cultural heritage are suggested as the reasons for this study result.

The question of Japanese teachers perceived English teaching seemed to follow the proposal by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science, and Technology (MEXT), which proposed that schools hire native-English-language teachers as part of the broader goal of developing international understanding (Butler, 2007). MEXT did not define the proposed goal in detail, and it appeared to be too broad, a sense that seems to be reflected in the Japanese English teachers' perception of English teaching and the role that the native-English teachers should play in the English education. This factor also affects the perception of the native-English teachers, as they generally follow the rules and expectations of the Japanese English teachers.

Teacher's perceptions of the English education and its importance need exploration. Do the English teachers' perceptions of how English is taught and used in class and in an international context match their actual instruction? Beyond communicative skills, social interactive skills should also be emphasized in today's language learning. Social interactive competence includes elements such as honesty, tolerance, sincerity, sentimentality, positiveness, and warmth to others (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). Communicative competence is an initial step to social interactive competence (Nazari, 2007): "The hypothesis of raising English-as-a-foreign-language

teachers' awareness of the autonomous and ideological concepts of communicative competence is likely to help them see that their teaching activities lean toward the autonomous model of communicative competence" (p. 202).

This hypothesis was tested by a study that explored how communicative competence is perceived among the English-as-a-foreign language teachers in Iran. Teachers' beliefs affect their practice, which affects their students—causes and effects that were emphasized as the driver for this research (Nazari, 2007). Questions that explored the teachers' perceptions of their subjects: (a) what does "communicative competence" mean to you; (b) what kinds of activities do you ask your students to do in the classroom; and (c) what methods do you apply to teach English, and why do you use those methods? The importance of activities in the actual method of instruction was analyzed to understand the teachers' perceived communication competence as English-language teachers.

The answers in this qualitative research and observation of three Iranian English teachers (Nazari, 2007) were categorized into narrow and broad meanings of the term "communicative competence." The narrow category means that the teachers' perceptions and instructional activities of English communicative competence lean toward traditional teaching, such as the emphasis on grammar, memorization of vocabulary, and syntactic structures (Nazari, 2007). The broad category broad includes instructions with activities such as communication practice and creative methods not confined by traditional teaching. The interpretation of the data gathered in this study indicated that teachers in this study had an indistinct perception in that they appear to move, in defining that concept, between broader and narrower meanings of "communication competence"

(Nazari, 2007). The study results indicated that the classroom instruction and activities of the three Iranian English teachers observed lean towards the narrower concepts of communicative competence (Nazari, 2007). In this study, the teachers' awareness of communicative competence in the broad sense did not affect their actual instruction.

### **Theoretical Concept of Cultural Psychology and Lay Theory**

The level of cultural awareness of leaders, whether of a nation, a community, a private organization, or an educational institution, influences the people they lead. Karahanna, Evaristo, and Srite (2006) wrote, "behavior is influenced by different levels of culture ranging from the supranational (regional, ethnic, religious, linguistic) level through the national, professional, and organizational levels to the group level" (p. 30). Behaviors are formed by one's values, which are acquired through life experiences in childhood and education, and there is a relationship between values and practice or core and peripheral values, in which the elements are intertwined (Karahanna et al., 2006). The different levels of culture such as family, organization, and nation interact to form an individual's culture and to shape behavior and practice.

This literature pointed out that although prior acquired cultural knowledge is dominant, additional information such as a professional setting, globalization, and changes in cultures may contribute to higher value competence in areas such as creativity, independence, and logical and intelligent behavior (Karahanna et al., 2006). This literature emphasized the influence of leaders' behavior and practice in an organization and can be applied to teachers who influence their students as leaders of their classes. A teacher's professional practices are also based on the different levels of culture, experiences, and education. Students are influenced by their teachers when the teachers'

personal values, behavior, and practice are part of their instruction. This literature continued to explain the relationship between values and practice and the importance of adding cross-cultural variables in the changing global market (Karahanna et al., 2006).

Teachers' professional practices regarding the way they deliver their instruction and interact with students influence their pupils in their classes (Harris, 2008). A leader's behavior is composed of primarily prior experiences but is subject to forming new concepts from new knowledge received in current surroundings (Karahanna, Evaristo, & Srite, 2006). It is, therefore, necessary to explore studies on the thinking and beliefs of English language teachers and their influence on their students. There has been recognition of the fact that teachers are active, thinking, decision-makers who play a central role in shaping classroom events (Borg, 2006). Psychology has shown that knowledge and beliefs result in strong human action, and this suggests that teachers play an important role in students' learning, academically and personally (Borg, 2006). Teachers' instructional behavior even correlates positively or negatively with students' autonomy (Reeve & Jang, 2006).

Understanding teacher cognition is central to understanding the process of teaching (Borg, 2006). Borg (2006) discussed the history of the conception models of language teachers from the 1960s to 2006. In earlier models, learning was considered the outcome of teachers' classroom behavior. The development in cognitive psychology came later to highlight the influence of thinking on behavior, which suggested that teachers' mental lives needed more research focus than did just observable behavior (Borg, 2006). In order to understand teachers, researchers need to study the psychological processes through which teachers make sense of their work (Borg, 2006). Borg (2006)



suggested that the study of teachers' work and cognition using qualitative means, rather than by generalizing their behavior in quantifiable methods, is a more holistic and better approach to understand the effect of teaching on learning (Borg, 2006).

Teachers' behavior can be explained as the formation of their past upbringing, experiences, and education by science and psychology (Borg, 2006). Psychology focuses on universal principals of thought and action (Molden & Dweck, 2006); however, at times, there are obscure situations where human action cannot be explained by the average mold of psychological analysis (Molden & Dweck, 2006). Teachers who have similar educational backgrounds and professional experiences may not result in similar teaching perceptions and practice. People vary in many ways and form their beliefs and actions differently given the same elements in their life experiences; given the same environment and similar experiences, individuals think differently (Molden & Dweck, 2006).

Lay theory is an alternate approach that complements interests in universal principles with its analysis of the unique psychological meaning of human actions (Molden & Dweck, 2006). In lay theory, people's perceptions of others and their social judgments are influenced by the thoughts formed through personal expectations and interpretation (Molden & Dweck, 2006). This is particularly important when conducting research to explore the native English teachers' perceptions of English teaching and English in the global context. Molden & Dweck (2006) proposed that lay theory influences individual behavior, intergroup relationships, and self-regulation. Lay theory is expressed by one's personal expectations and interpretation of their surroundings and experiences. 'This theory can be used to understand the instructional decisions and

material selections of the English teachers in the research. Both scientific explanations and lay theory should be considered when conducting research on human perceptions.

The decisions people make to act can be spontaneous or through a controlled process. In reality, people make social inferences without intentions, awareness or effort; instead, the inferences are made spontaneously (Uleman, Saribay & Gonzales, 2007).

These spontaneous social inferences can be explained by the general expectations people build about a person based on generalized and apparent traits. This is also referred to as implicit theory (Uleman et al., 2007). Evidence over the past 20 years has shown that social behavior governed by implicit attitudes and inferences affects the behavior people produce (Bargh & Hassin, 2005; Uleman et al., 2007).

Generalizations, stereotyping, and bias are formed by the implicit knowledge of and attitude toward others. Uleman et al. (2007) highlighted the three categories of judgment people make based on the inferences of implicit theory. Inferences based on faces, behaviors, and relational knowledge were explained, and it was shown that false judgment could occur under such inferences. Other implicit theories involving one's values and beliefs in spontaneous inference situations were discussed (Uleman et al., 2007). "People spontaneously infer values relevant to social situations and even cultures" (Uleman et al., 2007, p. 333).

Non-conscious behavior such as facial expressions, body postures and gestures, speech patterns, and emotional states of others affect all people involved in a situation (Uleman et al., 2007). This is crucial in instructional situations, where teachers' subconscious and non-conscious behaviors and actions are being interpreted by their students. There are differences between a decision or action made after a thought process

and a decision made spontaneously. For example, English-as-a-foreign-language teachers may appear to understand the importance of integrating cross-cultural learning and intercultural awareness, but their spontaneous, implicit actions can be difficult to measure.

Teachers' responsibility must go beyond connecting students to the curricula content; teachers must also connect students to the society in a larger sense, such as community and environment (Kennel-Ray, 2006). Kennel-Ray (2006) stressed teachers' philosophy in teaching and the instructional practices that evolve based on their pedagogical beliefs, which affects students and their sense of social responsibilities (Kennel-Ray, 2006). Kennel-Ray (2006) wrote, "As pedagogy, environmental sustainability is concerned with transforming students' patterns of thinking so that humanity can live meaningfully and harmoniously in the natural world" (p. 114). This is particularly necessary in our complex society, where human thoughts and actions are not only influenced by the immediate surroundings but by the information from different cultures presented via the Internet and other available and abundant sources. This literature focused on teachers' pedagogical philosophy and its effect on transforming students' thinking in the community and environmentally. The ideology of the relationship between teachers' actions and students' learning beyond textbook information parallels with the study that teachers' beliefs form their way of teaching and affect students' psychological development (Borg, 2006).

### **Intercultural Competence**

Instructions of English as foreign language will reach beyond the mechanical skills of the language. English language instruction in Asia no longer consists of just grammar and reading, but the integration of cultural activities, cross-cultural learning,

and intercultural competence are necessary as well. As English has become an international communicative tool, a higher demand for native speakers in every level of English education is needed. In many cases, native English teachers have no training in cross-cultural understanding. The complex cultural differences and sensitivity issues often create misunderstandings for both teachers and students (Sercu, 2005).

Teachers' lack of the notion of becoming interculturally aware and the flexibility to respect cultural differences affects their students in the material selected, instructions carried out, and behavior (Sercu, 2005). This situation remains while the speed of globalization is proceeding, and the gap between the intercultural awareness among teachers and appropriate instruction becomes wider. This calls for a discussion of intercultural awareness and the teachers' new responsibilities in the current globalizing society (Sercu, 2005).

The terms "intercultural competence," "cultural awareness," and "cross-cultural understanding" are interchangeably used in this section of the literature review. The notion of cultural awareness in English-as-foreign-language education was first pointed out by Byram in 1997 and then followed up by other scholars such as Jones (1995) and Littlewood (2001) (Baker, 2008). Byram's (1997) early theory of intercultural communication was widely referenced, criticized, modified, and studied. The skills of understanding oneself and others, interpreting and relating to situations and information around us, being aware of cultural behaviors and information, and how to view oneself and respect others are all fundamental and valuable in today's intercultural competence development (Byram, 1997).

Studies have been conducted to explore the intercultural communicative

competence among teachers and students in European countries based on Byram's theory of intercultural communicative competence (Sercu, 2005). Sercu (2005) stated that language is culture, and there are ways to conceptualize the relationship, distinguishing between cultural competence and intercultural competence:

. . . cultural competence involves knowledge, skills and attitudes concerning a specific cultural area such as that associated with the target language, whereas intercultural competence involves knowledge, skills and attitudes at the interface between several cultural areas including the students' own country and the target language country. (Sercu, 2005, p. vii)

Sercu (2005) referred to communicative competence as a person's ability to act in a foreign language in a linguistically, socio-linguistically, and pragmatically appropriate manner. The studies that focused on the language teachers' professional identity in Europe showed that teachers do recognize themselves as teachers of language and culture, but the diverse ideas of the elements in cultural learning require further discussion (Sercu, 2005). This prompted Sercu (2005) to form the following questions: How do teachers think about their own practice and about the preconditions for that, and how can one describe one's own meta-cognitive awareness? The broad investigation by Sercu (2005) started with the change in the demographic of the students in Europe, where migration is common, with classrooms composed of students from different parts of Europe and outside Europe today. This change forced policymakers in Europe to include intercultural objectives in their curricula and to promote the acquisition of intercultural competence through their teaching, especially in language classes (Sercu, 2005). "Bringing foreign language education to the classroom means connecting learners to a world that is

culturally different from their own” (Sercu, 2005, p. 1).

Population mobility is not the only reason; our cross-cultural contact from business to social sectors among diverse languages and cultural groups makes the skill of intercultural competence essential. The process and experiences as one move from intercultural awareness to communicative competency can be uncomfortable. Accepting different ideas and customs can be an angry, anxious, and exciting experience. While the notion of linguistic and communicative competence is important, psychological and emotional readiness of teachers and students to pursue language skills for intercultural competence is also necessary. Without a personal recognition of today’s international and complex social make-up, language skills and social politeness are not enough to broaden students’ perception of the world.

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, higher education institutions have realized the need to integrate intercultural learning and to recognize the connection between language and cross-cultural understanding. Crichton and Carino (2007) used the term “intercultural dimension” in the context of internationalization in teaching, learning, and research, pointing out that while cultures can be mediated through language teaching, such constructs must contain human ethics, values, and interactions. These factors are crucial for genuine learning and communication.

There is a connection between internationalization and intercultural teaching and learning. Small studies have developed in the areas between the internationalization of teaching and learning and the role of language and culture and efforts to bring them together as integral learning (Crichton & Carino, 2007). Crichton and Carino (2007) recognized that the term “intercultural” is conceptualized in different ways by different

scholars. “Cultural understanding” and “intercultural communication” are concepts used primarily in language learning and the culture of the teacher and the student in vast studies and literature, but are not a part of the body of international knowledge (Crichton & Carino, 2007). “Mono-experimental,” or the limitation of cultural contents between the language teacher and student, does not address the reality of engaging with multiple language and cultures (Crichton & Carino, 2007). In reality, for all students in higher institutions to master multiple foreign languages is not feasible, but the use of English as a medium to communicate with people of different cultures and to be exposed to various cultures is possible and necessary.

Crichton & Carino (2007) constructed two basic questions to be addressed in the teaching of language and internationalized knowledge: What knowledge do we want the students to develop? (What knowledge is valuable? How is this knowledge conceptualized? What is the substance and process of the desired knowing and learning?) How do we know that students have developed that knowledge? (How do we appraise or judge knowing and how do we warrant the judgments we make?) These questions assume that teachers have the necessary perceptions of language and cultural learning, particularly international or intercultural knowledge. These questions are interesting to explore among foreign language teachers, particularly English-as-a-foreign-language teachers in non-native-English-speaking countries. The assumption that language teachers have the intercultural awareness and willingness to conduct instruction that carries out internationalized knowledge can be a hypothesis for further research.

Several crucial elements are essential to form intercultural competence. Two example elements are perspective taking and cultural intelligence, which are essential to

the contribution of one's being interculturally aware and leading to competence (Wildman, Xavior, Tindall, & Salas, 2009). The skill of perspective taking involves understanding the perspective of others, and this was found to be positively correlated with social competence and self-esteem (Davis, 1983; Wildman et al., 2009). The element of perspective taking is adopted via education, experience, and the willingness to accept differences. Perspective taking is also formed with the second element, cultural intelligence, a "multifaceted competency consisting of cultural knowledge, the practice of mindfulness, and the repertoire of behavioral skills" (Thomas & Inkson, 2004, pp, 182-183).

Motivation is another aspect in pursuing the elements to become inter-culturally competent. The constant awareness of one's cultural surroundings, as well as one's own assumptions and thoughts regarding those surroundings, are the components of cultural intelligence (Wildman et al., 2009). These elements are necessary in education and should be the qualities teachers' project to students. These qualities should also be surveyed and fostered among teachers.

### **English Teachers and Their Intercultural Competence and Responsibilities**

English teachers have more responsibilities than just passing on English skills. As English is used as a lingua franca, the language tends to be emotive. Native English teachers teaching in non-native-English classrooms should possess the qualities of a willingness to understand the culture of their students, a personal intercultural competence, and the mentality to teach English as a world channel that leads to different cultures. English language teachers need additional knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and skills in language instruction in this challenging global society (Sercu, 2005). Native



English teachers' lack of cross-cultural awareness and training may affect their students' impression of other cultures and cause them to become less motivated in their English learning and foreign interests. "More than ever, teachers are responsible for the social development of students in a globalizing world" (Talib & Hosoya, 2008, p. 245).

