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LIFE STORIES OF NIKKEIJIN SEEKING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES:  
THE MOTIVATION OF BRAZILIAN IMMIGRANTS IN JAPAN FOR LEARNING  
JAPANESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

by

Marisa U. Bellini

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Center for Language Studies

Brigham Young University

December 2006

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Marisa U. Bellini

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Masakazu Watabe, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Bown

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Blair Bateman

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Marisa U. Bellini in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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Date

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Masakazu Watabe  
Chair, Graduate Committee

Accepted for the Department

---

Ray T. Clifford  
Graduate Coordinator

Accepted for the College

---

Gregory D. Clark  
Associate Dean,  
College of Humanities

## ABSTRACT

# LIFE STORIES OF NIKKEIJIN SEEKING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES: THE MOTIVATION OF BRAZILIAN IMMIGRANTS IN JAPAN FOR LEARNING JAPANESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Marisa U. Bellini

Department of Language Acquisition and Teaching

Master of Arts

The immigration of Brazilian-Japanese to Japan has started as recently as the early 1980s as a result of an economic downturn in Brazil and labor shortages in Japan. In a recent study published by the Ministry of Justice in Japan, there are about 250,000 Brazilians currently working throughout Japan. Even though most of the Brazilians are second or third generation of Japanese descent, they are not fluent in Japanese, thus resulting in many cultural problems and misunderstandings.

Some research has examined about the immigration of Brazilians (*nikkeijin*) to Japan, but none has investigated their acquisition of Japanese as a second language. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that motivate or unmotivate the *nikkeijin* in Japan to learn Japanese as a second language (JSL).

This qualitative study shows the life experiences of four *nikkeijin* who arrived in Japan at different ages (8, 18, 25 and 42 years old). It is a very richly descriptive study about the experiences of *nikkeijin* learning JSL. Through interviews conducted over the Internet using Online Messenger and phone conversations, the researcher gathered information and data about their real life experiences learning the language and adapting to Japanese culture.

The results of this study show how positive and negative life experiences of *nikkeijin* in Japan can affect their motivation to learn or improve their Japanese language skills. The age of arrival and the place of residence in Japan are also important factors that influence their experiences in Japan.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The opportunity that I had to be one of the thousand immigrants in Japan changed my life. When I lived in Brazil, my dream was to be a doctor only because I wanted to be a rich and successful person in life. However, coming to Japan as a fourteen year old teenager and facing innumerable challenges, frustrations, and cultural problems, I soon realized that just being rich would not bring happiness to my life.

I am greatly thankful for my parents who always tried to show me how to be a better person and to never give up. My parents were the ones who wiped my tears gently when I did not want to go back to school in Japan and kept showing me that I was able to do anything. I never thought that I would be able to learn Japanese and then have the opportunity to come to the United States one day and write a thesis about *nikkeijin* in Japan. Now I know that I don't have to be a doctor to feel that I am the richest and most successful person in the world because I have my parents, who to me, are the best parents in the world. They showed me the most important thing in life: to never give up!

There have also been many teachers involved in my education over the years. All of them deserve recognition here at the completion of my Master's thesis and degree. Since there are many, I will just name a few of the most influential ones. The



list of teachers begins with *professora Camila*, who was my elementary school teacher in Brazil. Next, was Baba *sensei* and Kawaguchi *sensei*. These two wonderful *sensei's* were both teachers during my high school years in Japan. Then, as an undergraduate student, professor Canales at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies introduced me to Brigham Young University. And as a graduate student, Dr. Watabe, Dr. Bown, Dr. Bateman, Dr. Baker, and Dr. Graham all helped me to further refine my thinking and understanding about this unknown study related to *nikkeijin* in Japan. I am also extremely grateful for the time that my friend Kimi Matsumura and Stewart Carvalho spent helping me with my grammar. They have been a very good example for me and my family.

Lastly, I want to say thank you, *obrigada* and *arigatoo*, to my husband and my son who has always been waiting patiently for me at home when I had to finish a paper or study for a test in the library until the late hours of the night. I know that they motivated me to study harder and harder each day especially on the days that I could only sleep 3 hours. My husband's encouraging words, patience and love; my son's gentle smile and kisses, helped me to pursue this wonderful education.

I am definitely the happiest daughter, wife, and mother in the whole world.

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## CHAPTER 1

### *Introduction*

Japan is not the same country it was 20 years ago. Japan has been greatly influenced by the United States and Europe in areas such as fashion and diet. For example, Japanese teenagers believe it is very fashionable to dye their hair different colors and change their hair styles everyday. It is also very common to see restaurant chains of *MAKUDO* (McDonald's) and *UENDHIZU* (Wendy's) in major cities in Japan.

Similarly, Japan has also become more open in its immigration to policies. Historically, an almost complete isolation of Japan from the rest of the world was established in 1639 and only after 1854 did the Japanese government open a limited number of ports to trade.

Presently, however, one can see more and more foreigners walking on the narrow streets of Japan. According to Tsuda (2003), Brazilian *nikkeijin* began migrating to Japan in response to a severe Brazilian economic crisis and a critical shortage of unskilled labor in Japan. Although they were well-educated, middle-class citizens in Brazil, they could earn five to ten times their Brazilian incomes as unskilled manual laborers in Japan. Currently, most of them work in small and medium-sized firms in the manufacturing and construction sectors performing

unskilled “3K” jobs. The term “3K” jobs is a Japanese acronym that means:

- **K**itsui = Hard
- **K**itanai = Dirty
- **K**iken = Dangerous

According to the Ministry of Justice (1999), there were about 250,000

Japanese-Brazilians living in Japan by the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most of them look Japanese because they are *nisei* (second generation of Japanese), *sansei* (third generation) or *yonsei* (fourth generation), but some of them never learned anything about Japanese culture and language while they were in Brazil. Some of them also thought that since they were *nikkeijin* in Japan, life would be easier for them. Unfortunately that was not the case (Carvalho, 2003). Culture shock, homesickness and prejudice were part of their lives daily.

#### *Significance of the Study*

The study of *nikkeijin* acquisition of JSL (Japanese as a Second Language) is still a new field to be explored. Although there are some studies about Mexican or Iranian immigrants learning ESL in the United States, there is almost nothing in the research literature about Brazilian *nikkeijin* learning JSL.

There are many anthropological studies about *nikkeijin* immigration to Japan and its problems and consequences. Tsuda (2003) has contributed largely to this field;



his studies talk especially about the problems and prejudice that *nikkeijin* face as a *gaijin* (a foreigner in the country) in Japan. The *nikkeijin* immigration to Japan is growing every year and the need to learn JSL (Japanese as a Second Language) has become crucial (Lesser, 2003).

This study is also unique in terms of interviewing participants via internet, using email and Online Messenger. The Internet allowed me to conduct interviews and establish a relationship with participants without the expense of travel to Japan. Turkle (1995) explains that "...a chat room in the internet gives people the chance to express often unexplored aspects of the self and one's body can be represented by one's own textual description."

As the researcher, I am also one of the 250,000 *nikkeijin* who emigrated from Brazil to Japan looking for a better life with my family. I was fourteen years old when I immigrated in 1992 with my parents and younger brother to Japan. Since my parents were *nisei*, second generation, they could carry on a conversation in Japanese. However, being *sansei*, third generation, I did not know much about the Japanese language and culture. I was the first foreigner to go to a regular municipal junior high school in my city. I did not know about the customs and language and thus I could not communicate with anyone in the school. It took almost 2 years for me to get used to my "new life". I was alone in my own world for a long time and I did not know what

to do. That experience changed my life. Even after all these years, I am still concerned about helping other *nikkeijin* to adjust in Japan. Also, during my college years in Japan, I was invited to give lectures in five high schools describing my experiences as an immigrant in a Japanese high school. The present study seeks to inform *nikkeijin* and also the Japanese community that they can live and help each other motivating one another to know more about Brazilian and Japanese culture. For this reason, my goal is to publish the findings of this study in language related journals and a newspaper for Brazilians in Japan.

I interviewed four *nikkeijin* of different ages and backgrounds to show their unknown life stories in this unique, but important country for *nikkeijin* that is Japan.

### *Research Questions*

This qualitative study explores the lives of four *nikkeijin* of different ages and residences in Japan and how their motivation affects the acquisition of JSL through their life stories in Japan. I hope to share some of the results of this study with some *nikkeijin* and Japanese natives who currently reside in Japan through Japanese language related journals and newspaper articles. My goal is to provide information about the cultural and language problems of *nikkeijin* in Japan and to show that both sides can learn from each other if they open their minds. The following research questions are investigated in this analysis.

1. How do the life experiences of *nikkeijin* in Japan affect their motivation to learn Japanese?
2. How can the age of arrival and place of residence in Japan affect their learning process?

#### *Delimitations of the Study*

This study only investigates subjects who are Brazilian *nikkeijin*. Those spouses or children of *nikkeijin* were not included in the research because they would have a different background in Brazil and the responses related to Japanese culture and customs could affect this particular study.

#### *List of Terms*

*Dekasegi*(migrant): It is used to refer not only to the *nikkeijin* as migrants, but also to their spouses of non-Japanese ancestry who migrated to Japan. In its original usage in Japan, the term defined people who left their birthplace to work elsewhere temporarily.

*Gaijin*: *Gai* (外) means outside and *jin* (人) means people, so it literally means a person who is an outsider, a foreigner in the country.

*JSL*: Japanese as a Second Language.

*Nikkeijin*: It literally means people of Japanese descent.

