

**Cultural beliefs and language teaching: The case of university English teachers in
Japan**

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Abstract

Culture is an evolving concept and a vast body of work exists that demonstrates its changing nature. The same can be said of the cultural dimension of language teaching yet despite a consensus emerging on its importance there is little work that indicates what actual practicing teachers believe and are doing regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching. This is particularly the case with the Japanese university context; an educational environment where the role of language teacher and research merge.

The primary foci of this research project were to uncover the concepts of culture held by teachers, the degree to which essentialism may or may not be present in such concepts, and if these are manifest in their teaching. To aid consideration of teachers' views on culture, two scales were hypothesized: Essentialism in the Concept of Culture (ECC) and Intercultural Inclination (ICI). A mixed method approach was followed that employed surveys, interviews and class observations. Previous work on the subject typically only used either a quantitative or qualitative approach.

The results offer insight into teachers views on culture and identifies certain issues that may impact how teachers understand and incorporate culture in their classrooms. One major theme throughout these results is the need for a more sophisticated and systematic approach to teacher training regarding culture as a concept. This is especially important given that the results also suggest that teachers with high ICI can also have high ECC. In addition to the findings, the scales developed may be of future use to teacher trainers for the analysis of needs and/or the impact of training.

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Abbreviations

ALT	Assistant language teacher
BA	Bachelor of arts
BANA	Britain, Australia, North America
BOS	Bristol online surveys
CEFR	Common European framework of reference
CELTA	Certificate in English language teaching
DMIS	Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity
ECC	Essentialism in the concept of culture
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
GELF	Global Englishes as lingua franca
IATEFL	International association of teaching English as a foreign language
ICI	Intercultural inclination
JACET	Japan association of college English teachers
JALT	Japan association of language teachers
JET	Japan English teaching
MEXT	Ministry of
L1	First language / Mother tongue
L2	Second language
MA	Master of arts
NNS	Non-native speaker
NS	Native speaker
TESEP	Tertiary, secondary, and primary school English
TESOL	Teaching English to speakers of other languages

Conventions

- Foreign words used will appear in italics in the first instance only.
- Japanese words will always appear in Roman alphabet form, though this may sometimes be accompanied by the original Japanese character(s).

Introduction

Long before I was asked to teach culture, before I began language teaching of any sort and certainly long before I entered into the academic discussion on culture, the nature of culture was something I had already considered. As a youth I felt I grew up in two distinct worlds which I noticed as different even though they existed in the same space. My parents came from different social / class backgrounds and as a child I played football in the ginnels (alleys) of the local estate where one half of my family lived and the next day I played in the elaborate tree house built in the walled grounds of a home belonging to a friend of the other half of my family. Switching from being the “dominos lad” in the smoky local pub to putting on my best clothes and rushing to piano practice where I was required to speak “properly” are experiences that could potentially influence my view of culture.

I felt this possible influence several years later when I spent a year on an exchange programme at a university in the United States. When I was there I disliked the assumption by many in my host institution that what I did was representative in some way of British culture. I did not (and I still do not) know what British culture *is*. The different backgrounds of my parents are both British yet different and often at odds. When people talked to me of Britain, it was clear that their image of Britain was as foreign to me as the land in which I was then living. Other than holding the same passport, I felt I had little in common with the few other British students who came, but I did get on with certain locals and people from different countries that were part of the international student body. I felt no discomfort or stress from interacting with people from different countries or backgrounds. This is perhaps not surprising since I had made a conscious decision to travel to experience life in another country, but what is of note is that I was 20 years old, the same age as most of my students now, and I had had no training, orientation or warning of what I was getting into. Despite this, I view this experience as extremely positive, successful and productive and hold it as one of the defining ones of my life.

In addition to my upbringing, my academic background also has the potential to influence my view of culture and should be disclosed. Before moving to the fields of Applied Linguistics / TESOL, I studied history. Part of the required reading was the work of E. H. Carr and his thoughts on the nature of history. Carr (1961) argued that all history was interpretation and that facts were meaningless unless given meaning as part of a narrative. This narrative, Carr suggested, is inevitably subjective as the historian makes the decision,

as reasoned as it may be, which facts are of importance and which are not.

Later, when I was writing my history thesis I came into contact with work on the subject of Japanese culture. Part of that thesis project involved examining different case studies of terrorism to argue that terrorism, perhaps like culture, is a word that is difficult to define and, like history, is subjective and ideologically based. My major case study was that of Aum Shinrikyo, the group responsible for the 1995 sarin gas attack on the Tokyo underground. When examining Aum, I discovered *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1) and became familiar with the work of Doi (1986) and others who contribute to that discussion of national self-caricaturization, as well as its critics (Befu, 2001; Dale, 1986; Van Wolferen, 1989) who show the extent to which it is believed among the population and its fallacious assumptions.

It is with these experiences that I approach the concept of culture in language teaching. I do not wish my experiences to prejudice my interpretations of the data, but neither can I ignore them. I believe that the first step into minimizing any such bias is to acknowledge that such experience and potential exists and make clear my position before proceeding into the final stage of the research.

This study into the beliefs and teaching practice relating to culture as part of language teaching is the result of an academic curiosity which, itself, was born of a professional dilemma. As an English teacher teaching at university in Japan, I have, in the past, been told by students that they like to learn about culture in class, colleagues tell me that culture is stimulating content for class and, on occasion, I have been asked to design and teach a culture class. When I hear such things, I am unsure whether or not people are talking about the same thing, and, if they are, if my idea of culture and the part culture plays in language classes is the same as other teachers. My uncertainty over what is actually meant as *culture* in the profession led me to seek a better understanding of the concept and discover how my fellow teachers at universities in Japan consider it and make it part of their teaching.

There is a large body of work on culture in language teaching, particularly, and most recently, on intercultural language teaching. However, work on how teachers understand culture and its part in language teaching, particularly within the context of Japan, is less prevalent. Getting a deeper and clearer picture of how teachers in Japan conceptualize culture and view its relationship with language teaching is the target of my research and

the focus of this research. Part of this project involves not only the investigation of teacher beliefs concerning culture, but also how fixed their view of culture may be, how likely they are to view culture as an integral part of their profession and how it is manifest in their teaching.

To provide answers to these questions, the investigation presented in this document will proceed through certain stages. Firstly, in Chapter 1, I will review the relevant literature surrounding the concept of culture and its relation to language and language teaching. Included in this will be an examination of existing literature on teachers' beliefs concerning culture. Chapter 2 will consider some contextual issues which have the potential to influence teachers' beliefs and the way they may approach and incorporate the cultural dimension of language teaching. Included in this are teacher education programmes, the discussion of Japanese identity, and the notion of native-speakerism.

Chapters 3 will explicitly articulate research questions and methodology, while chapters 4 and 5 will present the quantitative and qualitative results of my mixed method study respectively. Chapter 6 provides a discussion of the findings regarding the beliefs teachers' concepts of culture and their approaches to it as part of language teaching. The final chapter, Chapter 7, offers the conclusion, limitations of the research, implications for pedagogy, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

This research is concerned with teachers' beliefs about culture. In a general sense, beliefs "refer to the attitude we have, roughly, whenever we take something to be the case or regard it as true" (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2015). An investigation of beliefs, therefore, looks at whether belief exists as well as the degree and form the belief takes.

In addition to teachers' beliefs regarding culture (Section 1.5), this chapter will examine the literature concerning the connections between culture and communication (Section 1.3) and the different approaches towards the cultural dimension of language teaching (Section 1.4). As beliefs regarding *culture* are the subject of investigation, it is first necessary to consider the meaning and understanding of the word culture (Section 1.1) and the degree to which it may be understood as accurately representing reality (Section 1.2). As well as providing a greater understanding of the concept which lies at the very heart of this study, examination of the literature will also provide a terminology and framework in which to better understand and discuss teachers' views of culture with regards to language teaching.

1.1 Culture

1.1.1 A nebulous term

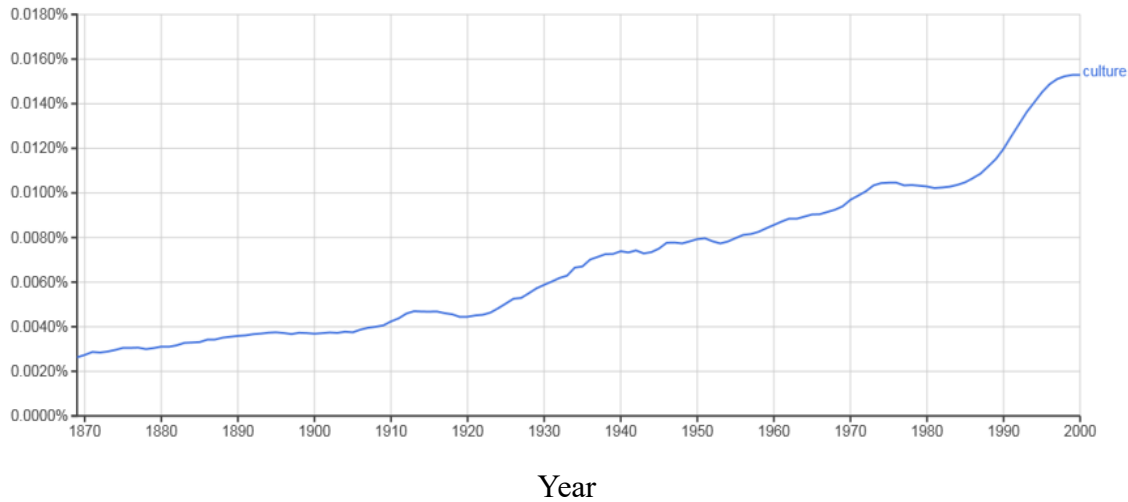
American academics are waging culture wars (not many dead). Politicians urge cultural revolution. Apparently a seismic cultural change is needed to resolve the problems of poverty, drug abuse, crime, illegitimacy, and industrial competitiveness. There is talk of cultural differences between the sexes and the generations, between football teams, or between advertising agencies. When a merger between two companies fails, it is explained that their cultures were not compatible. The beauty of it is that everyone understands (Kuper, 1999, p.1).

As is implied in the quote above, the Keywords Project at the University of Pittsburgh defined a keyword as “a socially prominent word (e.g. art, industry, media or society) that is capable of bearing interlocking, yet sometimes contradictory and commonly contested contemporary meanings” and adds that “failing to grasp the complexity of the word can lead to cross purposes and confusion in public debate as well as in personal conversation” (University of Pittsburgh, 2014). Culture was identified by sociologist and pioneer of the keywords project Raymond Williams as a polysemous word that was “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language” (Williams, 1983, p. 87). Williams was not alone in this as academics from multiple disciplines have commented on the vastness of “culture” and described it as, among other things, “a hyper-referential word” (Kuper, 1999), “a living metaphor” (Risager, 2006, p. 35) “an elusive concept” (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p. 18), a “fuzzy set of basic assumptions” (Spencer-Oatley, 2008, p. 3), “the broadest concept in the social sciences” (Wallerstein, 1990, p. 32), and a word that “often brings up more problems than it solves” (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 138).

Culture is not only a word used in academic work and debate; it is also a word that is used freely in everyday life and conversation, and often with very different meanings. Examples of this difference of meaning can be bartenders talking about “cocktail culture” (Rowan, 2014) or the British Culture Secretary’s policy aimed at providing “culture for all” (BBC, 2014, June 6). Perhaps it is no coincidence that dictionary company Merriam-Webster made it their word of 2014 due to *culture* seeing the biggest spike in the number of people searching for its meaning (Rothman, 2014).

This suggested increase in frequency with which the word “culture” is used is supported by the frequency with which the term appears in print. If we search for the use of “culture” among the Google corpus (Figure 1), we can see that its frequency of use (vertical y-axis) has steadily increased over time (horizontal x-axis) since the time of *Culture and Anarchy* (Arnold, 1869), a publication which began much of the early debate on culture (Storey, 2001). However, the great increase in usage does not begin until the 1930s and the second half of the twentieth century. As shall be shown below, this is a time when culture very much becomes a matter of concern for academics and lay commentators.

Figure 1. The frequency of “culture” as a percentage of words used in books in the Google book repository



Source: Google books Ngram Viewer. <https://books.google.com/ngrams>

1.1.2 Culture connects and divides

Though *culture* may be a word that has seen increased use in recent times, the etymology of *culture* shows that it is a derivative of the Latin word, *colere*, meaning “to till”, “to tend”, or “to cultivate”. This original meaning of tending to and developing the land to a higher quality was also applied figuratively to humans as can be seen in the oration of Roman Consul Cicero two thousand years ago when he refers to *cultra animi* (the cultivation of the soul).

This original usage of the term is consistent with that of Matthew Arnold writing two millennia later. His work *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) has been credited with sparking the debate and resurgence of the concept of culture. Arnold saw culture as a desired state of being. For him, culture represented a level of sophistication and enlightenment that people should aspire to. This view of culture as something which is attained and can be held at a higher level can be described as a hierarchical view of culture (Bauman, 1973) and focuses on mostly what some call “culture with a big C”, also known as high culture or objective culture (Bennett, 1998; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). Examples would include the arts, literature, knowledge of history, the classics and other components which may be termed highbrow.

Although the notion of culture as an enlightened state still exists and would seem

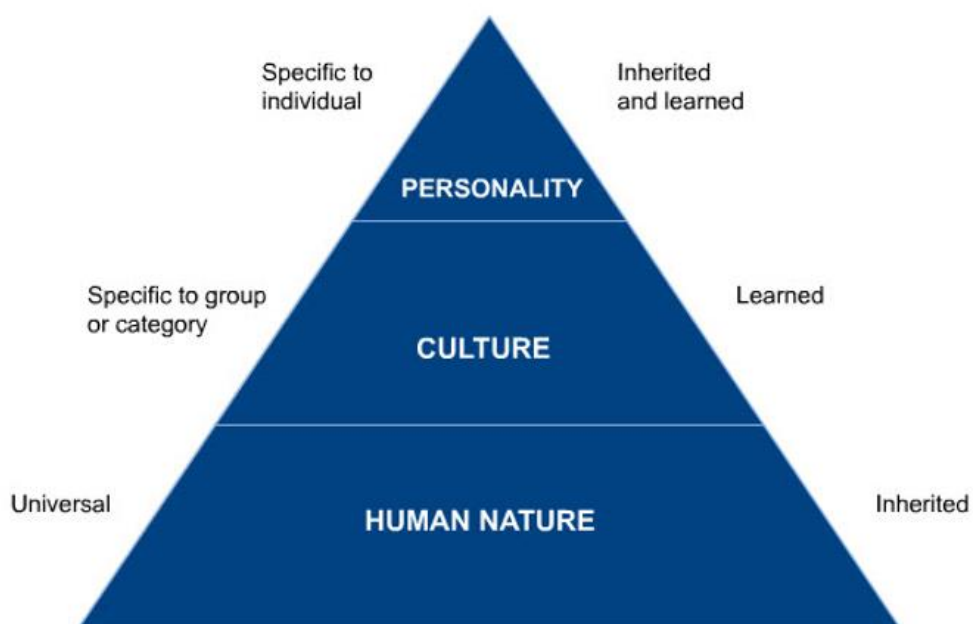
implicit in the goal of “culture for all” expressed above by the British Culture Secretary (BBC, 2014, June 6) the concept became fused with others to create a much broader idea. This is clear in the influential understanding of culture offered by anthropologist Edward Tylor:

Culture or civilization, taken in its broad ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tylor, 1903, p.1)

Tylor, partly writing in response to Arnold, gives an extremely broad definition of culture. The hierarchical element is still present, but since culture is given as a synonym of civilization, culture is now something which all people possess by virtue of being a member of society. As such, culture became something which separates people into groups, but, at the same time, unifies them as a phenomenon that touches all.

This notion of culture as a force that separates groups has been termed the “differential” dimension of culture and the unifying aspect of culture as the “generic” dimension of culture (Bauman, 1973). These observations are supported by others such as Murdock (1945), and perhaps best illustrated in Hofstede’s (2010) culture pyramid (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Hofstede’s pyramid (Hofstede, 2010, p.6)



The pyramid shows both the generic and differential aspects of culture. The pyramid represents the aspects that make up a human being. The largest part is human nature: the genetic and biological aspects that all humans possess. The second tier is culture: possessed by all but differing in characteristics that are specific to a particular group. The top tier represents the aspects of the individual such as personal history, experiences and injuries. Here culture is shown as a term that encapsulates traits that are neither idiosyncratic nor universal (Wallerstein, 1990).

Whereas anthropologists today reject the hierarchical idea of culture (i.e., culture is something quantifiable that groups or people can have more or less of than other groups), the differential and generic understandings of culture are subscribed to by most contributors to the field (Monaghan & Just, 2000; Hall, 1959). Indeed, they are implied in almost every usage of culture from bar culture, to American culture, to work culture and so on. Culture is almost universally understood as a divisive phenomenon, yet one which covers all humanity.

1.1.3 What is different?

If culture is a human condition encountered by all yet one which separates us, the next logical question would be to ask, “Along what lines are we separated?” As culture has been described as “the invention and key concept of anthropology” (Azoulay, 1997), it is from the field of anthropology that early definitions of culture arise to answer this question.

In 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn conducted a review of hundreds of definitions and statements of culture (Kluckhohn, 1962). They found that the variability was not as wide as expected and largely centred on which elements were stressed and how explicitly comprehensive a definition was. Having viewed these definitions, they offered their own:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products

of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.
(Kluckhohn, 1962, p.181)

This vast definition of culture covers great swathes of human existence and is very much in keeping with earlier anthropological definitions, such as that of Tylor (1903) above. However, rather than treat culture as a “complex whole”, other scholars try to pinpoint and describe in more detail the different areas or dimensions to which culture may relate. One such way can be seen in the work of Sarangi (2009) who puts forward mentalist, behavioural and semiotic dimensions of culture, all of which are present in Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s definition above.

The mentalist dimension of culture contains an “attempt to explain observable activities of human actors in terms of unobservable cultural dispositions” (Sarangi, 2009, p.85). Here, culture is largely static and abstract. In Kroeber & Kluckhohn’s definition the mentalist dimension can be seen in the inclusion of “ideas and their attached values” and in Tylor’s notion through the inclusion of “knowledge, belief, art, morals, law”.

By contrast, the behavioural dimension of culture, which sees culture as learned behaviour, would be easily observable. Here “culture is the preference for those patterns of communicative behaviour which are valued within a social group, however defined” (Sarangi, 2009, p.86). This can be seen in the “habits” and “behaviour” that are seen as acquired by Tylor and mentioned by Tylor, and Kroeber and Kluckhohn respectively. The behavioural aspect of culture is more prominent in the definition offered by Kroeber and Kluckhohn than that of Tylor, something which may be expected because the definition came following the work of Franz Boas (1940) and the rise of behaviourism.

Perhaps the dimension where both definitions seem lacking is the semiotic dimension. In the semiotic view of culture, culture is best understood as a system of symbolic meanings and connections. The context in which interaction, production and perception takes place is vital and “suggests that meaning and coherence are not inherent in cultural phenomena, but a question of subjectivity” (Sarangi, 2009, p.87). While symbols are mentioned as a means of transmitting culture in Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s definition, the semiotic dimension of culture is largely absent from both definitions.

Sarangi is not alone in attempting to separate the mass that is often understood as “culture”. Bauman (1973) and Risager (2006) also offer different dimensions in which

the concept can be broken down and understood and which show the different ways in which the term can be employed. These classifications are shown in Figure 3 and provide a terminology which will be used later to locate and discuss teachers' concepts of culture in such a broad landscape.

Figure 3. Dimensions of culture

Risager (2006)	Bauman (1973)	Sarangi (2009)
<p>Individual</p> <p>Perhaps the oldest way of thinking about culture. Appears to be similar to that of Matthew Arnold (1869) who said culture was a desired end. Here culture is mental cultivation. It is the knowledge and sophistication that create the 'man of culture'.</p>	<p>Hierarchical</p> <p>Culture is something that is possessed by people and societies to different degrees. A person or society can attain more culture. Attaining more culture is largely seen as desirable.</p>	<p>Mentalist</p> <p>Culture is in the head, largely static and abstract. Seen in Tylor's view of culture as morals, law, customs, etc.</p>
<p>Collective</p> <p>Similar to the individual idea of culture above, but applied to communities. Here culture is synonymous with civilization.</p>	<p>Differential</p> <p>Culture is something which separates groups of people.</p>	<p>Behaviourist</p> <p>Culture is learned behaviour. The behaviourist view recognizes human agency and choice. Behaviour is seen as social action and "culture is the preference for those patterns of communicative behaviour which are valued within a social group, however defined" (Sarangi, 2009, p.86)</p>
<p>Aesthetic</p> <p>The most common understanding of culture according to Risager (2006). Culture is understood in terms of artistic products, and artefacts that are seen as representative of a group. This view has been expanded as a</p>	<p>Generic</p> <p>Culture is a peculiarity of humanity. Culture is the use of tools and language by people in living and shaping the world around them. Culture is what connects all humans and, at the same time, separates them from all</p>	<p>Semiotic</p> <p>Culture is best understood as a system of symbolic meanings. The context in which interaction, production and perception takes place is vital and "suggests that meaning and coherence are not inherent</p>

result of the cultural studies movement to include sub-cultures such as youth culture and rock music.	other forms of life.	in cultural phenomena, but a question of subjectivity” (Sarangi, 2009, p.87).
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The dimensions of culture offered above show that the ‘complex whole’ of culture is understood to be too large to be useful and that academics from different disciplines offer ways to reduce it. The different dimensions presented not only show the vast scope of the concept, but also that it is possible to compartmentalize it in different ways that may be influenced by the background and foci of the scholar.

1.1.4 Developments

In some twenty-seven pages of his chapter on the concept, Kluckhohn managed to define culture in turn as: (1) “the total way of life of a people”; (2) “the social legacy the individual acquires from his group”; (3) “a way of thinking, feeling, and believing”; (4) “an abstraction from behavior”; (5) a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave; (6) a “storehouse of pooled learning”; (7) “a set of standardized orientations to re-current problems”; (8) “earned behavior”; (9) a mechanism for the normative regulation of behavior; (10) “a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men”; (11) “a precipitate of history”; and turning, perhaps in desperation, to similes, as a map, as a sieve, and as a matrix (Geertz, 1973, p.4).

Unsatisfied with traditional anthropological understandings of culture, Geertz, like others (Hall, 1997; Kuper, 1999), argued that the vast landscape of humanity covered by the term “culture” was not helpful and that it is necessary to choose your meaning. A linguistic anthropologist, Geertz (1973) argued for an exclusively semiotic understanding:

Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz, 1973, p.5).

This view is interesting for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the quote, in contrast to others, is extremely brief. When looking at the development of the concept of culture, we are faced with definitions that seem to demonstrate a need by the writer to capture the phenomenon in a precise manner. This may be due to the view among the early anthropologists that culture is an area of massive scientific promise (Kuper, 1999). Whatever the reason, what is true is that culture, taken as a whole, is a vast and nebulous concept, which results in very long and broad definitions as seen above.

However, the latter half of the twentieth century sees a reduction in the need and attempt of many to sound scientific when discussing culture. This may be a result of anthropology and other branches of the social sciences feeling less threatened as the new discipline on the block, but it may be due to a dissatisfaction with previous understandings of culture and some of the elements implied within it. When viewed in less scientific terms, the human aspect of culture became more pronounced and culture began to be seen as something which changed, evolved, was imbalanced, could be threatened, could be imposed and could exist among groups of any size.

Culture as action

Traditional views of culture given by Tylor, and Kroeber and Kluckhohn above present what Atkinson (1999) terms a ‘received view’ of culture; a person receives their culture as an inevitable consequence of living within society. However, with the work of Geertz, we see that the individual is involved in the construction of culture. Geertz was not alone in this belief and several scholars began to see culture less as an outcome and more as a process.

Indeed, for some, culture was the process. Street (1993), for example, suggests that ‘culture’ is best understood as a verb which people “do” rather than as a noun representing some force that determines their behaviour and thoughts. Bourdieu thought of culture in a similar way. According to him, as people engage in the practice of everyday life, they develop certain dispositions to act and view others in certain ways. This ‘cultural capital’ is both the start and end of the culture process.

Culture as an ongoing process between people is implicit too in the work of Holliday (1999, 2011, 2013). In Holliday’s concept of small cultures the core of culture is the process of negotiation and sharing of meaning between people. This process, Holliday

suggests, can start with only a couple of people and should be understood as the place from where all cultural change comes.

The idea of small cultures is similar to the idea of communities of practice put forward by Wenger (1998). Wenger suggested that we belong to many communities of practice such as work and family. These groups “develop their own practices, routines, rituals, artifacts, symbols, conventions, stories, and histories” (Wenger, 1998, p.6). Though Wenger was reluctant to call these communities of practice “culture” because he viewed them as more to be much more personal than culture, the notion is conceptually similar to Holliday’s idea of small cultures. These ideas show culture from the bottom up and are supported by others (Atkinson & Sohn, 2013).

Agency

The view that people are active creators of culture rather than mere recipients of it raises another question which has been of great interest among more recent contributors to the culture debate. This is the question of agency; an idea clearly in conflict with earlier received views of culture.

Several writers reject this received view (Bhabha, 1994; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Wenger, 1998) and suggest that rather than being forced upon us by the simple fact of living in a society, we exercise choice in what we wish to adopt. These cultural direction choices are presented to us through contact with other cultural groups and often in the context of an imbalance of power between the two groups (Bhabha, 1994). Although this agency is often seen as inevitably resulting in cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994), not all agree. Kumaravadivelu (2008), for example, suggests that agency is not only about selecting the elements one wishes to incorporate into the culture of a group, but it is also about having the ability to choose none and resist. To illustrate this, Kumaravadivelu (2008) points to differences between Arab countries and India in their respective resistance to and adoption of certain British cultural aspects.

Membership is imbalanced

Connected to the above point of imbalance of power between cultural groups is the notion of such an imbalance within groups themselves. If people are active in the process of culture (Street, 1993; Holliday, 1999) and are members of different cultural groups,

however defined, it would suggest that they are not equally active and influential in all. This is seen as happening at different levels within the concept of culture. Canagarajah (2013), for example, suggests that different groups within a larger culture, such as a nation, compete for a voice and influence, and typically occupy positions in the centre or periphery of change. In a smaller concept of culture such as that of Holliday (1994), the interactions between individuals that is the start of culture is imbalanced as certain individuals will inevitably exert more power and influence than others. This notion of a power differential in members of a group is also seen in Wenger's idea of communities of practice and the notion of discourse communities suggested by Swales (1990).

National groups are imagined

If I have chosen the national as my prototype of the particular, it is because in our modern world-system, nationalism is the quintessential (albeit not only) particularism, the one with the widest appeal, the longest staying – power, the most political clout, and the heaviest armaments in its support (Wallerstein, 1990, p.92).

Subscribing to a view that culture is emergent from interactions with smaller groups would suggest that the fixation on large ethnic or national groupings so often presented, as in the quote above, and assumed in early definitions of culture is unwarranted. Holliday's (2011; 2013) assertion that national units and institutions are influencers rather than determiners of culture would seem to hold water when we consider that nations are huge entities made up of millions of people living life at different ends of multiple spectrums from age, economic status, sex, location, educational background and so on. If we understand culture in mentalist, behavioural and/or semiotic terms, assuming homogeneity across the mass of humanity represented by these national / ethnic labels requires us to either ignore these differences or maintain great confidence in the ability of political borders to accurately mimic cultural borders.

As seen throughout the early sections of this thesis, most scholars would suggest that we should not do so and place little stock in the ability of national borders to match cultural ones. This is especially the case if we consider culture to be fluid (Dervin, 2010), from the bottom up rather than top-down (Holliday, 1996), a phenomenon that intersects national and regional boundaries (Hannerz, 1996), or that we move from culture to culture as a part of everyday life (Kumaravadivelu, 2008), or see culture exclusively as an active

process we are engaged in (Street, 1993). National labels are increasingly being separated from cultural ones, a process that can only increase as the world becomes more global and connected (Jackson, 2014).

No more material culture

As we have seen, the discussion on culture has moved on to the dynamics of culture and questions about how culture is manifest in our consciousness, and behaviour as well as questions about how culture develops, changes and interacts or overlaps with other concepts and categorizations. When examining such debate and changes, the products of culture such as laws, art and other artefacts now are almost completely absent. These products of culture were an important part of early anthropological understandings, but as understandings of culture become less static, more fluid and less focused on nations, material objects are viewed with less importance in the work of recent scholars (Risager, 2006).

However, the reduced importance of material culture is not replicated in wider circles. As Risager (2006) points out, the understanding of culture in terms of artistic products, and artefacts that are seen as representative of a group is a common, perhaps the most common, understanding of culture.

Ideology

Ultimately, it has been suggested that ideology – ideas which promote the agenda and interests of a certain group (Holliday, 2011) – drives all notions of culture (Canagarajah, 1999; Hall, 1997; Holliday, 2013; Storey, 2001; Wallerstein, 1990; Williams, 1983). As culture is a social distinction that draws lines of separation across the mass of humanity, where we draw the lines and how we create the cultural ‘Other’ is arbitrary and based, to some degree, on belief.

This has great consequences for the discussion of culture. If our concept of culture is dependent on our ideology, it makes the scientific quest undertaken by early anthropologists, among others, for a definition of culture an impossible task and one that makes any identification of a particular cultural group open to question. Spencer-Oatey (2008, p.3) may indeed be correct in suggesting that the best we can hope for is that culture is “a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural conventions, and basic

assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and each member's interpretation of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour." If culture is a grey concept, driven by ideology which subjectively ties groups together in some way, then we must consider the groups themselves to be more imagined than real and this leads us to consider the concept of essentialism. Essentialism will be examined in detail in Section 1.2 below. Before examining essentialism, and having looked at attempts to define and develop the idea of culture, it is necessary to examine attempts to define and identify the cultural groups themselves.

1.1.5 Describing Cultures

With culture being understood in different ways and at different degrees of certainty (see Section 1.1.1), one may be forgiven for thinking that isolating and identifying cultural characteristics is an impossible task that few would wish to engage in. However, the contrary is most certainly the case as numerous scholars have developed and presented their own cultural scales.

First and foremost is the work of Gert Hofstede who has been described as "the most famous cross-cultural researcher in history" (Meyer, 2014) whose differentialist cultural dimensions have received a huge amount of attention within the content of university courses (Hua, Hanford & Young, 2017) and are the most cited by scholars and other commentators looking at cultural differences and cultural relations around the world (Jackson, 2014). Hofstede (2010) saw culture as mental programming and, therefore, had a primarily cognitive view of culture. Hofstede's research was initially based on survey responses from IBM employees of several countries, but then later replicated by wider studies and the work of others (Hofstede, 2010).

Hofstede suggested that several cultural dimensions emerged from the data. These areas of belief that indicated clear difference between cultures and are briefly outlined in Figure 4 below. Figure 4 presents only a limited summary of the dimensions. Hofstede outlines each dimension in great detail in his work; the Long-Term vs Short-Term Orientation dimension, for example contains at least thirteen key points of differences.

Figure 4. Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 2010)

Power Distance	The degree to which people expect and accept that power is divided unequally
Individualism vs Collectivism	Preference for a loosely-knit social framework where a person is expected to take care of themselves and their close family or preference for a tightly-knit social framework where members of an extended family or other group look after each other in return for loyalty.
Masculinity vs Femininity	The degree to which a society values such as achievement, heroism, assertiveness, material success -deemed masculine by Hofstede – versus preference for feminine values such as equality, empathy and a more consensus based approach. The difference in gender roles is more prominent in masculine societies than feminine societies.
Uncertainty Avoidance	The degree to which members of the society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.
Long Term Orientation vs Short Term Orientation	Preference for long-term results and planning over quick results and short-term planning.
Indulgence vs Restraint	The degree to which a society allows relatively free gratification of basic human drives.

Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) offer an alternative set of cultural dimensions. Like Hofstede, their work is concerned with labelling differences encountered in a business environment. According to Trompenaars & Hampden (1998, p.8), “Every culture distinguishes itself from others by the specific solutions it chooses to certain problems which reveal themselves as dilemmas.” These dilemmas were seen as a result of people being located at different ends of certain cultural binaries or dimensions. The dimensions offered by Trompenhaar and Hampden contain some similarities with those offered by Hofstede, particularly the ‘Individualism vs Communitarianism’ dimension.

One possible reason for this is a clear focus on differences that arise from activity in a business context.

Despite focusing on a business context, the dimensions offered above find support in the work of others. Hall (1959), for example, offered the cultural binary of polychronic vs monochronic time, a dimension that maps almost seamlessly with sequential vs synchronous time offered by Trompenaars & Hampden (1998). Additionally, Triandis (2001) offers several dimensions that match those above (individualism vs collectivism, universalism vs particularism, ascription vs achievement etc). To this list Triandis offers additional dimensions such as active vs passive, instrumental vs expressive, vertical vs horizontal cultures and contact vs no-contact.

The dimensions offered by these authors have received an enthusiastic audience and have gone on to be replicated multiple times and serve as the foundation of several websites that seek to explain cultural differences. In my own experience over the last few years, I have attended several conferences featuring presentations where the work of Hofstede is presented as a vital tool for understanding students and teachers from different cultures. The work of Hofstede also featured as the sole frame of reference for a day-long work shop I attended in Tokyo titled, "Working Effectively with Japanese". The intercultural expert who led the workshop presented the dimensions of Hofstede and identified where Japan and selected other countries were positioned along the dimension. These dimensions were presented as fact and as the explanation for any perceived differences between foreign workers and their Japanese colleagues.

Although I have shown two groups of dimensions offered by experts in the field, as well as briefly touched on the supporting work of others, I have not yet offered any challenge to these authors. This is because the major criticisms of these cultural difference frameworks are applicable to all. The most salient issues to arise are connected to the idea of the "cultural group". Although there is the acknowledgement that a nation contains many cultures (Hofstede, 2010), the cultural group is invariably the whole nation state. This does not allow for any recognition or understanding of different and smaller groups within the national entity, as suggested by Holliday (1999), nor does it acknowledge any dynamic between them such as issues of oppression or imbalances of power.

Members of the national culture group are presented in homogeneous terms through the use of a final score or rating that pigeonholes that country. However, if we look at the

statistics in the work of Hofstede (2010) we can see that participant responses typically form a bell curve with only the central point representing the nation's position on the dimension. This means that, in terms of national populations, millions of people can be considered to be cultural deviants as they occupy a position far away from the national norm. Additionally, when we map the scores of two nations over each other, for example the individualistic Americans and the collectivistic Japanese, we can see that many Americans are more collectivistic than most Japanese and many Japanese are more individualistic than most Americans. The diversity, and the actual beliefs and behaviours within a huge number of people are ignored as only the middle ground is presented. As McSweeney (2002) says, Hofstede is claiming that "the national is identifiable in the micro-local".

Part of the reason for this stems from another criticism of Hofstede's work, namely that he only presents an etic or culture-general view (Gannon, 2001). Hofstede's dimensions are those of the observer viewing different groups and do not provide an emic dimension which offers a deeper level of understanding. This, it has been suggested, could be because the dimensions discovered by Hofstede may be as much a result of his own cultural preferences as much as differences that exist in reality (Jackson, 2014). It could be possible that had someone from a different background conducted the study, the differences identified as salient and significant may have been markedly different. An example of this can be seen in the work of Gerhart and Fang (2005) who reanalysed Hofstede's own data. Hofstede set out to find differences among national cultures, yet Gerhart and Fang (2005, p.982) suggest that the "data shows that organizational differences account for more variance in cultural values than do country differences." This view of the national cultural grouping being given dominance over 'organizational' and 'occupational' cultures (the other groupings analysed by Hofstede) is also seen by McSweeney (2002) as a result of assumptions made by Hofstede prior to analysis.

Despite presenting culture in homogeneous national terms, presenting people as receivers of their nation's cultural characteristics, identifying dimensions that have multiple possible outcomes, the work of Hofstede continues to be deeply popular, particularly in the business and globalization training fields. It is quite possible that the simplified and fixed nature of culture in the work of Hofstede and others is the very reason for its popularity. Rather than present culture in contested terms as a grey issue, these dimensions make issues of interaction in a global world a matter of one person having a higher score on one dimension than the other by means of their nationality. Difference is

explained away with no further need for analysis or understanding and presents a black and white version of culture to those who are seeking just that.

1.1.6 Cultural conclusion

The popularity of the notion of culture is undeniable as it is used in explanations of cause and consequence across many areas of human life and society. This can be said to be its greatest strength and its greatest weakness. Having examined the literature on culture, I found perhaps the most concise and astute observation that relates to this dilemma in an economics textbook from over 120 years ago. Writing over a decade before Tylor produced his famous quote on culture which began the early to mid-twentieth century preoccupation to produce scientific sounding definitions, dimensions or differences of culture, economist Arnold Marshall (1890) wrote:

Our task is difficult. In physical sciences indeed, whenever it is seen that a group of things have a certain set of qualities in common, and will often be spoken of together, they are formed into a class with a special name; and as soon as a new notion emerges, a new technical term is invented to represent it. But economics cannot venture to follow this example. Its reasonings must be expressed in language that is intelligible to the general public; it must therefore endeavour to conform itself to the familiar terms of everyday life, and so far as possible must use them as they are commonly used.

In common use almost every word has many shades of meaning, and therefore needs to be interpreted by the context.....The bold and rigid definitions, with which their [economists'] expositions of the science begin, lull the reader into a false security. Not being warned that he must often look to the context for a special interpretation clause, he ascribes to what he reads a meaning different from that which the writers had in their own minds (Marshall, 1890, p.35).

As Marshall highlights, the sheer breadth of use of a term has great potential for misunderstanding, yet the scientific way in which it is often presented can cause readers to place too much stock in its worth or accept the notion without consideration of the scope of the term and the context in which it is used. Culture is no exception and the observations of Marshall are of great relevance to this investigation into the understandings of culture held by language teachers.

1.2 Essentialism

As we have seen, a great deal of work (Geertz, 1973; Holliday, 2011; Spencer-Oatley, 2008; Street, 1993) suggests that culture is an unclear, ideologically based concept that is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately pin. Others go further claiming that culture is an ultimately meaningless term which should be abandoned (Kuper, 1999). This suggests that we should not believe too strongly in the validity of culture, the homogeneity of the groupings created or that culture determines action and thought. To do so would be to essentialize them.

The following sections will examine what is meant by essentialism and the essentialization of culture and cultural groups. Essentialism is worthy of consideration because it adds a different dimension to a person's understanding of culture and cultures by its possible presence or absence. As a consequence, this can influence how people understand themselves and others; something of relevance for language teaching (see Section 1.4).

1.2.1 Philosophical roots

Essentialism today is an issue of concern for many disciplines but was originally an area of inquiry in philosophy. From the time of Plato and Aristotle, philosophers have considered whether items in the natural world share certain traits or characteristics, termed 'essences', and whether it is possible for these to be correctly identified and known. These essences are believed to constitute the "eternal aspects of reality, independent of human beings" (Schwartz, 1986, p.434). Therefore, "the essentialist is committed to the view that the human mind can come to know the essence of things" and that "knowledge of essence is the conformity of the mind to the natures of things" (Oderberg, 2008, p.19).

Essentializing things (such as gases, animals, rocks) in the natural world, if one indeed believes one can, is to see groupings in nature as they actually are. However, there is little consensus on whether natural kind essences really exist or, if they do, can ever be truly known by humans. In fact, the literature discussing essences would seem to be sceptical. John Dupre (1986), for example, suggests that natural groupings are made rather than actually existing and so some are of more value than others. The ones of greater value, Dupre suggest, are those based on greater similarity. However, Dupre cautions that

“similar” is not the same as “essential”.

There is certainly no harm in calling a set of objects that are found to have substantial number of shared properties a natural kind. I want to insist that the discovery of such a kind provides no basis for the supposition that some particular property or properties can non-arbitrarily be singled out as essential (Dupre, 1986, p.454-5).

Though the philosophical debate continues the idea of objects in the natural world possessing a fundamental essence that binds them together as a group is a concept that has been around for a very long time. The application of such a belief to social groupings, however, is much more recent and, as we shall see, far more problematic.

1.2.2 Social essentialism

Nothing complicated enough to be really interesting could have an essence.
(Dennett, 1996, p.201)

Though Dennett was referring to the philosophical debate on essences, one would likely take the sentiment of the comment to be particularly relevant to social groupings. Grouping people would seem to be far more problematic than grouping chemical elements or rocks and it is no surprise that the social aspects of essentialism have received a great deal of attention.

Social essentialism “entails the belief that certain social categories (e.g., gender, race) mark fundamentally distinct kinds of people” (Rhodes et al., 2012, p.13526). Indeed, it is on the social categories of race (Frankenberg, 1993; No et al., 2008; Tador et al., 2013) and gender (Phillips, 2010; Pedwell, 2010), rather than culture, that most of the discussion on essentialism takes place.

Writing on the subject of gender theory, Phillips (2010) identifies 4 main meanings of essentialism which may exist together or separately (I have added an example about “the Japanese” to provide a cultural illustration).

1. Attributing specific characteristics to all members within a particular group or category. (*“All Japanese are polite”*).

2. Attributing these specific characteristics to the category itself thus naturalizing and reifying what has been socially constructed. (*“He is polite because he is Japanese”*).
3. The creation of a collective which is presumed to be a homogenous block. (*“We Japanese..... / You Japanese....”*)
4. The ‘policing’ of the collective category in a way that non-adherence undermines a member’s claim of membership within the group. (*“He is not really Japanese because he is not polite”*)

The first three meanings of social essentialism presented by Phillips above are consistent with the original philosophical understanding of essentialism in natural kinds. The fourth meaning, however, is clearly something that is only applicable to a social grouping. For example, a woman may be considered unwomanly-like if she doesn’t like children, or a Frenchman may be considered un-French if he doesn’t like wine, yet no one will describe a rock as acting in a way that is unrock-like.

1.2.3 Why consider essentialism?

Before discussing essentialism further, it is necessary to consider its value as a subject of inquiry and concern as it may profoundly impact views of culture. Academic discussions of essentialism in philosophical debates or social research does not necessarily mean that essentialism is common and therefore worthy of concern and attention here. However, when we look at the research on social groupings, we can see that it is a matter of great interest and concern be it on race, gender or, more recently culture precisely because it seen as being prevalent. Carolyn Pedwell (2010), for example, claims that cultural essentialism is wide spread within the modern Western socio-political sphere. A large number of academics contributing to different disciplines within the social sciences would tend to agree (Bjorge, 2016; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; No et al.; 2008).

The reasons for the importance of essentialism as a concept worthy of study can be perhaps best summarized under two headings: *essentialism as a human condition* and *negative consequences*. As essentialism is a major theme throughout this paper, it is necessary to examine these two points.

1.2.4 Essentialism as a human condition

Some kinds are, at the very least, more natural than others. The class of

creatures with wings and feathers, for example, is more natural than that of creatures that are gray and over a foot long. This is so because when we know that a creature belongs to the first class, we can make numerous further reliable predictions about it — that it or its female relatives, lays eggs, is warm blooded and so on. Membership of the second class carries no such benefits (Dupre, 1986, p. 443).

Whether or not essences truly exist and can be known, essentializing would appear to be part of the human condition to some degree. In an examination of studies on natural kind essentialism Rhodes et al. (2012) found the essentialist belief of natural categories was present in four-year-old children in all different national and social contexts studied. This led Rhodes et al. to conclude that natural kind categories facilitate learning of the natural world in the way illustrated above by Dupre and his example of the usefulness of essentializing birds.

In terms of natural kinds, essentialism makes the complexity of the natural world manageable. This too is seen as the reason of being for essentialism in the social world as it reduces cognitive strain and “helps reduce an unmanageable reality to a manageable label” (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.51). Social essentialism, therefore, would seem to be a continuation of how we learn from a young age. As we develop and mature, our attention turns from trees, rocks and birds to people, yet the way we make sense of things remains through some degree of essentializing groupings.

In addition to discovering that social essentialism was found to be present in all contexts studied, Rhodes et al.’s (2012) study found that what we essentialize differs. The results of the study show that the social categories which were essentialized by children differed according to the context studied. For example, children in US communities identified by the authors as being largely politically conservative were more likely to essentialize race than children in more liberal urban environments. Children in upper-caste Indian society were more likely to essentialize class than their lower-class counterparts. Also, children in Israel, an area with clear religious divisions, children were more likely to essentialize religious groupings (Rhodes et al., 2012).

The findings of Rhodes et al. that essentialized views are socially constructed and context specific is a view shared by others (Jackson, 2014; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Pedwell, 2010). Pedwell (2010), for instance, points to examples in the U.S. where whites are a

non-essentialized group with explanations for their behaviour being given on an individual basis, but people of colour are understood exhibiting behaviour understood in terms of a group. In the same vein, she gives a gendered example where violence against women in Middle Eastern contexts is understood in cultural terms as a problem with the group, but violence against women in the West is resistant to cultural explanation.

Though one could argue that offering some of these examples, such as conservative children essentialize race more than liberal children, smacks of essentialism too, the work of Rhodes et al. (2012) and Pedwell (2010) does highlight the contextual nature of social essentialism and support the view that it is widespread. It also further suggests the artificial nature of social groupings as groupings are only made and essentialized if they are of particular concern or prevalence within a particular context.

Although essentialism may not create the arbitrary divisions within the social world, it does constitute a belief that the categories which divide people are representative and accurate. Culture shapes the clay of the ‘other’, essentialism fires it in the kiln of the mind. This would seem to be a phenomenon experienced by all, to some degree.

1.2.5 Essentialism as a negative force

Pedwell (2010) sees essentialism as being largely reductionist. She supports the view of Narayan (1998, cited in Pedwell, 2010, p.5) that social essentialism creates homogenous groups from “heterogeneous people whose values, interests, ways of life, and moral and political commitments are internally plural and divergent.”

Though, as can be seen in Section 1.2.6 below, there may be occasional examples of the essentializing of social groups resulting in desirable outcomes, essentialism is overwhelmingly seen as a negative force (Holliday, 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2008; Pedwell, 2010; Phillips, 2010). A key reason for this is that holding an essentialized view of social groupings can lead to stereotyping (Holliday, 2013; Tador et al., 2013, Gutierrez, 2002).

Jackson (2014) highlights the work of Hewstone & Brown in identifying three steps in the process of stereotyping:

1. Often individuals are categorized, usually on the basis of easily identifiable

characteristics such as sex or ethnicity.

2. A set of attitudes to all (or most) members of that category. Individuals belonging to the stereotyped group are assumed to be similar to each other, and different from other groups, on this set of attributes.
3. The set of attributes is ascribed to any individual member of that category

If one was to look at the dimensions of social essentialism offered by Phillips (2010) earlier in this chapter, one may be forgiven for thinking that stereotyping and essentialism are one and the same. Stereotyping, however, is the manifestation of essentialism. Research indicates that essentialist beliefs lead to increased levels of stereotype endorsement (Bastian & Halsam, 2005) and to an increase in stigmatizing attitudes (Howell et al., 2010). To add to the metaphor presented previously, culture shapes the clay of the ‘Other’, essentialism fires it in the kiln of the mind and stereotyping puts it into use.

As Jackson (2014) points out, stereotyping occurs because it allows people to quickly process and organize information about a person or situation, to highlight differences between themselves and others, to make predictions and to simplify matters. This “theory formulation” is used to make sense of social categories and reflects natural kind category formation (No et al., 2008). This prolific use of stereotypes in daily life is supported by Kumaravadivelu (2008, p.50):

Cultural stereotyping is very common. People practice it, knowingly or unknowingly. It is an all-pervasive phenomenon that affects class, race, religion, gender, language, nationality and ethnicity. We stereotype others and others stereotype us. We are all victims as well as victimizers.

Herein lies the problem. Stereotyping, at least in some part, would seem to be a cognitive strategy in that it allows quick comprehension of a situation. Resorting to stereotyping may make a situation manageable in a timely manner where deep contemplation is neither necessary nor possible. If stereotyping has multiple uses and is practiced to some degree by all as Kumaravadivelu suggests above, it would suggest two possibilities:

1. Stereotyping can occur without essentialism
2. Essentialism is a human condition (but one that people may have to different degrees)

As we have seen, the research would tend to point to the second possibility being the case as essentialism creeps in to our thinking to some degree by our efforts to understand the world and the process of socialization. If people thought that the stereotypes they use to make sense of the complex mass of humanity held no water, it follows that they would likely not use them.

If we accept the view that essentialism is a part of human understanding then the importance of it, especially in terms of negative outcomes, would be on the degree to which it is present in the mind of the perceiver. It is quite possible that the stronger one subscribes to essentialism and the stereotypes that are the result of having a fixed, homogeneous view of social groups, the greater the possibility of a negative outcome:

In their extreme form, they can lead to prejudice and discrimination, even to hatred and violence. Stereotyping is a virus that replicates itself in one unquestioning mind and rapidly infects other unquestioning minds (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.51).

Other negative consequences have been highlighted. Tador et al. (2013), for example, suggest that the close-mindedness and stereotyping which may result from essentialism also hampers creativity. Also in the field of education, Gutierrez (2002) found that studies of bilingual students used their ethnic affiliation as an indicator of their communicative proficiency in the associated language: an assumption that did not accurately reflect their ability and may affect research results. However, the overwhelming negative outcome of essentialism is that it pushes people along a path of stereotyping and on, possibly to discrimination.

1.2.6 Strategic essentialism

Through this discussion essentialism has been shown to be a largely negative force as it forces rigidity upon what is fluid, and creates barriers where none exist. However, it should be pointed out that all manifestations of essentialism of social groupings are not seen by all in a negative light. At certain times the essentializing of social groupings has actually been seen as resulting in positive outcomes and, rather than being a force of homogenization, has actually helped preserve diversity.

Spivak (1988) coined the term “strategic essentialism” to describe the instances when a

group have identified essential characteristics within themselves to identify them as separate from a larger and more powerful group for political ends such as those that could be described as ethnic or cultural survival or the promotion of rights (Ritzer, 2007). In this sense, rather than essentialism removing agency from people by assigning particular shared characteristics, strategic essentialism suggests that people are empowered by essentialism and it is taken as a strategy instead of a theory (Morton, 2007).

Though essentialism may be manufactured and employed for ends deemed as positive, examples such as these would seem to be the exception rather than the rule. The fact remains that essentialism is reductionist and divisive whenever it is found and is the base upon which racism, sexism and stereotyping can be built.

1.2.7 The essentialism continuum

Essentialism is a concept that is fairly straightforward to understand and can be perhaps summarized as the belief that groupings are accurate, representative and fundamentally true. What is not so clear is the level to which one may subscribe to such an essentialized view or what alternatives to such a view of social groups may be possible.

For many contributors to the debate on social essentialism, essentialism is a belief that seems to exist on a continuum (Holliday, 2011: Tador et al., 2013). At one end of this continuum are people who tend to see social groups as possessing an underlying essence, representing deep-seated and unalterable properties that are indicative of traits and abilities, while at the other end are people who view social categories as arbitrary, malleable, and social-political constructions (Tador et al., 2013). The essentialist and non-essentialist position on culture is illustrated in Figure 5 below taken from Holliday (2011, p.5).

Figure 5. Essentialist and non-essentialist views of culture (Holliday, 2011)

Essentialist view of culture.	Non-essentialist view of culture.
A physical place with evenly spread traits and membership.	A social force which is evident where it is significant.
Associated with a country and a language.	Complex, with difficult to pin down characteristics.

<p>Has an onion-skin relationship with larger continental, religious, ethnic or racial cultures, and smaller sub-cultures.</p> <p>Mutually exclusive with other national cultures. People in one culture are essentially different from people in another.</p>	<p>Can relate to any type or size of group for any period of time, and can be characterized by a discourse as much as a language.</p> <p>Can flow, change, intermingle, cut across and through each other, regardless of national frontiers, and have blurred boundaries.</p>
<p>What people say</p> <p>‘I visited three cultures while on holiday. They were Spain, Morocco and Tunisia.’</p> <p>‘When crossing from Japanese culture to Chinese culture....’ ‘People from Egypt cannot.... When they arrive in French culture’.</p>	<p>‘There was something culturally different about each of the countries I visited.’</p> <p>‘There is evidence of a more homogeneous culture of food in.... than in...’ ‘Private secondary schools in.... tend to have a more evident culture of sport than state secondary schools in....’</p> <p>‘The culture of.... in some businesses inis changing.’ ‘The rapid influx of immigrants from....is having an impact on the work culture in the high street.’</p>

Though they may illustrate the different ends of the continuum, whether anyone has ever actually uttered sentences like those identified by Holliday is debatable. Additionally, the example beliefs expressed above seem unlikely to apply to many people in the extreme essentialized form and particularly in the non-essentialized form if we understand essentialism to exist partly as a cognitive coping mechanism.

When looking at the two directions of Holliday’s continuum, we can assume that most people will fall somewhere in between. Holliday seems to recognize this and suggests that the most common disposition is that of neo-essentialism. Holliday (2011) sees neo-essentialism in the work of influential writers, most notably Hofstede (2010) who, while recognizing that there are exceptions to the rule, attempt to capture and define cultures

(usually national cultures) along certain binary criteria.

1.2.8 Towards non-essentialism

Moving from essentialism and neo-essentialism towards non-essentialist concepts of culture we find the ideas of cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2009; Hannerz 1996; Holliday, 2011). Hannerz (1996, p.105) describes people with a cosmopolitan orientation as being willing to engage with the cultural Other, possessing an openness toward divergent cultural experiences and being engaged in a search for contrast rather than uniformity adding that “Cosmopolitans tend to want to immerse themselves in other cultures, or in any case be free to do so.” For the cosmopolitan, the world is thought of as a global village with all different cultural groups existing across the globe in a context of equality (Holliday, 2011).

This cosmopolitan view of culture is seen as being the default view in academia by Holliday (2011). Others go further; Delanty (2009, p.3) suggests that subscription to such a belief even may be to such a degree that “it would not be inaccurate to speak of a cosmopolitan turn in social science.”

Despite its apparent popularity, such a view of culture is not unproblematic. Being curious of other cultures and wanting to experience the cultural Other, for example, does not necessarily mean the absence of essentialism. Indeed, Bradley (2013) found that cultural nationalism, which is often based on essentialized notions of nation and culture, did not negatively correlate with interest in foreign affairs or a willingness to interact with a cultural Other as is often assumed in the literature. Additionally, cosmopolitanism has been criticized for presenting a balanced image of a collection of national communities in a global context that is not representative of the lack of equality and imbalance of power and influence that truly exists and which results in some communities imposing their values on others (Canagarajah, 2013; Holliday, 2011).

Delanty (2009), however, sees cosmopolitan as being more than simply being a tourist or seeker of the exotic. He adds that cosmopolitanism is often understood as “liberal multiculturalism where the emphasis is on plurality and the embracing of difference in the creation of a post-national political community” (Delanty, 2009, p.4). This description represents a development and expansion of the typical cosmopolitan view and has been termed by some as critical-cosmopolitanism.

Critical-cosmopolitanism, similar to dialogical cosmopolitanism (Canagarajah, 2013), recognizes the imbalance of relations and insists that one's recognition of difference is valid and should not be abandoned for the sake of harmonious relationships. Rather than being a somewhat idealistic view of social reality, critical cosmopolitanism offers a view where "the social refers less to a clear-cut definition of 'society' as national society or a territorially or culturally bounded entity, but a field of social relations in which conflicting orientations are played out" (Delanty, 2009, p.6). It is this critical dimension that acknowledges inequality and blurred boundaries which is seen as vital, for without it culture may be reduced to monolithic and static categories (Jackson, 2014). Preventing such a view is seen as desirable and critical cosmopolitanism is seen as being able to combat such a view (Delanty, 2009) because it recognizes and stresses three things:

1. Cultural difference and pluralization
2. Social groups and societies are mixed and overlapping as opposed to being homogeneous
3. Cultural difference is a reality

Like essentialism, critical cosmopolitanism represents a state of mind and a way of interpreting the world and mass of humanity around us. It is, however, fundamentally opposed to essentialism and exists at the opposite end of the imagined scale. It would seem that where a person may lie along this scale of essentialism, if a scale does indeed exist, has great potential to influence their beliefs regarding culture and, potentially, their interactions with cultural 'others'.

1.2.9 Capturing essentialism

If one accepts that essentialism is an important factor in conceptualizations of social groups and that stronger essentialism leads to stronger stereotyping (Hong et al., 2004), investigation into the degrees of essentialism held by people would appear to be the next stage. However, there is a large number of articles discussing essentialism, but far fewer trying to identify subscription to it among people. Rhodes et al. (2012) and No et al. (2008) are notable exceptions to this. Both focus on essentialism in race yet they employ different means of identifying social essentialism. No et al. used an attitudinal questionnaire while Rhodes et al. focused on the language used by participants.

The work of No et al. (2008) attempted to use quantitative data acquired through surveys to test a scale measuring essentialism. No et al. were interested in social essentialism and the survey items were worded accordingly, as can be seen in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6. The lay theory of race items (No et al., 2008)

The Lay Theory of Race Scale (Participants responded to the statements via a Likert scale)	
1.	To a large extent, a person's race biologically determines his or her abilities and traits.
2.	Although a person can adapt to different cultures, it is hard if not impossible to change the dispositions of a person's race.
3.	How a person is like (e.g., his or her abilities, traits) is deeply ingrained in his or her race. It cannot be changed much.
4.	A person's race is something very basic about them and it cannot be changed much.
5.	Races are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.
6.	Racial categories are constructed totally for economic, political, and social reasons. If the socio-political situation changes, the racial categories will change as well.
7.	Race does not have an inherent biological basis, and thus can be changed.
8.	Racial Categories are fluid, malleable constructs.

As can be seen, the first four items represent an essentialized view “that race is fixed and reflects biological essence....and represents the notion that categories possess underlying properties (No et al., 2008, p.992). In opposition, the final four items present a non-essentialized view “that race is socially constructed....and posits that categories do not possess inalterable inherent properties” (No et al., 2008, p.992). The survey items of No et al. achieved sound statistical indicators of validity. This, ultimately, allowed No et al. to declare the presence of a scale of essentialism with essentialism at one end and non-essentialism (or a social constructionist view, as No et al. term it) at the other end. On this scale, “the higher the score, the stronger the participants endorse an essentialist race theory over a social constructionist theory. The lower the score, the reverse is true” (No et al., 2008, p.994).

The study of No et al. (2008) is notable because it successfully gauges essentialism in a person's conceptualization of a social category. Although, in this instance, the scale gauges essentialism in the concept of race, it suggests that gauging essentialism in the concept of culture may be possible. However, one may question relying on quantitative

methods alone to isolate and identify essentialism in a person's conceptualization of culture. As we have seen throughout this chapter, culture is a contested concept existing at different degrees of abstraction depending on one's view point, and essentialism is the degree to which one holds that culture and cultural groupings exist objectively. Using a survey to attempt to determine the essentialism in a person's concept of culture would appear to be insufficient and in need of further support and verification, such as through qualitative means.

The work of Rhodes et al. (2012) examined and assessed essentialism by more qualitative means. Rhodes et al. (2012) presented a fictional group of people, called "Zarpies" to young children and their parents. The Zarpies were a mix of different genders, races and ages. Different Zarpies were introduced one at a time with the researcher making a statement about them. For one group of children, the language used was generic language about the group, such as "Zarpies are afraid of ladybugs". For the other group, non-generic language was used, such as "This Zarpie is afraid of ladybugs".

Rhodes et al. (2012) found that parents and children that heard generic language about Zarpies were more likely to express essentialist beliefs, such as assuming all Zarpies would share certain new traits, when the researcher introduced them through a new Zarpie despite the Zarpies differing in gender, age and race. Additionally, subjects who were exposed to generic language were more likely to use generic language themselves when talking about Zarpies and produced more negative evaluations of Zarpies. The reverse was found to be the case for the group who were introduced to Zarpies through non-essentialized language that presented them in individual terms.

Although Rhodes et al. (2012) stop short of saying that generic language creates essentialism, they do suggest that its use by parents can direct children towards essentializing some social groups over others. As a consequence of this, Rhodes et al. (2012) suggest that hearing less generic language about a social group can help reduce the stereotyping that results from essentialism.

The work of No et al. (2008) and Rhodes et al. (2012) is valuable because it suggests that essentialism can be viewed by quantitative means through attitudinal surveys and qualitative means through interviews and identification of generic language. However, extra weight could be given to the findings if these two methods were combined. This is something that, to the best of my knowledge, has not been done at this time.

In summary, essentialism is a phenomenon that has the power to greatly influence how people understand culture as a concept and the degree to which cultural groups represent real or imagined entities. The prevalence and potential influence of essentialism is a major component of this thesis. As shown, however, the groups people essentialize may be partly determined by the context in which they live. As such, consideration of the context in which research takes places is vital.

1.3 Culture, language and communication

One of the earliest and most influential theories on the relationship between culture and language, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, suggests that language determines thought as “observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar” (Carroll, 1956, p.90). Though linguistic determinism has been widely criticized as too extreme as the lack of linguistic elements in a language clearly does not prevent the comprehension of concepts, most scholars do accept the notion of linguistic relativity in that culture, language and communication are related (Everett et al., 2013; Kramsch, 2011).

As this study is concerned with teacher beliefs concerning culture in language teaching, it is necessary to consider the areas in which culture is seen as interacting with language and communication – the subject matter of teachers’ classes. This section will briefly survey the major issues in these areas of language and assess their potential importance to the language teacher. If we accept, as many do (Holliday, 2011; Kramsch, 2011), the view of Risager and Byram (1999, p.147) that “language contains culture, it carries culture in it” and that “language organizes and expresses a whole range of cultural information...” then it is necessary to look at language in both structure (linguistic form) and use (communication) as “culture” has the potential to influence or be manifest in both.

1.3.1 Language as code

The connection between culture and language in structural terms or as isolated linguistic elements has received a great deal of attention. This work examines the relationship between culture and vocabulary (Carroll, 1956; Deutscher, 2010; Lado, 1957), grammar (Deutscher, 2010; Hijirida & Ho-min, 1986; Steiner, 1975), and metaphor (Gannon, 2001; Hiraga, 2008; Lakoff, 1990; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Pinker, 2007; Su, 2002).

