博士論文（要約）

Changing Roles of Corporate Business Language Training in the Context of Globalisation in Japan: A Longitudinal Organisational Ethnography

（日本のグローバル化を見据えた企業ビジネス英語研修の役割：
企業内エスノグラフィーを用いた縦断的研究）

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Acknowledgements

When I embarked on my doctoral dissertation project in 2011, I did not have any idea where I was going; I was nothing but a freelance corporate trainer whose future career was totally obscure. My determination to enrol in this Ph.D. programme was originally a part of my career development strategies to me. It was at that time when I first met my supervisor, Professor Thomas Kilburne Gally, at the University of Tokyo.

His very first word in our first meeting at his office is still deeply inscribed in my memory; he said "it is wrong to think that obtaining the Ph.D. is the ultimate goal of your life." Now that I am finally at the stage to officially submit my doctoral dissertation, which now I think is the very first step of my academic career path, his above words have become more powerful to me. Without his encouragement, I could not have completed my doctoral research project.

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

BELF	Business English as a lingua franca
CA	Conversation analysis
CS	Communication strategy
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ESL	English as a second language
FTA	Face-threatening act
HR(D)	Human resources (Development)
IBD	Intercultural business discourse
L1	First language
L2	Second language
SLA	Second language acquisition

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Motive of this study

The use of English for business purposes in Japan, a non-English-speaking country, has been steadily increasing recently. One major reason for the emergence in English-speaking business discourse in Japan is globalisation ideology, according to Kubota (1998, 2011). Business communication skills based on advanced English proficiency are becoming more salient not only in foreign-affiliated companies, but also in a number of ordinary Japanese companies at present. (e.g., Fujio, 2010; Sato, 2014a, 2014b; Takino, 2015; Tanaka, 2006, 2010). This social metamorphosis grabs the attention of many researchers; not only in the field of business discourse studies, but also of applied linguistics. However, many such researchers, though they are eager to address various kinds of issues, are yet to achieve a full consensus about what *globalisation* is. Globalisation is such a buzzword in today's world.

Despite its ambiguity, an increasing number of Japanese companies are trying to catch up with globalisation by all means. In 2011, Recruit commissioned and conducted a statistical survey on global management and human resources development in order to draw a general picture of globalisation in Japanese companies. The analysis suggested that approximately 77% of companies in Japan, including small to medium-sized companies, were eager to introduce corporate in-house English training programmes to raise employees' awareness of global business communication. The results also indicated that, along with globalisation, the needs of corporate language training are subject to drastic changes. The objectives of corporate training are not only to help trainees acquire advanced proficiency of English for business purposes, but also to encourage them to develop competence for intercultural communication (e.g., Fujio, 2010, 2014; Handford, 2010; Tanaka, 2006, 2014). It is predicted that the number of Japanese businesspeople who are to take corporate training to acquire advanced business English skills will increase as globalisation proceeds.

As a freelance corporate trainer, I have been in contact with various companies in Japan and have facilitated corporate trainees developing their business English proficiency since 2010. At the same time, I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Tokyo whose research interests include

discourse analysis of business English. The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, is to combine my on-site practice at some global companies as a business English trainer with the theory of intercultural business communication in order to gain some insights into which direction the future globalisation of Japan will go in. In this sense, I count myself as one of the stakeholders of the possible benefits of this study.

Trainees receiving corporate English training are expected to develop their linguistic and business competence. The measurement/assessment of their proficiency growth is normally conducted based on the L1-standard. In order to do so, the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of a standardised English test that the trainees take is usually employed. In addition, evaluation reports from trainers are also referred to as supplementary material.

The forms of corporate in-house English training programmes vary from company to company depending on various factors, such as company policy, ultimate goals of training, and financial limitations. Table 1, presented below, is an example of the types of corporate English training programmes that the author observed. It also contains some general information about the average number of trainees in one lesson, training duration, average lesson time, training goals, and frequency. The information necessary for this summary was collected through my participant observation in several Japanese companies and confirmed by colleagues. Additionally, there are many other types of corporate training, including leadership and trust-building workshops for managers. It should be noted hereby, however, that readers are advised to consider very carefully before concluding that this tendency can be generally observed.

Corporate training has been adequately embedded as an aspect of human resource development strategy in many Japanese companies. It is often seen as one of the unique characteristics of Japanese-style business management and administration (Vogel, 1979). Senuma (2001) explained that, even in the current economically difficult time, nearly 100% of the leading companies in Japan implement corporate training for their full-time employees. Some researchers claim that, though its necessity has been fully acknowledged, the issues of corporate in-house training have been positioned as peripheral within the field of international business management and even of English education in Japan (Iwata, 2011). In the following section, I will summarise the issues of corporate in-house English training to clarify the position of my dissertation.

Types of training	Class size	Training duration	Lesson time (average)	Training goals	Frequency
Pre-departure training (赴任前研修)	Private or semi-private	About a month	Three to five hours a day	• Basic English Training (mainly grammar) • Technical/Business English training • Cross-cultural understanding	Often but irregular schedule
Intensive training (集中研修)	5 to 10 trainees	A few weeks	Eight to ten hours a day	• Basic English training (mainly grammar) • Technical/Business English training • Test preparation (mainly TOEIC) • Freshman English training (including OJT) • Presentation/meeting/negotiation skills • Cross-cultural understanding	Several times a year
Test preparation (テスト対策)	10 to 20 trainees	About half a year	90 minutes to two hours a day	• TOEIC test (targeting 630, 760, or 860 points is most common) • TOEFL test • BULATS test (focus on speaking)	Quite regular
Seminar (セミナー)	80 to 100 trainees	One or two day(s)	three hours a day or more	• Cross-cultural understanding • Basic (business) conversation training • Skill-focused workshops	Once or twice a year

Table 1: Corporate Training Programme Types

1.2 History of corporate in-house English training in Japan

Japanese style business administration or management is found to be unique. Vogel (1979), in his seminal work, identified three unique characteristics of Japanese business administration; 1) life-long employment, 2) seniority-based promotion, and 3) intra-organisational labour unions. Such

characteristics also reportedly contribute to promoting in-group solidarity of Japanese organisations (e.g., Doi, 1971; Nakane, 1967; Sugiyama, 1974). Even in the current Japan, corporate training is also implemented based on the belief that it will eventually help employees be better included in the community of practice.

Historically, much has been discussed about corporate English training from the viewpoint of human resource development (HRD) (Iwata, 2011, p. 175). The introduction of corporate training is by no means a current phenomenon in business context. Sakaguchi (1992) observed that the fundamental form of corporate training dates back to as early as the Meiji period (namely, in the middle of 19th century). Despite this long history, however, little has been addressed about the efficacy of corporate English training from pedagogical perspectives. Currently, there is a burgeoning interest shown in corporate training in an increasing number of Japanese companies, as globalisation is rapidly proceeding, as I mentioned earlier. To gain insights into the changing roles of corporate training in Japan, I will briefly explain the history of corporate in-house English training in Japan.

Corporate training as a part of human resource (HR) management started immediately after the Second World War ended. It was originally embarked on as a voluntary English learning group activity in a trading company based in Tokyo. Iwata (2011) stated that the fundamental form of corporate in-house English training in the context of Japan was observed in as early as 1950'. Later on, the HR department of the company recognised its efficiency and decided to provide the group with financial support for sustainable, continuous development. The philosophy of such voluntary study group activity was also gradually percolated into the wider social context in Japan. In the 1960's, many other companies began to develop their systematic corporate training policy and programmes. It was not until about this time that the term *Kigyō kenshū* (企業研修, corporate training) was first coined and introduced (Motoki, 2001).

Japanese society witnessed rapid economic growth from the latter 1960's to the early 1970's. Presumably, the dramatic post-war recovery also concerted with this progression of Japan. Consequently, the paradigm of corporate training gradually shifted; from old school, independent study group activity where trainees were expected to develop English literacy, to an individual, self-enlightening one with an orientation toward the pragmatism of language studies (Chida, 2009). Furthermore, many of such companies gradually started to provide some financial support to the selected trainees. This is how the fundamental form of modernised corporate in-house English

training programmes resulted.

The introduction of the free trading system further accelerated the needs for Japanese businesspeople to use English for practical purposes overseas. In the 1970's, the world economy was also subject to turbulence as a result of a couple of oil crises; the first one occurred in 1973, and the other in 1979. These economic/political instabilities worldwide were also difficult for Japanese society. As a result, many Japanese companies were in need of coping with uncontrollable anxiety in business abroad. To do so, one needed to obtain higher English proficiency. This socioeconomic transition in Japan changed the objectives of corporate training. In the 1970's and 1980's, corporate in-house English training was conducted with a special focus on nurturing regional human resources, not just motivating trainees to study English for self-enlightenment. In the 1980's, the philosophy of corporate training also shifted from providing intensive training to a selected few to enhancing the English proficiency of all the employees in entire organisations.

In the 1990's, after the bubble economy went bust, another paradigm shift of corporate training took place. The objectives of corporate in-house English training were to help trainees acquire advanced business skills not only to become human capital for regional management, but also for studying abroad, especially with a special focus on obtaining MBA (master of business administration) degrees. In this situation, demand for customised private lessons rose.

In the decade of the 1990's, people also observed the deregulation of the Worker Dispatching Act (Rōdōsha-haken-hō, 労働者派遣法). Before this deregulation, most corporate trainers were directly hired by their companies and were installed as employees in HR departments either as full-timer employees or part-timer employees, as my personal interviews suggested. This deregulation enabled private language schools in educational business industries to dispatch contracted workers to companies. For companies, the inclusion of dispatched instructors was theoretically considered beneficial in that it could help reduce the cost and necessary paperwork (e.g., Sato, 2012, 2014c). In practice, however, it resulted in confusion in numerous workplaces owing to complex working conditions along with multiple contracts (e.g., McConnell, 2000; Martin, 2010; McEvoy, 2014; Sato, 2014c).

During the first decade of the 21st century, many such returnees, after obtaining MBAs, played significant roles in expanding the possible market overseas. Yamamoto (2006) stated that, in the era of globalisation, English competence should be treated as a prerequisite in future HR

management/development. The MBA returnees reportedly utilised their experience and skills and contributed to their companies' globalisation. Many such Japanese companies attempted to establish their system of advanced HR development for specific purposes in those days. Hiroshi Mikitani, the CEO of Rakuten, also reported that this MBA earning process was beneficial for his future career in global business (Mikitani, 2012). Hence, the necessity for studies of corporate training to be more concerted with English education has been gradually recognized among researchers of human resource management. After 2010, Japanese society has faced further rapid globalization. It is expected that the on-going globalisation will continue to last until the Tokyo 2020 Olympic games, to say the least. For globalisation strategies, implementing corporate training and fostering employees' English competence will play an inevitable part. In such corporate training, not only receptive skills, but also, and more so, productive skills are largely focused upon. Out of all productive skills, spontaneous speaking competence is especially significant.

1.3 Globalisation and Englishnization

As was discussed above, English education as a part of corporate training programmes is an indispensable element in thinking about globalisation strategies in many companies. Nevertheless, as I mentioned earlier, globalisation is often used as such a buzzword that researchers may face a challenge in achieving a consensus about its definition. This paper, which aims at delineating how globalisation strategies are implemented in connection with English education in business context, primarily defines globalisation from a macro level as the worldwide economic movement in the discourse of neoliberalism where human resources, capital, and money could interact borderlessly (Stiglitz, 2002).

Regarding micro-level business discourse in Japan, globalisation is frequently observed in how Japanese companies proceed with their outbound transactions. For example, an increasing number of Japanese companies have lately merged with foreign companies. RECOF Corporation, an M&A consulting company, reported that, in 2015, the number of strategic mergers Japanese companies conducted with foreign companies amounted to 560 cases. It was also the largest number ever recorded. Moreover, a statistical survey by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan indicated that the number of Japanese business people dispatched to foreign countries in 2010 amounted to 231,827.

Along with the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympics as well as on-going Abenomics, this trend is supposed to keep its momentum for the next several years. In this situation, an increasing number of Japanese businesspeople may have to face the challenge of using English, the *de facto* lingua franca, as the medium of global business communication.

For all this reality, globalisation is often (mis)interpreted as approximately equivalent to Englishization (Sato, 2015a), or the introduction of corporate training as well as the implementation of English-only policy. This overly simplified (mis)idenfitication of globalisation as Englishnization (in the broadest possible sense) frequently results in perception bewilderment of not only policy-makers, but also corporate trainees. I will illustrate a case involving Rakuten in the following section, the discussion of which is based on my previously published paper (Sato, 2013).

1.3.1 The case of Rakuten

Rakuten, renowned to be the largest online retailer in Japan in 2012, implemented a unique corporate strategy for globalisation, known as *Englishnization*. The CEO, Hiroshi Mikitani, felt the need for his company to "catch up" with the global competition and was determined to make English the in-house official language, or *lingua franca*. This English-only policy was put into practice after a two-year moratorium period maintaining Rakuten's intra-organisational linguistic infrastructure. This policy has also been conducted as a part of Rakuten's globalisation strategy (Neeley, 2011). Rakuten's Englishnization has been considered unique for its establishment of the linguistic infrastructure where English is routinely used as a code of communication for the entire institution. Most other companies of those days would rather employ corporate in-house English training to help employees acquire English competence; not forcing them to use English within the organisation on a daily basis.

Since Rakuten declared the implementation of Englishnization, an increasing number of companies in Japan have begun to proceed with their own globalisation policies to eagerly catch up with the global competition. Interviews I conducted with my trainees have suggested that the issues of Englishnization by Rakuten have had such a strong impact on the socioeconomic trend of corporate training in action that executive officers of many companies were subjectively addressing the needs of employing English-only policies for advancing globalisation. In other words, while exploring globalisation in Japan, the discussion of Englishnization is inevitable.

In my previous study (Sato, 2013), I investigated the discourse of Rakuten's Englishnization based on a programme broadcasted by TV Tokyo. In this study, Englishnization was looked at as a *Discourse*, the conceptual framework proposed by James Paul Gee. According to Gee (1996, 1999), *discourse* (with small d) refers to language-in-use, whereas *Discourse* (with capital D) refers to language combined with other social practices, including behaviouristic patterns, sense of values, individual perspectives within communities of practice. My study employed the above concept of Discourse with capital D to understand what value people would place on the emerging English-speaking environment in Rakuten and beyond.

However, Rakuten's Englishnization[1] was in its initial stage of implementation as of July, 2012. Mikitani also acknowledged that Englishnization would have probably been in its experimental phase to maintain the company's linguistic infrastructure for the following few years. Hence, I thought that observing the on-going Discourse of Rakuten as a practical business English speaking context would probably mislead me to a distorted conclusion. Besides, with the limited data source, it was impossible to analyse the Discourse of Englishnization from a holistic perspective. Alternatively, I concluded that my previous study looked at Englishnizaion as the Discourse of learning English rather than that of English-speaking in order to properly design my research.

In the TV programme entitled "*Kanzen" ēgoka iyoiyo* [『「完全」英語化、いよいよ』, "Complete" Englishnization at last], one 39-year-old male employee was represented as a role model L2 learner. There were three judgment criteria for viewers to regard him as a successful English learner; they were, 1) retrospection of his last few years of study (his and his wife's perspectives), 2) his TOEIC score growth, and 3) his L2 business performance. Common sense says that assessing good practice in L2 use, particularly in L2 business performance, requires multidimensional judgment criteria. Nevertheless, the representation of *effective communicators* on the TV media appeared to be somewhat oversimplified. So, my previous study questioned the way the TV programme reassessed Tetsuya's two years of learning, and provided a different interpretation of his L2 learning process and performance.

[1] Englishnization has two levels; 1) implementation of English-only language management policy in the entire organisation, and 2) the introduction of corporate English training programmes as a strategy to maintain linguistic infrastructure for future globalisation. In this study, the word *Englishnization* will be consistently used to refer to the latter unless especially noted; since the *status quo* in most Japanese companies has not necessarily caught up with the former. (Sato, 2013)

The result of my analysis indicated that, from the L2 (socio)pragmatic perspective, a diametrically opposing interpretation could be placed on his performance. In other words, although his TOEIC score growth was noteworthy, it was highly likely that his use of English appeared to be so indigenised that those who have low familiarity with Japanese English could have difficulty communicating with him due to low interpretability of Japanese English pragmatics.

To gain deeper insights into the issues of Englishnization in Japanese companies, more ethnographic observation was required. Hence, as a corporate trainer, I conducted an ethnographic observation in a Japanese manufacturing company where (partial) Englishnization was taking place in order to supplement the above discussion (Sato, 2014a). I will briefly summarise this study in the following section.

1.3.2 The case of Rawfield

Parallel to the study mentioned above, I also conducted a more micro-level ethnographic analysis on how English is spoken in intercultural business context in Japan (Sato, 2014a). Since June of 2010, I have been involved in corporate in-house English training programmes in a manufacturing company located in Kanagawa. This manufacturing company, Rawfield (written in pseudonym), selects some experienced employees and provides them with foreign-based OJT (on-the-job training), especially in Guangzhou, China, every year. In advance of the implementation of this foreign-based OJT, pre-departure English training is provided for the candidate employees. The training purposes include basic grammar exercise, business conversation practice, and preparation for standardised tests. Most training programmes are implemented with an aim at helping learners to eventually acquire the L1-standard of English proficiency.

In the actual OJT context, however, the Japanese OJT trainees are more likely to interact and/or transact in English with non-native speakers of English, mainly native speakers of Chinese. In this situation, their communication does not necessarily base its ground on the L1-standard linguistic competence. As Fujio (2010) suggests, how L2 English is used in actual business interaction and how it results in intercultural conflict should be incorporated into up-coming corporate training curriculum development. In light of this, Rawfield is attempting to introduce an L2-English-oriented corporate training programme. As a contracted trainer, I proposed some training curricula to the company based

on the trainees' needs.

As an initial step to develop L2-English training curriculum, my previous research (Sato, 2014a, 2014b) looked at how intercultural business miscommunication happens between native speakers of Japanese and Chinese[2] while speaking English as a lingua franca. It was reported that communication between Japanese and Chinese for intercultural business purposes often results in miscommunication due to differences not only in cultural values, but also in working styles as is illustrated in Table 2 below (p. 7), according to Zhou (2000). Similarly, Han's (2011) study provided detailed explanation regarding the mechanism of miscommunication between Japanese and Chinese when conducting business. Han argued that the causes of intercultural business conflict between Japanese and Chinese include: 1) pragmatic differences and 2) differences in sense of values. Wang's (2001) study also provided some supportive evidence to this discussion. Nevertheless, how these differences manifest themselves in actual business discourse, particularly in Japanese context, has not been empirically touched upon, as far as I know. Hence, my previous study (Sato, 2014a) investigated how the interpretation of Japanese L2-English pragmatics by Chinese differs from the actual intention of Japanese.

As my study's data collection methods, participant observation and interview through an ethnographic approach were employed. Observation of the actual intercultural business interaction in a meeting was not allowed due to confidentiality. As an alternative, data were collected through qualitative interviews and presented in the form of vignettes. I conducted oral interviews with seven Japanese businesspeople working for Rawfield and asked them to recall some scenes of miscommunication. They were asked to describe business communication conflicts that they thought of as prototypical of Japanese-Chinese business transactions. Through the coding of this interview data set, three vignettes that most probably depict prototypical intercultural business miscommunication between Japanese and Chinese were obtained. These three vignettes were employed as my study basis.

For further confirmation of their credibility, I showed these three vignettes to 22 other businesspeople, which have experience with Japanese-Chinese business communication.

[2] It should be noted that, from hereafter, the word Japanese and Chinese are consistently employed as the meaning of native speakers of the Japanese language and those of the Chinese language, respectively.

Consequently, 19 of them agreed that these three vignettes highly represent the prototypes of Japanese-Chinese business miscommunication; three stated that they all looked representative, but they were not 100% sure of their prototypicality.

The result of data analysis suggested some possible challenges to the neutrality of using English as a lingua franca in global business. English as a lingua franca (ELF) refers to the use of English as a mutual L2 between/among interactants. In theory, EFL could potentially be of neutrality, because none of the speakers could claim to be native speakers of the language (e.g., Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005). In other words, as it may sound like an oxymoron, it is owned by nobody hence it is owned by everybody (see Chapter 2 for more explanation of the concept of ELF). In contradiction of this epistemology of ELF, however, the discourse analysis based on the vignettes illustrated above suggested that the L2-English-mediated business communication between Japanese and Chinese in practice could trigger intercultural conflict due to the difference in interlanguage pragmatics resulting from L2 transfer. Furthermore, it was also indicated that the use of L2 could possibly create linguistic constraint that may lower interactants' awareness of the differences in each others' business culture, including job responsibilities and decision-making approaches, as is further illustrated in the following Table 2.

	Japan	**China**
Style of employment	(Mainly) Life-long employment (But, gradually becoming contract-based)	Contract-based (Emerging after life-long employment system collapsed)
Wage	Seniority-based promotion	Skill-based promotion
Labour union	Intra-organisational	Government-controlled
Decision making	Collective	Individual
Responsibility	Collective	Individual
Required skills	Multi-skills are required (with job-rotation)	Mono-skills are required (without job-rotation)

Table 2: Difference in working style between Japan and China (Zhou, 2000, p. 272)

1.3.3 Implication of these two case studies

The above two companies, Rakuten and Rawfield, enormously invested in fostering English-speaking human capital even in their preparatory stage of Englishnization. It is apparent that the number of speakers of English as a second language (L2), who engage in business globally and internationally, is gradually increasing as globalisation further proceeds. Accordingly, the needs for corporate in-house English training programmes are also changing currently. These two companies' globalization strategies have so far relied heavily on proceeding with Englishnization. In this sense, it is not too much to say that globalisation is often (mis)identified as *de-Japanisation* of the organisation, where introducing Englishnization plays a significant part.

However, de-Japanisation through organisational Englishnization does not necessarily lead to globalisation. Rather, the emergence of indigenised Japanese English discourse in the organisation may result in new business communication conflict, as was suggested by Sato (2013). Besides, as was suggested by Sato (2014a), unique Japanese English pragmatics could also trigger miscommunication in business. So far, little has been understood about how Japanese speak English for business purposes, how it results in possible conflict, and how to solve the related problems, especially in the discourse of Englishnizaion. By conducting these two case studies, I am highly persuaded that the first step to better address the issue of business English as a lingua franca used in the context of globalisation in Japan is to understand how Japanese speak English as a lingua franca and how it leads to conflict in business communication, especially in the context of Englishnization.

1.4 The purpose of this dissertation

It is predictable, along with rapid globalisation, that an increasing number of Japanese companies will be more eager to introduce corporate English training programmes as a part of human resource development strategies for globalisation. As corporate training proceeds and English for business use increases among Japanese business people, the opportunities for Japanese businesspeople to use English for practical business purposes will eventually increase. In this situation, non-Japanese businesspeople may experience difficulty communicating with Japanese due to the unique pragmatics of Japanese English. This dissertation, in this light, will present a new perspective

of future corporate training programmes to provide a solution for this future challenge, which directly affects me in my vocation as a corporate trainer.