*Sei*: It is a Japanese character that means ‘generation’ and by adding a numerical

counter as a prefix, as in *isei*, *nisei* and *sansei*, first, second and third generation are designated.

*2LL*: Second Language Learner

*TL*: Target Language

## CHAPTER 2

### Literature Review

#### *Introduction*

It is very common today to see many foreigners sharing the same very narrow streets of Japan with Japanese natives. Moreover, it is very common to hear foreign languages when taking a bus or a train in the terrible morning rush hours when Japanese people go to work or to school. The most interesting thing is that some of those foreigners look Japanese, but they are actually *nikkeijin* who decided to leave their home country in order to find a better life in Japan. The term *nikkeijin* literally means “people of Japanese descent.”

There are about 250,000 (Ministry of Justice, 1999) Brazilian-*nikkeijin* registered in Japan. More than fifty percent of *nikkeijin* in Japan reside and work in Mie, Aichi, Shizuoka, Kanagawa, Saitama and Gunma prefectures, where there exists a heavy concentration of subcontractors of giant manufacturing companies, such as Nissan, Fuji Heavy Industries, Yamaha and Kawai (Weiner, 1997). Each one has his/her own reason for leaving Brazil and coming to a very distant country like Japan. This phenomenon is called *dekasegi*. In its original usage in Japan, the term defined people who left their birthplace to work temporarily elsewhere. More recently it has come to mean foreign workers of Japanese descent working in Japan, a group that has

increased significantly over the past 20 years. Even though most of *dekasegi* are *nikkeijin*, they come to Japan without any knowledge of the Japanese culture or language (Linger, 2001).

The situation with the *nikkeijin* in Japan presents an ideal context in which to examine the social and cultural factors which contribute to their motivation to acquire second language acquisition. According to Tsuda (2003), upon arrival in Japan, a *nikkeijin* faces a variety of social and cultural problems that may affect their motivation to learn the language and also to interact with Japanese people around them.

This paper researches through a qualitative study, the immigration phenomenon of *nikkeijin*, the critical period of learning a second language, the motivation and the degree to which influences the acquisition of JSL. Also, it will examine models of social interaction, including Schumann's Acculturation Model (1978) that provides a framework for understanding the data collected.

#### *The Immigration from Brazil to Japan by Nikkeijin*

Between 1885 and 1923, half a million Japanese left Japan for various reasons that included overpopulation and heavy taxes. The majority went to Hawaii or to North, Central, or South America (Carvalho, 2003). Most of those who went to South America ended up going to Brazil because they believed it offered a variety of

job opportunities due to its size.

This situation was reversed in the 1980s as a result of an economic downturn in Brazil and labor shortages in Japan. There were three main factors underlying this increase in immigration from Brazil back to Japan: A general labor shortage in Japan, high wages in comparison to other countries, and Japanese reluctance to engage in tedious manual labor (Hirataka, Koishi, & Kato, 2001).

Most of the *nikkeijin* that came to Japan in the 1980s looking for a better life were *nisei*, second generation, or *sansei*, third generation Brazilians. The Japanese immigration law allowed *nikkeijin* to work in Japan, while other foreigners were prohibited entry, if the purpose was to engage in simple manual labor. Formerly, only *nikkeijin* with Japanese nationality could live and work legally in Japan, but since 1980s *nikkeijin* down to the third generation, as well as their spouses, can legally stay and work in Japan even if they are not Japanese citizens.

According to the Japanese Ministry of Justice, in a study only officially published every 10 years, 224,299 Brazilians were registered as residents in 1999 as shown below:

Table 1

*Number of registered Brazilians in Japan (1990-1999)*

YEAR	NUMBER OF BRAZILIANS
1990	56,429
1991	119,333
1992	147,803
1993	154,650
1994	159,619
1995	176,440
1996	201,795
1997	233,254
1998	222,217
1999	224,299

Source: Ministry of Justice (1999-2000)

When *nikkeijin* apply for a visa to come to Japan, usually the *nisei* and *sansei* get a visa up to three years and their spouses (if not *nikkeijin*) just one year. Most of them intend to stay only until their visa expires; however the studies show that more than eighty percent of them renew their visas in Japan (Watkins, 1996). Those *nikkeijin* are called *dekasegi* or migrants, and not immigrants to Japan because most of them have the objective to save money and go back to Brazil to buy a house or to



run their own businesses.

*Problems with the Immigration of Nikkeijin in Japan*

Studies show that this rapid increase of immigrant workers during the last decade has given rise to various social problems such as homelessness, unemployment and criminal issues (Watkins, 1996). The government has enacted many policies in attempts to remedy these concerns. However, the immigrants' language problems are seldom among those that are actively addressed. Nonetheless, language issues are a major concern for the immigrants themselves. For example, a 1992 survey taken in Hamamatsu, an industrial city in Japan with many immigrant workers shows that Japanese Language courses rank first among administrative services desired by immigrants (Hirataka, Koishi and Kato, 2001).

The Shiga prefecture in Japan (Mainichi Shinbun, July 11, 2002, Osaka Morning Edition, page 28) which is a well-known prefecture for its large number of *nikkeijin*, from March of 2002 prohibited *nikkeijin* who do not speak Japanese to apply for public housing. The prefectural government defends its requirement of Japanese-language abilities. "Those who can't handle daily conversations in Japanese tend to have disputes with neighbors if they enter public apartments," an official of the prefectural government's housing division said. Mainichi shinbun says that many of them desperately need public housing because they have difficulties in renting

private apartments because their owners require tenants to find guarantors.

### *Critical Period Hypothesis*

There has been much debate about whether children truly learn second languages better than adults (Singleton, 2003). Many concede that children acquire languages best whether they are learning their mother tongue or a second language. Some may argue that adults are better learners and can grasp more complex concepts that children can. Still others believe that adults who learn a foreign language are not given the proper learning conditions (compared to those provided to young children) and therefore do not stand a chance when compared to children who acquire second languages.

It is believed that after the onset of puberty the critical period has passed and it becomes nearly impossible to learn languages to a high degree of proficiency. The popular belief that adults are much worse at learning a second language than children has been supported in part by the professional literature, especially since Lenneburg (1967). Many researchers have conflicting beliefs about Lenneburg's Critical Period Hypothesis. This hypothesis cited in Lightbown and Spada (1999) states that there is a "specific and limited time period for language acquisition" (p.19). Lenneburg believes that the "language acquisition device, like other biological functions, works successfully only when it is stimulated at the right time" (p.19).

## *The Effects of Motivation on L2 Learning*

In the literature on second language acquisition, motivation appears to be the second strongest predictor of success, trailing only aptitude (Skehan, 1989). We may not be aware of it, but motivational issues are a part of our daily lives. We talk about motivation daily even though we do not realize it. As language teachers, we constantly think about how to encourage our students to study harder or how to create better language materials to help the students to learn efficiently. Dörnyei (2001) explains that the concept of motivation is very much part of our everyday personal and professional life, and, indeed, few would ignore its importance in human affairs in general.

Dörnyei (2001) research has also shown that motivation correlates strongly with proficiency, indicating both that successful learners are motivated and that success improves motivation. Thus motivation is not fixed, but is strongly affected by feedback from the environment.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) stated that foreign language proficiency did not depend only upon aptitude and intelligence, but also included an important third factor: the individual's motivation to learn the language. Their studies identified two different types of motivation related to learning a foreign language: integrative and instrumental. Since then, numerous researchers have studied these components of

student motivation. While the studies subdivided motivation into many components with semantic variation, they have usually acknowledged integrative and instrumental motivation as essential categories to consider. In order to look at each element individually, Gardner and Lambert suggested that the integrative orientation that motivates a language learner to study a foreign language is grounded in positive attitudes toward L2 community and a desire to communicate and identify with the members of that community. An instrumental orientation, on the other hand, is associated with a desire to learn the target language for pragmatic reasons.

Dörnyei (2001) affirms that there are also two other types of motivations: intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to the desire to do something for an internal reward. Most studies have shown intrinsic motivation to be substantially more effective in long-term language learning than extrinsic motivation, which is the desire to do something for an external reward such as high grades or praise.

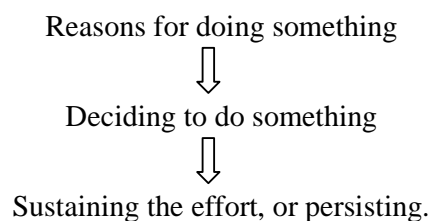
#### *Temporal Aspects in Motivation*

The study of the temporal aspects of student motivation has been also an important issue to point out for this study. Heckhausen and Kuhl (1985) developed the Action Control Theory that is based on the assumption that there are distinct temporarily ordered phases inside the motivation process. It can also apply to the motivational aspects of *nikkeijin* in Japan.

The 'predecisional phase', which can be seen as the decision-making stage of motivation, involving a complex planning and goal-setting process. In the case of *nikkeijin*, this important phase illustrates their decision to come to Japan for the first time to earn money in order to achieve their economical goals when they go back to Brazil. They feel very motivated to go to Japan, save money and go back to Brazil to achieve their goals.

The 'postdecisional phase' is the implementation of the motivation stage which involves motivational maintenance and control mechanisms. Again, this stage can also be seen among *nikkeijin* in Japan. Once they arrive in Japan, they may encounter many problems such as culture shock; however, they try their best to achieve their goals. They try to implement the motivation they had in Brazil in order to achieve their goals to save money and go back to Brazil.

