1. Introduction

In the research studies of Russian language education in Japan, several surveys on the effects of teaching methods have been published on the basis of data analysis (Ito, 2003; 2004). To our knowledge, however, very few studies have been conducted on the motivation of learning Russian as a foreign language (RFL) and its influence on language learning.

On the contrary, there are numerous extant quantitative studies of motivation in English education (e.g., Takase, 2007; Ueki and Takeuchi, 2012; Yashima, 2000; 2001; 2009). Yashima (2004:67) reports that since English is considered an international language, the construct which she determined to be important to motivation, namely, international posture, defined as an attitude and psychological tendency to embrace international cultures, is an appropriate concept to represent motivation. However, concerning languages other than English, the motivation of students to study the language seems to be more strongly connected to their attitudes and interests in the culture or societies in which the target languages are spoken.

However, from a questionnaire survey administrated by Shiomura and Kitaoka (2011) to RFL students who study Russian as a compulsory subject in the university, there are very few students who demonstrate an interest in Russian language, cultures and society. Furthermore, it is likely that attitude toward past language experiences, with English, for example, and
expectations to learn new things are more influential to motivation for studying languages.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the motivational components or orientations, the role of which is to help arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals, for Japanese university students to study Russian. On the basis of the studies by Gardner (1972; 1985; 2010), Dörnyei (1994; 2001) and Yashima (2000; 2001; 2004; 2009), the authors have configured the motivational components or orientations to study Russian and analyzed statistically the relationship between the orientations and learning outcomes.

2. The motivation to learn Russian as a foreign language

This section is an overview of the socio-educational theory by Gardner and Lambert (1972; 1985), comprising integrative orientation, a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture in which the target languages are spoken, and instrumental orientation, reflecting the practical value and advantages of learning a new language. In addition, Yashima’s (2000; 2001; 2004; 2009) and Nakata’s (2000; 2006) construct, namely, international posture is introduced. Furthermore, we will consider the motivation to study Russian as a foreign language in Japanese universities on the basis of the framework of an educational approach by Dörnyei (1994; 2001).

2.1 Integrative orientation and instrumental orientation

Motivation has been studied through the second half of the 20th century, mainly with regard to a cognitive approach, such as expectancy-value theories and goal theories. The influence of factors such as the socio-cultural context has come to be considered only since 1990 (see Uebuchi, 2004). On the other hand, as for the studies of motivation to learn a second or foreign language, the focus has been on social psychology, triggered by the integrative and instrumental outlook, presented by Gardner and Lambert (1972). The influence of socio-cultural factors has been more heavily considered than that of cognitive factors.

The concept of integrative orientation, motive or motivation has been widely discussed and has become the main subject of studies of motivation to learn a second or foreign language. According to Gardner (2010), many
researchers have different concepts of the term. Gardner (1985:54; 2010:5) offers the following explanation: “The concept of the integrative motive includes not only the orientation but also the motivation (i.e., attitudes toward learning the language, plus desire plus motivational intensity) and a number of other attitude variables involving the other language community, out-group in general and the language learning context.” Dörnyei and Ushioda (2001:41) offer the following explanation: “A key issue in Gardner’s motivation theory is the relationship between motivation and orientation. The role of orientations is to help arouse motivation and direct it towards a set of goals.”

Concerning the study of English in Japan, Yashima (2000; 2001; 2004; 2009) and Nakata (1998; 2006) proposed a concept called international posture. Yashima postulated that international posture “tries to capture a tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group, as a construct more pertinent to EFL contexts” (see Yashima, 2009:145).

International posture combines both integrative and instrumental aspects of motivation (see Yashima, 2001:39). She states, furthermore, “As English gains power as a world language, it has become increasingly more difficult for Japanese EFL learners to identify a clear target group or culture” (see Yashima, 2009:145).