English as a lingua franca used in business will be a major research inquiry throughout this dissertation. It is also a topic of research that has been enthusiastically explored by several researchers in fields of both language and business studies (e.g., Handford, 2010; Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005). Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) is a complex sociolinguistic issue: a dilemma of identity for some learners and a challenge of pragmatism for all. The idea of using neutral English grew out of the critical belief that L1 speakers tend to be hegemonic over their L2 counterparts in interactional discourse due to their linguistic superiority. However, Nekvapil and Sherman (2015) delineated that an interactant's contextual hegemony derives not only from the difference in pure linguistic competence, but also from various social factors. Further stating, even in mutual L2 communication, some L2 speakers could be hegemonic over others because of their high familiarity to their surrounding contextual norms (e.g., geographical maturity, deep understanding regarding the situated common sense and high controllability of the discursive events). Besides, as I discussed in the above section 1.2, the neutrality of English used as a lingua franca in the context of globalisation in Japan could be questioned.

In light of this, further studies on business English are called for in order to address the issue of how L2 speakers of English manage their language in global business context. Such studies are also expected to contribute to understanding the complexity of the reality of L2 business interaction, particularly in Asian context. This dissertation could count as the very first exploration to address the issues of BELF in a business context in Japan and will employ empirical qualitative approaches to discourse analysis over Englishnization as a part of globalisation strategies in a Japanese company. Four of the missions of this research project are to observe:

1. whether there are some common (socio)pragmatic patterns of Japanese English used in the context of global business in Japan
2. (if the answer of the above question is yes) how such Japanese English pragmatics result in miscommunication/misunderstanding not only by those who have low familiarity with Japanese English, but also among Japanese
3. (based on the answers of the above questions) possible direction in which future corporate

in-house English training will go, and

4. some necessary concept of future corporate trainings geared toward L2-English communication.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.0 Overview of this chapter

This chapter illustrates the theoretical framework employed to analyse data in this dissertation. First, I explain the four frameworks of this study: 2.1) how language use is perceived in this study (philosophical framework); 2.2) how English is used in business (the position of this dissertation within relevant academic discipline); 2.3) what communicative competence is (consideration of the increasing training needs in Japanese companies); and 2.4) how rapport is managed through language use (some ideal of L2 pragmatics in business).

2.1 How is language use perceived in this study?

Needless to say, the use of language is a complex social phenomenon. In this dissertation, the employment of language use for the purpose of communication will be viewed as *ecology*, not merely as a product of the brain, in order to cast an analytical eye on the dynamics of language use. An ecological perspective on communication is originated in social-constructivism (Kramsch, 2008; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008). This view presupposes the existence of multiple realities, not just one single reality. It regards communication not as a pre-existing phenomenon, but as a contingent manifestation and as a result of negotiation of meaning in a community of practice. In an ecological perspective, language use is considered inseparable from its surrounding factors, such as behaviouristic patterns of interactancts, shared social practices, sense of value (singular and/or plural), and cultural norms. In such sociolinguistic settings, interactants are viewed as participants in their communities of practice, who co-construct the discourse through mutual engagement in joint enterprise and create their shared-repertoire (Wenger, 1998). This study defines the notion of second language (L2) use in business more as a social activity, than as a cognitive one, within ecological systems.

2.1.1 Language use as ecology

This study defined the term "an ecological perspective" to language use based on the argument by Kramsch and Whiteside (2008). According to their definition:

> An ecological perspective on the data can build on the other analytic approaches, and view the unfolding events as the enactement [sic], re-enactment, or even stylized enactment of past language practices, the replay of cultural memory, and the rehearsal of potential identities. (p. 660).

Klamsch and Whiteside emphasised that employing a post-structuralism point of view when conducting (socio)pragmatic discourse studies would be important. A post-structuralism analysis of language use takes discourse ecology, or multidimensional realities, into consideration. Furthermore, studies of communication, especially when based on L2, will strongly require an ecological perspective in order to understand the complex reality. Klamsch and Whiteside suggested this ecological analysis could be methodologically achieved with the inclusion of an ethnographic approach to discourse analysis.

Ethnography of communication is one of the most popular topics of research interest in fields such as applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and sociolinguistics (Davis, 1995, p. 427). The notion of ethnography *per se* is rooted in anthropology. Characteristics of ethnography include the thick description of the observed events through participant observation, or holistic fieldwork (e.g., Conklin, 1968; Geertz, 1973). When doing fieldwork, researchers' full participation in discourse communities can make it possible to present perspectives that only insiders can gain. In addition, the researchers of ethnography in general emphasise the overall contributions of their research findings as well as the process of researching that helps find the frontier of exploration. An ethnographic approach to studies on L2 use in business with an ecological perspective is thus becoming a new research terrain.

Conventional linguistic research focused its analytical attention on psychological aspects of language. However, as the majority of language researchers have agreed, the issues of language use should also be looked at from sociocultural aspects, or ecological/holistic perspectives. Drawing on Gee's (1996) argument, this current study defines the notion of Discourse (written with a capital D)

as:

> [A] socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions and 'artifacts', or thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or signal (that one is playing) a socially meaning 'role' (Gee, 1996, p. 131)

When the word *Discourse* appears in this dissertation, I consistently refer to Discourse (with capital D) unless otherwise noted. This Discourse perspective will play a significant role in the study of language-in-use within a community of practice, or more specifically English-speaking business context in Japan, where there are constantly changing group dynamics, as well as cultural diversity. Research on language use in business requires methods that help researchers capture the complexity of realities. To do so, multiple data collection should inevitably be employed, which will be further illustrated in the subsequent section.

2.1.2 Ecological perspectives through multiple data collection

Common sense suggests that studying language use within ecology requires a complex analysis. Linguists, therefore, have explored the possibility of employing multiple data collection when conducting language studies with ecological perspectives. Silverman (1985), for instance, proposed a move to incorporate micro-perspectives of linguistic analysis (i.e., ethnomethodology) into more macro-level analyses, or ethnography. Many researchers have supported his proposal hitherto, and among them, Li's (2005) study is considered prominent. He investigated the pragmatic function of code-switching in an English-Chinese bilingual family. Through his discussion, he shed light on the potential validity of utilising an applied conversation analysis (or, CA) approach to sociolinguistic studies. He also discussed the substantial utility of integrating discourse-extrinsic data into a CA-based interpretation.

This move to combine multiple data is observed in both the field of sociolinguistics and that of second language acquisition and pragmatics. Roberts' (2001) study, for example, demonstrated that ethnographic data could supplement CA interpretations on how second language is acquired through socialising. Similarly, Nakane (2007) combined CA and ethnography to examine the

pragmatics of silence in intercultural communication from an ecological perspective. Thus, as was also argued by Garfinkel (1967), Moerman (1988), Saville-Troike (1983), and Seale (1999), sociocultural/historical understanding of the existing Discourse is invaluable for interpretations of observed phenomena. This 360-degree approach is considered important to grasp the complex realities in L2 speakers' good practice in business communication.

2.1.3 Non-native speakers within ecology

This dissertation focuses its analytical attention on non-native speakers' language use in business. There is no cross-disciplinary consensus pertaining to how non-native speakers are viewed. This dissertation, however, views non-native speakers as elements of linguistic ecology within a community of practice where English is used as a lingua franca. In other words, they are indigenised speakers of English rather than speakers with linguistic handicaps. In addition, this study avoids using the term *non-native speakers* and consistently refers to them as *L2 speakers* instead.

Traditionally, L2 speakers have been considered somewhat deficient in terms of pure linguistic competence. Recently, however, an increasing number of researchers have agreed that they are not necessarily defective in communicating (e.g., Cook, 1993; Firth & Wagner, 1997). For example, Firth and Wagner (1997) explained that in the field of second language acquisition:

> [F]or the most part, they [non-native speakers] are applied and understood in an oversimplified manner, leading, among other things, to an analytic mindset that elevates an idealized "native" speaker above a stereotypicalized "nonnative," while viewing the latter as a defective communicator, limited by an underdeveloped communicative competence. (p. 285)

They questioned the legitimacy of research approaches that rely heavily on analysing discourse-intrinsic data. Analyses based on limited discourse information might trigger researchers' stereotype to regard L2 speakers as deficient in their linguistic performance. By the same token, Seed house (2010) critically reassessed the classic pragmatics study by Brown and Haron (1970), and demonstrated that a completely opposite interpretation could be placed on the same discourse data when an ecological perspective was applied. Seedhouse concluded his study by suggesting that up-coming discourse/pragmatic studies, especially when L2 speakers partake in the discourse event,

should employ multiple data collection methods. L2 speakers are not noise of communication; they are a part of the ecology of the community of practice they belong to.

Language use is not simply a cognitive process; rather, it encompasses various kinds of sociological phenomena. To analyse L2 speakers' language use, a heavy reliance on a limited data set as well as on a single analytical approach, could possibly mislead researchers to look at the observed events in a stereotyped manner. Davis (1995), by the same token, stated that taking a holistic approach to, particularly but not limited to, studies on L2 use, is the essential first step to fully understand what is going on (both overt and non-overt aspects) in second language performance. This study will also employ ecological perspectives on L2 use as its philosophical/epistemological stance in order to investigate the complex reality of L2-English communication in a business context.

2.2 How English is used in business

As the second theoretical framework of this dissertation, Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) will be employed. This framework helps readers look at the use of the English language as a foreign language used as an imposed communicative apparatus and also as a shared code indigenised in a community of practice. It should be noted that this section was partially developed out of my published article (Sato, 2015a). To begin with, I will present an overview regarding English as a Lingua Franca ELF and Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) to draw a general picture of these disciplines. Then, I will explain why BELF in Asian context should be focused on. The purpose of this section (2.2) is two-fold; 1) to provide the analytical framework, and 2) to clarify the position of this dissertation within the mainstream of business communication research.

2.2.1 English as a lingua franca (ELF)

As the number of speakers of English as their L2 increases, L2 English speaking communication is becoming more common. This sociolinguistic phenomenon encourages L2 speakers to use English less hesitantly, and at the same time, requires applied linguists to investigate the *status quo* over the reality of the-English-language-in-use. The number of L2 speakers of English

is estimated to be approximately three to five times as many as that of first language (L1) speakers of English currently (Crystal, 2003). The on-going globalisation of the world's economics will also accelerate the increase in the number of L2 English speakers in the next decade or so.

Conventionally, L2 speakers have been seen as deficient in pure linguistic competence. However, as was discussed above (in 2.1.3), it does not necessarily mean they are defective communicators (Firth & Wagner, 1997). Notwithstanding, Jenkins *et al.* (2011) stated, "non-native speakers […] and all English varieties, native or non-native, are accepted in their own right rather than evaluated against a NSE [Native Speaker English] benchmark" (pp. 283-284). By the same token, Graddol (1997; 2006; 2010) also wrote that mutual L2 English communication is deemed more common than L1-L2 counterparts in today's English-speaking context. Hence, the belief that not only its L1 speakers but also its L2 speakers own English has gradually become widespread now, according to Seidlhofer (2009). In other words, English in today's world is taken as *English as a Lingua Franca* (ELF). The ownership shift takes place as the English language gains its status as a *de facto lingua franca*. This sociolinguistic paradigm shift over the use of English as a lingua franca is also known as the *decentralisation* of L1 speakers (Bolton & Davis, 2006).

There are a few terms used very similarly to ELF, including *English as an International Language* (EIL) and *World Englishes* (WE). These three terms defining how English should be perceived in today's world cannot be completely separate, as they mutually overlap in a complicated manner. However, in this dissertation, they are presented in different ways. Following Jenkins' (2007) explanation, the term ELF is consistently used to describe the English-mediated interaction between/among L2 speakers throughout this dissertation. In contrast, when NSs are involved in English-mediated discussion, it is referred to as *English as an International Language* (EIL), the definition of which is based off of McKay's (2002) argument. Another similar concept is *World Englishes* (WE; Kachru, 1983). This term was originally coined by an Indian linguist, Braj B. Kachru. While both ELF and EIL are used for English-mediated *interaction*, though they label respectively different characteristics of interactants, WE usually refers to the epistemology that affords the attitude to receive a large variety of English, L1 or L2 regardless, which is spoken all over the world.

In this dissertation, I intentionally avoid using the terms WE or EIL in order to prevent readers from experiencing confusion. Instead, the term ELF is consistently employed in this thesis to refer to the use of L2 English as a medium of communication.

2.2.2 Critiques against the ELF epistemology

It is apparent that the epistemology of ELF somewhat encourages L2 speakers of English to claim its ownership. However, ELF cannot be the one-size-fits-all tranquiliser for the pain that results from traumatic experience of L2 use failure. Sometimes, the idealistic concept of ELF may end up with tantalising L2 learners, especially Japanese businesspeople, who have obtained uncomfortable recognition by facing the reality of L2 use, to the extent that they would rather be reborn as L1 speakers of English, if they could. EFL, though it has made a great contribution to the field of sociolinguistics and L2 acquisition, may also trigger some criticism.

O'Regan (2014), in his seminal work, wrote of the four common critiques against the epistemology of ELF; 1) hypostatisation; 2) lingua franca fetishism and idealist rationalism; 3) the potential weakness of globalisation theory as its rationale; and 4) the poverty of ELF philosophy. Among these four, some researchers of relevant discipline agreed that hypostatisation is the largest factor of criticism, particularly in the context of Japan. In other words, the reality of ELF-in-use might not fully catch up with its theoretical progression.

In today's world, people tend to choose English as a common language, especially in global business, due to its popularity and potential neutrality. While some researchers support this EFL epistemology (e.g., Peters, 2004), others critically respond to this ideology. For example, Crystal (1997) stated that the legitimacy of using ELF was derived more from English's being "in the right place at the right time" (p. 110) than from its neutrality. Phillipson (1992), by the same token, even questioned the substantial neutrality of using ELF for mutual L2 communication largely due to the symbolic value of the English language in today's world. Phillipson (2009) also argued that the ideology of ELF has been more or less hypostatised. Addressing the issue of using ELF, especially in business context in Japan, requires even more careful consideration.

2.2.3 Business English as a lingua franca (BELF)

One of the elements that accelerate the hypostatisation of the ELF philosophy is discussants' limited concern with the existential matter. *Business English as a Lingua Franca* (BELF), being a practical application of the idea of ELF to intercultural business discourse, deals with the

reality of ELF-in-use for getting the job done with evident interactional purposes. This dissertation will investigate how BELF is situated and used in Japanese business context based on empirical discourse data (which will be illustrated in Chapter 6.).

This research tradition of BELF is deeply rooted in the globalisation movement in Finland. Although these two terms have *ELF* as their common word stem, BELF and ELF were originally derived from different academic roots. BELF was first proposed by some European business researchers (Louhiala-Salminen *et al.*, 2005). According to their definition:

> BELF refers to English used as a neutral and shared communication code. BELF is neutral in the sense that none of the speakers can claim it as her/his mother tongue; it is shared in the sense that it is used for conducting business within the global business discourse community, whose members are BELF users and communicators in their own right – not non-native speakers or learners. (pp. 403-404).

By proposing BELF, Louhiala-Saliminen *et al.* (2005) challenged the traditional L1-L2 hierarchy that is often seen in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) paradigm. They asserted that, as a key to establishing BELF, the L1-L2 distinction of interactants should be abandoned for the sake of neutralising English. To do so, L2 English speakers should be more aware that the ownership of English also belongs to themselves, not only L1 speakers. This argument is also supported by a number of applied linguists (e.g., Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 2006, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009). Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2013) compared the paradigms of EFL and BELF as is illustrated in the following Table 3 (p. 18) in order to challenge the L1-L2 distinction paradigm.

What makes BELF clearly different from traditional views on English is the difference in successful interaction criteria. Conventionally, speakers were expected to accommodate and/or acculturate themselves by following the L1 standard. In BELF, however, communication success is normally assessed in terms of whether interactants can or cannot get the job done. Handford (2010) also supported their argument by stating:

> [T]he most important issue in business is not language ability, but the experience and ability to dynamically manoeuvre within the communities of practice which business people inhabit. (p. 145).

Criterion	EFL	BELF
Successful interactions require:	NS-like language skills	Business communication skills & strategic skills
Speakers/writers aim to:	Emulate NS discourse	Get the job done & create rapport
L2 speakers are seen as:	Sources of trouble	Communicators in their own right
Main source of problems:	Inadequate language skills	Inadequate business communication skills
'Culture'	National cultures of NSs	Business community culture(s) & individual cultural backgrounds
English is 'owned' by	Its native speakers	Nobody – and everybody

Table 3: Comparison between EFL and BELF approaches (p. 29)

The philosophies of BELF and EFL are considered different from each other in many aspects. However, they also share their commonality in that the researchers of these two disciplines see English as a tool of communication between/among speakers who do not share their L1s. Both parties support the idea that English in today's world is the *de facto* lingua franca.

Some researchers also attempt to identify the contextual and discourse characteristics of BELF. Kankaanranta and Planken (2010), for example, suggest the following contextual features and discourse characteristics of BELF communication. According to Kankaanranta and Planken (2010), there are three contextual features and three discourse characteristics in BELF communication. I summarised their discussion in the following table (pp. 391-395) using their own wording.

Contextual features	Discourse characteristics
"international business, where it is used with colleagues and with different types of business partners" (p. 391)	"characterized as simplified English" (p. 392)
"shared professional area of expertise involving special concepts and terminology, as used by the relevant discourse community" (p. 391)	"general business-related vocabulary, the specific technical jargon, and the mastery of the relevant genres" (p. 394)
"significance placed on the length of the (business) relationship" (p. 392)	"a hybrid of features that partly originate from those of the speaker's own mother tongue and partly from those of other BELF speakers' mother tongues" (p. 394)

Table 4: Contextual features and discourse characteristics of BELF

Up to now, these four features have been commonly viewed as the *de facto* standards of BELF communication. It should be noted that ELF and BELF do not mutually exclude each other; they supplement each other in the way that the other cannot do either theoretically or practically. Besides, BELF is not merely an application of ELF philosophy to business settings. Rather, BELF can be seen as a discipline of *de facto lingua franca* research. In this discipline, researchers focus their analytical attention not only on the language use, but also on group dynamics and discourse ecology within a community of practice in business. This research stance will help overcome the drawback of hypostatisation that ELF has traditionally faced. In addition, substantial increase in the extent of L2 English use for business communication in the Asian region also backs up such anti-hypostatisation of the philosophy of lingua franca English.

2.2.4 BELF in Asia

Although BELF is an established and thought-provoking research inquiry, its basically European-centred circulation is one major critical issue of its tradition. Asia, in which most countries belong within the expanding circle of WE, has long been treated as periphery in the context of English-speaking business discourse. However, as the world has witnessed rapid globalisation for

these few years, researchers have gradually started to shift their attention to Asia, including Japan.

Despite possible challenges, researchers of L2 communication have subjectively tackled various relevant issues, such as Asian Englishes (i.e., how different English varieties are recognised in Asian context) and Asian competence (i.e., what Asian-specific competence is required for effective business communication in Asian business discourse) from Asia-specific perspectives (e.g., Du-Babcock, 2013; Du-Babcock and Tanaka, 2010, 2013; Fujio, 2010; Murata, 2012, 2015; Shi, 2009; Takamori, 2011, 2015; Takino, 2015). I will refer to a few studies on how English is used in Asia, especially Japan, in the section of Prior Studies, Chapter 3, which I think are all in alignment with the topics of inquiry of this current research project.

Although the above studies have made great contributions to the progress of the studies of BELF-in-use in Asia, especially Japan, they have acknowledged the following research limitations:

1. Investigating and deeply understanding the complex realities of how BELF is situated and used in business discourse in Japan will require micro-level analyses with ecological perspectives.
2. Presenting quasi-insider perspectives (e.g., through participant observation) on how BELF is situated and used in business is a key to delineating the process of on-going globalisation in Japanese companies.
3. For continuous development, a new concept of corporate English training programmes as a part of globalisation strategies should be considered based on the understanding of the realities of situated BELF-in-use in Japanese companies.

As discussed above, there is a burgeoning interest shown for studies on BELF-in-use in Asian context. The notion of BELF sounds conceptually and practically very convincing to both business communication researchers and corporate trainers. When it comes to its practical application to corporate training programmes, however, a general consensus has not been fully achieved yet. Therefore, investigating how BELF is situated and used in Japanese business context and, based on empirical approaches, and proposing how BELF should be instructed in future corporate training is where my dissertation should be positioned within the field of both second language acquisition and intercultural/global business communication. Besides, bridging between these two academic disciplines, which are expected to be mutually supplementary in theory, but have not fully

communicated with each other yet in practice, is also one of the expected contributions of this dissertation.

2.2.5 Application of BELF to future corporate training programmes

The majority of corporate trainers are dispatched instructors from private language schools, rather than directly hired by respective companies. In my previous studies (Sato, 2012, 2013), the Japanese term *haken* (派遣, dispatched) was introduced to describe such contracted, dispatched instructors. These instructors normally take teacher training/workshops provided by the language school. A training course basically provides teachers with basic but quite limited understanding of EFL-based teaching methods. In addition to that, most corporate trainers may also be working as either college EFL teachers or Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in junior/senior high schools in Japan. Hence, their teaching methods are more or less what they have been trained to do through their teaching practice in EFL teaching context. Corporate training programmes in action are of *backward compatibility* with foreign language teaching based on ELF approaches; there is no corporate-training-specific instruction method.

In my opinion, the applicability of EFL approaches to corporate English training could still remain somewhat questionable. One major reason is that the context of corporate training is apparently different from the sphere of school discourse. Fujio (2014) also suggested that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) perspectives should be taken into more consideration for designing and developing corporate training in the future. Responding to Fujio's (2014) recommendation, Sato, Nakatake, Satake and Hug (2015) explored the possibility of proposing BELF training, not just ELF training, for Japanese companies as well as universities. The probability of incorporating such BELF training programmes into institutional and/or organisational globalisation strategies will rise along with the rapid globalisation of the society of Japan. For further curriculum development, bridging between Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Intercultural Business Discourse (IBD) and collaboratively expanding the scope of these two academic disciplines are indispensable key steps.

Another concern with reconceptualising corporate training and consulting programmes for globalisation is the *teachability* of BELF; a neutralised and shared code for global communication. There has been an endless debate over the validity of *teaching communication* (e.g., Bachman, 1990;

Canale & Swain, 1980; Gumperz, 1982; Hymes, 1974; Savile-Troike, 1987), compared with the relatively acceptable validity of *teaching languages*. However, researchers of business communication are starting to agree that *communication strategies* as language awareness can potentially be teachable (Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010, 2013; Fujio, 2010, 2014; Sato, 2014b). Jean-Paul Nerriere, a former vice-president of IBM, France, also proposed the idea of teaching communication strategies by using limited vocabulary and utterance length to help enhance global business communication. He labelled the use of simplified English for business purposes as *Globish* (Nerrier & Hon, 2009). Unlike BELF, which is agreed-upon language use situated in a business context, Nerrier and Hon presupposed that Globish speakers have to be trained to use it based on the guideline illustrated later. In this study, however, the term Globish will be employed in alignment with BELF as they grew out of the same epistemological origin; hence, Globish training will be consistently seen as a synonym of BELF training in this dissertation.