The importance of a temporal perspective and the notion of various motivational phases have also been recognized in the field of second language acquisition (Benson & Numan, 2005). Williams and Burden (1997), for example, separated three stages of the motivation process along a continuum:



They explain that the first two stages involve initiating motivation and the third stage involves sustaining motivation, and this distinction bears a close resemblance to Heckhausen and Kuhl's theory.

The reasons that *nikkeijin* immigrate from Brazil to Japan are various; however, the motivational phases stated above suggest that they are essential in order for any language learner to go through the experiences of the whole process of feeling motivated to learn a second language. Consequently, not only the temporal aspects of the learner's motivation, but also the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that *nikkeijin* may have in Japan is an important issue to discuss in relation to this study. All the types of motivation may affect the acquisition by *nikkeijin* of JSL.

#### *Social and Cultural Aspects of Motivation*

Inasmuch as this study deals with the motivational issues of Brazilian immigrants learning Japanese as a Second language in Japan, not only motivation itself, but also social and cultural aspects of motivation can help to articulate the direction of this study.

Weiner (1994) refers to social motivation, the issues that emphasize the interpersonal nature, and the complex motives that are directly linked to the individual's social environment. Urdan and Maehr (1995) offer examples that include action associated with social welfare goals, such as becoming a productive member of

society; social solidarity goals, such as trying to bring some degree of honor to one's family; social approval goals, such as doing well in school to gain the approval of peers or teachers.

According to Carvalho (2003), the social motivation of *nikkeijin* in Japan plays an important role in the acquisition of JSL. Since they are perceived by the Japanese people as *gaijin* (foreigners), usually the *nikkeijin* society tries to be accepted by the Japanese society and their social motivation leads to positive or negative experiences in learning JSL.

Social motivation can be contrasted with personal motivation, which concerns issues such as: fulfilling personal desires, gaining knowledge to satisfy one's curiosity or to become more educated, and the impact of self-confidence and self-efficacy on one's achievement strivings.

The interest in the area of cultural diversity and cross-cultural issues as related to motivation has increased. Pintrich and Maehr (1995) claim that distinctive cultural and ethnolinguistic groups are increasingly present and constitute a salient feature in most societies.

Dörnyei (2001) explains that the best-documented cross-cultural difference in value systems is the contrast between individualism and collectivism as cultural syndromes observed in western and oriental cultures respectively. This sociocultural

contrast seems to appear in every aspect of achievement motivation and behavior. He explains, “Achievement for individualists is individual achievement, and is often seen as a means for ‘self-glory, fame, and immortality’. For collectivists, achievement is group achievement, for the sake of the ingroup, or to show superiority of the ingroup in relation to outgroup. Thus, goal attainment for individualists is associated with concepts such as pleasure, self-determination and self-fulfillment, whereas collectivists are motivated by their group.” According to DeCapua and Wintergerst (2004), individualistic cultures structure social experience around autonomous individuals. Those cultures emphasize self-reliance, individual growth, personal achievement, and satisfaction. On the other hand, collectivistic cultures structure their social experience around one or more collectives, such as the family, the tribe, the religious group, or the country. In such cultures, the goals of the group are valued over those of the individual.

#### *Acculturation Model*

One model of L2 acquisition, which seeks to account for the role of social factors, is the Acculturation Model (Schumann, 1978). It views second language acquisition as just one part of adapting to a new culture, emphasizing findings related to language socialization. This model may suggest how Brazilians in Japan adapt to learning a new language and a new culture.



His acculturation model includes seven social variables:

- 1) Social dominance: If the Second Language Learner (2LL) group is dominant to or subordinate to the Target Language (TL) group, social contact between two groups will tend not to be sufficient to acquire an L2.
- 2) Assimilation, preservation, and adaptation: The best way to learn a Second Language (L2) is when the 2LL group wants to assimilate into the TL group.
- 3) Enclosure: The more that 2LL groups share social institutions with the TL group, the more favorable the conditions will be for L2 acquisition.
- 4) Cohesiveness and size: The smaller and less cohesive the 2LL group, the more likely the contact with the TL group and the more favorable the conditions for L2 acquisition.
- 5) Congruence: The more similar the culture of the two groups, the more likely there will be social contact and language acquisition.
- 6) Attitude: The more positive the attitude of the 2LL group toward the TL group, the more favorable will be the conditions for L2.
- 7) Intended length of residence: The longer the L2 learners plan to remain in the L2 environment, the more likely it is that he/she will feel the necessity of learning the TL.

The model includes four affective variables:

- 1) language shock, or the degree to which speaking the new language makes the learner feel foolish or comical;
- 2) culture shock, the extent to which the learner feels disoriented and uncomfortable with extended residence in a new culture;
- 3) ego permeability, the ability of the learner to accept a new identity associated with the belonging to a new speech community;
- 4) motivation, the degree and type of desire experienced by the learner to acquire the L2.

Schumann (1978) stated that language learners' success in second / foreign language acquisition is attributable to the social and psychological distance between the learner and the target language. He explains that social distance refers to the relationship between the social group the learner belongs to and the social group speaking the target language, the integration patterns of the learner's own culture and the target culture, and the congruence between the target culture and the learner's culture. Psychological distance refers to internal factors, such as language shock, culture shock, motivation, and self-esteem (Schumann, 1978).

He mentions that the extent to which learners acculturate depends on two sets of factors which determine their levels of social distance and psychological distance.

Social distance concerns the extent to which individual learners become members of the target language group and, therefore, achieve contact with them. Psychological distance concerns the extent to which individual learners are comfortable with the learning task and constitutes, therefore, a personal rather than a group dimension. The social factors are primary. The psychological factors mainly come into play where social distance is indeterminate.

In his early writings, Schumann (1978) suggested that acculturation affects L2 acquisition by its effect on the amount of contact learners have with TL speakers. The greater the contact, the more acquisition takes place.

No study was found about the situation of *nikkeijin* of learning JSL; however, studies in different countries can reflect to what is happening to *nikkeijin* in Japan. Hoffman (1989) conducted a study about Iranian immigrants in the United States and suggested that the conceptualization of acculturation and cross-cultural learning has to go beyond traditional linear models of the relationship between language and culture, which cannot be separated from each other.

Another study, conducted by Gurin, Hurtado and Peng (1994), examined the adaptation of Mexicans in the United States. The study found that the differences between immigrants and ethnics are largely the outcome of shifts in reference groups as they compare themselves to a wider array of people who either promote acceptance

of devalued social categorizations or in feelings of discontent about one's social identity.

Although it has been more than 2 decades since the first *nikkeijin* arrived in Japan, we still do not know what motivates or unmotivates them to improve their language skills in Japan. As has been explained here, the different types of motivation can play an important role in their learning process. In addition to motivation itself, other social and psychological issues can interfere with acquisition of JSL.

I will investigate deeply the answer to the following questions: How do the life experiences of *nikkeijin* in Japan affect their motivation to learn Japanese? How can the age of arrival and place of residence in Japan affect their learning process?

Chapter three discusses the procedures and design of the current study. Four Brazilian immigrants of different ages were interviewed by me through Online Messenger, email and telephone over a period of two months. They answered questions about their life experiences in Japan learning JSL and Japanese culture. I want to find out how their motivation can affect their acquisition of JSL exploring what motivates and unmotivates them about living in Japan as a *nikkeijin* and how the age of arrival and place of residence in Japan can also affect their acquisition of JSL.

## CHAPTER 3

### Procedures and Design of the Study

The purpose of this study is to share the lived experiences of Brazilian Japanese immigrants (*nikkeijin*) learning JSL and how these experiences affect their motivation to acquire the Japanese language in Japan. A qualitative study using learners' stories is appropriate because the reader will be able to obtain very useful and rich information about the experiences of the Brazilian immigrants in Japan.

The research took place through an interview and questionnaire using mainly the Internet (email and Online Messenger) over a period of two months. The interview was divided into two parts. In the first part, I contacted the participants and asked them to write a biography about their experiences in Japan. In the second part, I asked questions about things they wrote in the biography, focusing especially on their motivation and discouragement in learning Japanese.

#### *Participants*

The study was focused on four *nikkeijin*: one who arrived in Japan when he was elementary school age, one who arrived when she was a teenager, one who arrived in Japan when he was 25 years old and one who arrived in Japan in her forties.

The participants were selected from among my personal acquaintances, in

order to achieve maximum variation sampling (Merriam, 2001) in terms of sex and age of arrival. I assume that the age of arrival is a more important factor than the length of residence in Japan, and thus four *nikkeijin* of different age of arrival were interviewed.

Table 2

*Subjects' Basic Information About Participants*

	<b>Paulo</b>	<b>Maria</b>	<b>Antonio</b>	<b>Vera</b>
<b>Age of arrival/</b>	8	18	25	42
<b>Currently age</b>	24	32	40	56
<b>Place in Japan</b>	Osaka	Saitama	Gunma	Osaka

*Sources of Information*

The study was conducted in December of 2005 in Portuguese through email and Online Messenger over two months, being divided in three parts:

- 1) Biography submitted via email or fax to me.
- 2) Interview via Online Messenger or telephone.
- 3) Member check via Online Messenger or telephone.

Each of these sources of information is explained in detail below.

*Procedure*

**Biography.** I asked the participants to write a biography about their experiences in Japan. I suggested some topics (see Appendix A and B), in order to help them to start writing their life stories in Japan. After all the biographies were obtained, I

conducted a preliminary analysis in order to choose the questions that would be the best to ask the participants.

The biography helped me to get to know the subjects better and to see if their experiences in Japan were positive or negative. It also helped illuminate other features about their attitude towards Japanese culture and language that may have affected the results of the research.