Compared with English, which is practically characterized as a universal language, for other foreign languages, such as Russian, it would be easy to identify the target culture more clearly. However, at the onset of the Russian course involved in this study, a survey is conducted every year to determine why students study Russian at the university. The following reasons are given: “I’ve heard that it is easy to earn the credit,” and “The information before class made Russian lessons sound like fun.” There are very few students who demonstrate an interest in the Russian language, cultures and society (see Shiomura and Kitaoka, 2011). In this study we try to determine whether instrumental or integrative orientation could be considered as motivational factors for studying Russian in Japanese universities.

### 2.2 Attitude toward English

The study of motivation for foreign or second language learning has been
pioneered by Gardner and his associates using a social psychological approach. The study of motivation was further characterized by work relying on cognitive theories, and developed in educational psychology in the 1990s. Studies are carried out without specific regard to foreign or second language learning but with consideration given to theories of motivation in general (see Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2001). Along these lines, Dörnyei (1994:280; 2001:18) presented a framework of L2 motivation as a model of the educational approach, focusing on classroom motivation (see Table 1). In this framework, the socio-cultural factors proposed by Gardner and his associates, integrative and instrumental orientation, are positioned on language level. The factors related to the learning of individual students interpreted in the cognitive approach are positioned on the learner level.

Table 1  Dörnyei’s framework of L2 motivation

| LANGUAGE LEVEL | Integrative motivational subsystem | Instrumental motivational subsystem |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| LEARNER LEVEL  | Need for achievement | Self-confidence |
|                | • Language use anxiety | • Perceived L2 competence |
|                | • Causal attributions | • Self-efficacy |
| LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL | Interest (in the course) | Relevance (of the course to one’s needs) |
|                | Expectancy (of success) | Satisfaction (one has in the outcome) |
| Course-specific motivational components | Affiliative motive (to please the teacher) | Authority type (controlling vs. autonomy-supporting) |
| Teacher-specific motivational components | Direct socialisation of motivation | • Modelling |
| Group-specific motivational components | • Task presentation | • Feedback |
|                | Goal-orientedness | Norm and reward system |
|                | Group cohesiveness | Classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive or individualistic) |
Gardner (2010:3) writes that “learning another language in school is unlike learning any other subject in that it involves making features of another culture community part of one’s own repertoire. For some individuals this can be a very positive enriching experience, but for others it can be a difficult negative one. This may be represented in the construct of integrativeness.” The questionnaire survey administered by Shiomura and Kitaoka (2011) revealed that students in their survey did not have a strong interest in Russian culture or society. Therefore, we could infer that attitudes toward the cultures or societies, in which target languages are spoken, are possibly not influential in learning the language, at least when the students start to learn. However, we could assume that factors of the learner level or learning situation level in the Dörnyei’s framework of L2 motivation could be more influential factors leading to the study of Russian.

University RFL students who report that they are not good at English or that they hate English are plentiful. We consider such negative attitude toward English of RFL students as a factor of causal attributions on the learner level in Dörnyei’s framework of L2 motivation; namely, the attribution placed on success or failure in the past experiences has an effect on a subsequent action. Most Japanese university students have experienced the study of English. We assume that this experience has strongly influenced their attitudes toward the study of a new language. At the same time, students possess some level of excitement when they begin to learn a new language, even if their interest level in that particular language is not very high. We also want to show how experiences with language study and a feeling of excitement for studying something new influence on learning Russian.

3. Result of the questionnaire survey

The questionnaire survey of Shiomura and Kitaoka (2011) suggests that it may be difficult to identify any element of instrumental orientation, integrative orientation or international posture as motivational factors to start learning Russian in Japanese universities. It seems also to reveal that a considerable number of students hold a feeling of excitement for studying something new, and that their past experiences of learning a foreign language, in most of the cases English, may have significant influences upon
their attitudes toward learning a new language. Motivational factors, such as these, should be discussed with as much objectivity as possible.

We conducted a survey consisting of 17 items with a five-point Likert scale containing items possibly related to factors of motivation of students of RFL; integrative orientation (Q2-5), instrumental orientation (Q6-9), excitement for learning something new (Q10-13), and other potential components of motivation (Q14-17). We investigated the data from two aspects. First, we measured the relative importance among orientations reported above by comparing the contribution ratios calculated from the orthogonal solution of factor analysis. Second, considering the significance of each orientation influencing a learning outcome, we attempted to evaluate the relative intensity of the orientations by comparison of standard partial regression coefficients, estimated from the regression of the scores from the Russian examination on the factor scores.