Specific examples from Japanese include Hijirida and Ho-min's (1986) examination of the use of honorific forms of language. They argue that the grammar and terminology contained in a language that is sensitive to social stratification results in a society that is more hierarchical in nature. They argue that this is the case for Japan and Japanese. Although it may be true that, for Japanese, "it is difficult to know how to behave unless one can place other people present in a hierarchy order to oneself" (Gao, 2010, p.5), it can also be said that this is true of most people, Japanese or not. Status ambiguity and the awkwardness that often accompanies it is certainly not limited to Japanese speakers. Likewise, it is suggested that the extreme gender division in Japan identified by (Hofstede, 2010), among others, is connected to the fact that Japanese is a sexist language in which men and women use different first person expressions (Gao, 2010).

Though the conclusions may suggest a clear relationship between grammar and culture it is important to remember that correlation does not mean causation. Additionally, the cultural aspects often seen as being the ones that match the linguistic forms (such as hierarchy, respect for status etc.) are often based on Nihonjinron literature (see Section 2.1) where such traits are assumed, over emphasised and applied to a mass of people that is understood as being homogeneous.

The presence of vocabulary as a result of environment or particular ideas is a feature of every language and something all people deal with as a fact of life when they move into unfamiliar genres. Likewise, the claims made by some regarding the grammatical impact on thought seem to be somewhat insubstantial (as with biblical Hebrew – Steiner, 1975) at best and unsubstantiated (as with the speculation about bullfighting in Spain – Lado, 1957) at worst.

As will be discussed in Section 1.3.2, language is ambiguous and use of certain structures does not necessarily mean that beliefs follow a similar form. This important point is made clear by Kumaravadivelu (2008) who points out that in his classes, even though he tells his students to call him by his first name rather than "professor" or "sir", doing so does not change the difference in status or power between him and them. He still controls the class, assigns the homework and gives the grades. The difference in power and status does not change whether they address him with an honorific or a nickname.

Despite recent attempts (Deutscher, 2010) to reinvigorate waning support for what might

be termed a strong subscription to linguistic relativity, attention seems to have shifted to more communicative foci. Although the relevance of the connection between culture and language as code may have declined, it is of concern here because the concept of culture implied, most notably that a language represents thought of a culture, is consistent with the notions of national identity within the discussion attempting to pin down ‘Japaneseness’ (see Section 2.1 – Nihonjinron).

1.3.2 Culture and language: Communication

A pioneer of modern sociolinguistics, Dell Hymes (1962, 1964) argued that knowledge of linguistic code is vital to communication, but so too is knowledge of the norms and values that guide communication and interpretations of communication. Becoming a successful participant within any speech community requires the ability to both understand and employ these communicative norms.

While recognizing the importance of established patterns of practice in language use, Hymes’ idea of speech communities still gave the impression of groups as isolated, static and monolithic entities. Despite this, his work did lay the foundations for future developments such as Wenger’s (1998) concept of communities of practice and Swales’ (1990) notion of discourse communities.

As we can see, “community” is very much the key word in these concepts and language use is seen as something that connects people for some purpose. Byram & Risager describe the community in the following terms:

The community may be of different sizes, from a family to an international network of researchers within a certain field. The community is built up around a social structure and will, to a greater or lesser extent, be characterized by a common frame of reference and common norms and values. The social structure, as well as frames of reference, norms and values, mark language in its pragmatic and semantics (Byram & Risager, 1999, p.146-147).

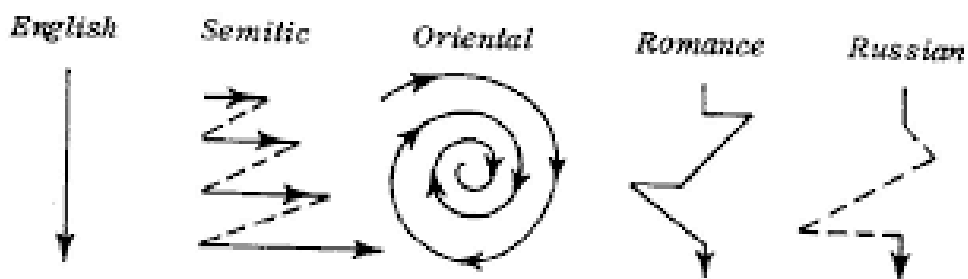
The idea of communities of practice regarding language use appears to be a central concept within the field and the final sentence of the quote above highlights pragmatics and semantics as areas of communication that may be seen as being particularly cultural.

However, the potential for cultural difference in communication seems greater than that. It is beyond the scope of this document to examine all potential ways that culture and communication interact and dealing with two vast concepts make even a more modest attempt difficult to organize in an easily comprehensible manner. However, as the field of language teaching has moved from a focus on form (through methodology such as grammar translation) to more communicative methodologies (such as CLT), it is likely that teachers are more familiar with a pedagogy within which an understanding of culture as communication (behavioural / semiotic) rather than an understanding of culture in language as code (cognitive) is implied. As such, it is necessary to examine the areas of communication where cultural difference may be most prominent. Although many of these are typically presented in terms of national or pan national entities and may fit neatly with the work of Hymes, the communicative differences they present are of relevance also for smaller more dynamic groups as suggested by Wenger and Swales.

Rhetoric

One of the earliest comparative studies on culture and communication was in the area of rhetoric and conducted by applied linguist Robert Kaplan (1966) who found that students from different cultures employed rhetoric in different ways. American speakers of English tended to be direct and straight to the point in their writing whereas, oriental users of English (e.g. Chinese and Japanese) favoured an indirect approach that skirted around the issue before arriving at the main point (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Rhetorical patterns of different cultures. Kaplan (1966, p.14).



Although Kaplan's work conflated quite distinct ethnic and national groups as well as perhaps privileging the "English" rhetorical style, it marked the start of the field of Contractive Rhetoric. Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) has been broadly defined as "The view that the rhetorical features of L2 texts may reflect different writing conventions learned in the L1 culture, and the cross-cultural study of these differences" (Hyland, 2006, p.312). Although primarily focusing on expository writing, CR has expanded since its inception in the 1960s and today represents an extremely complex field combining, among others, issues of learning/teaching a second language (Atkinson, 2004), business negotiation (Connor, 1996) and metalanguage strategies (Mauranen, 1993).

As is evident in the work of CR proponents, the principles underlying CR have been seen as lying in the Whorfian hypothesis of linguistic relativity (Connor, 1996; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Kubota & Lehner, 2004). The hypothesis asserts that a person's thoughts are unconsciously controlled by patterns imposed by their L1. Thought patterns are illustrated in the systemizations of the language used and highlighted through a comparison with other languages, particularly those of another linguistic family. Every language is a 'vast pattern-system' that is culturally unique and categorised in the way a person communicates and interprets the surrounding world (Carroll, 1956).

Although welcomed by some as a way to contrast language use, many question the value and methods of CR. Swales (1990), suggests that CR must use the same genres if a comparison between languages is going to be of any value, something which Kachru, (1995) says is not always possible as the same genres and genre distinctions are not always consistent across different societies of language users. Another criticism of CR, and the one worthy of particular note for this study, is the use of "culture" as a term of differentiation of rhetorical style. The cultural boundaries in CR often parallel national borders, for example, in studies of Japanese (Hinds, 1983, 1987, 1990), Chinese (Mohan & Lo, 1985), and Finnish (Mauranen, 1993). As we have seen, Kaplan (1966) went further in creating pan-national entities.

Lumping cultures and nations together has resulted in the creation of contrastive generalizations such as individualist Vs collectivist (Connor, 1996) or direct vs digressive cultures (Kaplan, 1966), cultural binaries that reflect the need to label cultures seen in the work of Hofstede (2010), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) and Triandis (2001), and which cannot do justice to the diversity and complexity of large groupings. Such

generalizations often ignore divisions within the group and may lead one to assume a non-existent homogeneity and that there is one true way in which a language is used (see Section 2.3- Native-speakerism).

Verbosity and non-verbal communication

Communication is not only about what is said, it can also be about what is not said. Indeed, the volume of language used has also been deemed cultural as it differs from group to group and language to language (Andersen & Wang, 2008; Hall, 1976). An example of this can be seen in Hall's (1976) dimension on the level of verbosity and specificity of language used across cultures. Hall suggested that some cultures were high context and some were low context in their use of language and communication style. Low context cultures, such as the United States, Germany and Scandinavian nations favour highly detailed and explicit language that is presented in a logical and linear manner (Hall, 1976). Conversely, high context cultures, of which Japan, China and Korea are said to be examples, often rely on contextual cues and non-verbal codes to provide much of the detail that is omitted when compared to low-context communication modes.

Low-context speakers who are reliant on detail and a higher level of verbosity may find the communication style of high-context speakers to be lacking clarity and sufficient information. The non-verbal communication offered through understandings of context and interpretations of body movement (kinesics), distance (proxemics) and even touch (haptics) (Hall, 1959). These sources of information may not be picked up on by the low-context speaker (Hall, 1976).

Though more recent work in the field has been done (see Andersen & Wang, 2008, for a summary), most of this work continues to be based on a national idea of culture, ignores diversity and, ultimately, is at odds with the idea of people moving between cultures. Indeed, the static idea of Japan as a high-context culture is found in *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1) through the concept of *amae* (interdependency) and *haragei* (instinctively knowing ones implied meaning from body language).

The ambiguity of language

Culture is communication and communication is culture (Hall, 1959, p.186).

The view of Hall above suggests two things of importance. Firstly, it suggests that using language is inevitably cultural as certain choices about its use must be made; choices which will typically conform in some way to previously established patterns. The second point to take from Hall's quote is that, if the use of language is culture then language as a code is relatively culture free. In this regards there is a similarity in the work of E.H. Carr on the subject of philosophy of history mentioned at the opening of this thesis. Carr (1961) made the point that historical facts are only given meaning, importance and connection to other facts by the narrative that is woven around them by the historian; a narrative that is largely dependent on the world view of the historian. If we accept the view of Hall, the same can be said to apply to the code of language when put into use by the speaker. Meaning comes not solely from the words themselves, but from an interpretation of the words and how, where, when and by whom they are used.

Yet communication is not a one way process. Jackson (2014), for example, identifies various elements in the process of communication:

Figure 8. Elements of communication (Jackson, 2014)

Sender	The person who is sending a message
Encoding	The process of putting an idea or message into a set of symbols
Message	What is conveyed verbally or non-verbally
Receiver	The person receiving the message
Decoding	The process by which the receiver tries to understand the meaning. The translation of the symbols into meaning
Receiver response	The verbal or non-verbal reaction after decoding the message
Feedback	Verbal or non-verbal signals that receivers give to indicate they have processed what the speaker has said
Context	The environment in which the communication occurs.

For communication to occur in a relatively smooth manner, one would need to have similar understandings and awareness of certain semiotic dimensions of communication (such as interpreting language as code, body language, expressions, feedback, silence, etc.) as well as the pragmatic norms which include an understanding of the context in which communication is occurring. The presence of such factors suggests that language itself is ambiguous.

Rather than words giving meaning to people as suggested by some scholars (Section 1.3.1), the opposite could be said to be true in day-to-day conversations as people force meaning on words. This is clearly shown in the work of Scollon & Scollon (1995) who point to the differences between the sentences, “There is a man at the door,” and, “There is a taxi at the door.” Though the sentences are identical grammatically with only one word being changed, the images and understandings that are brought to mind are very different. The former sentence likely gives the image of a man waiting immediately in front of the house entrance, most likely for the door to be opened after having knocked or rung a bell. In the latter, the taxi is most likely understood to be, not immediately next to the door, but waiting on the street with the engine running and a driver inside who is waiting for someone to exit the house. Though these are rather simple examples, they clearly show that the images that come to mind and the understandings we take from the language are very different even though the actual structure of the language is the same. Meaning here is largely based on world view, experience and patterns of language use (Scollon & Scollon, 1995).

The difference in meaning given to language is not only at the sentence level, but also at the discourse level. Though language may be identical, the position it is located in discourse can change the meaning for both the speaker and listener. Scollon and Scollon (1995, p.6) illustrate this with the following example:

Mr Wong and Mr Richardson have a conversation. Mr Richardson has enjoyed this conversation and when ready to part he says to Mr Wong that they really should get together to have lunch sometime. Mr Wong says that he would enjoy that. After a few weeks Mr Wong begins to feel that Mr Richardson has been rather insincere because he has not followed up his invitation to lunch with a specific time and place.

The communication problem here, according to Scollon and Scollon, is cultural as Mr Wong comes from a community of speakers where information given at the end of a conversation is typically given greater importance than that at the front, whereas the opposite is said to be true of Mr Richardson. The miscommunication is not a failure in understanding of the words themselves, but the meanings the interlocutors use them to convey. It can be said to be a pragmatic failure.

Pragmatics

This focus on meaning rather than focus on form which is shown in the ambiguity of the language above is at the heart of the field of pragmatics; a field which is viewed with great importance in the realm of communication (Cutting, 2002; Ishihara & Cohen, 2010; McConachy, 2018; Thomas, 1983; Yule, 1996). Pragmatics is defined by Yule (1996) as being “concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It has, consequently, more to do with analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves” (Yule, 1996, p.3). Pragmatic ability is an important part of successful communication as it “means being able to go beyond the literal meaning of what is said or written, in order to interpret the intended meaning, assumptions, purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions that are being performed” (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010, p.5). Though there are several forms of pragmatic failures, the two main types are pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic (Thomas, 1983).

- Pragmalinguistic failure “occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by S [student] onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native-speakers or when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from L1 to L2” (Thomas, 1983, p.99).
- Sociopragmatic failure has to do with “the social conditions placed on language in use” and “stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour” (Thomas, 1983, p.99)

If one considers the direction in the literature on the concept of culture (Section 1.1) and how this relates to language teaching (Section 1.4), we can see that focus will be on sociopragmatic failure rather than pragmalinguistic failure. The identification of “native-speakers” has been shown to be a problematic concept and one that is based on a fixed notion of culture (see Section 2.3). It is also one that is value loaded and does not adequately deal with issues of English in a global context or as a lingua franca. Therefore, if we look at the cultural dimension of pragmatics in the field today we see that the focus is on pragmatic failures that result from a lack of awareness of communicative norms on the behalf of the people interacting.

This development and change of focus can be seen in the work of Cutting (2002), who identifies three main areas of investigation within the field of pragmatics that are seen as

being dependent on culture:

- Cross-cultural pragmatics – “involves contrastive studies of the language of two or more social groups, using comparative data obtained independently from the different social groups. It compares the manifestations of a particular pragmatic principle in two societies, for example, how Mandarin speakers apologise to each other in China, compared to how English speakers apologise to each other in Australia” (Cutting, 2002, p.66).
- Intercultural pragmatics – “Using interactional data obtained when people from different societies or social groups communicate with each other using a lingua franca, it examines the effect of their different norms and values. It looks at how pragmatic principles manifest themselves in interactions between people from different groups, for example, how Mandarin speakers apologise in English to English speakers in Australia and how the English speakers react” (Cutting, 2002, p.67). The above example from Scollon and Scollon (1995) showing the pragmatic failure between Mr Wong and Mr Richardson is an example of this.
- Interlanguage pragmatics – “looks at how people learn pragmatic principles, for example, how Mandarin speakers learn to apologise in English” (Cutting, 2002, p.70). Research in this field considers the attitudes of learners towards English, which pragmatic dimensions they may adopt or reject and the reasons for these.

According to Cutting (2002) these three approaches to pragmatics have developed from one to the next since the 1980s. If we look at this development and consider the cultural dimension of language teaching, it is possible to see close parallels both in the notion of culture that underscores the approaches and in the way the learner and the target language are understood. This is a point that will be discussed at length in the following section.

Ultimately though, despite the development shown above, the very separation of the field between pragmatics on the one hand and some form of “cultural” pragmatics on the other hand seems to suggest a particular understanding of culture from the very start. If we view culture in semiotic terms (Geertz, 1976), in terms of small cultures (Holliday, 1994), in terms of the view that we “do” culture and live life as cultural being (Street, 1993) or subscribe to the notion that our communicative behaviour is learned and negotiated through our interactions with others then it would seem to suggest that the field of

pragmatics is entirely a cultural one and all pragmatic successes or failures are cultural in nature. To create a separation would be to introduce artificial borders and, possibly, increase the likelihood that culture is and continues to be largely understood in quite static terms based on a person's L1 or nation.

This concern is perhaps implicit in the discussion of Thomas (1983). She qualifies her use of these pragmatic divisions by stating that when she uses 'cross-cultural' it is "a shorthand way of describing not just native-non-native interactions, but any communication between two people who, in any particular domain do not share a common linguistic or cultural background" (Thomas, 1983, p.91). Though recognition of this is important, this disclaimer offered is often found in the work of academics who often discuss groups in quite static and homogeneous terms, such as Hofstede (2010). Though such writers may claim that the views they put forward relate to all groups, one can easily see that Chinese vs Americans or English speakers vs Mandarin speakers are almost exclusively used in examples.

Of course, this may be due to a belief that pragmatic failures between languages/nationalities are more salient and easier to discuss than others, and also have greater importance in a globalizing world than the "everyday" pragmatic failures we may encounter. One may also take a cynical view and suggest that it results from the growing commodification of cultural knowledge along national lines that often serves as the product and *raison d'être* of a 'culture shock prevention industry' that sells intercultural solutions to problems that are often presented as uniquely international (Section 2.4.3). Whatever the reason maybe, it is possible that the frequent presentation of pragmatic failure in terms of someone being a Mandarin speaker or Australian could be quite suggestive to the reader (Section 1.2.9).

The relationship between communication and culture appears to be stronger and more convincing than that of language and culture. Areas such as rhetoric and pragmatics show a much clearer connection between the language and learned behaviour, values and shared norms that are typically understood as culture. On this evidence alone, it would seem that the focus of the cultural dimension of language teaching should centre on these issues, yet, one may argue, language teaching must consider more than this as will be outlined in the following section.

1.4 Culture: The importance for language teaching

Young et al. (2009) divide the literature on culture and language teaching into two broad categories:

- Literature on learning culture: Work stressing the need of students to learn culture for some purpose and work on methods to teach culture.
- Literature on culture as context for learning: Descriptions of educational culture, class culture, stereotyping in EFL and linguistic imperialism.

Though all of the above are of relevance in some way to this project, items in the second category can be and have been treated separately (see Chapter 2) in a way the items in the first category cannot. Though issues in the second category may influence the first, it is primarily the first category, which shall be the focus of the following sections. More specifically, this will include:

- the perceived needs of students of students regarding the cultural dimension
- the form of desired teaching outcomes, i.e., competency
- the concept of culture that underpins these
- the way in which language is implicated in any or all of the above

In language education, Damen (1987) suggests that culture is the fifth skill (after reading, writing, speaking and listening) that is of great importance for students. Rather than being a discrete skill, which the others could possibly be argued to be, culture is a skill that permeates all others (Damen, 1987). For Crookes (2010, p.1131), the most important question for the language professional is, “What am I trying to do here?” If, as English teachers, our task is to teach English and increase our students’ proficiency in its use then, assuming Damen’s view is correct, culture would seem to be central to our task as it influences or is present in all areas of language and language use. Indeed, it is no leap or exaggeration to say that there is broad agreement that the intercultural dimension of language teaching is an important element of the profession because culture is everywhere (Hannerz, 1996) and that, ultimately, it is almost unthinkable to consider language teaching without culture and vice versa (Kohler, 2015). In answer to the question, “What is language teaching for?”, Cook (1983, p.230) answers that, “At one level it is ‘functional’ or ‘communicative’: the students are acquiring a skill they can use outside the classroom. At another level it can be called ‘educational’: we teach people a foreign language to broaden their horizons.” Although work on the connection between language and culture

(Section 1.3) would suggest that these two roles of the language teacher cannot be separated, culture is of relevance to both as it is part of language and it influences how we see the world.

However, the growing consensus on the importance of culture (Damen, 1987; Kohler, 2015; Kramsch, 1998; Kumaravadivelu, 2008) does not necessarily mean a consensus on approach. As discussed in Section 1.1: culture is a broad and contested concept and, as will be seen in Section 1.5, teachers' views on its place and form in language teaching differ greatly. Additionally, as the field of language teaching is a somewhat interdisciplinary field (Risager, 2011), approaches to the cultural dimension may mirror the differences in the foci of culture across different fields. These may be further complicated by more pragmatic issues of teaching and by the time or place in which they were first developed.

As a means of organizing and discussing the breadth of opinion regarding the form and focus of culture in language teaching in terms of the points above, I will use labels put forward by Risager (1998). These labels are best understood as umbrella terms which can serve as a means of organizing different views and approaches to culture as part of language teaching, as well as the cultural needs and desired competencies of students they assume. These are:

- 1 – The foreign-cultural approach
- 2 – The intercultural approach (Cross-cultural approach)
- 3 – The multicultural approach
- 4 – The transcultural approach

Though the actions teachers take and the beliefs that drive them may not fall entirely within one label, by using these labels it is possible to identify and discuss the key changes in approaches to the cultural dimension of language teaching and the understandings of culture that underpin them. More recent work, such as Hua's (2014) separation of the ways in which culture is "handled" is largely consistent with the divisions of Risager and also culminates in an approach based on a transnational and dynamic nature view of culture. Such consistency suggests the value of Risager's divisions, but may also hint at rather slow progress being made in the sixteen years that separate the divisions offered by Risager (1998) and Hua (2014). However, there *has* been some advancement since Risager's time of writing and I have added work to the divisions as is appropriate and

consistent. Despite these changes, the labels provide a useful means by which to navigate a body of work which is both physically and conceptually large, has an interdisciplinary character and contains many different philosophical positions that make tracking lines of agreement difficult (Risager, 2011).

1.4.1 The foreign-cultural approach

The foreign cultural approach enjoyed dominance as the most common manifestation of culture in the classroom prior to the 1980s, but has been losing influence since that time (Risager, 1998). The approach makes little effort to explore culture, develop empathy or any understanding of the human and linguistic variations students may come across. Culture is typically understood in a national sense with the information presented usually focusing on famous places, national habits and other country tidbits that demonstrate a concept of culture dominated by upper case / big C / objective culture (Bennett, 1998).

These slices of knowledge are often presented to students as cultural asides. Culture here is discrete from other parts of class and relegated to a supporting or supplementary role to be used by the teacher if needed. Though Risager (1998) identifies that the foreign-cultural approach is in decline, I would argue that it is still present in many textbooks. Several high school level English textbooks that I have used or observed in recent years often include a “culture corner” or “interesting fact” section in each unit (Section 2.4.1). These cultural points are often present to explain a particular reference in the text or conversation and are certainly not aspects that are meant for deeper exploration. They are points presenting elements of the target culture and, therefore carry the assumption that there *is* a target culture.

In terms of Moran’s (2001) Cultural Knowing Framework, the foreign-cultural approach falls in to the categories of ‘Knowing About’ a culture and ‘Knowing How’ to engage within it. It is an approach that is consistent with what Hua calls “The culture-as-content approach to language teaching [which] focuses on getting to know the language community and developing cultural awareness through fact finding” (Hua, 2014, p.4). Competence of the students is demonstrated or understood purely in terms of cultural information such as “facts, data, or knowledge about products, practices and perspectives of the culture” as well as a shallow view of “acquiring cultural practices” that are often understood to be common behaviours of the group (Moran, 2001, p.15-16). The foreign-cultural approach typically reduces culture to facts about a specific culture and can

therefore be seen as an approach that focuses on knowledge over competence (Bennett, 1996).

The foreign-cultural approach does little to equip students with the linguistic tools to navigate cultural encounters. Language and culture are clearly separated and presented in an isolated manner. The approach views culture as a dimension of language teaching that is exclusive of others and which can be removed or added as required (Hua, 2014). When aspects of language and communication are introduced, they will typically focus exclusively on issues or norms within the target culture. Additionally, if one examines coursebooks or activities that can be said to adhere to a foreign-cultural approach, we can see that the language-culture connection often focuses on the easily observable and, one may argue, somewhat superficial or easily managed differences, such as verbosity or gestures (Section 1.3.2).

A significant reason for continued adherence to the approach that is most commonly cited in my conversations with other teachers, and one that features commonly in the literature (Klayman, 1976; Simpson, 1997), is that culture has a positive influence on motivation, as students want to know about the country and people (Jones, 2000). Teacher-authors, such as Simpson (1997) take the view that students want to see more of the culture where English is spoken simply due to natural curiosity. The motivational aspects of content driven by curiosity and interest are issues of great importance for teachers following a methodology that requires active participation, such as communicative language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and particularly in an educational context such as Japan where students are often characterized as being reticent and unwilling to communicate (Section 1.4.6). For Klayman (1976), culture is something that helps develop integrative motivation (Gardner & Wallace, 1972) among students. By learning cultural information about the places where the language is used, students' desire to interact and integrate with the target people increases (Klayman, 1976).

Though introducing engaging content in class that promotes the L2 culture may have some positive impact on motivation, the importance given to it by teachers has declined considerably over the last twenty years (Lamb, 2017). This may be because the idea of integrative motivation has been challenged over recent years with work in the fields of World Englishes (Kachru, 1995), ELF: English as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2006; 2007) and native-speakerism. These fields highlight the notions that, rather than English being the possession of a particular place or group, a view that can lead to native-speakerism

(Section 2.3), English is a tool owned and used by people all around the globe for different purposes and in different ways. The foreign-cultural approach does not recognise these points. Whatever the motivations for adopting a foreign-cultural approach may be, ultimately, the identification of a single group has the potential to encourage native-speakerism among students.

1.4.2 The cross-cultural approach (intercultural approach)

The intercultural approach, as named by Risager (1998), may be better described as the contrastive approach or cross-cultural approach because such terms more accurately represent the approach and avoid confusion. The term “intercultural” represents something of an umbrella term for any approach that involves the meeting of two or more cultural groups, and it is often used by commentators (Corbett, 2010; Jackson, 2014; Phipps, 2013; Scollon & Scollon, 1995) in different and sometimes broader ways. Additionally, what might be seen as elements of an intercultural approach, such as the need to develop “attitudes of curiosity and openness, of readiness to suspend disbelief and judgement with respect to others’ meanings, beliefs and behaviours” (Byram, 1997, p.34), can, with the possible exception of the foreign-cultural approach, be identified as being present in some degree in all approaches.

What can be said is that the cross-cultural (intercultural) approach expands the scope of the cultural dimension from that of the foreign-cultural approach by considering both the culture of the target country/countries and the home culture of the students. These cultures are often used in a contrastive fashion which suggests an assumed similarity in the structure of culture as two versions of the same aspects of society are often presented. Typically, the emphasis is on the more exotic differences between the cultural groups (Young et al., 2009).

This notion of culture is similar to that expressed in Hofstede’s (2010) cultural pyramid (Section 1.2) in that cultures are equal and understandable as they are simply different manifestations of the same human nature. Like the foreign-cultural approach, culture and cultural groups continue to be understood in the traditional anthropological sense of beliefs, behaviours and artefacts, but are now presented with a desire to create a non-ethnocentric view of the countries involved (Risager, 1998).

In their work on the cultural dimension of language teaching, Allen & Vallette (1977)

highlight four cultural goals within the cross-cultural approach:

1. Developing a greater awareness and broader knowledge about the target culture
2. Acquiring a command of the etiquette of the target culture
3. Understanding differences between the target culture and students' own culture
4. Understanding the values of the target culture

Here we can see that these targets are similar to those of the foreign-cultural approach, but with the added goal of understanding differences between the target culture and the students' own. To understand difference, difference must be made salient and the approach highlights the need to incorporate the students' own culture and language as a means of identifying difference (Hua, 2014). Alongside the "Knowing About" and "Knowing How" cultural outcomes of the foreign-cultural approach is now placed the "Knowing Oneself" cultural outcome (Moran, 2001). However, these all continue to be typically understood as discreet homogenous entities with the nation continuing to be the default unit. This can be seen in the work of De Capua and Wintergest who, when discussing the elements of culture in language teaching suggest that "these shared matters are what identify members of a particular culture, such as German, Canadian, Chinese, Malaysian, or Vietnamese" (De Capua & Wintergest, 2004, p.12).

The goal of understanding difference that drives the approach is fuelled by a desire on the part of the teacher to create a non-ethnocentric view of the countries involved (Risager, 1998). Though the language-culture connection continues to be targeted on a particular native speaking group, the approach attempts to reduce cultural misunderstandings and anxiety. Moran (2001) makes the case that comparisons are a necessary part of culture learning because learners "construct an understanding of the other worldview" and this leads them to "come to a point where they can see the world from the other's perspective" (Moran, 2001, p.126).

Though the attempt to present both cultures on equal terms and reduce ethnocentrism is laudable, the approach suffers many of the same problems as the foreign-cultural approach. The cross-cultural approach, like its predecessor, views cultural groups in almost exclusively national terms and so fails to recognize the diversity within its national borders and the connections that exist beyond. This leads Guest (2002, p.155) to conclude that although the "binary logic can often be a convenient analytical tool, it frequently fails to make an adequate job of representing complex realities." Additionally, as the approach is usually manifest though a communicative language teaching methodology (Harmer,

2001), it is unlikely that a deep understanding of culture or the richness and variety of a group are goals that can be achieved. Reducing culture to a few areas of comparison can lead to a misunderstanding as the whole culture will be understood based on limited information (Guest, 2002). Indeed, some suggest that, rather than failing to meet the goal of greater understanding and acceptance, the cross-cultural approach can work in a counterproductive manner. Rivers argues that “orientations toward the intercultural Other (in this case symbolized by the native English-speaker and Western English-speaker nation) will provide the catalyst for the continuation of the well-established ‘us versus them’ paradigm in which notions of identity are negotiated primarily through contrasts with other intercultural groups, communities and practices” (Rivers, 2010: 326).

Attempts to present cultures as equals also opens up the approach to the charge of cultural relativism as cultures are “accepted” as they are and as a natural consequence of the environment in which they grew. This acceptance has the possibility to reduce any critical examination and, particularly at the university level, should be avoided (Azoulay, 1997). Additionally, the acceptance of cultures, while welcome by some, would only go half way to the humanism as defined by Bennett (1998, p.12) who suggests that “behaviours and values must be understood both in terms of the uniqueness of each person and in terms of the culture of that person.”

It is at this point that examples from my own experience of such an approach can be of relevance. One such example is the 2015 JALT (Japan Association of Language Teaching) Conference. The conference hosted hundreds of presentations from teachers, academics and publishers with a selection focusing on culture in some way. One such well attended and well received presentation I attended argued for an inclusion of the findings of Hofstede (2010) into language classes as a means of locating Japan and the other countries that teachers might present. This cross-cultural approach based on, or at least consistent with an unproblematic understanding of authors such as Hofstede (2010) also represents a commodity which is sold by some intercultural training companies to international organizations (Section 2.4.3). Hannerz (1996, p.108) somewhat derogatorily calls this the “culture shock prevention industry”. As a means of better understanding this industry, I attended a day long training seminar aimed at increasing workplace understanding and cooperation between Japanese staff and their foreign colleagues working in Japan. The seminar used the work of Hofstede (2010) almost exclusively and the discussions, rather than breaking down homogenized groupings, could be said to have reified them further as the divisions were presented with something approaching scientific authority.

In terms of the interaction between language and culture, although the home culture of students is discussed, the target language is still almost exclusively associated with a certain community. This can encourage native-speakerism (Section 2.3) and give students the unrealistic goal of trying to reach a native level of language use and proficiency. Additionally, rather than encouraging students to interact with the L2 community, through presenting and discussing particular cultural differences, it is possible that the focus on difference may lead to a reduction in a willingness to communicate as the target culture is seen as too alien or difficult (Guest, 2002).

Though the approach builds on that of the foreign-cultural approach and undoubtedly provides interesting subject matter for contrastive classroom discussions, it would appear to do little to develop criticality in the understanding of culture and the recognition of the Other as a complex individual rather than as a slave to cultural characteristics. Despite this, Risager (1998) claims that the approach is the dominant one in language classrooms. Though several years have passed since she made the claim, recent literature discussing new methods claims a need for change due to a fixation on a national top-down view of culture (Atkinson, 1999; Atkinson & Sohn, 2013). Perhaps a key reason for the persistence of such an approach is that it could be said to be consistent with the lay or everyday understanding of culture and so can be easily slotted into classes. One may also argue that part of this lay understanding includes the uncritical acceptance of cultural difference (Section 1.1 & 1.5).

Risager (1998), at her time of writing, claimed that the intercultural approach was the dominant approach of the day. Although other approaches developed from it, her contention was that the approach dominated partly due to endorsement from national education ministries. Whether this remains the case today, or at the university level, is not clear and there certainly is little work to either quantify or to suggest what is happening regarding the approaches teachers take regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching at universities in Japan (Section 1.5.2). Though I do not make the claim that the cross-cultural / intercultural approach is no longer the dominant approach, the volume of literature on later approaches in the following sections and the increasing, if somewhat slowly, sophistication with which culture features in materials (Section 2.4) would suggest that, if it remains the dominant approach, it may not do for much longer.

1.4.3 The multicultural approach

As its name suggests, the multicultural approach “rests upon a concept of culture that reflects the fact that several cultures may exist within the boundaries of one and the same society or state” (Risager, 1998: 246), and so seeks to promote the awareness of cultural and linguistic variety. The view that society contains multiple cultures and that people are members of more than one receives support from recent work on the subject of culture (Section 2.4), and also from those specifically commenting on the cultural dimension of language education (Baker, 2012b; Kumaravadevelu, 2008; Pino & Pino, 2009). As a consequence, the multicultural approach abandons the sole focus on the nation as the primary unit of interest that was central to the previous two approaches.

By recognizing the impact of various cultural contexts, the multicultural approach is also consistent with related work on genre (Swales, 1990), rhetoric (Connor, 1996) and discourse (Scollon & Scollon, 1995) that examine the different ways in which context can manipulate language. The role of language in the approach breaks from previous approaches where it was understood more in terms of a somewhat static code possessed by a homogenous block and becomes a more flexible tool that is manipulated in various ways. These linguistic norms are understood as being based on cultural views and, unlike previous approaches, the multicultural approach begins with language as a source of cultural knowledge making it an approach of teaching culture through language (Hua, 2014).

The multicultural approach incorporates the view that “culture represents a framework through which people communicate about, make sense of and interpret their worlds” (Kohler, 2015). To be a member of a culture “is to develop the resources necessary to participate in shared meaning making.” As individuals we move in and out of cultures, the behaviour and language they use must operate within different parameters and conventions. Awareness of conventions and the beliefs they may suggest is seen as an important cultural competency and represents a weak version of the *savoir etre* and *savoir comprendre* that form part of Byram’s (1997) model of intercultural competence (Appendix 1). Tomalin and Stempleski term this desired competency “cultural awareness” and describe it as “sensitivity to the impact of culturally-induced behaviour on language use and communication” (Tomalin & Stempleski, (2012, p.25).

The idea that learners live in heterogeneous rather than homogeneous communities

(Norton, 2000) can also be said to be true for language as it may be for culture. The multicultural approach, by examining the different cultures we move in and out of within our national label culture as well as the relationships between the groups and the imbalance between them, highlights the way language is used, changes and differs between groups, but also, by extension, they gain a realization that national cultures contain multiple different groups. This awareness of division within national cultures is understood as being likely to challenge any desire to essentialize groupings or members (Baker, 2012a; 2012b) and is something which may lead to greater cultural democracy and more harmonious intercultural relations in society (Brisk, 2008).

The blurring of cultural boundaries and view of people as being inevitably multicultural beings is certainly a positive development if one accepts that essentialism is something to be minimized as much as possible. Additionally, discussions of cultural differences based on smaller and multiple cultural groupings gives each student a different perspective on themselves and, therefore, highlights them as an individual as much as a cultural being. However, despite what are clearly positive advancements made from previous approaches, the multicultural approach is not without issue.

Perhaps the most salient is that identified by Risager (1998) who points out that the national cultural grouping is still dominant. Though students are encouraged to breakdown the national / ethnic level category, all smaller cultural groups are still contained within the national / ethnic level category. Indeed, the very notion of a third culture is indicative of the other two being the target and host nation. This very much gives the impression, sometimes explicitly so, that smaller cultural categories are sub-cultures. The very use of the term “sub-culture” suggests something of much less importance, influence and relevance. However, the idea of smaller fluid cultures in which people are active participants, rather than larger national groupings (Section 1.1.4) is very much the direction in which the concept of culture has been developing.

Another area of criticism concerns classroom manifestations of the approach. When we look at materials which can be said to be based on a multicultural approach (such as Corbett, 2010), we can see that the focus is much more on developing awareness of cultural difference and the changing of attitudes towards cultural groups rather than the development and awareness of linguistic diversity and change as highlighted by Byram (1997). The former may be privileged over the latter in such materials due to the view that an awareness of diversity within one nation will be transferred on to another nation

and lead to a reduction in stereotyping and discrimination (Baker, 2012a, 2012b).

This focus on awareness of diversity suggests the belief among proponents that such an understanding is lacking in learners and needs to be addressed through instruction. While we may reasonably assume that students lack linguistic awareness and skills as a consequence of living in another language community, students have extensive experience of existing in multiple social groupings. Students, in my experience, are often acutely aware of differences in perspective, values and behaviour across groups within the national grouping. Discussions and investigation of these, while it may raise the awareness for some, does not necessarily translate into a rejection of the privileged position given to the national level grouping that may be said to be the typical lay default understanding.

1.4.4 The transcultural approach

The question for English teaching professionals is not if but how to teach English globally (Canagarajah, 2006, p.25).

The multicultural approach draws attention to the diversity within a national unit yet is still confined by it. The transcultural approach attempts to remedy that by recognizing that cultures travel across national borders and so cannot be discussed in purely national terms. The transcultural approach is driven partly by “globalization and migratory movements [which] have highlighted the need to integrate interculturality in the language curriculum” (Lopez-Rocha, 2016, p.107). According to Risager, “the transcultural approach takes as its point of departure the interwoven character of cultures as a common condition for the whole world: cultures penetrate each other in changing combinations by virtue of extensive migration and tourism, worldwide communication systems for mass and private communication, economic interdependence, and the globalization of the production of goods” (Risager, 1998, p.248).

Culture, in the transnational approach, is highly complex and is influenced by numerous phenomenon at the local and national level. This level of complexity and fluidity is seen in the work of academics such as Canagarajah (2013), Hannerz (1996) and Dervin (2006, 2010), and can be said to represent a more critical and non-essentialized concept of culture (Section 3.8) that many have claimed to be lacking in the field of language education (Atkinson, 1999; Atkinson & Sohn, 2013; Baker, 2012a; Guest, 2002). Indeed, the

importance of the approach rests largely in its capacity for “reversing the usual direction of thought, which has been ‘polluted’ by essentialist and culturalist approaches to self and other” (Holmes & Dervin, 2016, p.10). Ultimately, the transcultural approach is the complete rejection of the notion present at different degrees in other approaches that cultures “are neatly bound and mutually exclusive bodies of thought and custom, perfectly shared by all who subscribe to them, and in which their lives and works are fully encapsulated (Ingold, 1994, p.330).

Additionally, as cultures cross borders, the role of English becomes viewed in different ways than before. As Baker points out, “English is no longer tied to the cultures of exocentric Inner Circle NES settings, nor does the NES function as the sole point of identity for speakers of English. Rather, local cultures and norms alongside dynamic global references can serve as points of identification and contextualization” (Baker, 2012a, p.26).

This view of the English language is fundamental in the approach of Galloway & Rose (2018). As a means of developing a more fluid understanding of culture and cultural groupings, Galloway & Rose (2018) propose a switch from ELT along traditional lines to that of GELT (Global Englishes Language Teaching). GELT, it is suggested, encourages the criticality demanded in a transcultural approach because it also exposes and investigates the shifting role of English in a global context for good or ill. As can be seen in Figure 9, GELT is seen as resulting in outcomes desirable within the transcultural approach.

Figure 9. Differences between GELT and traditional ELT (Galloway & Rose, 2018).

	Traditional ELT	GELT
Target interlocutor	Native English (NE) speakers	All English users
Owners	NE speakers	All English users
Target culture	Fixed NE cultures	Fluid cultures
Teachers	Non-NE speaking teachers (same L1) and NE speaking teachers	Non-NE speaking teachers (same and different L1s), NE speaking teachers
Norms	Standard English	Diverse, flexible, and multiple forms
Role model	NE speakers	Expert users
Source of materials	NE and NE speakers	Salient English-speaking communities and contexts
First language and own culture	Seen as a hindrance and source of interference	Seen as a resource

English, in the transcultural approach, is recognized as a language of intercultural communication (Baker, 2012a). Although English as a cultural bridge is a metaphor that could be used for most approaches, it is particularly apt for the transcultural approach as English becomes something that facilitates and fosters the extension of cultures beyond borders and allows cultures to mix and permeate others. In this sense, English is very much a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2007) and allows cultural connection and flows across static political borders. Recently, however, the term of ELF itself has come under fire for being “inadequate in relation to the sociolinguistic complexity of global and local uses of ‘English’ in the world” (O’Regan, 2016: 205). It is quite possible that a new understanding of the role of English is needed to match the complexity with which culture is understood within the transcultural-approach. O’Regan himself puts forward the idea of LFEs (lingua franca Englishes) where various types of English are used to facilitate transnational communicative flows (O’Regan, 2016). Although one may have assumed that this is already part of ELF, it is a good example of the problematizing of EFL interaction that is central to the transnational approach and its journey on the path towards greater criticality and complexity (Holmes & Dervin, 2016).

If we accept that people of multiple linguistic backgrounds interact and co-construct cultural frameworks through their interaction, albeit often as unequal partners, then their participation authenticates their varieties of English. This is something which literature on World Englishes urges (Kachru, 1995) as a means to resist linguistic imperialism (Philipson, 1992). This has the possibility to encourage ownership of English and the view of English as a tool which all have equal right to employ in an increasingly interconnected world, a view which completely dispels notions supporting native-speakerism (Section 2.3).

The focus on views and uses of English, however, does not disregard the L1 of students. Consideration of the L1 is important “because identities are hybrid and multiple, and most of the world is multilingual, we must conceive of learners as having identities that often accommodate English seamlessly with other languages” (Canagarajah, 2006, p.14). The relationship between the two should be based on “teaching English in a manner that complements rather than competes with local languages” (Canagarajah, 2006, p.25) and demonstrates that successful communication can still be achieved without following inner-circle or native-speaker norms (Canagarajah, 2011). The recognition and proposed symbiosis between the L1 and English(es) in a global setting is also articulated in the

view that learners operating in English occupy a third culture which neither represents a home culture or a target culture, but is one which encapsulates the changing and dynamic nature of interacting with the cultural Other in another language (Kramsch et al., 1996).

Ultimately, at the heart of culture in the transcultural approach is the learner as an individual. Culture as a force influencing our lives is not rejected, but the power of individuals to engage and change culture, as well as the fact that they occupy roles of varying degrees of influence within the shifting tides of culture, are all elements. This focus on “individuals or character types rather than cultures at large” is understood to be a closer approximation of the real world (Guest, 2002, p.157). Culture remains an influential force, but one that does not bind someone or adequately explain someone as it may do within other approaches. A focus on the individual would seem to remove the temptation to do so also. Achieving empathy and a truer understanding and awareness of communicative partners, particularly in personal discourse, comes from investigation on a personal level rather than the application of group generalizations (Guest, 2002). This focus may have begun within the multicultural approach but with the transcultural approach the scope is now multinational, multilingual and characterized by much greater complexity and fluidity.

1.4.5 Summary of the approaches

Atkinson’s (1999) call for an understanding of culture in language teaching that recognizes cultural complexity, is not prescriptive and is not based on large, top-down received cultural groupings and would seem to have been answered by the transcultural approach and, to a lesser degree, the multicultural approach. These approaches are part of “an increasingly reflective, self-critical, and socially critical strand of thought” which has been growing in the field of language teaching since the 1990s (Crookes, 2010, p.1126). Though definitions and the foci clearly differ, the trans-cultural, multi-cultural, and, to a lesser extent, the cross-cultural typically subscribe to the following beliefs though to varying degrees.

- ✓ Culture influences how we communicate and how we understand language
- ✓ Having a critical, non-essentialist and dynamic view of culture is desirable
- ✓ Intercultural teaching should develop empathy and reflection.

- ✓ It is part of the role of the language teacher to develop students' understanding and awareness of these two aspects.

It may be possible to say that these beliefs regarding the role of the cultural dimension of language teaching represent the fundamental beliefs of the field regardless of different understandings of culture or approach. These key beliefs can be said to be affective in nature rather than focusing on linguistic development and performance, although they may influence them.

One key difference between approaches, however, is that the foreign-cultural and cross-cultural approaches teach about *a culture* or *cultures*, whereas the multicultural and transcultural approaches teach culture more as a human activity and phenomenon. For the transcultural approach, perhaps more than the multicultural approach, the word *teach* may not even be suitable, because the approach problematizes and explores culture and language more than teaches some parcel of concrete knowledge as is the case with the foreign-cultural and cross-cultural approaches. This is related to the notion of competence. One may say that the simpler the concept of culture, the clearer the notion of competence. The muddying of the conceptual waters regarding culture and language may mirror the organic and overlapping development of human endeavour and interaction, yet as concepts are increasingly problematized, the idea of competence becomes much more abstract and difficult to pin down. Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence through *savoirs* (Section 2.4.3 and Appendix 1) is a good example of an attempt to define competence along lines consistent with a multicultural or transcultural approach, but which, ultimately, cover a vast conceptual and attitudinal tract.

This breadth of competencies is clearly demonstrated in the work of Moran (2001), shown in Figure 10. Here we can see the various desired outcomes of the cultural dimension of language teaching. Some approaches may only focus on one outcome, such as Adaption for the foreign-cultural approach. Other approaches will cover many outcomes, as we have seen above. Viewing the array of outcomes of the cultural dimension raises at least two pressing issues. Firstly, though outcomes may differ according to approach, how can teachers assess that these outcomes are being achieved? Secondly, although the approaches highlight certain outcomes as being of particular importance, do teachers actually aspire to such outcomes, and if they do, which ones are deemed of greatest importance? These questions will be addressed in Section 2.4.3 and Section 1.5

respectively.

Figure 10. Cultural learning outcomes (Moran, 2001, p.108).

Outcome	Emphasis	Examples
Culture-specific understanding	Intellectual insight and empathy regarding a specific culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● History, literature, the arts ● Area studies ● Products, practices, perspectives, communities, persons
Culture-general understanding	Insight into general concepts of culture and culture learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analysis of critical incidents ● Values clarification exercises ● Cultural simulations
Competence	Verbal and nonverbal cultural behaviours and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Language proficiency ● Communicative competence ● Cultural competence ● Intercultural competence
Adaptation	Entry and adaptation to a specific culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integration ● Assimilation ● Acculturation
Social Change	Critical thinking and action regarding the target culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social justice ● Cultural change
Identity	Transformations in the learner's self-concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A second language "self" ● Bilingualism ● Multiculturalism

Though approaches have come to possess an increasingly sophisticated understanding of culture and how it relates to language, several issues remain that are relevant to all. Perhaps the first is an issue with the terminology and the idea of "approach". An approach is typically understood to mean an underlying belief, idea or reason for doing something which is then operationalized by certain means. However, one will only have an approach for something if it is known or deemed something worthy of having an approach. Any approach to the cultural dimension of language teaching selected or endorsed by a teacher is first dependent on a need for an approach. This may not be the case and, although culture cannot be removed for any human activity, the cultural dimension may be represented in class by what we could call a "non-approach" or an "incidental approach". Related to this is the reality that, as there are a myriad of understandings of culture, it is very likely that any actual approach represents something of a hybrid of different

approaches.

For example, one may label the work of Baker (2012a, 2012b) or Guest (2002) as a blending of two with the multicultural approach developing into a more transcultural approach as the cultural awareness of students develop. Another example can be seen in the notion of proteophilic competence (Dervin, 2006) where a person is not understood in terms of *a* culture, but is seen as a person who *identifies* with various different groups and whose characteristics, behaviours and beliefs are fluid and subject to influence from moods, emotions and contextual issues. This can be seen in other languages too. The AQA course for French (AQA, 2018), for example, overwhelmingly adopts a foreign-cultural approach through a keen native-speaker focus on the French, but also contains units which could be considered cross-cultural (discussions of students own relationships and school-life) and transcultural (discussions of global issues).

Additionally, the very presence of a teacher who may be identified as a cultural Other by students can be a form of instruction regardless of any planning or learning objectives, and may indeed run counter to them. What the teacher says, how the teacher moves, the activities organized, the level of time keeping and flexibility in homework, all of these things and more are cues from which students may make cultural theories and assumptions beyond what the teacher may wish to teach. As Tudor (2001) points out, what the teacher has in mind when preparing a class, may not be what students perceive or experience during class. It is possible that, regardless of approach, what is not said by the teacher or what is passed over quickly also influences the cultural dimension of language learning (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). One cannot teach vocabulary or grammar by appearances and movements alone.

One final issue with approaches to the cultural dimension is that the approaches do not necessarily translate into classroom practice. Though there is a clear progression in the development and sophistication of the concept of culture, this development in approach does not appear to be mirrored in the development of method or the availability of training and materials. Support for teachers in the practical rather than conceptual realm appears to be left behind and is an issue that will be expanded in Section 2.4.

1.4.6 Context and methodology conflict

Having examined the different approaches, and before considering different issues of the

cultural dimension of language teaching, it is worth considering the relationship between a teacher's approach and the norms of the educational context in which he/she teaches as highlighted in Young et al.'s (2009) second point at the start of Chapter 6. Holliday (1994), drew a distinction between what he termed TESEP (state English language education in non-English speaking countries) and BANA (the ELT community in native-speaker countries, such as Britain and the U.S.) educational contexts. Holliday suggested that educational practices and classroom realities were vastly different between the two. BANA classrooms, for example, were typically populated by older and more motivated students who had elected to undertake a course of language study, often at their own expense. In BANA contexts, teachers often had considerable contact time with students and were frequently free to experiment with methodology. By contrast, TESEP classrooms were often larger and contained a wider spread of levels of proficiency and motivation, as one may expect from state classrooms. Language classes were typically a compulsory part of a broad curriculum that included many other subjects. Additionally, teachers were seen as being more restricted in the approach to language teaching as classes had to conform to set syllabi and learning outcomes. These differences were also seen as partly being a result of the historical educational traditions of these areas.

Holliday argued that the large number of BANA teachers moving to TESEP contexts often tried to bring and implement methodology that, while successful in BANA classrooms, was not appropriate or sensitive to the educational realities and norms of TESEP contexts. Language teaching methodology that actively encourages and incorporates the intercultural dimension and contains certain ideological stands can be counted among methodology that has largely developed in the BANA context.

All of this would seem to support the observations of Moloney (2013) that teachers, students and institutions view pedagogy through their own cultural lens, but also that people hold a preference for what is familiar. Japanese education is often presented as favouring a teacher-centred style where the teachers are the source of knowledge and students are there to listen and absorb (Kobayashi, 1976; Littlewood, 2000; O'Sullivan, 1996; Yoneyama, 1999). This view of education is often held as being responsible for the alleged abundance of non-participatory students in communicative classrooms that many foreign teachers write about (Kobayashi, 1976; Littlewood, 2000; O'Sullivan, 1996; Yoneyama, 1999). If many authors point to this disposition of the 'Japanese student', it is likely that many teachers investigating the area will conclude that discussing and mediating cultural information and views in class is something unsuitable for their

students.

Although the claim that a student / institution will assess a teacher in light of their past experiences with other teachers seems reasonable, it does not necessarily follow that any divergence from past educational norms will be stressful, unwelcome or viewed in a negative light. Hyland (1993), for example, examined learning style preferences of Japanese and though he found no strong preference for any style, students did express a dislike for styles where they are passive and inactive, a finding that challenges quite entrenched images of the Japanese student. Other research among Japanese students offers similar conclusions and likewise suggests that what may be termed BANA approaches to language teaching were far from stressful for students nor are they viewed as inappropriate by them (Davies, 2006; Terauchi, 1995).

Challenges to the notion that BANA methods are often culturally unsuitable and blindly implemented are not limited to Japan. Cortazzi & Jin (1996) found that many students in China expressed a preference for what they viewed as the foreign teaching styles being brought by their foreign teachers. In these classrooms, rather than being a source of conflict, the two educational styles complemented each other in what was described as 'cultural synergy' (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996).

Having worked at length in a Japanese 'TESEP' context, I feel that the work of Holliday (1994) might be overly cautious and suggestive of a world view based on notions of weakness or submission on the part of the host educational institutions, teachers and students. Rather than being confined by educational norms based on tradition, students, teachers and institutions are relatively open to new approaches and actively welcome them in certain instances. Though the concerns of Holliday may not ascribe enough agency, flexibility or diversity to certain educational contexts, his work does highlight the need to consider the cultural suitability of methodology and approach prior to putting it into practice in the classroom; something he and others (e.g. Bax, 2003) suggest is often overlooked. However, overstating difference may lead teachers to overcompensate in class by grading their behaviour and approach in some way that they feel is consistent to the preferences of the students and institution, preferences that may often be assumed more than real.

1.5 The beliefs of language teachers

Before examining the literature on teachers' beliefs and their relationship to practice it is important to bear in mind that beliefs are often not static and fixed. Beliefs may be subject to change over time, even short periods of time. There is also work that suggests that context and constraints mediate the relationship between beliefs and practices (Basturkmen, 2012). It is certainly reasonable to suggest that the situation and environment in which a teacher is asked to verbalize her beliefs can have an effect, possibly a profound one, on what is verbalized. Additionally, the process of verbalizing beliefs may be problematic in itself as teachers may be unable to express their beliefs in a satisfactory way; their utterances being interpreted by the researcher in a way other than that intended by the teacher that spoke them. Difficulty in expressing beliefs clearly has also been identified as being particularly prevalent among younger teachers as beliefs concerning the profession are new or still being formed (Basturkmen, 2012).

That what people say and what they do is often different (Dervin, 2009), is indeed true, but in terms of teaching, how they do it would appear to be of relevance too. According to Basturkmen's (2012) review of the literature on beliefs and practice, there was greater correspondence between beliefs and teaching if the aspects of teaching were planned rather than incidental. However, Basturkmen (2012) adds that research considering beliefs and the incidental aspects of teaching was far less than that of planned teaching.

That teachers' planned actions rather than incidental actions typically correspond more closely to their stated beliefs can possibly be explained by the notion of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). The theory of cognitive dissonance maintains that all people have a need to hold attitudes and beliefs in harmony because discomfort can result from imbalance (Festinger, 1957). As a means of maintaining harmony, beliefs or behaviour may be altered to restore a closer balance. The notion of cognitive dissonance, along with the other factors above, suggest that fixed binaries regarding beliefs represent a simplified and unproblematic version of reality. They are factors that must be borne in mind when considering the beliefs and practice of teachers concerning culture as part of language teaching.

1.5.1 Teachers' beliefs and the cultural dimension of language teaching

While most teachers agree that culture has a place in the language classroom (Bastos and

Araujo e Sa, 2015; Kohler, 2015; Stapleton, 2000), the evidence from many language teaching contexts is that this place is secondary to the linguistic elements. Sercu (1998, p.257), examining teaching in Belgium suggests that, “Belgian teaching is largely dominated by the knowledge dimension of learning, and teachers feel uneasy having to deal with affective or behavioural aspects of the learning process”, adding that most teachers in Belgium think of themselves as “language people.” In the U.S., Galeano & Torres (2014) surveyed language teachers and found that they rated the linguistic elements of language teaching as their primary teaching responsibility, a finding replicated in studies among teachers in England due to the requirements of examinations that focused on linguistic proficiency (Hennebry, 2014). Among teachers of Indonesian in Australia, Kohler (2015, p.127), suggests that teachers relegate culture to a lower priority and may exclude it because it poses a “risk of distraction from communicative language use”. Following a case study methodology, she concluded that teachers view language in largely structural terms and this view will dictate what are understood as teaching priorities (Kohler, 2015). In the Chinese educational context, Lessard-Clouston (1996) found that teachers overwhelmingly identify culture as an important part of teaching yet rarely or never include it in classes.

Supporting these findings, Raluca (2011, p.1827) suggests that “ESL educators are adamant about the necessity to integrate culture related tasks in their curriculum, yet in concrete learning situations they seem to favour and discreetly promote grammar and vocabulary learning at the expense of interactive, negotiated and interpreting activities that capitalize on culture teaching.” Though Raluca (2011) acknowledges that teachers often abandon the cultural dimension due to a lack of resources, time and the presence of demands to teach language, she suggests many do so because they possess an insufficient knowledge of cultural issues; a point which teachers are typically unwilling to admit.

Aleksanrowicz-Pedich et al. (2003) offer an alternative point of view insisting that teachers are not afraid of admitting their lack of knowledge regarding the cultural dimension. In their research on behalf of the European Centre for Modern Languages, Aleksanrowicz-Pedich et al. discovered that “all respondents declare unanimously the need to include in the pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes the theoretical and methodological elements of intercultural studies, which would constitute the foundations for systematic education in this field” (Aleksanrowicz-Pedich et al., 2003). These self-reflective conclusions clearly have merit as a great deal of evidence would also suggest that training relating to the cultural dimension of language teaching is

sorely lacking (Section 2.4.2).

As well as teachers highlighting the need for greater training in the cultural dimension, the above quote from Aleksanrowicz-Pedich et al., (2003) also highlights which area of the cultural dimension teachers wish to develop further. The “intercultural studies” field highlighted in the study as being the most important among teachers is consistent with an investigation of language teachers conducted by Bastos and Araujo e Sa (2015) who found that most teachers identified the affective component of intercultural teaching as the most important aspect. Though the cognitive development and praxeological aspects were also deemed important, “fostering an appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity, as well as a willingness to participate in plurilingual and intercultural encounters” (Bastos & Araujo e Sa, 2015, p.145), was seen as the most vital. Such a view receives a strong endorsement from Kramsch who adds that “richer cultural and sociolinguistic education for language teachers may ultimately prove much more important than training in pedagogical methods” (Kramsch, 1992, p.10).

However, both the studies above were conducted in Europe where language teaching and training is typically in line with or guided by the principles of CEFR. Research conducted in a non-EU context reached a different conclusion. In the United States, for example, Galeano & Torres (2014) state that teachers believed that presentation of material aspects of culture and cultural practices through “traditional methods” were more important than developing an awareness and understanding of the underlying forces or beliefs that influence them.

The divergence of findings is not limited to this one instance. Rather than welcoming exposure to new training and theories on the cultural dimension as suggested above, Sercu suggests that teachers in Belgium are often uncomfortable with theory as “teachers may either regard a theory as *per se* proven and requiring no further substantiation or else, as a result of professional pride, they may reject theory altogether” (Sercu, 1998: 255). This lack of interest in theory and published research findings is also the conclusion of Medgyes’ casual analysis of professional development presentations at the IATEFL Conference in Hungary and of Borg’s (2009) large scale study of teachers in thirteen countries.

However, others argue that teachers are reluctant to actively engage the cultural dimension for another and perhaps more worrying reason. Stapleton (2000) discussing

the results of an investigation into Japanese higher education states that “gaps exist between classroom teachers and research findings because of both the difficulty in teaching culture and the danger inherent in making assumptions about the culture of both the target language and the students own culture” (Stapleton, 2000, p.292). This danger is explicitly named by Kohler (2015) who shares his conclusion. She claims that for many teachers “culture represents problematic content due to the potential for stereotyping” (Kohler, 2015, p.127).

Over the last two decades, greater attention has been given to the subjects of race in TESOL (Kubota & Lin, 2006) and linguistic imperialism (Canagarajah, 1999). Additionally, these subjects touch upon many emerging lines of inquiry and branches of TESOL such as native-speakerism (Section 2.3), world Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, and the cultural appropriacy of certain methods. Though teachers may not be aware of the discussion of these in the field, it is very likely that teachers are aware of similar and related discussions that are existing in society. One may even argue that discussions of cultural appropriacy and race in TESOL are simply the application of the broader discussions in society onto the profession of language teaching. Ultimately, the observations of Stapleton (2000) and Kohler (2015) that teachers skip culture in class to avoid uncomfortable discussions and the possibility of reinforcing stereotypes is certainly one that will resonate with many EFL teachers.

Beyond the idea that it is and should be part of the profession, the works above on teachers’ views of the cultural dimension clearly differ from one educational context to the other. This can be seen in the concepts of culture held by teachers also. In what is perhaps the largest study conducted on teachers’ views of culture and the cultural dimension of language teaching, Byram and Risager (1999) investigated the views of over 500 language teachers teaching in compulsory levels of education in Denmark and England. They found that teachers’ views typically fell into the four emergent categories:

- A) culture understood as people’s way of life or traditions – how people live in concrete terms, their activities, their ways of living together and so on;
- B) culture understood as the objective structures people live in, the social, political and economic institutions for example;
- C) culture understood as the norms or values characterizing people’s lives – the ideas people have about their life, behaviour, mentality, consciousness and so on;
- D) culture understood as valued products or artefacts: as artistic life and artistic products

of different kinds, for example literature, music, art and so on.
(Byram & Risager, 1999, p.85)

The frequency of subscription was markedly different in the English and Danish contexts as can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Categorization of teachers' definitions of culture

Denmark			
A	B	C	D
470 31.9%	444 30.1%	258 17.5%	303 20.5%
England			
A	B	C	D
78 45.0%	40 23.1%	44 25.4%	19 11.0%

Although Figure 20 shows that there is a broad range of views in both contexts (a point Bryam & Risager do not address in any substantial way), we can see that a Category A view of culture is most common in both, particularly England. Category D, a big C or high culture understanding is particularly uncommon in England, though not in Denmark. This leads Byram & Riasger to conclude that “the English [from England] teachers have a view which is more oriented towards an anthropological concept, which focuses more on way of life / traditions, but which also gives weighting to social structures and norms and values (Byram & Risager, 1999, p.86).