**Online Messenger and telephone.** After analyzing the biographies, I contacted each participant and made an appointment to discuss some issues stated in their biographies via Online Messenger or telephone.

Some of the questions were based on an interview guide (See Appendix C and D) as well as on the participants' biographies. I tried to be as sensitive as possible to their positive and negative experiences in Japan. I asked the same questions to all participants; however, depending on the experiences, additional questions were asked throughout the interview. Vera did not know how to use the internet and for this reason, she was interviewed via telephone and the biography was sent to me by fax.

Paulo and Antônio were more consistent in their responses, trying to answer only the questions asked. Maria and Vera, on the other hand, tended to talk more and embellish their responses with details and additional experiences. The

following table shows the amount of time spent during the interviews.

Table 3

*Sources of Information and Time Spent During the Interviews*

	<b>Paulo</b>	<b>Maria</b>	<b>Antônio</b>	<b>Vera</b>
<b>Data collection</b>	Online Messenger, email	Online Messenger, email	Online Messenger, email	Telephone, fax
<b>Time spent</b>	55 minutes	70 minutes	60 minutes	95 minutes

**Member check.** A member check helped me to establish the consistency of whose experiences and to confirm important details that would be essential for the study such as their experiences learning Japanese, where and how. It was conducted via Online Messenger and telephone in which I went back to the participants with tentative interpretations and summaries of their experiences and asked them for confirmation.

A database was created using NVivo software containing all the textual data from the biographies, Online Messenger and telephone. Themes that emerged from the data were identified using the Constant Comparative Method of Strauss and Corbin (1998). Each theme was then summarized textually to describe the experience of the participants.

*Methodology Used in the Study*

The methodology applied for this study was a qualitative study using learners' stories so that I could obtain very useful and rich information about the experiences of



the Brazilian immigrants in Japan.

Since it is recommended that the researcher to rely on initial observations and “theoretical sensitivity” to develop categories, I tried to rely on my own experiences in Japan in order to come up with topics or questions for the biography and interview.

In order to look for a variety of data sources, I decided to collect the biography of the participants first and then interview each one individually. The data analysis proceeds through identifying categories and connecting them and these concepts were developed through constant comparison with additional data (member check).

Finally, I identified a main story for the study in which I could integrate the analysis around this framework until a theory emerged.

As claimed previously, the focus of the data analysis was to look at the similarities and differences between each subject’s experiences in order to determine the effect of their motivation towards the acquisition of JSL. The following table shows some of the data collected from the interviews and examples of the codes.

Table 4

*Descriptions and Examples of Composing Codes*

<b>Code</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Example from interviews</b>	<b>Translation</b>
<b>Reasons for coming to Japan</b>	Antônio	Financeira, se não não teria vindo aqui.	Financial, otherwise I would not have come here.
	Maria	Você vai rir... estava trabalhando em uma loja da "Levi's" e nessa época já dava um pouco de dor de cabeça pra minha mãe. De repente perdi o emprego e minha mãe insistiu que eu viesse para o <i>nihon</i> . No começo aceitei numa boa, mas um dia antes do embarque chorei desesperada porque não queria vir. Coitada da minha mãezinha, ficou tão aflita me vendo em prantos....hehehehe Vim sem planos, sem meta. Para muitos, um desperdício de tempo, por não ter	You are going to laugh... I was working in a "Levi's" store and I was the reason for a lot of my mom's "headaches". Suddenly, I lost my job and my mom insisted that I come to Japan. At the beginning I agreed, but one day before I was supposed to depart I cried desperately because I did not want to go. I felt sorry for my mom to see me crying... I did not have any plans and goals. For many, it was considered to have been a waste of time to stay here

		<p>juntado nem um pouco de dinheiro, mas não penso assim, não vim pra juntar e ir embora, vim pra viver aqui.</p> <p>Filosofando, talvez eu tenha vindo pra cá em "busca do meu EU", não sei se encontrei, só sei que foi o melhor pra mim.</p>	<p>because I didn't save much money. However, I don't think in that way. I didn't come here to save money and go back to Brazil. I came here to live here.</p> <p>Philosophically speaking, I might have come to find "myself". I don't know if I have found myself yet, but the only thing that I know is that it was the best thing for me.</p>
	Paulo	<p>Por causa que meus pais vieram para cá.</p>	<p>Because my parents came here.</p>
	Vera	<p>Ah, foi uma confusão não digo, mas foi (por causa de) um assalto e não era o nosso dinheiro. E fizemos de tudo para o meu marido não vir para cá, mas foi a melhor maneira para poder pagar as dívidas que tínhamos de ter sido assaltado.</p>	<p>Ah, it was a complicated situation. It was because my husband was robbed and the robber took money that did not belong to us. We tried everything so that my husband would not have to come here, but coming to Japan was the best way we could pay</p>

			our debts.
<b>Regrets about coming to Japan</b>	Antônio	<p>Quando surgiu a oportunidade de vir pra cá, agi no impulso, a ambição falou mais alto, não pesei os prós e contras, joguei para trás um futuro promissor, acredito que minha carreira profissional estava no início e poderia ter muito sucesso, mas só pensei nos dólares que ganharia em pouco tempo, larguei tudo e vim pra cá.</p> <p>Tinha um bom emprego, estava trabalhando na minha área, tinha tudo pra progredir profissionalmente, estava terminando a faculdade, estava encaminhado.</p> <p>Eu consegui comprar uma casa, mas se estivesse lá hoje, acho que também já teria uma casa também.</p>	<p>When the opportunity came to come here, I acted impulsively. My ambition spoke more loudly that I did not think about the pros and cons. I threw away a promising future. I believe that I was just starting my career and I could have much success. But I only thought about the money I would earn in a short time. I left everything to come here. I had a good job working in my area. I had everything to succeed professionally. I was finishing college and I was doing well.</p> <p>I was able to buy a house (sending money to Brazil), but I guess, if I had stayed there I would have my own house by now too.</p>

	<p>Maria</p>	<p>Pelo contrário, encontrei o homem da minha vida e tenho uma filha Linda. Isso dou tudo ao Japão. Minha felicidade está aqui. Quem me afirmaria que eu teria a mesma felicidade se estivesse no Brasil?</p>	<p>On the other hand, I found the man of my life and I have a beautiful daughter. I have to thank Japan for all these things. My happiness is here. Who could prove that I would have the same happiness if I were in Brazil?</p>
	<p>Paulo</p>	<p>絶対ない。Para falar a verdade, eu já nem me lembro do Brasil. Saí de lá muito novo e nem sei mais o que é ブラジル。(本当に若かったなあ) Tenho alguns 友達 que me perguntam sobre ブラジル e só sei falar que Brasil para mim é サッカー e arroz com feijão. É isso que meus pais tem me passado esses anos todos aqui.</p>	<p>Absolutely not (in Japanese). To tell you the truth, I can barely remember about Brazil. I left there when I was very young and I really don't know what Brazil (in Japanese) is. (Boy, I was young (in Japanese). I have some "friends" (in Japanese) who ask me about "Brazil" (in Japanese) and the only thing I tell them is that Brazil for me is "soccer" (in Japanese), rice, and beans. That's the only thing my parents have taught me throughout all these years here.</p>

	Vera	<p>Não, pelo contrário, eu agradeço muito porque tudo que eu tenho recebido agora, onde meu filho e minha filha estão hoje. Eles conseguiram o que eles querem, inclusive eles não querem de jeito nenhum irem ao Brasil. E meu filho casou com uma japonesa e está sendo muito gratificante para mim. A minha filha muito mais, ela se formou da faculdade aqui e trabalha numa grande empresa multinacional. E me sinto muito feliz.</p>	<p>No. Rather I thank Japan for all I have received here and for where my children are today. They got everything they wanted. They do not want to go back to Brazil at all. By all means, my son got married to a Japanese lady and this is very gratifying to me. Especially my daughter, she graduated from a Japanese college and now she works in a very big multi-national company. I am very happy for that.</p>
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To satisfy research requirements when using human subjects, I had all procedures and instruments approved by the Brigham Young University Office for Research and Creative Activities prior to carrying out the study (see Appendix E and F).

*Main Codes Found from the Interviews and Biographies*

Table 5.1

*Background Information from Biographies*

Age and year of coming to Japan	<i>Nikkeijin</i> background ( <i>nisei, sansei, yonsei?</i> )	Place of arrival in Japan
Education background in Brazil	Japanese proficiency in Brazil	Knowledge about Japanese culture
Reasons for coming to Japan	Dream before and after coming to Japan	How you learned Japanese?
Level of Japanese proficiency	Current place of residence	Current job in Japan

Table 5.2

*Experiences that Reflected Participants' Motivation to learn JSL*

Positive experiences	Negative experiences	Brazilians in Japan (Problems)
Illusion and lies about Japan	Japanese people's Image of Brazilians	Brazilians' Image of Japanese people
Japanese language and culture	Regrets About coming to Japan	Friends

Table 5.3

*Motivation issues*

Motivation to learn Japanese now	The importance of writing in Japanese	The importance of learning Japanese with their own children
Material things obtained in Japan	Unmotivated to learn Japanese (when and why?)	Motivated to learn Japanese (when and why?)
Relatives in Japan	Things learned only in Japan	Obtain Japanese citizenship one day

After all the data were collected, I started a more comprehensive analysis to

gather detailed information about each research question. In comparing the resulting themes from the interviews and biographies, I combined similar themes so that those themes would only appear once. Merriam (1998) suggests that all categories should be exhaustive and mutually exclusive, which means that all important data should be placed in only one category or subcategory.