Teachers today must be multicultural and must enhance intercultural skills in their classroom. Talib & Hosoya (2008) conducted a quantitative study of pre-service teachers' intercultural competence among teachers in Japan and Finland. Their questionnaire consisted of 92 questions examining three features: intercultural sensitivity and experience of difference, personal and professional identity and critical pedagogy, and social and global awareness and possible actions (Talib & Hosoya, 2008). Finland and Japan were selected for this study for their similarities in that both countries are relatively physically isolated, but the results of the research showed significant differences in their answers. One example given was the question of where teachers are more cautious about people who look different; the Japanese pre-service teachers scored higher or more cautious than the Finnish teachers did. The results also showed that Japanese teachers are less inclined to conduct intercultural activities in their classes compared to the Finnish teachers.

This study by Talib and Hosoya (2008) did not question the teachers from both countries regarding their perceptions on globalization and how their teaching plays a part in this phenomenon. The intention of this study and its results served as a reference to research on the English-as-foreign-language-teachers' intercultural competence. This is an inevitable skill the English-as-foreign language should acquire in foreign language classroom.

**English Education Teachers.** To cultivate the skill of English communication, the leaders of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan added oral communication instruction for junior and senior high schools throughout Japan in 1990s (Yamanaka, 2006). In addition, native-English speakers were hired as Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) or English Language Teachers (ELT). Most of the native speakers are from the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. Japanese universities also now offer classes taught by native English teachers to raise levels in the four skills of English: writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

A qualitative study was conducted to evaluate the priorities in professional development held by 44 English teachers of different nationalities in Japan and Korea (Igawa, 2008). Responses to open-ended questions showed that 65% of the teachers believed that teaching skills and methods were their major concerns; only 8% said that cultural understanding was important (Igawa, 2008). Even though governmental representatives from both Japan and Korea have announced the need to shift from the traditional grammar and translation approach to an instructional practice suitable to the globalization of English (Igawa, 2008), teaching English as a tool for intercultural learning was obviously not a priority for most of the respondents. For changes to occur in teachers' attitudes along with staying current with technological and global development, additional professional development and training are needed (Butler, Lauscher, Jarvis-Selinger, & Bechingham, 2004).

Sercu (2005, 2006) has researched the field of intercultural learning and foreign language education for years and has suggested various methods for more effective

pedagogical strategies. The current professional requirements of teachers in the field and their views on intercultural integration in their classes are focused on in a study conducted among the teachers of English, French, and German (Sercu, 2005), whose results clearly specify the difference between communication competence and intercultural communication competence among these language teachers. The extent of intercultural competence indicates the teachers' knowledge, as professionals know how to carry out their classes by integrating cross-cultural learning. This is an underlying principle of cultural integration in foreign language studies. The hypothesis that teachers do not have a clear concept of the differences between promoting intercultural studies and foreign language communication fluency was tested (Sercu, 2005), and research results showed the difference in the level of knowledge of global issues and competence for intercultural communication among the teachers of three languages: English, French and German (Sercu, 2005).

For teachers to promote intercultural competence, surveys as to the degree of intercultural understanding and methods of instructions should be promoting it (Sercu, 2006). A follow up research by Sercu took place in parts of Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain, and Sweden (Sercu, 2006), and survey results were similar to previous research conducted by Sercu (2005). Both results suggested that most teachers have not met the competency standards in intercultural understanding in their foreign language classes. This demonstrates the need for further research into teacher' education, training, and recognition in incorporating intercultural learning in their classes. Sercu's (2006) research raises concerns for those who are interested in researching intercultural learning via foreign language classes. Standards and assessment still need further

examination and research.

Despite the goal of moving toward a globalizing society and the need to prepare our next generation to maneuver in the international society of the future, teachers' perceptions of the globalizing phenomenon are omitted in many scholarly research studies, particularly among native-English-speaking teachers who are teaching the language abroad for learners to someday use in an international context. Teachers' perceptions, behavior, material used, and classroom instruction should be studied for a more holistic understanding to pursue more effective teaching and learning.

**Pre-service teachers' world language teaching practice.** In the United States, adding to the traditional approach of studying grammar, reading and translating, using a communicative approach to language teaching is becoming the national standard for pre-service teachers (Burke, 2006). A study of the effect of pre-service teachers' classroom instruction during field experience was conducted to examine the results of their training in school (Burke, 2006). The method used, the extent of influences after the completion of university, and communicative implementation in world-language classrooms were the research focuses in this study, and field observation was the main method (Burk, 2006). For the triangulation of the data from the main method, additional information was collected: lesson plans, self-critiques, written statements of a philosophy of education, teaching reflections, final reflections, and answers to research questions (a secondary method).

The results of the study showed that more pre-service teachers still rely on grammar and translation than on the world-language teaching approach that emphasizes the use of communication skills (Burk, 2006). Teachers who implemented the world-

language approach used practice for students to learn about different countries where a variety of languages are spoken (Nunan, 1991; Burk, 2006). Burk's (2006) findings showed that training in university methods courses and participation in field experiences are not enough to prepare new teachers to use the world-language approach. Burk (2006) suggested continued support to provide teachers with the confidence to use such teaching methods.

This study by Burke (2006) highlighted the reality of the lack of training for language teachers not only in the United States but also for those teachers who move abroad and teach overseas. The current native English teachers are not fully trained to teach these courses in a global context. Many teachers major in fields unrelated to English, linguistics, or education. English-as-a-foreign-language teaching training must rely on the university institutions and teachers' self-motivation to improve their professional and personal knowledge in the curricula of world language.

### **Overcoming Difficulties in Implementing Intercultural Learning**

There are many obstacles when implementing intercultural learning in a class with multicultural backgrounds (Ippolito, 2007). Teaching intercultural learning among students of different backgrounds seemed ideal and was expected to succeed in a multicultural university in Britain; however, unexpected obstacles arising from the students' multicultural differences made the intercultural program a staggering disappointment (Ippolito, 2007). Barriers of cultural differences and values arose during communication. These difficulties can be both found in classes with students of multicultural backgrounds and classes, which promote students from different cultures to communicate. Other obstacles that hindered this learning were linguistic inequality and

gaps in general knowledge (Ippolito, 2007). These are serious considerations for teachers planning the integration of cross-cultural interactions.

Preparation of the cross-cultural activities and implementation should proceed with caution. Anticipation of cultural misunderstandings and strategies to overcome such obstacles should be part of the instructional planning. One solution suggested by Ippolito (2007) to overcome the difficulties of students confronting different cultures is to create a space with intercultural understanding in order to identify mutual values in the space for communication.

### **English for Intercultural Awareness**

Although the emphasis on English education in Japan has long been on the skills of English reading, writing, translation, and grammar, fostering intercultural learning through English instruction is not a new idea. It is possible to introduce an innovative method of integrating intercultural learning by continuing teacher education to foster the transition (Bate, 2008). Researchers believe that the use of information technology will also be part of all English-language curricula in the future (Albrini, 2006). For example, Wiki technology is an example of a technology that can facilitate collaborative learning (Leight, 2008). Using Wiki technology, students interact in an educational, Web-based learning environment, with the boundaries of the communication not limited to the physical classroom. In a technology-assisted foreign language instruction, students can interact with students of other nationalities and develop better expression of their opinions and their cognitive skills.

The recognition of the need to develop intercultural competence via education has also become a part of German foreign language education and is considered a key goal of

teaching in German schools (Gobel & Helmke, 2010). English as a foreign language is one of the core classes and is valued as the tool for intercultural communication. Teacher training in universities is vital, but the continual effort of improving one's pedagogical instructions involving a world context is necessary.

Another factor that may affect the teaching of intercultural topics in the context of English as a foreign language is the teachers' previous intercultural experiences (Gobel & Helmke, 2010). People learn from social interaction with others, and these experiences affect the decisions we make and help form our behaviors. The study of the teachers' intercultural competence by reviewing and analyzing videotapes of English-as-a-foreign-language classroom instruction, comparing teachers who have had prior intercultural experience to those who have not, was conducted by the Assessment of Students Achievement in German and English as Foreign Language (Gobel & Helmke, 2010). The study results indicated that prior intercultural experiences have a positive impact on teacher instruction and that resulting lessons are of better quality (Gobel & Helmke, 2010).

The concern over promoting intercultural awareness among students in the modern language classroom also exists in Ireland. The ambiguity of "teaching culture" among language teachers should be clarified and developed in our constantly changing societies (Rantz & Horan, 2005). Rantz and Horan (2005) pointed out that learning the culture of the target language can bring cultural awareness, which becomes a new knowledge towards bridging different cultures. The equal importance of intercultural awareness and competence should be noted among teachers (Rantz & Horan, 2005). This requires teaching beyond the acquisition of pure knowledge. The development of a

combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values is necessary for developing pedagogical objectives and approaches. Selecting contents in modern language textbooks on the adaptation of multi-cultural perspectives and intercultural awareness was suggested (Rantz & Horan, 2005).

Finally, the question of what perspectives are necessary in teaching intercultural awareness and the need for further teacher professional training are raised (Rantz & Horan, 2005). These questions pertain to all foreign language teachers around the world, but especially to the English- as-a-foreign-language teachers. Research to understand the perceptions of these teachers provides a clearer indication of how to better prepare them.

#### **Technology in English Instruction to Aid Intercultural Awareness.**

Intercultural experiences or cross-cultural interactions increase the awareness of different cultures and have a positive impact on teachers (Gobel & Helmke, 2010). This theory can be applied to students as well. Teachers can foster students' intercultural awareness with the assistance of technology. Students' reading, writing, reflective, and collaborative learning skills also can be improved within the context of classroom instruction using technology under the guidance of the teacher (Leight, 2008). Findings from a study on the use of blogs for communication between students from the United States and English students from Germany suggested that information technology can be used to bring students of different cultures closer together (Elola & Oskoz, 2008).

Cross-cultural learning is increasingly available and possible with the advent of electronic technology. Cultural sharing, participation, and learning are now more feasible through the use of online platforms and other electronic learning tools (Brown, 2008). Efforts by teachers to strengthen intercultural and international communication can also



foster cross-cultural collaborative learning.

Kanata & Martin (2007) suggested the possibility of solving intercultural problems by using technology. Intercultural communication among students of different nationalities can be aided by learning the concept of “otherness” through actual communication on the Web (Kanata & Martin, 2007). Students understand more about themselves while getting to know others who are different. Merely using technology, such as email or blogs, to communicate will not be as effective as if students follow a sequence of topics, which lead to mutual understanding and interests of cultural learning. Also, the topics and dialogue should aim at discussions of solving global problems (Kanata & Martin, 2007).

Although there are many concerns regarding the use of technology in terms of usage and cultural misunderstanding, maintaining open communication for students to engage in positive and constructive dialogues will contribute to higher intercultural competence. An additional point to topics being given in a cross-cultural project is that teachers should plan their topics with less controversial or sensitive content. Students’ maturity level and language abilities should also be taken into consideration when implementing such projects.

Promoting intercultural awareness and competence among students rests on the teachers (Karpova, Correia, & Baran, 2009). Karpova et al. (2009) pointed out the difficulties of using technology for intercultural communication due to language barriers and time differences among different countries. Yet, several studies have shown that the positive results from the success of bringing students together via computer technology are far greater than the difficulties faced (Karpova et al., 2009). The positive outcomes

indicate that there is progress toward more intercultural awareness among teachers and students. Teachers should put more effort into making global learning successful (Karpova et al., 2009). Virtual collaboration among teachers in different countries is needed to assist students in communication and to discuss global issues together.

### **The International Dimension of Higher Education**

Many higher education institutions realize the need to integrate intercultural learning and recognize the connection between language and cross-cultural understanding. This is due to increasing cross-cultural activities, the advancement of technology, and economic and social changes (Knight, 2008). The universities in the United States are said to be the very first institutions to carry out classes on an international dimension (Knight, 2008). Australian universities have also attempted to form their instructional practice to fit international purposes (Killick, 2008). Killick (2008) suggested that universities in England are behind in preparing their universities to be compatible with those in the U.S. and Australia. One reason for their lag is an unwillingness to change traditional beliefs and customs.

“Universities should not simply share values with the rest of the society but also to help shape the society” (Robinson & Katulushi, 2005, p. 256). Killick (2008) argued that the word “shape” in the previous statement is too ambiguous and that further discussion is needed before the process of curriculum internationalization can begin. Killick (2008) divided the notion of international dimension into cross-cultural capability and global perspectives. Cross-cultural capability is concerned with the skills and knowledge base appropriate for living and working in the globalizing world, whereas a global perspective provides a world view and ethical views, which are equally important

and should be fostered in our higher education (Killick, 2008).

National requirements for university graduates are clearly stated in England (Killick, 2008):

1. Display an ability to think globally and consider issues from a variety of perspectives.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of their own culture and its perspectives and other cultures and their perspectives.
3. Appreciate the relation between their field of study locally and professional traditions elsewhere.
4. Recognize intercultural issues relevant to their professional practice.
5. Appreciate the importance of multicultural diversity to professional practice and citizenship.
6. Appreciate the complex and interacting factors that contribute to notions of culture and cultural relationships.
7. Value diversity of language and culture.
8. Appreciate and demonstrate the capacity to apply international standards and practices within the discipline or professional area.
9. Demonstrate awareness of the implications of local decisions and actions for international communities and of international decisions and actions for local communities.

These requirements are appropriate but need detailed description. The interpretation of the requirements may vary depending on individual teachers and their ethnicity. One important method universities may use to act on an international

dimension is teacher collaboration, locally, and worldwide. The elements and details of what constitute international or intercultural competence can be worked out through communication and compromise.

### **Summary**

This literature review combines scholastic papers, articles, books, and research in several different disciplines, which are relevant to this research. Research concepts, questions, and interview questions for this study have been developed by the literature studied. A portion of the literature reviewed is written very clearly in support of the intention of this research, which is to identify the discrepancies between the native English teachers' perceptions of English importance today and their actual instruction. Such literature includes the history of English education, English education in other parts of Asia, and how English is viewed in China and Europe. This literature supports that language study has evolved from the traditional pedagogy of training the mind to the teaching of the language as a means of human social interaction (Savignon, 2006). The importance of English as the most studied language in the world and how it has become one of the major compulsory courses in many non-English speaking countries is emphasized in much of the literature evaluated in the review (Johnson, 2009; Mufwene, 2010).

Secondly, the role of the English teachers in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction is expressed in much of the literature researched. This literature expressed that native language teachers are in the position to develop students' broad cross-cultural awareness and to encourage tolerance for other cultures (Harris, 2008). This is also an important step for the university students—to enter their first intercultural settings and

develop cross-cultural understanding (Harris, 2008). Literature on the influences that form the teachers' perceptions of English teaching and their instruction is reviewed for developing the research question such as, "How do the EFL teachers view themselves as instructors of English as foreign language? To what extent do EFL teachers perceive English as a global communicative language?" and the interview question, "Please describe your beliefs regarding your cultural heritage, life experiences, and education that influence your teaching today." Literature reviews that assisted in the development of the questions above are drawn from various theories, such that the behavior of teacher can be explained as the formation of their past upbringing, experiences, and education by science and psychology (Borg, 2006), and the lay theory that one's personal expectations and interpretation of their surroundings and experiences influences individual behavior, intergroup relationships, and self-regulation (Molden & Dweck, 2006). These elements investigate how the possible formation of a teacher's behavior is related to the teacher's actual instruction.

