This collection includes papers compiled in the aftermath of the third international conference on Cultures and Languages in Contact. The papers herein presented share a number of commonalities. First, they all deal with issues relating to either applied language or culture studies. Second, in terms of the topic coverage, the papers deal with specific language related issues such as linguistics, translation, language policy and language planning and ELT, with literature and culture related topics such as cultural translation, cultural and political theory; and finally gender issues and other areas related to contact of cultures and languages.
Committees

Scientific Committee
Pr. Taieb Belghazi, Mohammed V University, Rabat
Pr. Abdelkader Sabil, Chouaib Doukkali University, El-Jadida
Pr. Jacqueline Jondot, Toulouse University Le Mirail, France
Pr. Samir Dione, Chouaib Doukkali University, El-Jadida
Pr. Abdelaziz Boudlal, Chouaib Doukkali University, El-Jadida
Pr. M'barek Rouwane, Hassan II University, Casablanca
Pr. Reddad Erguig, Chouaib Doukkali University, El-Jadida
Pr. Iaafar Aksikas, Columbia College, Chicago, USA
Pr. Jamal En-nehas, Moulay Smal University, Meknes
Pr. Mohamed Yeou, Chouaib Doukkali University, El-Jadida

Organizing Committee
Abdelkader Sabil
Abdelaziz Boudlal
Mohamed Yeou
Samir Dione
Mohamed Maarouf
Mohamed Derdar
Reddad Erguig
Raja Rhouni
Yahya Dkhissi
Hamza Touzani
Mohamed Marouane
Contents

Committees .......................................................... 5
Contents ................................................................. 7
Acknowledgements .................................................. 11
Contributors ........................................................ 13
Introduction .......................................................... 15

Part I. Cultural Studies, Languages and Cultures in Contact
Teaching English and Literary Criticism in the Cyber Age:
Reforming the Moroccan University .................................. 23
Mohammed Ezroua

Representation of Orality and Ethnicity on the Modern African Fiction:
Telling the Untold ......................................................... 43
Ghouti Hadjou

The Impact of Globalization on Local Cultures and Languages .......... 51
Mohamed Chitatou

Oriental Despotism in Montesquieu’s Persian Letters .................. 65
Abdekader Sabil

Hyphenating Geographies: Jamal Mahjoub’s Novels as Road Novels..... 73
Jacqueline Jondot

Cultural Encounters in P. Bowles’ The Sheltering Sky .................... 83
Hamza Touani

Precolonial Cultural Geography in Joseph Thomson’s Travels in the
Atlas and Southern Morocco ......................................... 99
M'barek Rouwane

Liberating Islam from within: A Reading to Mohja Kahf’s
The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf ..................................... 117
Fouad Mami
Part II. Cultural Translation
The Narr(ati)ve Role of Local Translators in Turn-of-the-Century American Travel Accounts on Morocco .................................. 135
Khalid Chaouch
Cultural Equivalence in the Translations of Paul Bowles:
The Case of For Bread Alone ........................................ 161
Karima Bouziane
Islam and the Arabs in Arabic translations of selected European literary works .................................................. 175
Marcin Michalski
Approaches to Translation and Cultural Mediation in the English Translation of Taha Hussein’s The Days ................................. 201
Kholoud Elzat
Translatability of Shakespeare in Postcolonial Hong Kong ................................................................. 215
Jenny Wong

Part III. Language planning and Language Use
Societal multilingualism: a socio-political perspective ............ 231
Mohammed Larouz
The Language Use of the Polish Minority in the Belarusian-Lithuanian Borderlands ........................................... 241
Ines Ackermann
Language Use across Cultures: How to Enhance Doctors’ and Medical Practitioners’ Ability to Appropriate Culturally-Based Differences in Spoken Medical Contexts? ........................................... 253
Inen Noamah
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Language Planning in Algeria .......................................................... 269
Negadi Mohammed Nessim

Part IV. Translation and Language Teaching
The Paradigm of Equivalence in Legal Translation ................ 279
Abdelaziz Boudiaj & Abdelkarim El Amari
Formative assessment issues in high schools in the El Jadida region: A close look at some teachers’ practice...................... 295
Rediad Erguig & Bouchaib Benzahaf

A Thematic Analysis of Conference Proceedings to Identify Teachers’ Professional Development Needs ........................................ 313
Rediad Erguig, Samir Dione & Hicham Zayd
Constructing Critical Thinking Competence in the EFL Context ................................................................. 329
Hamid Amziane & Amar Guendouzi
Teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes:
The Need for ICT and Reconstruction .................................. 339
Yahya Dkhis
The De-Anglicization of the Home-Made ELT Textbooks
and the Globalization Process ............................................... 355
Smail Benmoussat & Nawal Bennouestef
Schematic Acquisition of Target-Language Culture ................................. 363
Abdelatif Semmoud
Interculturality in ELT Syllabuses and Textbooks in Algeria .......... 371
Ali Baiche
Cultural diversity in language learning attitudes: A study in cross-national similarities and differences in attitudes and approaches to learning English as a foreign language ...... 377
Robin Anderson & Rieko Matsuoka
Cultural Diversity and the Challenge of Teaching Multicultural Classes in the Twenty-First Century ........................................... 401
Ahmed Choujari
Digital Culture and Technological Adeptness among
Moroccan Freshman University Students .................................. 417
Ikbal Zeallari