Globish, which obviously is the abbreviation of Global English, helps conceptualise how BELF is situated and used in business settings. Drawing on the idea of BELF, Nerriere and Hon (2009) created a guideline of how to put it into practice, which is encapsulated as follows:

1. communicate by using a 1,500-word list, which was comprised based on the VOA frequently-used vocabulary corpus
2. limit one sentence utterance length to less than 15 words
3. place more importance on accent than pronunciation and intonation

Apparently, the teachability and the learnability of the above guideline can be guaranteed in a reasonable manner. However, Takamori (2011) critically argued that the use of Globish could deliver some potential communicative dilemmas. On a theoretical level, Globish will scaffold neutral business communication, as it has been designed to deconstruct the standards of linguistic evaluation based on the L1 speakers' linguistic competence so as to neutralise/normalise the L2 speakers' performance. On a practical level, however, fully utilising the code of communication presupposes users having a native-like command of the English language. Takamori (2015) further developed his argument and issued a warning that controlling the possible range of vocabulary and syntax may end up with paradoxically depriving communicators of their comfort of communication in the long run.

Provided that the instruction of Globish itself were proven to be feasible, a general consensus among researchers and educators pertaining to who teaches it, to whom, and to what extent would still remain to be achieved. Likewise, Gally (2012) summarises the series of discussion as follows:

> [W]ith the idealistic arguments in favor of World Englishes approaches not convincing to many educators, administrators, and learners, and with the pedagogical feasibility and practical benefits of such approaches not yet known, the uncertainty about what types of English should be taught in the second-language classroom might last equally as long. (pp. 50-51)

Hence, it should be noted that, when it comes to the instruction of BELF within corporate training programmes, (*haken*) instructors as well as curriculum developers in Japan and beyond are expected to carefully consider not only its teaching approaches, but also contents within each company's globalisation strategies. Besides, the roles of language teachers in BELF training programmes should not be equal to those of EFL. Before the BELF training programmes were introduced and implemented, how to evaluate trainees' performance and progress would have to be reconsidered. In order to gain insights into this issue, I will refer to the studies of communicative competence, the overall contributions of which can inform significant evaluation criteria of EFL curricula.

2.3 Communicative Competence

To gain insight into how L2 learning should be evaluated/assessed, the issues of communicative competence should be referred to. L2 learning is such a complicated phenomenon that includes metacognitive development of the lexico-grammatical knowledge of one's target language as well as some social process of entering into the wide context where the language is actually spoken. Chomsky (1965) dichotomised one's linguistic knowledge into *competence* and *performance*. The former refers to "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language" (p. 4); latter is the actual use of his language. Generative transformational linguists have been eager to find out what knowledge of language consists of. However, they could not go so far as to fully explain how competence is put into performance. Understanding how competence and performance communicate has been deemed quite challenging, from a psycholinguistic point of view, due to the complexity of

knowledge of language.

Sociolinguists have also tackled this challenge from an alternative approach. Hymes (1970) coined the word *communicative competence* to refer to one's ability to use a language effectively. Hymes, in his seminal work, provided four distinctive sectors of communicative competence; what is possible, feasible, appropriate and actually done. His argument was so influential especially in the field of applied linguistics that many researchers attempted to touch upon what communicative competence consists of.

Canale and Swain (1980) reinterpreted Hyme's four sectors and proposed alternative three subcategories of communicative competence; grammar competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. They also suggested that sociolinguistic competence could be further divided into sociocultural competence and discourse competence. Commonly, the components (and definitions) of communicative competence proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) are identified as the following four components:

1. Grammar competence: words and rules
2. Sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
3. Discourse competence: cohesion and coherence
4. Strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies

These four categories by Canale and Swain have been considered significant by second language researchers since they were applicable for the explanation of what *L2 communicative competence is*. As globalisation is on going, the demand for L2 learning has been growing. Subsequently, an increasing number of companies attempt to implement corporate training programs focusing on fostering trainees' communicative competence. Especially, nurturing trainees' strategic competence is in fashion in many corporate training programmes as far as I have observed. Presumably, one of the major reasons for this is because policy-makers assume developing strategic competence will help trainees acquire BELF competence effectively in cost-benefit terms (Sato, 2015b).

In light of this customer demand, I have been offering corporate training programmes with a focus on nurturing trainees' strategic competence, the definition of which will be provided in the following section.

2.3.1 Strategic competence

The strategies for communication are usually divided into learning strategies and communication strategies. The former one is concerned with how to effectively *study* L2; the latter with how to successfully *use* L2. In the following sections, I will define these two strategies.

2.3.1.1 Learning strategies

Researchers of second language studies focused their attention on psychological aspects of L2 learning at the early stage (i.e., from 1960's to 1980's). In her seminal work, Joan Rubin (1975) identified some commonality in learning styles among successful L2 learners. Inspired by this work, Rebecca Oxford (1990) invented *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (SILL), a questionnaire survey approach to find out what type of learning strategies one uses to study his/her L2. Oxford categorised learning strategies into the following two; 1) direct strategies (including memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies), and 2) indirect strategies (including metacognitive, affective, and social strategies). However, the use of learning strategies is such a complex phenomenon that there are so many cases that do not meet this dichotomy.

Applied linguists have attempted to figure out what leaner characteristics are likely to be leading factors to L2 learning success, by using various types of research approaches (Griffiths, 2008; Lafford, 2004; Lightbown & Spada, 2006 ; Naiman *et al.*, 1978). For profound understanding, many researchers administered questionnaire surveys to quantitatively/statistically investigate positive correlations between some learner variables over others. However, making a consensus about what *good language learners* are has been considered quite a challenging task up to present.

Our experience as language teachers might suggest it is hard to clearly define what strategic learning is and how such learning strategies should be evaluated. Nevertheless, we frequently witness there are those who learn L2 more strategically than others evidently existing in L2 classrooms. Besides, many researchers of L2 learning agreed that these strategic learners could often communicate more effectively in their L2 over the others (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980; Dörnyei, 1995; Tarone, 1983). This observation has brought us to shed light on the issues of communication strategies, which will follow.

2.3.1.2 Communication strategies

The term *communication strategies* (CSs) refers to "techniques to cope with difficulties in communication in an imperfectly known second language." (Stern, 1975, p. 411) Strategic competence, particularly in the realm of CSs research, should more precisely be defined as a skill to "use different strategies to ensure mutual comprehension" (Bosher, 2014, p. 275) in the speakers' L2. Basically, strategic competence itself has been discussed in connection with CSs. The three common characteristics of the use of CSs are that they are 1) problem-based, 2) conscious, and 3) intentional. Canale and Swain (1980) explained that L2 speakers realise strategic competence in order to solve their L2 production problems, cope with problematic communicative situations, and keep the channel of communication open. By overcoming such communication difficulties, learners are expected to learn how to effectively communicate in their L2, the recognition of which will eventually contribute to their further L2 learning. Tarone (1983) also claimed that communication strategies in actual use might serve learning purposes. The use of CSs obviously facilitates speakers' interlanguage-based information delivery, which leads to subsequent cognitive development.

However, some researchers suggest that the use of CSs can potentially be multifaceted. Not only does it facilitate the speakers' L2 learning processes; it can also eventually enhance rapport between/among interactants in the discourse community. Dörnyei (1995) suggested that the use of communication strategies plays an important role in helping learners develop their sociolinguistic competence. He wrote:

> [A] great deal of language attainment takes place through taking an active part in actual communication, and CSs [communication strategies] help learners to do so and thus (a) to obtain practice, and (b) to gain new information by testing what is permissible or appropriate. (Dörnyei, 1995, p. 60)

This study thus defines the use of CSs as an L2-based pragmatic device to help L2 learners to overcome linguistic deficiency, to facilitate their L2 learning processes and to realise better communication in a broad sense.

According to Ellis (1994), there are two approaches to CSs; *interactional* and *psycholinguistic* approaches. In the former approach, the use of CSs is regarded as a discourse

strategy to achieve conversational maintenance in an L2 interaction (e.g., Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Tarone, 1983). On the other hand, in the latter one, CSs are seen as cognitive processes (e.g, Færch & Kasper, 1983). Recently, some researchers have discussed the importance of taking the integrated approach by combining interactional and psycholinguistic approaches. For instance, Norton and Toohey (2001) suggested studies of CSs should look at talk-in-interaction as the basis of analyses. They wrote "understanding good language learning requires attention to social practices in the context in which individuals learn L2s" (p. 318) while using CSs for specific communication purposes.

Firth and Wagner (1997), however, critically responded that observing participants as *learners* might cause the researchers to place stereotypical ideas on what it is like to use an L2, and lead them to see L2 learners as merely deficient communicators. Bachman (1990), by the same token, asserted that CSs should be seen as pragmatic devices not only to cope with linguistic problems, but also to realise better information delivery. Furthermore, Byram (1997) observed that some communicative competence specifically for L2-based interation should be taken into account for studying CSs. Byram labelled such specific pragmatic skillfulness as *intercultural communicative competence* (ICC), and defined this competence as "the ability to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language." (p. 71) A foreign-language-mediated intercultural interaction requires not only sociolinguistic and discourse competence, but also flexibility to cultural difference; namely, intercultural competence. Moreover, successful intercultural communication entails the use of CSs for contextually appropriate information delivery.

Hence, this study defines strategic competence in a broader sense than what Canale and Swain (1980) explained. Drawing on Dörnyei's discussion, this study identifies strategic competence as the techniques used to overcome linguistic anxiety, to improve L2-based information delivery and to enhance rapport between/among interactants in the discourse community. To observe how participants employ CSs, this study looks at L2 *spoken* practices that were conducted as a part of a corporate pre-OJT training program in which I have been longitudinally involved. In such L2 spoken practice for specific purposes, participants are supposed to utilise CSs not only to deliver information, but also to establish rapport among themselves. Hence, I will align rapport management along with strategic competence. In the following section, I will illustrate how rapport is established and managed through language use.

2.4 How rapport is managed through language use

Generally speaking, business requires generating profit. For business communication, however, there are frequently no clear-cut purposes. From among complicated factors that surround business communication, r*apport management* is one of the most indispensable skills. Spencer-Oatey (2005) defined rapport as "the relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people" (p. 96). Business communication may break down when interactants fail to establish rapport among them.

The term, *rapport management*, was coined by Spencer-Oatey (2000). *Rapport* refers to human relationship or trust, in French. Linguists have considered how rapport is established through the use of languages. Tannen (1993), for example, is one of the eminent scholars of this discipline. She categorised the functions of talks into two: 1) report talk and 2) rapport talk. Report talk refers to the pragmatic patterns in which people show some prestige they have, including experience, knowledge, and so on, for the purpose of comfortable interaction. This is often observed in interaction where masculinity is dominant. In contrast, rapport talk, which is employed more often by females than males according to Tannen's statistics, refers to a linguistic attitude to seek out some shared repertoire in order for participants of the discourse community to realise a comfortable communicative environment. The term *rapport management* (Spencer-Oatey, 2005) is defined as "the management (or mismanagement) of relations between people" (p. 96), is thus achieved by the use of (socio)pragmatic strategies that can help interactants scaffold harmonious communication, particularly in business discourse. In BELF discourse, therefore, participants are expected to strategically manage rapport while interacting with each other in their L2. Those who can manage rapport smoothly by using BELF in their situated interaction are thus regarded as effective communicators in a sense.

Rapport management is often employed as an umbrella term to encapsulate various levels of human interaction theory, such as face (e.g., Ho, 1994; Hu, 1944), facework (e.g., Goffman, 1967, 1981), politeness (e.g. Brown & Levionson, 1987; Lakoff, 1975; Scollon & Scollon, 2001), impoliteness (e.g., Culpepper, 1996), and power relations (e.g., Fairclough, 1989; Locher, 2004). In the following few sections, I will briefly illustrate these constituents of rapport management.

2.4.1 Face and facework

Human beings in general are social beings. The idea of face, which is said to be derived from the Chinese traditional concept *miànzi* (面子, face), is an important sociopsychological constituent of any form of human communication; business or private regardless. Hu (1944), drawing on this traditional Chinese concept of human relationships, dichotomised face into *miemzt* (external face) and *lien* (internal face). The former consists of one's social achievement, and the latter refers to the sense of personal integrity. When Chinese communicate, face (both the external and internal) is said to be well respected; damaging the counterpart's face is not socially accepted to the least. In other words, maintaining your counterpart's face in the context of socialisation is deemed indispensable for rapport management, especially in Chinese society.

Researchers have agreed on the understanding that face is not culture-specific to China; it is also universally observed in human communication. Goffman (1967), in this light, developed the idea of facework as one of the constituents of rapport within human communication. To maintain rapport and then create harmony in interaction, people tend to intentionally avoid face-threatening acts (FTA).

2.4.2 (Im)Politeness theory

Another constituent of rapport is politeness. Politeness refers to (linguistic) devices to express intimacy between a speaker and a hearer and/or to avoid invading others' personal space for harmonious human communication. Lakoff (1975) suggested that the system of politeness is innately embedded in all human languages though some cultural variation should be acknowledged. By the same token, Brown and Levinson (1987) also explained that the use of politeness strategies is also observed universally. However, preference as to which of these two faces people belonging in a specific ethnolinguistic group place more emphasis on culturally varies. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 62) categorised the notion of face into two:

1. Positive face: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others.
2. Negative face: the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by

others.

When positive face is preferred, people tend to use positive politeness strategies, or emphasising closeness and intimacy; rather than negative politeness strategies, or keeping a distance in order not to impede others' freedom of action. Generally speaking, English (L1) speakers prefer to use positive politeness strategies, whereas Japanese (L1) speakers do otherwise. Planken (2005) stated that positive politeness is more directly related to rapport management, because it helps manage human relations through some communicative volition.

However, along with the growing interest shown to the studies of politeness, researchers are becoming aware that defining politeness as merely a *linguistic device* may fail in grasping its multidimensional aspects. Researchers of politeness, especially the ones based in Europe, thus redefined and then dichotomised this interactional redressing system as first-order politeness (P1) and second-order politeness (P2). The former one, which is also known as *pragmatic politeness*, is normally defined as "function of language manipulation that work to maintain smooth human relationship" (Usami, 2002, p.4). Meanwhile, the latter one is also called *discourse politeness*, and is generally referred to as "the dynamic whole of functions of various elements in both linguistic forms and discourse level phenomena that play a part within the pragmatic politeness of a discourse" (Usami, 2002, p. 4). Naturally, studies on business communication, the focus of which is not only on linguistic levels, but also on multidimensional levels of communication, are encouraged to address rapport management through the use of BELF based on discourse politeness, not just on pragmatic politeness, in order to clarify how participants dynamically manoeuvre within the discourse ecology of a community of practice.

2.4.3 Power relations

The third element that is indispensable for exploring rapport management is *power relations*. When people interact/communicate in business, the power relations between a speaker and a hearer must be an influential factor to construct Discourse characteristics (for further information, see Fairclough, 1989, 2003; Locher, 2004). For example, when people talk with their superiors, their syntax, the choice of words, and the prosody of speech should naturally become more polite than at

times when they talk with their colleagues with relatively equal positions in the organisation. This conversational speech style adjustment has something to do with how you recognise and understand the power relations within the community of practice you inhabit.

The notion of power existing in discourse community is not monolithic. Fairclough (1989) dichotomised the power relations in language use into: 1) *power in discourse* and 2) *power behind discourse*. The former one is "to do with powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions" (p. 38), meanwhile the latter one is "the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power" (p. 46). The issue of power relations within communities of practice is considered to be one major reason related to the dominance of longitudinal involvers over relatively new comers in discourse communities, as long-timers are normally more competent and/or experienced than those who are still new to the environment. My observation in some Japanese companies as a corporate trainer suggests that this phenomenon of power relations, between supervisors and subordinates in particular, commonly takes place even in current Japanese business Discourse.

As Japanese businesspeople are starting to face increasing numbers of opportunities for speaking English for business purposes along with the on-going globalisation, however, another variable with regard to power relations in Discourse will emerge; that is, English. In theory, BELF is designed to help neutralise English-speaking business communication by mitigating the power imbalance between/among interactants, which results from linguistic asymmetry. However, in practice, the power relations in Discourse are highly influenced by this asymmetry; both in a sociolinguistic (i.e., *power in discourse*) and sociocultural (i.e., *power hidden in discourse*) sense. In other words, L1 speakers naturally obtain more power over their L2 counterparts. In business communication, interactants are expected to be sensitive to power relations lest a crucial problem should happen. To fulfil the goal of BELF communication, mutual engagement of interactants, regardless of L1 or L2 speakers of English as a *de facto lingua franca*, plays a key role.

One way to contribute to the establishment of Discourse harmony in business is to use a so-called conversational *lubricant*. Out of possible conversational lubricants used as a communication strategy, Koester (2004) argued that the sequential use of *relational* and *transactional talk* in business context could afford healthy and effective business correspondence. Normally, *transactional talk*, or talk directly related to a situated business interaction, generates some hidden power in discourse.

Hence, to mitigate FTAs as a result of power practice, the insertion of *relational talk*, or exercising some sense of humour, in the middle of transactional talk can potentially function as a discourse politeness strategy. Koester (2004) suggested that these two pragmatic discourse patterns emerge interchangeably and are not clearly separable. As Koester emphasised, it is not the use of relational talk *per se*, but the sequence of these two pragmatic patterns, that contributes to the mitigation of unnecessary power imbalance on the one hand, and to the enhancement of *Discourse harmony* in business interaction on the other.

2.4.4 *Wa* (Discourse harmony) within a community of practice in Japan

Wa (和), or Discourse harmony, is a concept that illustrates the ideal value of effective correspondence among Japanese people in general. Since this study focuses on how Japanese businesspeople communicate for business purposes by using BELF, it is essential to introduce a theoretical framework that helps explain the ethno-specific value of communication in the context of Japan. In this study, the term *Wa* is consistently employed to describe this Japanese cultural value of rapport management in terms of face, politeness, and power relations.

In order to describe the notion of *Wa*, many anthropologists have provided its definitions through various kinds of positivistic and empirical approaches (Doi, 1971; Hamaguchi, Kumon & Mildred, 1985; Nakane, 1967; Sugiyama, 1974). One major reason for the hardship of achieving a general consensus about what *Wa* is like among scholars of this discipline is its multidimensionality. Referring to the clear distinction of *Uchi* (in-group) and *Soto* (out-group) in the Japanese sociopsychological mindset, Nakane (1967) argued that *Wa* is exercised among and thus experienced by Discourse insiders, or *Uchi*-ers. She also explained that this *Wa* is inherited from predecessors and handed on to successors in hierarchical social strata in Japanese Discourse. This *Uchi*-exclusive social structure accelerates the awareness of *Wa* within the community of practice one belongs to. Besides, *Uchi*-ers are expected to be mutually engaged in their Discourse events without any verbal instruction of what one is required to do, which facilitates their *Wa* co-construction within the community of practice (Doi, 1971). This Discourse literacy to meet the situated behavioural expectation is often labelled as *Kuki wo Yomu* (空気を読む, read the atmosphere; Fukuda, 2006; Reizei, 2006; Saito, 2007; Sato, 2010a; Yamamoto, 1977) in Japanese. Those who are not sensitive enough to meet this

Discourse expectation are called *Kuki ga Yomenai* (空気が読めない, cannot read the atmosphere), or commonly abbreviated as *KY*. *KY*-ers are often found *persona-non-grata* who do not contribute to establishing rapport within their *Uchi*-group.

Since *Wa* is not monolithic at all, however, defining *Kuki,* both *in situ* and *in vitro,* requires multidimensional observation. Takiura (2008) also indicated that, while *Kuki* in theory can be defined as literacy, *Kuki* in practice is such a highly context-dependent phenomenon (p. 46) that one cannot simply be regarded as KY only due to the lack of this literacy. To explain what *Kuki* refers to, observing situated interactions from compound angles is necessary. For the sake of the data analysis of this research, I will focus not on *Kuki per se* as a concept, but on the action of *KY* as a situated FTA resulting in the disruption of *Wa*, or mismanagement of rapport, in Japanese business context, especially in which English is spoken as a lingua franca to get the job done.

2.5. Summary: How this study looks at Discourse data

This study will investigate how BELF is situated and used in the context of Englishnization (as a part of corporate training programmes) in a Japanese company from ecological perspectives. According to BELF philosophy, viewing L2 speakers of English not as defective communicators, but as a part of Discourse ecology, is deemed valid. The research participants are a selected few: they are considered successful L2 learners and will receive foreign-based OJT (on-the-job-training) to play a central role for the further globalisation of their organisation. In most corporate training programmes, the judgment criteria of successful L2 learners heavily depends on numerical measurement, including the comparison of pre-post test scores. However, the expected BELF trainees in the context of globalisation should be those who can achieve success in business interaction by using BELF as a medium of communication; grammatical accuracy and active vocabulary range, though they are apparently considered to be significant factors, should not necessarily be prioritised in successful business interaction. This study defines BELF trainees as users of L2 English for practical business communication, especially for proper rapport management. To assess how rapport is managed within the participants L2 pragmatics, the issues of face, politeness, and power will be addressed. The Japanese sociocultural value of *Kuki* will also be considered as a part of rapport management in the business context of Japan. This is the theoretical framework to

employ for the data analysis of my dissertation. In the following chapter 3, I will review the relevant literature in order to position this dissertation within academic Discourse and to present research questions of this study.

Chapter 3: Prior Studies

3.0. Overview of this chapter

In chapter 2, I argued that this study, with a particular focus on adult learners' context, should look at the participants' (socio)pragmatic L2 performance for specific communicative purposes. Also, as the judgment criteria of good practice in BELF-in-use are multidimensional, the inclusion of multiple angles is vital in order to validate the analytical methods to investigate actual L2 performance. The remaining question is, in what context and for what business communication purposes BELF is used strategically in the business context of Japan.

It is expected that researchers of second language studies and intercultural business discourse will show increasing interest in the analysis of how BELF is situated and used in the context of globalisation in Japan. To better understand the complex reality of actual L2 business performance by situated *good language learners*, scientific communication between these two disciplines will play a facilitative role (Sato *et al.*, 2015). As the first step to scaffold better interdisciplinary communication, I will review some relevant literature of both studies on CSs and English for specific purposes (or, business discourse analysis) in the second language research terrain. By doing so, I will scrutinise what has been talked about and what is still missing as to the use of CSs for specific communicative purposes. To help readers understand some context in connection with the researchers who have informed this current research, I will provide some pertinent affiliated information. I referred to the most updated information of the authors as of July, 2015 (when the first draft of this dissertation was written).

3.1 Studies on communication strategies

First, I will review a couple of prior studies that deal with the issues of communication strategies utilised by Japanese L2 speakers, especially from interactionalist discipline, in the following section.

