Determination of University Students’ English-study Motivations and Preferences

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Abstract
In Japan, students spend years studying English with the main purpose of passing high school/university entrance exams and finding employment. Against such a background, many develop a dislike for the language that often stems from a lack of understanding or interest during classes. In this study, Japanese university students were asked to voluntarily participate in an anonymous survey conducted to clarify their purpose in studying English, their study/learning preferences and language learning activities/matters they valued. A total of 46 users of the university’s self-access center participated in the survey, and were classified into four groups based on their motivation for studying English. Study preferences in particular were found to vary by group, although other aspects of learning showed little variation except in the group of people studying to pass English classes. Students in this group listed comprehension and enjoyment of English as major considerations in learning. Despite a small sample, the study provided insights into why Japanese learners study English and their learning preferences. The results are expected to help educators understand how to provide motivation in classroom environments.

Key words
English education, motivation, awareness survey, university, EFL

Introduction
There are hundreds of thousands of students studying a foreign language at any given time. Language learners study for different reasons: for school, for work, for leisure, and so on. In Japan, English language education begins as early as (or as late as) fifth grade in public elementary schools, although many institutions – both public and private – begin earlier. The Ministry of Education (MEXT) has announced plans for public schools to start English language lessons based on foreign language activities (gaikokugo katsudo) from the fifth grade (MEXT website). As the main purpose of such activities is to expose students to English, classes are generally interactive, fun and activity-based. However, English language classes become a regular subject just like mathematics, history and language arts in junior high school.

This sudden shift in teaching style leaves many students confused, unmotivated and disinterested. It is widely known that Japanese students require English to pass entrance examinations for high schools and universities, and sometimes English ability is required for job applications (Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009: 69). With such restrictive learning objectives, many students feel overly pressured by teachers, parents and even colleagues, and therefore lose interest in studying. Perhaps this is unique to Japan; many students start actively disliking English classes (Ryan, 2009: 125).

At the university level, the gap between students who enjoy learning English and those who don’t continues to widen. English class attendance is a requirement for graduation from most universities, and this serves as the driving force behind English study. Uninterested and
unmotivated students struggle to retain information, which is one reason why they have a hard time comprehending lessons. Without comprehension, students are unable to use the language freely, which leads to stress and eventually a lack of interest and motivation. To prevent students from falling into this state of learning, steps must be taken to help them comprehend and use the language freely (Ustunluoglu, 2009: 161). The related responsibilities are shared among teachers, students and other external actors including classmates, parents and textbook producers (Mariani, 1997). The quality of language input is heavily dependent on the teacher, and students must be willing and motivated to learn (Ustunluoglu, 2009: 152). The teacher must present lesson content clearly so that students experience comprehensible input.

The second type of students are motivated with clearer, long-term objectives for studying English. They are keen to learn the language for various reasons, such as improving conversational ability or supporting overseas travel. These students retain information better than those with limited interest. Another characteristic unique to these motivated students is their propensity for independent study. In other words, as observed by Holec (1980: 4), they "take charge of [their] own learning" and study autonomously without the constant need for a teacher. As learning is a never-ending process, the possession of autonomous learning traits represents an ideal to be adopted from early learning stages so that students get into the habit of learning for and by themselves (Mariani, 1997). However, realistically speaking, the nature of the Japanese "educational system has resulted in Japanese learners with weak communication ability and low motivation to learn the language" (Nakata, 2006: 166).

**Motivation and Autonomy**

Gardener and Lambert define the two main types of motivation as instrumental and integrative. Instrumental motivation fuels learning for immediate, functional and practical needs such as securing a job or passing an exam (Ellis, 2012: 972), while integrative motivation underpins learning for personal growth, a desire to identify with the L2 culture or group, and cultural enrichment (Ellis, 2012: 972). Dickinson (1995) defined autonomy as a learner’s independence, responsibility and choice of how to perform a learning task and as a crucial force in motivation. Motivation and autonomy are closely related, and influence each other. Deci and Ryan (1985) (as quoted in Dickinson, 1995: 168) stated that motivation "tends to be higher in learners who are interested in learning tasks and the learning outcomes."