Part V. Gender and Identity
Cultural Racialized Dolls and the Question of Othering
in Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye ........................................ 439
Mohamed Sghir-Syad
Can the Subaltern Speak in Fatima Mernissi’s Work? ...................... 451
Raja Rhouni
The Portrayal of Women in Moroccan Folk Proverbs .................... 459
Mohammed Derdar
TV Satire and comedy in contemporary Morocco: Political (re)shaping of generic and interpretive frames? ........................................471
Mjidal Mohamed

Part VI. Linguistics and Language Use
bu-Nouns in Moroccan Amazigh and Moroccan Arabic: A Case of Borrowing? .................................................................481
Karim Bensoukas

Semantic change and body parts across Amazigh varieties: External and internal parts of the head ........................................509
Mohamed Yeou
Cultural diversity in language learning attitudes: A study in cross-national similarities and differences in attitudes and approaches to learning English as a foreign language

Robin Anderson & Rieko Matsuoka

Abstract

Society changes and the fact that English is a global language and people are more mobile is putting pressure on national educational institutions to respond to these changes by ensuring that their young people have the English language skills to succeed. Yet despite this motivation and investment to promote English language learning, many countries are failing to achieve the results hoped for. This paper presents an ongoing research concerned with the factors that affect English language achievement in tertiary education. Previous studies of English language achievement have focused mainly on affective factors such as Willingness to Communicate (see Matsuoka, 2009) and stressed socio-cultural factors as predictors to success or failure in foreign or second language learning. However in the light of the fact that some Asian and European countries have radically improved their English language proficiency while others have not, or have even declined, this research aims to investigate socio-educational factors such as the educational context and learner attitudes as a result of previous learning experiences. By comparing and contrasting the results of the analysis of the 36-item questionnaire data of college students from Italy and Japan, the research aims to provide some answers to this question, while accepting that the whole picture is extremely complex.

1. Introduction

People around the world learn English for different reasons; firstly there is the rise and subsequent ubiquitous domination of the Internet and Social Media. Approximately 60% of all written content on the internet is in English, accounting for almost 30% of the total internet usage, providing English language users with access to invaluable information, perhaps not available to non-English users. Being able to speak English proficiently allows people to communicate with more people from different parts of the world; it can provide more opportunities in life, often better job opportunities as English is often a necessity for millions of businesses worldwide. Many schools and
universities around the world require that their students have a basic or even intermediate understanding of the English language. Many have required courses that are taught in English. Often education, research and professional vocabulary and publications are in English, which makes English important for many professional walks of life and often a required skill for people who study or work in these industries. In many societies, speaking English fluently is a highly regarded and sought-after social skill. Understanding English allows learners to access English language music and films and the wealth of English language cultures contained therein. The reasons are many.

The English language is undoubtedly a global language which is used by the vast majority of people all over the world. From the statistics available we can estimate that around 375 million people speak English as a first language and English has official status in at least 75 countries with a combined population of over 2 billion. Around 750 million people are believed to speak English as a foreign language and 375 million speak English as a second language. It is believed that 1 in 4 people in the world speak English with some level of competence and that over 1 billion people are currently learning English world-wide (see Crystal 2003).

Therefore, perhaps the question is not “Why Study English?”, but “Why not study English?” For, English is the language of the global community and governments and national educational institutions are under pressure to ensure that their citizens have a level of English which allows them to participate in this evolving international context. Yet despite this motivation and increased investment to promote English language learning, many countries are failing to achieve the results hoped for. This paper presents an ongoing research by Rieko Matsuoka of the National College of Nursing, Tokyo and Robin Anderson of the University of Milan-Bicocca, into factors affecting English language achievement in tertiary education in Italy and Japan. We have followed Gardner’s advice that when analyzing the roots of motivation to learn a second language (L2) in considering it from both a cultural and educational viewpoint (Gardner 2007: 13), we should keep in mind that a difficulty in researching motivation is how to define and isolate it and what aspects to focus on and what aspects to background (Dörnyei 2001a: 105). Our focus will be on the following 2LA variables; 1) at the macro-level, the sociocultural milieu, which relates to the general perceptions of the importance of the L2 in the learner’s national context 2) learning outcomes at national level 3) second language acquisition (2LA) contexts (institutions, teachers, materials and methods) and 4) individual learner differences (motivation and language anxiety). Our research has been designed to focus on the situated complexity of the L2 learning process and its development in interaction with a multiplicity of internal, social, and contextual factors, taking account of the broader complexities of language learning and language use in the modern globalised world.

By comparing and analyzing our findings we aim to shed light on the question of why some nations have more successful English language outcomes than others and if those differences in success and failure can be attributed to any cross-national commonalities or differences. In doing so, we hope to be able to generate some avenues for future research.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The students involved in the research are all undergraduates in their early twenties, studying for degrees in Nursing and Teacher Training, both vocational degree courses, which predict a proficient level, motivation, and attitudes towards English in order to function in their chosen professions. 100 students participated in the survey, 50 from Japan and 50 from Italy.