3.1.1 A Study on communication strategies by Japanese L2 speakers

The first study is Fujio's (2007) doctoral dissertation. Misa Fujio is a professor at Toyo University. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo in 2007, and her research topic includes business discourse analysis in a foreign-affiliated company in Japan. In her doctoral dissertation, she analyses the function of communication strategies (CS) from interactive sociolinguistic perspectives: not the ones to repair conversation, but to better deliver information in L2.

As I already mentioned above, earlier studies of CSs usually viewed strategic competence as a pragmatic device to compensate for lexico-grammatical knowledge of L2 learners (e.g., Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1974; Tarone, 1977). However, some sociolinguists argued that there should be some strategies used not only for compensation, but also for realising effective communication (e.g., Bachman, 1990; Iwai & Konishi, 2003). Drawing on this interactionalist approach, Fujio (2007) critically examined the notion of CSs from social constructivism standpoints and redefined CSs as a linguistic device for better information delivery.

Drawing on Aston's (1993) assertion, Fujio also stated the significance of employing discursive, interactional, and sociolinguistic perspectives for CS studies. For her data analyses, she mentioned that the CS studies should focus on naturalistic spoken discourse where an NS and an NNS communicate. She understood that researchers should look at the communication-facilitative aspects of the use of CSs to provide a more ecological perspective on their pragmatic function. Hence, Fujio (2007) focused on the use of CSs by three Japanese L2 English speakers living in the U.K. which emerged while they were communicating with their counterparts who are L1 English speakers. To collect data, she videotaped their interaction, transcribed it, and analysed it through conversation analysis approaches.

Through analysing the naturalistic dyadic interactional discourse between L1 and L2 speakers, Fujio (2007) found out four different types of CS as is illustrated below (Table 2).

	Presentation	Acceptance
Problematic situation	Type 1 (Problem-solving)	Type 1' (Problem-solving)
Non-problematic situation	Type 2 (Information-adjustment)	Type 3 (Interpersonal)

Table 5: Types of CSs (Fujio, 2007, p. 50)

Type 1 refers to the CS used to overcome communication problems at the stage of information presentation. Type 1' includes the CS to indicate the listeners' incomprehension about the presented information. Types 2 and 3 are different from these in that Types 1 and 1' are used in problematic situations, whereas the others in non-problematic situations. Type 2 is used when the speakers try to adjust information according to the listeners' competencies. This is expected to prompt the listeners' comprehension and prevent further problems from happening. The last one, Type 3, includes active participation in the discourse to indicate the listeners' comprehension aiming at avoiding communicative problems.

Fujio's (2007) longitudinal study suggested that, though there was no statistical significance found in the use of Type 1 and Type 1' between L1 and L2 speakers, there was a clear difference observed in quality and quantity in the use of Types 2 and 3 (i.e., L1 over L2). The fact that L2 speakers could not acquire the competencies to use Type 3, although they recognised the importance of using this strategy, suggested that further studies should address the issue of how effective it is to teach relevant strategic skills as *explicit knowledge* to help L2 learners develop their strategic competence.

Fujio's (2007) study made a great contribution to business discourse studies as well as to L2 studies in that it clearly suggested the importance of focusing on how L2 speakers communicate in their target language. However, she acknowledged that not only her study, but also any studies in the discipline of intercultural business communication should overcome the following potential challenges. First of all, although she was fully aware of L1 speakers of English being gradually decentralised in English-speaking discourse, the view to see L1 speakers as *ideal speakers* and L2 speakers as *deficient in language use* still somewhat remains in her discussion. She also reluctantly acknowledged that her research finding, like many other studies', was not fully convincing enough to

juxtapose and equalise L1 and L2 speakers' positions. Therefore, a future challenge of L1-L2 pragmatic studies will be how to guarantee L1 and L2 speakers' equivalence in status within the community of practice, and then to analyse their communication as *practically* fair interactions. Second, any future study should also touch upon, from a pedagogical point of view, how to help develop the above strategic competencies so that L2 speakers become equivalent communicators as L2 counterparts. Lastly, in her study, she defined communication between L1 and L2 speakers as a prototypical form of intercultural communication. This discussion is fair as far as her data analysis goes. However, as Crystal (2003) stated, mutual L2 discourse is getting more and more popular nowadays. Therefore, further studies should focus on mutual L2 communication. In this light, Sato (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2010b) analysed Japanese-Chinese intercultural communication where all the participants can be L2 in a foreign language context, not second language contexts just like Barkhuizen's and Fujio's, which is illustrated as follows.

3.1.2 A Study on politeness strategies by Japanese novice L2 learners

Below is my previous study series conducted in 2009 (Sato, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d), which was developed out of my master's thesis study (Sato, 2009a). This study sheds light on how Japanese novice level learners of a foreign language perform in intercultural communication occurring outside of language classrooms. As Firth and Wagner (1997) stated, most SLA researchers administer language studies through stereotyped perspectives to regard non-native speakers as defective communicators. The occurrence of bizarre linguistic phenomena, such as silence and code-switching, in intercultural communication particularly by beginner level learners is thus often seen merely as the manifestation of communication breakdown, according to Tarone (1977). However, many applied linguists state that silence and code-switching in multilingual communication are quite multidimensional pragmatics, and automatically regarding them as the sign of linguistic deficiency is such an oversimplified interpretation. Hence, the movement to critically look at the peripheral linguistic aspects is gradually growing (e.g., Ellwood & Nakane, 2009; Nakane, 2007; O'Driscoll, 2001). Inspired by this critical approach to discourse analysis, Sato's (2009) study attempts to reassess the function of silence and code-switching in intercultural communication analysing from the framework of facework (Goffman, 1967) and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

As its research context, this study focused upon a specific discourse community where Japanese-Chinese intercultural communication constantly takes place. The data were obtained by means of audio recording and field note taking in the Ming-Xing Chinese Club (MXCC), a group for autonomous Chinese language learning based at Meisei University, located in the western part of Tokyo. MXCC was established in June of 2006. As an administrator, I had longitudinally observed the club activities for approximately four years since it was established. As Davis (1995) emphasised, such longitudinal observation helps in taking "holistic perspectives" in discourse studies.

MXCC consisted of 5 participants (3 Japanese and 2 Chinese citizens), excluding the researcher. The data analysis focused its attention on the linguistic strategies of two of the Japanese participants (Shun and Mihoko) observed while they interacted with the two Chinese members (Fang and Qing). All of them were considered *good language learners* (GLLs) of their L2 as they meet the standards: 1) high motivation for learning, 2) learners' autonomy, and 3) strategic communication skills. Shun and Mihoko were approximately the same age (20 or 21) at the time of this data collection. These participants were frequently involved in intercultural communication activities and the data could be obtained without much difficultly. This accessibility to the participants enabled the researcher to conduct a longitudinal study upon how they dealt with intercultural communication.

In order to capture the complex reality of intercultural communication, I collected two different types of data in MXCC. One is the participants' actual interactional data; the other is the participants' own interpretation of their linguistic behaviour. The first data were transcribed and coded using a CA-based transcription convention applied to every moment of their interaction.

The excerpts presented in this paper were prepared using the following procedure. First of all, I audio recorded the participants' verbal interaction while taking field notes for comments on non-verbal behaviour. Next, I transcribed nearly four hours of conversation. Subsequently, I codified the data to reveal the frequency of similar kinds of events. Through this coding, I identified when code-switching was used as a facework and politeness strategy. Lastly, in order to enrich the perspectives of data analysis, an interview about the CA data was conducted with each participant.

In conventional studies on intercultural communication, silence and code-switching have been viewed as signalling intercultural conflict, including a lack of linguistic competence and communication breakdown. Although Firth and Wagner (1997) criticised this view as stereotypical, they have not yet substantiated that non-native speakers' L2 performance that would appear to be

defective could be seen as not necessarily defective through multidimensional data analysis methods. This study attempted to reassess the (socio)pragmatic function of silence and code-switching in intercultural communication. It was concluded that the pragmatic functions of silence and code-switching are not limited to compensation strategies to overcome linguistic difficulty; they are also recognised as contextually available communicative resources. Besides, it was also suggested that silence and code-switching in intercultural communication could potentially function as facework (Goffman, 1967) and, to some extent, a politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In addition, I also concluded that the participants of this study (i.e., Shun, Mihoko, Fang and Qing) were considered GLLs in that they were willing to partake in intercultural communication, at their relatively early stage of learning, by strategically using their limited L2 competencies while utilising code-switching and silence for various kinds of communication purposes.

Although this study has made some contributions to the research domain of politeness and face studies as well as language choice and code-switching, it also contains some potential limitations. First, since the data analysis of this study was exploratory, researchers are advised to carefully consider for themselves whether it is transferable or not, before expanding it to their own research contexts. Second, the data collection methods should be revisited. This study employed only audio recording of the participants' talk-in-interaction, and nowadays many CA studies use videotaping in order to be able to capture various types of non-verbal information which helps researchers understand the context and the communications involved in greater depth. While audio recordings and transcripts are helpful, it is also true that they are highly limited in providing holistic information on the observed discourse. In addition, this study focuses upon the use of discursive and communicative strategies by novice-level L2 learners. The participants' strategic practice was mainly and mostly for compensating for their lack of linguistic competences. Further studies should be called for to apply this research finding to contexts with more advanced level L2 users and to see how their strategies function more for the realisation of better practice. Lastly, although this study explored the possibility of these linguistic devices as a means of communication strategies, its transferability to other contexts is not 100% guaranteed. Thus, further research inquiry will be called for and I myself would like to take this as the up-coming point of investigation.

3.1.3 Limitations of previous research

Previous studies on strategic language learning with psychological approaches focused their analytical attention on the predictor of L2 learner success (e.g. Carroll, 1967; Cohen, 1077, 1989; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975). Though L2 learners in these studies were seen as *good* language learners, researchers possibly regarded L2 speakers as deficient language users on an unconscious level. Recently, an increasing number of researchers have begun to take sociocultural, post structural, and critical perspectives into account for evaluating L2 users' actual performance (e.g., Norton & Toohey, 2001).

Up-coming studies on strategic competence are expected to focus their analytical attention on how L2 users manage their communication for specific purposes in order to investigate the multidimensional use of CSs. To do so, L2 speakers' performance should naturally be assessed from multiple perspectives. To gain insight, consulting some relevant studies conducted in the field of English for specific purposes (ESP) will play a facilitative role.

3.2 English for specific purposes

As was contended in Chapter 2, the English language practically functions as a *de facto lingua franca* and is gradually establishing itself as a medium of intercultural discourse communication. English for specific purposes (ESP), which grew out of this movement, is an idea of teaching/learning specific English skills, including vocabulary and grammar, necessary to accomplish business within a community of practice one belongs to. The idea of ESP is applied to teaching/learning business English, including technical English, scientific English, and medical English. However, in this paper, the term ESP is employed to allude to teaching/learning English for global business communication.

In the context of business communication, the required linguistic proficiency is such that speakers could dynamically manoeuvre within the community of practice to negotiate meaning, to repair communication breakdown, and to endeavour to establish rapport. One needs not necessarily be an L1 speaker in terms of pure linguistic proficiency to achieve such interactional goals. Fujio (2012) also suggests that teaching/learning ESP, which basically refers to the use of English in

intercultural business, "will be able to raise the awareness of students that they are l*anguage users* rather than *language learners*" (p. 204).

3.2.1 How Japanese use English in business (L1 vs. L2)

The origin of ESP dates back to the 1960's in European context. Today, an increasing number of researchers of ESP show their interest in exploring how English is used as a *lingua franca* in Asian business context. Due to participants' confidentiality resulting from traditional exclusivity of business discourse, however, doing empirical studies of business communication in Asia is quite challenging. In this section, I will refer to four empirical studies on Asian business communication, which are relevant to this dissertation (i.e., Du-Babcock and Tanaka, 2010, 2013; Fujio, 2010, 2014; Sato, 2014b; Tanaka, 2010).

The first two studies are discourse analyses by Hiromasa Tanaka (2010) and Misa Fujio (2010). It should be noted hereby that both Tanaka's (2010) and Fujio's (2010) articles were compiled in *Kokusai Bijinesu Komyunikēshon Kenkyū* (『国際ビジネスコミュニケーション研究』, International Business Communication studies) edited by the Japan Business Communication Association. In addition to the above two articles, this book contains various kinds of business communication studies conducted in the context of globalisation in Japan. I selected these two studies from this book, because 1) the book provides up-to-date information about business communication studies in Japan, and 2) among them, Tanaka's (2010) and Fujio's (2010) studies are relevant to this dissertation. Subsequently, Fujio's (2014) study, which provides advanced insights into ESP, will also be referred to.

Hiromasa Tanaka is a professor of applied linguistics and business discourse analysis at Meisei University, Tokyo, Japan. He earned his Ed.D. from Temple University, Japan, in 2003. As an independent consultant, he has engaged with various global companies both inside and outside Japan. He has developed corporate language training curricula in various global companies. He developed his doctoral dissertation research project based off of his experience as a consultant. He conducted three needs analysis projects to assess how much and to what extent English business communication is needed in three Japanese companies (Tanaka, 2003). As his background, he referred to the socioeconomic changes in Japan. He wrote that rapid globalisation made English a more frequently

used code of communication between non-Japanese-English-speaking business people and Japanese-speaking business people who are L2 speakers of English even in Japan.

His doctoral dissertation made a great contribution to the studies of business English discourse analysis in various ways. As his major research findings, he concluded that not only verbal, but also non-verbal communicative resources that were not fully touched upon in past research prevented Japanese participants from communicating in their second language. He also suggested that the participants' identity placed influence on their English communication style with their non-Japanese counterparts. It was reported that each individual's different communication styles on a micro level also hindered participants from realising successful business communication. Lastly, this study indicated that Discourse studies on business communication could greatly benefit from employing qualitative research approaches.

This self-reflection brought him to develop his 2010 study. Tanaka (2010) conducted an ethnographic qualitative study and looked at actual BELF-in-use in Japan. He believes that communication is not merely a process of message conveyance; rather, it encapsulates various kinds of sociological phenomena. Besides, what counts in business communication is not only successful negotiation of meanings, but also achievement of mutual win-win relationships. For smooth business communication, pure linguistic competence and sensitivity to rapport can function as indispensable tools. Tanaka (2010) investigated how Japanese people working in a France-Japan joint car manufacturer used English for business purposes, and identified the complex correlation between culture and language.

As his research method, he employed a Discourse analysis approach. Since authentic discourse data were impossible to obtain due to confidentiality in business context, he employed an alternative approach. He participated in an English-speaking business meeting in a Japanese consulting company and took field notes on what was happening in their interaction. Based on these field notes, he created a movie clip in which the observed interaction was actually re-enacted. Since the reliability of this video was still questionable, he showed this to another 43 Japanese global businesspeople from three different companies to check its representativeness.

For his data analysis, Tanaka placed importance on obtaining authentic voices of business people. He explained that his longitudinal engagement in consultation services enabled him to establish rapport with these Japanese businesspeople. He considers this trust-based human

relationship as his warrant to elicit proper data from his participants. To triangulate the source of data, he used the following three ways; 1) a questionnaire-survey, 2) oral interviews, and 3) recording group discussion on the relevant topics. This study focused the attention of analysis on the pragmatics of small talk and greetings in business Discourse where English is used as a lingua franca.

As a result of this qualitative discourse analysis, his study substantiated that business collaboration mediated by the use of English as a lingua franca between Japanese and American businesspeople can trigger miscommunication and misunderstanding due to the difference in sense of value. The data suggested that apologising and praising behaviour expressed in small talk and greetings in particular could cause miscommunication and misunderstanding because of the different connotations in their (socio)pragmatic functions. Tanaka also suggested that this description of *small narratives* on what is happening in a multinational workplace is quite beneficial in observing and unveiling diversity of business interaction.

Likewise, Misa Fujio (2010) conducted a Discourse analysis. Previously, she had worked for an America-financed company in Japan as a bilingual secretary. Her research interest in the studies of communication strategies by L2 speakers of English grew out of her business experience. After completing her dissertation (Fujio, 2007), she expanded her research interest to include the observation of actual business Discourse. In her 2010 study, she focused on a Japanese-American English-speaking meeting, and discussed how the negotiation of a meeting was achieved between the participants of different nationalities. So far, much has been discussed in business discourse studies about the significance of utilising communication strategies to better manage rapport. However, what types of communication strategies are used in what way has not been widely touched upon. Fujio's (2010) study attempted to address this issue through an empirical qualitative inquiry.

Fujio (2010) successfully audio recorded an authentic business meeting scene in an America-financed company in Japan, in which English was used as a medium of communication between L1 and L2 speakers. The purpose of this meeting was not to make important organisational decisions, but to exchange information in a relatively casual way. The participants were three meeting attendees: an American manager, a Japanese manager, and a Japanese employee. The audio-recording was transcribed later to enable micro-level analysis. In addition, post-interviews were conducted to identify what was unsaid but still important for analysing the data. To gain multiple perspectives on this Discourse event, Fujio also conducted oral interviews with several outsiders of this business

Discourse, including four American and three Asian students studying in Japan; six Japanese and two Japanese researchers; and two Japanese global businesspeople. In this analysis, she focused on 1) miscommunication along with misunderstanding, 2) the following negotiation of meaning, and 3) conversational collaboration.

In addition to this micro-level analysis, she also conducted macro-level analysis on the structure of this talk-in-interaction. To deal with the elicited data in a statistical approach, she used Praat. It is free scientific software designed for analysing speech in phonetics. This programme was originally developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenink of the University of Amsterdam, and is now used by many researchers of applied linguistics for research purposes.

This case study focused on some ambiguity of Japanese business communication styles, indicating the needs of explicit instruction on communication strategies to overcome this. On the other hand, Fujio reported that what has been believed to be negative characteristics of Japanese communication styles in business can also be utilised as a scaffold of floor-holding strategies. For example, Japanese communication in general is reportedly listener-initiated, while Western communication is more speaker-initiated (e.g., Ide 1998; Ide 1989, 2006; Kameda, 2012; Kondo, 2007). For further studies, Fujio emphasised the importance of focusing on how to positively deal with the characteristics of Japanese communication styles in general in global business communication settings.

Fujio (2014), in light of her above discussion, conducted a Discourse study to investigate how Japanese speakers of English employ turn-taking strategies in quasi-business interactions. L2 speakers often deal with difficulty around taking turns in intercultural business meetings. However, our experience as L2 speakers might suggest not only linguistic proficiency, but also business experience plays a facilitative role in realising effective turn-taking. However, little has been discussed about which factor is considered more influential when taking turns. Hence, her study focused its special analytical attention on linguistic ability and business experience and specified factors that can facilitate smooth turn-taking in business interactions.

There were 12 participants in her study, and they were divided into three groups. Each group contains 1) a native speaker of American English, 2) a Japanese businessperson and 3) two Japanese university students. The participants were asked to administer simulated business meetings in English in order to elicit the spoken discourse data. The data were transcribed and later analysed

both quantitatively (i.e., floor-holding time or speech rate) and qualitatively (i.e., micro-level analysis).

Her data analyses counter-intuitively indicated that the participants' linguistic ability was the most dominant factor to facilitate turn-taking in the meetings. In each group, the L1 English speaker and the university student with higher proficiency contributed to the meetings in terms of the number of turns they took compared with other participants. These two parties chaired the meetings and even occupied approximately three-quarters of the entire discourse by active turn-takings. Their higher English proficiency can be considered as the major factor in holding the floor. Nevertheless, the businesspeople, though their turn-takings were quite limited, utilised their expertise and professional experience trying to hard-line the conversation's directions when they see necessary. Fujio reported that the businesspeople have the same level (or even more) overseas experience as the higher level Japanese university students do, whereas their participation manner differs. Although the number of their turn-takings was limited, the businesspeople contributed to decision-making by presenting questions or suggestions based on their business experience, the idea of which other parties could not come up with. This observation brought her to the conclusion that linguistic ability could possibly be an influential factor to take turns effectively in this spoken discourse.

Based on her research findings, Fujio also addressed the problems L1 English speakers might probably face. It is often reported that L1 English speakers would face more challenges when they communicate with their L2 counterparts. For instance, Victor (2013) problematised "the tendency of native speakers to use their language in unnecessarily complicated ways when speaking to non-native speakers" (p. 57). Drawing on his argument, Fujio (2014) concluded that the sole reliance on the L1 standard "might possibly cause a situation in which, in spite of the meeting being conducted in English, native speakers might become the least understood participants if all the other participants are non-native speakers" (p. 23). When it comes to mutual L2 English interaction, one's striving to get acculturated with the L1 norms will not necessarily result in solution for communication breakdown. To gain insights, researchers of BELF are advised to look more actively at the English-speaking business context where all participants are L2 English speakers. By doing so, how Japanese English speakers could utilise their inherited pragmatic characteristics, including agreement and disagreement, can be considered. In the following section, I will introduce a couple of studies with a special focus on mutual L2 English business interactions.

3.2.2 BELF in Asia (L2 vs. L2)

Tanaka's (2010) and Fujio's (2010, 2014) studies have focused on English-speaking business communication between L1 and L2 speakers. They acknowledged that future studies might as well focus on BELF communication in Asia to reveal diversity of mutual L2 English-speaking Discourse. As Graddol (2006) suggested, the reality of Asian English communication is of large interest among applied linguists. Tanaka, in this light, focused on business communication between Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese professionals with his colleague, Bertha Du-Babcock. She is an associate professor of the City University of Hong Kong and specialises in business communication. Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010) reported the preliminary results of a study on differences in topic management and turn-taking strategies between English-Chinese bilingual Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese business professionals.

Their study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The quantitative analysis focused on five intercultural decision-making meetings to clarify the general tendency of topic management and turn-taking strategies. In addition to that quantitative analysis, a qualitative approach was employed to trace every minute aspect of communication by Japanese and Hong Kong Chinese businesspeople. In this study, 22 Japanese (mainly L2 learners, with a few exceptions) and 17 Hong Kong Chinese business professionals participated. These participants were asked to play the roles of decision-making board members. The role-play put them in a situation where they had to make an ethical decision as to whether their company ought to abandon one of its major products that eventually caused 30 to 40 unnecessary deaths. To collect data, the participants were asked to hold a videoconference. Their discussions were videotaped and audio recorded, and later transcribed. Although the data set was retrieved from this role-play task and did not necessarily represent an "authentic" business meeting, this method was considered still beneficial. The authors insisted that this role-play approach could produce "a simulated experiential case exercise (Guffey & Du-Babcock, 2010) where each group had to make strategic and ethical decisions based on a 45-minute discussion." (Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010, p. 5).

As a result of their preliminary analysis of intra-Asian business interactional Discourse, the authors found clear differences between Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese professionals with regard to topic management and turn-taking strategies. For instance, the Hong Kong Chinese participants

were more contributing to their involved interactions than their Japanese counterparts in terms of 1) the numbers of turn-taking, 2) speech-time length, and 3) the amount of words pronounced. This fact went against their original hypothesis that Chinese and Japanese would have similarities in their communicative behaviours. As far as their observation went, the Hong Kong Chinese were more assertive, while the Japanese were more reactive in their interactional behaviour. The speech patterns by Hong Kong Chinese were found to be consistently corresponding to L1 English speakers'. Meanwhile, the L1 transfer was frequently observed in the Japanese speech during the meetings. The authors tentatively concluded that the higher English-language proficiency of Hong Kong Chinese participants compared with the Japanese counterparts could be an intervening variable. In addition to the topic management and turn-taking strategies, they reported that there was an apparent difference in participants' ways of showing disagreement: the Hong Kong Chinese pragmatically directly disagree with their counterparts, whereas Japanese do it in a pragmatically ambiguous way (i.e., multiple interpretability). Since this was a preliminary analysis, further studies were called for to check the transferability of this discussion to another similar Discourse.