The divergence of views between Danish and English teachers is explained thus:

In the Danish folkeskole, there is a strong tendency to see an opposition between language and culture, so that culture included everything which ‘is not language’, that is literature, social structures and culture in the broader sense.... There is in Denmark a tradition of teaching about social structures and conditions in language teaching, and language teaching (especially English) lasts so many years that is also possible to deal with the study of literary texts of some length....this is a dimension lacking in the English [education in England] tradition (Byram & Risager, 1999, p.86).

Here we can see that views of the cultural dimension are influenced by both the inherent understandings within the term “culture” in the L1, but also in the form that language

education takes. The latter point, while being influenced by the former to some degree, would seem to be the most important in the findings of Byram & Risager (1999). Indeed, in addition to setting the amount of contact time between teacher and student, educational institutions set curricula which have certain ideological leanings (Section 2.4.3).

The experience typically identified as being of paramount importance to the views of teachers is their international experience. Given that international experience is viewed in the research as having a profound impact on the intercultural competency of students (Hua, 2014; Kanno, 2011), this may come as little surprise. With regards to teachers, international experience typically means either time spent overseas (Galeano & Torres, 2014), or the bi/multi-lingual upbringing, something which also typically involves time overseas (Kohler, 2015). The simple presence of such a background is often given as the source of competence or awareness. In Kohler's (2015) study, for example, the participant identified as demonstrating the greatest level of cultural awareness in her cultural class mediations with students had a bi-national and bilingual upbringing. This was attributed as the cause for such awareness at the exclusion of all other possibilities.

The connection made between some form of cultural competence and ability in another language or extensive time overseas may be an easy and convenient connection. Hua (2014) points out that, while study abroad can have significant benefits for students, the outcomes can depend greatly on the type and quality of the program as well as certain biographical characteristics of the participant. With teachers, Galeano & Torres (2014) discovered that, although time overseas made teachers more open to the idea of culture in teaching, it did not develop any greater sophistication of the concept nor a desire to explore culture in a deeper way in their classes. Perhaps the greatest challenge to this often taken for granted causal connection can be seen in a survey of European students who undertook a period of study abroad as part of their degree. Coleman (1996, cited in Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003) found that even students who were highly proficient in the target language returned with feelings of resentment to the host country due to cultural differences. Works such as these show that, though international experience may have a positive view on one's concept of culture, it is mitigated by several factors and does not always result in the desired intercultural outcomes.

1.5.2 The Japanese context

If we consider all the direct or implied findings above we can make certain claims based

on the literature.

- Teachers broadly agree that culture (albeit undefined) is of importance to language teaching.
- Teachers broadly agree that culture, while important, plays a less important role than other parts of language teaching, such as a focus on form or fluency development.
- Teachers' views differ on what this "culture" *is*.
- Experience influences cultural views and international experience is often identified as being the most influential.
- Teachers in different educational contexts may possess differing views on the cultural dimension for reasons such as the idea of culture in their L1, the level of importance given to culture in the curricula, practical considerations such as access to resources and technology, and the amount of contact time they have with students.

However, the only investigation on the beliefs of university English teachers in Japan on this subject was conducted by Stapleton (2000). Stapleton investigated the attitudes of university English teachers on several areas:

1. Cultural content: Feelings about the importance of teaching culture and what kinds of culture are taught (if any)
2. Language and culture: The use of contrastive constructs between the students' native and target language
3. Cultural adjustments: Teaching style adjustments that were made due to perceived cultural needs
4. Published materials: Perceptions about culture in textbooks

The strongest findings were regarding cultural content in language teaching. As with the findings of other studies shown above, Stapleton (2000) found that teachers felt the cultural dimension of language teaching was an important part of the profession yet they only occasionally considered it in their class planning. Additionally, teachers demonstrated a preference for "overt" culture in class (language, food, appearances, etc.) rather than "covert" culture (beliefs, values, etc.). A quarter of teachers surveyed declared that they never include covert culture in their classes. The overt culture favoured by teachers included topics such as holidays, taboos, body language, greetings and food; these subjects were repeatedly identified by teachers.

With regards to the language and culture connection, teachers “often taught features of language that they felt were culturally orientated, but the covert culture associated with the language was taught much less” (Stapleton, 2000, p.297). This tendency of teachers to avoid teaching the reasons behind certain language and behavioural differences is a similar finding to that of the American teachers in Galeano and Torres’ (2014) study mentioned above. As before, the university teachers in Japan favoured overt aspects with the importance of first names in English being frequently highlighted by teachers as an example. Echoing the views of Kohler (2015), Aleksanrowicz-Pedich et al. (2003) and Raluca (2011) above, Stapleton suggests that “the tendency not to discuss deeper aspects of culture may be a result of concerns about stereotyping or simply a lack of knowledge or awareness of cultural constructs such as hierarchy or collectivism” (Stapleton, 2000, p.298).

Of the 28 respondents, 27 responded that they had changed their teaching style based on their knowledge of students’ culture since they began teaching in Japan. Several reasons and manifestations of change were given:

- Students were identified as being more group orientated (than non-Japanese)
- Group work was used more frequently than when they taught elsewhere
- Students needed and were given more time to answer
- Teachers avoided asking questions to the class and instead asked individual students in order so that all students were asked equally
- Teachers avoided general questions that required students to give an opinion
- Students were identified as passive

Stapleton (2000) interpreted these changes in terms of teachers used to an education style of the Socratic tradition interacting with students used to a style of education based in the Confucian tradition. This view is similar to that of Holliday (1994) as discussed in Section 1.4.6. In the views above we can see that assumptions of Nihonjinron (Section 2.1) permeate the views of the teachers, and, one may argue, the interpretation offered by Stapleton too.

Over half of the teachers surveyed used a textbook with most of these using a multi-skill type book. Teachers expressed a dissatisfaction with textbooks in both a general sense and in relation to the cultural content. The dissatisfaction was generally a result of a perceived bias towards certain countries, particularly the United States. The content of the textbooks was also criticized for being too shallow, a point also made in a review of

textbooks (Section 2.4.1). Though there was some agreement that textbooks were improving in terms of cultural content, there was little agreement about how textbooks could improve cultural content in future. Interestingly, Stapleton (2000) suggests that teachers overall displayed something of a contradiction regarding textbooks. Teachers criticized textbooks for being too general, but textbooks that attempt to 'go deeper' are seen as being ethnocentric or stereotypical.

Stapleton's study was limited in many ways. Firstly, only 28 teachers were surveyed, all of whom were in Stapleton's own network. Additionally, all were foreign teachers. Japanese teachers were excluded on the assumption that they "teach 'reading' courses, which in effect are translation (from English to Japanese) courses" (Stapleton, 2000, p.294). This is quite a sweeping assumption and also suggests that the 28 teachers surveyed, who were of various nationalities, are similar to each other and equally different to the Japanese.

In terms of culture, there was no attempt to examine how culture was understood by teachers in terms of breadth of concept or how fluid or fixed their view was. Although there was mention of how teachers "used" culture in their classes, this is not the same as what teachers actually believe. Additionally, the way culture was used was often identified as shallow as it demonstrated "a lack of knowledge or awareness of cultural constructs such as hierarchy or collectivism" (Stapleton, 2000, p.298). This suggests that for Stapleton cultural constructs such as hierarchy and collectivism represent a deep, and possibly desirable, way to comprehend and present culture. As seen before (Section 1.4), these concepts are increasingly present in language teaching, but also have received considerable criticism from proponents of more recent views of culture.

Chapter 2

Contextual Issues

Language education and notions of culture do not develop in a vacuum. As the context in which teachers work has the potential to impact upon their beliefs and practices (Basturkmen, 2012), one can assume the same potential exists for their conceptualizations of culture and the way culture is manifest in their classes. This section will look at some of the contextual issues that may impact the cultural dimension of language teaching at universities in Japan. Though contextual variables are legion, the ones presented in this chapter (Nihonjinron – 2.1, Kokusaika – 2.2, Native-speakerism – 2.3, Support for teachers – 2.4) are those that are deemed to have the greatest relevance to the subject of culture and language teaching. It can be said that they also share a great deal of conceptual overlap and may reinforce or support each other in some way.

2.1 Nihonjinron

Nihonjinron (theories of the Japanese or Japaneseness), is an ongoing discussion that attempts to define who the Japanese are by highlighting characteristics that all Japanese are seen as possessing, and frequently offering explanations as to why they are in possession of them. Scholars of Nihonjinron, Befu and Manabe (1991, p.113) describe it as

A set of propositions about uniqueness of Japanese derived from traditional culture. It is presented [by proponents] as if a world characterized by this set of propositions, having to do with the Japanese national character, social structures, etc., is literally alive today.

As Nihonjinron is described as the discursive manifestation of cultural nationalism (Befu, 2001; Befu & Manabe, 1991), one would expect to see the majority of its proponents being Japanese. This is the case as a great number of the theories about Japaneseness originate from within Japan and, as such, Nihonjinron has been termed a ‘self-orientalising’ discourse (Iwabuchi, 1994; Mouer & Sugimoto, 1989).

The idea of Nihonjinron as self-orientalising is based on Edward Said's (1978) term 'orientalism'. Said used the term to describe a pervasive Western tradition, both academic and artistic, of prejudiced outsider interpretations of the East. Yet, by creating a caricature of Japanese through discussions of Japaneseness, proponents of Nihonjinron orientalize themselves and then present this image to the world as fact.

When attempting to orientalize, a source of reference is required. When asked why he examined Japaneseness from a 'Western' point of view, prolific contributor to Nihonjinron, Takeo Doi commented, "In fact I could not help doing so because Japanese culture did not produce any yardstick to judge itself critically" (1986, p.128). From Nihonjinron literature we see that this 'yardstick', in the majority of cases, is the United States. Indeed, in a study of Japanese university students found that over 75% students identified the foreigner as being an American and over half said that Americans were the group against whom they defined themselves (Bradley, 2013).

Though Japan and the United States have strong connections in recent history and are major trading partners, part of the reason for using the United States may be as Kubota (1999, p.298) suggests:

The notion of Japanese uniqueness often lacks legitimacy when Japan is compared to non-Western counterparts such as other Asian cultures.

In the attempt to differentiate Japanese from others, Nihonjinron proponents draw upon a plethora of disciplines such as history, climatology, psychoanalysis, ethnography, economics, business management, sociology and the literary genres of autobiography and travelogue (Buckley, 2002). However, the majority of Nihonjinron works are commentaries and lack empirical data and scientific proof to support their claims, resulting in much of it being viewed by some as an "academic joke" (Clammer, 2001).

Before looking at the content of Nihonjinron, I would like to make two points based on observations in the literature. Firstly, contributions to the field are not limited to only Japanese writers. Many foreign writers have contributed to discussions of Japaneseness (Benedict, 1946; De Mente, 1961, Reischauer, 1977). The theme and content is often the same as Japanese contributors with the only main difference being the nationality of the author. Though similar, these contributions fit with Said's concept of orientalism rather than self-orientalism as described by Mouer & Sugimoto.

The second is that despite *Nihonjinron* being a discussion of Japanese-ness, it is certainly not restricted to the Japanese. As *Nihonjinron* typically uses an imagined American as the Other, one could argue that the discourse is as much *Amerikajinron* as it is *Nihonjinron*. Though the following discussion will look at the idea of the Japanese as outlined in *Nihonjinron*, one must remember that a foreign national culture is often presented alongside that of the Japanese. Therefore *Nihonjinron* can be seen as occidentalising almost as much as it self-orientalises.

2.1.1 Tenets of *Nihonjinron*

Nihonjinron uses nationality, ethnicity and culture almost interchangeably in its attempt to describe the Japanese (Sugimoto, 1999; Buckley, 2002). A belief at the very core of *Nihonjinron* is that Japanese is an ethnic-national identity and the Japanese represent a unique and homogeneous group culturally and, as often is the case, racially. From this assumption spring a multitude of notions of “the Japanese” and “we Japanese” that assume an unchanging Japanese-ness that is in stark contrast to other peoples. The uniqueness, collectivism and interconnectedness of Japanese culture, nationality and ethnicity are assumptions that rest at the heart of *Nihonjinron* (Benedict, 1946; De Mente, 1961; Ishihara & Morita, 1989; Lebra, 1976; O’Sullivan, 1996; Nakane, 1970; Pritchard, 1995; Van Wolferen, 1989).

One may question such conclusions, yet when investigating *Nihonjinron*, one finds that such beliefs are neither rare, nor are they the most extreme. These core assumptions provide the basis for a great deal of work that many may find questionable. This includes connecting the Japanese race, climate and aesthetic design (Tanizaki, 1977), or suggestions that only Japanese can properly play traditional Japanese music (Mathews, 2004; Shepard, 1991). Perhaps most extreme are the physiological manifestations of *Nihonjinron* such as that of Tsunoda (1985) who claims that the Japanese use a different hemisphere of their brain to others and due to this they are more in tune with nature.

Although such leaps of faith are not rare in *Nihonjinron* literature, most contributors to the discourse of Japanese-ness are content to simply offer a characterisation of the Japanese personality. This may be that Japanese are quiet, reserved, polite, know their place in society and are group orientated (O’Sullivan, 1996), that their actions are dictated by *tatemae* (surface feelings) and *honne* (one’s real feelings) (Sugimoto, 2003), or that

harmony is promoted at almost all costs (Ishihara & Morita, 1991; Lebra, 1976). Despite such a vast array of contributions to Nihonjinron, one can identify the major assumptions within the discourse as being the uniqueness of Japanese culture and society, and the homogeneity of its people. These assumptions are seen as being manifest in uniquely Japanese forms of communication.

2.1.2 Nihonjinron and language

The suggested high levels of empathy and non-verbal communication abilities of Japanese have been seen by some Nihonjinron commentators as extending to mind to mind communication (Befu & Manabe, 1991). Indeed, foreign commentators have commented that, “The Japanese were so attuned to each other’s attitudes and manners that the slightest hint or gesture was sufficient to convey their meaning with an almost magical facility” (De Mente 1961, p.10) and that, in Japan, “successful communication is believed to depend largely on empathic and intuitive abilities of the listeners” (Tobin, Wu & Davidson, 1989, p.191).

Such beliefs hint at another key concept within Nihonjinron; the Japanese language is inseparable from Japanese culture. Whereas the interconnectedness of culture and language has been identified by many scholars (Duranti, 1997; Hall, 1959; Kramsch et al., 1996) (see Section 1.1), contributors to Nihonjinron take it as an absolute suggesting that the Japanese language is a cultural commodity available only to the Japanese (Befu & Manabe, 1991) and unmistakably reflects Japanese culture (Befu, 2003; Gottlieb, 2005). The use of clear levels of formality through *keigo* (honourific language) is a frequently cited example (Befu, 2003; Gottlieb, 2005).

A somewhat extreme notion that results from this is that Japanese can only be spoken by Japanese. Commentator on the Japanese educational system, Brian McVeigh, illustrates this by stating that:

Japanese speaking non-Japanese who are “white” are big news in Japan, often appearing in the media, derogatorily called “talking-dog foreigners” by some Japanese, meaning that they are famous because, like a dog that speaks, they are doing something unnatural (McVeigh, 2004, p.191).

A belief in the unique possession of the Japanese language by Japanese based either on

cultural or racial grounds, suggests that the learning of Japanese is an insurmountable challenge for non-Japanese. The uniqueness of the Japanese language is also manifest in the separation of foreign ‘loan’ words (usually written in katakana script, reserved exclusively for foreign words) and words that are seen as ‘purely’ Japanese.

Some of the concepts represented by ‘purely’ Japanese words are said to have no English equivalent (such as *ie* which is translated as house but is claimed to have much more complex connotations) (Dale, 1986). Non-Japanese who dispute this linguistic determinism are said to not understand something that makes instinctive sense to people of Japanese blood (Dale, 1986).

2.1.3 The popularity of Nihonjinron

In cultural matters, it is not demand that creates supply, it is the other way round.

- Joseph Brodsky, On Grief and Reason.

It could be argued that every country has its own equivalent of Nihonjinron and there are discussions on what it means to be British or Chinese or French so discussions of Japanese are no different. Yet the fact that such discourses exists does not necessarily mean that anyone listens to them or subscribes to the ideas they transmit.

Nihonjinron would seem to differ from the cultural nationalism of many other states by its sheer vitality, breadth and, particularly, its popularity. Indeed, long term commentator on education in Japan, Roger Goodman (1990, p.59), suggests that, “it would be difficult to exaggerate the extent to which Nihonjinron beliefs are held in Japan.”

The number of Nihonjinron books produced between 1945 and 1999 has been estimated at over 1000 and the stereotyping of Japanese culture during this period described as a “national sport” (Sugimoto, 1999, p.81). Both Japanese writers (Nakane, 1970; Ishihara & Morita, 1991) and foreign writers (Benedict, 1946; Reischauer, 1977) sell millions of copies in Japan and are regularly reprinted. Such is the demand that bookshops in Japan have had sections devoted to Nihonjinron works (Iwabuchi, 1994). The opinions of foreigners seem to be particularly sought out as books which deal with the generalities of Japaneseness are quickly translated and made available for the general public (Befu & Manabe, 1991).

The discourse is not limited to academics and commentators. Celebrated authors such as Tanazaki (1977) and the highly controversial figure of Yukio Mishima (Nathan, 1974) all contribute to the discourse as do politicians and famous business people. One time actor, Minister of Transport and Mayor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara and co-founder and former CEO of Sony, Akio Morita, co-authored the text 'The Japan That Can Say No' (Ishihara & Morita, 1991) which explained the strengths of Japanese society. Former Prime Ministers Ohira and Nakasone are also contributors (Iwabuchi, 1994).

Contributions to *Nihonjinron* today seem less numerous. This may be due to the increasing criticism *Nihonjinron* has faced from academics such as Dale (1986), Kubota (2002) and, most notably, Befu (2001), or the improved international standing of Japan (Mouer & Sugimoto, 1989). Whatever the reasons, *Nihonjinron* is not as active a field as it once was, though this is not to say it has ceased to be active at all. Works explicitly propagating the assumptions contained within *Nihonjinron* have still been produced from the mid-1990s (Befu, 2001). Iwabuchi (2004) suggests that *Nihonjinron* simply has switched to different genres and is distributed in a more implicit fashion.

Despite the large number of critical analyses of *Nihonjinron*, only few attempts seem to have been made to assess how widely believed the major assumptions of *Nihonjinron* are. Manabe, Befu and McConnell's (1987) study that over 70% of Japanese respondents were aware of the characterisations of *Nihonjinron*. In addition, 40% were found to have read at least one *Nihonjinron* book, however, most people (82%) were found to be interested in *Nihonjinron* through newspapers or television (79%) rather than through books (51%).

Despite such a high number of people being aware of *Nihonjinron*, 38% accepted its notion of homogeneity though less than 30% of respondents agreed with its assumptions on understanding Japanese culture, speaking Japanese, having mutual understanding and integrating into Japanese society. Even though such percentages may seem low, if one generalizes them across a Japanese population of approximately 125 million, the number of people with such beliefs becomes quite staggering. In addition, this number is for people who clearly identify their beliefs with the discourse of *Nihonjinron*.

In a more recent study, Bradley (2013) surveyed 190 Japanese university students on their subscription to the tenets of *Nihonjinron* in both a weak (cultural homogeneity, uniqueness, lack of comprehension by foreigners) and a strong form (tenets of

Nihonjinron plus the racial aspects). Little support was found for the racial dimension. Additionally, despite substantial support being found for the key non-racial tenets of weak Nihonjinron, only 5% of students were aware of the discourse of Nihonjinron, a significant drop from that of 38% found by Manabe, Befu and McConnell's (1987). These findings support Iwabuchi's (2004) view that although Nihonjinron is far from being extinct, it is now more implicit than explicit.

2.1.4 Nihonjinron and education

Instilling an identity that is guided by the principles of Nihonjinron would seem to start from an early age. Cave (2007, p.213) examining primary education in Japan suggests that learning from even this early age “involves not only education in subjects such as mathematics or Japanese, but also, and more deeply, education in what it means to be a person.” The major emphasis in this was on promoting interdependence, an integral element of Nihonjinron and one which is reinforced by the organization and content of academic learning (Cave, 2007).

This focus would appear to continue throughout the education of Japanese students. Writing about Japanese high schools, Yoneyama (1999, p.22) suggests that these institutions continue the creation of Japaneseness as “the reproduction of the normative consensus, i.e. internalisation of group values and nationalistic values (*Nihonjin to shiteno jikaku*), has indeed been the focus of Japanese education”. Ultimately, “Japanese education plays the central role in heightening the level of acceptance of the taken-for-granted ‘reality’ among Japanese” (Yoneyama, 1999, p.23). This is a view of education in Japan that is shared by many (Anderson, 1993; Azuma, 1998; Horio, 1991; Kobayashi, 1976; McVeigh, 2000, 2002).

Indeed, Goodman (1990) and McVeigh (1998) highlight the massively disproportionate attention that is given to *kikokushijo* (a term invented by the Ministry of Education for children returning to Japan from a period spent overseas). The very fact that the Ministry of Education has created a label for students who have spent time overseas can be understood as indicating an assumption that time out of Japan will irrevocably alter students to such a degree that reintegration is an issue. Kikokushijo comprise just 0.2% of the population and, though they may have been out of Japan for only a matter of weeks, there are support groups for returnees, they are given extra Japanese classes as standard and are even the source of derision through the use of such terms as “*han-Japa*” (half-

Japanese), “*hen na Nihonjin*” (strange Japanese), or “*chútohanpa Nihonjin*” (half-baked Japanese) (Goodman, 1990). The attention given to kikokushijo is seen as being unwarranted due to the short time many are overseas and the fact that many attend Japanese schools while overseas (Goodman, 1990; Takeuchi et al., 2001; Yoshida et al., 2002).

Within Japan, it is clear that English language teaching is not exempted from the influence of Nihonjinron. Aspinall (2003) highlights the dilemma in the learning of English:

On the one hand, they [Japanese] are subjected to the incessant message that the English language is the pathway to success (both professional and social), and on the other, they are warned that those Japanese people who become too good at English pose a threat to their own and their nation’s fundamental identity (Aspinall, 2003: 104).

English is therefore something that will help you out but, should you become too good, you will cease to be Japanese, a point certainly implied in discussions of kikokushijo. Although this dilemma is not isolated to Japan (Canagarajah, 1999; Crystal, 1997), such a view is clearly consistent with Nihonjinron in emphasising the absolute inseparability of the Japanese identity and Japanese language. Indeed, some Japanese nationalist scholars suggest that Japanese should be proud of their poor English (Aspinall, 2003).

Of course, most Japanese learners of English do not wish to remain at a low level of English proficiency and will want to improve. Additionally there is a growing belief that Japanese can learn foreign languages (Gottlieb, 2005). However, proficiency in learning the language may not always be viewed as the primary goal. *Eikaiwa* (English conversation schools) are extremely popular in Japan and are big business. One reason for the popularity of learning English is that language and culture have been turned into a commodity, often based on the Japan-Other dichotomy, and offered in bite size pieces. This has led to the suggestion that much English learning in Japan is simply ‘the consumption of Otherness’ (McVeigh, 2000).

The worries over identity associated with the study of English and the rather negative reaction to students who have spent time overseas may seem inconsistent with the desire to develop internationalization in schools and society in general which has been a priority of governments since the 1980s (Goodman, 2007; Lincicome, 1993) an important

discourse since the 1960s (Oliver, 2009) and has been formalized in several MEXT (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Science and Technology) policy announcements (MEXT, 2003a, 2003b, 2008). However, when one examines the discussion surrounding *kokusaika* (internationalization) in Japan, one sees that such actions are not necessarily out of step.

2.2. Kokusaika

Kokusaika is similar to *Nihonjinron* in that it purveys many different aspects of Japan and consequently means different things to different people because, as Befu (1983) points out, it is a term that is never introduced with a definition. The multiple understandings have led Goodman (2007) to understand it as a multivocal symbol and one which has been embraced by educational reformers as a “national imperative” (Linicombe, 1993, p.124).

Internationalization as a global concept that transcends national identity and promotes cultural diversity threatens the cultural and linguistic essentialism contained within the assumptions of *Nihonjinron*. As a result, *kokusaika* represents Japan’s struggle to claim power in the international community while affirming a distinct Japanese identity (Kubota, 2002). *Kokusaika* is Japan’s answer to the “highly charged political economic terrain in which Japan was seen as pitted against impinging foreign forces” (Oliver, 2009, p.52) and “blends Westernization with nationalism, failing to promote cosmopolitan pluralism” (Kubota, 2002:14). By incorporating western elements and keeping them separate and clearly distinct, internationalization can claim to be alive and well in Japan thereby satiating the demands of the international community. At the same time the clearly distinct western elements within Japanese society accentuate the dichotomy between Japan and a western world dominated by the United States (Kubota, 2002), a dichotomy informed by the assumptions within *Nihonjinron*. *Kokusaika* would seem to be an attempt to have the best of both worlds, but in actuality, possibly having neither.

An example in an educational context is the use of native-speaker assistant language teachers (ALTs) in pre-tertiary education. The majority of ALTs are employed through the JET Programme operated by MEXT and can only work for a maximum of five years. The two main objectives of the ALT are to assist in English language instruction in schools and to help promote internationalization in schools (MEXT, 2003a, 2003b, 2008). With the vast majority of ALTs coming from the United States and the United Kingdom Kubota

(2002) would seem correct in her suggestion that kokusaika is preoccupied with the Anglophone West and that learning foreign languages essentially means learning English.

Such views highlight the superficiality of kokusaika and the possible political reasons for this. Seargeant (2005, p.313) writing on education reform in Japan came to a similar conclusion, equating kokusaika to a “process of simulation, of recasting the concept of internationalism according to specific Japanese needs, of presenting an internationalist image to the international community while still managing to adhere to a nationalist or even isolationist agenda.”

This alleged hollowness of kokusaika would also appear to be the case outside of the classroom. From his examination of government policies and directives aimed at promoting kokusaika, Seargeant (2005) concluded that “Japan’s international program simply requires its citizens to be politer to foreigners and to travel abroad more.” Further examples can be seen in the realms of international business (Yamaguchi, 1988), and the push to internationalize Japanese universities (Goodman, 2007).

The gradual change in beliefs from insular to global, and an increase in, or acceptance of, cultural pluralism that one would typically associate with internationalization appear not to be the dominant driving force in kokusaika. Far from breaking down barriers, kokusaika “reinforces cultural nationalism through constructing a rigid cultural boundary between Us and Them” (Kubota, 2002, p.23): the ‘Us’ here being a homogeneous Japanese characterized by the assumptions within *Nihonjinron*, and ‘Them’ being the West typified by the United States.

2.3 Native-speakerism

The idea of native-speakerism was first put forward by Adrian Holliday who described it as “a pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘Western culture’ from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology” (Holliday, 2006, p.385). Native-speakerism holds that teachers whose mother tongue is English, usually from countries such as the USA, UK, Australia etc., represent the desired end, linguistically speaking, towards which language learners should strive (Holliday, 2006; 2013). In addition, native-speaker (NS) teachers are often seen as possessing a communicative teaching philosophy as default. This belief that NS teachers and non-native speaker

(NNS) teachers favour different teaching methodologies and have different teaching philosophies is implicit in such educational initiatives as the JET Programme (MEXT, 2003a, 2003b, 2008) as well as the academic literature. Holliday (1994), for example, suggests friction between the communicative methodologies developed in Western language schools that are brought by foreign teachers into NNS contexts, and the more traditional teacher centred approaches that are seen as being preferred (see Section 1.4.6).

From my experience within different institutions, I have severe reservations as to whether teachers, NS or NNS, subscribe to native-speakerism in the numbers or the degree to which Holliday seems to suggest (2006, 2013b). Additionally, I would argue that native-speaker sentiment decreases at the university level as all teachers are required to be qualified to a similar level, regardless of nationality, and identify themselves as English teachers. As the supervisor of teachers of various nationalities teaching at university in Japan, I witness a great variety of teaching styles and beliefs that clearly contradict the assumptions regarding preferences for certain methodologies.

However, my personal experience and the literature (Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Masden, 2013) suggest that native-speakerism may be more pervasive among the non-teaching, administrative and policy making parts of educational institutions, most of whom, in my experience, are not teachers or directly involved in classroom practice. Whether a teacher is NS or NNS is often a key factor in hiring decisions, contract status, opportunities for advancement (Masden, 2013) and which classes are assigned to the teacher. The administration at Japanese universities has a hand in all these matters. From conversations with administrative and PR departments at different universities, a reason for this may come from the desire of students to have NS teachers, who are often assumed to conduct lively and fun communicative classes.

Although native-speakerism stems from what Holliday terms ‘cultural disbelief’ – “a conviction that ‘non-Western’ cultural realities are deficient” (Holliday, 2013b, p.17), it would seem clear that the native-speakerism found within some Japanese universities comes from a different source. Native-speakerism in Japan may be desired to some degree as placing NSs as the possessors of English justifies and reinforces key themes in *Nihonjinron*, most notably linguistic nationalism (Kramersch, 1998), and the connection between Japanese culture and Japanese language. As Rivers (2010, p.319) points out, “one of the most potentially relevant variables in foreign language learning is the respective strength of certain dimensions of national attachment or identification,

especially when learning a language as ideologically symbolic and globally prominent as English.”

Hall (1991, p.21) declared that “to be English is to know yourself in relation to the French, and the hot-blooded Mediterranean, and the passionate, traumatized Russian soul.” In a similar vein, many Japanese know themselves in relation to the West, most notably in relation to Americans who were overwhelmingly identified as the Other against whom notions of the Japanese and Japaneseness are often built (Bradley, 2013). To take a Nihonjinron view that bundles together the nation and language as one, learners becoming proficient in English may be viewed as becoming less Japanese. In wider Japanese society this could have a negative impact on a person’s standing in society as has been seen by students returning from extended periods of study overseas (Kanno, 2011).

Ultimately, Nihonjinron, kokusaika and native-speakerism may represent different expressions of a fundamental essentialized belief that the Japanese are a group apart from others. When language is introduced, as it is especially with Nihonjinron and native-speakerism, these contextual issues become of great concern for the language teacher as they reveal assumptions on the causal relationships between language and culture. They do so, however, often without any need for evidence or understanding of the relationship between culture and language.

2.4 Support for teachers

Different approaches to culture exist and these will inevitably result in the creation of different materials, teaching guides, teacher training, assessment criteria, and more, which aims to assist the teacher in better improving the quality of their classes regarding the cultural dimension. The training options open to teachers, and the coursebooks that teachers may use or have access too are all potential influences on the beliefs they may have regarding culture as a concept, the relevance of the concept to language teaching and the way it is manifest in their classes. This section will investigate some of these potentially influential areas by looking at the support available to teachers looking to develop the cultural dimension of their language teaching.

2.4.1 Textbooks

The pros and cons of published materials are examined in a number of publications (Breen,

1984; Graves, 2000; McGrath, 2002; Richards, 2001; Saraceni, 2003; Thornbury & Meddings, 2001; Tomlinson, 2001; Woodward, 2001) with the consensus being that published materials result from and result in a compromise (Bell & Gower, 1998; Harmer, 2001; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Islam & Mares, 2003). This is seen as being particularly true for intercultural language teaching where “intercultural” is relegated to little more than a “trendy label” (Medgyes, 2017, p.494), due to the conservative nature of publishers (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Mares, 2003; Stranks, 2003). Although textbooks may represent a compromise, they often do serve as syllabi for teachers, thereby providing a potential influence upon the cultural dimension of classes. As teachers may often have power over which textbooks are selected, textbook choices may reflect their understandings of culture and mirror the importance placed on the cultural dimension of language teaching.

An investigation of textbooks used in various European educational contexts led Skopinskaja (2003) to offer the following summary of strengths and weaknesses in relation to the cultural dimension of language teaching:

Positive trends:

- An increase in attempts to include intercultural activities;
- An attempt to create reality in coursebook texts by including serious social issues;
- An attempt to personalize the FLL process by providing opportunities for exchange of views;
- A large range of accents and voices which provides good listening practices;

Negative trends:

- Subordination of the goal of culture teaching to other goals;
- The absence of controversial social issues in texts and activities;
- Tourism-orientated representation of the cultural character of the foreign society;
- Stereotypical representation of target cultures as well as students’ own;
- The excessive focus on language form, and the neglect of intercultural communication;
- The obvious scripting of listening texts;
- The Anglo-centric focus of coursebooks;

(Skopinskaja, 2003, p.52)

As a means of investigating the coursebook options available to teachers at Japanese

universities, and to what degree the literature on the cultural dimension of language teaching may have influenced the production of language learning materials, I examined the textbook catalogues of six large publishing houses that operate in Japan and whose materials are used by many teachers. The companies include both global and local publishing houses. The 2017 textbook catalogue of each company was examined. These catalogues are sent to teachers and language departments at most universities in Japan and representatives of these companies frequently visit campuses.

Figure 12 gives information about the company and the frequency of textbooks in their catalogues that reference a cultural consideration, component or outcome in the synopsis. An example of the results can be seen in Appendix 2. The search criteria were broad and included references to culture in terms of global issues, learning context, culture and language, cross-cultural issues, intercultural studies, identity, ELF, customs and stereotypes.

Figure 12. Frequency of culture related content identified in the textbook synopses of major publishers operating in Japan

Company	Number of textbooks referencing culture or connected theme	
Kinseido	30.4%	7/23
Nan'un-Do	22.6%	12/53
MacMillan Education	21%	4/19
Oxford	12%	3/25
Pearson	11%	3/27
Cambridge	0%	0/34

The number of textbooks making mention of culture is low considering the importance placed by the literature on the cultural dimension of language teaching. The absence of any mention of culture or related terminology in the sections of the Cambridge catalogue that were examined is particularly startling. Though one cannot know the exact reasons why, one can speculate that it may be because, as an international publisher, Cambridge lack a specific target context and wish to avoid the mention of “culture” or related terms which may suggest a more local focus.

Of the textbooks that do reference the cultural dimension in some way, when we examine the context of use and the connection to language learning, teaching and language, usage

suggests a largely superficial understanding of culture, one related to those found in the foreign-cultural or cross-cultural approaches (Section 1.4.1 & 1.4.2) and which closely mirrors the negative trends found by Skopinskaja (2003). However, the catalogues of publishers, particularly Japanese publishers who offer a larger number of titles with a more overt culture connection typically use culture as content for discussions and class activities. The approach taken tends to be cross-cultural with Japan being offered up for comparison with a cultural Other, most likely the nationality of the teacher. Although there is some consideration of diversity within Japan in some textbooks, which suggests a somewhat superficial multicultural approach, there is often little in terms of critically assessing culture or requiring students to move beyond the concepts or knowledge they may already hold. It should be said that this is not the case for all texts and *Intercultural Communication for English Language Learners in Japan* (McConachy et al., 2017) is a notable exception that emphasises the development of a fluid and sophisticated concept of culture.

Looking at Figure 12, we can also see that the two publishing houses offering the most textbooks that make clear reference to culture or the cultural dimension of language teaching are Japanese companies. The higher number of cross-cultural texts based on rather static and homogenous national categories could be due to the fact that they cater exclusively for the Japanese market. If, as the synopses and examination of texts suggests, a national cross-cultural approach underpins most textbooks, publishers who are targeting one specific national market are likely to offer such work. Additionally, one may argue that this can be influenced by *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1) and conform to, perhaps unwittingly, the goals of *Kokusaika* (Section 2.2).

Ultimately, as pointed out by experts in the field, textbooks represent “proposals for action” (Harmer, 2001, p.8), and a “stimulus or instrument for teaching” (Graves, 200, p.175). They are a starting point that is built on and expanded by the expertise of the teacher in response to the needs of students. This places the views, experience and training of teachers at the forefront of the cultural dimension. What teachers highlight or skip over has the potential to influence the cultural dimension of classes (Weninger & Kiss, 2012). An ability to adapt, discuss or approach the cultural dimension through the use of materials would appear to be vital yet, as shall be discussed in the following section, this is not something teachers are likely to have training in or, possibly, be cognizant of. Ideally, textbooks should provide teachers with an effective stimulus for cultural discussion and the development of a sophisticated understanding of culture, but the

evidence points to this not being the case.

2.4.2 Training and education

The theoretical, the professional, and the personal all intermingle (Edge, 1996, p.9).

Though one may contest which has primacy, there can be little debate regarding the statement from Edge that teachers' actions are based on their teacher training, the realities of their job / teaching context, and their personal experiences. If teachers lack training or instruction on the cultural dimension of language teaching, it would suggest that they would only have the requirements of their teaching context and their life experience to guide them, the latter of which can be highly influential and enduring if unchecked (Nespor, 1987). For teachers entering training programmes, this is precisely the opposite of what Johnson suggests is desired:

Teachers do not enter teacher education programs to mirror the experiences they have in the everyday world. Instead, they expect to engage in practices that will, by design, enable them to materialize and enact theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices that support productive language learning within the contexts in which they teach (Johnson, 2015, p.526).

It is questionable whether this is happening regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching. A review of job postings on various job boards will clearly show that a master level degree in TESOL or Applied Linguistics is typically the gate keeping qualification for most English language teacher positions at universities in Japan. This certainly does not mean that the cultural dimension of language teaching is part of instruction in a way that is consistent with recent literature if it is addressed at all. My own experience of undertaking a Masters degree suggests that the cultural dimension is under-represented as an element in the course of study. The subject of culture was only a central feature of a single class of a compulsory course and no electives were available at that time.

As this was the situation several years ago at just one university, I conducted a small scale investigation to examine the courses offered by universities in several native speaker countries and Japan. These countries were chosen as being the ones from which a large

number of university teachers receive their master degrees either on-site or, as increasingly seems to be the case, by distance. A simple Google search was conducted using the search phrase “MA TESOL, [country name]”. The course information available online was then examined for any mention of culture or related themes in the course description and for the frequency of classes that stated culture related content. The qualifying criteria for courses to be deemed to have some cultural content or connection was rather loose and included mentions of culture as learning context, culture and language, sociolinguistics, cross-cultural issues, intercultural studies, ethnography and identity. Despite the breadth of the search criteria, which had the potential to cover a wide range of understandings of culture whether specifically termed “culture” or not, the number of courses containing such content was typically very low as can be seen in Figure13.

Figure 13. Number of courses listed as having a cultural or culture related theme or focus

University / Country	Course	Compulsory Classes	Elective Classes
Canada			
Simon Frazer University	M.Ed. Teaching English as an Additional Language	2	0
York University	M.A. Applied Linguistics	0	6
University of British Columbia	M.Ed. TESL	2	0
Brock University	M.A. Applied Linguistics	1	1
St Mary’s University	M.Ed. Curriculum Studies TESL	1	0
Australia			
Victoria University	Master of TESOL Education	2	3
Monash University	Master of TESOL	0	1
University of Melbourne	Master of TESOL	0	2
Western Sydney University	Master of Arts (TESOL)	3*	0

University of Sydney	M.Ed. (TESOL)	1	2
Japan**			
Soka University	M.A. International Language Education: TESOL	1	1
Temple University, Tokyo	M.S. in Education, concentration in TESOL	0	1
Nagoya University of Foreign Studies	M.A. TESOL	0	2
Kansai University, Graduate School of Foreign Language Education and Research	M.A. Foreign Language Education	0	15
U.K.			
Manchester University	M.A. TESOL	1	2
University of Leicester	M.A. TESOL	1	3
University of York	M.A. TESOL	0	2
University of Glasgow	M.Ed. TESOL	0	1
University of Leeds	M.A. TESOL	0	2
U.S.			
University of San Francisco	M.A. TESOL	0	5
New York University, Steinhardt	M.A. TESOL	0	4
The Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey	M.A. TESOL***	1	0
Boston University	M.Ed. TESOL	0	1
California State University, Los Angeles	M.A. TESOL	1	2

*The courses were termed “recommended sequence” rather than being explicitly labelled as “compulsory”.

**Course information for Japanese universities was retrieved via their English websites. These sites were often basic and lacking information. One university was removed from consideration because no course information was listed.

***This university had two TESOL paths, one of which was called an “intercultural competence” path. The standard path courses are shown.

Of the twenty-four institutions examined, only twelve had a compulsory course that stated content related to culture. Cultural content or considerations were typically more concentrated in elective classes, which suggests a lack of central importance. However, if we more closely examine the content of the courses regarding culture (see Appendix 3 for an example), we can see that most cases typically relate to cultural differences in teaching contexts or as a vague reference to the “sociocultural” or “multiple cultures”. The concept of culture suggested in these synopses appears to more closely represent the cross-cultural or multi-cultural approaches to culture rather than the transcultural approach highlighted by recent literature (Section 1.4.4). This is also the conclusion of Hua et al. (2017) who highlight the contradiction of universities being places one would expect to see concepts of culture that more accurately align with recent research, but yet which overwhelmingly continue to use more dated understandings.

Although class synopses are brief by definition and may not give a fully accurate picture of the approach to culture within the courses, it is clear that the cultural dimension of language teaching is severely under-represented in teacher education courses if one considers the weight given to it in the academic literature. This is the case too in the course overviews and course introductions for entire master degree programmes as nine institutions did not make reference to the cultural dimension in any form.

The view that “teachers who will introduce their students to new cultural values and beliefs as part of the development of intercultural competence themselves need to experience and reflect on what it means in practice” (Williams, 2001, p.111) is reasonable and highlights the need for training on the cultural dimension of language teaching. University level teacher education programmes such as M.A. TESOL courses would seem to offer an ideal opportunity for this. It would appear that more needs to be done to “encourage TESOL educators to require student reflection and sharing on their own cultural trajectories as preparation for their future work as language teachers” (Menard-

Warwick, 2008, p.636).

Yet if we look at the courses offered at many universities then there seems to be little opportunity to gain this knowledge or to engage in such reflection. It certainly would seem to fall short of the desired outcomes of teacher training which “must not rest solely on what teachers come to know about L2 teaching, but on the extent to which engagement in these practices becomes internalized psychological tools for teaching and thinking” (Johnson, 2015, p.526).

Administrators of master degree level programmes for TESOL or Applied Linguistics may well claim in response that, as an academic course of study, the focus is to develop theoretical understandings rather than practical abilities. Such a justification would seem to be largely based on one of two assumptions. Firstly it assumes that teachers have the ability to translate theory into classroom practice without guidance or, alternatively, it assumes that teachers have already had more practice-focused training previously and elsewhere.

Even if teachers are experienced and have had previous teacher training, this does not necessarily mean that the cultural dimension of language teaching was part of it. Additionally, the previous training that teachers may have had prior to joining a M.A. TESOL or Applied Linguistics course is also likely to have had little place for the cultural dimension of language teaching, particularly with regards to a transcultural approach. One such example is the CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages): a common language teaching qualification that is often desired by language schools in Japan. This qualification is achievable in one month of full time study and is offered in many countries (CELTA, 2015a). Although typically being insufficient to allow employment at the university level in Japan, it can increase job potential and salary within Japan’s language schools and represents a stepping stone qualification.

An examination of the CELTA Candidate Record Booklet (2007), suggests little regarding the importance of the cultural dimension. Indeed, the only possible exception is the following requirement in how teachers should demonstrate their intercultural competence:

1b: teaching class with an awareness of learning styles and cultural factors that may affect learning

- Find out from learners and peers about the cultural backgrounds of learners
- Use this information for selecting materials and activity types where appropriate
- Use this information when setting up pair and group work and dealing with students in open class where appropriate

(CELTA, 2007, p.25)

However, in the 2015 Syllabus and Assessment Guidelines, these points have been extended somewhat (CELTA, 2015b). Figure 14 shows Unit 1 of the five training units of CELTA. Units 2-5 focus on more traditional aspects of language teaching such as teaching the four skills, planning classes and developing professionalism. Although Unit 1 makes reference of world Englishes, multiculturalism, multilingualism and the role of L1 languages, all of which are foci of the transcultural approach, the clear understanding and focus of the cultural dimension of language teaching in Unit 1 is cultural considerations for the classroom and dealing with learners. Considerations of the role English will play for learners in the world, the way in which English is and will be used, borderless cultures, empathy development and so on, would seem to be absent.

Figure 14. Topic 1 of the Certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages (CELTA, 2015b: 6)

TOPIC 1 – Learners and teachers, and the teaching and learning context

Ref	Syllabus content	Learning outcomes <i>Successful candidates are able to:</i>	Assessment
1.1	Cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds	understand the range of backgrounds and experiences that adult learners bring to their classes	Teaching practice: planning and teaching
1.2	Motivations for learning English as an adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. understand the different motivations and expectations that adults bring to learning English b. identify ways in which personal factors may affect language learning c. make practical use of this knowledge and understanding to plan and teach with sensitivity d. develop and maintain motivation, identify and respond to expectations 	Assignment: <i>Focus on the learner</i>
1.3	Learning and teaching styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. demonstrate an awareness of the different learning styles and preferences that adults bring to learning English b. demonstrate an awareness of the different roles teachers may adopt at different stages of teaching and in different teaching/learning contexts c. make practical use of this awareness in planning and teaching 	
1.4	Context for learning and teaching English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. understand in broad terms the context in which teaching is taking place with special reference to the learners, the physical surroundings and the availability of resources b. understand the broad range of learning needs including the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities c. make practical use of this understanding in adapting teaching to contexts and learners' needs 	
1.5	Varieties of English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. understand the main ways that varieties of English differ from one another b. demonstrate awareness of the need for teachers and learners to make informed choices about language models for teaching and learning c. make practical use of this knowledge and awareness in planning and teaching 	
1.6	Multilingualism and the role of first languages	understand the kinds of language backgrounds that learners may come from (e.g. multilingual/monolingual; standard/non-standard) and how a learner's language background might influence the learning of English	

The absence of guidance and training on the cultural dimension in practical training courses such as CELTA and more theoretical university courses, such as M.A. TESOL has also been reported in training programs for teachers at pre-tertiary levels (Sales Ciges & Garcia Lopez, 2006). The problem is also not something exclusive to any particular context or group as Harklau (1999) and Lazaraton (2003) both highlight a lack of cultural awareness from native-speaker and non-native speaker teachers respectively.

This all begs the question: How can teachers reasonably be expected to consider, understand and guide learners regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching when there are very little opportunities for teacher training in either theoretical or practical form? Teaching is a busy and demanding job, and any assumption that teachers will seek out recent research articles on the cultural dimension is one that is both unfamiliar with the realities of the profession and with the impractical view that many teachers hold regarding research articles (Medgyes, 2017). It also seems unreasonable to assume that intercultural ability and awareness of the cultural dimension will simply develop as teaching experience is gained as it is said that, “teachers exhibit a great deal of variance in terms of reflectiveness” (Medgyes, 2017, p.497).

Prospective teachers may enter teacher training classes with little knowledge or any strong beliefs concerning vocabulary retention, correction strategies, or grammar instruction, but culture is a word that teachers will already know well and possibly have certain views on. As culture is a concept that is used and experienced a great deal out of the language classroom, teachers have much greater potential to enter training courses with strong or fixed views regarding culture that run contrary to those highlighted in the language learning literature. With little instruction, discussion, debate or reflection on these, it would appear that such views will be carried, often unknowingly, into their own classrooms.

2.4.3 Assessing culture

As we have seen, textbooks and teacher training are both areas which have the potential to guide teachers in practice and possibly influence beliefs. The same may be true of means of assessing the cultural dimension. Should teachers adopt an approach to culture and see themselves as teaching it in some way, consideration must be given to assessment. Given that the idea of intercultural competence is still developing (Corbett, 2010), this may be more problematic than other areas of assessment.

This section will consider some prominent examples of assessment within the cultural dimension of language teaching before discussing the role of assessment from a critical standpoint. Though one may consider assessment a single issue and, one may argue, not one of pressing concern regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching, it is within this area that the many problems of culture arise and are salient. Perhaps most importantly, assessment is an area which quite clearly shows the gulf that teachers face regarding an

attempt to connect the literature on culture to actual teaching practice. For this reason it alone is an area worthy of investigation.

Though the freedom teachers at Japanese universities have regarding assessment may be limited by the demands of institutions (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Feryok, 2008), they typically enjoy a significant degree of flexibility and control over the courses they teach. If the cultural dimension of language teaching is given a great deal of time and consideration by the teacher as part of a course, there is likely to be some reasonable expectation from the student, institution and parents that the learning outcomes will be assessed in some way. Assessment for more recent approaches may require much greater consideration of how to identify and quantify competence as concepts become more fluid. However, work on how this may be done is somewhat limited. This is in stark contrast to the wealth of work on what teachers should be doing regarding the cultural dimension, why it is important and what competence means (Hua, 2014; Jackson, 2014; Scollon & Scollon, 1995).

Literature on the practical will inevitably be a step behind the theoretical, but in terms of the cultural dimension, it appears to be several steps behind. Hall's (2012) work *Teaching and researching language and culture*, Kramsch's (1993) *Context and culture in language teaching*, De Capua & Wintergest's (2004) *Crossing cultures in the language classroom* and Andersen et al.'s (2006) *Culture in language teaching* are prominent examples of large scale works that do not include considerations of assessment. More recent work, (Kohler, 2015; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) does include some discussion of assessment, but its position is still minor and peripheral. The lack of attention paid to assessment may be due to the belief that the cultural dimension represents "a highly individualized and developmental kind of learning" (Kohler, 2015, p.31), that is difficult to capture in assessment.

However, suggestions for assessment of the cultural dimension are put forward. Whereas early approaches may have been able to assess competence through fact / knowledge based questions, recent approaches highlight that competence relates to some form of attitudinal and awareness 'development' as well as the ability to employ language in certain situations. These offerings are not unproblematic and the issues facing them, which one may argue is symptomatic of the cultural dimension of language teaching as a whole, will be discussed at the end of this section.

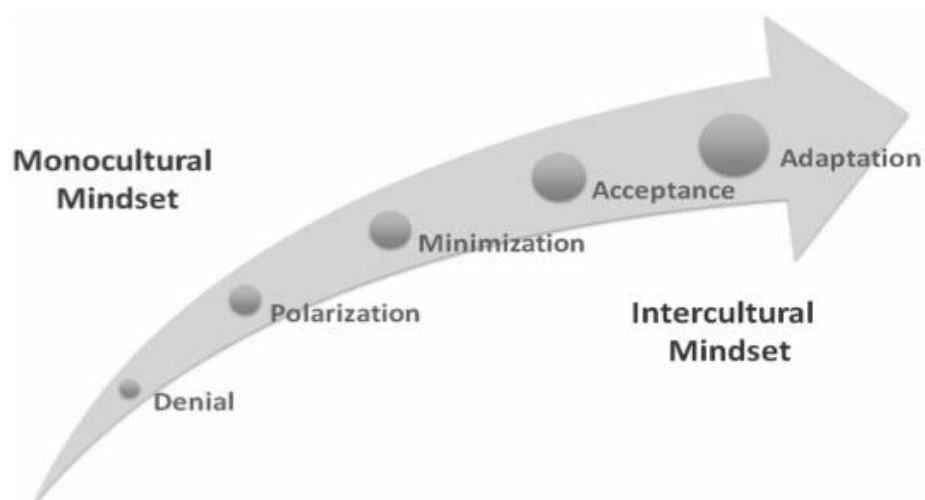
Assessment: Affective aspects

Development of the cultural dimension along attitudinal lines or increased awareness is contained within the cultural outcomes sought in many curricula in different contexts (Beacco et al., 2016; Phillips & MacLowhon, 2013), is at the heart of numerous textbooks (McConachy et al., 2017) and single activity materials (Corbett, 2010; Utley, 2012). However, assessing the attitudinal / cultural awareness element of cultural competence has typically received greater attention from outside of the field of English language education. Indeed, the Intercultural Communication Institute (2018) lists no fewer than 13 frameworks that assess intercultural ability along the lines of awareness and empathy.

One prominent example is the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2012), which is based on the work of Milton Bennett (1993) and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) he proposed. Both the IDI and the DMIS identify the stages of development through which an individual progresses until he/she reaches the stage that is identified as being the most conducive to interaction within an intercultural setting and with cultural Others.

The IDI is a 50-item questionnaire, the results of which are used by organizations, institutions or individuals to assess the intercultural competence of themselves or their staff. The level of competence is identified by the IDI and placed along the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2012)



The IDI has received a great deal of empirical support (Paige et al., 2003; Hammer, 2009) and it is largely well received, particularly in the “culture shock industry” (Hannerz, 1992, p.251) that sells intercultural solutions to global businesses. If language teachers are looking to assess some attitudinal change or awareness of cultural diversity in their students then the items of the IDI and the positions of the IDC can offer an indication of development if used at the start and end of a course.

However, the IDI can be subject to similar criticisms that are levelled against the work of another corporate intercultural favourite, Geert Hofstede (Section 1.1.5). Most notable among these are the assumption that certain dispositions are cultural, and the implicit notion that national / ethnic groupings are the default cultural groups. To illustrate this, we can look at Hammer’s (2012) description of a person in the Denial stage.

Individuals with a Denial orientation often do not recognize differences in perceptions and behavior as “cultural.” A Denial orientation is characteristic of individuals who have limited experience with other cultural groups and therefore tend to operate with broad stereotypes and generalizations about the cultural “other.” Those at Denial may also maintain a distance from other cultural groups and express little interest in learning about the cultural values and practices of diverse communities. This orientation tends to be associated more with members of a dominant culture, because they may have more opportunity to remain relatively isolated from cultural diversity. By contrast, members of nondominant groups are less likely to maintain a Denial orientation, because they may more often need to engage cultural differences (Hammer, 2012, p.120).

Though one may accept the idea that operating with broad stereotypes is a characteristic of someone with a lack of intercultural awareness, the idea that not recognizing that differences are cultural is a sign of Denial would appear to be assume that differences between people are inescapably culturally based. Not recognizing that differences may result from a firm belief in the agency of the individual or a belief that boundaries are blurred, it need not exclusively indicate a Denial position on the continuum.

At the other end of the continuum is Adaptation, which Hammer describes as:

An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing

behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways. Adaptation involves both deep cultural bridging across diverse communities and an increased repertoire of cultural frameworks and practices available to draw upon in reconciling cultural commonalities and differences. (Hammer, 2012, p.124).

The IDI gives the impression that development is a simple movement along a series of steps towards a desired end, yet development is certainly more complex and unlikely to be linear in nature.

Assessment on interactional / communicative aspects

Though fostering some affective change or development is a desired outcome of most approaches, for language teaching it is only part of the picture. All approaches to the cultural dimension involve language use or communication in some way and there have been means of assessment put forward that contain both affective and communicative development. Perhaps the most widely known and cited is that of Michael Byram (1997). The means of assessment he proposes is based on the five *savoirs* he outlines as capturing competence within the cultural dimension (Appendix 1). Byram (1997) detailed modes of assessment for each *savoir* and, for purposes of illustration, those relating to ‘interpreting and relating’ (*savoir comprendre*) and ‘discovery and interaction’ (*savoir apprendre/faire*) are shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16. Summary of modes of assessment for skills (Byram, 1997, p.102)

Objective	Kind of evidence	Where
(i) Interpreting and relating (<i>savoir comprendre</i>)		
(a) Identify ethnocentric perspectives	Part of evidence from <i>savoirs</i> (above)	Test and/or continuous assessment as for assessment of <i>savoirs</i>
(b) Identify misunderstanding and dysfunction	Ditto	Ditto
(c) Mediate between interpretations	Part of assessment of interaction (see below)	
(ii) Discovery and		

interaction (<i>savoir apprendre/faire</i>)		
(a) Questioning a native speaker	Use of interviewing techniques	Test simulation
(b) Identify significant reference	Ditto	Portfolio
(c) Agree conventions	Retrospective analysis and documentation by self and others	Portfolio
(d) Respond to distance/proximity of other culture	Ditto	Ditto
(e) Use sources to understand relationships	Use of reference books etc. to illuminate specific documents	Test and/or coursework
(f) Institutions for contacts	Ditto	Ditto
(g) Mediate between interlocutors	Ditto	Ditto

Here we can see that the *savoir* contains multiple objectives which are assessed through a number of different forms. Although not the case for all *savoirs*, the notion of skills and the effective manipulation of language is central here with the affective elements being largely unspecified or implied.

The idea of competency in Byram's *savoirs* influenced the modest intercultural goals of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) though the means of assessment based on his *savoirs* were not present. However, since that time there has been work to try to develop intercultural competency scales for the CEFR that will allow for assessment in the same fashion as other areas of language proficiency. North and Piccardo (2016), working on behalf of the Council of Europe have begun work on just this. The method of development is similar to that of Phillips & McLawhon (2013) above. Although not complete, the development can be seen in the B1 CEFR level given in Figure 17.

Figure 17. B1 level of cultural competence in the developmental CEFR scale (North & Piccardo, 2016, p.44).

<i>Creating pluricultural space</i> B1	<i>Sociolinguistic appropriateness</i> B1	<i>Exploiting pluricultural repertoire</i> B1
Can support an intercultural exchange using a limited repertoire to introduce people from different cultural backgrounds and to ask and answer questions, showing awareness that some questions may be perceived differently in the cultures concerned.	Can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using their most common exponents in a neutral register.	Can generally act according to conventions regarding posture, eye contact, and distance from others.
Can help to develop a shared communication culture, by exchanging information in a simple way about values and attitudes to language and culture.	Is aware of the salient politeness conventions and acts appropriately.	Can generally respond appropriately to the most commonly used cultural cues.
	Is aware of, and looks out for signs of, the most significant differences between the customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs prevalent in the community concerned and those of his or her own community.	Can explain in simple terms how his/her own values and behaviours influence his/her views of other people's values and behaviours.
		Can discuss in simple terms the way in which things that may look 'strange' to him/her in another sociocultural context may well be 'normal' for the other people concerned.

As a means of reference, I have provided the corresponding B1 summary from the original CEFR document (Figure 18). By examining this original scale, the cultural dimension in the work of North & Piccardo (2016) becomes much more salient.

Figure 18. The “global” level of competency at B1 CEFR level (Council of Europe, 2001)

B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
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In the B1 scale section of North & Piccardo's (2016) scale shown in Figure 17, we can clearly see the focus on the interaction between cultural awareness and knowledge and

communication. Although all aspects contain communicative competencies, these cannot be reached without a certain level of cultural knowledge, awareness and flexibility.

The work of North & Piccardo (2016) suggests that a framework to assess the cultural dimension that accompanies a well-known and often used framework of communicative competency may be forthcoming. At such a time, courses may experience a wash-back effect as teachers feel required or enabled to make the cultural dimension a greater element of their classes.

Problems of assessment

The examples of assessment above so far have been presented without much critical consideration. This has been done by design because means of assessment of the cultural dimension are typically subject to similar challenges, which are of relevance beyond assessment. These challenges can be grouped into three main problem areas: practical issues, ideology and the training of the teacher. All of these have relevance beyond assessment and awareness of them may influence teachers' choices regarding the cultural dimension as well as possibly being indicative of fundamental beliefs regarding culture.

In terms of the practical issues, we see that methods that include both an affective and communicative element involve traditional tests of knowledge, oral analysis, self-analysis work, portfolios and simulations. For university courses where classes may meet only 12-15 times during a semester-long course (as is the case for most universities in Japan) this means that a considerable amount of teacher time both in and out of class will be devoted to assessment. Additionally, as English language classes in Japanese universities often have student populations of 20, 30 or even 40, it is likely that assessing student production along cultural competence lines is simply not feasible.

The problem of ideology is relevant to all forms of cultural assessment and the subject as a whole. Whether the teacher elects to assess only some form of affective change / development, or selects a means of assessment that also contains communicative aspects, there are certain value judgements present in all cases. All models target a change in the attitudes and beliefs of learners to some degree. This not only shows the prestige attributed to certain theories of human existence but also raises the question of "who judges how good this is and against which criteria?" (Phipps, 2013, p.10). Endorsing and teaching a certain world view clearly have ethical issues and these are issues which, some

suggest, are paid insufficient attention (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Crookes, 2010; Phipps, 2013).

This would appear to be an important point. The CEFR, for example, clearly states that it serves the interests of the Council of Europe by promoting a certain agenda that includes the following goals:

- that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding;
- that it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination;
- that member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the field of modern language learning and teaching, may achieve greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies.

(Council of Europe, 2001, p.2).

The affective and communicative aspects that drive the curriculum and which are being brought into assessment (North & Piccardo, 2016) also serve a political purpose: the wish to increase the connection and interaction between European nations and peoples as a means of aiding the centralizing drive that is at the heart of the European Union. Of course, this is not isolated to the European Union (ACTFL, 2018) or assessment in particular. Hua et al. (2017) suggest that the problem exists at a more fundamental level. Based on their analysis of Intercultural Communication courses, Hua et al. conclude that:

In terms of the basic definition and framing of ‘culture’, its situated meaning in much of the data...tends to associate with a more static understanding of culture and, in some cases, conflate culture (or cultures) with diversity-related structural categories such as religions, nations/nationalities, races, and social classes. This conflation of large-scale, static, and a-priori categories is motivated by a keenness to highlight the desirability of diversity and difference (Hua et al., 2017, p.295).

Assessment is inevitably about attaching value to some things and not others, yet it can be said that assessment of certain areas of the cultural dimension are about disposition or personality rather than ability. Liddicoat and Scarino's framework for assessment, for example, includes "openness to the perspectives or expectations of others" as areas of consideration for assessment (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p.139). In terms of Hammer's IDI, the highest stage of "development" 'adaptation' is something of a self-fulfilling prophecy because "When an Adaptation mindset is present, diversity feels 'valued and involved'" (Hammer, 2012, p.124). Diversity will likely feel "valued and involved" if one has been trained to think so and is viewed as a sign of development. As Sato and Musha Doerr point out "The investigation and teaching of 'culture' is often linked to the political and economic domains" (Sato & Musha Doerr, 2014, p.4). To assume a certain objectivity in the desired outcomes of such curricula and assessment runs counter to the very criticality that many claim to require, encourage and assess. If teachers encourage students to consider the why of what they think and how they act, surely teachers need to consider the why of what is prioritised in the curricula they implement. My own experience as a teacher trainer has demonstrated that some teachers may ultimately avoid such areas they deem to be ideological or which involve "pushing" an agenda on to students. This leads one back to the fundamental question of "what is the role of the language teacher?"