2.2. Material

A 36-item questionnaire, with responses scored on a five-point scale (5 = strongly agree → 1 = strongly disagree) was designed to focus on the above 2LA variables. Each item has been developed via several factor analyses from 238 items from previous studies (e.g., Gardner & Lambert, 1976; Yashima, 2004; Matsuoka, 2009) and authors’ observation and experiences as 2LA educators.

The item order is randomized in order not to give any assumption about the meanings behind items so that the participants’ in-depth features can be revealed as precisely as possible. Thirty-six items have been categorized into three features; socio-educational context (motivation), immediate L2 learning context, and socio-cultural context (affective variables). These contexts may form individual differences, which may generate the learning outcome (see Figure 1 below).

By comparing and analyzing our findings we aim to shed light on the question of why some nations have more successful English language outcomes than others and if those differences in success and failure can be attributed to any cross-national commonalities or differences.
Figure 1: L2 Learning Outcomes

2.3. Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in University of Milan and National College of Nursing, Japan in 2014. Then the gained data were input into SPSS 19 for statistical analysis. As the purpose of this study, descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were conducted to find the significant differences between Italian participants and Japanese participants.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

The Japanese participants marked higher than 4 point for seven items; while Italian participants five. The item that Japanese participants scored the highest (4.64) is item 22 (I want to make myself understood even if my English is poor), while Italian participants scored 3.34 for this item. Italian participants marked the highest (4.54) for item 30 (It is necessary to do extra things in order to learn English, such as read books and watch films in English), and Japanese participants also scored higher than 4 point (4.02) for this item. The highest score in conjoined data was 4.27 for the item 30, the same item that Italian students marked the highest.

On the other hand, Japanese participants marked lower than 2 point for only one item; while Italian participants six. The item that Japanese participants scored the lowest (1.88) is the item 24 (I dislike English because I had a bad experience in class), and Italian participants also scored 1.64, which is even lower than Japanese scores point, for this item. In addition, Italian participants scored less than 2 point, 1.28 for the item 3 (I have stopped studying English seriously because I wasn’t learning anything) for which item Japanese participants scored 2.88, 1.46 for the item 28 (To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English) for which item Japanese participants scored 2.02, 1.86 for the item 36 (The classes need to give students a lot of opportunities to speak English) for which item Japanese participants scored 3.32, 1.92 for the item 9 (I don’t know the people in my class, so I feel uncomfortable talking to them) for which item Japanese participants scored 2.38, and 1.96 for the item 35 (I am not good at speaking in public, even my own) for which item Japanese participants scored 3.34.

3.2. ANOVA

The results obtained through a one way ANOVA reveal statistically significant differences (p< .05) between Japanese participants and Italian participants. Indeed, this analysis reveals the statistically significant differences in twenty-one items between Japanese participants and Italian students. They are items 1 (I panic when I cannot make myself understood in English), 3 (I have stopped studying English seriously because I wasn’t learning anything), 5 (Even when I have an opinion, I refrain from expressing myself in English), 9 (I don’t know the people in my class, so I feel uncomfortable talking to them), 11 (I worry that my English proficiency is not as good as other students), 17 (I enjoy learning English), 18 (I feel worried other people may think I am a poor speaker of English), 19 (I feel worried other people may think I am a poor speaker of English), 19 (To learn English well, you need to invest a lot of time and money), 20 (There are no specific cultural reasons why learning English is difficult), 21 (I want to make myself understood, even if my English is poor), 22 (I feel envious of people who speak English fluently), 23 (English is necessary for my future), 25 (English is difficult for me), 28 (To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English), 29 (I am a perfectionist and I don’t like to make mistakes), 30 (It’s necessary to do extra things in order to learn English such as read books and watch films in English), 31 (In the future we will all have to speak more English as the effect of globalization increases), 33 (I need to learn English because I want to live in an international setting), 34 (I prefer classroom activities which are clearly structured; for example, I don’t like pair work), 35 (I am not good at speaking in public, even my own), and 36 (The classes need to give students a lot of opportunities to speak English).

4. Discussion

4.1. Socio-cultural milieu

Why are some students more successful than others when learning a language? Where do those differences arise from? There is agreement among researchers that the role of motivation is a significant cause of variability in second language acquisition (2LA), but not agreement as to the exact nature of motivation. It is a highly complex term used in many areas of academic research to explain human behavior and although there is no general consensus
on the definition of the notion, “most motivation researchers would agree that it concerns the direction and magnitude of human behaviour, that is, the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expended on it” (Dörnyei et al., 2006: 9).

Early research into 2LL motivation focused mainly on integrative motivation; a learner is described as having an integrative motivation in 2LL when he/she is motivated to learn the L2 because of a genuine interest in communicating with speakers of the other language because of positive feelings toward that community or members of that community. Instrumental motivation was seen as the desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of the L2 and was linked to things like improving future job opportunities. Following Gardner and Lambert’s (1972: 3) seminal work, integrative motivation was seen as the most important motivational factor in successful SLA. Subsequent studies challenged the instrumental/integrative dichotomy of the theory of motivation seeing motivation as a “complex and dynamic process with room for several intervening variables” (Gardner & Tremblay, 1994: 366). Gardner later extended the definition of integrativeness to include an open interest in other cultures, an absence of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism. He referred to this as “Openness to Cultural Identification” which involves factors which can be linked to the cultural context of the language (Gardner, 2007: 15). Gardner had earlier claimed that L2 motivation “always has an integrativeness component …. some level of willingness to interact with other communities” (168). However he later agreed that for many researchers integrativeness is a term which has “slightly different meanings to many individuals” (Gardner 2001: 1) and “the notion has remained something of an enigma” (Dörnyei, 2003a:10).

