

**English in Global Voluntary Work Contexts:**

**Conceptions and Experiences of Language, Communication and Pedagogy**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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## Abstract

This research project focuses on situations where Japanese volunteer workers use English to communicate with local interlocutors in a diverse set of overseas countries, including Kenya, India and Jamaica. Before being dispatched, volunteers take an intensive ten week language learning programme in Japan, to act as preparation for using English during their time overseas. There are two strands to this project, firstly research into the *conceptions* of English held by teachers and students at the language training centres in Japan, relative to the overall context of language pedagogy and usage. Secondly, *experiences* of the overseas volunteers are investigated in terms of language and communication. This structure to the project allows for a consideration of the relationship between: a) conceptions of English and appropriate language learning for this context and b) experiences of language and communication in the target contexts of language usage. Exploring this relationship will facilitate the discussion of locally relevant issues in the pre-service language pedagogy for future JICA volunteers and for language education in other related contexts. The research methods which are used here derive from a discourse analytic approach to interviews and focus groups, and linguistic ethnography. In terms of conceptions in the pre-service pedagogical context, a range of perspectives are demonstrated, where some participants orientate strongly to standards-based conceptions of language and others adopt a more flexible, intelligibility-based view of global communication and language pedagogy designed to facilitate it. In terms of the post-pedagogy uses and experiences of English in the locations of voluntary work, the linguistic forms utilised in the communication are diverse in nature, and could be characterised as problematic by some ELT practitioners. In the extracts presented here, non-alignment with standard language forms does not lead to a reduction in mutual intelligibility between the participants. Instead, a reluctance or inability to align with and accommodate to interlocutors leads to the interactional trouble which does occur. Further aspects of the volunteer interactions are analysed and discussed such as cultural dimensions and matters of personal and professional identity. Regarding the implications of these findings for how a locally relevant, situated ELT pedagogy can be realised by language teachers at JICA and in related contexts, such a pedagogy would need to account for linguistic diversity in global

uses of English, and for the development of vital intercultural communication skills such as the ability to achieve specific pragmatic moves in interaction and how to handle reductions in intelligibility, including situations where an interlocutor is not mutually working to scaffold interactive success. A standards-based orientation towards language pedagogy is problematised based on the investigation's results, and suggestions are provided for raising teacher and learner awareness of issues in international communication which facilitate an intelligibility-based view. This project therefore contributes to a growing body of research into English in global contexts in terms of how teachers and learners conceive of language and communication relative to grammatical standards, the nature of real-life global communicative practices and the implications of this for language pedagogy.

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## **Chapter 1: Research Context, Focus and Orientation**

### **Introduction to Chapter 1**

This opening chapter aims to locate the project in terms of its focus for research, goals and fundamentals of approach. The organisation which makes up the overall research context – the Japan International Co-operation Agency – will be introduced along with associated processes of language pedagogy and communication between Japanese volunteers and local interlocutors in diverse global contexts. After introducing JICA, a core set of concepts and principles which underlie the investigation will be explored. This involves a basic rationale for carrying out the study, along with a discussion of how the research focus was established. The research questions for the project along with a rationale and explanation of related terms will then be presented.

Following this, some macro-contextualisation to the project will be provided, firstly in terms of English language learning in Japan, which represents the wider context in which language pedagogy at JICA takes place. Secondly, a discussion of existing studies related to English and international development will be provided. The final part of the chapter will locate this project in terms of its disciplinarity (Seargeant, 2012) relative to the wider academic fields of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. In doing this, a definite research stance and ontology will be established, including the conception of language, communication and pedagogy which underpins the work. This will include outlining a fundamental ethical approach to the project in terms of its ontology and epistemology.

## 1.1 Context and Focus of the Research

This section addresses the overall context and the focus of the research, from the inception of the project to the establishment of its research questions and rationale.

### 1.1.1 The Organisational Context of the Research

#### 1.1.1.1 Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA)

The Japan International Co-operation Agency (henceforth JICA) is a large governmental organisation which manages Japan's ODA (overseas development aid) programmes. The following screen shot is taken from JICA's website (JICA, 2014a).

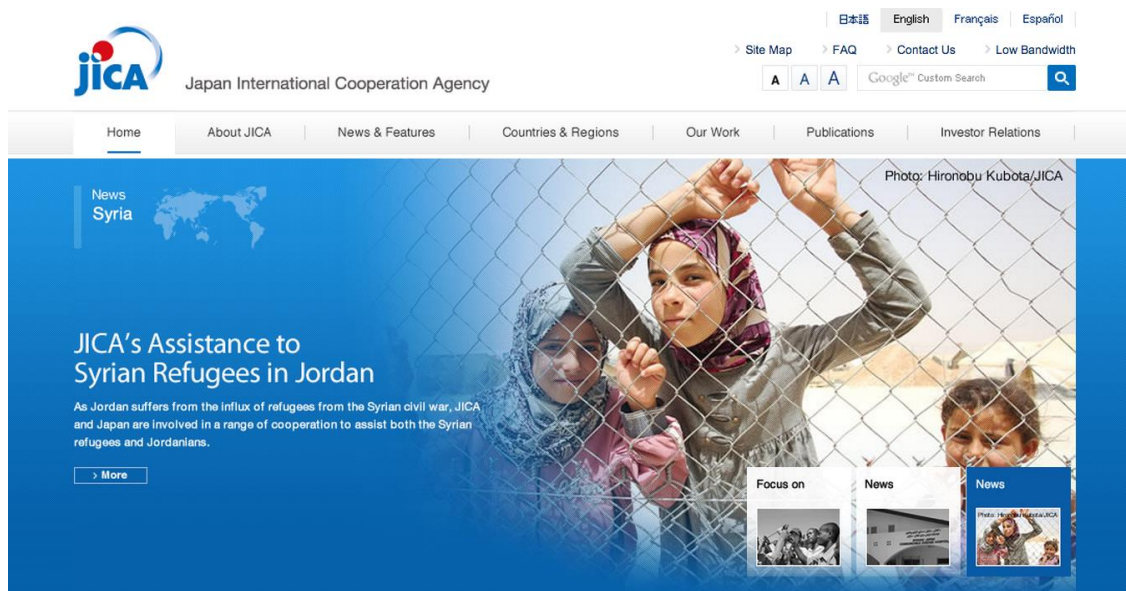


Image 1: JICA website screenshot

Although this image depicts JICA's assistance in terms of emergency disaster relief at the time of access in 2014, the organisation's major work is in supporting long term

sustainable growth for the countries which it supports. JICA has a 50 year history and Japan has been one of the world's major suppliers of ODA in that time, for example its gross ODA total in 2013 was 22.7 billion US dollars (JICA, 2014b). ODA is broken down between categories of loan aid, grant aid and 'technical co-operation' (JICA, 2014c), which encompasses the dispatch of Japanese volunteers to live and work in recipient 'host countries', typically for a period of two years to work in fields such as education, healthcare, agriculture, engineering and so on. Since the first volunteer was dispatched to Laos in 1965, JICA has dispatched over 47,000 volunteers to 96 countries across Asia, Africa, The Americas, Europe, The Middle East and Oceania (JICA, 2015b). Of this large number of volunteers, there have been slightly more males than females. There are two designated age brackets for volunteers, 20-39 and 40-69 (JICA, 2015a). The following screenshot is taken from one of JICA's official videos (JICA, 2012), and shows a JICA volunteer teaching about water filtration and purification at a rural community in Ghana.



Image 2: Screenshot from 'JICA: Building a Better World' video

This dispatch of overseas volunteers makes JICA a roughly equivalent organisation to America's Peace Corps, and similar to Britain's VSO, although the latter is a non-

governmental organisation. JICA represents a dynamic site for research into languages and linguistics, for example the nature of the communicative practices between JICA volunteers and their local interlocutors engage a series of questions regarding standards and diversity in languages on a global scale. JICA volunteers take an intensive 10 week preparation course before being dispatched from Japan which is based around studying their target language – this might be English, French, Spanish or another language – which is designed to facilitate their ability to work, live and communicate in their recipient host countries. These two aspects, the pre-service language pedagogy and the post-pedagogy language usage, will be investigated in this project.

The target language usage (post-pedagogy) for the context takes place in linguistically diverse locations around the world, and in a globally significant way as it relates to international development. The JICA organisation encompasses numerous situations which are of interest to researchers of language, pedagogy and culture, including communication between national governments, the planning and delivery of language courses, and situated verbal interactions between Japanese volunteers and their interlocutors around the world. The exact focus of research for this project will be established after further details regarding programmes of language pedagogy at JICA are provided.

#### 1.1.1.2 The Pre-service Language Pedagogy at JICA

Salient features of the pre-service language pedagogy at JICA will now be presented. First of all, the language lessons, combined with other aspects of preparation for the volunteers, take place in two training centres: the Komagane Training Centre and the Nihonmatsu Training Centre (henceforth KTC and NTC respectively). These centres are several hundred miles apart, and both situated in rural mountainous areas of Japan, with the nearby cities of Komagane and Nihonmatsu being relatively small. This remoteness of the training centres, coupled with the fact that the trainee volunteers live in the

training centre dormitories for the duration of the course, are notably unique features of the overall pedagogical context. Furthermore the volunteers are beginning an exciting set of activities and programmes, therefore enthusiasm and motivation are typically high among the volunteers.

Some key features of the ten week course will now be presented. These are applicable to both NTC and KTC, and are focused on the English language department although many of the points would also apply to volunteers studying other languages.

- There are four training terms per year at the centres, of equal duration.
- Volunteer/student numbers are variable by term and therefore teacher numbers per term also fluctuate: some teachers are on long term contracts and others are employed flexibly by term.
- The typical class size is around six; it would be unusual to have less than four or more than eight students in a class.
- Contact hours for the ten week language learning programme are high, with typically 5 one hour lessons per day, 6 days per week equalling approximately 300 contact hours.
- Students typically take 'home class' for general English in the mornings and 'technical class' for language practice related to their work assignments in the afternoons. Students take an initial placement test upon arrival and home classes are organised by test results in order to group students at similar levels of proficiency. Technical class is organised by work assignment, for example all of the healthcare workers might be grouped together.
- There are guidelines for English teachers on how to approach both types of class, for example there is a locally produced syllabus and textbook for home class based on a functional approach to tasks which JICA volunteers are expected to need to carry out, such as using the post office or visiting the doctor. In reality, individual teachers have a high degree of freedom about how to teach the classes and which materials to use.

- There is a 'final test' which all students must pass in order to graduate as JICA volunteers and be dispatched to their host countries. Despite this pressure, it would actually be highly unusual for a volunteer not to be dispatched due to failing the final test. The individual would typically be allowed to re-take the test until they can pass it. Items on the test mirror some features of the locally produced materials, for example listening and speaking activities based on specific functions. There are also grammatical elements to the test, for example multiple choice questions and a writing activity which is graded by grammatical accuracy.
- Most volunteers receive 'local language training' on arrival in the host countries, for example volunteers going to Kenya who have studied English at the JICA training centres might take a short course in Swahili upon arrival.

This has been a brief overview of facts regarding the pre-service pedagogy at JICA. The issues above represent important features worthy of further discussion which will be achieved in subsequent sections and chapters. At this point I would like to make it clear to the reader that I was employed as an English language teacher at the JICA training centres from 2007-2010. This is important in terms of declaring my 'subject positioning' (Roulston, 2010) relative to the current research project. Furthermore, my former participation in the pedagogical context described here is essential for defining how a focus for the project was identified, as will be described in the following section.



## **1.1.2 Reflexivity as Starting Point and Organising Principle**

### 1.1.2.1 Subject Positioning and Theoretical Foundations

The concepts of reflection and reflexivity have become important in academia generally, and this is certainly true of the academic sub-disciplines of English Language Teaching (henceforth ELT) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (henceforth TESOL). The ability to reflect on one's own teaching practices and modify future actions according to previous outcomes are at the heart of action research (Burns, 2010) and are central to many contemporary aspects of teacher development. Farrell (2007) points out various benefits for a language teacher who reflects on their practice, including a fuller understanding of others' perspectives, for example students or other stakeholders in the pedagogical context. Farrell (2007) also points out that the process of bringing pedagogical actions to the point of awareness is vital for professional development, as otherwise behaviours which have become automatic and routine are enacted uncritically. The ability to reflect is of central importance to the process of becoming reflexive; they are really two sides of the same coin as the *reflect* aspect defines looking at something and the *reflex* entails making some sort of response or movement based upon the looking. Edge (2011, p.7) defines reflexivity as bringing combined knowledge about ourselves and our environments so that we may bring them 'to our awareness and then commit ourself to future action based on that combined awareness – that constitutes our development'.

From 2008-2010, during my time working at KTC and NTC, I also took a master's degree in TESOL from Aston University in the UK as a distance learner. The ability to become reflective (or reflexive) was a central aspect of the course. This is actually the same programme which is referred to by Edge (2011, p.83) as the 'Master's level distance education with experienced teachers in their own contexts' for which he was involved with teaching, administrating and developing materials. Therefore my own academic orientation towards reflexivity in TESOL has been heavily influenced by Edge's

theoretical stance. Other key underlying features of Aston's programme were the concept that there is no one-size-fits all approach to language pedagogy as all contexts are different (Edge, 2011) and the encouragement to explore academic theory and its relevance and applicability to local contexts. These concepts are well established in ELT and TESOL, with the former referred to as the post-method condition (Kumaravadivelu, 2003) and implications of context for pedagogical practice being a source of much interest and debate (e.g. Bax, 2003; Ur, 2013).

Edge's recommendation to reflect on a local teaching context in order to come up with a focus for research (Edge, 1985; Edge, 2011) has also been very influential – both to my orientation to teaching and research in general and to this project in particular. The suggested process of reflecting on a pedagogical situation in order to determine a focus (but not necessarily a problem) for research is deeply connected with the overall concept of reflexivity and also action research, as it represents the starting point for beginning an action research project. This position conflicts slightly with the concept that research in applied linguistics should be based on tackling some kind of 'real-life problem' (Brumfit, cited in Simpson, 2011, p.2). As will be demonstrated below, this project is based on the reflexive position in terms of seeking to address a research focus or pedagogical question, rather than a pre-defined problem.

#### 1.1.2.2 Establishing a Focus: Reflections on the Context

As referred to in section 1.1.1 above, one of the primary, salient features of the JICA context of language pedagogy and usage is that the post-pedagogy language usage – facilitation of which being the primary goal of the pre-service pedagogy – takes place in highly diverse global locations which are separated from the pedagogical context in space and time. The dislocation would appear to represent a barrier for the teachers and learners in terms of their capacity to understand and learn about the target contexts of communication. There are some internal processes put in place by JICA in order to facilitate this knowledge, for example active volunteers occasionally take questionnaires

about their experiences or are visited in their host countries by the longer serving teachers at JICA. Nevertheless, the reality in many classrooms at the JICA training centres is that teachers may have little experience of the linguistic landscapes and communicative contexts that their learners are preparing for. Many teachers might have some awareness of the incumbent diversity in those contexts, for example the multilingual practices and inherent variation in English usage, but the degree of this awareness may vary widely – there is no formal training designed to promote it – and teachers may have little idea how pedagogical practices could be tailored in light of it. Investigating awareness levels of diversity in global uses of English, as well as attitudes and orientations towards it, will be one of the focal points of this research into the JICA context as explained below.

The overall situation at JICA represented a ‘puzzle of practice’ (Munby and Russell, cited by Akbari, 2007, p.194) for me in terms of my pedagogical practices as an English teacher at JICA. Through reflection, I began to wonder to what extent local varieties of English could or should be introduced as learning materials. A related question was to what extent a traditional focus on grammatical accuracy – in terms again of materials selection, time devoted to focusing on grammar and also approaches to error correction – might be relevant and appropriate for these learners, who might be going on to use English in contexts where certain aspects of standard grammar might have little or no relevance. One catalyst for this line of thinking was a situation where a student of mine at KTC broke down in tears of frustration whilst grappling with differences between the present perfect and the past simple tenses, a focus of the materials which I had chosen for the lesson. This led me to think along the lines of: I wonder how relevant this grammatical issue is for her future usage of English in her host country? As Kramsch (2003, p.4) points out, ‘a research project may begin in a “telling moment” in the language classroom’.

### 1.1.3 Research Questions

The research questions for this project are:

- 1) What conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy do JICA language teachers and learners have relative to their context, including: English usage in JICA host countries, communication between volunteers and local people in JICA host countries, and suitable language educational practices for pre-service volunteers?
- 2) After being dispatched to their host countries, what are the experiences of the volunteers in terms of using English and other languages for their daily lives and for carrying out their voluntary work?
- 3) What are the implications of these experiences for language teaching at the JICA training centres and for English language teaching in general?

As Bryman (2007, pp.5-6) points out, 'formulating a research question has an important role in many accounts of the research process as a stage that helps to militate against undisciplined data collection and analysis'. These research questions have been designed in a principled way, so as to be focused enough to address the original research 'puzzle of practice', but open-ended enough to not constrain the types of research findings which would be possible for this project. The three-part structure to the questions allows for a consideration of issues at the stage of pre-service pedagogy then post-pedagogy stage of language and communication, followed by a consideration of both aspects in terms of the implications for future language pedagogy at JICA and in related contexts.

The motivation for focusing on 'conceptions' in the pre-service stage goes back to the idea of dislocation between contexts of pedagogy and usage. The term conceptions has been adopted to imply a range of associated mental concepts such as ideas, attitudes,

perceptions and so on. It is also taken to entail awareness to some extent, as awareness surely feeds our conceptions, although it would be possible to have conceptions – particularly opinions – of something with little knowledge, experience or awareness of it. Conceptions as investigated here relate to ‘ontologies of English’ (Hall, 2013) which vary widely among individuals, including linguists and other professionals working with language. Ontologies of English will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this work.

Underlying research question one are issues of standards and diversity in English relative to the JICA context of language pedagogy and usage. Although this has already been declared as a point of interest in the previous section, it is not reflected in the wording of the question in order to leave the research findings open to other issues which might emerge from the data. This is also true of the second question. ‘Experiences of language and communication’ as a research focus is intentionally left open-ended, for example to accommodate any issue which might arise such as issues of affect or identity. The question would be far too broad were it not contextualised as relating to JICA volunteers. Further underlying issues here include an interest in how the volunteers experience linguistic diversity, the extent to which they are mutually intelligible with local interlocutors and the extent to which grammatical standards are relevant for their communicative practices. Again, these concepts have been established as points of interest by the preceding sections but the exact wording of the research question refrains from being overly restrictive, instead being intentionally open-ended.

## **1.2 Wider Aspects of the Research Context**

### **1.2.1 English Language Learning in Japan**

This section will provide a macro-educational context for the project's research via a discussion of English language pedagogy at the national level in Japan. In doing this, it is important on the one hand to acknowledge how expectations and policies at the national level are one important factor of an ELT context (Akbari et al, 2010), but on the other be wary of overgeneralising or essentialising about all situations of English language pedagogy at the national level.

Sociolinguistic studies of English in Japan have portrayed distinctive features of the language such as usage in a purely 'emblematic' (Blommaert, 2012) or 'symbolic' (Seargeant, 2010) way. Seargeant (2005) refers to English as having been 'reconfigured' by contact with Japanese culture, and goes on to suggest a connection with problems of attainment in the Japanese educational system. He points out that 'it has long been a received truth that ELT in Japan is a problematic issue, and that student achievement has failed to match educational investment' (Seargeant, 2008, p.122).

The issue of educational outcomes in English by Japanese students being relatively low is taken up by Bolton (2008) and McKenzie (2008), who notes that a review of TOEFL scores in Asia placed Japan joint-bottom out of 26 countries. It must be emphasised here that this discussion is by no means meant to imply that Japanese learners of English are somehow inferior or deficient language learners. However a common theme in the literature is that, despite many years spent studying English at school in Japan, learners have not traditionally practiced speaking and listening in that environment (Abe, 2013), leading to widespread difficulties of usage outside the classroom. There have however been recent changes to the national educational policy which represent a move towards development of communicative abilities (Abe, 2013; Mimatsu, 2011). There have also been several vocal advocates for a move towards the encouragement of Japanese usage

of English with less deference to externally imposed standards and using features of English usage which may be specific to Japanese users as markers of linguistic and social identity (Baxter, 1982; Hino, 2009; Yano, 2010).

A final point to make is that as a national stereotype, Japan has been characterised by many as preferring standards over diversity (e.g. Kubota, 1998), a preference which has been linked with a national characteristic known as *nihonjonron* (theories of the uniqueness of Japanese people) which can lead to a somewhat rigid view of languages and cultures. The tendency towards homogeneity in Japan has been linked to issues of native-speakerism (Houghton and Rivers, 2013) and monolithic views of languages (Matsuda, 2003) by some Japanese people. Summarising these positions is by no means meant as a criticism of Japanese people, it is merely designed to foreground the possibility that many conceptions of language and language learning might be orientated towards the upholding of linguistic standards in that national context.

These issues provide useful background information for appreciating factors which might be relevant to the JICA context. Whereas it is essential not to generalise or judge any of the volunteers in terms of their existing proficiency or communicative ability in English, it is useful to be aware of such background issues which are potentially relevant. For example despite many years of taking English lessons, certain volunteers have been known to attend the JICA training centres with little or no communicative ability in English. This may be influenced by the issues summarised above, such as the fact that the national education system has traditionally not promoted communicative ability, the fact there may be some tendency in the national mind-set to value standards and correctness (which can lead to an increased fear of making mistakes and taking risks in language learners), and the fact that English holds a symbolic position within Japan's linguistic landscape rather than a functional or communicatively transactional one. It is important to note however, that some of the English learning JICA volunteers have already achieved high levels of proficiency, for example during previous periods of living overseas. Nevertheless the relationship between Japan and the English language is widely thought to be complex, for reasons including those summarised above.

### 1.2.2 English Studies and International Development

As the JICA context of language usage represents an interface between English studies, TESOL and international development, areas of research literature which relate to that interface will now be explored. Publications in this general field tend to focus on the contested issue of English as development, in the sense that the authors explore issues related to when efforts to provide international development are linked with the teaching or general spread of English (e.g. the volumes edited by Seargeant and Erling, 2013, and Coleman, 2011). In the editors' introduction to Seargeant and Erling (2013), the negative side to English as development is pointed out whereby, in a situation where development workers are teaching English overseas, 'the disparity between the adversity of the locals and the comfort of the expatriate development workers' is all too apparent (Pennycook et al, 2013, p.xx). The editors go on to point out that 'inequality can be perpetuated through the very processes of international development, and the place of English language within those processes' (ibid.). In these comments the editors are referring to Appleby (2010), which is an investigation of the experiences of these overseas teachers which raises highly critical and politically charged issues such as gender inequalities in these contexts.

A related work is Zimmerman (2006), which contains a highly critical take on the activities of English teaching Peace Corps workers. A further problematic issue is presented by Romaine (2013), who gives a thorough explanation of how a continuing erosion of local languages around the world is having an adverse effect on attempts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, this being one of the drawbacks of the concept of English as international development. In an important sense, the current research project 'side-steps' many of the contentious issues in such political pieces of research, as the JICA volunteers are carrying out their voluntary work through the medium of English as a tool of communication, rather than attempting to spread English as a means of development in itself. Having said that there are of course political issues which could have formed the basis of this research: language, communication and discourse is said to always have political dimensions (Gee, 2011a), not least when related



to international development in postcolonial contexts. However such issues have not been attended to as the focus of this research.

Apart from 'English and development', another area of literature which can be related to the JICA context of usage is the sphere of peace linguistics and critical pedagogy. Wenden (1995) points out that language education can be steered towards the promotion of peace and the absence of national conflicts, which is one of the conditions required for international development to take place. With a broader aim in the field of sociolinguistics, Friedrich (2007) states that:

Studies of peace rely on the assumption that language uses which promote harmony and just social structures exist, and that such uses should be made known, multiplied, and celebrated in the hope that they will help us achieve more equality one language user at a time.

(Friedrich, 2007, p.73)

Bringing these concepts closer in line with relevance to the national context of this research, Nakamura (2008, p.126) presents a training course for student teachers in Japan 'which enables us to create a culture of peace in cross-cultural diversity', espousing the view that language teaching and the promotion of peace between cultures can be linked together.

Another related study with specific relevance to the communicative context of JICA volunteers' post-pedagogy linguistic practices is Yashima (2010). This study investigates the effects of international voluntary work experiences on the intercultural competence of Japanese participants. Yashima assessed participants in terms of: openness/ethnorelativism, international concern, interpersonal communication skills and self-efficacy, finding that participants who had experience as an overseas volunteer rated higher on these parameters than participants without voluntary work experience. Yashima (2010) claims that a major asset to the participants' improved intercultural

experience was due to the confidence gained by the experience of coping with linguistic and cultural barriers during the voluntary work.

Having reviewed English and communication studies which have relevance to JICA volunteers' communicative practices post-pedagogy, in terms of connections with international development and overseas voluntary work, further studies in well-established research movements will now be discussed which are related at a broad conceptual level, in terms of the global, international or lingua franca nature of the JICA volunteers' communicative practices. The remaining section of this chapter will include discussions of these terms and academic disciplines, and chapter two will include a selective review of their research findings.

### **1.3 Theoretical Orientation of the Research**

#### **1.3.1 Terminology, Disciplinarity and Research Ontology**

As alluded to at the end of the previous section, it is important to locate this project in terms of the academic disciplines which its research focus connects with. In Seargeant's (2012) terms, this requires us to establish the 'disciplinarity' of the study. At the broadest level, within the general academic fields of languages and linguistics, this research connects with applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and discourse studies. As an investigation pertaining to English language pedagogy, sub-fields of applied linguistics such as ELT and TESOL are naturally relevant in a general sense. In terms of research epistemology and ontology, the project is aligned with sociolinguistics and discourse studies, including ethnographic perspectives which are connected to both (e.g. Rampton, 2007). A key aim of this section is to define an epistemology and ontology for the research.

As we have seen in previous sections, the JICA context of language pedagogy and usage engages with a series of important questions currently being researched in applied linguistics concerning standards and diversity in languages. For example, if the volunteers will experience a diverse range of linguistic forms during their time overseas, then how relevant to their pre-service pedagogy are practices aimed at reducing grammatical errors and promoting adherence to 'standard' language forms? Such questions have become particularly important in researching English as a Lingua Franca (henceforth ELF). Researchers in ELF have worked to investigate features and processes in communication where English is used as a bridging language across first languages and home cultures. Notable ELF research into linguistic forms includes the work of Jenkins (2000) on pronunciation and Seidlhofer (2004) on lexico-grammar. The central assertion of such work has been that interlocutors are often mutually intelligible without adhering to forms of 'standard' English. Similar assertions have been made by ELF research into pragmatics (e.g. House, 2002; Hülmbauer, 2009) which highlights

strategies used by speakers to negotiate meaning and maintain intelligibility. An important outcome of such work has been the empowerment of English users whose communication skills might otherwise be viewed as deficient in comparison to unrealistic models (Kirkpatrick, 2006). This connects with a wider trend in applied linguistics which has sought to move away from taking a deficit-based view of language learners and users (Firth and Wagner, 1997).

The ELF movement is not without its problems and issues. Firstly, there is a long-running debate about whether ELF scholars are attempting to define a specific variety of English or not (e.g. Cogo, 2008; Saraceni, 2008). Furthermore, although the overall ELF project is intended to be empowering and emancipatory for previously marginalised English users (see Seidlhofer, 2004), researchers adopting the term tend to over-rely on the native vs. non-native speaker distinction in their theoretical approach. This either-or distinction has become highly de-stabilised in many global contexts (e.g. Bhatt, 2005; Leung et al 1997) meaning that a categorisation of communication as either ELF or non-ELF based on these characteristics can make research prone to essentialist positions (Sewell, 2012). Having adopted ELF as a contestable ontological category for their focus of enquiry, researchers have then been accused of over-generalising about the nature of ELF communication across different contexts (e.g., MacKenzie, 2013). Discussing English usage in Japan, Seargeant (2009) questions whether a blanket concept such as ELF can really capture the complexities and nuances of language usage in particular situated environments, an argument also expressed by Friedrich and Matsuda (2010).

ELF research has been informative and useful, but overreliance on the ELF term and concept can be limiting. This research project adopts a post-modern view of language and communication offered by discourse studies and ethnography (e.g. Rampton, 2006), because it overcomes a reliance on the native/non-native dichotomy when theorising language usage. Speakers are viewed as having individual linguistic repertoires that they bring to each communicative encounter (see Canagarajah, 2007b; Hall, 2013). The speakers' linguistic repertoires are one important aspect of the communicative context (Goodwin and Duranti, 1992) and as such can be usefully incorporated into an analysis

of the interaction (Gee, 2011b). The discourse is seen in terms of its cultural context and the linguistic resources of its speakers rather than by any pre-defined labels. There have been calls in the literature for this kind of approach to lingua franca communication, for example:

There... seems to be a compelling case to at least complement the current studies on World Englishes and ELF with an ethnographic... approach in which little in the way of a priori assumptions is taken on board

(Blommaert, 2012, p.5)

In adopting such an approach, this project also connects with previous research into discourse and intercultural encounters such as the work of Gumperz (1982) who incorporated contextual factors such as the degree of shared cultural knowledge between speakers into his analysis, as indicated by ethnographic data. Following Rampton (2006), this paper adopts Gumperz's interactional sociolinguistics method as a route into studying the interactions between Japanese volunteers and their interlocutors, which is supplemented by other forms of ethnographic data such as participant interviews and field-notes deriving from observation. These methodological aspects will be reviewed in detail in chapter three.

Apart from ELF, the academic field of intercultural communication is also potentially applicable to this project. Although many of the processes studied within the field are potentially relevant to the JICA situation, like ELF, intercultural communication was not adopted as a field to be fully aligned with by this project in terms of adopting its terminology. This is partly because the term 'culture' is highly contested, and previous generations of intercultural communication studies have tended to view culture in a fixed, essentialist way. This is not so much the case in contemporary studies, for example Piller (2011), who points out that 'most of the research methods traditionally employed in the field are sadly inadequate to the object of enquiry as a social practice in motion' (Piller, 2011, p.174). Piller goes on to explain that she adopts discourse analysis and ethnographic studies for her research, as a counterpoint to the previous limitations in

her field. Culture is an entity which will be incorporated into the discussions and analysis within this research, in the sense that Piller describes it, and as used in other work influenced by discourse and ethnography such as Gumperz (1982) and Agar (1996). From this perspective, culture would only be generalised at the national level with extreme caution, and when based on specific evidence. This project adopts the view of culture as a fluid, contextualised entity, including the concept that small cultures can be developed in specific settings as a combination of resources that individuals bring with them to specific moments and interactions, in other words a 'third space' (Kramsch, 2003).

Another academic field which clearly has relevance to this project is World Englishes, which since its inception in the drawing of Kachru's (1985) 'three-circle model', has done a huge amount to change perspectives towards diversity in English as it is used around the world, in academic theory at least. Despite the model still having some relevance and use, for example when discussing educational contexts (McKay and Bokhorst-Keng, 2008, p.30), there are obvious limitations with such a fixed boundary model, in the same way that the NS-NNS divide has become so porous, fragile and contested. The same 'essentialist' danger is posed by the naming of varieties in World Englishes as by the essentialist version of ELF, in that, although it might be useful to think about certain features of English in say, Kenya, as a collection of tendencies that might appear in a Kenyan person's use of English, it would be misleading to go down the route of thinking that 'all Kenyan people speak English this way'. This has been a potential problem for the World Englishes movement, although like ELF and intercultural communication, a more flexible application of the concept has emerged, for example Seargeant and Tagg's (2011) suggestion of a 'post-variety' approach. In terms of related terminology that will be used in this project for referring to aspects of diversity in English, this research tends to use 'linguistic landscape' (e.g. Backhaus, 2006) when referring to a place and 'linguistic repertoire' (e.g. Snell, 2013) when referring to a person. This terminology allows us to discuss linguistic and communicative features by place or person, in a non-essentialist way which highlights diversity in its positive sense. For example when Snell (2013) researched dialect features of school children in North-East England, she emphasised the fact that the children were also able to use standard forms – meaning

that they had access to the local dialect and the standard as part of their linguistic repertoire – and showed how both could be flexibly used depending on the context. This approach is vastly different to one which would see the use of dialect in a fixed, essentialist or a deficit-orientated way.

Yet another strand of academic research is known as English as an International Language, and is positioned as a movement within, or closely related to World Englishes. Ultimately the theory and research which uses this label can be considered as mutually complimentary with English as a Lingua Franca, although the scholars do not agree on terminology. Although Friedrich and Matsuda (2010) make highly valid points in critiquing ELF terminology, the ‘international’ in this alternative terminology can also be critiqued. As a term it is appealingly simple and side-steps suspicions associated with the ELF term that a new variety or concept might be being ‘invented’ (Canagarajah, 2007a) and that the speakers’ ‘non-nativeness’ is being used as a label. For example if we are talking about a Japanese volunteer talking with a Kenyan interlocutor, labelling this as an example of ‘international communication in English’ is appealing as the speakers are from different nationalities, and this is being referred to in a relatively neutral and a-political way. One obvious drawback with this is that speakers from say, Australia and New Zealand could also be classified as using English for international communication, but this is not the type of situation that the terminology is intended to convey.

In terms of defining an ontology of language and communication for this research to be based on, the study aims to provide a consistent postmodern conception of language and communication as interactional discourse, incorporating ethnographic perspectives which allow for a contextualised theorisation of features in uses of English in diverse global locations. This helps to move the research agenda away from quasi-essentialist perspectives, which tend to characterise language users with an over-emphasis on nationality or de-stabilised categorisations such as the non-native speaker. This perspective is beneficial for encouraging more realistic and egalitarian conceptions of language and communication in the world.

### **1.3.2 Ethical Dimensions**

Building upon the preceding discussion, it is crucial for this project to set out a position on research ethics. This is not in the sense of ethical considerations for how data was collected from specific participants and later represented and analysed – that will be discussed in chapter three – but rather the ethical dimensions of how individuals, situations and processes themselves are theorised. First of all the manner of theorising language teaching in general and the pre-service language pedagogy at JICA in particular, should be established. The position adopted here connects with the aforementioned post-method pedagogy (e.g. Kumaravadivelu, 2003) which states that a one-size-fits all is never appropriate in language pedagogy. Further critical research and theory is relevant here, for example positions which critique applications of specific teaching methods or techniques to classrooms without respecting their local cultures (Holliday, 1994; Pennycook, 1994). Following these theoretical positions, all discussions of possible future directions in language pedagogy (for JICA, and related contexts) are made here in terms of implications and recommendations rather than in a prescriptive sense. There is no intention to tell other language teachers or policy makers what they must or must not do, instead the intention is to raise awareness and empower individuals with possible alternative approaches to pedagogy, based on research findings. In other words recommendations for future pedagogy will be made and some of these will constitute strong suggestions, but ultimately this is not with the agenda that those recommendations are to be prescribed and that they should be accepted by others uncritically. These concepts are compatible with the position taken up by Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) who outline a ‘blueprint’ for a revised approach to pedagogy which is intended to be taken up conceptually, without the need for completely radical change to existing practices in any given context of teaching and learning languages.

The discussion in the previous sub-section contains many implicit references to taking up an ethical position relative to individuals within this study, in terms of their linguistic and communicative practices. It is essential not to pre-judge or pigeonhole a language



user based on their nationality or some other biographical fact, in other words not to 'essentialise' individuals. Adopting an egalitarian, difference not deficit approach to investigating people and their communicative practices is also essential, in other words to not 'other' individuals. It goes without saying that this research will avoid an ethnocentric position (Agar, 1996) at all costs. This is linked with Holliday's (2011) warning against taking up a hegemonic 'centre-West' stance in research, which entails the assumption that western academics can look at situations in other communities and contexts and come up with definitive answers and solutions for them. Clearly I do not take this kind of stance, instead I seek to make a meaningful contribution with this research based on the evidence that I find, without the presupposition that I can talk about the lives and experiences of others – including processes related to language learning, language usage and communication – in definitive and deterministic ways.

## Summary of Chapter 1

This chapter began by defining the JICA organisation and the situation where Japanese volunteers take a ten-week intensive language course to act as preparation for using a target language during a two year period of living and working overseas. This is the situation which this project seeks to investigate: the conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy held by teachers and learners in the pedagogical context followed by the experiences of the volunteers in terms of language and communication in diverse global contexts of voluntary work. The goal of the research is then to make pedagogical recommendations for the teaching context based on the findings of the project. The inspiration for the project was explained, which has its roots in a reflexive, post-method approach to language pedagogy which I adopted when employed as an English teacher at JICA from 2007-2010. This led me to consider how diversity in English was relevant to the JICA context, and as a related point, the extent to which adherence to standard forms of grammar was relevant as a teaching goal. Fundamentally, a gap in space, time and understanding between the point of pedagogy and the target language usage was identified, and this project was designed as a way to begin addressing that gap.

After establishing the research questions and offering a rationale for them, aspects of existing research literature which are relevant to the context at a macro-level – English language education in Japan and studies related to English and international development – were examined. Key concepts here included the fact that English learning in Japan has been construed as a problem by a number of researchers, in terms of relatively low levels of achievement, and further complicating sociolinguistic factors. In terms of international development, whereas many studies of English and international development are political in nature due to addressing sensitive issues regarding their relationship, this project avoids that kind of focus as English is here being used as a tool of communication for carrying out developmental activities rather than as a means of development in itself.

In the third and final section, the project was located relative to other disciplines in applied linguistics, and an examination of potential terminology and associated theoretical perspectives was carried out. Ultimately, although English as a Lingua Franca, World Englishes, English as an International Language and Intercultural Communication are all relevant research movements which offer important foundations for this project, it is not closely aligned with any of them in terms of using their specific terminology or in overall identification. This work draws on fundamental ideas from the previously mentioned movements, but aligns more with studies from sociolinguistics, discourse studies and ethnography in order to find its ontological and epistemological stance. The chapter ended with the establishment of an overall ethical stance for the research, including the idea that it will seek to contribute pedagogical recommendations rather than absolute and definitive prescriptions, and also that the research participants will be viewed from an egalitarian, non-essentialised and non-othered perspective.

## **Chapter 2: Conceptions and Experiences of Language, Communication and Pedagogy:** **A Literature Review**

### **Introduction to Chapter 2**

This chapter aims to build upon chapter one by reviewing elements of the academic research literature which connect with the research focus and questions for this study, in terms of theory and findings. This begins in the first section with a review of discussions surrounding theories of language and languages, particularly as related to contemporary ideas of fluidity and diversity. The section also includes a discussion of existing research into teacher and learner conceptions regarding these issues in language education contexts, therefore building towards an appreciation of material relevant to research question one.

The second section of the chapter examines research into processes in, and experiences of, language and communication in situations related to JICA volunteers' communicative practices, therefore reviewing literature which is related to research question two. The section will consider issues of diversity and intelligibility, and other processes such as identity construction in interpersonal discourse. It draws from literature in all of the research movements identified in chapter one as being related to this research: world Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, English as an International Language and Intercultural Communication. In a similar fashion, the third section brings together ideas from these related fields as the pedagogical implications of the material in this chapter as a whole are considered. This latter section on pedagogy is divided along the lines of three topics: overall pedagogical approaches in ELT or TESOL as related to the issues at hand, the selection of specific materials and activities for the classroom and finally a consideration of related issues in assessment.

## **2.1 Conceptions of Language, Communication and Pedagogy**

### **2.1.1 Ontologies of Language: Standards and Diversity in English**

We take the view that English is a protean entity; its fabric and its uses in the world are being constantly re-shaped and transformed in multiple ways

(Leung and Street, 2014, p.xxi)

The sentiment behind this opening quotation is vitally important to contemporary thought in many branches of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, namely that English and other languages should be viewed as diverse and fluid entities rather than fixed and static objects. The re-shaping and transformation of English referred to in the quotation above carries with it the implicit concept that the moment-to-moment contextualised communicative practices of individuals is what drives this perpetual diversity in languages. Whereas we could speculate that this has ever been so, it is certainly true that the current period of late-modernity, with increased global connectivity, fluidity in movement of people and communication across new modes and media, has heightened this diversity during moment-to-moment interactions.

What does this recognition of diversity mean for our working or everyday relationships with language and communication? An initial and vital concept, is the idea that grammatical standards in English are at least problematised and interrogated, in a contemporary world where languages are used fluidly for communication. Whereas some elements of linguistic form – phonetically, orthographically or in terms of syntax – clearly do convey meaning, both our everyday experience and empirical evidence shows that adherence to recognised standards may not be needed in order to communicate effectively. Taking this forward, judgements made regarding a person's English as being 'incorrect' or deficient – leaving aside educational situations for now – constitutes language as 'shibboleth' (Widdowson, 1994), a perspective whereby language is used to

judge a person's social value. This is clearly the case when regional dialects are considered negatively relative to a national standard (Crowley, 2003) and is also the case when considering non-standard uses of language in international contexts (Widdowson, 1994).

Recently, many complimentary lines of theory and research have sought to position language more as resource rather than as shibboleth. This has led to concepts such as 'grammaring' (Larsen-Freeman, 2003), 'languaging' (Hall, 2013) and 'Englishing' (Hall, 2014) whereby the act of using available resources to construct communicative practices from the bottom-up contrasts sharply with the idea that something fixed and static must be applied from the top-down. This is an egalitarian perspective, which fits with the concept of linguistic resources being used flexibly, particularly by multilinguals whose resources in, for example English, should be viewed positively as resource rather than as deficit relative to an external standard. This fits with an overall difference rather than deficit approach to diversity in languages, which lies at the heart of many lines of contemporary thought.

How far can this line of conceptual thinking be taken? Makoni and Pennycook (2007) have called for the 'disinvention' of languages, with the proposed project of eroding all borders between separate languages, and theoretically opening the floodgates to full diversity of form in communicative practices. Another related and useful theoretical position is the notion of 'translanguaging' (Canagarajah, 2011), which implies that the border between languages in multilingual practices is fluid and porous, resulting in hybrid communicative practices which cannot fully be accounted in the traditional concepts of code-switching.

What of the opposing positions that might refute the difference position on linguistic diversity, instead prioritising adherence to grammatical standards? Quirk (1990) is a famous example of this position from the literature, referring to the idea of legitimate diversity in English around the world (e.g. Kachru, 1985) as 'half-baked quackery'. The

fundamental justification which Quirk supplies is that grammatical standards are both needed and desired in contexts of language education. Whereas the absolute rejection of legitimate diversity might appear to be distasteful – or even ethnocentric – Quirk’s position that standards in languages are important for education might hold currency with many practicing educators. In the case of general school or higher education for example, would it be acceptable for essays or dissertations to be submitted with no orientation towards standards in spelling or grammatical structure? What are the implications of the overall debate for English language teachers and learners? These are complex questions which are engaged by the ‘protean’ nature of English in the world (Leung and Street, 2014).

One possible route out of this dilemma – for language education at least – is a consideration of Widdowson’s (2003) distinction between language as object and language as subject. In terms of the language as object, this is English as actually used in the world for communication, which as has been discussed is naturally diverse, hybrid and emergent in its form. Language as subject implies formal study of a language, which implies the necessity to learn grammatical standards. With this distinction in place, language teachers might be able to consider for example if the goal of their learners is to learn the abstracted, idealised standard forms (language as subject – for example students who might be preparing for a high stakes examination) or if the learner goals are to be able to communicate in the language, implying that the focus could be on language as object, and adjusting the priorities relative to standards in grammar. Despite this useful distinction, debates on the topic could rage on, for example a hard-line position from the deficit position – that there is no place for studying the object, that language education is fundamentally about the subject. Or conversely from the difference position – that the subject is so destabilised by the real nature of communicative practices that the idealised grammatical standards should be abandoned, both in educational practices and in our general consciousness.

Theoretically, this research adopts the position that neither of these hard-line ontological positions is valid, but that being aware of both allows for a nuanced

consideration of issues surrounding standards and diversity in languages, in contexts both of language usage and pedagogy. Such a nuanced consideration would mean that for specific situations, an appraisal of whether a focus on language as object or subject would be in the best interest of learners, based on the current goal of the pedagogy, could usefully be carried out. Whereas the hard line difference perspective may be untenable – because it would delegitimise the practices and goals of many teachers and learners, and carries an implicit message that any orientation to standards in languages is unacceptable – it would perhaps be preferable to the hard-line deficit position, which is fundamentally hegemonic across all educational contexts, and perhaps ethnocentric across international ones. Therefore while this project seeks to take a nuanced view of this matter, it fundamentally rejects the notion that the natural diversity which exists in English language around the world is wrong and illegitimate.



### 2.1.2 Teacher and Learner Conceptions

Building upon the previous discussion, the focus will now turn to teacher and learner conceptions regarding language, communication and pedagogy in terms of standards and diversity in languages. Firstly, regarding teacher conceptions, Hall et al (2015) use the terms monolithic versus plurilithic in a way which can be mapped onto the deficit versus difference ontologies which were outlined above. The term plurilithic is directly relatable to a 'protean' view of language, in that:

We see them as single objects, like rocks, but they are in fact more like sandy beaches, rain clouds or galaxies: collections with no one central point and no sharply defined borders

(Hall et al, 2011)

In these terms then, a monolithic view of language retains the idea of a fixed rock, whereas a plurilithic conception incorporates the view of fluid, diverse forms in the manner of shifting sands. Hall et al (2015) investigated conceptions of English in these terms among Chinese university teachers of English, and found evidence for both positions within their interview data. In a way which maps onto the preceding discussion of object versus subject or usage versus learning, their results indicated that teachers' conceptions tended to be more monolithic when discussing the teaching and learning of language when compared to its actual usage for communication.

Further studies also suggest that teachers often tend to resist the idea of incorporating diversity in English into their pedagogical practices. Suzuki (2010), investigating the attitudes of trainee English teachers on this topic, found that they were reluctant to address any varieties apart from standard British or American English in their lessons, orientating instead to the need for a single standard that can be learned. Although the research is slightly problematic as it is unclear if diverse forms are being discussed in a complimentary or alternative fashion relative to standard English, similar findings have

been presented elsewhere. Matsuda (2009) also found that many trainee teachers believed it was neither desirable or necessary to incorporate diverse forms of English into their lessons. In terms of teacher beliefs regarding the incorporation of concepts from English as a Lingua Franca – for example a prioritisation of intelligibility over ‘correctness’ in pronunciation or grammar – teacher responses to this have also been shown to be mixed, including ambivalent positions and rejections of the concept (Jenkins, 2007).

In terms of the learner perspective too, there is little available evidence for learners taking up what could be described as a plurilithic conceptual position. Groom (2012) noted a strong rejection of ELF as a learning target among university students. Adolphs (2008) noted that learners might reject the need to learn finer points of English which are idiomatic to native-speakers, but that the pull towards standard grammar nevertheless remains strong.

The current research project in the JICA context represents an opportunity to move this discussion forwards by investigating a situation where language learning is taking place in order to facilitate communication in contexts which are naturally fluid and diverse in terms of local languages and communication. It can be argued that this adds a novel contextualisation to the debate, as standards and diversity are naturally engaged by the teaching context and therefore conceptions of English as more or less protean and plurilithic, with incumbent issues of legitimacy, are brought into sharper focus.

## **2.2 Experiences of Language and Communication: Englishes as International, Intercultural and Lingua Franca**

### **2.2.1 Experiences of Diversity and Intelligibility**

As already discussed, diversity in English around the world occurs as a natural feature of its usage in new linguistic and cultural contexts. The world Englishes research literature supplies us with a great deal of information regarding variation on the world stage, for example Bokamba (1992) noted a number of syntactic features which occur in African Englishes generally, such as omission of function words, countable use of mass nouns, use of affirmative answers to yes/no questions, variable word order in phrases containing pronouns and omission of 'more' in comparative constructions. Bokamba (ibid.) also notes regional variation at the level of superstrate language influence, for example that English usage in West Africa is less likely to retain features such as pronoun and subject-verb agreement than speakers of Bantu languages in the East, whose languages feature the same syntactic patterns. African Englishes have also been described as having unique lexical features at the regional and/or national level (less clear cut in Africa than in other continents) for example the use of 'pick' instead of 'pick up' is common in Kenyan English according to Skandera (1999). As described in chapter one, for adopting a non-essentialist position towards such matters, it is useful to conceive of them as tendencies rather than fixed absolutes.

The question of intelligibility between speakers using different varieties of English has also been a point of interest for the world Englishes movement. Smith (1976, 1992, 2009) has been the most active scholar within the World Englishes movement in terms of researching intelligibility between English users from different parts of the world. His preferred term for this phenomenon is 'English as an International Auxiliary Language' (Smith, 1976). By recording conversations between various international interlocutors and gaining interpretations of intelligibility from another set of participants, Smith

(1992) provided evidence for a three-part model of international intelligibility. Smith's model is comprised of:

1. Intelligibility: the degree to which one is able to recognize a word or utterance spoken by another;
2. Comprehensibility: the degree to which one is able to ascertain the meaning from another's word or utterance; and
3. Interpretability: the degree to which one is able to perceive the intention behind another's word or utterance

(Smith, 2009, p.17)

Smith's research indicates that these three levels become increasingly difficult to achieve in this sequence (an assertion which might be true for any spoken interaction) and makes the point that the speakers in his study from Britain and the USA were not the most intelligible (Smith, 1992).

Moving on to a consideration of findings from ELF, Firth (1990, 1996) was the first researcher to apply the term *lingua franca* to refer to English spoken between so called non-native speakers. Firth's research was based on telephone interactions conducted in English between the staff of a Danish dairy company and various international interlocutors. Firth applied the technique of conversation analysis in order to investigate the nature of these interactions. His overall findings were that despite a great deal of 'non-standard' language use by the participants, 'the talk is made 'normal' and 'ordinary' by the participants themselves, in their local discursive practices' (Firth, 1996, p.242). Firth reports that the participants did not orientate to each other's marked usage, and operated a 'let-it-pass' approach to problematic sequences by not attempting to repair potential misunderstandings except where clarification was essential for immediate purposes. Firth (1990) reports the now famous example of when a participant refers to 'cheese blowing' which the interlocutor originally lets pass but soon after seeks

clarification and negotiates the meaning that the cheese has 'gone off', as comprehension is needed to take the interaction forwards from that point. Firth (1996) makes further observations about interactional behaviour in ELF situations such as speakers often taking up each other's marked features and using humour to orientate to English proficiency.

The major strength of Firth's approach was that he adopted an egalitarian approach to his participants, seeking to position them as legitimate and successful users of English. In Firth and Wagner (1997) this perspective was turned into a full-blown critique of the second language acquisition (SLA) paradigm, which tended to judge such English users as deficient relative to a native speaker standard. This challenge set off an important debate between scholars as SLA researchers defended their position. Long (1997) contended that Firth and Wagner were simply conflating language usage with acquisition. Despite rebuttals, Firth and Wagner (1997) is an important milestone in the movement towards an egalitarian 'difference' position towards users of English.

House (1996) researched the pragmatics of ELF, which she defines as 'interactions between two or more different linguacultures in English, for none of whom English is the mother tongue' (House, 1999, p.74). She goes on to state that her research interest is to 'ask whether and how' these interactions are different from those between native speakers, or a combination of native speaker and non-native speaker. House (1996) identified features of pragmatic fluency in native speaker discussion including the ability to initiate and manage topic changes appropriately, carry weight in a conversation, and show appropriate uptake of information including responding behaviour and noted that achieving success in these routines can be particularly challenging when using a second language.

Also studying interactions in English between speakers of diverse international backgrounds, Meierkord (2000) recorded naturally occurring conversations which occurred over dinner at a British university hall of residence, which she analysed as an

example of ELF. Meierkord was also interested in the pragmatics of ELF interaction, although she did not compare them directly to native speaker examples as House did. Meierkord's findings can be summarised as follows:

1. There are surprisingly few misunderstandings or communication breakdowns
2. The few misunderstandings that do occur are not overcome by negotiations but rather by topic changes
3. These misunderstandings seem not to be caused by interactants' lack of English linguistic competence, but rather by gaps in their knowledge of the world
4. ELF interactants have a markedly reduced repertoire of tokens at their disposal, especially in ritualised phases of ELF talk
5. Transfer and interference of L1 interactional norms is almost completely absent
6. The participants adopt an overtly consensual, supportive interactional style through the use of cajolers, verbal back-channels and laughter

In later studies, Meierkord identified further features of ELF interactions. Meierkord (2004) noted the following features of ELF interaction:

- Simplification of utterances through segmentation
- Topicalisation, a process where the salience of the main topic at hand is loaded towards the front of sentences

Leaving aside any of the political issues or theoretical arguments concerning ELF (referred to in chapter one), the original 'classic' studies in the area went some way in contributing towards the appreciation of diversity and intelligibility in English. Jenkins (2000, 2002) carried out significant work on phonological intelligibility, with her major findings being that certain pronunciation features did not lead to intelligibility problems whereas others did. This allowed her to propose a lingua franca core (LFC) of pronunciation features which are a requirement for maintaining intelligibility whereas

features outside it can be varied, allowing for speaker variations in pronunciation.

Jenkins' LFC includes:

- Maintenance of contrast between long and short vowel sounds e.g. 'set' and 'seat'
- No omission of sounds in word-initial consonant clusters e.g. 'street'
- The majority of consonant sounds, although some particular ones can be substituted e.g. 'zis' is intelligible as 'this'
- Appropriate use of contrastive stress at the level of clause (*tonic* or *nuclear* stress in Jenkins' terms) to signal meaning e.g. 'are you *walking* home?' as opposed to 'are you walking *home*?'

(examples of the LFC, adapted from Jenkins, 2002, pp.96-97)

One important implication of the LFC is that features traditionally thought of as important for intelligible pronunciation, such as word stress and fricative sound production, may not be important at all for achieving intelligibility. Jenkins also noted that accommodation in ELF interactions is extremely common, in that speakers will often converge together by taking up each other's distinctive pronunciation features.

Seidlhofer (2001, 2004) conducted similar research into lexico-grammatical features of ELF communication. By compiling and analysing the Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English, Seidlhofer was able to identify which features of lexis and grammar led to problems in intelligibility and which did not. Seidlhofer (2004, p.220) produced the following list of features which are common in her corpus of ELF communication and are 'generally unproblematic and no obstacle to communicative success':

- Dropping the third person present tense –s e.g. he play\_
- Confusing the relative pronouns *who* and *which* e.g. the boy which...
- Omitting definite and indefinite articles where they are usually required, and non-standard usage e.g. swim in \_ sea, have \_ time,

- Failing to use correct forms in tag questions (e.g. *isn't it?* or *no?* instead of *shouldn't they?*)
- Inserting redundant prepositions e.g. *We have to study about...*
- Overusing verbs of high semantic generality, such as *do, have, make, put, take*
- Replacing infinitive-constructions with *that*-clauses, as in *I want that*
- Overdoing explicitness (e.g. *black colour* rather than just *black*)

(adapted from Seidlhofer, 2004, p.220)

The negative semantic weighting of the terms originally used by Seidlhofer to describe these features was later criticised by Cogo and Dewey (2006), who argued that terms such as 'confusing' and 'failing' are not suitable based on the underlying aim of ELF research to emancipate language users.

After the classic studies from Jenkins and Seidlhofer, and particularly after early debates surrounding whether ELF scholars were trying to define a new variety of English to be used as a pedagogical model settled down, a surge of further studies into ELF were carried out, many of which are potentially relevant in contributing towards an understanding of processes related to the communication between JICA volunteers and interlocutors their host country. Canagarajah (2007b) states that Lingua Franca English is 'negotiated by each set of speakers for their purposes' (p.925) and represents a series of interactional skills including the ability to monitor the proficiency of other speakers and align one's language resources to the needs of the situation (p.928). Firth (2009, p.161) makes a similar point, stating that the competence described in ELF situations is 'perhaps a kind of dynamic, 'relativised' competence, a contingent resourcefulness and co-participant-centered accommodation, alignment and adaptation'.

Bjørge (2009) found that backchannelling was very common in her sample of ELF interaction, but there was a notable reliance on non-verbal techniques at 70% of occurrence. Mauranen (2006) and Kaur (2009) report that speakers use pre-emptive moves in order to pro-actively overcome potential intelligibility problems, such as



slowing rate of speech and supplying appropriate emphasis when they are unsure if their interlocutor will understand something. Watterson (2008) highlights some of the processes used to repair non-understanding, such as repetition, reformulation, explication of meaning and linking back to context.

Ehrenreich (2009), adopting a community of practice approach to ELF communication in a business context, showed how participants were dynamic, efficient communicators despite some participants having relatively low proficiency. The particular group were shown to be linguistically endonormative, creating and adopting new forms which would present intelligibility problems to those outside the community. Pullin Stark (2009) focused on humour in ELF business contexts, wherein jokes were regularly used to show solidarity between speakers and diffuse tensions in the workplace.

Pitzl (2009) and Seidlhofer (2009) have both studied the use of metaphor and idioms in ELF communication. Whereas this can lead to communication breakdown, there are also examples of 'non-standard usage' working without trouble. Pitzl (2009) also demonstrates that idiomatic language can be very fluid and open in this type of situation, with new metaphorical uses being negotiated between the participants. Seidlhofer (2009) shows how ELF speakers are playful with collocations, for example when the adjective 'endangered' was extended from the noun 'species' to a whole series of academic-related words by a group of students.

Klimpfinger (2009) and Cogo (2009) have both studied code-switching in ELF. Cogo (2009) demonstrates that this can be done for stylistic reasons including variation and for the expression of identity. Klimpfinger (2009) identified the following functions of code-switching in ELF: specifying an addressee, introducing a new idea, appealing for assistance and signalling culture.

The research of Björkman (2009) and Hülmbauer (2009) is particularly relevant to this project, as they were interested in the relationship between lexico-grammatical form and intelligibility. As the overall aim of this research is to relate its findings back to the pre-service pedagogy, a consideration of the relationship between form and intelligibility in international communication is particularly relevant. Björkman (2009) showed numerous examples where 'morphosyntactic non-standardness' does not impede intelligibility. Questions were shown to be more susceptible to interaction problems where they did not conform to standard syntactic patterns. Hülmbauer (2009) states that her interest in the relationship between lexico-grammatical correctness and communicative effectiveness stems from the fact that ELF encounters are extremely variable at the level of linguistic forms, therefore a high degree of variability typically occurs. Hülmbauer (*ibid*, p.324) makes the point that generalisations between different ELF encounters should not be made, as 'the situationality factor... determines every lingua franca interaction anew and on its own'. Hülmbauer shows that unconventional linguistic forms generally do not impede intelligibility in her sample, as meanings are negotiated *in situ*. For example 'overfulled', an example of direct translation from German but not correct by traditional standards, is used as a legitimate innovation which does not cause intelligibility problems (*ibid*, p.338). Furthermore, the participants frequently take up and use each other's non-standard forms.

As this initial sub-section has demonstrated, there has been a great deal of interest and research in the linguistic and communicative processes which take place when speakers of different first language backgrounds interact in English. The findings reported above can lead to new ways of appreciating diversity and intelligibility in English.

### **2.2.2 Further Processes and Experiences in Related Aspects of Language and Communication**

In terms of other processes beyond negotiating diversity and achieving intelligibility with local interlocutors, there are of course numerous other potential issues which are relevant to the JICA volunteers' communicative practices. First of all 'translanguaging' (Canagarajah, 2006) or 'crossing' (Rampton, 2014), or some other form of hybrid linguistic practices, are likely to take place in their daily interactions. This is because, in the new multilingual contexts that volunteers are dispatched to, languages other than English will play a role in their communicative practices. Volunteers may become active users of the local languages themselves or achieve a level of receptive intelligibility, based on language courses taken upon arrival and everyday encounters which they experience. Hybrid linguistic practices are multi-faceted in their implications for the volunteers' experiences. They may be a positive experience and route into understanding and participating with the local communities, or they may represent an area of difficulty such a barrier to intelligibility and communication. In a related issue, the concept of 'accommodation' (Giles, 2009) might be especially relevant to JICA volunteers. As they experience new and diverse forms of English, possibly in combination with other languages, they are likely to need their interlocutors to 'accommodate' to them by being sensitive to their receptive intelligibility of such forms and to modify their communicative styles to suit the volunteers.

Knowledge (or lack thereof) of the local culture may also come into play during acts of communication, whereby as Agar (1996) points out, contextual frames of knowledge are activated when we communicate, and in situations where we do not have shared cultural knowledge this could act as a barrier to successful communication. This concept is very similar to the notion of 'contextualisation cues', as outlined by Gumperz (1982). Gumperz (1982) also notes how lack of shared cultural pragmatic routines can also lead to interactional trouble in terms of inadvertently causing offence.

A related matter is the notion of identity construction as it relates to interpersonal discourse. The notion that we are expressing an identity whenever we communicate with others is well-known (Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz, 1982; Gee, 2011) and in fact from one perspective it is the act of interpersonal interaction which enables us to create a social identity in the first place (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). The notion of the volunteers expressing an identity through interaction with the local interlocutors is an intriguing one, particularly considering aspects of identity which would naturally be engaged by the situation, including being Japanese in a completely new context, and of having come to that context for an egalitarian purpose, to assist with development in some way. The notion of identity construction and expression in and through language and communication has gained much research interest in applied linguistics since the publication of Pierce (1995) two decades ago. In terms of which aspects of identity research might be most relevant to JICA volunteers, Firth (2009) has pointed out that lingua franca type communication tends to have a special 'factor' or quality, whereby communication practices are highly aligned and mutually collaborative. This phenomenon can be couched in terms of speakers constructing and expressing a particular type of friendly and co-operative identity in this type of communication.

In terms of a related study which focused on individuals living overseas as a 'sojourners', Jackson (2010) researched aspects of identity in a group of Chinese students who lived overseas as international students. She found that this involved new 'ways of being' as well as communicating, and resulted in socio-pragmatic development of communication skills. Significantly, and of interest to the JICA context, the research also revealed processes of identity 're-construction' upon arrival back to China.

The concept of identity in interpersonal interaction is vitally important to research carried out from a discourse orientated, ethnographic perspective (e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Rampton, 2007), with which this project is aligned. As this research perspective deliberately adopts a broad approach to analysing spoken discourse, a range of processes which have been discussed in the wider academic literature could also be potentially relevant to the communicative practices of JICA volunteers, from Goffmanian

face issues to Gricean conversation maxims to conversation analysis inspired frameworks for the preference of turn taking sequences. Another famous notion which is also applicable is communicative competency (Hymes, 1972). The concept here is that beyond competency of knowledge in linguistic forms, understanding of context and appropriate types of communicative behaviour for it, including pragmatic routines are all necessary for successful communication.

## **2.3 Related Research into Language Pedagogy**

This section will provide an overview of related issues in language pedagogy, as they relate to the topics which have already been discussed in this chapter.