The preliminary analysis by Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010) overcame traditional constraints of previous studies, addressed the issues of Asian business communication with English as a lingua franca, and made a great contribution to the discipline of business Discourse analysis. However, their focal Discourse was the English-speaking interaction between the Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese professionals. The Japanese participants were mainly L2 speakers of English, excluding a few exceptional participants; meanwhile the Hong Kong Chinese participants were English-Chinese bilinguals. There was asymmetry in their linguistic proficiency, and it is highly possible that this imbalance in competencies could have intervened into their Discourse construction. It is expected that future study will focus on mutual L2 business interactional settings where interactants' (linguistic) competencies are relatively balanced. My initial studies (Sato, 2014a, 2014b) investigated how L2 English-speakers of Japanese and Chinese interact for business purposes based on an ethnographic observation for the former and a stimulated conversation for the latter.

In Sato (2014a), intercultural business interaction between Japanese and Chinese was looked at through an interview-based qualitative analysis, and the causes of conflict happening when English is used as *lingua franca* was considered based on the conceptual framework of rapport management, especially face. Interviews that I conducted with some Japanese businesspeople

suggested that they have suffered from FTA by their Chinese business counterparts. For Japanese participants, the most problematic issue of their Chinese counterparts' pragmatic behaviour was their overpowering assertion. This study was driven by the local business voice mentioned above. I tackled this issue in an attempt to figure out the causes of this intercultural communication problem to inform future corporate training programmes.

To collect data, I conducted a fieldwork survey in a Japanese global company, in which I offered corporate English training to seven selected trainees. These trainees often experienced business communication conflict with their Chinese subordinates when they were in English-speaking meetings (both face-to-face and videoconference). I interviewed these seven Japanese workers about interactional events which they thought were prototypical of Japanese-Chinese business conflict. To reveal the (cultural) perception discrepancy between Japanese and Chinese, I also asked some Chinese businesspeople, who were familiar with Japanese business practices, to provide their Chinese interpretation on the Chinese pragmatic behaviour which Japanese found problematic.

My interview analysis suggested that, from a Japanese perspective, Chinese assertion is an apparent challenge against authority to Japanese managers in many Japanese-Chinese intercultural business interactions. From a Chinese standpoint, however, it is not necessarily an intended FTA. Rather, the actual intention of assertion by Chinese is highly likely to save the supervisors' faces by attributing the causes of problems to external, uncontrollable factors. This perception is diametrically opposing to the Japanese-centred interpretation of the impertinent Chinese pragmatic behaviour. The data analysis suggested that the discrepancy of face values between Japanese and Chinese might have possibly caused Japanese to misunderstand the pragmatic function of Chinese assertion.

To design and develop a corporate training curriculum for the near future, Du-Babcock and Tanaka suggested that not only language skills of the L1 standard, but also intercultural competence with mutual L2-English interaction should be included in the training contents. Such training is expected to help Japanese businesspeople skilfully handle intercultural business conflict. In addition, to help trainees face different culture, awareness-raising about the sensitivity to their business counterparts' culture is inevitable. Thus, Sato (2014b) argued over the importance of awareness-raising training. One way to realise this awareness-raising is to do stimulated conversation.

A role-play activity is one of the frequently employed training approaches of corporate

training programmes, as it presumably helps trainees develop their practical L2 using skills while maximising the trainees' speech turns. Nevertheless, little has been discussed about the efficacy of role-play activities as intercultural awareness raising training as was discussed in my previous study (Sato, 2014a). In my previous study (Sato, 2014b), I investigated the effectiveness of role-play activities between business English trainees with different nationalities, namely Japanese and Chinese. I collected data by 1) videotaping a role-play activity and 2) conducting retrospective interviews with the participants. This role-play-based analysis helps produce semi-realistic business meeting Discourse in terms of sociolinguistic aspects, such as turn-taking, rapport management, and communication strategies (e.g., Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010, 2013).

This time, I focused on BELF-mediated business communication in Japanese business context. I offered free-of-charge training to raise intercultural awareness and its relevant consultation in exchange for gathering data. For this, two participants volunteered (one Japanese and the other Chinese). These participants were constantly involved in English-speaking meetings with their L2-English-speaking counterparts. They were balanced in language proficiency, as the TOEIC-based proficiency level for both of them was approximately 650, as of the data collection date. For this study, they were asked to play the roles of businesspeople working in a Japanese company and to make collective decisions about their company's globalisation strategies. They discussed the issue and chose one organisational policy out of five choices that could be considered to be the most appropriate. The conversation was videotaped and transcribed later to enable text-based Discourse analysis.

Based on the videotaped data, I used a stimulated recall approach and collected retrospective interview data. The data were collected using the following steps; 1) showing the videotaped interaction as well as its rough segmental transcription, 2) pointing out where I thought communication conflict occurred, and 3) asking them to self-interpret why they did/said so. The chosen segments referred to the situations where apparent pragmatic differences were observed; 1) when Japanese received disagreement, and 2) when Japanese showed euphemistic disagreement. Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010) also identified these pragmatic differences between Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese.

Statistical comparison indicated that there was no significance in the participants' interactional performance in terms of 1) turn-taking frequency, 2) the number of words uttered in total, and 3) speech length per turn. These quantitative results did not correspond to what Du-Babcock and

Tanaka (2010) reported. The contradiction between their study and my study is deemed to have simply resulted from adopting mutually different variables; Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010) analysed group videoconference interactions, whereas my study looked at dyadic, face-to-face interaction. Besides, the Chinese participant in this study was not a pure English-Chinese bilingual, unlike Du-Babcock's and Tanaka's (2010) study.

The subsequent qualitative analysis suggested that Japanese tended to feel more FTA on Chinese interactional pragmatics than it was actually intended. For example, the Japanese participant of this study commented that Chinese confirmation questions sounded as if the speaker were showing (reactive) disagreement.

In contrast, I reported that Japanese *harmonious disagreement* (e.g., I agree with you mostly) followed by floor-offering (e.g., What do you think?) toward the end of his utterance caused communication dilemma for his Chinese counterpart. For Japanese, this complex and ambiguous pragmatic pattern is a part of rapport management in that it helps mitigate FTA through ambiguous statement. However, for Chinese, this complicated pragmatic behaviour of Japanese makes it difficult to understand what they actually intend to say due to its multiple interpretability.

The Japanese participant, when he received clarification request, felt face-threatened while the Chinese counterpart did not intend to do anything more than negotiate the meaning. The data analysis even suggested that this interactional conflict must have been derived from the significant difference in pragmatic density between Japanese and Chinese, the possibility of which was also suggested by Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010, 2013).

Moreover, it was implied that the Japanese participant observed that consensus should have been achieved through paralinguistic elements (namely, synthetic laugh and silence) where the Chinese counterpart did not recognise any kind of agreement. This perception gap suggested that, for Japanese, synchronised paralinguistic pragmatics plays a significant role in determining the conversational direction.

Retrospective interviews indicated that both Japanese and Chinese speakers recognised a perceptive gap, especially with regard to the pragmatics of disagreement (speakers' and hearer's intentions), consensus-making and clarifying. As was indicated in my previous study (Sato, 2014a), the cultural, perception discrepancy between interactants owing to low familiarity with each other's cultural background could possibly end up with business communication conflict, particularly

rapport-disestablishments. Besides, paralinguistic elements, including silence and synthetic laugh, were also found to be worthy of further analysis. It was indicated that future studies should focus more attention on the perception synchronicity/discrepancy between speakers and hearers. This dialogue-based training was found to contribute not only to the development of practical skills of L2-English pragmatics, but also to participants' intercultural awareness-raising.

3.3 Informing future studies

Corporate in-house English training programmes generally have two expectations; 1) to help trainees improve their practical English skills, and 2) to have trainees be more aware of the importance of CSs for better information delivery. The former is largely talked about in the field of IBD, and the latter in applied linguistics. Although these two academic disciplines are not mutually exclusive, researchers have not fully communicated with each other. In order to develop better corporate training programmes, this dissertation is meant to play a role as a bridge between these two fields.

The above prior studies of both applied linguistics and IBD suggested some points to overcome for a future study. The issues to address encapsulate:

1. Studies on L2 use should focus their scope on the actual, situated performance to take a holistic perspective on L2-based interactions (e.g., Norton & Toohey, 2001; Takeuchi, 2003; Saito, 2000, 2003, 2012).
2. Situated good L2 performance, including business interaction, should be assessed not only with linguistic proficiency with the L1 standard, but also as to whether they could get the job done (both in terms of goal achievement and rapport-management) by dynamically manoeuvring within the community of practice they belong to.
3. To understand the complex reality of L2 pragmatics in Discourse, both macro-level and micro-level analyses are important, as was suggested in Fujio (2010). Tanaka (2003) also suggested researchers should take micro-level analysis of *spoken data* as their study basis.
4. Macro-level analysis through longitudinal ethnographic approaches can be a great supplementary to micro-level analysis that focuses on every minute aspect of business

communication. For micro-level analysis, researchers can benefit from obtaining naturalistic spoken Discourse data (Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010; Fujio, 2010). By conducting such a longitudinal ethnographic study, researchers will be able to compare the perceptions of both speakers and hearers.

5. Overcoming confidentiality in business Discourse settings is, though not completely impossible, hard to achieve. Simulating conversation through a role-play activity is one of the most promising and practical alternative approaches, as was suggested in Du-Babcock and Tanaka (2010, 2013) and Sato (2014b). Future studies are expected to put more analytical focus on the characteristics of Discourse complexity, included participants' power relations and hegemony.
6. It is commonly reported that the way Japanese speak English in business is pragmatically ambiguous. Investigating how such pragmatic ambiguity of Japanese spoken English, including disagreement and clarification request, trigger misunderstanding and miscommunication even between Japanese speaking with Japanese helps gain insight into how to help Japanese corporate trainees better improve their English skills.

Drawing on the above argument, I have established the following three research questions for this dissertation.

3.4 Research questions

Below are the three research questions. I will then explain each in detail to clarify what I intend to say by my statements.

RQ1. What do situated Japanese BELF trainees do?

This is the biggest research question I approach in this dissertation. Answering this question will help readers draw a general picture of what prototypical corporate English trainees are and what they actually do during corporate in-house English training, especially in the era of globalisation. Analysing the English trainees' characteristics in a Japanese company, in which

Englishnization will be taking place, and my participants will play a key role for assessing/evaluating their globalisation strategies, from an ecological perspective. This is the first key concept of this study.

RQ2. How is BELF situated among and (pragmatically) used by the Japanese BELF trainees?

This study focuses its analytical attention on how BELF is situated among and used by Japanese speakers of English for business purposes. In this situation, the success of communication does not necessarily depend on pure linguistic maturity in relation to the L1 standard. Rather, the participants' experience and skills to dynamically manoeuvre within their community of practice will play significant roles. Such "dynamic manoeuvre" must have something to do with the Japanese interactants' unique (socio)pragmatic practices. Observing some BELF pragmatic patterns used by the Japanese businesspeople (aseptically when to confirm or disagree) and investigating how the pragmatic characteristics could potentially result in miscommunication or misunderstanding in intercultural business communication is the second key concept. The prior studies have suggested the need to analyse the following pragmatics; 1) showing disagreement (speakers' intentions), 2) receiving disagreement (hearers' intentions), 3) consensus-making, 4) clarification-responding and 5) the use of paralinguistic elements (laugh and silence) for collective decision making. This study also looks at role-play-based interactions among participants in the context where power relations and hegemony are situated.

RQ3. What can the Japanese BELF trainees tell us?

The educational implication language teachers and learners can learn from the corporate trainees' L2 practice is the third key concept. Through stimulated recall interview, I will identify how Japanese businesspeople view their own pragmatic ambiguity. Based on the analysis, I will present some insights about how to design and develop future corporate English training programmes as a part of globalisation strategies in Japanese companies.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.0. Overview of this chapter

In this chapter, I will explain the research methodology of this current study. First of all, I will elaborate on an ethnographic qualitative approach to Discourse analysis. Second, data collection and analytical methods will be explained. Lastly, I will describe the ethical consideration of this dissertation.

4.1. Methodological consideration

4.1.1 What is an ethnographic qualitative approach?

This study employs an ethnographic qualitative approach to Discourse analysis as its research methodology. Many studies on second language acquisition have conventionally employed statistical approaches, which help measure learners' metacognitive developmental processes. Such quantitative approaches with psycholinguistic perspectives have been traditionally considered beneficial to draw a general picture of L2 learners, from a macro-perspective. Although employing a statistic approach is beneficial for researchers to achieve robust research, some scholars have critically questioned the legitimacy of sole reliance on statistics to tackle such a highly context-dependent, dynamic, and complex issue as L2 teaching/learning. A Qualitative approach to L2 studies, which has an orientation to exploring something new rather than confirming generalizability, thus resulted as an alternative to the numerical data analysis methods (Chaudron, 2000).

Conventionally, quantitative researchers conduct experiments and present data as controlled numerical representation. In contrast, qualitative researchers deal with various types of naturalistic data. Unlike quantitative analysis whose goal is to confirm the generalizability, qualitative analysis aims at a thick description of complex realities observed in a naturalistic setting. Manson (1996) stated "qualitative research –whatever it might be – certainly does not represent a unified set of techniques or philosophies, and indeed has grown out of a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions" (p. 3). By the same token, Croker also explained:

> Qualitative research – when you first heard the term, your initial thought might have been, 'What do qualitative researchers actually do?' It may come as a surprise to you that you are already familiar with many of their activities, and you actually do them yourself – everyday – as you watch and listen to what happens around you, and ask questions about what you have seen and heard. (Crocker, 2007, p. 3)

Recently, an increasing number of applied linguists employ qualitative methods, either independently or as a supplementary to a statistical analysis. This study, whose aim is to describe thickly how English is spoken in business interaction in the context of Englishnization in Japan, will thus highly benefit from a qualitative approach to L2 studies.

Researchers could appreciate employing qualitative methods when they find it challenging to approach their research contexts with statistical measurement due to their specificity (Noron, 2000; Toohey, 2000). As Norton and Toohey (2001) explained, future studies on communication strategies should focus on more holistic aspects of language learning through post-structural and socio-cultural approaches. Hence, in this study, an ethnographic qualitative approach to Discourse analysis is considered a desirable methodological concept. To do an ethnographic study, participant observation is a key to successful data collection. It can help researchers gain quasi-insider insight into the research context, which will enrich the research perspectives.

4.1.2 Ethnographic approaches and participant observation

A qualitative approach and ethnography, in the context of Discourse analysis, are often seen as synonyms. The term *ethnography* was originated in anthropology, as is often represented in the studies of Bronislaw Mamlinowsky and Claude Levi-Strauss. Ethnographic approaches are characterised by the thick description of the observed events through holistic fieldwork (Conklin, 1968). Ethnography, which literally refers to the *graph* (writing) of *ethno*, emerged as early as 1730's. Ethnography is said to have grown out of Gerhard Friedrich Müller's active study on world history. In the course of his study, Müller became convinced that not only positivistic, but also empirical research methods would be required in order to explore the complex realities of world history. This enlightenment guided researchers to raise awareness of the necessity of employing more anthropological approaches to the studies of world history.

For a holistic observation, researchers' full participation in Discourse communities is essential. Being a (quasi) insider makes it possible for a researcher to gain some insights that are deeply rooted in the target culture, and thus numerical measurement cannot easily capture. An ethnographic analysis requires more process-oriented approaches, unlike conventional statistical research which is largely product-oriented. Ethnography and statistics, though they are often seen as mutually exclusive, will supplement each other when designed and utilised properly.

Today, the term ethnography is not only used by anthropologists; but also used multi-disciplinarily. An ethnographic approach to language studies was introduced in 1960's mainly by some sociolinguistics from the Chicago school background. At that time, linguists began to work on overcoming the potential limitation of a sole reliance on traditional positivistic approaches. As an initial attempt, an empirical ethnographic approach, therefore, was introduced to the research discipline. This methodological paradigm shift resulted in expanding the scope of linguistics. Nowadays, in fields such as applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and sociolinguistics, ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis are commonly employed (Davis, 1995, p. 427). In this study, I will continue to use the term *ethnographic approaches*, rather than *ethnography*, to indicate that the former is ethnography applied to studies in disciplines other than anthropology. In this study, the latter term is intentionally used only to refer to the very genuine use of ethnography in the field of anthropology.

Ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis made a great contribution to the horizontal development of the field of linguistics, because it helped linguists explore new research agenda in linguistics, including this current study whose focus is how BELF is situated and used in the context of globalisation in Japan. Ethnographic practices vary depending on research context and/or culture. Sometimes, the use of ethnography with a specific contextual approach is labelled as micro ethnography or intra-organisational ethnography. In general, the use of ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis is considered beneficial when researchers want to understand some cultural-specific practices, including (but not limited to) sociocultural norms and values, the reasons for some certain behaviours, social trends and tendency, the meaning of social interaction and encounters (both on a macro and micro level), and the roles of organisations.

An ethnographic approach to Discourse analysis frequently utilises observation as its study basis. Similarly, various types of qualitative-oriented language studies, including action research and

case study, embrace observation techniques. In addition, data analysis based on observation is often combined with other supplemented techniques (e.g., the use of interviews and surveys) to enrich research perspectives. Even though observation *per se* is taken as an established independent research method, a heavy reliance on observation technique, just like the potential challenge of statistics mentioned above, may have researchers overlook some points, possibly because they are considered as subconsciously taken for granted. Therefore, observation, the main form of data collection for ethnographic approaches, is often used in combination with other back-up techniques to guarantee holistic/ecological perspectives.

Observation is not a passive data collection technique; rather, it requires researchers' dynamic action-taking within the community of practice in order to capture something of value. According to Cowie (2007), researchers of L2 studies can benefit from observation because:

> Observation is a conscious noticing and detailed examination of participants' behavior in a naturalistic setting. In applied linguistics, this can include a classroom or teachers' room, or any environment where language use is being studied, such as a bilingual family home or a work environment that is bilingual or has nonnative speakers. (p. 166)

Employing observation techniques helps researchers uncover familiar and fixed aspects of social interactions and practices. It also helps demystify what is actually going on vis-à-vis what is assumed to be happening. For this study, whose research focus is on Discourse of Englishnization in a Japanese company that is still new to Japanese society as of August, 2015 (when the first draft of this dissertation was being written), employing an observation technique is a rational and valid choice.

There are basically two categories of observation: 1) non-participant observation, and 2) participant observation. With the former, observers do not get themselves involved in the Discourse. Showing no presence to the observed enables researchers to control the influence that the presence of an observer might give and look at naturalistic Discourse phenomenon. Meanwhile, with the latter approach, the observer himself/herself is involved in the Discourse as a constituent of the community of practice. Unlike non-participant observation, the full-presence of the researcher might possibly influence the behaviour of the observed. However, the sense of belonging of the observer makes it possible to obtain insider-perspectives. In my dissertation, I will employ participant observation, since 1) the researcher is offering corporate training to the participants, 2) the researcher has already been a

constituent of Discourse for six years, and 3) insider-perspectives are important to fully understand the organisation.

4.1.3 How to understand organisational culture

Conventionally, observation is the main form of data collection for ethnographic approaches. What researchers observe is groups of people or a culture, in the field, and in a natural setting. The observation is expected to help researchers elicit cultural norms, values, patterns, and routines, which are all unsaid but understood by every member of the society, or every inhabitant of the community of practice. This study understands organisational culture as context-dependent values and at the same time socioculturally co-constructed norms shared by every participant and experienced within the community of practice.

Needless to say, culture is not monolithic at all. Tanaka (2003), in his dissertation, also acknowledged that various sociocultural and sociohistorical factors could highly place influence on business interaction. In addition, cultural factors are so multidimensional that sole reliance on observation techniques cannot help researchers capture its multifaceted aspects. Therefore, to understand organisational culture embedded in business interaction, using multiple data collection methods is essential.

4.1.4 Multiple data collection methods

An ethnographic approach to L2 Discourse studies involves multiple data collection methods as the basis of study. This approach also helps take an ecological perspective on the observed phenomena. Some researchers critically look at the validity of sole reliance on Discourse-intrinsic data as evidence for interpretation when conducting ethnographic approaches. Other researchers even substantiated that the application of different approaches to the same data can lead the researcher to different understandings and interpretations (e.g. Firth & Wagner, 1997; Li, 2005; Roberts, 2001; Samra-Fredericks, 2004; Seedhouse, 2010; Stubbe, Lane, Hilder, Vine, Vine, Marra, Holmes and Watherall, 2003). These researchers acknowledge that ethnographic observation is complex, and a general consensus about this methodological approach is hard to achieve. In spite of this difficulty,

ethnographic researchers of communication commonly understand that they need to look at various aspects of social interaction by collecting multiple data.

Discourse analysis, in particular, has been a topic of inquiry using ethnographic approaches and many studies have been conducted (e.g. Fairclough, 1989, 2003; Labov, 1972; Lakoff, 1975; Saville-Troike, 1982; Tannen, 1993; van Dijk, 1993, 1998; Wodak, 1989). Ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis have thus been differentiated from conversation analysis (CA). As Nelson (1994) stated, CA prioritises *transcription-intrinsic* data. Meanwhile, as Moerman (1988) responded, ethnographic methods carefully consider the historicity of interaction and other *Discourse-extrinsic* information. Researchers of these two disciplines have been debating about to what extent these two different methods can communicate. However, it is commonly understood that multiple data collection methods are beneficial when researchers need Discourse-extrinsic information to rationalise their interpretations.

Triangulation of perspectives is also considered essential in conducting qualitative studies in general. Davis (1995), for example, in order to guarantee the validity of qualitative data analysis, suggested the triangulation of data sources. Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson and Planken. (2007) also explained that the employment of multiple data collection methods is the first step to tackle multicultural and multilingual research contexts, where there are fewer fixed "taken-for-granted" cultural norms (p. 117). Roberts (2001) also recommended the use of ethnographic data as supplementary to understand the complexity of Discourse. Likewise, Samra-Fredericks (2004) suggested, "the traditional ethnographic approach needed to be extended to include actual recordings of natural occurring talk-based routines" (p. 139). She stated that ethnography combined with CA enriches the research perspectives and thus allows "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). Hence, many studies on intercultural communication utilise similar multi-layered approaches (e.g., Kramsch, 2008; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008; Nakane, 2007). CA in combination with ethnography has gradually become recognised and employed by many applied linguists (e.g., Ellwood & Nakane, 2009; Li, 2005; Moerman, 1988; Roberts, 2001; Sato, 2009b; Silverman, 1985). In this dissertation, following Fujio's (2007) method, I will employ the word *conversational analysis* to define how I analyse the complexity of my participants' interactions, based on CA-inspired transcriptions. Using this terminology also helps segregate myself from the tradition of Chicago-school orthodox CA research, in light of academic correctness. For this conversational analysis, multiple data collection methods are

being considered indispensable, as the topic of inquiry of this study is highly exploratory in nature. To fully utilise the data collected from multiple sources, I will also include the epistemology of *sensory pragmatics* and provide ecological perspectives on the observed Discourse.

