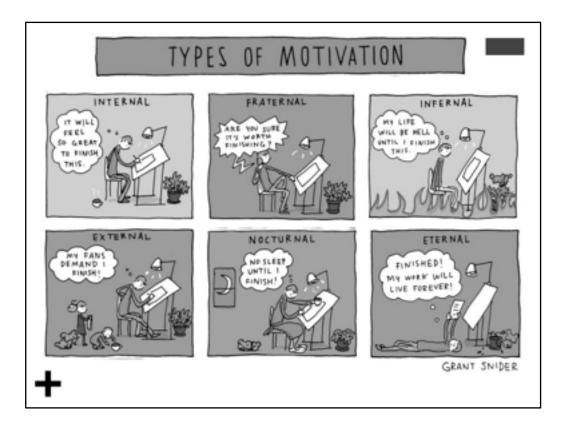
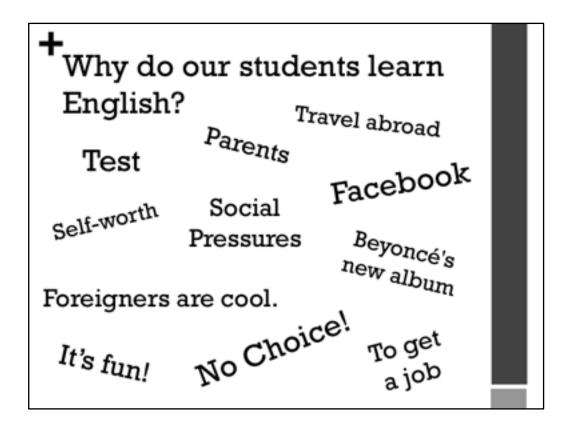


My name is Matthew Barbee and I'm an English teacher at Kwansei Gakuin University. My research background, among other things, is in L2 learner motivation. Connected to motivation, today I want to talk about how one of my students is navigating their identity in a globalized Digital World. But first, motivation.

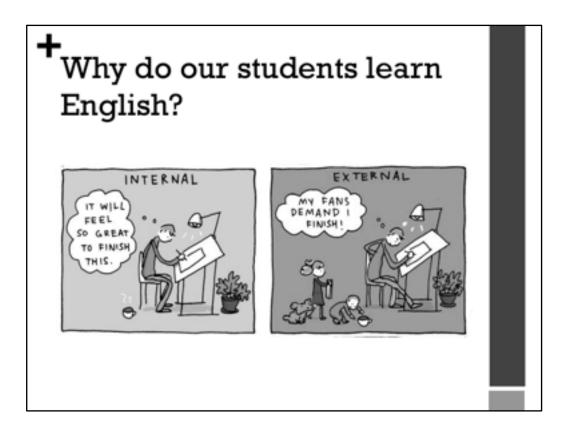


Like all of you, I am interested in why our students want to learn English, in some cases, why they don't want to learn English. Today, I want to talk a little about student motivation, some past research of mine, and introduce you to a special case study that I'm current working on.



Seriously though, why do our students learn English?

Tests, parents, social pressures, to find a job, no choice, sense of worth, connect to global culture, understand Beyoncé's new album, etc.



Ultimately, this can be broken down into two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Students that do want to learn English either do it for themselves or because of outside forces. [CLICK] Typically, research shows that students are are internally motivated learn English faster and retain it longer.



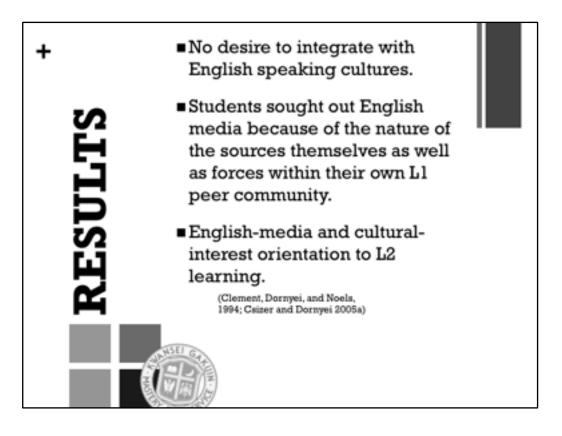
Another type of motivation, introduced by Gardner and Lambert in 1972, is Integrative Motivation. Integratively motivated learners want to learn the language so that they can better understand and get to know the people who speak that language. The identify with and want to integrate into those cultures. At the time, scholars agreed that this type of motivation had the large positive effect on the mostfluent L2 English speakers.