### **2.3.1 Pedagogical Issues Related to Intelligibility and other Processes**

Following on directly from the last point in the previous section regarding contextual knowledge and communicative competency, this has been applied directly to language pedagogy by for example Goh and Burns (2012) who point out a number of ways that communication and discourse strategies can be developed alongside ‘core speaking skills’. From a similar perspective, Leung (2013, p.308) states the possibility of ‘helping students understand the ways in which linguistic resources can be deployed to achieve communicative goals within situated practices’, as a vital alternative to studying only abstracted grammatical norms.

In terms of a language learner’s identity, it has been argued that teachers can have an impact on the identity of their learners (Winchester, 2013). This being thought possible, it might be desirable for a teacher, implicitly or explicitly (Harris, 2009), to foster the belief that language learners should consider themselves to be legitimate language users. Furthermore it has been suggested that what might otherwise be thought of as deficiencies or second language errors, can in fact be viewed of linguistic markers of identity expression, for example using English in a distinctly ‘Japanese way’ (Baxter, 1980; Hino, 2009).

Regarding the intelligibility studies which were reviewed above, one major implication of studies such as Jenkins (2000) and Seidlhofer (2004), is that teachers could become more sensitive to issues in language form – such as grammar or pronunciation – which influence the degree to which their learners are intelligible to interlocutors. Devoting time and effort try to eradicate ‘learner’ features which do not have an impact on

intelligibility would not be appropriate in many cases. This is also another example of an idea which could be implicitly fostered with learners, in order to give them more confidence or an increased sense of legitimacy as a language user.

Dewey (2012) lists the following five-point list of objectives for English language teaching as reconceived from the perspective of incorporating principles and research findings from English as a Lingua Franca:

- 1) Investigate and highlight the particular environment and sociocultural context in which English(es) will be used
- 2) Increase exposure to the diverse ways in which English is used globally; presenting alternative variants as appropriate whenever highlighting linguistic form
- 3) Engage in critical classroom discussion about the globalisation and growing diversity of English
- 4) Spend proportionately less time on ENL (English as a Native Language) forms, especially if these are not widely used in other varieties; and thus choose not to penalise non-native-led innovative forms that are intelligible
- 5) Focus (more) on communicative strategies e.g. by prioritising accommodation skills; gauging and adjusting to interlocutors' repertoires, signalling (non)comprehension, asking for/providing repetition, paraphrasing etc.

(Dewey, 2012, pp.163-164)

This is a very useful and comprehensive list and is mostly compatible with the theoretical positioning of this current research project. The only problem in this sense is the first half of Dewey's fourth point, which introduces a native speaker based categorisation ('ENL norms') and implies a rather static view of 'ENL' and other language varieties. If this point were substituted with 'spend proportionately less time focusing on standard linguistic forms', then this list would be fully in line with the theoretical underpinnings of this research.

Dewey's list of objectives is compatible with implications for language pedagogy stated by other scholars working in complementary fields, for example Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) and McKay (2002), who also suggest a focus on the development of pragmatic skills, the encouragement of critical thinking regarding diversity in English and a reduced amount of time spent focusing on standard language forms, especially when innovative uses do not represent a barrier to intelligibility.



### 2.3.2 Related Issues in Assessment

Most contexts of language pedagogy – including JICA – have some form of language assessment as the ultimate goal and purpose for teaching and learning practices. This means that methods of language assessment would need to be brought in line with the rethinking of pedagogical approaches that was previously discussed regarding intelligibility and other related processes. The relationship between assessment and teachers' conceptions regarding the nature of language, communication and pedagogy are also important (Leung, 2014) as if these are out of sync then the implicit beliefs reflected in the pedagogical style of the teacher would not be consistent with the assessment practices. Jenkins and Leung (2014, p.1614) point out a washback effect in which testing can 'promote an outdated view of communication as relatively fixed', even if the associated pedagogy were conducted more in line with the idea of language as flexible set of resources. This ontological link is also established strongly in Hall (2014), which calls for a reconsideration of assessment practices so that they can measure linguistic resources rather than an individual's ability to adhere to linguistic norms. Canagarajah (2006) raises similar issues and offers the suggestion that language awareness, sociolinguistic sensitivity and negotiation skills should be represented in language assessment practices, in order to reflect an approach to languages – ontologically and pedagogically – which is in keeping with contemporary thought on the diversity of English in the world today.

As this brief look at language assessment from alternative perspectives has shown, there are difficulties and challenges involved in accounting for a plurilithic or protean view of English, as many tests of English are equipped to reflect standardisation rather than diversity in English. This is an emerging aspect of the literature which will no doubt develop significantly in the future. It is hoped that the current research project can contribute something towards this, as the pedagogical implications considered for research question three will include considerations for language testing at JICA, a context which naturally engages with diversity in English.

## Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter has engaged with research literature which is relevant to the three research questions for this project in the JICA context. First of all, ontologies of language in the academic literature were reviewed, including an emphasis on contemporary, late-modern conceptions of language as fluid, diverse and variable entities. The position that such diversity should be celebrated and reflected in professional practices relating to languages, and the opposite perspective which views it negatively as deviation from the standard, were both considered. This was carried forward into an engagement with literature concerning English language teacher and learner conceptions in these terms, with the results tending to show ambivalent attitudes towards diversity and an orientation towards standards in language. Having said this, not a great deal of relevant material was available in this particular area, especially from the learner perspective, and therefore this is one of the niche areas to which this current research seeks to contribute towards.

The second section of the chapter discussed research literature regarding processes in language and communication, in order to act as a platform from which to examine the experiences of JICA volunteers – a focus which is defined by research question two of the project. Based on the nature of this target situation of English communication in global contexts, research literature from academic movements such as English as a Lingua Franca, world Englishes and English as an international language were examined. The initial set of processes which were presented looked at the experiences of diversity and negotiating intelligibility that JICA volunteers might experience. This involved research which indicates which phonetic or grammatical features of English are more or less likely to lead to intelligibility problems. Pragmatic processes involved in intelligibility, along with the possibility to ‘let pass’ interactional trouble were also reviewed. The second section also highlighted further processes which were expected to have relevance to the experience of JICA volunteers to some extent, for example potential accommodation from local interlocutors and experiences of linguistic hybridity. The matter of identity construction for volunteers, expressed in and

constituted by local interactions was also considered. Related to this was a discussion of the implications for shared cultural knowledge – or the lack thereof – for the volunteers and their interlocutors, as linked to communicative competence.

The third and final section of the chapter related the preceding discussion to its implications for language pedagogy which can be found in the available research literature. Some of the implications follow directly on from the theory, for example the identification of features in standard English which do not affect intelligibility in communication means that teachers might choose to attend less to those features in language lessons. Other principles were drawn out, including an emphasis on communication skills and the possibility of fostering critical thinking regarding standards in English along with the encouragement of students to view themselves as language *users* as opposed to a *learners*. In the final part of the chapter, language testing was problematised as an issue. One aspect of the problem is said to be the difficulty of bringing language tests in line with measuring resources rather than adherence to standard forms. Having reviewed these areas of the literature which are of major relevance to the current investigation, the following chapter moves on to describe and establish its methods for research.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

### **Introduction to Chapter 3**

This chapter aims to define how data was collected and analysed for the project, including a discussion of the adopted research methods, matters of epistemology and aspects of the project's methodological development. The chapter is divided into two sections, with the first providing an overview of the adopted research methodology and the latter providing an account of its development, based on the concept of researcher reflexivity.

The initial section (3.1) defines the overall data set which was collected along with the research instruments and analytical methods which were used, and also accounts for processes such as participant recruitment and related ethical dimensions. The main methodological approaches which were used for the study – a discursive approach to interviews and focus groups, and linguistic ethnography – are explored along with related underlying epistemological issues, and specific procedures such as approaches to sampling and representing data.

The latter section (3.2) is based around an account of the original exploratory study for the project, and a series of instrument development activities which were used to trial and develop the main research instruments. This extra set of developmental activities is defined, and an account of my professional development as a researcher during this process is provided. This includes a commentary on how my awareness of interactional moves as both researcher and co-participant of the interviews and focus groups was increased by reflecting on the instrument development data.

### **3.1 An Overview of the Research Methodology**

#### **3.1.1 Research Instruments and Processes of Data Collection**

In order to respond to the research questions which were defined in chapter one, two field trips were organised for data collection. The first field trip was to Japan in spring 2012, to visit KTC and NTC for conducting interviews and focus groups, with teachers and learners respectively, in order to address research question one regarding *conceptions*. The second field trip was conducted in summer 2012, for the purpose of visiting JICA volunteers and collecting ethnographic data in order to address research question two regarding *experiences*. This second trip was conducted continuously across three global locations, Kenya, India and Jamaica. The collected data from this second field trip includes interviews, recordings of interactions between JICA volunteers and local speakers, field notes from observations and other resources such as photographs and videos. A second set of data for investigating volunteer experiences was also collected. Nine JICA language learners from the focus groups in field trip one were contacted as remote participants after they had been dispatched to their host countries. For each of these participants, a shared web-based document was set up for the recording of entries in an 'e-journal'. In addition to this each volunteer was interviewed remotely by Skype. The research instruments which were used to collect this broad data set are explained in the following sub-sections, after which a table documenting the whole data set is provided.

##### **3.1.1.1 Research Instruments: Conceptions**

The specific research instruments for all of these data collection processes, such as interview questions and the focus group procedure, are presented here along with supporting justification. Research interviews were all conducted using a semi-structured approach (Roulston, 2010), meaning that a series of questions were prepared

beforehand, but a great deal of flexibility was retained for discussing issues surrounding those questions, including a tendency to focus on topics that the participants themselves introduced. This is in line with the overall reflective (Roulston, 2010), discursive (Mann, 2011) approach to the interview research method which this project adopts, and has been extended to the use of focus groups. This approach is defined in detail at a later stage. The pre-prepared interview questions for the JICA English teachers were:

- 1) In your opinion, what are the main language learning needs of JICA volunteers?
- 2) Are the learner needs different from, for example a Japanese person preparing to live in the UK or the USA?
- 3) What do you imagine daily interactions will be like for the volunteers in their host countries?
- 4) Can you define your overall approach to the lessons at JICA and give some examples of the lesson content that you use?
- 5) Are there any aspects of your lessons which you feel are particularly suitable and appropriate for JICA volunteers as opposed to other types of language learners?
- 6) If you had unlimited time and resources, is there anything that you'd like to improve about how you address the learner needs?

(Interview questions for JICA teachers)

As explained in chapter one, the object of enquiry here is 'teacher conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy' relative to the JICA context. As can be seen from the list above, certain questions are designed to be relatively non-specific to JICA, for example questions 1, 4, 5 and 6 could be asked of most language teachers in most contexts. It was expected that teachers might orientate to issues which are of underlying interest to the project, such as standards and diversity in JICA host countries and the implications for pedagogy, within responses to those questions. Questions 2 and 3 are more specifically geared towards targeting those points of interest within the umbrella term 'conceptions', in that they focus interviewees on a consideration of volunteers' destinations and future contexts of language usage.

For the focus group procedure in field trip one, six items were also used but these were in the form of statements to elicit agreement or disagreement, rather than questions. A clearly defined structure was put in place for the procedure, with these statements printed on cards to be read aloud by one participant, and all participants having smaller cards equivalent to a five point Lickert scale (-2, -1, 0, +1 and +2), with which to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. Participants were then invited to explain their level of agreement, as a major organising principle of the activity and facilitator of output from participants. This procedure is distinctive, although stimulus materials are not uncommon in focus group research (Barbour, 2007). The major justification for adopting the approach was that it was designed to enable participation and scaffold the participants in articulating responses in what was not their first language. Additional dimensions to this were applied, for example Japanese translations of the six statements were available (see appendix A4.3), and participants were invited to use Japanese if they needed to, which could later be translated. Ultimately, a trial of the procedure was considered successful (see section 3.2 for details) therefore the procedure was retained for the data collection in Japan. The six statements which were used in the focus groups were:

- 1) I think English will be very important for living and working in my host country
- 2) When people are speaking English to me in my host country, I think I'll be able to understand them easily
- 3) I feel confident about speaking English in my host country
- 4) In terms of learning and practicing language, I think that preparing to live in the UK or the USA would be very different from preparing to live in my host country
- 5) In order to communicate successfully with people in my host country, I think it is important to learn English grammar rules as they are written in textbooks
- 6) Thinking about all of my experiences learning and using English before joining JICA, I think they are good preparation for using English in my host country

(Focus group statements for JICA learners)

Again, as previously explained, the target for research here was learner conceptions of

language, communication and pedagogy relative to the JICA context, in a broad sense but with an underlying focus on standards and diversity. There are some connections between these statements and the teacher interview questions, for example statement 4 has almost the same content as interview question 2, rephrased from a learner's perspective. Statements 1-3 here revolve around expectations for how frequently English will be used in host countries, and personal expectations on the nature of communication in English in terms of expected levels of ease and confidence. Statement 5 is an explicit realisation of the research interest regarding linguistic standards relative to grammar for this context of teaching, learning and using English. Whereas the teachers were expected to orientate towards this themselves, or could be guided by supplementary probing questions, it was felt that a definitive statement for eliciting responses on this topic would be more appropriate for the focus groups. Statement 6 is designed to elicit responses regarding suitable pedagogy for preparation to use English in JICA host countries. It was thought that a direct question regarding the perceived appropriacy of the learners' current lessons would not be suitable, particularly as focus groups would be conducted by English classes at the JICA training centres, and the learners' teacher might be present. Furthermore, reflecting back on previous learning experiences might enable a discussion of the Japanese education system which, as discussed in chapter one, has been criticised from some quarters for being overly standards-based.

#### 3.1.1.2 Research Instruments: Experiences

In terms of the remote data collection from volunteers, the e-journal template was set up to encourage a flexible approach to recording any experiences in terms of language and communication in their new contexts that the volunteers wanted to record. A sample entry was also supplied, and the original focus group statements were reproduced in case volunteers wanted to continue reflection upon those (see appendix A4.4 for the full e-journal guidelines). For the interviews by Skype, the following four topics were used during the interviews and emailed in advance (presented below with



the example of South Africa), in order to give volunteers a visual reference point and help to counteract any connection issues:

- 1) Uses of English and local languages in South Africa. Anything you find surprising or interesting about the way people use English in South Africa (any examples of different pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar etc.)
- 2) Your experiences of communicating with people in South Africa (is it easy, difficult etc.)
- 3) If you think it's necessary to follow English grammar rules strictly in South Africa (e.g. one chair, two chairs... I play, he plays)
- 4) Any advice you can give to new JICA volunteers about languages and communication (studying or using languages). This advice could be for: any JICA volunteer, volunteers studying English (generally) or volunteers going to South Africa (specifically)

(Topics used with volunteers during remote interviews)

The second and third topic here map onto issues raised by the focus group statements, with the intention being to collect data from volunteers in a before and after or 'expectation then experience' fashion. The first topic is designed to establish the issue of whether the volunteer is perceiving aspects of diversity in English alongside local languages in their new context. The final topic is designed to conclude by investigating whether the volunteer has any advice for new trainees: this would open the door for discussion of concepts such as what the most appropriate kind of language pedagogy for future volunteers might be at JICA, based on the current volunteers' experience of both the pre-service pedagogy and the post service usage of language and communication.

Moving on to the ethnographic research in Kenya, India and Jamaica, the data collection was based upon an organisational framework which allowed for flexibility and a range of data collection outcomes from specific volunteers, from the minimum requirement of meeting to conduct an interview upwards to other types of data collection. Interviews

were typically conducted at a café near JICA volunteers' places of work, and were based around a pro-forma document for collecting information such as details of their assignment and their background before joining JICA, before the following pre-scripted questions were used as the basis for a semi-structured interview, which were available as a printed copy for volunteers to refer to:

- 1) Do you find that English is important for living and working here?
- 2) Can you understand local people easily when they speak English to you?
- 3) Do you feel confident when you are communicating with local people?
- 4) Do you think it's important to speak 'grammatically correct' English here?
- 5) Please tell me about your early experiences of using English here (when you first arrived). Have your language experiences changed over time?
- 6) If a new JICA volunteer coming to this country asked you for advice about using languages here, what would you tell them?

(Questions used with volunteers during on-location interviews)

As can be seen, these questions intersect with many of the previous questions, statements and topics from the other research instruments, including questions with a specific focus on intelligibility and diversity (2 and 4 respectively) and one which enables a discussion of pre-service pedagogy and training (6). Other questions such as number 5 and number 3 are open and general enough to tap into volunteers' reported experiences in a general sense, opening up the possibility of other emergent issues in the data.

As stated above, conducting this initial interview was the starting point for attempting to pursue other types of data collection with each participant. Having already observed the volunteer in the local context to some extent – for example interactions with staff at cafés – I already had the opportunity to observe and reflect on their interactions with local interlocutors, and make selective fieldnotes. The next step was to request visiting the volunteers at their places of work, and this was possible in many cases. This gave me the opportunity to observe them in their work environment and take further notes, and

also take videos and audio recordings where appropriate. This might be of the work environment itself or the volunteer carrying out aspects of their work, for example teaching a lesson. The final step which was possible in almost half of the cases, was arranging to make an audio recording of the volunteer interacting with an local interlocutor at work or in another setting. During fieldwork in India, interactions with interlocutors from work could not be arranged, so interaction with a local acquaintance of the one of the volunteers in a social setting was recorded instead. All interactions were 'elicited' to a greater or lesser degree, because it was necessary to set up the recordings in a deliberate way, so that I could obtain consent from the local interlocutors (see next sub-section for details). In some cases the interaction would then proceed with me simply leaving the participants to talk amongst themselves, either about work related matters or some other topic, with no further prompting. In other cases it was more appropriate to provide some stimulus materials, so for example in two of the recorded interactions from Jamaica, the following suggested 'topics for discussion' were provided:

1. 'Work talk'
2. Jamaican Culture / Living in Jamaica
3. Usain Bolt / Sport in Jamaica
4. Other

Some interactions were audio-recorded only, and some were also captured on video. At a later stage of this chapter, the principles for analysing these interactions so that claims could be made about volunteer experiences will be outlined. Beyond these interactions and the types of data already mentioned, several forms of supplementary data were also collected. These are mentioned in the table below and also appear immediately before the analysis in chapter five. The preceding discussion has set out all of the research instruments which were employed for collecting data. In terms of the overall data set which was collected for this project, this is represented in the following table:

<p>Data collected for investigating JICA English teachers' <i>conceptions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews with 9 teachers: (note: 2 of the teachers were interviewed as a pair)</li> <li>➔ 8 audio files, 6h47m58s in total</li> </ul>
<p>Data collected for investigating JICA English learners' <i>conceptions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus groups with 29 learners in 5 groups:</li> <li>➔ 5 audio files, 4h16m45s in total</li> </ul>
<p>Data collected for investigating JICA volunteers' <i>experiences</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ E-journals written by 7 volunteers:</li> <li>➔ 7 word documents, 7139 words in total</li> <li>▪ Skype interviews with 9 volunteers:</li> <li>➔ 9 audio files, 4h44m35s in total</li> <li>▪ On-location interviews with 20 volunteers:</li> <li>➔ 20 audio files, 8h59m25s in total</li> <li>▪ Interactions between 7 volunteers and local interlocutors:</li> <li>➔ 7 audio files, 56m20s in total (of which 3 files were also available in video)</li> <li>▪ Further sources of data collected during fieldwork:</li> <li>➔ Fieldnotes (3 documents, 1737 words)</li> <li>➔ Photographs or short videos of the working environments of JICA volunteers (21 files)</li> <li>➔ Photographs (60) and audio/visual recordings (12 files, 5h04m44s in total) of JICA volunteers carrying out teaching or training work related to their voluntary work assignment</li> <li>➔ Audio/visual recordings (14, 3h36m04s in total) of 'miscellaneous interactions' between the volunteers and further local interlocutors took place, in group settings where I was also present and included</li> <li>➔ Audio/visual recordings (4, 3h03m01s in total) of 'miscellaneous visits' in which volunteers showed me around places of interest to their work or life within the local community</li> </ul>

Table 1: Overall data set for the project

### 3.1.1.3 Participant Recruitment and Ethics

Recruitment of participants for the project occurred incrementally in stages. Official approval from JICA was requested and received for key stages of the project, such as visiting NTC and KTC. The initial route into teacher recruitment for the interviews was personal contact with the head English teachers at both training centres. As personal contacts of mine from my time working for JICA, I was able to contact them both directly and ask if they would be willing to take part. As both agreed, I was able to arrange a period of time that would suit them both for visiting the centres and conducting their interviews, and the next step was to start recruiting other teachers. This was possible by establishing email contact via the head teachers, and pre-empting my visit by discovering which teachers would be willing to take part. Ultimately nine teachers took part in the research, which was approximately half of the English teachers who were employed at the time of the field trip.

In terms of the recruitment of learners for focus groups, this was arranged by contact with specific teachers, who allowed me to conduct the activity during assigned lesson times, or in the evening, in the learners' classrooms. Five focus groups were conducted with 29 participants, which represented around a third of the volunteers who were learning English at the time. Consent to take part was requested before these sessions took place (see ethics discussion below), and all members of all of the classes agreed to take part.

Recruitment of participants for the 'remote phase' of data collection was linked to the focus group process described above. At the end of the focus group activity, I requested the email addresses of volunteers who would be willing to remain in contact and contribute further to the research. The resulting list of contacts was added to by other English learning volunteers who I encountered around the training centres, but did not take part in focus groups. After the fieldwork in Japan was concluded, I contacted all of these volunteers to request on-going participation after being dispatched to their host countries. Eventually nine of these volunteers took part in the e-journal and Skype interview phase of the research, who were then living and working in the following host

countries: Belize, Bhutan, Malawi, The Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Tonga, Tanzania, and Uganda.

For the second phase of fieldwork in Kenya, India and Jamaica, participants were recruited by email. These participants were not known to me personally before my initial email contact. Their details were all passed on to me by either one of the head English teachers at JICA – the participants being their former students – or by other JICA volunteers or former volunteers, who were former students of mine from the training centres. The total number of volunteers who were met and interviewed for this stage of the project was 20, of which eight were in Kenya, four in India and eight in Jamaica.

Now turning to an ethical consideration of this data collection process, ethical approval for all stages of the project was applied for and received from York St John's research ethics committee (see appendix A2.2 and A2.3). Most of the research activities can be considered as 'low risk' to the extent that we can assume that participation in interviews would not represent a potentially harmful or damaging experience. Having said that, there are certain aspects of these procedures that could be considered difficult for participants, such as the Japanese participants being required to participate in interviews and focus groups in English. Consent forms for interview and focus group participation were collected (see appendices A3.3-A3.5) with typical safe guards in place such as the assurance of anonymity, the right to withdraw and the protection of data. The recording of interactions is another aspect for which all three of the aforementioned ethical safeguards needed to be in place, and in the ethnographic fieldwork data collection process described above, the fact that I asked Japanese volunteers for access to local people, to act as their interlocutors in interactions, was a specific ethical concern with this research. My solution to this is the consent form in appendix A3.6, which requests consent of the volunteer both for their own interactions to be recorded and for them to act as intermediaries for access to the other participants. There was then a separate consent form (appendix A3.6) which was used to gain consent from the host country interlocutors to make recordings.

### **3.1.2 Discourse Analysis, Research Interviews and Linguistic Ethnography**

As previously mentioned, this project is methodologically based on a discursive approach to interviews and focus groups (e.g. Mann, 2011; Talmy and Richards, 2011) and linguistic ethnography (e.g. Rampton, 2006; Copland and Creese, 2015). This section seeks to explore the underlying epistemologies and methods of analysis for these approaches, and argues that they are mutually complementary and beneficial. The application of these methodological approaches to the project is explicated fully in the following sub-sections.

#### **3.1.2.1 Research Methods and Theoretical Aspects**

Both the discursive approach to interviews and linguistic ethnography can be considered as branches of discourse analysis, therefore they have similar underlying epistemologies. The nature of discourse is considered as contextualised communicative practices in both cases, therefore attempting to achieve an insider perspective on the discourse is important for both. For the practice of ethnographic research, this includes the goal of appreciating the 'uniquely situated reality' (Blommaert and Dong, 2010, p. 17) of a communicative context, and to gaining an emic perspective on the linguistic and communicative processes which are being studied. In the discursive approach to interviews, researchers are considered as 'insiders' in that they at least partially co-construct the interview data (Mann, 2011). For both branches of this project's methodology, it is the process of interaction between participants which is considered as the primary driver and creator of data, and therefore the analysis of interaction is the main route into data analysis.

Ontologically, linguistic ethnography is a good fit for the project because, as a form of discourse analysis (Cook, 2011) it views language and communication as interactive, co-constructed, contextually situated, related to the identities of its users and multi-layered

in its interconnectedness at micro to macro levels. Declaring an epistemological position is said to be important for interviewers to 'theorise' their practice (Talmy and Richards, 2011). In this case, theorising my research interviews as acts of interactive discourse is fully compatible with the adoption of linguistic ethnography as an overarching research method. This is because both methodological approaches are aligned with the conceptions of language and communication which are typically taken up by discourse analysts.

Positivism versus relativism in research (e.g. Richards, 2009) is one issue which is particularly relevant to this discussion. Clearly from a discourse perspective which prioritises context and situated practice, a positivist approach in attempting to generalise widely from this research will not be adopted. Instead, the goal is to shed light on specific examples of conceptions and experiences in this context, demonstrating that particular processes and conceptions might exist without seeking to make claims for how regularly they occur across JICA volunteers and teachers in general. The overall approach to research here is to attempt to make interpretations and assertions regarding the specific conceptions and experiences which are under investigation, rather than to be able to generalise widely.

Mann (2011, p.9-11) presents four 'discursive dilemmas', which are factors that the discourse analytic orientated interviewer should consider and account for in their research practice. These are: co-construction, a greater focus on the interviewer, the interactional context and the 'what and the how' of interview processes. The first point acknowledges the extent to which interview data (participant responses) are co-constructed by the interviewer, and the following two points are mainly extensions of this. The last point refers to the fact that the 'what' – specific things which participants say in interviews – should be considered in terms of the 'how', which would include nuanced issues of expression and the interactional processes surrounding what was said. I have attempted to engage with these four 'dilemmas' in the process of my research in the following ways:



1) Co-construction – my probable influence on interviewee responses based on what I say and how I say it

- I engaged in developmental activities which allowed me to practice interviewing techniques and become self-aware of co-construction processes (see section 3.2)
- I have incorporated my voice into data presentation and analysis, including a consideration of how interviewees respond and react to my talk. Extracts from my data set have been sampled and presented as extracts of interaction between myself and participants, meaning that my voice is well represented in the data
- I have presented as much supplementary data as possible, in order to attempt transparency in facilitating the checking of my co-construction, or alternative interpretations of the discourse.

2) A greater focus on the interviewer

- All of the points above allow for focus on the interviewer in the research
- Furthermore, I am ‘written into’ the project as interviewer: my assumptions and ideological positions have been documented in chapter one, including an exploration of my subject positioning relative to the context of research

3) Interactional context – the significance of contextual factors surrounding individual research interviews

- Relevant contextual factors are presented and incorporated into data analysis

4) The ‘what’ and the ‘how’ – this point highlights the fact that de-contextualised words and phrases are a limited portrayal of interview data as they may not reflect the manner in which that text was originally produced by the participant(s)

- As stated above, the interviewer's voice is not deleted from the data, therefore processes of interaction, including how the interviewees respond to my talk, are represented in the data and incorporated into analysis
- The process of interaction in interviews is a primary driver of analysis and findings, therefore the 'how' is being used as resource for analysis

The preceding discussion outlines some of the fundamental implications of adopting a discursive perspective on interviews for this research. Turning to a consideration of linguistic ethnography (henceforth 'LE') as research method, this is a relatively new, emerging and contested methodological approach (Creese, 2008). The unifying concepts amongst its adherents include an overall 'post-modern' view of language and communication. This involves an anti-essentialist, contextualised view of language which promotes social justice and equality. The roots of the movement are in anthropology and the ethnography of communication (Maybin and Tusting, 2011) which involve the close observation of individuals in cultural groups to determine aspects of their communicative practices. This is the basis of the term ethnography, 'derived from the Greek words *ethnos* (race, people, or cultural groups) and *graphe* (writing or representation)' (Tsui, 2012, p.383).

LE typically uses the approach of accessing multiple forms of discourse data from which to draw its findings, for example recordings of interactions, research interviews, field notes and other forms of data. In many ways the research instruments and methods described in section 3.1.1 for field trips to Kenya, India and Jamaica are compatible with this overall methodological approach. An important point of departure is the relatively brief amounts of time I was able to spend with each volunteer. This is in contrast with many types of ethnographic fieldwork which might spend up to a year making their observations (Smart, 2012). Despite this issue, LE is thought to be a flexible set of methods rather than a process which needs to be rigidly applied (Tsui, 2012). Whereas I have not spent an extended amount of time studying one particular volunteer or one single context, I have made what Harklau (2011, p.177) refers to as 'brief and

concentrated site visits'. Although the group of participants which I am researching do not form a neat group in physical space, in effect they are part of a larger group of Japanese volunteers who are in active service around the world. Therefore by studying 20 of the volunteers using ethnographic methods, I am providing some insight into the nature of the communication practices of this group. JICA volunteers could be defined as a type of extended speech community in the sense alluded to by Rampton (2009), whereby traditional definitions of speech communities do not always apply to clusters of speakers in this current age of late modernity. In this case the volunteers are spread far and wide geographically and experience different communicative conditions based on local factors. As a group, the communicative practices between members are not the focus of study, it is the common experiences of the group members in their own diverse contexts. They may still be conceived of as one group – similar to the concept of a speech community or community of practice – due to their shared national culture and purpose, and certain commonalities in communicative experiences which they are all likely to encounter.

Rather than a prescriptive set of methods to be applied, it could be argued that a certain perspective on language and communication – as discourse – is the fundamental characteristic of LE. Researchers are typically interested in aspects of culture and identity in their research, but do not foreground these in an essentialist manner (Maybin and Tusting, 2011). Furthermore, my presence as an active agent in the processes of data collection – as deemed necessary based on the exploratory study (see section 3.2) – is a fully established aspect of LE fieldwork methodology. The researcher is always part of the data (Tsui, 2012) and should act in a reflexive manner as part of their data collection (Tusting and Maybin, 2007). As we have already seen, this is also a core feature of discursive approaches to the research interview. Another aspect which connects the approaches is researcher reflexivity, which is central to both, and as explained in chapter one is a vitally important concept for this project.

Perhaps most essential to my argument here – that an LE approach is a good fit for my project despite limited amount of time for fieldwork – is that the process of conducting

LE research is itself seen as a kind of open-ended, reflexive journey (van Praet, 1986) and that the analytical methods are intentionally left open until the process of analysis itself begins (Creese, 2008). The nature of this project is very much 'exploratory and open-ended' (Tsui, 2012, p.384) allowing the space to engage in a process of discovery, therefore a flexible approach was needed which would allow the research focus to be defined and refined throughout the process, in a bottom-up approach working from the data (Eckert, 2009). This has already been demonstrated through justification of the project's research questions, which were deliberately left open to see what findings in terms of conceptions and experiences would emerge from engagement with the data.

Several cautionary notes should be sounded at this point. Potential weaknesses in ethnographic research have been identified and should be addressed here. For example, Watson-Gegeo (1988) warns of the danger that ethnographic research can be 'anecdotal or impressionistic'. Furthermore there is the danger that the linguistic ethnographer's interpretations of communicative events would have very little validity for the participants themselves who are engaged in them (Tusting and Maybin, 2007). This latter point is connected to Toohey's (2008) assertion that linguistic ethnographers should beware of the assumption that there is one true analytic interpretation, particularly as this would result in an unethical power relation between the researcher and the researched. Although it was originally hoped that participant perspectives on the data and my interpretation of it could be collected, ultimately this was not possible due to practical issues (see sub-section 3.2.2) and the need to keep the data set down to a manageable size. Therefore, as with many other researchers in discourse studies, the final solution to this issue was to engage with the data carefully and rigorously, building up interpretations based on convincing evidence across broad sets of data.

### 3.1.2.2 Methods for Sampling, Representing and Analysing Data

The data analysis for this project was initiated by identifying extracts of the whole data set for close analysis following the method of searching for self-contained or bounded units of communication in which an identifiable goal can be observed (Gumperz, 1982).

The procedure is explained as follows:

The passages in question may vary in length, but a basic requirement is that they constitute self-contained episodes, for which we have either internal or ethnographic evidence of what the goals are... These passages are then transcribed literally bringing in as much phonetic, prosodic and interactional detail as necessary, described in terms of the surface content and ethnographic background necessary to understand what is going on and, finally, analysed interpretively both in terms of what is intended and what is perceived.

(Gumperz, 1982, p.134)

This overarching method has been applied to the selection of extracts for both the interview and focus group data, and the interactions between volunteers and host country interlocutors. In both cases it is the analysis and interpretation of interaction between speakers which constitutes this project's research findings, in terms of either *conceptions* or *experiences*. More details on specific methods for the analysis and interpretation of interactions is provided later in this section. Going back to the issue of extract selection for close analysis, the first phase of analysis for any sub-section of data (for example the teacher interviews), involved a thorough review of the data set and a search for 'self-contained episodes', as described by Gumperz. A key aspect of this was for episodes to have an identifiable beginning, middle and end point or resolution. On many occasions in the overall data set, such episodes were found where a question or topic is introduced, opinions are exchanged or transacted, and then the topic is closed down. Clearly, in order to select a manageable amount of extracts to analyse for each sub-set of data, not all of the episodes could be included and therefore a rationale and set of guiding principles was needed. An initial determination was made regarding

whether any particular episode contained features which, even at a surface level of interpretation, were of particular relevance for one of the project's research questions. Such extracts were given priority from the outset. Beyond this, the concept of 'rich points' (Agar, 1996; House, 2002) was also influential in determining how to prioritise extracts. This was in terms of whether – again, at an initial surface-level assessment of an episodes' features – there was evidence of some distinctive, unique or surprising feature of interaction which could be subjected to a fuller analysis and lead to research findings related to *conceptions* or *experiences*. To provide examples from the teacher interview data set, there were occasions when teachers aligned with interview questioning and occasions where they resisted them. When such alignment or resistance was particularly marked or noticeable – from the pragmatics of the interaction as well as literally what was said – this was thought to constitute a rich point that was likely to merit a fuller analysis of the episode.

What has been described above is a process by which I thoroughly reviewed all of the recorded interactions in this project's data set, dividing them up into self-contained episodes and making lists of priority extracts in terms of immediate relevance to research questions or in terms of 'rich points' of interaction. Another feature of this process – deciding on which extracts to include for a full analysis – involved taking account of the connections that I made between meaningful aspects, either within one particular recording, between different recordings within one sub-set of data or between different recordings across the entire set of data. So for example when topics or issues recurred across the data set, these were considered in terms of whether they consolidated, expanded upon or provided an alternative perspective to the original topic or issue as it had originally been encountered. The outcome of this complex interpretive process was a set of interactions of core interest for the research questions of this project. These are the extracts which are transcribed and presented throughout chapters four and five. The specific rationale and reasoning for the choice of extracts for any given sub-set of data is supplied in a designated sub-section preceding the extracts and their analysis.

In terms of the transcription methods that were used, a guiding principle of the research was to transcribe interactions to a level of detail which was fit for current purposes (Gee, 2011b, p.xi; see also Gumperz's quote at the beginning of this sub-section). Like the initial selection of extracts, this process can be thought of as part of the data analysis itself rather than simply as preparation for it. This is because, as Fairclough (2001) points out, transcription methods are the beginning point for researcher interpretation of discourse, and also because the chosen methods reflect 'the transcriber's own expectations and beliefs about the speakers and the interaction being transcribed' (Bucholtz, 2000, p.1439).

Following Gumperz's original recommendations and as applied elsewhere (e.g. Jaspers, 2012), the majority of interactional data – including interviews and focus groups – were initially transcribed at a basic level and then the chosen extracts were brought up to a higher level of detail, to facilitate a deeper level of analysis and interpretation. The level of detail which was ultimately used (see appendix A1 for conventions) stops short of full Jeffersonian levels of detail, but does provide information such as occurrence of pauses (timed when more than one second), where instances of overlap begin, and instances of marked rising or falling intonation occur. This level of detail was thought to be fit for current purposes, in terms of allowing a full and detailed analysis of the extracts of spoken interactions, as described below.

Turning now to an explanation of how the extracts were analysed, as described elsewhere in this chapter, this project is aligned with discourse analysis as an overarching approach to research methodology, meaning that a huge range of analytical tools, techniques and approaches were available as routes into interpretation of the extracts. This is consistent with Gumperz's original approach to the analysis of episodes, of which Levinson (1997, p.24) has stated, the 'tools are eclectic, and the toolbox cluttered'. Practically speaking, the following advice from Rampton was adopted as the main route into the actual analysis of each chosen extract. This is to immerse oneself in the data, looking at it without pre-conceived ideas and trying to take:

A slow, close look at the moment-by-moment unfolding of (the) episode, bringing in different concepts from linguistics and discourse analysis in provisional ways, exploring whether they could help illuminate what was going on

(Rampton, 2006, p. 396)

This method provides the discourse analyst with an extremely important set of guiding principles, to literally review interactions turn by turn, always questioning why each element of the interaction occurs when it does, with an open mind about what could be taking place until an interpretation can be developed from empirical evidence in the discourse data, be it pragmatic, semantic or of some other kind. Having adopted this perspective and overall method, this is how the analysis of extracts in chapters four and five was carried out. For each interaction, the interpretation and findings are built on this line-by-line reading of each extract. The interpretations are built on the 'what and the how' of the discourse (Mann, 2011): not only literally what is said, but the pragmatics of it, for example what can be revealed by pauses, overlaps, false starts and whether adjacent turns are completed in a typical or a marked fashion.

These methods have their roots in various branches of discourse analysis, not least conversation analysis. This project is similar to the approaches taken by Gumperz and Rampton in that supplementary ethnographic evidence is brought in to aid interpretation of the interactions, rather than a sole reliance on what is contained within the transcripts themselves. Also following the traditions set out by these scholars, matters of culture and identity are brought into the interpretation of interactional discourse, where this can be supported empirically through evidence inside or outside the extracts themselves.



### **3.2 Methodological Development**

As explained in chapter one, the foundations of this project are in reflexivity, in the sense that a reflective, reflexive approach to my former teaching context led me to a series of pedagogical questions which have directly fed into this research. Following on from this, reflexivity has been a major driving force in the project's research methods, informing my choice of methods and refinement of research instruments and building towards the final research framework and resulting set of collected data. Adopting a reflexive approach to the project has been a crucial aspect from its earliest stages of inception in 2010. Essentially, just as the JICA context represented a puzzle of practice to me in terms of how best to approach English language pedagogy there, so this project represented a puzzle in terms of how best to approach researching that context.

As can be seen from the following sections, this puzzle was approached by way of trialling approaches to the research, reflecting on their outcomes and planning ways forward accordingly. This overall reflexive approach to planning data collection activities is a good fit with the main research methods that this project aligns with. As discussed above in section 3.1, both the discursive approach to interviews and linguistic ethnography both incorporate researcher reflexivity at a fundamental level. It can be seen then, that reflexivity – the process of undertaking deep reflection on one's own actions and subject positioning in order to inform future actions and decision making – underpins this research at all levels. The sections below will explain how the reflexive orientation of this project was operationalised in terms of developmental and exploratory research activities.

### 3.2.1 The Exploratory Study

As the name suggests, this collection of activities was an initial exploration into researching the target situation rather than a trial of specific methods, clearly differentiating the process from a pilot study. The exploratory study was conducted during the first eight months of 2011. The essence of the activity was to collect samples of verbal interactions between JICA volunteers and their interlocutors at work in their specific voluntary work contexts, by the process of those volunteers self-recording and sending audio files directly to me as email attachments. This was then followed up by a phase of reflection on the resulting data and trial analysis, along with the essential process of collecting feedback from the participants on this endeavour from their perspective.

The first step was to recruit a group of active JICA volunteers to act as participants. By contacting my former students and other acquaintances from my time teaching at the JICA training centres, I was able to establish a list of active JICA volunteers who were willing and able to participate. During this process, it emerged that three potential participants were working in the same region of Western Kenya, in the same designated JICA role of 'HIV control'. Volunteers in this position take part in a range of activities including: working directly with HIV patients at health centres and community projects, working with staff members at such institutions or carrying out administrative work in order to support patients and staff. These three volunteers – two of them former English students of mine from NTC in 2010 and the other an acquaintance from the same intake of volunteers – were recruited as the participants for the exploratory study with the rationale that:

- there should be more than one participant, but a large number was unnecessary
- the fact that all three volunteers were in the same role in the same region of Kenya meant that the data set would be relatively focused in these contextual terms, allowing for a later decision on this aspect of participant recruitment for the main study

The three participants will be referred to by the pseudonyms Riko, Shinobu and Taka. Regarding the ethical dimensions of the exploratory study, the usual considerations of anonymity and secure storage of the data were important considerations. A slightly unusual feature was the requirement for participants to self-record themselves interacting with local interlocutors, and therefore the necessity to ask these speakers for permission to record. This situation resulted in two ethical concerns:

- that participants could feel self-conscious about recording themselves and sharing the audio files, either based on self-perceived language abilities or some other reason
- they might feel awkward about asking the local interlocutors for permission to make the recordings

These concerns were offset by three multiple choice questions which were incorporated into the original email contact with potential participants, as follows:

3) Would you feel comfortable with making recordings of yourself at work?

Yes / Maybe / No

NOTE: The purpose of the study is NOT to check for 'grammar mistakes' in English

4) Do you think there is at least 1 person at your work who would be comfortable with being recorded?

Yes / Maybe / No

5) Would you be comfortable with asking for this person's permission before making any recordings? (you will need to explain that this is for the purpose of research into JICA volunteers using English to communicate in Kenya)

Yes / Maybe / No

Riko, Shinobu and Taka all replied affirmatively to these questions, and therefore it was decided that the study was ethically sound. The research activity was granted approval

by York St John's internal research ethics committee (see appendix A2.1). The other multiple choice questions which were asked in the aforementioned email related to whether the volunteers had access to the internet, whether they were using English at work and whether they would like to take part in the study or not.

When the participants had been recruited as described above and consent forms had been completed (see appendix A3.1), I sent a digital voice recorder to each of the volunteers by courier. At around this time I remained in contact with the participants by email and Skype (voice messaging and instant text messaging). I collected information about each volunteer's specific context in terms of work locations, tasks and routines, along with what types of interactions they typically had in English while at work. I also passed on my requests and instructions for how to collect and send data: this involved not only sending the audio files themselves but also completing a spread sheet with information such as the place, date and time of each recording, who the other speakers were and a checking system to confirm that the permission of each speaker to make and keep the recording had been received. An example of these spread sheets can be seen in appendix A4.1.

The volunteers all received the digital recorders in early-mid March 2011, and it was agreed that recordings would take place for three months until June. The general instruction was to collect recordings whenever it felt appropriate and comfortable, not forgetting to ask for permission from the interlocutors first. Participants were asked to record only with co-workers or other health professionals rather than with anyone in a patient capacity, and also to avoid recording when sensitive issues were likely to be discussed.

After the recordings were stopped in June, the participants were all interviewed by Skype with questions relating to their communicative experiences in Kenya, and the experience of taking part in the exploratory study.

In total, 32 audio recordings were sent by the participants with a combined time of 3 hours, 29 minutes and 58 seconds. By participant, these figures break down as:

- Shinobu: 3 recordings, 26 minutes 8 seconds
- Taka: 10 recordings, 58 minutes 28 seconds
- Riko: 19 recordings, 1 hour 55 minutes 22 seconds

The recordings feature a varied mix of interactions, including examples of code-switching between English, Swahili and Luo (a language which is regional to Western Kenya). Some recordings featured long periods of silence, and in several cases the topics of discussion were hard to understand without knowing the contextual details whereas for others the purpose and topics were relatively transparent. In a related point some interactions were about something relatively hard to decipher about the work context such as paperwork or filing, whereas others had a clearer focus such as gathering or conveying information. Whereas Shinobu and Taka had recorded themselves exclusively in one workplace, Riko had made recordings ‘in the field’ as she went out to different projects. A sample of one such interaction will now be included, in a situation where Riko was visiting what she referred to as a ‘feeding centre for malnourished children’. Her interlocutors are staff at the centre who have roles similar to social workers or support workers. These interlocutors have been assigned the pseudonyms of Belinda and Florence. The transcription conventions for the extract can be found in appendix A1. The extract is 1m11s in length, and has been taken from the beginning of Riko’s thirteenth recording, which was 14m03s in total.

### *Extract 3.1*

- 1 R: okay (.) so:: right now how many: (.) how many childrens  
2 are there °here°  
3 B: we have one hundred and eighty  
4 R: one hundred and eighty  
5 B: yes  
6 R: children  
7 B: yeah

8 R: you are feeding  
9 B: mmm  
10 R: okay: (.) uh-huh (.) so::: (.) out of a hundred eighty  
11 how many children are malnourished  
12 (1.1)  
13 B: you know the s- the chil- the- (.) the:: support here  
14 R: uh-huh  
15 B: it was a result of (.) malnourished children in the  
16 community  
17 R: okay  
18 B: and so we were just trying ( ) some student who  
19 maybe going to school so it's like all of them were  
20 malnourished  
21 R: uh-huh  
22 B: but some are rehabilitated by now [so  
23 R: [okay  
24 B: that's why we- you can identify them from their hairs  
25 and [maybe the loss of  
26 R: [mmm  
27 B: body weight  
28 R: mm  
29 B: so  
30 R: mm-hm  
31 B: it's that way  
32 R: mm-hm (.) okay  
33 B: yes  
34 (.)  
35 R: wh- when will you <discharge those children>  
36 B: mmm  
37 R: discharge↑ like (.) ((laughter))  
38 B: how  
39 F: ( )  
40 R: mm↑  
41 F: what do you mean by discharge  
42 R: [er: like er you  
43 B: [if you want to  
44 R: mm you like you register those children  
45 B: [yes  
46 R: [but then (.) wh- mm up to when are you going to take  
47 care of them  
48 F: ( )

49 B: it's like er:  
50 F: ((speaks in a local language))  
51 B: it's like er:: (2.5) it's like er:: if you look at er:  
52 the time er of maybe (.) releasing them  
53 R: mm-hm  
54 B: we just give them chance even up to when they are doing  
55 their secondary school  
56 R: mm-hm

(Riko, Belinda and Florence)

A brief commentary on this extract will now be provided, which will serve to provide an interpretation of this communicative event and a preview of the data analysis methods which will be explained in section 3.3. First of all, this extract was selected by following principles outlined by Gumperz (1982) for selecting extracts of spoken discourse data for analysis. These principles include making a rough transcription of the entire interaction, and then searching for a bounded unit of communication – where bounded means containing identifiable beginning and end points – where a goal or purpose can be defined (Gumperz, 1982, p.134). In this case the identifiable purpose is Riko's attempt to acquire information on the number of malnourished children at the centre, and how long they are taken care of. The end point is where the 'interactional trouble' caused by Riko's initial use of discharge (lines 35 and 37) has been resolved, whereby Belinda has ascertained that the question is about when the children are released from the centre (51-52) and she formulates a response (54-55). A fuller analysis of this extract would be possible and desirable in terms of the individual turns and their interactional and communicative significance, but this will not be included here for reasons of space.

Another methodological point to make here is that the extract can be interpreted as one of Agar's (1996) 'rich points', which is the reason that it was chosen for demonstration here as opposed to other possible bounded units in the original 14 minute interaction. Rich points have been used as a methodological device in related research, for example House (2002) and Hornberger (2006). Rich points essentially entail moments which seem to indicate a deep significance at an impressionistic level, and therefore are worthy of close examination. Agar (1996) presented the term as the process of meeting

new features of an unknown culture, such as when a certain event is experienced as being new, different and loaded with cultural significance. Agar saw the process of coming to understand the new rich point as a vital way to begin understanding the new culture at a deep level. The concept has been expanded by researchers of language and communication to entail aspects of a data set which make a similar impression on the researcher and therefore merit a full and close analysis. Extract 3.1 is considered to be 'rich' on a number of levels, including the fact that a certain piece of vocabulary which is used by the JICA volunteer causes interactional trouble, and then a process unfolds by which that difficulty is resolved.

Returning to the results of the exploratory study in terms of its emergent data set, as has already been alluded to, many of the recordings did not contain interactions that were this amenable to analysis in terms of the transparency of the context, the ease of being able to identify speaker goals and the overall 'richness' of the interactional data. This was the first indication that the technique of remote data collection by participant self-recordings would not be suitable for the main study for the project.

Turning now to the post-recordings interviews with Riko, Shinobu and Taka, these were conducted by Skype and audio recorded in August 2011. The following data was collected:

- Riko: 8m25s interview recording, text interview by instant messaging (673 words)
- Shinobu: 24m58s interview recording
- Taka: 29m02s interview recording, text interview by instant messaging (1100 words)

In Riko's case, the supplementary interview by instant messaging was due to connection difficulties on Skype and in Taka's case this was done initially because he did not have a microphone (the voice recorded interview took place on a subsequent day, to



supplement what had already been discussed). The purposes of the interviews were three-fold:

- To ask for clarification on certain aspects of the recordings, for example what was happening and who was speaking
- To ask general questions about the participants' experiences of language and communication in Kenya, including English and other languages
- To ask about the participants' experiences of taking part in the exploratory study, for example if any aspects were difficult or problematic

When reflecting on this collected data, responses to the first two sets of questions did not feel fully satisfactory, as it was difficult for me to frame questions that had real value or meaning. Furthermore, it did not seem that the process of taking part in the study had always been easy for the participants, for example they had needed to pay a charge when collecting the voice recorders, which I later refunded by PayPal. There were also some indications that making the recordings had been difficult for the participants.

This led me to conclude that despite collecting some data that was amenable to fruitful analysis, for example extract 3.1 above, I actually needed to be on location for this type of data collection. Therefore at the end of the exploratory study, along with building up some early impressions of the interactions between JICA volunteers and their local interlocutors, I had also built up some awareness about fruitful and non-fruitful methods and avenues for data collection relating to the JICA context. I then formulated the plan to carry out two sets of fieldwork in the following year of 2012, firstly in Japan to investigate teacher and learner ideas about language and pedagogy in the JICA context, and secondly in one or more JICA host countries, to interview volunteers and collect samples of their interactions with local interlocutors.

### 3.2.2 Instrument Development Studies and Researcher Development

Having completed the exploratory study and identified the need for field trips to Japan and other locations to collect data, a series of instrument development studies were carried out, to act as preparation for specific research activities, and to allow for researcher development in practicing their application with comparable participants. All of the following activities were determined to not need separate application for ethical clearance by York St John's research committee. This was because a screening checklist indicated that specific applications were not needed. Furthermore these activities did not represent significant departures from other aspects of the project which had already been cleared ethically. Consent forms guaranteeing the usual ethical safeguards were used for all of these activities, an example of which can be seen in appendix A3.2.

The instrument development activities were as follows, with the amount of data collected supplied below each entry:

1) Interviews with two former JICA English teachers by Skype

- 2 audio files of 47m52s and 1h2m15s

2) A focus group conducted at York St John University, with five Japanese participants who were international students studying in York

- 1 audio file of 53m04s

3) Two interviews and one focus group with JICA volunteers who had recently returned to Japan (conducted in person during the first field trip to Japan)

- 3 audio files of 18m47s, 23m00s and 34m10s

4) A 'communication activity' between two international students at York St John University, one from Japan and one from Kenya. Participants were given a short article to read and discuss as 'stimulus material'. The article was about reported benefits and challenges experienced by international students of adapting to life in the UK. The discussion was audio-recorded, transcribed, and then shared with the participants as an

audio file and word documents. Participant reflections on the interaction were collected via comments inserted into the word document, and expanded upon during a subsequent Skype interview. The interview also had the purpose of gauging what this experience had been like for the participants.

- main audio file (38m46s), inserted comments (20 comments totalling 295 words, from the Japanese participant), interview files (37m04s and 55m44s)

The experience of carrying out these activities all contributed towards the final procedures which were adopted for data collection, as described in section 3.1.1. For example activities 1 and 3 above helped prepare for the interviews conducted with teachers and volunteers, in terms of helping to make decisions about which pre-scripted questions to use, and to fine tune their specific wordings. The second activity, the focus group with Japanese international students, was an essential way to confirm that the proposed format – a presentation of statements, with participants choosing then explaining levels of agreement with the statements – was viable. Upon reflection on this focus group data, there was good evidence that the format was achieving its aims of scaffolding participation. I had enlisted the help of a bilingual Japanese acquaintance to help with any necessary interpretations or translations, although this did not seem to be essential therefore it was decided that I could conduct the focus groups in Japan alone, using only written Japanese translations of the statements to act as support if needed.

Activity 4, acting as precursor and preparation to the collection of interactions between JICA volunteers and host country interlocutors, allowed for serious reflection on one aspect of the originally intended methodology, resulting in it subsequently being dropped. The original intention was to bring the analysis in line with House (2002), who invited participants to listen back to their interactions in English with other international students, and incorporate their feedback on their perspectives on what was happening in the interactions. It was a strong ambition of this project to adopt a similar technique, as it was considered to be able to offer important insights into communicative practices

that might not otherwise be available to the researcher, and represents an egalitarian move in terms of enabling participant-led analysis rather than researcher driven analysis. The data collected in the above activity – in terms of participant reflection on the interaction – did indeed offer valuable data, for example the Japanese participant identified a point where the phrase ‘come to terms’ was used by the Kenyan speaker and was apparently not understood, although this could not be identified from internal evidence in the interactional data itself. However, this aspect of the methodology was not taken forward, due to concerns that listening back to the data had felt awkward and strange for the participants. It is common knowledge that for some people, listening back to one’s own voice is not a pleasant or comfortable experience, and it appeared that this was the case with at least one of the participants here. This, coupled with the fact that I would be collecting data in quite transient situations during the second field trip, without the affordance of having regular contact with participants (as with the study by House, 2002) meant that it seemed unlikely that participant-led analysis of interactions was viable for this project.

Reflection on the resulting data from these activities also enabled my development as a reflexive researcher. Having adopted a discursive approach to interviews in theoretical terms, I was acting as co-creator of the interview and focus group data that I was collecting to at least some extent (Mann, 2011), and therefore I wanted to develop and understand which manner of phrasing questions and other interactive moves appeared to be more or less successful. Richards (2011) points out that reflection upon and analysis of interview transcripts is an excellent way for novice researchers to develop their practice. This is in the sense that:

Just as musicians constantly reflect on subtle aspects of their technique...  
so interviewers should seek to exploit the generatively reflexive power of  
awareness, sensitivity and practice

(Richards, 2011, p.109)

My approach to this involved reflection upon specific wordings of questions that I had used in the instrument development studies, for example how economical I was with words, and what types participant responses were elicited by certain types of questions. This included a review of my use of 'elaborate questions' (Roulston, 2010, p.47), which are intentionally multi-layered in order to give the interviewee a range of possible response types, and carry the implication that a definitive answer might not be expected as it might not be possible.

I also carefully reflected on the data from the focus group which was carried out in York, by coding my interactional moves as the facilitator in terms of those defined by Myers (2007), these being: questions, prompts, probes, formulations, echoes, information, meta-comments and back-channels. Through this analysis, I came to be aware of issues in my practice such as probes that seemed to more or less successful, and some obvious places where a potential probe was missed. I also found some examples of interactional moves which constituted a contribution of my opinions on language and culture as they were discussed by the group. My feeling was that these should be avoided as much as possible, or at least adapted into questions for participants. This point is related to the following extract which is taken from the very early stages of the focus group, and includes a response from a participant who I will refer to as Gaku.

*Extract 3.2*

- 1 G: well I would say like English useful (.) I- I wouldn't  
2 say like English is important  
3 N: right  
4 G: because (.) like >I don't wanna like< (.) say like  
5 English is important because  
6 N: >you don't wanna give it< too much status  
7 G: yeah  
8 N: or power  
9 G: yeah ((laughter)) so  
10 N: ((laughter)) it's useful yeah  
11 G: yeah it's useful yeah

(Focus group development activity)

I commit what I see as a major mistake here, by not allowing even a slight pause for Gaku to continue or finish his chain of ideas from lines 1-5. By completing his answer for him in lines 6 and 8, then 10, I deny him the chance to express his own ideas and instead contribute my own. Although he indicates agreement in lines 7, 9 and 11, this could not really be taken as evidence that his perspective truly aligns with what I suggest. This is arguably a case of interviewer construction rather than co-construction, and would represent a serious methodological flaw were it to occur in one of the main sets of data in this project. This type of reflection enabled me to develop my interviewing and focus group techniques in both theoretical and practical ways. I was certainly greatly aware of the need to pause and allow time for responses after this aspect of reflection.

In two other elements of reflexive methodological practice, I was interviewed twice by a fellow postgraduate student based on interview questions which I myself had written. In one case, this was analogous to the first instrument development mentioned above, in that I was also interviewed as a former JICA English language teacher by the same questions that I was using with other teachers. This was beneficial in the sense of gauging the interview questions and potential ways to respond, from the participant perspective. The other interview was a combination of the 'why interview' and 'bracketing interview' (Roulston, 2010), the purpose of which being to be able to verbalise and therefore bring to awareness my subject positioning, intentions, motivations and expectations for the project, in a concrete way. This latter activity was highly beneficial in terms of my reflexive approach to the overall project.

### **Summary of Chapter 3**

To summarise this chapter, the project has adopted methodological approaches and methods which align with a discursive approach to research interviews and linguistic ethnography. These two influences on the research methods are seen as complimentary and mutually beneficial, building on similar approaches to data and its analysis. The first sections of the chapter explained the data collection procedures which were carried out in Japan, Kenya, India and Jamaica, including the research instruments that were used, the processes of participant recruitment and associated ethical considerations. The following sections explained the project's methodology in terms of its alignment with the discursive approach to interviews and linguistic ethnography. Following this, the specific methods for sampling, transcribing and analysing the data were set out. The latter part of the chapter explained that the starting point of the data collection was an exploratory study, which collected data remotely from volunteers in Kenya. The practice of conducting this study and reflecting on its resulting data set and reported participant experiences, allowed for a considered approach to designing the main research procedures which were ultimately adopted. This section of the chapter also reviewed a series of instrument development studies, which were conducted in preparation for the main studies and helped to facilitate reflexive researcher development.

## **Chapter 4: Conceptions of Language, Communication and Pedagogy at JICA**

### **Training Centres**

#### **Introduction to Chapter 4**

This chapter provides an analysis of data collected at the point of pre-service pedagogy in the JICA context of language teaching and learning. This is based on interview data with JICA teachers, and focus group data with JICA learners, all collected at the JICA training centres in the spring of 2012. Both sets of data were collected using semi-structured qualitative research techniques. Both the interview and focus group research instruments were designed to investigate participants' views on the pedagogical context in general, along with the imagined subsequent real life language usage by the learners. By association, these instruments also tapped into how participants conceptualise language, communication and pedagogy in this context, and this will be the focus of analysis, based broadly on a 'discursive approach' to qualitative research methods (Mann, 2011; Talmy and Richards, 2011). The purpose of this chapter is to make a response to research question one:

1) What conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy do JICA language teachers and learners have relative to their context, including: English usage in JICA host countries, communication between volunteers and local people in JICA host countries, and suitable language educational practices for pre-service volunteers?

Both sections of the chapter begin with an overview of the available data and provide a rationale for how it is sampled, presented and analysed.



## **4.1 Teacher Conceptions**

### **4.1.1 Overview of Interview Data and Preview of Analysis**

As described in the previous chapter, the teacher interview data comprises of a series of semi-structured interviews conducted with nine English language teachers who were working for JICA in April 2012. Table 2 shows the selected pseudonyms for participants, some of their basic biographical information and the length of each interview (note that the first two participants were interviewed together).

Name (pseudonyms)	Gender	Nationality	Length of interview
Jessica / Paul	Female/ Male	Canadian	47m02s
Richard	Male	British	53m19s
Donald	Male	American	22m59s
Martha	Female	Philippine	1h6m11s
Sam	Male	British	40m58s
Terry	Male	British	30m41s
Laurence	Male	Ghanaian	46m58s
Kelly	Female	American	1h29m45s

Table 2: Teacher interview information

The total length of the eight interviews is 6 hours 47 minutes and 58 seconds. The early stages of each interview were focused on collecting biographical data for each participant, so that this could be drawn into analysis and interpretation of the interviews, as deemed to be necessary and relevant. The pro-forma document which was used to collect this biographical data can be found in appendix A4.2.

Following the collection of biographical data, the main body of the teacher interviews were based around six pre-scripted questions, although these were used flexibly, with each of them usually framed as a 'complex question' (Roulston, 2010), with the intended implication for interviewees being that the questions might not have simple and straightforward answers. Furthermore in the manner of semi-structured interviews, unscripted follow-up questions, probes and expansions were used to pursue topics and themes which were introduced by interviewees. The participants were able to see a printed copy of the interview questions during the interviews, which were:

- 1) In your opinion, what are the main language learning needs of JICA volunteers?
- 2) Are the learner needs different from, for example a Japanese person preparing to live in the UK or the USA?
- 3) What do you imagine daily interactions will be like for the volunteers in their host countries?
- 4) Can you define your overall approach to the lessons at JICA and give some examples of the lesson content that you use?
- 5) Are there any aspects of your lessons which you feel are particularly suitable and appropriate for JICA volunteers as opposed to other types of language learners?
- 6) If you had unlimited time and resources, is there anything that you'd like to improve about how you address the learner needs?

As explained in the previous chapter, the approach taken towards the collection and analysis of the interview data is based on a discursive orientation to qualitative research methods. One of the procedural outcomes of this approach is that data extracts will be presented which prominently feature my voice as the researcher, in order to acknowledge my potential co-construction of the participants' statements and wordings of responses. This feature is in keeping with suggestions by Mann (2011) on the treatment of interview data from a discursive approach.

Based roughly on the same process described by Gumperz (1982) for finding significant

moments in interactions for discourse analysis, the data was transcribed roughly in full and a process of searching for salient moments of researcher-participant interaction was conducted. These include 'rich points' (Agar, 1996) of contact between researcher and participants, in conceptual terms. Where an interactional sequence was deemed to have particular relevance for responding to research question one, this was flagged for fuller transcription and analysis. Such transcribed extracts, accompanied by analysis and interpretation, will make up the substance of the teacher interview analysis.

Through this process of engaging with the data and starting to build interpretations of it, a way of structuring the extracts for presentation also emerged, and has been applied. Because two of the interviews – the joint interview with Jessica and Paul, and Laurence's interview – proved to be highly divergent in terms of the conceptions that participants expressed, those interviews have been analysed in some depth and have dedicated sub-sections for analysis (4.1.2 and 4.1.3 respectively). These interviews, which could be described as extreme cases in the data set, will be used to establish a core set of emergent issues in teacher conceptions. These issues will be expressed as a series of assertions, by which I mean points of interpretation relative to research question one which can be supported by the discourse data. Having done this, the established issues will be expanded upon by analysing selected extracts from the other seven interviews in sub-section 4.1.4. This is in order to draw upon data from all of the teachers when making broader assertions regarding teacher conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy in the JICA context. Discussion of these conceptions will also be found in the summary of this chapter and in chapter six.