Merriam (1998) also remarks that it is very important to establish the validity of qualitative studies and for this reason a triangulation using multiple sources was essential for this study. Triangulation consists of using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the same data. Member checks are also valuable in order to go back to the data collected asking the participants to verify the accuracy of the interpretations.

After the coding and analysis of the data was complete, the biographies and interviews were translated. It is important to note here that the data collection occurred in the L1 of the subjects, is Portuguese. Only Paulo had some problems expressing himself totally in Portuguese, so he responded in Portuguese and Japanese. Some of the translations provided in this study are meant as general guides only. They are not designed for interpreting results.



## CHAPTER 4

### Results

#### *Biographical Information on Participants*

First, I asked all the participants to send an email with their basic background information, to aid in preparing interview questions. The following chart shows the participants' biographical information obtained via email.

Table 6

#### *Biographical Information on Participants*

	<b>Paulo</b>	<b>Maria</b>	<b>Antonio</b>	<b>Vera</b>
<b>Age of Arrival/ Current Age</b>	8 24	18 32	25 40	42 56
<b>Place of Arrival Current Residence</b>	Osaka Osaka	Saitama Nagoya	Gunma Saitama	Osaka Kyoto
<b>First Language</b>	Portuguese (Never spoke Japanese in Brazil)	Japanese (Spoke both Japanese and Portuguese)	Portuguese (knew basic Japanese words in Brazil)	Japanese (Spoke both Japanese and Portuguese)
<b>Background</b>	<i>Sansei</i>	<i>Nisei</i>	<i>Nisei</i>	<i>Nisei</i>
<b>Considers himself / herself more...</b>	Japanese	Both	Brazilian	Both
<b>Fluent language</b>	Japanese	Japanese and Portuguese	Portuguese	Japanese and Portuguese
<b>Plans to go back to Brazil</b>	Never	Not at the moment	If I could, right now	Maybe in 2 or 3 years
<b>Education in Brazil</b>	Elementary	High school	Started College	Bachelor's degree

There were basically two types of *nikkeijin*. Maria, Antônio and Vera were *nisei*, second generation Japanese-Brazilians, and Paulo was *sansei*, third generation.

It is noticeable that even though Maria, Antônio and Vera were all *nisei*, they were raised in different ways. Maria and Vera learned Japanese when they were young, while Antônio did not have that opportunity in Brazil. Paulo never spoke Japanese in Brazil, and even though his first language is Portuguese, he can no longer speak Portuguese fluently after almost 15 years in Japan. All of the participants have been in Japan an average of 12 years. Though all know Japanese well, they do not share the same feelings regarding Japan. Paulo does not have any interest in Brazil or his first language. Maria loves Japan and wants to stay there as long as she can. She is even thinking about applying for Japanese citizenship. Antônio does not like Japan and states that he wants to go back to Brazil as soon as possible. Vera is waiting until she reaches retirement age in Brazil so that she can go back to Brazil and not have to work anymore. Even though she enjoys living in Japan, she feels that Brazil is the best place for her to live. She pointed out that her dream is to buy a log house in the country side of São Paulo and stay there surrounded by nature until she dies.

After all the data was collected, I started a more comprehensive analysis to gather detailed information about each research question. In comparing the resulting themes from the interviews and biographies, I combined similar themes so that those themes would appear only once. Merriam (1998) suggests that all categories should be exhaustive and mutually exclusive that means, all important data should be placed

in only one category or subcategory in order to get better results.

I explained each theme including some quotes claimed during the interviews and biographies in order to find the answers for the following research questions:

1) How do the life experiences of *nikkeijin* in Japan affect their motivation to learn Japanese?

2) How can the age of arrival and place of residence in Japan affect their learning process?

Then, I showed a portrait of each participant, providing a summary of each participant's feelings and experiences learning Japanese.

#### *Experiences that Reflected Participant's Motivation to Learn JSL*

*(See Table 5 for further details)*

#### *Positive Experiences*

It was noticeable that some of the positive experiences observed occurred in the first days in Japan such as noticing cultural aspects of Japanese people bowing and the clean streets of Japan that is called "Honeymoon Stage" (DeCapua and Wintergerst, 2004). It seems that the participants were more open to the new environment and the positive aspects were easier to be aware of. Paulo said:

*"I was very surprised when I first took a train in Japan. I saw the train conductor bowing a couple of times to people who were getting on the train. From*

*observing such Japanese people's behavior, I think I learned how to be polite and respectful to others. At first, I remember making fun of those people who could not stop bowing all the time, but I learned afterwards that it was the best thing to do."*

All of them stated that they wanted to be a part of the society when they first arrived in Japan and wanted to learn or become more fluent in Japanese as soon as they could. On the other hand, after a while in Japan, the daily experiences around them became more natural and the positive experiences were no longer salient.

Antônio mentioned that after his daughter started going to a local Japanese school recently, he realized that she started making Japanese friends and she could talk fluently to anyone. He said he was very happy and it was a very positive experience that happened to him after a long time. *"At least my daughter is improving in something in this place..."*

Maria stated that buying everything she wanted and when she wanted was unbelievable for her. *"In Brazil we had to buy everything and pay by installments every time...."*

Vera affirmed that she could even walk without shoes in the streets because they were so clean. *"I could not even smoke in public expecting that someone would punish me... All the old ladies of my neighborhood cleaned the streets everyday."*

Those positive experiences helped all the participants to feel more welcomed

by the Japanese people and motivated to learn more about the language and new customs. Also, the experience of earning a substantial amount of money helped them to feel more motivated to stay longer in Japan.

### *Negative Experiences*

It was very interesting to notice that besides Paulo, everyone had numerous things to say about this topic. The only negative experience Paulo said was when he first arrived in his apartment. *“When I entered the apartment my dad had rented for us for the first time, the first thing I saw, was a little sink and a door. That door was inside the kitchen and I opened that door expecting that it was a closet or something, but it was a very small bathroom that only one person could go inside and that little sink was the place we were supposed to wash our hands after going to the bathroom... It was shocking.... How could a bathroom be so close to the kitchen’s area? It was just too disgusting for me. I remember that I could not eat in that kitchen for about two weeks...”*

Maria was shocked by not having a shower in the apartment and Antônio explained that he had to commute by bicycle a distance of 20 kilometers daily. He also mentioned that one of the first words he learned in Japan was *gaijin*. *“When I first arrived in the airport, because of my colored shirt and different type of jeans [that were not very common in Japan], Japanese people could tell that I was a*

*foreigner and they started staring at me mumbling the word gaijin several times. At that time, I did not know the meaning of that word; however, I could feel that it was not a pleasant word from the people's facial expressions."*

Compared to the other participants, Vera was the only one who could communicate well when she arrived in Japan. Although knowing how to understand and speak the language helped her, understanding too much made her feel very sad and disappointed some times. *"When a Japanese person in charge of my section called me Ahooka (You stupid) in front of everyone, I felt very embarrassed and humiliated. No one in Brazil does that just because you forgot to write your name on a paper..."*

All the negative experiences recognized by the participants were related to experiences they never had when they were in Brazil. Some of those experiences were cultural misunderstandings or problems. Antônio pointed out that the transportation in Brazil is very advanced now; however, in the rural areas of Japan, it is not common to see buses, subways and trains everywhere and any time of the day.

Those negative experiences contribute to the perception that all the places and everyone in Japan were the same for them. Vera stated that changing work places helped her to see that not every place was the same. *"I realized that I and my family learned a lot from those bad experiences in Japan. We knew that if we had a negative*

*way of thinking, everything would become negative around us, and the more negative you are, you are unable to make Japanese friends and to improve your language skills.*

*Unfortunately, not everyone felt like us.”*

### *Brazilians in Japan*

In provinces such as Saitama and Gunma that have a large concentration of *nikkeijin*, it is not unusual to see some of them on the news in Japan. Some *nikkeijin* rob convenience stores and throw daily parties very late at night causing numerous problems to the community. They are not highly regarded by the Japanese people in those cities. Maria observed that sometimes she lied to some people saying that she was from the Philippines, because she did not want people know she was from Brazil.

Vera described that since Osaka does not have a large population of *nikkeijin*, some Brazilians tend to gather together not trying to acculturate themselves to the Japanese culture and customs.

Problems caused by some Brazilians in Japan seem to influence *nikkeijin* to not express or teach Japanese people about their own culture, customs and language, contributing to a huge misunderstanding between the two parties.

### *Ilusions and Lies About Japan*

All the participants stated that everything promised by the employment agencies in Brazil was a lie. Some companies promised that they would be able to

save at least three hundred thousand yen (about \$2500) a month and working only one year in Japan would help them to buy the house of their dreams in Brazil. Antônio explained: *“I guess I could save almost three hundred thousand yen a month, but I would be able to eat only Kappu Raamen (cup noodles) and drink water everyday. I would not be able to take a shower in the public bath everyday and I would only be able to call my family in Brazil once every 6 months. At that time, I did not have a computer at home and we did not have the convenience of speaking online with my family. Calling overseas was really expensive! I would rather stay in Brazil than not call my family once a week. That was the only pleasure and happiness I had... ”*

The motivation that many *nikkeijin* had to learn the language before coming to Japan disappeared little by little as they realized that the life in Japan was much harder than they thought. They worked at least 12 hours a day and after going back home, they just wanted to take a shower and go to bed to prepare for another hard and tiring day. They did not have time to write letters to their families in Brazil and creating time to study the language was not a priority in their lives.