The problems of English educational practice that lacks the instruction of practical communication skills and the input of intercultural awareness is expressed by several studies stating that most teachers and students still insist on adopting "standard" English (i.e., American and British English) (He, 2007). Literature regarding English teaching and learning from different parts of the world, such as countries in Asia and Europe, written by scholars were explored to understand the existing need for the research on the native English teachers' perceptions of English teaching and its importance. An example research in Indonesia showed that although the use of English to communicate with various cultures is widely understood there, the focus of the

instructional practices in universities is still mostly grammar (Jantraskul, 2010).

A portion of the literature, such as the review on intercultural awareness, textbook selections, technology as supplemental activities to the textbooks, and other studies tied together to support the current situation on the native English teachers' personal intercultural awareness, their selections of textbooks, and the suggested missing part of their instruction. Views on English as lingua franca and the concept of a world English in Europe and China and many non-English speakers' attitudes toward native English teachers were reviewed to understand how native English teachers and the English that is being taught are viewed in many parts of the world. This part of the literature review serves as a reference to future data analysis on the discrepancies of the native teachers' claimed perceptions of English importance and their instruction.

In order to understand the teachers' perceptions, many factors must be considered for review. Some elements to take into consideration are the teachers' upbringing, education, cultural psychology, and lay theory when analyzing the data or comments regarding the teachers' personal theory and perceptions on English language, globalization, intercultural competence, and technology use in class. These are very sensitive and complex for the reason that human behaviors are difficult to predict and pinpoint. The theory of spontaneous behavior under conscious and unconscious states, governed by deeply rooted pre-conceptions learned despite logic, is one example of the difficulties faced in fully understanding the mindset of English teachers and the classroom actions they take. The elements in the literature reviewed will all be taken into account in the attempt to form inquiries leading to the complex thoughts and philosophies of the teachers.

### Chapter 3: Research Method

Today, English as a foreign language still holds its place and has become even more important not only for international business but also for the learning of other cultures in social and human contexts (Tochon, 2009). The gap between the native-English-speaking teachers' perception or recognition of the need for English-as-a-foreign language teaching in a world context and their actual instruction is a recognized problem (Enping, 2007; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004; Xiao, 2006). Currently, there is no literature written on multiple-case studies of native-English teachers' perceptions of the importance of English language as an international communicative tool in a multi-cultural world context compared with their actual instructions.

The purpose of this study was to identify the degree of discrepancy that exists, if any, between the native English-as-a-foreign language teachers' perceptions of the English language in a global context with a multi-cultural focus and their actual instruction. English as a foreign language has been the most studied language in the world since World War II (Brumfit, 2004; Butler, 2005; Sakurai, 2008). This language has contributed to many non-English-speaking countries' economic success and development and is viewed as a skill for international activities. Cultural learning has been recognized as necessary to English-as-a-foreign-language instruction by many scholars (Karpova et al., 2009), and rapid globalization can be attributed to the breakthrough of technological and language barriers. This rapid change requires the native-English-speaking teachers to recognize the need to integrate intercultural awareness and cultural learning in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction, especially for native-English-speaking teachers who are teaching in non-native-English-speaking

countries. Their perceptions of English usage in a global context in terms of language skills and cultural understanding are essential in language teaching and learning.

The integration of intercultural awareness in the English-as-a-foreign-language instructional practice has been suggested by the Ministry of Education in Japan, but there are no specific guidelines to follow for the university compulsory English courses. The recognition of the cultural aspects of the language and its relation to other different cultures vary among teachers. English-as-a-foreign-language instruction in Japan and in many non-English-speaking countries employs native-English-speakers from countries such as the U.S., Australia, Canada, England, and countries in which English is the first and native language. Although some native-English-speaking teachers' own cultures are introduced in the English-as-a-foreign-language courses, the use of English in an international context with different socio-cultural norms of communication and learning have not been fully incorporated (Baker, 2008). Three kinds of data were collected and analyzed in this research, which included (a) in-depth interviews with the native-English-speaking teachers, (b) focus group interviews with students, and (c) the syllabus used in the English-as-a-foreign language instructions. This research examined the native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of English teaching and their teaching practices to identify the gap, if any, between their claimed awareness of the importance of English and their instruction.

### **Statement of the Research Questions**

To investigate issues of current native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of English language teaching and usage in the world and their actual classroom instructional practice, the following research questions were formed as guide of this research.



RQ1. How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?

RQ2. To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?

RQ3. What are the lived educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context?

### **Research Methods and Design**

The purpose of this research was to understand the native-English-speaking teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool in an international context and to investigate whether there is a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction. A qualitative multiple-case study design was used to collect and analyze the data from the teacher interviews, student interviews, and course syllabi to draw a single conclusion for the purpose of this research (Yin, 2009). This study examined native-English-speaking teachers living in Japan. This study was considered a case study due to the bounded system of individuals examined through the qualitative method using in-depth interview research (Creswell, 2003). The analysis of the study relied on multiple sources of evidence as data to converge into a valid analysis (Yin, 2009). Native-English-speaking teachers, English-as-a-foreign language students, and the course syllabi in different parts of Japan from several universities were examined.

A multiple-case study design is used to examine the multiple cases to fulfill the research purpose of this study.

The goal of this study was to investigate the experiences and perceptions of native-English speaking teachers of English as a foreign language and students, with regard to the perceived importance of the global nature and multicultural focus of English as a foreign language as well as actual teaching practices. According to Creswell (2005), “qualitative research is best suited for a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore” (p. 45). The qualitative research method was selected for this study because the research explored the lived experiences of participants, rather than quantifying variable relationships (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative studies focus on the importance of the participant’s perspective and how it informs the personal meaning held by the participant (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative method also provides flexibility in exploring an isolated subject (Yoshikawa, Weisner, Kalil, & Way, 2008). Qualitative exploration allows for an in-depth study, which may lead to the potential development of a new observation, providing an opportunity for further exploration of a study’s prevalence, predictors, and sequence in other studies (Yoshikawa et al., 2008). The methodology approach of a qualitative study is inquiry-based exploring an occurrence through questions, narrative descriptions, and analysis of emerging themes (Creswell, 2007). As such, the qualitative method provides a representation of the specific focus of the present study, based on the interpretation of lived experiences of teachers and students of English-as-a-foreign language university courses in Japan (Creswell, 2007; Neuman, 2003).

A case study research approach is useful for studies that have unknown variables,

use interviews and observation, and have flexible guidelines (Creswell, 2005). The current study is exploratory in nature and as such lends itself to the use of case study methods in order to examine the phenomenon and global impact of teaching English as a foreign language. Researchers use case studies when they are concerned with gathering real life data from participants and creating an understanding of a specific phenomenon (Yin, 2009).

An advantage of case study research is the close collaboration between the researcher and the participants in which the participants describe views of reality, providing a better understanding of the phenomenon and participant actions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). According to Yin (2009), a case study is an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Case study theory enables researchers to answer questions such as “why” or “how” while still being able to incorporate the influence of a phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). As such, a case study design was the best approach to pursue the goal of the study.

Case studies provide researchers the ability to conduct research on more than a single individual or situation (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Multiple-case study analysis is used to carefully explore persons and operations at several locations in order to understand complex situations (Stake 2006). Yin (2009) asserted, “Evidence from multiple case studies is likely to be stronger than that of single case studies” (p. 19).

The in-depth interview with the native-English-speaking teachers also incorporated phenomenological questioning, useful for examining unique individual views on life and work as shaped by personal experiences and the environment (Shank,

2006). A phenomenological questioning approach would enable an understanding of the philosophical perceptions of the English-as-a-foreign-language instructional practices among the native-English-speaking teachers studied. In addition to interviewing the native-English-speaking teachers regarding their perceptions of the importance of English language instruction as a communication tool in an international context, the interview questions also inquired with regard to the teachers' typical class activities and the materials used in their classes.

Data from student focus group interviews were also collected. The student focus group interview questions were straight forward on specific classroom contents learned. Direct questions such as whether they have learned about foreign cultures through their English-as-a-foreign-language classes and how English is used in the future after their graduation will be inquired.

Course syllabi were also collected from the native-English-speaking teachers. Copies of syllabi will be obtained only when provided voluntarily by the native-English-speaking teachers. The course syllabi were also examined for their contents to answer the research questions. This research collected large amounts of data from the teacher, student interviews, and copies of the course syllabi, which then required analysis to identify the data patterns (Shank, 2006). The validity of the answers from the primary participants of the study were tested through triangulation, or converging lines of inquiry, through semi-structured small-group interviews with students, and inquiries into the materials used in class.

The research consisted of two kinds of interviews: an in-depth interview administered to approximately 25 English-as-a-foreign-language teachers who are native-

English-speakers at the university level throughout Japan and short interviews of student focus groups. Each focus group consisted of three to five students who are currently studying English-as-a-foreign-language course in the teachers' universities. The interview questions of the main participants consisted of eight main questions (Appendix E). These questions were open ended so the participants could answer without constraints. Other questions may have been asked as probe questions to seek more detailed information. Interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. The contents of these in-depth interviews were coded and analyzed for commonalities among both interview participants: teachers and students.

The primary participants in the research were asked to voluntarily participate on the basis of their years of teaching and their nationalities. The purpose of this study was to explore the current native-English-speaking teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool in an international context with a world view and multi-cultural focus and to investigate whether there is a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction, which pre-service and new teachers are unable to express. Therefore, answers from pre-service teachers and teachers with less than a year of teaching experience may not fully reflect the current English teaching environment in Japan. English teachers in Japan consist of teachers from different native-English-speaking countries such as the United States, Canada, England, Australia, and New Zealand. The selection for this study was concerned with collecting data from teachers of as many native-English-speaking countries as possible. This selection method could provide data that was not skewed to a certain country of the native-speaking-English teachers, but explored native-English-speaking teachers of multi-national

backgrounds.

Teachers and students from medium-sized universities of more than 10,000 students were targeted. The universities were selected from both the Kanto (eastern) and the Kansai (western) regions of Japan. Most major universities are located in these two regions. The selected native-English-speaking teachers came from various English-speaking countries, primarily the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, and countries in which English is the primary and official language. All participants were required to have more than one year of experience teaching English-as-a-foreign-language. As the researcher is a lecturer of English-as-a-foreign language in a Japanese university, access to the native-English-speaking teachers in her university and other universities was not problematic. It is customary in Japan for university teachers to interact among different universities for research or the exchange of academic information.

Each individual teacher interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. Students from the same universities of the teachers who were interviewed and who were studying English-as-a-foreign language as a compulsory course were approached for voluntary participation in a focus group interview regarding their English classes. Seven questions were included in the student group interview (Appendix F). The first three questions are general information questions and the following questions are the target questions for this research.

Focus groups of three to five students from each main participant's university were approached for the student interviews. It was estimated that approximately 30 to 50 students would be interviewed. These students were interviewed in groups and were

asked about the class instructions and materials used in order to understand the students' experiences and learning in their English classes. The focus group interview took approximately 60 minutes and was arranged at a time that was convenient for the students in each group, for example, after their classes had finished for the day. In both interviews with the main participants and the students, materials used in class as indicated in the syllabi and the instructional methods of the teachers were questioned and documented. Results from the student interviews and examination of the material used by the teachers assisted in measuring validity and consistency in the data gathered as a whole.

All three data sets were triangulated for verification of consistency. Through data triangulation and analysis process, the possible discrepancies between the data would indicate the gap between teachers' perception of English in terms of its importance in an international context as a communication tool with a world view multi-cultural focus and their actual instruction. The research process of interview questionnaires with the teachers and the students occurred in two steps. The first step was the pilot research conducted to test the structure of the questions and the relevancy of the results to the research purpose. The pilot test allowed refinement of the questions and clarification of validity and reliability prior to the continuance of the research.

The second step was the in-depth interview questions presented to native-English-speaking teachers of English-as-a-foreign-language regarding their views of teaching English in a multi-cultural world context, their roles, and their actual class instruction. The interview questions used in the second step were those refined from the first step in the pilot research. Interview questions were designed to address the research questions regarding perceptions of the teachers' perceived importance of English language

instruction as a communication tool in an international context, and the extent they supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness.

The open-ended questions allowed participants to express their thoughts on various dimensions. Although the interviews followed the pre-designed interview questions, probes and transitional techniques were also used to gain further understanding of the deeply rooted teaching philosophies and personal experiences among the teachers (Patton, 2002). An example question is, “Do the materials you use contain foreign cultures and issues?” If the answer is yes, following probe questions would be, “What foreign cultures do you discuss in your classes (if you do)? For example: Your culture? Comparing your culture and the culture of your students? Various cultures?” These responses were expected to be detailed and complex. An inductive approach was used to enable an understanding of the data through the development of categories, coding, and interpretation of the interview results.

Student focus group interviews followed after each main participant’s interview. Three to five students who were currently studying English-as-a-foreign language at the main participants’ universities were approached for participation in a focus group interview. These questions were aligned to be coded with the main participants’ answers. The student interview questions were for the purpose of understanding what they have learned in their English classes and how these classes influenced their awareness of using English with people of different cultures.

A course syllabus were requested prior to the interview with the native-English-speaking teachers and collected at the time of the interview for data analysis. Course



syllabi were obtained only provided voluntarily by the native-English-speaking teachers. The course syllabi were examined through content analysis to determine and validate course material taught and compared to data gathered from teachers and students specifically in terms of answering the research questions.

For accuracy, a voice recorder was used with permission during all interviews, and the contents were transcribed after each interview. NVivo 9® qualitative research software was used as an aid to this study to sort the large amount of the data. The transcription of each individual and group interview was coded and analyzed by the researcher. Coded schemes were reviewed and analyzed to find a pattern and to develop the findings into meaningful explanations.

### **Participants**

A qualitative multiple-case studies methodology and sampling was used in this in-depth exploration of the perceptions and actions of unique individuals in the same profession. Japanese university native-English-speaking teachers of English-as-a-foreign-language, the primary participants of this study, were selected following the strategy of the primary method of qualitative research, purposive sampling. All the participants must have certain criteria to demonstrate their teaching experiences, a factor known as “expert sampling,” a sub-category of purposive sampling, which was essential to this study (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The number of the primary participants was small, and they were selected based on their education, years of teaching, and the experience of teaching in more than one country. The purpose of this research was to understand the native English-as-foreign language teachers’ perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool in an international context as a communication tool

with a world view multi-cultural focus and to investigate whether there is a discrepancy between their perceptions and their actual instruction.

Twenty-five English-as-a-foreign-language teachers from native-English-speaking countries who meet the criteria of possessing a master's degree or above and having taught in more than one country were selected for this research. Individual interviews proceeded following the explanation and consent (Appendix A, B) from the participants. The number of full-time English-as-a-foreign-language teachers in Japanese universities is small, and the possibility of their identity being revealed may risk their continuance as university lecturers. It was thus vital that confidentiality is assured.

The data from the primary participants were examined for validity by interviewing their students. Focus groups of three to five students from each primary participant's university were interviewed. Students who were currently studying English-as-a-foreign language in the main participants' universities were approached for a short interview. The data drawn from the secondary participants, the students, were analyzed to check for consistency with the data collected from the primary participants for triangulation purposes. For triangulation, secondary participants were selected randomly from students who have studied or are currently in the English classes of the main participants' universities. Students were approached and asked according to their availability and their willingness to participate.

### **Material/Instruments**

The interviews of the primary participants were to be semi-structured and open-ended. A brief explanation of this study and an assurance of confidentiality were given prior to the interview. Participants' criteria for this study were re-ensured by confirming

their nationalities, years of teaching experience, and countries in which they have taught (Appendix D).

Interview questions (Appendix E) were asked to reveal whether the native-English-speaking teachers' believe that it is important to teach English with a worldview, such as using English as a tool to learn about different cultures and to communicate in a multicultural context, and class instructions or activities that include the teaching of foreign cultures and/or international issues. Some probe questions were conducted to explore the teachers' answers in further depth. This is a standard technique in which general questions begin in an interview and guide toward research purposes (Trochim, 2008). Participants' answers were not disturbed, but were encouraged for expansion.