The following conventions will be followed when referring to data extracts taken the teacher interviews:

- where a brief extract of the data is quoted, this will appear in simple text form (with no transcription of paralinguistic features) in quotation marks within the main body of text. A time reference will be included indicating at what point the quotation begins within the original audio file.

- for longer extracts, these will be transcribed according to the conventions listed in appendix A1. The extracts will be labelled according to chronological order that they appear in the chapter, for example 4.1, 4.2 and so on. Below each extract, the speakers are named and the time frame relative to the original audio file is supplied, indicating both the beginning and the end of the extract.
- where brief extracts of talk are reproduced in the main body of text – for analytical purposes – which also appear in a long extract, it will be presented in quotation marks with the respective line number (or group of line numbers) from the long extract shown in brackets.
- where reference is made to data from an extended interview extract which is included in the appendices, the conventions for referring to this will be established on a case by case basis.

#### **4.1.2 A discourse analysis of Jessica and Paul's interview**

Jessica and Paul are a married Canadian couple, with extensive experience of teaching English at the JICA training centre in Komagane, having worked there intermittently (typically two out of the four annual terms) for ten years. During the first part of the interview, when their biographical data was being collected, neither Jessica or Paul declared themselves as having any relevant experiences of JICA host countries or of doing voluntary work overseas themselves. Furthermore, their own language education and principal teacher training took place some time ago. They both have bachelor degrees in education from Canada, which were completed over twenty years previously. Paul stated that, despite having limited ability to use French, 'on paper I'm a qualified French teacher... in those days it was all grammar and reading' (6m19s). This is an early indication that Jessica and Paul's grounding in language pedagogy is fairly traditional and rooted in a grammar-translation model. In terms of ELT training, both Jessica and Paul had taken short courses before leaving Canada and had taken teacher training courses while working in Japan.

Before beginning the analysis of the interview data, it should be noted that although some assertions are made about Jessica and Paul individually, ultimately they are treated jointly as a pair. This analytical decision was driven by the discourse data itself, which demonstrates high levels of alignment between the two participants and no instances of even minor disagreement, or the presentation of even slightly divergent thoughts and ideas. The couple also have virtually identical backgrounds in terms of education, experience and so on. Based on these factors, it is expedient to treat Jessica and Paul as having the same set of conceptions relative to language, communication and pedagogy in the JICA context, and this is how the subsequent analysis will proceed, based on a chronological sequence of extracts which have been deemed to be salient

and useful for close analysis. During my analysis of these extracts, I will make a series of assertions about Jessica and Paul's conceptions which relate to research question one.

#### 4.1.2.1 Initial Analysis of Jessica and Paul's Interview

As a response to my initial question about learner needs in the JICA context, and coming approximately eight minutes into the interview, Paul makes the following set of statements and observations which related to pre-service language pedagogy at JICA and post-pedagogy language usage:

##### *Extract 4.1*

- 1 P: I don't think when often they get to the country the::y  
2 (.) English in (.) Papua New Guinea is so different from  
3 (.)  
4 N: [right  
5 P: [the way you and I speak that they (.)  
6 N: right  
7 P: they end up (.) learning some version of pidgin English  
8 once they get [there  
9 N: [right  
10 P: and sometimes they end up (2.3)  
11 J: mm  
12 P: >I wonder sometimes how useful what we teach them is< in  
13 certain countries it doesn't seem to be that relevant and  
14 N: yeah  
15 P: in other countries it seems to be (.) pretty relevant for  
16 them  
17 N: right (.) that's an interesting point isn't it  
18 J: yes

(Jessica and Paul, 7m59s – 8m32s)

When taking a close examination of this extract, it is significant to note two entities which Paul refers to:

- a) 'some form of pidgin English' (7) and
- b) 'what we teach them' (12)

These are significant constructs because they are fundamental to a particular stance and set of conceptualisations which run consistently throughout the interview. First of all pidgin English is to some extent *othered* by Paul, in that he refers to it as 'so different from the way you and I speak' (2-5). Furthermore the prefacing 'some version of' (7), in combination with frequent pauses from Paul in lines 1-10 hint at a possible negative appraisal of pidgin English, which will later be established definitively. 'What we teach them' (12), sequentially positioned as it is after establishing the first construct, refers to *standard English*, the approved centre-construct positioned in contrast with the *othered* pidgin English.

It is important to note here that a non-critical reading of Paul's discourse in the extract above is also possible, particularly considering that nobody could disagree that the English which is used in Papua New Guinea is different from that used in the UK or Canada. Can the preceding critical reading incorporating the concept of *othering* be justified? As Rampton (2006) points out, a case for a particular interpretation can be built across a set of discourse data, and later data extracts will add weight and support to the notion that Paul is here referring to pidgin English in a denigrating manner.

In the next extract – which took place very soon after the first – my complex follow-up question (Roulston, 2010) in lines 1-6 is designed to elicit more comments on the issue of different forms of English, with an implicit message that the different forms should be considered as legitimate and with their own validity:

### Extract 4.2

- 1 N: and is this something that you:: (.) do you tackle this  
2 issue with them (.) or do you kind of treat the lessons  
3 >as if it's a shared understanding that< (.) you're  
4 teaching them a form of English that (.) they're expected  
5 to learn (.) >as part of the test for example< (.) d- do  
6 you talk about pidgin English with them [do you  
7 P: [well not really  
8 and the (.) JICA staff debate themselves every year  
9 should we group them by occupation should we group them  
10 by [countries  
11 N: [right  
12 P: should we group them by level or  
13 N: yeah (.) do you have any any opinion on that >because  
14 obviously that is< an (.) interesting question [isn't it  
15 J: [mm  
16 N: how they should be grouped

(Jessica and Paul, 9m14s – 9m47s)

Notable features of this extract are that my aforementioned attempts to elicit discussion on different types or styles of English (see particularly 4-5) are not taken up at all by Paul. Instead, he picks up and negates the basic element of the complex question ('do you talk about pidgin English with them': 6, negated in 7) and steers his comments onto a related topic about how JICA learners are grouped into classes. By picking up this topic with a follow up question (13-14) I abandon my previous failed attempt to elicit comments on different forms of English and their relative legitimacy. I believe this was done in the spirit of focusing on what the participant wanted to say without forcing my own agenda. Nevertheless the non-alignment by Paul to aspects of my initial complex question in this extract can be seen as important. It should be noted here that one confusing aspect of our interaction was that we never established whether Jessica and Paul believed that pidgin English can be classed as a separate language which is distinct from English, or is a type or variety of English. Expert opinion (e.g. Romaine, 2000) is that pidgins and creoles should be viewed as distinct languages rather than dialects of



other languages which have influenced them, such as English. This is one area that, in hindsight, could have been usefully probed during the interview. Paul's original formulation of 'some version of pidgin English' (7) in the first extract indicates that he might view it as a kind of inferior or deviant version of English. 'Local languages' are referred to in the interview, for example when Jessica said 'they may use more of the local language than English or a combination of them' (9m02s), although it is not clear if she was including pidgin within this remark along with the completely distinct local languages that JICA volunteers encounter and typically use, for example Swahili in Kenya.

The third extract, again beginning with a complex question, appears approximately seven minutes later at a stage of the interview when I am probing for more information following initial responses to the second interview question (relating to whether JICA learners have different learning needs than for example a Japanese person preparing to live in the UK or USA). As can be noted in lines 1-5, I am again probing for responses related to the perception of different forms of English, and the relative legitimacy or appropriacy of their inclusion in the pre-service pedagogy.

#### *Extract 4.3*

- 1 N: >what d'you think about< (.) the target languages:: and  
2 like the accents that y- they're exposed to. (.) I mean  
3 d'you (.) do you have any particular policy on that on  
4 >what kind of speakers you use in listening texts< or (.)  
5 how do y- how do you approach that.  
6 (1.2)  
7 J: you me::an British [versus American<sup>↑</sup> or  
8 N: [ye::ah d- d- do you have any kind of  
9 idea about (.) how you approach that or is it more  
10 general just (.) any English is (.) worthwhile  
11 (.)  
12 J: umm::

13 P: I find that the main variations of English are alright  
14 whether it's someone from England or [America  
15 N: [mm  
16 P: or Australia but (.) occasionally you get a textbook  
17 where you've got a (1.5) someone who is obviously (1.9)  
18 speaking English as a second language and  
19 N: mm  
20 P: I don't think that's very (.) >helpful in fact< the JICA  
21 text's like that some of the (.)  
22 N: right  
23 P: some of the [oral  
24 N: [mm  
25 P: exercises are done by (.)  
26 N: mm  
27 P: teachers >from Africa that aren't even native speakers  
28 and< I don't think that's (.) particularly good

(Jessica and Paul, 16m03s – 17m03s)

Following the initial question sequence (1-5), Jane's response (7), coming after a pause and containing stretched sounds, rising intonation and a clarification request, appears hesitant and reluctant. In fact her response of 'British or American' (7) and non-completed hesitation (12) imply that she either does not have an opinion on the topic(s) being raised or that they are unclear or lacking meaning for her.

Paul's turn (13-28) contains a bald, on-record assertion that 'non-native English' is not suitable material for listening activities in the English classroom at JICA. Paul clearly positions certain types of English as 'not worthwhile' in his response, particularly the language as used by speakers from Africa. By stating 'I don't think that's very helpful' (20), he ties this in to a pedagogical aspect, although this is not elaborated and I do not take up the opportunity to ask him why he thinks this is the case. This is also true of the initial statement in line 13 that 'the main variations of English are alright'. This is important in that again there is the implication of pedagogical value attached to native (as opposed to non-native) English, although no real justification for this opinion is provided.

The issue of prioritising 'native English' in pedagogical materials recurs in a subsequent extract therefore will be discussed again at a later point. The following extract follows the preceding one immediately (there was no break, they have been separated to avoid presenting one long extract). It should be noted here that I was somewhat taken aback by the opinions expressed by Paul at the end of the previous extract and therefore struggled with how to proceed next. Whereas on the one hand the direct question 'why are speakers from Africa not appropriate?' may have gone most clearly to the heart of the matter, this could have appeared confrontational and face threatening to Paul, therefore I attempt yet again to frame a question which will elicit more information about attitudes towards diverse forms of English and their relevance to this context. In the passage that follows, the divergence between my own conceptualisations of these matters and the participants' is particularly marked.

#### *Extract 4.4*

- 1 N: does that mean do you think that we- they should all (.)  
2 er hope to (.) >speak as correctly as possible< or (2.8)  
3 the- the English that's used in Africa do you think um  
4 (.) the volunteers should be aware of what's:: (.) more  
5 correct and what isn't or  
6 (1.6)
- 7 P: °well°  
8 (1.8)
- 9 N: does it matter particularly.  
10 (.)
- 11 J: I think from a teacher's perspective you want them to be  
12 (.) you want er teachers to be as professional as  
13 possible they're- [it's going to be  
14 N: [mm  
15 J: liquefied as they get into [the communities  
16 N: [yeah yeah  
17 J: and they'll get a lot of the slang or the (.) they'll  
18 adapt to that (.) but I think us teaching them (.) as  
19 professionally as we can is (.) would be beneficial  
20 N: yeah

21 J: as a learner  
 22 (.)  
 23 N: you don't feel the need to address those  
 24 unus- [perhaps unusual forms in the lessons  
 25 J: [mm not necessarily  
 26 P: °no no°  
 27 N: okay

(Jessica and Paul, 17m04s – 18m01s)

Following my attempt to raise the issue that *correct* English may not be a very important issue in Africa (1-5), Paul responds with 'well' (7) which could be interpreted in various ways, including a pause for thought or incredulity at the suggestion which I am making. Jessica's response is telling in that she raises a number of interrelated and significant issues which fit with the overall tone of the interviewees' discourse (as divergent from my own, based on the line of questioning I am producing in the interview):

- a) that being 'as professional as possible' equates with the promotion of standard English by English language teachers (11-13)
- b) that the same standard English, after being ideally transferred to the learners, will be 'liquefied' (15) in local communities in JICA host countries and this process will include the promotion of 'slang' (17)
- c) that Jessica and Paul do not 'feel the need to address those unusual forms' (23-24, my wording) in lessons

These issues fit tightly with those already raised so far in this analysis, namely that both Jessica and Paul seem to hold a 'difference as deficit' perspective towards English usage in JICA host countries, casting such usage in a negative light. The term 'liquefied' (15) appears loaded as it can be taken to portray an entity as being blended into fluid matter, with its original form being destroyed. Furthermore the term 'slang' (17) appears significant as it also has a negative semantic loading, implying something that is incorrect, uneducated and lazy. The terms appears elsewhere in the interview, for example when Paul, in response to my question about what type of English JICA

volunteers will use and experience in host countries, says that ‘it would be pretty much slang I would imagine’ (18m29s).

#### 4.1.2.2 Mid-point of Jessica and Paul’s Interview Analysis

As mentioned previously, Paul holds the opinion that native speaker English should be the focus of linguistic input that JICA learners encounter during their lessons. He expands on this in the following extract, although the point of comparison here is not non-native speakers, instead it appears to be teaching materials which do not adequately reflect native speaker speech, from Paul’s perspective. The extract follows the fourth interview question regarding which pedagogical approach, for example in terms of specific classroom activities, the teachers take in their lessons at JICA.

##### *Extract 4.5*

- 1 P: teachers have a lot of freedom (.) to do what they want  
2 [actually  
3 N: [right yeah  
4 J: mm  
5 P: ( ) they like (2.9) personally I’ve found (.) native  
6 pronunciation (1.1) to be er: (.) useful (.) when I teach  
7 listening and I  
8 N: °mm°  
9 (.)  
10 P: I have a textbook I use (.) when you say (.) we almost  
11 use every morning  
12 N: °mm°  
13 P: it deals with a lot of contractions in native speech  
14 whether its British English [or  
15 N: [mm  
16 P: American English

17 N: the listening (.) the [listening skills  
 18 P: [listening skills  
 19 N: are a priority for you  
 20 P: >what are ya gonna do< >what are ya gonna do this  
 21 weekend< is different from <what are you going to do this  
 22 weekend> ((delivered in a style to emphasise a lack of  
 23 contractions))  
 24 N: yeah  
 25 P: which is  
 26 N: yeah  
 27 P: well I think listening is (.) is the most difficult of  
 28 the four skills I think  
 29 N: yeah

(Jessica and Paul, 25m27s – 26m19s)

During Paul's explanation of these listening activities and the rationale he provides for them, we can notice that again, it is the *nativeness* of the English which gives it its value and makes it 'useful' (6), although no justification or explanation is offered for why this is the case.

Regarding the implied criticism of materials that do not reflect native speaker speech (20-22), this leads us to understand that Paul is genuinely concerned with raising his learner's listening abilities in order to be able to cope with such forms, but this highlights a sense that the overall argument being presented is flawed. This is because both Paul and Jessica have both already established that such forms are unlikely to be encountered in JICA host countries. Perhaps the underlying logic is in fact that Jessica and Paul see it as a kind of duty or integral part of their teaching identities to teach standard English whether it is fully relevant to the current learner needs or not. This takes us back full circle to an initial comment from Paul on learner needs in which he commented that 'I wonder sometimes how useful what we teach them is... in certain countries it doesn't seem to be that relevant' (8m18s).

This reinforcement of an earlier point allows us to make a fairly strong assertion about Jessica and Paul's conceptualisations, which is that English in the JICA context should be

taught in as close approximation as possible to how it is used by 'native speakers', regardless of the type of English that learners will actually be experiencing during their voluntary work. This is consistent with other evidence in the interview which confirms that Jessica and Paul believe that the JICA learners are the same as any other type of language learners with regards to topics such as error correction, as in response to a question along these lines, Paul commented that 'I don't think that that would be much different' (30m05s). The main point of differentiation was that JICA learners need to know the technical language for their work in English, as highlighted by Jessica's comment that 'I think that... the morning general English would be the same as if they were going elsewhere' (14m26s).

So far in this analysis, a fairly strong case has been made for two assertions regarding Jessica and Paul's belief systems, namely that forms of English in JICA host countries are incorrect and illegitimate to some extent, and that standard English should be the learning target for JICA learners. The final two extracts will consolidate these points and expand upon them, being in fact again one longer passage divided into two parts to facilitate analysis and discussion. At the point where the next extract begins, we are at the stage of the interview relating to interview question five, where I am asking if there is anything about the teachers' approach to language lessons at JICA which is specific to this context in comparison to other types of English language teaching. After a discussion on error correction in this regard, I again try to steer the topic towards standards and diversity in the context with a multi-layered complex question.

#### *Extract 4.6*

- 1 N: and do you ever kind of (.) highlight the fact that (.)
- 2 the uses of English where they're going might be non-
- 3 standard themselves (.) or do you just kind of let them
- 4 (.) exper- you know (.) that's for them when they arrive
- 5 (1.4)
- 6 J: yeah I don't (.) I::: I basically teach English
- 7 N: your
- 8 J: [English

9 N: [your English yeah  
 10 J: yeah and however (.) whatever they encounter when they  
 11 arrive they will [adapt  
 12 N: [right  
 13 J: but if they learn more here (.) it will be easier for  
 14 them when they arrive (.) and  
 15 N: yeah  
 16 (.)  
 17 J: I'm (.) unfortunately we (.) >we can't control those  
 18 situations so all we can do is focus on what we can teach  
 19 them here<  
 20 N: yeah  
 21 J: they've only got sixty five days so why not teach [it  
 22 N: [mm  
 23 J: as good as you can  
 24 N: yeah  
 25 J: um (.) and  
 26 N: mm  
 27 J: whether that gets diffused or localised  
 28 N: mm-hm (.) yeah  
 29 J: hopefully they'll know the difference  
 30 N: right (.) right

(Jessica and Paul, 31m22s – 32m18s)

In Jessica's response to my question sequence in lines 1-4, she apparently starts a negative response to my question – 'yeah I don't' (6) – but this is not completed. After a pause and an elongation of 'I' she then states 'I basically teach English' (6) in a bald, on-record fashion. This could be interpreted as indicating a degree of frustration with my line of questioning and a desire to close it down with a definitive statement. That definitive statement is telling, in that 'I basically teach English' is an affirmation of the position that there is only one real form of English – standard English – and it is self-evident that this is what English language teachers should be teaching. This is followed by an extended sequence (10-30) which reinforces the concept of 'liquefaction' on contact with communities in the JICA host countries. In this case the terms used are 'diffused or localised' (27), the latter of those terms being relatively neutral but the former again implying some kind of movement from the strong, original form to a weaker one. By stating that 'unfortunately we can't control those situations' (17-18) and



'hopefully they'll know the difference' (29) this compounds the sense that Jessica would fundamentally like the idealised product which she conceives herself as a teacher of, standard English, to be retained and adhered to by her learners. There are clear indications here of negative appraisals for non-standard forms of English, when used by both JICA learners and local people in their host countries.

As previously mentioned, the next and last extract to be presented from this interview follows immediately from the previous one. In my next turn I frame a question which persists with the topic of addressing diverse English forms in the classroom despite ongoing resistance from the interviewees to the topic.

#### *Extract 4.7*

- 1 N: okay great and um:: (.) you mentioned pidgin English  
2 before (.) um:: (1.9) so talking about these diverse  
3 forms (.) would you ever think about including language  
4 like that in a lesson (.) or do you think that's not (.)  
5 appropriate  
6 (2.1)  
7 J: teaching pidgin English↑  
8 N: not (.) so much te::aching it (.) not not trying to teach  
9 it but (.) having it as a feature of a lesson (.) to some  
10 extent (.) is that something you'd you'd try or would y-  
11 would you [prefer to avoid  
12 J: [I:::  
13 personally (.) I don't (.) I::: don't think I↑ would  
14 N: mm  
15 J: um:: (.) we've only got sixty five days and (.) depending  
16 on the levels that you get at the [beginning  
17 N: [mm  
18 J: as to how much you can actually teach in that sixty five  
19 days  
20 N: yeah  
21 J: but if you (.) dilute your (.) overall [content

22 N: [mm

23 J: um (.) [it's gonna be harder for them (.) I think I

24 N: [mm

25 J: would stick with [English and

26 N: [right

27 (.)

28 how about the very top class (.) if they were kind of

29 comfortable with most of your materials would you

30 consider it then or would you just prefer just to leave

31 it out (1.5) altogether

32 (.)

33 P: well I teach slang once in a while [some

34 N: [mm

35 (.)

36 P: well common English phrases (.) that seems to be the most

37 popular (.) part of the [class

38 N: [yeah mm

39 P: sometimes ( ) each joke is a ( ) or something like

40 that you know

41 N: mm-hm

42 P: but there's limits to that kind of thing

43 N: yeah

44 (2.1)

45 J: mm

46 (2.0)

47 P: no not really

48 N: >okay<

49 (2.6)

50 J: yeah I think more of the the common u- used languages

51 N: mm

52 J: the combination of (.) phrases and

53 N: yeah

54 J: the real English but still more slang type English

55 N: yeah

56 J: perhaps (.) yes I could certainly see that especially

57 with the higher [level classes

58 N: [yeah

59 J: but getting into more: (.) the pidgin (.) language type

60 N: yeah

61 J: I'm not so su::re

62 N: yeah no that's fine [yeah

63 J: [I don't think we have time basically  
64 N: yeah (.) yeah that's fine

(Jessica and Paul, 32m18s – 34m24s)

In the early part of extract 4.7, after my question sequence (1-5), Jessica's request for clarification (7) and my response (8-11), Jessica makes an extended response (12-25) which is a negation of my proposition which is wholly in keeping with the perspectives which have emerged throughout this analysis. Of particular note is the term 'dilute' (21) used here with reference to diluting the content of the course if pidgin English was featured within it. This now creates a neat semantic set used by Jessica in relation to the concept of incorporating diverse linguistic forms of English as opposed to the standard, comprising of 'liquefied', 'diffused' and 'diluted'. These terms are linked semantically, all indicating a move from a pure form to one which is weaker, as explored earlier. This provides a neat example of Jessica's underlying conceptions of diversity in English and the importance of maintaining the standard in educational contexts, as does her comment 'I would stick with English' (23-25), later clarified as being 'the real English' (54).

My response to Jessica's initial answer is to formulate another question sequence (28-31), which seeks to expand the topic by referring Jessica and Paul to 'the very top class' (28). This is an attempt to circumvent Jessica's rejection of my proposition based on the need to support learners who begin the training course with lower proficiency. It is taken up by Paul who again equates the type of language I am referring to with 'slang' (33), saying that he teaches this 'once in a while' (33) and subsequently links this with 'jokes' (39). There is an element of confusion here as Paul seems to be equating the topic of pidgin English with informal standard English, a connection which does not hold up to close scrutiny. Regardless of this, as Paul's contribution to the extract ends with 'no not really' (47), it is clear that he rejects the overall proposition I have made in my two question sequences. The extract then ends (50-63) with Jessica again contributing another negation of my propositions. This picks up the earlier confusion in Paul's turns regarding the relationship between 'slang' and pidgin English, as she says she would

consider incorporating ‘the real English but still more slang type English’ (54) with higher level classes but that she would not be sure about ‘getting into more... pidgin language type’ (59). This is all consistent with what has gone before and in fact a notable aspect of Jessica and Paul’s conceptualisations of these topics is their clarity and consistency: there seems to be no ambiguity or internal complexity to them at all.

#### 4.1.2.3 Jessica and Paul’s Interview: Concluding Comments

The analysis above demonstrates that, when it comes to conceiving of language in JICA host countries, Jessica and Paul take a ‘deficit view’, from which they essentially see such forms of communication as incorrect and inadequate. In a related set of conceptions, they view such non-standard forms of English as having no place in the pre-service language pedagogy of the Japanese volunteers. This resistance to an incorporation of diverse forms of English into language pedagogy is broadly consistent with findings which were reviewed in chapter two (e.g. Matsuda, 2009; Suzuki, 2010). It could be argued that the significance of this resistance is amplified in the JICA context, as the learners are without question going to experience those kinds of diverse forms post-pedagogy. It is important to emphasise here that such ideas may be closely bound up with Jessica and Paul’s professional identities as teachers (Richards, 2006) and their idealised teacher selves (Kubaniyova, 2012). Based on the biographical information that we have about Jessica and Paul, it seems possible that their inexperience of language and communication in JICA host countries, combined with an assumed lack of teacher education regarding global diversity in English, may be contributing factors towards these conceptions.

It is important to note here, that it has not been my wish or intention to portray Jessica and Paul’s conceptions in a negative light. As Iedema (2014) points out, it is important for discourse analysts not to misuse the power that they have when selecting data and

an analytical framework with which to interpret it. The critical assertions which have been made here about Jessica and Paul's conceptions have been carefully assembled following a thorough, bottom-up approach to the data. As clearly demonstrated, these assertions can be made with more conviction based on the consistency in the expressed ideas across numerous extracts.

To provide some counter-balance to my depiction of Jessica and Paul, I would like to point out that they clearly care about their learners and want what they see as the best for them. For example they were quick to discuss aspects of the JICA learning context in the sense of how the learners can best be served by the teachers. This was evident in various features of the interview which it is not possible to report upon here due to restrictions of space. It seems that, apart from an adherence to standard English as shown above, both Jessica and Paul prioritise functionality in their learners as they referred frequently to the goal of making them more functional, although language form always seems to be the priority, such as when for example Jessica stated that 'the more English they have... the more they can function' (15m34s). Confidence was another issue that was mentioned, for example when Paul commented that he would frequently tell his learners 'you're gonna make mistakes, don't worry about it... don't lose confidence' (19m39).

Having said this, I have built a case carefully for the fact that Jessica and Paul have views about language and communication which can be seen as rather ethnocentric and native-speakerist. This means that we can legitimately question whether some kind of awareness raising of issues in real-life communication in English between speakers from diverse backgrounds would be appropriate for Jessica and Paul. As stated earlier in the chapter, another teacher interview provides a clear point of divergence and contrast from the conceptions which have been discussed so far. This is the interview with Laurence, which is analysed next.

### **4.1.3 A discourse Analysis of Laurence's Interview**

Laurence is a male teacher from Ghana, with a vast amount of teaching experience. At the time of the interview, he had been teaching for approximately thirty seven years, with twenty six of these spent working for JICA, the last ten years of which in the role of head teacher of English at the Nihonmatsu training centre. He holds a bachelor's degree in education and has lived in the USA and Nigeria as well as Japan and his native Ghana. In his own words he can 'probably use a local Ghanaian language... called Dagari' (4m48s) and has some receptive ability in French and Japanese, with English being what he later described as his dominant language. As Ghana is one of the host countries which English-learning JICA volunteers are regularly dispatched to, it can be speculated that Laurence would naturally have a heightened awareness regarding the types of cultural environment and styles of language and communication that JICA learners may experience post-pedagogy. The fact that he has made frequent visits to JICA host countries for official purposes, including several nations in Africa and the pacific region, is also likely to be relevant in terms of increased knowledge and awareness of JICA volunteer experiences. When asked what he did during these visits, Laurence replied that this was 'basically checking how volunteers are handling their assignment... what kind of communication gaps there still are to make up for' (8m41s).

#### 4.1.3.1 Initial Analysis of Laurence's Interview

During our opening discussion of JICA learner needs, Laurence made the succinct comment that 'basically they need the language for two things... one is just for general communication and the other, more important thing is for the job' (9m26s). He also made comments regarding the wide variation in proficiency of learners when they begin the course, including the fact that 'there are some volunteers who really don't need any further coaching on using the language for general purposes' (9m52s). When the discussion progressed to the second interview question, and a consideration of the JICA

learners compared to a Japanese person preparing to live in the UK or USA, Laurence made a series of comments regarding a difference in terms of the 'cultural sociolinguistic aspect' (11m58s) of English not being a focus for JICA learners. He went on to state that 'they are only learning the language as... a simple tool... not the language for the purpose of immersing themselves into the culture' (12m14s). As the quotations above demonstrate, Laurence has an established set of beliefs regarding language and culture, for example that learning English as a tool of communication is somewhat different from attempting to learn the language with embedded cultural elements as apparently would be the case in locations such as the UK or USA.

This raises the question of whether Laurence believes that using only English in JICA host countries would mean that some cultural elements of those locations would remain inaccessible to volunteers, which would perhaps be particularly significant to volunteers who would *want* to experience it. With hindsight, I could have followed up on this question by asking Laurence whether he believes that some aspects of culture are embedded in particular languages, and only fully accessible through it. Aspects of Laurence's established set of beliefs about language and communication will become clear from the extracts below and their analysis, starting with extracts 4.8 and 4.9, which represent Laurence's response to the third interview question regarding daily language use for JICA volunteers.

#### *Extract 4.8*

- 1 N: that actually leads really neatly into three so perhaps  
2 we'll go straight in  
3 L: yeah  
4 N: what do you imagine daily language use will be like for  
5 the volunteers in their host countries (.) now for you  
6 you don't have to imagine because you've visited them  
7 L: yeah  
8 N: and seen them (.) so let's talk about their daily  
9 language use

10 L: yah er:m (.) daily language use and this is quite an  
11 interesting (.) thing  
12 N: right  
13 L: er because in Zambia I met a volunteer  
14 N: mm-hm  
15 L: she was from one of the higher classes  
16 N: right  
17 L: and she: said when I asked her what do you think (.) was  
18 missing in your training (.) in  
19 N: mm-hm  
20 L: er NTC  
21 N: uh-huh  
22 L: she said (.) she would like to see (.) more: exposure to  
23 the dialects of English that are av-  
24 N: right  
25 L: that people use in their host country (.) so um I asked  
26 her why she would need that because I [said  
27 N: [mm  
28 L: you are supposed to learn what used to be called standard  
29 English here  
30 N: mm-hm  
31 L: and she said because when she speaks (.) they don't  
32 understand her  
33 N: mm  
34 L: and when she speaks  
35 N: mm  
36 L: or- oh when they speak she doesn't understand (.) them  
37 N: right  
38 L: and when she speaks they don't understand her  
39 N: [sure  
40 L: [she had a very American accent she lived in the US and  
41 when she came here she was near-native ( )  
42 N: right  
43 L: so: I (.) told her that there was no need (.) for her to  
44 pre-learn a dialect  
45 N: right  
46 L: of English  
47 N: right  
48 L: because when you go into that  
49 N: yeah



50 L: er situation (.) you will get used to it you'll learn it  
51 from immersion

(Laurence, 12m37s – 14m06s)

In interactional terms, Laurence responds to my question sequence (1-9) with the presentation of a narrative which begins in line 13 and continues for the remainder of the extract. It is notable that the move to present a narrative follows my comment, embedded into the question sequence, that Laurence might have particular experiences which he can refer to (5-8). The narrative begins with a situation that was alluded to previously, with Laurence on location in a JICA host country gathering information about any perceived gaps in volunteers' abilities to communicate. This is explicitly realised in lines 17-18 with the reported question 'what do you think was missing in your training'. The reported response is 'she would like to see more exposure to the dialects of English that... people use in their host country' (22-25). This is a significant moment because it begins to formulate the issue which Laurence is raising in response to my question about daily language use; in other words it is a significant moment not just for Laurence's narrative, but for this phase of the interview and ultimately, Laurence's conceptions of language and communication.

The issue here of variation generally and 'dialects of English' (23) specifically, is raised in a neutral and non-problematic way compared with how diverse forms of English were treated in Jessica and Paul's interview. Having said that, as Laurence's narrative continues, there is still an overall orientation to the idea of standard English, although the phrasing of 'you are supposed to learn what used to be called standard English here' (28-29) implies a certain awareness that the concept is either in transition or is an entity which is open to question. Furthermore Laurence's ultimate response to the issue, that there is 'no need to pre-learn a dialect' (43-44) because 'you'll learn it from immersion' (51) seems to revolve around the concept that standard English still has a value in a pedagogical sense as adaptations to specific dialects will occur naturally as a feature of

real life interaction and language contact. This is reiterated and expanded upon as the sequence above continues, now presented as extract 4.9.

*Extract 4.9*

- 1 N: so yeah I was (.) I was just gonna ask you so what (.)  
2 you know how did you field her question and her request  
3 so (.) that's your: (.) your your principle (.) guiding  
4 (.) thing  
5 L: yah  
6 N: is that (.) that immersion happens (.) the adaptation to  
7 local  
8 L: yeah  
9 N: standards  
10 L: because that (.) i:s the case (.) in any language  
11 situation  
12 N: right  
13 L: er if you went to er: (.) Alabama  
14 N: uh-huh  
15 (2.7)  
16 L: you would probably need to take a lo- er a little while  
17 to get used to how they're speaking  
18 N: right  
19 L: and if you went off to the islands (.) the islands off  
20 um: the coast of er (.) Georgia  
21 N: uh-huh uh-huh  
22 L: you probably wouldn't be able to understand anything at  
23 all  
24 N: right  
25 L: um even (.) near home maybe you would have a little bit  
26 of a challenge  
27 N: mm-hm  
28 L: listening to a Yorkshire-man who's never stepped out of  
29 Yorkshire  
30 N: okay yeah  
31 L: [so  
32 N: [that's an interesting point you make  
33 L: yeah

34 N: so what (.) why is it because he's never stepped out of  
35 Yorkshire himself  
36 L: because then (.) he is not aware: (.) that (.) his (.)  
37 dialect  
38 N: yeah  
39 L: may not be easily understood by other people  
40 N: right  
41 L: yeah  
42 N: right right  
43 L: because when you're talking to somebody who speaks a  
44 different dialect from you  
45 N: mm  
46 L: you make efforts (.) to: (.) kind of modify  
47 N: right  
48 L: your dialect  
49 N: right [right  
50 L: [in a way that the other person will find it easier  
51 to understand  
52 N: sure [sure sure  
53 L: [and that always happens in any you know  
54 N: sure

(Laurence, 14m07s – 15m36s)

This passage demonstrates Laurence's awareness and understanding the process of accommodation (e.g. Giles, 2009) which was reviewed in chapter two. This is made clear near the end of this extract where Laurence refers to 'when you're talking to somebody who speaks a different dialect from you... you make efforts to kind of modify... your dialect... in a way that the other person will find it easier to understand' (43-51). Laurence appears to see this process as universal and ubiquitous, as demonstrated by the examples he provides earlier in the extract, the early comment 'in any language situation' (10-11) and the final thought which is left unfinished 'that always happens in any you know' (53). This process is certainly being posited as being relevant and significant to JICA volunteers in their experiences post-pedagogy, coming as it does subsequent to the narrative about the volunteer in Zambia and a continued justification for Laurence's position relative to her questions, which was explored above.

It is noteworthy that the hypothetical examples provided by Laurence in extract 4.9 include native speakers from Kachru's inner circle countries. The orientation to myself in the examples beginning 'if you went to Alabama' (13), can be explained on the one hand by the fact that, as Laurence's current interlocutor, he made the examples recipient-designed in order to provide increased effect and impact on me as the receiver of the concepts. But furthermore, it seems significant that Laurence illustrates his point only through so called native speakers, by providing hypothetical examples of communication between myself and individuals from the American states of Alabama (13) and Georgia (20), then a Yorkshireman (28), and referring to potential interactional trouble and the need for accommodation. This indicates that Laurence is highly aware of diversity in English not just in postcolonial, multilingual environments relevant to JICA volunteers, but also within the so-called but contested category of the native speaker. This paints a picture of Laurence's conceptions of language and communication as being at ease with the principle of variation in English and the incumbent need to accommodate to different varieties, with these processes in fact being completely natural. We can speculate that such a position may derive from his own background coming from a postcolonial, multilingual environment, or from other relevant life experiences.

#### 4.1.3.2 Mid-point of Laurence Interview Analysis

So far, it is clear that the orientation to *native* and *non-native* speakers by Laurence is wholly different from those taken up by Jessica and Paul, as there is no evidence of illegitimacy ascribed to the latter by Laurence, and variation or diversity within the former is alluded to. Having said this, there is still the orientation to the importance of standard English as the learning model which was discussed above, with the implication that diversity is perhaps for language in the real world rather than in educational contexts. The following extract will shed some light on this, which begins around 15

minutes later at a point when I am asking about the possibility of incorporating the English of JICA host country speakers into lessons in the pre-service pedagogy.

*Extract 4.10*

- 1 N: I'm interested in um: (.) like listening texts [that are  
2 L: [mm-hm  
3 N: used um would you think there's any scope for: trying to  
4 (.) get more authentic host country: (.) communication in  
5 as listening texts or is that not really  
6 L: um:  
7 N: suitable  
8 L: some of the teachers  
9 N: mm  
10 L: feel very strongly that (.) um: the (.) variety of  
11 English that we shou- we teach here should be the  
12 varieties they f- meet (.) in the host countries  
13 N: ri:ght  
14 L: so (.) one of the ways for us to do that (.) would be (.)  
15 to expose them  
16 N: mm  
17 L: to recorded material  
18 N: right  
19 L: er from the host countries  
20 N: mm  
21 L: there is a value in that  
22 N: mm mm  
23 L: er because ultimately (.) they are going to go there and  
24 they are going to have to deal with the accents (.) with  
25 the vocabulary  
26 N: sure  
27 L: and all  
28 N: sure  
29 L: the varieties that are (.) used in their host country  
30 N: mm  
31 L: so it would be good for them (.) to be introduced to some  
32 of that kind of er er dialect  
33 N: sure [sure

34 L: [but if it's at the expense of learning the basics  
35 (.) then I would not emphasize that  
36 N: right  
37 L: I would reserve that until (.) after they finish  
38 N: right  
39 L: er what I would call the kernel set of functions and er:  
40 N: right  
41 L: then we can go onto that  
42 N: sure [sure sure  
43 L: [yeah

(Laurence, 32m30s – 33m54s)

This extract offers further insights and an extension of the discussion above regarding Laurence's perspectives on the relationship between standard language in educational contexts and diversity in language as it is actually used in the real world. In terms of an acknowledgement and understanding of that diversity, we have Laurence's wording of 'the varieties they meet in the host countries' (11-12) and a later expansion of the same concept as 'they are going to have to deal with the accents... the vocabulary and all the varieties that are used in their host countries' (24-29). Such phrasing and manner of framing variations of English can be characterised as matter-of-fact and non-judgemental, with nothing to indicate that Laurence finds the diversity to be inherently wrong or deficient.

In terms of the pedagogical aspect of my question above (1-7), Laurence takes up the position that exposure to recorded material from the host countries could be valuable, but not at the expense of the 'kernel set of functions' (39) that volunteers are thought to need. It is noteworthy that Laurence refers to a baseline ability in terms of functions rather than grammatical standards here. In fact this is particularly significant when considering the next pair of extracts, which are again a longer passage divided into two. Here the subject is 'error' correction in the classroom, which will again feed into the larger question of how Laurence conceives of standards and diversity in English, and implications for the JICA classroom.

*Extract 4.11*

1 N: about how you (.) correct errors [or how you  
2 L: [oh error correction  
3 [yeah okay  
4 N: [is there any difference there or  
5 L: m er yeah I it is there's a big difference [here  
6 N: [right right  
7 L: because (.) our focus is not on accuracy  
8 N: right  
9 L: yah  
10 N: right  
11 L: so (.) if a volunteer (.) skips all his articles  
12 N: mm-hmm  
13 L: and still says what he wants to say  
14 N: mm  
15 L: I do not correct errors  
16 N: right  
17 L: yeah  
18 N: how [interesting yeah  
19 L: [so I don't correct those kind of (.) mechanical  
20 errors  
21 N: mm  
22 L: that do not interfere with the b- (.) the basic message  
23 that they are trying to communicate  
24 N: right  
25 L: I don't bother with that at all  
26 N: right right  
27 L: ah another thing is (.) I don't bother with correcting  
28 pronunciation  
29 N: right  
30 L: because (.) here again  
31 N: mm  
32 L: the- the difference between (.) the native-native speaker  
33 ((taps table in time with 'native-native'))  
34 N: mm-hm  
35 L: and the learner speaker  
36 N: mm-hm  
37 L: and if I know  
38 N: mm  
39 L: if for example the Africans say soka (.) I know what it

40 /sɒkæ/ - phonetic  
41 **transcription**  
42 means  
43 N: mm-hm  
44 L: I don't need to say (.) use a differen- a softer sounding  
45 ending or [anything  
46 N: [right right  
47 L: because a- (.) the person in Zambia will say I like soka  
48 N: yeah yeah  
49 L: and so if a volunteer says it the same way  
50 N: yeah  
51 L: I don't- I don't change it ((taps table with 'change  
52 it'))  
53 N: right right  
54 L: because my (1.9) my feeling is a Japanese should speak  
55 English the way a Japanese speaks English  
56 N: that's a great point [yeah yeah  
57 L: [yeah so (.) um (.) those kind of  
58 things  
59 N: mm  
60 L: like (.) insisting (.) on the pronunciation [of vo:wels  
61 N: [yeah  
62 L: [that (.) are not (.)  
63 N: [right  
64 mm  
65 L: easy (.)  
66 N: mm  
67 L: for them to articulate  
68 N: sure  
69 L: yeah [because they are not native speakers  
70 N: [sure  
71 sure  
72 L: or correcting errors like (.) prepositions  
73 N: right  
74 L: and er articles  
75 N: right  
76 L: and things that do not change the meaning of what they  
77 said  
78 N: right  
79 L: I don't waste time on that

(Laurence, 25m20s – 27m19s)



In response to the overall topic of error correction for the context, and specifically as a possible point of difference between JICA learners and other kinds of English language learner, Laurence immediately orientates to a well-established pedagogical concept, with a focus not on 'accuracy' (7), but by implication, fluency (e.g. Savignon, 1991). This is in itself not surprising considering other elements of what Laurence has said regarding the pedagogical context. However the sequence beginning 'if a volunteer skips all his articles' (11) reveals a nuanced, principled set of orientations towards this issue. For example, as somebody with seemingly high levels of awareness of issues in interpersonal intelligibility and processes such as accommodation, Laurence is able to give specific examples of why he would never consider correcting certain errors in the JICA classroom, for example soccer pronounced as 'soka' (line 39, meaning that the last vowel is pronounced as a stressed A sound, such as in Japanese katakana style pronunciation of the word and in other variants, rather than the more accepted, standard pronunciations in British or American English).

Whereas many English teachers might see this feature of pronunciation as an error in need of correction, Laurence views the feature in terms of a good fit with typical pronunciation in some JICA host countries, seeing this then as a facilitator of intelligibility. In addition to this, we can observe that Laurence is sensitive to certain difficulties that Japanese learners might experience in pronunciation, such as 'vowels... that are not... easy for them to articulate' (59-66). A fundamentally egalitarian perspective is offered by the comment 'my feeling is a Japanese should speak English the way a Japanese speaks English' (53-54). This point of view, that learners should have the freedom to speak a certain variety of English (usually with the proviso that it should be intelligible to other speakers) is frequent in the world Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca literature, and is made specifically by Baxter (1980) and Hino (2009) for the Japanese context, as was outlined in chapters one and two.

In the section of the interview immediately following extract 4.11, Laurence does make the point that 'error correction will come in of course in writing tasks' (27m20s),

indicating an alignment with standard English for the written mode of communication. This adds complexity to the issue and will be discussed again shortly. He also gives an example of when he would correct a JICA learner's spoken English due to an anticipated problem with intelligibility arising from a construction which commonly occurs in Japanese learners' English: 'if you say almost Japanese like natto... the person who has no experience talking with Japanese would not know what you mean... so I would point out errors like that' (28m17s). Laurence's point here stems from the fact that the use of *almost* instead of *most* in the construction referred to (natto being a type of Japanese food) does in fact have a major impact on the intelligibility of the statement. Note that even here, his allusion to 'the person who has no experience talking with Japanese' has implications of Laurence's heightened awareness of issues in intelligibility and accommodation to different diverse forms of language. These points are crucial to understanding Laurence's conceptions of language, communication overall, and specifically for the JICA context.

The last extract of Laurence's interview to be presented and analysed here (extract 4.12) is part of an extended six minute extract which occurs at the very end of the interview and has been included in appendix B1.1. The topics discussed in the longer extract are complex, including questions of whether the term *Ghanaian English* has relevance or meaning to Laurence, and passages of interaction which skirt around the topic of whether Laurence considers himself to be a *native speaker* or not. The whole passage is relevant to the issues which have been raised so far. The shorter extract included immediately below has been chosen as it touches on the issue of standard English again, which will move us towards being able to make assertions and conclusions regarding Laurence's conceptions of this topic. To provide a little context for the shorter extract included here, at the point where this begins we had been talking about the topic of whether *Ghanaian English*, if such a thing exists, could be considered as being a legitimate variety of English.

*Extract 4.12*

- 1 L: what I would call standard is if it's spoken (.) it it's  
2 never deveered so much from: basic English that it's not  
3 intelligible to other (.) [speakers  
4 N: [sure sure yeah (.) [I see  
5 L: [yeah so  
6 when you have (.) for example Australia can talk about  
7 Australian English  
8 N: mm-hm  
9 L: yeah because there are some varieties (.) variations that  
10 N: [yeah yeah  
11 L: [are peculiar to them but they are standard  
12 N: yeah [yeah  
13 L: [yeah Ghana does not have a large enough  
14 N: right [right  
15 L: [population of English speakers (.) [to s-  
16 N: [would (.)  
17 would you agree with me that um: (.) Ghana is a case that  
18 (.) it might sort of challenge that traditional divide of  
19 native and non-native speaker because (.) obviously you  
20 are a native speaker of English (.) because you grew up  
21 using it (.) extensively as a young person  
22 L: yah  
23 N: therefore you acquired it  
24 L: yah  
25 N: in a similar way to me  
26 L: yah  
27 N: so do you (.) do you think it challenges that boundary or  
28 do you think that you- you do map onto a native non-  
29 native speaker  
30 L: I think that there's still that mapping because  
31 N: right  
32 L: the (2.1) the ambience atmosphere  
33 N: right  
34 L: is not an English one  
35 N: right:  
36 L: yeah  
37 N: so maybe something cultural as well as [linguistic or

38 L: [yes (.) yeah so  
39 and (.) also again (1.1) there aren't that many people  
40 like me  
41 N: right  
42 L: who would say for example that their dominant language is  
43 English  
44 N: right  
45 L: yeah so:  
46 N: mm [mm  
47 L: [we don't have a large enough pool of (.) people  
48 N: yeah  
49 L: that way to say [that  
50 N: [I see what you mean yeah  
51 L: a variety has emerged  
52 N: yeah  
53 L: so we are sort of still attached to (1.9) an external  
54 N: okay  
55 (.)  
56 L: idea of English  
57 N: yeah that's (.) [that's really interesting stuff  
58 L: [yeah  
59 yeah ((laughter))  
60 N: and thanks for sharing that

(Laurence, 44m44s – 46m34s)

The extract opens with Laurence supplying a possible definition for what standard English is, which again relates to intelligibility (2-3). The fundamental issue that Ghana does not have the kind of sociolinguistic environment to have its own form of standard English, as opposed to Australia for example, is then pointed out (5-15). My question sequence in lines 16-29 is notable from an interactional point of view, in that I essentially avoid the direct question *do you consider yourself to be a native speaker of English?*, via circumlocutions, and I in fact choose to go on record as saying 'obviously you are a native speaker of English' (19-20), perhaps with the intention to allow Laurence to negate this if he feels it is untrue. In the beginning of a response sequence which starts in line 30 and continues to the end of the extract, Laurence alludes to Ghana itself rather than himself as an individual, reaffirming that he does not see it as an environment in which

individuals could be considered as native speakers of English, referring to the ‘ambience atmosphere... being not an English one’ (32-34). He then tellingly differentiates himself from typical Ghanaians by saying ‘there aren’t that many people like me... who would say... that their dominant language is English’ (39-43). We can speculate that this differentiation may be important for Laurence’s personal and professional identity. This issue is linked with the larger point being made about the *non-nativeness* of English in Ghana in the remainder of the extract, and the key point is made that, from Laurence’s point of view, Ghana does not have its own variety of English because ‘we are sort of still attached to... an external idea of English’ (53-56). This perspective connects remarkably well with the traditional Kachruvian idea of some nations being norm-dependent in terms of English standards, although a fundamental difference is that Kachru would have considered Ghana as being in a circle which is developing its own norms for language. Whether Laurence’s conceptualisations here are coming from his own thinking or from academic reading on the subject is unknown, although with the absence of any mention of academic theories, perhaps we can assume that they are in fact his own ideas.

Before making a conclusion in regards to this analysis of Laurence’s interview, an extra point should be made which comes from a point in the interview just preceding extract 4.12, and which is included in the extended transcript in the appendix. Assertions have already been made that, despite his seeming awareness of diversity in English and lack of negative judgement towards it, Laurence places value on standard English in terms of educational contexts and perhaps for his professional and personal identity. This comes across in a passage where he makes negative evaluations against certain constructions he has experienced in American English, specifically ‘it’s different than’ (42m53s) and ‘I wish I would have known’ (43m15s). These examples appear in the context of Laurence explaining that we can conceive of American English but not a Ghanaian one, because such constructions are used so widely by a large of group of first language speakers of English. By criticising the constructions, most explicitly in ‘where I come from... in terms of my social background and my school background... we would not allow that to go’ (43m27s), Laurence makes it clear that *standard English* IS important to him. The

references to his 'social background' and 'school background' making it apparent that this is true in terms of general life, education and we can surmise, professional identity as a teacher who is aware of such issues. This is somewhat incongruous with Laurence's previously stated attitudes that English should be taught with an orientation towards intelligibility rather than standard English. How do we account for this apparent complexity, and perhaps some degree of internal contradiction in Laurence's apparent conceptualisations of language, communication and pedagogy?

The answer can be found in the principle of contextualisation of such ideas in spheres of language education. So the fact that Laurence would not intervene with linguistic features in the JICA classroom if they seemingly do not effect intelligibility, but does believe in linguistic standards in other social and educational environments are perhaps not incongruous at all, as they are explainable by what is relevant and fit for purpose in different contexts and situations. This links with Widdowson's (2003) differentiation between English as subject and object, for example when English is studied formally as a subject, perhaps in a grammar lesson in his native Ghana, Laurence would not agree with the constructions above being featured non-problematically. But when the purpose of education is functional communication, in other words the language as object which is common in everyday verbal interaction, he would accept the constructions as being part of everyday diversity in language usage. These concepts and interpretations of Laurence's perspectives can be given support by another brief quotation from Laurence in the context of needs analysis of JICA learners, where he states 'we found that sixty per cent of them have never really used English... they have studied English just as a subject... so our first approach is to try and get them to start using it as a language' (19m40s). We can see here that Laurence is fully aware that studying English 'just as a subject', in the way that all Japanese high school students do, contains a somewhat different set of pedagogical and ontological orientations to how Laurence conceives of, and approaches language, communication and pedagogy for JICA language learners.

#### 4.1.3.3 Laurence's Interview: Concluding Comments

In conclusion, based on the data presented above and its analysis, the assertion can be made that Laurence has high levels of awareness of diversity in English around the world, based on a range of factors relevant to individual contexts and situations. Although the term *native-speaker* obviously has some relevance to him, a strict dichotomy between native and non-native speakers is not integral to his conceptualisations of language and communication, for example referring to potential reduced intelligibility of individuals from different regions in the UK, without the ability or necessary experience to accommodate to each other's dialects. Generally speaking, Laurence seems to be non-judgemental about diversity in English, refraining from casting variations in a negative light. This is fundamental to his approach to pedagogy with JICA learners, making the ability to function in English in a way which would be intelligible to most speakers, the primary aim of his teaching. Having said this, *standard English* does have a resonance and meaning for Laurence, largely again based on intelligibility, but there is some evidence for it having some resonance with his personal and professional identity. This has partly been explained by the concepts of contextualisation of standards as more or less relevant to different educational environments, perhaps in the sense that they are more relevant when language is being studied formally, as a subject.

#### 4.1.4 Analysis of Further Teacher Interview Extracts

As has been explained previously, the first two interviews have been analysed in some depth in order to draw out a set of emergent issues in teacher conceptualisations for this context. Furthermore they work in opposition to each other on many of those issues. This following section will present and analyse a series of further extracts from the teacher interviews, for the purpose of expanding upon some of those issues and presenting the wider range of teacher conceptualisations which emerged from the data.

##### 4.1.4.1 Richard

Richard is a highly experienced English teacher from the UK, who has around a decade's teaching experience at JICA. He has spent extended amount of time travelling and living in JICA host countries, including official visits for JICA of the same type as Laurence, as was described previously. The following extract comes at a relatively early stage of the interview, as a follow-up to an initial discussion of learner needs.

##### *Extract 4.13*

- 1 N: um (.) yeah so we were talking about er yeah you were  
2 answering that question about (1.0) different learning  
3 needs for [those  
4 R: [yeah  
5 N: so y- you touched on cultural differences (.) u::m and  
6 also (1.1) degree of (.) you mentioned degree of  
7 grammatical accuracy [being less [important for  
8 R: [yeah [yeah  
9 N: probably the JICA learners  
10 R: yeah



11 N: yeah (.) and um:: (1.2) how about the actual kind of  
12 variety and style of the language you mentioned that as  
13 well  
14 (.)  
15 R: [ah yeah  
16 N: [but to what extent do you:: (.) try to:: (.) incorporate  
17 the f- (.) the destination they're going to  
18 (.)  
19 R: this is true um (.) it's a little difficult really I mean  
20 (.) er how can I say >going to Africa<  
21 N: mm  
22 R: >I've found anyway< they (.) in Africa they speak a very  
23 nice kind of textbook nineteen fifties English it sounds  
24 like Janet and John books  
25 N: right  
26 R: and it's beautifully [articulated  
27 N: [yeah  
28 R: sub-Saharan Africa I-I love it you know it's beautiful to  
29 listen to  
30 N: mm  
31 R: and things like (.) yeah they speak like Japanese in a  
32 way in that they avoid (.) phrasal verbs they'll use a  
33 dictionary verb you know [they'll use  
34 N: [mm  
35 R: recover rather than get better and they'll (.) they'll do  
36 that  
37 (.)  
38 N: yeah  
39 R: and (.) and also they're very awkward with some of the  
40 phrases  
41 N: °mm°  
42 R: and some of the (.) [there was a guy on the  
43 N: [°mm°  
44 R: radio today what was he saying (1.2) I have to tighten my  
45 belt very much very hard this kind [of (.) stuff  
46 N: [mm  
47 yeah  
48 R: which (.) do you correct that in a class (.) you know you  
49 might say something but it's not something you'd push

(Richard, 12m28s – 14m02s)

This extract portrays Richard as someone with a relatively high level of awareness of global diversity in English, perhaps at a level which is comparable to Laurence's, as he is quickly able to provide specific examples of linguistic features from JICA host countries, for example a tendency to use the more formal 'recover' as opposed to 'get better' (35) in 'sub-Saharan Africa' (28). This level of awareness, or at least personal perception, of diversity notwithstanding, Richard's attitude towards that diversity and variation appears to be more complex than either Laurence's or Jessica and Paul's, as there is evidence of both positive evaluations, for example 'it's beautifully articulated... I love it... it's beautiful to listen to' (26-29), and negative evaluations such as 'they're very awkward with some of the phrases' (39-40). Working with these two comments there are the illustrative examples of 'a very nice kind of textbook nineteen fifties English... like Janet and John books' (22-24) and 'I have to tighten my belt very much, very hard' (44-45). The latter example could be perceived as a kind of jovial banter regarding JICA host country English, but would surely be perceived by some to be patronising and insulting, as would the reference to Janet and John books.

The issues raised above, that Richard seems to have awareness of diversity in English as it relates to JICA host countries, but that his evaluations of those linguistic forms are mixed and sometimes explicitly negative, are a feature of the entire interview. For example soon after the previous extract ends, Richard is talking about instances when he has spoken to volunteers who have worked in the Pacific island nations, and he comments that 'they love pidgin... they learnt pidgin very quickly because it's that half kind of broken English which is not very far from... what they they've learned' (14m32s). This mode of expression, particularly the 'half kind of broken English' terminology, seems to represent an explicitly negative appraisal of pidgin English, and the type of English that some Japanese speakers use, and in fact represents an incorrect set of ideas about pidgin English, reminiscent of those held by Jessica and Paul. As mentioned previously, English-influenced pidgin languages are thought to be linguistic systems in their own right, rather a 'broken' or deficient form of English (Romaine, 2000).

The issue of negative appraisals aside, Richard seems to take an approach to pedagogy which is fairly similar to Laurence's, in that he does not emphasise grammatical accuracy (see lines 6-10 of the extract above) and has a position on error correction which is based largely on intelligibility, a process which he refers to as pointing out 'miscommunication errors' (30m09s). He also gives specific examples which are similar to those which Laurence gave, for example the need to correct 'almost this' (31m19s) as an example of a 'repeated Japanese English mistake' (31m17s), and the relative lack of importance of areas such as prepositions and articles. Furthermore he tries to 'use materials from the host country... as much as possible' (29m13s), mentioning specifically that he uses radio broadcasts, newspapers and even high school textbooks from JICA host countries.

#### 4.1.4.2 Sam

Sam is a male teacher from the UK with several years teaching experience at JICA, and a long history of living in Japan and working as an English language teacher. He has a particularly high level of proficiency in speaking Japanese. The extract presented below and subsequent analysis will serve to consolidate some of the issues addressed above in discussion of Richard's data.

#### *Extract 4.14*

1 N: that's great and then (.) leads onto the next one quite  
2 nicely (.) er what do you imagine daily language use will  
3 be like for the volunteers in their host countries (.)  
4 so: this is a very general question but I- I mean: you  
5 could think about their use of English their use of local  
6 languages  
7 (1.5)

8 S: yeah I mean a lot of places especially with English where  
9 they go (.) English is (.) not the first language in a  
10 lot of places so um: (1.3) and er a lot of it (.) even  
11 the English that they use in these countries is kind of  
12 broken English pidgin English or [whatever  
13 N: [mm mm  
14 S: u::m  
15 (1.2)  
16 N: right [right  
17 S: [so I feel that probably it's a lot easier for them  
18 N: mm-hm  
19 S: in:: (.) host countries rather than (.) native speaking  
20 countries such as the UK or the USA Canada or Australia  
21 or whatever  
22 N: right  
23 S: u::m because (.) people in the host countries don't  
24 expect them to:: speak perfect English and u::m  
25 N: right  
26 S: people who actually live there don't (.) speak perfect  
27 English themselves  
28 N: right [right  
29 S: [so: um

(Sam, 11m05s – 12m11s)

This extract took place as part of a longer sequence and discussion of English usage in JICA host countries and the implications of this for pedagogy in the context, with the issue of perfection, or imperfection in the host countries (23-27) being a regular feature of Sam's ideas and perspectives that he expressed on the topic. Sam expresses the point here that this could actually be a benefit to JICA volunteers as they may not be expected to 'speak perfect English themselves' (24), as opposed to hypothetical Japanese people living and working in 'native speaking countries' (19-20). This point aside, the issue of a JICA teacher referring to 'broken English' recurs here, with Sam's depiction of 'the English they use in these countries is kind of broken English pidgin English or whatever' (11-12). With Sam, Richard, Jessica and Paul, we can now identify a sub-set of teachers within those interviewed who are comfortable with casting English in JICA host countries in a somewhat negative light, although Sam has here expressed this in a rather matter-

of-fact way, without subtle detectable nuances or complexities (such as with Richard), and without a set of other supporting evidence available to show attitudes of native-speakerism (as with Jessica and Paul). All of these teachers indicate the possibility that they are not fully aware of issues surrounding standard English, dialects and variations of English, pidgins and creoles and other distinct local languages in JICA host countries. Although it could be argued that such entities are not neatly bounded and may exist on some kind of cline, it seems clear that the lack of awareness that they could at least be conceived of as separate linguistic entities, rather than simply 'broken English' is notable in this teaching context. Like Richard (and Laurence) but possibly unlike Jessica and Paul, Sam also seems to conceive of intelligibility as being a major factor to consider in JICA language classrooms, as he goes on to give a familiar account of his error correction in that 'basically error correction is if it... deters from comprehension' (19m04s).

#### 4.1.4.3 Kelly

Kelly is from the USA and has a wealth of English language teaching experience, including extended amounts of time at both JICA training centres. She is also a former Peace Corps volunteer who worked in Cameroon primarily through the medium of French, meaning that she has personal experiences which are relevant to the JICA context. Our interview was conducted remotely by Skype after I had visited the JICA training centres. When this extract begins, we had been discussing the third interview question of what daily language usage might be like for JICA volunteers in their host country, and I had asked a question regarding whether Kelly tries to incorporate styles and varieties of English from host countries into her lessons.

#### *Extract 4.15*

- 1        K: um (.) well it's my opinion er that (.) I could go  
2            anywhere in the world and er (.) anywhere (.) I could go

3 to any English speaking country in the world (.) >I mean  
4 I haven't been to all of them but< I've met a lot of  
5 people from various different English-speaking countries  
6 N: mm  
7 K: here in Japan and in the US (.) and I can understand them  
8 all can't I  
9 N: [yeah  
10 K: [and they can understand (.) we might have different  
11 accents and we use different words for different things  
12 but people tend to pick it up in context  
13 N: [sure  
14 K: [so I don't think that that um (.) I don't think there's  
15 a big problem once a person reaches a certain level of  
16 fluency and if they have a problem in adjusting to a  
17 different accent or slightly different way of  
18 N: [mm  
19 K: [using the language (.) well then that shows that they're  
20 not so flexible doesn't it  
21 N: [right right  
22 K: [I mean they have to (.) they have to (.) you know use  
23 what they have and (.) and um (.) adjust to the situation  
24 so while the English certainly is um (.) you know the  
25 wording can be different as well as the accent that's  
26 also true in in our own countries isn't it  
27 N: [sure sure  
28 K: [and um I mean you know so I- I- I don't I don't know  
29 whether you're asking if- if they should teach to a  
30 particular way of speaking English in Ghana for example  
31 or Kenya I don't think so  
32 N: [right  
33 K: [I think that (.) I think that if- if the teacher is an  
34 educated er Ghanaian or Kenyan  
35 N: [mm  
36 K: [that's good enough you know if they (.) I mean (.) I  
37 think w- the students need educated teachers who speak  
38 their own language fairly well right [and  
39 N: [sure sure  
40 K: but but beyond that I don't- I don't see it as a big  
41 problem  
42 N: [mm

43 K: [and so if um (.) er (.) of course I have (.) we have our  
44 standards based on our own education and if you look at  
45 the online newspapers even in Africa er (.) for example  
46 or anywhere else in the world you'll see that they use  
47 English differently than than we do  
48 N: [yes  
49 K: [won't you  
50 N: yes that's right [yeah  
51 K: [but I can understand what they're  
52 saying  
53 N: [yes  
54 K: [and in some cases (.) in some cases I- I d- I could say  
55 well I don't agree with that that's not (.) you know  
56 that's not what we would consider er appropriate  
57 N: [right  
58 K: [I can I believe that I can say that from an educated  
59 person's point of view

(Kelly, 33m17s – 35m52s)

In this extract, Kelly provides an extended line of argumentation (running throughout) which essentially proposes that it is not essential to incorporate host country specific features of English into the JICA classroom. In interactional terms, this becomes clear in lines 28-31, when Kelly reformulates my complex question into a new form and then negates it: 'I mean so you know I don't know whether you're asking if... they should teach to a particular way of speaking English in Ghana for example or Kenya... I don't think so'. Upon close scrutiny, the lines of argumentation that Kelly provides in support of this position are revealing about her conceptualisations of language and communication. For example lines 1-12 establish the concept of accommodation as being a key factor in the points that Kelly is making, as she explains that people can typically understand each other despite linguistic differences in English, in areas such as accent and vocabulary for example, due to the process of picking things up 'in context' (12). The extract as a whole leaves the impression that Kelly is, like Laurence, aware of diversity in linguistic forms and processes of accommodation in interpersonal communication relevant to the JICA context. She also has relatively high awareness of the continuum of language varieties including pidgins and creoles, local language and

varieties of English, as evidenced by a discussion of West African pidgin varieties at a point in the interview shortly after the extract above.