4.1.5 Sensory pragmatics

A number of studies of Discourse analysis looked at participants' mutual engagement through talk-in-interaction as well as other contextually available communicative resources. Many such researchers, however, refrain from touching upon some emotional aspects of Discourse. This is largely because the inclusion of such subjectivity may deprive the research of the objectivity of their analyses. Bargiela-Chiappini (2013), however, provided counter-evidence to this assumption. She encouraged researchers to include the interpretation of participants' emotion, especially as a part of business interactional analysis where facework plays a decisive role in forming its discourse coercion. She also proposed a move to "look beyond discursive pragmatics" (p. 39) since she was convinced that conventional Discourse analysis design would not be convincing enough to capture the multidimensional aspects of business interactional Discourse. This new movement in (business) Discourse analysis, to take researchers' holistic perception through their five-senses as research tools, is called *sensory pragmatics*. Bargiela-Chiappini (2013) explained:

> A sensory pragmatics perspective would argue that the organisation of social bodies within a material environment is a vital component of the organisation of interaction and that corporeal language needs to be analysed alongside verbal language. Bodily participation realised through 'the simultaneous deployment of intonation, gesture, body positions, touch, the distribution and handling of objects' (Tulbert and Goodwin, 2011: 90) is redolent with affect. While aspects of the 'language of emotions' have been widely analysed, the pragmatics of affect realised by other modalities is still largely unexplored: yet another topic of investigation for future sensory pragmaticians. (p. 41)

This study, whose focus is to analyse how BELF is situated and used by L2 speakers in a Japanese company, will incorporate this philosophy of sensory pragmatics into its analytical procedure to provide ecological perspectives on underlying principles of participants' social interaction in business.

Although employing a sensory pragmatics approach in this study is considered beneficial, the subjective-analysis nature of this approach can probably result in a potential threat to the study's

reliability and validity. As Bargiela-Chippini (2013) suggested, conducting third-party confirmation is one of the most feasible ways to overcome this research design's weakness. This study, in this light, employed an interrator reliability check approach to guarantee the legitimacy of the coding result. This reliability check was administered based on simple percentage agreement. Portney and Watkins (1993) suggested that for simple percentage agreement, above 75% could be considered good, but over 90% would be ideal. When an item received the agreement rate of less-than-90%, I conducted an oral interview and asked the raters to provide some reasons.

When conducting interrater reliability checks, conducting a blind-reviewer rating is considered reasonable. However, the nature of this study to implement ethnographic observation in a Japanese company gave me some constraint in selecting reviewers. In connection with consent, I was not allowed to disclose the elicited data/information to general outsiders of the company context, the exemption of which includes academic presentations. Hence, instead of asking for blind-reviewing by complete outsiders of the context, I asked two of the corporate trainers (i.e., Rater A and B) being longitudinally involved in this corporate training program to see if they could agree with my coding results. By providing the comparative results of their simple percentage agreement, I attempted to guarantee the legitimacy of my coding results in this study. Whereas I was also fully aware of the methodological weakness of this interrater reliability check approach, the research context left this methodical choice practical as well as most valid.

Out of seven trainers, I chose two: Rater A is a Canadian male, and Rater B is an American male. They have been involved in Crescendo Corporation's English training for over six years so far. I showed the codification results to these two corporate trainers, who have engaged in pre-OJT-departure training together with me, and asked to what extent they could agree. Their rating was conducted as a form of simple perceptage agreement (from 0% to 100%).

I also incorporated the trainers' input into critical reviewing of my own analysis several times. I asked five other trainers that were not involved in this interrater reliability check to look at my analysis and provide their own perspectives, if any, in order to analyse the Discourse data from multiple angles.

It should be noted here that, due to the company's confidentiality policy, my contact with the other seven corporate trainers was limited to the timing when the relevant corporate training program was being implemented. My limited access to these informants resulted in inadequacy of

data elicitation procedure; albeit not crucial for designing research properly.

4.1.6 Designing research

As was explained earlier, this study will employ an ethnographic approach to Discourse analysis to find out how BELF is situated and used by L2 speakers in a Japanese company, which is now an emerging social phenomenon. To study this subject matter, there are at least three critical points of consideration before conducting the study. First of all, since Englishnization is a relatively new social phenomenon, only few previous studies have touched upon this issue from limited viewpoints. Secondly, due to the above reason, this current study cannot consult with any previous studies with regard to its technical aspects, such as how to design research, what methodology to employ, what stakeholder is being addressed, and how to present data. Lastly, proper ethical consideration becomes an issue due to the lack of attempt with its equivalent standard.

Hence, I have decided to employ an exploratory approach for this study. The goal of this study is not merely to investigate how BELF is situated and used by Japanese GLLs in a Japanese organisational culture, but also to explore a possible new research terrain as well as its relevant research approaches to contribute to the expansion of the research scope of both SLA and IBD. This research, outlines the following research procedure:

1. The researcher gained access to the target research site (Crescendo Corporation) as a contracted corporate trainer. I have been involved in its corporate training programmes since 2010. Through my longitudinal engagement, I conducted participant observations of daily on-goings in this company.
2. Prior to my main study being conducted, I administered a couple of pilot study projects: 1) needs analysis of Englishnization based on non-structured interview (Sato, 2014a, 2014c); 2) Discourse analysis of BELF pragmatics of Japanese L2-English speakers (Sato, 2014b); and 3) designing a new corporate training curriculum as a part of globalisation strategies (Sato *et al.*, 2015). These pilot study projects were conducted in order to confirm the credibility of this relevant research domain.
3. Based on the pilot studies which were explained earlier, I concluded that my main study should

include 1) narrative-based description of my participants, 2) Discourse analysis of their *spoken* L2 pragmatic patterns through mock-meetings, and 3) assessment of their BELF practice with critical reviewers (other corporate trainers) to direct new corporate training programmes.

Throughout this study, I have dealt with participants' personal information in detail. To do so, some ethical consideration was necessary. Below is the ethical standard I have employed for my study.

4.1.7 Ethical considerations of ethnographic approaches

Providing an insider's perspective is seen as valuable and thus is one of the strengths of ethnographic approaches. On the other hand, in order to gain an insight as an insider, getting to know the organisation and people inhabiting the community of practice through longitudinal involvement is an indispensable factor. To deal with research participants, high sensitivity to privacy and confidentiality is essential. Thus, researchers are aware that, to conduct research with ethnographic approaches, careful ethical consideration is required (e.g., De Costa, 2014; McKay & Gass, 2005; Paltridge & Phakiti, 2010).

Every organisation has its own confidential matters. It often has something to do with its special engineering technology, innovative ideas, or issues with intellectual property. As a corporate trainer, I always have to be aware of clients' confidential issues. To deal with research ethics properly, this study employs consequentialist ethics. Non-consequentialist ethics presupposes the pre-existing moral principle. Researchers following this discipline assume all ethical behaviours in research, regardless of the consequences in a specific situation, should be guided based on universal standards. This ethic is often employed for positivistic research. Unlike non-consequentialist ethics, consequentialists look at the result of actions to determine their ethical rightness or wrongness. It is often employed for empirical research. For my research, I decided to go with consequentialist ethics. Ethical consideration in a company situation differs from context to context, and individual to individual. Therefore, it is more ethically agreeable if I negotiate with the participants and human resources managers about the ethical standard based on their needs and requirements.

For this study, I had initially negotiated with the human resources of the target engineering company to obtain their permission to let me observe the actual, authentic L2-English-speaking

meetings. The purpose of my observation was mainly to clarify the cause of miscommunication and/or misunderstandings occurring between Japanese and their L2-English speaking counterparts. Then, based on the analytical results, to provide better corporate English training. As a result, the company rejected my entry into the business site due to confidentiality. As its alternative, I asked students, corporate trainees I worked with for training programmes, to do mock meetings in which participants would negotiate with each other to come to a collective decision on a given topic by using BELF. I videotaped their performances to teach them what problems in their linguistic behaviour were and how they could possibly end up with conflict in intercultural business interactions. I also received permission from participants and the human resources department to utilise the obtained data for my dissertation under the condition that my data analysis results would benefit their continuous global human resources development. With this procedure, I overcame the issues of confidentiality pertaining to videotaping the participants' L2 performance.

For ethical agreement, I employed the following process before starting any videotaping.

1. One day before the videotaping both for the pilot study and the main study, I explained the purpose, procedure, contact information of the researcher, and expected contributions of this research project to the participants. I also gave them a consent form (see Appendix 6) to allow me to use the data for my dissertation with their freedom of withdrawal guaranteed.
2. I asked the participants to submit their consent forms only in cases where they agreed with the statement. All participants gave me their consent forms with their hand-written signatures and dates of agreement on them. After collecting the forms, I copied their consent forms and gave the copies back to them so that the participants could consult the agreement statement in case they found anything unethical about my data collection procedure.
3. I videotaped their performance. Toward the end of the training period, I played the video and showed them their own performance. I also gave them some educational feedback about how to improve spoken English for business purposes. As of August, 2015, none had asked for withdrawal from this research project.

To present data, the participants' names, affiliation, and other private information will be written as pseudonyms so that general readers cannot identify them. This is how I confirmed the validity of my

ethical consideration based on the ethical standard of ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis proposed by (De Costa, 2014). In the following section, I will explain the specific data collection methods along with the research questions established in Chapter 3.

4.2 Data collection methods

4.2.1 For RQ1 (*What do situated Japanese BELF trainees do?*): Retrodictive qualitative modelling (RQM)

"What do situated Japanese BELF trainees do?", as was previously noted, is the biggest research question of this dissertation. It is also a long-lasting question in the field of international business communication in Japan. Answering this question will help readers draw a general picture of what good L2 performance consists of, what makes people (mainly teachers) assume who successful L2 users/learners are, and what they do both in general and in situated context especially in the era of globalisation. Analysing the successful L2 users/learners characteristics in a Japanese company, in which Englishnization will be taking place and my participants will play a key role for their organizational globalisation strategies, from an ecological perspective, is the first key concept of this study.

To identify who successful learners are and what they do, traditional studies have relied on statistical measurement (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1967). However, Dörnyei (2009, 2014) challenged the research tradition that mainly focused on investigating the L2 learning success *predictor* in order to create some successful L2 learning models. He proposed an alternative idea, which is called *retrodictive qualitative modelling* (RQM). The traditional research methods for L2 learner studies, with heavy reliance on statistical measurement, attempted to delineate participants' individual characteristics and traits by controlling some variables. Dörnyei (2014), however, critically pointed out that the nature of learning *per se* is so dynamic and complex that not only *predictors* of learner success, but also *retrodictors*, or the factors that contributed to the outcome of learner success, should be taken into consideration for future studies. Dörnyei (2014) stated:

> [I]nstead of the usual forward-pointing 'pre-diction' in scientific research, we reverse the order of things and pursue 'retro-diction': by tracing back the reasons why the system has

> ended up with a particular outcome option we produce a retrospective qualitative model of its evolution. (p. 85)

To look at the outcome of situated learning as well as the actual performance of the learners, both psychological and sociocultural perspectives should be employed. This study looks at situated business interactions, in which pre-OJT trainees of a Japanese engineering company perform in their L2, or BELF, and considers how some *typical* Japanese learners engage in English as a *lingua franca* at a worksite.

To describe typical learners, Dörnyei (2014) recommended the following research procedure. First, participants in his research site should be codified according to individual factors, such as age, L2 proficiency, and behaviouristic patterns. This categorisation functions as the very first step to find some *prototype* of learners or learning style in a situated context. Second, the one who is considered a very prototypical learner based on the identified categories should be chosen from among the research participants. Observation and interviews will be administered to find out details. Based on the collected data, narratives of *typical* learners should be created. Third, the created narrative data should be subject to peer reviewing for reliability check.

The created narrative data should be analysed subsequently in order to determine the retrodictive factors that have largely contributed to the learning success of these typical learners. For this dissertation to employ RQM, third-party confirmation plays an important role in guaranteeing analytical objectivity. Third parties, trainees, human resources officers, and other corporate trainers were selected. This also helps clarify the perception difference in needs for English training. The needs analysis based on RQM is considered beneficial in order to find out the judgment criteria of situated L2 learning success in this Japanese company and beyond.

In this study, the data were collected through my participant observation with longitudinal involvement in Crescendo Corporation. I observed participants' learning styles throughout the pre-OJT training course. Based on the gathered data, I created narratives, each one of which represents what all my trainees (n=29) normally did in the course of English studies during the pre-OJT training course. To create these narrative data, I also consulted the interim and term-end reports written by the trainers, which contain the overall proficiency growth and individual learner traits of all 29 participants. I decided to create narrative data for all participants, instead of the description of learner prototype, in this dissertation. This is because the number is small enough to be

able to form narrative-based descriptions of all of them. The participants were selected as foreign-based OJT candidates. Further discussion will be presented in Chapter 5. The created narrative data were further codified and categorised to provide more detailed delineation of the participants' characteristics.

Some studies of business communication base their analysis on narrative data (Sato, 2012, 2014c; Tanaka, 2006, 2010), suggesting the potential benefit of this research approach. Polkinghorne (1995) stated that a narrative analysis is effective because it is a way where "researchers collect descriptions of events and happenings and synthesise or configure them by means of a plot into a story or stories" (p. 12). Narrative data are deemed appreciated in studies of applied linguistics in that they can allow Discourse outsiders reasonable quasi-access to insider perspectives. In business Discourse studies, where researchers generally have difficulty overcoming confidentiality, the use of narrative data can be a worthwhile attempt, especially for exploratory studies. Thus, several studies of business communication have employed narrative-based approaches to Discourse analysis (e.g., Tanaka, 2006, 2010).

Although it is a potential exploratory approach, the reliability of created narrative could still be somehow questioned. To make the data more reliable, I showed the created narratives of the participants of Crescendo Corporation to other corporate trainers involved in their English training curriculum for third-party confirmation. Two other corporate trainers, who are L1 speakers of English from the U.S.A. and Canada respectively, were asked to check as to whether the description is commonly observed among selected trainees or not. Consequently, both of them fully agreed with my description. Since they are the only two sources of information available for this study, I could not ask for a future third-party confirmation. This lack of informants should be acknowledged as one of the methodological limitations of my research.

4.2.2. For RQ2 (*How is BELF situated among and (pragmatically) used by the Japanese BELF trainees?*): Discourse analysis based on conversational analysis

This study focuses its analytical attention on how BELF is situated and used by Japanese businesspeople to get the job done. In this situation, the success of communication obviously depends not only on the pure linguistic maturity compared with the L1 standard. It also depends on the

participants' experience and skills to dynamically manoeuvre within their community of practice. In such dynamic manoeuvres of Japanese businesspeople, it is often reported that pragmatic ambiguity frequently becomes an issue, especially when to confirm and disagree (e.g., Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010, 2013; Fujio & Tanaka, 2011; Sato, 2014b). Observing some BELF pragmatics used by Japanese businesspeople and investigating how they could potentially result in miscommunication or misunderstanding in intercultural business communication is the second key concept of this dissertation. Nevertheless, as I explained earlier, access to authentic L2-English speaking business meetings was impossible due to confidentiality. As an alternative, I have determined to base my Discourse analysis on stimulated conversation, which is illustrated as follows.

4.2.2.1 Stimulated conversation and L2 pragmatics patterns

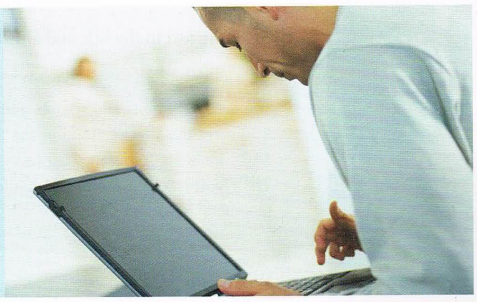
The necessary Discourse data for this study were collected through stimulated conversation. As a part of corporate training contents, the trainees were asked to do a stimulated role-play activity. In this activity, participants were asked to play roles of human resources officers and to decide on one candidate worker out of four possible choices for pilot teleworking; 1) Ed Stanton, 2) Dorothy Lovelle, 3) Bob Summers, and 4) Sue Bishop (see figure 1 below for further information of these participants). This is quoted from a textbook used for the corporate training, *In Company Elementary* (Clarke & Mark, 2010). This specific material (p. 76) was selected for this stimulated conversation task, largely because it was scheduled to be used in the proper timing according to the provided curriculum. This stimulated conversation is considered to produce semi-naturalistic Discourse data (Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2010, 2013). Based on the videotaped data, I investigated the Discourse pragmatic patterns of L2-English used by Japanese businesspeople.

The obtained data were transcribed based on CA-inspired transcription conventions. All the transcription for this stimulated conversation will be presented in Appendices 1 to 5. The transcribed data set was analysed to find out some pragmatic patterns of L2-English by Japanese businesspeople. To analyse the data, a Discourse analysis approach was employed with conversational analysis utilised as its study basis, which will be further illustrated as follows.

Figure 1: Stimulation (Who to telework?)

3 Your company is based in a city-centre office where space is a problem. The company wants to try teleworking, with a selected employee working from home as a pilot project. There are four employees on the shortlist. All four are good employees. Today you have a meeting to choose one of the four for the experiment. Read the information about each candidate and put them in order of priority. Number one is your first choice.

Ed Stanton lives twenty minutes walk away from the office. He is single and has no children. He is a Buddhist and needs time to meditate every day. This is best for him in the morning. He wants the option to telework because of the flexibility. He can do most of his work at a laptop and doesn't have many face-to-face meetings.



Dorothy Lovell is a single mother with a small child. She commutes into work by bus and train. The journey takes a hour. She lives with her mother who helps with child care but who now has health problems. She wants telework to reduce travelling and be able to take her child to school. She works in human resources and face-to-face communication is essential in her job.

Bob Summers is married and lives in the country with his family – he has three children. He wants telework to avoid commuting as much as possible. He drives in to work and it's expensive and there are often traffic jams. He works in a team where contact with other members of staff is important. He says he can do this by videoconference.

Sue Bishop is the 'life and soul' of the office. She is a great organizer and makes sure that everything runs smoothly. She does most of her work over the phone and because of this wants to try working from home. Her husband complains about the long hours she works.

CASE STUDY VIRTUAL WORKING SOLUTIONS 31

(Retrieved from Clark & Powell, 2010. p. 31)

4.2.2.2 Conversational analysis

From among various analytical approaches, conversation analysis, or CA, is one of the most popular methods in the field of applied linguistics (e.g. Firth, 1995; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1988; Jefferson, 2004; Sacks, 1972; Sacks & Shegloff, 1979; Sacks, Shegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Originating from the perspectives of social constructivism, CA assumes human communication to be a joint activity consisting of "talk-in-interaction" and/or "co-construction of meaning" (Sacks, 1972).

CA researchers look not only at the meanings negotiated through interactions, but also at every minute component of communication, such as pauses, turn-takings, hedges, latches, etc. Data analysis is based only on transcription-intrinsic information in order to guarantee the validity of researchers' interpretation, because transcription-extrinsic data would allow an immense expansion of possible interpretation, weakening the authoritativeness of research. Brown and Levinson (1987) underlined that, in interactional sociolinguistic studies, "other approaches to discourse analysis, using different kinds of text (predominantly narrative) have contributed less" (p. 41) than CA. Thus, CA has been widely used in this research arena.

However, there are also some researchers who have questioned the validity of sole reliance on Discourse-intrinsic data as evidence for interpretation. They demonstrated that the application of different approaches to the same data could lead the researcher to different understandings and interpretations (e.g. Firth & Wagner, 1997; Li, 2005; Roberts, 2001; Samra-Fredericks, 2004; Seedhouse, 2010; Stubbe *et al.*, 2003). In the section below, I will summarise some academic debate over the legitimacy of conversational analysis based solely on discourse-intrinsic data for intercultural communication studies.

Stubbe et al. (2003), for example, explored different conclusions reached when five different approaches to Discourse analysis were applied to the same set of data. They compared: 1) conversation analysis, 2) interactional sociolinguistics, 3) politeness theory, 4) critical Discourse analysis, and 5) discursive psychology, demonstrating how different their respective conclusions were. By the same token, referring to the psycholinguistic study of Brown and Hanlon (1970), Seedhouse (2010) proposed that different research methodologies applied to the same data may even possibly lead to "diametrically opposing conclusions" (p. 1). These discussions did not necessarily discourage applied linguists from using CA, but they inspired a call for alternatives, one of which is the

employment of CA in combination with ethnography, as illustrated below.

Many studies of communication have looked at various socio-psychological aspects embedded in interpersonal interaction. Discourse analysis, in particular, has been a topic of inquiry using ethnographic approaches and many such studies have been conducted (e.g. Fairclough, 1989, 2003; Labov, 1972; Lakoff, 1975; Saville-Troike, 1982; Tannen, 1993; van Dijk, 1993, 1998; Wodak, 1989). Ethnographic approaches to Discourse analysis have thus been differentiated from CA, because CA prioritises "transcription-intrinsic" (Nelson, 1994) data, whereas ethnographic methods carefully consider the historicity of interaction (Moerman, 1988) and other Discourse-extrinsic information.

Ethnographic studies also aim at discovering contextually and discursively constructed "culture." Garfinkel (1967) demonstrated that shared tacit knowledge produces many things that are unsaid but known to the members of the occurring social interaction. Moerman (1988), in this light, proclaimed that the researchers of ethnography could benefit a lot by actively participating in the Discourse. Likewise, many linguists of Discourse studies have recommended that the study of (intercultural) communication should perceive "culture" not as static, but as contingent, performative, and indigenous to each Discourse (e.g. Mills, 2003; Piller, 2007; Shi, 2009).

Samra-Fredericks (2004) suggested, "the traditional ethnographic approach needed to be extended to include actual recordings of naturally occurring talk-based routines" (p. 139). She stated that ethnography combined with CA enriches the research perspectives and thus allows "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). Bargiela-Chiappini *et al.* (2007) explained that the employment of multiple data collection methods is the first step to tackle multicultural and multilingual research contexts, where there are fewer fixed "taken-for-granted" cultural norms (p. 117).

Likewise, other studies on intercultural communication utilise similar multi-layered approaches (e.g., Kramsch, 2008; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008; Nakane, 2007). CA in combination with ethnography has gradually become recognised and employed in applied linguistic studies as well (e.g., Ellwood & Nakane, 2009; Li, 2005; Moerman, 1988; Roberts, 2001; Sato, 2009b; Silverman, 1985). Silverman (1985) first proposed a move to combine ethnomethodology with ethnography. Li's 2005 study highlighted the potential of an applied CA approach to investigate the pragmatic function of code-switching in an English-Chinese bilingual family. It also argued for the substantial utility of Discourse-extrinsic data integrated into a CA-based interpretation. Likewise, Roberts' 2001 study of

second language acquisition demonstrated that ethnographic data could supplement CA interpretations.