During communication with the teachers to set up the interviews, the teacher participants were asked if they would be willing to provide a copy of their course syllabus as part of the data collection for the research. Teachers agreeing to provide the syllabus were asked to provide this to the researcher at the time of the interview. The researcher followed up with the teachers who expressed willingness to provide the syllabi but neglected to bring a copy to the interview, and collected the syllabi from the teachers personally or the syllabi were mailed to the researcher by the teacher.

After completion of the teacher interviews, student participants were approached for voluntary participation in a focus group interview regarding their English classes' instructions and material used (Appendix F). An audio recorder was used to record both the main participants, the native English speaking teachers' interviews and the student focus group discussion. The use of the recorder was explained prior to the interview. The participants were assured of confidentiality of the recorded data, which was kept by the

researcher and destroyed after the entire research is completed. Course syllabi used in class were also treated with the same care as the recorded interview data. All data were kept on file in a cabinet in the personal residence of the researcher for a period of seven years after which time, all data will be destroyed. Paper documents will be shredded and electronic data maintained on compact disc will be deleted and the disc will be broken.

### **Data Collection, Processing, and Analysis**

A qualitative multiple-case study methodology was used to collect and analyze the data from the teacher interviews, student focus group interviews, and the teaching materials. Data collection from the main participants, their students, and course syllabi are multiple sources of evidence to allow triangulation (Yin, 2009). Prior to proceeding with the research, approval from the Northcentral University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) was necessary. Upon obtaining the permission, the researcher approached the native-English-speaking teachers, explained her research, and asked for their cooperation.

Twenty-five English teachers lecturing in different parts of Japan were approached to participate in this study. This was a volunteer study, and only the teachers who gave consent were interviewed. The researcher located the 25 English teachers by referral and by contacting English teachers who are on the list of the Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET). Most of the participants were not acquainted with the researcher.

The main participants of this research, native-English-speaking university English-as-a-foreign-language teachers, were approached by personal visit, telephone, and email inquiry. The criterion of being a native-English-speaker with teaching

experiences of more than one year in a foreign country was explained, and appointments were obtained for the interviews. At the beginning of each interview, assurance of confidentiality was emphasized. A consent form of confidentiality agreement was also provided to the participants (Appendix B). A background information sheet to confirm the teachers' nationality and the number of years they have taught English-as-a-foreign language was filled out together between the researcher and the participants before the actual interview started (Appendix D).

The interviews with the teachers were conducted individually and took approximately 60 minutes. The researcher interviewed 25 teachers from five different universities. The researcher visited the universities at which the native-English-speaking teachers lecture and conducted the interviews there. For teachers at universities located at a distance that makes traveling difficult, a Skype interview was arranged for the interview.

Students who are currently studying English-as-a-foreign language in the main participants' universities were approached between classes for voluntary participation in an interview. A focus group interview method was adopted for this interview. A group of three to five students were approached for the interview. The student interview questions were designed to be simple and could be answered in a short period of time. Student interviews were conducted in available public areas such as the students lounge, cafeteria or an available classroom, within a 60 minute time frame (Appendix F).

The contents of the course syllabi used for each teacher's class, if provided, were questioned during the interview with the native-speaking-English teachers to understand the instruction focus. The course syllabi were collected only if the native-English-speaking teachers were willing to provide them. The syllabi were documented as text

contents for analysis using content analysis techniques (Neuendorf, 2002). Four questions as a guide to code and to analyze the contents of the materials were developed to address the research questions.

Content analysis was used to determine whether there are certain concepts present in written syllabi documents (Neuendorf, 2002). To conduct a content analysis on the text obtained for this research, the data (course syllabi) needed to be coded into manageable categories on a variety of levels, which included breaking the textual data down into key components, words, sentences or themes, similar to the text analysis that was conducted on the interview data ((Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2009; Neuendorf, 2002). These themes or key components were then examined using relational analysis to determine whether there were any relationships with the responses of the interview participants.

The teacher and student interview questions and the guided questions for the teaching materials were developed by the researcher to align with the research questions. The alignment between the interview questions, guided questions and the research questions are shown in the tables below, and articulated following each table.

Table 1

*Teacher Interview: Correspondence of Research Questions and Interview Questions*

Research Questions	Teachers Interview Questions (Appendix E)
How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign	# 1
language teachers view their role as English-as-a-	# 2
foreign-language teachers and do they perceive	#7
teaching English in a multi-cultural global context	#8
to be an important element of their role as an	
English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?	
To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-	# 2
foreign language teachers supplement traditional	# 3
English instruction with materials and activities	#4
that foster intercultural awareness?	# 5
	#6
What are the lived educational experiences of the	# 2
English-as-a-foreign language students,	#3
specifically in terms of whether they learned	# 4
English within a multi-cultural, global context?	# 5
	#6
	# 8

Research question number one sought to explore the native English-as-foreign language teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction as a communication tool in an international context with a world view multi-cultural focus. In addition, it sought to find out how the native-English-speaking teachers view their role as important as their perceived importance of the English instruction in an international context. Interview question number one was a direct question to understand if the native-English-speaking teachers believe that it is important to teach English with a worldview. This question was also an open-ended question that allowed teachers to expand their answers without interruption. The open-ended question gave the teachers an opportunity to express how they perceive English in an international context as a global communicative language.

Teachers' behavior, practice, and how they view themselves and their instructions are formed by their cultural background, personal experiences, and other aspects of their personal history (Harris, 2008). Interview question number two was a direct question regarding the native-English-speaking teachers' class instructions or activities that include the teaching of foreign cultures and or, international issues. Both native-English-speaking teachers, with and without class instructions or activities that include the teaching of foreign cultures or, international issues were asked to describe a typical activity that occurs in a class period. Interview answers from question number two assisted the investigation of whether there is a discrepancy between the native-English-teachers' perceptions and their actual instruction.

Interview question two to six were questions that directly addressed the native-English-speaking teachers' extents of supplementing traditional English instruction with



materials, which foster intercultural awareness. These interview questions identified the specific materials, textbooks, classroom activities, technology integration and the English language skills emphasized in the native-English-speaking teachers' classes. These questions also answered the research question number three of the contents students learned from their English-as-a-foreign language courses.

Interview question seven was designed for the native-English-speaking teachers to answer freely regarding their personal experiences, which influence their perception of English teaching in their classes. This interview question added to understanding of how native-English-speaking teachers perceive English as a global communicative language, which may be influenced by their personal beliefs, cultural heritage, life experiences, and education. Interview question eight inquires the native-English-speaking teachers' goal for their students in the usage of English after graduation. The question aimed to explore native-English-speaking teachers' perceived English as a global communicative language of its relevance even after students graduate. This question also aligned with research question three, which answered the question of the contents of classroom studies as a goal for the English-as-a-foreign language students.

Table 2

*Student: Correspondence of Research Questions and Interview Questions*

Research questions	Student interview questions (Appendix F)
How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?	# 2
	#4
To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?	# 1
	# 2
	# 3
	# 4
	# 1
What are the lived educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context?	# 2
	# 3
	# 4

Student interview questions were developed to verify the teachers' answers regarding their perceptions importance of English teaching with a world view multi-

cultural focus, purposes of learning, and their instructions. The interview questions for the students were short, straightforward, and easy to answer. Different from the teachers' interview questions, where teachers' perceptions were explored, the student questions served the purpose of validating the instruction they received in English-as-a-foreign language classes. Student interview question number one sought the precise knowledge taught and learned in their English classes taught by the native-English-speaking teachers. Interview question number one aligned with research question number two and three, to understand the skills of English focus by the native-English-speaking teachers. Student interview question number two aligned with research questions number one, seeking to find out if foreign cultures are part of the English class through instructions, textbooks, or other materials.

The answers to these questions allowed further understanding of the native-English-speaking teachers' perceptions of English, its importance, and the extent of how the purpose of using English as a communicative tool in an international context with a world view multi-cultural focus is carried out. Interview question number two and four aligned with all the research questions. Students' motivation of how the English language is used after graduation reviewed the purpose of learning the English language as taught by the study teachers and whether the purpose included using the language in an intercultural context.

Interview question one asked the exact contents learned in students' English-as-a-foreign classes, cultural knowledge in the textbooks and materials used in class. This interview question aligned with research question two and three. This interview question determined the extent to which teachers supplement traditional English instruction with

materials that foster intercultural awareness, and what the students have learned.

Interview question number three was a straightforward question to verify different cultures are written in the students' textbooks and materials used in the class instructions.

Table 3

*Textbooks and other materials: Correspondence of Research Questions and Interview Questions*

Research questions	Questions regarding the contents of Textbook and Other Material (Appendix G)
How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?	# 1
To what extent do native-speaking English-as- a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?	#2 #3 #4
What are the lived educational experiences	#1

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of the English-as-a-foreign language	#2
students, specifically in terms of whether	#3
they learned English within a multi-	#4
cultural, global context?	

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The contents of the syllabi material used for the course/class were questioned during the interview with the native-speaking-English teachers to understand the instructional focus. The focuses of the instruction through the syllabi from the class triangulate with the answers from the interview with the native-English-speaking teachers regarding their perceived importance of English language instruction. Syllabi were requested and obtained with the native-speaking-English teachers' consent. Four questions served to guide the examination of whether the syllabi used in class, which provides further information on the specific textbooks and materials used in class as well as content covered in class, contain foreign cultures, topics, and issues and the extent to which native-English-speaking teachers foster intercultural awareness in their instructions (Appendix G). These questions were for the purpose of data analysis and each question was clear and straight forward.

The interview data collected from the main participants and their students were complex, non-numerical, and rich-text-based, all to which requires logical steps from organization to analysis. The information documented on the course syllabi also generated a text document, which was coded and analyzed for the contents. The steps of the content data analysis were incorporated with the analysis of qualitative data for interview transcripts suggested by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2009). The first step

suggested was to transcribe the interviews and to read the teaching materials (syllabi) collected. Transcribed data and teaching materials generated large amount of texts for analysis.

Following the first step was identifying and dividing texts into units of data for analysis (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2009). This is referred to as “unitizing” (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The teachers’ interview questions were open ended and exploratory, from which a large amount of data could be expected. The length of answers to the interview questions was dependent on each teacher’s response, which was not predictable before the interview. The researcher divided the data text into groups of sentences for further analysis as the second step of this research.

The third step suggested by Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2009) was coding: the most widely used categorizing strategy in qualitative data analysis. The development of the coding scheme was based on the answers received during the interview phase of this research. The data can range in magnitude from a single word to a full sentence to an entire page of text data (Saldana, 2009). Several coding techniques were utilized in this segment. One example is coding with a single word or phrase, taking at least one word directly from the participants’ answers; this is called “In Vivo Code” (Saldana, 2009). Another example is to summarize the segments divided into topics, or “Descriptive Coding” (Saldana, 2009).

Through qualitative coding, the researcher was able to define what is represented by the data (i.e., what the data is about) (Charmaz, 2006, 2010). Coding incorporates the segmentation and labeling of the data, which “simultaneously categorizes, summarizes, and accounts for each piece of data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). In this research, the

transcribed interviews conducted with the teachers and students were selected as the texts for analysis.

The researcher began the coding process by reading the interview transcripts, which included taking notes and memos of the material read and conceptualizing ideas of the possible categories and relationships in the data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2009). Initial coding, the process of progression through the data line by line, is used to label data while allowing the researcher to discover what lies inside the data through segmentation, or breaking up the data into component parts, from which the researcher seeks “tacit assumptions, crystallizing the significance of the points, and comparing data with data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 50). According to Charmaz, the second coding phase, focused coding, is “more directed, selective, and conceptual than initial line by line coding, as focused coding means condensing and refining data by using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes” (p. 57). Memo writing is used within the second step to facilitate the transition of focused codes to conceptual categories that are used to provide clarity in terms of explaining the common elements (codes) from the data (Charmaz, 2006). Memos are narrative notes or statements that define a category, specify or explain the conditions for inclusion of elements within the category, describe how the category relates to the phenomenon, and how this category relates to other categories (Charmaz, 2006).

The final step of the analysis was to analyze the coded data to and review the segments and topics developed during the coding process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2009; Saldana, 2009). Repeated codes throughout the entire text data is both natural and deliberate to identify the consistencies in human affairs and to find patterns as part of the

analysis process (Saldana, 2009). Emphasis on particular beliefs is natural and deliberate in answers of research interview, which result in repeated patterns of the same words and phrases occurred in the interview data. The researcher then constructs emergent themes, or generalizations, from the data resulting from the preliminary codes, focused codes, and memos (Charmaz, 2006, 2010). These themes are representative of the experiences and perceptions of the participants as a whole and serve to provide insight and answers to the research questions of the study.

The process of data gathering, transcribing, and analysis was conducted manually by the researcher. Nvivo 9® qualitative analysis software was used in order to assist in the coding and the development of themes and patterns from the data. Nvivo 9® software is designed to manage qualitative data by classifying, sorting and arranging information, and noting the frequency and location of occurrences. In addition, Nvivo 9® is able to assist in the coding of multiple sources of qualitative data. Interpretation of the analysis was the responsibility of the researcher. The steps and the possible coding themes developed are presented in the following table.



Table 4

*Data Analysis Process*

Process: Analysis Process	Description
Step 1: Selection of the texts for analysis	Interviews from the teachers and the students will be selected for data analysis. Course/Class Syllabi used for the class will be selected for data analysis.
Step 2: "Unitizing": dividing texts into segments or "chunks" for analysis	Interview text will be transcribed and divided into three sentences in one chunk for analysis. Course syllabi used in class will be analyzed.
Step 3: Coding	<p data-bbox="671 1145 1342 1329">In Vivo Coding: Transcribed data will be reviewed line by line and coded with word or words according to the themes of the research interests.</p> <p data-bbox="671 1362 1342 1543">Descriptive Coding: Transcribed data will be reviewed in segments and topics will be developed for each segment.</p>
Step 4: Analyze the code themes	The codes of the data will be analyzed to determine which themes occur most frequently and the correlation of the code themes.

### **Methodological Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

This research method analyzed the data collected by interviewing the native English-as-foreign-language teachers, the students of English-as-foreign language, and the materials they use in class. The analysis required using coding methods to organize a large amount of data from the interviews and copies of course syllabi. Interpretations by the researcher were carried out to fulfill the research purpose: to explore the perceptions of the native-speaking-English teachers' views of teaching English in a multi-cultural world context as important as their role, and further, whether their actual instruction is in accordance with their perceptions. Perceptions are influenced by various elements such as one's cultural background, upbringing, education, and personal experiences. Teachers' actual instructional methods are the result of their personal beliefs, goals, and inferences (Molden & Dweck, 2006).

Assurance of confidentiality was given before the interview and participants were treated with honesty and respect. A set of assumptions need to be explicitly documented in order to ensure openness and genuineness of the research (Cohen, 2009). The following are the assumptions of the qualitative interview with the participants, teachers, and students: (a) The responses of participants were answered with the best of their efforts in an honest and appropriate manner; (b) the research process was genuine, without manipulation; and (c) the data gathered were transcribed and analyzed to answer the research questions.

Every study has a set of limitations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Although the intention of the researcher is genuine, and this research was carried out with integrity and

caution, uncontrollable threats to the internal validity potentially exist and should be identified (Cohen, 2009; Creswell, 2005). This case study was limited in scope to interviews with 25 English-as-a-foreign-language teachers at various universities in Japan, focus groups with some of the students in these courses, and course syllabi information obtained from the teachers reflecting the content and objectives of these courses.

The main participants of this research were native-English-speaking teachers in Japanese universities. One limitation of this study is the fear of the main participants of a research breach in confidentiality or being accidentally identified by university administrators, a fear that may have affected their interview answers. Native-English-speaking teachers in Japanese universities are on contract system, and the insecurity of possible contract termination may cause their answers to be formed within the bounds of not affecting their positions. Being foreign nationals teaching in Japanese universities, they are vulnerable in labor protection and job security. Despite the reassurance of confidentiality, some participants may have hesitated to give their actual perception of English teaching, their instructional methods, and materials they use, fearing that their current performance may be different from the university standards.