#### *Japanese Perceptions of Brazil and Brazilians*

All of the participants stated that being the different one in the society does not bring positive things. Paulo explained: *“I’ve never thought that clothing would make such a difference in the way Japanese people look at you. I remember when I*



*went to my elementary school and I was wearing yellow socks, one of my classmates asked why I was wearing such socks. In Brazil, you can wear whatever you want, but in Japan everyone has to be almost the same. From that experience, I asked my mom to buy a few pairs of white socks that I could wear at school. Now, I am very sensitive of being different, I wear what everyone else wears and so no one thinks I am from Brazil.”*

Antônio and Vera stated that Japanese people asked them questions such as “Do you use knives and forks to eat?” or “Can you buy a bra in Brazil? I know that Indians in Amazon do not wear bras, right?”

Some Japanese people did not know anything about Brazil and even though *nikkeijin* felt offended when those questions were asked, they had to answer the questions calmly in order to create friendly bridges between them. However, Antônio mentioned that he did not even want to respond to those questions closing doors that could lead to a better communication.

#### *Brazilian Perceptions to Japanese*

All the participants maintained that when they were in Brazil, they wanted to become like Japanese people because they were seen as hard workers and disciplined people. All of them stated they had a very good image about Japan and Japanese people before they came to Japan, helping to build their motivation to work harder in

order to achieve their goals.

### *Japanese Language and Culture*

Maria explained that she tried to invite her co-workers to go out with her, but they always refused with “*chooto...*” (Thanks for inviting me, but...). Then she realized that in Japanese culture it is not very common to have social relationships everyday with a co-worker. They could go together to an *enkai* (dinner party) organized by the company two or three times a year, but not go to watch a movie or to buy clothes together like in Brazil. From that experience, she learned that she had to accept their culture and that she should not take everything personally. It motivated her to improve her language skills so that she could communicate well with her co-workers during the *enkai*.

Paulo mentioned he learned Japanese observing his classmates while they were playing soccer. “*I started copying what my friends were saying to me during the soccer game. Some of the first phrases I memorized were “Kocchi koi yo” (Come here) and “Yamerotte” (I’m telling you to stop it). I feel I have learned everything by copy what has been said around me.*”

Antônio claimed he learned enough to communicate while he was working, but because of the cultural differences, he felt that he would never be able to become one of them (referring to a Japanese native).

Vera felt Japan was her home because her customs in Brazil were more Japanese than Brazilian, such as taking off her shoes and eating with *hashi* (chopsticks) everyday.

The way that each *nikkeijin* felt about the Japanese language and culture seems to reflect on the way they react in their daily lives. Accepting the differences in the culture and language helped Paulo and Maria to become a part of the group. On the other hand, Antônio did not try to assimilate to Japanese culture and customs.

#### *Regrets About Coming to Japan*

The responses obtained seemed to correlate with the experiences *nikkeijin* had while they were in Japan. Antônio was the only one who regretted coming to Japan and he pointed out that he would not recommend that a friend come to Japan. Paulo, Maria and Vera were very satisfied with their lives in Japan and mentioned that Japan opened many important doors to their lives.

#### *Motivation Issues*

##### *Motivation to Learn Japanese Now*

Since all of the participants have been in Japan for more than twelve years, they feel they know enough. However, Maria and Vera affirmed that they wanted to learn more *Kanji* (Chinese characters) in order to understand the Japanese newspapers and magazines. Antônio said that he has learned enough and because he works night

shifts, he does not have time to improve his language skills.

### *The Importance of Writing in Japanese*

Although Antônio did not feel he needed to learn Japanese writing, he observed that knowing how to write at least *hiragana* and *katakana* (two major Japanese writing systems) could open him doors to get better jobs such as working as a interpreter or section leader of a factory, but since he did not want to stay longer in Japan, he felt satisfied with his actual job and just wanted to save a little more money to go back to Brazil.

Vera mentioned that understanding how to read her Japanese co-workers badges' names helped her to feel more accepted and to be treated like a Japanese native.

Maria pointed out that understanding how to write opened doors to better communication between parent and teacher because usually her daughter's school provides a diary for a parent to write daily.

Since the number of *nikkeijin* in Japan has increased yearly, not only speaking and listening, but also writing and reading have become a requirement in many factories in Japan, and for those who knows at least *hiragana* and *katakana*, it means opportunities to get a better hourly wage or better job. All of the participants mentioned that the work field for *nikkeijin* in Japan has become more and more

difficult and in order to be hired for a good job, *nikkeijin* are required to have good language proficiency and also a Japanese driver's license so that they can also work as drivers to pick up some *nikkeijin* in their apartments to take them to their work places.

### *The Importance of Learning Japanese with Their Own Children*

With the exception of Paulo, all of the participants had children living with them in Japan and they expressed the importance of learning Japanese with them. Due to the heavy traffic of Japan, Antônio prefers to ride trains rather than drive his car and he claimed that his daughter started reading all the local train station's names for him and he ended up learning some *Kanji* with her.

Since Maria's daughter is still two years old, she has not learned Japanese from her, but going to parent-teacher conference helped her to get to know different types of Japanese people. People that she could not see in her work place: mothers who did not work outside the home and friendly people. *"I know that I have to keep studying because I always have to go to parent meetings at my daughter's school. I love to participate in discussions. I remember asking one of the mothers how to cook misoshiru and we ended up planning an activity among the mothers to share recipes. I love to talk and to interact with people."*

Antônio, Vera and Maria explained that having children in Japan does not help in saving much money; however, what they can learn from their children is something

that is much more precious than money. Thus, having children can help the motivation of their parents to work and study harder in Japan.

#### *Material Things Obtained in Japan*

All of the participants stated that in Brazil, it would be very hard to obtain everything they have now in Japan: simple things such as having a good computer, cheap high-speed internet and a good car sometimes are not easy to get in Brazil.

Antônio said that what motivates him the most to stay in Japan are his material things. He has many electronic devices, a good car and money to buy toys for his daughter and clothes for his wife.

All the *nikkeijin* know that with all their hard work they can buy whatever they want. Vera mentioned that after coming to Japan, she could pay all her apartment mortgage and could buy another house in a very prestigious area of São Paulo.

Although some participants explained about their hard life in Japan, their monthly paycheck compensates for their sadness and tiredness, and motivates them to work harder and to keep improving their language skills in order to get a raise or a better position.

#### *When Participants Felt Most Motivated to Learn Japanese*

It was interesting to see that depending on the age of the participant, the reasons they became motivated to learn Japanese were different. Paulo wanted to

learn Japanese in order to understand his games and TV cartoons. Maria wanted to improve her language skills so that she could make Japanese friends because she used to feel very lonely after work. Antônio felt he needed to learn Japanese when all his *nikkeijin* co-workers quit and he was the only *nikkeijin* in his factory. He knew he had to survive by himself and he started talking to some of his Japanese co-workers during the *kyuukei* (Breaks). Vera wanted to go to a Japanese karaoke and in order to read everything on the TV screen, she had to study at home.

Although everyone had different reasons to motivate them to learn Japanese, some said that when they feel motivated is when they start thinking more positively towards the Japanese language and culture: however, due to numerous problems *nikkeijin* encounter in their lives daily, they mentioned that it is hard to keep that motivation constantly.

#### *When Participants Felt Least Motivated to Learn Japanese*

It was interesting to see Vera and Maria's responses. Both claimed that when their *nikkeijin* co-workers wanted to use them to translate things for them all the time, they wished they could not speak Japanese. Maria explained: *"I remember that when I started feeling comfortable with my Japanese, I offered to help my Brazilian friends with simple things such as going together to the drugstore or doctor when necessary. I soon realized that those friends just wanted to use me all the time because they did not*

*want to learn Japanese themselves. At that time I wished I could not speak Japanese.”*

Vera also mentioned that speaking Japanese was a disadvantage: “*when Brazilians thought that I wanted to show off when I spoke only Japanese. I have never done it on purpose, but I always spoke in Japanese even with my children and husband so that we could practice at home, but some Brazilians thought that I just wanted to show off my Japanese and it was not true...*”

Antônio affirmed he felt unmotivated almost everyday when he was working. He felt that even though he knew some Japanese, his boss never listened to what he wanted to say and having so many *nikkeijin* in his condo did not motivate him to learn Japanese.

#### *Summary in Response to the Research Questions*

The participants’ responses for each question were richly descriptive due to their own life experiences as a *nikkeijin* learning JSL in Japan. Following is a summary for each research question synthesized from the themes mentioned previously.

1) How do the life experiences of *nikkeijin* in Japan affect their motivation to learn Japanese?

Motivation is an important factor that helps the acquisition of an L2. If L2 learners do not motivate themselves to learn, the chances to learn or even to improve a



new language are not great. What unmotivated the participants the most was the people around them: people who wanted to take advantage of those who spoke and people who did not give a foreigner chance to speak.

The participants' life experiences can strongly affect their motivation to learn JSL. Antônio had a large number of negative experiences in Japan as compared to the other participants. He always lived in places with a large concentration of *nikkeijin* and did not have many opportunities to make Japanese friends and to get to know the culture better. All his experiences resulted in a lack of motivation to learn the language, bringing negative thoughts to his mind even after staying so many years in Japan. He still wants to go back to Brazil as soon as possible.

Maria had similar life experiences; however, she tried to create opportunities to learn and to integrate into her daughter's school environment. Doing so, she had more positive experiences resulting in motivation to continually learn Japanese. Although motivation plays an important role in the process of acquire a L2, Maria showed that it was not only motivation, but also her outgoing personality that helped her extensively to acculturate to the Japanese culture and to learn Japanese faster.