The final issue I wish to raise concerns the ability of the teacher to perform assessment. When discussing the cultural dimension, the idea of steps is an often used and understood metaphor for development, with progression in one leading to the next in a linear fashion (Byram, 1997). However, Byram suggests that for students beyond "the earlier stages of learning" a jigsaw is a more accurate metaphor for development (Byram, 1997, p.75). Although Byram (1997) offers a framework through his *savoirs*, teachers require much more than a jigsaw metaphor to comprehend how the pieces may fit, interact and demonstrate competence. As shown in the previous section, the cultural dimension of language teaching is something that is often given secondary importance, if any, in teacher education and professional development courses. Yet the means of cultural assessment put forward not only require great consideration of culture in the stages of planning and guiding students through the different competencies that will be assessed, they also require considerable awareness and expertise on behalf of the teacher to identify, quantify and connect the different pieces of the conceptual and communicative jigsaw to show an accurate picture of competence.

The problems of assessing competence reflect the problems within the area of the cultural dimension of language teaching as a whole and give examples of contextual issues discussed throughout this chapter. The ability of teachers to teach and assess, issues of time, and the debate about what should be, and what can be, taught and assessed are all present. The divide between the affective and interactional aspects of culture and the lack of a unified means of assessment that is compatible with classroom realities demonstrates the gap between the aspirations within the field and the possibilities of the classroom; a gulf that has the possibility to impact teachers' beliefs and the cultural dimension of their classes. Just as there may be a lack of opportunity for teachers to develop an awareness of the cultural dimension of language teaching (Section 2.4.2), so too may it be the case that teachers who have such an understanding and wish the means to implement it find a lack of methods or examples of suitable / relatable classroom practice in both the literature.

Chapter 3

Research Questions and Methodology

The review of the literature shows that culture as a concept is something that has been pondered greatly by academics of multiple disciplines over the last one hundred years. From this body of literature we are able to see multiple understandings of culture and are able to identify which concept is implicit in discussions and work of authors both within and out of language teaching.

The body of work focusing on language teaching, while informing us of the theory and ideas of best practice, does not tell us what is actually happening in classrooms. With this being the case, investigating to what degree and in what way teachers are aware of and are integrating notions of best practice concerning this into their classes would seem to be of great importance. It is in this area that the research is lacking. Though there is a modest number of studies on teachers' views and practice, these typically tend to be at a pre-tertiary level and often in relation to a curriculum imposed upon teachers by a board of education.

The same cannot be said for the context of higher education in Japan. Universities in Japan, although subject to curriculum scrutiny by the Education Ministry on occasion, typically do not work within any framework handed down to them from government. Universities in Japan typically enjoy a freedom of course design, focus and implementation that is not experienced by the compulsory stages of education or the high school level. One may also argue that university English teachers in Japan are subject to other influences that teachers elsewhere may not be, particularly the pre-tertiary teachers in the United States, England and Denmark that were the subjects of previous studies

All of this leads me to propose the following research questions which are based on the view that there is an apparent lack of research in the field in these areas.

- ◇ **1. What do English language teachers at Japanese universities believe regarding culture as a concept?**
 - How did they arrive at this concept of culture?

- Is it possible to identify and measure an essentialism construct in teachers' attitudes to culture?
 - If so, what relationship does it have with their reported teaching practices?
- ✧ **2. What do teachers believe regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching?**
- How do teachers view the relationship between language and culture?
 - Is it possible to measure the level of importance to which teachers view culture as part of language teaching?
 - What do teachers believe regarding the role and purpose of culture in English language teaching?
 - What problems do teachers identify regarding teaching culture in the Japanese university context?
- ✧ **3. Is the culture they teach consistent with their own concept of culture and its place in language teaching?**
- If not, why is there an inconsistency?
 - Are there any frequently cited barriers to teaching culture?

Research into these areas has the potential to add depth to our understanding of (the situation(s) involving) the cultural dimension of language teaching in English classes within Japanese universities. Additionally, as someone responsible for the professional well-being of teachers, the knowledge gained has the potential to better inform and direct future action aimed at teacher development.

Looking at the research questions one can see that relying solely on either quantitative or qualitative methods will not yield data suitable to provide an adequate answer to all questions. Developing instruments to gauge the level of essentialism in a teacher's concept of culture (from here on referred to as ECC) or to indicate language teachers' intercultural inclination (from here on referred to as ICI) requires numerical data that is best obtained through the use of quantitative methods and allows for the statistical analysis of results. However, the statistics provided by quantitative data do not lend themselves to answering all my research questions; qualitative data is also required. Therefore, I propose to answer the above questions through mixed-methods research that generates quantitative data through the use and analysis of surveys, and qualitative data acquired through interviews and class observations.

3.1 Research philosophy

Cresswell (1998) recommends that researchers choose an ideological perspective or social theory to guide their research. Until recently, the “overarching constructive framework and meta-thinking” that constitute the paradigms (Hua, 2016, p.18) available to researchers have been in sharp opposition due to their perceived incompatibility (Bryman, 2006). Disagreements exist between all paradigms (Hua, 2016) no doubt as a result of being developed to add opposition or refinement to a previous one (Crookes, 2010), but the ‘paradigm wars’ (Bryman, 2006) focus on ontological and epistemological differences between the major paradigms of positivism or post-positivism on one hand, and interpretivism or constructionism on the other.

A positivist position is typically associated with quantitative research methods based on the belief that objective truth exists and can be found (Dudovskiy, 2018). Carson (2005, p.238) adds that “objectivists do not consider prior knowledge or cognitive structures as a subjective lens through which one views reality.” Under such a paradigm, truth exists and is independent of the research and the researcher.

This is in contrast to an interpretive paradigm that looks to investigate phenomena and interpret them in the context in which they exist (Hua, 2016). Closely related and often subsumed under interpretivism (Hua, 2016), constructivism posits that reality is created by the human mind and is, therefore, subjective (Dudovskiy, 2018). From a constructivist view, an individual is “an active participant in constructing reality and not just a passive recorder of it” (Elkind, 2004). This is, of course, true for researchers and participants.

The fundamental differences between paradigms, which were viewed as irreconcilable by many in the past, have recently been seen as compatible and even mutually supportive (Bryman, 2006; Dudovskiy, 2018; Riazi & Candlin, 2014; Shannon-Baker, 2015). Hua (2016, p.17) suggests that “It is not the question of whether one is better than the others. The question should be which paradigm is more suitable for some types of research questions than others.” This view is shared by others (Bryman, 2006, Dudovskiy, 2018) and represents the pragmatic paradigm that emerges when different paradigms are selected based on their suitability to answer certain research questions. Speaking of the paradigm, Shannon-Baker (2015, p.331) adds that:

Pragmatism offers a strong emphasis on research questions, communication, and shared meaning making. In connecting theory to data, it uses abduction, which has been found to be particularly useful during the integration stage of mixed methods. Pragmatism recommends a balance between subjectivity and objectivity throughout the inquiry. Finally, its emphasis on transferability offers a paradigm that can revise previous or create new disciplinary theories based in particular context but still generalizable to others.

The flexibility of the pragmatic approach within mixed-method research (MMR) is often cited as one of its great strengths, but also its greatest weakness as the practical is placed ahead of the philosophical concerns listed above (Rizai & Candlin, 2014). In terms of this study, recognising that culture is understood by participants in different ways that develop over time suggests an interpretive constructionist approach that requires qualitative means to investigate. However, questions of whether it is possible to gauge essentialism and a level of belief in the cultural dimension of language teaching require quantitative means underscored by the positivist view that such things exist and can be known. As certain paradigms are tied to certain methodologies, a pragmatic research philosophy selected to answer certain research questions will inevitably employ MMR. Though Bryman (2006) warns that a pragmatic approach and MMR should not be seen as a solution for all research problems, it is appropriate for this research as it is required in order to answer the research questions above.

3.2 Mixed methods research

MMR is much more than a simple pairing of qualitative and quantitative methods (Dörnyei, 2007; Ivankova & Cresswell, 2009) and the adoption of such an approach is appropriate for my purposes for a number of reasons beyond the one outlined above. Perhaps the greatest reason for the use of MMR is its potential to capture and understand difficult concepts. Culture and essentialism are abstract concepts and attempting to gauge teachers' views concerning them will be a challenging task. This too is true of culture as part of language teaching where understandings may differ depending on the context of use or discussion. If we accept the view that what people think, do and say may differ significantly (Dervin, 2009) then relying solely on one method would possibly lead to the researcher producing different results and drawing alternative conclusions. As Bryman (2007, p.9) highlights, "bringing together quantitative and qualitative findings together

has the potential to offer insights that could not otherwise be gleaned.”

Morse and Chung (2003, p.11) suggest that “a single method does not build a comprehensive and competent research program if the researcher’s goal is to understand a single concept holistically.” It is the richness of data provided by investigation of the same issue by different means that is seen as the chief virtue of MMR (Ivankova & Cresswell, 2009), and allows for methodological triangulation (Brown & Rodgers, 2002) which can benefit research validity (Dörnyei, 2007). Triangulation, defined as “intentionally using more than one method of data collection and analysis when studying a social phenomenon so to seek convergence and collaboration” is indeed identified as a virtue of MMR, and one that can also lead to ‘initiation’ – the ability to identify discrepancy and maximize the possibility of revealing unlikely findings (Riazi & Candlin, 2007).

Mixed methods also potentially contributes to increased validity through guided sampling. The approach has the possibility to reduce or eliminate qualitative participant selection bias if selection is based on a representative qualitative survey (Dörnyei, 2007). A mixed methods approach, therefore, not only provides the depth and richness of data lacking from a qualitative study, it also reduces the arbitrariness of qualitative study.

The increasing popularity of MMR have led some to see the weakness of the approach less in the method itself and more in the researcher who carries it out. For example, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) question whether an individual researcher can possess the competence to carry out both quantitative and qualitative methods effectively. This too is seen in the warning given to researchers against being too prescriptive and predicting precisely to what degree each method will contribute to the overall results (Holliday, 2009; Phipps, 2013).

Indeed, particular ‘skill specialisms’ or lack of them is one of several criticisms Bryman (2007) identifies as being cast against MMR. Though some criticisms are of minimal concern or not applicable to this study (such as writing results for different audiences, publication issues or researchers having a stated bias for a particular method) others are of relevance. Bryman (2007, p.14) points out in a review of MMR that a lack of integration often exists because “when a mixed methods project is set up in such a way that either the quantitative or qualitative component provides the main point of orientation, it will be difficult to bring the findings together because the overall design was not

conceptualized in a sufficiently integrated way.” In this regard, MMR runs the risk of simply being to studies, one quantitative and one qualitative, under the same project rather than one unified study where both aspects interact and complement each other in the way outlined above. Likewise, in terms of presentation of results, the MMR researcher is in danger of giving the reader “parallel accounts that barely connect” (Bryman, 2007, p.21).

Such cautions are important to consider, yet growing opinion is that researchers should strive to follow the method they view as being the most likely to provide the best data with which to answer their research questions (Bryman, 2006; Dudovskiy, 2018; Hua, 2016). Additionally, although MMR may be selected to avoid philosophical dogmatism (Riazi & Candlin, 2014), many claim that a pragmatic approach to MMR *is* a paradigm and, as we have seen, one of value if methods are integrated and suitable for the research questions.

The suitability and integration of MMR can be aided by ‘not losing sight of the rationale for conducting MMR or by using it in ways that not part of the original rationale as doing so results in researchers becoming uncertain of how to best approach connections between qualitative and quantitative results and data’ (Bryman, 2007). This is the case for this research. The original rationale for the MMR was predicated on the belief that cultural views on language teaching, especially the hypothesized ECC and ICI, require data from multiple sources to allow me as the researcher to attempt to answer my research questions and enter into a discussion of them in any meaningful way. This can be seen in Figure 19 where the three main research questions are presented along with the qualitative and quantitative methods and means of analysis that are used to attempt to answer them. Though a great deal of MMR may simply be two separate projects rather than a unified one (Bryman, 2007), all my research questions draw upon all aspects of MMR and were conceptualized as such from the very start.

Figure 19 – Overview of research questions and methods of data collection and analysis.

Main research question	Instrument	Main method(s) of analysis
1. What do teachers believe regarding culture as a concept?	Questionnaire	Reliability analysis Exploratory Factor Analysis One-way between-groups ANOVA Two-way between-groups ANOVA
	Semi-structured Interviews	Qualitative content analysis

	Open observations	Qualitative content analysis of field notes
2. What do teachers believe regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching?	Questionnaire Semi-structured Interviews Open observations	Reliability analysis Exploratory Factor Analysis One-way between-groups ANOVA Two-way between-groups ANOVA Qualitative content analysis Qualitative content analysis of field notes
3. Is the culture they teach consistent with their own concept of culture?	Questionnaire Semi-structured Interviews Open observations	One-way between-groups ANOVA Two-way between-groups ANOVA Qualitative content analysis Qualitative content analysis of field notes

I undertake such a methodology aware of its philosophical underpinnings and conscious of warnings above. I believe that by attempting to maintain a “naiveté of assumption” (Phipps, 2013, p.20) and recognizing the co-constructed nature of data (Dervin, 2009) I can recognize, and therefore reduce, any fallibility I may have as a researcher.

3.3 Methodological development

To lessen the concerns of Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), and Bryman (2007) that few researchers are skilled at both qualitative and quantitative research methods, extensive piloting was conducted to both improve the quality of data collection instruments and also to improve my own abilities as a researcher through self-reflection throughout the pilot process.

The pilot stage proved very fruitful in terms of both highlighting areas of my methodology and instruments that worked well and should be retained as well as showing areas that required alteration or removal. In the following sections, I will detail the development of both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of my mixed method approach.

3.3.1 Pilot Stage

To improve research validity and reliability, I undertook a pilot study and other activities. The actions taken are summarized below:

1. Think-aloud trials of the first draft of my questionnaire.
2. Distribution of a revised questionnaire to 32 teachers.
3. Analysis of the pilot data via SPSS.
4. Two trial interviews.
5. Four classroom observations.
6. Distribution of a Japanese version of the culture concept part of my questionnaire to students.

3.3.2 Pilot stage: Questionnaire

When designing my questionnaire I kept in mind the general ‘rules’ for overall questionnaire and individual item construction, such as avoiding double-barreled questions, negatively worded questions and an excessive number of items, among many others, highlighted by a number of authors (Brown, 2009; Dörnyei, 2010; Foddy, 1993; Vogt, 2007; Denscombe, 2007; Gillham, 2008). I also examined related surveys of other authors (Byram & Risager, 1999; Stapleton, 2000; No et al, 2008) to consider the format, length, items wording etc. Based on the relevant literature above and with these formatting issues in mind, I created my first draft questionnaire.

Prior to distribution of the questionnaire, I invited several teaching colleagues to complete the questionnaire while thinking aloud and verbalizing all thoughts they had regarding the questionnaire items, design, wording or any other issue that came to mind. No coaching was given so the thoughts highlighted would be as free as possible (Charters, 2003). Several issues were raised by the volunteers while others were identified by close observation of participants and their interaction with the questionnaire. An example of this was the identification of silent spells where the participant is visibly troubled because, as Ericsson & Simon, (1980, cited in Charters, 2003) highlight, cognitively demanding tasks may interfere with the verbalization of problems required in the think-aloud process. The issues found as a result of the think-aloud trials (Appendix 4) and resulted in significant changes being made to the questionnaire prior to the pilot.

The edited pilot questionnaire contained the following 5 sections:

- Section A- Culture in the teaching of respondents.
- Section B- Perceived barriers to cultural dimension of language teaching.
- Section C- Beliefs concerning the role of culture in language teaching.
- Section D- Understandings of culture as a concept.
- Section E- Biographical information / further participation request / comments.

Section A

As many scholars (Byram, 1989; Prodromou, 1988) would suggest that teaching inevitably involves teaching culture on some level, questions in Section A inquire as to whether teachers see themselves as teaching culture and, if so, with what frequency.

Section B

The items in Section B are all possible barriers to cultural dimension of language teaching based on my experience of teaching in Japan and / or are referenced in articles which give practical advice on culture for the language teacher (e.g., Simpson, 1997; Guest, 2002). Teachers are also able to add their own items.

Section C

Items in Section C aim to elicit what teachers believe concerning the role and approach to culture in teaching. The hypothesized dependent variable (ICI), acknowledges the role of English in the world, the teachers' role as a teacher/facilitator/mediator of culture who aims to offer students a better understanding of culture and attempts to reduce stereotyping and cross cultural boundaries with the minimum of stress. The items that I suggest may contribute to this are highlighted in the chart below (Figure 20) through both the positively scored 'intercultural awareness' items and the negatively scored 'traditional / default' items. Items suggested to be indicators of an intercultural inclination or belief in a more traditional approach are based on the work of authors (such as Baker, 2010; Atkinson, 1999; Klayman, 1976) as discussed above (Section 1.4).

Section C also seeks attitudinal information. This is information that I think is important to capture and may prove useful in later discussion, yet these are variables which I do not

think it can be said to fall exclusively into either of the above categories.

Figure 20. Items related to culture as part of language teaching

Traditional / default	Intercultural awareness	Attitudinal
<p>5. The language teacher should present a positive image of different cultures.</p> <p>9. Native speaker cultures should be the focus of cultural content.</p> <p>11. The cultural dimension of language teaching should involve making frequent comparisons between Japan and other countries.</p> <p>12. Culture should be used primarily to foster language development.</p> <p>20. Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.</p> <p>21. If the time pressure is great, the cultural dimension should give way to the linguistic.</p>	<p>2. Culture and communication are inseparable.</p> <p>3. Culture is a vital part of English teaching.</p> <p>10. Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal.</p> <p>13. Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.</p> <p>14. Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.</p> <p>15. It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.</p> <p>16. If cultural comparisons are used in class, they should highlight similarity rather than difference.</p>	<p>1. Culture and language are inseparable.</p> <p>4. The teacher can only really teach his/her own culture.</p> <p>6. The cultural dimension of language education is more problematic for English than other languages.</p> <p>7. Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on student motivation.</p> <p>8. Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate.</p> <p>17. Students should have some form of assessment on the cultural dimension.</p> <p>18. The cultural dimension of English language teaching is more important than the linguistic dimension.</p> <p>19. Teaching culture creates stereotypes rather than breaks them down</p>

Section D

Items 1-12 (Figure 21) attempt to capture the latent variable of essentialism. The items are based on the cultural essentialism work of Holliday (2011, 2013) and No et al.'s (2008) work on racial essentialism, but the wording of the items is my own. The focus of the items is largely in line with that of No et al. (2008) whose work on essentialism in the lay concept of race represents one of the very few, if not the only, attempt to gauge essentialism through survey form. As the work of No et al. (2008) was well received and reproduced (Tador et al., 2013) I take the similarity of my items to be a positive sign for the reliability of my questionnaire.

Questions use 'culture' as both a countable and uncountable noun. These are both common uses of culture and, I believe, are understood by all. In most items, culture may be defined by the question. This as an unavoidable consequence of dealing with such a nebulous term but one that is not anticipated to be problematic as essentialism resides in the way both culture and cultures are understood. I do not feel that using 'culture' exclusively as a countable noun or uncountable noun for these items will result in any gain or greater accuracy.

The items which aim to gauge essentialism in the respondents understanding of culture are identified in Figure 21 below. The items are presented as 'essentialism' items and 'non-essentialism' items. Items for the latter are reverse scored.

Figure 21. Questionnaire items hypothesized as indicators of essentialism or non-essentialism

Essentialist items	Non-essentialist items
1. National boundaries accurately represent cultural boundaries.	3. Diversity is the norm in any culture.
2. The traits that define a culture are shared equally by its members.	4. The way people think of culture is dependent on their beliefs (i.e., a person's concept of what culture <i>is</i> is based on ideology.)
5. Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g., collective cultures vs. individualist cultures, hierarchical vs. non-hierarchical etc.) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	6. Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.
9. Culture can be weakened or eroded (for	7. Cultures are constantly being negotiated and contested by their members.
	8. An individual has the power to choose

<p>example, by Westernization).</p> <p>10. A cultural group can attain a higher level of culture than others.</p> <p>11. People in one culture are essentially different from those in another culture.</p> <p>12. Characteristics that define a culture are easily identifiable.</p>	<p>the cultural elements they adopt.</p>
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The latter half of Section D aims to capture data to indicate which elements of culture teachers agree with as being ‘culture’. Items 13-24 are drawn from multiple sources and all represent different understandings or elements of culture as a concept. Although it may be possible and to consider responses individually for each item, it may be helpful also to consider them in terms of the broader dimensions of culture, for example, the different trinity offered by Sarangi (2009) or Risager (2006).

Section E.

Section E collects respondents’ teaching experience, gender, nationality and educational level. Section E also contains the request for further participation through interviews and observation.

3.3.3 Pilot Distribution and Analysis

A paper version of the pilot questionnaire was given to a total of 32 NS and NNS teachers of English at the university level in Japan. Teachers were employed at various universities and were connected through my own professional network either directly or on my behalf.

The pilot data was analyzed via SPSS version 22. The analysis process I followed was guided by the work of Pallant (2013) and featured the following basic steps:

1. Input variable names and questionnaire answers.
2. Scan the data for input errors by using descriptive statistics to identify if any variables have values outside the determined range.
3. Group together independent variables hypothesized as contributing to the dependent variables of essentialism and intercultural awareness. Negatively score items as appropriate.

4. Conduct a reliability analysis on these groupings.
5. Remove certain independent variables to improve Cronbach's Alpha results based on the statistical feedback provided by SPSS.
6. Examine the descriptive statistics for other issues, such as low response rate on particular items, demographic trends, potential correlations etc. (Factor analysis is unavailable due to the small number of respondents)

The analysis of the pilot gave encouraging results. The hypothesized dependent variable of ICI returned a significant Cronbach's Alpha of .807 and essentialism returned an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha of .716 (Dörnyei, 2010; Pallant, 2013).

3.3.4 Additional trial

At my current university I was asked to teach a half-semester long (7 weeks) course entitled "Culture Studies". Students taking the full year-long course are taught by 4 teachers each teaching an area of culture that is of interest to them. The other three teachers elected to teach "Indian Culture", "British Music" and "American Music". I saw this as a good opportunity to try some classes I had created which I hoped muddied the cultural waters for students by problematizing the issue of culture and, it is hoped, promoted a less essentialized view of culture. At the start of the first class I gave students a questionnaire in Japanese. The questionnaire included the 5 items identified above as indicating essentialism. To these 5 items I added 5 more which were No et al.'s racial essentialism items reworded for culture. The students were given the same questionnaire in the final class.

As in the pilot, a reliability analysis was conducted. This was conducted on both sets of data. The reliability analysis gave stronger results than the pilot suggesting the additional items should be included in the final version. Additionally, for all but one student, the essentialism scores at the end of the short course were lower than the scores at the start of the course. This was encouraging as it points to the success of the course, but also, as all course material was created with the aim of reducing essentialism, the change in essentialism scores suggests offers support for the validity of my items.

3.3.5 Pilot stage – Interviews

To better plan and anticipate what may arise during interviews on such abstract, broad

and challenging subject matter, I conducted and recorded two pilot interviews. As future interviews maybe with both NS and NNS teachers, I elected to have pilot interviews with one NS and one NNS teacher.

The pilot interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview method. The semi-structured style was chosen to allow me to ask what needs to be asked while maintaining the flexibility for probing and for respondents to expand and lead the way (Gillham, 2009; Richards, 2009; Gibson & Hua, 2016). With a subject like culture and teaching, respondents need room to expand and talk freely, yet at the same time, the researcher needs to direct them to discuss certain areas without restricting the flow of information. The initial interview schedule I created for my semi-structured interviews can be seen in Appendix 5 and was made taking into account the advice regarding the wording, flow and structure of questions offered by Richards (2009), Gillham (2009), Foddy (1993), Kvale (2008) and Gibson and Hua (2016).

3.3.6 Pilot stage – Observations

As a means of preparation and to put into practice my readings on the subject, I conducted a total of four class observations. The four classes varied in age, level and language focus. The four teachers were also of different nationalities.

Although the observations were held within the university that was my place of work at that time, I tried to make the familiar become strange as recommended by Cowie (2009) and not take anything for granted. As a means of achieving this I took extensive notes so all aspects of class planning, class-room arrangement, teacher-student interactions and class/textbook use and content were documented.

Despite attempts to openly view all aspects of the class, I found identifying the more subtle manifestations of culture teaching, such as guided semiosis (Weninger & Kiss, 2013) to be problematic as they were absent. As a result I was restricted to noting the overt elements of teaching or the aspects of culture contained within the coursebook. Perhaps the main reason for this was that teachers seldom used the coursebook during class or, if they did, it was not as overtly cultural as the more traditional and stereotype packed textbooks used in Weninger and Kiss's (2013) study. Additionally, guided semiosis was not applicable as cultural aspects were not discussed nor were a feature of class content as much of class was built around language points or language development

activities that were devoid of any substantial content.

3.4 From pilot to final study

The pilot stage proved very fruitful in terms of both highlighting areas of my methodology and instruments that worked well and should be retained and showing areas that required alteration or removal. In this section I will outline the changes made for the final study.

3.4.1 Questionnaire: Physical changes

The think-aloud trials, questionnaire piloting and the limited analysis conducted on the results led to several changes in the final version of the questionnaire I propose to use.

I have removed several items from the questionnaire. This was done for two main reasons. Firstly, feedback and my observations led to the conclusion that the questionnaire was too long and could result in respondent fatigue. I feared that this fatigue could possibly lower the response rate to the questionnaire when distributed to respondents who were not connected to me directly or through a colleague. The second reason for the removal of several items was that the pilot responses and analysis allowed me to identify items that were often missed or largely irrelevant and discard them.

Although several items were removed, five items were added to the pool of essentialism items as a result of the favourable reliability findings in the questionnaire given to students in my culture classes as mentioned above. Despite adding these additional items the overall length of the questionnaire is less than before.

One other significant change in the final questionnaire from the pilot is that items are no longer organized into discrete sections based on theme. Sections C and D in the pilot were merged together with the location of items being randomized within the new larger single section. This was done to better conceal the proposed latent variable. Having ICI items and ECC items located in separate sections possibly made the underlying latent variable of those sections observable to the respondent and thereby could possibly encourage “social desirability bias” (Dörnyei, 2010). In the literature, essentialism is overwhelmingly seen as negative and the importance of culture to language teaching is increasingly seen as vital. Should respondents identify that items attempt to gauge subscription to these, it is quite possible that their answers would differ from their true

beliefs. The merging of sections and randomizing of item location was done to prevent this. The final version of the questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 6.

3.4.2 Questionnaire: Distribution and participants

The questionnaire is for teachers of English at universities in Japan regardless of nationality. My initial plan was to identify relevant teachers at universities in the large Chubu (central) area of Japan and send them the questionnaires with return envelopes. This method proved fruitless in the three universities I identified for the pilot study. Teachers simply did not respond. The one teacher that did respond said he would pass it to his colleagues if it was in electronic format. In the end, I gained 32 responses by engaging in the traditional means of communication between institutions – personal contacts.

One teacher told me quite flatly that teachers in Japan will not help you unless they know you. Although this is clearly not the case for all, pressing ahead with the plan to target specific universities around Japan and rely on some feeling of teacher solidarity to guarantee response would have been unwise. For the final project I offered my questionnaire in paper form, electronically as an email attachment and online through the questionnaire platform provided by BOS (Bristol Online Surveys), run by Bristol University (<https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/>). BOS questionnaires are easily accessible via a single web link, meet all UK accessibility requirements and is fully compliant with all UK data protection laws (BOS, 2017).

To ensure a high number of respondents, teachers were made aware of the questionnaire via my network of contacts. Having taught at university in Japan for several years, I have made many contacts at universities in and around the Nagoya area, but also in surrounding prefectures and further afield as past colleagues have moved. I also know many part-time teachers who teach at two or more institutions.

By providing the questionnaire in multiple mediums and exploiting the contact network in Japan to pass on the request for participants, I was confident that this convenience means of sampling would obtain at least the 100+ responses I had targeted as allowing me to complete a factor analysis on the results. However, the number of complete responses was quite low and remained at a low rate for some time indicating further action was required to achieve a desirable number of responses. To direct university English

teachers to my questionnaire, I took the following additional measures which ultimately lead to achieving a satisfactory number of responses:

- Contacted teachers directly by email to pass on my questionnaire.
- Teachers passed on the questionnaire link to other teachers in their professional networks.
- Flyers with the link to the online questionnaire were distributed at the JALT Conference (Japan Association of Language Teachers).
- Messages requesting research assistance were posted on social network sites for groups such as JALT, JACET and other groups with a special interest in certain areas of pedagogy or applied linguistics.

3.4.3 Analysis: Questionnaire

Having collected 121 complete responses the following analyses were conducted on the data following input in statistical software package SPSS 22:

1. Descriptive analysis of biographical data.
2. Descriptive analysis of items in Section A
3. Descriptive analysis of items in Section B
4. Factor analysis on items within the ICI item pool of Section C
5. Reliability analysis of items identified as contributing to any factor
6. Assessment of normality of data for the emergent factor / dependent variable.
7. Repetition of stages 4-6 for items in the ECC item pool
8. Repetition of stages 4-6 for ICI and ECC items combined
9. Assess scatterplot to determine if any correlation between the two exist.
10. Examination of correlation coefficients for all items in Section C
11. ANOVA analysis of different variables to discover possible variations and patterns

This is a more thorough analysis than that conducted on the pilot responses. The main reason for this is that the greater number of responses allows for greater statistical processing such as conducting factor and ANOVA analyses. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on both ECC pool items and ICI pool items separately and together. A factor analysis of each group has the potential to challenge, support or amend my hypothesized factors of ECC and ICI. Additionally, an exploratory factor analysis on all items offers the possibility of a new factor emerging that combines essentialism and

culture teaching.

These factor analyses of the data were not possible during the pilot stage due to the limited number of responses. The thirty-two responses I received were sufficient to conduct reliability analyses on my scales yet did not meet the ratio of at least 5 responses for every item (Pallant, 2013) or the 100 total (Dörnyei, 2010) suggested as necessary for factor analysis. The number of 121 responses received for the final questionnaire exceeds these numbers and makes factor analyses possible.

3.4.4 Interviews

Participants for the interviews were selected from questionnaire respondents who volunteered for both an interview and to have a class of theirs observed. A total of five participants were interviewed. This number was selected as it allowed for the inclusion of participants found to have different ICI and ECC scores on their survey. It also allowed for the inclusion of both Japanese/ non-Japanese teachers and other demographic divisions. Ultimately, the choice of participants was informed by the results of the questionnaire and the actual number and availability of volunteers as will be shown the results chapters below.

The interview schedule used in the pilot interviews worked well and allowed for a thorough discussion of the topics with the vast majority of the talking time being taken by the interviewee. However, there were areas that required additional probing and expansion. These were recorded and the literature on interview techniques was revisited for advice on how to probe and delve deeper into areas (Richards, 2009).

Changes to the interview schedule were not major in nature. However, there were two developments to the schedule that are worthy of note. Firstly, although the participants background and the training / cultural experiences were discussed, they were not a feature of the interview schedule and so were added to the interviews for the final study.

The second change of note is the order of the interview schedule. Lines of questioning regarding the participant's view of culture as a concept were positioned last on the pilot schedule. This was chosen under the belief that it would aid analysis. It was feared that if teachers are invited to discuss their concept of culture before anything else, they would then go on to describe all their thoughts relating to teaching in terms that were consistent

with the definition they had first given. Talking about teaching and professional views before any discussion on the concept of culture was thought as being likely to result in true views being put forward and make any inconsistencies much more salient.

However, in the pilot interviews, the subject inevitably came up at the start and attempts to sidestep it to preserve that line of questioning for later felt unnatural. As such, questioning related to the participants concept of culture was moved to the start of the schedule and the subject was typically broached after establishing participants' backgrounds and academic interests. Although the subject was moved earlier in the schedule, this does not mean that the schedule is an interview timetable. Flexibility is always maintained during interviews and, although the schedule represents a logical and reasoned progression of questioning, it is not binding.

3.4.5 Interviews: Analysis

For the qualitative data gained by means of interview transcriptions, a qualitative content analysis is most suitable. Dörnyei (2007) identifies the following steps as representing the content analysis process:

1. Transcribe. Familiarity with the data can be gained during this activity.
2. Pre-code. Read and reread the transcripts and make notes of thoughts and observations.
3. Code. Highlight extracts and label this with other chunks of information. The categories and themes borne out of the quantitative results will inform the coding of interview data.
4. Grow ideas. By using memos, vignettes, interview profiles and other forms of data display I can begin to flesh out labels and identify possible connections.
5. Interpret the data and draw conclusions.

As the research questions of this study relate to quite broad concepts, approaching the data with such a method allows issues to emerge from the text rather than be imposed on it.

3.4.6 Observations

Based on issues raised by the pilot observations such as the lack of what could be

described as clear cultural teaching moments and the infrequent use of coursebooks, an open means of data collection was selected as more suitable than the use of a structured observation chart. Although it may be possible to use a chart to record the number of occurrences of culture content in class as *I* find them, it is not enough to simply note the frequency. Contextual features and student-teacher interchange must be noted. What occurs and what potential meanings it may suggest are important and cannot be captured in a pre-determined chart, but only through the taking of detailed notes for each incident. Additionally, as a structured observation chart is largely a device to capture quantitative data and each instance of cultural meaning making in class would be given even weight that would not adequately represent the significance of the events (Cohen et al., 2000).

Similar work in the field can help widen our understanding of the ways cultural dimension of teaching can occur and give me additional areas to observe such as the guided semiosis of cultural content by teachers highlighting and ignoring certain cultural aspects of classroom materials (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). Additionally, the work of Kohler (2015) focused on the ways cultural information is mediated between teacher and student(s) and the questions she provides helped guide observations. The following are particularly relevant to my investigation:

1. What messages are conveyed, explicitly or implicitly, about language, culture and their relationship?
2. What kinds of interactions constitute mediation of intercultural language learning in the classroom?
3. What kind of discourse was used by the teachers in mediating intercultural language learning?

However, pilot observations showed that culture may not be on the teachers' agenda in such an explicit way as it was for the teachers Kohler, and Weninger and Kiss observed. Therefore, my note taking during observation needed to be extremely detailed with all aspects of teaching considered.

Pilot interviews and observations were not conducted with the same teachers because pilot interviews were done with the goal of trialling an interview schedule and observations were made to assess the suitability of different methods of data collection. Having conducted both, it became clear that the order of interviews and observations was of great importance. As pilot observations resulted in many questions about classroom

decisions, the decision was made that observations were to precede interviews.

3.5 Trustworthiness and ethics

Rallis and Rossman (2009) suggest six questions (three practice related and three ethics related) that must be answered to ensure the trustworthiness of a study. To maintain transparency and ensure that I follow an ethical path, I have answered each of these questions in relation to this study.

1. Is the study credible?

In addition to my two official supervisors, I have a local ‘advisor’ and several ‘critical friends’ (Rallis & Rossman, 2009) who all ask difficult questions about my insights and work. I recognize my work is specific to its context and time and I understand that there is no one truth, particularly concerning culture and belief. The methods I employ are those I deem most suitable and likely to give fair representation of respondents and subject matter.

2. Is the study systematic and rigorous?

My study is based on a clear gap in our understanding and on a professional dilemma. It employs a mixed method approach with a goal of triangulation of findings. The stages of research mutually strengthen and enrich each other and the approach is suitable to the conceptual framework. As my study has developed I have presented parts of it at academic conferences and received feedback that allows me to further refine my ideas.

3. Is it useful for other language researchers and teachers?

The project is undertaken by a language teacher/ researcher and stems from intellectual curiosity which is related to classroom practice. It is research by a teacher, about teachers, for teachers and researchers. The scales I introduce in my questionnaire have the potential to be replicated in different contexts beyond Japan and the results of my study could possibly be used as a justification for a change in teacher training. Additionally, in the short term interview participants said the process of talking about culture and teaching helped them consider their teaching practice making participation in the study instantly of value. Ultimately, there is little work on teachers’ conceptions of culture and beliefs on culture and language teaching in the Japanese university context. My work hopefully has the potential to provide a little illumination in this dark area in the same way that the work of Byram and Risager (1999), and Kohler (2015) have brought us a greater understanding

in other contexts.

4. What assurances must researchers give to the participants?

The questionnaire data was obtained via a protected and certified survey site and is stored on the University of Leeds protected network. All interview data and observation notes contain no reference to the participant or their place of work. All data is stored anonymously. Participants are told they can withdraw from the study at any time. This information was provided to them via a data protection checklist / consent form they were given before proceeding (Appendix 7). Additionally, all participants were offered a copy of the interview transcription for approval.

5. How are participants honoured and protected from disclosure?

In addition to the procedures detailed above, participants are invited to set the criteria under which I may observe their classes. They also set the time, date and location of interviews to ensure their maximum convenience.

6. How are differences across cultural backgrounds respected?

Although nationality, ethnicity, gender and religion of participants will differ, all are members of the community of language teachers in Japan. Although 'cultural' background may be found to be significant once the results are collected, I do not feel it presents any barriers to the administration of the questionnaire or interviews nor is there anything that may be deemed offensive or culturally inappropriate in the data collection methods.

I believe that my actions and considerations satisfy the questions posed by Rallis and Rossman (2009). This belief is shared by the Ethics Committee of the University of Leeds who conducted a strict ethical review on my research proposal and methodology. Ethical approval was requested prior to both the pilot study and the full study. On both occasions the research plan was deemed to satisfy all ethical requirements. Confirmation of this can be seen in Appendix 8. Additionally, during my period of research I completed the updated Research Ethics course offered by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. The certificate for this can also be seen in Appendix 9.

Chapter 4

Results: Surveys

This chapter will present the results of survey data collected. Although obtaining respondents was challenging, the survey resulted in 121 responses, all of which were complete. Thirty-one were completed in the paper form and ninety were online submissions. Statistics available through the online survey provider stated that 50% of people viewing the survey completed it in full and submitted it, a reasonable figure when compared to ones cited in the literature (Dörnyei, 2010).

Biographical data of survey respondents can be found in Appendix 10. Data directly relating to the research questions posed earlier will be presented thematically according to the areas highlighted in the review of the literature and the order of the research questions of this study. These areas are as follows:

1. Educational background
2. Teachers' concepts of culture
3. Essentialism
4. Belief in culture as a part of language teaching
5. Approaches to culture as part of language teaching
6. Additional findings

As teachers' views of culture do not exist in discrete parts (agency, ideology, dimensions etc), it would follow that any presentation of their views on the concept be given as whole.

4.1 Educational background

When asked about their highest qualification, nearly 70% of respondents reported that the qualification was connected to language teaching (Figure 22). However, conversely, nearly 70% of respondents answered that they had not had any training regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching (Figure 23). No correlation (-.034) was found between the two sets of answers indicating that the possession of a language teaching qualification was no indication of having any training regarding the cultural aspects of

language teaching.

Figure 22. Number of respondents with a qualification related to language teaching

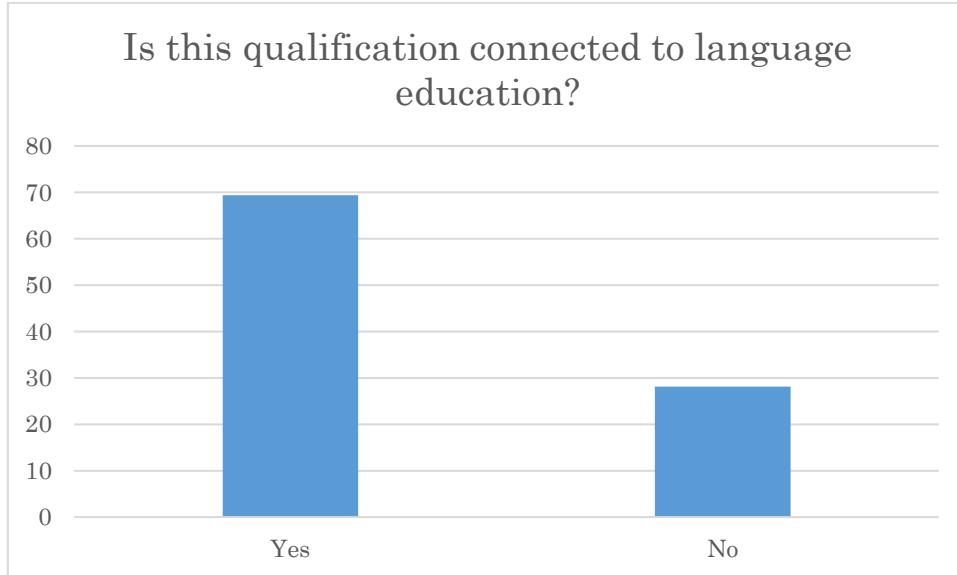
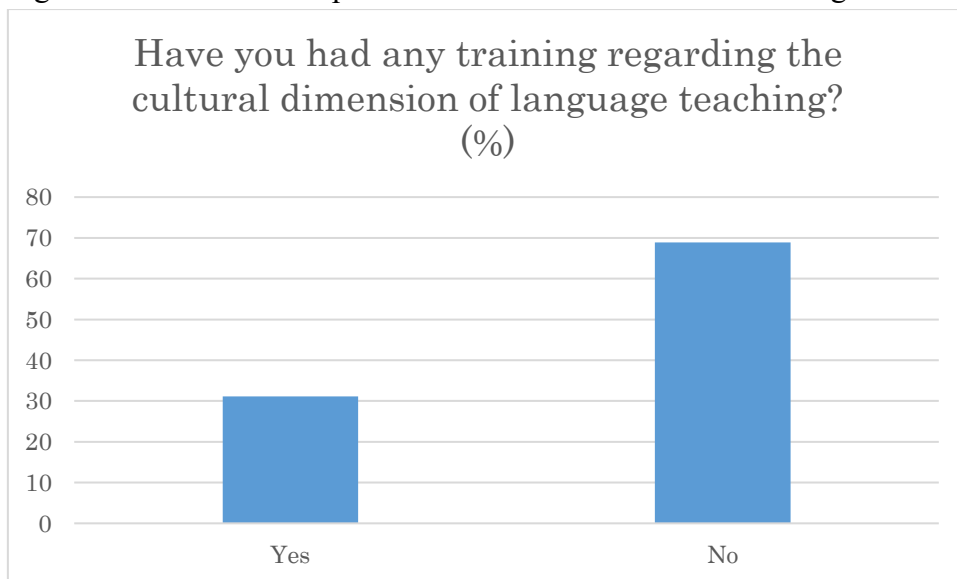


Figure 23. Number of respondents who have had cultural training



The 31.1% of teachers who answered that they had had some training on the cultural dimension were invited to provide information on what form of training this was. Comments were received from all and a summary of the comments can be seen in Figure 24 below (the full list can be seen in Appendix 11). Note that the total count of comments below is higher than the number of respondents who commented as some cited two sources of training.

Figure 24. Breakdown of respondent comments on cultural training undertaken

Source / Level of training regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching	Number of associated comments
Unit taken during master degree study	13
Attendance at a related presentation, conference, discussion group	9
During study of another / non-education related qualification (e.g. anthropology B.A)	7
Focus of thesis / primary research area	5
Living overseas / self-taught	3
Meaning unclear	2
CELTA course	2
PhD unit studied	1
Working with an expert colleague	1

Two things are significant from these comments. Firstly, the scope of the sources of training highlighted by respondents from “Only touching upon culture in some JALT forums,” to “Focus of Master’s Thesis,” to “25 years living in another country,” shows that cultural expertise is seen as being obtained through formal study as well as having the experience of interacting with a cultural Other, either by living overseas or by studying other cultural groups.

The second, and perhaps most salient aspect of the comments, is that only 19 of the 43 comments indicate cultural training to at least a level one might expect of a university language teacher, i.e., training specifically about culture as part of language teaching. This again points to a lack of a cultural element in teacher training given that approximately 70% of teachers indicated that they had a qualification connected to language education.

As the results of the survey suggested a lack of any kind of training on the cultural dimension among a majority of respondents, I conducted a small scale survey following the main study to inquire about the past experience of teachers. The questions related to teachers’ educational and occupational backgrounds. Respondents were sourced in the same way as the main study and invited to complete a survey online using the same web-based platform (Section 3.4.2).

At bachelor level, not one respondent had studied TESOL and only 2.8% had studied

applied linguistics. Nearly 70% of university teachers had studied a course outside of applied linguistics, TESOL, English or education as their bachelor degree. The subjects studied differed greatly and can be seen in Appendix 17.

Figure 25. Bachelor degree subjects of teachers

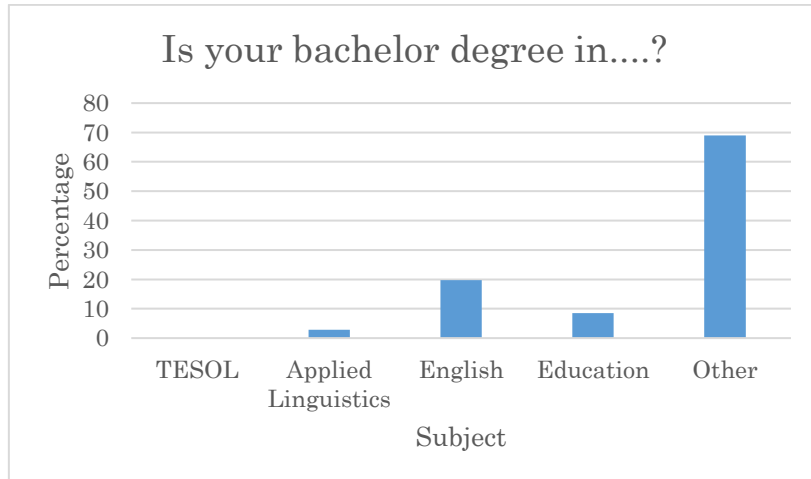
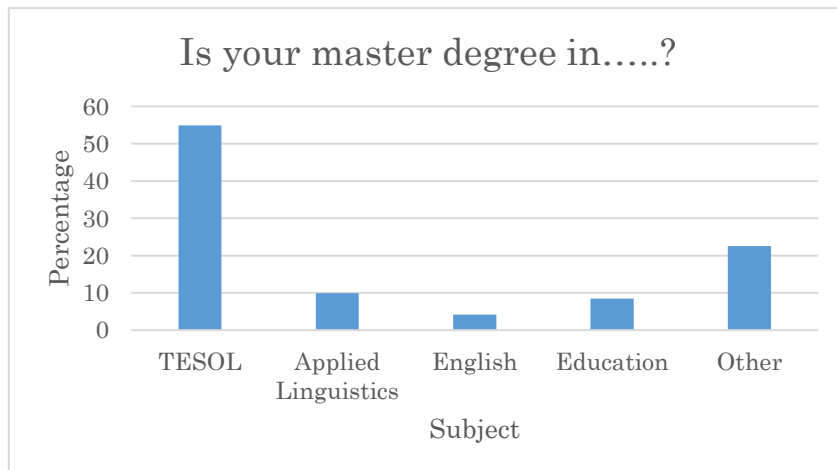


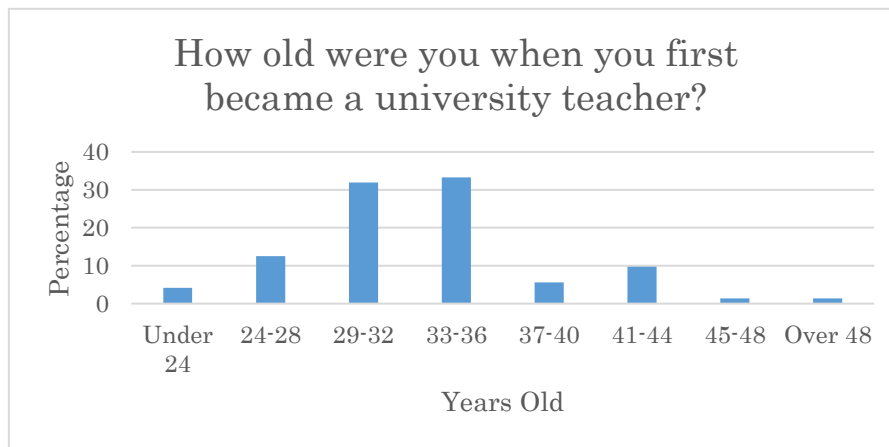
Figure 26. Master degree subjects of teachers



When we look at the master degrees, we can clearly see a shift in discipline as 54.9% hold a TESOL master degree. The number of applied linguistics and education qualification holders also increases at the master level. This suggests that most teachers did not intend on becoming university language teachers at first.

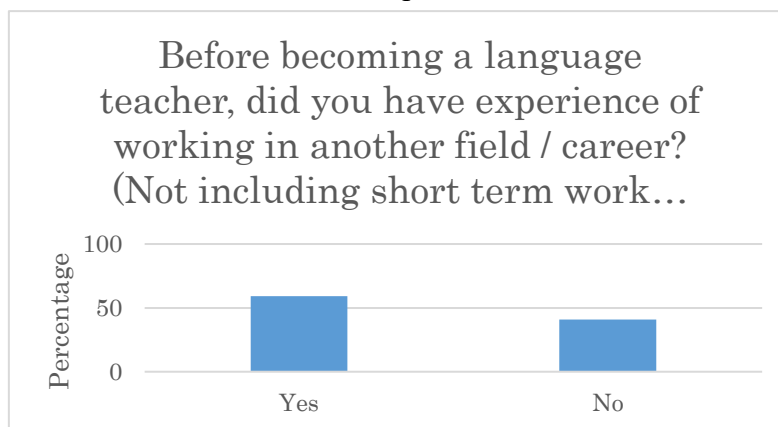
That teaching was not the first career choice of university language teachers in Japan is also suggested by Figure 27 as 33-36 was the most common age to join the profession.

Figure 27. Age at which teachers began university teaching



This leads one to consider what they have been doing during those years. Of the respondents, 59.2% had been working in a field other than language teaching (Figure 28). The list of previous occupations can be seen in Appendix 18. This indicates that university English teachers in Japan bring to the profession an extremely diverse collection of occupational backgrounds as well as undergraduate disciplines.

Figure 28. Number of teachers with work experience in another field



For respondents for whom language teaching has been their only career, over 75 % did not complete their master degree in a language teaching related subject for at least 5-6 years (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Number of years in teaching before obtaining master degree

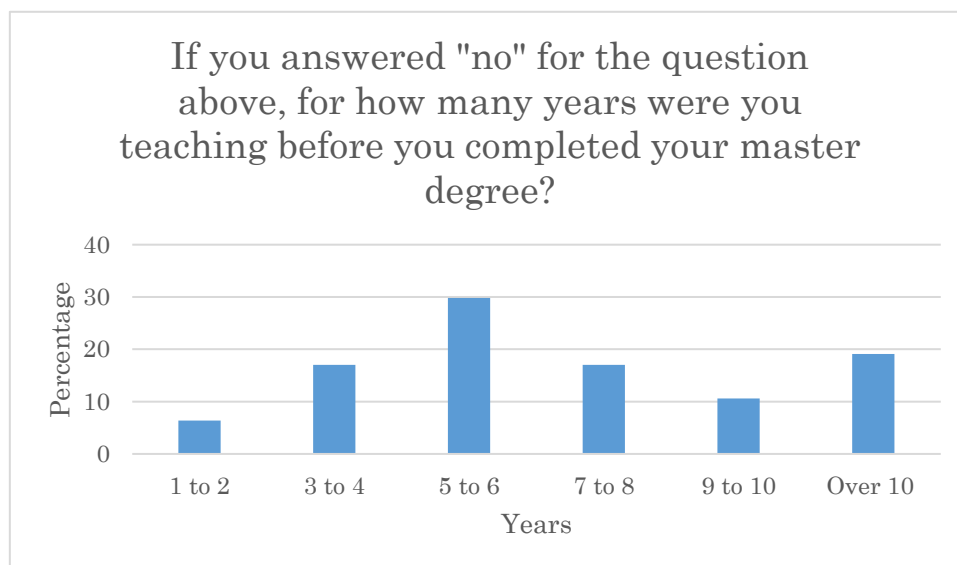
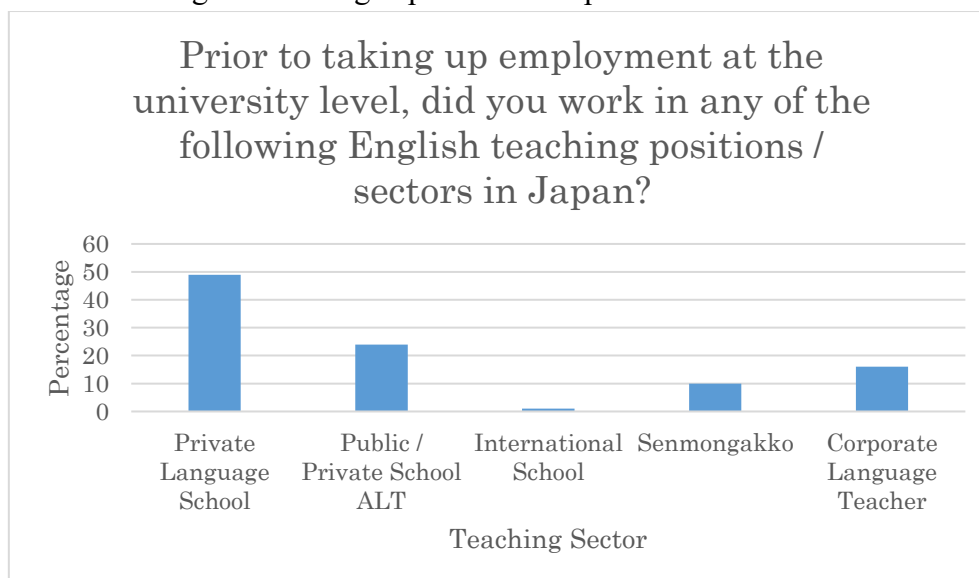


Figure 30. Other English teaching experience in Japan

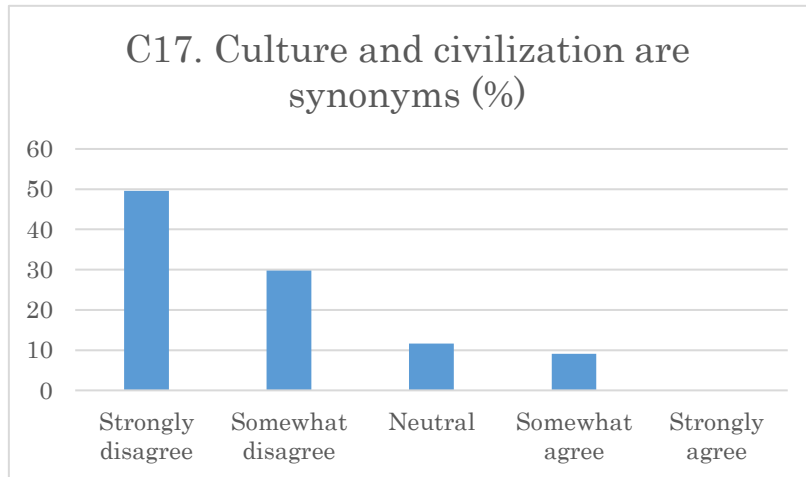


The results of the follow-up study on teachers' backgrounds shows that most enter into university teaching after considerable experience either outside of language teaching or after many years teaching in private language schools / ALT positions where a bachelor degree in any subject allows employment. Given the frequency with which respondents identify that the cultural dimension of language teaching is absent from their training, previous work experience and educational background become potential influencers on understandings and beliefs of culture.

4.2 Teachers' concepts of culture

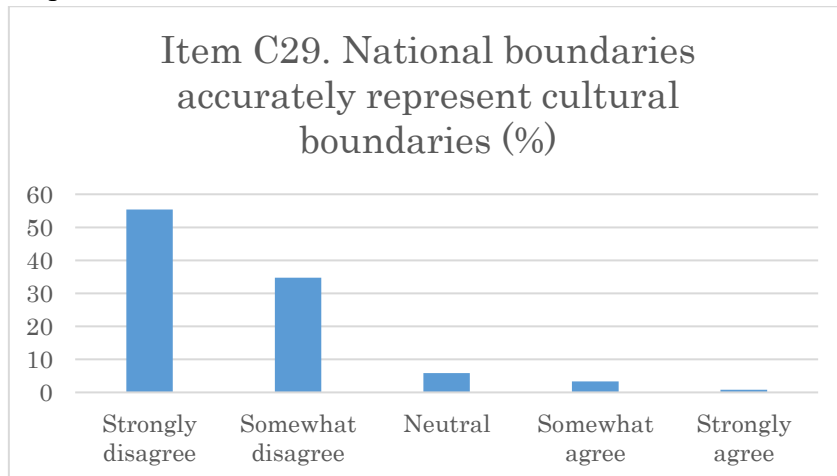
This section will look at survey items that relate to teachers' subscription to both the broad understandings of culture in both a lay / everyday usage and the literature that challenges them.

Figure 31. Responses to C17



Item C17 above was the only one that failed to register a single response in the “strongly agree” option. Almost half of respondents strongly disagreed with the notion that culture is synonymous with civilization. This hierarchical view of culture featured in the earliest writings of culture from Cicero to Matthew Arnold and big C notions of culture still circulating today is largely rejected by university language teachers in Japan. Less than 10% of respondents even somewhat agreed with the concept.

Figure 32. Responses to C29



The results of item C29 of the survey indicate a great dissatisfaction with the national unit as a cultural grouping. Over 50% of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that national groupings represent cultural groupings. Indeed, only 3.3% of respondents somewhat agreed with the statement and just one respondent (0.8%) agreed.

This sentiment is reflected in Figure 33, which shows subscription to the idea that people are members of multiple cultures. The vast majority of respondents agreed with this statement either somewhat (41.3%) or strongly (45.5%). Perhaps somewhat unsurprisingly given that so many people disagreed the view that “national boundaries accurately represent cultural boundaries” and agreed that “people are members of multiple cultures”, there exists a significant negative correlation (Pallant, 2015) between the two with a -0.339 Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

Figure 33. Responses to C16

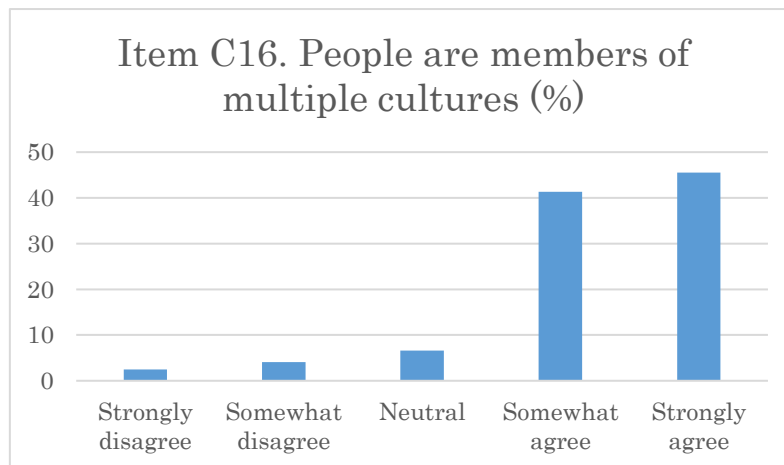
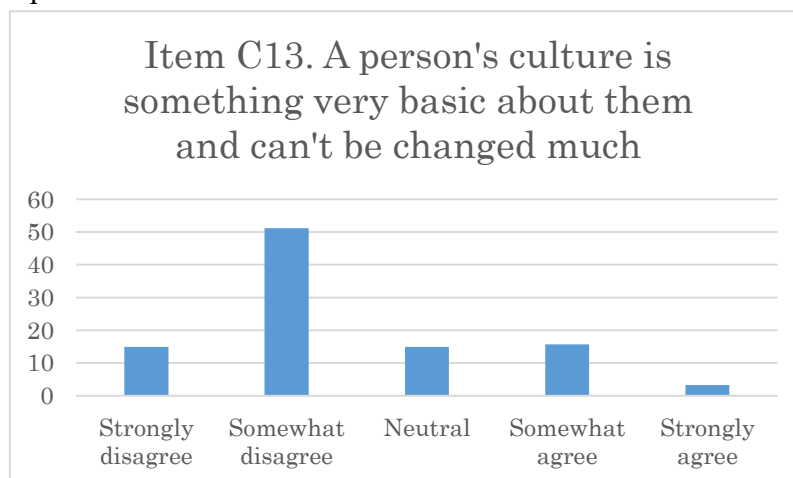
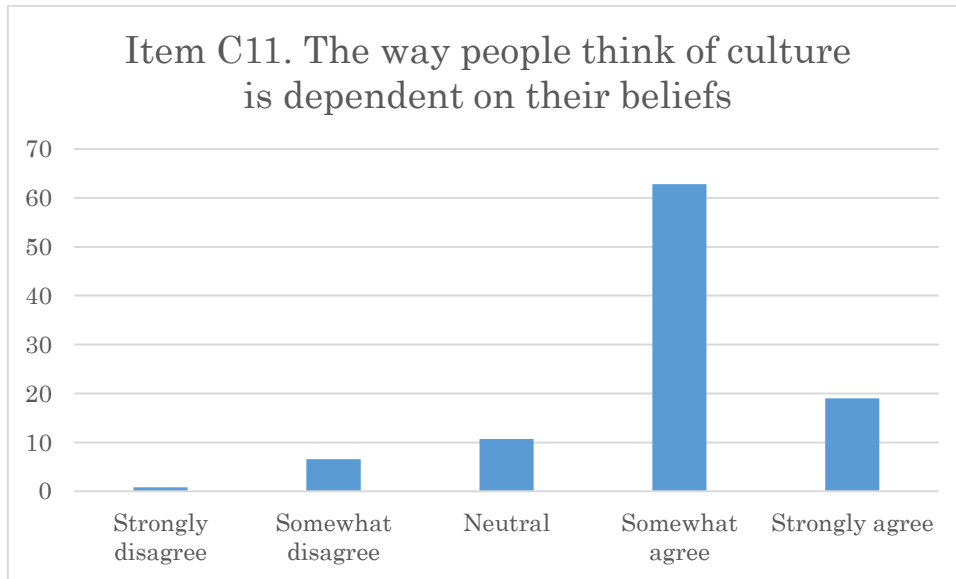


Figure 34. Responses to C13



Item C13 elicited sentiment regarding the possibility of culture change, though not necessarily an individual’s ability to direct the change. Although there was a spread of responses, by far the most common response was disagreement (51.2% somewhat and 14.9% strongly) suggesting a belief that culture can change.