Another possibility that may contribute to this limitation is the fact that the researcher is a university English lecturer, which puts her in the same or competitive positions with the main participants of this research. Despite the limitations, the researcher guaranteed her sincerity and integrity. Another limitation is the possibility that students in the focus group interview may have hesitated to answer all the questions honestly. Students may have been under the impression that the interview was an evaluation of their teachers and this may have caused the students hesitate to speak

fearing job risks for their teachers. The intention of the research was explained and confidentiality was guaranteed prior to the focus group interview to ensure the integrity and validity of this interview.

The study maintained a focus on the instructional practices and inclusion of multi-cultural aspects of the curriculum in teaching English-as-a-foreign-language and the personal experiences and beliefs of the teacher interview and student focus group participants. As such, the study utilized voluntary participation, which may have led to data reflecting strong positive or strong negative opinions with regard to teaching with a worldview or multi-cultural view. It is therefore possible that those who were inclined to volunteer to participate in the study may be more likely to share certain positive or negative perceptions, creating a possible bias for the study.

Further, the study was limited by data dependent on the participants' willingness to share openly and honestly during interviews and focus groups. As such, the validity of the study was limited by the reliability of the data obtained from participants. As suggested by Moustakas (1994), to encourage open and honest discussion during qualitative study interviews, the researcher ensured that the interview location was comfortable and private. As a qualitative study, the results are not generalizable to a larger population; however, the results obtained from participants in this study can shed light on possible perceptions of other English-as-a-foreign-language teachers in Japan or elsewhere for exploration in other research.

Despite efforts to minimize researcher bias, the possibility of bias remains a limitation of the study. Although the researcher attempted to remove bias through viewing the data in the absence of prior experience or knowledge, the possibility for the

interpretation of elements in the context of pre-conceived notions that would serve as a threat to study validity, and therefore, a limitation of the study.

Delimitations are the factors, constructs, or variables left out intentionally to form reasonable boundaries of the research (Cohen, 2009). The delimitations of this study include the following: (a) main participants were limited to only native-English speakers teaching in Japanese universities; (b) student group interviews were limited to those who attend the universities of the main participants and have studied or are currently study English-as-foreign language in university; (c) this study only analyzed the data retrieved from the main participants' interviews, and other data such as student interviews and course syllabi were used as triangulation; and (d) this study only examined the data of the native-English-speaking university teachers; the Japanese English university teachers were not studied within this study

### **Ethical Assurances**

The research was conducted among a small number of selective English-as-a-foreign-language teachers; therefore, several ethical issues and potential risks need to be addressed to ensure ethical responsibilities. The purpose of the research was explained to potential participants before the interview. However, teachers may have declined to participate due to concerns that their answers may affect their jobs directly. To overcome this barrier, confidentiality was assured, and the interview was conducted to those who gave consent voluntarily (Allmark, 2002). The same standard was also applied to the students who were interviewed.

The identity of the primary participants—the native speaking English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and their students—was not exposed in writing as a guarantee

to fulfill part of the ethical responsibility. University names of the research subjects were also kept confidential and were represented by other means. Personal views can be considered “biased” (Shank, 2006); therefore, the interviewer’s attitude and judgment must not affect the interview process and results. The questions designed in the research must not mislead the participants in answering in a direction that would affect a genuine result. It would be unethical to purposely advise and guide the participants to answer according to what they might think are the right answers for their careers. The questions must be impartially worded in order to receive each participant’s true opinions.

### **Summary**

The present study hoped to discover the current system of English education in Japan, whether a gap exists between the teachers’ perception of the English importance in a multi-cultural world context and their instructions, and to add this finding to the English-as-a-foreign-language-teaching literature as reference for further research and practical teaching. The exploration of the results of the interview questions showed the native-English-speaking teachers’ perceptions of the English language in a multi-cultural world context, and their answers were triangulated with the students’ interview answers and course syllabi. All the data were analyzed to identify the teachers’ perceptions of the English language teaching and learning in the world and whether they perceive that English should be taught as integrating the learning of other cultures or as merely a language art focused on grammar and translation. In addition, data from students’ answers and course syllabi used allowed the comparison between the teachers’ claimed perceptions and their instructional practice. The completion of the research results will hopefully assist educators in the teaching of English as a foreign language, from

administrators to teachers, in countries where English learning is a part of their core courses from lower grade levels to university level.

## Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this multiple case study was to understand the native English-as-foreign language teachers' perceived importance of English language instruction and compare this perception to their actual classroom practices. In-depth interviews were conducted with 25 university level native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers to explore their perceptions of teaching English and teaching English as a communication tool with a world view multi-cultural focus in an international context. The native English-as-foreign language teachers were teaching at universities located in several regions of Japan: Tokyo, Hokkaido, Ibaraki, Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe. These teachers were located by using the directory of Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET) and referral by the teachers accepted to the interview. In addition, data were gathered from students in the form of focus group data as well as course specific data obtained from course syllabi to investigate whether there was a discrepancy between the teachers' perceptions and their actual instruction. Students who participated in the focus group interview were English-as-foreign language learners at the universities of the native English-as-foreign language teachers. The course syllabi were obtained during the teachers' interview or down loaded from the universities' open web page with permissions.

This chapter presents the findings from the detailed analysis of each of the data sources used in the study. As noted in Chapter 3, descriptive coding (Saldana, 2009) was employed and used to identify similar occurrences within each data source through a process in which each occurrence was compared with an occurrence within the same source (interview, focus group) and/or in a different source (interview, focus group).



Through these comparisons, the themes of the analysis evolved, serving to describe the participants' experiences and perceptions related to the implementation and use of the acuity assessments. Syllabi data obtained from the interviewed teachers were analyzed by means of a content analysis, as described in Chapter 3. Nvivo 9® qualitative analysis software was used to assist in the coding process for all data sources.

The following research questions were explored in this study:

RQ1. How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?

RQ2. To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?

RQ3. What are the lived educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context?

## **Results**

Prior to the data collection, four volunteer native English -as-foreign language teachers were interviewed as a pilot study for time management planning and possible probe questions needed in addition to the interview questions. The pilot testing can also provide conceptual clarification for the research design (Yin, 2009). The process for the pilot testing interviews was successful as planned. The volunteer participants were able to express their answers to all the interview questions without guidance and the

actual interview time for each participant was around 10 minutes under or over one hour. One focus group of four students was also interviewed and no complication occurred during the interview. As a result of these tests, no changes were made to the interview questions and anticipated time for interview for both the teachers and students. The interview results from the pilot testing were not included as part of this study.

The findings of the primary study are provided according to the research questions. Data from all three sources (teacher interviews, student focus groups, and syllabi) are used in conjunction in order to answer each of the research questions.

**Research Question 1: How do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher?** To address the first research question, data were gathered with regard to teacher perceptions of teaching English in a multi-cultural context. From the interview data obtained, three thematic categories were revealed related to the first research question. These themes included (a) teacher personal beliefs and experiences that have shaped their teaching, (b) perceptions of teaching English with a worldview within the context of the globalization of English, and (c) expressed goals for their students' use of English in the present and future.

The first thematic category, teacher personal beliefs and experiences that have shaped their teaching, was defined by seven key elements. Table 5 provides these elements and the associated frequencies with which they occurred among interview participants. Critical to these findings are the personal learning experiences of these teachers, which affected their teaching by providing a better understanding of the

difficulties of learning a language. In addition, prior teaching experiences and multi-cultural experiences, such as family life and culture as well as travel and study abroad experiences, served to shape their teaching philosophies.

These elements are exemplified in the words of the participants who noted the influence of life experiences and prior teaching on their current teaching practices. For example:

Well I have studied abroad two times in my life. In Latin America. My experiences in how I learned a second language definitely influenced my teaching. I helped several groups of students for the study abroad program. I always share the things that I experienced with the students and any of the classes I took also gave me the knowledge of how I put my materials together and conduct my classes. Yes, everything affected the way of my teaching. (Participant 12)

When I was learning a foreign language and one of the biggest motivator is to enjoy learning it. When I went to France I learned about the culture and language and enjoyed it a lot so I think my students can enjoy the culture that they would enjoy speaking the language. They will also realize the benefit of learning English. Not as the language that people think would take over the world but as a language that they can use in the future, not necessarily in their career but in their personal lives as well. (Participant 17)

So what I do is when I'm in class I offer remind me from time to time that I know what it's like to be in their shoes, I have studied French and German before and now Japanese so I know the difficulties at a certain level of students learning a foreign language. (Participant 1)

Well, I come from Australia, which is very multicultural. And now I teach in Japan where it's not very multicultural. I don't know if this is relevant is so much to my teaching but being in Australia and all help me to understand the differences of different cultures. As an educator, I want to help my students to understand about different cultures. I think students are not just learning a foreign language but also the foreign cultures well. So I try to open their eyes to different issues of cultures. And I think since I have lived in different countries it also allowed me to do that without being too judgmental. (Participant 20)

Well my experiences of teaching in Taiwan prior to coming to Japan was very valuable. I had an intensive training on how to teach foreign students in Taiwan and I learned how to prepare materials to best suit my students of their levels and interests. I also think that my American upbringing allows me to my perspective to the students so students can think and compare the perspectives between American and Japanese and may be they can form a different or newer perspective. (Participant 7)

Table 5

*Personal Beliefs of Culture, Heritage, Experiences, and Education that Shape Teaching*

Element*	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Personal learning experiences allow for greater understanding of the difficulties in learning a new language	9	36%
Have lived in a multi-cultural environment, which has influenced teaching	5	20%
Prior teaching experiences and confidence gained from years of teaching	5	20%
American upbringing allows to share perspective	4	16%
Personal study abroad experiences or travel experiences	4	16%
Students not responsible for own learning in Japan/need for greater independence	3	12%
Bilingual in English and Japanese and don't believe acquisition of one language affects another	2	8%

\**Note.* Elements mentioned by a single participant are not included in table, but include the following

statements by participants: eternal learner, understanding the balance of challenging the students, spirituality, do best to fulfill teaching responsibilities, learned by doing, teachers are role models and motivators, focus on communication, students need to learn to get along with different nationalities, acceptance of different accents of English, Personal culture affected teaching through learned discipline, social and political sensitivities promote teaching critical thinking skills in students, belief in rights to fairness, self-determination, equality and equal opportunities, bridge the gap of knowledge between teacher and student, grew up knowing several languages and am therefore more strict with high expectations for language acquisition, believe in student centered learning and critical thinking, as American, believe in active learning.

The second thematic category related to the first research question, teaching English with a worldview, was defined by a total of 12 elements. Table 6 provides these elements and the associated frequencies with which they occurred among interview participants. Key elements in this theme included (a) English as a global communication tool, used to communicate with people of different nationalities, (b) English has become more relevant due to its use for communication among non-native speakers, (c) should expose students to a variety of Englishes (e.g., different accents), and (d) acknowledgement of the emergence of English as a world language (*lingua franca*). These elements demonstrate the predominant perception of the use of English as a world language for purposes of multi-cultural communication and understanding. However, it is noted, that six individuals also felt it was important to teach standard (or mainstream) English, as taught by native speakers.

More than half of the participants noted the elements of English as a global language that can be used to communicate between different nationalities and cultures, even among non-native speakers. This can be witnessed in the following examples:

With globalization and the internationalization of a lot of aspects of life. It just so happened that English is the current *lingua franca* so I think it's important to equip students with the tools and the skills to be able to, to do whatever they want in life. English is a valuable skill in every aspect. (Participant 24)

Previously English learning is a hobby or required course in schools or an assessment to pass the universe exam but now there is another purpose using English as the world communicator with people of non-English speakers. (Participant 13)

Participant 12 noted that although students should understand the importance of English as a global language, they should also learn standard English from native speakers.

I think students should be aware of that English can be used to communicate with many different people. But I think students should learn standard English from mainstream English speakers. This is just to widen their ability to communicate. But learning standard English can maximize their efficiency in speaking and listening and other communicative usage. But I do think they should use English to learn about all the worlds. There's a lot of politics on the language imperialism, but the situation is English is the language that most people will use to interact with others. And to get information outside of Japan, or outside of their home country. (Participant 12)

Participant 15 expressed the ideas on global English, the variety of “Englishes” around the world, and the importance to instruction and learning:

I want my students to understand that English is an international language. English is not just American English or exclusively to the UK, Australia. Its Indian English, Chinese English and English used in all the world to communicate between non-native speakers. There are many different dialects different ways to express themselves English, different ways to speak it. So it's important that students get used to understand that there is a whole variety of Englishes. If I just focus on the American English or standard English than they will lose the opportunity to understand the reality of how English is used today. (Participant 15)

Table 6

*Teaching English with a Worldview/Globalization of English*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
English has a purpose to communicate with people of different nationalities, a global communication tool	13	52%
English has become more relevant because is used as a communication tool among non-native speakers	13	52%
Expose students to a variety of Englishes	10	40%
Emergence of World English or lingua franca	10	40%
Should learn standard English (mainstream English)	6	24%
Natural course of English to have different variants (different kinds of English) because is used by different countries	5	20%
Should not exclude learning English of different accents	4	16%
Focus on students' ability to express themselves in English, language skills, rather than culture	4	16%
Due to the global nature of English, purpose is to give students access to information and knowledge outside of Japan	2	8%
Focus more on cultural aspects than on mechanics of English	1	4%
Cultures should be incorporated into a separate class; don't teach culture	1	4%
Outside of Japan, use English on an international level, but within Japan, use English for advancement	1	4%



The third thematic category related to the first research question was that of the goals of the teachers for their students in terms of their use of English, particularly in the future. Key elements to this theme include (a) the desire of teachers for the students to become autonomous, independent learners; (b) to use English as an instrument or tool in a practical way later in life; (c) to be confident in speaking and using English; and (d) to continue to learn English. These common elements demonstrate an awareness of the importance of English as a communication tool for use in the future. In addition, interviewed teachers expressed the desire for the students to take responsibility for their learning, becoming more independent in their learning. Also common was the hope that the students would develop confidence to express themselves using English. Table 7 provides the elements noted by participants and the associated frequencies of occurrences.

Some participants expressed the desire for their students to become autonomous or independent learners and to become more confident in learning and using English, able to use English as a tool for communication. For example,

I want my students to be independent learners. By doing things in the class that promote that. Just University English is not enough for students to master English so it is important for them to become independent and take responsibility of learning. So they can be active learners even after graduation. (Participant 11)

I would like them to have the independence to try to reach their own potential. I see my students capable to do so much more but just the lack of confidence and independence. (Participant 13)

Hopefully by the way I set up my class which is more student directed, the

students can be more autonomous in learning. So they can take charge to use English in other situations. Hope that their interests in English will stay. Hopefully they'll understand that they're so much more to know, not just the language, but the thinking skill to get the information you need. (Participant 4)

Table 7

*Goals for Students' use of English*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Students become autonomous learners	9	36%
Use English as an instrument/tool in a practical way for later in life	8	32%
To be Confident in speaking, self-expression, and using English	8	32%
Continue to learn English	6	24%
Continue to use what they have learned	4	16%
Use of English to work or study abroad	3	12%
To verbalize their thoughts and express themselves	2	4%

\**Note.* Those mentioned by a single participant not included in table. These elements included: Use in environmental issues, to score satisfactorily on the assessments, become more curious, want to travel and learn more, learn from mistakes, use to communicate with someone not Japanese, learn cooperative learning, to use English to transfer skills to broader use, set own goals and how will achieve them, knowledge and skill in English, and flexibility of thinking and learning.