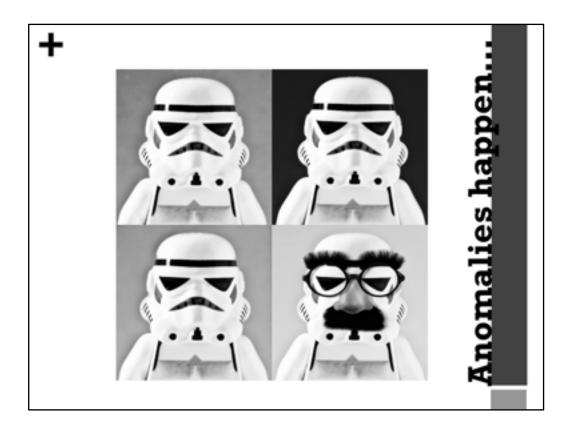
However, teaching in [Slide 6] rural part of Japan for five years, I had my doubts about integrative motivation. I wondered what accounted for high-level English learners in rural areas who have little little personal contact with foreigners and foreign cultures, who don't travel abroad, and have no need for English locally. Without contact, how can language learners form strong attitudes towards English speakers or integrate into their culture or be 'like them'?



This question lead to my latest research. I focused on 300 rural Japanese high school students who were identified as high English achievers. At the time, I was interested in the correlation between exposure to English and motivation, so I studied how much exposure the students had to English outside the classroom. I thought that if I knew what sources of English students sought out and how much exposure they had to it, I could better understand their motivations to learn English.



What I found was: Gardner's model of Integrative Motivation couldn't account for these learners. Rather than integrate into a foreign culture, students only wanted access to globalized English media while still maintaining their local identities. Instead of listening to only American artists, they mostly listened to Japanese artists who used English. Rather than traveling abroad or having foreign friends, they formed English circles in their own schools. Instead of reading authentic English texts or watching standard English movies, they read graduated readers targeted to Japanese students, and watched foreign movies with Japanese subtitles. Even in regards to English pronunciation, they spoke in a Japanese variation of English with heavy L1 transfer.



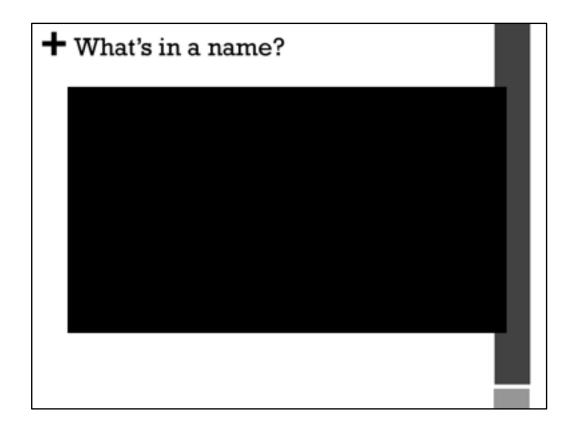
And I could end my presentation there, but I won't.

As with all experiments, the most interesting findings are in the [Slide 10] anomalies, the **outlying** students that didn't fit the overall profile.

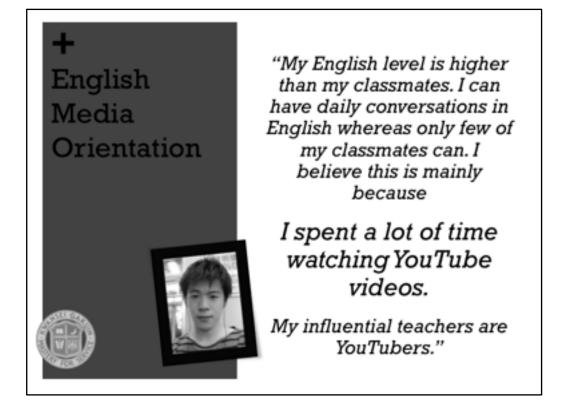


Please meet Keisuke. LEARNER BIO: When I first met him, he was 17 years old, a 2nd year high school student, he had never been outside of Japan, he had had the same 6 years of English that most Japanese have in junior and senior high school, and over a 900 TOEIC score. For all intents and purposes, he was near-native in English.