Where Kelly differs from Laurence is that there are a set of implicit and explicit features in her discourse data which indicates a negative evaluation of certain non-standard forms of English as linked to the *non-nativeness* of the speaker. There are indications of this in the passage above, where Kelly states that teachers need to be ‘educated’ and ‘speak their own language fairly well’ (37-38) and then the assertion that she doesn’t agree with, or find inappropriate, some forms of English in online African newspapers (54-56). Immediately following the extract, Kelly offers a personal anecdote where she explains that ‘once I... had to translate a person’s Indian or Sri Lankan English into English because I’m saying nobody could understand what this person was saying at this conference here in Tokyo, this was years and years ago, because his accent was so bad’ (35m55s). It goes without saying that this is a negative portrayal which casts the individual’s usage of English as deficient, without any acknowledgement that it could be legitimately different. Furthermore, there are points in the interview where Kelly repeatedly refers to the need to be an educated speaker, which gives the impression of a kind of elitist view. There are also further indications of quite a strict outlook when it comes to language standards, such as when referring to the need to correct the language of JICA language learners, Kelly states that ‘they can become really sloppy in their language’ (15m58s).

We can at least confidently say that Kelly’s orientations to standards in language are complex, for example at one point in the interview she equates them with professionalism, by stating that ‘I tell them that you know... the better you can speak, the more you’re going to come off as a professional’ (1h03m40s). Almost immediately after this, she makes a bald on record assertion about the issue of judging another person based on their language ability, when she states that ‘I mean it’s true for me, at the beginning when I meet someone who’s a non-native speaker, I know very well they’re a non-native speaker I am aware of that consciously but after I get to know them



a while, I forget about it and then I'm likely to judge them on some level on their ability to use the language well' (1h03m55s). Like Jessica and Paul, there seems to be some element of native-speakerism in Kelly's conceptualisations of language and communication.

#### 4.1.4.4 Martha

Martha is a female teacher from the Philippines who had lived in Japan and taught at the JICA training centre for approximately eight years at the time of our interview. The interview was started in person at the Komagane training centre and completed later by Skype, with the following extract coming from the latter part. When the extract begins, we had been discussing interview question two, regarding what Martha imagines daily language usage to be like for JICA volunteers. The issue of how Martha conceives of English usage in her native country then emerges as an issue of some importance.

As this is somewhat nuanced and complex issue, a longer stretch of the interview data has been included in appendix B1.2. As a general response to the interview question, Martha stated that she expects 'those students who have high English proficiency' to have 'no problem communicating' (8-11 – see extended extract presented in the appendix). Turning to English in the Philippines specifically based on my prompting, she initially points out that 'we know that the people speak differently' (13-14) and goes on to give an example of people in the Philippines using the word *shooting* where *filming* might be less ambiguous, for example if a person was saying 'I wanna see the shooting' (24). The wider point being made about the volunteers' experiences is that Martha expects some of the dispatched volunteers not to understand some aspects of local usage initially but 'as they live in the country they start to adapt this' (31-32). A notable issue is that Martha conveys the issue of English usage by people in the Philippines in a somewhat negative light, as the *shooting* example is somewhat comical, and is prefaced

by the comment that the people use such words ‘without thinking of the context’ (17-18). This hints at a negative evaluation when compared with other hypothetical ways that Martha could have framed an example of English usage in her home country. As the discussion unfolds (as can be seen in the extended extract, lines 34-73), Martha also refers to the mixing of English with local languages as ‘funny’ (54), again emphasising the humorous aspect of the linguistic processes being referred to, which seems to be consistent with a slight criticism of them. This assertion regarding negative evaluations of English as used in the Philippines will be strengthened through consideration of a shorter extract taken from the full version in the appendix.

#### *Extract 4.16*

- 1 N: so (.) by the way while we're talking about this idea of  
2 (.) English in the Philippines um  
3 M: [yeah  
4 N: [what do you think about (.) the idea of there being um a  
5 Philippine English as a kind of style of English d- do  
6 you have you heard of that and do you kind of agree with  
7 that  
8 M: yeah I- I- I- I heard but actually I don't like it  
9 ((laughter))  
10 N: you don't like it  
11 M: because (.) what is Philippine English↑  
12 N: mm  
13 M: maybe they mean the way people pronounce (.) some words  
14 N: mm  
15 M: is different  
16 N: mm (.) [right  
17 M: [and the intonation and the accent because we have  
18 a lot of islands  
19 N: yeah [yeah  
20 M: [and people (.) speak differently  
21 N: mm mm-hm [sure  
22 M: [and most (.) Japanese when they go to they  
23 don't stay in the city

24 N: [right  
25 M: [I mean the volunteers they don't stay in the city (.)  
26 they stay in some (.) areas  
27 N: yeah  
28 M: and most people don't speak English (.) and when they  
29 try: to speak English (.) they sound very funny  
30 N: mm-hm uh-huh  
31 M: so they think this is Filipino English (.) and so for  
32 example they say (.) er this sounds funny (.) **wa-terr** for  
33 **phonetic transcription -**  
34 **(/wa:teər:/)**  
35 example wa-terr  
36 N: mm-hm  
37 M: or I can't even say that (.) w- instead of water [or  
38 N: [mm  
39 (.)  
40 M: they (.) the r is very (.) like they- there is a sound a  
41 lot of r sound  
42 N: uh-huh uh-huh (.) yeah  
43 M: but I think this is because of the Spanish  
44 N: ri::ght okay okay

(Martha, 28m24s – 29m55s)

My question sequence in lines 1-7 is typically 'complex' (Roulston, 2010) in the sense that I tend to rarely ask direct questions during the interviews, particularly if I do not believe there is an obvious answer available, or if I feel the topic is potentially sensitive. By framing the question in this way here, I am aware of the fact that it is a potentially face-threatening or sensitive question, which proves to be the case. Martha goes on record as saying that she doesn't like the concept of Philippine English (8) and questions what it is (11). The reason for this, as the unfolding interaction indicates, is that Martha takes the term to mean something like a deficient or incorrect form of English, which presumably would be face-threatening to her personally or professionally, as such a term could be applicable to her, being from the Philippines herself. Martha acknowledges that 'the way people pronounce some words... is different' (13-15) and also that 'the intonation and accent' (17) is different. By the way she frames her continuing discussion of the issue, she seems to be claiming that this is either only true

or especially true of people in the remoter islands or rural areas of the Philippines, stating that most of these people 'don't speak English and when they try to speak English they sound very funny' (28-29). By doing this, Martha again distances herself from less proficient speakers of English from the Philippines, presumably because proficiency in English is an important part of her professional and personal identities. This is emphasised by her treatment of the *water* example (31-42) which 'sounds funny' (32) and is a style of pronunciation that Martha herself 'can't even say' (36).

This somewhat critical stance towards English in the Philippines is notable, and again with reference to the extended extract in the appendix, progresses to a point where Martha states that 'after a few months I think... they become like them... it's the danger... of the language because here we are trying to teach them the proper way... but when they are in those countries... and when they come back they have some... like some similarities... so uh sometimes I am afraid' (141-153, appendix B1.2).

In hindsight, a probing of this response would have been relevant and useful, and in fact there are interactional moments in the interview at this stage when I do not probe or ask for more examples when they would have been helpful, possibly because of the sensitive topic or because of the lack of interactional affordances associated with a face to face interview. Therefore we can only speculate why Martha might be 'afraid' of JICA volunteers picking up features of host country English from their experiences there. Perhaps Martha is thinking ahead to the individuals usage of English in other contexts such as in formal situations or taking grammar-based tests, or perhaps the comment simply reflects an inherent dislike of non-standard English forms. There is enough evidence here to assert that Martha at least takes an ambivalent attitude towards diversity in English (including her own country), or perhaps a somewhat negative one.

#### 4.1.4.5 Terry

Terry is a male teacher from the UK with many years' experience working for JICA. Like Laurence and Richard, he has taken part in trips to JICA host countries in order to collect information about their communicative experiences there. In the early stages of the interview in relation to JICA learner language needs, Terry made very similar succinct responses to those supplied by Laurence, namely that 'the main thing is they are able to transfer their skills sort of their knowledge... to the recipient organizations so that's... certainly from my point of view... I focus on how they can best transfer their skills... and how to make them as useful as possible as soon as possible' (9m06s). This typifies Terry's overall orientation to the pedagogical context which is extremely focused on the volunteers' work activities, in terms of how best to facilitate this through the pre-service language pedagogy. He also feels that the host countries and work assignment should be brought into focus through the lessons as much as possible, for example when asked about the morning general English class specifically, he stated that 'the technical element is still there' (11m14s) and that the topics he tends to choose for lessons are 'anything that related back to their work and also to the country they're going to' (11m46s). In the extract which follows, Terry formulates a response to the second interview question.

#### *Extract 4.17*

- 1 N: great let's move onto the second one (.) are their  
2 language learning needs different from for example a  
3 Japanese person preparing to live in the U- UK or the USA  
4 (.)  
5 so in terms of  
6 T: [yeah  
7 N: [actual geographical (.) you know the country the  
8 destination  
9 T: yeah

10 N: is there anything different about their learning needs do  
11 you think  
12 (.)  
13 T: um: (.) >yeah of course because they have a specific< (.)  
14 er: (.) req- requirement  
15 T: [transferring their knowledge  
16 N: [right  
17 right right  
18 T: and therefore um: (.) that- that's (.) that's the main  
19 focus um: (1.0) there are some things depending on the  
20 level of the class they also need to learn certain like  
21 phrasal verbs  
22 N: mm  
23 T: that we'd only use for example in British English<sup>↑</sup>  
24 N: right right  
25 T: a lot of the volunteers have problems with things like  
26 (.) the ones I met in Uganda said for example (.) erm:  
27 (.) a lot of the teachers didn't know the expression to  
28 sit an exam  
29 N: [right  
30 T: [they had no idea what [that meant  
31 N: [right right  
32 T: and it caused great difficulty for them so  
33 N: mm  
34 T: I mean I'd as I- I said to them it means to take an exam  
35 and (.) when I met the volunteers in Kenya last month  
36 they said they got thrown by things like the use of  
37 vehicle  
38 N: [uh-huh  
39 T: [rather than car  
40 N: right [right  
41 T: [so these kind of [things are  
42 N: [yeah yeah  
43 T: are very specific to their needs  
44 N: right and would you: (.) would you to any extent try to  
45 address that in your lessons  
46 T: I do [yeah  
47 N: [or how would you tackle that  
48 T: um: (.) er whenever it comes up whenever the opportunity  
49 comes up I'll explain the difference between say either  
50 the grammar

51 N: [right  
52 T: [or the vocabulary between British English and American  
53 English  
54 N: right right  
55 T: depending on which country they're going to  
56 N: [mm  
57 T: [so if they're going to the Philippines (.) um then the  
58 main focus would of course be on American English  
59 N: right  
60 T: and if it's (.) if they're going to Kenya or one of the  
61 African countries it tends to be British English (.) the  
62 way I address it is the kind of materials I use so I use  
63 something called the oxford photo dictionary  
64 N: oh right  
65 T: which explain- which has both British and American  
66 English [expressions in it  
67 N: [oh that's interesting (.) I didn't know that  
68 T: so I have a headache I've got a headache  
69 N: yeah  
70 T: or um (.) the parts of the car the trunk or the [boot  
71 N: [right  
72 T: I have a copy that I can show you [later  
73 N: [is that (.) is that um  
74 a book or [( )  
75 T: [it's a book so whereas Americans would say  
76 notebook in Britain we would say exercise book  
77 N: [right right  
78 T: [so I try and point them out as much as possible  
79 N: yeah  
80 T: depending on which country they're going to  
81 N: great

(Terry, 11m53s – 14m00s)

In Terry's initial response to my question sequence (1-11), it seems that he might not align with my attempts to be specific in terms of the actual geography or 'destination' (7-8) by focusing on the volunteers' work assignments again (13-15). However following this, Terry does go on to discuss the concept of different learner needs based on linguistic forms which may be typical to certain JICA host countries. He is able to give

specific examples of vocabulary which has caused intelligibility problems for volunteers in Africa, namely 'to sit an exam' (27-28) and 'vehicle' (37). Terry seems to be tuned into this issue as he states 'these kind of things are very specific to their needs' (41-43) and goes on to explain how he addresses the issue by differentiating between American and British English where relevant for the various post-colonial contexts where his students are going to (line 48 onwards). Whereas this seems like a sensible idea with some obvious pedagogical justification, there is a case for suggesting that Terry is being somewhat *monolithic* here, in terms of an either-or distinction which only emphasises the specific colonial legacies of the forms of English in each context, as opposed to its local influences. Having said this, Terry later demonstrates awareness of more idiomatic or creative expressions in host country English, such as 'some of the more colloquial English expressions... like in Ghana they might say er have you chopped yet meaning have you eaten... or small small instead of a little' (14m59s). At the same point of the interview, Terry points out that he might cover some of these issues with advanced JICA classes where relevant, but when I ask him specifically whether he would set out to incorporate for example 'Philippine specific English' (14m45s) he states that he feels the 'local language training which will... cover those kinds of things' (14m51s).

From the main data extract above and these further examples we can confidently say that Terry has a relatively high awareness of diversity in English which is relevant to English in the JICA host countries and also that he has a principled set of ideas regarding to what extent he might incorporate the diversity into his own teaching. As one final example will demonstrate, in reference to lower proficiency learners, he points out that 'we... focus on making them functional... so not worry about the subtleties, wait for them to get to their host countries' (16m55s). Apart from this high level of awareness, Terry also seems to take up a non-judgemental stance towards the diversity in English being referred to, as there is no solid evidence anywhere in his interview to suggest that he conceives of them in a negative light, or as illegitimate.



#### 4.1.4.6 Donald

Donald is a male teacher from the USA with a long history of living in Japan and more than five years of experience working at the JICA training centre in Komagane. Like Sam, he has a notably high proficiency in Japanese. In the first part of the interview, when discussing the main learning needs of students at JICA, Donald emphasised 'confidence... ability to understand questions and directions and being able to respond... and having enough vocabulary to be able to function' (5m29s). The extract below represents discussion of the second interview question.

#### *Extract 4.18*

- 1 N: thanks so we'll move onto the second one (.) are their  
2 language learning needs different from for example a  
3 Japanese person preparing to live in the UK or USA  
4 (2.3)  
5 D: er well (.) c:ertainly (.) because um (.) for example  
6 when I teach here (.) well (.) there are differences  
7 because a lot of the countries the people are not native  
8 speakers or they might be close  
9 N: mm  
10 D: but er just you know a famous example of course is  
11 Singlish  
12 N: [mm-hm  
13 D: [right so er  
14 N: Singapore [English yeah  
15 D: [where (.) yeah so (.) it's not necessarily  
16 standard English in terms of grammar or vocabulary and  
17 things like that and so as here (.) if I were teaching  
18 somebody to go to the UK or to the US (.) I could maybe  
19 (.) make more generalizations or make er: more specific  
20 claims about like well grammar  
21 N: mm

22 D: but an example is like er I believe in Fiji (.) it's  
 23 similar to Japanese when they say like er oh so you're  
 24 not Chinese (.) yes  
 25 N: mm-hm  
 26 D: yes means I'm not Chinese  
 27 N: ah  
 28 D: while in standard English for us of course  
 29 N: [yeah  
 30 D: [no I'm not Chinese so er in terms of student needs the  
 31 students don't need [me  
 32 N: [yeah  
 33 D: to spend fifteen minutes explaining  
 34 N: mm-hm  
 35 D: a grammar [point  
 36 N: [yeah  
 37 D: that may not be valid  
 38 N: yeah  
 39 D: so it's better to hit the big points  
 40 N: right  
 41 D: rather than the small points

(Donald, 44m44s – 46m34s)

Donald's response to my initial question in lines 1-3 is notable in terms of his use of 'certainly' (5) which contains a high degree of certainty when compared with many of the other teachers' responses to this question. We could speculate that perhaps this is something which Donald has considered himself beforehand and therefore has an existing set of ideas which are relevant for formulating a response. The response as it unfolds shows a high degree of awareness or consideration for diversity in English as relevant to the JICA learners. There is initially a perhaps questionable conflation of native speaker status with proficiency (5-8) although this is of course, a default, everyday position on this issue. Donald raises Singapore English (11) as his example of 'not necessarily standard English in terms of grammar or vocabulary' (15-16). Having established this concept of diversity in English by national context, which by association is related to JICA host countries (as also being multilingual postcolonial contexts), Donald then moves into making a succinct point regarding what he feels this means for

the JICA pedagogical context, namely that 'the students don't need me to spend fifteen minutes explaining a grammar point which may not be valid' (30-37). His illustration for this idea (22-30) is notable in that it could be argued that it is less an example of linguistic form and grammatical diversity, as linguistic form and pragmatic diversity in English. Nevertheless, the overall assertion is the same, that it is questionable whether teachers and students at JICA should spend time working on linguistic features that are not likely to be encountered in the host countries. Donald's further statement 'it's better to hit the big points... rather than the small points' (39-41) seems to suggest that his pedagogical decision making regarding which linguistic features to focus on, is driven to some extent by which features he believes are valid for all or most contexts.

From the extract above, we can surmise that Donald is aware of diversity in English which is relevant to the JICA pedagogical context and has some degree of rationalisation and set of principles for how he orientates towards it. It is difficult to identify any negative or critical orientations towards the diverse forms of English being alluded to, and therefore we can suggest that Donald is open-minded towards such diversity.

#### **4.1.5 Teacher Conceptions: Concluding Comments**

The extracts presented and analysed above make a significant contribution to understanding how teachers in the JICA context conceive of language, communication and pedagogy. In terms of overall awareness of diversity in JICA host countries, we can see that all teachers possess this to some degree, although there is variation regarding whether this is expressed in a positive or negative light. The latter two teachers represented here, Terry and Donald, orientate to this diversity in a similar way to Laurence, in other words in a practical and matter-of-fact way, with little or no evidence of negative appraisals. All of the other teachers can be seen to have at least some aspect of negativity or illegitimacy regarding English usage in JICA host countries in their conceptions, although this varies widely in terms of how it is expressed. Regarding conceptions of to what extent standard English should be emphasised in the JICA learning context, this again varies within the set of teacher extracts which is analysed above. Following Jessica and Paul, teachers such as Kelly and Martha at least implicitly suggest that standard English should still be at the heart of JICA pedagogy, whereas in a similar way to Laurence, teachers such as Richard and Sam express an orientation towards promoting intelligibility rather than adherence to standard forms. Both Terry and Donald have specific principles regarding this, for example attempting to tailor the focus on linguistic features so that they are maximally relevant to the JICA learners. It seems clear that a range of conceptions exist within this sample of JICA teachers towards the diversity in English which JICA volunteers will experience post-pedagogy, and the degree to which this influences their teaching practices.

## 4.2 Learner Conceptions

### 4.2.1 Overview of Focus Group Data and Preview of Analysis

Five focus groups were conducted with twenty nine JICA trainee volunteers, who at the time of research were learning English in the pre-service training centres as described in chapter one. The focus groups were conducted during the same research visit as the teacher interviews and in some cases the teachers who were interviewed were the learner-participants' teachers. Focus groups were carried out in class groupings and in most cases were done during scheduled lesson times. Others were conducted in the evenings, but always in the students' classrooms. Table 3 shows the chosen pseudonyms for the participants (or the real names for some participants who had specifically asked for them to be used), along with gender, host country (the country they would be dispatched to after the training) and the length of time of each focus group.

Focus Group	Names (real/ pseudonym)	Gender	Host country	Length
1	Michiko	Female	Tonga	51m48s
	Kazuko	Female	Marshall Islands	
	Akira	Male	Samoa	
	Yuzuki	Female	Belize	
	Haruki	Male	Solomon Islands	
2	Daisuke	Male	Micronesia	57m10s
	Miyako	Female	Bhutan	
	Hiro	Male	Papua New Guinea	
	Etsuko	Female	Nepal	
	Tomomi	Female	Tonga	

	Kaori	Female	Micronesia	
3	Chihiro	Female	Tanzania	50m27s
	Kozue	Female	Uganda	
	Rika	Female	Malawi	
	Yoshi	Male	Ghana	
	Tomoko	Female	Uganda	
	Makoto	Male	Malawi	
4	Kanako	Female	Malawi	51m42s
	Sachiko	Female	Ethiopia	
	Hiraku	Male	Cambodia	
	Akio	Male	Namibia	
	Miyu	Female	Zambia	
	Chiyo	Female	Malawi	
5	Katsu	Male	Botswana	46m52s
	Ichiro	Male	Tanzania	
	Shiro	Male	Tanzania	
	Yuta	Male	Cambodia	
	Jiro	Male	Zambia	
	Haruka	Female	Uganda	

Table 3: Learner focus group information

The total length of the focus group data is 4 hours, 16 minutes and 45 seconds. Of the 29 participants, there were 16 females and 13 males. The four major regions which English-learning JICA volunteers are dispatched to – Africa, Asia, The Caribbean and the Pacific Islands – are all represented, with 16, 4, 1 and 8 participants respectively.

Although ages of participants were not recorded, the majority of the participants appeared to be in their twenties or thirties, with a minority at around the age of retirement, representing the 'senior' volunteer programme at JICA. In fact because of limited time, biographical data was not collected with the learner-participants in a formalised way as it was with the teachers. Despite this, the learners often disclosed relevant information such as time spent living in English speaking countries or experiences of travelling in JICA host countries, in the course of the focus group discussions. Therefore such details have been incorporated into the analysis and interpretation where possible, and where deemed relevant.

As described in the methodology chapter, a novel approach to the focus group procedure was taken whereby a series of statements were presented to the group, to which they were asked to individually display one of five cards corresponding to a Lickert scale of -2, -1, 0, +1 or +2 for level of agreement, and then invited to make comments explaining their choice. This was mainly intended to encourage participation and scaffold learners in presenting their opinions in English. For the same reasons, Japanese translations of the statements were available if needed – see appendix A3.2 - and participants were told that they could use Japanese during the session if they needed to. After a practice with the statement 'I think the food in my host country will be completely different from the food in Japan', the following sentences were discussed by the focus groups:

- 1) I think English will be very important for living and working in my host country
- 2) When people are speaking English to me in my host country, I think I'll be able to understand them easily
- 3) I feel confident about speaking English in my host country
- 4) In terms of learning and practicing language, I think that preparing to live in the UK or the USA would be very different from preparing to live in my host country
- 5) In order to communicate successfully with people in my host country, I think it is important to learn English grammar rules as they are written in textbooks

- 6) Thinking about all of my experiences learning and using English before joining JICA, I think they are good preparation for using English in my host country

The ensuing discussions will be treated as discourse data and approached in the same way as the teacher interviews were. Although recent publications on the discursive approach in qualitative research have focused on interviews (Mann, 2011; Talmy and Richards, 2011), there are no theoretical or procedural reasons not to apply the same concepts to focus group data. In fact previous research has taken an approach to focus groups which accords with an interactional or discourse-based orientation, such as Myers (2007) which emphasised how the facilitator's talk can shape an ensuing focus group discussion.

The manner of sampling and referring to the focus group data is the same as with the teachers in the previous section. The structure of the presentation and analysis of data also roughly mirrors it, although this time a thorough analysis of one focus group – rather than two interviews as before – is used to establish a set of core issues, before moving on to an expansion of these issues with analysis of extracts from the other focus groups in sub-section 4.2.3. The rationale for placing an initial focus on focus group three is that the participants were very willing and able to discuss the topics, and able to draw upon personal experience to illustrate their ideas. Furthermore, a number of 'rich points' are present in this group's discourse data which relate to issues of standards and diversity in English in the JICA context, connecting with issues explored in the analysis of the teacher interviews.



#### **4.2.2 A Discourse Analysis of Focus Group Three**

As shown in table 3 above, the six participants in focus group three were all preparing for dispatch to African countries, one of them to Ghana, one to Malawi and two each to both Tanzania and Uganda. Four of the participants were female, and two male. Most of them appeared to be at relatively early stages of their careers, and most were being dispatched in the roles of ‘rural community development officers’ (this is a generic role which is commonly assigned to volunteers who do not have established careers in a field relevant to JICA, such as healthcare, education etc.). At least one of the participants, Yoshi, was an experienced primary school teacher and one other, Chihiro, was also going to be taking up a teaching assignment. All of the participants mentioned at some point that they had studied English overseas to some extent, ranging from short stays to several years in Kozue’s case. This group was rated highly in terms of English proficiency, in fact being the highest at the NTC training centre at the time of research.

##### 4.2.2.1 Initial analysis of focus group three

In response to the initial prompting statement regarding whether English would be ‘important’ in their host countries, the first participant – Chihiro – strongly agreed that it would be and commented that ‘Tanzanians can speak English, and especially I will be a teacher at the school, the students are graduated from high school so they can speak English very well’ (Chihiro, 4m20s). Chihiro later clarified that she would be teaching at a college, and this initial comment seems to indicate her awareness that English would be the medium of instruction for Tanzanian students at high school, resulting in her expectation that their English proficiency will be high.

Rika spoke next, and also in agreement with the statement commented that ‘I think I will be speaking English at work, and sometimes... I will have to meet someone in a

higher position, in that case you know English helps a lot and if I don't speak proper English there might be a problem' (Rika, 5m23s). The issue of 'proper English' was referred to by Rika here without any particular prompting, and demonstrates how the focus group discussion steered towards an expression of ideas about standards and diversity in English within the very early stages of the focus group. I did not ask for a clarification here about what 'proper English' is for Rika and the other participants, although many of the extracts below offer insights regarding their conceptions of standard English. The initial idea that Rika expressed about meeting someone in 'a higher position' is something that she refers back to several times during the focus group. The crux of the issue seems to be the fact that in her role as a rural community development worker, Rika expects to meet individuals of quite high status, perhaps in local government. Indeed, it is not uncommon for JICA volunteers to meet senior government figures including prime ministers or presidents during the course of their time overseas. This initial statement from Rika is therefore meaningful not just in the sense of being a pre-cursor to a thorough discussion of standards and diversity in English, but there is also a hint here that Rika's ideas about these matters are complex, in that there are situational, contextual elements, including matters of status.

The topic of standard English in education, linked to both of the initial comments, was then developed by Yoshi, who stated that 'teachers have to speak correct language for children or student' (Yoshi, 5m59s). This statement conveys a sense of responsibility in terms of setting a 'correct' example to students linguistically. Based on other statements by Chihiro and Yoshi included below, there are also indications of an underlying anxiety about going into a new linguistic environment and using English as the medium of instruction.

Two other comments regarding the 'importance' of English further demonstrate that learner ideas about this can be dependent on their future professional role, and specific contextual factors in their future work environments. Tomoko commented that 'Luganda is very important to make the relationship better' with the local community (Tomoko, 7m25s) and this concept was alluded to by all of the future rural community

development workers – Rika, Kozue, Tomoko and Makoto – to some extent. In contrast the two volunteers preparing to work in educational contexts – Chihiro and Yoshi – did not mention local languages at all. The volunteers’ awareness of certain specific issues relevant to their future communicative and linguistic practices has already been seen in Rika’s comments. Kozue also had some relevant pre-dispatch information, illustrated by her comment that ‘there are many people who will be able to help me out to communicate with the local people’ (6m30s). By this she meant that her future colleagues would be able to act as translators and interpreters between herself and local people that she would be interacting with. Kozue stated that ‘I already actually checked with my predecessor’ (6m12s) in order to get this information, meaning that she asked the existing JICA volunteer who she would directly replace. JICA encourages this and puts in place other processes in order for volunteers to get some pre-awareness about linguistic and communicative issues in their future host countries, as explained in chapter one.

The next phase of the focus group discussion was based on the second and third focus group statements, engaging the participants to discuss expectations regarding their future use of English in the host countries, including confidence levels regarding listening to and speaking the language. The following extract features input from Makoto, Tomoko, Chihiro and Yoshi on this topic, specifically in terms of expectations regarding listening to English in host countries. Prior to this, Kozue and Rika had initially made comments regarding expected differences in accent and dialect, with an emphasis on the fact that ‘in the beginning it will be hard’ (Rika, 9m42s) but that they expect to adjust to this over time.

*Extract 4.19*

- 1 N: um:: could you (.) er tell me why you chose zero
- 2 M: yeah because I (.) I mean (.) when (.) I watch
- 3 documentary from Africa
- 4 N: yeah

5 M: I always feel that oh what are they [saying  
6 N: [right  
7 M: you know it's really difficult to understand  
8 N: right  
9 M: this morning I just spoke to the teacher from Ghana  
10 N: mm-hm  
11 M: I was like what are you saying  
12 N: [mm mm mm  
13 M: [really difficult to understand so (.) for- for- for the  
14 beginning at least  
15 N: yeah  
16 M: it's gonna be like hard so  
17 N: yeah  
18 M: I chose [zero  
19 N: [okay okay (.) was there anything (.) when you  
20 speak- spoke to the teacher from Ghana was there anything  
21 in particular about (.) the style he was speaking or was  
22 it just generally  
23 M: well maybe because of the accent  
24 N: the accent [yeah  
25 M: [it was it was difficult to understand  
26 N: right right okay (.) sure okay um: you also chose zero  
27 T: [yes  
28 N: [have you got anything to add to what he said  
29 T: er:: (.) I'm- I'm now I'm listening (.) BBC Africa news↑  
30 N: mm-hm  
31 T: and er (.) the announce is in African [dialect English  
32 N: [mm mm mm  
33 T: and the word (.) er itself is er (.) has (.) another  
34 meaning (.) I found that it's not simply the (.) a  
35 definition of er basic English  
36 N: mm  
37 T: I need to have a- a knowledge of background information  
38 about history or (.) er:  
39 N: [mm  
40 T: [one word contains a lot of meaning and  
41 N: mm  
42 T: the concept is different so I don't understand the  
43 culture so I need to (.) er learn more ((laughter))  
44 N: okay  
45 T: [so I don't think

46 N: [okay  
 47 T: I can understand perfectly  
 48 N: sure sure so yeah we've heard a bit about pronunciation  
 49 and some cultural differences and um (.) er has anybody  
 50 else chosen zero (.) no you've both chosen minus one so  
 51 could you (.) tell me why you chose minus one  
 52 C: er: (.) I'm not- I am not confident  
 53 N: mm  
 54 C: with my listening skill  
 55 N: mm-hm  
 56 C: so I don't have any idea (.) what kind of English they  
 57 (.) speak  
 58 N: right  
 59 C: so maybe it could be difficult ( )  
 60 N: mm-hm ((*laughter*)) (.) so you expect it to be quite  
 61 different (.) the way they speak  
 62 C: mm  
 63 N: okay yeah (.) did you have the same idea or  
 64 Y: er yes (.) almost the [same  
 65 N: [almost the same  
 66 Y: er I have er two reason er first is (.) the first is same  
 67 with her  
 68 N: mm  
 69 Y: er my (.) especially my listening [comprehension ability  
 70 N: [mm  
 71 Y: is very low [so  
 72 N: [mm  
 73 Y: mm er I probably I- I- I will- I will not catch (.) them  
 74 N: right  
 75 Y: plus er Ghanaian er English have unique pronunciation er  
 76 I heard that er the story  
 77 N: [mm-hm  
 78 Y: [but I actually I didn't (.) hear (.) their- their  
 79 speaking  
 80 N: mm-hm  
 81 Y: mm but er I heard that story so mm I mm can't have (.) er  
 82 confidence  
 83 N: right (.) okay well (.) I hope you can get confidence  
 84 before you go  
 85 ((*some laughter from group*))

86 or I'm sure you'll be fine when you get there (.) so  
87 great I think we'll move on to the third one

(Makoto, Tomoko, Chihiro and Yoshi, 10m16s – 13m16s)

At the start of the extract above (2-18), Makoto echoes Rika's preceding ideas about the initial difficulty of listening to English in his host country, backed up by his experiences so far at the JICA training centre (listening to an African documentary and speaking with a teacher from Ghana, 2-13). He also appears less sure that this will become easier over time, referring to difficulty 'for the beginning at least' (13-14) and having chosen 0 as his numerical response to the statement that comprehension of spoken English would be easy in his host country. 'The accent' (23) being 'difficult to understand' (25) is stated as the possible reason for the overall difficulty being alluded to.

Further concerns about the ability to comprehend are expressed by the other speakers although different reasons for this are referred to. For Chihiro (52-62) and Yoshi (64-82), there are negative self-appraisals regarding their general listening abilities in English – specifically in lines 52-54 and 69-72 respectively. This is coupled with the assertions that pronunciation in host countries will be 'unique' (Yoshi, 75) or is just generally unknown at this stage (Chihiro, 56-59).

Tomoko (27-47) gives quite different reasons for why she doesn't expect to 'understand perfectly' (47). She alludes to words in African dialects having 'another meaning' (33-34), beyond the 'definition of... basic English' (35). Tomoko is displaying an awareness of the concept that culture can be embedded within some aspects of language and communication (Agar, 1996) and that many linguistic items do not have direct one-to-one translations into other languages, in part because of this cultural embeddedness (Lefevere and Bassnett, 1998). Based on this conception, she indicates that she would 'need to have... knowledge of background information about history' (37-38) and to 'understand the culture' (42-43) in order to understand fully. This is quite a remarkable set of ideas and concepts from Tomoko in terms of the levels of awareness

demonstrated with regards to language, communication and culture in general, and the issue of 'non-equivalency' (Lefevere and Bassnett, 1998) in translation in particular. Although I do not follow up on it specifically, it would appear from these assertions that Tomoko is also aware of the influence of local African languages on the English used in JICA host countries, rather than seeing local languages versus English as an either-or dichotomy.

Following these discussions, the group responded to the third statement regarding confidence levels with speaking English in their host countries. Some of the first comments included:

Of course, everyday English is okay, but I have to teach science and mathematics, and I don't have enough knowledge of specific term

(Yoshi, 14m32s)

I have a Japanese dialect, and African people are not be used to listening to Japanese people's English

(Tomoko, 15m25s)

Well to me it's the same whoever I'm talking to in English so, I mean it's not really a difference if I speak to British people if I speak to African people, if I speak to Japanese people in English it's the same

(Makoto, 16m03s)

The quote from Yoshi exemplifies the sense of concern that JICA learners might have regarding whether they can meet the linguistic demands of carrying out their work in English, which is of course being worked on directly in the 'technical class' at JICA, but might understandably be a point of concern before the volunteer arrives in their new context and begins work. Tomoko's quote continues her theme of 'dialects' based on a speaker's nationality. Although the point she is making is that this might cause intelligibility issues, it can be seen as empowering that she conceives of herself as having

a particular style of English, rather than orientating to any deficit in language ability. This is reminiscent of points made by previously by Laurence, connecting with concepts in Baxter (1980) and Hino (2009), that Japanese learners should be encouraged to speak English in their own style. Makoto's quote implies a sense of confidence when speaking in English, regardless of any issue to do with the interlocutor's nationality.

The following two extracts (4.20 and 4.21) feature input from Kozue and Rika on related issues. These are one longer passage divided into two, for the purposes of clarity in presentation and analysis, as with some of the teacher extracts in section 4.1. The point chosen to divide the passage (17m41s, line 37 below) was chosen because the focus group was briefly interrupted at that stage, by another JICA trainee volunteer entering the room to share some information with the group. The two extracts engage with topics such as personal feelings and identity when using English, intelligibility and the relative importance of linguistic 'mistakes' relative to standard English. At the point when the first extract begins, there had been some amusement in the group regarding Kozue's indecision between choosing plus two or plus one for agreement with the statement. Indeed for Kozue, the topic seemed to have some resonance and importance based on her experience of living in America for an extended period of time, which leads to a lengthy, considered and complex set of responses, as follows.

#### *Extract 4.20*

- 1 N: great (.) okay (.) can you: [t- ((laughter))  
2 K: [((laughter)) I'm not sure ()  
3 ((some group laughter))  
4 N: no [go on tell us why- why you chose it  
5 K: [well I- well I  
6 I chose two first  
7 N: mm-hm  
8 (.)



9 K: because um I::'ve spoken with some Africans before I've  
 10 spoken [with like  
 11 N: [mm  
 12 K: you know (.) basically people coming from  
 13 N: mm-mm  
 14 K: many different countries before  
 15 N: mm  
 16 K: and I've never felt (1.5) too nervous::  
 17 N: mm-hm  
 18 K: speaking English to them  
 19 N: [right  
 20 K: [although (.) I still make many mistakes and [sometimes  
 21 N: [mm-hm  
 22 K: when the other person is (.) b- n- you know kinda (.)  
 23 being judgemental<sup>↑</sup> or [something  
 24 N: [mm  
 25 K: I might feel a bit (.) nervous but it's the same way (.)  
 26 in Japanese in my [first language so  
 27 N: [yeah yeah  
 28 K: as long as I'm confident with the person I think I'll be  
 29 okay<sup>↑</sup>  
 30 N: yeah  
 31 K: and [you know  
 32 N: [sure  
 33 (.)  
 34 K: and I'm (.) kinda like I'm so used to making mistakes  
 35 ((*laughter*)) in  
 36 N: mm  
 37 K: speaking English so

(Kozue, 16m48s – 17m41s)

Kozue grounds her ideas in the assertion that she has 'spoken to people from 'many different countries before' (14), with the stipulation that this includes African people (9) working to make her talk more relevant to the current focus group and situation in general. The sequence of ideas expressed in 'I've never felt too nervous' (16) 'although I still make many mistakes' (20) appears to be significant as it allows us to imagine Kozue in such situations, using English with what she feels are mistakes, but this not mattering particularly in terms of either her ability to communicate or her sense of personal identity.

The extension of these ideas is the qualification that she might feel nervous if the other person is 'being judgemental' (23). This chimes with Rika's ideas regarding linguistic standards being more of a concern when an interlocutor is of 'higher status', in other words the issue of whether 'making mistakes' (or deviations from standard, accepted English) is important or not, can depend on who an interlocutor is and the perceived notion of whether they are 'judging' the speaker relative to standard English or not. This portrays the participants' conceptions of these matters as being rather complex, and emergent from situation to situation.

Kozue makes the point that these matters are not just about English, but languages in general including her own first language (25-26). She then begins a humorous turn regarding being 'used to making mistakes' (34) which is interrupted by the aforementioned visitor, but picked up again in the following extract.

*Extract 4.21*

- 1 N: so: (.) yeah you were just saying that (.) well you've  
2 got a lot of experience [so you've already  
3 K: [er:  
4 N: [talked with a lot of people from around the world  
5 K: [yes I've got I have a lot of experience  
6 N: yeah  
7 K: in making mistakes in English  
8 ((some group laughter))  
9 that's why I- I'm like [because  
10 N: [yeah  
11 K: you know at- (.) the first couple of years (.) speaking  
12 er >living in< [the United States ((laughter))  
13 N: [yeah yeah  
14 K: um I was more:: (.) nervous [about making mistakes  
15 N: [yeah yeah  
16 K: but then I kind of got over it and now [I'm like okay  
17 N: [mm  
18 K: yeah [so

19 N: [well I was (.) gonna ask you I mean (.) making  
20 mistakes I mean does it really matter do you think if you  
21 make [mistakes  
22 K: [er as long as you:: try ((laughter))  
23 N: mm  
24 K: as long as you try to communicate with the person because  
25 English is a tool of communication and  
26 N: yeah  
27 K: and you know like for example when I'm speaking to a (.)  
28 Japanese speaker (.) in Japan  
29 N: mm  
30 K: I don't really care about (.) that person's making lots  
31 of mistakes in Japanese as long as it makes sense  
32 N: mm mm-hm  
33 (.)  
34 N: [yeah yeah ( )  
35 K: [you know so- so I think I I w- (.) you know (.) [yeah  
36 N: [yeah so  
37 do you think (.) has anyone else got any ideas about this  
38 like (.) communication and (.) grammar I mean what (.) do  
39 you feel you need to speak grammatically correct (.)  
40 English  
41 ((some murmured responses from the group))  
42 R: n- not all the time  
43 M: yeah  
44 N: mm  
45 R: yes I- I totally agree with what she said  
46 N: yeah  
47 R: totally but  
48 N: yeah  
49 R: I'm just worried about the formal English  
50 ((some group members murmur agreement))  
51 K: yeah  
52 R: because yeah when- yeah cos I think we get to have a  
53 chance we- >we get to have a chance< to speak to you know  
54 someone (.) at a really high position  
55 N: [mm  
56 R: [you know since we are going (.) as er like not  
57 representative but er you know  
58 N: mm mm  
59 K: yeah yeah

60 R: representing the country [kind of  
 61 N: [sure sure  
 62 R: so I'm just (.) thinking about that situation  
 63 particularly  
 64 N: sure [yeah  
 65 K: [yeah  
 66 R: [otherwise you know mistakes doesn't really matter  
 67 K: [mm  
 68 N: [right right (.) a lot of people are nodding so I think  
 69 (.) I think other people agree as well (.) yeah have you  
 70 got anything more you want to add on that point  
 71 K: um yeah that's the reason why I wasn't sure ((*laughter*))  
 72 ((*group laughter*))  
 73 N: [right right yeah  
 74 K: [I'm okay meeting people you know  
 75 N: yeah  
 76 K: just (.) people  
 77 N: okay  
 78 K: just you know well- but um: (.) like she said a- er  
 79 profes- professional  
 80 N: mm  
 81 K: you know er setting (.) it's better to speak properly and  
 82 it's better to be able to speak with (.) you know  
 83 complicated vocabulary so:: you (.) because there are  
 84 people out there who are very judgmental  
 85 N: [mm  
 86 K: [of the way you speak or the accent that you have and so  
 87 it's better to speak in a way that's:: (.) presentable  
 88 N: sure yep I get it  
 89 K: you know professionally  
 90 N: that's great okay (.) a lot of interesting things about  
 91 topic three

(Kozue and Rika, 18m04s – 20m38s)

Kozue completes the punch line of her joke about having 'a lot of experience in making mistakes in English' (5-7) which prompts laughter from the group (8). She then expands on the overall concept and proposition that she is making, by rooting it again in her experiences in the USA, and clarifying that she had felt more nervous about making

mistakes in the first 'couple of years' (11) but that she then 'got over it' (16). I then take the opportunity to ask for an expansion on the overall concept of 'making mistakes' (19-20), questioning whether it really matters (20-21). Kozue's response to this (22-35), does not contain a direct positive or negative response, but features the ideas that it is important to 'try' (22, 24) and that she herself does not judge a person too harshly if they are 'making lots of mistakes in Japanese' (30-31). These ideas, coupled with the reference to English 'as a tool of communication' (25) indicate that her general belief is that mistakes in a language do not or should not matter, although there are provisos about effort and intelligibility, and as we have seen before, the issue of whether a person is 'judgemental' or not. Clearly, there is some complexity to Kozue's conceptions of standards and diversity in English.

At the point when I invite contributions from the group on this topic (37-40), Rika makes a response (42-66) which begins – 'not all the time' (42, in response to my question of whether the learners feel they need to speak grammatically correct English all the time) – and ends – 'otherwise you know mistakes doesn't really matter' – with modes of expression which again reinforce the idea of the issue of standards being contingent on situational factors. In this sequence, Rika again revisits the issue of being concerned about speaking to someone 'at a really high position' (54), expanding on this with the idea of representing Japan (60) during such situations. This set of ideas from Rika is then taken up again by Kozue (71), indicating that this idea of being 'professional' (79) is one aspect of the contingent set of ideas regarding this topic that she has. Some of the terminology used by Kozue at the end of the extract – 'speak properly' (81), 'speak in a way that's presentable' (87) – could arguably be taken as being judgemental itself in another context, but here it seems likely that it refers principally to the avoidance of mistakes which has been at the heart of this section of the focus group data.

#### 4.2.2.2 Mid-point of Focus Group Three Analysis

Moving into the group's discussion of statement four, regarding whether the pre-dispatch language pedagogy for an imagined period of time in the UK or USA would need to be different from the learner's current studies, Rika initially made the point that 'we are learning special terms for development, or any particular fields that we are specialising in' (23m28s), highlighting this as a key point of difference from other kinds of language pedagogy. Yoshi then alluded to differences between American and British English, and went on to point out that 'African English conversation country... was English colony' (24m54s), indicating possible benefits to focusing on styles of English which might be most relevant to, or prominent in, specific host countries based on historical influences.

Kozue then made the point, linking back to previous comments by Tomoko, that when preparing to use a language overseas, 'it is important to be able to understand the cultural context of that language' (26m44s). She then again made a comparison to the Japanese language in saying that many words are 'taken from old literature' (26m59s) meaning that they are harder to know and understand. She also commented that 'there are many expressions.. in each language that's very hard to translate' (27m16s) and concluded that 'it's different to prepare' (27m31s). From these comments we get a sense that Kozue feels the need for context specific linguistic styles and cultural content to be included in pedagogy designed to prepare learners for living in a specific global context. This is linked to the subsequent comment by Chihiro that 'learning the way of life' (27m52s) along with the language could be important.

An extended extract from the discussion immediately after this point has been included in appendix B2.1. At the start of that extract in the appendix, Makoto makes the point that 'we need to get used to the African accent' but that this can be done after arrival, therefore might not be important for learning and practicing beforehand. Tomoko's turn then includes the articulation of some of her ideas in Japanese, before she restates them

in English (appendix B2.1, 45-79). Following on from her previous ideas, she states that she needs to 'prepare for the African language dialects' and 'culture'. She points out that this is appropriate to herself, as someone who has 'experience in overseas in English speaking country', but not for volunteers without such experience, with the implication being that those volunteers should focus on basic issues in language and communication before thinking about specific variations and cultural issues. The following extract, where Rika interjects some comments to follow Tomoko's, is part of the longer passage in the appendix, and is included here for close consideration.

*Extract 4.22*

1 R: may I just add one thing  
2 N: yeah of course  
3 R: she mentioned that er anyone who has been to an English  
4 sp- speaking country (.) but I would say like (.) it  
5 doesn't really matter if it's an English speaking country  
6 or not and (.) I think it (.) I mean I don't know (.) I  
7 don't know it's just my [opinion but  
8 N: [yeah sure  
9 R: I- I have been to more like er (.) I have been to non-  
10 English speaking countries  
11 N: uh-huh  
12 R: more than English speaking country (.) then so I feel  
13 comfortable going there it's no problem I mean language  
14 problem (.) shouldn't- I don't think I will have a  
15 language problem because (.) I have been to non-English  
16 speaking countries  
17 M: yeah  
18 R: [yeah ( )  
19 N: [and- and do you think it's just like the general (.)  
20 practice and awareness of what it's like to speak (.) to  
21 international people (.) is that the experience you're  
22 talking about (.) [more than actually just using English  
23 R: [I-  
24 N: it's the:: (.) [experience  
25 R: [the language and you know people get used  
26 to it anyways

27 N: right  
 28 R: so:  
 29 N: yeah  
 30 R: I- I you know (.) I have experienced that it okay  
 31 especially when I went to India  
 32 N: [mm-hm  
 33 R: [they had like strong accent and  
 34 N: mm-hm  
 35 R: I couldn't understand what they are saying in the  
 36 beginning  
 37 N: mm-hm  
 38 R: but you know after I stayed for a few months I  
 39 N: mm-hm  
 40 R: I could understand it  
 41 N: [mm  
 42 R: [and I am comfortable now  
 43 N: yeah [yeah  
 44 R: [with their English (.) so I- I have experienced  
 45 that  
 46 N: yeah  
 47 R: so (.) like someone who has experienced like non-English  
 48 speaking (.) country life  
 49 N: mm  
 50 R: would be more I don't know (.) comfortable I think  
 51 K: mm  
 52 N: right (.) interesting  
 53 R: er that's my [opinion  
 54 N: [any-

(Rika, 30m24s – 31m51s)

Whereas Tomoko had previously asserted that having experience in Canada had the implication that she should now focus on African dialects and culture in her pre-service pedagogy, Rika contends that having experience in a 'non-English speaking country' (9-10) such as India (31) will also make her more 'comfortable' (13) in terms of using English in her host country. Leaving aside the questionable designation of India as 'non-English speaking', Rika is expanding here on the issue of overseas experience rather than the pedagogical implications about which Tomoko has just made assertions. My attempt to



seek clarification (19-24) and suggestions that 'practice' (20), 'awareness' (20) and 'experience' (21, 24) of speaking to 'international people' (21) may be significant, are not picked up or aligned with by Rika. Instead she comments that 'people get used to it anyways' (25-26) which is a recurring motif in Rika's talk, with other ideas expressed about getting used to the kind of interactions being discussed appearing in the long appendix extract and elsewhere in the data. She gives a specific example in the extract above where she explains that she got used to the 'strong accent' in India (33) after 'a few months' (38). The extract continues for several more minutes in the extended sequence in the appendix, and features contributions from Kozue on the idea of getting used to new accents. A neat summary of Rika's point which has been under discussion here is when she says that 'we all get used to it... but it helps if you have experienced communicating with the people who speak little English' (appendix B2.1, 185-189).

Moving on towards the latter stages of the focus group discussion, the last two extracts from this group are presented below, and are again one longer passage divided into two. The participants are discussing statement five, regarding whether it is necessary to learn English grammar rules as written in textbooks in order to communicate successfully in their host countries. This topic allows for further engagement with topics related to standards and diversity in English, naturally connecting with previous ideas expressed about 'mistakes' in English, but allowing the opportunity to think about the issue from a different angle and with a different focus. All six participants will be heard from on this topic across the two extracts.

#### *Extract 4.23*

- 1 N: okay I think this time I'll start with you (.) because  
2 you made a very quick decision so [I'm interested  
3 M: [right okay  
4 N: to know why you why you chose minus one

5 M: I chose minus one (.) because from my experience I- I've  
6 been to London (.) like er (.) I don't know two years ago  
7 or [something  
8 N: [u-huh  
9 M: but before that I learned many things from (.) you know  
10 textbook in Japan  
11 N: mm  
12 M: but (.) it didn't work at all (.) I mean  
13 N: mm  
14 M: just like you go and try to speak and  
15 N: mm  
16 M: and I think that's important so (.) I can't really agree  
17 with  
18 N: okay  
19 M: the- the question  
20 N: so for you (.) the grammar itself learning grammar itself  
21 is not the most [important thing  
22 M: [not most important things  
23 N: yeah yeah (.) and so you chose minus one not minus two so  
24 maybe it's slightly↑  
25 M: yeah but somehow you (.) need to know  
26 N: right [right  
27 M: [so  
28 (.)  
29 N: okay (.) thank you (.) anyone else chosen minus one (1.4)  
30 no: (.) okay (.) let's- let's move on to you then (.) why  
31 did er why did you choose plus one  
32 T: er: (.) I think it depends on the:: (.) which grammar  
33 N: mm-hm  
34 T: like (.) a and the  
35 N: mm  
36 T: articles (.) and plural it doesn't really matter  
37 N: uh-huh  
38 T: but uh basic grammar rule like maybe past tense or past  
39 perfect or present  
40 N: mm  
41 T: it's important ((*laughter*)) to: (.) get the meaning  
42 N: mm  
43 T: so:: I chose plus one  
44 N: okay (.) great  
45 T: mm

46 N: anybody else choose plus one  
47 Y: yes  
48 N: okay (.) have you got  
49 Y: okay  
50 N: anything to add to her opinion or  
51 Y: yeah uh  
52 N: is it the same  
53 Y: er I have- I have er: (.) two reason  
54 N: uh-huh  
55 Y: yeah er of course er:: I'm teacher so I have to speak er  
56 correctly  
57 N: mm  
58 Y: so the grammar is probably very important for me  
59 N: mm  
60 Y: but on the other hand (.) er when I was in London er: I-  
61 my friend were er Spanish and Polish (.) and Italian  
62 N: mm  
63 Y: they- their: English is er terrible ((*laughter*)) er not  
64 terrible but er they are fluent they have fluency  
65 N: uh-huh  
66 Y: er but their grammar is not correct  
67 N: uh-huh  
68 Y: but er: er (.) I- I was er very shy student so  
69 N: mm mm  
70 Y: er I couldn't speak well  
71 N: mm  
72 Y: but er they are er: they they spoke each others fluently  
73 N: right  
74 Y: at pub ((*laughter*)) so mm: to communicate  
75 N: mm  
76 Y: and er to make er friendship  
77 N: mm  
78 Y: with Ghanaian people  
79 N: mm  
80 Y: er (.) too nervous er:  
81 N: uh-huh  
82 Y: er for grammar  
83 N: mm-hm  
84 Y: is not (.) good for me  
85 N: [okay  
86 Y: [( )

87 N: yeah that's really so you explained that really clearly  
88 so it is important so it's plus one (.) but it's not  
89 really really important (.) right I get it (.) okay

(Makoto, Tomoko and Yoshi, 35m05s – 37m56s)

The initial opinion expressed by Makoto is that knowledge of grammar from textbooks alone doesn't 'work at all' (12), and to 'go and try to speak' (14) is very important for developing communication skills. This is based on his own personal experience of textbook study in Japan followed by a period of study in London. It is noteworthy that Makoto stops short of dismissing the importance of grammar study altogether, saying 'but somehow you need to know' (25) in response to my uncompleted prompting question (23-24). Following this, Tomoko makes the point that 'it depends on... which grammar' (32), pointing out that 'articles and plural' (36) don't really matter whereas grammatical tenses might be important for meaning. This idea of course echoes many assertions in the academic literature that certain lexico-grammatical forms are not essential for intelligibility between speakers (e.g. Seidlhofer, 2011).

Maintaining the focus on such ideas, Yoshi's subsequent talk provides an opportunity to think through and consider some of the concepts associated with the English as Lingua Franca (ELF) research literature, from a holistic and contextualised perspective. Echoing the initial comments he made in the focus group discussion, Yoshi states that 'I'm a teacher so I have to speak... correctly' (55-56), 'so the grammar is probably very important for me' (58). Here is an example of where certain aspects of grammatical form would have little bearing on Yoshi making himself intelligible, but would seem to be quite significant for his professional identity as a teacher (although an alternative interpretation of lines 55-58 is that he doesn't want to set a bad example, linguistically, for the school children). If we accept the premise that Yoshi does not want to make mistakes at school for matters of personal or professional identity, then a stark focus on intelligibility alone – as was argued in chapter two is sometimes the case with ELF literature – may not always be appropriate from a language learner point of view.

To perform a neat balancing act on this matter, Yoshi's subsequent anecdote about Spanish, Polish and Italian friends in London (60-61) communicating fluently (64) but with incorrect grammar (66), chimes exactly with typical assertions in ELF that a great many meaningful interactions can be carried off without the necessity to either know or use some aspects of standard grammar. In terms of Yoshi's overall conception then, he seems to have the belief that grammatical correctness is valid and relevant in some contexts, but at other times communicating with fluency but incorrect grammar is the best way to make meaningful interactions and interpersonal relationships. His overall summary of this for his own current situation is that being 'too nervous' (80) about grammar would not be good for communicating or making friendship (76) with people in Ghana (78). The final extract for this focus group, which adds some further perspectives on contextualised needs for grammatical correctness, will now be considered.

#### *Extract 4.24*

- 1 N: so we've had: (.) um: (.) plus one from y-you already  
2 explained and you explained (.) has anyone got (.) plus  
3 two  
4 K: I do  
5 N: okay  
6 K: um I was trying to (.) I was- I kind of (.) talked about  
7 it earlier  
8 N: [mm  
9 K: [but I think (.) even like little (.) grammar difference  
10 like (.) like the articles or like (.) prep- preposit-  
11 prepositions or  
12 N: [mm  
13 K: [like punctuation even (.) makes big dif- makes such big  
14 differences in (1.8) the: meaning [of the sentences  
15 N: [yep  
16 [okay  
17 K: [sometimes like um you know (.) like well even (.) uh the  
18 place of (.) the place where you put the adverb in the  
19 sentence

20 N: mm  
 21 K: might (.) make the meaning of the sentence [very  
 22 different so  
 23 N: [so you're  
 24 talking about very subtle differences in meaning  
 25 [based  
 26 K: [yes  
 27 N: on grammar  
 28 K: yes [sometimes yes  
 29 N: [finer points of grammar  
 30 N: right  
 31 K: yes (.) so I think it's very important to: learn that  
 32 N: mm  
 33 K: yes and also somebody said to me that English is kind of  
 34 like mathematics  
 35 N: uh-huh  
 36 K: and to be able (.) it's very useful to: communicate (.)  
 37 clearly  
 38 N: mm  
 39 K: but (.) and its like but its um (1.7) so um (.) grammar  
 40 is very important to ((laughter)) know that  
 41 N: mm  
 42 K: know kind of (.) to organise the ideas  
 43 N: sure  
 44 K: er correctly and comm- to communicate with another person  
 45 N: sure  
 46 K: so  
 47 N: great um: so (.) we've got two zeroes and (.) could you  
 48 start why did you choose zero  
 49 C: yes er I think (.) if I (.) if I understand general  
 50 grammar  
 51 N: mm  
 52 C: er: (.) maybe I can understand what they say or what they  
 53 [write  
 54 N: [mm  
 55 C: so (.) in sometimes we- we use general gram- general  
 56 English  
 57 N: uh-huh  
 58 C: er (.) when I write some formal document  
 59 N: mm-mm  
 60 C: so we need it [( )

61 N: [so is it different if it's written or  
62 spoken is that what you mean (.) grammar's important for  
63 written  
64 C: mm  
65 N: for writing but not so much for speaking  
66 C: I [think so yes  
67 N: [is that true (.) is it a similar reason or have you  
68 R: mm I think grammar is kind of important for both  
69 N: mm  
70 R: but as long as you know the basic  
71 N: mm  
72 R: grammar (.) like small mistakes don't really matter I  
73 think (.) like plural  
74 N: mm  
75 R: I think you know sometimes people forget to put right  
76 N: mm  
77 R: so I think it doesn't really matter  
78 N: mm  
79 (.)  
80 R: but you need to know the basic er: grammar  
81 N: yeah  
82 R: to avoid misunderstandings  
83 *((some sound of agreement from the group))*  
84 N: right  
85 R: that's the only reason  
86 N: okay great (.) let's try and do the last topic in five  
87 minutes if we can

(Kozue, Chihiro and Rika, 37m57s – 40m34s)

Kozue (4-46) provides a set of ideas which emphasise the importance of grammar for some situations in the sense that little differences (9) such as articles, prepositions, punctuation (referring for the first time in these discussions to expression in the written mode) and 'even... the place where you put the adverb in the sentence' (17-19) might have an effect on meaning. Coming sequentially where these ideas are expressed (relative to the previous extract), they could be taken as a kind of counterpoint to the ideas expressed by Tomoko and Yoshi – broadly an 'intelligibility-based view', for some contexts at least. However it should be noted that Kozue had already prepared these

ideas, at least in part via selection of a number representing agreement, before those speakers had made their comments. Furthermore these ideas should not be taken as a kind of espousal for standard English in all types of language pedagogy, based on Kozue's previous contributions, for example when she stated that mistakes in English don't matter 'as long as you try' (extract 4.21, lines 22 and 24). Rather, Kozue's ideas can be taken as yet another argument against an 'intelligibility-only perspective' (for any context), in the sense that we have an example of a learner here who cares about the fine-grained details as they may have an impact on meaning, presumably from the perspective of either transmitter or receiver of a message.

Chihiro's contribution (49-66), includes the idea that studying grammar can increase comprehension – 'I think if... I understand general grammar... maybe I can understand what they say or what they write' (49-53) – and also points out that it might be important for when she needs to 'write some formal document' (58). This point might easily be forgotten in discussions of linguistic standards relative to the JICA context; the fact that such documents need to be written as part of the volunteers' assignments might help us to guard against conceiving of grammatical standards as largely irrelevant to learners in the JICA context. For example it might be face threatening for volunteers to have to submit written reports if they are unsure about technical grammatical accuracy, which is perhaps a reason for paying attention to grammatical accuracy in the pre-service pedagogy, for most volunteers at least.

Moving towards the end of the extract, upon reflection I believe that my reformulation (61-63) is inaccurate, and therefore Chihiro's agreement with it (66) should be treated with caution as she may have felt obliged to agree. Rika concludes the extract with comments that align with the 'intelligibility position' explored earlier, namely that 'as long as you know the basic grammar' then 'small mistakes don't really matter' (70-72).



In the very last phase of the focus group, experiences of studying and using English prior to the JICA training were considered, relative to how useful they were perceived to be for enabling communication in host countries (focus group statement six). Setting a pattern which many of the other focus groups followed, attitudes towards the Japanese national education system of English varied from the position that it is limited but useful – limited in the sense that ‘it wasn’t really preparing me to speak’ (Kozue, 43m51s) – to negative appraisals. In the most extreme case, Rika commented that her English education in Japan had been ‘pathetic’ (46m33s) whereas ‘practicing on her own’ (46m56s) by ‘travelling around’ (47m04s) was the best way to learn. Furthermore Yoshi pointed out that aspects of his education were ‘terrible’ (49m52s), pointing out that only basic grammatical sentences were studied, with no listening or speaking practice at all, although he did point out that this was some time ago.

#### 4.2.2.3 Focus Group Three: Concluding Comments

To summarise some of the key emergent issues which have been demonstrated in the data:

- There are different conceptions in the group with regards to the importance of English versus local languages in their future contexts, with the rural community development officers placing more emphasis on local languages than the teachers
- Within the group there seems to generally be a high awareness of linguistic features in the African host countries, including the fact that different accents and dialects of English will be encountered, along with the fact that a period of adaptation to these features is expected, and that developing more knowledge of the local cultures will assist with this
- With regards to linguistic standards in the sense of avoidance of ‘mistakes’ when using English, at least two members of the group seem to have rather complex

notions of this related to issues of intelligibility, the need to be 'professional' with the language in certain situations and dependent on the attitudes and behaviours of interlocutors

- Related to the last point, this data captures the idea that sometimes language is simply a tool of communication and 'correctness' or standards have little relevance at all compared with simply being intelligible, but at other times correctness and standards are relevant, for example when teaching, when writing official reports or when meeting important people while representing Japan through voluntary work
- In terms of pedagogical approaches to preparing for language usage in the host countries, ideas were expressed that on the one hand, preparing for any type of English is the same, because a period of adaptation to local styles will happen anyway, but on the other, preparing for specific dialects, pronunciation and cultural aspects of language usage could be appropriate, especially for learners who already have some overseas experience and therefore don't need to focus on the basics

### 4.2.3 Analysis of Further Focus Group Extracts

Now turning to the remainder of the focus group data, at least one extract from each of the other four focus groups, along with supplemental quotations will now be presented for analysis.