The questionnaire survey was conducted in 2011 with the cooperation of 38 first-year students of Russian and 15 of German among an informatics faculty at a Japanese university. Therefore, the results may be partially attributed to the characteristics of the faculty or the university. The questions are in the Appendix.

3.1 Factor analysis

The analyses were implemented using a statistical software package, R Ver. 2.11.1 (64 bit), with reference to Aoki (2009). Oshio (2004) was also consulted for statistical procedures. First of all, we performed an exploratory factor analysis on the dataset obtained from our questionnaire survey and then, scrutinizing such criteria as the scree-test criterion, the Kaiser-Guttman rule, the cumulative contribution ratio, and the goodness of fit (CMIN/DF), determined the number of factors that should be extracted, and selected items from the perspective of possible interpretation of a factor. Table 2 shows the loadings of four factors finally extracted.

The extraction of factors was implemented by using the maximum likelihood method and varimax rotation. The chi-square statistic with 41 degrees of freedom amounts to 44.07, while its p-value is .343. The contribution ratio in the table, a proportion of the sum of squares with respect to factor loadings to the variance among all observed variables, indicates the
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Table 2  Results of factor analysis on learners of Russian

| Question item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Q11           | .859     | -.044    | .161     | -.082    |
| Q13           | .765     | .173     | .222     | .200     |
| Q12           | .757     | .151     | .058     | .225     |
| Q10           | .652     | .050     | .179     | -.026    |
| Q6            | -.064    | .859     | .089     | .069     |
| Q9            | .296     | .793     | .067     | .077     |
| Q8            | .159     | .656     | .205     | -.014    |
| Q7            | -.014    | .563     | .287     | -.257    |
| Q17           | .019     | .428     | .115     | .204     |
| Q4            | .154     | .182     | .967     | -.054    |
| Q2            | .202     | .292     | .689     | -.084    |
| Q5            | .354     | .173     | .631     | -.079    |
| Q15           | .024     | .039     | -.079    | .993     |
| Q16           | .157     | .078     | -.105    | .837     |
| Contribution ratio | .190 | .179 | .149 | .137 |
| Cumulative contribution ratio | .190 | .369 | .518 | .655 |

amount of information involved in each factor, or the explanatory power of a factor to the variance. It is noteworthy that such an interpretation is impossible when we use the oblique solution (see Adachi, 2006). The underlined values in boldface suggest that they have large absolute values in the factor loadings and correspond to the questions characterizing the factor. In the first column of the table, the questions are arranged.

We observe that Factor 1 which has the highest contribution ratio significantly correlates with Q10-13 suggesting a feeling of excitement for learning something new. Therefore, we call Factor 1 finding orientation. Factor 2 highly correlates with Q6-9 prepared for instrumental orientation. Therefore, we call Factor 2 instrumental orientation. Factor 2, however, also shows a high correlation with Q17. Since these five questions are prepared to identify how students think about the utility or practicality of the Russian language, we call Factor 2 practical orientation, which has indeed almost the same meaning as instrumental orientation. Factor 3 highly correlates with Q2, Q4 and 5. Thus, we provisionally call Factor 3 integrative orientation. In fact, we will give it a different interpretation later on. Factor 4 shows high a correlation with Q15 and 16, in which the students are asked whether or not they like English. Thus, we call Factor 4 the English orientation, or the English-complex if the sign of its factor loadings is reversed.
We used the same survey and performed analysis with students of German as a foreign language (GFL) in order to confirm whether or not such a feature of motivational factors at the start of learning is in common among other language students. Table 3 shows the results of the analysis concerning GFL students.

The items are the same as those given to RFL students. We changed only Russia and Russian language to Germany and German language. The chi-square statistic with 32 degrees of freedom is 32.02, while its p-value is .466.