BUT, he was also a self described introvert, quiet, did not claim to have friends, and felt like an "outsider" in Japan. Based on initial questionnaires and follow-up interviews, Keisuke did not identify with Japan or other Japanese English learners. **So, what was motivating him to learn English?**



Self Intro



English Media Orientation

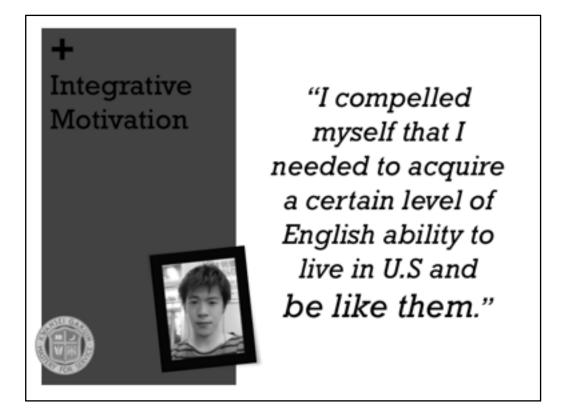
At first, in the initial questionnaire and first follow-up interview with Keisuke, it seemed that he also oriented to English-media or cultural-interest motivation for learning English. He wanted to understand his favorite actors in interviews; he attributed his high-level of English to watching YouTube; and he admitted that his role-models and influential teachers where YouTube personalities.



LGBT YouTube Influencers:

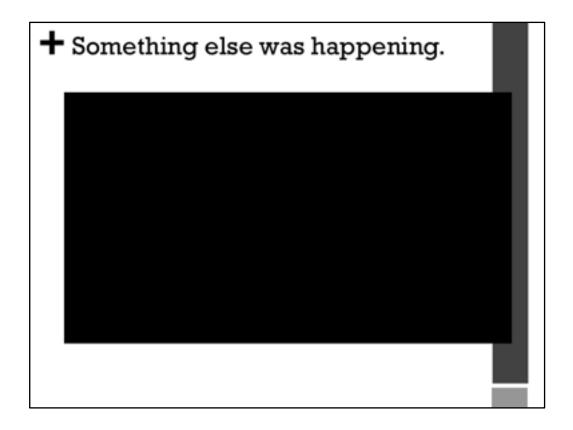
- 1. Tyler Oakley
- 2. Superfruit
- 3. Connor Franta
- 4. Kenny Moffitt
- 5. Shane Dawson
- 6. Miles Jai
- 7. Hannah Hart
- 8. Arielle Scarcella
- 9. Alex Bertie
- 10. Matthew Schuller
- 11. Lucas Cruikshank
- 12. Ingrid Nilsen
- 13. Trevor Moran
- 14. Rickie Dillon
- 15. Dodie Clark

(theodysseyonline.com)



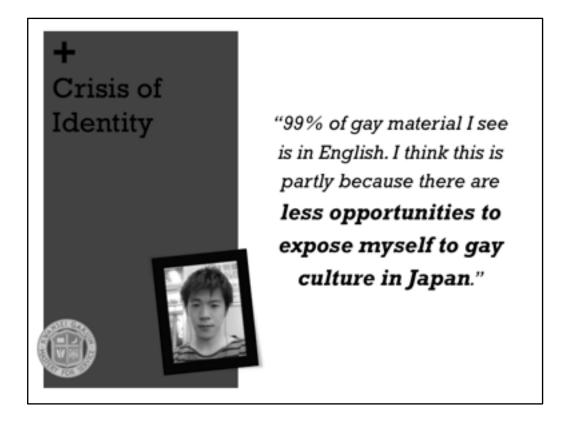
Integrative Orientation

However, his responses also showed a high correlation with an integrative motivation to learn English. He wanted to learn English to live in the U.S., he wanted to have foreign friends, he more closely identified with western, online personalities, and in a sense, he wanted to "be like them."