**Learning Characteristics**

Learners study their target language for different reasons. Students may wish to improve a particular skill or a combination thereof. Skills can be categorized as input types such as reading and listening, and output types such as writing and speaking. Most common forms of reading skill development are based on extensive and intensive reading. The difference lies in whether the learner is aiming to build vocabulary by reading a large volume of text or wishes to improve comprehension. Of course, learners can gain both. However, students must of course read and gain exposure to various texts. The same can be said for listening; in order to improve listening ability, learners must know how words are uttered, linked and so on. Listening is an input skill whose development requires careful attention from students. Nowadays, extensive resources target input skill building, such as graded readers and free audio files online. The output skills of writing and speaking are slightly more difficult to acquire individually, as effective and readily available resources are limited. Without the necessary input skills, output ability cannot be achieved. In addition, learners must work with a teacher or a classmate who can provide feedback or conversational input. By working with peers or teachers, learners can experience what Vygotsky describes as the zone of proximal development (Ustunluoglu, 2009: 151). Learners reach new, higher levels of understanding by working with peers or teachers who have superior levels of knowledge (Mariani, 1997). Working together with a peer or teacher supports comprehension and therefore encourages output.

For learners, both input and output are very important. Comprehensible and meaningful input in particular is essential. Nation (2007) introduced his well-known four strands of meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning and fluency development that ideally provide balance for the language learning experience of students and should be present in any language learning environment. However, realistically, this is not the case in the majority of Japanese English language classrooms, causing poor retention and proficiency among students despite years of education from junior high school to university. In addition, learners are often unaware of types of learning activities or considerations that may help them improve.
language proficiency. Against such a background, this study was conducted to clarify university students’ self-awareness in regard to why they study English and which learning activities/matters they consider important. The two main research questions were:

1. Based on the reasons why students learn English, what were their study preferences?
2. What correlations/trends are observed among reasons for studying, perceived matters of importance in learning, and study preferences?

Methods

Setting

A facility providing English language learning support at a private women’s university in Chiba, Japan, was observed for a period of two months. The facility was established in 2012 as part of the university’s endeavors to encourage English learning, and is gradually evolving in its role as a self-access center promoting learner autonomy in the process of assisting students. The facility is referred to here as the Self-Access Center, or SAC.

The university has a four-year college, a two-year college, and graduate programs. For this study, students in both colleges were asked to voluntarily participate in a questionnaire survey. The four-year college has six departments (Child Education, Psychology and Social Welfare, Human Nutrition, Literature, Nursing, and Music) with approximately 1,000 students in each year. The two-year college has two departments (Early Childhood Education, and Arts and Science) with approximately 600 students in each year. Students are required to take General English courses in the first two academic years (with the exception of the Literature and Psychology/Social Welfare departments in the four-year college and the Early Childhood Education department in the two-year college). Students in the Human Nutrition department are required to take two different English classes per week, totaling up to eight in their first two years. Nursing department students are required to take two English classes per week in their first year but none in their second year. In other departments, students take one English class per week for two years (four academic semesters) and have an option to take French, German or English thereafter.

There are eight English courses in the four-year college. Each is 15 weeks long, and students take two per academic year. For the first two (English 1 and 2), the curriculum is designed to reinforce students’ English basics with particular focus on grammar. In English 3 and 4, reading and reading comprehension are taught. In English 5 and 6 the focus is on written output, with students practicing various writing styles. In the final English language classes, students are taught communicative skills through activities. Students in the two-year college are taught English basics, and in the second year (for the Arts and Sciences department) focus on writing and speaking. Although all students take English classes in the Japanese school system, the majority develop an aversity to studying the language due to the strictly input-oriented teaching style of these classes.

The SAC has ten full-time faculty members, with two main figures as language advisors providing students with learning support. These advisors are bilingual in Japanese and in English, and work to meet students’ learning needs in areas such as grammar, test preparation, communication practice, composition and pronunciation. Their focus is on creating a friendly environment that encourages learning in a less stressful way. Four assistants (fourth-year students with intermediate English ability) also provide students with support as needed.

Participants

Students in the four- and two-year colleges were asked to voluntarily take part in the study. The participants were aged between 18 and 21, and were from different departments with different motivations for English learning. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to participants using the SAC. The survey was conducted anonymously in the interests of privacy.

Instrument

The survey was designed to: (1) provide an overview of SAC usage by students; and (2) clarify students’ English learning objectives and learning characteristics. The questions were newly set by one of the SAC language advisors, as questionnaires from past studies were not suitable for this study group.