#### 4.2.3.1 Focus Group One

There were five participants in focus group one, two males – Akira and Haruki – and three females – Michiko, Kazuko and Yuzuki – going to Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, the Marshall Islands and Belize respectively. This group was considered to have a relatively high proficiency in English, being the highest ranked class at the time of research in KTC. The two extracts presented below represent responses to the second statement, regarding whether the learners expect to be able to understand spoken English in their host country easily or not. This topic enables a discussion regarding expected styles of English in the host countries, as follows.

#### *Extract 4.25*

- 1 N: could you lead the discussion by telling us why you chose  
2 that number  
3 A: because in Samoa er: the official language is also  
4 English  
5 N: mm-hm  
6 A: but (.) I'm er pre- my er: the previous (.) person er who  
7 (.) er in my school (.) told me that (.) many S- er many  
8 people in Samoa usually use ((laughter)) Samoan  
9 N: uh-huh  
10 A: and this ( ) their local language  
11 (.)  
12 N: [right  
13 A: [so they don't use difficult English

14 N: mm-hm  
15 A: mm and (.) er when I went to Saipan (.) maybe they have  
16 local language  
17 N: sorry w- [where  
18 A: [Saipan  
19 N: Saipan  
20 A: Saipan  
21 N: Saipan  
22 A: mm  
23 N: okay  
24 A: they have local language too [and  
25 N: [mm  
26 A: they s- (.) I can understand  
27 N: mm  
28 A: English they speak  
29 N: mm  
30 A: so (.) I not- I don't have much trouble ((laughter))  
31 about  
32 N: [great  
33 A: [understanding English  
34 N: yeah (.) so you chose plus one because you think maybe  
35 they will speak kind of easier English and  
36 A: [mm-hm yes  
37 N: [you'll be able to follow that quite well  
38 N: okay great er let's move on which number did you choose  
39 Y: I chose minus one  
40 N: minus one  
41 Y: disagree (.) becau:se (.) I- their English will be creole  
42 (.)  
43 N: mm-hm  
44 Y: that's like a English (.) based language but it's not  
45 quite (.) it's not like the English you speak  
46 N: mm-hm  
47 Y: so I'm (.) I'm very sure that I have difficulty at the  
48 beginning maybe I'll get used to it [but  
49 N: [mm  
50 Y: in the beginning I'll probably have difficulties  
51 communicating with them  
52 N: okay interesting  
53 Y: mm I've never heard of the creole  
54 A: mm-hm

55 Y: so I don't know ( )

56 N: right right okay

(Akira and Yuzuki, 10m41s – 12m17s)

The ideas expressed by Akira on this topic (3-36) represent a new perspective that was not touched upon by focus group three, namely that the multilingual environment in their host country might result in a relatively less difficult style of English to comprehend (13) than the UK or USA. Whereas in focus group three accents, dialects and other issues such as cultural influences were discussed in terms of representing potential barriers to intelligibility, Akira does not allude to such problems at all. In making these assertions, he draws on reports from his predecessor (6-13) and his own experience in the pacific region in Saipan, which he portrays as being a meaningful comparison. It might well be the case that certain host countries tend to feature styles of English which are generally easier for Japanese volunteers to comprehend than others, although we are only presented with anecdotal support of that here, and it should be remembered that attempting to make generalisations at the national level must be treated with caution.

Despite the need to be cautious with such generalisations, the reference to a creole context by Yuzuki (39-55) is notable here. Such a context, in this case Belize, is thought to be relatively complex linguistically, as speakers might interchangeably use linguistic forms from any level of a post-creole continuum (Irvine, 2008), and in the case of Belize would feature other languages prominently in addition to English and creole, as alluded to by Yuzuki at an earlier stage of the focus group. As with Rika previously, Yuzuki makes the point that – specifically in her case because of the local use of creole – she expects communication to be difficult initially but to get easier over time (47-51). It is notable and questionable perhaps that, even with all of JICA's available resources, Yuzuki has never heard examples of creole from Belize (53-55).

Haruki's statements on this topic, which followed Yuzuki's, have been excluded as he himself stated that he didn't have a 'serious reason' (12m57s) for his response. Haruki

was a resistant participant, selecting plus two as his numerical response to each statement – at times with comments not indicating agreement – and carrying on with some of his work as an employee of the Japanese government during the focus group. Nevertheless his voice is represented in this work via the appendix, as will be touched upon later. Extract 4.26 begins immediately after Haruki’s excluded non-serious contribution, with Michiko responding to the second statement.

*Extract 4.26*

- 1 N: right how about moving on to you two what did you choose  
2 M: okay I chose minus one (.) disagree (.) and as: Yuzuki  
3 said before  
4 N: uh-huh  
5 M: er I also never: (.) heard the Tongan English  
6 N: [uh-huh  
7 M: [that’s why I’m so: nervous ((laughter))  
8 N: mm-hm  
9 (.)  
10 M: mm  
11 N: so you think um: (.) you’ve never heard the Tongan  
12 English and you expect it to be different  
13 M: yeah I think so and yeah as I said like main island (.)  
14 in main is- island (.) some of them speak English (.)  
15 very well  
16 N: mm-hm  
17 M: and like clearly  
18 N: mm  
19 M: but Eua is a (.) different island  
20 N: m-hm  
21 M: from there (.) and I don’t think they can speak English  
22 (.) yeah  
23 N: okay okay (.) so you’re expecting some language  
24 differences  
25 A: mm-hm  
26 N: and you don’t know  
27 M: yeah  
28 N: what to expect

29 M: mm  
30 N: okay (.) that's fine (.) and you also [chose minus one  
31 K: [I choose disagree  
32 (.)  
33 N: yeah  
34 K: I have (.) mainly two reasons for that er first one is  
35 that I (.) in Marshall Islands highly educated people  
36 N: mm  
37 K: tend to go to US  
38 N: mm-hm  
39 A: mm  
40 K: to learn and get highly [educated  
41 N: [right right  
42 K: so maybe they speak with nice accent  
43 N: mm-hm  
44 K: maybe like I can understand them (.) but er on the other  
45 hand as er Yuzuki and Kanako said  
46 N: mm  
47 K: people in distant from the central area  
48 N: mm-hm  
49 K: might speak with the accent or they might make  
50 N: uh-huh  
51 K: sort of the mixture like er pidgin or something like that  
52 N: yeah yeah  
53 K: and also the secondly I'll be dispatched to the  
54 international school as I mentioned as I told you  
55 N: mm  
56 K: and in that school maybe pe- student (.) come from many  
57 (.) other pacific islands and  
58 N: mm  
59 K: and also Australia (.) or China  
60 N: yeah  
61 K: I mean Taiwan or something like  
62 N: yeah yeah yeah  
63 K: so maybe (.) they might be many kinds of accent  
64 ((some group laughter))  
65 N: right right okay good good answer (.) very good answer

(Michiko and Kazuko, 13m05s – 15m04s)

Michiko follows up on Yuzuki's previous comment about never having heard English from her destination country (5) and indicates that because of this she is 'nervous' (7) regarding this topic of anticipated comprehensibility of English there. This seems to be compounded by the fact that her specific destination within Tonga might not predominantly use English (13-22), although it is not clear whether she is referring to use of a local language or a style of English which is influenced by a local language.

A notable feature of the extract is that there are references to local styles of English which could be interpreted as critical and deficit orientated, for example where Michiko refers to people in Tonga speaking English 'very well' (15) and 'clearly' (17), with Kazuko going on to say that certain 'highly educated people' (35) in her host country go to study in the US and therefore might 'speak with nice accent' (42). The pitfall of this type of language is that it conceptually *others* different types of English users in the contexts being described, a feature of the discourse that was very rarely seen in the other focus groups. Kazuko in fact goes on to refer to people who 'might speak with the accent' (49) or 'might make sort of the mixture like... pidgin or something like that' (49-51). Although such ideas might be an indication of a deficit orientation to diversity in English, it is important to acknowledge that the nuances of such terms might be less apparent to these participants as they would to, the JICA teachers for example. In terms of Kazuko's expectations of English in the Marshall Islands, she appears to be expecting some diversity based on education and experience overseas (34-42), specific locations within the Marshall Islands (47-51) and the presence of people – specifically her future students – from other locations in the Pacific and beyond (56-63). The overall concept is that diverse accents might be difficult to understand.

Having already discussed the group's expectations of English usage in their host countries, another topic of note from this focus group was their expectations of what it would be like for themselves to be using English there. The passage of discussion on this topic, representing responses to focus group statement three, has been included in appendix B2.2. Line numbers used here refer to that passage in the appendix. One of the issues which emerged was, perhaps predictably, the challenge faced by using English



to carry out technical voluntary work assignments, for example 'talking about HIV AIDS and reproductive health' (Yuzuki, 3-4) and in situations related to Michiko's work as a Japanese teacher (104-115). On the same topic of teaching and at the end of the extract, Akira made the counterpoint that he feels teaching mathematics through English will be relatively straightforward, because 'the words we use in the classroom is not so much... so I can tell them about my idea of course about mathematics' (174-180). On a related point, Kazuko mentioned that having already used English during her activities as a Japanese teacher, this has increased her confidence with using the language generally (130-142). She also had some general comments about communication, including the expression of ideas (144), showing an interest in 'the people you are facing' (146) and also the importance of 'non-verbal languages' (153) and 'expressions' (155). Kazuko links these ideas to those previously expressed by Haruki earlier in the extract (143). In a sequence which could be described as remarkable – both in terms of content and interactional patterns – Haruki (29-96), appears to be initially reluctant to contribute (29) before going on to talk at length about his involvement with United Nations activities (40) and discussing his experiences of being involved in negotiations at the level of national governments (59-61). Some of his comments represent direct criticisms of 'European countries including the UK' (63-64), referring to issues of linguistic and cultural imperialism relative to dominating negotiations (63-72). These issues aside, Haruki also comments on communication in general, including the need to express 'complete messages or complete ideas' (82) and non-verbal behaviour such as body language and facial expressions to 'get your message across to other people' (84-90).

A final point to note regarding focus group one was that, connecting with previous concerns expressed about never having heard English from specific host countries by Yuzuki and Michiko, Kazuko mentioned that she had specifically searched for examples of English from the Marshall Islands on the internet, 'especially YouTube... but no results (49m37s). She pointed out that although she had found grammar books from the Marshall Islands in the library, 'it won't help because there is no recorded material' (49m17s).

#### 4.2.3.2 Focus Group Two

There were six participants in focus group two, two males – Daisuke and Hiro – and four females – Miyako, Etsuko, Tomomi and Kaori – with both Daisuke and Kaori going to Micronesia, and the others going to Papua New Guinea, Bhutan, Nepal and Tonga respectively. In terms of the English proficiency of this group, it is considered to be lower than focus groups one and three, being around the middle point or slightly lower of JICA classes overall. Following on from this feature of the group – being categorised as having lower English proficiency – there was a notable orientation to having low confidence in English communication from several of its members. For example Daisuke frequently referred to having problems with using English, and in addition to Daisuke, Etsuko, Tomomi, Kaori and Hiro all referred to having low confidence with using English during responses to the second focus group statement (18m43s – 21m08s). Having said this, Tomomi qualified this by saying it was related to feeling that she couldn't use English 'in her school days' (19m55s). Subsequent extracts will portray Tomomi as someone who is likely to be able to build confidence quickly, based on her conceptions of language and communication. On this evidence it should be noted however, that conceptions of language and communication for the JICA learners might be problematic and troubling at times for individuals who feel that their abilities are low.

The extracts below represent comments from the group in response to statement five, concerning whether it is necessary to learn grammar rules as they are written in textbooks, in order to communicate successfully in the host countries.

#### *Extract 4.27*

- 1 N: so:: could you please tell us your number and why you  
2 chose it

3 K: er minus one  
4 (1.0)  
5 N: yep (1.1) minus one so you: disagree  
6 K: disagree  
7 N: yeah and: (.) could you explain why you disagree  
8 K: mm:: we have to learn English (.) but (.) it's important  
9 to speak  
10 N: mm-hm  
11 K: with th- them  
12 N: mm  
13 K: so (.) grammar English grammar rule as written in  
14 [textbook  
15 N: [mm mm  
16 K: is not so much (.) diff- important for me  
17 N: right right okay  
18 K: but it's not important  
19 N: mm (.) so it is important a little bit  
20 K: [a little so  
21 N: [but it's not really important it's not the most  
22 important thing  
23 K: so I'm not minus two  
24 N: ri::ght minus one yeah okay (.) okay that's great thanks  
25 (.) so:: has anybody else put minus one (.) yeah um (.)  
26 is it the same reason or have you got something to add  
27 D: uh (.) actually er:: (1.2) English grammar rule uh er:  
28 (1.2) it is (.) er it it lear:ns eh it is learn  
29 N: mm  
30 D: English grammar [rules  
31 N: [mm  
32 D: er it is important to (.) it is important to lear:n (.)  
33 English grammar (.)  
34 N: yeah  
35 D: rule but eh:: (1.6) for example  
36 N: m-hm  
37 D: eh:: (.) I like grammar  
38 N: m-hm  
39 D: but I- I don't speak (.) English  
40 N: m-hm  
41 D: eh:  
42 (.)  
43 N: but y-you do but

44 D: yeah to speak (.) er [to speak  
 45 N: [yeah  
 46 D: English  
 47 N: right  
 48 (.)  
 49 D: er: (.) er: I: (1.1) I have to I have to speak er: (1.4)  
 50 each other  
 51 N: yes

(Kaori and Daisuke, 34m43s – 36m32s)

Kaori's contribution (3-23) emphasises the need to be able to speak English over knowledge of its grammar rules, therefore they are 'not so much... important for me' (16). Daisuke makes a similar point by using himself as an example in the sense that although he likes English grammar (37), he doesn't feel he can speak English. Miyako's ideas, coming 45 seconds later and at the start of the next extract, problematises and complicates these issues to some extent.

*Extract 4.28*

1 N: so we've had two minus ones (.) er: which number did (.)  
 2 >you< choose  
 3 M: er I choose plus one  
 4 N: plus one yeah  
 5 M: yeah  
 6 N: and why did you choose plus one  
 7 M: (.) ((laughter)) eh:: (1.4) I think I think speaking is  
 8 er important but if I (1.0) er:: (.) if I want to:: ( )  
 9 something  
 10 N: mm-hm  
 11 M: the content of my speech completely (.) um the grammar is  
 12 (.) I think the grammar is important  
 13 N: mm-hm  
 14 M: so if I (1.2) have s- s- er many mistakes for grammar  
 15 N: mm  
 16 M: maybe someone cannot catch my feelings or my er: opinion  
 17 N: right [right

18 M: [so I think that (.) the grammar is er important  
19 N: right right okay  
20 M: yeah  
21 N: that's great thank you (.) er:m (.) yeah that's a really  
22 good point so if you want them to catch your feelings  
23 easily  
24 M: mm-hm  
25 N: you think (.) knowing more grammar will help you  
26 M: yeah  
27 N: use English like that  
28 M: yeah  
29 N: I get it (.) so she's chose plus one (.) did you also  
30 choose plus one (.) have you got anything to add to what  
31 she said  
32 (.)  
33 E: er on my job  
34 N: mm  
35 E: I must write (.) some manuals  
36 N: mm  
37 E: of computer systems  
38 N: right  
39 E: so (.) if I: not correct grammar  
40 N: mm  
41 E: mm some people mm th- some people (.) don't know (.) the  
42 right to (.) er how to use system so  
43 N: [yeah  
44 E: [it is very important (.) grammar [English grammar  
45 N: [I understand yeah  
46 so you want to make the manual (.) as good as possible  
47 E: [yeah  
48 N: [as grammatical as possible (.) okay that's that's  
49 interesting yeah thanks (.) plus one (1.8) okay so: which  
50 number did you choose please  
51 H: um I chose er minus two but um (.) may I- may I change er  
52 minus  
53 N: sure  
54 ((some group laughter))  
55 sure sure sure to: what's your new number  
56 H: minus one minus one  
57 N: minus one yeah  
58 H: so um: (.) at first at first I- I er: grammar is not

59           important so m- so much  
60       N: mm  
61       H: we need that so many um: vocabulary ( )  
62       N: uh-huh uh-huh  
63       H: but um: certainly we mus- er we need English grammar for  
64           correctly eh: correctly ( ) my issues  
65       N: uh-huh  
66       H: er to cor- cor- er communicate with  
67       N: mm  
68       H: so::  
69       N: mm  
70       H: I chose minus one  
71       N: interesting yeah yeah that that that's (.) yeah that's  
72           very good yeah so (.) what number did you choose  
73           (.)  
74       T: minus two  
75       N: minus two:: okay interesting (.) okay could you tell us  
76           why  
77       T: u::m (1.1) I (.) er: when I was university students  
78       N: mm  
79       T: I lived in international dormitory  
80       N: mm-hm  
81       T: so: (.) almost everyone can speak Japanese very well  
82           ((laughter))  
83       N: mm mm  
84       T: so I don't need English but  
85       N: mm  
86       T: some some pers- some people er can't speak Eng- er:  
87           Japanese  
88       N: mm  
89       T: so I have to:: communicate with them  
90       N: mm-hm  
91       T: ah: (.) then my English (1.0) is (1.1) mm English is (.)  
92           not not good  
93       N: mm  
94       T: than (.) not good than m- than now  
95       N: yeah  
96       T: than now ((laughter))  
97       N: yep  
98       T: so: but er: (1.5) I (.) I can (.) I- not very much but I  
99           can communicate (.) with them

100 N: mm  
101 T: so I said some words (.) some words  
102 N: mm  
103 T: only a few words but er they can (.) understand and they  
104 try to understand  
105 N: mmm  
106 T: to me  
107 N: mm-hm  
108 T: so: (.) I can (.) I can communicate (.) then next oh I  
109 have to learn grammar  
110 N: [mm-hm  
111 T: [or more vocabulary (.) or more communication (.) how to  
112 communication  
113 N: mm  
114 T: so (.) then first (.) er: (.) I don't (.) mm of course  
115 important English grammar but I don't need (.) so much  
116 N: that's right so you chose minus two because you think (.)  
117 it's not so important the communication is more important  
118 is that true  
119 T: mm yeah  
120 N: communication's more important okay that's really  
121 interesting (.) great um: let's move on to the last one  
122 (.) almost finished

(Miyako, Etsuko, Hiro and Tomomi, 37m14s – 41m51s)

Miyako's ideas (3-20) include the concept that grammar is important for her as she feels that 'if I have many mistakes for grammar... maybe someone cannot catch my feelings or my opinion' (14-16). This leads to a problematisation of a dichotomy between grammatical form and communicative function, reminding us that they are linked. However, the previous points made by other group members about the problem of studying grammar in isolation from communication must surely hold, therefore the pertinent issue for language pedagogy is arguably how to address both, without sacrificing one for the other.

In terms of the other ideas expressed in extract 4.28, Etsuko provides another example of why adherence to standard English – in terms of the avoidance of errors – might be

more relevant to some JICA learners than others, when she explains that she ‘must write some manuals... of computer systems’ (35-37). It is clear that a volunteer with such an assignment might have a different conception of the importance of grammar than, a rural community development officer, for example.

Hiro’s contribution (51-70) again returns to the issue that adherence to standard grammar might not be the most important factor in volunteers’ communicative practices (58-61) but that it is necessary nonetheless (63-66). Tomomi’s response (74-119) features a personal anecdote about time spent in an ‘international dormitory’ (79) where she had to communicate with some people there in English despite her English being ‘not good’ (92) at the time, and that she managed to do this. Her conclusion to this anecdote is yet another example of the idea that English grammar is ‘of course important’ (114-115) but that she doesn’t need it ‘so much’ (115). Tomomi expands on this idea with another related sequence of ideas which took place near the end of the focus group, prompted by her consideration of the sixth statement regarding the relative usefulness of different experiences of using English.

*Extract 4.29*

- 1 N: okay thanks (.) and why did you choose plus one  
2 T: plus one  
3 N: >was it< yeah  
4 T: er: and add  
5 N: the same  
6 T: add her  
7 N: yeah  
8 T: add her opinion  
9 N: yeah  
10 T: er: (.) in Japan- in Japan Japanese education in English  
11 is a little bit old (.) old phrases  
12 N: right ((laughter))  
13 T: they use  
14 N: right right right



15 T: so it's very: big problem (.) I think  
16 N: right  
17 T: and (.) er: we have to (.) more discussion  
18 N: mm-hm  
19 T: um (1.1) so (.) we (.) if if I can use English very well  
20 N: mm  
21 T: but I can't maybe I can't discussion with other (.) other  
22 country's people  
23 N: right [right  
24 T: [so (.) we have to (.) some activities  
25 N: mm  
26 T: of discussion  
27 N: right  
28 T: and er that is add her  
29 N: yeah yeah  
30 T: and er: (.) so (.) I- I said er: I lived in international  
31 dormitory so: (.) er (1.6) it's er (.) then (.) I: don't  
32 I (.) gradually I: don't afraid  
33 N: mm-hm  
34 T: er: (.) wrong wrong English  
35 N: mm mm  
36 T: I speak I can speak wrong English ((*laughter*))  
37 ((*some group laughter*))  
38 I don't afraid  
39 N: mm mm  
40 T: so: because (.) if I- if I wrong  
41 N: yeah  
42 T: er: (.) they don't ag- er angry ((*laughter*))  
43 N: uh-huh uh-huh  
44 T: or something  
45 N: yeah yeah yeah  
46 T: er they try to: understand (.) me  
47 N: yeah [yeah  
48 T: [so it's (.) it's very hap- happy  
49 N: right right yeah  
50 T: very happy so  
51 N: thank you

(Tomomi, 51m02s – 52m56s)

The initial point which Tomomi makes is that English education in the Japanese school

system not only uses 'old phrases' (11) but needs to have 'more discussion' (17). These ideas lead her back to the anecdote about the international dormitory, about which she points out that the speaking practice there made her less 'afraid' (32) and taught her that using 'wrong English' (34) was not a problem because her interlocutors did not get 'angry' (42) and tried to understand her (46) which made her 'very happy' (50). These ideas are of course very reminiscent of the anecdote supplied by Yoshi in focus group three regarding speakers communicating together without much need for adherence to grammatical standards. Therefore Tomomi's anecdote connects with concepts related to English as a Lingua Franca, as was previously discussed.

#### 4.2.3.3 Focus Group Four

There were six participants in focus group four, two males – Hiraku and Akio – and four females – Kanako, Sachiko, Miyu and Chiyo – with both Kanako and Chiyo going to Malawi, and the others going to Cambodia, Namibia, Ethiopia and Zambia respectively. In terms of English proficiency, this group was categorised as being towards the lower end of the scale.

The extracts below – which is one longer passage divided into two – represent the participants' responses to focus group statement five, regarding whether preparation for the UK or USA would be different from preparation for a JICA host country. This enables a discussion of the participant's conceptions of English in their host countries relative to those other contexts.

#### *Extract 4.30*

- 1 N: okay so please put your numbers down (.) and could  
2 you tell us (.) er your number and why you chose it

3 H: er (.) er:: eto er basically preparing er is er no  
4 **hesitation marker in Japanese**  
5 difference  
6 N: mm-hm  
7 H: but 193re r: in the host country eh: people cannot speak  
8 Eng- ( ) English er: prepare- comparing the UK [UK or  
9 N: [uh-huh  
10 H: United States  
11 N: mm  
12 H: so er: if the 193re r (.) level is low (.) or it is okay  
13 it is er: available er or the same in host country  
14 N: mm mm mm  
15 H: mm  
16 N: that that's the difference (.) about the level of English  
17 H: level about level of  
18 N: that's different  
19 H: yes  
20 N: between England and host country  
21 H: mm  
22 N: okay that's an interesting point so sorry which number  
23 was that minus  
24 H: minus er plus one  
25 N: plus one yeah (.) plus one (.) has anyone else chosen  
26 plus one  
27 S: yeah  
28 N: okay (.) do you have the same idea as him or is  
29 S: mm  
30 N: why did choose that one  
31 S: yes yes er: er in my host country English is a second  
32 languages  
33 N: uh-huh  
34 S: and 193re r UK and US is er English is main language  
35 N: uh-huh  
36 S: so if I go to er if I go to UK or US  
37 N: mm  
38 S: I need more (.) high levels  
39 N: mm  
40 S: in English high level  
41 N: yep yeah  
42 S: at least er one or two step (.) high level and er  
43 N: yeah

44 S: er I need more (.) mm (.) I m- (.) mm↑ (.) mm. I- I have  
45 to er: speak (.) more speedy [or fluently  
46 N: [right right right (.)  
47 that's the difference (.) so you think in England or  
48 America you'd need to speak more English (.) and faster  
49 S: mm-hm  
50 N: more natural English  
51 S: yeah  
52 N: okay interesting interesting (.) thank you (.) so let's  
53 choose someone else er which number did you choose please  
54 M: minus one  
55 N: okay (.) so: um (.) why did you choose minus one  
56 M: mm: I think (.) er my English level is very low  
57 N: mm  
58 M: so that so (.) er I must (.) study basic I must  
59 (1.0)  
60 N: mm  
61 M: learn basic English so  
62 N: mm mm  
63 M: so uh (.) so (.) so I (.) so I so I ((*laughter*))  
64 N: yeah  
65 M: that (.) so (.) no no  
66 N: no difference  
67 M: no difference  
68 N: same situation you just need learning basic English  
69 M: yeah yeah  
70 N: even if you're going to England or your host country (.)  
71 yep okay thank you I understand

(Hiraku, Sachiko and Miyu, 24m05s – 27m01s)

In the opening of the extract, Hiraku makes the comment that because the English 'level is low' (12), this makes the language more accessible or 'available' (13) to him compared to the UK or USA. Sachiko makes roughly the same point, in the sense that if she were going to such places she feels would need 'high level' English (40) – including the need to speak more speedily or fluently (45) – compared with her host country Ethiopia, where English is a second language (31-32). These points connect with Akira from focus group one, who raised a similar issue relative to his expectations of English in Tonga.

Miyu's contribution (54-69) connects with a point made by Tomoko in focus group three, namely that a JICA learner without experience of using English should focus on the basics without worrying about specific features of their host country's English. Miyu states that she must learn 'basic English' (68) due to having a 'very low' English level (56). The topic is picked up by Kanako in the following extract.

*Extract 4.31*

1 N: so that was minus one right (.) has anyone else chosen  
2 minus one (1.6) yeah why did you choose it  
3 K: er: in my host country Malawi  
4 N: mm  
5 K: er people (.) often speak English  
6 N: yeah  
7 K: so: (.) their they there is (.) a (.) there is difference  
8 er difference country er: (.) difference ah UK or: US and  
9 Malawi  
10 N: mm  
11 K: but mm I th- (.) I think it is not so different  
12 N: not so different yeah not so different okay (.) who  
13 haven't we heard from (.) we haven't heard from you (.)  
14 which number did you choose  
15 C: two  
16 N: plus two  
17 C: yeah  
18 N: why did you choose that one  
19 C: um: I have um same [opinion  
20 N: [yeah yeah  
21 C: with her (.) um because er: (.) my host country is  
22 English and English is second language  
23 N: mm  
24 C: so I- I also second language  
25 N: yeah  
26 C: er so (.) if I went I will go to UK or USA I (.) I think  
27 nervous [(laughter))  
28 N: [okay yeah yeah yeah (.) you'd feel more nervous  
29 in those countries

30 C: yeah I (.) need more high level  
31 N: right right  
32 C: mm  
33 N: yeah (.) interesting okay (.) did we hear from everybody  
34 yeah I think we did (.) we finished this one right (.)  
35 next one  
36 A: ( )  
37 N: ah sorry I've forgotten ((laughter))  
38 A: ( ) you  
39 N: yeah she  
40 S: she said  
41 N: she said ( )  
42 A: oh  
43 N: so which number did you choose  
44 A: I chose n- minus two  
45 N: minus two so: it's basically the same yeah  
46 A: basically the same  
47 N: and wh- why do you think so  
48 A: er: (.) mm (.) I (.) actually I (.) er I was er (.) I was  
49 thinking about it minus two or plus two  
50 N: oh really↑  
51 A: yeah  
52 N: mm  
53 A: but finally I could choose this one  
54 N: could you explain why you were thinking that  
55 A: yeah because er (.) er sp- er to practice (.) the English  
56 N: mm  
57 A: is er (.) necessary to go to the around the world  
58 N: mm  
59 A: even the places (.) er difference pronunciation  
60 N: mm  
61 A: they are speaking  
62 S: mm-hm  
63 A: but the same things I think it's all of that is same  
64 N: [right  
65 A: [because (.) er I heard from the British friend  
66 N: mm  
67 A: and he said er even I don't (.) I first time when he went  
68 to the USA  
69 N: mm  
70 A: he couldn't understand the pronunciation and

71 N: mm-hm  
72 A: and he couldn't catch the conversations  
73 N: yeah  
74 A: with USA's person (.) but maybe it is (.) more easier  
75 than Japanese person who can who want to speak English  
76 N: mm  
77 A: because the pronunciation is difference and speech is  
78 maybe difference  
79 N: right  
80 A: but I think (.) for example Spanish or Brazilian  
81 N: mm  
82 A: they often use the first language is difference to the  
83 English  
84 N: mm mm  
85 A: maybe they also (.) they will also study about second  
86 language for English  
87 N: yeah  
88 A: but also they can speak English very fluently because  
89 N: mm  
90 A: it's like er: very similar to speak English  
91 N: yeah  
92 A: yeah I mean [( )  
93 N: [that's interesting  
94 A: this is my reason  
95 N: that's an interesting yeah an interesting idea yeah  
96 A: mm

(Kanakano, Chiyo and Akio, 27m01s – 30m36s)

Kanakano (3-11) expressed the idea that there is not much difference in the comparison being made. Chiyo (15-32) made similar points to those in the preceding extract, including the idea that she will be less 'nervous' (27) using English in her host country than she would be in the other contexts, highlighting again a liberating or empowering dimension to the host countries for JICA volunteers, due to their multilingual nature. Akio's response (36-96) touches upon issues seen elsewhere in this data, for example that everywhere has its own pronunciation (59), so 'all of that is same' (63), meaning that preparation for any English using context is the same. He illustrates this with an anecdote that connects back to an idea expressed by Laurence in his interview, that even so called native speakers from inner circle countries can have difficulty understanding

each other. Akio makes this same point with reference to a British friend who went to the USA but 'couldn't understand the pronunciation' (70) or 'catch the conversations' (72). The overall message here appears to be that adjustment to accents and other variations needs to happen in situ as it is a natural process which is universal to travel and contact with other styles of English.

#### 4.2.3.4 Focus Group Five

There were six participants in focus group five, one female – Haruka – and five males – Katsu, Ichiro, Shiro, Yuta and Jiro – with both Ichiro and Shiro going to Tanzania, and the others going to Uganda, Botswana, Cambodia and Zambia respectively. The group was also categorised as having a relatively lower proficiency in English, being similar to the previous group.

Following on directly from the preceding discussion of focus group four, the following extract from the fifth group represents part of their discussion based on the same statement, regarding whether preparation for the UK or USA would be different from preparation for a JICA host country.

#### *Extract 4.32*

- 1 N: anyone else choose plus one (.) plus one (.) okay (.) did  
2 you have the same idea or do you have any other opinion  
3 Y: oh my opinion er learning terms (.) as important if I go  
4 to US or er:: king- UK  
5 N: mm  
6 Y: er I- I need more long time to learn about Eng- practice  
7 English (.) but I'm going to south east Asia  
8 N: yeah  
9 Y: and they are er (.) same English as more more simply



10 N: mm  
11 Y: to understand (.) for me  
12 N: yeah  
13 Y: so that er: term is (.) er this term two month  
14 N: yeah  
15 Y: and er if I go to US or more I need more long term  
16 N: yeah  
17 Y: to practice  
18 N: yeah  
19 Y: so that um plus one  
20 N: yep  
21 Y: and choosed it  
22 N: that's fine ((addressing Katsu)) by the way were you  
23 talking about general life or  
24 K: I- I'm sorry I took mistake ((laughter))  
25 N: but it's it's connected right (.) because if you're going  
26 to practice some language for those situations it's (.)  
27 it's- it's- it's fine (.) what you said was fine  
28 K: I- I ((laughter))  
29 N: you also chose plus one  
30 J: yes  
31 N: do you have the same idea as them or something different  
32 J: same same  
33 N: same so:  
34 J: same opinion  
35 N: same opinion yeah that's fine (.) and: which number did  
36 (.) you choose Haruka  
37 H: zero I choose zero  
38 N: why did you choose zero  
39 H: I have no idea  
40 N: ((laughter)) no idea yeah yeah  
41 H: sorry  
42 N: it's okay that's fine no problem (.) no problem and: (.)  
43 yes  
44 I: I think that question or some message to me  
45 N: yeah  
46 I: is very different is (.) little bit unacceptable  
47 N: oh [yeah well  
48 I: [I think ( )  
49 N: why's that  
50 I: UK and USA (.) and African

51 N: mm  
52 I: er how can I say it t- to (.) English language is  
53 national language  
54 N: yeah  
55 I: national language to use it (.) so that's why there is no  
56 difference  
57 N: there's no difference yeah  
58 I: it's clear  
59 N: but I mean the (.) um I mean the a lot of people study  
60 about (.) um using English in different countries for  
61 example India or  
62 I: uh-huh  
63 N: um Kenya and actually the: (.) some people believe the  
64 style of English (.) is different it's their own variety  
65 Indian English Kenyan English  
66 I: m-hm  
67 N: [( )  
68 I: [I think most of the African countries are influenced  
69 from the UK right  
70 N: yeah  
71 I: that is the historical background  
72 N: yeah yeah (.) yeah yeah (.) okay no problem but you chose  
73 zero right  
74 I: yes ((laughter))

(Yuta, Katsu, Haruka and Ichiro, 28m59s – 31m29s)

In the opening of the extract, Yuta makes roughly the same points as were made previously regarding the expectation that English in Cambodia will be more simple to understand (3-11). Possibly premised on the wording of the question (in terms of...), he relates this in the sense of JICA's term of study by explaining that this would need to be longer if he were going to a country such as the US (15). Following this, the sequence where I interact with Katsu (22-28) involves a clarification that we had been at cross purposes just before this extract began, as he had been talking about preparing to live in his host country but not in a linguistic sense. Following this Jiro (30-34) indicates that he has the same opinion to what has previously been said, and Haruka says that she has 'no idea' (39) about this topic. The sequence featuring Ichiro (44-73) is notable in the sense that he appears to be upset or offended by the statement, calling it 'unacceptable'

(46). Ichiro had previous experience of working in South Africa and therefore had some existing personal experience and connection with the topic at hand. The clarification of his comment is that English is the national language in African countries (50-55) therefore 'there is no difference... it's clear' (55-58). Quite what caused the offence and objection isn't totally apparent, although it could be speculated that this was due to a perceived kind of imperialistic or hegemonic message in the statement. This sequence is useful in that it reminds us of the potential danger to cause offence when discussing variations in English around the world in the sense that, just as there was resistance to some extent from both Laurence and Martha to the concept of variations of English based on their home countries, by applying an academic or conceptual label to a type of English, we run the risk of othering it and conveying the message that by virtue of being different, there is something implicitly wrong with it.

#### 4.2.4 Learner Conceptions: Concluding Comments

In the preceding analysis of additional focus groups, some topics recurred which had already been established from the focus group three data, such as a certain complexity in relation to conceptions of grammar and grammatical accuracy relative to the JICA context. Grammatical accuracy is at times downplayed as far less important than being able to speak and communicate, but the concept also comes through strongly that grammatical form is important not only to construct meaning in communication, but also for some specific volunteer activities such as writing computer manuals. As we saw with focus group three, the complexity of this idea is partly based on the fact that it might be context dependent for certain types of interlocutors that volunteers communicate with, not only in terms of their status but also their behaviour and whether they have a 'judgemental' attitude.

Regarding expectations of what English usage is like in their host countries and what it will be like to use English there, the additional focus groups added the idea that English might be more simple and easy to use in host countries, with less pressure on the volunteers to adhere to grammatical standards in language. This contrasts with the idea expressed elsewhere that the multilingual environments in such contexts will add difficulties to the comprehension of its localised English styles, due to dialect, accent or cultural aspects of the language. One participant mentioned going to a creole language context, expressing the view that this might be a challenging experience.

As a final point, considering the question of whether the learner-participants took an egalitarian 'difference' approach, or a critical 'deficit' approach to conceiving of English diversity in general and specifically in their host countries, overall the data indicates the former position. Diversity is generally alluded to as something natural and interesting, rather than problematic. There were just two cases where the language being used by focus group members to describe local accents and styles of English could be thought of as being deficit orientated. Conversely, there was also the final case where it appears

that the suggestion of a difference between English in the host countries as being different from that in the UK or USA appeared to cause offence with one participant.

#### **Summary of Chapter 4**

In summary of this chapter, the discourse analysis of interview and focus group data has uncovered a range of conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy relative to the JICA context, from the teachers and learners who were involved in the pre-service language pedagogy in spring 2012.

Regarding awareness of the diversity in English in the JICA host countries, and other aspects of their linguistic environments, there were some relatively high levels of awareness of this from both teachers and learners, although understandably a lot of this seemed to have been passed down second hand from other sources, such as existing and returning volunteers. Some of the teachers had particularly high awareness, having been involved in research in the host countries, or actually being originally from a host country in two cases. In other cases some teachers referred to English in host countries in limited ways such as referring to 'some type of pidgin English' or that the English is simply 'broken'. Limited awareness was also demonstrated in ideas expressed by some learners that English is simply a second language in host countries, meaning less proficiency than in other contexts. On the other hand some learners had advanced ideas about host country English, emphasising its uniqueness in terms of variation and cultural influences.

In terms of conceptions of the importance of adhering to grammatical standards for the JICA volunteers in their work, and implications for the pre-service pedagogy, this was problematised by some teachers who took a view which could be described as intelligibility based, in other words they saw their goal as being to facilitate intelligibility

post-pedagogy, with adherence to standards in linguistic form – in terms of grammar or pronunciation – having less importance. Other teachers seemed to be working from a standards-based conception of pedagogy, with grammatical correctness being an overriding priority. The learners typically emphasised communication skills over the need to speak with grammatical accuracy, although the importance of grammar for constructing meaning was frequently alluded to. Furthermore some specific volunteer activities were highlighted as needing grammatical accuracy more so than others. From a personal perspective of identity and the perceived need to speak in a grammatically accurate way, this was a complex issue which, for some participants was context-specific depending on particular situations. For example in some cases the willingness to communicate and make oneself understood was the overriding priority, whereas in other cases – including some professional situations and interacting with ‘judgemental’ interlocutors – the perceived need to speak with grammatical accuracy was strong. The implications for this in terms of professional conceptions of these issues from an academic or pedagogical perspective are profound, and will be discussed in detail in chapter six.

Lastly, in terms of how diversity in English is conceived of by the participants, there was a great deal of evidence that the learner-participants viewed diverse forms of language usage as natural and normal, without judgemental attitudes towards it. The teachers’ conceptions were more complex and varied, with some tending to take a native-speakerist, difference as deficit type perspective. Others were more egalitarian, showing respect to diverse and localised forms of language and communication. Some of the perspectives were internally complex, for example even teachers with a largely liberal and egalitarian view on diversity still held conceptions about the importance of standard language for some situations and contexts, linked to their own personal and professional identities.

## Chapter 5: JICA Volunteer Experiences of Language and Communication

### **Introduction to Chapter 5**

This chapter focuses on the experiences of JICA volunteers in global contexts of voluntary work, in terms of language and communication. The chapter draws on data collected from 12 participants, all in different host countries. The 12 nations represent all four of the major world regions to which English learning JICA volunteers are dispatched, namely: Africa (Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda), Asia (Bhutan, India), The Caribbean (Belize, Jamaica) and The Pacific Islands (The Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga). The aim of the chapter is to enable a response to research question 2:

2) After being dispatched to their host countries, what are the experiences of the volunteers in terms of using English and other languages for their daily lives and for carrying out their voluntary work?

As described previously, the term ‘experiences’ is intentionally broad, in order to capture emergent issues in the data, although investigating experiences of linguistic diversity and intelligibility, not excluding matter of culture or identity, are part of the fundamental research interest. The chapter features different types of qualitative research data, which will be analysed in order to build up an interpretation of the volunteers’ experiences. Part one includes data collected remotely from the participants, by web-based methods including Skype interviews and e-journals. Part two draws on field work which was carried out in three of the global contexts – Kenya, India and Jamaica – drawing on interviews, fieldnotes, recordings of the volunteers communicating with local interlocutors, and other supplemental types of data, in order to make an ethnographic analysis of the volunteers’ experiences.

## **5.1 Experiences of JICA Volunteers Part 1: Interview and E-journal Vignettes**

### **5.1.1 Description of Data and How it was Sampled**

Nine JICA volunteers acted as participants for this part of the study, all of whom had been in their new context of voluntary work for approximately three months at the time of data collection in autumn 2012. Eight of these participants are the same volunteers who took part in the focus groups which were reported in chapter four, namely Kazuko and Yuzuki from focus group one, Michiko, Hiro and Tomomi from focus group two and Chihiro, Kozue and Rika, from focus group three. A ninth participant, Ryuta, is included in this data set although he did not appear in the focus group data. Ryuta was an English language student from the same overall group as the other volunteers but his English class was not one of the ones which could be accessed for focus group data collection. Nevertheless when I met him at the training centre, he declared an interest in the study and a wish to take part. He was originally interviewed with the intention of this being an 'instrument development' activity in preparation for data collection with the other participants, however ultimately there was no reason to exclude his data from the set of new volunteers' experiences.

There are two elements to the data which is reported and analysed below: an interview by Skype and an 'e-journal'. This latter element is an internet-based document designed to encourage participants to record their early experiences of language and communication in the new context. This was shared with the participants approximately two months before the interview, and consisted of a pro-forma set of instructions and an example of an experience in Japan (related to language and communication) which felt significant for me during my time living there. This anecdotal example was mainly designed as an ice-breaker and encouragement to note down anything related to language and communication in an informal way. The pro-forma document can be found in appendix A4.4. When entries were recorded, I would make a reply within the same e-document, thanking participants for contributions and occasionally making suggestions for possible future entries. The full set of e-journal data can be found in appendix B3.



The interview was then a chance to expand upon what was recorded in the e-journals, and ask further questions. Participants were sent a list of four topics by email in advance of the interview, to give them the opportunity to think about the topics in advance. These topics were as follows, with the example of South Africa given here:

- 1) Uses of English and local languages in South Africa. Anything you find surprising or interesting about the way people use English in South Africa (any examples of different pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar etc.)
- 2) Your experiences of communicating with people in South Africa (is it easy, difficult etc.)
- 3) If you think it's necessary to follow English grammar rules strictly in South Africa (e.g. one chair, two chairs... I play, he plays)
- 4) Any advice you can give to new JICA volunteers about languages and communication (studying or using languages). This advice could be for: any JICA volunteer, volunteers studying English (generally) or volunteers going to South Africa (specifically)

As can be seen, these topics are designed to be able to tap into issues such as the local linguistic environment, intelligibility with local interlocutors, standards vs diversity in languages and advice for future volunteers (encompassing suggestions for future pedagogy).

In terms of the amount of data collected for this part of the project, seven of the nine participants made e-journal entries, which including my brief replies within the document, come to a total of 7139 words. The nine interviews are 4 hours 44 minutes and 35 seconds in length. The following table shows the amount of data collected per participant, and also identifies their location and work assignment. As before with the focus groups, the names below represent a combination of pseudonyms and real names, where use of the real name was requested by a participant.

Name	Host Country	Assignment	Interview Length	E-journal
Ryuta	South Africa	Science	38m22s	45 words
Kazuko	Marshalls	Japanese Teacher	36m28s	580 words
Yuzuki	Belize	HIV control	34m54s	1132 words
Michiko	Bhutan	Nutritionist	16m47s	–
Hiro	PNG	RC* Development	20m51s	1827 words
Tomomi	Tonga	Japanese Teacher	34m32s	657 words
Chihiro	Tanzania	Teacher	18m30s	714 words
Rika	Malawi	RC* Development	41m12s	–
Kozue	Uganda	RC* Development	42m59s	2184 words

Table 4: Participant details and record of collected data (\*Rural Community)

For each volunteer in the chronological order that interviews were carried out, a vignette will be supplied which aims to draw on both the interview and journal data in order to make assertions about that volunteer's experiences in terms of language and communication in their new context. The term vignette here is used in the sense of an illustration or sketch: it is not possible to give a full account of each volunteers' reported experiences, therefore a snapshot focusing on the main points of inquiry will be presented for each volunteer. The analysis technique is again influenced by the discursive approach to qualitative research methods, as extracts of some of the interviews will be presented and analysed as interactional events, whereas in other cases the interviews are only briefly quoted. In all of the cases where e-journal entries were made, this has been used for analysis in conjunction with the interview data.

## 5.1.2 Volunteer Vignettes

### 5.1.2.1 Ryuta: South Africa

One of the salient features of Ryuta's interview was a discussion of the richly diverse multilingual environment of South Africa. In Ryuta's region of living and working, the eastern cape province, the people 'normally use their own language, Xhosa' (9m51s). This language is famous for using an audible 'clicking' sound during pronunciation, and it was notable that Ryuta pronounced the *Xhosa* with a 'click' on the first syllable. He went on to explain that Xhosa is normally used by local people for all social interactions whereas English is used for work, and that his very basic usage of Xhosa means that he cannot communicate with 'one hundred per cent' of the people around him (11m49s). He later commented that mixing Xhosa with English was done regularly and to 'emphasise what they say' (19m20s).

In terms of noticeable features of the English which he had experienced so far in South Africa, Ryuta pointed out a new phrase – 'sharp' – which he stated in his e-journal can be used to mean: 'Hi', 'OK', 'Nice', and 'Bye' etc. (appendix B4.1, line 6). In the interview data he also pointed out that it is 'used for giving thankfulness' (6m24s) and is a 'kind of slang' (7m08s) as it would be too informal to use with people of higher status.

Regarding the issue of whether he has found the English of those around him easy to understand or not, there are different responses to this idea with Ryuta's interview data, implying that this is a variable, contextual issue. His response to my initial question on this topic was 'for me it's not so difficult when they use English' (9m36s). Several minutes later, I reformulated the idea that understanding English is 'not so difficult' for Ryuta by asking him if it was true that this is actually quite easy for him. He responded to this by saying 'actually sometimes it's not true because... someone speaks English very quickly... and not so kindly' (12m07s). It would appear from this comment that Ryuta has experienced communicating with people who do not make an effort to modify the way

they speak in order to make themselves maximally intelligible. When I later probed the issue of South African people 'not being kind' in their communication with him, Ryuta commented that it was linked to the process of 'insisting themselves' (17m40s) and that this 'depended on the person' (18m31s). All of his comments on this topic were light-hearted as demonstrated by accompanying laughter, therefore Ryuta seemed to be coping with these experiences when they occurred.

Moving into the third topic in the interview – whether 'grammatical correctness' in English seemed to be important to Ryuta – this topic begins the following extract.

*Extract 5.1*

- 1 N: okay let's move into topic c (.) um: I'm interested in  
2 the idea of um English grammar rules um: and whether  
3 people (.) y- you feel they follow those rules strictly  
4 (.)  
5 R: mm-hm  
6 N: d- do you have any ideas about that  
7 (.)  
8 R: er: yah er they (.) they: (.) you know um it's not so  
9 strict  
10 N: right  
11 R: yah they can catch even when I speak not proper English  
12 grammar  
13 N: mm-hm mm-hm  
14 R: yah er because er I think (.) er it comes from: the er  
15 (.) um (.) characteristic (.) of different culture  
16 N: ok ok that's good  
17 R: yah  
18 N: mm  
19 R: I think they use eleven official language  
20 N: mm mm mm  
21 R: about ten (.) different cultures (.) so er from back in  
22 days they experienced to take some another cul- cultures  
23 from another tribes  
24 N: mm

25 R: so they can communicate with er: in different languages  
 26 N: mm mm mm  
 27 R: like Xhosa (.) isutu Zulu even in English (.) Afkrikaans  
 28 so er someone can't speak English properly  
 29 N: uh-huh [uh-huh  
 30 R: [so there's some gap between people who speak  
 31 English  
 32 N: right  
 33 R: of the level of their English [yah  
 34 N: [okay that's really  
 35 interesting (.) really interesting  
 36 R: that's why er yeah someone can't speak English especially  
 37 for er maybe elder people  
 38 N: mm-hm mm-hm  
 39 R: yeah that's like er other developing countries the elder  
 40 people sometimes er can't speak prop- er properly  
 41 N: mm  
 42 R: it comes from um apartheid as well  
 43 N: oh sure sure so [there's mm mm  
 44 R: [especially for er science and  
 45 mathematics area but (.) er they can't they couldn't take  
 46 er a proper education because of the (.) development- um  
 47 diplomacy  
 48 N: mm mm  
 49 R: so yeah  
 50 N: yeah that's really [interesting  
 51 R: [and yah someone can speak English  
 52 very fastly very quickly  
 53 N: mm [mm mm  
 54 R: [very properly but er some don't  
 55 N: yeah  
 56 R: yah

(Ryuta, 20m15s – 22m54s)

Ryuta's response begins with 'it's not so strict' (8-9), with the subsequent 'they can catch even when I speak not proper English grammar' (11-12) indicating that he is framing his response in terms of how South African people might evaluate his own use of English. Lines 14-31 are an indication that the 'gap' (30) between different levels of ability in English in South Africa occur within a wider cultural context of gaps in familiarity with

different languages, which would seem to naturally imply the need to be flexible with language usage, negotiate meaning and prioritise intelligibility. Lines 34-54 add some more detail and information to this, including generational and educational aspects, as well as socio-political. The main indication from Ryuta here, going back to the original comment, 'it's not so strict' is that the concept of standard English and the need to adhere to grammatical correctness is destabilised in this wider cultural and linguistic context.

In terms of the fourth topic of what advice he would offer to new volunteers, Ryuta's main idea here relates back to the idea of 'insisting opinions' which he referred to at a previous stage. For new volunteers, he points out that 'first, it's important to insist the opinion myself' (24m57s), going on to say that 'it's not like Japanese, it's more like the US and England as well or European countries people' (25m45s). Ryuta later emphasised the need for future volunteers to be confident, as 'Xhosa people is very proud of themselves... so they have confidence for themselves even if it's correct or not' (28m09s).

#### 5.1.2.2 Kazuko: Marshall Islands

Kazuko estimates that her speech in the Marshall Islands is 'ninety per cent English' because she works in an American school where she 'needs to speak English and needs to teach almost completely in English' (6m04s). This means that she has very little contact with the Marshallese language and does not use it frequently.

In terms of the style of English used by local people in the Marshall Islands, Kazuko notes that the 'vowel sounds are different' (17m41s) and also refers to some differences in vocabulary, for example a plastic bag would be referred to just as 'plastic, for example please give me plastic' (21m50s). When asked if it was generally easy or difficult to understand the local Marshallese people when they spoke English to her, Kazuko replied

that 'it's not so difficult' (17m50s). In terms of communicating in English at work, the following extract from her e-journal indicates that she has experienced some difficulties:

Fortunately I am not that bad in communication in English language, but often face many difficulties in understanding what they say. I think that is not a question of grammar, but of 'native speech' and of course of 'professional words'. It seems that everybody in this school considers me to be a 'very good English speaker'. I'm simply happy with that, but on the other hand, they speak to me quickly and naturally. They won't choose 'easier expressions' for non-English speaker. That's been stressful for me this first week here, but at the reception of two days before, I let them know so, and they said I can ask them to speak slowly or simply whenever I don't understand. I felt easier than before now.

(Kazuko e-journal, lines 27-35)

This extract seems to indicate a challenge faced by Kazuko when integrating into her new workplace, although this would seem to be a different situation than many JICA volunteers, in that she mainly needs to integrate with American people rather than Marshallese. Extract 5.2 relates to the question of whether or not grammatical standards seem to be important for how Marshallese people communicate in English or not.

### *Extract 5.2*

- 1 N: and how about (.) sort of grammar and word order I mean  
2 we can start talking about topic C now about the grammar  
3 um  
4 K: mm-hm  
5 N: do you find that people in the Marshalls are they using  
6 kind of standard English grammar (.) or do they use it  
7 slightly differently  
8 (.)

9 K: I think not- not really (.) important  
10 N: uh-huh (.) uh-huh  
11 K: for the you know if you want to speak with Marshallese  
12 people in English language (.) not strictly  
13 N: okay okay that's interesting  
14 K: mm-hm  
15 N: so um (.) you mean um for like- for you or for a Japanese  
16 volunteer (.) [it's not so important to use the exact  
17 K: [yeah  
18 N: grammar rules  
19 (.)  
20 K: mm-hm not- not really important  
21 N: mm  
22 K: of course maybe this is important but er (.) maybe we can  
23 understand each other even though it's not perfect  
24 English  
25 N: yeah and you mentioned that topic in er:: in er KTC as  
26 well you- you were saying (.) [something similar to that  
27 K: [mm-hm  
28 N: so (.) from your experience in the Marshalls (.) [you st-  
29 K: [yeah  
30 N: you still believe that- that small differences don't  
31 really (.) affect the communication  
32 K: mm-hm (.) yeah exactly but you know this is actually I  
33 work in the American almost American society  
34 N: yeah  
35 K: maybe this is a little bit different from other JICA  
36 volunteers  
37 N: ri::ght ri::ght  
38 K: and er (.) some: it's not really (.) necessary to follow  
39 English grammar rules strictly  
40 N: uh-huh  
41 K: when I speak with local Marshallese people  
42 N: yeah  
43 K: but on the other hand when I step into you know my co-  
44 workers circumstances  
45 N: yeah  
46 K: and when I teach (.) Japanese language in English  
47 N: mm mm  
48 K: in my classes  
49 N: mm



50 K: I think I have to follow  
 51 N: ri::ght  
 52 K: the grammar rules  
 53 N: [right right  
 54 K: [because the students knows more- more than I do and the  
 55 students are more fluent  
 56 N: yeah I  
 57 K: fluent speakers  
 58 N: mmm  
 59 K: that makes me you know (.) confused  
 60 N: I can understand that so m-maybe with American people or  
 61 in your classroom you would try harder to use the exact  
 62 grammar (.) correctly  
 63 K: mm-hm yes  
 64 N: so [how how about (.) how about when a Marshallese person  
 65 K: [yes  
 66 N: speaks English to you (.) d-do you feel that are they-  
 67 are they using grammar strictly or are they quite  
 68 flexible about how they use English  
 69 K: er they are not really following I think  
 70 N: mm-hm  
 71 K: of course it depends on people  
 72 N: yes (.) yes  
 73 K: yeah  
 74 N: depends on the [person  
 75 K: [if they are you know as I said in higher  
 76 society or have experience in learning abroad (.) they::  
 77 follow the rules they speak nice English  
 78 N: [uh-huh  
 79 K: [but if you want if you talk with the local normal people  
 80 N: yeah  
 81 K: who are not really rich (.) they do not follow the rule  
 82 [really  
 83 N: [yeah yeah

(Kazuko, 21m58s – 25m54s)

In this extract, Kazuko explains a divergence in her experiences of English in terms of standards and grammatical correctness. She points out that when communicating with local Marshallese people, standard grammar is not really important (9, 20) whereas it is

vitaly important for her when she is at work, communicating with American colleagues and when teaching her own students (43-63). This indicates that a fundamental experience for Kazuko is this movement between the 'local' environments which feature varied, diverse uses of English and her workplace in which standard English plays a dominant role. A notable aspect of this is the way that Kazuko equates these differences in linguistic standards with matters of social class in her immediate environment. She states that if a person is in 'higher society, or have experience...learning abroad, they follow the rules, they speak nice English' (75-77) whereas the 'local, normal people who are not really rich... do not follow the rule (79-81). This is a rather complex, double-sided issue. On the one hand, for a great number of the contexts in which JICA volunteers work, the idea that more wealthy individuals will have greater access to standard forms of English than the less wealthy, is likely to be a de facto, every day and non-problematic perspective. There is clearly a danger however, in taking up an elitist, judgemental perspective of social class and linguistic standards. This type of position is indicated here by Kazuko's wording when she refers to the richer individuals speaking 'nice English' (77), which carries the unstated message that the poorer individuals' English is not nice. This position was already indicated during Kazuko's responses during the focus group (see chapter four) and by one of the teachers (Kelly). Such a perspective can be critiqued from an egalitarian perspective and the case can be made that some awareness raising or need to increase critical thinking is required in the JICA context. Negative appraisals based on linguistic standards in English and social class are fundamentally unfair for a variety of reasons. In Kazuko's case, her co-teachers (43-44) and students (55) are likely to have English as a first language or for it to have played a prominent role in their early lives. The less wealthy individuals are likely to be dominant in the local language, therefore their use of English is a case of additive bilingualism and therefore negative appraisals of it should be avoided.

When discussing advice for future volunteers, I steered Kazuko back towards a topic which she had raised in her focus group discussion – the lack of available listening materials with speakers from the Marshall Islands – to see if she still had the same opinion on this or anything to add. In response to my question, 'do you think it would

be useful for the volunteers to be able to hear Marshallese accents before they go' (29m16s), Kazuko commented 'yes definitely, in KTC's library there was a grammar book but we didn't know how to pronounce and the sound is very important – listening materials are very important' (29m43s)

### 5.1.2.3 Yuzuki: Belize

Yuzuki's new context of Belize could be defined as one of the more complex environments in terms of language and culture, with its diverse range of local languages making it more similar to South Africa than the Marshall Islands out of the two locations which have already been touched upon. This comes across in Yuzuki's e-journal:

*In terms of language experience, I'm surprised by the fact that many Belizeans can speak more than 2 languages and use different languages depending on situations. Belize is indeed a very diverse country with many ethnic groups and languages.*

(Yuzuki e-journal, lines 17-19)

*Belize is an interesting country from the language perspectives. Even though it's a small country, I encounter many languages. When I take a bus to the Northern part of Belize, the bus is full of Creole-speaking people when it departs from Belize City, but I gradually get surrounded by Spanish-speaking Mestizos. It sometimes feels like I'm in a different country when I go to other parts of Belize. I have also noticed that Mestizo people's Creole is easier to understand than that of Creoles.*

(Yuzuki e-journal, lines 100-106)

She also made comments about this diversity in her interview, for example when I originally asked her if she had noticed 'anything different about English in Belize'

(3m39s), she replied that ‘yes because the first time I heard creole, I didn’t think it was part of English at all’ (3m51s). After this she went on to list features of creole that she had noticed such as ‘many grammatical details are simplified or omitted’ (4m03s) and then giving more details about pronoun and subject usage and so on. When I ask Yuzuki ‘do you think of creole as a different language’ (4m45s) she replied that ‘I think it’s a kind of dialect’ (4m56s). This is another example in my data, following some of the examples in the teacher interviews, where it is not clear if the topic being discussed is creole as a form of English or as a separate language in its own right. Although this could be seen as a limitation in the data, it could also be seen as a significant finding in its own right which points towards the need for greater awareness of the dynamic between English and pidgins/creoles in the JICA context. Going back to comments that Yuzuki makes in this part of the interview, it is significant to note her confusion regarding what she was hearing during initial exposure to language usage in Belize. In her e-journal (appendix B3.3, lines 30-41) she reflects more on uses of creole, for example explaining when it would be used in certain situations and when she finds this more or less a barrier to communication.

*People I have communicated here in English include my host family, teachers at school, Mayan family I visited as a part of class, and students from Mexico. I haven’t had difficulties communicating with them. It is easy to understand them when they are talking to me. They do have accent, but their accent doesn’t become an obstacle for our communication.*

(Yuzuki e-journal, lines 20-24)

At a later point in the journal, she describes that she is finding it easier to understand Creole but wishes that she knew more. A significant part of Yuzuki’s experience seems to be exploring this new linguistic form and its dynamic relationship with English.

One notable feature of Yuzuki’s interview was an aspect of her experiences in Belize which did not match the expectations which she expressed in her focus group

discussion. In the focus group she had been more concerned about difficulties in communicating with local people at work, in terms of using technical vocabulary related to HIV and reproductive health. In her interview, Yuzuki commented that communicating with people in general was 'very difficult in casual settings' (16m10s) whereas situations such as meetings were easier. She indicated that this was related to the creole dynamic in casual settings.

#### 5.1.2.4 Michiko: Bhutan

In Bhutan, Michiko was experiencing the dynamic between Dzongkha as the main local language and English, along with some uses of Nepali and Hindi. When asked if she had experienced anything surprising about the way English was used there, Michiko commented on the use of 'know' as a generic question tag: 'when we want to say *isn't it*, Bhutanese people say *know*' (5m09s). She also commented that the word order when using English seemed to be flexible and influenced by Dzongkha. When I asked Michiko if she found English easy to understand in Bhutan, she replied 'yes it is easy' (7m50s) although the dynamic with the local language did not always seem to be easy for her, for example she said that 'when co-workers talk with them, they use Dzongkha the local language, so I can't understand and I can't join them, so sometimes sad' (13m43s).

#### 5.1.2.5 Hiro: Papua New Guinea

Like Yuzuki in Belize, a large element of Hiro's data focused on experiences and impressions of a pidgin/creole language, in his case Tok Pisin or pidgin English. At the start of his interview he pointed out that 'actually in Papua New Guinea, every people usually use pidgin English' (4m31s) going on to say that 'it's rare to hear the normal English' (4m39s) and 'if people use the normal English they confused about the pronunciation, English or pidgin' (5m02s). Hiro then went on to discuss new

pronunciations of words such as 'vehicle' (5m38s) and 'car' (5m43s) which he had experienced in PNG. Although these reported experiences might be true for many JICA volunteers, an argument can be put forward that the JICA host countries featuring a major pidgin or creole language might be a more challenging linguistic environment to experience and get used to compared to where the local languages are unrelated. This assertion can be supported by both Hiro and Yuzuki's data. Regarding the question of grammatical standards in every day communication, Hiro commented that in general people in Papua New Guinea 'don't pay attention for the grammar' (9m09s).

Hiro's e-journal data provides a window into his self-perceptions regarding levels of intelligibility between himself and local interlocutors in PNG. This first extract indicates that his intelligibility with one interlocutor depended on whether that individual was accommodating to him or not:

I met a person who was introduced by my acquaintance. He is Indian. I have met Indian people, and I felt Indian English is very fast, but there are not so difficult words then. Anyway, I talked with him about one and half hour. I was able to understand almost all his speaking, and I could hear very clear and very similar with PNG English. After I met him, we went to his house. There are he and his brother-in-law. His brother is American, and I couldn't so much his speaking. When he talked with his brother, I thought that his English is totally different.