Finally, in seeking to answer the first research question, the course syllabi provided data related to course objectives outlined by the teachers prior to conducting the course and therefore, the objectives of the teacher in terms of instruction and student

learning. Table 8 provides the data on course objectives obtained from the content analysis of the syllabi data. The findings demonstrate a predominance of objectives related to speaking and conversational skills for communication and personal interaction in addition to the basic four skills development (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Also mentioned by seven participants was the use of English more specifically as a tool for intercultural communication. Regardless of specific orientation, traditional learning versus multi-cultural context, the advancement and importance placed on speaking and conversation skills provides skills necessary for use of English as a global language and learning within a multi-cultural context.

Table 8

*Course Objectives from Syllabi*

Element	# of focus group discussions mention this element	% of focus group discussion mentioning this element
Speaking and conversational ability and personal interaction and communication	15	60%
Four skills development	11	44%
English as a tool for intercultural communication	7	28%
Listening comprehension	7	28%
Language acquisition and learning theory	1	4%

**Research Question 2: To what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness?** Data from the teacher interviews were used to answer the second research question. The data are presented within two general headings, which include (a) general description of present instructional practices, and (b) practices specific to teaching a worldview. This was done to gain a better understanding of “traditional” or standard instructional practices as well as the additional instruction given to promote greater global and intercultural awareness as it relates specifically to the English language. To answer the second research question, teacher interview data as well as course syllabi data were used.

*General Description of Present Instructional Practices.* In seeking to identify the use of worldview practices among English teachers in Japan, the study first sought to gather information on the instructional practices of these teachers. Interview data from the 25 teacher participants revealed four thematic categories related to present instructional practice, which included (a) teaching materials, (b) focus of teaching materials, (c) instruction, and (d) integration of technology. In addition, syllabi data obtained from each teacher provided information on course contents. Combined, these data provide a detailed picture of the current instructional content and practices for these English teachers.

The first two thematic categories related to the attempt to form a general description of the present instructional practices to answer the second research question included teaching materials and focus of teaching materials. Tables 9 and 10 provide the elements revealed in the analysis in terms of teaching materials used and the focus of

these teaching materials.

Table 9

*Teaching Materials*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Supplement textbook with information from internet, newspapers, news/video, etc.	13	52%
Do not use text much	3	12%
No textbook	3	12%
Use of new articles in class	3	12%
Use text and happy with the text	3	12%
Use a lot of authentic materials to listen to native speakers	2	8%
Use two texts	2	8%
Use own material without the text	2	8%
To provide structure	1	4%

Table 10

*Focus of Teaching Materials*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Reading	19	76%
Grammar	17	68%
Listening	17	68%
Vocabulary	6	24%
Writing	6	24%
Discussion or conversation skills	5	20%
Speaking or presentation skills	5	20%
Translation	3	12%
Balance of focus on a variety of skills	3	12%
Foreign cultures	2	8%
Pronunciation	1	4%
Overall communication	1	4%

Key to this theme is that more than half the teacher participants reported supplementing the text, when available, with additional instructional materials garnered from the internet, news, or other sources. Some participants did not have a text while others had more than one text. Many note more than one of these elements at once. For example,

It [the text] has four skills. I also find the textbook to be more of an impediment. Because this is a book that I am required to use. So I either use the textbook as homework or I'll take one activity, one or two activities that fit the objectives or

theme of the class but I use most of my own activities that I made myself that are related to the objectives. (Participant 11)

I sometimes supplement materials from workbook for different textbooks. Or something from Internet. There are many times I will look on the Internet to look for materials for the native speakers but for children in America for my children. (Participant 13)

I bring in articles, current news, mostly controversial issues to class. I don't usually follow textbook. Sources from Internet. I am a questions regarding the article or the news where reading. And sometimes I use the examples of the sentence structure in the news and we studied that particular sentence as grammar practice. I tend to just use the article itself as study source. Another class that I have I do use a textbook. (Participant 20)

However, for the majority of teachers, these materials, whether text or supplemental materials, were focused on the basic language acquisition elements of reading, grammar, and listening skills.

My materials, whether it's a textbook or the materials I create all focus on the four skills, grammar listening, reading and writing. Journaling class I tried to focus 25% on each skill. I try to focus on this balance. So I keep in mind. (Participant 11)

A specific focus on the incorporation of foreign cultures within the course materials was noted only by two interviewees.

I get a lot of materials from BBC, or ABC from Internet. I like to bring in news a lot, such as current news. Especially news that involve Japan. Sometimes I bring

in news from different parts of the world but regarding the same issue, but you know both clips are in English. I just want to show the students a different point of views of the same issue from two different countries or more. I usually bring in news and nothing all history. I also like to focus on traditions, for example on American traditions such as the holidays etc. things like that. (Participant 17)

The third and fourth thematic categories related to forming a general description of the present instructional practices included instruction and the integration of technology into instructional practice. Key instructional elements include class activities that are focused on communication, listening, vocabulary, discussions, and group activities, as well as the incorporation of content based teaching with real-world relevance. Technology use in instruction was limited. It was noted that none of the interviewed teachers reported the use of technology to support cross cultural communications with students. The most common use of technology in the classrooms included the use of videos (e.g., Youtube) and the internet for online researching. Tables 11 and 12 provide the elements revealed in the analysis specifically in terms of instruction and the incorporation of technology with the associated frequencies.



Table 11

*Instruction*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Class activities focused on communication, listening, vocabulary, discussions, and group projects	16	64%
Content based teaching with real-world projects	9	36%
No teaching of foreign cultures	4	16%
Student directed	3	12%
Use of songs and projects	1	4%
Role playing	1	4%

Many participants provided a description of a typical day or lesson. For example, participant 12 described:

My instructions consist mostly of topical news. So there can be foreign cultures for international issues involved. But not always because sometimes it's just domestic news, Japanese news written English. And I usually start with some general questions. Related to the topic. To build a schema. And to find out what students already know about the topic. And try to introduce vocabulary needed for that activity. And that's for conversation reading. And then I give them a chance to look over the questions they might have and what the task is and give them a chance to do it. And keep them as much time as they need to complete the task. And maybe give them a more difficult task and have them check each other's answers. (Participant 12)

Usually I try to use songs. I usually have some kind of grammar points that lecture so they know how to put those grammar points in context. But that the beginning of the class I either use a song to warm up or I ask a question. And then I lead to the topic. Or I show a YouTube clip and asked students about the clip such as have using this situation before, do you know what they're talking about, do you know certain actions or what they're saying in the clip. For listening practices I have them listen to it two times and go over them. But our class is mostly conversation style. I give them a lot more time to do task-based activity. All of the activities I tried to make them produce something. It could be a dialogue that they write themselves and at the end of the class we have students in groups present themselves. (Participant 9)

Very little technology was described other than the use of Youtube for videos or clips and online research activities. No participants cited the use of technology for cross-cultural exchange. As an example, participant 12 stated, "I try to use YouTube videos and get most of my materials from the Internet, but not to communicate with people from other countries, no."

Table 12

*Integration of Technology*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
No cross-cultural exchange or communication	25	100%
Online research activities	9	36%
Use of Youtube or video clips	8	32%
Student blogs or twitter	4	16%
Very limited	3	12%
Use of email	3	12%
Do not really embrace technology	2	8%
No use of technology	1	4%
Students use website for homework assignments	1	4%

***Practices Specific to Teaching a Worldview.*** To answer the second research question, the researcher explored the responses of teacher participants in terms of identifying the use of worldview practices added to the classroom instruction. The interview data from the 25 teacher participants revealed two thematic categories related to instruction within a worldview context, which included (a) inclusion of foreign cultures and issues, and (b) example areas of class discussion of different cultures. Teachers commonly reported teaching about their own culture (20 of 25 participants, 80%), teaching about a variety of cultures (76%), focusing on Western (76%) and Asian cultures (primarily Japanese) (60%), and as such, comparing the teacher's own culture with the students' culture (Japanese) (68%). Tables 13 and 14 provide the common

responses of interview participants to reveal these central themes. In addition, areas of discussion seemed to vary, with the most common areas inclusive of political news or current events (36%).

The majority of teacher participants cited using discussion about their own culture in the classroom and frequently compared that to the Japanese culture. For example,

Being a Westerner, I can only speak of my own experience. I'm either talking about the Western cultures, or comparing the cultures here in Japan, or talking about the interpretations of, my interpretations of Japanese culture. So everything is kind of being filtered through Western culture, view, perspectives. I haven't done any topics or issues on other cultures such as Africa and cultures, the Southeast Asian cultures and whatever. Yes I would say it has Western orientation. (Participant 24)

I'm from Australia so I bring in more Australian cultures and stories, maybe history. I know that not all students are interested in Australia, so I try to introduce other cultures of the main native English speaking countries. And I do also try to bring in cultures from different countries like Italy or Germany.

(Participant 2)

Yes I talk about my culture, the Canadian culture. And I talk about American culture. British culture. It's not really in depth study of cultures just superficial. I mainly do comparative cultures and I just want the students to think about the differences. And to realize how these differences can cause a communication problems. (Participant 3)

Table 13

*Inclusion of Foreign Cultures and Issues*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Teaching about teacher's own culture	20	80%
Teaching about various cultures	19	76%
Focus on Western cultures	19	76%
Comparing teacher's culture with that of the students	17	68%
Focus on Asian cultures (particularly Japanese)	15	60%
Introduce cultures from a range of English speaking countries	7	28%
Also try to bring in cultures from different countries (including non-English countries)	3	12%
Very broad, daily activities topics	1	4%
Class discussion does not include major issues (i.e., politics or economics)	1	4%
Communication in a multi-cultural context not possible	1	4%
Impossible to teach a foreign language without input of culture	1	4%

Examples of class discussion topics ranged from news and politics to family traditions and gender roles. For example, participant 11 used various topics and sources, "I discuss almost all subjects, economics and political science or humanitarian issues." Others concentrated on controversial issues:

Well I bring it in controversial issues, and we do research and prepare for debate, such as news articles. The one example of the news/topic abroad in was on the

death penalty. And talk about whether death penalty is something Japan should keep or not. I try to give students the research on the subject and get them used to express their opinions and to debate about it. I tried to use typical topics, yes yes I do. (Participant 20)

Table 14

*Areas of Class Discussion of Different Cultures*

Element	# of participants to offer this experience	% of participants to offer this experience
Political news or current events	9	36%
Lifestyle, traditions, & everyday issues	7	28%
Cultural differences	6	24%
Humanitarian issues or human rights	4	16%
Economics	3	12%
Variety of subjects	3	12%
Environmental issues	2	8%
General news	2	8%
Gender roles of women in the world	1	4%
Social linguistics	1	4%
Cultural stories, folklore	1	4%
Business	1	4%

Finally, the course syllabi data provided insight into the course content to support the information gathered from the teacher interviews. Course syllabi described the use of social and political topics spanning various cultures with an equal focus on communication/presentation and general skill development. Table 15 illustrates the

course content data obtained from the syllabi.

Table 15

*Course Content*

Element	# of focus group discussions mention this element	% of focus group discussion mentioning this element
Social and political topics	13	52%
Presentations, discussions, negotiating	7	28%
Skill development	7	28%
Working across cultures/ diversity	4	16%
Dialogue and conversational elements	4	16%
Student directed	2	8%
Stories and discussion of different cultures	1	4%
Language development	1	4%

**Research Question 3: What are the lived educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context?** To answer the third research question, data were obtained from nine focus groups of English-as-a-foreign-language students. From this data three thematic categories were revealed to shed light on the experiences and perceptions of students with regard to English learning in general and within a global context. These thematic categories are used to answer the third research question of the study. Student focus group data were also used to better understand the content learned by students from the students' perspectives.

***General Learning.*** Students provided areas in which they felt were focused on and in that they learned from their English class. Table 16 demonstrates the variety of responses given throughout the nine focus group sessions, with most groups noting the acquisition/learning of basic language skills of grammar, reading, translation, vocabulary, listening, and discussion/ conversation skills. For the most part, student perceptions of the focus of the materials and learning resembled the teacher perceptions in terms of presenting grammar, reading, vocabulary, and listening skills. However, discussion of other cultures was mentioned by five people (20%). For example, one student participant in Focus Group one noted, “Culture for example, anthem, food, ecology.” Also one participant from Focus Group six stated, “Grammar, reading, and translation was covered in the class. I remember the class that we read the sentences about Japanese national anthem.”



Table 16

*Students have Learned in Class*

Element	# of focus group discussions mentioning this element	% of all focus groups mentioning this element
Grammar	9	36%
Reading	9	36%
Translation	7	28%
Vocabulary or word choice	6	24%
Discussion of cultures	5	20%
General discussion or conversation	5	20%
Exercises	5	20%
Listening	5	20%
All aspects	1	4%
Differences between Japanese teachers and English teachers	1	4%

***Learned about Foreign Cultures.*** The students in the focus groups were also asked to discuss their perceptions of what they learned about foreign cultures in their English class. Key themes within this analysis include that at least one student in all of the focus groups noted the use of teacher handouts or printouts for use in learning and discussing foreign cultures. In addition, many students noted the inclusion of some cultural instruction in the textbooks. Some students in six of the nine focus groups reported no cultural information learned from the text or in the class in general. Table 17 provides the elements included in this thematic category and the associated frequencies of the responses. From this data, it is suggested that although the textbooks may be limited

in providing cultural instruction to students, the teachers are providing supplemental materials and information for the students' learning.

Students cited learning about other cultures through handouts, textbooks, and class discussion. Many focus groups had many of these elements at once. For example, one participant from Focus Group 9 noted the use of "Print outs and videos. One example is about 'Afghanistan'." Another member of Focus Group 3 noted, "[learned from the] Text book. Sometimes using print outs. I don't think I learned about foreign cultures enough. Only about Americans and Japanese."

Table 17

*Have Learned about Foreign Cultures*

Element	# of focus group discussions mention this element	% of focus group discussion mentioning this element
Learned about cultures through handouts/ printouts provided by teachers	9	36%
Learned through textbooks a little	7	28%
Learned from teacher through discussions	6	24%
No cultures or foreign issues learned	6	24%
Different cultures were not written about in textbook	6	24%
Learned teacher's culture from teacher instruction	5	20%
Learned about various topics	4	16%
Learned through use of videos	3	12%
Teacher compared own culture with Japanese culture	2	8%
Did not learn much ; should have talked about foreign cultures more	2	8%
Learned about different pronunciations	1	4%
Learned that studying English is not only to improve language, but to know other cultures	1	4%

***How Affected Multi-cultural Thinking.*** In addition to information on the specific instruction received and instructional practice used in their English classes, students were asked if the class instruction affected their own personal thinking,

particularly in terms of the use of English on a global or multi-cultural scale. Key findings include that, although in six of the nine focus groups students noted no change in their thinking, other students in five of the nine focus groups reported wanting to communicate in English with other non-native speakers as well as native speakers. Students also suggested both the desire and need to learn more English in order to facilitate communication, the desire to travel, and to learn about other cultures. Table 18 provides the variety of responses given by students in the different focus groups.

Despite many efforts of the teachers to reach their goals and have students become more aware of the multi-cultural aspects of English, six focus groups noted evidence of at least one participant stating that no change in thinking occurred. For example, a member of Focus Group two stated, “I liked foreign cultures before taking this class. This class did not change my thinking.” Another from Focus Group four stated, “This class did not change me. I didn’t like the materials.” In contrast, some students recognized a new desire to communicate in English with other nationalities. For example, one participant in focus group one noted, “Yes. want to communicate European people in English. And I want to study English more.” Another in focus group four described future goals and how this class related to those goals; “I want to be a business man. Talking to people of European countries, Asia(South East). I wish to learn culture more.”