The 5-minute double-sided A4 questionnaire had 14 questions in both English and Japanese to facilitate understanding. The front had three multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions, and the reverse (see Appendix: Survey) had four multiple choice questions and four open-ended questions. For this study, data from the reverse were used.
Three of the four open-ended questions on the reverse covered (Op-1) students' motivation for learning English; (Op-2) things they considered important in language learning; and (Op-3) their views on learner autonomy. The fourth question provided space for further comments. Op-1 responses provided an overview of the most common factors behind participants' desire to learn English. These factors were grouped and analyzed based on students’ responses to the other questions. With consideration of motivation for learning English, Op-2 and Op-3 were posed after the multiple-choice questions. Op-2 provided spaces for students to indicate up to three things they considered most important in English language learning. The responses here would likely relate to the motivations stated in Op-1. Op-3 was intended to identify trends in responses within Op-1 groups and how they differed. It should be noted that students’ definitions of learner autonomy were not evaluated based on definition quality.

The four multiple choice questions addressed students’ learning preferences and characteristics: (M1) how long they spent studying English per week; (M2) preferred locations/environments for English studying; (M3) preferred English-study partners; and (M4) preferred English-study methods. The aim was to identify any similarities in learning habits among the groups.

Procedure

The study was conducted at the SAC via an anonymous voluntary questionnaire. The questions were in both English and in Japanese, but students were not required to respond in English. Participants were asked to put their completed questionnaires into an envelope on a language advisor’s table. Some were folded in half and returned directly to a language advisor. The survey was conducted throughout June and July 2016 – a period judged suitable because students had likely gotten used to their new environment and classes by this time. Other months were considered less suitable, both for students and for data collection, due to scheduling issues (including holidays and university events) and the need for adjustment to a new semester (especially in April, when the new academic year starts, and September, when the second semester starts).

Results

A total of 46 students participated in the survey. Among the 46 questionnaires collected, 44 contained responses to Op-1. However, only 40 were categorized, as the others were considered non-categorizable. The most common motivations for studying English were: for the future (n = 16); to improve conversational ability (n = 13); to pass a course (n = 7); and for travel (n = 4). These four reasons were set as the groups, each of which was analyzed based on students’ definitions of learner autonomy (Op-3), things they believed important in language learning (Op-2), and items from M1 to M4.

Students’ definitions of learner autonomy were categorized into four sub-groups: (a) conducting independent research; (b) having the desire to learn; (c) studying in one’s own areas of interest and liking the subject; and (d) identifying optimal study methods for oneself. Sub-groups (a), (c) and (d) involve actual hands-on learning and learning methods, while sub-group (b) involves students’ willingness or desire to learn. As the part on matters of importance (Op-2) produced numerous responses, only the three most popular are shown in the results table (see Appendix; Table 1)

Group 1: English for the future

A total of 16 participants reported studying English for their future. Students in this group were instrumentally motivated to study. Among the 11 indicating their perception of learner autonomy (Op-3), 54.5% expressed an opinion that it involved establishing one’s own study methods. This suggests that these students perceived themselves as being responsible for their own learning. One respondent stated that learner autonomy was about having the desire to learn, which suggests the student may be aware of the importance of English for the future but does not necessarily embrace it.

Matters of importance (Op-2): Respondents specified 18 matters of importance. The two most popular were speaking ability and vocabulary. Writing ability, repetition of activities, ambition for learning, learning atmosphere, and people ranked joint third. Combinations of these considerations are ideal for language study, highlighting the importance of learning environments (atmosphere and people), approaches to learning, and repetition of activities that support language acquisition through output (speaking and writing).

Learning styles and preferences (M1 – M4): Students in this group were motivated to learn English for their futures. Notable trends based on the responses for M2, M3 and M4 were observed. M2 asked students where they preferred to study English. Seven preferred studying in their rooms, six preferred the SAC, and three preferred their English classrooms. One respondent circled both 'English
classroom' and 'SAC.' For M3, which asked students about their preferred study partners, all students answered, "with teachers and/or with classmates and friends." It was surprising that no one in this group preferred studying alone despite indicating a preference for studying in their rooms in M2. Lastly, students cited practicing speaking and writing, studying grammar and translating and taking notes as optimal learning approaches. Studying grammar/translating and taking notes are both input-based learning activities that are common in junior and senior high schools in Japan. It is notable that only half of respondents in this group preferred active English despite studying the language for their futures.

**Group 2: English communicative ability**

The 13 students in this group showed integrative motivation, studying to improve their English conversational ability. Six gave definitions of learner autonomy (Op-3), which were categorized into three sub-groups ((a), (b) and (d)). For this item, there was no strong correlation between study motivation and opinions on autonomous learning.