Learners’ attitudes, beliefs, ideas and expectations will largely be products of the sociocultural milieu in which he or she grows up (see Gardner 1985: 147). He/she will also have notions about the value, meaningfulness, implications and expectations about what can and what cannot be achieved in the process of learning a second language. These values and beliefs originate and develop in the learner’s overall cultural context. Our study therefore involves the analysis of the social milieu in Italy and Japan at the macro level, to explore the effect if any this might have on learners’ motivational orientations towards 2LA.

Italy has a population of around 60 million and Italian is spoken by about 70-125 million people over the world, though primarily in Italy and is ranked to be the fifth most taught non-native language in the world. Japan has a population of around 127 million and Japanese is spoken and taught almost exclusively within the Japanese archipelago. Italy is the ninth largest economy in the world by nominal GDP; Japan is the third largest. Italy is also the 5th most visited country in the world with 47.7 million visitors in 2013; Japan is ranked 6th in the Asia and Pacific region with 10.3 million arrivals in 2013.

It is not easy to collect data on how many mother-tongue people are residing in Italy and Japan. The Guardian newspaper (January 26, 2012) reported that there are 29,184 registered British people living in Italy, but obviously the figure will be much higher with non-registered people. And Wikipedia states that there are around 100,000 English speaking people living in Japan out of 2 million registered foreigners. This means only 5% of all foreigners, or 0.07% of the total Japanese population.

In general, people in Italy are not known for speaking English very well; however, factors such as the Internet and above all Italians’ awareness of the importance to learn English has generally changed attitudes to the importance of being proficient in English. The situation outside school is that there are limited possibilities to be exposed to the English language. Italians in general consider English a versatile tool, but they are much more attached to their mother tongue which they consider rich and important. Italians watch dubbed films; however, it is relatively easy to find English language newspapers and magazines especially in large cities. Italians travel abroad with the same frequency as other Europeans and the ability to be able to communicate while you are abroad is considered a desirable goal, which usually means “tourist English”. Italians recognize that their national level of English is lower than that of many other European countries. Italian workplaces are generally not very international, and even when they are, Italian is the language spoken normally.

The Japanese are widely perceived as not being communicatively competent in English (Poole, 2005), and there are perhaps aspects of Japanese culture which add to this factor. Japanese society is organised on the principle of “katagata” which establishes roles and rules in order to preserve balance and harmony. Previous research based on the students’ actual opinions has suggested that hardworking students are overly conscious of errors and less willing to communicate in English in order to avoid socially inappropriate communication acts in the “public eye”; this is known as “seiken”, an awkward embarrassment which may be avoided by keeping silent. Searoi points out that many Japanese fail to become proficient speakers of English because silence constitutes an acceptable response in Japan and in school. He goes on to say that Japanese people by and large do not understand that English is “not optional, but essential”. This he argues is because everywhere they look,
most of the words are still in Japanese and the vast majority of the people are Japanese. Bochner (1982) also argues that Japan is the closest thing the world has to a completely homogeneous country. Likewise, Seerol (2012) notes that for many Japanese, English is like a mildly interesting hobby and the majority don’t learn English because it is not seen as important.

However, some efforts have been made to introduce the English language to Japan on a day-to-day basis, with street signs and the public transport system, but this is restricted to the main cities. Movies in Japanese cinemas are usually shown in the original version with subtitles, rather than dubbed. The national TV channel NHK provides bilingual programmes (including the news) in Japanese and English; NHK radio also has English programmes. All the major Japanese newspapers or news agencies have an English-translation of the major news, updated on a daily basis. There is also the Japan Times, written in English.