Paulo and Vera did not have as many negative experiences as Antônio and Maria, which contributed to their motivation to learn Japanese faster and easily. Living in Osaka, they were forced to communicate with Japanese people more

intensively and consequently, they were able to build a bridge that led to a better communication and understanding between Japanese natives and *nikkeijin*. Thus, Maria and Paulo had the opportunity to have better and more positive experiences.

2) How can the age of arrival and place of residence in Japan affect their learning process?

From the experiences stated above in the codes, it was interesting to see how the age of arrival affected the acquisition of the language. Paulo, who was eight years old when he arrived in Japan, was able to acculturate very quickly, and Vera, who was forty-two years old, also experienced the same factors. Why? Vera had the privilege of being raised in a family that valued Japanese culture and customs, and although she had never come to Japan before, she could assimilate better and faster to the new environment.

Thus, not only the age of arrival, but also the family background plays an important role.

Another important factor that could influence the participants' thinking is their first place of residence in Japan. Saitama and Gunma (rural areas) have a large concentration of *nikkeijin* because of the many factories located there. Those prefectures have numerous Brazilian stores, bars and restaurants in order to accommodate the large Brazilian population. Antônio mentioned that when he lived

there, he felt as if he were in Brazil instead of Japan because when he walked down the streets, he saw more Brazilian flags than Japanese flags. On the other hand, Osaka is an urban area that, compared to Saitama and Gunma, does not offer many job opportunities to *nikkeijin*, resulting in a smaller population of *nikkeijin* in the province. Thus, Osaka does not have many Brazilians stores. It is more common to see big trucks stocked with Brazilian goods visiting different cities in the Osaka area. These trucks look like a mini convenient store inside. A Brazilian can buy different types of Brazilian food such as *pãozinho francês* (French bread) and frozen *coxinha* (deep fried chicken filled dough), drinks such as *suco de maracujá* (passion fruit juice) and *cerveja* (beer), newspapers such as *O Estadão* and popular magazines such as *Contigo*. Usually these trucks stop once a week in front of factories with a large concentration of Brazilians.

The place of residence significantly affected the motivation of *nikkeijin*. Paulo and Vera were able to improve their language skills easily and faster because they lived in Osaka. They did not have opportunities to speak in their native language due to the few numbers of *nikkeijin* in the area. However, Antônio and Maria who lived in Saitama and Gunma did not have to force themselves to learn Japanese because of the convenience of having Brazilians stores and Brazilian friends all around. On the other hand, Maria worked very hard to be accepted by the community because she did not

want the Japanese people to think she was one of those Brazilians who were always getting in trouble and making noise. Although she had as many negative experiences as Antônio, she knew that she had to work harder. Her attitude played an important role to her motivation to improve in the language.

Thus, *nikkeijin* who first arrived in provinces with a large concentration of *nikkeijin* had a tendency to not have as many opportunities to learn Japanese as those *nikkeijin* in Osaka (urban areas) and positive attitudes are essential to help *nikkeijin* to assimilate themselves to the new environment.

#### *Portraits and Summary of Each Participant*

The following are a portrait of each participant summarizing their experiences in Japan.

##### *Paulo – The Youngest*

Paulo was the youngest of all the participants and there is no question that he was able to learn Japanese faster than the other participants. He came to Japan because his father lost his job in Brazil. He had some uncles in Japan and they told his father that coming to Japan would change his life.

Paulo identified himself as Japanese. Although he still understands some Portuguese, his Japanese skills are better than his native language skills. He does not have any Brazilian friends and is married to a Japanese woman. In fact, I had to use

some Japanese with him during the interviews, but there were times I had to mix the conversation with Japanese and Portuguese so we could have a smooth conversation online.

His integrative motivation played an important role in his language acquisition. Although he did not show any type of social motivation such as to become more educated to get a better job, he wanted to be accepted by his friends so that he could play soccer and talk on his way to school with them.

Also, he did not show any type of temporal aspect motivation. Since he came with his parents to Japan when he was very young, his only expectation was to go to school and make friends, which became an aspect that helped him to assimilate better to the new culture and language.

Paulo showed four of the characteristics from the Acculturation model of Schumann (1978). Paulo has been living all these years in Osaka, a place with a small concentration of *nikkeijin*. Since he did not have any Brazilian friends at his school to help him, he had favorable conditions to learn the language more quickly (cohesiveness and size variable). He shared social institutions with the TL group when he started playing soccer and going with them (enclosure variable) and naturally, he wanted to be a part of that group (assimilation, preservation and adaptation variable).

He also had very positive attitudes toward his friends, helping him to reduce

the problems of adaptation to the new culture (attitude variable).

*Maria – The Happiest*

Maria went to Japan just after she graduated from high school in Brazil. Her social life there was very intense. She always wanted to be with her friends and was rarely at home. Her mother asked her to go to Japan so that she could change her life and have better friends. Although she was not as young as Paulo when she arrived in Japan, she applied her outgoing personality to learn Japanese and to get to know new people.

Like Paulo, she did not have any type of temporal aspect motivation. Since her mother wanted her to go to Japan to change her life, she did not have any goals at the beginning. Nevertheless, she had strong social goals so that she could be accepted by the people around her. She also showed aspects of integrative motivation when she wanted to improve her language skills so that she could communicate better with some parents at her daughter's school and when she wanted to invite her co-workers to do something as a group. Although she did not know that Japanese culture was a collectivist culture, she tried her best to be accepted by the community.

Unlike Paulo, who had a strong integrative motivation, Maria showed aspects of both integrative and instrumental motivation; she wanted to be a part of the society around her and she wanted to be able to communicate well with them. She realized

that being in a city of a large concentration of *nikkeijin* would not help her to practice Japanese, so she tried to create opportunities to speak the language as much as she could by talking to the parents of her daughter's friends and co-workers (assimilation, preservation and adaptation variable).

She also had positive attitudes towards Japanese people who culture helped her to improve her language skills and make friends in the TL (Attitude).

#### *Antônio – The Regretter*

Although Antônio is *nisei*, he did not learn Japanese when he was in Brazil. He came to Japan when he was twenty-five years old and he mentioned being very close to his family members and relatives in Brazil. He always resided in prefectures with a large concentration of *nikkeijin*. He had more Brazilian friends than Japanese friends and he considered himself more Brazilian than Japanese. He pointed out many times during the interview he regretted coming to Japan. He came to Japan because he wanted to be rich, but he realized that money does not buy everything.

Antônio seemed to have temporal aspects of motivation when he arrived in Japan. He wanted to come to Japan to save money to buy a house and to establish his own business in Brazil. He tried to learn Japanese in his first years in Japan, but he ended up losing his motivation due to negative experiences he had during his years living there.

There were times when he showed some aspects of integrative motivation such as when he wanted to make friends with his Japanese co-workers. What helped him to feel that way was because he just had a few *nikkeijin* co-workers in his factory.

Although Antônio did not show aspects of social motivation during his interview, some variables from the Schumann acculturation model were present.

The social dominance variable was the variable that most interfered in the process of Antônio acquiring JSL because he lived in a place of large concentration of *nikkeijin*.

He did not have many Japanese friends and the Japanese people he knew from his work caused him to become sad and unmotivated to learn the language and culture.

Unlike the other participants, he did not show motivation to assimilate to the new culture and community and his attitudes towards the language were not favorable.

He was the only participant who wanted to go back to Brazil as soon as possible and his advice to other *nikkeijin* who would come to Japan was not very sympathetic.

#### *Vera- The Oldest*

Vera was the only *nikkeijin* who had the opportunity to go to a Japanese language school in Brazil. Her parents only spoke to her in Japanese and it helped her when she came to Japan with her family.

Vera explains the reason she came to Japan. *“I was tired of seeing São Paulo becoming more dangerous each day. Newspaper and TV news was always advising us*



*not to leave our homes alone. Then, when you think that those horrible things will never happen in your family, a robber stole my husband's company money when he was on his the way to deposit the money in the bank, five minutes walking distance from his company. The company did not believe my husband had been robbed. My husband was fired the next day and they did not pay all the benefits because his boss thought my husband had created this entire story to steal the money from the company. My husband tried to find a job, but since he was 42 years old no one wanted to hire him. We had our house mortgage and loans to pay. We had no choice. We decided to come here to at least pay all our debts..."* Maria was the oldest participant and she reflects those *nikkeijin* who worked very hard for many years in Brazil and did not have choice but coming to Japan.

Like Maria, Vera is very outgoing and loves to go to *karaoke* with her friends. She identified herself as more Japanese than Brazilian. Although she has both Japanese and Brazilian friends, she mentioned she liked to be with her Japanese friends more.

Vera seemed to have more intrinsic and extrinsic motivation than the other participants; she wanted to feel a part of the community and also she wanted to improve her language skills in order to get a better job in her factory.

Also, she showed temporal and social motivation in her experiences. First,

she wanted to come to Japan to pay her debts in Brazil and she kept working very hard to save money once she arrived in Japan. Her motivation to learn the language kept growing because she wanted to be a part of the community around her. Similar to Maria, Vera wanted to improve her language skills to communicate well with her children's teachers at school.

In the experiences of Vera, six variables from the Schumann acculturation model are found. She was the participant who showed the largest number of those variables.

The first place Vera lived in Japan was Osaka. Although she had some *nikkeijin* co-workers, she did not have any *nikkeijin* living close to her. It encouraged her to try to assimilate with her neighbors (assimilation, preservation and adaptation variable + cohesiveness and size variable).