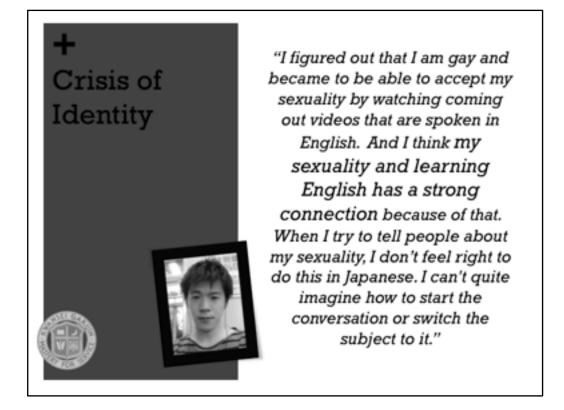


Coming Out Day

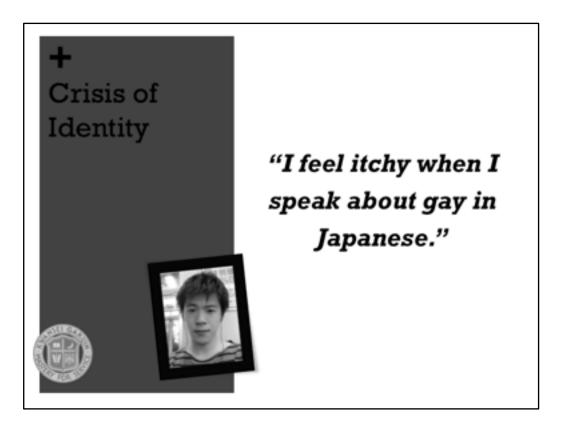
Even though Keisuke has over 100 Vlogs, just before he made this video, he stopped publishing them.



Identity Crisis: At the time he was developing his sexual identity, all the media and information that he was exposed to having to do with that identity was in English. He had a perception that being Japanese was incompatible with being gay.



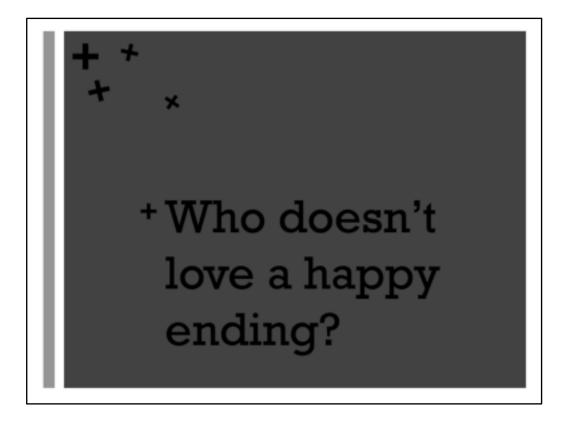
In short, he was motivated to learn English not only to have access to English media, he wanted to integrate into the English speaking world, in his case, a LGBT-friendly English speaking world.



And I think this says it all.

HE IDENTIFIED WITH ENGLISH CULTURE BECAUSE IT, NOT JAPANESE, WAS COMPATIBLE WITH WHO HE WAS.

While his classmates were glocalizing, he just wanted to escape and globalize.



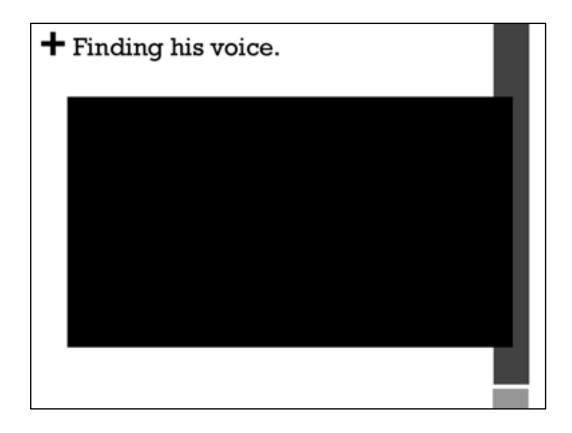
However, this story does have a happy ending. Now, Keisuke in a university student. While he first separated his sexual identity from his cultural identity, through university involvement, joining an English speaking society with a diverse membership



Japan is changing its views on sexual minorities.



He is accepting that the particularities of his local culture are indeed welcoming and nurturing of both his sexual and English-speaking identities. By finding this balance, he has found his voice in English and Japanese and feels empowered to help others



Coming Out Speech:

Since his winning speech, Keisuke has come out to other Japanese friends and his family...in Japanese. He has officially merged his two worlds: his global identity with local identity.



Final Thoughts

We teach a lot of students with many individual differences. They come to our English classrooms for many reasons and with different motivations.

Certainly language acquisition and identity go hand in hand. So, as teachers, we must be aware of the diversity our students, motivational diversity, cultural, social, as well as gender and sexual identity diversity. Not only do we help create English speakers, we are molding young individuals who are trying to navigate a globalized world and figuring out if their own identities are compatible.

That is why online materials as content for our English classrooms are so important. Materials should be authentic, relevant, and interesting to our learners. And with so many types of learners, our materials should be as diverse as they are. They should ultimately be representative of the ones we are teaching.