Table 18

*Affect of Class on Personal Thinking and How can Use English for Communication*

Element	# of focus group discussions mention this element	% of focus group discussion mentioning this element
No, no change in thinking	6	24%
Want to communicate in English with European, Chinese, and others from many countries	5	20%
Want to study English more	3	12%
Need to learn more; do not know enough to communicate now	3	12%
Want to travel to other countries so study of English is important	3	12%
Want to learn more about other cultures	3	12%
Useful class for my future	1	4%
Want to know about comparison of Japanese and foreign schools	1	4%
Would like to explore history of foreign countries	1	4%
Did not teach other cultures	1	4%
Not interested in other cultures	1	4%
More interested in all over the world	1	4%
Want to study political affairs	1	4%
Class not challenging, too simple	1	4%

**Evaluation of Findings**

The thematic categories reveal several themes that serve as the conclusions of the

analysis. Through the conclusions revealed in these themes, a greater understanding of multi-cultural English instruction in Japan can be achieved from the perspectives of the teachers and the students. These conclusions are given as they relate to the research questions of the study.

**Research Question 1.** Results from the analysis revealed three themes that related to the first research question. These include the following:

Theme 1: Personal life, culture, and learning experiences are believed to have served to shape teaching practices and the tendency to include multi-cultural instruction. This finding revealed through the analysis of the interview data aligns with previous research and theory in which teaching practice is defined by the teachers' personal philosophies, experiences, education, and environment (Harris, 2008), and culture (Karahanna et al., 2006). In this study, teacher interview participants described feelings of the effect of their personal experiences, education, environments, and overall culture on their personal teaching practices and philosophy.

Theme 2: Teacher perceptions of the emergence of English as a world language has given it a purpose as a communication tool to use across cultures, but at the same time, creating variants of the language in terms of accents and usage. Results provide evidence suggesting a predominance of the acknowledgement of English as a world language and tool for communication on a global scale. Associated with this acknowledgement was the description of the evolution of different varieties of the English language, of which some participants noted the importance of teaching or presenting to their students. However, in contrast, some participants felt that standard English is the only English that should be taught. This latter finding, although less

prevalent within this group of participants, aligns with Kirkpatrick's (2007) concept of linguistic prejudice, suggesting a superiority of native English to these variations of the language. The findings of this study, however, contradict the findings of Murray and Christison (2010) in which the majority of teachers in Japan demonstrated such linguistic prejudice practices. The majority of teacher participants in the present study believed in exposing the students to the variety of English seen around the globe.

Theme 3: Stemming from their beliefs, teachers' goals for the use of English for their students in the future included for students to become more autonomous and confident in learning and using English, and to use English as an instrument/tool in a practical way later in life. Participant responses reflected a predominance of a world-view demonstrating the desire for students to use English in a practical way for communication and advancement later in life. As such, the teacher participants frequently described the desire for students to continue to learn English and grow in confidence to enable self-expression using the English language. To accomplish this, teachers described the need for student autonomy in their own learning. The ability for teachers to achieve this autonomy within their student population, will, however, likely to be dependent on their own teaching practices, as demonstrated by Reeve and Jang (2006).

**Research Question 2.** Results from the analysis revealed two themes specifically related to the second research question, which included:

Theme 4: Course objectives and instructional practice are reflective of the importance of conversation/speaking skills to enable communication in addition to basic language acquisition skills of grammar, vocabulary, reading, and listening, with teachers supplementing instructional materials. Although the majority of teacher respondents

reported textbooks focused on basic skill development (reading, writing, grammar, and listening skills), these teachers also reported a personal instructional focus on communication, discussion, and presentation skills. The textbook material, as reported by both students and teachers lacked multi-cultural content, which supports the conclusions of Yamanaka (2006), who noted that multi-cultural textbooks are generally not selected for use in the classroom. Teacher participants in this study described a limited use of the textbooks, preferring to use personally supplied materials geared toward communication skills.

These findings contrast those of Igawa (2008), who determined that the majority of teachers believed the major instructional concern is skill development. In addition, the findings support teacher acceptance of the use of technology to promote cross-cultural exchange and awareness, but a general lack of implementation. These results align with Albrini (2006), who suggested the need for teacher training and support for the integration of technology in the classroom.

Theme 5: Inclusion of various foreign cultures and issues into instruction accomplished commonly through discussion of teacher's own culture and comparing that with student culture (with a focus on Western and Japanese cultures), as well as discussion of cultural differences related to political news, current events, lifestyles, traditions, and everyday issues.

Study results seem to mirror the cultural inclusion described by Hulmbauer et al. (2008), in which the teacher incorporates the concept of intercultural learning primarily through connections with the student language culture in comparison to their own. As such, teacher participants predominantly described instructional practices focused on



discussion of the teacher's own culture and/or comparisons made between the teacher's culture and that of the students, and therefore, a focus on comparisons between Western and Japanese cultures. Other cultural differences were also reportedly discussed within the context of politics, current events, lifestyles, traditions, and everyday issues. This result supports conclusions of Harris (2008), who supported the use multi-cultural learning and the use of English as a tool for learning about global issues.

**Research Question 3.** Finally, results of the qualitative analysis of the data presented revealed a sixth theme used to answer the third research question of the study.

Theme 6: Students reported having learned standard English language development skills of grammar, reading, vocabulary, translation, listening, as well as learning about cultures through teacher supplemented handouts, videos, and teacher discussions; however, this additional learning did not seem to spark a great change in thinking with regard to English as a global communication tool.

The student data obtained during this research generally supported the teacher data. Students reported having a strong instructional focus on standard English language development skills in addition to learning about different cultures primarily through teacher instruction and supplemental handouts, videos, and discussion. Despite this reported use of supplemental instruction focused on cultural aspects of instruction, students did not generally reveal overall positive change of thought processes regarding English as a means of cross-cultural communication. While some students reported an increased desire to communicate with other cultures using their English skills, travel to other countries, learn more about other countries, and learning more English to feel more confident in their communication abilities, a nearly equal number of students reported no

change in thinking at all. Sakurai (2008) concluded that students in Japan remained focused on English skills needed to pass university exams and to graduate. The results in this study demonstrate some evidence of this attitude, with students remaining unaffected and unconcerned with multi-cultural aspects of English language skills.

### **Summary**

Qualitative analysis of interview data obtained from a sample of 25 English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and 34 students from various universities in Japan was completed with the assistance of Nvivo9® qualitative analysis software. Results of the analysis were given, revealing the major themes generated from high frequency common responses. In addition, content analysis was used to explore syllabus information on each class. The various data sources were used together to answer the research questions of the study. The next chapter provides a discussion of the results as they related to the research questions and the related literature.

## **Chapter 5: Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions**

English is currently the most-studied foreign language in many countries in the world and is used to provide understanding as well as social and economic exchange between countries, which has been recognized through compulsory education of many non-English-speaking countries (Johnson, 2009; Mufwene, 2010). As such, intercultural awareness and education as part of English language learning is essential. The Ministry of Education in Japan has promoted the learning of other cultures and English language competency to enable communication with people of different cultures (Sasaki, 2008). Despite the recognition of the importance of multi-cultural instruction related to English learning, the actual instructional practice and integration of cultural awareness remains the responsibility of the individual teacher and as such, may not be incorporated into their instruction (Yamanaka, 2006).

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple-case study was to explore the experiences and perceptions as well as actual practices of native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers in Japan with regard to inclusion of multi-cultural teaching in English courses in light of global, multi-cultural aspects of the use of the English language. The study was designed to identify discrepancies between the perceptions of the teachers with a worldview multi-cultural focus and their actual instructional behavior. To accomplish this goal, the study employed a multiple case study design, which used semi-structured interviews with 25 native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers from Japanese universities as well as nine focus groups with students in these courses. In addition, course syllabi were analyzed using content analysis to support the data obtained from

teacher and student interviews.

This chapter provides a discussion of the research findings in relation to the research questions of the study and the relevant literature. Limitations to the results are given in addition to the implications of the study results and the significance of the findings. Last, study findings are used to provide practical applications and recommendations for further research.

### **Implications**

This qualitative case study explored the problem of possible discrepancies between the perceptions of importance of inclusion of cultural awareness in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction and the actual practices of native English speaking university teachers. This exploration detailed not only the perceptions and practices of the teacher participants, but also the perceptions of students and the content analysis of course syllabi to support whether actual practices align with the teacher perceptions. Therefore, the study was designed to explore the experiences and perceptions of a sample of native English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and students in Japan with particular interest in the multi-cultural or worldview aspects included in instruction.

From the analysis of the data obtained through interviews and focus groups, six themes were identified, representing the experiences and perceptions of the participants, the instructional practices of the teachers, and the attitudes and perceptions of both teachers and students with regard to the multi-cultural aspects of English language learning. These themes are used to answer the research questions of the study. A discussion of each theme in terms of the implications and previous research is provided according to the associated research question.

**Research Question 1.** The first research question asked, how do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers view their role as English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and do they perceive teaching English in a multi-cultural global context to be an important element of their role as an English-as-a-foreign-language teacher? This question was answered with the first three themes revealed from the data analysis. Each of these themes is reviewed as they relate to this first research question as well as to prior research.

*Personal life, culture, and learning experiences serving to shape teaching practices and the tendency to include multi-cultural instruction.* This first theme was revealed from the interview data obtained from the teacher participants. The teachers expressed the perceptions that their own personal life experiences in terms of culture, level of multi-cultural background, and personal learning experiences served to shape their current teaching philosophies and practices, including the tendency to include multi-cultural aspects into their English instruction. Participants felt these prior life experiences enabled a greater understanding of the struggles of the students as well as an enhanced multi-cultural understanding and a global view of English. Many participants noted that coming from a different culture themselves served to provide a different perspective to their students, as well as their own experiences travelling and/or studying abroad. The other element noted by teacher participants to affect their current teaching was that of previous teaching experiences, particularly foreign teaching experiences.

Japanese university students are exposed to the native-English teachers' personalities, philosophies, and beliefs as expressed in their university English classes and as such, native language teachers are in the position to develop students' broad cross-

cultural awareness and to encourage tolerance for other cultures (Harris, 2008).

According to Harris, teachers' perceptions of how English should be taught are formed by their personal philosophies, experiences, education, environment, and many other factors. The different levels of culture such as family, organization, and nation interact to form an individual's culture and to shape behavior and practice (Karahanna et al., 2006). The responses of the teacher interview participants reflected this notion in that they felt their personal experiences, education, and environments affected their teaching practices.

*Teacher perceptions of the emergence of English as a world language has given English a purpose as a communication tool to use across cultures, but at the same time, creating variants of the language in terms of accents and usage.* Teachers' notion or lack of the notion of becoming interculturally aware and the flexibility to respect cultural differences affects their students in the material selected, instructions carried out, and behavior (Sercu, 2005). A majority of the teacher participants in this study directly noted the purpose of English as a communication tool with people of different nationalities and cultures and/or the emergence of English as a world language (72%) as well as to provide student access to knowledge and information on a global scale. As a natural result of this perceived globalization of English, participants described the evolution of variants in the language. Some participants felt instruction should include acknowledgement of these language variants or accents, while others believed only Standard English from mainstream teachers should be taught.

The findings therefore support an element of linguistic prejudice in which some participants suggest a language superiority of native varieties of English, neglecting the relevance of other forms of English (Kirkpatrick, 2007). According to Kirkpatrick, this

mentality among teachers and students makes acceptance of the concept of using English as a medium of communication with other non-native English speakers more difficult. Although the majority of participants seemed to be accepting of various forms of English and willing to expose their students to the variety of English, some revealed elements of such linguistic prejudice. Prior research has demonstrated that the majority of teachers in Japan still maintain the belief that English should be taught to imitate the natural or native-like English (Murray & Christison, 2010). Hulmbauer et al. (2008) emphasized that the notion that the English language is the property of native speakers should be changed to English as lingua franca for international use.

*Stemming from their beliefs, teachers' goals for the use of English for their students in the future included for students to become more autonomous and confident in learning and using English, and to use English as an instrument/tool in a practical way later in life.* Following the perceptions of English as a global language and the use of English as a tool for multi-cultural communication and understanding, the teacher participants expressed their goals for their students as related to English learning. These perceptions provide insight into the objectives of the teachers and their beliefs with regard to the use of the English language in modern society. The responses of participants reflected these multi-cultural beliefs in the desire for students to use English as an instrument or tool in a practical way for later in life, to communicate and to be able to express themselves, and to advance in areas in their lives (32%). Many of the teacher participants also noted their desire for students to continue learning English in order to become more confident in their speaking and self-expression through use of English, enabling them to express themselves adequately within the English language (32%).

As an element that could assist students in obtaining these goals, teachers also want their students to become more autonomous in their learning, taking responsibility for their own learning and development (36%). However, this element reverts to the teacher instructional practices, as prior research has suggested that teachers' instructional behavior correlates positively or negatively with students' autonomy (Reeve & Jang, 2006).

**Research Question 2.** The second research question asked, to what extent do native-speaking English-as-a-foreign language teachers supplement traditional English instruction with materials and activities that foster intercultural awareness? This question was answered with the fourth and fifth themes that were revealed through the analysis. These themes are reviewed as they relate to the second research question and prior research. Data from both teacher interviews and course syllabi were used in conjunction to reveal the resultant themes.

*Course objectives and instructional practice are reflective of the importance of conversation/speaking skills to enable communication in addition to basic language acquisition skills of grammar, vocabulary, reading, and listening, with teachers supplementing instructional materials.* Through an examination of both course objectives as noted in the course syllabi and the instructional practices reported by teacher participants, the data revealed that these objectives and practices reflect the teachers' perceived importance placed on conversation and speaking skills in order to facilitate communication. Although basic skills were seen as necessary for language acquisition and were reported to remain a focus of the instruction, teachers expressed the importance of conversational and presentation skills, particularly for increased



confidence in speaking the language, which was seen from research question one to be a primary goal of teachers for their students.

Despite teaching materials such as textbooks that remain focused almost entirely on the basic skill development of reading, writing, grammar, and listening skills, the majority (64%) reported a classroom instructional focus on communication, discussion, and presentation skills through group activities and presentations. This instruction was frequently reported as accomplished through original or authentic information/material and activities often based on real-world topics.

Yamanaka (2006) revealed that, despite the publically recognized need for learning about different cultures, multi-cultural textbooks are not selected for use in the classroom. Yamanaka alluded to insufficiencies in the guidelines for the teaching of English to incorporate different cultures and the lack of cultural content in the materials used. Teacher participants in this study did not report whether they selected the course text or not; however, many noted limited use of the textbooks and a greater concentration of teacher supplied materials to enable the use of activities geared toward communication skills, moving beyond general skill development in grammar, listening, reading, and writing.

Prior research has demonstrated that 65% of the teachers in Japan and Korea believed that teaching skills and methods are the major concerns with only 8% reporting that cultural understanding was important (Igawa, 2008). In addition, Burk, 2006 reported that more pre-service teachers still rely on grammar and translation than on the world-language teaching approach that emphasizes the use of communication skills. Along with the data revealed in the present study, it can be suggested that teachers would

benefit from professional development in this area.

Finally, cross-cultural learning is increasingly available and possible with continual advancements in electronic technology. Cultural sharing, participation, and learning are now more feasible through the use of online platforms and other electronic learning tools (Brown, 2008). However, teacher participants in this study reported limited integration of technology in the classroom, with use of videos or clips obtained from the internet and students performing internet searches. Although teachers and educators agree that using technologies in our current educational practices can facilitate global learning and enhance foreign language learning and cultural knowledge (Davis et al., 2005), teachers in this study demonstrated little use of technology in this way.

Some of the teacher participants demonstrated enthusiasm with the idea of using technology for cross-cultural exchange, which was also suggested by Elola and Oskoz (2008) to bring students closer to different cultures. Technology has been shown to be an effective tool for increased interest in foreign cultures and for promoting cross-cultural understanding and intercultural competence (Elola & Oskoz, 2008). As such, the use of technology for cross-cultural exchange should be encouraged. Technology use could be improved with additional training and support, as suggested by Albrini (2006), who concluded that teachers provided with training and support are more willing to integrate technology in their classes.