(Hiro e-journal, lines 56-62)

In an additional comment on the same situation, Hiro writes:

I realized that communication is more important than grammar or tense even if there are mistakes about grammar. Actually, I was able to communicate with him and his brother.

(Hiro e-journal, lines 66-68)

There are numerous examples in Hiro's journal regarding instances where he doesn't feel that he fully understood his interlocutors, or otherwise there was some issue with mutual intelligibility:

I talked with shopper at mobile phone shop to buy SIM card. Then, I thought I have enough knowledge and words about mobile phone. But, she couldn't understand my English. I disappointed that.

(Hiro e-journal, lines 71-73)

The situation in the phone shop provoked a negative emotional response of disappointment for Hiro, with the following extract recounting a similar experience:

Yesterday, our dormitory's electricity was down, so today, proprietary company staff came and checked electrical equipments. Then, I needed to communicate with him of course. However, I wasn't able to listen his English. I realized that I can't recognize by sound between Pidgin English and English. It is very difficult for me.

(Hiro e-journal, lines 78-82)

The following entry continues to build on depicting Hiro's communicative experiences as dependent on context:

Today, I went to office on foot and I greeted some people. It made me confident and couraged. But, at noon, I went to shop, and I was told by shopper but I didn't understand clearly. I was told by cook of hotel, which I'm staying at, I also didn't understand half of story. I thought that I can hear almost all conversation, but actually, I can't. However, I'll continue trying to communicate.

(Hiro e-journal, lines 92-97)

Overall, these journal entries provide valuable insights regarding the experience of a JICA volunteer going into a challenging new linguistic environment. From Hiro's

perspective, he is experiencing linguistic diversity and the struggle to achieve intelligibility at a number of levels. At the JICA training centre, he would have been focused mainly on acquiring standard forms of English (this assertion can be made with confidence due to the fact that Paul was Hiro's teacher at KTC). However in his host country location he is now contending with a diverse range of linguistic forms involving standard English and pidgin English. These experiences relate directly to many of the issues discussed in relation to Jessica and Paul's interview in chapter four, and lead to a series of important questions about the most appropriate language pedagogy for JICA learners, which will be addressed fully in chapter six.

#### 5.1.2.6 Tomomi: Tonga

Tomomi's experiences are quite different from Hiro's in that she does not appear to have had much difficulty with communicating with local people, for example this entry in her e-journal:

*Almost all of people who I met here can speak English even a girl is 11 years old and their English is easy to listen for me.*

(Tomomi e-journal, lines 3-5)

In her interview, in response to a question about whether she finds communication there easy or not, she said 'I think it's easy, Tongan people also learned English as a second language so I think native speakers speak English very quickly, too fast, but Tongan people's English or how to speak is very easy to understand, and they try to understand my English, so I think it's easy to communicate each other' (13m26s).

In a similar way to Michiko in Bhutan, it seems that a lack of understanding the local language, Tongan, is the major barrier to Tomomi's communication with local people,



for example she pointed out that 'meeting in the school so the principle tries to use English, all English, but if she asks something to other teachers then teacher answers in Tongan, and even the principal she usually speaks English but sometimes suddenly change to Tongan' (9m55s).

In terms of the question of whether Tomomi feels that English grammar rules are important for communication in Tonga, she explains that 'some teachers think about using English strictly, but I think not too much, because my counterpart... she sometimes mistakes she or he, or other teachers doesn't matter for past tense or present tense' (19m13s). In terms of how she speaks, I asked Tomomi if local people would mind if she makes mistakes with English grammar, her answer was: 'no problem, if they can't understand what I said of course they ask me, but if they can catch I want to say so then it's no problem' (20m18s).

Towards the end of the interview and in relation to topic D (advice for future volunteers) I asked Tomomi if she felt that students should get to learn about Tongan accents while still studying in Japan. In response to this she said that 'I think we don't need learn Tongan accent, Tongan English because in my case my English skill or English level is not so high, so I need more basic things maybe' (27m22s).

#### 5.1.2.7 Chihiro: Tanzania

A very notable feature of Chihiro's data is her surprise regarding the extent to which Swahili is used in everyday life in Tanzania compared with English:

*Most of the volunteers who have been here can speak Kiswahili fluently.*

*I'm really impressed with them.*

*They say Kiswahili critical to live here.*

As far as I know one among four taxi driver can understand English.

(Chihiro e-journal, lines 18-21)

In her e-journal Chihiro also reflected on one instance when she was talking with a Tanzanian man who did speak English with her:

In my opinion, it was different from when I talked with a native speaker.  
Because he didn't care my mistakes and looked patient.  
Sometimes native speakers give up to talk when they feel difficulty to have  
conversation with me but it depends on the personality..not general.

(Chihiro e-journal, lines 31-34)

The following extract demonstrates the anxiety that can be felt when adjusting to a new linguistic environment and being concerned about intelligibility issues:

I met some Tanzanian who can speak English well, but sometimes I feel  
difficulties to listen to their English.  
For example I heard agost, but it was August. These things are happened.  
It is still difficult using mobile phone for me even in English.  
From tomorrow I'm going to the dispatched place myself and I needed to  
make appointment by mobile phone previously.  
Even The man who seemed to be responsible for me spoke in English, but I  
could catch only "just come!"  
I'm anxious very much.

(Chihiro e-journal, lines 73-81)

Although Chihiro has experienced a limited need for English in the community, she still points out that it is necessary for her work and also says that 'JICA volunteers should learn English as much as they can because here in Tanzania there are many chance to

use English for example immigration office or bank' (11m07s).

Chihiro made some reflections about the way she uses English in Tanzania, saying 'I try to use simple vocabulary or grammar, and I think I don't need to use proper grammar, so I try to emphasise the word which is important in sentence so I try to make a pause before the word which is important... so word is more important than grammar'(8m32s). She does make reference to more formal situations, for example 'in the meeting or to explain about my work to my boss, maybe I need proper English to explain' (11m05s).

Overall, complementing Hiro's vignette which raises similar themes, Chihiro's data portrays a sense of difficulty with adjusting to the new linguistic environment. She specifically states that the situation is causing her anxiety. Connecting with numerous other elements of the data set – for example the focus group data and Ryuta's vignette – there are also indications that Chihiro's experiences are to some extent dependent on the personality or attitude of specific interlocutors, for example whether they are kind, patient and so on.

#### 5.1.2.8 Rika: Malawi

In Rika's context of Malawi, she was experiencing a dynamic interplay between English, Tumbuka and other local languages. In a situation which may be typical for many volunteers, Tumbuka is the main language of the local community whereas English is typically used at work. As a rural community development worker, Rika would be using English with co-workers in her office and with some people out in the community, although she relied on co-workers for translation from Tumbuka to English for much of the time, having said this she was 'trying to learn the local language' (7m45s).

In response to my question: 'how about the style of English that people in Malawi use,

do you find anything different or new or surprising about it?’ (8m59s), Rika mentioned that the pronunciation was different, and highlighted that formal phrases such as ‘provided that’ (9m37s) were very common. She made particular praise here for her teacher at NTC (Terry) for highlighting phrases such as this which she had never heard before his lessons, and ultimately were proving to be very common and useful in the new linguistic environment. This was in fact part of Terry’s overall approach to teaching, as explained in the analysis of his interview extract in chapter four, and we can observe the fruits of this here in Rika’s account.

In relation to the same topic, Rika pointed out that the phrase ‘oh you are so scarce!’ (10m53s) – to mean something equivalent to ‘long time no see’ – had been confusing when she first encountered it. Regarding adjustment to communicating in the new environment, apart from examples such as this, Rika pointed out that ‘it was a little bit difficult to understand what they are saying in the beginning, maybe for three weeks or so when I first got here but since I got used to their accent it’s really easy for me to understand what they are saying’ (14m40s). She then went on to say ‘but the difficult part is, they always mix English with Tumbuka and Chichewa another national language so I get confused sometimes because of the accent I get confused in they’re speaking in English or Tumbuka, because they always mix phrase all of a sudden’ (15m12s). It was notable that Rika was laughing at this last point, which was quite a common feature of the JICA volunteers’ reporting of such experiences. Despite the reverse appearing to be true for some volunteers such as Chihiro, many volunteers appeared to find novel aspects of the new linguistic environments amusing and were inquisitive and playful about negotiating linguistic differences, rather than portraying them as a negative experience.

Regarding the issue of whether linguistic standards (in terms of grammatical correctness) seem to be necessary in Malawi, I asked Rika specifically about how English speakers in Malawi would react to the dropping of third person s by an interlocutor, for example ‘she collect wood’ (19m47s). Rika responded by saying ‘I don’t think they really care, they would notice but they wouldn’t care, they think to understand each other is

more important than those small grammatical mistakes' (20m12s). To expand upon this topic, I tried to elicit ideas regarding two areas which had come up in Rika's focus group discussion where the volunteers considered that grammatical correctness might be more important: firstly, when volunteers are meeting with people of a higher status (possibly government officials or senior members of large organisations) and in the case of report writing. These issues feature in the following extract.

### *Extract 5.3*

- 1 N: and um (.) I wanted to ask you about um (.) in NTC you  
2 were saying that (.) you were wondering about if you were  
3 gonna get any sort of very formal situations with like  
4 bosses or (.) like um managers or anything like that (.)  
5 [have you  
6 R: [mm-hm  
7 N: have you found that have you had that kind of situation  
8 R: formal situation<sup>↑</sup>  
9 N: yeah like someone with a high status or someone that you  
10 (.) someone that you think yeah it's a formal situation  
11 R: actually yes I um (.) I- okay my colleagues (.) like I- I  
12 speak (.) naturally but uh  
13 N: yeah  
14 R: er: I work near the district council  
15 N: yeah  
16 R: so but they're pretty casual as well but when I speak to  
17 someone er maybe I feel like I should be a little bit  
18 formal  
19 N: right right  
20 R: yeah and also like I have a lots of chance to meet chiefs  
21 N: [chiefs  
22 R: [of the: chiefs  
23 N: yeah  
24 R: like you know like a native American kind of chief  
25 N: yeah like a tribal leader  
26 R: yes yes I have a lot of chance to meet the tribal leaders  
27 N: right right  
28 R: and there's a certain expression in Tumbuka as well  
29 N: yeah yeah

30 R: but most of them actually speak you know or a lot of them  
31 speak good English  
32 N: yeah yeah  
33 R: so in that case I try to be you know formal or I try to  
34 be polite  
35 N: right right right  
36 R: mm  
37 N: but do you feel I mean are they kind of would they judge  
38 you if- if you made a like a so called grammar mistake  
39 would they::  
40 [how would they feel about that  
41 R: [mm I don't think so  
42 N: no no  
43 R: they don't they don't really care  
44 N: [right right right  
45 R: [(*laughter*)

(Rika, 16m07s – 17m55s)

In this extract, Rika states that whereas she feels she can speak 'naturally' with her regular colleagues (11-12), with other interlocutors such as local 'chiefs' (20) in the community, she feels like she should 'be a little bit more formal' (17-18). This perceived need to be 'formal' or 'polite' (33-34) does not seem to equate fully with an adherence to standard grammar, as when I ask a follow-up question on this (37-40) she states that 'they don't really care' (43). Therefore it seems that Rika is not really referring to grammatical correctness as an element of formality here (as opposed to her focus group data, in which she clearly did) but rather she means in the literal sense of certain lexico-grammatical items or pragmatic routines being relatively more or less formal and polite. The analysis of Rika's focus group contributions indicated that this was an issue she was already thinking about prior to leaving Japan, and the extract above indicates that is still a salient issue for her. The perceived need to be formal and polite with interlocutors of high status seems to be something of a central issue for Rika, which could be explained in terms of her identity or overall set of conceptions about language and communication. We could speculate on potential reasons for this based on what we know about her background. For example such issues are stereotypically associated with a Japanese way of communicating – the need to be polite and deferential with seniors – not least in the linguistic system of honorifics in the Japanese language. Furthermore we know that Rika

strongly disliked the formal education she received in English (see chapter four) and picked up the language mainly through informal interactions in her global travels. Therefore it is possible that she might feel unaware of certain formal linguistic features, relative to other JICA volunteers. As already mentioned, these ideas are speculative and there is no possibility of reaching definitive answers here. What is clear is that there is some internal complexity in Rika's personal relationship with English in terms of the language as a formal way to communicate versus as a flexible tool to communicate informally, which is playing out to some extent in her new linguistic environment.

In terms of the need for grammatical standards in Malawi, Rika later brought this up in relation to writing. My original question was 'before you went to Malawi you had the opinion that those kind of small mistakes, they're not really important for communication, you kind of said that it doesn't really matter as long as we understand each other... have you found that to be the case in Malawi?' (20m54s). Rika's response was 'I still believe that, strongly, they still understand it anyways but okay when you write documents, it is important to write correctly I think' (21m34s). The topic of the perceived need for grammatical correctness in writing will be taken up during Kozue's segment.

#### 5.1.2.9 Kozue: Uganda

In her new context of Uganda, Kozue was experiencing the main local language of Runyankole along with usage of Luganda and English. She identified some new uses of English which she found new or surprising, identifying examples which she herself had started using, such as 'what's your programme today' (8m10s). At a later point in the interview – when discussing intelligibility levels with local interlocutors – Kozue identified other new uses of English such as 'if I bump into someone after a long time the person might say *you are lost*' (21m59s). Kozue goes on to explain that this phrase – meaning the equivalent of *long time no see* – caused her to be 'so confused at first' (22m04s) although she told this anecdote with laughter and a strong emphasis on the humorous nature of it: 'I was like, what what, am I lost, no I

think I know where I am' (22m12s). This example connects with Rika's previous account of 'you are so scarce' and Kozue also mentioned that another participant – Chihiro – had told her the previous day by phone about an equivalent usage of 'you've been hiding' in Tanzania.

Another example of new usage comes from Kozue's e-journal where she pointed out:

*For example, my co-worker said to me, "Are you leaving (the office) now? Can you see the cloud is organizing to rain?" I knew what she meant, but I wasn't sure if I've heard of such expressions before and if it was uniquely Ugandan.*

*(Kozue e-journal, 55-57)*

She also mentions the term 'procure' (62-63) which she did not know, which is another example of formal language causing an intelligibility issue. As Kozue was another one of Terry's students, based on the discussion above regarding Rika's need for formal terms in Malawi, it would seem that this is one example of a required formal term which was not covered during Terry's classes. In terms of the easiness of understanding and communicating with her local interlocutors, Kozue stated that this 'really depends on the person I'm talking with but with co-workers I don't have hard time, it's not very easy but I don't find it very hard' (14m53s).

This issue is expanded upon in Kozue's e-journal, where she makes the following entry as a reply to the statement 'when people are speaking English to me here, I am able to understand them easily', which I had suggested could be a topic to consider and write about.

*Not at all - but it seem to depends on the person's education level. I work with the district government officers who are highly educated in English, so I have easier time communicating with them. But they tend to speak faster with Ugandan accent, which I'm not used to, so that I often get confused or trapped in different usage of words and lose track of conversation.*



With local farmers, I have very difficult time in understanding their English especially on phone. I can't give any examples but even any simple communication is a trouble. I prefer writing to them, so when a farmer called me on the phone the other day (August 29<sup>th</sup>), I wanted to understand but I just couldn't, so I apologized and wrote a text message. But I am not sure if he has gotten the message.

(Kozue e-journal, 115-125)

The issues raised in these entries connect with Kazuko's vignette above, which was analysed in terms of the participant making an association between education or social class and linguistic issues. However, we can see here that Kozue discusses the issue without an expression of ideas which denigrate the individuals that she refers to. She also mentions:

When I speak with the counterparts and other colleagues, they sound very fast with strong Ugandan accent. Sometimes I don't understand half of the conversation and wonder if it was entirely in English (but I'm sure it is).

(Kozue e-journal, 137-139).

In terms of the overall question of whether grammatical standards seem to be important for using English in Uganda, when I asked about local speakers' usage in this sense, Kozue pointed out that 'when they are speaking I don't notice, probably they do get influenced by the local language' (19m13s). Immediately after this, Kozue makes a comment which gives us some insight into her frame of mind, cognitive processes and identity as a user of English in this new context: 'for me, I remember that when I started my English that difference, that mistakes by speakers used to be more like relevant in understanding, but at this point I'm more focused on what's being communicated in the content rather than that grammar so I tend to kind of drop, I tend to not notice those mistakes any more' (19m44s). In relation to this point, the data that Kozue has supplied for this project – her contributions to focus group three, her e-journal and this interview – provide a rich source of data regarding her identity as a user of English, including her conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy which have already been explored. This would merit a far deeper analysis than is possible here, however even at a basic level we can say that Kozue is an extremely deep thinker and is introspective

about language usage. Despite being considered an extremely proficient user of English there are indications that her confidence can be fragile, that she is highly self-critical and that she fears being 'judged' by other people based on her language usage. This comes across in the following journal extract:

*Also, I noticed that some Ugandans who speak fluent English has taken a judgmental attitude against me, probably assuming that I wouldn't understand or speak English well because of the stereotype of Japanese speakers. As soon as I find such attitude, I tend to feel tense and lose fluency.*

(Kozue e-journal, 141-144)

This issue is expanded upon in the journal, with the example given of a dispute with a bank manager (146-157). Returning to the issue of whether she felt that grammatical standards were important for her current context of usage, as previously mentioned, Kozue made several points concerning the need for grammatical accuracy in writing. She expressed some concern over the grammatical accuracy of her reports. I made the following contribution on the topic in general - 'I think in some cases, as you said before it depends on the person, but a lot of people in countries in Africa or other places in the world, they are more flexible and they tend to worry less about what's mistake or, I don't know it's just my idea' (25m37s) – to which Kozue's response was:

*But you know that's what I imagined, but it's surprising that I have regular like monthly meetings with the officers and there is a man who is in charge of taking, like recording minutes, and he comes back to me a few weeks after the meeting with the minutes and we correct together, and at the next meeting with the rest of the group members we go through the minutes, but surprisingly the very first thing they do is correcting the mistakes, the grammar, but it's so interesting that they spend so much time correcting this person's mistakes rather than the content*

(Kozue interview, 26m28s)

This is an example of when grammatical standards seem to have meaning and significance for a JICA volunteer's experiences, in the sense that a colleague of Kozue's placed high importance on the need for grammatical accuracy, making her in turn feel that they were important.

In the later stage of the interview, when asking Kozue about topic D, how to advise new volunteers, we returned to the usage of 'you are lost' which was discussed above. I formulated a question about whether volunteers should attempt to pre-learn features like this before being dispatched to host countries, as follows: 'do you think volunteers, do you think it's useful for them to try and learn things like that or do you think it's better for them just to go there and experience it' (29m20s). Kozue's response was 'I think it's better just to go there, because reading in a book or hearing from someone else is different and I think someone who likes to learn another language would enjoy this kind of thing' (29m45s). She went on to say that, whereas she enjoys such a process of 'learning things on my own, for some people it might be stressful' (30m11s). The following extract links strongly with Kozue's identity which has been discussed previously, and encapsulates some of her conceptions of English which are in keeping with what was discovered previously but can now be demonstrated again after a period of time using English in Uganda.

#### *Extract 5.4*

- 1 N: and then talking about this (.) so I'm really thinking  
2 about topic d now about new volunteers and (.)  
3 [language learning  
4 K: [mm  
5 N: and preparation I mean  
6 K: mm-hm  
7 N: would you have any advice for them about how to study or  
8 K: uhh  
9 N: what to expect  
10 K: well just just be open-minded ((*laughter*))  
11 N: yeah  
12 K: I think just try not to (.) er get caught by the rule  
13 that you- that they- that we learned in school↑

14 N: uh-huh  
15 K: in textbook and  
16 N: yeah  
17 K: er just enjoy I guess and tr- tr- try not to be (2.3) you  
18 know judgmental<sup>↑</sup> or like  
19 N: yeah yeah  
20 K: not judgmental but like (.) try not to (.) say this is  
21 the right >try not to speak< with one rule because  
22 [English is like (.)  
23 N: [uh-huh  
24 mm  
25 K: you know I don't know what rule is correct because  
26 everyone use it in different ways ((*laughter*))  
27 N: ((*laughter*)) yeah that's right [that's right  
28 K: [and: er I think that's  
29 what makes English very unique and enjoyable  
30 N: yeah yeah  
31 K: yeah

(Kozue, 31m15s – 32m23s)

This extract encapsulates many of Kozue's reflections on the nature of language and communication, and also conveys her sense of joy at using English flexibly and experiencing its diversity. It also reconnects with other findings from within this project and in the wider academic literature. For example when Kozue suggests that future volunteers should be 'open-minded' (10) and should not 'get caught by the rule... that we learned in school' (12-13), this connects with many ideas from across the data set regarding the need to prioritise communication over an adherence to grammatical standards (for just one example, see Yoshi's comments and anecdotal examples in chapter four). Kozue neatly sums up a central part of this overall notion – which is also prevalent in research movements such as English as a Lingua Franca – with the comment that: 'everyone uses it in different ways and... I think that's what makes English unique and very enjoyable (26-29).

## **5.2 Experiences of JICA Volunteers Part 2: Ethnographic and Interactional Data**

### **5.2.1 Description of Data and How it was Sampled**

As described in chapter three, the field visits to Kenya, India and Jamaica were carried out consecutively during the same field trip from late August to early October 2012. In all cases, the research was based primarily in and around the capital cities of the three countries, Nairobi, Delhi and Kingston, although in the latter case it was possible to branch out to further locations in Jamaica, due to its smaller geographical size. The data from this field trip was emergent, in the sense that the basic starting point was meeting a JICA volunteer to conduct an interview on their experiences of language and communication, and after this initial meeting, if possible the volunteer was later visited at work or in a social setting. These visits had the twin purposes of enabling the observation of volunteers in different settings, and allowing for the possibility of recording the volunteers in communicative exchanges with host country interlocutors. In order to document the full data set that was collected for this stage of the research, this will now be defined in three categories of data: interviews, interactions and supplemental.

#### *Interviews*

Field interviews were carried out with 20 volunteers overall, eight in Kenya, four in India and eight in Jamaica. These total recording time of the 20 interviews is 8 hours, 59 minutes and 25 seconds.

#### *Interactions*

There are seven recordings in the data set which are considered as the 'main' interactions, as these were the situations where recordings were made of for example, a volunteer having a one-to-one discussion with a colleague. Some of these recordings took place at work and some in other nearby locations. In the case of India it was not

possible to arrange this type of situation, so a recording of a volunteer interacting with a local acquaintance in a social setting was made instead. Apart from this recording in India, three were made in Kenya and three in Jamaica. The total time of all seven recordings is 56 minutes and 20 seconds, with the shortest recording being 8 minutes 34 seconds and the longest 20 minutes and 21 seconds.

### *Supplemental*

This category is used for classifying the remaining types of data that were collected, which included:

- 1) Researcher field notes
  - when typed, these totalled 510 words for field visits in India, 292 words for Kenya and 935 for Jamaica
- 2) Photographs or short videos of the working environments of JICA volunteers (21)
- 3) Recordings (audio and/or visual) of JICA volunteers carrying out teaching or training work related to their voluntary work assignment, for example:
  - a volunteer in Jamaica teaching three separate arts and crafts lessons across two locations, to students with specific learning needs (2h17m19s in total)
  - a volunteer in India teaching Japanese to a class of visually impaired students (57m00s)
  - a volunteer in India teaching Japanese (mainly through the medium of English) at a University in Delhi (54m45s)
  - a volunteer in Kenya assisting with teacher training for local high school teachers in physical education, focusing on baseball (various sessions, totalling 55m40s)

Note: 60 photographs were taken in addition to the recordings of these activities.

4) 'Miscellaneous interactions':

these are audio recordings of the JICA volunteers, myself and local interlocutors, mainly in social situations. In some cases these constitute the process of setting up the 'main interactions' or a period of discussion afterwards. In other cases the recordings were taken for example during taxi journeys. In all cases, verbal consent was obtained for making recordings where this was not covered by written consent for the main interactions.

- 14 recordings totalling 3h36m04s

5) 'Miscellaneous visits':

these are audio recordings which were made during visits to specific locations in which the JICA volunteers gave me tours of specific sites of significance to them, introducing me to people and places that they considered to be of interest to my research. Both a greater understanding of the context and the volunteers verbal descriptions and commentaries were considered as points of interest in this data. The recordings were:

- a visit to a housing project in Kenya (8m49s)
- a visit to a school for rehabilitating young offenders in Kenya (47m54s)
- two visits to schools in Jamaica (53m21s total)
- a tour around a volunteer's workplace and town of residence in Jamaica (1h12m57s)

Despite having such a large data set to work from featuring 20 JICA volunteers, the decision has been taken to focus on the experience of just three volunteers in some detail. This is primarily for reasons of space, because it would not be possible to account for all of these volunteers' experiences from an ethnographic or discourse orientated research perspective. Therefore one volunteer from each of the three global contexts have been selected for inclusion in this section of research, and given the following pseudonyms: Ayako (female – India), Hideki (male – Kenya) and Ren (female – Jamaica). The selection of these participants over the others has been taken for several key reasons. First of all, only participants for whom interactional data was available were

considered, therefore Ayako was the only volunteer from India who qualified on that basis. The nature of Hideki and Ren's interactions and the quality of the available data, were the driving forces for the other two selections. The audio recordings for Hideki and Ren's interactions were of high quality, and video was also available to supplement the audio. Furthermore upon rough transcription and consideration of the 'bounded units of communication' contained within (Gumperz, 1982) it was considered that these two interactions contained more rich points in terms of linguistic and cultural features (Agar, 1996) and from a methodological point of view (House, 2002). Yet another consideration was the amount of supplemental data which was available, for example recordings of Ren teaching arts and crafts lessons and other supplementary material were available, meaning that a richer data set was available for her compared with other volunteers who were visited in Jamaica.

Analysis of the available data for Ayako, Hideki and Ren will now be presented, along with interpretations of their experiences of language and communication in their global contexts. These interpretations will constitute a series of assertions, based on the available data and its analysis. For each volunteer in turn, the format of this analysis will be based around a presentation of relevant biographical and contextual information, and an analysis of interactions with local interlocutors supplemented by interview and other forms of supplemental data.



## 5.2.2 Ethnographic Accounts of Volunteers and their Communicative Practices

### 5.2.2.1 Hideki: Kenya

Hideki is a male volunteer, working in a governmental department in Nairobi with the goal of improving logistics. He had been in Kenya for approximately 7 months at the time of research. He had some overseas experience before this, having lived in Germany for a period of around three months, several years previously. Beyond this he had travelled abroad often, including regular visits to relatives who live in the USA.

The ministry which Hideki had been assigned to was the governmental department which handles the distribution of maize to parts of the country which are in need of food supplies. A conversation between Hideki and a colleague – referred to here as Patrick – was recorded after lunch in a nearby café. This meeting was set up for the benefit of my research, although I did not elicit any specific topics, I merely suggested that the participants could talk about their work. The style of the interaction involves Patrick asking a series of questions about Hideki's work at the ministry, his progress since joining six months previously, and his plans and goals for his remaining 18 months. It is unclear whether Patrick genuinely wanted to know this information, was robust in structuring the discussion for the benefit of my recording, or whether a combination of both was the case. The full interaction is 20 minutes 21 seconds long, and is constituted by a series of interrelated topics about Hideki's work and the ministry's activities, as guided deliberately by Patrick. There were few examples of clear 'rich points' from which to prioritise extract selection, as key aspects of the discourse were fairly consistent across the 'bounded units' which could be identified. Therefore three of the units have been selected as extracts for analysis based on their chronological positioning, chosen from the beginning, middle and end of the interaction. The first is taken from the start of the interaction.

Extract 5.5

- 1 H: let's talk  
2 P: okay yeah so. maybe we can start like (.) what was your  
3 expectation  
4 H: stocktaking↑  
5 P: not even stocktaking. (.) like so far (.) since you came  
6 to Kenya and you got the job what was your expectation  
7 H: ((laughter))  
8 P: is it (.) like what you expected or  
9 H: wait wait wait (1.2) wait a moment ((uses mobile phone))  
10 ya mata okay ah::  
11 **later (Japanese translation)**  
12 M: your job.  
13 H: my job↑  
14 P: so far.  
15 H: okay  
16 P: your activities which you've been doing  
17 H: right now  
18 P: yah  
19 H: since I came to Kenya  
20 P: is it yah is it meeting your expectation↑ is it like  
21 above your expectation below your expectation (.) you're  
22 taking every day as it comes  
23 (.)  
24 H: yeah first (.) first five months (.) five months  
25 P: all of it since the day you came  
26 H: okay the first five months six months (.) I very  
27 confusing (.) no job (.) nobody press me (.) press on me  
28 (.) yah (.) you know that  
29 P: yah uh-huh  
30 H: I don't know my mission was er just er (.) improving  
31 logistics  
32 P: improving logistics  
33 H: very big  
34 P: very big  
35 H: very big issues how can I approach (.) but er the very  
36 good things is the trip to western Kenya  
37 P: yes  
38 H: stocktaking

39 P: mm-hmm  
40 H: I learned many things (.) there  
41 P: so the stocktaking like it gave you:: (.) focus direction  
42 H: yeah (.) for mapping  
43 P: for mapping for mapping ((*laughter*))  
44 H: mapping  
45 P: a big project  
46 H: visualize  
47 P: visualizing  
48 H: yeah visualizing (.) and also some people told me the top  
49 ( ) stubborn (.) they don't understand er the shrinkage  
50 of maize (.) is going (.) so it- I thought it's good to:  
51 you know explain for them by (.) using a map visualize  
52 P: although in essence you realize that um (.) it's not like  
53 being stubborn it's just that (.) also some poor decision  
54 making  
55 H: yeah  
56 P: has contributed to the shrinking  
57 H: yeah  
58 P: of the maize  
59 H: yeah  
60 (.)  
61 P: you understood that yeah the decision also with regard to  
62 the storage (.) are not very good they're not very wise  
63 (.) yes okay  
64 H: yeah and one more okay for example you Patrick (.) or  
65 many people knows how many bags one hundred bag to Narok  
66 or something you talk ah (.) only talking (.) you guys  
67 don't use a mapping or visualize things  
68 P: yeah  
69 (.)  
70 H: it's not good I think  
71 P: yeah so like you also realize that er it's like ah:: most  
72 of our processes (.) are not like  
73 H: not strategic  
74 P: not strategic and not follow  
75 H: yah follow manuals  
76 P: yah not only manuals not follow like er: not follow the  
77 procedures not like have a procedure like a way of doing  
78 things (.) so for example if today (.) somebody from our  
79 department goes

80 H: mm  
81 P: he goes with information because most of the things are:  
82 (.) not structured  
83 H: mm  
84 P: yah  
85 H: yah ((*looks at mobile phone*))  
86 P: just pick it it's okay

(Hideki and Patrick, 0m13s-3m38s)

First of all, the manner of discourse interaction that was alluded to above – the fact that Patrick controls the unfolding interaction almost as if this is a meeting or progress check on Hideki's work – is established right at the beginning in lines 2-6. Patrick's question regarding expectations (2-3) is met with Hideki's 'stocktaking' (4) with a questioning intonation – as suggestion or query for confirmation about Patrick's suggested focus – which is followed by 'not even stocktaking' (5, falling intonation) and a reformulation of Patrick's question about expectations (8). This high level of control from Patrick is fully consistent across the interaction.

Despite this fairly formal structure to Hideki's interaction – and the indications of annoyance from Patrick in lines 12 and 14 (note the falling intonation), presumably with either Hideki's laughter (7), his use of the phone (9-10) or the general slow response to the question – there are elements to the discourse which index it as not like a fully formal meeting, and more like structured discussion of progress with a colleague who is also a friend. The indicators of this include Patrick's laughter in line 43 in response to Hideki's introduction of the key word 'mapping' (42), and his tolerance of certain moves from Hideki which are potentially face-threatening to Patrick, either personally, to his organisational culture and also by extraction potentially to his national culture. These face-threatening moves come from Hideki as part of his general articulation of ideas which are expressed in response to Patrick's original question regarding whether his experiences have been matching his expectations. After establishing that his role was initially confusing and vague (26-35) and then became clearer after a trip to Western Kenya (35-40), Hideki then goes on to criticise 'the top' (used by both speakers to

reference the top management of the ministry), pointing out that he had heard they were 'stubborn' (49) and 'don't understand... the shrinkage of maize' (49-50). The other examples are where Hideki criticises 'only talking' (66) at the ministry rather than keeping records – including a direct reference to Patrick (64) as somebody who does this - and his attempted completion of Patrick's 'our processes are not like' (72) with 'not strategic' (73). All of these moves are indicative that Hideki – in this situation at least – is highly assertive and confident in expressing his opinions about the ministry. In terms of identity construction and expression, he is clearly playing his role of an expert on improving logistics who has come to improve procedures.

Patrick's response to these moves are notable in that he accepts the face-threats without direct complaint, instead using constructions using 'you realize that' (52, 71) to modify Hideki's ideas somewhat, achieving deflections of the face threats and indexing himself as the real insider who knows the organisation best. In terms of why he would tolerate criticisms without direct rebuttals – particularly the personal, direct example – we could speculate that this is to maintain friendly relations or 'conviviality', because he is genuinely interested in Hideki's opinions or because he agrees that some criticism is justified, which is indicated by his comments that some decision making regarding the maize storage had not been 'very wise' (62).

Another feature of note in the above extract is an indication of reductions in mutual intelligibility in both directions between the speakers in lines 20-26. When Patrick uses the relatively idiomatic term 'taking every day as it comes' (22), this is followed by a pause and then the phrase is not attended to or given much of a response, only a 'yeah' (24) from Hideki prefacing the start of his response. The pause in particular indicates that this is a possible example of 'letting pass' something which is not understood. Although there is no definitive evidence for that assertion, the interpretation will be given support by another example at a later point. The other slight intelligibility issue is that Hideki's second use of 'five months' in line 24 may be interpreted as a clarification question directed at Patrick – in terms of whether he is asking Hideki only about his first five months – based upon his response in line 25. Hideki then continues his train of

thought in line 26, which appears to have been what he was building towards in line 24. These minor issues which demonstrate slight interactional trouble or dips in intelligibility are the exception, as otherwise the speakers seem to be highly aligned and affiliated in their interaction, particularly because they engage in moves to collaboratively support each other. This is true of Hideki in the collaborative completion which has already been mentioned (73) and again in line 76, and is even more noticeable from Patrick in terms of backchannel usage. He responds to Hideki's starting point – the place where Hideki gets on track with reporting experiences and expectations (26-28) – with a positive 'yah uh-huh' (29) and goes on to echo various key words and phrases that Hideki uses, presumably to act as receipt tokens and continuers, therefore as scaffolding and encouragement for Hideki to continue expressing his ideas. In the above extract, these 'echo backchannels' occur in lines 32, 34, 43, and 47. In lines 74 and 76 the repetitions are for another purpose, as was described above. The use of collaborative backchannels via repetitions are even more evident in the following extract:

*Extract 5.6*

1 P: so your project (.) how long do you think you're gonna  
2 take  
3 (1.6)  
4 H: I wanna I wanna finish (.) er until December this  
5 December  
6 P: you want to finish in December (.) so your timeline is  
7 are you meeting your timelines your goals or your (.) if  
8 somebody asks you your project ( ) are you half way  
9 through are you meeting your objectives  
10 H: just starting just [starting  
11 P: [just starting  
12 H: it depends on the data  
13 P: depends on the data  
14 H: information  
15 P: information  
16 H: NCPP (.) we give them they give us the correct  
17 information

18           (.)  
 19       P: ( ) the information↑  
 20       H: I can do  
 21       P: you can do (.) so by December you'll be having a map  
 22           (.)  
 23       H: I'd like to  
 24       P: you'd like to  
 25       H: that's my plan  
 26       P: three months  
 27           (.)  
 28       H: yeah it's possible if there are data

(Hideki and Patrick, 10m36s-11m27s)

These further examples of backchannels occur after Patrick introduces the topic of timescales, approximately half way through the whole 20 minute interaction. They occur in lines 6, 11, 13, 15 and 21, with line 19 also using a repetition of 'information' from Hideki's preceding turn, although realised as a question. The regularity and rapidity of Patrick's backchannels are notable and highly consistent: whenever Hideki is expressing ideas on a topic, Patrick tends to use backchannels as a discourse strategy, which can be interpreted as support or scaffolding for his interlocutor.

The third and final extract to be considered is taken from the ending of the interaction.

#### *Extract 5.7*

1       P: so:: what do you think  
 2           (2.8)  
 3       H: for what  
 4       P: your your: work plan (.) so far so good are you achieving  
 5           it  
 6       H: yeah it's a challenge  
 7       P: it's a challenge  
 8       H: ah but I have to press pressure press press  
 9       P: pressurize who  
 10      H: to top

11 P: top management  
12 H: top management  
13 P: okay  
14 H: we need data data data  
15 P: okay data data data every day data  
16 H: every morning  
17 P: ((laughter))  
18 H: you know it's good things  
19 (.)  
20 P: yeah it's a good thing  
21 H: no top management (.) come early every day come to the  
22 office (.) er: (.) before eight (.) and then they like  
23 news- reading newspaper or watching tv  
24 P: ((laughter))  
25 H: until nine  
26 P: ((laughter))  
27 H: nine thirty  
28 P: ((laughter))  
29 H: and then (.) they started working  
30 P: yeah  
31 H: so it's good to go to them from eight to nine thirty (.)  
32 and talking  
33 P: before they start working  
34 H: yah  
35 P: that's nice  
36 H: this is my way  
37 P: that's your way you've learned a trick you've realized  
38 ((laughter))  
39 H: this is my way  
40 P: so you're working very smart (.) that's nice okay I think  
41 er: (.) let's wait and see what happens  
42 H: what's that  
43 P: I'm saying let's wait and see what happens (.) in time  
44 we'll see what happens  
45 (.)  
46 H: what happen  
47 P: yeah in terms of the project  
48 (2.0)  
49 H: so now you're talking (.) the things I done



50 P: no I'm saying (.) in time we're going to: see (.)  
51 continuous evaluation we're going to see what happens (.)  
52 it's a wait and see thing (1.4) let's wait and see  
53 H: yeah ( )  
54 (.)  
55 P: it's good (.) so you think you're: okay you're done

(Hideki and Patrick, 18m18s-20m08s)

Many of the previously mentioned discourse features aid towards building an interpretation for specific moments of interaction and the overall processes at play in this final phase. For example Patrick's continuing collaboration and support, and Hideki's confidence – or we could say strong identity – being evident, such as 'for what' (3) being a relatively direct way to check Patrick's question in line 1. Furthermore Hideki mentions his plan to 'press... top management' (8-12), indicating his intention to try to promote change within the organisational culture. His plan to approach them to discuss issues while they are 'reading newspaper or watching TV' (23) is greeted with amusement by Patrick, initially when he appears to think this is part of a general criticism (see lines 24, 26, 28 and 30) and then when it has been established that Hideki is planning to use the situation to 'go to them' for 'talking' (31-32). This then produces more amusement (38) and approval from Patrick (35, 37, 40). Whereas Patrick's laughter in line 24 is seemingly based on a lack of full understanding at that point, there is a more marked and transparent example of an intelligibility issue at the end of the extract. Patrick uses the phrase 'let's wait and see what happens' in line 41, seemingly as a way to begin closing down the conversation by drawing it to a conclusion. There is clear evidence that Hideki cannot comprehend the meaning of the relatively fixed, idiomatic phrase in lines 42, 45-46 and 48-49. Patrick's efforts to paraphrase or simplify the expression during the last turns of the extract do not seem to help, and he ultimately ends the exchange with 'so you think you're okay you're done' (55) which is a reference to making the recording. This is an example of 'letting pass', as directed by Patrick, upon perceiving that Hideki is not with him in terms of comprehending the meaning of the phrase. Here, the interactional affordance is that the discussion was already ending and that the successful completion of the recording can be referred to as a change of topic. If the

interactional trouble had occurred earlier on the discussion, presumably a topic change would also have been the likely solution.

Regarding Hideki's communicative experiences here, in terms of an interpretation of the overall preceding discourse extracts based on analysis of micro moments, the following summary can be provided:

- Interaction between the speakers is generally communicatively successful in that Hideki expresses a range of ideas and opinions to Patrick with very little sign of interactional trouble
- The speakers are highly affiliated, with Patrick frequently using echoes and other backchannels to signal and realise communicative support for Hideki
- Several minor dips in intelligibility are discernible during the discourse, along with one major dip which occurs at the end due to Hideki's difficulty with the idiomatic phrase 'let's wait and see what happens'. This is 'let pass' rather than being resolved
- Hideki displays a strong, confident identity as somebody who is not afraid to criticise or take action to address problems in his new organisational context
- Patrick is generally supportive of this orientation by Hideki, not reacting negatively to Hideki's criticisms and encouraging him with his overall project, including this critical aspect of it. He contributes his own criticisms at times, and also orientates to having more insider knowledge than Hideki

In terms of Hideki's interview data, there is a comment which tempers my original interpretations of him as being 'confident' although it does not detract from the idea of him having a 'strong identity'. When I asked him if he felt confident when using English with local people in Kenya he replied 'no... I don't have confidence, but I'm always trying to tell what I want to say' (Hideki interview, 12m29s). Perhaps then, instead of confidence, Hideki's interactional behaviour could be better interpreted in terms of assertiveness. It is important to remember that this assertive communication is in the context of trying to improve the logistics of food aid distribution. The need for JICA

volunteers to be assertive with their opinions has already been suggested by Ryuta, at the beginning of this chapter. Regarding the findings above related to idiomatic expressions from local interlocutors leading to a reduction in intelligibility, these connect to some extent with experiences recounted by both Kozue and Rika in the previous section.

#### 5.2.2.2 Ayako: India

Ayako had been working in India as a Japanese teacher for approximately one year and five months at the time of research. She had travelled and lived overseas extensively before joining JICA, for example having lived in the USA for nine months, Thailand for five months, and having visited India several times before as a traveller.

Her linguistic practices in India involved a combination of English, Hindi and Japanese. Her use of Japanese was mainly at work, whereas English was used for everyday interactions with Indian people, mixed with some use of Hindi for greetings and basic usage. During my field work with Ayako, I observed her teaching a Japanese lesson with a class of visually impaired students, in which she used all three languages.

Turning to the interactional data for Ayako, this comes from a conversation with an acquaintance of hers from Delhi who will be referred to as Rajesh. Rajesh had extensive experience of living in Japan as an international student. The recording was made at a bar, with the overall conversation lasting for 19 minutes and 1 second. The following extract comes from approximately four minutes into the conversation, which was not elicited by me in the sense of providing any topic or instructions, however the social meeting was arranged in the interests of my research.

In the extract, the Hindi and Japanese discourse markers 'he' and 'na' (pronounced /he/ and /næ/ respectively) are both used, along with the culturally loaded Japanese English

term 'salaryman'. This term has a humorous quality to it, as it refers to businessmen who are successful but at the same time almost comically formal and over-worked. Usage of Japanese in the extract has been translated. There is a degree of transcription uncertainty with this extract, due to background noise on the recording.

### Extract 5.8

- 1 R: so chio kenchiguchi I know that area very well (.) it's a  
2 mafia area also right  
3 (1.5)  
4 A: I haven't been there  
5 R: chio- chio is a is a: yakuza area actually (.) I've seen  
6 yakuza in in chio  
7 A: yeah (.) you know fukuoka is famous for yakuza yah  
8 R: and then in fukuoka (.) chio is the area where you see  
9 them  
10 A: and also my hometown (.) kurume  
11 R: ah Kurume yah  
12 A: is a (.) centre of mafia area (.) sometime fighting  
13 against the police and the (.) mafia yakuza  
14 (1.1)  
15 R: so the yakuza is a kind of er (2.1) kind of well-behaved  
16 mafia in Japan I would say  
17 A: yah  
18 R: if you compare it with er (.) Russian or Italian (.)  
19 mafia (.) they are more (.) they are more (1.0) civilized  
20 sort of er  
21 A: that's true (.) yeah  
22 R: I mean they're Japanese so what do you expect  
23 (.)  
24 A: so ne  
25 **that's right isn't it (Japanese translation)**  
26 (7.6)  
27 (*(R orientates to his clothing)*)  
28 R: ( )  
29 A: eh daijobu yo ne  
30 **it's okay isn't it (Japanese translation)**

31 (1.9)

32 R: you're used to it

33 A: you look totally salaryman

34 R: ((laughter))

35 A: ((laughter))

36 (1.2)

37 R: no (.) I don't I don't even wear black suit (.) they

38 never wear red tie

39 A: yeah I know but (.) this is India (.) yah so

40 R: yeah Indians are wearing

41 A: yah if you wear this one in Japan maybe a little bit

42 strange but in India

43 R: ( )

44 (.)

45 A: perfectly official

46 (.)

47 R: but with this suit like in Japan also people like on the

48 subway look at me as if I'm different (1.7) maybe because

49 I wear like very bright colours

50 A: no no no this one okay yah

51 (.)

52 R: I remember in Osaka when I was like wearing a usu- like

53 most of the ties I wear are like more bright (.) they're

54 brighter as compared to (.) the- the- the normal ones

55 salarymen

56 A: mm-hm

57 R: wear in Japan (.) I mean of course I'm a foreigner so (

58 ) different (.) but I don't know I always got this sort

59 of sense (.) and I got this feeling from the Japanese

60 salarymen in Osaka when you know I was wearing something

61 completely different ( ) (.) something strange

62 (.)

63 R: really↑

64 (.)

65 A: maybe because you know they're so used to seeing people

66 wearing black and [white

67 A: [yeah dark colour

68 R: yeah dark [colour

69 A: [yeah

70 R: and also white shirt ( )

71 A: yeah yeah yeah very typical

72 R: those ties that you don't even notice because it's just a  
73 regular tie

74 A: uh-huh

75 R: but always for me you know I was wearing these bright  
76 ties

77 A: yah

78 R: my colour suits also very ( )

79 A: maybe this is for party or wedding ceremony or something  
80 like that

81 R: ( )

82 (.)

83 A: yeah

84 R: this is the (.) yeah. for me this one is the most (3.3)  
85 most official or most formal suit I have

86 A: yeah for me good yah

87 R: others are um. (.) pretty much (1.6) more party from  
88 Japanese point of view I think

89 A: yeah people here like bright colours

90 R: mm-hmm

91 A: see today uh teachers day na so I was planning to wear er  
92 white and green colour: (.) sari (.) but senior- senior  
93 persons said (.) why are you wearing (.) why you want to  
94 wear such a dark colour (.) you have to wear a bright  
95 colour (1.8) like this one (.) like er (.) red and yellow  
96 and blue  
97 (.)

98 R: more colourful he

99 A: yeah yeah I know that (4.8) so ne (.) but skin colour ah  
100 your skin colour is much darker than Japanese skin colour

101 R: mm-hm

102 A: so that's why bright colour (.) suits you na

103 R: maybe yeah that's also true weather (.) could be one of  
104 the things in India (.) yah I mean that would be  
105 different I don't know the factors behind it but (.) I  
106 believe yeah the skin colour and the weather would be the  
107 two major factors that (1.1) sort of change the  
108 perspective towards the colour of

109 A: yeah  
110 (4.4)

111 **kore wa nani** England against  
112 **what's this (Japanese translation)**

113 (1.1)

114 R: South Africa

(Ayako and Rajesh, 4m23s-8m58s)

This 4m35s extract was selected as a unit because it contains a main topic - comparing clothing in Japan and India in terms of colour - book ended by the close of one topic and the beginning of another. In the opening lines (1-22), Rajesh displays his insider knowledge of Japanese culture by referring to the Japanese mafia – the Yakuza – in the context of the place that he formerly lived in Japan. The closing of this topic culminates with the idea that the Japanese mafia are ‘well-behaved’ (15), and ‘civilized’ (19) compared to gangsters from other countries, rounded off by ‘I mean they’re Japanese so what do you expect’ (22). This orientation to a national Japanese stereotype is gently mocking, and accepted by Ayako with an agreement receipt token in Japanese (24).

These interactional moves feed into the emergence of the main topic which, initiated by Rajesh in an orientation to his clothing (27-28), moves on to another turn in Japanese from Ayako – indexing Rajesh as at least a partial insider in Japanese language and culture – and then consecutive teasing moves, where Rajesh orientates to plain formal clothing in Japan with ‘you’re used to it’ (32) and Ayako returns with ‘you look totally salaryman’ (33), mocking Rajesh in turn by indexing him in terms of that same referential plain clothing in Japan. These humorous moves are completed by both participants’ laughter in 34-35.

As the interaction on clothing continues across lines 37-109, the orientation to clothing and culture is realised between the participants in a highly dense, affiliated manner. Although the longer turns are all taken by Rajesh, Ayako is always able to respond quickly and on-topic, maintaining the light-hearted exchange of ideas about differences in clothing between India and Japan, for example ‘if you wear this one in Japan maybe a little bit strange but in India... perfectly official’ (41-45). It is also Ayako who closes the topic, by asking a question about the cricket match which is playing on the television (111).

A series of interrelated assertions will now be made about this interaction.

- First of all the interaction is densely loaded with linguistic and cultural references to both India and Japan, for example there are discourse markers from both Japanese and Hindi ('he' in line 98 closely followed by 'na' in 102), a long discussion and exchange of ideas regarding the comparison of clothing styles in the two countries, and Japan-specific phenomena such as the Yakuza and the term 'salaryman'
- There is no evidence of a lack of intelligibility anywhere in the extract
- Both speakers use what could be considered as non-standard or grammatically incorrect English during the extract, for example
  - Rajesh: 'others are um pretty much more party from Japanese point of view I think' (87-88, *party* used as an adjective, indefinite article *a* omitted before 'Japanese point of view')
  - Ayako: 'if you wear this one in Japan maybe a little bit strange but in India' (41-42, this conditional clause should technically be used with wear in the past tense and an alternate modal structure such as *would be* instead of maybe)
- Apart from the jointly constructed cultural references, there are numerous other markers of affiliation between the speakers, for example the use of humour (32-35)

Regarding the shared cultural knowledge which is displayed and actively exploited in the interaction, whereas this may be uncommon for the majority of JICA volunteers, this interaction shows that it is possible for some of them, perhaps especially the Japanese teachers who are more likely to encounter local interlocutors who have some experience of Japan. Furthermore, it is an example of how intercultural speakers can create a third space of intercultural knowledge to facilitate communication. This example can be interpreted as the speakers exploring 'rich points' of cultural difference (Agar, 1996) in a manner which facilitates their interpersonal communication. This is a significant feature of the whole extended discussion between Ayako and Rajesh, for example as part of their discussion on cricket they compare this as a sport with Sumo in Japan, with both sports being highly significant culturally and therefore becoming the



platform with another comparison of cultural features to which both speakers have insider access.

As Ayako's interaction with Rajesh did not appear to feature any examples of reduced intelligibility, it is useful to turn to her interview data to get an account of this. In response to my question 'can you understand the local people easily when they speak English to you', Ayako initially laughed and then said:

You mean Indian English? Okay honestly speaking, when I first came here I couldn't understand... not not at all, but not so much. Because their pronunciation is totally different and also their grammar may be different. They use a lot of difficult words... at first I didn't know which language they were talking. Right now it's easier for me, actually easy, it became more difficult to listen to native speaker's English, like you.

(Ayako interview, 19m48s-20m55s)

This account gives one indication of why there might not have been any issues of intelligibility with Rajesh – the fact that Ayako has found Indian speakers easier to understand over time. It was not possible to ask whether there might be something about his communicative style – or the shared cultural knowledge of each other's countries – which makes him especially intelligible to Ayako, as the interview had taken place before the interaction. In terms of the points of analysis above which suggest that English was used flexibly in the extract – without the need to adhere to grammatical standards – I also asked Ayako about this during the interview. When I asked about whether she needed to adhere to grammatical standards when communicating with local people – giving the example of 'he play' versus 'he plays' – Ayako responded emphatically with: 'no not at all, because they also don't care' (Ayako interview, 25m16s).

### 5.2.2.3 Ren: Jamaica

When I met Ren on September 25th 2012 in a large coastal city in the west of Jamaica, we conducted a semi-structured interview at an al fresco restaurant / bar about her experiences since joining the JICA organization, with an emphasis on language and communication. The interview was 34m04s in length. Early on in the interview, I learned basic facts about the nature of Ren's voluntary work assignment and she also disclosed relevant biographical information such as the fact she had previously lived overseas in the UK for several years. In the main part of the interview, we discussed various aspects of her communicative experiences in Jamaica and the overall linguistic landscape, including the interplay between Jamaican Creole (known locally as patois English, or simply "patois") and Standard English. In the following interview extract, after prompting from me, Ren makes a subjective assessment of how intelligible she finds Jamaican speakers to be (lines 6 and 28):

#### *Extract 5.9*

- 1 N: let's try number two (.) can you understand local people  
2 easily (.) when they speak English to you  
3 (.)  
4 R: er (.) they ta::lk to me (.) i::n standard English  
5 N: yeah  
6 R: er:: (.) it's about seventy per cent  
7 N: okay (.) okay  
8 (.)  
9 N: er::m (.) but with the patois is that (.) is it difficult  
10 to catch when someone's speaking patois (.) can you  
11 understand  
12 R: mmm  
13 N: some of it?  
14 R: some (.) but you know (.) especially the ladies (.) talk  
15 a lot  
16 N: yeah  
17 R: and very quickly  
18 N: yeah

19 R: er I can't catch  
 20 N: right right  
 21 R: maybe you know (.) I can guess the situation [like  
 22 N: [mm  
 23 R: oh they're talking about something like (.) talking about  
 24 the foo::d  
 25 N: right  
 26 R: talking about [guys  
 27 N: [right right right  
 28 R: but you know (.) so maybe I understand like (.) half.  
 29 N: yeah (.) yeah yeah yeah

(Ren interview, 17m47s – 18m40s)

On the subject of who she finds more or less intelligible, she also mentions that taxi drivers can be harder to understand than her students and co-workers, particularly as they frequently use Creole to communicate with passengers (23m21s). Her overall impression is that English and Creole usage is demarcated and separate, with the two operating as distinct languages (11m16s) with their interplay varying by speaker and context (15m50s). Here are some further experiences and impressions of language and communication in Jamaica that Ren mentioned in the interview:

- some general features of Jamaican English pronunciation, such as vowel stress: e.g. where the second syllable in 'second' can be stressed, making the pronunciation /sekond/ rather than /sekənd/ (11m34s)
- 'y insertion': e.g. where 'name' might be pronounced as /njeim/ (32m45s)
- some pragmatic features, such as '>do that for me<' used as a normal request in Jamaica where the lack of politeness features is not marked (27m25s)

The morning after the interview (September 26th), I travelled with Ren to her place of work, a school of special educational needs where the students had been diagnosed with conditions such as down's syndrome and autism. The following exchange took place between Ren and the taxi driver during this journey, and can be taken as an example of her communicative practices outside work.

*Extract 5.10*

- 1 R: but you know I'm not so (.) I don't come to this road so  
2 much  
3 T: so often (.) you mostly go bottom road  
4 R: yes like you know from the ( )  
5 T: yes  
6 R: for the ( )  
7 R: [( )]  
8 T: [( )]  
9 T: but it's the same drive right (.) you have to know it's  
10 like that (.) you understand<sup>↑</sup>  
11 R: I understand.  
12 T: ((*laughter*))

(Ren with taxi driver)

I take this extract as indicative of Ren's confidence and communicative success in Jamaica, as she: successfully conveys a message (1-2), responds appropriately to a collaborative completion or receipt confirmation move by the driver (3-4) and seems to resist being positioned as a complete cultural outsider who needs to be told about the local environment (5-12).

We arrived at the school before 9am. It had a bright, vibrant atmosphere and we were immediately greeted by pupils in the front playground area. I observed Ren teaching two lessons (and assisted her to some extent). The lessons focused on how to make 'towel art' which is a way to make decorative displays out of towels by using techniques of rolling and folding, to some extent influenced by Japanese origami. Ren mentioned in our interview that, by teaching the students towel art, she hoped to boost their employment opportunities at local hotels and resorts. My impression was that she was well liked by students and teachers alike, and that she was confident and competent at her work. I noticed that she spoke with the other teachers at the start of the lesson (about class set-up) and again at the end. She mainly spoke to the students to give instructions either as a group or individually, to advise, give feedback and praise. I did not observe any noticeable occurrences of a lack of mutual intelligibility or difficulties

communicating. There were two occasions when I could not make out what a student was saying but Ren appeared to. In one case, a student asked me a question which I noted as:

You can make dog?

I did not understand his question at the time, but Ren successfully understood that he was asking the equivalent of:

Can't we make a dog (instead of an elephant)?

I believe that Ren's success at receptive intelligibility here was related to her far greater experience with features of language and communication in Jamaica, and also within the specific educational context. In this particular instance, my status as the 'native speaker' of English had little relevance to the communicative needs of the situation, with Ren's linguistic and pragmatic repertoire being better suited to comprehending the question.

After the towel art lesson, there was an opportunity to making a recording of Ren in conversation with the home-class teacher of the students, who will be referred to as Val. The discussion was elicited by first presenting the speakers with the following list of topics (originally hand-written):

1. 'Work talk'
2. Jamaican Culture / Living in Jamaica
3. Usain Bolt / Sport in Jamaica
4. Other

They were then asked to discuss the topics for around 10 minutes, before the audio-visual recording was started and they were left to continue alone. The audio version of

the complete interaction is 11m03s long. The extract transcribed below takes place between 7m54s and 9m07s in the audio recording. At the point where this interaction begins, Ren had already guided the discussion through the initial topics, and is considering what topic to introduce for 'other' (topic 4):

*Extract 5.11*

- 1 R: ah I'd like t'know (.) what Jamaican people usually do  
2 like weeke::nd go to chur::ch  
3 (.)  
4 V: yeah (.) persons go to church (.) or they go to parties  
5 (.) like the clubs or dance  
6 R: mm-hm  
7 V: dance >where is the thing where< (.) that's in (.) in not  
8 really club itself but like a lawn (.) a place that you  
9 know have no roof  
10 R: ah [outside?  
11 V: [but it's  
12 (.)  
13 R: yes  
14 V: it's a building but it don't have any [roof  
15 R: [mm-hm  
16 V: so you go (>inside and then dance and get dark and they  
17 play loud music and so<) ((laughter))  
18 R: mm-hm ((laughter))  
19 V: that's it that's they call dance [yes  
20 R: [okay not a club  
21 V: not the club because it don't have any roof  
22 R: ah  
23 V: it's just in area where it's like (.) it's made with  
24 >something like an area like this< but it don't have any  
25 roof  
26 R: no drink (.) like is anyone (.) selling drinks?  
27 (.)  
28 V: not (.) >you don't go inside they would be outside< (.)  
29 >the person who will be selling it will be the person who  
30 is keeping it<  
31 R: mm

32 V: the person who's responsible the [dance  
 33 R: [mm-hm  
 34 V: they would have it inside, but you have to stay outside  
 35 or you pay money to go in  
 36 R: mm-hm  
 37 V: but it's not a club though  
 38 R: okay  
 39 V: it's like (.) (>dance and everyone come and dance and  
 40 play music until<) (.) police lock out the party  
 41 R: oh  
 42 V: daylight ((laughter))  
 43 R: okay ((laughter))  
 44 V: ((laughter))

(Ren and Val, 7m54s - 9m07s)

A slow, turn-by-turn examination of this discourse uncovers features of the interaction which lead to an overall interpretation. Starting with a micro-analysis of specific turns enables building up towards a broader interpretation of the discourse. Based on this analysis and interpretation, four assertions on the nature of the interaction are presented below. Assertions 1 and 3 relate mainly to linguistic features and mutual intelligibility in the extract, whereas assertions 2 and 4 are mainly concerned with interactional resources and pragmatic features.

**Assertion 1:** *There are numerous examples of linguistic forms which could be viewed as “non-standard” or “incorrect” which do not hinder mutual intelligibility or the unfolding interaction.*

Focusing on lines 1-10 of the interaction, here are three examples of linguistic features which could be viewed as non-standard in some language learning contexts (or as mistakes requiring correction):

- weekend (Ren: 2) used without preposition or article
- persons (Val: 4) could be seen as an incorrect plural (although some ambiguity can be found in prescriptive grammars regarding people vs. persons)

- have no roof (Val: 9) from an error perspective, there is marked verb agreement

The interactional moves which follow these linguistic forms offer no internal evidence for a subsequent reduction in intelligibility, specifically:

- Val completes the adjacency pair of information request – provision in (4-5) following Ren’s weekend
- Ren follows Val’s persons with a minimal response/continuer (6)
- Ren responds with a confirmation question (10) following Val’s turn ending have no roof, implying comprehension of the concept

As there are no marked or dis-preferred interactional moves following the three examples given, this suggests that the ‘non-standard forms’ here are having little or no impact on mutual intelligibility in this micro-stretch of the discourse. Throughout the entire 11 minute discussion there are no instances of minor grammatical issues (plurals, prepositions etc.) with evidence of a subsequent reduction in intelligibility.

**Assertion 2:** *Ren successfully uses pragmatic strategies of collaboration and active listening as interactional moves*

During Val’s talk, Ren shows that she is a competent and capable active listener. Pragmatically, her moves can be viewed as successful and appropriate in this example of intercultural exchange. Her turns are collaborative, displaying affiliation and interest. For example in lines 11-26, during Val’s continuing description of the dance, Ren uses the following pragmatic moves to signal comprehension and continuing interest:

- minimal responses and continuers: yes (13), mm-hm (15 and 18), ah (22)
- on-cue collaborative laughter (18)
- a clarification statement / re-formulation (20) and an on-topic expansion question (26) which is sequentially relevant



Whereas all of these moves signal comprehension, it is the latter two which offer tangible evidence that Ren finds Val's talk intelligible at this point.