Following Gardner et al. (1999), we consider the sociocultural milieu as an important influence on individual difference variables involved in L2 learning. The cultural context can have an important effect on a learner’s integrativeness, his or her “Openness to Cultural Identification” of the target L2 community, but also on the perceived value to the learner of acquiring a proficiency in the target L2; his or her instrumental motivations. Cultural contact is regarded as a key factor in promoting positive L2 attitudes, motivation and other affective variables (see Dörnyei, 2005). This Contact Hypothesis claims that contact with the L2 target culture and the L2 target community motivates L2 learning behavior, leading to improved L2 achievement levels (see Uribe et al., 2011: 10). As Dörnyei et al. (2006: 147) pointed out “Past research on intercultural/intergroup contact has shown convincingly that contact has significant bearings on a host of issues, including affecting people’s interethnic attitudes and L2 motivation”. However, the above pictures of the socio-cultural milieu of both Italy and Japan would suggest that for most citizens, contact with the L2 people and culture will be of a limited nature and duration and therefore it seems likely that, as Dörnyei et al.’s (2006: 118) study concluded, this limited contact with the L2 in the form of contact with foreign visitors and foreign cultural products will not “result in the improvement of the participant’s language and intercultural attitudes”. Previous theories about intergroup contact have argued that superficial contact experiences that are perceived as having no value in themselves and are not instrumental in reaching a valued goal will not bring about positive improvements in intercultural attitudes. So, it seems reasonable to state that in our two target groups there is limited opportunity for our L2 learners to develop an interest in the L2 people and culture through direct contact, or to demonstrate his/her “Openness to Cultural Identification” with the target community (Gardner 2007: 7). Also the recent repositioning of English as a global language; an international lingua franca, and a basic educational skill in more and more international educational curricula is leading researchers to question whether it is still meaningful to talk about integrative motivation in L2 learning. Is it still valid to conceive of a specific geographical linguistic community, or should research be focused on a global community? For Ushioda (2006: 150), precisely because it is a global community it is meaningful to conceptualize it as an external reference group, or as part of one’s internal representation of oneself as a de facto member of that global community. So there is a move to conceive of integrativeness as “an orientation towards the global community rather than an assimilation with native speakers” (McClelland, 2000: 109). These factors we predict will have a negative effect on the integrative motivational drive of learners, but will not necessarily affect their instrumental motivations, given that both societies consider that the acquisition of a proficient level of English is very desirable. What is clear is that the likely situation in which learners from both countries will meet and learn the target language is in the classroom.

The questionnaire items projecting socio-cultural milieu are the items 2 (I feel happy in the company of English-speaking people), 6 (I want to speak English fluently, but without losing my national identity), 15 (I would like to make friends with English-speaking people), 19 (To learn English well, you need to invest a lot of time and money), 20 (There are no specific cultural reasons why learning English is difficult), 21 (I want to make myself understood, even if my English is poor), 23 (English is necessary for my future), 26 (My goal is to speak English like a native speaker), 27 (I’m interested in what people in the rest of the world think), 28 (To be honest, I really have no desire to learn English), 31 (In the future we will all have to speak more English as the effect of globalization increases), 32 (For me, English is a chance to enrich my life), and 33 (I need to learn English because I want to live in an international setting). Among them, the items 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 31, and 33 reveal the significant differences between Italian participants and Japanese participants. Other items indicate similarity between these participants.

4. 2. Socio-educational context

4. 2. 1. Access and achievement in tertiary education

As we have seen, the likely contact that our two national groups have with the L2 is through L2 cultural products and the education system, either private or state. Our study analysed briefly educational achievements in Italy and Japan in order to compare achievement in English with achievements in other areas of study.
With regard to the proportion of tertiary-educated citizens, between 2000 and 2012, rates of entry into university programmes fell significantly in Italy. The percentage of Italians that have attained tertiary education in 2010 was 10% and in 2012 it was 16%. Putting Italy at 34th out of the 37 countries surveyed. In Japan, the proportion of tertiary-educated adults in Japan increased from 34% to 47% between 2000 and 2012 and is now ranked 2nd out of the 37 countries surveyed. The OECD average was 22% in 2010 and 33% in 2012. Tertiary attainment rates grew on average in OECD countries by 13.2% between 2000 and 2012. In Italy the growth was 11.8% and in Japan 19%.

As for literacy proficiency in tertiary education, in a survey of adult skills (25-64 year olds) the quality of Japanese tertiary education was found to be high. 37% perform at level 4/5 of literacy proficiency (a score of 296), the highest level in the survey. In Italy, however, the figure was 13% (a score of 249), the lowest in the survey. The OECD average score was 272. Concerning the graduation rate, it was 26.13% in Italy in 2010 but it was 45.13% in Japan (OECD, 2015).

4. 2. 2. National spending on education

National spending on education is one indicator of a nation’s attitude to the importance of education in general. Italy is the only country in the OECD where real spending on all educational institutions fell between 2000 and 2011 by 3%; the OECD average expenditure increased by 38%, however. Other studies on country investment in education have ranked Italy 12th (4.4% of GDP) and Japan 33rd (3.5% of GDP) (Eurostat 2005); Italy ranked 102nd (4.3% of public spending) and Japan 133rd (3.5% of GDP). In 2008 Italy was below the OECD expenditure average on education and Japan only slightly above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>OECD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual spending per student - Tertiary level</strong></td>
<td>$9990 - (28% lower than the OECD average)</td>
<td>$16446</td>
<td>$13958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total spending on education as a percentage of GDP</strong></td>
<td>2000 – 4%</td>
<td>2000 – 5%</td>
<td>2000 – 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011 – 5%</td>
<td>2011 – 5%</td>
<td>2011 – 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total spending on education as a percentage of public spending</strong></td>
<td>2000 – 10%</td>
<td>2000 – 9%</td>
<td>2000 – 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2011 – 8.6%</td>
<td>2011 – 9.4%</td>
<td>2011 – 13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(source: http://www.oecd.org/edu)

The statistics in Table 3 show that both Japan and Italy have traditionally been poor investors in education, yet the above statistics on low investment in education do not seem to be coherent with the fact that both governments are aware of their citizens’ poor English language achievement levels and are under pressure to deliver improved learning outcomes. As a result, education ministers are searching for evidence of educational achievement more than ever before.