Figure 35. Responses to C11



Responses to Item C11 above, when taken with the results of other items, suggest that respondents have a sophisticated view of culture that is based on multiple cultural identities rather than national labels, is subject to change, and which is ideological in nature.

4.3 Essentialism

Based on the literature, and as mentioned earlier, I hypothesized 12 items as potentially being indicators of essentialism in the concept of culture held by teachers. For ease of reference, these items are shown again below.

Figure 36. Hypothesized essentialism items in Section C

2	The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.
3	Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.
4(R)	Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.
6(R)	Diversity is the norm in any culture.
9(R)	Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national

	structures.
10	Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g. collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.
13	A person's culture is something very basic about them and cannot be changed much.
14(R)	Cultural categories are based on ideology (economic, political, social, etc.) If the socio-political situation changes, the cultural categories will change as well.
19(R)	An individual has the power to choose the cultural elements they adopt.
21	People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.
24(R)	Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary
29	National borders accurately represent cultural borders.

*(R) Indicates that the item is reverse scored

Before presenting the results of the statistical analyses of the items as a group, examination of the frequencies for each item shows some interesting patterns.

Figure 37. Responses to hypothesized essentialism items

Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
C2	37.2	29.8	15.7	12.4	5
C3	14.9	43.8	19	21.5	0.8
C4	1.7	5.8	10.7	43.8	38
C6	10.8	25	17.5	30	16.7
C9	0	15	19.2	40	25.8
C10	8.3	29.2	29.2	30.8	2.5
C13	14.9	51.2	14.9	15.7	3.3
C14	3.3	20.7	17.4	47.1	11.6
C19	3.3	28.1	21.5	39.7	7.4
C21	26.4	40.5	18.2	10.7	4.1
C24	11.6	39.7	27.3	15.7	5.8
C29	55.4	34.7	5.8	3.3	0.8

As we can see, there is a clear disagreement with the idea that members of a culture equally share the traits that define it (C2), one of the fundamental assumptions in essentialism. This strong feeling is also shown in the rejection of the idea that culture is fixed (C4) and that people in one culture are essentially different from people in other

cultures. However, other items, such as C10 show a clear ambivalence.

4.3.1 Analysis of essentialism items

To check the suitability of items for factor analysis, Pallant (2015) suggests that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy be above .6 and that the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be significant (.05 or less).

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the above items was .664 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was .000. Both these scores are within the scores set by Pallant (2015) as indicating suitability for factor analysis. However, Pallant (2015) suggests that identifying several correlation coefficients at .3 or above also indicates suitability for factor analysis. Examination of the correlation matrix table (Appendix 12) shows that although there are some scores above .3 these are not frequent. Although there are a number of correlation coefficients close to .3 and the scores of the suitability tests above were positive, the lack of a great number of correlation scores above .3 suggests that the suitability of exploratory factor analysis for the essentialism items is not as robust as hoped.

This mediocre suitability for factor analysis is reflected in the Scree Plot (Appendix 12) which, although showing one factor above the elbow of the curve, the factor has a less than ideal Eigen-value. Despite this, an Eigen-value above the elbow is clearly present and the tests, despite lower than hoped for coefficients, do point to a sole factor being present.

Examination of the output statistics (Figure 38) showed that all items except C14R and C19R are components of this factor. The exclusion of these two items is not surprising because, as we have seen above, views were extremely divided across all 5 options from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Figure 38. Essentialism items that load onto the emergent factor

C2	.650
C3	.527
C10	.432
C13	.455
C21	.521
C29	.494
C4R	.473
C6R	.404
C9R	.463
C14R	
C19R	
C24R	.494

4.3.2 Reliability and normality of data

Having completed a factor analysis, I conducted a reliability analysis, which gave a .652 indication of reliability. This indication of scale reliability is below the ideal .7 score (Pallant, 2015; Dörnyei, 2007). However, Pallant (2015) does suggest that scales with ten or fewer items often do return lower reliability scores than scales with more items and Dörnyei adds that researchers need not necessarily worry unless scores are below .6 (Dörnyei, 2007).

The statistical analyses above are based on the assumption that the distribution of scores on the dependent variable is 'normal' (Pallant, 2015). To assess the normality of the data and support the analyses above, I conducted a descriptive analysis of the dependent variable Essentialism in the Concept of Culture (ECC).

In the first test examining normality of data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Sig. value was above .05 indicating normality (Pallant, 2015). The normality of data was supported by two further steps. Firstly, the mean of essentialism (24.1345) is very close to the 5% trimmed mean (24.1489) which suggests normality of data (Pallant, 2015).

The second procedure to confirm normality of data is examining the distribution of data for essentialism in histogram form (Appendix 12). The scale ranges from a lowest

possible score of 10 to a highest possible score of 50. The lowest score was found to be 13 and the highest, 36. The concentration of scores are around the mean score of 24.1345 indicate normality of data.

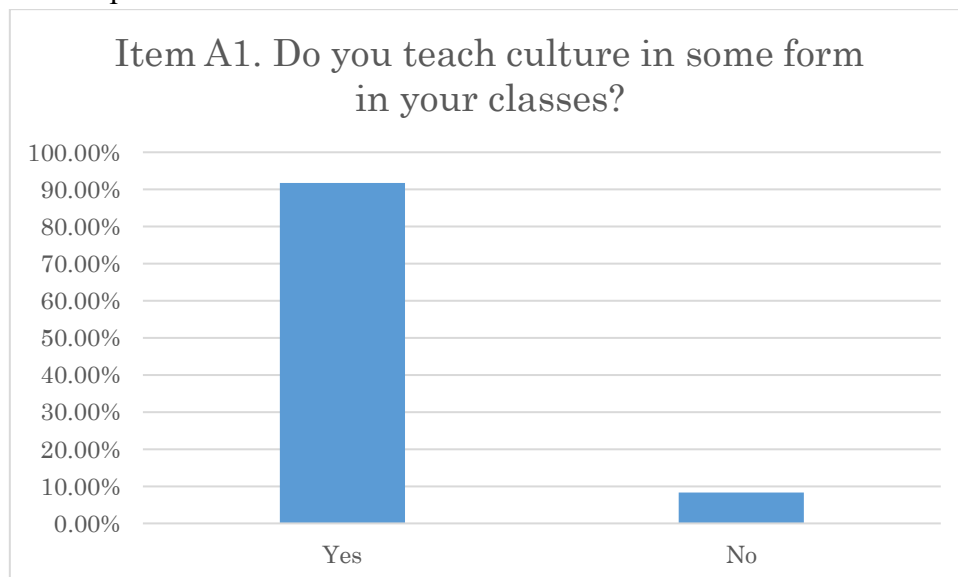
4.3.3 Summary of essentialism results

Though the data pointing to the presence of Essentialism as a factor was not found to be as strong as in the pilot study, the data does suggest that a factor is present and that it is reliable to a reasonable degree. Given that the independent items that contribute to the dependent variable are somewhat abstract and the concept of culture is, as we have seen, vast and nebulous in its common understanding, I believe that the results are satisfactory and show that a scale to capture essentialism is present. The normality of data lends further support to this end. Findings from interviews and class observations, as will be shown later, support the presence of an essentialism scale.

4.4 Culture and language teaching

The opening question in the survey resulted in an overwhelming response in the affirmative as shown below.

Figure 39. Responses to A1

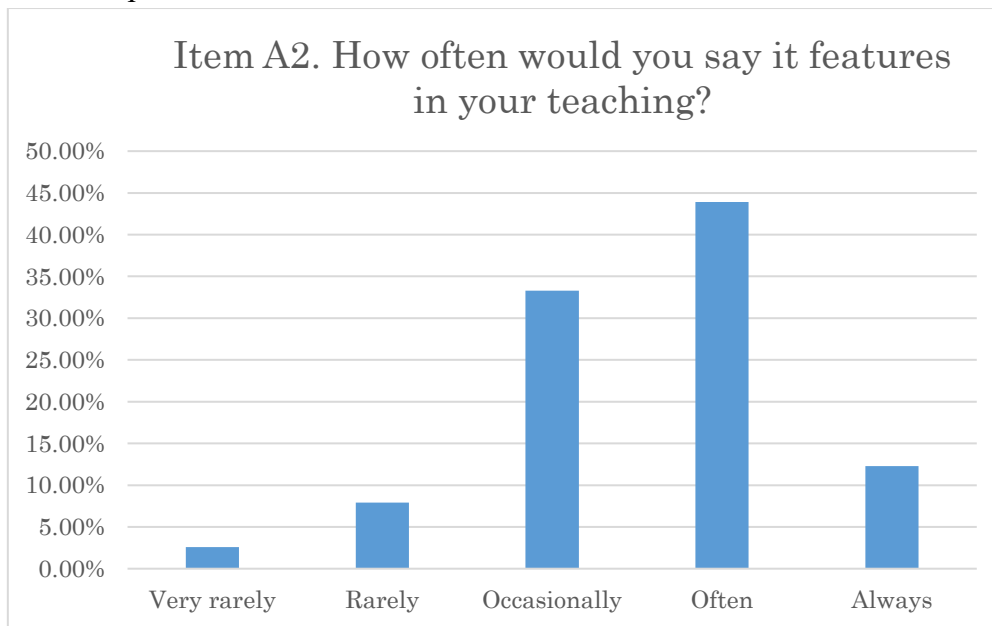


Interestingly, nearly 10% of teachers did not see themselves as teaching culture in some form in their classes. Therefore, almost 1/10th of teachers would disagree that teachers

cannot help but teach culture in some way. I found this answer interesting because I had assumed that teachers would likely view culture teaching as inevitable. One possible explanation could be that this answer was common among Japanese teachers who, sharing the same nationality as their students, did not see themselves as bringing anything “cultural” into the class. Of the twenty-one Japanese respondents, five answered that they did not teach culture in some form in their classes. This rate of nearly 25% is much higher than that of foreign teachers, but the vast majority of Japanese teachers still do see themselves as teaching culture in some form.

Teachers who said they did not teach culture in anyway were not required to answer any further questions until Section C. Of the teachers that did answer ‘yes’, it would seem that culture is something that they consider more often than not when planning classes.

Figure 40. Responses to A2



It is also something they usually look at when examining materials (Figure 40) and an area of their teaching which nearly 30% of respondents are satisfied with (Figure 41).

Figure 41. Responses to A3

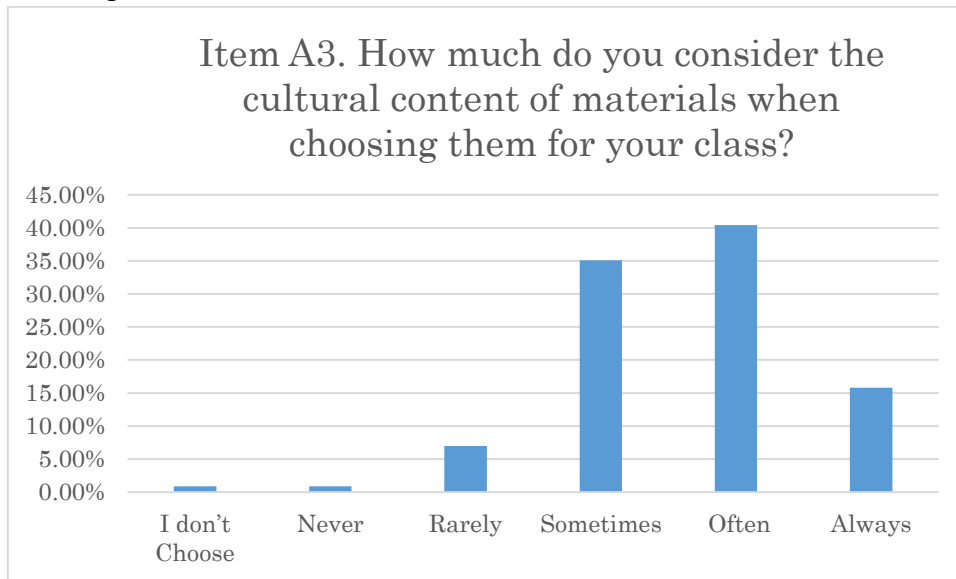
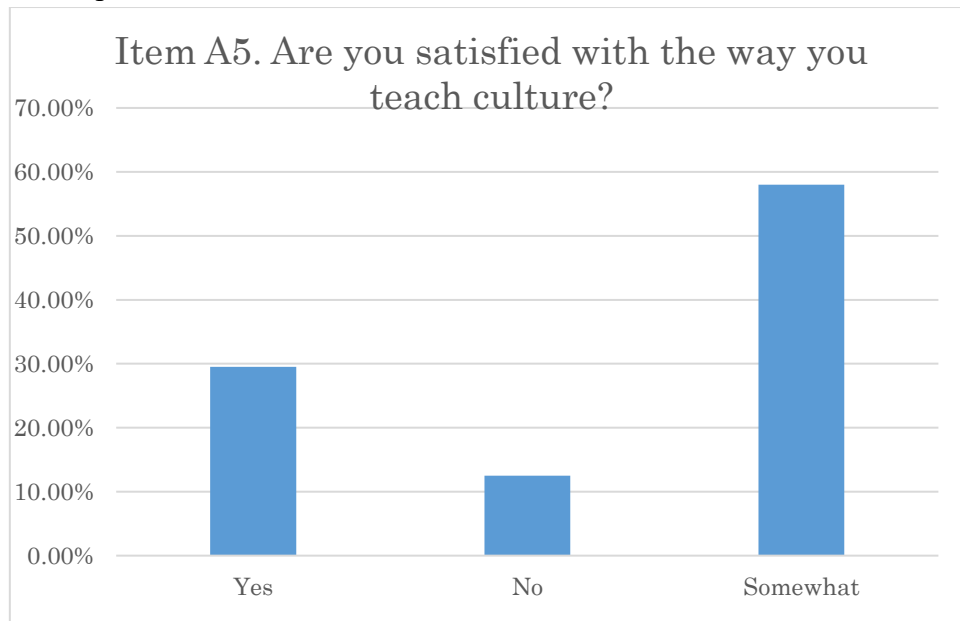


Figure 42. Responses to A5

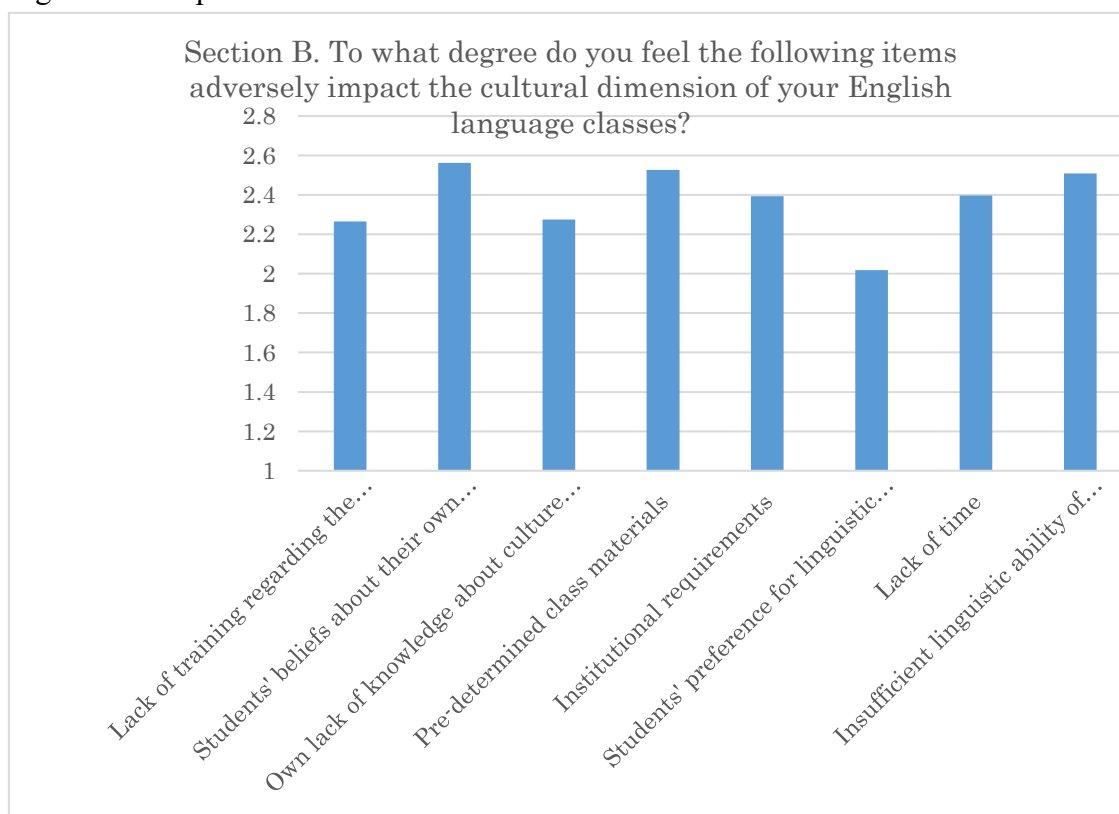


Though the main value of the above items will come when examining teachers' attitudes toward the cultural dimension of language teaching, we can see that, overall, teachers view culture as being a frequent part of their classes, see it as an important component of course books and is an area that 70% of teachers feel some dissatisfaction with.

An attempt to gauge possible sources of dissatisfaction was made in Section B of the survey (Figure 43). Respondents answered on the impact of various factors on the cultural

dimension of their teaching with a score of 1 indicating no impact up to a score of 4 for strong impact.

Figure 43. Responses to items in Section B



It is interesting to note that reasons we might possibly identify as being deficiencies on behalf of the teacher (B1- Lack of training regarding the teaching of culture & B3- Own lack of knowledge about culture / cultures) were low scoring items. Conversely, items we may identify as based on student deficiencies (B2- Student's beliefs about their own culture & B8- Insufficient linguistic knowledge of the students) were two of the top three scoring items. The other top scoring item (B4- Pre-determined class materials) is also an item that is not one related to a lack of teacher knowledge nor are the following two high scoring items (Lack of time' & 'Institutional requirements').

4.4.1 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

Based on the literature (Section 1.4), I suggested the following items as being indicative of a pedagogical inclination towards goals and outcomes consistent with those of intercultural language teaching at a fundamental level. For ease of reference, the items

are shown again.

Figure 44. Hypothesized ICI items

C1	Culture and language are strongly connected.
C5	Culture and communication are strongly connected.
C7	Culture is a vital part of English teaching.
C23	Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal.
C26	Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.
C27	It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.
C33(R)	Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.
C34	Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.

As with the essentialism items, I conducted a factor analysis to test whether only one factor was present. However, as I only identified 8 items as possibly being suggestive of ICI, and several other items were related to the cultural dimension of language teaching, I added the following items (Figure 45) to the exploratory factor analysis.

Figure 45. Items added to ICI item pool for exploratory factor analysis

C8	The teacher can really only teach his/her culture.
C12	The language teacher should present a positive image of different cultures.
C15	The cultural dimension of language teaching is more problematic for English than other languages.
C18	Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on student motivation.
C20	Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate.
C22(R)	Native speaker cultures should be the focus of cultural content.
C25(R)	The cultural dimension of language teaching should involve making frequent comparisons between Japan and other countries.
C30	If cultural comparisons are used in class, they should highlight similarity rather than difference.

4.4.2 Results of individual items

Before detailing the results of the exploratory factor analysis and other statistical procedures on the items taken as a whole, I will show details of each item.

Figure 46. Results for all items in the expanded ICI item pool

Item	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
C1	0.8	3.3	4.1	23.1	68.6
C5	2.5	1.7	5	32.2	58.7
C7	2.5	3.3	21.5	40.5	32.2
C23	4.1	8.3	24.8	43.0	19.8
C26	8.3	27.3	23.1	27.3	14.0
C27	9.9	9.9	16.5	47.9	15.7
C33	31.4	35.5	19.0	11.6	2.5
C34	0.8	12.4	19.8	47.1	19.8
C8	38	38.8	13.2	9.1	0.8
C12	4.1	20.7	33.1	27.3	14.9
C15	21.5	28.9	24	19.8	5.8
C18	1.7	6.6	32.2	45.5	14
C20	0.8	10.7	38.8	43.0	6.6
C22	33.9	38.8	19	5	1.7
C25	11.6	24.8	31.4	26.4	5.8
C30	14.9	28.9	35.5	13.2	7.4

Examining individual items like this rather than by presenting a mean value is important because from the table above we can see the division of belief rather than just averages.

From the above, we can see that respondents showed strong agreement with the following statements:

C1. Culture and language are strongly connected.

C5. Culture and communication are strongly connected.

C7. Culture is a vital part of language teaching.

Although these respondents agreed with other items, these three stand out due to the strength of agreement and that these are more fundamental in nature than other items.

Here teachers clearly see culture, language and communication as strongly connected. With such an option expressed, it follows that, as language teachers, culture is understood as an important part of the job. However, it is worth noting that 5.8% of teachers disagreed with the idea expressed in item C7. Though this may seem like a small number, one may assume that other aspects of language, such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, listening or pronunciation, to name but a few, would likely receive no responses disagreeing that they are vital parts of language teaching.

Items that teachers clearly and strongly disagreed with focused on the imposition of limits on them as a teacher regarding the teaching of culture:

C8. The teacher can only really teach his/her own culture.

C22. Native speaker cultures should be the focus of cultural content.

C33. Teaching culture creates stereotypes rather than breaks them down

The strong disagreement with items C8 and C22 would seem to indicate that teachers do not believe that the cultural dimension of their teaching should be limited by either their own culture or the culture(s) which are often associated with English.

The third item, C33 is perhaps different as it is suggestive of a result of culture in language teaching. The common belief among teachers is that the teaching of culture does not lead to stereotyping. However, views on item 27 differ despite the item being similar (“It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices”). The main difference is that C33 asks whether teachers think the outcome is more negative than positive whereas C27 inquires whether or not teachers see this breaking down of prejudice as part of the duty of a language teacher.

It is with items similar to C27, i.e. ones that they represent a desired end or method, that we see answers become less absolute and either fall into the “somewhat disagree” (C15, C30) or “somewhat agree” (C23, C27, C34, C18, C20).

Three items, demonstrate a clear difference of opinion mixed with a lack of feeling on the subject:

C26. Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary goal.

C12. The language teacher should present a positive image of different cultures.

C25. The cultural dimension of language teaching should involve making frequent comparisons between Japan and other countries.

4.4.3 Statistical analyses

To check the suitability of items for factor analysis, Pallant (2015) suggests that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy be above .6 and that the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity should be significant (.05 or less). The items above returned scores of .730 and .000 respectively, indicating suitability for factor analysis. The suitability was further confirmed by an examination of the Correlation Matrix scores. Several correlation coefficients were .3 or above (Appendix 13) and so suitable for factor analysis (Pallant, 2015).

Examination of the Eigen-values in the scree plot (Appendix 13) showed several values above 1. However, one value (4.048) is much higher than all the others, and the only value above the elbow of the curve in the scree plot, indicating a one factor solution.

The items which load on to this factor are shown below (Figure 45). All hypothesized items are identified as significantly loading onto the factor (score of .3 or higher). Five of the eight additional items added were found to not be part of the factor (items C8, C12, C15, C30 and C22R). Three items from the eight additional items were identified as being part of the factor, one of them negatively.

Figure 47. Correlation scores for items loading on to the emergent factor

C1	.463
C5	.476
C7	.736
C18	.661
C20	.587
C23	.532
C26	.691
C27	.774
C34	.752
C25R	-.477
C33R	.710

Although all items are connected to culture and language teaching, the excluded items do represent themes separate from that of ICI and their exclusion was no great surprise. However, three of the eight (C18, C20 and C25R) did load on to the factor.

Item C18 and C20 represent the motivational aspects of the cultural dimension of language teaching. Although belief in the motivational value of such cultural content is not exclusive to intercultural language teaching, it can be said to be an assumed part of cultural content in most forms. However, this can be especially true for intercultural language teaching due to its roots in the student centred methodology of CLT, and its focus on interactions with intercultural others through the prism of cultural analysis. This motivating aspect of culture, while not anticipated, is reasonable and can be accepted as part of ICI.

As shown above, one item, C25R, was found to load negatively on to the factor and, from the correlation matrix (Appendix 13), can be seen to have a negative correlation with multiple items, something which I found surprising though understandable. The item had been reverse scored on the belief that part of ICI would be that teachers should not focus on international comparisons between Japan and elsewhere as this has the potential to reify ideas of 'the Japanese' as well as 'the Other'. As seen in Section 1.4, recent work on intercultural teaching, such as Baker's (2010) idea of Intercultural Awareness, places great emphasis on the breaking down of rigid conceptual barriers regarding culture. The inclusion of C25R would seem to be at odds with this growing belief within intercultural language teaching. As it is an issue that is still somewhat contested in intercultural language teaching and as the item is suggestive of a particular method of teaching rather than a view of the role of culture, I removed the item from the factor.

4.4.4 Reliability and normality of data

Having examined the items through factor analysis and discovered clear evidence that a factor exists among the items, I was eager to examine the Cronbach's Alpha score to assess reliability. The indication of reliability expressed above is significant and well above the .6 or .7 score that is often set as the benchmark.

Figure 48. Reliability statistics for ICI

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
.845	.844	10

As with items for ECC, to assess the normality of the data and support the analyses above, I conducted a descriptive analysis of the dependent variable ICI. The mean (37.84) is very close to the 5% Trimmed Mean figure (38.13) indicating that extreme scores do not have a strong impact on the median (Pallant, 2015). This can be seen in the histogram (Appendix 13). The scale ranges from a lowest possible score of 10 to a highest possible score of 50. The lowest score was found to be 19 and the highest, 50. The concentration of scores are around the mean score of 37.8430 indicates normality of data.

4.5 Other analyses: Correlations

Having analysed teachers' responses to the survey and found evidence that supports the hypothesis that certain items contribute to the factors of ECC and ICI, the next stage of analysis was to ascertain if there was any relationship between the constructs.

No correlation would seem to exist between ECC and ICI. This can be seen in the broad dispersion on the scatterplot (Appendix 14) and the correlation value of .067. This value is well below the values of .10 to .29 suggested as being indicative of even a small correlation (Pallant, 2015).

As such, it would appear that a teacher can have an essentialized view of culture *and* still view culture as a necessary part of language teaching and the main objectives of intercultural language teaching as key goals within this.

4.5.1 Comparing groups

ECC and ICI scores of teachers were considered across categories such as experience, qualifications, and other background / demographic categories. This is not done to create, reject or reaffirm any stereotype nor do I wish to essentialize any group. This is done to identify any trends, patterns or interesting anomalies in the data which may assist or challenge further explanations and discussion. The statistical techniques employed to

achieve such ends are, in this instance, independent samples t-tests and one-way between-groups ANOVA.

4.5.2 Comparing groups with ECC

Using independent samples t-tests ANOVA analysis it was possible to view the mean scores for ECC and ICI across a great number of demographic categories such as gender, native or non-native speaker, and international experience. Interestingly, the lowest mean scores for ECC were found to be:

1. Respondents who are not satisfied with the way they teach culture (22.76)
2. Respondents who have had training on the cultural dimension (22.91)
3. Respondents whose highest qualification is connected to language teaching (23.65)

Teachers whose highest qualification is related to language teaching have lower ECC scores than those who do not, but the score is still higher than other variables. These results point once more to the findings of the small scale survey of teaching courses in Section 2.4.2 (Training and education), that suggested a lack of instruction regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching. As well as its absence, the results highlight its positive impact in reducing essentialism.

However, the lowest essentialism mean above was among teachers who were dissatisfied with their teaching of culture. Given that non-essentialism is partly the greying, problematizing and muddying of the concept, this result would partly offer support for the presence of ECC as a factor. This finding along with the lack of clear difference across many demographic categories suggests that, though cultural education and training can help reduce essentialism, the reason for the presence of ECC may be beyond the ability of demographic breakdowns to explain. This is where the strength of the mixed method approach can be felt as this avenue can be explored in interviews and observations.

4.5.3 Comparing groups with ICI

When comparing groups with ICI, there was no significant impact if a teacher was multilingual, had extensive international experience, had a qualification in language teaching or had had some form of cultural training. The three highest ICI averages were achieved by women (39.26), teachers who declared dissatisfaction with the way they

teach culture (39.50) and PhD holders (39.53). These scores, though suggestive, are not as clear as they may appear. For example, while women were found to hold greater ICI, the female respondent population was more highly educated than the male respondent population as a much higher percentage held PhDs. ANOVA analysis showed that both impact ICI though being female tended to have the greatest impact. While ICI increased with education level for both men and women, the level of ICI for women was higher than that of their male counterparts at each stage of education. Having discovered this trend, the lack of female participants for the qualitative stage is lamentable.

The high ICI score for teachers who declared dissatisfaction with the way they teach culture was also interesting in that it did not have a relationship to the other two high scoring categories as no significant differences were seen across gender or educational levels. This category may be said to be the most significant as it was dependent on the respondents understanding of culture, its role in teaching, and a self-reflective assessment concerning these.

4.6 Summary of survey findings

- Teachers overwhelmingly see themselves as teachers of culture in some form.
- The cultural part of language teaching is something teachers often consider.
- Problems beyond the teacher's control, such as students' lack of travel experience, are seen as the biggest issues in the use of culture in their teaching.
- A construct – which I identify as Essentialism (ECC) – was found to exist. However, statistical support for the presence of a factor and the reliability of the scale was mediocre.
- ECC scores were distributed in a bell curve along the continuum, but with a greater concentration of scores toward the lower end, indicating a general rejection of essentialism.
- A construct, which I identify as an Intercultural Inclination (ICI), was found to exist. The statistical procedures identifying the factor and its reliability returned a robust indication of the presence of a factor and the reliability of the scale.
- ICI scores were distributed in a bell curve along the continuum, but with a greater concentration of scores toward the higher end, indicating strong belief in the role of culture in language teaching.

Chapter 5

Results - Interviews

5.1 Participants

Of the 121 respondents who completed the survey, 21 volunteered for both interview and class observation. As mentioned in my methodology section, participants were to be selected based on their survey responses to the essentialism items and culture as part of language teaching items. This is in addition to an attempt to pick respondents who represent the diversity of language teachers in Japan (male-female, native speaker-non-native speaker, foreign-Japanese, differences in qualification and so on.)

Having drawn up a table of potential candidates, two of my initial selections did not respond and one teacher (PhD, female, non-Japanese and non native-speaker) was able to undergo a class observation, but unable to interview, and subsequently dropped out of contact. The final five selected were all able to complete class observations and interviews.

Figure 49. Biographical information of interview participants

	Nation	Teaching experience (years).	M/F	Highest degree earned. Related to language teaching? (Y/N)	Time teaching at university in Japan. (years)	Language ability other than English / Japanese?
Alan	USA	8-12	M	Bachelor / N	Less 3	N
Brian	UK	13-20	M	Master / Y	Less 3	N
Chito	Japan	13-20	M	Master / Y	7-10	N
David	UK	13-20	M	Master / Y	Less 3	N
Eric	USA	20+	M	Master / Y	Over 10	Y

To respect and maintain the promise of anonymity given to survey participants who volunteered for the interview and observation phase, specific names and places will be omitted. When it is believed that mention of these is necessary and relevant to the presentation of results and discussion, these details will be replaced with more general or descriptive language that prevents individual identification without being too vague or uninformative. Additionally, all participants have been given a pseudonym. The first letter

of the name given will be indicative of the order they were interviewed and are presented: Alan, Brian Chito, David, Eric. As interview transcriptions represent a huge amount of data, only a short sample has been provided (Appendix 15).

Despite being conducted in very similar settings, the classes observed differed in student level, age, and major, as well as the focus of class. The student level and class focus shown in Figure 50 below was reported by the teacher and is not my own assessment. The number of students refers to those present in the observed class rather than the number of students registered to that class. In all classes, students sat at individual movable desks. Alan, Brian, Chito and Eric all used a projector screen during class. Eric was the only teacher whose class did not have a designated textbook.

Figure 50. Class information of observations

Teacher	Location	No. of students	Student year	Student level / major	Class focus
Alan	Campus classroom	10	Freshmen	Low / non-English major	Pronunciation
Brian	Campus classroom	14	Freshmen	Low / non-English major	General English
Chito	Campus classroom	15	Freshmen	Intermediate / English majors	Reading
David	Campus classroom	14	Freshmen	Intermediate / English majors	Communication
Eric	Campus classroom	6	Junior	Upper-intermediate / English majors	Reading

5.2 Alan

5.2.1 Background

Alan lived the early years of his life in a major cosmopolitan American city before moving with his family to another large city in the U.S. In his early 20s, he moved to another less populous state and lived there for a number of years.

Alan had not lived in another country until he moved to Japan but has close family members in three northern European countries. Additionally, members of Alan's family have married people of other nationalities which leads Alan to the view that he has a very international family and declare "we just don't seem to stay in the same country we were born, and that's maybe in the blood." Outside of visits to countries for the purpose of family visits, Alan has visited other countries in Asia and Oceania.

Although Alan's highest qualification is a bachelor degree in business and he holds no teaching qualifications, his career has been based on teaching. Alan has spent 13 years in Japan teaching English. This teaching initially focused on young children in small private language schools. After this he moved to state operated schools and, more recently, to maintaining a teaching schedule populated by classes taught at three different higher education institutions. Two of these are universities and one is a professional training college (*senmongakko*). The classes Alan teaches focus on speaking and pronunciation and are delivered to first and second year students.

5.2.2 Concept of culture

Alan: I'd define it as ways of thinking, maybe? And actions. But something deeper than—a lot of people think what people like to eat or how they dress, which is true, but maybe a little shallow. I would say primarily ways of thinking and what people value. Here it's like a group culture; we're more individualistic. I would primarily say those two things. A lot of other things, food and dress, are more surface stuff.

The definition of culture offered by Alan is a very broad definition similar to that offered by anthropologists in the early to mid-twentieth century. When asked to give his understanding of culture, he gives a statement that references the mental aspects of culture,

the “ways of thinking” as well as behaviour “And actions” and also adds what may be termed artefacts or aspects of material culture such as food and ways of dress.

Interestingly, in the quote above, Alan mentions food and dress twice and suggests that, although it may be part of culture, these are surface elements of culture and focus on them “maybe a little shallow”. With greater importance given to the “ways of thinking” and “actions” dimensions of culture, it would appear at first glance that Alan’s concept of culture primarily revolved around the mentalist and behaviourist dimensions with the semiotic dimension being largely absent.

The focus on mentalist and behavioural dimensions of culture in his definition was not manifest in his presentation of culture in class. Part 3 of the observed lesson featured a strong comparative phase (an example of observation notes can be seen in Appendix 16). Students were asked to write national symbols for the U.S. and Japan. Students were given the examples of Australia- koalas, France- Eiffel Tower, and China- Pandas. The answers given by students were similar, such as hamburgers, Hollywood, Grand Canyon and Walmart for the U.S. and sushi, kabuki, tatami, and geisha for Japan. Interestingly, the teacher added the Statue of Liberty as the number 1 symbol of the U.S., and Mt. Fuji as the number one symbol of Japan despite no students giving either answer when prompted. These symbols of America and Japan were not followed up on once elicited and therefore remained in “the more surface stuff” category of culture suggested in Alan’s definition.

This too is the case in the use of “History of the world in two minutes” videos for the U.S. and Japan. Students were again asked to write which images they saw. This resulted in a similar list of things: monster trucks, guns and Elvis for the U.S., and samurai, karate and Godzilla for Japan. Again, this was not followed up on in any way and therefore was left as stereotypical national imagery.

5.2.3 Cultural groups

Alan: I could say that I’m in the teaching culture now, because we’re wrapped up in education. That’s a way of thinking as well.

The above quote from Alan demonstrates the implicit belief that we move in and out of cultures. The declaration that ‘education is a way of thinking as well as others’ and that he is in that context “now” suggests the importance of context. The group implicit in this

comment would tend to be along the lines of a discourse community or community of practice. The cultural group is defined by the action and situation the individual finds him or herself and would imply that people are all multicultural.

However, the above quote was the only mention of this multicultural dimension of human life. On all other occasions, the differential aspect of culture, the group, was defined exclusively in terms of national or pan-national entities. For example, when asked the somewhat leading question of “What is your culture?” Alan responded:

Alan: I would probably go nationalistic and say American, but I could say Western. In this context, probably a little more Western culture, because from their [Japanese] perspective it's 'us' and 'them'. You can't dice it up too much. I would probably either say Western or American, probably American.

This is very interesting as it shows that his idea of his cultural group might differ depending on who he is talking to. The mention of “In this context, probably a little more Western culture” suggests a great cultural gulf between Japan and the US across which all Western culture begins to look the same. Indeed, Alan often made reference to “Western” and “Eastern” culture. This again is maybe due to context. When talking about British and American culture, Alan stated, “Actually, it's not that different when you compare.” Thus in the context of Japan, two members of different national cultures become members of a Western culture by virtue of its cultural distance from Japanese culture.

However, when asked what his cultural group would be if asked by another American, Alan said he would give the answer, “It's our culture. It's the same thing that you're in.” Here we see that the idea that Alan's idea of the cultural group is dependent on context does not follow as we might expect him to define the group by some different label such as home state. This statement does confirm, however, what is demonstrated throughout the interview, that the group in Alan's concept of culture is overwhelmingly understood in terms of national entities.

In the survey, Alan somewhat agreed with items C16 “People are members of multiple cultures”, and C9 “Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures”, as well as somewhat disagreeing with item C29 “National boundaries

accurately represent cultural boundaries.” Despite this he constantly referenced national labels throughout the interview and, as we have seen, he defines himself in terms of nationality.

Culture understood in national terms was a very strong element in the class observation with American culture and Japanese culture being frequently contrasted, but also with mentions of his family who get along well in English despite being of various nationalities such as Japanese and Lithuanian. Talk of in class English accents also supports the view that the nation is the cultural grouping of most importance from Alan. As an aside in class, Alan mentioned that English has different accents such as American, British and Australian accents.

5.2.4 Hierarchy

A hierarchical dimension of culture was not present in his definition of culture, nor was it present, implicitly or explicitly in his classroom teaching that comparatively contrasted national cultures. However, comments in the interview were suggestive of a belief in the superiority of one culture over other.

Alan: There is this thing where everyone thinks that no culture is better than any other culture. ‘We’re just different. Yours isn’t better than mine, and vice versa.’ Some cultures, I think, are more advanced human-rights-wise, and other things. But that hasn’t been anything that’s been brought up in class.

Alan here expresses some dissatisfaction with the cultural relativistic view that moral and ethical systems, among others, vary yet are equally valid as they are the inevitable result of context which, therefore, makes it impossible to identify a best or superior system. Although Alan does not explicitly endorse a hierarchical view of culture, for certain things such as human rights there clearly is a hierarchy in mind with certain cultures featuring higher on the scale than others. While not being a hierarchical view that states one culture is better than the other, it does indicate a belief that one culture has aspects that are better than another.

This ambivalence concerning the presence of a hierarchical dimension in his culture concept is perhaps supported by his neutral response to survey item C17 which asked whether culture and civilization were synonyms.

5.2.5 Development of the concept of culture

Alan: My mother's British, and the first time that I remember going over there I was twelve years old. I'd been there before, but that's the first time I got the first real taste of a different culture. Actually, it's not that different when you compare. It's still Western, you still speak English. But I thought it was real interesting. "Oh wow, you drive on the other side of the road, and a car has the steering wheel on the other side, and they use different money." Even small stuff like that I thought was really interesting. I think primarily, just by being here [Japan] for many years, you start to get more of a feel, a little deeper understanding. When you first get here there's culture shock. You notice some surface stuff. "Wow, everything's so small. Trains are fast. Everything's so organized." Short answer is by being here for so many years, you have more experiences and more encounters, more interactions, and that's probably what's done it.

The above quote was given in response to a question about why he came to understand culture in the way he does. Experience would seem to be key in the initial stages of his development of an awareness of culture. Experience gained primarily through observation. Visiting and living within different cultures – again here identified in national terms- gives one cultural awareness and makes one aware of differences on a gradually deeper and deeper level.

This view would seem evident too when he talks of his understanding of culture as compared to that of his students.

Alan: I would hope that mine's a little deeper than theirs. I'm older than them. With a little more life experience you have a little more depth to your thinking and your experience. I think they might get a little more of their impression of culture from what they see on TV or in movies, and I'm thinking Western culture, TV, movies, songs. I read more, watch a lot of news, so I hope to get a little deeper. Maybe pop culture they're more—even from Korean pop culture or something, I think that's what they think is like "those kinds of clothes," "that food," "that music." That's their impression of culture.

Again, his concept of culture is a result of exposure. He views his own culture concept as deeper than students due to the exposure of living in Japan for a number of years. Though he sees students' views of culture as somewhat superficial, he does claim this is natural.

Alan: When you're young, a teenager or in your twenties, you're not necessarily thinking what's deeper ways of thinking for another culture. One of the first things you notice is "wow, they eat this unusual food," or "they dress this way." It's the first thing you see and comes to mind.

Implicit in this view of culture would seem to be a belief that obtaining a more sophisticated view of culture is somewhat inevitable as people gain more life experience. As Alan said above, "I read more, watch a lot of news, so I hope to get a little deeper." This short statement also highlights two interesting points. Firstly he mentions getting a "deeper" idea of culture. A "deeper" idea of culture was something that was mentioned several times during the interview beyond the three times it is mentioned in the above excerpts. A deeper understanding was often juxtaposed against the "surface" elements of culture such as food, dress and music. Despite the frequent references and denigration of an idea of culture focusing on surface elements, Alan never elaborated on what the deeper elements of culture are beyond quite general statements about different ways of thinking and behaviour. Though specifics were not forthcoming, we again can see that culture for Alan is similar to that in the cultural iceberg; a large block with elements we can clearly see and other components lurking beneath the water at different depths.

The second point highlighted by the above statement focuses on Alan's mention of his reading habits. Alan's reading habits would appear to have a considerable influence on his idea of culture.

Alan: I buy a lot of books off Amazon. I'm really interested in American culture particularly, and I compare and contrast it with Japanese culture. There're a few books that I really like about Japanese culture, and more on American culture. Formally, no, but reading a lot of books about it, and whatever I find on the internet I devour.

Alan gave titles of two books he particularly likes: '*Japanthink, Amerithink*', and '*The Japanese Mind*'. Synopses of these books read as follows:

A look at the cultural differences between Japanese and Americans discusses the prevalence of detective agencies in Japan; Japanese business etiquette, eating, lovemaking, child-rearing, and retirement; and much more (Goodreads, 2016a).

Readers of this book will gain a clear understanding of what really makes the Japanese and their society tick. Among the topics explored: *aimai* (ambiguity), *amae* (dependence upon others' benevolence), *amakudari* (the nation's descent from heaven), *chinmoku* (silence in communication), *gambari* (perseverance), *giri* (social obligation), *haragei* (literally, "belly art"; implicit unspoken communication), *kenkyo* (the appearance of modesty), *sempai-kohai* (seniority), *wabi-sabi* (simplicity and elegance), and *zoto* (gift-giving), as well as discussions of child-rearing, personal space, and the roles of women in Japanese society (Goodreads, 2016b).

The titles and synopses of the books suggest a highly comparative style of discussion, and one which is based on nation groupings. The contents of the book as understood from the synopses, as well as perhaps falling into the category of *Nihonjinron*, would seem to be consistent with the ideas of culture expressed by Alan throughout the interview and within his presentation of culture in class. Interestingly, Alan has self-published a book in which he discusses many different areas of Japan and America from an American perspective.

Ultimately though, if his preference in such books is the cause or the outcome of his understanding of culture is not known. Viewing culture in national and somewhat homogeneous terms may stem from his upbringing where members of his family are defined by their nationality. When moving to Japan, contrastive works along *Nihonjinron* lines would fit neatly into a framework of cultural understanding based on national blocks. Therefore, whereas such works may give Alan knowledge to claim his understanding of culture is well developed, they only are able to develop a certain understanding of culture – one based on fixed national identities.

At no point has formal education influenced his understanding or concept of culture. Alan's highest degree is a bachelor degree in business and he has declared that he has had no instruction in the cultural dimension of language education. Experiences outside of education would seem to have led Alan to his current understanding of culture. Chief

among these would seem to be a personal history based on a multinational family and reading habits that demonstrate preference for works of a national and contrastive nature.

5.2.6 Essentialism

Alan: There's a good joke about Americans that you may have heard. If you know three languages you're trilingual, if you know two languages you're bilingual, if you know one language you're American.

As seen in the literature review, there are several identifiers which may point towards an essentialized view of culture. Some of these are found in Alan's discussion of culture. Perhaps the most salient is Alan's identification of cultural groups as corresponding to a place. As we have seen, Alan frequently identifies cultural groups as national or pan national entities. Although Alan mentions, somewhat tentatively, that groupings other than the nation, can be viewed as cultural groups, his use of repeated use of countries, most commonly America and Japan, does suggest that Alan holds a strong belief that nations represent the most accurate cultural groupings.

Though the use of country as the default cultural group can be said to be a commonly held view and does not necessarily indicate an essentialized understanding of culture, the way in which Alan describes members of the group and perceived characteristics of members does point to the presence of essentialism:

Alan: They [Japanese] have lucky days – they're superstitious, I think....
Here it's like a group culture; we're more individualistic.

The use of generic language devoid of hedging was used often throughout the interview and could be said to be indicative of an essentialized view. The second example above is particularly interesting as Alan is assigning characteristics to me based on my nationality. As a member of "Western" culture, I am given the characteristic of being individualistic.

However, not all language used was generic and Alan also employed several hedging devices:

Alan: I've shown videos before of when [U.S. President] Obama visits [Japanese Prime Minister] Abe, and simple things like Obama smiles more.

And when Abe comes and visits he smiles more than he usually does. Because that's more of a Western or American thing.

I think the Japanese way of thinking is very technical about language. Subject, verb, object. Grammar, what's correct. But to see it in the context of culture, I would say Western people might be more expressive. They might use their hands more and gestures. You have more facial expressions. They might speak louder, get angrier more. Japanese tend to be a bit more reserved, a little gentler—at least in public.

In the two above quotes we can see that, through the use of devices such as “tend to”, “usually”, “might be”, Alan’s language is less absolute. Though he avoids more generic language on occasion, the above quotes do point to what Holliday suggests as being a neo-essentialist view; variation may exist but that these variations are exceptions to the rule.

Alan’s use and presentation of culture in the class observation and his survey responses would seem to support the findings of the interview. Although the class observation of Alan will be discussed in greater depth later, it is worth pointing out that Alan’s class was very much a presentation of American Vs Japanese culture and both were shown as discrete and self-contained entities that seemed to have no connection to each other.

On the survey, Alan’s ECC score was 30. While not the highest score, it was well above the average of 24.13 and places him at the higher end of the scale. When we look at his answers to the individual items on the scale we can see that several responses conform to a somewhat essentialized or neo-essentialist view of culture. Strong agreement with C10 and strong disagreement with C6 point countered against strong disagreement with C2 point strongly to a neo-essentialist view of there being exceptions to the cultural rule, but the rule is still accurate and exceptions to the rule are just that: exceptions.

Figure 51. Alan’s responses to ECC items

Item	Alan’s Response
C2-The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.	Strongly Disagree
C3-Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.	Neutral
C4-Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.	Somewhat agree

C6-Diversity is the norm in any culture.	Strongly disagree
C9-Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.	Somewhat agree
C10-Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g. collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	Strongly agree
C13-A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.	Neutral
C21-People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.	Neutral
C24-Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	Somewhat disagree
C29-National borders accurately represent cultural borders.	Somewhat disagree

Though Alan's answers resulted in a score several points above the average ECC score that tends to support the data obtained in his interview, they also display some ambivalence, almost contradiction. For example, the divisions of cultural tendencies (C10) is almost always presented in national terms in the literature. As, in the survey, Alan's strongly agreed with its accuracy, as he reads Nihonjinron-esque literature, and as cultural comparisons between Japan and the United States was a very strong element of his observed class, one would naturally conclude that Alan would be of the belief that national borders represent cultural borders. However, Alan somewhat disagreed with that item (C29).

Although Alan's ECC score was high due to an apparent strong feeling on certain items, he was clearly indifferent or unsure on others with three of the ten items receiving a neutral response. If we examine the items that Alan showed strong feeling to and indifference to, we can see that it correlates to some degree with his view of culture as displayed in the interview and class observation. Alan frequently frames culture in a comparative context which typically juxtaposes the US and Japan. Alan also often assigns characteristics to these national groups despite occasionally employing hedging devices that would indicate a less than absolute belief in the appropriateness of the assigned labels to all people contained within the group. Alan's ECC answers would tend to support this.

5.2.7 Culture and language teaching: Purpose

Alan: I think generally it's reduced misunderstandings, less friction, less conflict, smoother relationships. Better relations in general..... I don't think that's something they get from linguistic mastery.

In the above quote from Alan on culture, we can see that he values it as part of language teaching and deems a focus on only linguistic elements as insufficient. For Alan, this "technical" view of language is particularly common in Japan and is one that is typically held by his students and favoured by institutions.

Teaching culture would then seem to fill a hole that is present if we, as teachers, teach only linguistic forms. For Alan, "without that cultural understanding, there's going to be some friction, some conflicts and misunderstandings." The examples given in the interview focus exclusively on aspects of "face-to-face communication" where the difference in ways of communication across cultures is not given enough attention, in Alan's view:

Alan: That's [body language and size of voice] that they need to be a bit more cognizant of, because they can understand vocabulary and grammar, but they [Japanese students] get a shock where there's a foreigner who speaks louder and is either a little more proud or uses gestures a lot, then that might freak them out a bit. Things like that I like to convey a bit more, that it's not just the technical language bits, it's their thinking that's different. It's their behaviour that's different.....you can be totally fluent in English or Japanese, if you're not aware of those things then you might not have really good communication or a good relationship with the foreign person.

Here Alan makes clear again the communicative importance of culture for students. This would seem to be along the lines of "thinking" and "behaviour". Development of an awareness of these would assist in a better understanding of "the foreigner". The foreigner in this instance would seem to be assumed to be an American, and the justification for it could possibly be a result of some experience Alan has had. The ultimate goal of the cultural dimension for Alan appears to be empathetic in nature. Though one may claim that the *culture* presented by Alan is somewhat superficial and essentialized, Alan is attempting to increase students' awareness of cultural differences to prevent future

misunderstandings and negative interactions.

The empathetic value of culture in the class for Alan is not its sole use. Culture serves a more pedagogical pragmatic purpose. In addition to developing understanding in students, Alan highlights the motivational aspects of culture in class:

Alan: I think that [culture] would make them [students] more interested than ‘Let’s read this story and answer my questions.’ I think that telling a real-life story, for example, if it’s not too long, that does. Or if I say, ‘The first culture shock I had when I came to Japan was this and this.’ That does make them more interested. I think it is more engaging, the whole subject. I tend to notice I get more attention when I tell a real story or something about real culture, rather than something like a textbook or something that we planned in class.

This motivational effect of culture in class is something Alan feels for himself too. Alan states, “I find it particularly interesting and I try to add it a little bit more in my lessons.” Indeed, culture would appear to make classes much more interesting for teacher and students.

The use of the word “add” in the short quote above is key here. Alan’s view on the separation of culture and language aspects suggests the belief that culture can be added and taken from classes; that it is not inevitable. This is something that Alan seems to believe as he suggests that culture should not be, “crowbarred into every class or every lesson, but when the situation presents some cultural aspect then it should be delved into a little bit more.” In this sense, culture is something to be added when required to give contextual information.

5.2.8 Content

Alan: I think of myself as having some degree of expertise in American culture, and just by being here for many years and having the experience, I have somewhat of an understanding. That’s what I have expertise on. It tends to be very much my culture: Western culture, and Japanese culture. I don’t go into Middle-Eastern culture or the other ones.

A recurring theme throughout the interview was that Alan saw himself as an expert on American culture and Japanese culture. As he perceived a cultural affinity between several nations, he extended this to Western and Eastern cultural groups. However, Alan draws the cultural line at groups beyond these as he sees himself as lacking the experience and knowledge to teach them.

This belief in the cultural knowledge requirements of the teacher is expressed beyond himself too. When Alan remarks that, "I suppose the teacher should have some knowledge or, maybe they don't have to have visited that country, but it's probably best that they're a bit versed and knowledgeable about it," he is again demonstrating the belief in nation as the cultural group and his belief that experience of a culture almost inevitably leads to knowledge and understanding.

These thoughts expressed in the interview were observable too in the class observation where much of the class was a cultural presentation based on clear distinctions drawn between the US and Japan; experiences which seemed to be based largely on Alan's own experiences. A lot of this presentation was given mostly in the form of images with the actual meaning and purpose being somewhat left to the students to ascertain. An example of this were the two short videos entitled "History of the World in 2 Minutes". Both a Japanese and American version were shown with no activities to lead into it or follow on from it leading to the conclusion that exposure to this imagery alone was deemed to be sufficient. Much of the class contained clear reference to cultural differences and followed a similar vein with, for example, an activity where students have to name symbols of the US and Japan, and a short slide show of some family pictures of the teacher.

All of these comparative aspects seemed to be contained in what one might describe as a guidebook notion of culture. Snapshots of historical knowledge, short asides on behavioural norms, creating lists of popular symbols within the country would do well as part of a guidebook to a country. These activities, though consistent with Alan's nation based comparative take on culture, is somewhat at odds with some of the reasons he gives for bringing culture into the class.

One inconsistency would be the non-verbal communicative aspect highlighted by Alan. The use of gesture, body language, smiles and other facial expressions were all given as examples throughout the interview, but the focus of the class observed was given to comparing imagery and symbols. One might describe this more as a semiotic contrastive

approach rather than one based on the behaviour Alan highlights as the focus of his classes. In the interview, however, Alan does describe classes on gestures and body language that represent successful culture classes he has given, so it could well be that the observed class was not representative of cultural content. Alan did give a possible reasons for this based on his assessment of the ability of his students. This will be described in greater detail in the section below on limitations.

5.2.9 Method

When asked if the cultural dimension of his classes is implicit or explicit, Alan replied:

Alan: I guess both, but I'm pretty explicit. As an example, when I go on vacation back to the States, I take a lot of pictures. And I'll explain, "Oh look, I went to a regular sports store, and I saw all these guns available. You wouldn't see that in Japan, but there's more of a culture of that back in the States."

As the culture Alan sees himself as teaching is knowledge about thinking and behaviour that is based on his own experiences and discoveries, a strong use of cultural presentation based on personal stories is not surprising. As we have seen, Alan sees himself as the possessor of considerable cultural knowledge which has been acquired through life experiences in the US and Japan, something which has also given it perspective. If Alan understands cultural knowledge in these terms then instructing students on culture through the explicit use of stories and strong comparisons is consistent as it is an attempt to give experience by proxy.

The explicit use of Alan's understanding of culture was clearly evident in class as mentioned above and as shown in the observation notes in Appendix 16. Also shown throughout the observation notes and the interview were the roles Alan takes in class. Alan seemed to wear two hats in class. One hat was that of the mediator, the bridge between two opposing worlds. When wearing this hat, Alan facilitated contrastive activities such as the symbols of America and Japan activity. This role is referenced several times in the interview also as Alan expresses his desire to help students gain the understanding he has of both cultures. Such a role is seen by Alan as being unbiased and neutral as it is based on objective observation and experience.

The other hat would seem to be that of Alan as an American. Explicitly identifying himself as an American throughout the interview and class would seem to be at odds with the other hat of neutral facilitator. For example, when students were completing the symbols of Japan activity, Alan would add certain answers that he thought students had missed, but it would seem that these were symbols of Japan that a “foreigner” would give about Japan. Indeed, much of Alan’s description of Japanese culture could be said to be a non-Japanese view of Japanese culture. This is, of course, natural and can be used in class to generate discussion. However, Alan seemed to occupy both roles at the same time.

Additionally, though Alan’s use of culture in class was described by him as explicit, if we consider his class from a guided semiotic perspective (Weninger & Kiss, 2013), Alan’s constant referencing of Japanese culture and American culture and the presentation alongside these labels of symbols and behavioural characteristics, one might conclude that such an approach is directing students towards adopting or confirming a fairly stereotypical view of American and Japanese culture; certainly a view that is consistent with much that is said in *Nihonjinron* discussion.

5.2.10 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

The strong belief that culture is of importance as part of language that Alan demonstrated throughout the interview phase corresponded closely to his answers on the survey. Alan’s survey responses to ICI items are shown in Figure 52 below. Here we can see that Alan answers strongly with all but two of the items that count towards a high score on ICI. This gave Alan a final ICI score of 47, which places him at the high end of the scale. In interview, observation and survey, Alan demonstrated a clear belief in the role and use of culture. However, though this belief in the importance of culture and its ultimate purpose(s) might be consistent with much of intercultural education, the way it manifest in his class and the description of its content in his interviews would seem to be at odds with it.

Figure 52. Alan's responses to ICI items

Survey Item	Survey Response
C1- Culture and language are strongly connected	Strongly agree
C5- Culture and communication are strongly connected	Strongly agree
C7- Culture is a vital part of language teaching	Strongly agree
C18- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on motivation	Strongly agree
C20- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate	Strongly agree
C23- Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal	Somewhat agree
C26- Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	Strongly agree
C27- It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	Neutral
C34- Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.	Strongly agree
C33R- Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	Strongly disagree

The only survey item to which Alan had no strong feelings, C27, would seem to also indicate this. Alan's neutral answer to C27 is something of an anomaly given his strong conviction demonstrated in all other items. If we look at Alan's responses to other survey items such as ones related to agency and fluidity in culture (C13, C14 and C19), we can see that Alan also gave a neutral answer. Although not disagreeing with the idea of agency or ideology in an understanding of culture, Alan's neutral answers to these, his presentation of culture in class and his interview comments on national groupings and an assumed cultural homogeneity would suggest that he views himself as presenting cultural facts and realities. As such, breaking down prejudices may be a consequence, but does not necessarily have to be a task of the teacher.

5.2.11 Limits

During the interview, Alan articulated several problems and barriers that, he suggests, influence how he thinks of and uses culture as part of his teaching. Three particular

influences can be observed: the linguistic ability of the students, the cultural knowledge of the students and teacher, and institutional resistance.

Over the course of the interview, Alan referenced the low level of his students several times and stated that his students were not of a sufficient level to grasp certain elements, though, in the quote below, we can see that when Alan talks of a student's level he seems to be referring more to something other than the linguistic ability of students:

Alan: The two universities I'm at right now, they're not high enough level to fully appreciate that [the way culture influences communication style]. Here [observed class], they're a little closer to that. The kids that I teach, the younger ones, aren't really developed enough. They can only experience, 'there's a foreigner, maybe he has different manners'. Or 'he looks different', obviously.

Here we can see that Alan identifies maturity as a factor influencing the cultural dimension of his classes. When asked later about what enables students to grasp his cultural points he expands further:

Alan: I think that might require some higher maturity than first- and second-year students might have. Students who have lived or studied abroad can do that a little better. I've had students, even young ones, who've lived in the States or somewhere else, and I would ask them simple questions like 'What do you like most about living in America or Australia? Which school system do you like better, and why? What don't you like about each one?' I've had several students who've lived in the States for a few years and then come back, and I'll say, 'Do you think it's a good idea that they have school uniforms?' Or, 'What do you like about Japan? What don't you like?' That kind of stuff. But it generally requires either a higher level of maturity, or an experience in another country.

Here, Alan once again demonstrates his contrastive, country based view of culture, but also one that he believes requires either intellectual maturity or international experience on the part of the student to be able to engage with such questioning. This belief is consistent with the finding that Alan sees cultural awareness as a product of international exposure. As Alan perceives his students to have little to no cultural experience, the

culture he uses in class is simplistic and somewhat superficial as students are seen as lacking the capacity, in their present condition, to understand any deeper examination of culture.

A deficiency is not only seen in students. Alan also identifies his own cultural deficiencies. As an American with experience of living in Japan for many years, Alan sees himself as being qualified to teach American and Japanese culture. Likewise, as he has no experience of other countries beyond short visits for recreational purposes, he states that he is not qualified to teach other cultures. Again, this points to Alan's national view of culture. It is also a limitation of culture in the class as moving beyond national views of the US and Japan would be seen by Alan to be moving out of his area of expertise. As we have seen earlier, this view would appear to be extended to other teachers also.

Another limitation identified by Alan is that he perceives the institutions he works for as favouring classes that focus overwhelmingly on linguistic knowledge:

Alan: I think a lot of schools are not keen to have that part [culture] taught. They're more keen on 'they have increased their vocabulary, they can make a correct sentence or answer a question correctly'. I don't think that a lot of schools, or the department heads, or the Ministry of Education in Japan, or the whole system are quite as eager, because it's squishy.

As well as implying a cultural facts / descriptive approach to a culture, Alan clearly identifies institutional opposition to the incorporation of culture as a limiting factor. The reason for this, suggested by Alan, is that culture is not quantifiable (squishy). Academic institutions are seen as favouring vocabulary and grammatical structures as schools and students can easily identify how many and which they know. Cultural knowledge is vaguer. Although many teachers beyond Alan cite this problem one might add that, in Alan's case, the inability to quantify stems partly from the inability to specify or clearly define the purpose of what is seen to be being taught.

Ultimately, despite this institutional opposition to culture, which exists as a feeling Alan has rather than as the result of a previous denial, Alan confides that he still "sneaks" culture into his classes. Here, once again, Alan identifies culture as something to be taken up and dropped.