Comparing with Table 2, the factor loadings in Table 3 have no clear and simple structural pattern. Factor 1 which has the highest contribution ratio, highly correlates with Q15 and 16, which indicates English orientation. It is noteworthy that Factor 1 of Table 2 shows no such feature. Factor 1 of Table 3 is characterized considerably by an attitude toward English. Since Factor 2 correlates highly with Q11-13, it seems to be the finding orientation, a feeling of excitement for learning German. Factor 3 may be interpreted as the mixture of instrumental and integrative orientation. Factor 4 which shows particularly high correlation with Q9, is considered to represent a vague interest in German for GFL students.

In summary, as discussed in existing studies, we maintain that instrumental

### Table 3 Results of factor analysis on learners of German

| Question item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Q16           | .990    | .100    | .063    | .033    |
| Q4            | .788    | .315    | .444    | .003    |
| Q15           | .738    | -.281   | .070    | .292    |
| Q7            | .684    | .333    | .543    | .308    |
| Q12           | -.164   | .936    | .005    | -.090   |
| Q11           | .080    | .772    | .202    | .304    |
| Q5            | .316    | .622    | .267    | .125    |
| Q13           | .133    | .599    | .136    | -.039   |
| Q8            | -.059   | .377    | .279    | .288    |
| Q2            | .344    | .071    | .932    | .056    |
| Q6            | .056    | .250    | .743    | .130    |
| Q10           | .279    | .283    | .283    | .182    |
| Q9            | .256    | .071    | .138    | .952    |

**Contribution ratio**

| Contribution ratio | .233 | .216 | .172 | .103 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|
| **Cumulative contribution ratio** | .233 | .450 | .621 | .724 |
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and integrative orientation seem to be components of motivation to students of Russian and those of German as they begin their language studies. With regard to RFL students, a feeling of excitement for learning something new or the finding orientation seems to be more significant. This result is consistent with that of Shiomura and Kitaoka (2011). We, however, will give a different interpretation to the integrative orientation of RFL students later. A negative feeling toward learning English may influence learning Russian, while for GFL students, a feeling toward learning English has great significance, perhaps positively. The factor of finding orientation influences both GFL and RFL students.

3.2 Regression analysis

In the above discussion, we evaluate the relative importance of factors by means of their contribution ratios. Now, we calculate the regression line of the result of an examination considered as one of the learning outcomes on the factor scores calculated from the factor analysis of RFL students. We estimate the intensity of each factor referring to the size of the standard partial regression coefficients. Three students with missing values were excluded from the data.

In the first step, we implement the regression of the results of a Russian examination held in the second semester as a learning outcome for the first year on the scores of the four factors extracted by factor analysis and independent variables, probably related to the examination. In all cases, none of the regression coefficients was significant, and an indicator of the fitness of a regression line, R-squared, was quite wrong. Therefore, we postulate that motivation as study begins may be more influential on a learning outcome in an earlier period and conduct a regression analysis of the results of the examination held in the first semester.

We made use of stepwise variable selection. In this procedure, the result of the Russian examination becomes a dependent variable, while the average score of all examinations except for Russian held in the first semester, the result of the vocabulary test, and the scores of four factors are all independent variables. The standard regression line finally obtained is specified by Equation (1) below.
Result of Russian examination held in the first semester

\[ \text{Result of vocabulary test} = 0.621 \ (\text{Result of vocabulary test}) - 0.314 \ (\text{Integrative orientation}) + 0.340 \ (\text{English-complex}), \]  

where we define English-complex as minus English orientation. The regression line is highly significant, and the adjusted R-squared amounts to 0.568. The standard partial regression coefficients are all statistically significant even at the 1% level (see Table 4).