*Inclusion of various foreign cultures and issues into instruction accomplished commonly through discussion of teacher's own culture and comparing that with student culture (with a focus on Western and Japanese cultures), as well as discussion of cultural differences related to political news, current events, lifestyles, traditions,*

*and everyday issues.* Study results demonstrated a predominance of cultural instruction focused on discussion of the teacher's own culture and/or comparisons made between the teacher's culture and that of the students. Reflecting these practices, teachers reported a focus on Western and Japanese cultures, likely through such comparative discussions. This type of cultural inclusion is similar to what Hulmbauer et al. (2008) described as native-English-speaking teachers merely connecting intercultural learning to the learning of the target-language culture, which Hulmbauer et al. considered counterproductive to the pursuit of intercultural learning and communication.

Cultural differences beyond this scope (i.e., inclusive of other countries worldwide) were most often noted to be discussed related to politics, current events, as well as lifestyles, traditions, and everyday issues. This notion aligns with Harris (2008), who suggested utilizing English for learning about global issues from cultural to economic aspects to provide practical purpose to the learning of English among university students. Similarly, Harris (2008) suggested that lifestyles around the world of English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries should be introduced in reading and videos to arouse interest in new cultures among students. Various activities to bring sensitive issues such as racism, discrimination, and stereotypes into the English learners' own environment for later discussion about those issues in other countries are also recommended as part of the teachers' instructional plans (Harris, 2008), because the degree of cultural understanding positively influences the English learners' intercultural competence (Harris, 2008). Teacher participants in this study seemed to be attempting this type of intercultural instruction through use of these types of global topics.

**Research Question 3.** The third research question asked, what are the lived

educational experiences of the English-as-a-foreign language students, specifically in terms of whether they learned English within a multi-cultural, global context? This question was answered by reviewing the results obtained from the sixth theme revealed through the data analysis. This theme is discussed as it relates to the research question and the previous literature.

*Students reported having learned standard English language development skills of grammar, reading, vocabulary, translation, listening, as well as learning about cultures through teacher supplemented handouts, videos, and teacher discussions; however, this additional learning did not seem to spark an overall positive change in thinking with regard to English as a global communication tool.* To more fully understand the instructional practices and to obtain the perspective of the students on the multi-cultural aspects of English-as-a-foreign-language, focus group data were obtained from nine focus groups of students from the teacher participant classes. Supporting the teacher data obtained for the first two research questions, the student data revealed common elements of having a strong instructional focus on Standard English language development skills of grammar, reading, vocabulary, translation, and listening. In addition, students reported learning about different cultures primarily through teacher instruction and supplemented handouts, videos, and discussion. It is noted that although teachers did not report translation skills as a focus of instruction, many students noted this instructional element. This may be the result of the student interpretation of what teachers felt was a focus on communication, discussion, and speaking skills.

Despite the reported teacher supplementation of cultural aspects of the instruction of English, these efforts did not appear to create an overall positive change in the thinking

of the student participants with regard to English as an instrument for cross-cultural communication on a global scale. Although many students in the various focus groups expressed an increased desire to communicate with other cultures using their English skills, travel to other countries, learn more about other countries, and learning more English to feel more confident in their communication abilities, a nearly equal amount also reported no change in their thinking at all (mentioned in 6 of the 9 focus groups).

The findings align somewhat with those of Sakurai (2008), who noted that the purpose of English learning in Japan is primarily to pass university exams and for graduation; therefore, whether there is social interaction does not affect the students' attitudes toward English learning. Despite the weak correlation between Japanese students' attitudes and social interaction with foreign cultures, there is a strong positive correlation of students' motivation in English learning and their interest in possibly using English cross-culturally.

As noted previously, students are influenced by their teachers when the teachers' personal values, behavior, and practice are part of their instruction. At the same time, previous literature has continued to explain the relationship between values and practice and the importance of adding cross-cultural variables in the changing global market (Karahanna et al., 2006). Therefore, teacher efforts to include multi-cultural aspects of English language learning into the courses remains valuable and according to the results of the present study, affected an overall positive change in thinking for roughly half of the students interviewed.

### **Recommendations**

This study has provided insight into the perceptions and views of teachers and

students of English-as-a-foreign-language in Japan with regard to teaching English with a multi-cultural worldview. The findings not only contribute to the knowledge of teacher experiences with regard to teaching English-as-a-foreign-language in a foreign country, but also provide insight into the practical applications of multi-cultural teaching of English to non-native speakers using a worldview.

**Practical Applications.** The study is significant to foreign language studies and educational leadership in terms of curriculum development and English language learning objectives for students. The study provided in-depth perspectives of both teachers and students of English-as-a-foreign-language at the university level in Japan. The participants expressed their experiences, past and present, as well as their perceptions of the inclusion or lack of inclusion of cultural aspects of teaching English in a globalized society in which English is used as a tool to communicate between nations and cultures, native-speaking or non-native speaking alike. Based on the study participants' views of the advancement of English as a global language, the understanding of various cultures related to the use of English is critical for students to move beyond seeing English as merely another language to learn, but toward an understanding of the use of English for global communication.

Several pedagogical recommendations can be suggested resulting from the results of this study. It is recommended that English-as-a-foreign-language instruction in Japan include instructional elements of cultural awareness and understanding as well as the use of English as an instrument for global cross-cultural communication. It is also recommended that new textbook development more adequately reflect the multi-cultural nature of English as a communication tool, as well as the modern global culture. Due to

the fact that most teachers in the study reported limited use of technology within the classroom, it is also recommended that technology, such as email or student blogs, be used specifically to promote cross-cultural exchange between students to promote practical awareness of this purpose of the English language. Finally, many participants reported supplementing the text or instructional materials with personally developed materials for the purpose of incorporating additional cultural aspects to instruction. As such, professional development opportunities for English-as-a-foreign-language teachers could provide the teachers with greater availability of resources to be used to promote a worldview within the classroom.

**Recommendations for Future Research.** The results of this study suggest the possible benefits of teacher training and professional development in areas of cultural awareness instruction and use of technology for promoting cross-cultural exchange among students. These elements may serve to improve the teaching practices of native-speaking English teachers to include more multi-cultural instruction, incorporate technology, and reduce possible linguistic prejudice. A pre-post-test design study examining the possible effects of specific professional development on these elements would demonstrate whether this type of teacher support could serve to improve the levels of cultural awareness and bias in English instruction. In addition, a study documenting the benefits of the use of technology may also serve to promote greater use of technology in the classrooms. Finally, a content analysis of textbooks used in Japanese English-as-a-foreign-language classes at any level, would provide real data with regard to the actual cultural content included and enable an evaluation of changes that may be needed to current textbooks to facilitate greater cultural awareness and the use of English

worldwide.

### **Conclusions**

This qualitative, multiple-case study explored the experiences and perceptions of English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and students at the university level in Japan. The results provide insight into the perceptions of these teachers and students with specific regard to multi-cultural awareness and instruction in the classroom and the purposes for studying English-as-a-foreign-language. The teacher participants in this study noted an emphasis of instructional materials on standard English acquisition elements of reading, writing, listening, and grammar, with supplemental materials and content provided by the teachers to promote a focus on communication skills, discussion, presentation skills, and group activities, which was supported by both student data and course content syllabi data. The data suggest that teachers believe in the importance of multi-cultural teaching practices and support that belief with supplemental instruction, despite a textbook focus on standard instruction, lacking a cultural focus.

Although teacher incorporation of cultural elements was noted, these instructional elements commonly remained focused on the teacher's own culture and/or comparisons made with the students' culture and traditions. Instruction incorporating comparisons across cultures and nationalities with regard to humanitarian and environmental issues, current events, politics, and world news seemed to provide instructional material for multi-cultural instruction. The impact on students remained somewhat unclear, as relatively equal numbers of focus groups noted no change in thinking versus greater cultural awareness and desire to use their English skills for inter-cultural participation in the future.



The study provided evidence for the perceived need for incorporation of a worldview in English-as-a-foreign-language instruction in Japanese university English coursework and the potential benefits of greater levels of inclusion of cultural awareness and discussion of English as a global language in teaching materials and texts. Teacher participants expressed the desire for students to grow in their learning of the English language, to be able to express themselves confidently in the language, and to understand the global context of English-as-a-foreign-language for their use and success later in life. As such, teacher preparation/professional development and more culturally based instructional materials that more adequately reflect this need should be incorporated into the English-as-a-foreign-language instruction in Japanese universities, aligning with government recommendations.

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Appendix A:  
Introductory Letter

Dear Teacher,

I am currently conducting research to explore native English teachers' perceptions of English teaching and English as a language tool in a global context and their instructions in class. Students of your university who are potentially studying in your classes may also be approached for a group interview regarding their English learning and materials used in class. Confidentially guarantees that both the teachers' names and the students' names will not be reviewed.

This interview includes two parts: The first part is a demographic survey, and the second part is the interview questionnaires. This interview includes approximately 9 open-ended questions related to your teaching and perceptions of English education. This interview will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes. This interview will proceed with your consent and your discretion to answering the questions. The interview can be stopped anytime you do not wish to proceed. Your name and answers will be confidential. Thank you for all your cooperation.

Sincerely

Michelle Kawamura

Northcentral University

Doctoral Candidate

Appendix B:  
Informed Consent Form  
Native-English Teachers

A Study of Native English Teachers' Perception of English Teaching:  
Exploring Intercultural Awareness vs. Practice in Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language

*Purpose.* You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted for a dissertation at Northcentral University in Prescott, Arizona. The purpose of this study is to examine native-English teachers' perceptions of English teaching and English as a language tool in a global context and their instructions in class. Students of your university who are potentially studying in your classes may also be approached for a group interview regarding their English learning and materials used in class. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

You will be interviewed on your experiences and perceptions of English teaching. There are eight questions in this interview. An audio recorder will be used to record the interview with your consent. This interview will last approximately one hour.

There are no known risks in this study. Questions are regarding your personal teaching believes. However, you may withdraw at any time and you may choose not to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable in answering.

There is no financial or compensation for participating in this research. No incentives are offered. The results of the study will add to the current researches and literatures in the field of English as foreign language internationally.

Confidentially guarantees that both the teachers' names and the students' names will not be reviewed. In addition, the data collected in this study are confidential. All participants' names will be coded and will not be identified or in any way associate with the universities in which the participants are employed. The data are made available only to the researcher conducting this project.

Again, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You may omit questions if you do not want to answer them.

Your cooperation and generosity to spare your precious time for this research is greatly appreciated. I would be happy to answer any concern you have about this study. Please feel free to contact me at [84-35elmhurst.ny@kvp.biglobe.ne.jp](mailto:84-35elmhurst.ny@kvp.biglobe.ne.jp) or 81-903826-7799 (Japan).

I have read the description of your research, A study of Native English Teachers' Perception of English Teaching: Exploring Intercultural Awareness vs. Practice in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in the experiment.

Participant's Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C:  
Informed Consent Form  
University Students**

**A Study of Native English Teachers' Perception of English Teaching:  
Exploring Intercultural Awareness vs. Practice in Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language**

*Purpose.* You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted for a dissertation at Northcentral University in Prescott, Arizona. The purpose of this study is to examine native-English teachers' perceptions of English teaching and English as a language tool in a global context and their instructions in class. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

You will be interviewed on your experiences and opinions on the knowledge and materials learned in your English as foreign language course. This is a group interview and will last approximately one hour.

There are no known risks in this study. Questions are regarding your personal experiences and opinions. However, you may withdraw at any time and you may choose not to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable in answering.

There is no financial or compensation for participating in this research. No incentives are offered. The results of the study will add to the current researches and literatures in the field of English as foreign language internationally.

Confidentially guarantees that both the teachers' names and the students' names will not be reviewed. In addition, the data collected in this study are confidential. All participants' names will be coded and will not be identified or in any way associate with the universities in which the participants are employed. The data are made available only to the researcher conducting this project.

Again, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You may omit questions if you do not want to answer them.

Your cooperation and generosity to spare your precious time for this research is greatly appreciated. I would be happy to answer any concern you have about this study. Please feel free to contact me at [84-35elmhurst.ny@kvp.biglobe.ne.jp](mailto:84-35elmhurst.ny@kvp.biglobe.ne.jp) or 81-903826-7799 (Japan).

I have read the description of your research, A study of Native English Teachers' Perception of English Teaching: Exploring Intercultural Awareness vs. Practice in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in the experiment.

Participant's Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D:

### Demographic Information

1. Is English your native language?
2. What is your nationality?
3. How many non-English speaking countries have you taught outside your home country?
4. What is the highest degree you obtained?
  - Bachelor's degree
  - Master's degree
  - Doctorate

## Appendix E:

### Questions to Guide Personal In-Depth Interview

This research study is for teachers who are teaching English as foreign language in non-English-speaking countries, for a study being conducted by Michelle Kawamura. Participants are encouraged to expand on answers at will.

1. Do you believe that it is important to teach English with a worldview such as using English as a tool to learn about different cultures and to communicate in a multicultural context?
2. Do your class instructions or activities include the teaching of foreign cultures and or, international issues? Please describe a typical activity that occurs in a class period.
3. Do you integrate technology or other activities using English as a tool to learn from nation and or to communicate with people from other countries?
4. What materials do you use? Name of textbooks? Work books? Other materials?
5. What do the materials you are using focus more on:
  - Grammar
  - Reading
  - Translation
  - Listening
  - Other
1. Do the materials you use contain foreign cultures and issues? If yes,
  - a. What foreign cultures do you discuss in your classes (if you do)?
    - Your culture
    - Comparing your culture and the culture of your students

- Various cultures
- Focusing on western cultures
- Focusing on Asian cultures
- Other (please specify)

b. If different cultures were discussed in your classes, please give an example of the area of the culture covered. Example: Economy, politics, humanity?

2. Please describe your beliefs regarding your cultural heritage, life experiences, and education that influence your role as a teacher and English teaching today.
3. What goals do you have for your students to use English after graduation?

## Appendix F:

### Student Questions

The following are questions to students in English as foreign language classes for triangulation on teachers' answers and materials used, for a study being conducted by Michelle Kawamura. Participants are encouraged to expand on answers on their own will.

#### General Questions

1. What year are you in university now?
2. Do you like your English classes taught by the native speakers?
3. What is your native teacher's nationality?

#### Interview Questions

1. What have you learned in your class till now?
  - Grammar? If yes, what percentage of grammar is covered in your class?
  - Reading? If yes, what percentage of reading is covered in your class?
  - Translation? If yes, what percentage of translation is covered in your class?
  - Other exercises? Please give some examples. What percentage of other exercises is covered in the class?
  - Discussion of cultures? If yes, what cultures have you discussed in class?
2. Do you feel that you have learned about foreign cultures through your English teacher's instructions? Through the textbooks? Materials?
3. Are there different cultures written about in the textbooks? In other materials used?
4. Did your experience of studying in the English-as-a-foreign language class affect how and who you think you can use English to communicate in the future ? After graduation?

## Appendix G:

### Content Analysis Reflection Questions

The following are questions to guide the data examination and analysis of the contents in the course syllabi used in the English as foreign language classes by the native English speaking teachers for triangulation. These questions will not be used during the interview with teachers; rather, these questions serve to guide the content analysis of the syllabi. As such, the researcher will consider these questions (i.e., keep them in mind) when conducting the content analysis on the course syllabi obtained from the teacher participants.

1. Do the syllabi used in class contain topics on foreign cultures other than the English speaking countries? If yes, are they written about the foreign cultures only or relate the Japanese cultures to foreign cultures?
2. Do the syllabi provide activities to research on topics of foreign cultures?
3. Do the textbooks and/or materials provide activities to use internet for research on topics of foreign cultures?
4. Do the syllabi provide activities to interact with people of foreign cultures?