5.2.12 Summary of Alan

Culture

- View of culture focuses on behaviour and “thinking” of a group.
- Hierarchy is not present in his understanding of culture.
- Strong identification of himself as an American and strong understanding of culture in terms of national blocks.
- Essentialism survey score was high and interview / observation would tend to support this.
- View of culture could be termed neo-essentialist as he expresses quite a fixed and homogeneous view of culture, but one in which there are exceptions.
- Alan’s concept of culture is a product of his personal experience and reading preferences. Much of this reading would be along the lines of Nihonjinron.

Culture and Teaching

- Culture is something that can be added and removed from language classes.
- Strong contrastive approach. Culture is (only) visible when contrast with another way.
- Culture is presented in a very explicit way.
- Cultural element is country based and based on overt behaviours and symbols.
- Cultural and linguistic elements of class are separate. Some connection between communication (body language, gestures etc) and culture.
- Use of personal cultural anecdotes which focus on international experiences.
- Belief that fluency can be achieved without the cultural dimension.
- Students seen as only able to deal with superficial cultural imagery and knowledge.

The importance of culture to language teaching for Alan would seem to focus on a fairly narrow view of the behavioural aspects of communication and a somewhat limited semiotic perspective. This understanding is consistent throughout his descriptions of culture as a concept and his teaching. Although Alan suggests that the culture he “sneaks into classes” is a simplified version of his understanding of culture based on his experience, there would not seem to be a significant difference between the two.

5.3 Brian

5.3.1 Background

Brian grew up in the UK but moved around often due to his father's occupation. After completing his bachelor degree in philosophy, Brian moved to Japan and began working for a major chain of English conversation schools. After about three years he switched to a rival chain before leaving the private conversation school market and joining the public school system as an English teacher at elementary school and then at high school.

A condition of gaining employment at high school was that he obtain a CELTA certificate. Brian travelled to Thailand that summer to complete the CELTA course. Following this, Brian worked for the high school for ten years teaching mostly conversation classes with other classes including writing, presentation and speech preparation.

Over the years teaching at his high school, Brian noticed that student numbers were declining and departing teachers were being not replaced. Noticing that "the writing was on the wall", Brian decided to increase his future employment prospects and chances of moving into university education by undertaking an MA in Applied Linguistics through a UK institution by distance learning.

Brian currently teaches at one university full-time and at another university part-time. At his full-time university, Brian teaches elementary level communication classes. It was one of these classes which I observed.

5.3.2 Concept of culture

When asked about his view of culture, Brian immediately displayed some discomfort with the concept, something which was to be feature of the interview:

Brian: I suppose that there are two sort of distinct meanings of culture, which I think are both true, but they have - or maybe even three, I suppose. There's one form, which is simply that - one definition of culture, I would think, it just happens to be the habits of any particular society. So in that sense, every society - every time you have a group of people doing something together, you have a culture. I think that's kind of a very broad term of culture. But

then, I think that sometimes when people talk about culture, maybe in these situations, in language teaching situations, I think they're more talking about, you know - so you're from the UK, so you have "British culture". Tell us about the things that British people do. And maybe even with perhaps an emphasis on either pop culture or high culture, or something that is supposedly unique to that country.

Brian clearly identifies that culture means different things to different people when used in different contexts. In the above excerpt, Brian identifies culture as habits, culture as something possessed by groups both small and at the national level. Although Brian acknowledges that these understandings of culture may be true he suggests a more cognitive understanding of culture when he adds:

Brian: I think that there are certain – if you like, certain habits of behaviour that are different in different societies. There are cultural expectations, which maybe a little bit more unconscious, which I think are probably a little more useful.

Unconscious cultural expectations would fit with a Hofstedian understanding of culture that sees culture as the software of the mind. However, when asked on the survey about the cultural dichotomies such as those put forward by Hofstede (C10), he gave a neutral response.

This reaction seemed to be typical for Brian as he gave a neutral response to several culture concept items on the survey (C6, C10, C12, C16, C18, C19, C21). In the comments section of the survey, Brian elaborated on why he had given numerous non-committal responses:

Brian: I found some of the questions difficult to answer without elaboration. Some of them fell into the 'It depends' category.

Brian's interview and survey comments clearly show a belief that the meaning of culture as a phenomenon is specific to the context in which it is used. This recognition of culture as a polysemous word and an unwillingness to give a personal understanding of culture would suggest somewhat of a dissatisfaction with the concept.

However, when pressed, Brian did briefly give his personal view; culture is mostly about pragmatic norms, expectations and behaviours. Though he did not elaborate further when discussing culture as a concept, he did describe it in relation to his profession and elaborate on how he came to such an understanding. These points will be introduced in the relevant sections below.

5.3.3 Cultural groups

Perhaps one reason that Brian demonstrated some reluctance to detail his view on culture as a concept is that he appears to believe that culture may be given more value than it is worth. This seemed to particularly be the case if it is understood in terms of national units, something which he disagreed with on the survey.

Brian: I don't necessarily say 'OK, this is what people do in the UK', or 'this is what people do in America.' 'That's not how people talk. That's different from Japan.' Because I don't necessarily know that the reason why students behave in a particular way in a language class is purely because of cultural differences. I think that might not be the case. I think it might just be that students feel that they're in a classroom, and they're asked a question, and they should answer a question. The cultural expectation might be more to do with what their expected role is as a student, rather than how they would necessarily interact in a real-world situation.

Here, Brian is clearly questioning the value of a differential understanding of culture based on national units. Though Brian does suggest that culture plays a role in behaviour, he seems to suggest that what or where, exactly, the influence comes from is not clear and possibly cannot be known.

Such a view might lead one to conclude that Brian holds a somewhat fluid view of culture where people move in and out of cultures, for example, when students enter the classroom, they adopt certain understandings and roles that differ to those when they are elsewhere. However, when we examine his language closely, we see a deeper confusion. Brian seems to be suggesting that student behaviour in classroom is not a result of cultural differences, but then implies that classroom roles are a manifestation of culture. He finishes by contrasting classroom behaviour and real world behaviour in a way that would seem to imply that the behaviour outside of the classroom is in some way the "real" culture.

Brian's survey answers would also suggest a lack of any conviction regarding cultural groupings. Brian somewhat agreed that people are not bound by national structures (C9) and somewhat disagreed that national boundaries represent cultural boundaries (C29) supporting the views expressed in the interview.

The only non-teaching related culture item that Brian provided a strongly agree or strongly disagree response to was C2- "The traits that define a culture are shared equally by its members." Brian's strong disagreement with this statement is consistent with all the above comments and explicit in the following thought:

Brian: I tend to think that cultures are not indivisible, and I think that a lot of the trouble with thinking about culture is that within a particular culture, everybody behaves in a particular way, and then that's one of the things that I think is damaging, if people are saying 'OK, let me tell you about my culture.' And then they become a kind of spokesperson for that, as though everybody else who might be from the same society agrees, or has assented to the same thing. So I tend to think that when I've heard people say that 'in Japan people do this', well - not everybody. I mean, I think there are probably lots of people I know in Japan who don't agree with a particular thing, and it could be that there are people who are not Japanese who might agree with you. I don't generally agree with the idea that it's a kind of uniform thing among a particular group of people that've happened to have been born and raised in a particular country.

This is in line with the believe that Brian appears to hold where, if people are influenced by culture at all different levels and depths, we lose the ability to effectively describe and prescribe as culture becomes more a matter for individuals. This certainly has the potential to influence his position regarding culture and language teaching as will be shown later.

5.3.4 Development of the concept of culture

Brian's understanding of culture, much like that of Alan, is seen as being a consequence of his educational background and reading habits, and experience. However, though these may be factors influencing the development of his understanding of culture, they have

resulted in very different conclusions being drawn.

Like Alan, Brian identifies his experience of living in Japan has having impacted his understanding of culture:

Brian: I think that if you do live abroad, I think instead of saying 'oh, I found out so many more things about Japan, or Japanese culture', over time people generally start to, in my case anyway, you almost stop seeing things as different, and more similarities, I think. So, in that sense - I'm not sure this makes sense, but the second definition of culture [broad national characteristics based view] seems a lot more superficial, I think, and not really the day-to-day thing that people do, in how they organise themselves according to particular social rules, mostly unconscious social rules, I think.

As well as again demonstrating a preference for a cognitive understanding of culture and a dissatisfaction with a broad / surface view of culture, Brian highlights the results of his experience of living overseas. Despite his suspicion of national groupings, Brian does identify that his experience living in Japan has made him think less of the differential form of culture and more of the generic (although by highlighting that people organise themselves by certain social rules does imply the differential aspect).

This focus on social rules that people adhere to, rather than a group or trying to define or identify a group would appear to have a strong connection to previous learning. Brian, like Alan, has been strongly influenced by his reading habits. However, for Brian, these were assigned readings as part of a course of study. Brian identifies his bachelor degree studies in philosophy as having a strong impact on his thinking regarding culture, particularly when it comes to teaching. This connection of philosophy and teaching was made when Brian studied his TESOL MA by distance and rediscovered several concepts which he had first learned through philosophy:

Brian: So I think - you did ask earlier, have I studied culture - and I don't know if I have done so, not in a deliberate way. But I think that a lot of those ideas have come through, almost implicitly, from reading things like some of the things to do with philosophy and sociolinguistics.....Actually, one thing that was interesting, because when I started doing my masters course, I didn't realise that the use of certain things that I had looked at in philosophy,

whereas I thought of it as being quite impractical and not very useful, but people's ideas such as Austin and Searle - they came up with speech acts, and Paul Grice in particular, conversational maxims, and the cooperative principle of conversation.

Brian is very clear about the origins and development of his concept of culture. When Brian thinks of culture, issues and concepts raised during his reading of philosophy which were also elements of a sociolinguistics class taken as part of his MA TESOL course of study come to the fore. Indeed, the focus of Brian's MA thesis was sociolinguistics. Ultimately, we can see that Brian's education has had a profound impact on his understanding of culture.

5.3.5 Essentialism

Brian's discussion of culture suggests a view of culture that, on the surface, avoids essentialism. In his discussion of culture, as we have seen, Brian expresses great discomfort with national grouping or, indeed, any label concerning cultural groups. He demonstrated a clear reluctance to pigeonhole people by assigning them to certain groups based on culture. Additionally, Brian very rarely used any generic language or language forms which would suggest an homogenous view of cultural groups. Perhaps the one exception to this may be his response when asked about culture and language:

Brian: I think that language is often shaped by a particular culture. So various ways of talking in terms of politeness, and some kinds of social structures to language, will be determined by culture and cultural influences. So certain countries, like English has been influenced by Anglo-Saxon, of course which it started as, and then French, if that's what you mean. But then also I think that over time, English has become maybe more...well, the countries in which English is spoken, particularly America, have become less socially stratified, I think, in terms of who can talk to who.

Here we can see that Brian makes specific reference to the reality of national cultural units. However, this would appear to be done to illustrate a larger point of cultural change; an idea opposed to essentialism.

The above quote is perhaps best used to illustrate Brian's somewhat contradictory and

somewhat ambivalent attitude to culture which, on the one hand, cannot be used to define and group people, but on the other forms groups along lines defined by certain norms.

This ambivalence may partly explain Brian's ECC score of 26, which is slightly above the average of 24.13, but several points lower than Alan's. When we examine Brian's responses to the individual items, we can also see that a middling ECC score is partly a result of neutral responses to several items.

Figure 53. Brian's responses to ECC items

Item	Brian's Response
C2-The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.	Strongly disagree
C3-Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.	Somewhat disagree
C4-Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.	Somewhat agree
C6-Diversity is the norm in any culture.	Neutral
C9-Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.	Somewhat agree
C10-Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g. collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	Neutral
C13-A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.	Somewhat agree
C21-People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.	Neutral
C24-Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	Somewhat agree
C29-National borders accurately represent cultural borders.	Somewhat agree

If we look at the neutral responses, particularly C6 and C21, we see a discrepancy between survey and interview data. Brian's survey responses that he is neutral to the ideas that diversity is the norm and people are essentially different across cultural groups are not supported by comments in the interview that suggest a more non-essentialist position. In the interview, Brian was of the opinion that people are characterized more by similarities than differences, that the reasons people do things cannot be easily explained by culture, and that people in predetermined cultural groups may actually have more in common with people of other groups than with members of their own. With these comments in mind

we might expect Brian's survey answers to C6 and C21 to be 'agree' and 'disagree' respectively.

5.3.6 Culture and language teaching: Purpose

Whereas Brian's views of culture as a concept may be said to be characterised by a lack of firm opinion, the same cannot be said for the purpose, function and reason for culture as part of language teaching. The cultural dimension of language teaching was clearly identified as relating to pragmatics:

Brian: I think, well there's one example I think with this student that I said, 'Do your family live in Kyoto?'. I think, I can't remember exactly. And he said 'No'. And I think, well - that's a kind of dispreferred response in the sense that there's no clarification of that one. And that is something that should be, I think, expected in most pragmatic - pragmatically, that's what we would expect. So you'd say 'No, they live in Nara.' And so I don't think it's about a lack of linguistic skills. I think that is a lack of maybe pragmatic skills. And perhaps it is a cultural expectation, not necessarily because in Japan people will say 'no', so that's the part where I think that it's not necessarily about a difference between UK and Japanese culture. I think that somebody probably would say 'No, Nara.' I think they'd say that in Japanese. But I think it might be more of a cultural expectation with the classroom. So in the classroom, the teacher's asked me a question, my role is to answer the question that they asked, and not to expand on it. And I think that's the type of thing that I'm trying to gradually break through with the students.

Brian clearly identifies that pragmatic awareness, which he sees as cultural, is lacking in students. He acknowledges that their linguistic level may be sufficient but, without this cultural awareness, Brian believes that communication will be impaired. However, what is interesting to note here is that Brian suggests that this lack of awareness is not a result of the teacher being British and the students Japanese, or even of the students communicating in English. The cultural issue here is seen as being the context in which they are communicating. Here the educational context, the culture of the classroom is identified as the limiting factor. Brian sees students as having a sufficient amount of cultural awareness, in terms of pragmatics. However, that when students enter the

classroom, this ability is left at the door and learners become 'students' as traditionally understood in the Japanese educational context.

Overcoming this cultural barrier is seen as a key purpose of the cultural dimension for Brian. Raising students' awareness of pragmatic norms will, of course, have positive consequences outside of the classroom for language use too:

Brian: I think it's my responsibility to teach that, as opposed to simply teaching grammar or vocabulary, which by itself is not going to be sufficient for students to have any useful interaction with people in the world. Because nobody talks purely in terms of grammatically correct sentences and vocabulary. I think there needs to be some understanding about that form of culture to make any sense to anybody.

Although Brian largely rejects the more common, broad, national focused view of culture as having little relevance to language, he does identify, grudgingly, a use for it as an educational tool:

Brian: I don't think it's [broad definition of culture] necessary. But it might be engaging for students....So if I said 'this is British culture', because it's a British movie made about Britain, then it might be interesting for students, so that might be a good reason to show it, or it might be something that is motivating for some students, or they might have a positive attitude towards that particular culture and that might be a good reason for using it, but I don't necessarily think it's my job to be an ambassador for the culture.

Brian sees little value in using culture in the broad national sense other than to provide content and information that may engage students more in class. This view is consistent with his answer to survey item C20 where he somewhat agreed with the statement that cultural content in class has a positive impact on students willingness to communicate. However, it seems clear that should Brian find that this form of cultural content is no longer motivating for students, he will cut it from his classes as he holds it in little regard as part of language teaching and does not view it as his responsibility.

5.3.7 Content

Brian: If people don't know much about Yorkshire pudding it doesn't matter. I don't think - so that's on the other side. Those kinds of cultural things I don't think are really - I mean I really don't think that's a part of language teaching. But I think that the pragmatic sense should be.

As we have seen, the cultural dimension of language teaching for Brian focuses solely on sociocultural aspects and this is something he consciously tries to include in his classes:

Brian: I think probably understanding about...Well, I think probably just teaching how to have a casual conversation that doesn't require question and answer forms of communication. But I think it sort of depends on what the goal of the classroom is. These are communication classes, so I think teaching - this is more casual conversation, so I think teaching informal register, and being able to talk a little bit about something without having to be constantly prompted. So that's one of the reasons why I get students to write in their diaries at the beginning, and I'm trying to get them to come to the classroom with something to talk about already, so that when they're sitting in pairs at the beginning of the class, they don't have to sit there thinking about what they're supposed to do. So I'm trying to encourage fluency that way, I suppose.

Interviewer: Is culture something you - the cultural dimension of language teaching, if you can call it that - is that something that you often consider in your planning?

Brian: Yeah, just from the pragmatic sense, yeah. I try to look at something, and I think to myself, "Is that how people will talk? Do people talk that way?" I don't really want to just teach people conversations which no one would ever think is normal.

Interviewer: Yeah. What cultural norms do you use as the normal? Or how would you identify the normal?

Brian: Well, I suppose that if I'm having students talk to each other, I assume

that the two participants in a pair conversation, or even four participants, or however many participants there are, they're all supposed to be socially equal. They should be able to talk in conversation classes. If it's something like I was teaching a writing class, where you're writing to somebody asking for a job, then it becomes more difficult. So I would try to think about it that way. But I try to encourage the idea that anyone should be able to talk to each other as social equals, and I try not to encourage formal conversation in the classroom, in terms of conversation classes. Does that make sense?

Brian's goal of increasing the pragmatic awareness and competence of students is a target expressed often throughout the interview and it was clearly manifest in his observed class as will be seen in the next question. Identifying pragmatic norms as a focus of teaching inevitably leads one to ask which norms are being taught.

Although Brian answers in both survey and interview that teachers can teach any culture and are not confined to their own, nor should they be, the norms he presented could be argued as being ones he identifies with. This may lead students to associate such norms as being native-speaker norms, though Brian disagrees strongly on the survey and interview with the idea that native-speakers should be the focus of cultural content. As the information given is not clarified, however, students are likely to come away with this conclusion. Indeed, information given in class about the need to be verbose, avoid silence, and gesticulate more may all be seen as fitting comfortably with certain Nihonjinron distinctions that see the quiet, silence friendly, context sensitive Japanese contrast with the loud, direct and talkative American.

5.3.8 Method

The pragmatic targets that comprise the cultural dimension of Brian's class were taught explicitly. The class activities were ones easily recognisable to the EFL teacher with students sharing diary work, practicing set conversations, gap-fill activities and so on. Explicit cultural information was added to each of these activities, usually through the form of guiding students to notice something about the text, conversation or listening. For example:

- Listening activity comprised several comprehension questions, but teacher also asked students to assess the attitude of the speaker. Information highlighted by the teacher

- was tone of voice and non-linguistic sounds of annoyance.
- Students told to give more “active” responses to questions or the person asking the questions might feel “strange”.
 - When addressing a stranger, students should begin with “Excuse me.”
 - Short answers were identified as a sign of reluctance and unwillingness to engage in conversation.
 - Gestures during conversation will help understanding.
 - People asking yes/no questions do not expect to get yes/no answers.

As these are presented as facts and not qualified or challenged in any way by the presentation of other norms, students may view these as aspects of the culture of English, rather than being issues the teacher feels uncomfortable with during the class and interchanges.

5.3.9 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

Brian’s responses to ICI items are shown in Figure 54 below. His responses to these items resulted in an ICI score of 28, much lower than the average of 37.84.

Figure 54. Brian’s responses to ICI items

Survey Item	Brian’s Response
C1- Culture and language are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C5- Culture and communication are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C7- Culture is a vital part of language teaching	Somewhat agree
C18- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on motivation	Neutral
C20- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate	Somewhat agree
C23- Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal	Neutral
C26- Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	Neutral
C27- It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	Strongly disagree
C34- Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is	Somewhat

an important goal in the EFL classroom.	disagree
C33R- Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	Somewhat agree

Brian's responses show a belief that culture is a part of language and communication. Yet, there is a clear opposition to the view that the cultural dimension of language teaching is the responsibility of the teacher. This opposition is also seen against items that identify the more moral and conceptual aspects of the cultural dimension.

Despite Brian's commitment to the cultural dimension of language teaching along pragmatic lines, culture is clearly not viewed as something of deep importance. Brian acknowledges the motivational potential of culture and it seems that his use of it in the broad sense or in the more pragmatic sociocultural sense is more about getting students speaking more and being more active class participants than it is about having students develop a greater awareness of culture, empathy or flexibility. As such, Brian's ICI score seems to be appropriate.

5.3.10 Limits

Regarding issues that adversely impact the cultural dimension of language teaching, Brian highlighted his own lack of knowledge about culture/cultures and institutional requirements as the most relevant survey items. Brian identified both as having a moderate impact. Although Brian drew attention to institutional requirements, this was not a strong theme in the interviews and Brian did not expand further beyond saying that the course books were pre-determined. As we have already seen, Brian spoke at greater length about his lack of knowledge and this is, perhaps, one reason for a focus on pragmatics as it is an area he has studied.

On the survey, Brian was one of the few respondents to add an option to the section on barriers to culture teaching. He added, "Cultural expectations of teacher and student roles in the classroom sometimes hinder lessons." This is consistent with a focus on pragmatics and his comments about the motivational aspect of cultural content and its ability to increase willingness to communicate.

This too was the key reason given in the interview when asked the same question and the discrepancy between his own view of the language classroom and his perception of his

students' view was highlighted:

Brian: Maybe some students feel a bit more anxious about having to perform like that. Because, again, I think that the students maybe don't recognise that they really are supposed to participate in something, almost as if they were doing music, or sports. Actually, that communication classes should be more like that, rather than like what they're used to in say maths or history. Not that necessarily maths and science have to be taught that way either, but I think that they generally think 'Ok, this is the correct answer, so that's how I should answer.' And then when they are told that that's not what's expected of them, maybe they feel anxious about it. I think, possibly, that could be a barrier.

Here classroom culture is the greatest barrier and the cultural focus of class is to overcome this barrier so that the language learning classroom can be a more productive environment. Again, the use, relevance and purpose of culture seems to stop and start at the classroom door.

5.3.11 Summary of Brian

Culture

- Little subscription to the common understanding of culture
- Holds little belief in the validity of commonly used labels for cultural groups
- Believes cultural groups are better defined as being people who hold and conform to certain communicative practices
- View of culture tends to be more semiotic / cognitive
- Average ECC score

Culture and Language Teaching

- Strong belief in pragmatics as being the focus of culture in language teaching
- Strong distaste for contrastive presentations or uses of culture
- Belief that culture (in the common understanding) can be motivating content for classes
- Clear belief that culture is not a necessary requirement of language teaching
- Cultural aspect often tacked on to the end of standard EFL activities
- Making language classrooms more communicative along cultural lines determined by

Brian's communicative norms is an important reason for the cultural dimension

Brian's view of culture would tend to be a fairly non-essentialized one and this is recognized by his average ECC score. He expresses clear unease with the concept of culture and, particularly, with cultural groupings. This can be seen to some degree in his teaching as there is little reference to groups. However, cultural teaching along pragmatic lines occurs and students may be left wondering about who subscribes to such norms and if any deviation from these norms exists or can be expressed when using English. Though Brian expresses a desire not to stereotype it is possible that it is occurring implicitly. Ultimately though, culture for Brian is pragmatic in the sense that it focuses almost exclusively on communicative norms, and in the sense that it is employed to change student classroom behaviour to that which is deemed to be more suitable for both the communicative classroom and hypothetical future interactions in English.

5.4 Chito

5.4.1 Background

Chito grew up in central Japan and had initially studied international economics at university with the intention of becoming a high school teacher. Becoming an English teacher had not been a career choice Chito had ever considered while he was studying at university, particularly because he considered his English level to be quite low.

When examining the available jobs for high school teachers, Chito noticed that, in the central Japan area in which he lived, there were no openings for his chosen subject area. There were, however, several positions available for English teachers.

Chito: So there could be, a little bit more chance for me to become a teacher, so I just chose English as a subject. I had no interest in English, I had no ... I was not good at English at all, but I just chose English as the subject, just to be a teacher, high school teacher. And I started studying English then, but... things didn't go well.

The thing that didn't go well was his teacher training. Chito's level was extremely low and, when placed alongside a native speaker teacher in a conversation class, Chito could not understand the teacher's instructions. This experience embarrassed Chito and resulted

in a strong desire to improve his English level by studying for a year before studying for his MA in TESOL at a university in California. As we shall see in later sections, his time at university in the U.S. clearly influenced him a great deal.

Following his return to Japan, Chito struggled to find full-time work and took a university position teaching English in China. He worked there for two years before returning to Japan to work at a junior college for three years before arriving at his current university in Tokyo.

Chito was hired as a “discussion teacher” and taught mostly discussion based classes for three years before being allowed to teach a wider variety of courses including: TOEIC preparation, English writing, English presentation and reading classes. The class I observed was a reading class.

5.4.2 Concept of culture

When asked about how he understands culture, Chito gave the following answer:

Chito: Culture is like common beliefs and practices that the people in the community share. So... It could be big, it could be very small... Depends on the community you define, but for example, within a classroom for example, the class I just taught, has a kind of very serious culture. They have their own, they share those kind of atmosphere and culture, I guess. If I call it a culture, it's a culture that they share. And they work really hard. You know, I always check their homework, but they do perfectly all the time. It's different from other classes I teach... so they have this literature major students have a kind of culture, I think. So it's also related to stereotypes as well, I think. Once you have a kind of notion of culture within that particular group, you try to apply that to other similar situations as well. So when I teach this literature class for example, these people are from literature majors, so I just assume that from... assume that other class in the literature major have a similar culture. So when I... this semester I don't teach any other literature major groups but, maybe in the future, if I have a literature major in this particular university, maybe I expect the students to be the same. And I make judgments based on, you know, what I thought this class would be or not.

This quote clearly shows Chito's idea of culture in several ways. Firstly, he suggests a cognitive and behavioural focus in his view of culture by highlighting beliefs and practices. This focus is demonstrated also in the example he gives immediately after. When discussing an example of culture he defines them in terms of cognitive elements (serious) and behavioural elements (hard working, always do their homework perfectly).

Chito provides another, yet richer, example when talking of his MA TESOL experience in California:

Chito: The content [of class] itself was interesting, I learned a lot; however, the classmates were so talkative. I was the only foreign student there, all native speakers, and I didn't know the culture of the masters' seminar course... so the people talked a lot. But I paid a lot of tuition as an international student, and I was expecting to get more from the instructor rather than the classmates, so I was shocked... In Japan, totally lecture style, right? So it's totally different from what I expected, actually, but when I went there... Because when you study TOEFL, there is a lecturer and stuff, so basically what I was expecting was a lecture like a TOEFL test. But we didn't get that. In the undergraduate, the undergraduate lectures are lectures, so we just basically listened to the lecturer talking all the time, sometimes we just had questions, but no... not a lot of interactions among students. But the masters' seminar, 80% of the time is discussion.

Behaviour difference is the key aspect upon which Chito focuses. The differences in the behaviour of other students and the teacher are clearly highlighted. Additionally, Chito once again suggests the cognitive side of culture too when he mentions expectations he had for the course and his surprise when it was different. However, it is worth noting that these expectations and surprise are only referenced when the behaviour was found to be different, once more suggesting a view of culture that is focused on behavioural norms.

5.4.3 Cultural groups

Chito's discussion of culture very rarely references national groupings or even nations, beyond stating where incidents occurred. When he does discuss culture, the groupings mentioned are typically ones in an educational setting such as the classroom or a school

major. As we are not always located in the classroom, implicit in these comments would be the belief that we are members of multiple cultures. This is a view consistent with his survey response of somewhat agreement with the statement that people are members of multiple cultures.

However, Chito's infrequent reference to national groupings and his seemingly tacit agreement with the view of multiple cultures does not necessarily mean a rejection of the national cultural group. Chito somewhat disagreed with the statement that though he may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures. This sentiment could be argued as being present in the following excerpt:

Chito: I think my culture is pretty unique... yeah. I'm a Japanese, I'm speaking English now, but I've never been confident in my English. I don't know. My cultural identity is totally Japanese-Japanese, but people don't admit that. So... I often have kind of an argument about my identity and also my English.

Japanese as a cultural group would seem to be a reality for Chito and he clearly identifies as "Japanese-Japanese", but the fact that he speaks English makes him think that, perhaps he is a member of a Japanese sub-culture; a Japanese who speaks English and has spent a significant amount of time overseas. This cultural identification of himself as a bilingual Japanese with international experience suggests two somewhat related things. Firstly, it suggests that bilingualism and international experience is something opposed or unconnected to Japaneseness. Secondly, the conflict Chito articulates here about his identity seems consistent with a great deal of literature on the subject of problems of Japanese returning and reintegrating to society after time overseas. Despite this issue having received a lot of attention, the conflict and his identification as a somewhat different Japanese appears, at first glance, to be self-made.

This was quite salient during the interview. The cultural groups Chito identified were, from his perspective, groups that shared common behaviours as identified by him. We have already seen that he identifies certain classes and majors as cultures based on his observations of their behaviours. This is expressed directly by Chito in the following terms:

Chito: So as I talk to a new person, and I learn the behaviour or the way he or she talks, and from that, you know, maybe the actions, maybe behaviour, I kind of develop just an image of the person that belongs to some culture similar to his own behaviour, and I just put him into the culture that I know ... and if he's different, he moves to a different group of people. So this is kind of ... Oh, I hate talking about this. So, maybe you are categorizing those people based on what you know about people. And assuming you know ten different cultures, and when you meet a person for the first time, and as you talk or as you do something together and you learn about this person, and you put this person into one culture from the ten cultures you know.

Chito suggests that he assigns people a culture based on their behavioural tendencies. Though this does not necessarily answer how he forms the cultural groups. To better explain how Chito identifies cultural groups, we need to look at the influences on his culture concept.

5.4.4 Development of the concept of culture

Life experience is a clear influencing factor for Chito and this can clearly be seen in his formation of cultural groups. During the interview, Chito often speaks of small cultural groups such as a class or major, but then also in terms of himself as Japanese or an international Japanese. These are all groupings connected to Chito and groupings that he determines as real.

Although experience will inevitably be part of anyone's concept of culture, it is particularly interesting in Chito because his view of culture would appear to expose a meshing of two views that, one might say, are seldom found in tandem. These would be a somewhat traditional view of Japanese culture and a small scale view of cultures that we shift in and out of.

A homogenous view of Japanese culture along traditional lines is something Chito suggests is the view of culture held by students. It is also something implicit in comments such as:

Chito: We [Japanese] might have a common sense of identity, yeah... but nowadays, though... nowadays, a lot of foreigners, and a lot of people go

abroad and experience different things, so they have a unique, their own identities.

Here is the suggestion that greater number of foreigners into Japan and a greater number of Japanese travelling overseas has broken down the homogenous culture. That such a homogenous culture existed is of course implicit in the statement.

Chito's understanding would appear to be similar. A homogenous view of culture, one may argue, along Nihonjinron lines has been challenged by perspectives given while overseas and, particularly, since returning. However, a belief in this traditional view lingers and results in switches between discussions of classroom culture, with mentions of "I am a Japanese" and use of "we" when referring to Japanese.

It is this experience that has driven the development of Chito's concept of culture. Chito never discussed any other force impacting the development, or being the source, of his understanding of culture. Although he possesses an MA in TESOL, on his survey he reported that he has had no training regarding the cultural dimension of language education. His interview discussion supports this and points to personal experience as being the major influencing factor.

5.4.5 Essentialism

Chito's score on the essentialism scale was 30, the same score as Alan and towards the higher end of the spectrum. His answers to survey essentialism items can be seen in Figure 55.

Figure 55. Chito's responses to ECC items

Item	Chito's Response
C2-The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.	Somewhat agree
C3-Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.	Somewhat disagree
C4-Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.	Somewhat agree
C6-Diversity is the norm in any culture.	Somewhat disagree
C9-Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.	Somewhat disagree
C10-Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g.	Somewhat disagree

collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	
C13-A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.	Somewhat agree
C21-People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.	Somewhat agree
C24-Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	Somewhat agree
C29-National borders accurately represent cultural borders.	Somewhat disagree

Two things are easily identifiable from Chito's answers. The first is that no strong response was recorded, positively or negatively, for any item. This indicates a certain amount of uncertainty or a lack of conviction or thought dedicated to such issues. Secondly, Chito's answers demonstrate a quite conflicted view, but one that is consistent with the interview data.

If we look at C4 and C24, for example, we can see that Chito believes that cultural groups are not fixed. This is consistent with the view expressed earlier about how he places people in cultural groups based on their actual behaviour and also that he creates groups as he comes into contact with new ways of doing things. This view, along with his view on C29, might be understood as suggesting a somewhat non-essentialized idea of culture. However, when we look at his other responses and when we examine his comments that illuminate his thinking behind the responses to C4 and C24, we see that an ECC score of 30 can be argued to be representative.

Though Chito acknowledges in his survey and interview that cultural groupings can change, it doesn't necessarily exclude the idea that once assigned, members and groups are essentialized. As we have seen, Chito assigns people to groups based on how *he* assesses them. For example:

Chito: Then when you meet a new person, you know, when you introduce yourself, maybe you don't ask all the questions, about where they're from, or what kind of backgrounds they have, but through the conversation, you kind of sense something unique about the person and you try to match something that he has or she has to the things you know already. So those are an accumulation of your experience, and you have many different

cultures in your mind.

Though a person is assessed as an individual, they are arbitrarily assigned a group based on the person possessing the perceived characteristics of that group. In this sense, Chito is indeed essentializing groups. This is something Chito is acutely aware of, mentioning on at least two occasions that he is stereotyping.

The other ECC responses all point to the presence of essentialism. Chito, for example, answered that he disagreed that diversity is the norm in any culture and agreed that the traits that define a culture are shared equally by its members; things to be expected if you view yourself as being involved in creating the cultural groupings. Ultimately, all points raised and items answered point to essentialism. Indeed, Chito somewhat agreed with the one item (C21) that explicitly asks if he views cultural groups in essentialist terms.

5.4.6 Culture and language teaching: Purpose

Chito: I think language instruction is a preparation stage, so that they can accommodate themselves to the new culture that they see in the future.

Chito clearly equates operating in another language with operating within another culture. Language teaching as preparation for this, therefore, would seem to need to raise awareness and lay the groundwork that will facilitate successful interactions in the future.

Given such a view, Chito unsurprisingly identifies several connections between culture and language:

Chito: Metaphors. Or... you know, especially when I see students writing, using old sayings or something, direct translations from Japanese language, I see the difference in language as well as the culture, so when the students try to write something using Japanese culture, but in English, I see contradiction between what they want to say....And also, I think syntax is [unintelligible]. The word order? In English, as I learn English, especially speaking, I have to say the subject and the verb first, and then additional information later, but in Japanese you have to have the additional information first, and later you get to the point, right? So that's a cultural thinking as well.... It does represent our way of thinking. So it's very difficult

to start thinking in an English way.

Here Chito identifies several areas where culture and language connect, such as metaphor, proverbs or rhetorical structuring, and one may predict that the cultural dimension of language teaching would be of great importance for him. However, despite his endorsement of survey item C33 that culture is the responsibility of the language teachers, the opposite would actually seem to be the case.

On his survey, Chito declared that, although he acknowledged himself as teaching culture, he did so rarely and also rarely considered the cultural content of materials when choosing them for class. During the interview, Chito somewhat clarified his position:

Chito: I don't intentionally put some cultural stuff into my teaching, but for example, in a reading, if something comes up, something related to culture, to understand the passage itself, I have to teach the culture. But when you say 'teaching,' I think the language teaching is like coaching...so to me, as a language teacher, I just give them time to think and practice the language rather than I give something, you know...sometimes they need help, so I can do some kind of small lecture, but usually I don't do that.

Chito clearly expresses the view that culture is taught when necessary. The time deemed as necessary is identified as when students come across something that they cannot understand without being explicitly told. For Chito, this purpose for culture is usually focused on non-linguistic cultural information.

When students listen or read they are likely to come across certain information, deemed cultural by Chito, which requires clarification so that students may fully understand the wider text. This information is typically not related to language use and may include, for example, the names of famous people or historic movements. Despite supplying various reasons for why culture is an important aspect of language use and language teaching, it is this purpose that Chito sees his cultural instruction as targeting.

5.4.7 Content

What is taught would appear to be the result of an assessment of the materials Chito is provided based on his understanding of students' knowledge of cultural information

contained within it. This assessment would appear to be influenced by his own relationship to language use and his experience as a learner. An experience that he projects on to students also.

Chito: And also, it's always difficult, even for me, to understand something...you know, people often talk about past celebrities, or famous movie stars or something, but I never really interested in those kinds of things, so I don't know who they are. But they appear in the textbook as well. And I try to Google their backgrounds or what kind of movies they are, and then...try to learn more about those actors and actresses because, you know, students like reading those stories about famous people. So when it comes to that kind of...um...show business, or celebrities, then I have almost none... although I stayed in California for about five years, still my lack of knowledge about old cultures or celebrities especially, I don't know too much, so I don't...I can't teach actually. I try, but....

Here we see an example of the cultural needs of his students and the cultural information that is given. In discussions or readings, the cultural need focuses very much on a guidebook idea of culture where explanation is given to foreign artefacts; here represented by movie stars.

When looking at Chito's teaching, we see this too, albeit in a different manifestation. At several times during the class, Chito expands on certain points beyond what may be considered traditional comprehension questions or eliciting of opinion. These points all sought to offer insights on the subject of class discussion, nutrition trends. Although the coursebook mentioned countries, Chito's discussion of trends in countries did little to suggest any difference in outlook between members of a particular country, in fact, it could be argued that his monologues sought to confirm such homogenous groupings. Class examples may include the following statements, all of which were contained within interesting anecdotes:

“This article was probably not written in Japan”

“In Japan, people are more influenced by TV shows”

“Gyoza from China sound dangerous”

“Food trends are different from country to country”

5.4.8 Method

The cultural purpose of class would appear to be somewhat of an afterthought as it is seen simply in terms of information road blocks that interfere with fluent reading or discussion. The way it is taught in class is consistent with this view of culture as an add-on. Culture is taught in a teacher-centred way by explicit explanation.

The way the teacher identifies the cultural elements of class (knowledge) and how he prepares for them (Google check) indicate a likelihood of how the teacher will deal with them in class. It is no surprise, therefore, that when students reach areas of the text with specific “cultural” terminology, the teacher deals with it explicitly through lecture, and often by means of personal anecdotes. Though these parts of class are typically the most teacher-centred parts of class and clearly serve the purpose of providing information that cannot be found in students’ dictionaries so they might return to the meaning of the text.

What is interesting to note about some of these cultural explanation asides, is that they often contain a comparative element. In the observed class, this comparative element was between the unidentified culture presented in the article and Japanese culture. This comparative element is seen as serving the purpose of helping students understand the subject matter:

Chito: Sometimes I incorporate those kind of foreign cultures into classrooms, when I have to teach those. Today for example, the article says about the diet and the trends in the diet, but trends in foreign countries are different from trends in Japan, so maybe it's hard to understand for my students. So I have to add some more information about, you know, something related to Japanese trends or... so that they can understand a little bit more.

When asked if drawing distinctions between the culture present in the materials and Japan has the potential to affect students’ sense of identity, Chito agreed that it has. However, this was seen as a positive consequence as students were deemed to lack a strong sense of identity. Looking at different cultures in a contrastive way with Japanese culture was seen as a way of remedying this:

Chito: When they see something different from their own culture, they feel

that they have an identity. But before that, I'm not sure, for example, my children have an identity or a sense of identity...They do, but they don't kinda realize that. But once they learn different cultures, they may have a strong sense.

5.4.9 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

Chito's ICI score was 36, slightly below the 37.84 average. His answers to specific ICI items are shown below.

Figure 56. Chito's responses to ICI items

Survey Item	Chito's Response
C1- Culture and language are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C5- Culture and communication are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C7- Culture is a vital part of language teaching	Neutral
C18- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on motivation	Somewhat agree
C20- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate	Somewhat disagree
C23- Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal	Somewhat agree
C26- Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	Somewhat disagree
C27- It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	Somewhat agree
C34- Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.	Somewhat agree
C33R- Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	Strongly disagree

Chito's answers to ICI items are consistent with much of his discussion on culture and language teaching in that they too are somewhat inconsistent. As we have seen, Chito recognises that culture and language have a strong connection but sees himself as teaching only guidebook style factual information about people or issues in a country.

In his answers to C1 and C5, Chito again acknowledges the language-culture-communication connection, but the remainder of these answers demonstrate a clear ambivalence to aspects beyond this connection. If we look at his view of culture as part of language teaching, for example, we see his answer to C33 suggests a real belief that teaching culture is the responsibility of language teachers, but then he gives a neutral response to C7 about culture being a vital part of language teaching.

Other examples can be seen. If we look at C18 and C20, we see that Chito agrees that cultural content has a positive impact on motivation, but disagrees that it has a positive impact on willingness to communicate. Likewise, we seem agreement with C23 and C27, that teaching should break down prejudices and give students a better understanding of their own culture, but disagreement with C26, that fostering a deep understanding of other cultures is an important class goal.

Of course, although these item pairs are not asking exactly the same thing, answering each differently is not especially unusual. What is unusual is that Chito seems to give somewhat counterintuitive answers across all pairs of related items, with the exception of the culture-language relationship.

These answers balance out to give Chito a slightly below average ICI score, but his answers, particularly ones on the survey, and approach to culture demonstrated in his teaching indicate that such a score should be considered somewhat opposed to the widely held beliefs in intercultural language education.

5.4.10 Limits

The lack of consistency in approach to his conceptualization of culture and approach to the teaching of culture cannot be said to exist in the barriers to teaching culture identified by Chito. In his survey answers Chito selected ‘Students’ beliefs about their own culture’ and ‘Own lack of knowledge about culture / cultures’ as the issues that have the greatest negative impact on the cultural dimension of his teaching. Chito answered that both have a strong impact.

These two barriers were also frequently referenced in the interview. We have already seen, for example, Chito’s belief that his students have a very superficial view of culture, based on TV imagery, and that, when faced with information from an ‘other’ culture, it has to

be presented alongside Japanese culture to be comprehensible.

Likewise, an awareness of his own lack of knowledge of culture and cultural groupings was a feature of the interview as expressed earlier in his declaration that he often googled certain cultural information before class so he wouldn't be caught out and could inform the students of it. Yet, this lack of knowing is beyond simply not knowing actors' names or certain trends:

Chito: Because I don't know too much about culture, I want to do more, but still I lack knowledge about the culture. Yeah. And nowadays, when we say "global English" or "world English" then I have...I need to learn a lot more about those cultures who speak English...Yeah, because, the "world English" is common, then I feel kind of pressure that I have to introduce a little cultures related to non-English speaking countries, like the Philippines, or [unintelligible], you know, outer circle. So I need to learn a lot more about where their accents are from, like Singaporean English, so they're speaking English as a native language maybe, but they have a different variety, so we have to teach those as well.

This extended quote on his lack of knowledge encapsulates Chito's broad attitude to culture to some degree. Firstly, he acknowledges the culture-language connection by identifying different Englishes as an important part of knowledge a teacher is required to know. Interestingly, this is despite strongly disagreeing on his survey that native speaker cultures should be the focus of cultural content. Secondly, we see that identification of differences such as accents is demonstrative of his teaching focus on surface differences that are found between national groupings and can be easily taught or demonstrated.

Perhaps the final attitude contained in the excerpt is frustration with the field. There is a detectable annoyance with the idea that this (culture as defined by Chito) is something he needs to try to work into his teaching. His self-declared lack of knowledge surrounding the cultural dimension, often demonstrated in the interview, clearly is a source of this frustration. Despite having a master degree in TESOL, Chito declared that he has had no training regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching and still remains unsure about how to proceed regarding it.

5.4.11 Summary of Chito

- Concept of culture focused on behavioural aspects
- Little use of national cultural label, though some use is implied
- Idea of cultural groups tends to be quite fluid with the idea that we are members of many
- Yet, once assigned a group, essentialization would seem to occur
- Essentialism score is fairly high

- Classroom use of culture focuses on guidebook type information
- Culture is considered an add-on and dealt with in such a way
- Teacher is worried about lack of own cultural knowledge
- ICI score is slightly below average

Although Chito talked at length about how behavioural differences are central in his understanding of culture, his use of it in the classroom would seem to not be consistent with this. In the classroom, the culture he identifies himself as preparing, presenting and teaching is focused almost entirely on national imagery and information about artefacts or news.

Despite consciously marginalizing the culture in the class providing somewhat inconsistent answers regarding the desired goals of culture, Chito may, unconsciously be actually achieving some of the teaching goals of inter cultural language teaching. By using only English, by incorporating discussion in class, by presenting himself in very Japanese ways on one hand (use of Japan to contrast certain points and clear identification of himself as Japanese) but outwardly behaving in a way that is not in keeping with it in a way that is understood, as he sees it, by his students, he is actively demonstrating both a multi-cultural existence that is tied to difference in language. Though he clearly has real problems with the idea of culture as part of language teaching and demonstrates a great deal of confusion about it, his greatest act of classroom culture teaching that is consistent with intercultural language teaching may simply be being himself. Being a Japanese teacher yet teaching exclusively in English and operating a class along educational lines one may argue are more in line with what is considered the norm outside of Japan than inside it challenges possible entrenched beliefs and stereotypes about being Japanese and about being a student in a Japanese classroom.

Chito: I didn't know that, actually, when I went to America, that we could speak up anything, because my experience was mostly in a classroom setting, that students are supposed to be quiet, sitting there, saying nothing, but I didn't know that we are allowed to actually say something, spot the teacher's mistakes, or, you know... so, as you learn the cultural differences and then you can actually try something that you've never done before, in the cultural settings, in your own cultural settings. That could be one thing you could do... to prepare.

Though Chito never seemed to demonstrate a strong awareness that the way he conducted class may be a source of cultural teaching, it could be argued to be the greatest.

5.5 David

5.5.1 Background

David is the only interview participant whose career since leaving university has been exclusively within the field of language education. Though his bachelor degree was in Film Studies, David decided to complete a CELTA qualification after graduating as he believed that English teaching would allow him to travel and work, something he was very keen to do.

After an unpleasant first experience teaching for a small school in Italy, David joined a large English conversation school company in Japan at the age of 23. After 18 months, he moved to take a position as an ALT (assistant language teacher) in the elementary and junior high school system. The schools in which he worked during this time received extra funding to develop and implement a content based programme of English teaching, something quite rare in Japan at that time and something which David described as a step in the right direction.

David returned to the UK where he took employment within the English centre of a university. Here he taught general English and pre-sessional courses for foreign students looking to develop their English before they entered a regular course of study. During this time, David completed his TESOL MA on a part-time basis.

David returned to Japan four years ago and, after working as an ALT again for one year,

found employment with a university. Currently still at the same university, he teaches general English, culture, and writing classes.

5.5.2 Concept of culture

David recognises that the concept of culture is something which he has thought about little and, because of this, it is something he finds difficult to articulate.

David: It's not something I'd ever really, massively thought out, to be honest. That might be the case with a lot of people. It's not necessarily a question you always ask yourself. It's one of those things, you feel like you just know it. And it's only when you're asked about it, and you actually have to think about it, you might come up with certain words, which I only really have since I've been chatting with you about your research and since I've been teaching it in the last few days. If you had asked me before that, I might have stumbled a little bit. I might have said, 'Hang on a minute, I need to think about it a bit more.' Because it's not an easy thing to just come out with.

Despite admitting a lack of thought on the subject, he did offer a view of culture, and, rather than demonstrating a lack of thought, showed a clear awareness of the differences of how the word "culture" is understood and used:

David: So for me, its ideas about how groups of people live, ideas about how they act. The way they do things, including customs and things like that, I suppose. As well as the other side of looking at culture is the arts, really.

David's definition of culture is similar to the anthropological definitions of the early 20th century which are, arguably, the basis of a common lay concept of culture. Though broad, there is a clear focus on the behavioural dimension through the mention of how people live, how they act and the way they do things. This view of culture with a little c is then contrast with the big C culture, or high culture, of the arts: culture as artefacts.

However, throughout the interview, David demonstrated a great unease with the discussion of culture. This would seem not to be a result of a lack of knowledge or awareness, but more from a lack of faith in the validity of the concept. The idea simply did not sit well with him.

If we look again at David's definition, we see that he defines culture as being "ideas about" things. This suggests an awareness and belief in the man-made nature of social groupings and ideas concerning culture; culture is "ideas about" something rather than actually being something. He identifies culture as being a debate, a concept in flux, rather than being something absolute. This can be seen in the first excerpt too when he identifies cultures as "one of those things, you feel like you just know it." As David clearly does not think that people are thinking the same, this again suggests the belief that culture is understood in many ways. This is something that clearly relates to essentialism as we shall see later.

5.5.3 Cultural groups

The questioning of the concept of culture is evident in discussions relating to ideas of the group in the notion of culture.

David: There are certain things that I suppose I do which fit in with the way that other British people may do. Certain ideas, certain things you may do, customs you may have. There are other ways when I probably don't really care about any of that and just potentially do things in a way I personally see fit. In a way that it may not be British or English or Southern or whatever, it's just me as an individual.

David suggests that there are multiple groups in which one might explain ones actions or identify with. These groups would appear to begin and increase in size beyond the individual as a single person: family, town, county, country, etc. However, David indicates that it is difficult to pin down the influence of cultural groups as his actions may simply be his own rather than a result of membership of a particular group.

Additionally, this lack of belief in the validity of cultural groupings can be seen in the way he positions or identifies himself culturally:

David: I suppose when you're in Japan, it almost feels so far away that you consider yourself British is small enough of a label. But when you're there, it would feel too broad a cultural label to stick on.

In this view, cultural groups are constantly being changed, made, reduced or expanded based on the context in which one finds oneself. For David, identifying culturally as British while in Japan is of sufficient cultural distance to be meaningful. Yet, when in Britain, the label would be somewhat meaningless as almost everyone you encounter would be contained within the label. In this understanding, cultural groups exist when distinctions need to be either made or explained. This is something that is suggestive of a lack of essentialism in his concept of culture.

5.5.4 Development of the concept of culture

David's lack of certainty regarding culture appears difficult to pin down. He acknowledges that he has no formal education regarding culture and has not studied the concept in any way. Perhaps the main source of influence on his view of culture is that of his problems of identification with a particular group:

David: Having grown up in the south near London, my father's family are all from the east end. It's that way of thinking and attitude, even language culture still lives on a little through my dad, and sometimes through me....There are quite different thoughts and customs and all the rest of it all over the country. Essentially four different countries, really. And even within that, there are still all sorts going on. It's an interesting one, perhaps I wouldn't if I were there. Would I consider myself British? I don't know. English? Essex?

Additionally, on his survey, David agreed with item C9 that states "Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures". From this survey answer and interview data, one may argue that the national structure in which David was raised has influenced him in his reluctance to place too much faith in the idea of culture and its groupings that are used.

Though the traditional anthropological view of culture as shared attitudes and behaviours is found through all David's discussions of culture, David shows great hesitance to label himself as any in particular. British, English, Essex and Southern are all terms that came out in the interview as possible cultural groupings, yet ones that, while David did acknowledge as sharing some relationship with, ultimately felt were insufficient or too inaccurate.

There is one further point of interest regarding David's experience and its connection to his understanding of culture: his reading regarding cultural groups.

David: Quite often, some of those classic ideas of differences are not as extreme as may well be thought of. Even before I came to Japan, I read certain books about how Japanese do things and you can't do this, and you have to do that, and you shouldn't do certain things... The reality when I got here was much less frightening and severe and strict than I'd been led to believe by certain books and advice.

Prior to coming to Japan, David read works on the Japanese that presented Japan and the Japanese as possessing extreme differences. This literature, which may fit well with the literature described in the earlier Nihonjinron (2.1) section, rather than serving as a foundation for understanding culture and, in particular, Japanese culture, was rejected by David. As we can see from the above excerpt, it was rejected because David felt his experiences in Japan were not consistent with the image of great cultural distance presented to him in the literature.

This finding is particularly interesting as it differs greatly from that of Alan, whose view of culture is greatly influenced by this form of homogeneous nation based homogenous understanding of culture found in certain literature. This leads one to ask whether literature on culture has the ability to overturn previously held beliefs regarding culture. This will be a question discussed further in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

5.5.5 Essentialism

David: It's [culture is] such a slippery concept

Much of the results presented so far surrounding David's thinking on the subject of culture are suggestive of a non-essentialized view. His unease with the concept and his great uncertainty about which social labels to use to describe himself or his culture all point to a rejection of essentialism. This is something indicated by his survey results also. David's ECC score was 17, the lowest of the interview volunteers and well below the average score of 24.13.

Figure 57. David's responses to ECC items

Item	David's Response
C2-The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.	Somewhat disagree
C3-Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.	Somewhat disagree
C4-Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.	Somewhat agree
C6-Diversity is the norm in any culture.	Somewhat agree
C9-Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.	Somewhat agree
C10-Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g. collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	Strongly disagree
C13-A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.	Somewhat disagree
C21-People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.	Strongly disagree
C24-Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	Somewhat agree
C29-National borders accurately represent cultural borders.	Strongly disagree

As can be seen, every answer provided by David is towards the non-essentialized side of the scale. Of these, three are strongly held beliefs: C10, C21 and C29. These three strongly held beliefs are consistent with the interview data. As we have seen, David has strong reservations about national cultural labels (C29) demonstrated by his unease with describing himself, culturally, as British. Indeed, any form of cultural label is viewed with suspicion by David as he is unsure where the individual factors end and the cultural factors begin. This can be seen in his rejection of a different form of cultural label; those of cultural tendencies expressed in item C10.

Ultimately, the sentiment recorded in his answer to item C21 that people are definitely *not* essentially different from those in another culture clearly indicates a non-essentialized view of culture. This view is consistent with comments throughout the interview on the concept of culture and, as we shall see, on the cultural dimension of language teaching. Although David is opposed to an essentialized view of culture this do not necessarily indicate subscription to opposing concept view. Rather, his views would appear to demonstrate a clear dissatisfaction with the commonly held concept of culture and the

way it is used. David's comments on culture suggest that he would be likely to subscribe to a non-essentialised view of culture along critical cosmopolitan lines. However, as David has had no training or education regarding culture, it appears that dissatisfaction with the lay concept of culture remains as dissatisfaction and has not developed into another coherent system of understanding.

5.5.6 Culture in language teaching: Purpose

David agreed to items C1 and C5 that culture is connected to language and communication and clearly identifies culture as having a place in language teaching.

Interviewer: What are the benefits of teaching culture in English classes?

David: One example, many of these students may be going overseas. They may be experiencing life within a different culture, so even just having the odd little bit of cultural discussion and introduction to how certain other cultures may do things is a help, I would imagine. Then again, if they're not going to be spending time overseas, a lot of our students here at [this university] for example, they'll potentially be using English in their job for the rest of their life and therefore may be dealing with people from all over the world. Just being aware of certain things.

Interviewer: Does that mean that we need to teach a specific culture?

David: No, it doesn't at all. Like I say, not saying this is how it's done there, but sometimes this is how certain people here think like this, sometimes this is a way of doing things in a certain area. There is that, it's for the students' future and where they may go. Practical sense of work and travel and things like that.

I also think that a second thing is that it's interesting. The world is an interesting place, partly because of the different cultures around. It's interesting for me, as a teacher, thinking about them. I mentioned that I hope that it's interesting for the students, thinking about these things. So there's the interest level.

The two purposes of culture in language teaching expressed in the interchange could be

argued to be ones commonly understood and expressed by teachers. The first purpose expressed is the “preparational” use of culture. Here cultural information is understood as being of benefit for students when they travel. David recognises that this travel and interaction with another culture will likely not be with a native speaker culture. However, identifying specific cultural knowledge of a place /culture that students are likely to interact in/with requires the identification of a specific culture. David did not provide an answer on how this seeming contradiction can be reconciled.

The second purpose is also one often heard from teachers: the motivational power of culture. On the survey, David agreed that cultural content has a positive impact on both motivation (C18) and willingness to communicate (C20). Likewise, in the interview, David cites the student interest element of culture immediately after mentioning the cultural information/preparational purpose. This would suggest that when David mentions the motivational factor of culture in class, he is thinking of a more traditional, cultural information understanding of culture based on interesting differences. This may be because this view of interesting and unique differences fits well with the view of culture he sees students as typically holding, albeit one he may disagree with:

David: A lot of them [students] seemed to focus on the old [view of culture]. Initially, they seemed to be thinking of...another word that came up was... ‘unique’, and I questioned them on that.

Ultimately, culture in class for David has the potential to do much more than these things. This can be seen in his response when asked if cultural teaching should focus on things groups do differently:

David: Or even do things the same. Not necessarily differently. Differently, the same, whichever it may be. Like I said, one [reason] is to potentially prepare them for the future whether it's work, travel, or even if they're staying here, people coming here. I suppose it also helps them to possibly... It's not just about others, it's about their own culture as well. By discussing culture, thinking about themselves as Japanese and thinking about what that means. What their culture may be. It's great to frame language learning within these interesting discussion points, these interesting things that students can really think about and get teeth into.

In this sense, the cultural dimension of language teaching has an introspective purpose. Culture helps to gain a deeper understanding of the students' own culture, something which again is seen as connected to increased levels of student engagement.

An additional purpose for culture in class and one that connects to the motivational use, is that David understands culture as being something that students demand or, at least, view as being a standard part of university language teaching:

David: I think particularly at a place like this [his university], with the amount of English lessons the students get over four years,...they'd be disappointed if they didn't get it, it would be a shame if they didn't get it. Even if you were teaching just pure language. If there was no discussion about cultural issues it would be a shame. I think I do.

As we have seen, David suggests that the purpose of culture in class is to satisfy student demand, prepare students for possible future journeys and increase motivation in the classroom. Having looked at the purpose of culture in teaching for David, I will now examine the substance of the 'culture' used.

5.5.7 Content

The purposes highlighted above by David appear to be present simultaneously in the cultural dimension of his classes. This can be seen in certain classroom procedures described by David and observed directly in his class.

For example, in terms of culture as direct information about a country, in his class David began class with the expression "A pinch and a punch for the first of the month." This was identified as a British expression that people say to each other, often accompanied with a pinch and/or punch, on the first day of each month. This information was explained to students and presented as British culture. However, David also highlighted that many people in Britain might not know it and that it might only be something that people in his local area know. This hedging would seem to be consistent with his view on culture. Yet the identification of it as "British culture" suggests pampering to an assumed preference for national culture held by students.

Despite highlighting the information aspect of culture teaching in his interview, the

cultural dimension of the observed class focused more on the introspective and semiotic aspects. The observed class was based on a course book unit though the course book was not used by students at any point during the class. Instead David used the theme and target language in a discussion. The theme of the unit was 'Business'. Students were tasked with deciding whether or not certain business practices were good or bad. Students shared their answers and had to give a rationale for their answer. Although this could have been more explicit, students did have to articulate certain beliefs and reasoning that could certainly be described as cultural in nature and existing at a much deeper level than surface cultural differences. This was followed up by discussion questions that also required the identification of beliefs.

In the interview, David also highlighted an activity like this as an example of cultural teaching in another of his classes:

David: I was doing dilemmas with the students, and there was a picture on the board of man walking his dog, it was a cartoon. There was a man walking his dog, he stood on a jetty, and in the water there's someone struggling to swim surrounded by sharks. And the dilemma was, what would you do? I got them to talk about it, and I said, 'My idea is I would throw the dog in so the sharks would be distracted, eat the dog, and I would try to rescue that person.' It blew my mind the majority of students said they consider their dog's life more important than a stranger's. That was across two classes. And I know that Japanese people tend to all agree. If one or two strong students said, 'That's what I think,' they'd all go, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah...' But it seemed to be a consensus. It absolutely blew my mind. I was like, 'Seriously?' That just seems mad to me.

Activities that make students think about and question their deeper beliefs, such as this, would seem to be a feature of David's classes. Additionally, the fact that such topics, the examples here being business practices or dilemmas, are never presented in national terms is consistent with David's view of the nation and culture. This too can be seen in the excerpt above when David shows surprise that the view expressed by students was consistent across both classes and could be seen as a Japanese view point.

5.5.8 Method

David: *Teach* culture is a strong word to use.

On the survey, David declared that he often teaches culture and sometimes considers the cultural content of materials when choosing them for class. Yet, as we can see from the quote above, David questions whether he is actually teaching culture. This may stem partly from a lack of planning regarding the cultural dimension:

David: I plan lessons, but actually a lot of what happens for me in class--particularly things like cultural bits--often are things that just come up. Quite often, a lot of the things that happen in my class just happen in the moment and can be a side path. They can be the kind of cultural issues. Unless there's something like, whether it's reading or listening, those two where there's text of some kind--where during the preparation there's something like, 'Ah, that bit is worth looking into', or 'that bit is worth discussing.'

This spontaneous approach to emergent cultural issues appears to be David's preference regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching and one that he has adopted since he began teaching at the university level with pre-sessional classes in the UK. David describes classes there in the following terms:

David: I don't remember explicitly going out and teaching it or thinking, 'Today I'm going to have a lesson on culture.' There'd perhaps be things that come up in an introductory talk to your partner. 'How was your weekend? You've been here a week, how're things going?' You find out from the class that someone had an issue with tips. That kind of thing. That would tend to be how it came out. I think it probably is how I have dealt with that. The most connection with dealing with issues of culture as and when they come up.

Here, the cultural discussion is emergent and often focused on issues that students encounter or observations they make while studying abroad in the UK. Though the context may differ, David adopts the same approach to the cultural dimension in his classes at university in Japan. His approach sees him adopting something of a blended role between discussion facilitator and Devil's advocate. A particular example can be seen

in David's interactions with students during a class discussion on Japanese culture:

David: A lot of them [students discussing *culture*] seemed to focus on the old...another word that came up was the word 'unique', and I questioned them on that. I said 'Well, hang on a minute. Does it have to be a unique thing?'... so I raised that with them. And the idea of traditional is brought up. Surely tradition is a part of it, but you can't exclusively label culture as that.