**Table 4 Estimates of standard partial regression coefficient:**

|                      | Estimate | Standard error | t-value | p-value   | VIF |
|----------------------|----------|----------------|---------|-----------|-----|
| Result of vocabulary test | 0.621    | 0.113          | 5.48    | 5.36e-6 *** | 1.01 |
| Integrative orientation | -0.314   | 0.119          | -2.76   | 0.010 **   | 1.01 |
| English orientation     | -0.340   | 0.115          | -2.96   | 0.006 **   | 1.00 |

The result of vocabulary test in Equation (1) is an indicator for measuring the daily learning of RFL students. From the results of the principal component regression of Shiomura and Kitaoka (2001), we deduce that it has great influence on the results of the examination. Therefore, both the finding orientation and the practical orientation can have little influence upon the outcome. It is, however, very surprising that the partial regression coefficient with respect to integrative orientation is significant and negative.

Now, we further examine Q2, Q4 and Q5, which correlate highly with the integrative orientation. These items are designed to identify integrativeness with the people, culture and society of Russia. Since many RFL students in Japanese universities are unfamiliar with Russian language, culture and society, they are not likely to have interest in them from the outset. In fact, the questionnaire by Shiomura and Kitaoka (2011) suggests that most RFL students have little knowledge of the Russian people, Russian culture, and society. Students with high scores on Factor 3 are unlikely to have sincere and strong interest in the people and culture represented by a group that speaks Russian. Students who answered the questionnaire say, “I have a Russian friend, but talk with the friend in English,” or “There were Russian characters in the Japanese anime” and so on.
We infer that Factor 3 represents an interest without recourse to the Russian language. Students with high scores on Factor 3, which correlates highly with Q4, “I want to have a Russian friend,” almost always chat with others during lessons. Perhaps, they are more interested in making friends than in learning Russian. Therefore, Factor 3 appears to be the *relationship orientation* of Ichikawa (2001; 2011), that is, a feeling that we do things simply because others do them. In addition, he refers to self-respect orientation (for pride or competitiveness) and award orientation (for awards). Concerning these three types of orientations, he says, “It is noteworthy that the quality of learning cannot always be improved by promoting motivation” (see Ichikawa, 2001:60). The reason that Factor 3 *negatively* correlates with the learning outcome is that many of those students who have high scores for it avoid studying with friends. There seems to have been a failure to connect the relationship orientation with the learning attitude or a learning outcome.

The reason that English orientation negatively correlates with the learning outcome or positively with the English-complex is that those students who have difficulty learning English want to try again to study foreign language to prove to themselves that they can succeed.

In 1994-1995, research on remedial education in Japanese universities was carried out by Arai and others. In the preface of the report, Arai reports the following: “In the last few years, there has been an increasing concern about remedial education in universities. This is due to the fact that the number of students who could pass the examination but cannot keep up with lectures or lessons has increased, since various devices of entrance examination have been made. Examples include admissions by recommendation, curtailing examination subjects, and so forth” (see Arai et al., 1996). Such unfavorable situations have not yet been remedied.

In Russian-language classrooms, there are students who did not develop effective study habits until they matriculated in a university. These students could not force themselves to keep studying, and abandoned learning when they realized that language learning requires regular study over a long period. In fact, students who had developed effective study habits tend to get good grades, even if they lack passion towards the object of study. Our results reveal that the current teaching method fails to motivate students beyond the study habits they had already acquired, and does not foster the development
of more effective study habits.

4. Conclusion

When students have strong motivation to learn a language, teachers do not need to worry about how to motivate them at the start of a course. Instead, teachers should consider how to encourage students to continue studying, as language acquisition is a long-term endeavor. On the other hand, for less motivated RFL students, such as those who may be taking Russian as a mandatory course, teachers should find ways to motivate them at the early stages of the course. In this research we tried to identify the motivational components of RFL students at the early stages of the course, and then investigated whether or not these components affected the learning outcome.

We assumed that previous L2 experiences, (or an English-complex) and the expectation to acquire new knowledge, (or “finding orientation”) are the key components of motivation for students enrolled in Russian language classes at the start of the learning process. From the result of the questionnaire an English-complex and “finding orientation” both seem to be components of motivation of RFL students. But in current teaching methodology “finding orientation” has little influence on the outcome.

We also tried to identify the motivational components of RFL students based on a socio-psychological model and then investigated whether or not these components affected the learning outcome. We maintain that instrumental orientation, (or practical orientation) and integrative orientation both seem to be components of motivation for RFL students. However the relationship between practical orientation and the learning outcome is weak. Moreover integrative orientation negatively influences the outcome.