With respect to investing in education, neither country has a good record, being more or less at the same level. However, of the two Japan is showing increased investment in education while Italy is not. With regards to overall educational achievement, as measured by the Economist Intelligence Unit “The Learning Curve” report and the 2012 PISA study, Japan is far ahead of Italy. However, despite both countries having a similar poor record in educational investment, Japan has an overall educational achievement level much higher than that of Italy.

Having taken into consideration the macro social and educational contexts we then analysed the micro-educational context; that is, the immediate classroom situation, the expectations of the system, the quality of the learning programmes, the interest, enthusiasm, and skills of the teacher, the adequacy of the materials, the curriculum and the classroom atmosphere. The immediate educational context will influence the learner’s L2 motivations. Despite the fact that proposing a definition of what it means to learn a L2 is very difficult, as Csizer and Dörnyei (2005:616) point out, it is universally accepted that motivation plays a vital role in academic learning in general, and “this is particularly true of the sustained process of mastering an L2”.

For Gardner (1985), there are two types of 2LA motivation: Classroom Learning Motivation (CLM) and Language Learning Motivation (LLM). Language Learning Motivation (LLM) is a general form of motivation which is relevant in any 2LL or 2LA context. CLM refers to the classroom situation or any specific learning situation. The focus is on individual’s perception of the task at hand. It is affected by many factors associated with the classroom environment, such as the teacher, the materials, the class atmosphere, the course content, the institution’s facilities and the personal characteristics of the learner. Teachers are seen as important elements in CLM motivation. Wudthyagorn (2000) found positive correlation among students’ attitudes toward teacher, classes and learning processes. He found that if the students like the teacher, they enjoy the class, are satisfied with their learning experiences, and have positive behavioural attitudes towards the study of the target language regardless of the instructional format. In terms of the formal learning situation
motivation has been seen as both a "condition for and a result of effective instruction" (Winne & Marx 1989). Gardner and Maclntyre (1993: 9) claimed that individual-difference variables; cognitive and affective, interact with both formal and informal language learning contexts and influence both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. "Teachers, instructional aids, curricula, and the like clearly have an effect on what is learned and how students react to the experience". In a survey of demotivated learners of English in Japan and considering previous research by Dörnyey (2001a), Arai (2004), and Hasegawa (2004), Kikuchi (2009:187) concluded that "it is arguable that one of the most salient demotivating factors may be teacher related". Our study therefore analysed the situated context of 2LL in Italy and Japan in order to be able to compare the 2LL experiences in both countries and found that both Italy and Japan have similar features with regard to salient features of the learning and teaching processes of English as a second language.

For the present study, the questionnaire items for the area of socio-educational context such as previous and current preferred learning experiences are the items 3 (I have stopped studying English seriously because I wasn’t learning anything), 7 (I find English more interesting than other subjects in the university), 10 (The English lessons in my middle school/high school helped me to learn English), 12 (The ways of testing what we had learnt in middle school/high school were effective), 16 (English classes in middle and high school were fun and interesting), 17 (I enjoy learning English), 24 (I dislike English because I had a bad experience in class), 34 (I prefer classroom activities which are clearly structured; for example, I don’t like pair work), and 36 (The classes need to give students a lot of opportunities to speak English). Among them, the items 3, 17, 34, and 36 revealed the significant differences between Italian participants and Japanese ones. Other items did not show the significant difference and similar in numbers.

4.3. Individual learner variables

As Dörnyey et al (2006: vii) point out, "Many conditions are needed to learn a L2 successfully but most teachers and researchers would agree that motivation was one of the key factors that determine learning achievement". However as Ushioda and Dörnyey (2012:401) state; L2 motivation is "an abstract, multifaceted construct [...] notoriously difficult to measure in an objective way". Its complexity means that it cannot be measured by one scale alone and so L2 motivation is difficult to define, as Dörnyey et al (2006: 9) point out, there is "No general consensus on the definition of the notion". One important factor in the complexity of L2 motivation is the fact that the global position of English means that students’ motivation is becoming less of a determinant for choosing Global English, that more and more learners do not make a motivated choice to learn English, English has become a self-evident component of the 21st century" (Dörnyey et al 2006: 89). In other words, the target reference group has become a global not geographically specific reference group. According to Ushioda (2006: 150) L2 learners therefore have a conception of themselves as a de facto member of that global community.

Also as we have seen above, English has become an educational requirement in Italy and Japan and as Dörnyey et al point out, when an L2 becomes an educational requirement then the "correlation between the learner’s subject-related attitudes/motivation and choice of the subject become depressed" (Dörnyey et al, 2006: 88/89). This would seem to challenge Gardner’s assertion that L2 motivation “always has an integrativeness component” (Gardner 1985:168). It is more likely that the nature of the motivation to learn English in Italy and Japan is a “Required Motivation”, which proposes that L2 learners can be motivated to learn a L2 in order to meet social and parental expectations (see Warden & Lin 2000; Chen et al 2005). A longitudinal study by Dörnyey and Csizér (2002) also found that although an integrative factor was consistent in their study it was underpinned by practical instrumental motivation.