5.5.9 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

David's ICI score based on his survey items was 39. This was slightly above the average of 37.84.

Figure 58. David's responses to ICI items

Survey Item	David's Response
C1- Culture and language are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C5- Culture and communication are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C7- Culture is a vital part of language teaching	Somewhat agree
C18- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on motivation	Somewhat agree
C20- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate	Somewhat agree
C23- Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal	Somewhat agree
C26- Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	Neutral
C27- It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	Somewhat agree
C34- Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.	Somewhat agree
C33R- Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	Somewhat disagree

With the exception of his neutral response to C26, all of David's answers were on the side

of the scale that suggests a belief in the importance of culture and a subscription to the desired ends of intercultural language teaching. However the somewhat average score of David would appear to be due to a lack of strong feeling regarding this as all items received a 'somewhat' response with no item receiving a 'strongly' response.

David's view of culture and his classroom practice would suggest that he might strongly subscribe to such views, but his response to the teaching items and interview data point to his approach to culture being reactive rather than proactive. David's classes may seem to be informed by intercultural language teaching in the sense that he tries to develop empathy, critical thinking and rejects homogeneous cultural labelling, but, as he declared, culture is not something he thinks about and intercultural language teaching is something he is not aware of. As such, a fairly average ICI score is consistent and suggestive that his teaching, which may be well regarded from an intercultural perspective, is simply a consequence of his own personal beliefs regarding culture manifest through a communicative approach.

5.5.10 Limits

Perhaps the most salient limit of the cultural dimension of David's classes is the inconsistency of approach to culture. This is manifest in two main ways. Firstly, David displayed a very confused attitude towards his students and the issue of *culture*. On the one hand, David praised their understanding of the concept as being better developed than he anticipated:

David: They did surprise me by not labelling culture as extremely stereotypical. In fact, beyond stereotypical and into cliché-type behaviour, energies and symbols. Things like that, they didn't really – in a short time in class, they came up with pretty decent ideas that weren't too far off.

Yet at other points, David refers to students as having a superficial view:

David: I've had students in the past [discussing culture] and get lots of custom, tradition, history, ancestors coming through....I think they were looking at uniquely Japanese things. In their words, things like clothing, kimono and stuff like that.

Likewise, David's classroom approach did not remain consistent and shifted to quite different extremes. As all of David's students are within the same department and majoring in English, one can reasonably say that this was not a consequence of perceived limitations of student language ability. David's approach to culture was largely reactive and seemed to be dependent on his perceptions of students' concepts of culture and some largely undefined cultural outcome. In some classes David presents "a culture pyramid" or discusses the thinking behind reactions to certain dilemmas, As students are clearly linguistically capable of deeper thinking concerning culture, the shift in foci and approach to culture would seem to be pegged to some other desired outcome or purpose.

A clear example of this was the importance David attaches to pronunciation, a subject of research for him and which he tries to incorporate into classes in some form. Though David demonstrated a clear discomfort with the large, nation based concept of culture and with how a person may be understood in national culture terms, this view was suspended when dealing with pronunciation. During class, David spent time on the pronunciation of the following colloquial contractions

- "D'ya nowah" – Do you know her.
- "D'ya like it?" – Do you like it.

When introducing the items, he informed the class that "Where I am from, people speak like this" and that "native speakers will say this". These utterances suggest a different underlying concept of culture and one that runs contrary to the views David expressed during interview. However, in this particular teaching situation this idea of culture aids the teaching of the contractions as it offers a justification for inclusion and attaches a certain importance to them.

5.5.11 Summary of David

Culture

- Little subscription to the common understanding of culture
- Shows great discomfort with the idea of prescriptive cultural labels such as nationality or ethnicity
- Reluctant to ascribe a cultural label to himself or explain the origins of actions / beliefs
- Recognises that culture is a concept that is used for different purposes and in different

ways

- View of culture focuses more on behavioural aspects
- Very low ECC score

Culture and Language Teaching

- Belief that culture does have a place in language teaching
- Prefers the cultural dimension to emerge in class rather than be planned
- Dilemmas / conflicts when discussed can be considered cultural in nature
- Occupies a position of Devil's Advocate in discussions
- Approach to cultural issues in class is inconsistent
- Average ICI score

David's views concerning culture point to a non-essentialized view of culture. This view, however, has not coalesced to form a coherent concept of culture and remains simply as dissatisfaction with the default anthropological top-down view of culture; a view he largely identifies as *culture*. As dissatisfaction has not developed into anything further, David does not attach great importance to the cultural dimension of language teaching. Culture may be present as an extension or variety of communicative language teaching (Harmer, 2001) or simply as information regarding a country. With no firm or developed concept of culture and how it relates to language teaching, David's approach is understandably fluid and often contradictory.

5.6 Eric

5.6.1 Background

Eric is a native of southern California and grew up in a neighbourhood which he describes as "very multi-ethnic". As a result of this Eric is the only interview participant to grow up in a multi-lingual environment. Though he does not claim a high level of fluency, Eric speaks Spanish and this is a result of growing up in such an environment.

Included in this diverse community were several Asian groups such as Korean and Japanese. Eric studied karate as a child and had several Asian-American friends which created in him an interest in Asia. Eric finally had the chance to visit Japan and came to study Japanese and teach English with the intention of working for some time, but, as he lacked qualifications to advance further, he returned to the US to undertake a bachelor

degree in Asian Studies. Although Eric was primarily interested in Japan and Japanese, he studied Chinese and spent his final semester in China because his supervisor felt he was too focused on Japan. Despite study of Chinese and time in China, the majority of the courses taken were related to Japan.

Once Eric received his bachelor degree he was able to return to Japan and find official employment as an English teacher with a well-known language school chain. While in this position he undertook an MA TESOL course by distance with a UK university. This led him to find employment in the higher education sector at a university that focuses on foreign languages. Eric has been teaching at the university level in Japan for nearly 15 years.

Though Eric's path through teaching is similar to other teachers interviewed in that he moved into language teaching after studying a largely unrelated subject for his bachelor degree and after leaving his home country, there is one notable difference. Eric is the only teacher to specify on his survey that he can speak another language other than Japanese or English. Eric's level of Japanese is much higher than that of the other interviewees and he also answered that he knows some Chinese from his previous studies and some Spanish. Although Eric admits that his Chinese has since declined, he did show pride in his Spanish ability by stating that he speaks to the family of his Mexican-American friends in Spanish even though they lack the ability.

Additionally, Eric differs from other interviewees in one other factor which may be of relevance in any later analysis: awareness of being raised in a multi-ethnic environment. Although other interviewees reference regional or international variety in their own family, Eric highlighted difference in the community in which he was brought up. Eric mentions multiple ethnic groups coexisting in his local area when growing up and having friends from different backgrounds as a consequence. This melting pot community idea is not presented by other interviewees. One possible reason for a focus on the diversity of the community in which he was raised may be that, until he came to Japan, Eric had only travelled across the local border into Mexico and lacked the international travel experience of other interviewees such as Alan or Brian.

5.6.2 Concept of culture

Eric: I guess for me, culture is both the behaviours, attitudes and beliefs –

so some of them are visible elements – of a specific group of people. And it can be categorised – it can be a culture of two, you know? So I mean, it really depends on how wide we're talking, but I think that whatever group we're referring to, that that culture has certain expected behaviours, or attitudes, or values that they hold dear, and that maybe can be compared with others in terms of whether they are similar, or different.

When asked explicitly about his view of culture, Eric first mentions behaviours, attitudes and beliefs. This very common view of culture is consistent with the standard anthropological view of culture in the mid twentieth century that culture relates to certain characteristics and behaviours that are shared by a group. Though Eric does not provide much more detail than this regarding a concept of culture, we can see this focus on behaviour, attitudes and beliefs in his comments and discussion of culture with regard to teaching. This will be discussed in Chapter 6.

What is of particular interest at this point is that, although Eric's definition of culture is somewhat unremarkable in that the elements identified are ones commonly voiced by others, it does show an awareness of one issue that is perhaps absent in the ideas of others: culture is context specific. The quote above is the only time throughout the interview that Eric talks about his views of culture as a concept. All other mentions of culture are in relation to students' views, teaching or classroom activities. The reason for this may be found in the quote above. Eric states that ideas of culture depend on which group is under discussion, "how wide" the discussion is, and what groups are cast against each other. Though the idea of culture changing meaning depending on the context in which it is used is not unusual, the interesting issue is that Eric is aware of it and presents that as part of his definition of culture.

5.6.3 Cultural groups

Eric: Well, there's macrocultures and microcultures. There's even individual family cultures, there's friend cultures...there could be two people who are good friends...they could have a specific culture.

As can be seen, Eric clearly adopts the view that people are members of multiple cultures from large groupings (macrocultures) to more local and personal groupings (microcultures). The formation of these groupings is consistent with his idea of culture

above in that they exhibit or require a specific variety of behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. This is needed regardless of how big or small the culture may be:

Eric: So I mean, it really depends on how wide we're talking, but I think that whatever group we're referring to, that culture has certain expected behaviours or attitudes or values that they hold dear, and that maybe can be compared with others in terms of whether they are similar or different.

It is on the subject of cultural groups that we first see some of the ambivalence Eric has regarding culture. On the one hand, Eric demonstrates cultural formation from the top down which, while typically avoiding national units, still uses large groupings that inevitably involves assigning a culture to someone by virtue of their location:

Eric: The fact that I'm from Southern California, there are people from Southern California, there's a type of culture – Southern Californian culture. If you're in a church, that's a specific type of culture. So it could be any type of group or association.

Yet he also demonstrates a much more fluid idea of cultural group formation that is from the bottom up and based on active participation:

Eric: Yeah, I mean there could be two people who are good friends – they could have a specific culture. And then another person comes in, and whether they are a part of that culture or not, or if they know the expected way to act in that situation.

Though the quote represents a somewhat incomplete thought, Eric later adds that “new people becoming part of that culture” is what drives cultural change and, therefore, means cultural groups are in a state of flux due to the participation of its members.

5.6.4 Development of the concept of culture

Eric declared that he had learned a little about culture as part of his MA in TESOL several years ago and also through certain presentations at conferences over the years. Though Eric says that this information has largely been forgotten over time, he does remember that the culture content of his MA was an examination of national cultures along the lines

of Hofstede's dimensions (collectivism vs. individualism, power-distance, etc.). Despite occasional exposure in an educational setting, Eric clearly identifies cultural exposure through life experiences as being the greatest contributor to his idea of culture.

Eric: When I first came to Japan, I got my passport, I'd only been to maybe Mexico. Otherwise, I was only in the United States. So I think, very egocentric, when I first left, even though I was in an area of Southern California where I did meet other people and had friends from different cultures. So in that way, I was exposed to a lot more than maybe, say, my relatives in Arkansas or Wisconsin, who couldn't believe I had friends from different cultures., didn't believe I had gay friends....But I still think that yes, over time, my understanding of culture and maybe the idea of 'wow, they're different!' – you know, that judging from my own culture's perspective – I've tried to be a little more careful about that, even though I still do it. But hopefully I'm a little wiser in that regard.

In his early life, the diversity of Southern California exposed him to a high degree of different behaviours, values and attitudes. In later life, visiting China and extended contact with Japan are identified as similar influences on his view of culture. Both these experiences highlight the impact of interaction with others deemed to be culturally Other. This can be seen also in the fact that he points out that his family in Arkansas and Michigan, which in his mind are more homogeneous, lack such experience and exposure.

5.6.5 Essentialism

The identification of the genesis of his culture concept also once again suggests the ambivalence or contradiction in Eric's view. On the one hand Eric identifies that culture constitutes behavioural, habitual and attitudinal norms, and that groups of people that loosely adhere to particular sets of these norms represents a culture. This, by extension, means that every society is multicultural regardless of whether in Southern California or Wisconsin. However, the prioritizing of national /ethnic cultural groupings and the minimizing of others suggests that such groupings are real and more influential than others.

Eric's ECC score of 29 was several points above the average and can perhaps be seen as a reflection of a cosmopolitan multicultural view, albeit one in which national and ethnic

groupings still dominate. Though not necessarily incompatible, if we look at the multicultural approach (Section 1.4.3), we can see that subscription to a multicultural cosmopolitan view of culture is typically accompanied by reduction in importance of the national unit. If we look at Eric's survey responses, we also see several answers which seem to contradict each other. Throughout the interview Eric discussed multicultural society, particularly from his own perspective. It follows that he would strongly disagree with the idea that traits that define a culture are not equally shared (C2), while agreeing that cultural categories are malleable (C4) and that we are members of multiple cultures (C16). However, Eric strongly disagrees that diversity is the norm in any culture, agrees that dichotomies of cultural tendencies are accurate and disagrees that cultural categories are arbitrary and can be changed if necessary.

Figure 59. Eric's responses to ECC items

Item	Eric's Response
C2-The traits that define a culture are equally shared by its members.	Strongly disagree
C3-Characteristics that define a culture are easily recognizable.	Somewhat agree
C4-Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.	Somewhat agree
C6-Diversity is the norm in any culture.	Strongly disagree
C9-Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.	Neutral
C10-Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g. collective vs individualist, hierarchical vs non-hierarchical) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.	Somewhat agree
C13-A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.	Somewhat disagree
C21-People in one culture are essentially different from those in another.	Somewhat disagree
C24-Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	Somewhat disagree
C29-National borders accurately represent cultural borders.	Somewhat disagree

Eric: I show students my elementary school picture, and white people were the minority in my elementary school in my class.

Eric's ECC score represents mixed feelings on a number of matters which can possibly be explained by his upbringing in a multicultural environment where "multicultural" was understood in terms of different national and racial backgrounds. The education Eric received may also have played a role in this in that the work of Hofstede focuses on national characteristics and can serve to reinforce a multicultural cosmopolitan view based on national background.

5.6.6 Culture and language teaching: Purpose

The cultural dimension of language is deemed important by Eric, because he sees it as aiding both linguistic and cognitive development. Of the two Eric points out, "My main focus is getting them to learn the language." In terms of linguistic development, Eric identifies cultural content as providing a means through which vocabulary and certain conversational strategies can be introduced and practiced in an authentic manner. Of the two, vocabulary would seem to have a more privileged place:

Eric: I think that the students need a lot of vocabulary work in general. They have such a limited number of words they know. So in terms of functional language, yes, it's good for them to be able to hedge what they say, and other things, but I'm more interested in them getting a lot of exposure to language, and hopefully learning the major concepts, so that if someone says something, like "designated area", they know what a designated area is, as opposed to "I see your point, but ...". I mean, hopefully because the discussion strategies or functional language, there are fewer that they need to learn to be able to function in a language, but the main part for me is that I think these other topics expose them to more language that they need to know in order to be able to understand what's being discussed.

Despite thinking that "the pendulum in language teaching has gone a little overboard on the discussion strategies and conversation strategies, and focusing on whether students use them enough", Eric does value the linguistic development, aided by cultural content, beyond vocabulary acquisition:

Eric: I think that, for preparing them to, hopefully interact with other cultures, that maybe learn to share a little more, or maybe understand that some people would expect that.

Though somewhat vague on this area, Eric suggests that knowledge of communicative norms will be of benefit to students in the future and aid smoother communication.

The cultural content of his classes is seen by Eric as not only giving his students extensive exposure to language, but also providing an opportunity for some cognitive change or development. This is seen as being achieved by putting students' previous intercultural experiences and assumptions into perspective.

Eric: I think that often students take one example, and they generalize it for an entire population, or beyond. And often they tend to make assumptions that what they see is true, even if it's something that was just in a particular context in a movie, or something like that. Or if they meet one person from a country, and they say 'all people from this place are nice.' So sometimes, I definitely think that generalizations are made very quickly.

Eric sees the exposure to cultural content and different ideas as "an exercise in critical thinking" that reduces the likelihood of students making sweeping assumptions about culture based on a single observation. This aspect of the cultural dimension of language teaching, however, is largely dependent on the type of class. As will be discussed in more detail in the following section, Eric largely understands cultural content to be topical or controversial issues. Whether or not these will be a major feature of class is dependent for Eric on whether the class he is teaching is a compulsory course or not. Though Eric acknowledges that such content has a place at the university level, he uses it less in compulsory classes as students have no choice because, as he says, "I don't think students should be forced to care for something they don't care about." Elective courses, on the other hand, allow him greater freedom to delve into certain topics because students know the content and have elected to take the classes.

5.6.7 Content

Information that has the potential to inform or alter cultural views and knowledge can come from two main sources according to Eric. These can be implicit and unplanned, or explicit and planned, both of which Eric sees as being part of his teaching. In terms of the cultural content mentioned above, this is explicit and planned and typically related to what might be referred to as "big questions". Examples given by Eric during the interview

were human rights and the smoking ban, whereas an observed classroom related to nationalist feelings stemming from a compatriot winning a Nobel Prize. Such questions often require students to take a position, justify or explain their thoughts and require a certain degree of introspection. For these reasons, questions such as these are not common in textbooks, particularly intercultural texts or teacher resource books.

Eric is aware that such questions and topics may invite disagreement and, as such, may not be welcomed by all students. These contentious issues feature less in his compulsory classes because, as he states, “I don’t think students should be forced to care for something they don’t care about, and so just letting them know what it is, I think that’s fine.” These issues are dealt with more prominently in his elective classes.

Eric: I would like them to believe, or maybe to take some of these concepts, and play with them and see if they’re important to them or not...So that’s pushing my agenda,...that’s maybe my cultural imperialism, in that respect.

The decision for what content should be selected for classes appears to mostly be a result of the interests of Eric, rather than any reasoned belief on specific needs of students beyond the need to view issues from more than one perspective. Some content, such as human rights, is present simply because Eric says, “I believe in human rights and I want to teach about human rights.” Other content, such as the smoking ban, while recent and contentious in certain Western countries, is not in force in Japan, neither is it one currently being considered. One may also say that content relating to the pride felt when a compatriot, in this case a Japanese scientist, wins a Nobel Prize is the reaction from Eric to the outpouring of praise and nationalism that often occurs.

Cultural content in Eric’s teaching is not only present in the theme of class or the content of the text:

Eric: I think part of culture you can’t help hide – just who you are – the fact that I sit on the desk sometime, when as a teacher I come in playing music, sometimes I bring in a coffee, so I think some of it, it’s not explicit teaching, it’s just being who you are.

Eric recognizes himself as cultural content in the sense that, as someone likely to be viewed as a cultural Other, everything he says and does can be interpreted culturally.

This was salient in the class observations as Eric played rock music prior to class, chatted and joked informally with students prior to the commencement of class, and wore casual attire. Such actions and class choices indicate a desire to create an informal and relaxed classroom atmosphere. Though such actions are not unique to Eric, there is the possibility that, to a student who has few classes with foreign teachers, the image and behaviour that Eric presents is understood to be usual or stereotypical of American teachers. In this sense, it is quite possible that classroom actions lead to the very thing that identified as a source of concern: overgeneralizing.

5.6.8 Method

Eric: In all my classes it [culture] comes up.

Eric recognises that most aspects of class can be considered cultural and this, coupled with his comment above suggest an incidental approach to culture. However, this is not to say that cultural issues arise at random or unexpectedly. When choosing the content, Eric anticipates certain comments and viewpoints arising and so is ready to question and expand when necessary.

Perhaps the first instance of this is an opening segment of class where Eric shows students something happening in the world and elicits responses. An example of this is the presentation of a new article about a Japanese scientist winning a Nobel Prize. Students are asked, “How do you feel when a Japanese person wins a Nobel Prize?” and, “Do you feel proud?” Students discuss in pairs with some answers being reported to the class. Following this, there isn’t any further development of the theme or thoughts given; as seen, simply having the students consider the subject is seen as enough by Eric.

Though it was not a feature in his observed class, Eric declares that he does go deeper sometimes:

Eric: ...and it’s good that we get to talk about it when they make those generalizations, and say ‘so if I were to say that a Japanese person showed me the way, would you think that all Japanese people would stop and show me the way?’ or whatever. You know, try and bring it back into context.

This investigation and deeper look at the views expressed by his students is claimed to be

a feature of most of his classes:

Eric: And whether it's that reading class, or debate, or whatever, we're always trying to say 'let's look at what's happening elsewhere in the world, and also let's look at here.' Whether we start with Japan and work out, or start somewhere else and work back to Japan. So we're always trying to connect it.

From the texts and subject matter selected for class, Eric clearly knows that cultural issues and the negotiation of meaning will arise, and he is prepared for this in the sense that he is ready to discuss the issue and encourage reflection on it. As can be seen from the excerpts above, his interview and class observation, culture is usually discussed in relation to Japan, or from the perspective of an assumed Japanese view point. The assumed view point appears largely to be one that is based on an understanding of Japanese culture that is fairly nationalistic and Nihonjinron like in form. If one assumed that students were unlikely to hold a fixed view of Japaneseness and a strong sense of nationalism, it would make questions about their feelings when other Japanese win an international prize somewhat redundant. In this sense, the somewhat essentialized view that Eric holds about the somewhat essentialized view that students hold regarding themselves as Japanese directs a lot of content choices and predicts areas of discussion and mediation on cultural matters. Though Eric declares that "It [culture issues] usually comes out naturally" in his classes, it seems clear that students are guided to areas of contention, question and discussion by the content and Eric's own questions.

5.6.9 Intercultural inclination (ICI)

Eric's ICI score of 38 is very close to the average of 37.84. With the exception of items C20 and C27, Eric agrees somewhat with all the statements that suggest the importance of culture to language teaching.

Figure 60. Eric's answers to ICI survey items

Survey Item	Chito's Response
C1- Culture and language are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C5- Culture and communication are strongly connected	Somewhat agree
C7- Culture is a vital part of language teaching	Somewhat agree

C18- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on motivation	Somewhat agree
C20- Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate	Neutral
C23- Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal	Somewhat agree
C26- Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	Somewhat agree
C27- It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	Neutral
C34- Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.	Somewhat agree
C33R- Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	Somewhat disagree

Though there is consistency in his answers, there is also consistency in the fact that the “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree” options were never selected. This lack of strong feeling is congruent with a view of the cultural dimension of language teaching where culture is ‘dealt with when it comes up’ and where ‘giving students exposure to other viewpoints is enough’. Culture is given importance, not because of its ties to language or language use, but due to its ability to allow for self-reflection and to highlight the diversity among groups, particularly among students’ own national group.

5.6.10 Limits

Though given importance, the cultural dimension of language teaching, was typically of secondary importance to Eric. Vocabulary acquisition and, to a lesser extent, conversation/discussion strategies were identified as more important. Eric acknowledges the connection between culture and language, and culture and communication, but the culture in his classes, as he sees it, is largely through discussions of viewpoints on groups. As mentioned above, these are often limited by Eric depending on the type of class he is teaching; the cultural dimension of language teaching will be more a feature of class activities and Eric’s teaching than compulsory classes.

Although Eric looks to break down a reified national understanding of Japaneseness by

having students question it, reflect on it, and consider the variety within it, a limitation would appear to be that Eric often sets up the very structures or views he is looking to break down. As seen in his class, Eric introduces an issue or view point from a national grouping point of view and then asks students to think about it. As Eric is conscious about not forcing his views too much on students nor does he wish to delve too deep, it is quite possible that the national understanding of the issue is all students receive thus making it very possible that such activities are counterproductive. Activities outside of class may work in a similar vein. At the end of the observed class, Eric assigned a homework task to ‘make cultural observations’. As class discussions often involve Japanese culture as the cultural unit, even though Eric does so to deconstruct it in some way, it is very possible that students will undertake their homework looking for such national examples of culture.

5.6.11 Summary of Eric

- Recognises that “culture” is a word used in different contexts
- Holds a somewhat ambivalent view of culture which seems to be multicultural but also one in which groups are somewhat static
- ECC score is above average
- Experiences growing up in Southern California appear to be the most influential aspect contributing to his understanding of culture

- Classroom use of culture focuses on certain points of discussion
- These points are typically elicited by the teacher
- Teacher is confident in dealing with cultural issues when they arise
- ICI score is average and based on a largely unenthusiastic acceptance of most of the points within

Chapter 6

Discussion

This examination of teachers' beliefs and approaches to the cultural dimension of language teaching was undertaken with no preconceptions of exactly how teachers may conceptualize culture nor any belief that a particular approach may be more common than others. Despite attempting to maintain a "naiveté of assumption" (Phipps, 2013, p.20) regarding what I may discover, the research questions posed do somewhat imply that culture *is* something considered. Perhaps the most unexpected finding is that the cultural dimension is something that seemingly warrants little consideration for teachers despite stated beliefs regarding its importance. Though surprising, this view appears to be entirely consistent with the rest of the English teaching profession and surrounding industry as little consideration for the cultural dimension is a characteristic of published materials and teacher education. These and other findings will be discussed in the following sections and will be organized in relation to the research questions.

6.1 What do English language teachers at Japanese universities believe regarding culture as a concept?

In terms of the understanding of the word culture, teachers understood it in typical lay concept terms that are largely based on the traditional anthropological view developed in the early and mid-twentieth century. Such a view is consistent with the ingredients of culture as articulated by anthropologists such as Kluckhohn (1962) in that habit, behaviour, morals and attitudes are part of the "complex whole" that was described by Tylor (1903) over a century ago. This broad view of culture typically focused on cognitive and behavioural (Sarangi, 2009) dimensions of the concept of culture. Though a semiotic viewpoint of culture was somewhat implicit in David's discussion of culture, this dimension of culture was largely absent from the views of teachers expressed during the interview phase. This perhaps reflects the focus on cognitive and behaviour aspects in early definitions of culture (Boas, 1940; Kluckhohn, 1962; Tylor, 1903) and the influence these have had on the shaping the lay understanding of culture which we often observe in the media and everyday conversations.

Although all interviewees gave responses consistent with this broad concept, this does not indicate satisfaction with it. Though interviewees typically gave a similar answer when asked to describe their understanding of culture, survey results show that different areas within this large concept receive greater subscription than others, often in a manner that may appear contradictory. Teachers, for example tended to agree that people were members of many cultures and that cultural categories were based on ideology, but disagree with the statement that cultures are arbitrary categories and can be changed.

These results suggest that the concept of culture does seem to capture some recognizable or tangible phenomenon in the eyes of language teachers despite it often being seen by them as having elements that are neither accurate nor consistent. The benefit of culture as a convenient yet imprecise explanatory tool is seen in the value teachers assign the cultural dimension of language teaching despite inherent conceptual deficiencies. Teachers overwhelmingly hold the view that culture is a force that brings people together and connects them in some way, and that people are members of cultures other than their national one. This view often sits uncomfortably within the framework of the anthropologically inspired lay concept of culture. As will be discussed later, such a view has implications for working in an educational context which is arguably influenced by a *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1) view that focuses on cultural groups at a national level.

Beyond offering what one may identify as the common lay understanding of culture and varying degrees of discomfort with it, beliefs relating to culture that included a greater focus on language use, fluidity, and the construction of meaning between participants (Canagarajah, 2013; Dervin, 2010; Geertz, 1976; Holliday, 1994; Street, 1993) were not forthcoming from teachers. This is the case even though teachers were made aware by the survey cover letter and pre-interview discussion that the theme of research was culture and language teaching.

Traditional lay definitions of culture may be offered due to a paucity of knowledge concerning the development of the concept or competing viewpoints on it. Though teachers may disagree with it, they often lack anything in their conceptual tool kit to replace it with and, as such, it is a term and concept of convenience. For this reason, teachers' concepts of culture may often seem contradictory. As will be discussed, the

evidence points to this being a result of a lack of education and training regarding the concept of culture and the cultural dimension of language teaching, something that will be a major theme of this discussion.

6.2 Is it possible to identify and measure an essentialism construct in teachers' attitudes to culture?

The results indicate that the degree of ECC (Essentialism in the Concept of Culture) as described in the literature (Holliday, 2011a; No et al., 2008; Phillips, 2010; Rhodes et al., 2012) can be identified. Though statistical significance was achieved (Section 4.3), the results were less robust than those of No et al. (2008). The items that contributed to the ECC scale were variations of those used by No et al., but also included items that reflected the scope of the concept of culture. As culture is a concept, one may argue, of greater abstraction than race and covers more conceptual ground, the lower statistical significance of ECC results compared to those of race (No et al., 2008) is understandable.

Though there is a certain inescapable irony in discussing the level of essentialism held by a group, when we look at the distribution of scores on the scale we can see that a strongly essentialized view of culture (Figure 6) is uncommon among university language teachers in Japan. As essentialism within social groupings is almost universally understood in the literature as a negative force (Section 3.5), the results suggest that the concerns of Holliday (2011) regarding the spread of essentialism may be overstated. Indeed, all interviewees offered some level of hedging when discussing culture and cultural groups and acknowledged the presence of diversity, albeit to quite different degrees. As one may expect, this hedging was frequently employed by David and Brian, who were positioned lower on the ECC continuum, and less so by Alan and Chito, who were positioned higher on the continuum. As generic language has been identified as contributing towards essentialism (Rhodes et al., 2012), the general tendency to avoid it can be seen as movement away from essentialist understandings.

Though Alan and Chito were towards the higher end of the essentialism scale, their positions were well below the maximum possible and their score of 30 could be identified as representing neo-essentialism: the incomplete rejection of essentialism (Holliday, 2011). This finding is consistent with the view of Milton Bennett (1993) that ethnocentrism is the default position for most people. Despite the nature of their profession, it is possible that language teachers are no different, especially as there is

clearly an absence of awareness raising concerning culture in the educational and training backgrounds of teachers (Section 6.6).

Neo-essentialism would seem to accurately describe the interview discussions and use of culture in class by both Alan and Chito yet it was revealed in different ways. The presence of neo-essentialism for Chito was discovered in his discussions of how he uses cultural labels and how he understands different groups. While one may postulate that this level of reflection would lead to a more non-essentialised view, this was not the case as reflection simply resulted in an awareness that he was engaging in stereotyping and not in any desire to reduce such practice or belief. For Alan, ECC found on the survey was reflected in his discussions of groups, presentation of groups, interactions with other groups and liberal use of generic language.

Though the essentialism scale and results may point to a conclusion that would be welcome to scholars (Section 1.2.5), an area of continued concern should be that the rejection of essentialism does not mean subscription to a particular non-essentialized view, such as a notion of critical cosmopolitanism (Canagarajah, 2013; Holliday, 2011) or, indeed, a clearer understanding or awareness of culture. Saying something does not sound right, or feels wrong is not the same as knowing exactly what is wrong and what to do instead. As a consequence, it is quite possible for respondents to offer answers to items that one may identify as being contradictory. One may believe, for example, that diversity is the norm, but also hold a belief that national borders accurately represent cultural borders.

It is important to note that the ECC scale cannot offer any explanation for any contradictions nor provide reasons for subscription to, or rejection of, essentialism. What the ECC scale can do is give an overall reflection of a person's subscription to the level of essentialism within the concept of culture. Additionally, examination of individual items allows one to view areas of conflict or contrasting views because, as both interviews and the literature (Basturkmen, 2012) show, it is quite possible that multiple viewpoints regarding culture can exist within one person. The scale offers the ability to identify the strength of subscription to a fully essentialized view of culture as well as specific issues within it. Though the scale may be refined in this regard, the interview data supported the survey data suggesting that it was successful in identifying ECC and can be employed by others in future.

More practically, the scale has the potential to serve as a needs analysis tool for educators, particularly teacher trainers and intercultural trainers, through which they can gain insights into the views held by their students prior to training. It also has the potential to act as a means by which to measure the outcome of such education that attempts to create a more fluid and less reified understanding of culture.

6.3 If it is possible to identify an essentialism construct, what relationship does it have with their reported teaching practices?

Although cultural information can be transmitted or drawn from the appearance of teachers, the arrangement of the classroom and the structure of the class, ECC is observable mostly through teacher presentations of cultural groupings, talk about themselves as a member of a group, talk about others as members of groups, and through discussion with students about groupings and the level of cohesion and shared traits within and between groups. Though all aspects of classes were recorded, these particular elements were not always visible and depended on the teaching style and content of the class.

The classes where these ECC signifiers were most salient were those of Alan and David. In their classes, there was a clear relationship between ECC and their teaching despite the two teachers being at opposite ends of the ECC scale. Discussions of people and groups were a feature of their classes yet they were manifest in ways that were consistent with their level of satisfaction with the default lay concept of culture. Alan occupied a position of cultural authority with all discussion and imagery framed in national groupings and presented through generic language. The objective nature in which he presented cultural images reflects both his position on the ECC scale and the view of culture that underpins the largely cross-cultural approach (Allen & Vallette, 1977) which he employed. The focus on 'Knowing About' a culture (Moran, 2001) demonstrates his belief in the truth of his presentations and projects the same to students.

Alan's contrastive approach was opposite to the more critical multi-cultural approach (Section 1.4.3) of David who was careful not to suggest that certain behaviours or beliefs were a result of culture, and thereby highlighted uncertainty of culture as a descriptive tool. Rather than position himself as a source of cultural truth or knowledge, David adopted the role of informant providing what was framed as a perspective that was his alone and inviting students to give their views on it. Though it is quite possible that

students will place great stock in the individual opinion of a teacher and possibly extrapolate it to a wider group, David's style of questioning and presenting information as his opinion that is subjective mitigated the possibility of students doing so.

Examples of David, Eric and Alan tend to be similar to those presented in recent literature, in that there was some interaction between teacher and students regarding groups of people identified as cultural Others and which could represent the negotiation of meaning (Kohler, 2016), or that certain class materials were highlighted (or not highlighted) as being cultural markers in some form (Wenniger & Kiss, 2015). However, such observations were rare and the classes of Brian and Chito in particular contained none of these mediations or explicit attention focusing elements. If one were to attempt to culturally analyse their classes through means employed by Kohler or Wenniger and Kiss, one would have no data to analyse. Issues such as group practices, behaviours, values, and institutions were not raised by teacher nor students. Additionally, although Brian and Chito used a textbook to a greater extent than David and Alan, they were not texts with explicit cultural points or stereotypical national imagery in the same way as those in Wenniger and Kiss' investigation. Though classes cannot be culturally bare as teaching is an interactive human activity, the results support the view that rather than engaging in discussion and mediation of cultural issues, teachers stick to a more traditional language class focusing on fluency development and reading comprehension activities (Raluca, 2011).

These findings indicate that the level of ECC is not a significant factor influencing whether or not the cultural element of class is something teachers consciously plan or engage in in their teaching. A single observation for each teacher will only provide a snapshot of their teaching and not a comprehensive view. The question also arises as to whether it is possible to view ECC in someone's classroom behaviour. The work of Kohler (2015) and Rhodes (2012) (Section 1.2.9) would suggest that developing an understanding of someone's view point on culture can be achieved. Although one may point to the absence of repeat observations, the lack of relationship between ECC and the cultural dimension of language teaching in terms of conscious planning is supported by interview and survey data. Interviewees neglected to identify the importance of culture to language teaching beyond simple affirmative aspects consistent with those presented in Section 2.4.3. The lack of a relationship may be, once again, a consequence of an absence of cultural considerations in teacher development, education and training programmes: something clearly flagged up by survey data as well as interviews.

The highlighting of affirmative aspects likely means that, as explicitly mentioned by David, the cultural dimension is considered in an incidental fashion as it comes up in classes. It is in this real-time form rather than pre-class planning that a relationship between ECC and teaching emerges. Whether or not teachers' consciously employ culture in their classes may be determined by other factors such as education, as will be discussed later (Section 6.5). However, should teachers actively engage in some form of cultural mediation, cultural asides, or discussions of groups, a teacher's ECC will influence how these are manifest. Such class discussion and responses to student queries cannot be planned and, though teachers are not compelled to give answers that match their true beliefs, one can consider them to be indicative of the views teachers hold given their spontaneous and real-time nature. Examples from Alan and David clearly show a great difference in the way culture is negotiated and discussed – ways that are consistent with their ECC scores and discussions of culture in their interviews. This offers additional importance to the ECC scale.

6.4 How did they arrive at this concept of culture?

The literature often suggests that international experience and a bilingual or multilingual background means that an individual is on an inevitable path towards a more fluid, less essentialized and empathetic view of culture and the cultural Other (Kanno, 2011; Kohler, 2015). However, very little in the data offers support for this. David, whose ECC score was lowest among the interviewees can be said to have had the least international experience and also considers himself to be largely monolingual. On the other hand, Chito, fully bilingual with extensive international experience overseas, returned a much higher ECC score. The same can be said for Alan who is a member of a multi-national family and, to a lesser extent, for Eric who has a multilingual background and was raised in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood.

All interviewees and, one would assume, all respondents have extensive international experience by virtue of being a university level teacher of a foreign language and, for most respondents, by being a foreign national living and working in Japan. It is quite possible that the presence of many teachers with lower levels of ECC is a result of this, but without replication studies in different contexts, this cannot be maintained with any great certainty. What can be said is that international experience and exposure does not put one on a direct path to lower ECC or a more developed notion of culture as many

teachers returned high ECC scores and several interviewees displayed subscription to certain essentialized views. This is similar to the finding of Bradley (2013) that subscription to the tenets of Nihonjinron did not negatively correlate with a progressive and non-ethnocentric international posture as outlined and suggested by Yashima (2002). Exposure to and interest in different groups does not inevitably lead to what could be considered a sophisticated (Section 1.4.4) understanding of social groupings. If we look at the examples of Alan and David, we see that international experience has the ability to both validate and challenge one's own previously formed concept of culture whatever it may be.

As all teachers have international experience with no evidence to suggest having more is better, conceptual differences regarding culture would appear to have a different cause. Interview data suggests that various interests and experiences result in differences in ideas regarding culture. For Alan, a preference for reading cross-cultural contrast books seemed to have fossilized a belief in national units that form a basis for his view of culture. Likewise, differences in David's family around Essex and London made him question the validity of such national units.

Though experiences that influence teachers' concepts of culture may come from various sources, ECC results show that education with a cultural component was the most effective variable in reducing ECC (Section 4.5.2). As such, education on the cultural dimension in some form is the experience that moulds a person's concept of culture into something more in step with the recent literature (Canagarajah, 2013; Dervin, 2010; Holliday, 2011). It is also possible to make the claim from the data that previous university education has little bearing on the concepts of culture held by teachers. This is not a contradiction to the previous statement nor is it due to ineffectual education or poor delivery, although the concept of culture underpinning a great deal of available courses and programmes is questionable (Hua et al. 2017) (Section 2.4.2). The lack of impact is largely due to the absence of culture related study in the educational backgrounds of teachers, including teachers with master degrees in TESOL or Applied Linguistics. Two thirds of respondents held a master degree, but only one third reported having had cultural instruction of any kind. When such instruction is present in a teacher's background, however, the evidence suggests that it does have a greater impact on teachers' views and understandings of culture than other variables.

With two-thirds of teachers lacking any kind of instruction or training regarding culture,

other experiences would seem to take precedent. The survey (Section 4.1) discovered that a large majority of language teachers in Japanese universities are what we could call “occupational migrants” (Appendix 18). I use this term because many teachers, particularly foreign teachers, came to language teaching after having started careers or jobs in other fields and professions, and after having studied largely unrelated subjects at university. The results suggest what is known by many within Japan; many foreign language teachers began work in private language schools that require only a bachelor degree in any field, retrained in TESOL while working, and began the career development that took them to their current positions in universities around Japan.

English teachers at universities in Japan bring with them extremely diverse educational and occupational backgrounds. With an absence of education on the cultural dimension, these would appear to have as much, if not more influence on their concept of culture than international experience which is often cited in the literature. Culture is a concept of great relevance to language teaching (Section 1.4), but it is also a concept with relevance beyond the profession. As a term and concept that is often used in the media and daily conversations, teachers’ extensive previous experiences outside of the field have the power to shape the concept of culture in different ways – ways that may or may not align with what is seen as desirable by recent literature, such as by proponents of a transcultural approach (Section 1.4.4).

Shaping beliefs to align with such an approach is not a matter of more teachers having greater education in TESOL or Applied Linguistics, it is about courses in these disciplines containing and offering training regarding the cultural dimension. It is this which the data suggests has the power to transform culture concepts in ways that may be considered to be desirable. In the absence of education on the concept of culture, the idiosyncrasies of teachers take over and culture is understood according to experiences that are particularly salient for them, but which may differ greatly from person to person.

6.5 What do teachers believe regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching? Is it possible to measure the level of importance to which teachers view culture as part of language teaching?

Culture (presented to teachers without definition) is overwhelmingly reported by teachers in the survey as being an important part of language teaching. If we examine individual items, we see that culture is seen as having both relevance to the subject

matter of classes and to the activity of teaching. Items connecting culture to language and communication received strong endorsement, as did items that connect culture to increased student motivation and a willingness to communicate. The survey results also indicate that culture is something which a sizeable majority of teachers consciously consider in their classes and which they see as being part of their teaching on a regular basis. Additionally, from the survey we see that, as a group, teachers generally agree that learning a foreign language is about dealing with groups, discussion of groups should be respectful, and cultural information or discussions usually make stimulating and motivating content in class. These views are supported by a great deal of literature (Corbett, 2010; De Capua & Wintergerst, 2004; Guest, 2002; Simpson, 1997) and manifest in the factor of ICI (InterCultural Inclination). As discussed earlier (Section 1.4.5) ICI attempts to capture endorsement to the fundamental principles of the cultural dimension of language teaching as highlighted in the vast majority of literature, namely the recognition of the influence of culture in the ways language is used and understood, the need to develop empathy and reflection, the desire to understand people and groups in non-essentialized ways, and the view that these are all roles / goals of the language teacher. ICI returned strong statistical confirmation and the general high scores of teachers suggest that English teachers at Japanese universities strongly endorse these fundamental principles and targets. Rather than viewing culture as “the marginalized sister of language” (Hennebry, 2014, p.135), teachers clearly seem to acknowledge its importance to the profession.

However, when considering data from interviews and observations, the strong endorsement for culture found in the survey is much less confident and not as forthcoming. The connection between culture, language and communication was not articulated by teachers during interview despite the overwhelming endorsement in the survey. The primary importance of the cultural dimension identified by interviewees was that of developing students’ understanding of culture and cultural groupings. Support for this was also evident in the survey, but it was less substantial than other aspects.

The reason for this discrepancy is likely due to the conditions surrounding the survey and interviews. The surveys invite teachers to state their beliefs largely absent of contextual issues. Although teachers will likely always have their classrooms in mind to some degree when thinking about teaching, the survey items allow a certain level of idealism to be present. When asking similar questions to teachers face to face in their

place of work and after a class observation, the realities of their place of teaching are very much at the forefront. Rather than adhering to the beliefs stated on the survey, the situational constraints (which will be discussed in detail in the following section) prevent teachers from putting their beliefs into action in the classroom (Basturkmen, 2012).

Of course, the decreased enthusiasm for the cultural dimension expressed in the interviews and the lack of an observable cultural component in class observations may not be solely down to immediate contextual constraints. Teachers largely demonstrated a lack of awareness of the cultural dimension of language teaching beyond anything other than what might be identified as a cross-cultural approach. A knowledge gap existed which, perhaps, emphasises the “inclination” of ICI as when it comes to putting beliefs into practice, the consensus evaporates and teachers’ adopt something which one may constitute something of a non-approach (Section 1.4.5) in that no conscious choice is made regarding the cultural dimension. Basturkmen (2012, p.286) highlights that “beliefs [are] reflected in the practices of more experienced teachers” and so suggests that younger teachers’ (of whom 4 of the 5 interviewees can be so called) practice is likely to be more at odds with their beliefs. However, a lack of education rather than experience would appear to be the issue as teachers of all ages were found to have high ICI, but also lack any training regarding culture. Development of the cultural dimension requires more than classroom experience and experimenting; it requires awareness of entirely different conceptualizations.

Ultimately, whether from a lack of experience or, more likely, from a lack of education and awareness, the beliefs stated in the survey were less pronounced in the interview and observation. Though teachers may often downgrade their beliefs to “this is just what I think” (Hanks, 2017), it is likely that teachers attempt to maintain consistency between beliefs and practice as suggested in cognitive dissonance theory. Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that people will take steps to avoid any conflict between beliefs and behaviours as dissonance between the two leads to feelings of discomfort (Festinger, 1957). Whereas the survey did not allow for the uncovering of any dissonance between belief and practice, the interview and observation phase did make it possible. As such, to reduce the dissonance between stated beliefs and practice, it is possible that teachers under-reported their belief in the importance of the cultural dimension of language teaching.

Despite differences beliefs reported in the survey and interviews, there were areas of consistency. Like a great deal of recent literature (Baker, 2012a; Canagarajah, 1999, 2003; Holliday, 2006, 2013b; Houghton & Rivers, 2013), teachers overwhelmingly reject the idea that native-speaker cultures should be the source / target of the cultural dimension of language teaching. Despite this, several aspects of language teaching appear to facilitate the opposite in being the case. The cultural foci of textbooks (Section 2.4.1), for example, certainly does not aid rejection of native-speakerism as cultural imagery, norms, groups presented were representative of what might be termed “native-speaker” groups or featured discussions of the characteristics of Japanese society which are most salient when contrasted with native-speaker groups. As teachers had expressed a belief that students’ concepts of culture are often consistent with a concept influenced by *Nihonjinron*, it is likely that the minimal attention paid to the textbook in class was a result of a dissatisfaction with the cultural content within.

With a lack of sophisticated material support or training regarding the cultural dimension, teachers typically fall back to a position best illustrated by the phrase “in my town / area / country”. The (cultural) group size and the level of hedging used can be predicted by a teachers ECC score to some degree, but the result is the same in that it continues to focus students’ attention on native-speaker groupings. Moving away from such a classroom approach would require training and greater awareness of the concept of culture, but it is also incredibly difficult as students will be naturally curious about their teacher. As much as teachers may disagree with native-speakerism, without training and greater awareness, they cannot escape how students and institutions may perceive them.

Teachers do not typically hire themselves as native-speakers or non-native speakers nor do they produce the textbooks for the most part; the problem of native-speakerism is a larger issue within the educational context. It is an issue where the beliefs of many teachers seem to be greatly at odds with those implicit in the context in which they teach. It is also an institutional level contextual issue of which teachers seem to be unaware or unwilling to discuss.

Ultimately, the issue of native-speakerism is one of the few areas where views of teachers overlap with the literature, particularly recent literature that encourages increased criticality (Holliday, 2013), a transnational view (Canagarajah, 2013) and a more fluid understanding (Dervin, 2010). One may even argue that the rejection of

native-speakerism occurs because the concept is at odds with commonly held notions of identity and cultural pluralism that are popular in wider society, particularly those of the home country of foreign teachers.

With the exception of this, teachers' understanding of the cultural dimension is often at odds with the literature or largely unaware of it. This is particularly the case for areas such as assessment (Section 2.4.3), an area which identifies clear outcomes for the cultural dimension in both affective and communicative terms, as well as areas that connect culture and language (Sections 1.3 & 1.4). If teachers have a stated interest in the cultural dimension and a preference for linguistic elements (Galeano & Torres, 2014; Hennebry, 2014), one may expect teachers to be particularly interested in areas such as metaphor, rhetoric, and pragmatics (Section 1.3) as areas where culture and linguistic elements mix and which can be taught in quite traditional ways. However, these were never raised by teachers in interviews as important aspects of the cultural dimension nor were they elements of classroom instruction in observations. The one exception to this was Brian whose exaggerated flustered expressions in response to lengthy periods of student thinking time during conversation attempted to demonstrate that such periods of silence were to be avoided as they could be viewed negatively by future foreign conversation partners. Ultimately, the results echo the findings of Lessard-Clouston (1996) and Raluca (2011) who found that teachers highlight the cultural dimension as important yet avoid it in actual teaching situations.

6.6 What problems do teachers identify regarding teaching culture in the Japanese university context?

Whereas various problems were identified in the survey, the top five can be condensed into three areas which can be described as representing three forms of deficiency: context deficiency, materials deficiency and student deficiency.

The fourth and fifth most frequently identified problems fall under the banner of context deficiency. Although Kramsch (2009, p.210) is correct that “to view the foreign language classroom as a deficient, less than authentic instructional setting is to ignore its potential as a symbolic multilingual environment where realities can be explored and reflected upon”, the contextual deficiencies actually identified by teachers were a lack of time and institutional requirements. Though a lack of time is often identified as a constraint by teachers (Hanks, 2017) even though it alone may not necessarily constrain

them, if it is coupled with institutional requirements to teach certain things as it is in this instance, the problem for teachers wishing to explore the cultural dimension in their classes is compounded.

The problem identified as the second biggest on the survey was that of pre-determined class materials. This was evident in the observed classes also. Of the five classes, four used a textbook that was either predetermined by the course or selected by the teacher from an approved textbook list. The exception was Eric, who had complete freedom regarding textbook and assessment and chose not to use one in favour of students bringing in their own texts. In all observed classes, the textbook was seldom, if ever, used. Instances of what might be considered cultural discussion came from the teacher and not from the textbook. Despite rare usage of the textbook, course assessment was based on the language / skill of the textbook. Rather than being materials for use in class, textbooks were simply used as a syllabus, a point consistent with the literature that suggests textbooks are used as a stimulus (Graves, 2000) or “proposal for action” (Harmer, 2001, p.8). Despite teacher dissatisfaction with textbooks, the explicit inclusion of the cultural dimension of language teaching into the core objectives of a textbook may have a positive washback effect on teachers’ classes and require that teachers consciously consider the cultural dimension of their classes. Though teachers have been portrayed as largely ignoring recent research (Medgyes, 2017), making the cultural dimension a key part of texts may encourage teachers to seek out better ways to develop the cultural dimension of their classes by investigating research or participating in culture related professional development.

The top two problems identified by teachers both represent a perceived deficiency within their students. The second most frequent problem identified was the insufficient linguistic ability of students. Though Tomlinson (2001) argues that one should not underestimate learners’ linguistic and intellectual abilities, the belief that students do not possess the prerequisite ability to engage with the cultural dimension is common. Even if students do indeed lack linguistic ability, this does not mean low intellectual capacity. As shown in the work of Tudor (2001) and Weninger and Kiss (2013) among others, the cultural dimension does not solely rely on linguistic signposting as students can draw conclusions and information in different ways. The belief that the cultural dimension requires language ability above a certain threshold also suggests a view that such instruction must occur explicitly and verbally from the teacher. The work of Baker (2012a, 2012b), Corbett (2010), Galloway and Rose (2018) and Guest (2002) all

demonstrate that students can engage in activities relating to cultural reflection, investigation and noticing that raise cultural awareness while not requiring high levels of language ability. Teachers highlighting a lack of language ability as something that adversely impacts the cultural dimension of classes demonstrates a lack of awareness of such work, which in turn once again is suggestive of the lack of cultural considerations in teacher training and education.

The most frequently highlighted problem was a deficiency of a different kind: students' beliefs regarding their own culture. Interview data and survey comments expanding on the selection of this item highlight the belief among many teachers that common among the university student population is a simplistic view of culture based on homogeneous nation units. This view, one may argue, is also the one that dominates in wider Japanese society so expecting students to have a more developed concept is an unreasonable expectation. However, what stands out is that teachers view this as being a deep rooted phenomenon that is more deeply essentialized than it is, perhaps, in other contexts.

As Byram (1991) suggests, students are not *tabula rasa* as they bring with them certain ideas, beliefs and assumptions. It is quite possible that the ideas, beliefs and assumptions brought by students have been influenced by the exceptionally prolific discourse of *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1) that looks to define Japaneseness, identify its uniqueness, separate it on a fundamental level from other national cultures and which offers a superficial understanding of internationalization (Section 2.2). This is something teachers allude to in their discussions through description though not specifically by name. The large number of locally produced textbooks seeking to explain Japanese culture in English or contrast it with other countries (usually the U.S.) is an educational example of this (Section 2.4.1) and, like *Nihonjinron*, can be seen as both a cause and consequence. Teachers seem to be in a curious position of not wishing to essentialize Japanese students by assigning the characteristic of having a homogeneous view of culture, but hold the view that such an understanding is both common and stubbornly entrenched among their students.

Deficiency either linguistically or conceptually on the part of students should not prevent teachers from developing the cultural dimension of their classes. If students did not lack ability, knowledge, conceptual sophistication or awareness of some kind then there would be little need for them to attend courses and classes. Recent work highlights methods such as investigations of different groups within the home country, or portfolio

projects as a means of developing the cultural dimension of classes without requiring excessive linguistic knowledge on the part of students (Baker, 2012a; Feryok & Oranje, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2018). It is clear that awareness of such means, like most aspects of the cultural dimension of language teaching, is unknown to teachers.

6.7 Is the culture they teach consistent with their own concept of culture and its place in language teaching? If not, why is there an inconsistency?

This question has been answered in part by previous sections in that the concept of culture held by teachers and the views concerning the place of culture in language teaching do not align. Teachers strongly support the inclusion of a cultural dimension to language teaching, but when it comes to concrete examples and actual teaching situations, this strong belief is not represented. This was the case with class observations and interview data as only Alan considered culture in class planning and explicit class outcomes. This is consistent with the literature that suggests cultural considerations are marginalized, at best, in the planning of teachers (Raluca, 2011; Sercu, 1998). However, work examining teacher beliefs and incidental aspects of teacher practice are seldom tackled (Basturkmen, 2012) despite recent work (such as Kohler, 2015) suggesting that it may be a conduit through which to observe beliefs at a more fundamental level.

It is in this particular area that the data presented in this thesis can further the knowledge of the field. The separation between beliefs and planned practice has been documented previously, but the current data suggests that teachers' ECC as reported via survey and interpreted from interviews is consistent with the way culture and cultural groups are conceptualized in incidental aspects of their classroom teaching. Though the teachers' ECC may be represented in the way they discuss culture and groups in unplanned classroom interaction, it remains the case that teachers generally do not often seek to engage in such discussion or even actively avoid such instances.

The reason for the inconsistency between beliefs in the importance of culture and teaching practice are many. It is possible that the perceived conceptual gulf between teachers' and students' views of culture, or the cultural distance between students C1 and the C2, pushes teachers toward consciously presenting more homogenous nation based views of culture in class. As much of language teaching is based on small incremental steps from students' current level, teachers operating on the same principle with culture may mean that the point of departure for any cultural development will be from a Nihonjinron-laden

perspective.

Teaching culture along intercultural lines would seem best facilitated by teachers possessing a cosmopolitan view. However, this is a view that connects to self, Other and the world around them; it is ideological and not isolated to teaching or language use. Unlike attitudes and beliefs concerning grammar, vocabulary and components of language use, culture exists on a much more personal level. It is a concept that is used widely in society (Section 2.1) so any understanding of it likely did not begin when teachers entered the profession, but developed throughout their lives and through their experiences.

The experience that displayed the biggest impact on teachers' concept of culture is education about culture in some form. Yet, as has been mentioned repeatedly through earlier sections, education connected to culture is absent more than it is present in both teachers' educational backgrounds and the teacher development courses offered by universities and other institutions (Section 2.4.2). There appears to be an underlying assumption in the profession that if one knows and can teach the language, one can teach culture. However, the data generated suggests that assumptions that teachers have the necessary knowledge, ability and skills are deeply misguided. Knowing the language, living overseas, being bi/multilingual or having "cultural" experiences is insufficient and has been found to not develop a greater sophistication of the concept nor to incorporate it more in classes (Galeano & Torres, 2014). Rather than inevitably leading to some form of cultural enlightenment, these have the potential to lead people to different conclusions and conceptualizations of culture. Some of these, such as with Alan, may even represent views that many academics might view as counterproductive (Baker, 2012b; Holliday, 2011; Kumaravadivelu, 2008).

Although teachers may agree with some general principles of the cultural dimension of language teaching (Section 1.4), there was a profound lack of awareness of the means to put them into practice and of the knowledge that would allow them to do so. None of the interviewees were aware of the field of intercultural language teaching nor could they articulate different understandings of culture beyond the default lay understandings. Perhaps most interestingly, the connection between language, communication and culture (Section 1.3) that teachers strongly identified with on the survey was never a feature of their discussions of culture and teaching, and was not a feature of their classes in anyway. Teachers clearly had not considered the cultural dimension of language teaching and so

what was observed could be described as a non-approach to culture or an incidental approach (Lazaraton, 2003): an approach through which, as discussed earlier, the ECC is more likely to be represented due to its unplanned nature.

The problem of a lack of education / training on culture among teachers would seem to represent a much larger issue in the field. Practicing teachers have been identified as typically being unwilling to seek out new research in journals (Medgyes, 2017) meaning that guidance must come from some other source. It is reasonable to assume that this guidance should come from formal education and training courses, yet, with the exception of Alan, all interviewees and the majority of survey respondents already hold a master degree in TESOL of applied linguistics. Teachers' lack of awareness added to the fact that cultural content in masters level courses is often absent (Section 2.4.2) or superficial (Hua et al., 2017) points to a clear underrepresentation of the importance of the cultural dimension of language teaching that is given in the literature (Section 1.4). Given that education / training on culture was found to be the variable that resulted in the lowest ECC scores, focusing teachers' attention on culture through training / education would appear to be of great importance and represents a failing in the profession. With a lack of guidance teachers to fall back on things they have noticed or experienced.

This is problematic because the cultural dimension of language learning is perhaps one area where teachers need to be involved the most. Leaving students to experiment with language, speak amongst themselves may be good for the development of fluency and communication skills, but for raising awareness of how students 'use' culture in their assessments and interactions with others requires some input and mediation from the teacher. But how can teachers mediate cultural representations and concepts if they are not aware of them themselves. Of course, some are and experience may have led them to such an understanding or they may have sought to learn more about the field themselves, but, if the profession understands culture to be such an important dimension, should things be left to chance as they are? The results of this investigation would suggest that they should not be.

Chapter 7

Final Thoughts

7.1 Implications

The ECC and ICI scales point to a broad range of views on culture and its role in language teaching, but also offer an opportunity to develop such views in a consistent way that is generally in step with some common beliefs within the literature such as that essentialized views can be damaging to interactions with people of other groups (see Section 3). The scales can be used by teacher trainers, intercultural trainers and course coordinators as part of pre-service or in-service training. By using the scales prior to training, trainers can get an indication of both a teacher's beliefs in the importance of culture and the form their concept of culture may take. Such knowledge can aid any needs analysis the trainer may carry out and allow them to more effectively plan their training and materials. Additionally, deployment of the scales following training, particularly that for ECC, can provide valuable feedback on the effectiveness of any training.

This implication is particularly important as the results suggest that teacher training and education is severely lacking regarding the cultural dimension. Although teachers were found to do their own thing when it came to culture, the evidence suggests that, when culture 'comes up' a teachers ECC score does impact how it is manifest. Therefore, reducing ECC would have positive consequences and the ECC scale can offer an indication if such levels change. The scale provides a way by which to gauge outcomes in this regard.

Beyond this, the scales represent new means by which to gain an attitudinal overview for a larger teacher population, such as one that might be needed when considering institutional change or wide scale development. On a personal level, the scales can also be used by individual teachers as a form of self-analysis and means of better understanding their own position on what represent extremely abstract concepts.

Though the scale represents a fixed instrument despite culture being a nebulous concept with different elements which, as we have seen, people can subscribe to at different levels,

the scale provides the ability to give a snapshot of the level of essentialism in a person's view and understanding of culture at that instant. It does not seek to define or constrain culture, nor does it assume that a person's beliefs are static nor that their behaviours are fixed. Indeed, the scale is founded upon the notion that people's views change and the scale is there to attempt to provide a means by which to see how fixed or fluid a person's view is, and can become. It is a means to view change. One may even call it a means to view labels rather than a means to label views.

Though constraints may exist that limit the potential of the cultural dimension of language teaching, reducing essentialism is of great importance. Discussions involving culture will inevitably arise and teachers with a deep understanding of the concept and equipped with non-generic language have the potential to develop students' awareness in just these brief moments; outcomes that can be gauged by the ECC scale.

As essentialism represents a fundamental belief regarding culture, it is perhaps this that should, again, be the target of classroom teaching as teachers typically identify student cultural views as superficial and often influenced by ideas that frequently arise within the discussion of Japaneseness represented by *Nihonjinron* (Section 2.1). Whether or not this is the case, some form of instruction or mediation that targets views on culture at a fundamental level, such as with the idea of proteophilic competence (Dervin, 2006) (Section 1.4.5), would seem to be required. Rather than teachers discussing different areas of Japanese society to encourage students to transfer the complexity of their own society onto others (Baker, 2012), explicit questioning of opinions, underlying concepts, and use of non-generic language by a teacher aware of the competing views in the field has the potential to be more suitable and effective.

Of course, prior to teachers engaging in such activity, they need to be conscious of these issues and equipped with an awareness of how to proceed. A major implication of this study was that this awareness was largely absent from teachers, but also that it was absent from teacher training. This can, perhaps, be considered to be a profound weakness within the profession given the importance placed upon the cultural dimension in the literature. It is certainly one that needs to be addressed before the cultural dimension represented by practice can become conceptual consistent with the cultural dimension of research and the literature.

7.2 Limitations

The mixed methods study investigated beliefs and practice. Belief, as has been discussed in earlier sections, is fluid, multifaceted and can often contain contradictory elements. Examining belief by qualitative means can open up the researcher to imposing his/her own beliefs on the data as information is interpreted through the lens of the researcher. This too is the case for quantitative study which also carries the burden of trying to represent belief through numbers and statistical means. This is particularly the case for the quantitative phase where a Likert scale and closed questions were used to represent the strength of essentialism in a person's concept of culture. Though one may question an attempt to capture belief by quantitative means, by relating qualitative findings to quantitative data, discrepancies can be uncovered, challenged or found. As the goal was to create scales for ECC and ICI, quantitative means were necessary though it is clear that numbers and scales cannot effectively represent or capture the complexity of human belief systems.

Perhaps the most salient example of the problems of capturing belief via quantitative means can be seen in the example of Brian. Brian's survey answers and interview comments may suggest a possible limitation with the survey. As Brian indicates that he has two understandings of culture, a general one and a more professionally focused one. When answering the survey, he answered the items with the general broad understanding in mind, something which he values little, particularly with regard to his profession. This can be seen in his answers to survey items which identify little need or interest in the cultural dimension of language teaching. However, his interview answers identified a strong belief in the need to make students aware of culture in the form of pragmatic norms and preferences. This seems to indicate that when asked about the cultural dimension of language teaching, Brian takes the view that I am referring to the general view. This suggests that Brian sees this as the default meaning of culture for the field. The fact that he separates his own view from that, but yet answers according to the general understanding, would tend to support this finding.