Matters of importance (Op-2): For this item, a total of 13 considerations were listed. Speaking ability was the most commonly cited, followed by vocabulary and writing ability. This trend was very similar to that of Group 1. However, it should be noted that Group 2 had a higher percentage of students who thought speaking ability was an important part of learning English. Other matters included listening and grammar, which are both important for learning and using communicative English.

Learning styles and preferences (M1-M4): As with Group 1, most students in Group 2 studied for an hour or less every week (M1). Several inferences can be made from this outcome. An optimistic reason would be that students do not feel that practicing spoken English is a form of learning. Another inference could be that students face time restrictions due to their busy course schedules. Many preferred studying at the SAC (M2), possibly because there are always other students, student helpers and teachers with whom to practice speaking English there. The results for M3 indicated that students in this group preferred to study with peers and teachers. Despite their motivation for studying English, five students preferred studying in their rooms and one preferred studying alone. Only 50% preferred learning English by speaking and writing.

**Group 3: Passing English classes**

Seven instrumentally motivated students were categorized in Group 3. Their main purpose for learning English was to pass English and other courses. All three of the students giving definitions of learner autonomy cited identifying suitable study methods. This could indicate that these students are serious about finding efficient and appropriate ways of studying to maximize comprehension and therefore pass their courses.

Matters of importance (Op-2): A total of 13 considerations were cited by students in Group 3. The two most popular were comprehension and enjoyment of learning. It is safe to say that these students, who were motivated to pass classes, were keen to understand course content. Many of the group may be concerned about not understanding and be confused by classes. The group’s indication of enjoyment of studying could indicate a lack of enjoyment in classes, possibly due to a lack of comprehension. Students also cited reading, listening and translating as matters of importance. These factors differ from those of Groups 1 and 2. Reading and listening are input methods that can be applied without a teacher or a classmate.

Learning styles and preferences (M1-M4): Students in Group 3 reported a tendency to study for longer (1 to 2 hours), probably because they required more time to maximize comprehension. Five of the seven students preferred studying at the SAC due to the immediate help and support available there from language advisors, which could also be inferred from the results for M3.

**Group 4: Travel**

Only four integratively motivated students were categorized in this group. The two who shared their definitions of learner autonomy both cited identification of suitable methods for studying.

Matters of importance (Op-2): Students in this group believed that listening and vocabulary were the most important aspects of language learning. In contrast to the students in Group 2, speaking was not the most important thing for those in Group 4. Respondents displayed a general concern regarding their ability to understand locals overseas when asking for directions or interacting in other ways. One consideration uniquely cited in this group was the exercise of initiative, which is a necessary skill for traveling or communicating with others.

Learning styles and preferences (M1-M4): Group 4 students were learning English for travel purposes, and
their responses for M2, M3 and M4 showed some correlation between this motivation and their learning preferences/styless. Respondents preferred studying at the library, at the SAC or in their rooms. None cited a preference for English classroom study, probably because typical English classes are the teacher-centered lecture type that provide students with only very limited opportunities to talk. This could be the main reason why 50% of respondents preferred studying at the library or the SAC. For M3, all students cited a preference for learning with a teacher, with classmates or friends, or with student helpers at the SAC. Learning with someone else provides more opportunities for negotiation and mediation, which are necessary for language acquisition. In addition, 50% of respondents cited a preference for learning by practicing speaking and writing, while others preferred taking notes and memorization. All these are essential activities for learning a language, especially for those focusing on linguistic output.

**Analysis**

Research question 1: Based on student motivations for learning English, what study preferences do the results show?

The 40 respondents categorized into four groups shared similarities and minor differences that could be characteristics unique to the set of students in each group. Group 1 preferred studying at the SAC and/or in their rooms, and also cited a preference for learning with a teacher and/or with classmates or friends. Respondents favored taking notes, studying grammar and translating, and practicing speaking/writing as methods of learning. These study preferences are typical of students who are motivated to learn English for their futures. Meanwhile, Group 2 was motivated by a desire to improve English conversational ability, with some students preferring to study in their rooms. Only one student preferred studying alone. It is notable that students in this group preferred input-based study (taking notes, memorizing and studying grammar/translation). Regardless of their aim to improve conversational ability, some favored non-output study environments and methods, suggesting the use of materials and study in private. Group 3 students were studying to pass English courses. Many cited a preference for studying at the SAC with teachers and classmates, and an even distribution of study method preferences was observed. Finally, Group 4 students, who were studying for travel purposes, generally preferred studying with peers or teachers, suggesting active participation in interaction with others.