**Assertion 3:** *Ren does not find Val's talk fully intelligible*

As the episode draws to an end in lines 28-44, the following aspects of Ren's interaction indicate a change of footing (Goffman, 1981) as her participation level reduces, offering less evidence that she finds Val's talk intelligible:

- her minimal responses reduce to only mm (31), mm-hm (33 and 36), and her response tokens oh (41) and okay (38 and 43) demonstrate alignment but not tangible evidence of comprehension
- there are no further reformulations, expansion questions or other form of topic continuers
- her laughter (43) again follows Val's (42) which works again for alignment/affiliation but does not provide any evidence for receptive intelligibility

These co-occur with the following features of Val's talk:

- her turn beginning in line 28 is relatively unclear for several reasons, e.g. the beginning of her reply to Ren's question in lines 26 is a dis-preferred circumlocution instead of a plain affirmation or negation, her use of the second anaphoric reference 'it' in line 30 could refer to either alcoholic drinks or the party itself
- there is a rapid succession of related topics: the person and what they are selling/keeping (28-30), responsibility for the dance (32), being inside vs. outside and whether money is paid or not (34-35), activities at the dance and how it ends (39-40)

The claim for a reduction in intelligibility here is a fairly high-risk assertion but there is other evidence to support it, as during the interview extract which is included earlier, she made the subjective assessment that she does not always achieve 100% receptive intelligibility with her Jamaican interlocutors. The reference there may have included

situations analogous to this one, in that she said reductions in intelligibility might occur ‘when the ladies... talk a lot... and very quickly’, going on to state that on such an occasion she can follow what the topic is but not all of the content. In addition to this, soon after the extract under analysis here, there is another interactional episode in Ren and Val’s discussion where intelligibility was more clearly an issue: this will be presented and analysed below, and therefore provides supplementary support of the assertion that intelligibility becomes an issue in lines 26-44 in the extract above.

It is important to consider why this happens. Val’s talk from line 28 onwards shows a lack of accommodation to Ren as interlocutor, as she either cannot or does not make an effort to be maximally intelligible. Furthermore she seems to be unaware that Ren’s intelligibility level has become an issue. Aside from the pragmatic dimensions of Val’s talk mentioned above (increased speed, fast topic shifts, etc.) Ren also does not possess the cultural knowledge about Jamaican dances which would facilitate interpretation of lines 26-44. The fact that Ren is guiding the discourse through questions and topic changes is significant, as she is able to ‘let pass’ any talk which she finds unintelligible.

**Assertion 4:** *The speakers employ a range of interactional resources in their communication which relate to culture, identity and the moment-by-moment unfolding of the discourse*

In the opening lines of the extract, Ren orientates herself to an interviewer-type role as she instigates the new topic of weekend activities. She also displays semi-insider knowledge of Jamaican culture through her understanding that going to church is a significant weekend activity. There are numerous examples of how Ren orientates herself to this role of interviewer which was fairly consistent throughout the discussion, for example:

- as in this case, Ren tended to introduce a new topic and then sit back as a passive receiver of information on it
- before the discussion began, it was Ren who orientated herself to the instructions about the suggested topics and timing

- it is Ren who initiates an end to the discussion (this can be seen in the extract below)

To complement Ren's role of interested, inquisitive sojourner in Jamaica, Val takes on the role of cultural insider who is happy to give information about her home country. Two points of interest are that:

- in the interaction above and elsewhere in the data, Val tends to emphasise the difference of things in Jamaica to elsewhere, for example, the "nots and buts" constructions (8, 11 and 14)
- Val particularly indexes the bright, vibrant and colourful aspects of life in Jamaica. Aside from the dance/party topic she introduces here, she also brings up the following topics elsewhere in the discussion: friendliness with neighbours, food and Jamaican national dress

The two speakers co-construct these identities and roles through their interaction together (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005). The main interactional significance of Ren's adopted role as interviewer, as mentioned above, is that it offers Ren the resource of being able to let pass anything which she does not find intelligible (or comprehensible or interpretable, Smith and Nelson, 1985). Instead of relying on intelligibility to construct her next turn as in other types of interactive discourse, she is able to simply introduce a new topic or to ultimately end the discussion. This ability to let pass is not dependent on the overall genre or type of discourse, but rather the particular interactional moments and moves which occur within it. For example, Firth (1996) demonstrated that in business negotiations some turns can be allowed to pass without comprehension and some cannot. Hypothetically, if Val had reversed the identity roles at some point in the discussion and asked Ren specific questions, then we would have seen different interactional features coming into play.

The following extract supplements assertions about the first interaction reported which were made above. The extract begins roughly one minute after the previous episode

ends, and lasts until the end of the recording (10m11s-11m08s). Before the extract begins, Ren and Val had been discussing the topic of Jamaican funerals for several turns.

*Extract 5.12*

1 R: people cry there?  
2 (.)  
3 V: yeah (.) cry and bawl (.) not cry bawl  
4 (.)  
5 R: °bawl°.  
6 V: yeah not [cry ( ) bawl  
7 [((Val illustrates this difference with hand  
8 movements away from the eyes getting bigger from when she  
9 says 'cry' to 'bawl'))  
10 they call it bawl ((laughter)) the Jamaican language  
11 R: mm  
12 V: so they drop ( ) the casket and they roll up on the  
13 ground and (then )  
14 R: mm  
15 V: you know (.) like (.) they roll ( dirt )  
16 R: oh  
17 V: and they ( ) their shoes and ( )  
18 ((laughter)) saying that they miss the person so they cry  
19 (.) a lot (.) loud  
20 R: mm-hm [okay ((Ren makes brief eye contact with Val then  
21 averts gaze))  
22 V: [mm  
23 (4.3)  
24 R: is that ten minutes (.) about  
25 (1.6)  
26 V: mm (.) yeah  
27 (6.6)  
28 R: oh yes eleven minutes  
29 V: eleven oh okay ((laughter))  
30 R: I think that's enough (.) thank you very much  
31 ((laughter))  
32 V: you're welcome

(Ren and Val, 10m11s-11m08s)

Ren is engaged at the first line of the extract, but the problematic vocabulary 'bawl' (3) signals the beginning of intelligibility issues and from there onwards she only supplies minimal responses until suggesting they had spoken for long enough (30). This example supplements the assertions made above about a lack of full intelligibility in talk between Ren and Val, for reasons including the lack of shared cultural knowledge between the two speakers. Although there is a more formal linguistic and pragmatic intelligibility issue here – lack of awareness of the term 'bawl' by Ren (5) and Val's attempt to explain the term through gesture seeming to lack success (6-11) – Val's increased speed and topic transitions (10-19, note the open brackets showing lack of transcription certainty) can be viewed as a lack of accommodation towards Ren as interlocutor. We can only guess the reasons for this, but they could potentially include Val's lack of experience in communicating with interlocutors who are not bi-dialectal in English and Jamaican Creole.

To conclude these interpretations of Ren's experiences of language and communication in Jamaica, Ren is a confident and generally very successful communicator in this context, although she appears to regularly experience issues with intelligibility in interactions with Jamaican interlocutors, therefore must frequently need to overcome these. These limits should not be viewed negatively in terms of Ren's receptive skills or other aspects of her linguistic and communicative repertoire, as other factors such as non-accommodation by her interlocutors may be a significant issue, as we have seen in the examples above.

## Summary of Chapter 5

In summary of this chapter and the reported findings, the vignettes presented in section one included accounts of volunteers experiencing dynamic relationships between local languages and English, including some extremely diverse linguistic landscapes such as Belize and South Africa. There were several accounts of linguistic diversity in terms of experiencing novel and surprising uses of English, such as ‘you are scarce’, ‘you are lost’ and ‘you’ve been hiding’ all used to mean something equivalent to *long time no see*. Reports of such experiences tended to be light-hearted and humorous rather than a negative depiction. There was a mixed range of reported intelligibility, with some volunteers apparently having little or no problems in communication with local people, and others finding the process more challenging. There was some indication of negative affect, such as disappointment or anxiety, in the volunteers who experienced this. In terms of perceived communicative practices relative to standard English – regarding the host country interlocutors and the JICA volunteer’s self-perceived needs to be grammatically correct – many of the volunteers depicted their experiences of English as fluid and not reliant on grammatical standards. This was sometimes explained in terms of the diverse linguistic environments – for example South Africa – where maintaining intelligibility was thought to be naturally a priority over using standard or correct forms. There were indications of experiences where standard grammar was perceived as important, for example in working environments at international schools, in communication with senior staff and community leaders, and in situations where the volunteers’ written reports were thought to be under scrutiny. This was depicted as a minor issue in the data overall, with intelligible communication regardless of form appearing to be the normal priority. This was summed up in one of the volunteers’ advice for future volunteers, *to try not to be caught by the rule that they learned in school*.

Regarding the ethnographic analysis of communication between JICA volunteers and local interlocutors in Kenya, India and Jamaica, a number of assertions were made regarding the volunteers’ experiences. First of all continuing the issues of intelligibility

and diversity raised above, there were many examples of ‘non-standard’ English used by both volunteers and their interlocutors in the extracts – in terms of grammatical elements such as plurals, articles, prepositions and verb agreements – with no evidence of resulting reductions in intelligibility, and no other kinds of interactional trouble such as speakers correcting each other or orientating to linguistic differences. Where lack of intelligibility did occur – it was identified several times for two of the three volunteers – this seemed to be due to the local interlocutor not accommodating fully to the Japanese speaker, for example talking rapidly or using idiomatic expressions. These issues were tended to ‘let pass’ in the data, as the discourse type and specific moments of interaction allowed for that to happen. An argument was put forward that the lack of shared cultural knowledge was a contributing factor to the lack of intelligibility that was demonstrated in the Jamaican data, in contrast to the data from India where the jointly shared cultural knowledge of both India and Japan amounted to a kind of third space or small culture, and was a facilitator of communication between the speakers. There was a high degree of alignment and affiliation in the India data, which was also true of the Kenya example, which featured regular occurrences of supportive backchannels and collaborative completion of turns, particularly from the Kenyan speaker. The volunteers all demonstrated robust communicative identities in these interactions, expressing themselves with confidence and managing the reductions in intelligibility appropriately.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusions**

### **Introduction to Chapter 6**

In this final chapter, the findings which were reported in chapters four and five will be reviewed and discussed in relation to the project's research questions and aspects of the research literature which was presented in chapters one and two. This process will include a major focus on the pedagogical implications of the findings for language pedagogy at JICA and related contexts, a focus which is represented by research question three. The final section of the thesis includes a reflection on limitations of the research, which includes a consideration of the project's methodology in terms of strengths and weaknesses. The section will also include ideas for future research, and an overall conclusion of the project.



## **6.1 Discussion of Findings and their Implications**

### **6.1.1 Discussion of Findings Relative to the First Two Research Questions and Related Literature**

The findings reported in the previous two chapters contain a complex set of assertions, as might be expected from an application of discourse analysis and ethnography to this particular research focus. It is not a simple matter to summarise the findings, and there are no strong claims being made here of generalisability or representation, merely that certain concepts and processes were found to exist within the data upon analysis.

#### **6.1.1.1 Research Question One: Conceptions**

Beginning with a review of research question one, to recap the original question, it was:

1) What conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy do JICA language teachers and learners have relative to their context, including: English usage in JICA host countries, communication between volunteers and local people in JICA host countries, and suitable language educational practices for pre-service volunteers?

The interview and focus group data, as analysed from a discursive approach to qualitative research data, revealed a complex set of conceptions from both teachers and learners. For the teachers, there was strong evidence of a continuum of conceptions with a 'standards-based' view of language, communication and pedagogy at one end, and an 'intelligibility based' view at the other. These conceptions were represented by two teachers (interviewed together) at the standards-based end of the continuum, one teacher at the intelligibility-based end and the other teachers ranging between the two polar opposites.

The implications of the standards-based perspective include a deficit orientated view of English as used for communication in JICA host country speakers, both in terms of general usage in those contexts and in communication with JICA volunteers. In terms of the relative importance of grammatical standards as a target of the pre-service language pedagogy, this is considered to be a priority. The intelligibility-based view which was represented in chapter four, was far more tolerant of global diversity in English with variation and the need to negotiate meaning being considered as a natural feature of communication between individuals from different backgrounds, including cultural differences. This then, represents an egalitarian, non-judgemental perspective towards English as used for communication in JICA host countries, both in terms of the local speakers and interactions with JICA volunteers. The implications for pedagogy are a reduced focus on grammatical standards, with non-standard features that would not harm intelligibility being 'let pass' by the teacher. There is also an implication from this perspective that volunteers should not be deterred, implicitly or explicitly, from speaking English in a way which is influenced by their first language, as a marker of identity, as has been argued in the case of Japanese speakers by Baxter (1980) and Hino (2009).

In terms of learner conceptions of the issues referred to directly above, there was a great deal of evidence in the focus group data for volunteers adopting this intelligibility-based view of language, communication and pedagogy, to at least some extent. From the learner point of view, many of the trainee JICA volunteers expressed ideas relating to the need to communicate without full deference to grammatical standards, with the need to achieve intelligibility with the local speakers being their main priority. This position appeared quite consistently in the data, but was nuanced by various ideas which added complexity based on factors including context and mode of communication. For example many volunteers expressed the idea that grammatical standards might be more important in writing, particularly volunteers who expected to write a lot of official reports or need to create training manuals. Another idea which was expressed is the perspective that improved grammar skills allow individuals to express their ideas more clearly and promote increased intelligibility. Furthermore some

volunteers were more concerned about grammatical standards for situations where they would be meeting individuals of high status, or when speaking with interlocutors who are 'judgemental'. In terms of volunteer conceptions of the way that English is used in JICA host countries, there was very little evidence of any judgmental ideas about this in terms of deviance from standards, save perhaps for some use of terms such as 'good' or 'nice' English for some speakers, implying that 'bad' or 'unpleasant' forms of English might also exist. There are mixed implications of these ideas for what volunteers perceived to be appropriate pedagogy for their situation: it is clear that the volunteers wanted their language lessons to be 'communicative' in a broad sense, but there was not an absolute or fundamental resistance to the inclusion of a focus on grammar.

One issue which appeared in both sets of data – but will be included here as it relates more to conceptions than to experiences – are ideas surrounding the relationship between socio-economic status and linguistic standards. At least one teacher and one student referred to less educated speakers in a somewhat critical way relative to their proficiencies and styles of English. In chapter five, the same volunteer also appeared to equate lower status and less well educated individuals with having poorer linguistic abilities. In another case, a different volunteer referred to the same issue – having more difficulty in communication with locals with less education – although in a more neutral way and without criticism. This difference in attitude seems to map onto the difference versus deficit construct, with the deficit orientation referring to both linguistic standards and social class. This also relates to the issue of native-speakerism, as it was found that some teachers had a tendency towards idealising speakers from this (contested) category or speakers who are otherwise thought to have a high proficiency in English. Other teachers displayed no such tendencies in their accounts of related issues, giving no indication that social class, use of standard English or proximity to the native-speaker should be considered as a determiner of value or worthiness.

What do the findings which are summarised above mean in relation to the wider research literature on conceptions of language, communication and pedagogy, particularly those related to standards and diversity? The findings show that some of

the teachers at JICA held what could be described as a 'monolithic' conception (Hall et al, 2015; Hall, 2013) rather than a plurilithic view, which was represented in the data by the intelligibility-based perspective. The preceding discussions regarding research question one can be connected with positions outlined by Widdowson (2003; 1994), firstly that speakers around the world should have the right to be flexible and innovative in their uses of language, and secondly that languages can usefully be conceived of in terms of 'subject' (reified versions for some educational purposes, including the implication that standard language is a legitimate concept) and 'object' (the act of communication, referring to real-life processes of establishing and maintaining intelligibility and not necessarily related to linguistic standards). Considering the research findings relative to these theoretical positions, we can see that some of the teachers, and seemingly all of the learners, are aligned with the idea of 'linguistic rights for all' whereas some of the teachers are not. Furthermore the language as object versus subject concept goes some way towards theoretically explaining why some teachers and learners perceive linguistic standards as more or less flexible depending on current purposes, whereas some of the teachers are more stuck upon the idea of seeing language as a fixed and invariable entity. These issues connect with a great deal of research literature which implies that awareness raising regarding the nature of language and communication when used for interactional, communicative processes around the world, would be recommended for language teachers in general (e.g. Hall et al, 2015). The specific implications of this for JICA will be considered in detail later in this chapter.

### 6.1.1.2 Research Question Two: Experiences

Moving on to a consideration of research question two, this question was:

2) After being dispatched to their host countries, what are the experiences of the volunteers in terms of using English and other languages for their daily lives and for carrying out their voluntary work?

The findings in relation to this question can be summarised as follows. As demonstrated initially by findings from the interview and e-journal stage of research, volunteers experience a great deal of diversity in language and communication in their new contexts of global voluntary work, based on variable uses of English and the interconnection with other local languages. There are some tentative findings in the project which indicate that negotiating local linguistic repertoires featuring pidgin and creole languages might be a more challenging experience than environments where unrelated local languages are used. The implication is that 'finding the boundaries' between languages in the first case might be harder than the latter, although this is only a tentative finding. In terms of the experience of diversity within uses of English, there were several examples of new and surprising usage, for example innovative question tags or novel phrases which function as greetings.

In terms of these experiences of new multilingual environments and the affective or emotional dimensions of them, there was some evidence that particular volunteers found them challenging but enjoyable, viewing them as a natural feature of their new communicative environment and as something to enjoy or celebrate. There were some indications that the opposite was also true for some volunteers, in other words that the new multilingual environment was found to be challenging and caused anxiety. The latter position could be tentatively linked to issues of identity, confidence and experience with using English. The data collected here cannot seek to generalise about

whether volunteers tend to experience one side of this or the other, or to what extent and in what circumstances.

Regarding standards in language and communication, many of the volunteers expressed the feeling that in everyday spoken communicative practices in JICA host countries, adherence to grammatical standards does not typically happen and is not particularly relevant. The issue of a need for standards in writing and when interacting with certain speakers was explored with the volunteers, and this was perceived to be the case to some extent by certain volunteers, although again no definitive findings were found with regards to this. The indications are only tentative and again certainly seem to be linked with identity. However, we can at least assert that some volunteers feel the need to use English in a grammatically correct way, in some situations in their host countries. In terms of perceived levels of mutual intelligibility with local interlocutors, this varied widely, with certain volunteers reporting that intelligibility could always be achieved through negotiation, and others stating that at times it had been frequently hard to achieve it. There were references to the attitude and orientation of interlocutors: whereas most interactions appeared to be positive and 'convivial', two volunteers referred to interlocutors communicating with them in ways which were not kind or supportive.

Regarding the interactional, ethnographic data collected from volunteers in India, Kenya and Jamaica, the findings from this phase of the project indicated that interactions tended to be collaborative or mutually supportive, although in some cases the host country interlocutor was not able to fully scaffold and support the JICA volunteer in terms of accommodation, in order to maintain intelligibility. There were examples of where reductions in intelligibility could be 'let pass' due to the nature of the discourse and no evidence of any situations where non-standard uses of language in terms of articles, plurals, prepositions, verb agreements and so on caused any reduction in intelligibility. The features which did cause reductions in intelligibility appeared to be the occasional appearance of vocabulary items which were either unknown or unfamiliar in context, including relatively idiomatic phrases such as 'let's see what

happens' in the Kenya data. There was some evidence for the importance of shared cultural or contextual knowledge as facilitator of mutual intelligibility and lack of 'interactional trouble'. For example in the India data, there is a high degree of shared understanding in these terms – the speakers in fact co-create a kind of third space of cultural and contextual knowledge regarding India and Japan – and this appears to facilitate communicative competence in that example. In the Jamaica data – although it may only be one of the factors which leads to a reduction in intelligibility – the lack of shared contextual knowledge in the topics being discussed appeared to have a dampening effect on processes of intelligibility, highlighting linguistic or pragmatic differences and making them harder to overcome.

How do these findings relate to the existing related research literature? Starting with the issue of identity construction, the findings here connect with other research such as (Jackson, 2010), which indicates that an experience sojourning overseas in a new cultural and linguistic environment entails the need to reconstruct oneself and carve out a new hybrid identity. This very much seems to be the case with the volunteers when they arrive in their new environments. In terms of the major debates surrounding the need for grammatical correctness and related issues of intelligibility, these findings contribute in several ways. First of all, communication between the volunteers and their interlocutors appears to be positive, convivial and mutually supportive, assertions which have been made many times about similar interactions in the research literature. Secondly, the findings accord with many of the assertions in ELF and WE literature regarding standards and intelligibility, in the sense that adherence to grammatical standards is typically not necessary in order to achieve intelligibility with interlocutors. This argument is nuanced somewhat by these findings, which indicate that in certain situations and modes of communication, the volunteers have reported that they do feel the need to use grammatically correct English. This seems to indicate that a theoretically hard-line 'intelligibility only' position would not be appropriate relative to the JICA context of language pedagogy and usage, unless another hard-line position was taken up: that the perspectives, feelings and identities of everyone involved in the context should be changed in accordance with reconfigured, plurilithic views. This concept

appears to be untenable, as it would represent a case of ideas which are initially designed to be egalitarian and empowering to be taken to an extreme which becomes just another form of prescription of only one set of ideas and beliefs. The route out of this philosophical dilemma appears to be in awareness raising, the idea that revealing alternative ways of viewing language and communication based on real-life examples can empower individuals to construct their own identities and perspectives in an informed way. These ideas will be discussed further below.

Apart from identity, intelligibility and standards and diversity, the findings of this project also connect with plurilithic ideas of culture in that, just as identity and intelligibility can be co-constructed and negotiated by participants, so can an emergent small culture which is defined by the shared cultural and contextual knowledge of the participants. In terms of Gumperz's (1982) 'contextualisation cues', the fragility of these in the Jamaica data and their robustness in the India data are one important way of interpreting the communicative processes in each case.



### 6.1.2 Discussion of Pedagogical Implications

This section will provide a consideration of the pedagogical implications of the findings, as a response to research question three:

3) What are the implications of these experiences for language teaching at the JICA training centres and for English language teaching in general?

As already referred to, this will involve a discussion of proposed awareness raising (e.g. Roberts, 1998) and a range of practical applications for teaching and learning. First of all, it seems clear that as part of the professional development of – or perhaps the pre-service training of – JICA English language teachers, a set of awareness raising activities involving a presentation of:

- alternative conceptions of language and communication
- linguistic forms and processes in communication between speakers with different linguistic repertoires

might usefully be included. For the first point, Hall and Wicaksono (2013) would be an excellent starting point, as it is an interactive web-based resource which exposes users to a variety of related content designed to raise awareness of these issues, including Widdowson's (2003) theoretical stance on language as subject versus object. For addressing the second point as an important exemplar of the first, teachers could also be guided through interactions between JICA volunteers and host country interlocutors, in order to become aware of relevant issues, processes and factors. A selection of the data from this project is one potential source of such interactions. It is important to note here the difference between this proposal and the alternative of awareness raising through interactions from the host countries without the JICA volunteers: an interaction between two Kenyan speakers would be useful for learning about typical features of

Kenyan English, but when a JICA volunteer is involved, processes in the negotiation of intelligibility are engaged which are particularly relevant here.

In terms of learner awareness raising of the issues above, the same concept of using these resources with the teachers is also applicable to learners, although the interactions could also be used directly as learning materials (as will be described in detail below), and there might be some need to tailor materials if they were to be presented in English. Specific awareness raising activities for learners could be either integrated into language lessons or taken as one of the numerous training sessions which take place at KTC and NTC which are separate from the language lessons. Advantages of this latter option would be that content could be covered in Japanese, and all volunteers training in all languages would be able to take on board some of the concepts. Awareness raising for learners would have numerous benefits relative to the discussion in section 6.1.1. Not only might learners want to actively pursue other types of language learning than traditional grammar (e.g. the study and practice of pragmatic routines), the process might have implications for increasing the confidence of learners to communicate with less deference to standards in most situations, and a feeling that they can legitimately express themselves in forms of English freely influenced by Japanese (Baxter, 1980; Hino, 2009). There would also be a sense of empowerment in increased awareness of the fact that many interlocutors are not likely to be judgemental about language standards (based on their own conceptions) whereas some might take up a standards-based position. Awareness of this might also increase confidence of some learners, and make them realise that interlocutors taking up the latter position are really making judgements based on educational and social factors, rightly or wrongly.

To reiterate some useful points of awareness raising for both JICA teachers and learners, based on this project's findings, the following issues could usefully be addressed:

- 1) Grammatical standards may be salient for some functions such as educational practices, but in reality forms of language are diverse around the world, particularly so in the spoken mode as opposed to the written. This point can be mapped onto Widdowson's concept of language as object versus subject. Awareness could be fostered of the fact that, in order to improve general communication abilities, a focus on language as subject (prioritising grammar) may not be appropriate. Pragmatic skills are an alternative focus, including the ability to establish and maintain intelligibility when required. Emphasis could be placed on the fact that all JICA volunteers will need to be able to negotiate linguistic differences, rather than pre-learn every possible form of a language.
- 2) The ability to use language in a 'grammatically correct way' might still be a relevant focus for some JICA volunteers, especially in terms of the ability to write reports or in situations where they feel somebody might be judging them for their language abilities. Awareness raising could be carried out for the fact that individuals around the world feel differently about grammatical standards – some care about this as a marker of education, intelligence and so on but others are mainly or only concerned with intelligibility. Learners could be empowered with the idea that language can be fluid and diverse, and that others may feel differently, but that position is open to critique and debate. There is hard evidence that not all linguistic forms impact intelligibility and teachers and learners can usefully be made aware of the implications of that.
- 3) Awareness could be fostered regarding the nature of diversity in English in some example contexts, perhaps some case studies such as English in Ghana, to show some regular features which emerge based on local languages and cultures. Awareness of pidgin and creole contexts as opposed to where distinct and unrelated local languages are used could be encouraged. Emphasis could be placed on pidgins and creoles as legitimate languages with their own grammar, as they are typically a fusion of one language (e.g. English) with another, therefore are not 'deficient' forms of one of its parent languages. Awareness could be raised of the fact that the boundaries between English and pidgins and

creoles may be harder to detect than in the case of linguistically unrelated local languages and English.

- 4) Related to the last point, work on awareness raising could also develop increased 'political correctness' in terminology for discussions of languages in host countries. Learners and teachers might be encouraged to refrain from referring to host country speaker's linguistic abilities in terms of their educational background, social status, income and so on. Awareness could be raised regarding these factors as a possible influence on linguistic abilities, but that there is a danger in enacting social judgements by categorising people in this sense. Furthermore, awareness that when discussing someone's capacity for using a language, using terms such as 'bad', 'poor', 'weak' and so on are highly contentious as in the case of speakers in JICA host countries, these individuals are likely to use English in terms of additive multilingualism, therefore any capacity to use English should be viewed as an addition to their linguistic resources rather than a deficiency.

In terms of learner awareness raising, the issues listed above could be introduced through specific guided activities, such as the use of Hall and Wicaksono (2013) or other resources, or in an implicit way by teachers (Harris, 2009), based on how they refer to English in the host countries, the materials that they present in class and their approach to error correction. By avoiding fronting lessons with a 'standard language ideology', teachers may be able to positively influence their learners' identities (Winchester, 2013) in terms of encouraging them to be 'convivial' communicators (Leung, 2005) and playful creators with language (Gao, 2014). Regarding materials selection, Matsuda and Duran (2012) point out that the use of a speech by Ban Ki Moon on YouTube as a listening activity carries the implicit message that such an important individual on the global stage does not need to use English in standard ways in order to achieve communicative competence and success. Although critical pedagogy will not be discussed in any depth here, clearly critical pedagogy is an applicable concept to the JICA context, for example as part of the Ban Ki Moon example (such as a follow-up discussion of the issues raised)

and in fact as part of the project to raise awareness in any of the four areas outlined above. Moving forwards from the idea of selecting the Ban Ki Moon speech as a listening text, the previously mentioned idea of using recordings of JICA volunteers interacting with host country interlocutors – such as those featured in this project – would have the twin benefits of raising awareness and being exploitable for the learning of relevant linguistic, pragmatic and cultural features.

Such listening texts, or videos if available, could also usefully be prepared in terms of bounded units of communication in the way outlined by Gumperz (1982). This would enable learners to be given the context, and the communicative function which is about to take place before extracts are presented. Naturally such texts could be used in typical ways such as the processing of gist or specific meaning. Taking those basic ideas forwards, pragmatic routines could be learned by introducing texts that contain ‘interactional trouble’ based on universal issues such as unknown vocabulary, or more JICA relevant examples such as code-mixing, context specific English usage and so on. These texts could be exploited in various ways to give learners indicative examples of how and why intelligibility issues might occur, and how they are overcome (including negotiation based on paraphrasing, the option to ‘let pass’ etc.). After initial exposure to these processes, further similar texts could be used and ‘paused’ at the original point of interactional trouble, with learners asked to decide ways that the speakers could respond and try to overcome the issue. This concept could then be extended to encourage learners to try role-playing the next few lines of dialogue in order to practice dealing with intelligibility issues and ways to respond, before checking how the interaction in the materials continues. Takimoto (2009) points out the possibility that pragmatic routines can be learned from input, and there are many examples in the literature of taxonomies of pragmatic routines (e.g. Taguchi, 2011) which could usefully be used to supplement those that are drawn directly from the dialogues.

Another way that such dialogues could be exploited – as part of a larger project to increase awareness of the issues – would be if learners were trained to recognise cultural and contextual features of the communication. McConachy (2013) advocates

this approach, in addition to the possibility of learning pragmatic routines from dialogues. So for example in the Jamaica interaction recordings in this project, the issue of a lack of shared understanding of Jamaican dance parties and funerals could be highlighted as a barrier whereas the shared understanding of clothing in Japan and India in the India data could be highlighted as a facilitator. This concept could empower learners to understand that an awareness of cultural frames can facilitate intelligibility and communication (Agar, 1996), which could act as a confidence booster in terms of how volunteers view their communicative abilities, and as a kind of pre-trainer for looking out for contextual and cultural features of their host countries upon arrival.

Apart from the concept of using volunteer interactions to facilitate this perspective, learners could be exposed to other target material such as the kind of reflections upon cultural and linguistic practices in a new context as can be found in Agar (1996) – in an abridged and adjusted form. The concept here is that learners could be pre-trained to look out for ‘rich points’ that they experience in their new environment where notable experiences, including perceived barriers to understanding in a linguistic or cultural sense, could serve to facilitate better understanding of the context and therefore improved abilities to know and understand going forward. The idea of training language learners to become ethnographers themselves is not new, it has been proposed before in Roberts et al (2001). Although the types of learner and educational contexts are different, the principal idea remains the same.

Another complementary strand to this cultural awareness project being proposed, is that learners could be introduced to the concept of linguistic landscapes as a route into pedagogy, for example Rowland (2013). In this research, the linguistic landscape of Japan is analysed via signs. This could be used as a model for JICA learners, which they could take forward in accessing information about their host country’s linguistic landscapes via the internet or photos collected by existing volunteers or JICA staff. This would enable them to start investigating the linguistic landscape of their host country destination, and prepare them for the project of continuing to learn from it upon arrival. There is a connection here with an entry in my fieldnotes during research in Jamaica,

where I noted seeing two signs for soft drinks, relatively close together on the same road in Kingston. One was written in standard English, whereas the catchphrase for the other was 'WATA WID WOW', which I interpreted as being a Jamaican creole influenced text along the lines of 'water with wow'. For me, seeing these signs was an encapsulation of the continuum between creole and standard English in the context, and the spelling of 'WATA WID WOW' was an exemplar of pronunciation practices in Jamaica. Such explorations could be worthwhile and beneficial for JICA learners, as previously said in terms of both a preparation activity and to facilitate the continuous development of understanding linguistic and cultural features after arrival. The structured viewing of videos from host countries with the goal of learning cultural information (e.g. Truong and Than, 2013) is another potential avenue for building up cultural knowledge, and could be used to encourage the volunteers to view television as a useful learning resource upon arrival in host countries. All of these ideas about promoting understanding of culture and context are geared towards increasing communicative competency (Hymes, 1972; Leung, 2005) based on these parameters of awareness and understanding.

So far, this section has considered awareness raising, potential uses of listening texts and the development of linguistic and cultural knowledge as aspects of pedagogical implications for the JICA context. The last consideration to be included here will be assessment for the volunteers before dispatch. As mentioned in chapter one, the JICA test – although it periodically undergoes changes and revisions – is ultimately based on a series of assessed listening and speaking activities, with the inclusion of a writing task (typically writing a letter related about JICA activities or a kind of short essay) which is judged partly by grammatical standards, and a multiple choice test which measures vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. One implication of the findings here is that the written assessment could be tackled in a more nuanced way, first of all it could be made function specific in that learners would be tasked with writing up a brief report based on a given situation at work. The ability to complete such reports, or writing sections of a manual in some cases, could be worked on specifically with certain learners for whom it is necessary and appropriate. The written assessment could be taken out of the formal

exam, and be taken as a portfolio assessment. Learners who are not required to do certain kinds of writing would not be required to do those aspects of the portfolio. By demarcating this part of the assessment, there would be an implicit message that writing is one of the areas where grammatical standards may be more relevant, in the sense of language as subject, when compared to listening and speaking.

It could be argued that listening and speaking should still be assessed, although that could be carried out in a nuanced way relative to this entire discussion, for example the listening activity might be to identify aspects of meaning, linguistic form or pragmatic outcome in terms of a recorded interaction between a JICA volunteer and a host country interlocutor. The speaking element currently involves demonstration that the volunteer can carry out an everyday communicative task such as using the post office, with a JICA teacher acting as their interlocutor and assessor. This activity could remain the same, or be expanded to mimic typical communicative exchanges that might be needed at work or to an exchange of cultural information. Lastly in terms of the multiple choice element, the assessment of some vocabulary knowledge seems valid, as does some grammatical knowledge provided that the target structures contribute to intelligibility rather than being redundant features. As multiple choice tests are common in Japan and easy to assess, one new idea might be to incorporate pragmatic routines into what is being assessed. For example, a question for such a test might be:

You are walking down the road in your host country, when somebody you know but haven't seen for some time says 'you are lost'. You don't quite understand what the person means. How could you reply?

The choices to the question would include a response that would be geared towards resolving the intelligibility issue and others which would not. Other paper tests of pragmatic awareness could be based on options for paraphrasing that are more or less appropriate, and such issues could also be potentially incorporated into either speaking or listening elements of the tests. These ideas for assessment would be an appropriate marker of the type of skills which this project has shown to be relevant to the



communicative practices of JICA volunteers. Furthermore, they are in keeping with Hall's (2014) proposal to test languaging as opposed to language, and Canagarajah's (2006) assertion that tests should be able to assess communicative functions.

## **6.2 Limitations, Future Directions and Conclusions**

### **6.2.1 Project Reflections: Limitations and Future Directions**

This research project has been complex in its scope and execution. It has been a living, fluid and emergent process which has needed to adapt to specific challenges and changes, be they conceptual shifts based on exploration of the research literature or issues with negotiating access to participants and sites for research. Fortunately the key parameters which were needed to ensure that the research focus could be addressed were met, namely access to JICA teachers and learners at the point of pedagogy, and access to JICA volunteers in their host countries, including examples of them in interaction with local interlocutors.

Upon reflection, and with the benefit of hindsight, naturally there are some aspects of the research which can be seen as limitations. Firstly, a relatively large amount of the final set of collected data was focused on ideas and perceptions of language and communication, rather than enactments of it in practice. This was appropriate for research question one as that was the focus, but for research question two it can be identified as a limitation. In terms of researching experiences, if the amount of available data for volunteer interviews and e-journals are compared with the total amount of recorded interactions, the former far outweighs the latter. Fortunately an application of linguistic ethnography allows for the focus on micro stretches of data, which were available within the available data set. Nevertheless there was the issue of having to drop a large amount of the field data from the field visits to Kenya, India and Jamaica in order to achieve any balance between chapter five section one and section two. The remote interviews conducted for section one were difficult to execute and analyse, because of the limitations of carrying out an interview remotely compared with face-to-face, my lack of understanding of each of the nine host country contexts and the need to talk in abstraction about abstracted issues in language and communication.

The relative lack of recorded interactions was in part due to the limited amount of time that I had with each volunteer in each of the contexts of voluntary work that I visited. This mitigated against at least three factors that would have been beneficial to the ethnographic research. Apart from being able to record more interactions, these could have been naturally occurring rather than elicited. Furthermore I would have been afforded the opportunity to 'lurk and soak' in the classic sense (Shaw et al, 2015) in order to gain more insider understanding of individual contexts. Going back to the elicited nature of the interactions, this had the damaging consequence to the resulting discourse data that participants were more able to 'let pass' misunderstandings, whereas more authentic interactions from the workplace could have produced a more thorough examination of the issues as the need to be intelligible might have been more pronounced, such as in the exploratory study extract which was presented in chapter three. These points are all related to the final limitation to highlight, namely that the collected interactions are not all work-related (for example the India interaction) and those that are related to work are rather in the abstract, an elicited conversation about work with a colleague in the Kenya case, and an elicited conversation about life in Jamaica with a colleague at work in the Jamaica case. Such interactions are clearly of interest to the research, but not so directly as authentic task-orientated interactions at work or naturally occurring social interactions would have been.

Such limitations are important to consider, and can be used as a spring board for considering the implications for future ethnographic research with JICA volunteers. A clear case could be made for a more traditional project based on linguistic ethnography in one single context, for example a school in a JICA host country where one or more volunteer is working. A more ambitious project might be to identify a wider area, for example the Nairobi area of Kenya, and visit multiple sites on a regular basis in order to establish a more emic perspective on the contexts and be able to address the limitations that are mentioned above. Longer term ethnographic projects are also possible, tracking the issues researched here across longer periods of time including when the two year cycle of voluntary work has been completed, rather than investigating the issues in snapshots of time, as has been achieved by this project. Taking a wider view, there are

of course numerous potential research projects involving the JICA context and applied linguistics, but these will not be reviewed here for reasons of space and the fact that many of them would be based upon research ontologies and epistemologies which are not in keeping with those adopted for this project.

Processes of data representation and analysis are another aspect of the project and its methodology which merit reflection and consideration. The discursive approach to interviewing and focus groups was a great benefit to this project, enabling as it did an ontological and epistemological consistency with linguistic ethnography, and my reflexive development as a researcher, as was examined in chapter three. One of the challenges of the approach is the task of selecting extracts for analysis, and achieving a fair representation of the interviewees across the entire data set. In this project, my solution to the issue of extract selection was to employ Gumperz's (1982) notion of 'bounded units of communication' in combination with Agar's (1996) notion of rich points in order to choose the extracts for selection. My interpretation of rich points for this included where interaction between interviewer and interviewee produced either noticeable friction (as with Jessica and Paul), or notable collaboration (as with Laurence). Having initially selected and analysed extracts in this way, I then conducted searches across the whole interview for elements which either strengthened or conflicted with my interpretations of the original extract, in order to build a case or series of assertions about the discourse data, in a manner which is also a feature of analysis of interactions in linguistic ethnography. This approach represents a contribution to how analysis might be productively conducted in the discursive approach to qualitative research methods.

Edge (2011) points out that the influence of the research on the researcher is an aspect of reflexivity which is rarely referred to. Needless to say, my personal and professional development has gone hand in hand with this research project over the last five years. I have experienced my own awareness raising in terms of conceptions and experiences of language, communication and pedagogy. It has fundamentally changed the way that I see these topics and issues, and is perhaps just the beginning of personal and professional change in these terms rather than the end of it.

### 6.2.2 Summary of Chapter and Conclusion

In conclusion and summary of this final chapter, this research project has fulfilled its original aim – based on a reflexive approach to teaching in the JICA context – to investigate aspects of teacher and learner conceptions at JICA and compare this with the experiences of active JICA volunteers, in order to address the gap in time and space between the teaching and learning, and the usage of languages in this overall organisational context. The teacher conceptions were noted to be diverse, ranging from an intelligibility based view of language, communication and pedagogy – which highlights an egalitarian view of diversity in English – to its polar opposite. Learner conceptions were complex and geared towards an appreciation and acceptance of diversity, but retaining conceptions of the importance of grammar for specific situations and functions. In terms of the experiences of JICA volunteers in terms of language and communication, the findings included examples of identity formation relative to the new linguistic environments, including positive and negative aspects of affect. Volunteers experienced a great deal of linguistic diversity – as linguistic standards were frequently not adhered to – and were engaged with negotiating this diversity. The evidence from interactions with JICA volunteers showed that shared cultural and contextual knowledge, along with the ability or willingness of interlocutors to accommodate, were of key importance.

These findings have enabled a consideration of the implications for language pedagogy at JICA, which include awareness raising as a route into promoting more balanced views of diversity in English, awareness of processes in achieving intelligibility and the implications for pedagogy in language teachers. Awareness raising has also been suggested as a suitable approach for learners, to help them across all aspects of their experiences including potential benefits to positive affect, confidence and the ability to express their identities as legitimate language users and cope with any situations where interlocutors might be judgemental. Beyond awareness raising, recommendations were provided for how recordings of JICA volunteers interacting with host country interlocutors might be effectively used in various ways including the development of

pragmatic skills. Furthermore the concept of JICA volunteers being enabled to act as ethnographers themselves, before and after dispatch to host countries, in order to develop knowledge of their new cultural contexts as a facilitator of communication, was proposed. Finally, implications for assessment were considered, including recommendations for adjusting the approach to written assessment – to make it more functional for specific volunteers that need to write official documents during their assignments – and an overall alignment towards pragmatics and intelligibility, destabilising aspects of the test which might be testing redundant grammatical features. My intention is to disseminate some or all of these findings back to JICA, either through official channels in the organisation, direct contact with the teachers or a combination of both.

In conclusion, this project has made a contribution towards a greater understanding of the implications of standards and diversity in language and communication for language pedagogy, in a context which highlights the fact that global uses of English in diverse contexts are inherently fluid, variable and tied to issues of identity and culture. It has attempted to adopt and maintain a consistently late-modern view of all the individuals, processes and concepts under investigation, attempting not to overgeneralise or essentialise these matters at any point. It is hoped that this perspective can go some way towards highlighting the dangers of one-size-fits-all approaches in theory or practice, and warning against the pitfalls of becoming entrenched only in one perspective, without a consideration of alternative, contextualised perspectives or points of view. In this period of late-modernity, numerous aspects of how we view language and communication are in transition and flux, and this is no less true of language pedagogy. This project has sought to make a contribution to the discussion of such concepts in a nuanced and contextualised way, providing arguments which are linked to real-world applications in language teaching and learning, particularly where those processes are related to global contexts of voluntary work.

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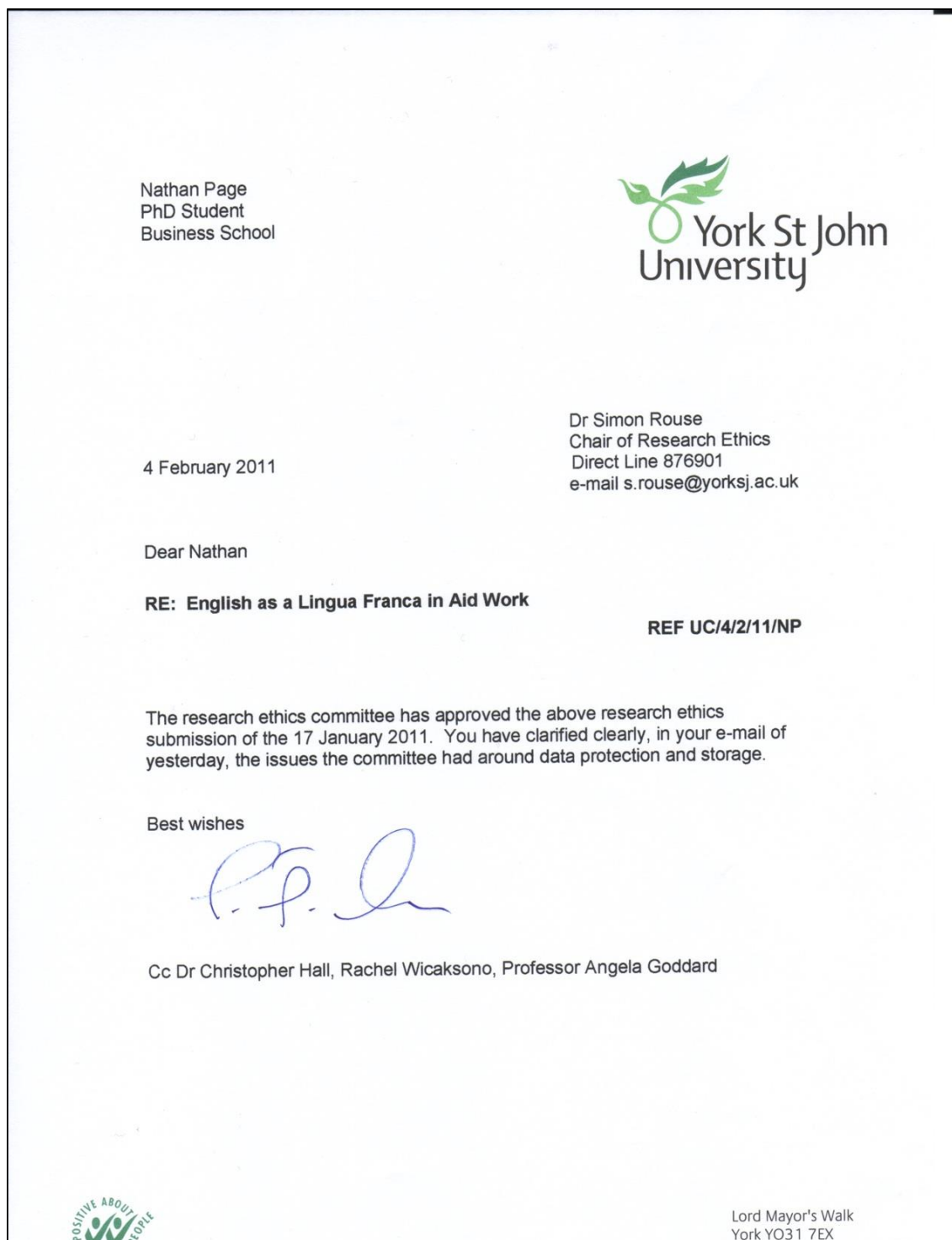
## Appendix A: Additional Information and Research Documents

### A1 Transcription Conventions

(.)	brief pause (under one second)
(1.0)	longer pause (the number indicates length in seconds)
<u>text</u>	emphasised relative to surrounding talk
°text°	relatively quiet
[	beginning of overlapping talk or action
[	
>text<	speeded up or compressed relative to surrounding talk
<text>	slowed down or elongated relative to surrounding talk
te::xt	stretched sounds
=	latched turns, no pause between turns
((text))	'stage directions', or description of non-verbal activity including laughter
( )	transcription uncertainty (including text within parentheses for transcriber's 'best guess' and blank spaces in parentheses for utterances which could not be made out at all)
t-	utterance cut off
.	falling intonation (particularly when the usage is marked pragmatically and/or significant as a discourse move)
↑	rising intonation
<u>text</u>	talk which is translated or phonetically transcribed..
(text)	...with the translation or transcription below

## A2 Ethical Approval Documents

### A2.1 Ethical Approval for the Exploratory Study



Note: 'English as a Lingua Franca in Aid Work' was an early working version of the project title.

## A2.2 Ethical Approval for the Fieldwork in Japan



Note: 'English as International Communication for Voluntary Work Overseas' was another early working version of the project title.



## A2.3 Ethical Approval for the Ethnographic Fieldwork in Further Global Locations

Nathan Page  
PhD Student



18 July 2012

Dr Simon Rouse  
Chair of Research Ethics  
Direct Line 876901  
e-mail: s.rouse@yorks.j.ac.uk

Dear Nathan

**RE: English as International Communication for Voluntary Work  
Overseas (Study B)**

**REF: UC/18/7/12/NP**

---

We can confirm that your ethics research re-submission is approved without any alterations needed

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Rouse".

Cc  
Christopher J. Hall, Rachel Wicaksono,  
Andrew J. Merrison



A Church of England Foundation 1841 Registered Charity No. 529589

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York YO3 1 7EX  
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F: 01904 612 512  
www.yorks.j.ac.uk

## A3 Consent Forms

### A3.1 Consent Form for the Exploratory Study

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM	
Name of Researcher: Nathan Page (email: <a href="mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk">n.page@yorks.ac.uk</a> )	
Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: <a href="http://www.yorks.ac.uk">www.yorks.ac.uk</a> )	
Research Project: An exploratory study of the communication of JICA volunteers in their host countries	

Please read and complete this form. If you are willing to participate in this study, please delete the 'NO' responses then sign and date on the dotted lines. If you do not understand anything and would like more information, please ask.

- The researcher has explained the purpose and procedures of the project. YES/NO
  
- I understand that the research will involve making audio recordings of my conversations at work, and sending these to the researcher via email. YES/NO
  
- I understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time without having to give an explanation. YES/NO
  
- I understand that all information about me will be treated in strict confidence and that I will not be named in any written work. YES/NO
  
- I understand that any recordings of me will be used only for research purposes YES/NO
  
- I understand that the research project will be discussed with others at York St John University. YES/NO

I give my consent to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of this form for my own information.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## A3.2 An Example of the Consent Forms Used for the Instrument Development Studies (York St John Focus Group Activity)

### Project Consent Form

**Name of researcher: Nathan Page (n.page@yorks.ac.uk)**

**Research project: Focus Group Discussion**

Please read the following information. If you require any further information or explanation then please ask. If you are happy to take part then please sign below:

I understand that ...

> in a group discussion, I will be sharing my ideas and experiences about learning and using English

> the discussion will be audio-recorded

> my name will not be used by the researcher in his reports or presentations, to protect my identity

> I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason

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

### A3.3 Consent Form for the JICA Teacher Interviews

*JICA Instructor Consent Form*

Please read the following information. If you require any further information or explanation then please ask. If you are happy to take part then please sign at the bottom of the page.

Research project: English Language Instructor Interviews

Researcher: Nathan Page (email: [n.page@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk))

Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk))

I understand the following:

- > In an interview, the researcher will ask me about my perception of learner needs in this teaching context and about classroom techniques that I use to address those needs.
- > My answers will be completely confidential and anonymous. To protect my identity, my name will not be used by the researcher in reports or presentations.
- > The interview will be audio-recorded.
- > I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.
- > I can request a copy of this document if I want to keep it for my records.

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

### A3.4 Consent Form for the JICA Learner Focus Groups

*JICA Learner Consent Form*

Please read the following information. If you require any further information or explanation then please ask. If you are happy to take part then please sign at the bottom of the page.

Research project: English Language Learner Focus Groups

Researcher: Nathan Page (email: [n.page@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk))

Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk))

I understand the following:

> In a group discussion, the researcher will ask me about my experiences of learning and using English in the past and my expectations of using English during my voluntary work overseas.

> My answers will be completely confidential and anonymous. To protect my identity, my name will not be used by the researcher in reports or presentations.

> The interview will be audio-recorded.

> I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

> I can request a copy of this document if I want to keep it for my records.

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

### A3.5 Ethnographic Fieldwork Consent Form 1 (Interview with JICA Volunteer)

#### Consent Form 1

Thank you for your interest in taking part in my research. Please read the information on this document and ask me if you would like any more information or explanation. If you are happy to take part then please sign at the bottom of the page. Please feel free to ask if you would like to keep a copy of the document.

Research project: JICA Volunteer Interviews

Researcher: Nathan Page (email: [n.page@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk))

Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk))

I understand that the researcher is asking me to take part in the following activity:

- an interview about my experiences of using English and other languages here

I understand the following features of the research (which are designed to protect me):

- The researcher will not use my real name when reporting the interview
- The interview is for the purpose of academic research and will not be shared or used for any other purposes
- The interview recording will be carefully protected
- I can ask to stop the interview at any time and do not have to explain why

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

## A3.6 Ethnographic Fieldwork Consent Form 2 (Volunteer Permission to Record Interactions with Local Interlocutors)

### Consent Form 2

This document refers to the next part of my research when I hope to visit your place of work (and/or other places) so that I can learn more about how you communicate with the local people here. As before, please check and sign this document (don't forget that you can ask me for a copy of this document or to explain anything that you're not sure about).

Research project: JICA Volunteer Visits

Researcher: Nathan Page (email: [n.page@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk))

Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk))

The following steps are involved in this part of my project. Please read them and check that you are happy to proceed:

- 1) The researcher will come with me to my workplace or an alternative place that I regularly go (for example a community centre or a place that I go to socialize)
- 2) If possible, I will introduce the researcher to some of the people that I regularly speak with in those places
- 3) If it seems appropriate, the researcher will ask those people if they would be happy to take part in the project
- 4) If so the researcher will make audio (and possibly video) recordings of me speaking with those people
- 5) There will be a final, later stage when the researcher will ask me (possibly by email) to listen to the recordings and ask me to give comments or answer some questions

As before, there are features of the research which are designed to protect me and other people taking part (names will be secret, the recordings will not be shared other than for research purposes, I can withdraw from the study at any time).

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

### A3.7 Ethnographic Fieldwork Consent Form 3 (Local Interlocutor Permission to Record Interactions with JICA Volunteer)

#### Consent Form 3

Thank you for your interest in taking part in my research. Please read the information on this document and ask me if you would like any more information or explanation. If you are happy to take part then please sign at the bottom of the page. Please feel free to ask if you would like to keep a copy of the document.

Research project: JICA Volunteer Visits

Researcher: Nathan Page (email: [n.page@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:n.page@yorks.ac.uk))

Research Institution: York St John University, UK (website: [www.yorks.ac.uk](http://www.yorks.ac.uk))

I understand that the researcher is asking me to take part in the following activity:

- To take part in a conversation or discussion with the Japanese volunteer who is living and working here. This will be audio or video recorded and the researcher may ask me later to comment or answer questions based on these recordings (possibly by email).

I understand the following features of the research (which are designed to protect me):

- The researcher will not use my real name in his reports
- The recordings are for the purpose of academic research and will not be shared or used for any other purposes
- The recordings will be carefully protected
- I can withdraw from the activity at any time and do not have to explain why

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



## A4 Further Documents Related to Data Collection

### A4.1 An Example Data Spreadsheet from the Exploratory Study

Recordings Information Sheet - Taka

File	Length	Date – Time – Location	Speakers – male/female - names – time of first speaking – consent to make and keep recording
1	6.41	Monday, 21 March 2011 11:23 Office	Speaker 1, M, (name deleted), 0m0s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 2, F, (name deleted), 2m28s ▶ Yes/No
2	3.33	Tuesday, 29 March 2011 14:07 Office	Speaker 1, F, (name deleted), 0m01s ▶ Yes/No
3	8.06	Thursday, 7 April 2011 10:42 Staff room	Speaker 1, M, (name deleted), 0m10s ▶ Yes/No
4	8.06	Friday, 8 April 2011 09:56 Office	Speaker 1, F, (name deleted), 0m0s ▶ Yes/No
5	3.58	Wednesday, 27 April 2011 16:48 Office	Speaker 1, F, (name deleted), 0m11s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 2, F, (name deleted), 1m25s ▶ Yes/No
6	6.41	Thursday, 12 May 2011 16:09 Office	Speaker 1, F, (name deleted), 0m0s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 2, F, (name deleted), 0m2s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 3, M, (name deleted), 0m10s ▶ Yes/No
7	10.16	Monday, 16 May 2011 12:24 Staff room	Speaker 1, F, (name deleted), 0m14s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 2, F, (name deleted), 0m32s ▶ Yes/No
8	8.50	Wednesday, 18 May 2011 12:53 Staff room	Speaker 1, M, (name deleted), 0m01s ▶ Yes/No
9	4.45	Friday, 27 May 2011 15:12 Office	Speaker 1, M, (name deleted), 0m21s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 3, M, (name deleted), 1m42s ▶ Yes/No
10	6.32	Tuesday, 7 June 2011 16:48 Office	Speaker 1, M, (name deleted), 0m0s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 2, F, (name deleted), 0m11s ▶ Yes/No Speaker 3, M, (name deleted), 0m25s ▶ Yes/No

## A4.2 Template Used for Collecting JICA Teacher Biographical Information

<i>JICA Instructors Background Information</i>	Participant number _____
--	--------------------------

1) How long have you been an English language teacher?

Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 10 years <input type="checkbox"/>
1 -2 years <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20 years <input type="checkbox"/>
2 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 20 years <input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2) How long have you been an English instructor at JICA?

Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 10 years <input type="checkbox"/>
1 -2 years <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20 years <input type="checkbox"/>
2 – 5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 20 years <input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Which JICA training centres have you worked at?

Komagane Training Centre

Nihonmatsu Training Centre

Hiroo Training Centre

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

4) a) Please indicate the amount of training in English language teaching that you have received. If you feel that more than one of the statements is true for you, please feel free to select more than one.

All of my training has been learning and experience on the job

My training has been mainly on the job, with some extra professional development provided by my employers

I took a short course in English language teaching before I began work

I took a fairly extensive course before I began work

I hold an advanced qualification, such as a diploma or postgraduate degree

Other comments: \_\_\_\_\_

b) If applicable, please write the names of any teaching qualifications that you have obtained, e.g. CELTA

\_\_\_\_\_

1

5) Please give the following information about your nationality and where/how long you have been resident:

a) My nationality is \_\_\_\_\_

b) I was born in \_\_\_\_\_

c) I grew up in \_\_\_\_\_

d) I have lived in Japan for \_\_\_\_\_

e) Have you spent extended amounts of time in any other countries? If so, where?

\_\_\_\_\_

f) Do you have any other comments about where you are from and where you have lived?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6) Do you speak/use any other languages other than English? If so, please indicate the languages, how proficient you consider yourself to be on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 indicating high proficiency) and how you acquired/learned each language.

Example 1: Spanish – 5 – spoke at home with bilingual parent

Example 2: Japanese – 2 – high school course, self-study, community classes, speaking practice in Japan

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Do you consider yourself to have personal experiences that are relevant to the future experiences of JICA volunteers? For example if you have previously been an overseas volunteer or have lived in countries that volunteers are sent to, this could be seen as relevant. If so, please list the experiences here and indicate on a scale of 1 – 5 how relevant you feel this is to the volunteers' future experiences, with 5 being highly relevant.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### A4.3 Focus Group Statements with Japanese Translations

**0) I think the food in my host country will be completely different from the food in Japan**

私の受入国の食べ物は日本の食べ物と全然違うだろうと思う。

**1) I think English will be very important for living and working in my host country**

英語は、私の受入国での生活や仕事で、とても重要になると思う。

**2) When people are speaking English to me in my host country, I think I'll be able to understand them easily**

私の受入国で人々が私に英語で話しかけてきたら、簡単にその人たちの言っていることを理解できると思う。

**3) I feel confident about speaking English in my host country**

私の受入国で英語を話すことに自信がある。

**4) In terms of learning and practicing language, I think that preparing to live in the UK or the USA would be very different from preparing to live in my host country**

イギリス（連合王国）や、アメリカ合衆国に住む準備をするのと、私の受入国に住む準備をするのとは、言語を学んだり練習したりするという点で、かなり違うだろうと思う。

**5) In order to communicate successfully with people in my host country, I think it is important to learn English grammar rules as they are written in textbooks**

私の受入国の人々と上手くコミュニケーションをとるために、教科書に書いてあるような英文法を学ぶことは重要だと思う。

**6) Thinking about all of my experiences learning and using English before joining JICA, I think they are good preparation for using English in my host country**

JICAに参加する以前の自分の英語学習や使用経験を全部思い返すと、それらは、私の受入国で英語を使用するのに良い事前準備だと思う。

## A4.4 Guidelines for Using E-journals

July 1st

### Advice for Writing the Journal

Hi! I hope your new life as a JICA volunteer is going well so far. If you are planning to use the E-journal, here is some advice for how you can write it.

Actually, the only 'rule' is to write the date (e.g. July 1st above) whenever you write something on here. As I said before, the activity will stop at the end of August (I will collect up everything that has been written then as data for my project). I guess that for most of you that will mean you can tell me about one month living in the capital city and studying local languages, then your first month in the new place you will be living and working.

Apart from these things about dates, there are no other rules, no minimum or maximum amount to write. For example, some people might like to write a couple of times a week, others once a week and others once a month. A couple of other points:

- please don't worry too much about spelling and grammar when you write in the journal. Just write however it feels comfortable to you
- if you ever need my help or advice with anything over there, you can write it onto the journal or in a separate email
- as always during my research, anything that you write in the journal will be 'anonymous'. That means I might write about it in my thesis, but I won't use your name to identify that you wrote it

So, what might an entry in the E-journal look like? I have thought back to one 'language experience' I had when living in Japan, and I will write it here as an example (the date is just a guess)...

### Example Journal Entry:

February 1st (2009)

It's interesting and funny (but sometimes annoying..) that people in Japan pronounce my name as 'Nei-san'. This is because it sounds like 'big sister' in Japanese! If it was 'big brother', I wouldn't mind!!

Actually, the people who speak some English can say it, because they can make the 'th' sound. If I meet someone who doesn't speak much English, or if I introduce myself in Japanese, I have started to use 'Nei-sun'.

That is actually closer to the pronunciation of my name in English. Unfortunately, for changing words into Katakana, the spelling of a word is much more important than its pronunciation!! So I think I can't escape being called 'big sister' here.

Do you like my story? As the example shows, I am interested in any experiences related to using language that feel significant to you. But here are some topics to give you ideas if you need them:

Example Questions and Topics:

These are the topics that we talked about in our focus groups in Japan (changed slightly). If you have any more comments about them, you could write about that.

- 1) English is very important for living and working in my host country
- 2) When people are speaking English to me here, I am able to understand them easily
- 3) I feel confident when I speak English here
- 4) I think that using English in the UK or USA would be completely different from using it here
- 5) Knowing grammar rules as they are written in textbooks is important for communicating successfully here
- 6) Thinking about all of my experiences learning and using English before coming here, they have been good preparation for using English here.

Or it might be more useful to think about this one 'big' question:

Q: How successful is your communication with the local people in English?

By that, I mean do you think that you understand each other clearly or not? Is it easy or difficult to use English with them? Comfortable or uncomfortable?

When answering this question, it would be useful if you could give specific examples. For example about the people and situations, and the language features (such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) that you feel are significant.

Hopefully that will give you plenty of ideas for what to write about! If you have any questions, please ask.

Again.. thanks, and if you have any questions.. please ask!