The problem this exposes in the survey is that, as items regarding culture as a concept and culture as part of language teaching are mixed and spread throughout Section C, respondents may hold more than one concept, depending on the context, yet answer with only one of them. Additionally, it exposes my own thinking. By arranging the survey in such a way, I am expecting respondents to have a single concept which is applied

consistently to all situations.

However, an alternative explanation may be that the fault doesn't lie with the survey, but rather with the interview. Brian's often ambivalent attitude to culture may be accurately captured in the middling ECC score and several neutral responses. This may indeed represent Brian's non-interest in culture, paucity of thought regarding it, and a general lack of any strong opinion on it. When asked about it explicitly in the interview Brian may provide his answers, not out of conviction, but out of a need to provide an answer. Though his belief in the pragmatic aspects of culture seem to be consistent throughout the survey, interview and class observation, consideration of culture beyond this dimension appears to be something of little consequence or worthy of little thought for Brian. As such, a middle ECC score may indeed be accurate to some degree.

In terms of participant numbers, though the sample was large enough for statistical purposes, a larger number of questionnaire respondents and interviewees would add greater weight to the findings. Additionally, logistical issues resulted in only one class observation for each teacher. Repeat observations may have had the potential to better understand the cultural dimension of participants' classes. Doing so would also have brought the study in line with other recent investigations on the topic (Kohler, 2015; Weninger & Kiss, 2013) where multiple observations were made. Repeat observations would have shown how representative the observed classes were of the teacher's practice.

Recent research problematizes observations at a fundamental level suggesting that the classroom actions of teachers are a result of "the invisible dimension of teachers' mental lives that have emerged from teachers' diverse personal and language learning histories, language teacher experiences, and the specific contexts in which they do or learn to do their work" (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015, p.435). Though measures were taken to increase research validity (Section 3.3) and one should not assume that it is always possible to observe people's beliefs or that actions indicate belief, having repeat observations would have allowed for an increased possibility of identifying patterns that would enable this "invisible dimension" to be known to a greater degree. The limitations relating to a single observation holds true for the interview stage of data collection also. Though certain constraints did not make it feasible in this instance, having had repeat interviews, particularly before and after class observations, would also have allowed for greater integration of lines of investigation and provided a forum through which teachers could discuss their classroom actions.

Ultimately, all means of data collection and analysis is subject to limitations. By recognising this and using multiple means to assess beliefs, it is hoped that such inevitable limitations are kept to a minimum.

7.3 Areas for future research

Further testing, development and refinement of the scales, particularly ECC, should be an immediate concern for future research. The scales showed promise, but testing the scales with different teacher populations in various educational contexts both inside and outside of Japan would offer further support or identify areas for attention. Further testing may also allow for the identification of particular points on the continuum. Using the scales in conjunction with the development and implementation of a teacher training course would allow for both an assessment of the scales and their integration into a training programme.

One pressing concern that emerged and should be an area for future research is investigation into ways to develop an awareness among teachers of the differing concepts within culture and the cultural dimension of language teaching. Although there are studies that outline programmes for teachers in tertiary level schools that abide by a particular curriculum or ideological standpoint, such programmes may be unsuitable for the Japanese university context. Research into the success and applicability of such training programmes among teachers employed at Japanese universities would be welcome.

In terms of individual cultural views, research examining in greater depth the relationship between an individual's experiences and their concept of culture would be illuminating. As education was found to have a profound impact on concepts of culture despite being often absent among teachers, focusing on teacher training and concept development would be both illuminating and possibly provide a greater impetus for change within teacher education programs.

As intercultural is often understood in terms of international or inter-language interaction, previous research often points to a relationship between the international aspect or bi/multi lingual ability, and a person's understanding of culture (Kanno, 2011; Kohler, 2015). In the university EFL context, the vast majority of teachers have international experience and are typically bi/multilingual to some degree yet cultural views differ

greatly. The data presented here suggests that experience beyond this or before this plays a role in the formation of cultural beliefs and a focus on experience may yield rewarding findings.

As one final avenue of future research, further investigation of teacher training programs can help better understand the lack of inclusion of the cultural dimension of language teaching in such programs. Though this research can occur in many ways, interviews with programme leaders of master level TESOL and applied linguistics courses may allow for an in-depth understanding of whether certain barriers exist to greater inclusion of a well-developed concept of culture and the role it plays in language use and communication.

7.4 Conclusion

This investigation was undertaken to answer three main research questions concerned with the way teachers understand culture, the extent to which they view culture as an important part of language teaching, and reasons for any discrepancies between the two, should they exist. As little work has been done on the conceptualizations of culture among university English teachers, especially in Japan, research into these areas provided insights that both challenged and supported previous work. Research also identified several themes of relevance which are certainly of value and relevance to contexts beyond that of the Japanese university context.

Teachers understand culture in what may be considered to be a broad anthropological understanding of culture that is common in wider everyday society and can be called a lay or default concept of culture. The key differences between teachers existed in the level to which they understand the concept and the groupings to be real (essentialism). Essentialism in the concept of culture (ECC) was largely, if incompletely, rejected and culture in an undefined form was mostly welcomed by teachers as an important and necessary part of language teaching. This importance of culture in the mind of teachers is consistent with a great deal of literature that points to culture as the fifth skill in language teaching, among other things. However, if culture is the fifth skill in the eyes of teachers, it is one that is most certainly fifth in order of importance. Although teachers say they subscribe to the importance of culture, the reality is that it plays little conscious part in their teaching.

Examination of why this difference between belief and practice existed resulted in the

finding that a severe lack of awareness and training regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching exists among English teaching professionals at Japanese universities. Other contextual issues, such as native-speakerism and a preference for linguistic instruction, which are said to be common to the Japanese context, were present but not found to have a significant impact. Indeed, native-speakerism was overwhelmingly rejected by teachers. A lack of education concerning culture as part of language teaching was common in the backgrounds of teachers and accurately reflected the findings of a further small scale investigation into master degree courses offered by universities around the world.

The lack of education resulted in the dissatisfaction, which many teachers have with the common understandings of culture, never developing into an alternative or more developed concept. As such, when culture was an element of classroom practice, it was typically manifest in a way that was consistent with the teachers' level of essentialism in relation to a lay understanding of culture. The development of teachers' concept of culture requires training, institutional support, material support and the will of teachers to develop this area of their instruction. The situation regarding all of these was not found to be promising and the cultural dimension of language teaching requires significant attention to bring it up to the level often illustrated in the literature (see Section 1.4).

Despite uncovering multiple deficiencies concerning the cultural dimension within the profession of language teaching, I believe that I achieved my original goals. In addition to developing scales by which to assess beliefs related to essentialism (ECC) and the inclination toward intercultural education (ICI), I was able to provide new illumination on the situation at Japanese universities regarding the cultural dimension. Though this situation proved to be somewhat disheartening, there were areas for encouragement, such as the rejection of native-speakerism, a tendency to value the cultural dimension as part of the profession and a lack of subscription to essentialism in a strong form. The high ICI of teachers also reflects positively for the future if training can be implemented to turn interest into action.

Ultimately, issues such as a lack of education regarding the cultural dimension, the prevalence of neo-essentialism and the dominance of a lay understanding of culture, can be said to be ones that are not unique to teachers in the Japanese educational context, though contextual issues may point them in certain directions. They are often a result of forces within the profession as a whole or developed from a multitude of experiential

forces over a large amount of time. As such, the findings presented in this thesis are of relevance to all language teaching contexts.

On a personal level, undertaking this large scale project has helped me better understand my own position. My increased level of self-reflection helped me to be cognizant of assumptions I had previously been operating under, and is something that will be transferred to other areas of my professional life beyond this investigation. In short, I feel that the construction of this thesis has resulted in benefit for both the field as it identifies problems as well as possible ways to assess and address these, and benefit for myself as a researcher and professional teacher.

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Appendix

1. Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (Muller-Hartmann & Schoker-vo Ditfurth, 2004)

<p>Savoirs / Knowledge</p> <p>What? (explanation) not primarily knowledge about a specific culture but rather k. of how social groups and identities function (own and others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of social processes, + knowledge of illustrations of those processes and their products, k. about how other people see oneself as well as k. about other people, knowledge about self and other, of interaction (individual and societal) <input type="checkbox"/> comprises traditional <i>Landeskunde</i> knowledge (auto-stereotypes (+/- stereotypes a person has about his/her own culture), hetero-stereotypes (+/- stereotypes sb has about other cultures)] <input type="checkbox"/> knowledge about social interaction <p>How can it be developed in class? facts (film, texts, internet, authentic material), working with stereotypes in class, guest speakers ...</p>	<p>Savoir comprendre / skills of interpreting and relating</p> <p>What? (explanation) = ability to interpret a document/event from another culture, to explain and relate it to documents/events from one's own culture, learners relate oral and written texts to each other and try to interpret each in the light of the other, involves the skill of mediation</p> <p>How can it be developed in class? tasks that allow careful reading, analysis, interpretation of texts – in order to achieve a change of perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> creative tasks working with literary texts (writing new scenes, new endings), look at action in literary text from the point of view of minor characters, projects/simulations – learners experience a situation from different cultural point of view (how does the American school work – what is a typical day like at such a school), role plays / certain games
<p>Savoirs engagez / critical cultural awareness</p> <p>What? (explanation) ability to evaluate critically on basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, products in one's own culture / other cultures, countries, closely connected with cultural studies, dealing with speakers from another culture always involves the evaluation of a culture – this often leads to an exchange of stereotypes, aiming for a critical evaluation of another culture – development of all the other 4 levels / competences necessary, including a critical perspective on one's own culture</p> <p>How can it be developed in class? <input type="checkbox"/> critical comparison how Australian and German society deals with immigration</p>	<p>Savoir être / Attitudes (savoir être)</p> <p>What? (explanation) attitudes, values (one holds because of belonging to social groups / to a given society), attitudes of the Intercultural speaker and mediator, = foundation of ICC, curiosity, openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own, willingness to relativise one's own values, beliefs, behaviours, willingness not to assume own beliefs etc. are the only possible and correct ones, ability to 'decentre' – ability to see how own values, beliefs, behaviours might look from the perspective of an outsider who has a different set of values, beliefs, behaviours</p> <p>How can it be developed in class? using brainstorming, visual aids when working with texts to create curiosity and interest, using texts written by or about learners from other cultures telling about their lives, children's and young adult literature, authentic texts – brought by learners (songs, interviews), virtual and face-to-face encounter projects (e-mail, exchange) – getting-to-know phase important, cultural similarities in forefront</p>
<p>Savoirs / Knowledge</p> <p>What? (explanation) not primarily knowledge about a specific culture but rather k. of how social groups and identities function (own and others)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of social processes, + knowledge of illustrations of those processes and their products, k. about how other people see oneself as well as k. about other people, knowledge about self and other, of interaction (individual and societal) <input type="checkbox"/> comprises traditional <i>Landeskunde</i> knowledge (auto-stereotypes (+/- stereotypes a person has about his/her own culture), hetero-stereotypes (+/- stereotypes sb has about other cultures)] <input type="checkbox"/> knowledge about social interaction <p>How can it be developed in class? facts (film, texts, internet, authentic material), working with stereotypes in class, guest speakers ...</p>	<p>Savoir apprendre / faire / skills of discovery and interaction</p> <p>What? (explanation) = ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture/cultural practices and to operate knowledge, attitudes, skills in real-time communication and interaction</p> <p>How can it be developed in class? comparing e-mails, face-to-face and virtual encounter projects (web cam), oral, study visits – ethnographic observation tasks (sounds, images, smells ...), negotiation of cultural misunderstandings, role plays, critical incidents</p>

2. Frequency of use of culture-connected terms in EFL catalogues

*Full results available on request)

Publisher	MacMillan Education	Catalogue Year	2017
Number of course books referencing culture / the cultural dimension of language teaching / language use	4 / 19 textbooks		
Sections included in the catalogue	Coursebooks / Skills, Grammar & Vocabulary		

Book title	Target level	Details from the synopsis
Breakthrough Plus p.30	Beginner to Upper-Intermediate	It contains global themes with native and non-native accents.
Global p.32	Beginner to Advanced	Global is an award-winning six-level general English course for adult learners, sophisticated in both presentation and approach. It has international appeal , combining challenging content, intelligent topics and cross-cultural awareness . It is free from celebrity-driven lifestyle content, making it more suitable for a wider range of learners.
People Like Us p.44	TOEIC 400-500	In People Like Us, you'll meet people from different countries all over the world. But remember that your culture in [sic] not just your country. It's what you do and how old you are. It's where you live. It's the things you like doing and the things you don't like doing. It's the way you talk and your education. It's about your friends, your family and your own character. This is your cultural identity.

Key Features:

An integrated skills course which allows students to sample the lifestyles, attitudes and opinions of ten people from around the world.

3. Frequency of use of culture-connected terms in TESOL / Applied Linguistic master degree courses and course synopses

*Full results available on request)

University 1	Simon Fraser University	Country	Canada
URL	http://www.sfu.ca/education/gs/degreediploma/masters/tefl.html		
Qualification	M.Ed. Teaching English as an Additional Language–Fieldwork Stream (TESL/TEFL)	Teaching English as an Additional Language–Fieldwork Stream (TESL/TEFL)	
Description	None. References to a “multicultural environment” due to a large number of international students.		
References to cultural dimension in course synopsis (if any)	“Academic literacy and cultural adjustment student supports are offered throughout the duration of the program.”		
Number of culture related modules / units/ classes available			2

Class title	Elective/ Compulsory	Details of cultural dimension from class description
EDUC 835-5 Graduate Study in Second Language Acquisition	Compulsory	Educational topics and academic and cultural adaptation to graduate study in Canada. Explores key questions in contemporary educational discourses, issues of culture , language and identity, and develops advanced academic literacy through intensive reading and writing. Course activities will be structured for participants to consider recent formulations of learners as agents as well as subjects of culturally constructed, socially imposed worlds. Participants will examine a number of ethnographic descriptions of the experiences of learners in a variety of communities, noting in particular their use of diverse mediations/tools, including language. Participants will consider these ideas in relation to their own educational communities and develop plans for research activity in those sites.
EDUC856-5 Sociocultural Perspectives on Education and Identity	Compulsory	

4. Notes on the think-aloud protocol conducted on the first survey draft

*Full results available on request

Participant	Section/ Item	Issue.
1. MA App Ling. Trinidadian. Female. 33 4-7 years.	Section C C4 C17&18 C19 C5-18	Suggested altering the numbering for section C to separate the likert items and the check box items. Suggested that a third option of “somewhat” be added. Suggested a little note explaining that respondents can write in their own items Suggested I provide more space in which to answer. Suggested that a “don’t know” option be added.
4 MA App Ling Japanese Female 36 8-12 years	A4 A5 A16 B8 B14 Section C C14	Questioned the meaning of the item. Questioned the use of “accurate”. Interpreted it as almost always correct and said she didn’t think they are. Suggested changing it to “useful”. The original draft used the word “useful” but it was changed as deemed a little vague and likely to be scored highly by all as the dichotomies probably do have some use. The actual word ‘dichotomies’ presented no problem. Asked if it referred to all of culture. Questioned as the previous question asked if art, music, crafts etc., are culture. Placing A15 further down the item order should resolve this. Asked what is meant by ‘culture in class’. I explained as ‘cultural content’ and she understood and suggested changing the wording to this. Asked which classes this relates to. It may depend on the classes. Possible change to “Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures should be a primary goal of EFL classes. Suggested that a ‘don’t know’ option be added. Suggested it is not a problem as she can simply explain in Japanese.

5. Provisional Interview Schedule

A Opening Phase.

Explain the purpose of the interview.

Collect information relating to background, experience, classes taught, select materials etc.

B Exploratory Phase.

Probe for information along specific lines of questioning. Each section contains several questions. Each question should offer the potential to ask follow up questions to probe and explore the subject. The list of questions is not a set script, but rather serves to illustrate the areas on which the respondent will be invited to discuss.

Explore the respondents' concept of culture.

There are many different understandings of culture, how would you describe culture?

How did you come to this understanding of culture?

If asked in class, how would you describe your own culture?

Has your culture always been as you described?

Is the culture you teach in the classroom consistent with your definition of culture?

Explore the respondents' views on culture in their own teaching.

Do you teach culture in some form in your classes? How often? Planned / unplanned?

Explicit / implicit?

Can you give some examples of the culture taught in your classes?

Are you satisfied with the way you teach culture?

Why are you satisfied / dissatisfied?

How do you feel the culture dimension of your classes could be improved?

Explore the respondents' views on the importance of culture to language teaching and the relationship between culture and language.

What are the benefits of teaching culture in English classes?

Drawbacks?

What do you feel is the main reason you teach culture?

How do you decide what culture or aspects of culture to teach in class?

What are the ends or the goals of teaching culture?

How do you view the relationship between language and culture?

Do you believe it is possible to teach culture in language class?

Are there any circumstances where you wouldn't teach culture?

C. Closure Phase.

Wind down the interview, invite final comments and thank.

Do you have any additional thoughts or comments on the subject?

Do you have any questions you wish to ask before we conclude the interview?

Would you be willing to volunteer for a class observation (give details) and a short follow-up interview?

Would you like to see the transcript of the interview and/or receive a copy of the full research paper?

Do you have my contact details in case you need to contact me?

6. Final questionnaire

**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

Dear Teacher,

My name is Nicholas Bradley and I am currently conducting research into culture and English language learning in Japan. I would very much appreciate your assistance by answering this questionnaire.

The questionnaire is for English teachers teaching English classes at the university level in Japan and should take around 10 minutes to complete. Please simply select the option you feel is right. All responses are anonymous (unless you kindly offer to participate further) and will only be viewed by me so please answer as honestly and freely as possible.

If you wish to receive a copy of the final results, I am happy to send you them via email once all the questionnaires have been collected and counted. Please supply your email address at the end of the questionnaire should you desire a copy.

The final page of this questionnaire can be used for any comments you may have about the subject or if you wish to expand on your answers to any particular items. If you have any questions regarding any matter relating to this questionnaire then please do not hesitate to email me at ed09npb@leeds.ac.uk.

Thank you for your help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Bradley', with a long, sweeping underline.

Nicholas Bradley.

Section A. (please circle the most suitable answer)

1) Do you teach culture in some form in your classes?

a) Yes b) No -Please continue from Section C.

2) How often would you say it features in your teaching?

a) Very rarely. b) Rarely. c) Occasionally. d) Often e) Always.

3) How much do you consider the cultural content of materials when choosing them for your classes?

a) I don't choose b) Never c) Rarely d) Sometimes e) Often
f) Always

5) Are you satisfied with the way you teach culture?

Yes No Somewhat

Section B. To what degree do you feel the following items adversely impact the cultural dimension of your English language classes?

	1 No impact	2 Slight impact	3 Moderate impact	4 Strong impact
1	Lack of training regarding the teaching of culture.			1 2 3 4
2	Students' beliefs about their own culture.			1 2 3 4
3	Lack of knowledge about culture / cultures.			1 2 3 4
4	Pre-determined class materials. (i.e. the coursebook or other materials pre-selected for class)			1 2 3 4
5	The need to teach linguistic knowledge due to institutional requirements / pre-determined class goals.			1 2 3 4
6	Students' preference for linguistic knowledge.			1 2 3 4
7	Lack of time.			1 2 3 4
8	Insufficient linguistic ability of students.			1 2 3 4
9	(other-please complete if applicable)			1 2 3 4

Section C.

Culture and Language teaching.

Please circle the number which best represents your opinion.

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral.	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree	
1	Culture and language are strongly connected					1	2	3	4	5
2	The traits that define a culture are shared equally by its members.					1	2	3	4	5
3	Characteristics that define a culture are easily identifiable.					1	2	3	4	5
4	Cultural categories are fluid and malleable constructs.					1	2	3	4	5
5	Culture and communication are strongly connected.					1	2	3	4	5
6	Diversity is the norm in any culture.					1	2	3	4	5
7	Culture is a vital part of English teaching.					1	2	3	4	5
8	The teacher can only really teach his/her own culture.					1	2	3	4	5
9	Though we may be influenced by them, we are not bound by national structures.					1	2	3	4	5
10	Divisions / dichotomies of cultural tendencies (e.g., collective cultures vs. individualist cultures, hierarchical vs. non-hierarchical etc.) are accurate tools for understanding cultures.					1	2	3	4	5
11	The way people think of culture is dependent on their beliefs (i.e., a person's concept of what culture <u>is</u> is based on ideology.)					1	2	3	4	5
12	The language teacher should present a positive image of different cultures.					1	2	3	4	5
13	A person's culture is something very basic about them and can't be changed much.					1	2	3	4	5

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral.	4	Somewhat agree	5	Strongly agree
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14	Cultural categories are based on an ideology (economic, political, social, etc.). If the socio-political situation changes, the cultural categories will change as well.	1	2	3	4	5
15	The cultural dimension of language education is more problematic for English than other languages.	1	2	3	4	5
16	People are members of multiple cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Culture and civilization are synonyms.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on student motivation.	1	2	3	4	5
19	An individual has the power to choose the cultural elements they adopt.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Cultural content in class usually has a positive impact on willingness to communicate.	1	2	3	4	5
21	People in one culture are essentially different from those in another culture.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Native speaker cultures should be the focus of cultural content.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Teaching students to have a greater understanding of diversity within their own national culture is an important class goal.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Cultures are just arbitrary categories and can be changed if necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
25	The cultural dimension of language teaching should involve making frequent comparisons between Japan and other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Fostering a deep understanding of different cultures is a primary class goal.	1	2	3	4	5

1	Strongly disagree	2	Somewhat disagree	3	Neutral.	4	Somewhat agree	5	strongly agree
---	-------------------	---	-------------------	---	----------	---	----------------	---	----------------

27	It is the task of the teacher to contribute to the breaking down of prejudices.	1	2	3	4	5
----	---	---	---	---	---	---

28	Culture is symbolic (i.e, it is how we interpret, transmit and respond to different symbols of different forms).	1	2	3	4	5
29	National boundaries accurately represent cultural boundaries.	1	2	3	4	5
30	If cultural comparisons are used in class, they should highlight similarity rather than difference.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Culture is behaviour that creates group cohesion.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Teaching culture creates stereotypes rather than breaks them down	1	2	3	4	5
33	Teaching culture is not the responsibility of the language teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Developing a greater understanding of culture as a concept is an important goal in the EFL classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

Section E. Biographical data and further contact. (Please circle)

1. Teaching experience.

1-3 years 4-7 years 8-12 years 13-20 years Over 20 years

2. Gender (please circle) Female Male

3. Highest educational level achieved. (please circle)

Bachelor Degree. Master Degree. PhD.

4. Is this qualification connected to language education? Yes No

5. Your nationality:

6. Do you consider yourself to be a native speaker of English? Yes No

7. How long have you taught at university in Japan?

Less than 3 years. 3-6 years. 6-10 years. Over 10 years.

8. How long have you lived in Japan?

Less than 3 years. 3-6 years. 6-10 years. Over 10 years.

9. Have you lived for over 1 year in countries other than Japan and your home country?

No Yes (please specify) _____

9. Do you speak any other languages other than English or Japanese? Yes No

10. Have you had any training regarding the cultural dimension of English language teaching? No Yes (please specify) _____

Would you like a copy of the results once collected and counted?

If yes, please provide your email address:.....

Would you be willing to participate further in this study?

If yes, please complete the section below and choose the level of participation.
Participants are free to withdraw at any time.

Name _____ Position _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

Level of further participation (please circle)

Interview only.

Interview and class observation

If you have any comments about this questionnaire or culture in language education, I would be very eager to hear them. Please contact me at ed09npb@leeds.ac.uk or write your comments on the final page.

Comments Page.

Please use this page if you have any comments about any items or themes in this questionnaire.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your time and effort.

Nicholas Bradley

Thank you!

Nicholas Bradley

Aichi University, 4-60-6 Hiraike-cho, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi, 453-8777

7. Interview consent form

*The cover letter is not shown

Consent to take part in a study of culture and language teaching.

Name of participant - _____

Initial to
agree

I confirm that I have read and understand the information above explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time up until the end of the interview and observation. No reason need be given for withdrawal and there will be no negative consequences for withdrawal.

In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

If I withdraw from the study before the interview and observation are completed, I can request that my data be destroyed.

I understand that my data will be stored on secure servers at the University of Leeds.

I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I agree for the data collected from me to be stored and used in relevant future research.

I agree for written excerpts of the interviews and observations to be used in any written or oral presentation of the research.

I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform Nicholas Bradley should my contact details change.

*This section will be completed at the start of the interview and a copy will be given to you.

Participant's signature	
Date	

8. Ethical approval from University of Leeds Ethics Committee

Performance, Governance and Operations

Research & Innovation Service

Charles Thackrah Building

101 Clarendon Road

Leeds LS2 9LJ Tel: 0113 343 4873

Email: ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Nicholas Bradley
School of Education
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT

**ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee
University of Leeds**

Dear Nicholas

Title of study: Cultural beliefs and language teaching: The case of university English teachers in Japan.
Ethics reference: AREA 15-015 response 1

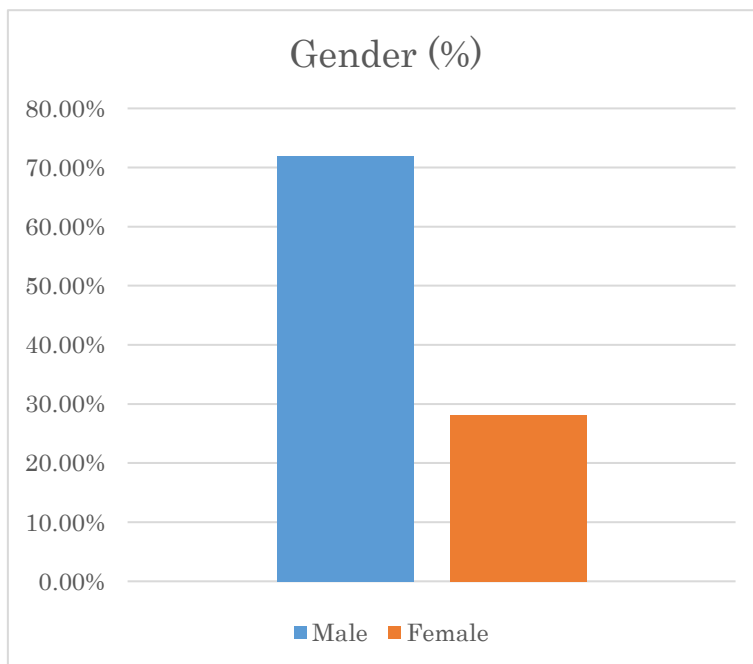
I am pleased to inform you that the above research application has been reviewed by the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments, I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
AREA 15-015 ethical form full info.doc	2	01/10/15
AREA 15-015 consent form and info.docx	2	01/10/15
AREA 15-015 fieldwork-assessment-form-low-risk-2013.doc	2	01/10/15
AREA 15-015 Final Interview Schedule.docx	1	08/09/15
AREA 15-015 Proposed research timeline following the PhD upgrade meeting on 29th July 2015.docx	1	08/09/15
AREA 15-015 Ethical_Review_Form_Nicholas Bradley.doc	1	08/09/15
AREA 15-015 final final Questionnaire.docx	2	01/10/15

9. Certificate of completion of ethics and research course



10. Biographical information of survey respondents



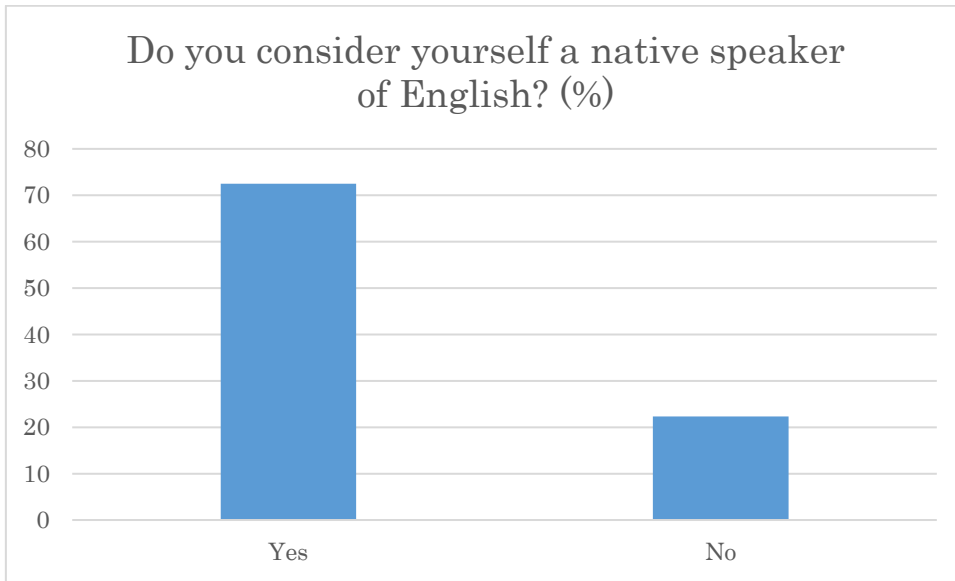
Gender	
Female	28.1%
Male	71.9%

Although there are no statistics available, my working experience at different universities and at teacher conferences in Japan leads me to believe that male teachers are in the majority and having mostly male respondents was somewhat expected. Whatever the ultimate reasons may be, the gender imbalance among respondents was a little surprising.

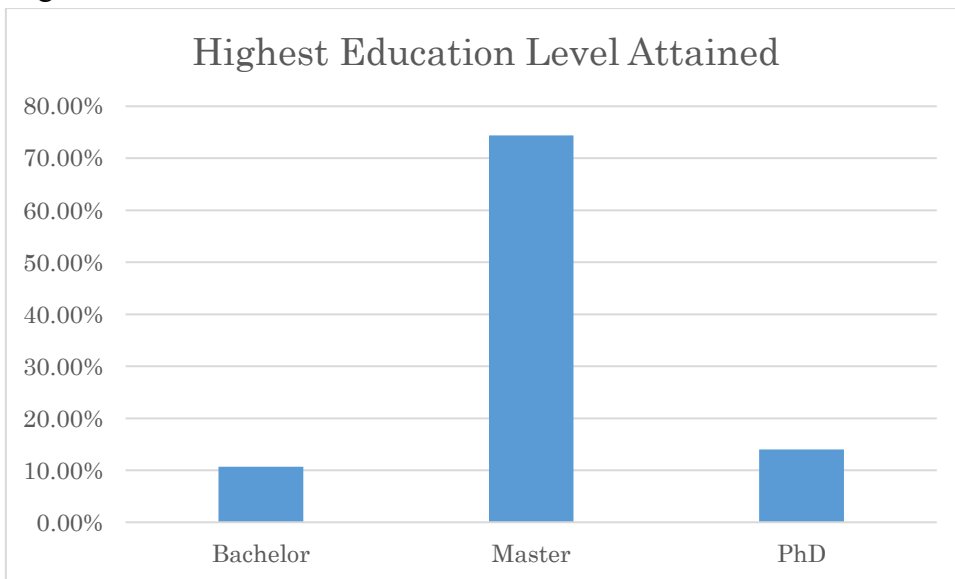
Nationality of respondents

Nationality	
American	34.7%
British	20.7%
Japanese	17.4%
Canadian	10.7%
Australian	9.1%
Irish	1.7%
German	0.8%
Hungarian	0.8%
New Zealander	0.8%
Romanian	0.8%
Specified as "other"	2.5%

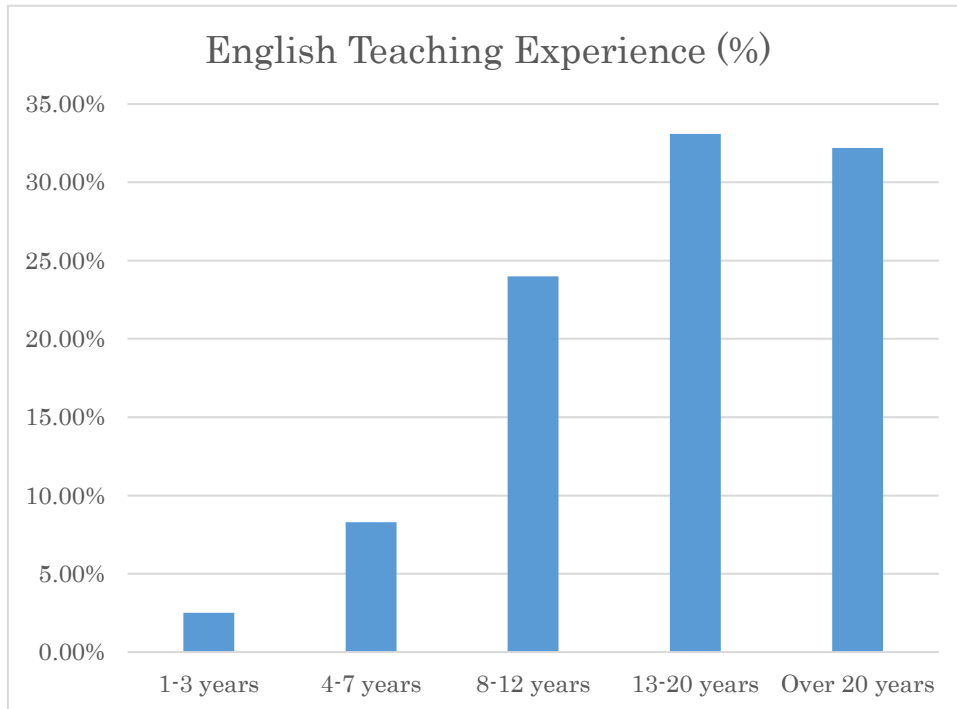
The large proportion of American respondents was somewhat expected. Although no accurate nationality statistics are available for the large number of language teachers in Japan, we can look to certain organizations for guidance. The JET Programme, for example, a government operated English teaching programme that places teachers in public schools across Japan, has 4,952 foreign teaching staff as of this year (JET Programme, 2016). Of this number, well over 50% (2,814) are American. The JET number, of course, does not include any Japanese teachers, so any statistic that includes Japanese teachers is likely to see the overwhelming dominance of American teachers reduced as can be seen above.



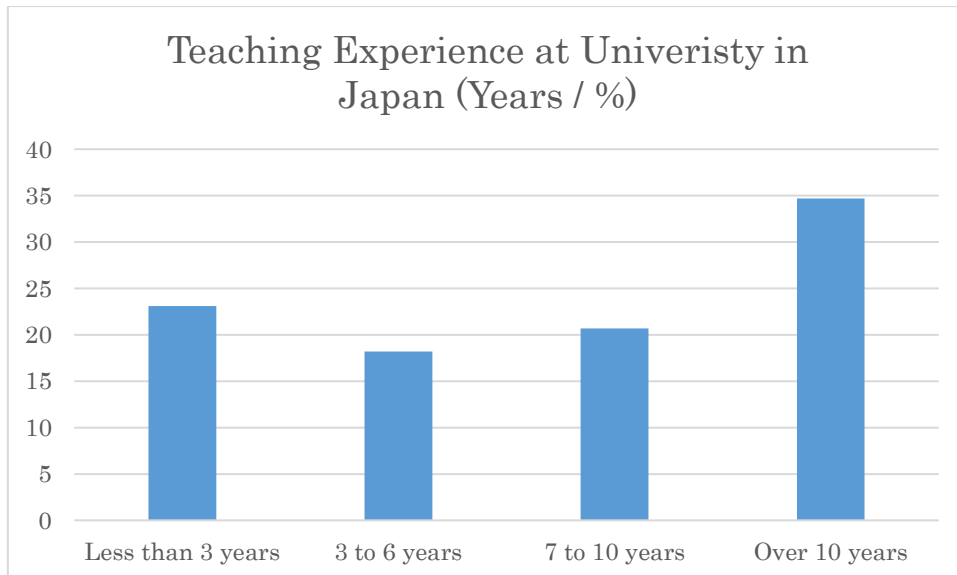
Highest education level attained



English teaching experience



Teaching experience at university in Japan



11. Comments from respondents on their training regarding the cultural dimension of language teaching

*Language used is the respondents own

Took a course during my Master's called "Language, Culture and Education"

Only touching upon culture in some JALT forums.

PhD coursework

Component of TESL training in Canada.

Not necessarily what you mean but 4 year degree in Japanese studies and Anthropology informs how I go about teaching language and culture. Also growing up in a French Immersion system also informs my approach.

a course in language and culture at the graduate level

Inter-cultural communication

During my Master's course

Took courses in World Englishes and evolution of English through use as a lingua franca

BA in Anthropology & CELTA

Masters level coursework.

Focus of Masters Thesis

The odd workshop/presentation at various conferences...

team taught with a intercultural professor at my university for 2 years. had to develop my own courses about cdn. culture/CMs, etc.

I answered No so that I wouldn't have to explain my YES answer, but actually I feel my 25 years living in "another country" qualifies as "training" to add a "cultural dimension" to my class.

Intercultural Communication course as part of my MA

I attend SEITAR meetings in Osaka

Lingua culture approach by Japan Intercultural Institute

It's part of my main field of research. I also train graduate students.

I am a cultural anthropologist and have been teaching comparative culture classes to both Japanese and international students for over 5 years.

Slightly - a sociolinguistics module on my Master's course.

What was covered during the CELTA (briefly)

Part of TESOL courses, such as study of World Englishes and ELF.

Cultural discourse

During university we touched on this topic. My BA was in Multicultural Studies.

one of my graduate courses

Master's thesis was focused on this

As part of Masters in EFL

I have attended presentations on culture in the classroom. Before that, I was "self taught" reading books on what culture is and the various generalizations that can be made about cultures and communication.

Was Course Discussion leader on the Ship for World Youth

My MA TESOL was through a school of intercultural communication.

Pragmatics workshop

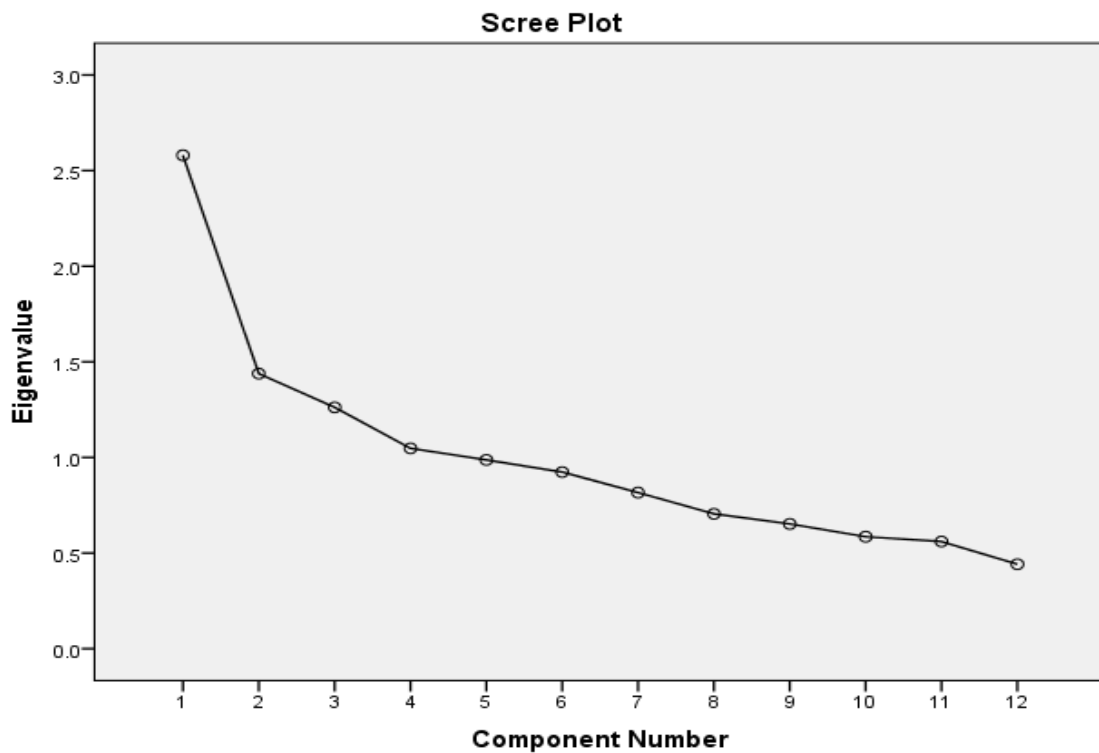
It was a small part of some of the modules I undertook as part of my Master degree. I took a course, for example, called Language and Diversity which focused on culture, and the role of NSs and NNSs in language education.

12. Statistical data for ECC

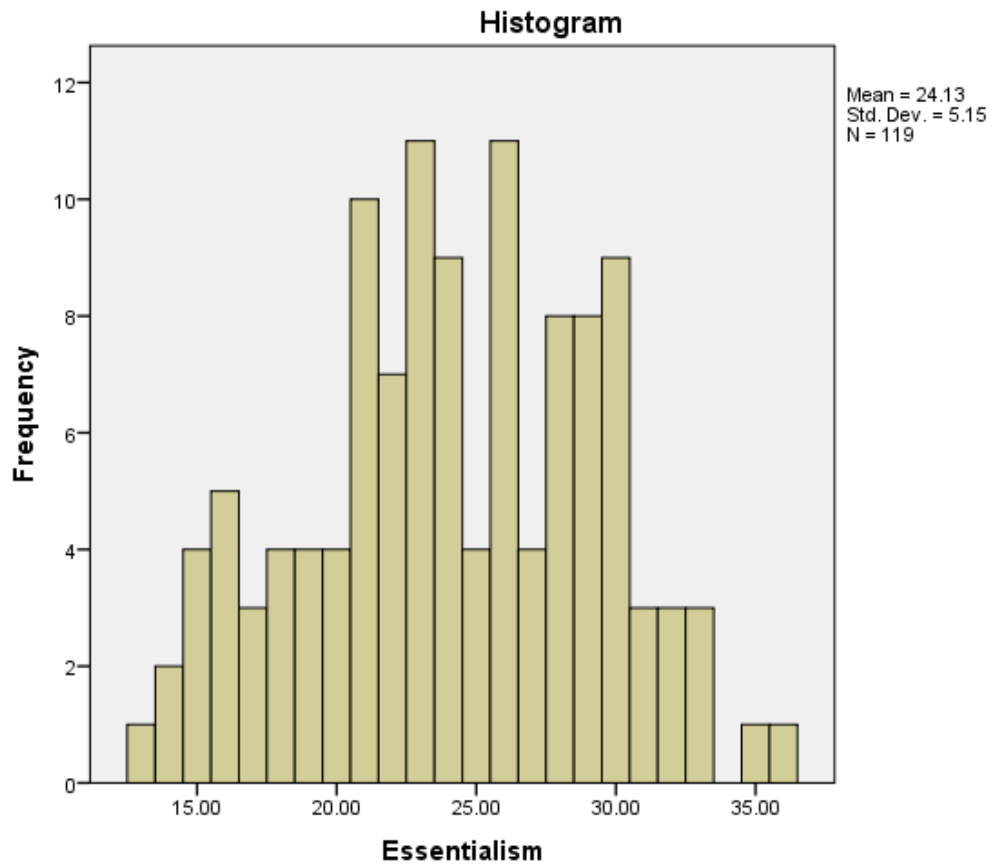
Correlation matrix for ECC pool items

		Correlation Matrix											
		C2	C3	C10	C13	C21	C29	C4R	C6R	C9R	C14R	C19R	C24R
Correlation	C2	1.000	.300	.284	.255	.288	.280	.129	.046	.339	.089	.002	.170
	C3	.300	1.000	.300	.153	.215	.134	.180	.070	.066	.139	-.048	.198
	C10	.284	.300	1.000	.144	.062	.114	.141	.140	-.002	.053	.006	.102
	C13	.255	.153	.144	1.000	.201	.291	.021	.026	.100	-.066	.140	.146
	C21	.288	.215	.062	.201	1.000	.287	.183	.156	.127	-.049	.031	.115
	C29	.280	.134	.114	.291	.287	1.000	.163	-.006	.105	.068	.062	.081
	C4R	.129	.180	.141	.021	.183	.163	1.000	.283	.097	.183	.081	.199
	C6R	.046	.070	.140	.026	.156	-.006	.283	1.000	.259	.140	.151	.191
	C9R	.339	.066	-.002	.100	.127	.105	.097	.259	1.000	.124	.164	.182
	C14R	.089	.139	.053	-.066	-.049	.068	.183	.140	.124	1.000	.021	.056
	C19R	.002	-.048	.006	.140	.031	.062	.081	.151	.164	.021	1.000	.321
	C24R	.170	.198	.102	.146	.115	.081	.199	.191	.182	.056	.321	1.000

Scree plot for ECC pool items



Histogram for ECC



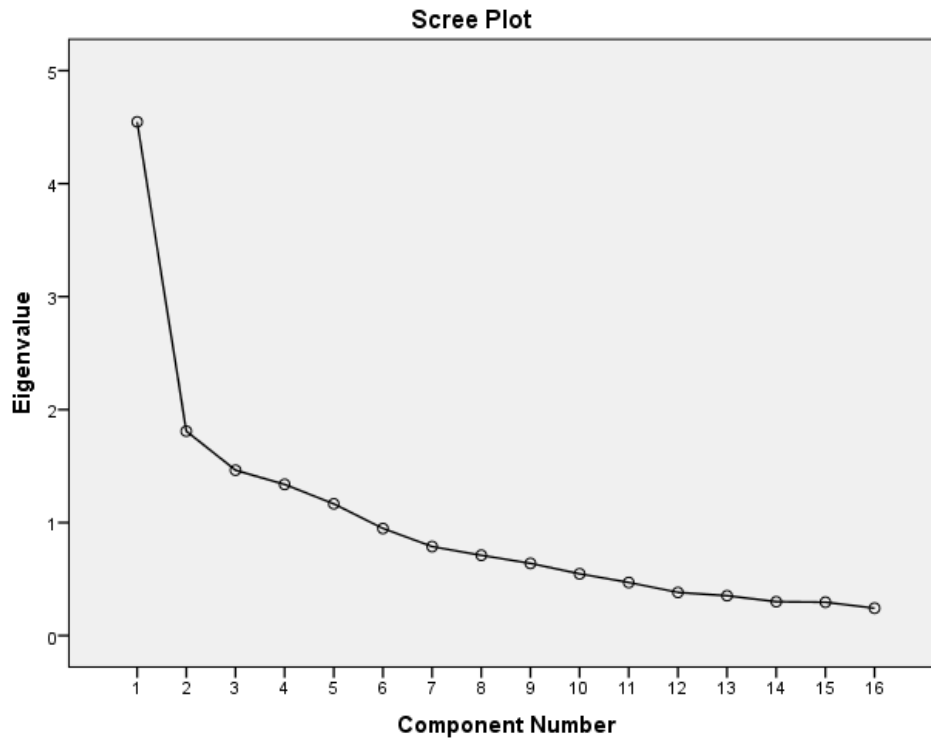
13. Statistical data for ICI

Correlation matrix for ICI pool items

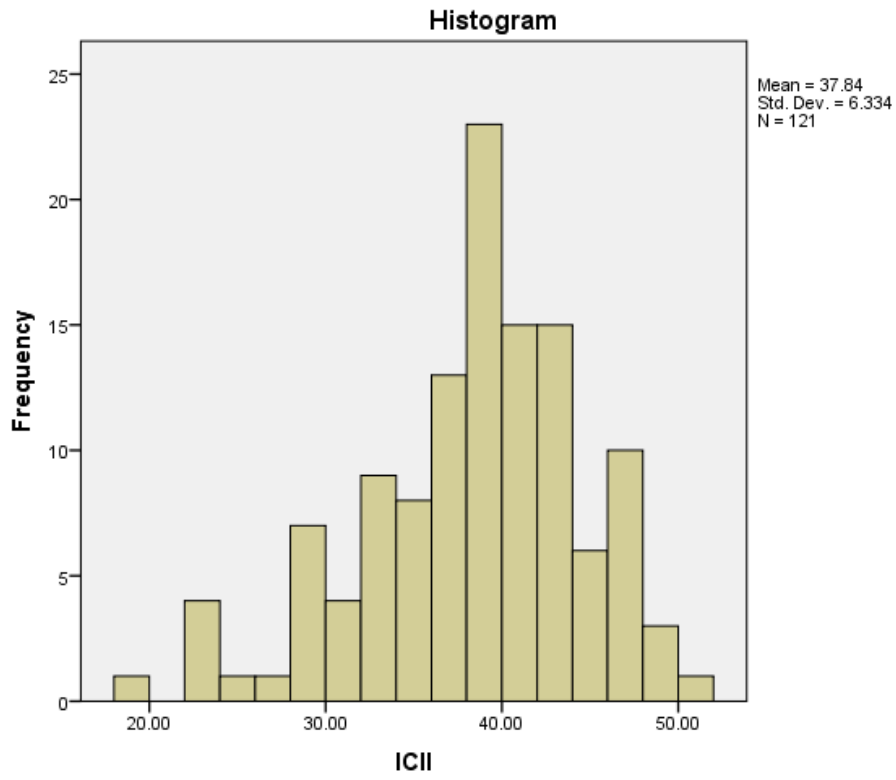
Correlation Matrix

	C1	C5	C7	C8	C12	C15	C18	C20	C23	C26	C27	C34	C30	C25R	C33R	C22R
Correlation: C1	1.000	.657	.444	-.099	-.027	-.069	.186	.178	.110	.142	.186	.257	.023	-.106	.283	.056
C5	.657	1.000	.384	-.225	.048	-.104	.244	.230	.025	.137	.290	.185	.034	-.138	.272	.051
C7	.444	.384	1.000	.016	.025	-.240	.401	.325	.281	.436	.541	.499	-.010	-.251	.523	.019
C8	-.099	-.225	.016	1.000	-.060	.064	-.195	-.178	.003	.068	-.208	-.057	.057	-.027	-.212	-.354
C12	-.027	.048	.025	-.060	1.000	.024	.190	.259	.140	.123	.179	.018	.246	-.057	-.013	.000
C15	-.069	-.104	-.240	.064	.024	1.000	-.039	-.083	.010	.016	-.100	-.032	.239	.061	-.064	-.090
C18	.186	.244	.401	-.195	.190	-.039	1.000	.649	.199	.370	.385	.426	.187	-.287	.330	.062
C20	.178	.230	.325	-.178	.259	-.083	.649	1.000	.162	.327	.351	.300	.142	-.191	.284	-.066
C23	.110	.025	.281	.003	.140	.010	.199	.162	1.000	.482	.421	.446	.261	-.150	.352	.148
C26	.142	.137	.436	.068	.123	.016	.370	.327	.482	1.000	.523	.563	.177	-.389	.364	-.163
C27	.186	.290	.541	-.208	.179	-.100	.385	.351	.421	.523	1.000	.558	.143	-.276	.573	.061
C34	.257	.185	.499	-.057	.018	-.032	.426	.300	.446	.563	.558	1.000	.015	-.384	.520	.066
C30	.023	.034	-.010	.057	.246	.239	.187	.142	.261	.177	.143	.015	1.000	-.004	.044	-.156
C25R	-.106	-.138	-.251	-.027	-.057	.061	-.287	-.191	-.150	-.389	-.276	-.384	-.004	1.000	-.329	.173
C33R	.283	.272	.523	-.212	-.013	-.064	.330	.284	.352	.364	.573	.520	.044	-.329	1.000	.041
C22R	.056	.051	.019	-.354	.000	-.090	.062	-.066	.148	-.163	.061	.066	-.156	.173	.041	1.000

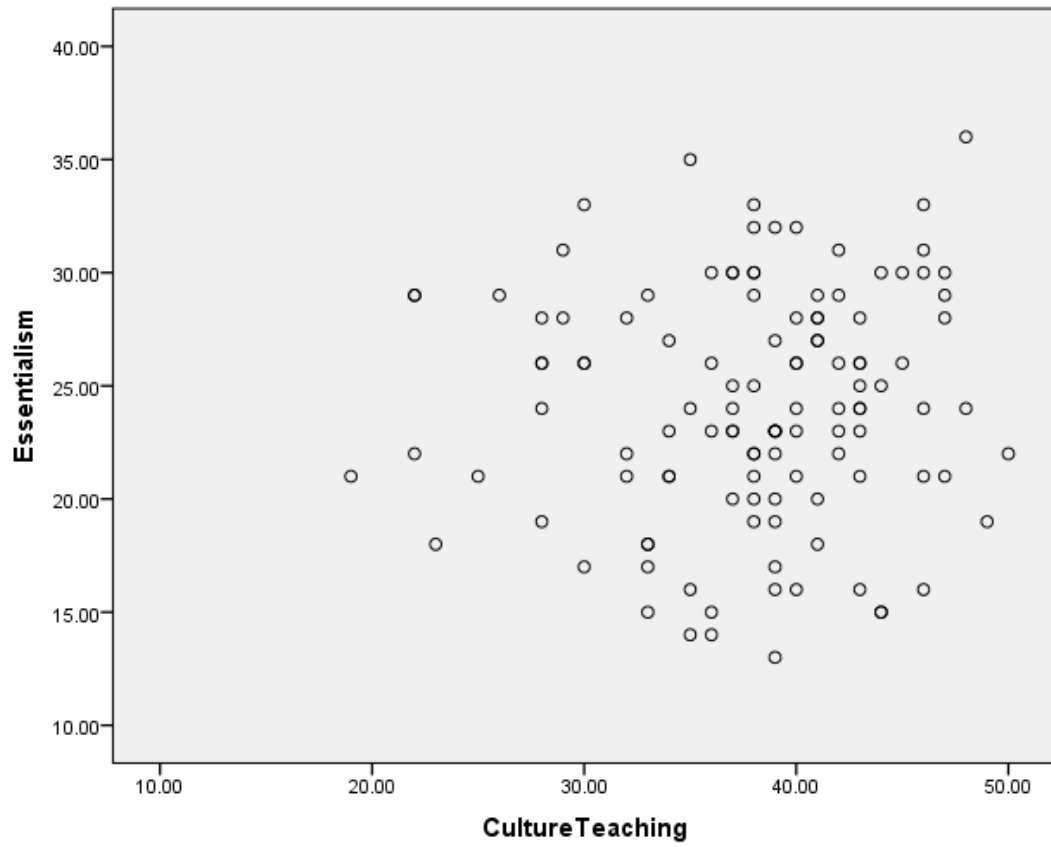
Scree plot of ICI pool items



Histogram for ICI



14. Scatterplot for ECC and ICI scores



15. Example of interview transcription

*Interview with Alan

A: There are lots of different understandings of culture, how would you describe culture, define it?

B: I'd define it as ways of thinking, maybe? And actions. But something deeper than—a lot of people think what people like to eat or how they dress, which is true, but maybe a little shallow. I would say primarily ways of thinking and what people value. Here it's like a group culture; we're more individualistic. I would primarily say those two things. A lot of other things, food and dress, are more surface stuff.

A: How did you come to choose that idea of culture instead of any of the other different definitions? Was there anything in your background that pushed you in that direction?

B: My mother's British, and the first time that I remember going over there I was twelve years old. I'd been there before, but that's the first time I got the first real taste of a different culture. Actually, it's not that different when you compare. It's still Western, you still speak English. But I thought it was real interesting. "Oh wow, you drive on the other side of the road, and a car has the steering wheel on the other side, and they use different money." Even small stuff like that I thought was really interesting.

I think primarily, just by being here for many years, you start to get more of a feel, a little deeper understanding. When you first get here there's culture shock. You notice some surface stuff. "Wow, everything's so small. Trains are fast. Everything's so organized." Short answer's by being here for so many years, you have more experiences and more encounters, more interactions, and that's probably what's done it.

A: It's definitely experience that's given you your understanding of culture?

B: I think so.

A: Have you ever studied it formally in any way?

B: I wouldn't say formally, but I read a lot of books. I buy a lot of books off Amazon. I'm really interested in American culture particularly, and I compare and contrast it with Japanese culture. There're a few books that I really like about Japanese culture, and more on American culture. Formally, no, but reading a lot of books about it, and whatever I find on the Internet I devour.

16. Sample of observation notes

*Full observation notes included a detailed account of all class activities

Class 1 observation

90 minute English class for freshman students studying an airline course.

Class structure from view of the observer

Opening monologue (referencing Ise Summit, Obama, teacher's family, importance of clear pronunciation as many different English accents)

L&R pronunciation / listening practice. Pronunciation pairs.

Symbols. Students think of national symbols and write on a card.

Inventions. Students write their top 5 inventions on the back of the card.

Teacher reads out some answers of symbols and shows two videos.

Teacher reads out some answers of inventions and then gives his top 5.

Students read a comic style story of a boy who fell into a gorilla enclosure.

Teacher reads story sentences by sentence and students repeat.

Teacher asks some questions about the story to the class (boy's name, how far he fell etc)

Students read aloud together in pairs. Teacher collects the reading and asks same questions.

Quick aside about ask Siri.

Final pronunciation practice of some very high frequency words – salad, bed, mad, at, and, good, is, like, please etc.

What is the layout of the class?

10 students in class. Usually 13 but 3 were volunteering at the Ise Summit. Classroom was very spacious and had seating for 50. Students sat at individual desks 5 across and 2 deep. Teacher at front- whiteboard and small podium.

Teacher was energetic, friendly, used graded language and spoke at a slower speed.

Teacher the focus of the class. Most talking from the teacher with students only giving one word answers to student questions. Student-to-student talk was in the reading aloud activity.

What materials are used?

Projector beamed on to side wall: Photo of teacher and his wife with wax statues of Obama and wife at Washington DC waxwork museum. Picture of teacher with his wife, cousin and cousin's wife at temple in Japan. Two videos- "History of the world in 2

minutes” version for Japan and USA (available on youtube).

L & R Worksheet. Note card for comparative culture element of class.

White board, pens.

What messages are conveyed, explicitly or implicitly, about language, culture and their relationship?

Nothing about connection between language and communication connection.

Cultural images given were largely broad national images / stereotypical national imagery as above when students were asked to list symbols of USA and Japan. Teacher gave examples of food, animals and buildings then asked about Australia – koalas, France- Eiffel Tower, China- Panda.

During the reading about a trip to the zoo, a measurement in feet was mentioned- teacher highlighted the different measurement system in USA and gave a rough conversion to metric.

Classes opened and closed in traditional Japanese style with students standing up to greet the teacher at the start and thanking the teacher at the end. However, this is done in English with a simple “hello” and “thank you, bye” at the end.

Calling roll “yes / Here” – Students invited to choose which they wish to respond with.

Cultural aside- face masks common in Japan but teacher doesn’t like them because they interfere with communication. When he communicates in Japanese he likes to see peoples mouth move.

What kinds of interactions constitute mediation of intercultural language learning in the classroom?

Little interaction. Interaction was mainly teacher talk with students shouting out one word answers when prompted.

What kind of discourse was used by the teachers in mediating intercultural language learning?

Monologue, storytelling, personal information.

Teacher tells of “American” view of Japan – good technology, good cars. After initially owning an American car, all the cars he has ever bought have been Japanese- (American view based on teachers own view which he applies to all Americans?)

YouTube videos.

How are teachers' identities invested in their teaching – explicitly or implicitly?

Explicitly- Reference to him being American, talk of American views of Japan, talk of American symbols.

Implicit – global citizen – American, Japanese wife, English cousin, Lithuanian wife of cousin.

17. Bachelor degree subjects of teachers

*Language used is the respondents own

Music	Religious Studies, minor in East Asian Studies
Arts - History, Politics	International Relations
Journalism	History / political science
Film and Media	History / political science
biology	Modern history and theology
Literature	I have 2, Chemistry and Education
Fine Art	Social Policy and Administration
History	computer science
Bachelor of Arts	Spanish/International Affairs
Physics	Chemistry
Japanese studies and anthropology	Creative Writing/ Literature
Engineering (Chemistry)	History
Modern Foreign Languages	Information technology
Aerospace Engineering & International Relations (BS & BA double-major)	BA French major and Bachelor of Phys. Ed.
French	BASc in Engineering
History	Music
German and psychology	Asian Studies
Psychology/Sociology	French Literature
Japanese and sociology	Communications
Linguistics and German	Business Administration
Computer Science	English Literature/ Music
Russian American Studies	Geology and Human Development Double Major
Ceramics	Theology
Political Science	Mathematics
Pharmacology	

18. Previous occupations of language teachers

*Language used is the respondents own

research assistant, humanities teacher	Various admin positions
lived in a Catholic monastery, then left and worked in book publishing	3 years in a hardware store
Subtitler, call center, teaching	Primary school teacher
biotechnology research	Motorcycle Despatch Rider/Courier 1 Year
Elementary school teacher	Commercial fisherman
Travel agent, translator/interpreter	after my TESOL degree I became a headhunter in Tokyo for 3 years before returning to teaching.
Hospitality	3 years as a high school chemistry teacher, 3 years as a private language school manager
Two years of running a pub.	University Lecturer
Bank teller, customer service representative, waitress,	Researcher in computer science (computational linguistics)
High school physics teacher in Fiji for two years	2 years in an industrial laboratory, 2 years as a public officer, 1 year as a waiter
Music teacher (private)	duty free receptionist/shop assistant/ Japanese liaison, 7 years, bank clerk, 3 years, book store clerk, 3-4 years
Recording engineer 3 years, flight attendant 4 years	Network design engineer
8 years as an engineer, 9 years as a translator	8 years as a Conference Manager at a hotel
Musician (self employed)	I ran my own piano teaching business.
2 years in retail management	1 year in marketing
3 years at a ski resort	Buyer / Production Controller
Import Business	various positions in retail
Language instructor in another country	Researcher, Computer Lab Director
High school teacher	Sales in banking sector
Social work	Secondary School teacher
Computer Programmer (2 years), Musician (4 years)	15 yrs as a radio announcer