Therefore the emergence of English as a global language, no longer geographically situated and the subsequent shift in 2LL motivation theories away from a focus on “integrativeness” and motivation being seen as created, driven and sustained by external references has led to a focus on the internal domain of the learner and his/her immediate learning situation (see Ushioda 2005: 54; Dörnyey & Csizér 2002: 453). These changes have led to a focus on the affective variables in the L2 learning process; how the learners feel emotionally towards the language and the process of learning a L2 and what students feel about themselves in the L2 learning situation will determine the way they deal with the challenges of the learning experience (Arnold, 2007).

"Self-concept is one of the oldest constructs in the social sciences and it is widely acknowledged that it plays a central role in all learning situations" (Arnaz & Guillen 2012: 81) According to Shavelson et al (1976), self-concept consists of a person’s self-perceptions built through experience with interpretations of one’s environment. These self-perceptions are influenced mainly by evaluations by significant others, reinforcements, and attributions for one’s own behavior. There is sufficient research evidence to assert that self-concept influences behaviour. What students feel about themselves will determine the way they deal with the challenges of the learning experience and also their relationship with others (Arnold, 2007).
Academic self-concept is an individual’s self-perception of competence and his/her evaluative judgments in the academic domain (Mercer, 2011: 14), and in learning an L2 this self-concept can be vulnerable as L2 learning is much more “ego-involving” than other areas of study (Horwitz, 2007; Arnold, 2007; Mercer, 2011). In learning an L2, the learner is being asked to use a language of which he does not have full command and this makes the self especially vulnerable (Tsui, 1996: 155). Due to the intrinsically social nature of the language learning process, a very common problem in language learners is that they feel their ideas are not expressed properly in the target language and this may make them appear immature or foolish. It is this “visibility” characteristic of the language learning process, especially as regards the oral skill, that may turn it into an emotional ordeal (Mercer, 2011). As Stevick rightly said almost 40 years ago, success in foreign language learning depends more on what happens inside and between the people in the classroom than on materials and techniques (1980: 4). The most original techniques and the most appealing materials may turn out to be useless if negative emotional factors are present in the learning context (Arnold & Brown, 1999). There seems to be consensus opinion then that self-concept plays a key role in successful L2 learning in situated contexts.

Not surprisingly then, self-related constructs have appeared in a wide variety of areas of SLA research such as individual differences (Ehman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003), motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), anxiety (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) (Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide & Shimizu, 2004; Matsuoka 2009).

In Dörnyei’s “L2 Motivational Self System” the notion of integrativeness and integrative motivation is conceived of as the notion of the ideal self; which is the representation of all the attributes that a person would like to possess (i.e., a representation of personal hopes, aspirations, or wishes) in the future. The complement concept to the ideal self is the ought to self; a representation of the attributes that one believes one ought to possess in the future (see Dörnyei 2005). “A basic tenet is that if proficiency in the target language is integral to one’s ideal or ought to self, this will serve as a powerful motivator to learn the language” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012: 400-1). The “L2 Motivational Self” theory suggests that L2 learners are motivated by the psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between present and future self states (Csízér & Kormos, 2009; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009). Recent research then has focussed more on “how learners think about their learning and process relevant experience, and how their thinking affects their motivation and engagement in learning” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012: 403).

Connected to this is the notion of learner self-confidence; that is, the learner’s belief that he/she has the “ability to produce results, accomplish goals or perform tasks competently” (Dörnyei, 1998: 123). This refers to the learner’s “self-perceptions of communicative competence and concomitant low levels of anxiety in using the second language” (Noels et al 1996: 248). Self-confidence is composed of perceived competence and a lack of anxiety (Clément, 1980; 1986). Self-confidence is one of the three motivational constructs that Clément et al (1994) suggested were present in learners who had no direct contact with the L2 and the L2 community, the other two being “integrativeness” and “appraisal of the classroom environment”.

When there is an absence of confidence, then L2 learners can be anxious about the L2 learning process. In psychology, anxiety is generally classified into trait anxiety which is related to a stable part of an individual’s personality and can be defined as a more permanent disposition to be anxious, which Ellis notes “is perhaps viewed as an aspect of personality” (Ellis, 1994: 479-480) and state anxiety, which is an apprehension that is experienced at a particular moment in time as a response to definite situation connected to specific events or learning. Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the (foreign) language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986: 128). FLA is distinct from state anxiety, which occurs within specific, temporary situations and fades when the threat (or situation) disappears (Maclntyre, 2002). FLA is also distinct from trait anxiety, a permanent, individual difference where people with high levels of trait anxiety have a general tendency to become anxious in any situation (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001, Ellis, 2008). According to Horwitz et al. (1986), FLA is distinct from these types of anxiety and is classified as “situation-specific anxiety”. This type of anxiety is prompted by specific set of conditions for example public speaking or participating in class. FLA is unique in that it occurs specifically in the unique foreign language learning context. Gardner and Maclntyre (1993) defined language anxiety as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning”. Norton (2000: 122), however, has argued that “there is a specific kind of anxiety which interferes with second language learning for many learners” (Norton). However, research has shown that anxiety is not necessarily negative in the L2 learning situation. Debilitating anxiety “is considered to be detrimental to performance” (Maclntyre & Gardner, 1989: 252), while on the other hand, “facilitating anxiety mobilizes resources to accomplish a task” (Ehman, 1996: 148) and “motivates learners to fight the new learning task, prompting them to make extra efforts to overcome
their feelings of anxiety" (Ellis, 1994: 482). Williams (1991: 21) suggests that the distinction between these two types of anxiety may correspond to the intensity of the anxiety, with a low-anxiety state having a facilitating function and a high-anxiety state a debilitating effect. In foreign and second language learning, anxiety (in addition to attitudes and motivation) has been shown by various researchers to be an important affective variable which influences foreign language achievement (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Spolsky, 1989; Ehrman, 1996). It should be noted, however, that not all the studies in their review produced significant correlations between anxiety and achievement. In fact, studies of learner anxiety have often produced mixed results (Ellis, 1994: 482). That is, some researchers have found no significant correlation (see for example Young, 1986) while the results of other studies suggest that language anxiety is negatively correlated with performance quality and measures of performance in the L2 (see Gardner, 1985; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Nevertheless, there "is sufficient evidence to show that anxiety is an important factor in L2 acquisition" (Ellis, 1994: 483) and a predictor of success in learning the foreign language (Al-Saraj, 2011). FLA research has also suggested that anxiety-related behaviour differs from culture to culture (Oxford, 2005; Matsuoka, 2009).