Research question 2: Were there any correlations or trends between the results and motivations for learning?

All four groups showed correlations between motivation for learning and study preferences. This suggests that students were aware of the type of study needed to reach their goals. All four groups also listed major considerations toward the fulfillment of their objectives.

On a different note, there was a notably clear split among the four groups in terms of instrumental motivation (Groups 1 and 3; 23 students in all) and integrative motivation (Groups 2 and 4; 17 students in all). The gaps between the groups were not as big as expected, but more students exhibited instrumental motivation than anticipated. This could indicate that students were learning English as a tool for self-advancement, whether to secure employment or to pass English language courses. Less than half of all respondents exhibited integrative motivation to learn English.

**Limitations**

There were two main limitations to this study. The first was the low questionnaire return rate. Questionnaires were distributed in June and July, which coincided with final exams. Students at the SAC tended to be busy, and many required immediate attention from the language advisors. Some had no time to spare, or showed disinterest in the survey. Some completed the questionnaire only partially, resulting in invalid data. Questionnaires that had answers to more than 80% of the questions on the second page were used, representing only 40 of the 46 collected.

The second limitation was in the wording of the questionnaire. One issue here was with categorization. If the open-ended question on students’ study motivation had instead been multiple-choice, more of the questionnaires might have been valid for analysis. Secondly, the question asking students to list important activities and considerations in language learning generated a wide range of responses. Again, a multiple-choice question would have focused the results and their significance by concentrating respondents’ options.

Another limitation may have been a lack of clarity in questionnaire wording. For example, under study preferences (M3), the term ‘teacher’ may have been slightly vague, as
it could have referred to the English class teacher or the SAC language advisors. The items on the second page were also intended to provide an overview of students’ learning preferences based on their language study motivations.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

In this study, 46 university students participated in an anonymous survey to establish their motivations for learning English and their preferences of study style. The objectives were 1) to determine students’ perceptions of learner autonomy, and 2) to clarify their self-awareness regarding the study methods and abilities needed for attainment of their goals.

The majority of students completing valid questionnaires responded that learner autonomy involved identifying study methods that were suitable for them personally. Most students in Japan follow a cookie-cutter, one-size-fits all style of study throughout their primary and secondary education. As the survey participants had reached the tertiary level, they were arguably realizing that there are different ways to study. The questionnaire results suggested that respondents had clear motivation that involved working toward their futures, improving English conversational ability, passing English courses, or developing English proficiency for travel. Notably, different sets of students responded differently to questions on subjects such as where they preferred studying, who they preferred studying with and how they learned best. These three items differentiated the groups. Another question that separated the groups asked what students considered important in learning. However, it is questionable whether the students were actively practicing the skill sets they considered important in language acquisition toward their learning objectives. Despite the results, it cannot be claimed that the students had reached the status of autonomous learners of English.

Everyone is a language learner: some are learning their mother tongue, while others are learning a second, third or fourth language. All learners have objectives and motivations, whether integrative or instrumental. Among the study’s respondents, 87% had specific reasons to study English. Autonomous learning can be defined in many ways, and all people have their own way of learning. However, many university students today are still heavily dependent on their teachers or classmates for guidance on what and how to study. This stems from the approach taken in Japan’s educational system. The educational style needs to be changed to promote critical analysis and the ability to think outside the box. Students must also learn to think independently, take initiative and have the desire to learn, not just in English study but in all subjects. There is an urgent need for English language education reform in Japan. Learning is a lifelong process, and every student must have clear goals, interest and motivation for it.

**References**


Mariani, L. (1997). Teacher support and teacher challenge in promoting learner autonomy. *Perspective. TESOL. Vol XXIII.*


Appendix

Survey:

Note: These are the questions given out to university students at the SAC facility in June and July 2016. The questions were provided in both English and Japanese to promote comprehension. Students were not required to respond in English.

あなたの英語学習について教えてください:

1. I study English because: 私が英語を勉強する理由:
   ▶

2. I prefer studying in… 私が一番落ち着いて英語をする場所は:
   1. my English classroom 英語の教室
   2. the library 図書館
   3. the Language Education Center 語学教育センター
   4. my room 自分の部屋

3. I prefer studying with… 私が一緒に英語を勉強したい人たち:
   1. a teacher 先生
   2. classmates or friends クラスメートや友達
   3. student helpers at the LEC 先輩やセンターの学生ボランティア
   4. nobody 一人で

4. I learn best by… 私に一番合っている勉強法は:
   1. taking notes ノートにメモを取ったり、書き写したり
   2. memorizing 暗記
   3. studying grammar and translating English to Japanese 文法や英文の和訳
   4. practicing speaking and writing 話したり、書いたりひたすら練習

What are the most important things in English language learning?