Nathan

## Appendix B: Supplementary Research Data

### B1 Instructor Interviews

#### B1.1 Laurence Interview: Supplementary Extract

##### *Extract B1.1*

- 1 N: so just as a very final point  
2 L: yah  
3 N: I'm interested in going back to something you mentioned  
4 earlier (.) it's really interesting when you said that  
5 you think they should be allowed or not discouraged to  
6 speak in a Japanese way  
7 L: yeah  
8 N: what are your (.) can you give me any more insight into  
9 like (.) for example coming from Ghana  
10 L: yah  
11 N: do you consider yourself a um as a like (.) speaking  
12 Ghanaian English has that got any meaning to you or do  
13 you view yourself (.) how do you actually unpack that  
14 L: yeah okay I read something recently that amused me  
15 N: uh-huh  
16 L: but which I thought was true  
17 N: uh-huh  
18 L: which (.) somebody was trying to define Ghanaian English  
19 N: right  
20 L: and he ended up saying that Ghanaians would vehemently  
21 say there is no Ghanaian English (.) we speak English we  
22 don't speak Ghanaian English ((laughter))  
23 N: right  
24 L: now that is what (.) that's what the comment of somebody  
25 made about Ghanaians  
26 N: and what's your opinion about on that  
27 L: I think (.) when I was in school  
28 N: yeah

29 L: it was true that we considered ourselves English speakers  
30 N: right  
31 L: but now it's become fashionable  
32 N: right  
33 L: to be unable to speak English  
34 N: oh is it<sup>↑</sup> right ((laughter))  
35 L: ((laughter)) yes it's become fashionable in Ghana  
36 N: right (.) how interesting  
37 L: and I haven't been there for quite a while  
38 N: right  
39 L: so I don't know for myself  
40 N: yeah  
41 L: I was brought up to feel that I speak English  
42 N: right  
43 L: and so  
44 N: yeah  
45 L: for the people who I went to school with my  
46 contemporaries  
47 N: yeah  
48 L: who communicate with me in English  
49 N: mm  
50 L: we don't think that we are speaking Ghanaian English  
51 N: right  
52 L: of course we are aware that our  
53 N: yeah  
54 L: accents are different (.) but the vocabulary is British  
55 N: so do you think  
56 L: yeah  
57 N: in that context (.) do they equate (.) the word Ghanaian  
58 English do they equate that with meaning in somehow  
59 deficient or  
60 L: yeah  
61 N: wouldn't it be possible to think of it as a different  
62 style but no less correct  
63 L: only if there's a large enough group  
64 N: right  
65 L: to make it a standardized dialect  
66 N: right  
67 L: of standard English  
68 N: right  
69 L: yeah just like American English



70 N: mm  
71 L: when everybody says it's different than  
72 N: mm-hm  
73 L: yeah they say that without you know  
74 N: mm-hm  
75 L: they don't (.) only an English professor in a university  
76 will mark that down as no (.) different than is not (.)  
77 it's not a comparison  
78 N: yeah yeah  
79 L: you are (.) this is different (.) A is different from B  
80 not different than  
81 N: sure  
82 L: and then they say things like I wish I would have known  
83 (.) you've heard that before haven't you  
84 N: yeah it rings a bell  
85 L: yeah I wish I would have known  
86 N: yeah  
87 L: I wish I would have known  
88 N: I wish I would have known (.) yeah  
89 L: yeah I wish I would have known  
90 N: mm-hm  
91 L: now um where I come from  
92 N: mm-hm mm-hm  
93 L: in terms of my social  
94 N: mm  
95 L: ((laughter)) background and my school background we would  
96 not allow that to go  
97 ((laughter))  
98 N: right so what (.) what (.) what's the  
99 L: it's the (.) I wish I had known  
100 N: I wish I had known (.) yeah (.) yeah  
101 L: yeah not I wish I would have known  
102 N: yeah (.) yeah  
103 L: but Americans say that very  
104 N: it's er  
105 L: they say it commonly  
106 N: overly complex it seems  
107 L: and it's not (.) it's not (.) it's grammatically  
108 inaccurate  
109 N: right (.) right (.) right  
110 L: but there are many enough of them

111 N: yeah yeah  
112 L: that it's become acceptable  
113 N: yeah yeah yeah sure  
114 L: there isn't that situation you know um countries like  
115 Ghana yah  
116 N: sure sure  
117 L: probably India may have a variety  
118 N: yeah  
119 L: that could be recognized as a standard dialect of English  
120 N: is that because of the amount of speakers or  
121 L: because of the amount of speakers also because the of the  
122 length of time that English has been a language in India  
123 N: sure  
124 L: yah  
125 N: sure I understand yeah (.) so  
126 L: so I think  
127 N: mm  
128 L: educated Indians  
129 N: yeah  
130 L: have a variety of English  
131 N: yeah  
132 L: that is (.) standard yeah  
133 N: sure sure  
134 L: I think they have it  
135 N: yeah  
136 L: what I would call standard is if it's spoken (.) it it's  
137 never deveered so much from: basic English that it's not  
138 intelligible to other (.) [speakers  
139 N: [sure sure yeah (.) [I see  
140 L: [yeah so  
141 when you have (.) for example Australia can talk about  
142 Australian English  
143 N: mm-hm  
144 L: yeah because there are some varieties (.) variations that  
145 N: [yeah yeah  
146 L: [are peculiar to them but they are standard  
147 N: yeah [yeah  
148 L: [yeah Ghana does not have a large enough  
149 N: right [right  
150 L: [population of English speakers (.) [to s-

151 N: [would (.)  
152 would you agree with me that um: (.) Ghana is a case that  
153 (.) it might sort of challenge that traditional divide of  
154 native and non-native speaker because (.) obviously you  
155 are a native speaker of English (.) because you grew up  
156 using it (.) extensively as a young person  
157 L: yah  
158 N: therefore you acquired it  
159 L: yah  
160 N: in a similar way to me  
161 L: yah  
162 N: so do you (.) do you think it challenges that boundary or  
163 do you think that you- you do map onto a native non-  
164 native speaker  
165 L: I think that there's still that mapping because  
166 N: right  
167 L: the (2.1) the ambience atmosphere  
168 N: right  
169 L: is not an English one  
170 N: right:  
171 L: yeah  
172 N: so maybe something cultural as well as [linguistic or  
173 L: [yes (.) yeah so  
174 and (.) also again (1.1) there aren't that many people  
175 like me  
176 N: right  
177 L: who would say for example that their dominant language is  
178 English  
179 N: right  
180 L: yeah so:  
181 N: mm [mm  
182 L: [we don't have a large enough pool of (.) people  
183 N: yeah  
184 L: that way to say [that  
185 N: [I see what you mean yeah  
186 L: a variety has emerged  
187 N: yeah  
188 L: so we are sort of still attached to (1.9) an external  
189 N: okay  
190 (.)  
191 L: idea of English

192 N: yeah that's (.) [that's really interesting stuff  
193 L: [yeah  
194 yeah ((laughter))  
195 N: and thanks for sharing that

(Laurence, 40m44s – 46m35s)

## B1.2 Martha Interview: Supplementary Extract

### *Extract B1.2*

1 N: great (.) so:: (.) um number three what do you imagine  
2 daily language use will be like for the volunteers in  
3 their host countries: (.) [so could you tell me what you  
4 M: [( )  
5 N: think about that and also the fact that you (.) you're  
6 familiar with the Philippines (.) you could probably also  
7 tell me a bit about that  
8 M: yah:: okay I think well for (.) those students who have  
9 high English proficiency  
10 N: mm  
11 M: I think they have no problem (.) communicating  
12 N: right  
13 M: and (.) because we we know that the people speak  
14 differently  
15 N: mm:  
16 M: so for example in Philippines there are some words that I  
17 think the Filipino just (.) use this words without  
18 thinking of the context  
19 N: mm-hm↑ mm-hm↑  
20 M: so for example maybe it's better to say filming  
21 N: mm  
22 M: but they always say >shooting shooting shooting<  
23 N: right  
24 M: so (.) I wanna see the shooting (.) so it's like what↑  
25 what kind of shooting is that gun shooting

26 N: right

27 M: but they mean (.) movie making

28 N: okay

29 M: filming

30 N: okay

31 M: so some people I think do not understand this but as they

32 live in the country they start to adapt this

33 N: great

34 M: so the people or students who volunteers who can speak

35 English well (.) I think they can imagine that and I

36 think they have no problem

37 N: right

38 M: with that

39 N: so erm is that um: okay so they might use slightly

40 different English vocabulary

41 M: [yes vocabulary

42 N: [and how about the (.) how about the local languages d-

43 do you think the Filipino people might (.) mix in some

44 local languages as [well

45 M: [ri- yeah very that's really I think

46 (.) the trend [because

47 N: [mm

48 M: we have (.) we call it Taglish

49 N: uh-huh

50 M: that is Tagalog-English

51 N: yeah

52 M: or Ceblish uh Cebuano English

53 N: uh-huh

54 M: it's funny

55 N: yeah

56 M: yeah but they tend to mix like for example we say (.) we

57 have the prefix mag

58 N: uh-huh

59 M: m a g

60 N: mm-hm

61 M: this is very like we say convenient to use so example I

62 would say mag-mcdonalds

63 N: uh-huh (.) what would [that mean

64 M: [so that means I wanna (.) I wanna

65 [have some mcdonalds

66 N: [o::kay okay

67 M: or I wanna play tennis mag-tennis  
68 N: yeah:: yeah I see I see  
69 M: yeah so [( )]  
70 N: [that's easy  
71 (.)  
72 M: easy (.) and for for the students it's easy to learn the  
73 local language actually in [the Philippines  
74 N: [right right so:: you  
75 mentioned that you think the high proficiency English  
76 students won't have any problem [erm::  
77 M: [yes I guess so  
78 N: so do y- do y- do you think that some of the lower levels  
79 might find it difficult  
80 M: yeah I (.) I noticed that because you know the beginners  
81 they're afraid to try and  
82 N: mm  
83 M: usually they only memorize a few sentences so for example  
84 they only memorize how are you  
85 N: mm  
86 M: so when they hear other expressions like how's it going  
87 or how are things they panic  
88 N: right  
89 M: and then they can't answer that  
90 N: yeah yeah um: so by the way when we're talking about this  
91 idea of English in the Philippines  
92 M: yeah  
93 N: um what do you think about the idea of there being a  
94 Philippine English as a kind of style of English d- do  
95 you have you heard of that and do you kind of agree with  
96 that  
97 M: yeah yeah I heard but actually I don't like it  
98 ((laughter))  
99 N: you don't like it  
100 M: because (.) what is Philippine English↑  
101 N: mm  
102 M: maybe they mean the way people pronounce some words  
103 N: mm  
104 M: is different  
105 N: mm (.) right  
106 M: and the intonation and the accent because we have a lot  
107 of islands

108 N: yeah yeah  
109 M: and people speak differently  
110 N: mm mm-hm [sure  
111 M: [and most (.) Japanese when they go to they  
112 don't stay in the city  
113 N: right  
114 M: I mean the volunteers they don't stay in the city (.)  
115 they stay in some (.) areas  
116 N: yeah  
117 M: and most people don't speak English and when they try to  
118 speak English they sound very funny  
119 N: mm-hm uh-huh  
120 M: so they think this is Filipino English and so for example  
121 they say er this sounds funny (.) wa-terr for example wa-  
122 terr  
123 N: mm-hm  
124 M: or I can't even say that (.) instead of water [or  
125 N: [mm  
126 M: they (.) the r is very (.) like they- there is a sound a  
127 lot of [r sound  
128 N: [uh-huh uh-huh (.) yeah  
129 M: but I think this is because of the Spanish  
130 N: ri::ght okay okay so (.) um: so there are there are some  
131 pronunciation features maybe which are different in the  
132 Philippines [um::  
133 M: [yeah  
134 N: and [um::  
135 M: [( )  
136 (.)  
137 N: do you think um do you think that (.) do you think that  
138 is a major challenge for them to adapt to that or do you  
139 just think that the volunteers will get used to it when  
140 they get there  
141 M: er after a few months I think they- they become like them  
142 ((laughter))  
143 N: right  
144 M: yeah it's it's the danger  
145 N: [right  
146 M: [of the language because here we are trying to teach them  
147 the proper way  
148 N: mm

149 M: correct sound but when they are in those countries (.)  
150 and when they come back they have some (.) like some  
151 similarities  
152 N: yeah yeah  
153 M: so uh sometimes I am afraid  
154 N: yeah yeah

(Martha, 25m14s – 30m46s)

## B2 Learner Focus Groups

### B2.1 Focus Group Three: Supplementary Extract

#### *Extract B2.1*

1 N: great well let's hear from the zero: people  
2 M: yeah  
3 N: why why did you choose zero  
4 M: I chose zero because I can't really tell if I agree with  
5 it or not but  
6 N: mm mm  
7 M: but like I said before (.) we need to get used to the:  
8 African accent  
9 N: mm-hm  
10 M: but (.) I think it's something that you can get used to  
11 [after  
12 N: [uh huh  
13 M: you go to Africa  
14 N: right  
15 M: so in terms of like learning and practicing language  
16 N: mm-mm  
17 M: (.) well can't really (.) agree or disagree with it so I  
18 chose zero  
19 N: interesting point so it's similar to what she said (.)  
20 but if you think about it as (.) learning and practice



21 M: yeah  
22 N: you're not really sure if that's (.) relevant or if you'd  
23 just adapt when you arrive  
24 M: yeah  
25 N: yep that's a good point (.) er did you have the same idea  
26 or is it anything [different  
27 T: [er: I have the same idea  
28 N: yeah  
29 T: but er: I think I misunderstood this question  
30 N: uh-huh  
31 T: er: this is (.) my opinion right  
32 N: m-hm uh yeah  
33 T: it can  
34 N: just your opinion  
35 T: ah my opinion so  
36 N: I think I think  
37 T: I learned English in er: Canada so: (.) I have to prepare  
38 the African English so I'm sorry I (.) misunderstood  
39 N: it's fine  
40 T: people in general  
41 N: yeah  
42 T: er: this is different so er: if (.) the person who  
43 doesn't er: learn English (.) in different country before  
44 N: mm-hm mm-hm  
45 T: er and (.) I'm sorry I can't I can't explain this in  
46 [English  
47 N: [it's okay you can tell one of them in Japanese if you  
48 want  
49 T: er::: ((Tomoko speaks in Japanese to the group, there is  
50 some laughter from her and other group members))  
51 N: someone someone can translate it  
52 T: ((continues speaking in Japanese, there are some  
53 responses from other group members))  
54 M: right  
55 K: ((Kozue uses Japanese))  
56 T: someone who has experience in overseas in English  
57 speaking country plus one  
58 N: uh-huh  
59 T: because they have to prepare for the African language  
60 [dialects  
61 K: [yes yes yes

62 N: [right  
63 T: culture  
64 R: mmm  
65 N: right right  
66 T: but somebody who totally er:: don't have experience in  
67 overseas  
68 N: mm  
69 T: it's zero (.) because I agree with his opinion  
70 N: uh-huh  
71 T: lang- learning language is (.) same (.) dialect  
72 N: mmm  
73 T: everywhere di- there are [dialects so  
74 K: [yeah  
75 T: I think it's zero  
76 N: [interesting yeah  
77 T: [in my case I learned English in [Canada  
78 N: [uh-huh  
79 T: so I have to prepare for the African language so plus one  
80 M: right  
81 N: great yeah thanks for explaining that and I'm gonna (.)  
82 make a note that (.) it depends  
83 R: may I just add one thing  
84 N: yeah of course  
85 R: she mentioned that er anyone who has been to an English  
86 sp- speaking country (.) but I would say like (.) it  
87 doesn't really matter if it's an English speaking country  
88 or not and (.) I think it (.) I mean I don't know (.) I  
89 don't know it's just my [opinion but  
90 N: [yeah sure  
91 R: I- I have been to more like er (.) I have been to non-  
92 English speaking countries  
93 N: uh-huh  
94 R: more than English speaking country (.) then so I feel  
95 comfortable going there it's no problem I mean language  
96 problem (.) shouldn't- I don't think I will have a  
97 language problem because (.) I have been to non-English  
98 speaking countries  
99 M: yeah  
100 R: [yeah ( )  
101 N: [and- and do you think it's just like the general (.)  
102 practice and awareness of what it's like to speak (.) to

103 international people (.) is that the experience you're  
104 talking about (.) [more than actually just using English  
105 R: [I-  
106 N: it's the:: (.) [experience  
107 R: [the language and you know people get used  
108 to it anyways  
109 N: right  
110 R: so:  
111 N: yeah  
112 R: I- I you know (.) I have experienced that it okay  
113 especially when I went to India  
114 N: [mm-hm  
115 R: [they had like strong accent and  
116 N: mm-hm  
117 R: I couldn't understand what they are saying in the  
118 beginning  
119 N: mm-hm  
120 R: but you know after I stayed for a few months I  
121 N: mm-hm  
122 R: I could understand it  
123 N: [mm  
124 R: [and I am comfortable now  
125 N: yeah [yeah  
126 R: [with their English (.) so I- I have experienced  
127 that  
128 N: yeah  
129 R: so (.) like someone who has experienced like non-English  
130 speaking (.) country life  
131 N: mm  
132 R: would be more I don't know (.) comfortable I think  
133 K: mm  
134 N: right (.) interesting  
135 R: er that's my [opinion  
136 N: [anything to add or shall  
137 K: can I I'm not sure if it has to do with the question  
138 ((laughter))  
139 N: that's alright  
140 K: but somebody (.) um I was talking to my African friend  
141 the other day  
142 N: mm

143 K: and she said that uh I might (.) I might have (.) a  
144 harder time to get adjusted to African accent or (.) the  
145 other (.) you know way of s-  
146 N: mm  
147 K: style of speaking English because I'm so used to American  
148 English  
149 N: mm  
150 K: and I'm kind of like in- stuck in this: (.) you know (.)  
151 way  
152 N: mm  
153 K: so um she said that I might have harder time to get used  
154 to it (.) compared to (.) ah more than the (.) you know  
155 other people who  
156 N: mm-hm  
157 K: are learning English  
158 N: [that's a good point  
159 K: [from the scratch because you know  
160 N: that's a good point  
161 K: kind of like what she was saying  
162 M: yeah yeah  
163 N: yeah so it's a different kind of experience because  
164 you're s- really used to one variety of English  
165 K: mm-hm  
166 N: but you've got more general experience of different  
167 places and different people speaking in different ways is  
168 that true<sup>↑</sup>  
169 R: mm  
170 N: [like India and  
171 R: [it's true. (.) mm and also like you know (.) she has  
172 been in America for a long time  
173 N: mm  
174 R: and the people you know she has African friends as well  
175 N: right  
176 R: but those African friends should be able to speak English  
177 well I think  
178 M: yeah  
179 R: but you know when we go there like we have to speak to um  
180 I mean we're not gonna speak to them in English  
181 N: mm  
182 R: but we're gonna speak to you know villagers or you know  
183 people who don't speak much English as well right

184 N: yeah  
185 R: in that case you have to have (.) I mean we all get used  
186 to it yeah  
187 N: yeah  
188 R: but it helps if you have experienced communicating with  
189 the people who speak little English  
190 K: yeah  
191 N: [yeah  
192 M: [yeah  
193 R: if you have already experienced that  
194 K: yes  
195 N: yeah  
196 R: you feel comfortable in going anywhere  
197 N: yeah  
198 R: I think  
199 K: yeah yeah  
200 N: and I think you're talking about communication skills  
201 that you develop  
202 R: kind of yes  
203 N: by you know when (.) when you have to negotiate a  
204 difference in language  
205 R: mm  
206 N: and you have to co-operate together right  
207 K: yes  
208 N: two speakers have to really  
209 R: mm  
210 N: you know some people don't have that experience if they  
211 never leave their hometown (.) some people never even  
212 really speak to other people from other countries  
213 R: mm  
214 N: and I think personally their communication is quite  
215 different  
216 R: they might be confused in the beginning  
217 N: yeah  
218 R: but (.) you know like er in my case I feel easy because  
219 it's diffi- difficult in the beginning I already know  
220 that (.) but ah it's gonna be okay anyways  
221 N: yeah yeah yeah  
222 K: mm  
223 R: I can feel you know easy  
224 N: great

225 R: that's the only difference  
226 N: wow we got a lot of discussion out of that one  
227 ((some group laughter))  
228 that was an interesting one (.) we should probably (.) in  
229 the interests of t- wow yeah we should move on

(Makoto, Tomoko, Rika and Kozue 28m05s – 34m17s)

## B2.2 Focus Group One: Supplementary Extract

### *Extract B2.2*

1 N: so could you please: start by telling us why  
2 Y: okay the reason is (.) the reason I don't feel confident  
3 is that because I'm gonna be talking about HIV AIDS and  
4 reproductive health  
5 N: right  
6 Y: and I've been (.) doing volunteer work in this area in  
7 Japanese but I've never done this in English  
8 N: uh-huh  
9 Y: so I have to: (.) I know these words I can like (.) I  
10 know how to say these words but I think it'll be hard  
11 difficult for me talking in front of people in (.) the  
12 words I want to say may not you know  
13 N: mm-hm  
14 Y: mm I may have difficulty speaking these technical words  
15 N: okay  
16 Y: mm  
17 N: so in the friendly situations  
18 Y: mm-hm  
19 N: do you feel that will be quite different  
20 Y: I think  
21 N: from the working ones  
22 Y: friendly situations will be eas- (.) better  
23 N: yeah (.) yeah  
24 Y: I will have more difficulty in a big group  
25 N: uh-huh

26 Y: or when I talk about HIV ( )  
27 N: okay thanks that's great (.) okay and (.) you've probably  
28 chose plus two  
29 H: oh you are a very brave man to ask me so many questions  
30 N: ((laughter))  
31 ((some group laughter))  
32 H: okay so maybe I'm over-evaluating and over-estimating my  
33 capacity of speaking English so that's why  
34 N: uh-huh  
35 (.)  
36 H: er my answer is er plus two (.) yes (.) I perfectly have  
37 a confidence in my ability in other countries  
38 N: uh-huh uh-huh  
39 H: because I have already a lot of international backgrounds  
40 er in many countries including united nations missions so  
41 that's why  
42 N: okay well (.) then that's a great answer could you just  
43 tell us a bit about that I mean  
44 H: ((laughter))  
45 N: have you ever have you ever experienced um (.) any  
46 problems in international communication or has it always  
47 been  
48 H: yeah in many stages  
49 N: going smoothly  
50 H: in high level or low level and grass roots levels  
51 N: uh-huh uh-huh  
52 H: at levels I (.) joined ( ) missions  
53 N: and basically you you never had any problems or problems  
54 negotiating using English  
55 (.)  
56 H: er: (.) sometimes it's er very difficult to er transmit a  
57 message  
58 N: uh-huh  
59 H: but even in er high class standards you know (.) still  
60 now (.) so many delegates from each government er cannot  
61 make themselves understood as international ( )  
62 N: uh-huh  
63 H: so that's why especially nowadays er you know European  
64 countries including the UK (.) persons take the  
65 initiative over (.) making some kind of er strength over  
66 (.) er: (.) discussions

67 N: mm-hm mm

68 H: it's terrible it's er just based on English abilities

69 N: mm

70 H: so that's why nowadays so many countries are upset about

71 the U- UK's attitude (.) they are always er (.)

72 negotiating at ( ) using their English abilities

73 N: mm-hm yeah that well that's a [really interesting point

74 H: [I'm so sorry ((laughter))

75 [( )]

76 N: [no don't apologize no no no

77 H: okay

78 N: no it's an important issue you're referring to there and

79 er it's I don't know much about that so it's very

80 interesting to hear

81 H: but important things is to er is whether you have

82 complete messages or complete ideas

83 N: right

84 H: ideas are more important rather than just the languages

85 N: right

86 H: because ( ) using your body languages and expressions

87 and the faces and a (.) lot of er (.) un verbal

88 expressions to

89 N: right

90 H: trans- er get your message across to other people

91 N: yeah

92 H: from other countries

93 N: yeah yeah

94 H: it's a very general ideas but er

95 N: yeah yeah

96 H: I feel that er such a kind of situations

97 N: actually the things you've just said I I have read

98 similar things in books (.) so I think you're not the

99 only person that has that kind of idea and it's really

100 interesting to hear you say it (.) great so moving on

101 they've had (.) what they said (.) you three have you now

102 got anything to add (.) anything extra to say about this

103 topic starting with you

104 M: okay so (.) I chose minus two (.) I don't have any

105 confidence to speak English ((laughter)) but um as Yuzuki

106 said (.) mm I I'm teaching Japanese like I'm I'm a

107 teacher (.) so I hope I will use like Japanese



108 N: uh-huh  
109 M: in the classroom and (.) like mm mm the same  
110 N: right  
111 M: as Yuzuki said but like we can just communicate with the  
112 local people and people in daily life in English  
113 N: mm mm  
114 M: but when we had a (.) like serious talk or (.) s- mm I  
115 don't have any confidence to use the technical word  
116 N: okay  
117 M: mm  
118 N: so it's very similar to what Yuzuki said  
119 M: yeah  
120 N: although in your case it's actually teaching right  
121 M: yeah  
122 N: teaching but your case is HIV  
123 Y: yeah I'll also be doing like workshops in high schools  
124 N: right  
125 Y: like junior high schools  
126 N: okay okay that's great (.) thank you so how about you  
127 K: and the reason why I chose plus one is of course I must  
128 admit I have many things to do  
129 N: mm  
130 K: to to to improve my English skill (.) but I've been  
131 working as a Japanese language teacher for seven years  
132 N: mm  
133 K: and some of the- my works are included er teaching  
134 Japanese language in English  
135 N: mm-hm  
136 K: it's funny I know  
137 N: mm-hm  
138 K: and maybe this experience mi- er would help me  
139 N: mm  
140 K: this is actually this is the confidence  
141 N: mm-hm  
142 K: rather than sort of the skill of language (.) and also  
143 the most important thing as er Haruki said (.) and er  
144 ideas that you want to express and also interest  
145 N: mm-hm  
146 K: to the people you are facing you're you would face (.) in  
147 Marshall or somewhere else and you have er ideas and also  
148 interest to the people

149 N: mm  
150 K: maybe you can have a communicate (.) you can have  
151 communication with them  
152 N: mm  
153 K: not only with language but also non-verbal languages  
154 N: right  
155 K: expressions [so that's why  
156 N: [yeah that's great thanks for explaining that  
157 that's brilliant (.) okay (.) why did you choose minus  
158 one  
159 A: because now I have a trouble speaking English  
160 ((laughter))  
161 N: ((laughter))  
162 (.)  
163 really  
164 A: yes ((laughter)) they speak fluently but I have trouble  
165 to tell my idea  
166 N: [mm-hm  
167 A: [( ) now  
168 N: mm-hm  
169 A: but (.) when it comes to er teaching mathematics because  
170 I'm a maths teacher  
171 N: mm  
172 A: in Samoa  
173 N: mm  
174 A: and there ((coughs)) the words we use in the classroom is  
175 (.) not so much  
176 N: mm  
177 A: not so much  
178 N: mm-hm mm-hm  
179 A: so I can tell them about my idea of course about  
180 mathematics  
181 N: mm mm mm  
182 A: so I chose this  
183 N: okay (.) that's [great  
184 A: [this one  
185 N: okay brilliant  
186 A: ( ) use mathematics  
187 N: ((laughter)) I'm sure you  
188 A: ( )  
189 N: I'm sure you can do it

190 A: mm  
191 N: I'm sure you can do it (.) great so er we'll move on to  
192 the next topic

(Yuzuki, Haruki, Michiko, Kazuko and Akira, 16m06s – 22m33s)

### B3 Volunteer E-journals

#### B3.1 Ryuta E-journal

1 August 25th  
2  
3 HI, Nathan  
4  
5 What I am interested in is they use "Sharp" for greeting.  
6 Sharp means "Hi", "OK", "Nice", and "Bye" etc.,  
7  
8 They also use "Sure" (but pronunciation is 'shor') in the same situation with  
9 "Sharp".  
10 "Sure" is more informal than "Sharp".  
11  
12 Regards,  
13 Ryuta

#### B3.2 Kazuko E-journal

1 August 2nd  
2

3 Hello Nathan, I'm sorry for not having been able to written this journal though I had  
4 promised to help you. Let me tell you my JULY in Marshall Islands as an excuse. I  
5 arrived at Marshalls on July 4th and spent about 4 or 5 days in down town. After  
6 finishing some courtesy calls and city tour, another volunteer mate and I went to a  
7 suburb area which is called Laura for three-week language training. In Laura, you can  
8 enjoy the local Marshallese life though you still have shower and electricity. At first  
9 I thought I could enjoy my life there, but it was wrong. I got stressed with the food  
10 they gave me. I know I simply have to thank them, but their food is not healthy at  
11 all. They raise vegetables at their farm, but rarely eat them. They just sell them to  
12 the supermarkets or Chinese restaurants in downtown. I got really frustrated  
13 because I couldn't have any control of food life and was disappointed at myself who  
14 got stuck in this tiny matter. Anyway now I came back to downtown and am at a  
15 residence of high school where I will teach Japanese language. Thinking about my  
16 three weeks in Laura, it was a good chance to see my weakness. I think I will face  
17 many cases that discourage me in these two years. Now I feel I have to do and to be  
18 mentally simple. Now I think I should stop writing. I'm going to write about the  
19 topics you gave me below for the next time.

20

21 Kazuko

22

23 Aug 5th

24 Now I am in my school where I am supposed to teach Japanese language. This is not  
25 a local school but American school, so most of stuff here are from U.S.A or Canada,  
26 or other English speaking places. This means a great deal of difference from working  
27 with local people. Everything is in English. Fortunately I am not that bad in  
28 communication in English language, but often face many difficulties in understanding  
29 what they say. I think that is not a question of grammar, but of 'native speech' and  
30 of course of 'professional words'. It seems that everybody in this school considers  
31 me to be a 'very good English speaker'. I'm simply happy with that, but on the other  
32 hand, They speak to me quickly and naturally. They won't choose 'easier expressions'  
33 for non- English speaker. That's been stressful for me this first week here, but at  
34 the reception of two days before, I let them know so, and they said I can ask them  
35 to speak slowly or simply whenever I don't understand. I felt easier than before now.

36

37 The other story that I found here regarding my English. It's very strange, but I  
38 think I am more fluent in speaking English than I was in Japan, including the period  
39 of the training at KTC(Sorry, [name deleted]!). It's because of the atmosphere.  
40 Everybody speaks English thus my code switching of language is working well. Now I  
41 just hope to understand more what they speak.

42

43 Kazuko

44

45 *Hi Kazuko, this is so interesting, thanks for finding the time to write for me. Later,*  
46 *if you have a chance, it would be good to know more about the natural expressions*  
47 *which are difficult for you to understand. For example, is it just the speed of what*  
48 *they say? Or are there new words and expressions which you've never heard before?*

49

50 *Thanks again for your help,*

51 *Nathan*

### B3.3 Yuzuki E-journal

1 July 10th

2

3 Hi Nathan,

4

5 I'm sorry I haven't e-mailed you in a long time.

6 I tried to access the google document, but I somehow couldn't log in, so I'm e-  
7 mailing you this time.

8 Sorry for my long e-mail. Following a journal for what I've been experiencing here so  
9 far.

10

11 It's been almost 2 weeks since I arrived in Belize. I spent 3 days in Belize City and  
12 moved to Belmopan last weekend. Currently I am attending University of Belize and

13 learning about Belizean culture. More specifically, I've been learning about history,  
14 geography, ethnic groups, political system, school system, health-care system,  
15 religions, etc...I have also been staying at a Belizean family's home.

16

17 In terms of language experience, I'm surprised by the fact that many Belizeans can  
18 speak more than 2 languages and use different languages depending on situations.

19 Belize is indeed a very diverse country with many ethnic groups and languages.

20 People I have communicated here in English include my host family, teachers at

21 school, Mayan family I visited as a part of class, and students from Mexico. I

22 haven't had difficulties communicating with them. It is easy to understand them

23 when they are talking to me. They do have accent, but their accent doesn't become

24 an obstacle for our communication. They also understand what I say most of the

25 time too. I usually speak in the same as when I used English at KTC, work, or in

26 Canada where I went to university, and they understand me most of the time. I've

27 had more difficulties communicating with people from India, New Zealand, and

28 Australia before.

29

30 However, I've been struggling to understand what Belizeans are talking to each

31 other. All the people I've met here speak to me in English, but they talk to each

32 other in Creole. Before coming to Belize, I had had a misunderstanding that Creole is

33 spoken among youth in Belize City. In reality, however, Creole seems to be spoken by

34 the majority of people. My host family use English when they are talking to me, but

35 they talk to each other in Creole. Even a Mayan lady I met can speak Creole. It's

36 been particularly difficult to understand what my teenage host sister and brother

37 are saying when they are talking to each other in Creole. At first, I thought they

38 were speaking Spanish. Creole spoken by adults is slightly easier for me to

39 understand. I am more likely to be able to pick up words from their conversation. I

40 hope I can get used to Creole as I will work in Belize City and I will interact with

41 teenagers a lot.

42

43 That's pretty much what I've been feeling for the last 2 weeks. I'm enjoying my

44 stay so far. People are friendly and approachable.

45 There are lots of tourist attractions too. I'll start working in about 2 weeks and I

46 can't wait.

47 I'm bit afraid but excited. If you have any question about my journal, please don't  
48 hesitate to ask me.

49 Bye for now!

50

51 Yuzuki

52

53 October 22

54 It has been almost 4 months since I arrived in Belize and 3 months since I started  
55 working. Let me briefly explain about what I've been doing at work first. I work at a  
56 reproductive health NGO for HIV/AIDS awareness and have a wide range of duties.  
57 Right now I'm mainly working on the capacity building of our youth group members,  
58 by administrating weekly quiz and doing review sessions on reproductive health. I've  
59 also done some team-building activities with them, and will start craft sessions with  
60 them in November. I also co-facilitate peer-educator trainings at high schools and  
61 I'm mainly in charge of sessions on safer sex practices and physiology. Other things  
62 I have done include management of a condom-distribution project, participation in  
63 outreach programs like health fairs, assistance with forums, development and  
64 management of Facebook pages, etc. I have 2 colleagues: a female program director  
65 and a male youth officer. They are both Creole and speak mainly in Creole. The youth  
66 group members and the high school students I interact with everyday are also  
67 predominantly Creole. Creoles are the biggest ethnic group in Belize City, followed  
68 by Mestizos.

69

70 In terms of the language experiences, I'm getting used to being surrounded by  
71 Creole-speaking people. Even though English is the official language in Belize, I hear  
72 people speaking English only in certain situations such as official meetings and in the  
73 media. I've heard that kids are encouraged to speak in English at school, but I hear  
74 them talking in Creole all the time. When we have sessions at schools, my colleagues  
75 use English for explanation of concepts and use Creole for further explanations with  
76 real-life examples. I think it's an effective way to deliver messages.

77 I wish I could speak Creole too, but I haven't learnt enough to speak. I have started  
78 to pick up some words, but I don't feel confident using them in appropriate context

79 yet. When I have sessions, I try to speak clearly and students seem to understand  
80 me for the most part, but it's been difficult to understand their questions. I  
81 sometimes get frustrated not being able to understand what they mean, since we  
82 deal with sensitive topics and details are important. My colleagues usually speak to  
83 me in English as they know that I don't fully understand Creole, but kids talk to me  
84 in the same way as they talk to Belizeans. I've also noticed that students speak  
85 thicker Creole at schools for less privileged students. Apparently their Creole is  
86 more "street" style. I can hardly understand them when they are talking to each  
87 other.

88

89 JOCVs who have been in Belize over a year have told me that my listening skill for  
90 Creole will improve without doubt, but the improvement of speaking skill will be up to  
91 the JOCV's circumstances. I want to learn to speak, but at the same time, I don't  
92 want to get too used to Creole and lose regular English. Creole often seems to lack  
93 grammatical structures.

94

95 I haven't struggled with reading and writing so far. Even though people communicate  
96 in Creole verbally, most people, especially at work, write English.

97 I've been struggling with some medical and health terms, but I think I will get used  
98 to these as I have many opportunities to use them.

99

100 Belize is an interesting country from the language perspectives. Even though  
101 it's a small country, I encounter many languages. When I take a bus to the  
102 Northern part of Belize, the bus is full of Creole-speaking people when it  
103 departs from Belize City, but I gradually get surrounded by Spanish-speaking  
104 Mestizos. It sometimes feels like I'm in a different country when I go to  
105 other parts of Belize. I have also noticed that Mestizo people's Creole is  
106 easier to understand than that of Creoles.



### B3.4 Hiro E-journal

1        June 24  
2  
3        Hi, Nathan!  
4  
5        Well, I'll leave Japan at June 26, I'm excited now to go to PNG!  
6        And, I got a lot of advices about PNG from many people, I felt I got very good  
7        acquaintances...  
8        Anyway, I'll arrive at June 27 and stay Port Moresby for a week when I can connect  
9        internet, so I can access this online document this term.  
10  
11       See you again!  
12  
13       Hiro  
14  
15       *June 24*  
16  
17       *Hi Hiro,*  
18       *Good luck on your adventure to PNG!*  
19       *Sure, please write again when you have time.*  
20       *Bye for now,*  
21       *Nathan*  
22  
23  
24       June 27  
25  
26       Hi Nathan,  
27       I arrived here, PNG today!  
28  
29       I realized result of KTC training in conversation with airline crew or airport staff  
30       today.  
31       Anyway, I felt PNG English is very easy for Japanese, because their pronunciation is

32 very similar to Japanese one.

33

34 But, I don't know in detail, so I'll write down something here.

35 Bye for now,

36

37 Hiro.

38

39 *July 1st*

40

41 *Hi Hiro,*

42 *That's great... I'm glad you arrived there safely. Thanks for your first comments*

43 *about the pronunciation there. It's interesting that you're finding it easy at first!*

44 *Another volunteer asked me for some advice about what format to use for writing*

45 *her journal. So I will write that and also copy it onto our page here in case it's useful*

46 *for you. I'll also write some advice about the recordings that we talked about*

47 *before.*

48 *Hope you're enjoying PNG*

49 *Nathan*

50

51 Nathan

52

53 I'm sorry to no update these days. I can't connect internet.

54

55 *July 7*

56 I met a person who was introduced by my acquaintance. He is Indian. I have

57 met Indian people, and I felt Indian English is very fast, but there are not so

58 difficult words then. Anyway, I talked with him about one and half hour. I was able

59 to understand almost all his speaking, and I could hear very clear and very similar

60 with PNG English. After I met him, we went to his house. There are he and his

61 brother-in-law. His brother is American, and I couldn't so much his speaking. When

62 he talked with his brother, I thought that his English is totally different.

63 Then, I couldn't explain my idea not so good even now, so I felt I should

64 memorize more words about feeling or idea. Then, what should I do memorize such

65 words?

66 I realized that communication is more important than grammar or tense even  
67 if there are mistakes about grammar. Actually, I was able to communicate with him  
68 and his brother.

69

70 July 9

71 I talked with shopper at mobile phone shop to buy SIM card. Then, I  
72 thought I have enough knowledge and words about mobile phone. But, she couldn't  
73 understand my English. I disappointed that. I think that I should pay attention to  
74 pronunciation more, because I paid attention to grammar and choosing word by now,  
75 and I ignored right pronunciation. What do you think about my idea?

76

77 July 11

78 Yesterday, our dormitory's electricity was down, so today, proprietary  
79 company staff came and checked electrical equipments. Then, I needed to  
80 communicate with him of course. However, I wasn't able to listen his English. I  
81 realized that I can't recognize by sound between Pidgin English and English. It is  
82 very difficult for me.

83

84 Hiro

85

86 July 16

87 I have arrived at Kiunga. But, today, everybody gaze at me, so I can't communicate  
88 with any people. However, I can hold conversation with co-worker. I couldn't be  
89 confident, but I was encouraged. Tomorrow, I will try to talk with other people.

90

91 July 17

92 Today, I went to office on foot and I greeted some people. It made me confident  
93 and encouraged. But, at noon, I went to shop, and I was told by shopper but I didn't  
94 understand clearly. I was told by cook of hotel, which I'm staying at, I also didn't  
95 understand half of story.

96 I thought that I can hear almost all conversation, but actually, I can't. However, I'll  
97 continue trying to communicate.

98

99 *July 18th*

100

101 *Hi Hiro, thanks for your journal entries. I'm using a different colour just so you can*  
102 *see it is me easily!*

103 *Everything that you have written is very interesting. You mentioned that the Indian*  
104 *person seemed to speak like PNG people, then changed his speaking style with his*  
105 *brother in law. That is quite normal I think, for people to speak quite differently*  
106 *depending on who they are with and in what situation. Especially so for 'multilingual'*  
107 *people.*

108 *You mentioned that you have trouble understanding some people, and you were*  
109 *concerned that the woman in the phone shop did not understand you. It is difficult*  
110 *to say at this point whether these difficulties are because of pronunciation,*  
111 *grammar, vocabulary or the mixture of 'pidgin English' and 'English'. Possibly a*  
112 *combination of all of those.*

113 *But well done, you seem to be making a good job of communicating with most people!*  
114 *If I were you, I would make some recordings of yourself speaking to some of the*  
115 *people. If you tell your friends or co-workers that you are doing this to get used to*  
116 *English in PNG, they will probably understand and support the idea. (of course it*  
117 *would probably not be suitable in some situations, like when you are shopping).*

118 *If you were comfortable with it, my advice would be to do a kind of 'interview' with a*  
119 *PNG person about English in PNG. Ask them to explain about when pidgin English is*  
120 *used and to give you some examples. If you have any trouble hearing any of their*  
121 *words, ask them to repeat them for you so that you will have a record. You could*  
122 *even ask the person if they understand you clearly, and if there is anything about*  
123 *your pronunciation which they do not understand.*

124 *Having a recording would help you in these ways:*

125 *- you would be able to listen back and check exactly what you said and what the local*  
126 *person said*

127 *- you would be able to become familiar with PNG pronunciation of English words, and*  
128 *learn something about pidgin English*

129 *- you would be able to think about what features of the talk causes any problems in*  
130 *understanding*

131 *Okay, that's my idea. If you would rather not make recordings, I recommend*  
132 *listening for particular features (e.g. the pronunciation of particular words) which*  
133 *might be different. Try to write them down and tell me about them in the journal!*  
134 *Good luck, keep in touch. Ask me for help or advice anytime.*

135 *Nathan*

136

137

138 July 24

139 Almost all people talk in Pidgin English, but sometimes, they speak mixture  
140 English. Then, this is same as my first opinion, which I should speak local language.  
141 However, Pidgin is not so different from English, so studying English partly help to  
142 speak Pidgin. The biggest my problem is pronunciation yet. These days, my ear is  
143 getting better to hear their English, I think their pronunciation is different each  
144 other. But, they can communicate each other. I wonder why they can understand  
145 each other. Is this a kind of their dialect? I hope that my English has improved, I  
146 feel that I can make good sentence now, but my English can be understood many  
147 times, so I can't be confident.

148

149 July 25

150 Today, I talked with my boss when he bring me my office by car. Then, I  
151 asked some questions. I asked him "Boro-san( who is our driver) where?" He  
152 answered. After that, I asked him "How far Tabubil from here?" He wasn't able to  
153 understand easily. Then, I realized my 'f' pronunciation was not clear for him. And,  
154 they don't pay attention to grammar so much, they need only understandable  
155 sentence, I think. One more point, our division secretary is Ms. 'Helen'. But, I heard  
156 that everyone called "elen". Maybe it is common, but I realized first time.

157 I have thought that studying English is sometimes useful to speak English or  
158 other languages in other country before came here. It is true, but I realize now that  
159 I can have gotten big benefit from KTC training. It is listening skill. Now, almost a  
160 month past since came here, and I can listen their English partly. Maybe I, before  
161 KTC training, couldn't be getting better so early. I feel that listening skill can be  
162 trained, even if trainer's nationality is not same as my host country.

163

164 *This is very interesting Hiro, thanks very much for writing it !!*

165

166 July 31

167 Today scheduled that I moved to a house from hotel. But, I haven't gotten a  
168 key for a house. So, I tried to inform that to hotel staff. Then, I could make him  
169 sure, but grammar was broken. I think they tend to make simple and easy sentences.  
170 I review about conversation by today, they don't use relatives.

171 And he talked about Japanese volunteer "Masuda", but I heard "Matsuda". Then, I  
172 felt that they recognized English from only pronunciation. I tend to recognize from  
173 grammar. So, I felt that their English is difficult.

174

175 Aug 1

176 Today, I involved in drinking with 2 men who stay at same hotel. Then, they  
177 talked many things, but stories I could understand were around 40%. At that  
178 moment, I felt their English was completely different. One is from Rabaul, the other  
179 is from southern Western province. They said that Western province was England  
180 territory, on the other hand Rabaul was Germany, Japanese territory. So I think  
181 their English is relation to unoccupied countries. I think Western provincial English  
182 is easy for me to understand. When I talked them, I had confident to speak and  
183 they understood. That is big result for me.

184

185 Aug 2

186 Today, I went to Tabubil to radio program recording and I met local level  
187 government leaders to say hello. Then, I couldn't speak very well. I was shocked  
188 that, but I could decide to make more effort to speak English. Anyway, I thought  
189 that is difficult to make sense without facing people. I communicated with face to  
190 face by now, but it was first time to speak at radio, of course. I realized that face  
191 to face is important.

192

193 Aug 19

194 This 2weeks(Aug 8-), we have been training of pidgin english. In pidgin  
195 english, there are many same words and vocabulary. So, studying English is very  
196 useable to study pidgin english. In pidgin english, past tense is just putting 'bin' or

197 'pinis' in sentence. So, when I make sentences, sometimes confused. But now, I am  
198 speaking and listening pidgin english every day, I am able to use them. I realized  
199 that speaking and speaking, listening and listening is only way to learn language.

200 Sometimes, PNG people's English is mixed up to pidgin english. For example,  
201 "talk" is "tok" in pidgin. So, "talk and talk is best way to learn pidgin" is "tok and tok  
202 is-" like that. Another one is "taste" is "test".

203 I feel that some pronunciation is difficult for them, last time I wrote  
204 "masuda" is "matsuda" , and yesterday I felt "examination" is "igjaemeneusen", and  
205 "soccer" is "soka".

### B3.5 Tomomi E-journal

1 July 2nd (2012)

2

3 I'm in Nukualofa where is the capital of Tonga. Almost all of people who I met here  
4 can speak English even a girl is 11 years old and their English is easy to listen for  
5 me.

6

7 I don't have confidence about using English so I thought Tongan people can use  
8 English more frequent than me. Of course their English skill better than me but I  
9 realized that they also studied English as a second language through the example as  
10 follows.

11

12 One of the national stuffs of JICA Tonga office explained safety and security in  
13 Tonga. Then he said "~~~ 3 weeks after." He wanted to say "~~~3 weeks later." I  
14 think. Before I trained at KTC, I'd made a same mistake, so I realized that.

15

16 Anyway, I was relieved that I could almost understand their English. That is first  
17 impression.

18

19 Can you understand my English and how about this contents? Is it ok? Yuina

20

21 *Hi Tomomi,*  
22 *That's really interesting, thanks. The topic and the example are both really good!*  
23 *I'm glad to hear that you feel comfortable and relieved about using English there so*  
24 *far.*  
25 *By the way, if you could tell me more about the idea of 'mistakes' when using English*  
26 *in Tonga, I'm very interested in that. It would be great to hear about more examples*  
27 *and what you think about this topic over the coming weeks. And of course any new*  
28 *topics and experiences that you can tell me about.*

29

30 *Nathan*

31

32 I'm sorry I didn't write this report for long time. Now I'd like to tell you new 3  
33 topics. Cause I haven't found 'mistakes' like previous report yet.

34

35 July 18th (2012)

36 1. Now, I still continue to study Tongan language in Nukualofa.

37 My Tongan language teacher is Tongan. She teaches me it using English.

38 Sometimes I couldn't understand what she explained because I didn't know (or

39 I forgot) the English words. Even the common word, for example, "climate"

40 "adopted child" "qualified" or some grammatical words, "intransitive verb"

41 "interrogative".

42 In the other case, when I check the Tongan word in a Tongan-English

43 dictionary, sometimes I have to check the meaning of the English word in

44 English-Japanese dictionary. This situation should be caused by my poor

45 vocabulary but when I learn new language, It's a big problem.

46

47 2. I learned some sentences like " today is hot." in Tongan. In case of in

48 English, we can't say " I'm hot." as same mean as "today is hot." but we can say

49 that in Tongan and also in Japanese.

50 When the teacher explained the sentence "I'm hot" in Tongan, she said she

51 couldn't translate to English directly. So she was a little bit hard to explain

52 that. But we could understand each other about this sentence a short time

53 later. You know we have same grammar about that, why we couldn't?



54

55 3.

56 During the home-stay, I and my host mother were in Kolovai ( my home stay  
57 village ) , then we talked about a event on next Sunday. The event was hold  
58 another town, Nukualofa. She invited me to the event, then she said, " I will  
59 come ~~~(to the event or Nukualofa and so on)" or "You will come~~~". When I  
60 heard that, it sounds strange for me. I thought she should say " I will go ~~~"  
61 because we were in Kolovai, not Nukualofa where the event site. But then, I  
62 could understand what she want to say to me. So we could have a  
63 communication.

64 Actually I haven't been to foreign country with using English for a long time.  
65 So I can't recognize what is the natural way. I mean, I felt something strange  
66 but I didn't know the expression is correct or not.

67

68 *Thanks a lot Tomomi, this is so interesting... especially giving me the real*  
69 *examples, that's very useful. If there's anything I can do to help, anything I*  
70 *can check or explain anytime, please just ask. Good luck!*

### B3.6 Chihiro E-journal

1 Dear Nathan

2

3 Hello!

4 Long time no see.

5 I apologize not to reply your mail for long time.

6 Now I've safely arrived at Dar es salaam and started lesson of Kiswahili  
7 today.

8 The JICA's domitory doesn't have LAN so I couldn't use internet these days.

9 I finally got a modem today.

10

11        Anyway, I try to write my English experience here a little.  
12        Honestly local people can't use English well except people who is working at  
13        the facilities for foreigners.  
14        I visited some luxury shopping centre and hotels and people rather speak  
15        English.  
16        It is difficult to negotiate the direction and the price with the driver who  
17        can't speak English.  
18        Most of the volunteers who have been here can speak Kiswahili fluently.  
19        I'm really impressed with them.  
20        They say Kiswahili critical to live here.  
21        As far as I know one among four taxi driver can understand English.  
22  
23        Today we had to talk to Tanzanian at least three during the lesson.  
24        I talked to a man who was sitting at outside seat of the restaurant.  
25        He looked like rich and he could speak English well.  
26        Even though I talked in Kiswahili, he answered in English and asked about  
27        JICA's activities.  
28        Actually he was a person in high society.  
29        He said his sons were belong to an international school.  
30        They couldn't speak Kiswahili.  
31        In my opinion, it was different from when I talked with a native speaker.  
32        Because he didn't care my mistakes and looked patient.  
33        Sometimes native speakers give up to talk when they feel difficulty to have  
34        conversation with me but it depends on the personality..not general.  
35  
36        I'll write to you again if I meet interesting things.  
37  
38        If you have requests, please tell me.  
39  
40        Good night!  
41  
42        Chihiro  
43

44 *Hi Chihiro*  
45 *Thanks very much for your email.... no problem that it took a little while to*  
46 *write. You must be very busy and not always able to use the internet.*  
47 *Hearing about your early experiences there are very interesting, thanks. It is*  
48 *fine to send me emails, I will copy them into the google document, so I can*  
49 *keep them easily in one place. I made some advice for writing the journal on*  
50 *the google document. I have attached it as a word file here so you can have a*  
51 *look. Please check it when you have time.*  
52 *It's great to hear about the relationship between Kiswahili and English in*  
53 *Tanzania. If possible, I'd like to know more about examples of when you are*  
54 *using English there. For example, is there anything new or surprising about*  
55 *pronunciation and vocabulary when you use English there? Do you generally*  
56 *find it easy or difficult to use English with people there?*  
57 *Thanks again and good luck with settling in.*

58 *Nathan*

59

60 22.July.2012

61 These days I study Kiswahili hard.  
62 Becasue Here in Tanzania People rather speak in Kiswahili,not English.  
63 Despite students are obliged to speak in English in the class,teachers need to  
64 explain in kiswahili again when they can't understand well.  
65 Volunteers working as a teacher also said they use the local language even  
66 when they talk with colleagues from KOICA or PEASECO.  
67 It is very important skill to make good communication with local people.  
68 But now we learn Kiswahili in English at the language school from native  
69 teachers ,so in my opinion ,we need English skills for some extents.  
70 It helps us to understand the grammar and usage of words properly to ask in  
71 English.  
72 At least we'd better to be able to express the questions in English.  
73 I met some Tanzanian who can speak English well,but sometimes I feel  
74 difficulties to listen to their English.  
75 For example I heard agost,but it was August.These things are happened.  
76 It is still difficult using mobile phone for me even in English.

77 From tomorrow I'm going to the dispatched place myself and I needed to  
78 make appointment by mobile phone previously.  
79 Even The man who seemed to be responsible for me spoke in English, but I  
80 could catch only "just come!"  
81 I'm anxious very much.  
82 This language has many words originated from English like "katakana English" in  
83 Japanese.  
84 Dakutari is "doctor".Epo is "apple".Karoti is "carrot".  
85 Benki is "bank".  
86 Benki is same sound as 便器 (toilet) .It is confusing.  
87 Anyway I'm excited to head to the place where I'll stay for 2 years.  
88 Chihiro

### B3.7 Kozue E-journal

1 First I will write some changes I've noticed during the period:  
2  
3 1. I am less willing to speak in English:  
4  
5 - When I was at NTC, I consciously spoke English in daily conversation with other  
6 trainees, and I felt quite natural with them because I was not afraid of judgments.  
7  
8 NTC has a special environment. When I spoke English or wanted to express things in  
9 English in my hometown, Akita, I often had to take myself back, because the  
10 listeners are often non-English learners. And I was afraid to be judged that I was  
11 trying to be different from them or something. But at NTC, I often never felt that  
12 way until later in the training when I started to be corrected every time I made a  
13 mistake. Then, I started to feel overly self-conscious in my own speech, so I started  
14 to shut up.  
15  
16 After the training, I had 10 days back in my hometown to prepare for the  
17 departure. Of course, I had no other JICA trainees around, so I did not get to

18 speak even one word in English. But I expected that I would be speaking in English as  
19 soon as I was reunited with the other JICA trainees at the airport. Indeed, we kept  
20 speaking only in Japanese until we were individually dispatched in late July.

21

22 I think I kept speaking in Japanese, because towards the end of training at NTC I  
23 was trying to refrain from speaking too much in English. I avoided taking the  
24 opportunities away from the other trainees, because I was aware that I was more  
25 verbal than the others and quicker to respond in a conversation.

26

27 In the first 3 weeks of training in Kampala, I still kept shut up. I didn't feel like  
28 speaking in English unless it was my turn to speak. Before then, that required a lot  
29 of patience especially when someone was confusing or lacking clarification. Of  
30 course, I tried my best not to make the speaker embarrassed by correction. But I  
31 learned to speak only when they needed my help in English or it was my turn to  
32 speak, so I became very reserved.

33

34 2. I am speaking more slowly in simpler sentences.

35

36 In early July, I noticed that I often was asked to slow down. I never noticed this  
37 before. Although I thought I learned to speak a bit more slowly and put my thoughts  
38 in more simpler and clearer sentences at NTC, I started to speak even more slowly  
39 and in simpler and shorter sentences in Uganda.

40

41 I felt that many people in Uganda spoke very slow and sounded murmuring. On the  
42 first day of Kampala training (around June 28), we were introduced to the JICA  
43 staff in a meeting. I had a hard time understanding any word of the Ugandan staff.  
44 But I knew slowing down and choosing simpler words can help the communication, so  
45 I tried. Also, I noticed that I made more gestures than before.

46

47 I often wondered if I give too many words and am confusing the listeners. So I  
48 preferred limiting the number of words to avoid misunderstanding.

49

50 2. British, American, or Ugandan English?

51

52 When I hear unfamiliar expressions, I wonder if it is characteristically Ugandan or  
53 just American/British speech that I happen to be unfamiliar with.

54

55 For example, my co-worker said to me, "Are you leaving (the office) now? Can you  
56 see the cloud is organizing to rain?" I knew what she meant, but I wasn't sure if I've  
57 heard of such expressions before and if it was uniquely Ugandan.

58

59 Also, I often see a matatu (taxi) with a sign that says "God is able". I know what it  
60 means, but it sound unnatural to me.

61

62 In mid-August, I was in a meeting and the officers were repeatedly saying 'procure  
63 beehives.' I didn't know the word 'procure,' and wasn't sure if it was a common word  
64 even in British or American English.

65

66 Of course, I mostly know what the speakers mean but it usually stops me for a  
67 second. To clarify my understanding, I tend to rephrase or repeat the speaker.

68

69 Like one day in mid-August, I was waiting for an engineer at my house, but he did not  
70 show up for a long time. When I called him, he said, "I come 1 o'clock." To clarify, I  
71 asked him "You come in one hour?" Then he said, "Yes".

72

73 I also noticed that when someone introduces oneself to me, he/she often say, "I am  
74 called ..." instead of simply saying "I am ..." or "My name is ..." Also, when people  
75 greet to me, they abruptly start with "How are you?" without starting with "Hello"  
76 or "Good morning." I wonder if it has to do with direct translations of their first  
77 language, as in "Oraire ota?" literally means "How did you sleep?" but used as "Good  
78 morning."

79

80 Also, I often rephrase myself when I automatically use American vocabularies. For  
81 example, I wanted to discard something at a food court in Kampala, so I asked  
82 someone "Do you have a trash can?" But soon I realized that it was American  
83 English, so I rephrased, "I mean, a rubbish bin?"

84

85 I think I am speaking with different accent as well. I speak a lot slowly with the  
86 sound of "t" pronounced more clearly (e.g. "letter," "water") because I don't want to  
87 confuse the people.

88

89 Sometimes I get caught in the slight difference and lose the fluency of  
90 conversation, even when I completely understand what the speakers mean. When  
91 that happens, I start to stutter and sound very childish. Also, the speed of speaker  
92 greatly affects the speed of my speech as well. When the speaker is fluent and go  
93 fast in natural flow, I can carry the conversation a lot easier. However, when the  
94 speaker is very slow and makes many stops, I also speak in similar way. I have never  
95 understood why this happens or if it happens with other English speakers.

96

97

98 **Reactions to your key points:**

99

100 1) English is very important for living and working in my host country

101

102 Not really.

103

104 Most of the time, people speak in their local language and switch to English when I  
105 am engaged in the conversation. People in my host region do not seem to mind  
106 speaking in English. However, I heard that volunteers who live in Buganda region,  
107 they are more often encouraged to adopt the local language, so that the volunteers  
108 are more pressured to learn it. I don't think it will be necessary for me, but I will  
109 continue to learn some words because it would show that I am willing to adopt the  
110 culture here.

111

112 2) When people are speaking English to me here, I am able to understand  
113 them easily.

114

115 Not at all - but it seem to depends on the person's education level. I work with the  
116 district government officers who are highly educated in English, so I have easier

117 time communicating with them. But they tend to speak faster with Ugandan accent,  
118 which I'm not used to, so that I often get confused or trapped in different usage of  
119 words and lose track of conversation.

120

121 With local farmers, I have very difficult time in understanding their English  
122 especially on phone. I can't give any examples but even any simple communication is a  
123 trouble. I prefer writing to them, so when a farmer called me on the phone the  
124 other day (August 29<sup>th</sup>), I wanted to understand but I just couldn't, so I apologized  
125 and wrote a text message. But I am not sure if he has gotten the message.

126

127 3) I feel confident when I speak English here

128

129 Yes and no.

130

131 When I seem to know more vocabulary and expression than expected, they often  
132 complement ("You speak better than other Japanese people."). But sometimes I feel  
133 the limitation of my English ability, when I have a hard time explaining things in  
134 easier way, because often I need to talk with farmers who can speak English only a  
135 bit.

136

137 When I speak with the counterparts and other colleagues, they sound very fast with  
138 strong Ugandan accent. Sometimes I don't understand half of the conversation and  
139 wonder if it was entirely in English (but I'm sure it is).

140

141 Also, I noticed that some Ugandans who speak fluent English has taken a judgmental  
142 attitude against me, probably assuming that I wouldn't understand or speak English  
143 well because of the stereotype of Japanese speakers. As soon as I find such  
144 attitude, I tend to feel tense and lose fluency.

145

146 One incidence happened on July 5<sup>th</sup>, I visited a bank branch to retrieve my ATM  
147 card. After their very slow service, I finally got my card back and withdrew 100  
148 dollars in two 50-dollars bills. I didn't want to exchange the money to shillings at the  
149 bank, so I went to another one. The clerk said, "I'm sorry I can't take this bill



150 because it's ripped. Please go back to the bank and exchange it with an unbroken  
151 bill." So I returned, but unfortunately, the bank clerk did not believe that I got the  
152 bill from them so he sent me to the manager. The manager gave me a really mean  
153 look and kept speaking to me very slowly in elementary vocabularies. I started to  
154 feel awkward and uncomfortable. I tried to calm down my anger so I started to lose  
155 fluency, then she said, "Do you understand me?" in a really rude way. I did manage to  
156 negotiate by replying to her assertively, but that was a typical situation in which I  
157 can lose fluency because of the nervousness.

158

159 4) I think that using English in the UK or USA would be completely different from  
160 using it here:

161

162 Refer to the note above.

163

164 5) Knowing grammar rules as they are written in textbooks is important for  
165 communicating successfully here

166

167 I've been asked to correct English in another JICA volunteer's report. Her mistakes  
168 were common such as commas and wordings. But I honestly felt unsure if my  
169 corrections were due to the difference from American English. I really do not know  
170 the British English rules and vocabularies. I also corrected spacing and indenting,  
171 according to the best knowledge I have.

172

173 Later, she told me that a Ugandan JICA staff has re-corrected the mistakes  
174 according to the Ugandan rules. The volunteer said to me that Ugandans do not seem  
175 to use many commas to joint the sentences. In her opinion, American rule probably  
176 could be more universal than that of Ugandan, but because she submits it to a  
177 Ugandan institution, she wants to keep the Ugandan rule.

178

179 I totally agree with her. Then I wondered how different the writing rules are, so I  
180 referred to an official booklet written by Ministry of Ugandan government. Also in  
181 this official document, commas were often omitted, which seemed to make the  
182 sentences very long and confusing to me. But that probably means my use of too

183 many commas could be as confusing as the Ugandan writings is to me.

184

185 For example, in the booklet it says:

186

187 Farmers also expressed confidence and trust that they would be able to continue  
188 programme activities given the fact that the training had changed their mind set to  
189 become business oriented which is backed by the high demand of value added  
190 products within their locality and nationwide.

191

192 I am tempted to add commas and dash '-' in between the compound noun. This  
193 happens quite often in working with Ugandan officers on writing some documents.

194

195 So, perhaps knowing grammar rules is not too significant in speaking, but in written  
196 documents it is more confusing if I do not know the grammar rules. When it comes  
197 to speaking, I think it matters less but the accent can be another factor of  
198 confusion.

199

200 6) Thinking about all of my experiences learning and using English before coming  
201 here, they have been good preparation for using English here.

202

203 Q: How successful is your communication with the local people in English? Do you  
204 think that you understand each other clearly or not? Is it easy or difficult to use  
205 English with them? Comfortable or uncomfortable?

206

207 Learning English previously definitely helped me to communicate with the local  
208 people here in Uganda. I think I can present myself confidently enough in terms of  
209 speaking and writing in work environment. I can also quickly correct myself if there  
210 is any mistakes or misleading expressions. So I think the people here understand me  
211 clearly enough. However, I do not necessarily understand them clearly, which has  
212 been frustrating.

213

214 I think what worries me the most is that I am losing fluency. I expected that  
215 I would speak more naturally once I started to get used to the environment

216 here, but it is in fact opposite. I wanted to work in English speaking country,  
217 so I can gain back the ability of speaking English, but I am becoming worried  
218 that maybe it would confuse me more. I may end up sounding very mixed with  
219 Japanese, American, and Ugandan English and I will be unintelligible!