Similarly, Nakane (2007) combined CA and ethnography to examine the multiple functions of silence in intercultural communication. Furthermore, Carroll (2009) showed that embedding supplementary data into CA transcriptions allows general readers to grasp various kinds of contextual elements occurring along with talk-in-interaction. Thus, as was also proposed by Garfinkel (1967), Moerman (1988), Saville-Troike (1982), and Seale (1999), sociocultural/historical understanding of the existing Discourse is invaluable for interpretations of observed phenomena. This methodological challenge is labelled as *conversational analysis*. As I explained earlier, I employ this terminology *conversational analysis* to describe the methodological stance of my Discourse analysis while detaching myself from the Chicago-school orthodox CA tradition.

This study employs conversational analysis as its methods for analysing participants' interaction, which will be presented in Chapters 6 and 7. First, Discourse analysis based on conversational analysis will be presented. Following the research methods employed in the studies by Du-Backcock and Tanaka (2011, 2013), this study also counted WPM based on words descipherable as English words, and elimited filler expressions (i.e., "a:" or "e:"). To supplement my analysis, relevant interview-data will be provided. Unlike the CA-inspired transcription, interview-experts only necessary for data analysis were transcribed and presented. I also asked other corporate trainers involved in this training programme to check the legitimacy of my pragmatic categorisation in terms of interrater reliability check. They were also asked to assess the participants' L2 performance in order to find any pragmatic patterns that are incomprehensible for non-Japanese English speakers.

4.2.3. For RQ3 (What can the Japanese BELF trainees tell us?): Stimulated recall and focus group

In addition to the conversational analysis approaches, reflecting participants' subjectivity on its analysis also facilitates sensory pragmatic analysis. As Garfinkel (1967) stated, understanding shared tacit knowledge in observed Discourse community plays a significant role in analysing the ecology of language use. Generally speaking, looking at a pair as the minimum unit of analysis (or, preferably in-group socio-psychology), not individual psychology, can potentially make it possible to

explain shared norms within communities of practice. Kasper's (2012) study, in this light, investigated the ways participants manage knowledge and adjust the linguistic expression in their L2 dyadic or triadic speech performance. She mentioned that participants' inter-subjectivity would be an indispensable factor in conducting future Discourse analysis. In addition, she suggested that having participants' interaction in their L2 will make the participants' inherent cultural characteristics more obvious and prominent. The interaction based on interlanguage pragmatics will result in meaning-focused interaction. In this L2 interactional discourse, some marginal linguistic elements that their L1-based language command can only afford are normally eliminated. Hence, an increasing number of studies have begun to investigate interlanguage pragmatics. To do so, in-group interactions are often looked at as the minimum unit of analysis. Especially, in the context of Japan, in-group collective awareness should be taken into consideration to find out the Discourse ecology (Hamaguchi *et al.*, 1985). This research approach is also expected to contribute to developing new methodology that helps overcome the potential limitation of individual-psycholinguistic approaches to CS studies.

In Chapter 8, I will consider students' interpretation of their own L2 performance, which was retrieved not by analysing individual interviews, but through analysing their focus group discussion. As a part of the corporate training, I showed the videotaped performance to the participants, asked them to watch and interpret their own L2 performance, and evaluate their in-group discussion. This consensus-making process about their own performance provided more profound insight into what was happening in and behind the Discourse. I will present the relevant excerpt (presented in Chapter 6 and 7) to confirm my sensory pragmatic interpretation based on Discourse analysis with a conversational analysis approach.

4.3 Data collection site

This section, which contains a great deal of intra-organisational information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research site of this study.

4.4 Limitation of this research design

Lastly, potential limitations of this research design will be mentioned. I have employed an

interpretive qualitative approach to Discourse analysis to investigate how BELF is situated and used by the pre-OJT trainees of the Japanese engineering company.

First, this study is exploratory in nature in order to shed light on issues which have not been touched upon hitherto. While employing exploratory approaches or qualitative research is considered beneficial for this purpose, readers are also advised to carefully consider their own context before deciding whether to apply research findings to their own studies.

Secondly, due to confidentiality, this study looked at stimulated business conversation to find L2-English pragmatic patterns displayed by Japanese. However, the applicability of this analysis result to an authentic business meeting is not fully guaranteed. Therefore, researchers are advised to conduct further exploration on this research agenda based on this study.

Third, some research methods employed in this study are still under theoretical and practical development (e.g., retrodictvive qualitative modelling and sensory pragmatics). This study is meant to make a contribution to the exploration of new research terrain and to the methodological establishment of new approaches to some extent. However, further consideration will still be needed as to whether these newly proposed approaches could be fully applicable to other applied linguistic studies. Based on the above established methodology, I will conduct my analysis in the following three chapters (Chapters 5, 6, and 7).

The fourth limitation resulted from the nature of participant observation of corporate training in action, in which I was involved as a trainer. This study had to be conducted under various restrictions. The English training curriculum was so designed that the researcher was allowed to be involved in the trainining, the purpose of which was restricted to the instruction of business English communication. This restriction enabled me to design this research so as to compare the participants' meetings in their L1 (Japanese) and in their L2 (English). Although I attempted to overcome this methodological weakness by comparing the analytical results with previous studies, this comparative analysis approach needs further validating.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis 1

Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling

This chapter, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis 2

Discourse Analysis

This chapter, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Chapter 7: Data Analysis 3

Sensory Pragmatics with Ecological Perspectives

This chapter, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Chapter 8: Data Analysis 3

Focus Group Discussion

This chapter, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.0 Overview of this chapter

Today's international business world has witnessed rapid *globalisation.* In Japan, globalisation is a big slogan nowadays. In most cases, globalisation is believed to require *de-Japanisation* of the organisational system and potential human resources development. As a strategy for globalisation, introducing measures of *Englishnization* (mostly in the sense of introducing English training) plays a significant role. In many companies in Japan, the eagerness in connection with *Englishnization* in order to catch up with the global competition is increasing. Besides, such demand of globalisation is often seen as a universal, one-way phenomenon; especially from policy-makers to ordinary employees. Nevertheless, there are reportedly so many cases where the low-rank employees make great contributions to organisational globalization to the extent that managerial side officers cannot ignore their voices. This dissertation, in this light, attempts to draw a picture of the *status quo* of globalisation strategies in connection with Englishnization implemented in a leading Japanese engineering company.

The last chapter of this dissertation includes the following four sections. First of all, I will summarise the research findings of this research project. Second, I will answer the established three research questions based on the respective data analyses. Third, I will present some pedagogical implications of this research project. Lastly, I will refer to the limitations of this research.

9.1 Answers to the research questions: Summary

9.1.1 What do situated Japanese BELF trainees do?

Many researchers of second language acquisition have claimed that strategic language learners share some common characteristics. I am also constantly involved with adult Japanese learners of English through my job as a freelance corporate trainer, and I agree with those researchers' findings. As globalisation continues, however, the characteristics of strategic learners (including but not limited to Japanese) must be changing. Accordingly, the criteria of successful, strategic L2

communication are also subject to some fundamental changes. This study attempts to delineate what BELF trainees do in the Discourse of Englishnization through a qualitative ethnography of a Japanese company. In addition, this study will gain insight into the expected contributions of BELF training implemented as a part of the globalisation strategies in the above context.

In Chapter 5, the prototypical learner characteristics in Crescendo Corporation were presented. Because they were chosen to be foreign-based OJT candidates based on the company's unique judgment criteria is, needless to say, not a good enough reason to conclude that they are found to be strategic learners/communicators. Also, I am aware that their individual traits do not necessarily meet the common characteristics that conventional SLA studies have identified. For this study, I would rather conclude that the participants of this study were considered prototypical of pre-OJT BELF trainees at Crescendo Corporation. And at the same time, they do have the potential to be trained to be strategic learners/communicators, depending on the contents of training.

It is also noteworthy that all 29 participants of this study were eventually allowed to engage in foreign-based OJT after this pre-OJT training. Through this pre-OJT training, their proficiency eventually met the required standard based on TOEIC score results. In addition to this standardised test result, their English-speaking performance interview evaluations were considered adequate in accordance with the organisation's judgment criteria. Furthermore, their actual delivery of a business presentation was also taken into account in a descriptive fashion. The participants' presentation skills were evaluated and reported as a form of performance review written by corporate trainers.

In connection with the performance evaluation of the trainers, the age and experience of the participants were found to be influential factors. In Crescendo Corporation, senior employees are by default expected to play leading roles in training programmes. Junior workers normally look to them as role-model learners/trainees. Senior workers are either internally motivated or externally required to meet the institutional and social expectations due to subconscious *shafū*-rooted behaviouristic expectations. This *shafū* also allows senior engineers more power hidden in Discourse, while putting sales representatives in a relatively inferior position to them. In addition to *shafū*, participants' English procifiency also influenced their power dynamics; generally speaking, the more proficient they are, the more influential they are found to be. E1-type participants in each and every team were normally most proficient (in terms of either turn-taking or WPM, not TOEIC score), and

they played influential roles in the process of collective decision making. It should be noted that E1-3, who was supposed to be a team-leader based on *shafū*, failed in facilitating the discussion due to his lack of enough procifiency to do so. S1-4, who is relatively senior in this discourse and also is the most proficient person in the team, helped him by playing a facilitating role in their quasi-meeting. I observed that proficiency had an impact on group power dynamics.

The subsequent interview survey suggested that, in Crescendo Corporation, trainees, HRD managers, and trainers had different expectations of the training. With different expectations, judgment criteria of trainees' learning performance can diverge in the company. For the selected candidates, the most realistic goal to achieve through the pre-OJT training is to enhance their *pure* English competence based on standardised measures. This goal-setting itself is not so off the mark from L2 learners' point of view. However, given that they are expected to make themselves function in English-speaking business in the near future, this goal-setting with an orientation to test score growth can be considered somewhat weak. Rather, through the training, participants should be encouraged to clearly understand what specific English skills are needed for future business, and what kind of practice could potentially facilitate their L2 performance in the long run.

The analysis suggested that there was one crucial problem to improve in the OJT system. After spending half a year taking foreign-based OJT, trainees are supposed to return to Japan. In theory, they are supposed to play core roles in proceeding with Englishnization as a part of the globalisation strategies within their organisation. In practice, however, when Englishnization will be implemented and to what extent these participants will be involved in the said project remains non-transparent in most situations. Some participants even anticipated that they would be deprived of their opportunities to speak English after they returned. This foreign-based OJT has been designed to contribute to the organisational globalisation strategies based on long-term goal-setting. However, due to their obscure goal-setting, it turns out to be in reality such a short-term project. Besides, this non-transparency may also hinder trainees from being motivated to learn practical English skills. As a result, they would possibly assume that focusing on learning pure English competence is paradoxically the only reasonable option to commit themselves to this pre-OJT training.

For HRD managers, in contrast, the cost-benefit ratio of the on-going corporate training programme is as important as the efficiency of the programme itself. This is because their initial interest is to prove how well the training programme is running at the executive/shareholder meetings

within a short span. To make their report more convincing, progress reports based on objective numerical measurement are deemed adequate and preferred. Hence, from the HRD point of view, high score holders on the standardised tests, especially TOEIC, are automatically identified as successful learners. Hence, whether a participant is considered a strategic learner/communicator is a secondary issue in most cases. In addition, for most *Haken* (dispatch) trainers, a general English training programme with a focus on business communication is considered the most practical and feasible choice. For measuring trainees' progress, using a standardised test score, especially TOEIC, is also found to be appropriate.

The above discussion suggests the following point. As globalisation proceeds in the society of Japan, practical (speaking) skills of business English are becoming more and more salient. As objective measurement of trainees' achievement, the value of standardised tests of English, especially TOEIC, is increasingly becoming greater in Japan. Besides, TOEIC is regarded as one of the most trusted indices to evaluate participants' English ability, though it is not designed specifically to measure test-takers' speaking skills of business English. In order to gain insight into how to improve this situation, it was suggested that investigating how BELF is situated and used by Japanese businesspeople and analysing how it leads to possible intercultural conflict should be a key step. Chapters 6 and 7 addressed the issue of BELF-in-use through the Discourse analysis of stimulated conversation.

9.1.2 How is BELF situated among and (pragmatically) used by the Japanese BELF trainees?

Through the initial analysis (Chapter 6), I have hypothesised the following five pragmatic patterns.

1. Showing disagreement
2. Receiving disagreement
3. Consensus-making
4. Clarifying-responding
5. Paralinguistic elements (synthetic laugh and silence)

Pervious studies of discourse analysis also looked at how these pragmatics were manifested by collecting data through role-play activities. Many researchers collected data using role-play, in which participants without mutual organizational engagement volunteered. This research approach was considered beneficial, since researchers of business discourse analysis had conventionally had difficulty overcoming confidentiality. However, it was also commonly recognised that such role-play based analysis might lead researchers to overlook some rapport elements necessary for business interaction, including power relations and hegemony. In this light, this study observed the above L2 pragmatics used by pre-OJT trainees in a Japanese company. Investigating the complexity of these pragmatic patterns in this study was considered particularly significant to gain insight into determining the criteria of successful BELF communication by Japanese.

What was commonly observed in these above five pragmatics patterns is their interpretational ambiguity in Discourse. In the main study, I analysed these above *ambiguous* pragmatic patterns through a sensory pragmatic approach with ecological perspectives, based on a conversational analysis approach to Discourse analysis. To begin with, the pragmatic pattern of disagreement was looked at. The data analysis suggested that such disagreement should often be expressed in a harmonious way. In addition, this harmonious disagreement pragmatic pattern is largely predicated on the collective mind-set of Japanese in BELF Discourse. When disagreement is expressed, not only the choice of words, but also the manifested pragmatic characteristic patterns contribute to the interactants' awareness of implied euphemisms. The key statements are normally expressed with an at-about-10-word-range sentence.

I have also observed that hesitation, pause and silence, and self-repair commonly appear in the L2 pragmatics of disagreement by the participants, which actually duplicates the results of many previous studies (e.g., Fujio & Tanaka, 2011; Du-Babcock & Tanaka, 2011: 2013). Participants with power hidden in Discourse, especially E1s and S1s, often express disagreement in the community of practice they inhabit. Also, disagreement is delivered more effectively when other participants scaffold the floor through back channelling; otherwise, disagreement givers tend to feel uncomfortable. The pragmatics of disagreement were often observed in this study with the number of words uttered in a sentence frequently around a 10-word range. The pragmatics of disagreement by Japanese are also achieved as a social co-construction of meaning between a disagreement giver and its taker. The pragmatics of harmonious disagreement results not from individual endeavour, but from

collaborative practice between addressers and addressees. This meaning co-construction should naturally require dynamic manoeuvre. Experienced participants (i.e., E1 and S1) were more able to sensitively shift their position (i.e., disagreement giver or taker) dynamically than the employees with less experience (i.e., E2 and S2), though there are exceptional figures, as was noted in other noteworthy variables.

Disagreement shares its pragmatic similarity with consensus-making. Theoretically, the use of positive politeness strategies plays a facilitating role in achieving a consensus, as positive politeness emphasises the commonality between interactants. In practice, however, the effort-making to achieve a consensus combined with positive politeness strategies often develops the participants' persistent attitude largely due to its pragmatic ambiguity. This proposition is further supported by the observation that only two cases out of five in total succeeded in achieving a consensus; meanwhile, three other cases ended up with failure in doing so. When one fails to achieve a consensus, its negative recognition places a direct impact on the participants' judgment of communication success.

While disagreement is mostly expressed by participants with power hidden in Discourse due to age and experience, clarification requests were observed in the pragmatic behaviours of all categories of participants in this study. Generally speaking, requests for clarification in BELF communication are deemed essential for necessary meaning negotiation in order to get the job done. Nevertheless, the use of clarification requests might also cause conflict in communication due to their pragmatic ambiguity, especially for junior employees (E2 and S2). Besides, the pragmatic pattern of clarifying-responding was often misidentified as that of indirect disagreement. It was observed that junior employees, in particular, frequently felt more face-threatened than necessary when they received clarification requests from senior parties. However, clarification requests from junior to senior were often conducted with no apparent face-threatening consequences.

Lastly, pragmatic ambiguity was also observed in the use of paralinguistic elements, such as synthetic laugh and silence. I observed that participants applied a double standard for synthetic laugh and silence. Synthetic laugh and silence, both of which occur as a result of interactional collaboration, could potentially enhance in-group *Wa*, while the pragmatic ambiguity could also encompass unnecessary misunderstandings due to *Kuki*, or power in Discourse.

What is suggested through this data analysis is that the tolerance of such pragmatic ambiguity should also count as a key constituent of communication success in BELF-in-use in

Japanese Discourse. On the other hand, such tolerance, with the aid of *Kuki*-literacy, also legitimises the avoidance of clear decision-making among Japanese businesspeople. Participants are expected to dynamically manoeuvre within this pragmatic ambiguity by properly reading *Kuki* to manage rapport and establish in-group *Wa*.

9.1.3 What can the Japanese BELF trainees tell us?

Lastly, I will discuss the third research question of this study based on my research findings. The focus group interview primarily suggested that some corporate trainees and trainers agreed on the understanding that the participants' apparent hesitant attitude for collaborative communication is mainly developed out of their lack of *linguistic* confidence. Corporate trainers also observed that participants did not want to voluntarily handle the meeting. Such hesitation is often misidentified as the manifestation of a lack of *business* confidence. Besides, the lack of confidence could potentially lead to the lack of persuasiveness in their transactions. To help trainees overcome this sociopsychological aspect of L2 business communication, conventional business language training based solely on the L1 standard requires revisiting. Rather, we will have to think about encouraging the trainees to utilise the business skills of their own styles and to use more contextually available communicative resources.

The data analysis also suggested skill attrition as a result of using an L2. Normally, Japanese businesspeople have been trained to do business not only through probation, but also through business trial and error. All participants in this study, being incumbent employees at Crescendo Corporation, should naturally have acquired some business communication skills to make themselves function in Japanese business Discourse. However, it was observed that the participants could not fully apply their experience and skills in BELF Discourse, which they are relatively unfamiliar with. This psychological uneasiness developed their hesitant attitude, which lead to the apparent attrition of business performance.

This anxiety occurred probably as a result of *English education* in which the dissimilarity between Japanese and English (both language and culture) is strongly emphasised. The overgeneralised assumption that English is different from Japanese in language system and culture developed their attitude to have to *de-Japanese* themselves. Such globalisation fallacy also had them

refrain from utilising what they have learnt in Japanese Discourse for L2 communication, leading to the skill attrition. This dissertation could not go so far as to provide any concrete solution for the above issues. Researchers are advised to tackle this theme in future studies.

With regard to the communication strategies for rapport management, it was observed in this meeting, but also throughout the training period, that the co-construction of *Wa* within the community of practice was highly appreciated. To the establishment of in-group rapport, language is not the only mediation; utilising many kinds of contextually available communication resources plays an important role in succeeding in harmonious communication in business. Even when disagreement is expressed, some experienced trainees were trying to scaffold the floor by means of back-channelling. Thanks to this collaborative communication, disagreement givers felt comfortable stating their opinions. Meanwhile, trainees with less experience apparently did not scaffold their counterparts' floor while receiving disagreement. Silence in communication sometimes even resulted in disestablishment of *Wa* co-construction in Discourse.

To solve this communication issue, especially for junior employees, they were advised to be more reactive while interacting. To do so, utilising back-channelling is beneficial, because it contributes not only to scaffolding others' disagreement, but also to showing one's presence in Discourse. It also functions as a pragmatic strategy to avoid unnecessary silence. In addition to back-channelling, requesting clarification is another effective way for participants in a weak position to contribute to meetings more. The quantitative analysis suggested that clarification requests are the most commonly used communication strategy for all types of learners. Encouraging participants, especially junior sales representatives, to use more clarification requests will potentially help them develop better a attitude for communication.

For a more advanced BELF training, participants should also be advised that receiving clarification requests differs from receiving disagreement. Junior participants should be more explicitly trained not to be overly pressurised when receiving clarification requests from their seniors. Data analysis also suggested that handling clarification requests properly would enhance *Wa* in Discourse. To do so, understanding how to train participants to raise their awareness of Japanese L2 English pragmatics in business is a key.

To better raise the participants' awareness, they should be encouraged to understand the communication conflict in connection with their Japanese communication style. In order to succeed in

such harmonious business communication in the context of Japan, having *Kuki*-reading literacy plays a key role as is commonly stated. For example, when achieving a consensus, its mutual confirmation is often done based on *Kuki*-reading literacy. Although *Wa*-based communication potentially functions in Japanese Discourse ecology, such *Kuki* is not always monolithic. Pragmatic ambiguity often results in participants' inaccurate understanding of given contents. Communication success based on *Kuki*-literacy is such a disputable issue even among Japanese. Participants should be more explicitly instructed not to postulate the possibility of communication in assumption of what is unsaid but still presumably understood.

In future research, the pragmatics of silence along with Japanese BELF-in-use should be further explored. Normally, participants are encouraged to avoid silence in meetings while speaking in English. However, in many such approaches, the negative side of the pragmatics of silence in intercultural communication is overemphasised. How silence is better utilised in intercultural business Discourse should be looked at ecologically for the development of better corporate training for globalisation from now on. Such continuous endeavour will also help divulge the still unsaid success criteria of business communication that the participants unconsciously perceived. This data analysis based on focus group discussions eventually implied pedagogical implications language teachers and learners could benefit from.

9.1.4 The implications of my results for the understanding of BELF training in general

Conventional SLA studies attempted to evaluate L2 learners' practice based on a quantitative-oriented measurement (i.e., questionnaire surveys) as was mentioned in Chapter 3. Although such a quantitative approach to assessing L2 learning strategies has been considered valid, more qualitative approaches have also been called for to further explore the complexity of L2 learning processes. Such qualitative inquiry will supplement the statistical assessment of good L2 practice with the inclusion of multidimensional perspectives. Takeuchi's (2003) study investigated the individual traits of Japanese successful L2 learners through such a qualitative approach. He recommended that future study should observe and analyse what L2 learners do in a *situated* context, especially outside the in-class learning discourse. This will help expand L2 researchers' perspectives. In this light, this study looked at situated L2 practice in the context of *Englishnization* at a Japanese engineering

company.

In this study, I shunned observing participants as being L2 learners-in-progress with deficiencies to overcome. Rather, in order to assess their *good* L2 practice, I looked at the participants' communicative, interactive, and discursive practices as the social product developed in the Discourse ecology. As Firth and Wagner (1997) indicated, such an ecological perspective will help researchers identify what has been overlooked about L2 learners' realities. The employment of ecological perspectives in this study helped the researcher discuss:

1. how the participants with different social status dynamically manoeuvre within the community of practice, especially when showing and receiving disagreement.
2. how the participants negotiate (complex) meanings by utilising contextually available communicative resources, such as fillers, pauses, (inauthentic) laugh and silence.
3. how the use of ambiguous pragmatics can eventually help the participants communicate their ideas and eventually create Discourse *harmony* within the community of practice.