1. ___________________ 2 ___________________ 3 ___________________

What is your definition of learner autonomy?

________________________________________

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1: English for the Future</th>
<th>Group 2: English Communication Skills</th>
<th>Group 3: Passing English Class</th>
<th>Group 4: Traveling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Op-3) Learner autonomy involves:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) conducting research myself</td>
<td>(n = 11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 2 (18.2%)</td>
<td>n = 6</td>
<td>n = 0</td>
<td>n = 2 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) having the desire to learn</td>
<td>n = 1 (9%)</td>
<td>n = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>n = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 1 (9%)</td>
<td>n = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>n = 0</td>
<td>n = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) studying what I want to study and liking the subject</td>
<td>n = 6 (54.3%)</td>
<td>n = 2 (33%)</td>
<td>n = 3 (42.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) identifying study methods that best suit me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n = 2 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n = 3 (42.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (Op-2) Important learning activities/ matters: | | |
| Speaking proficiency (n = 5; 12.2%), Vocabulary (n = 4; 9.75%), Writing proficiency, Repetition, Ambition, Atmosphere, People (n = 3; 7% each) | Speaking skills (n = 7; 20.6%), Vocabulary (n = 6; 17.6%), Writing skills (n = 4; 11.8%) | Comprehension (n = 3; 15%), Ability to enjoy (n = 3; 15%), Reading; Listening; Translating (n = 2; 10% each) | Listening (n = 2; 20%), Vocabulary (n = 2; 20%), Speaking; Writing; Help, Communication skills; Taking initiatives; Desire to think (n = 1; 10% each) |

| (M1) Duration of weekly study: | | |
| 0-30 minutes | n = 8 (50%) | n = 6 (46.2%) | n = 1 (14.3%) | n = 3 (75%) |
| 1 hour | n = 5 (31.3%) | n = 4 (30.8%) | n = 3 (42.9%) | n = 1 (25%) |
| 2 hours | n = 2 (12.5%) | n = 2 (15.4%) | n = 3 (42.9%) | n = 0 |
| 3 or more hours | n = 1 (6.3%) | n = 1 (7.7%) | n = 0 | n = 0 |

| (M2) Preferred study environment: | | |
| English classroom | n = 3 (17.6%) | n = 1 (8.3%) | n = 1 (14.3%) | n = 0 |
| Library | n = 1 (5.9%) | n = 1 (8.3%) | n = 0 | n = 0 |
| SAC | n = 6 (35.3%) | n = 5 (41.7%) | n = 5 (71.4%) | n = 2 (50%) |
| Own room | n = 7 (41.2%) | n = 5 (41.7%) | n = 1 (14.3%) | n = 1 (25%) |

| (M3) Preferred study partner: | | |
| Teacher | n = 8 (44.4%) | n = 5 (35.7%) | n = 3 (33.3%) | n = 1 (25%) |
| Classmates or friends | n = 10 (55.5%) | n = 6 (42.9%) | n = 5 (50%) | n = 2 (50%) |
| Student helpers at the SAC | n = 0 | n = 2 (14.3%) | n = 0 | n = 1 (25%) |
| Nobody | n = 0 | n = 1 (6.1%) | n = 1 (11.1%) | n = 0 |

| (M4) Preferred style of learning: | | |
| Taking notes | n = 5 (35.7%) | n = 2 (16.7%) | n = 2 (40%) | n = 1 (25%) |
| Memorizing | n = 0 | n = 3 (25%) | n = 2 (40%) | n = 1 (25%) |
| Studying grammar and translating | n = 2 (14.3%) | n = 1 (8.3%) | n = 1 (20%) | n = 2 (50%) |
| Practicing speaking and writing | n = 7 (50%) | n = 6 (50%) | n = 2 (40%) | n = 0 |

Note: Group 1 categorized 16 students and they were studying English for their future. Group 2 had 13 students who cited speaking proficiency and vocabulary as being among the most important activities/matters in language learning. Group 3 had seven students. They were instrumentally motivated students' sole objective for learning English was to pass their English courses. Group 4 had four students who were studying English for traveling purposes.