Another affective variable in 2LA closely related to self-confidence and anxiety is the learner’s Willingness To Communicate (WTC), which has been defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998: 547). MacIntyre et al conceptualized L2 WTC in a theoretical model which included learner personality, intergroup climate, intergroup attitudes, intergroup motivation, L2 self-confidence, and communicative competence, among other factors, which are interrelated to influence L2 WTC and L2 use (Clément et al., 1998: 546). Yashima et al theorised L2 WTC as being influenced by student’s confidence in the L2, which involves L2 anxiety and the learner’s perceived L2 competence (Yashima et al, 2004).

The two principal antecedents of WTC are communication apprehension and self-perceived communication competence (see Matsuoka, 2009). Communication apprehension is defined as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1997: 78). Communication apprehension has been identified as one of the strongest factors in reducing the level of willingness to communicate among Japanese college students (Matsuoka, 2009). Self-perceived Communication Competence indicates the level of communication competence or skills that individuals perceive themselves to possess and it has been found to correlate positively with WTC (Matsuoka, 2006; 2009). McCroskey predicted a substantial positive correlation between the self-perception of communication competence and WTC scores, and this prediction was confirmed across cultures with positive correlations between self-perceived communication competence and WTC in Sweden (McCroskey, Burroughs, Daun, & Richmond, 1990; McCroskey, 1997).

The students who do not have confidence in their abilities to learn English might be less motivated, as they do not feel confident in their learning and perhaps they are more reserved during the lessons. Krashen (1985) argued that learners with high motivation, high self-confidence and a low level of anxiety regarding the target language have better conditions to learn a second language. On the other hand, if motivation and self-confidence are low and the learner is more anxious, it will aggravate the process as, what Krashen termed as, an affective filter is raised, creating an obstacle to learning. Students who have a negative attitude toward a language or the culture represented by that language (Brown, 1994: 63) are said to have a high affective filter. Conversely, students who are "open" to input are said to have a low affective filter, and will acquire more efficiently a greater percentage of the input to which they are exposed (Dulay & Burt, 1977, as cited in Krashen, 1988: 21). University learners who dislike English have a high affective-filter and are unlikely to learn deeply or recall what they are taught.

So our research reflects the recent shift in 2LA research to place the individual learner in centre stage, to focus on the “agency of the individual as a thinking, feeling human being, with an identity, a personality, a unique history and background, a person with goals, motives and intentions”, and to "to integrate the individual and context in the analysis of motivation" (see Ushioda, 2009: 220).

The questionnaire items for learners’ affective differences are the items 1 (I panic when I cannot make myself understood in English), 4 (I feel self-conscious, when I hear other students speaking good English), 5 (Even when I have an opinion, I refrain from expressing myself in English), 8 (I prefer being silent rather than embarrassing myself in speaking English), 9 (I don’t know the people in my class, so I feel uncomfortable talking to them), 11 (I worry that my English proficiency is not as good as other students), 13 (I feel ashamed, if I can’t speak in English to native speakers of English), 14 (I don’t like speaking in class, because I am not sure I can produce/use what I have learnt), 18 (I feel worried other people may think I am a poor speaker of English), 22 (I feel envious of people who speak English fluently), 25 (English is difficult for me), 29 (I am a perfectionist and I don’t like to make mistakes), and 35 (I am not good at speaking in public in any language, even
my own. Among them, the items 1, 5, 9, 11, 18, 22, 25, 29 and 35 revealed the significant differences between Italian participants and Japanese participants. Other items indicated some similarities between them.

5. Concluding remarks

In conclusion, as Figure 2 shows, cultural context and educational context may lead to integrativeness and foster positive attitudes toward learning situation. These factors influence individual motivation, which may affect their classroom behaviors, persistence, cultural contact and learning retention. Through orchestrating these factors, the learners will hopefully achieve language learning and will eventually be able to use it. The present study has provided us with some differences and similarities between Italian participants and Japanese participants. The next step will be to integrate the questionnaire results into more theoretical framework which may explain the attitudinal variables with different cultural backgrounds.

Figure 2: Language achievement and use

References