Since this study focused only on the context of *Englishnization* at Crescendo, a Japanese engineering company, future studies are called for to achieve a deeper understanding of what situated L2 learners do outside the in-class context. Also, this study addressed what types of learners are apt to employ what types of pragmatic strategies; however, it could not go as far as to touch upon the correlation between the participants' learning styles and their use of (socio)pragmatic strategies. This question has to be addressed in a future study and also with a broader contextual scope.

One other issue to mention is the implication of my result on the understanding of BELF in general. As mentioned above, there is considerable interest in BELF in the Asian context along with emerging Asian Englishes as well as Asian competence. Up to now, the issues of this lingua franca used in business context have been enthusiastically explored in the field of intercultural business discourse (IBD) and second language acquisition (SLA). Although these two research fields share the same academic interest, researchers from these two disciplines have not fully communicated with each other. These two fields are not mutually exclusive; rather, there should be a number of ideas that can be exchanged and shared by each party. This dissertation, in an attempt to bridge these two disciplines, combined BELF with L2 learning as a part of corporate training in the context of

globalisation. The results suggested the following points for further consideration.

First of all, BELF Discourse is gradually emerging in the business context in Japan and it will be further accelerated along with *Englishnization* strategies at some globalizing Japanese companies. Since such *Englishnization* of the majority of Japanese companies is at its experimental stage today, those who are proficient in English are the main constituents of BELF communities of practice as of now. However, as was suggested in Chapter 7, Japanese indigenized BELF pragmatics are frequently misunderstood by both Japanese and non-Japanese English speakers, mainly because of pragmatic ambiguity. Apparently, Japanese BELF trainees dynamically manoeuvre and tolerate pragmatic ambiguity to communicate effectively within the community of practice while utilising all contextually available communicative resources as communication strategies. However, it is those who have high familiarity with Japanese Discourse norms that can properly interpret such complex practices as dynamic manoeuvring. Besides, it is the participants' tolerance to such pragmatic ambiguity that makes it possible to let conversational discourse occur. For those who have low familiarity with it, it is nothing but an incomprehensible interactive phenomenon. To solve this problem, only emphasising the dissimilarity between Japanese and L1 English communication is not sufficient as was discussed above. Rather, future corporate training should focus more on raising awareness of Japanese L2 English pragmatics not only for Japanese, but also for non-Japanese BELF users in order to have them understand how such communication conflict resulted. In the future not so far away, this issue of communication conflict needs to be further explored through focusing an analytical attention on the Discourse of *Englishnization* being not at its experimental stage, but already implemented as a successful community practice in Japan.

Accordingly, the roles of English instructors for corporate training are also subject to a change. Conventionally, corporate trainers have been expected to merely convey knowledge to business students. However, the emergence of BELF-speaking Discourse along with *Englishnization* as well as the changing social factors surrounding the English language, including the Internet, is likely to expose such instructors to drastic changes in the roles they are expected to play. Corporate trainers will play more multi-dimensional consulting roles in helping students develop their situated BELF competence. Also, English instructors even in the sphere of school discourse are highly likely to experience a change. They will also be expected to instruct (socio)linguistic competence necessary for L2 English used for practical purposes. Providing some consultation will also help learners

develop better L2 communication abilities, whose success criteria is thoroughly different from the L1 English standard. This point should be subjectively explored in future studies at the right timing. This dissertation has contributed to raising researchers' awareness of the pragmatic issues of BELF-in-use and the eventual needs for its instruction/consultation in the context of globalisation in Japan.

9.2 Pedagogical implications

Based on the above research findings, I will present the pedagogical implications of this research project. Firstly, I will position corporate training programmes in the sphere of English education in Japan. Secondly, I will provide some insights into the curriculum development for a new concept of corporate training for globalisation based on the research findings of this study. Thirdly, I will explain how this dissertation may contribute to my potential stakeholders.

9.2.1 Positioning corporate training in English education in Japan

The Japanese term, *Eigo-kyōiku* (英語教育, English education), generally refers to the issues of teaching and learning the English language as a school subject in the sphere of pedagogical Discourse at various levels, such as elementary schools, junior and senior high schools and colleges in Japanese context. The scope of English education research includes, but is not limited to, how the foreign language is learnt and how it should be taught. Researchers in this academic discipline have addressed the issues of teaching and learning from various angles to fulfill the ultimate goal of improving the situation and finding a better way of educating through trial and error.

The researchers of *Eigo-kyōiku* have made a great contribution to the continuous development of education in Japan. However, it has also been argued that mainstream research has focused its attention on the issues happening in the school context, while little has been discussed about the issues of teaching/learning English outside the sphere of school Discourse, including corporate training. Although several researchers have acknowledged its significance, little empirical research has been conducted to understand the reality of corporate training. Given that the current globalisation is likely to continue for another decade or more, the researchers' awareness-raising of *Eigo-kyōiku* happening in business context, or English for specific purposes (ESP), has been highly

expected. This study, in this light, looked at the *Eigo-kyōiku* in the context of corporate training in Japan to gain some insight on how English is used in business and how English education can be better implemented in order to meet society's needs.

Recently, many researchers have emphasised the importance of curriculum continuation of English education in Japan (e.g., Otsu, Erikawa, Saito, & Torikai, 2013; Torikai, 2015). This study proposed that the understanding of how English is situated and used for business purposes by Japanese businesspeople, or BELF-in-use, should also be included in the consideration process of further curriculum development and continuation. It also issues a warning about the overemphasis of the dissimilarity of Japanese and English (both in linguistic and in cultural aspects) throughout *Eigo-kyōiku*. Besides, conventional native-speakerism may have accelerated the negative mind-set of Japanese English learners, "*Nihongo-Eigo de wa tsūyō shinai*" [Japanese-flavoured indigenous English will not be accepted] in global business (e.g., Marriot, 1995; Mikitani, 2012; Sato, 2015a). *Eigo-kyōiku*, in light of this, is expected to seek out how Japanese pragmatic characteristics should be better included and utilised while speaking English as well; not only how *pure* linguistic English competence can be better fostered for Japanese learners.

Most studies on corporate training have focused their attention on the efficacy of corporate training in terms of cost-benefit ratio; a key concept is maximising its benefit while minimising the relevant costs. In addition to that, such studies are mostly conducted from the viewpoint of human resources development (HRD). From HRD's viewpoint, trainees are expected to autonomously study by themselves even outside the training sessions in order to maximise the benefit of training. Provided that learners' autonomy plays a significant part in designing and developing corporate training, utilising what trainees have learnt in English classes when they are in school must be an indispensable factor in designing and developing future corporate training curricula. In order to do so, the scientific communication between SLA and IBD should be inevitable. This is where corporate training is poised in the realm of *Eigo-kyōiku* in the context of Japan for the time being. Since there are more potential points where SLA can be combined with IBD, further exploration in this regard will be needed.

In the following section, the issue of curriculum development for future corporate training will be discussed.

9.2.2 For further curriculum development

Generally speaking, research on business communication is often assumed to address how effective communication contributes to profit-making. Nevertheless, what determines effective organisational management cannot be free from human resource development in the long run. For better human resource development, continuous assessment of the programme, both short-term and long-term, is deemed essential.

As was indicated in Chapter 5, however, numerical measurements (i.e., standardised test scores) of trainees' learning have been regarded as the most trusted information sources in some companies. This numerical-data-oriented assessment is driven largely by short-term goal setting for organisational management. Assessment reports of the training programme have to be presented in the short term in order to demonstrate that the on-going corporate training programmes make a direct impact on their globalisation project. However, such short-term goal-setting could potentially deprive trainees of the opportunity for them to picture their future self in the long run.

I suggest that future corporate training should be implemented with not only short-term, but also long-term goal-setting, in order to help trainees picture their future selves more clearly and concretely. This long-term goal-setting is considered reasonable in language learning from human resource management perspectives. Developing and maintaining fine human capital is an important strategy from a corporate managerial point of view. Running such corporate training programmes longitudinally and assessing trainees' development in the long run will be necessary. This human resource development strategy will scaffold further Englishnization, in the sense of organisational English-only policy.

In 2013, Rakuten implemented its Englishnization policy in order to catch up with global competition. Since then, an increasing number of companies in Japan have expressed their eagerness to adopt such language management policies; some partially, and some entirely. Others critically responded that policy makers of such companies would be making nothing more than an extreme and a hasty decision. Crescendo Corporation is not an exception. I suggest that the corporate training programmes should be assessed with a long-term view. In nature, Englishnization (both in terms of English-only policy and the introduction of corporate English training) of a Japanese company should be achieved over the long run such that corporate policy makers should take into more careful

consideration the facilitating roles that the candidates in pre-departure training would eventually play to advance further Englishnization as well as the globalisation of the entire organisation.

For future corporate training, I suggest that awareness-raising of BELF pragmatics based on self-reflective learning methods (e.g., critical assessment of videotaped performance and/or focus group discussion) should be potentially beneficial. In most corporate training programmes in action, trainees are expected to develop their English competence based on the L1 standard. Nevertheless, what trainees are likely to face in the future is evidently more L2-oriented, or BELF, Discourse. Curriculum developers as well as corporate trainers are advised to provide a training programme with a new concept in order to help trainees develop their BELF competence while fully utilising their on-hand business skills and experience so that they can dynamically manoeuvre within the global business Discourse. To overcome the issue, the establishment of L2-oriented approaches to English training is a must (Oka, 2004). Future research should subjectively address the issues of such corporate training programmes (desirably) in continuation of *Eigo-kyōiku* curricula in the context of Japan.

9.2.3 Who are non-academic stakeholders of this dissertation?

Before concluding this discussion, I would like to clarify who are potential non-academic stakeholders of this dissertation, and to explain how they can benefit from this discussion. Basically, I postulate the following four as my potential stakeholders; 1) future (pre-OJT) corporate trainees, 2) HR managers and policy makers, 3) non-Japanese businesspeople, and 4) other corporate trainers working in Japan.

First, future (pre-OJT) corporate trainees are advised to look at how English is spoken as an L2 by Japanese and to consider how potential communication conflict is developed due to L2 pragmatic characteristics. Conventional corporate business English training has focused mainly on developing participants' linguistic competence based on the L1 standard, whose judgment is based largely on TOEIC test score growth. Some may claim that this type of training has reportedly resulted in a positive effect in fostering participants' communicative competence. However, as the data analysis of this dissertation indicated, sole reliance on the L1 standard as the BELF training success criterion needs revisiting. Besides, placing too much value on being trained to speak English for

business purposes based only on the L1 standard will perhaps paradoxically transfer a "native speaker problem" (Victor, 2013) to us Japanese BELF users. Future corporate trainees are advised to pay more attention to how to balance between the development of English competence and the awareness-raising of the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) to utilise Japanese L2 English pragmatics through corporate business language training for future Englishnization and globalization.

Second, I recommend that HR managers as well as policy makers consider the possibility of introductin training programmes geared toward developing participants' L2 English pragmatics and ICC along with conventional business English training based on the L1 standard. The conventional training reportedly resulted in a positive effect in terms of fostering participants' pure English linguistic competence. Hence, we do not need to make a thorough paradigm shift of corporate business language training curricula. Rather, introducing such L2 pragmatics training will expectedly serve as a supplement. In doing so, meeting role-play activities will be quite beneficial in that they help raise the participants' awareness of their own communication styles. In addition, as was otherwise noted, there was at least one participant with an international background either in childhood or in current business. Their intercultural experience and understanding were not fully utilised during the training, since the training focus was to help trainees develop English competence based the L1 standard. Nevertheless, as was mentioned earlier, not everybody will go to countries positioned in the inner circle of World Englishes; most will go to countries that belong to either outer or expanding circles. Besides, even for those who will be dispatched to L1 English speaking countries, their business counterparts do not always have an L1 command of English. In order to improve the efficacy of BELF curricula, the company's holistic training system itself needs to be better configured so that these participants with international backgrounds can make more effective use of their experience and understanding for reciprocal learning. Creating this peer coaching model will be a key to implementing successful globalisation strategies in connection with Englishnization.

Third, although the Japanese economy is staggering, its politico economic presence still lingers worldwide. Along with the on-going Abenomics as well as the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympics, an increasing number of business people will expectedly continuously observe Japanese economics. Such non-Japanese business people will be eager to communicate with Japanese business people in many respects, in which English plays a mediating role. This dissertation will contribute to

these non-Japanese business people in terms of awareness-raising of Japanese L2 English communication styles. As the interview with L1 English speaking corporate trainers indicated, people with low familiarity to Japanese communication styles are likely to struggle with the pragmatic ambiguity of Japanese L2 English. To solve potential communication conflicts, intercultural training with an orientation to understanding Japanese communication styles should also be conducted to those who are interested in interacting with Japanese business people in the near future. Since Englishnization is at its experimental stage, implementing this training is just a possibility for the time being. However, by the time Englishnization has been commonly observed in the context of Japan, fostering non-Japanese business people's communication strategies will not have been thought light of.

Lastly, other corporate trainers working in Japan, L1 or L2 English speaking instructors regardless, should be strongly advised to raise their awareness of Japanese L2 English communication styles. This dissertation looked at how Japanese show disagreement, receive disagreement, reach a consensus, request clarification, and use paralinguistic elements (e.g., synthetic laugh and silence) while interacting in English in business context. To train Japanese English speakers, conventional training has relied heavily on the L1 standard and thus almost automatically identified Japanese L2 English pragmatics, especially its pragmatic ambiguity, as problematic. However, as long as the tolerance to such pragmatic ambiguity is a constituent of Japanese communication styles, we cannot condescendingly advise Japanese to stop acting so and have our trainees acculturate their pragmatic behaviours on the basis of the L1 standard. Rather, we are advised to consider how to better include the trainees' *culture* in their BELF interaction while encouraging them to eliminate their pragmatic behaviours that can trigger unnecessary communication conflict, such as overgeneralised harmonious disagreement, Kuki-literacy and power exercise, just to mention a few. For a better curriculum development, more scientific communication between applied linguists with research interests in business communication and in-service corporate business language trainers will mutually beneficial.

In Japanese companies, globalisation strategies are normally introduced and implemented in a top-down fashion. It is mostly executive officers that make and determine the policy. In this organizational system, the pre-OJT trainers, being positioned in a relatively lower place in the social hierarchical strata, will have to experience globalisation on various levels without being able to contribute to the entire organisation. Up to now, their trials and errors turn out to be nothing but their

self-sacrificing experiment. In addition, corporate trainers that are expected to play significant roles in the process of globalisation in Japanese companies are in a situation where they cannot contribute to the continuous development of the organisation that consults them. However, since these corporate trainees and trainers are definitely key factors to generate further globalisation, their voices should be paid more attention to. Such a bottom-up approach may be a key to considering how to better proceed with the on-going and upcoming globalisation as well as Englishnization strategies in Crescendo corporation and beyond.

9.3 Limitations

Lastly, the limitations of this research design should be mentioned to provide insights for further exploration of this research agenda. First of all, this study focused its analytical attention on only one company in Japan, basically due to accessibility. Through my longitudinal involvement as a corporate trainer, I could provide some quasi-insider perspectives about the company. However, this high-context dependability also encompasses a lack of generalizability of the discussion. Potential stakeholders of this research (e.g., corporate trainers, curriculum developers, HRD managers, and researchers) are advised to consider their own context carefully before applying these research findings.

Secondly, this study addressed the issues of corporate training in action in the context of Japan largely from HRD perspectives with GLLs as its conceptual framework. It also investigated the criteria of successful BELF-in-use through the viewpoint of rapport management. However, when considered from organisational/managerial perspectives, such corporate training programmes could be possibly seen differently. This time, the analytical framework was limited to rapport management when analysing the Discourse data. In future research, the data (or, with the inclusion of similar kinds of data) should be revisited from different frameworks, such as corporate governance, risk management, and marketing strategies, just to mention a few.

Thirdly, the *Englishnization* at Crescendo is still at its experimental stage. Drawing on the case of Rakuten, Sato (2013) indicated that *Englishnization* strategies in action were designed largely to maintain the intra-organisational linguistic infrastructure for further globalisation; rather than to practically use English for all business conduct. Since this study is exploratory in nature, applying the

research findings of this study to readers' context not only requires careful consideration but also may not result in an immediate impact in today's world. Nevertheless, future studies are recommended for further theoretical and practical contributions to the consideration of policy-making at global Japanese companies based off of the research findings of this exploratory study.

Fourth, but related to the third limitation, this study addressed how Japanese organisational features, including the seniority system, have affected the participants' communication styles. However, I did not tackle how the different English levels have influenced their power dynamics in the organisation. This exploratory study looked at the issues of Englishnization at its experimental stage. However, as Englishnization proceeds, new power dynamics based on linguistic proficiency will probably come into play. In this light, for future study, researchers are advised to investigate how the different English levels have influenced their original power dynamics in the organisation. Creating such dual focus (i.e., the L1 sociocultural influence on the participants' L2 communication and the L2-proficiency-based power dyanmics affecting L1's organisational positioning) will eventually broaden our research perspectives.

Fifth, as is the nature of any ethnographic research, some subjectivity may have emerged in the process of analysis, which still remains to be a minor issue. To guarantee legitimacy, I conducted interrater reliability checks. Due to methodological constraint, only simple percentage agreement was employed without comparing it with blind-rating results. This research design has somewhat developed a potential threat to the study's reliability. To overcome this methodological weakness, further research needs to be administered in the near future.

9.4 The potential and limitations of my methodologies

It should be noted that some research methods employed in this study should be worth revisiting. I have to emphasise that two of the research methods I employed in this research, retrodictive qualitative modelling and sensory pragmatics, are still in the development process. Although these two research approaches grab the attention of applied linguists, their theoretical and practical establishment as *legitimate* methods remain to be completed.

Firstly, retrodictive qualitative modelling was found beneficial in drawing a general picture of what participants normally do in observed Discourse. Since *Englishnization* is a relatively new

phenomenon, general readers cannot have access to such research sites easily. Therefore, employing retrodictive qualitative modelling and the described learner type categories on a superficial level allows readers to understand the participants' shared behaviouristic patterns along with their *Shafū* Discourse that places an impact on the underlying motivation of their transactional performance.

It is noteworthy that other corporate trainers involved in the corporate training programmes at Crescendo have agreed with this categorisation and have even acknowledged that these learner types (i.e., E1, S1, E2 and S2) can be repeatedly observed from 2013 (the time of data collection) up to present. This note suggests that these four learner type categories are still considered valid for the purpose of this current study and its subsequent corporate training in action. However, I am also aware that this superficial categorisation may also lead to overlooking some individual traits of learning. Through the analytical process, it was indicated that combining retrodictive qualitative modelling with more micro-level analysis approaches (i.e., Conversational analysis approaches to Discourse analysis) would be deemed valuable. This point should be further explored in future studies in order to establish some concrete analytical models with such categorised narrative data as the study basis for (organisational) ethnographic inquiries.

Secondly, the sensory pragmatics approach, on which the micro-level analysis of this study relied heavily, is also worth revisiting. As Bargiela-Chiappini (2013) suggested, dialogic-based retrospective interpretation on self-performance is indispensable to achieve a sensory pragmatic analysis. This study, in this light, combined the Conversational analysis Discourse analyses with focus group discussions to observe Discourse ecology. This integration of these two Discourse-based micro-level approaches resulted in demystifying; 1) participants' dynamic and flexible positional manoeuvre between (disagreement) addressers and addressees, 2) the use of pragmatic ambiguity as a face-negotiation strategy, 3) the multi-dimensional functions of paralinguistic elements (e.g., a nervous laugh and silence), as a shared repertoire within the BELF community of practice. These are also the issues that one cannot fully address by using one single pragmatic approach to Discourse analysis.

However, I am aware that this study is still exploratory in nature. It is doubtless that this study has greatly benefited from the use of this sensory pragmatic approach with the combination of a Conversational analysis and Discourse analysis with focus group discussion. On the other hand, as Bargiela-Chiappini (2013) indicated, sensory pragmatics is still at its experimental stage; this

integrated approach is only one possible form. Future studies should therefore consider 1) legitimising this analytical approach as an established method, and 2) exploring the transferability of this methodology to a broader context, even outside the realm of international business discourse studies.

These two approaches methodologically contributed to this current study, through which the potential explorability of these methods was also discussed. However, once again, what I have done in this study is still exploratory in nature. Therefore, further consideration is needed to guarantee the legitimacy of such research approaches.

Besides, in this study, I combined a CA approach with ethnography in order to design the analytical method. As I mentioned in the section of methodology (Chapter 4), this combined method is quite controversial. Traditional CA researchers and applied linguists have almost agreed with each other in that the combined method will enrich research perspectives. On the other hand, they have not achieved a consensus about how a CA approach essentially differs from ethnography to observe reality or realities. This discussion could not go so far as to scrutinise how the researchers in these two disciplines succeeded to understand each other and where they have failed in doing so. Future studies of business communication using this combined method should more sensitively tackle this issue to better legitimise the research approach of this discipline whose positioning still remains to be fully established.

As a concluding remark, I would predict that the demand of BELF communication research in the context of Japan would increase further as globalisation proceeds. This study provided some insights of how BELF is situated and used by Japanese businesspeople. I would feel rewarded for my efforts if this dissertation proved thought-provoking to researchers of second language acquisition and intercultural business Discourse.

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Appendix 0: Transcription convention

(2.0)	silence with the length of time
(.)	short pause which lasts less than 0.5 seconds
((smiling))	paralinguistic element
::	extended vowel
=	latching
.	falling intonation
?	raising intonation
(…)	inaudible
[A]	speech overlap
[B]	

Referring to Firth's (1995) convention

Appendix 1: Transcription for Pilot Study

This section, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Appendix 2: Transcription for Team Aladdin

This section, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Appendix 3: Transcription for Team Scheherazade

This secion, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Appendix 4: Transcription for Team Yunan

This section, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Appendix 5: Transcription for Team Judar

This section, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.

Appendix 6: Informed consent

Consent Form

A Critical Qualitative Analysis on Intercultural Pragmatics of L2-English

Thank you very much for your interest in participating in this study. As a researcher of intercultural pragmatics of L2-English, Yoichi Sato would like to video-record your role-play performance and use it for his current research. Please read the following conditions of agreement carefully, and give your signature below if you could kindly agree to participate in this study.

1. I confirm that I have had the study explained to me by the researcher, including the research purpose, study length and data collection method.
2. I understand that all my details will be kept confidential and my name will not appear on any reports or documents the researcher will publish.
3. I understand that notes and data collected during the study are seen only by the researcher himself and are used only for the research-related purposes.
4. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any stage without giving reasons and without receiving any educational/academic penalties.
5. Under the conditions stated above, I agree to take part in this study.

_____ _____

Participant's signature Date

_____ _____

Researcher's signature Date

Appendix 7: Narratives of Participants

This section, which contains a great deal of personal information, has been excluded so general readers cannot identify the research participants of this study.