

学 位 論 文 要 旨

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題 目 Student engagement and motivation in primary foreign language classes:
A mixed-methods longitudinal study (小学校外国語活動における児童
の主体的な学びと動機づけに関する混合方法を用いた縦断的研究)

This thesis reports on a series of quantitative and qualitative studies of classroom practices influencing student motivation and engagement. Working from the basic thesis that teachers are most interested in ways of actively engaging students in the learning process, this series of studies investigates practices currently used by teachers in elementary foreign language classes. The first chapter provides the rationale behind the studies and an outline of the overall organization of each chapter.

Chapter two describes the basic theories of motivation, engagement, and learning used in these studies. This chapter puts a special emphasis on two main theories: self-determination theory of motivation and social cognitive theory of learning. These two distinct theories provide a mechanism for investigating how motivation and learning develop in a school setting.

Chapter three describes the setting where the research will take place. This chapter focuses on the Japanese social and political environment surrounding the implementation of foreign language activities in elementary schools. Drawing on the discussions of theory from the previous chapter, this chapter describes how self-determination theory may align with elementary foreign language policy, as well as discussing some of the realities of teaching in Japanese elementary schools and the role of foreign teachers in the classroom.

Chapter four outlines the methodological considerations used to address the study of engagement and motivation in elementary foreign language classes. After describing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this chapter explains the reasons for using a mixed-methods design to study the complex and dynamic nature of classroom engagement. The chapter lays out the research questions connecting the five empirical chapters to follow, and describes how they interrelate to form a clear narrative. The design starts with qualitative groundwork, moving through a series of quantitative explorations, and finally a grounded, in-depth qualitative investigation of classroom practices which positively influence engagement.

Chapter five describes a series of classroom observations conducted in the United States and Japan. These observations focused on high-engagement classes where teachers used the new language close to 100% of class time. This study found a series of practices used by these teachers which enabled them to use the new language for nearly all of class.

Chapter six describes the process of creating a survey instrument which could measure some of the practices found in chapter five. Building instruments from the bottom up by interviewing and discussing items with teachers, this series of studies describes the process of validating these surveys to be used in elementary foreign language classes. These studies were designed in line with the theories discussed in chapters two and three, and based on the data-gathering principles outlined in chapter four. The results showed that students had a clear and consistent understanding of how their teachers' actions influenced their sense of satisfaction and engagement in class.

Chapter seven tested the differences between classes led by native and non-native teachers, using data from chapter six to perform an embedded study. This chapter found that students perceived little difference between Japanese and non-Japanese teachers' teaching styles, but that they were more likely to attempt to speak in classes led primarily by their homeroom teachers. The results were used to justify the use of a single classroom observation in chapter 8 to sample students' engagement, as survey results indicated little difference between survey ratings over time.

Chapter eight investigated the longitudinal influence of motivation and classroom processes on engagement and learning. The study presented in this chapter expands on the work completed in chapters six and seven, using longitudinal structural equation modeling to investigate the relationship between existing motives and in-class effort. The study was also triangulated using outside observers. This chapter found that in-class processes are highly salient to students, while existing motivation has a relatively small influence on students' engagement. External observers and teachers confirmed this, finding the strongest relationship between students' self-reported engagement, observer ratings, and teacher assessment.

Chapter nine describes the observation procedures used to describe classes thought of as the most engaging by both students and observers. Classes found to be highly engaging and promote learners' sense of self-directed motivation were recorded and cataloged in comparison with other classes to help recognize what specifically allowed them to be more interesting and engaging. These teachers' classes displayed patterns of emotional and instructional support, clear organization, and comprehensible linguistic input. By supporting students in these four areas, teachers were able to create a classroom environment where students benefited from and enjoyed the foreign language learning process.

Chapter ten summarizes these findings in light of the research questions presented in chapter four. This chapter describes the findings of the empirical chapters in light of the theories, policies, and realities presented in chapters two and three. Special care was taken to connect the findings to actionable practices for teachers to use in the classroom.