In its original meaning, integrative orientation reflects a sincere and personal interest in people and culture represented by the L2 group; in this sense it is a strong factor of motivation and would most likely have a positive relationship. It seems that integrative orientation does not have its original meaning, when we refer to learning the language of a culture or community which is not familiar to students. For most RFL students, Russian people, culture, and society are a distant reality; thus, for the majority of them, it would be difficult to have a deep interest in any of them. Students are likely
only to want to have new friends, new experiences or common topics to speak with classmates.

Questions 2-5 are designed to identify “integrativeness” with the people, culture, and society of Russia. However Factor 3, which highly correlates with questions 2, 4 and 5, suggests not integrative orientation, but relationship orientation, that is, seeking new friends or contact with friends in the class. This relationship orientation actually leads students away from the study of Russian.

In our analysis it is also revealed that students’ study habits, which teachers in a university may not be able to control in the short-term, have a greater influence on study outcomes. This result seems rather disappointing. It indicates that there is little that teachers can do to change university students’ study habits or attitude to learning languages or to motivate students to learn languages and thus affect their study outcomes. However our research and analyses reveal that some factors of motivation to study Russian have actual significance. Therefore, we must find some way to activate these factors and motivate students. We hope that our analysis and insights will lead to improvements in the teaching of Russian in Japan.

In this study we have used open-source R software developed by the R Development Core Team (2010) for data analysis. The software, distributed under the terms of the GNU General Public License, is the equivalent of expensive statistical analysis software, and may have more functionality and reliability. Recently, it has gained recognition among researchers in foreign language education (see Uehara, 2011). We hope that many more researchers will use such easily available software to conduct further studies of RFL teaching in Japan.

Appendix  Questionnaire items and scale used in the study

The questionnaire for RFL and GFL students consists of 17 items with a five-point Likert scale and free description. The items are presented below. The questions, with the exception of the language used, are identical for the GFL and RFL students.

Please recall your first lesson of Russian in April. Then,
Q1. I knew something about Russia.
Q2. I wished to live in Russia.
Q3. I wished to travel in Russia.
Q4. I wished to make friends with Russian people.
Q5. I was interested in Russian culture.
Q6. I thought that knowledge of the Russian language would be an advantage to getting a job.
Q7. I thought that knowledge of the Russian language would help to study a major subject.
Q8. I thought that studying Russian is important because it would enable me to have a broad knowledge about the world.
Q9. I thought that knowledge of Russian would be helpful to me someday in the future.
Q10. I had expectations to learn a new language in university.
Q11. I was curious to know what kind of language Russian was.
Q12. I was curious to know what kind of country Russia was.
Q13. I thought that learning Russian would help me discover something new.
Q14. I thought that learning a language would be interesting.
Q15. I thought that I was good at English.
Q16. I liked English.
Q17. I thought that the ability to speak a foreign language, in addition to English, would be “cool”.

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ABSTRACT

Motivational Factors for Learners of Russian: Statistical Analysis with R

Kitaoka Chinatsu
Shiomura Takashi

The purpose of this study is to identify the motivational components or orientations for Japanese university students to study Russian and analyze statistically the relationship between the orientations and learning outcomes. The results of the analyses are explained in the following. First, a feeling of excitement for studying something new (finding orientation) and an expectation that the Russian language someday would be of use (practical orientation) could be the motivational components at the start of learning. These orientations, however, do not reflect an influence on the learning results. Students’ learning habits are much more influential on the learning outcome than the initial motivational components. Second, interest in the culture or society in which the target language is spoken has been considered to be an integrative orientation in existing studies but it might be better explained as a “relationship orientation.” Third, negative attitudes toward past language experiences (i.e., difficulty or feeling of inadequacy with English) have an unexpectedly large influence on Russian language learning. Therefore, to those who do not have effective study habits, no type of orientation would have an influence on learning Russian unless an unconventional approach to learning is adopted.