Since she considered herself more Japanese than Brazilian, she was comfortable living in a culture similar to hers (congruence variable). Enjoying *karaoke* with her Japanese friends (enclosure variable) also shows positive attitudes towards the culture and her motivation to improve her Japanese daily (Attitude variable). Since she knew that she would stay in Japan for an unknown period of time, she did her best to preserve her relationships with neighbors and co-workers (Intended length of residence variable).

### *Summary of Each Participant's Motivation*

The following tables show the summary of each participant's motivation according to the theories of Gardner and Lambert (1972), Dörnyei (2001) and the acculturation model of Schumman (1978). The symbol "O" points out that the participant showed a particular type of motivation during the interviews. On the other hand, the symbol "X" demonstrates that the participant did not show any aspect of a particular type of motivation. Finally, the symbol "N/A" means that the information was not available during the interviews. In the case of Paulo, the symbol "N/A" is particular common because he arrived in Japan when he was very young and could not provide as many information as other participants.

Table 7

#### *Comparison of the Motivation of Participants*

	<b>Integrative</b>	<b>Instrumental</b>	<b>Intrinsic</b>	<b>Extrinsic</b>	<b>Temporal aspects</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>Paulo</b>	O	O	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Maria</b>	O	O	X	X	X	O
<b>Antônio</b>	O	X	X	X	O	X
<b>Vera</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O

Table 8

*Comparison of the participants according to Schumann's acculturation  
Seven model's variables*

	<b>Social Dominance</b>	<b>Assimilation, Preservation and adaptation</b>	<b>Enclosure</b>	<b>Cohesivess and size</b>	<b>Congruence</b>	<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Intended length of residence</b>
<b>Paulo</b>	X	O	O	O	X	O	N/A
<b>Maria</b>	O	O	O	X	X	O	N/A
<b>Antônio</b>	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Vera</b>	X	O	O	O	O	O	O

Depending on the life experiences of each *nikkeijin* showed in this study, their motivation to learn JSL vastly varies. Paulo and Vera, who had the opportunities to reside in Osaka, tended to have more positive experiences than Antônio and Maria. The advantages of living in Osaka were that natives in that area did not have much experience interacting with foreigners, and according to the experiences of Paulo and Vera, *nikkeijin* were well accepted, helping them to feel welcome by the Japanese of that area. Thus, trying to assimilate to the new culture and language, they could assimilate into the new society more easily and quickly.

Although Maria had fewer opportunities to learn JSL, her attitudes toward Japanese culture and language were always positive. Another factor that may

contribute to her positive attitude was her outgoing personality.

Unlike Maria, Antônio had his own temporal goals before coming to Japan; however, due to the high number of negative experiences in his first years there, his motivation to keep learning the language and attitudes decreased each year.

The age of arrival was an important factor to observe. However, Vera, who arrived in Japan when she was forty-two years old, assimilated well to the Japanese culture. Furthermore, since she understood the language from the time she was in Brazil, she did not have major problems improving her skills.

Thus, from the experiences found in this study, a *nissei* who learned the culture and language in Brazil, no matter what the age of arrival in Japan, seem to assimilate to Japanese culture more easily, helping to improve their language skills.

The findings and implications for this study will be further discussed in chapter five.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to look at *nikkeijin*'s life experiences in Japan and identify what kinds of factors could affect their motivation to learn the language. In addition, the study examined the effect of age of arrival in Japan and the place of residence on these *nikkeijin*'s motivations. Four Brazilian *nikkeijin* participated in this study, sharing their life experiences in learning the Japanese language and culture through interviews conducted via biographies, Online Messenger, and phone conversations.

### *Findings*

Paulo's experiences and learning style suggests that the younger the learner has contact with the target language, the greater the probability may be of learning and thinking in ways that most reflect the target culture people. Furthermore, it is easier to learn a language when the province lived in does not have a large concentration of *nikkeijin*. Saitama and Gunma Prefectures seemed to hinder Maria and Antônio's language development due to the constant meeting and contact with more Brazilians than Japanese.

As Dörnyei (2001) explained, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation plays an important role in the acquisition of the language. *Nikkeijin* felt motivated to learn the

language when they received a promotion or a better salary in the factory. They also felt that when Japanese people treated them as part of the community, they had a higher sense of belonging and need to learn and to improve their language skills.

According to Schumann's acculturation model (1978), the smaller and less cohesive the 2LL group is, the more likely the contact with the TL group and the more favorable the conditions for L2 acquisition. Since Antônio and Maria lived in Gunma and Saitama, unfortunately, they did not have as much contact as Paulo and Vera with the TL group due to the great number of *nikkeijin* in that area. When learners make an effort to adapt to a new culture, it is easier for them to understand the target language speaker's behavior. Schumann also affirmed that the greater the contact, the more acquisition will take place.

In Antônio's case, even though he has lived in Japan for more than 10 years, he did not enjoy being in Japan and did not have the opportunities to emerge in the target culture. Therefore, his negative experiences were a huge motivational factor to not learn more about the Japanese people, language, and culture. However, for Paulo, Maria, and Vera, being more open to their challenges in the new culture seemed to help them learn the language more quickly and efficiently even though Maria did not have as many opportunities as Antônio.

Also, the social motivation of *nikkeijin* in Japan plays an important role in the

acquisition of JSL. According to the responses from the participant's interview, they all felt that they were perceived by the Japanese people as *gaijin* (foreigner/outsider) and not as a *nikkeijin*. Although Antônio had some extent of social motivation to emerge in the culture and learn the language in the beginning, his negative life experiences hindered him from improving his language skills and to acquire a better image about the Japanese people and language.

This study shows that not only motivation, but also the place of residence, age of arrival and acculturation problems, can have a strong influence on *nikkeijin*'s acquisition of JSL. The lack of opportunities to communicate in the target language may be a problem that they currently encounter. However, by going to Japan at a younger age and staying in provinces that have fewer concentration of *nikkeijins*, the likelihood of success in improving their language skills greatly improves. This is apparent in the cases of people such as Maria and Vera, who, like so many, strive to become *dekasegi* in Japan. .

### *Implications*

The findings of this research suggested several directions for immigrants of an L2. Oftentimes, immigrants tend to create their own group thus, isolating themselves from the contact of TL group. Fear and the lack of confidence to communicate in the TL may hinder immigrants to create opportunities to associate to



the community.

Since numerous problems have been caused by *nikkeijins* in the past few years (Carvalho, 2003) in Japan, city halls or employment centers should encourage foreigners to take language and culture lessons. There are some institutions that provide Japanese language courses for free, such as *Kokusai kaikan* (international center) and *hakken gaisha* (employment center). These opportunities will help these *nikkeijins* to see the similarities and differences of their own culture to that of the Target culture. In addition, it may also improve the relationships between Japanese natives and immigrants. Not only the *nikkeijin*, but also the companies they work for can benefit from those language programs. According to Martin (1968), the companies that provide language training for immigrants can benefit hugely. These companies are able to have better language communication between employee and employer, and also save money on interpreters.

Antônio mentioned in his interview, most of the Japanese people who worked with him in the factory were non-educated people. They did not know how to communicate well with *nikkeiji*. Instead of explaining something calmly, some of them would start yelling at the *nikkeijin*. Since Antônio did not have many social opportunities to intermingle with other Japanese natives outside his factory, he assumed that all Japanese people were the same as the people he knew from his work.

Personality and attitude of an L2 learner may also affect the process of getting used to a new culture. Due to Maria's outgoing personality, she tried hard to assimilate to the new culture. As a result, she improved her language skills more easily and better than Antônio.

#### *Limitations*

A limitation that may be important to point out is the length of residence and background of the participants in Japan. All the participants have been living in Japan for more than 10 years. It would have been interesting to see participants of different length of residence and backgrounds in order to compare their motivation and reasoning to learn the target language.

#### *Directions for Further Research*

This study could be replicated by increasing the sample size and having *nikkeijin* of different length of residence in different places throughout Japan. Also, different results from the diversity of people's personalities would emerge. Similarly, the spouses of *nikkeijin* would be an interesting area to explore. A factor that would be interesting to explore is how can different backgrounds affect the motivation to learn JSL and assimilate the TL?

From the participant's experiences of this study, it seems that some *nikkeijin* have the tendency to feel that they are *gaijin* in Japan and not immigrants. Through

future studies about Brazilian-*nikkeijin* learning Japanese in Japan, I hope that doors will open to Brazilians to feel that *gaijin* is a simple nickname that can reflect a positive meaning of a foreigner friend and not an outsider anymore. I am grateful for Japan and for all the valuable experiences I had there. I know that without those experiences as a *nikkeijin* in Japan, I would not be able to complete such an important study about how *nikkeijin* learn Japanese in this small, but unique country that is Japan.

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*Appendix A*  
*Biography (English)*

Write about your experiences in Japan including the answers for the following questions. You can write as many things as you want.

1. Where were you born?
2. Do you identify yourself as Brazilian, Japanese or *nikkeijin* (the mixture of Brazilian and Japanese)?
3. When did you come to Japan? How old were you? When was it (year)?
4. How long are you planning to stay in Japan?
5. How many years did you go to school in Brazil?
6. Tell me about some experiences you first had in Japan (positive or negative).



*Appendix B*  
*Biography (Portuguese)*

Escreva sobre algumas experiências no Japão incluindo as respostas das seguintes perguntas. Você pode escrever mais coisas se você desejar.

1. Onde você nasceu?
2. Você se identifica mais como Brasileiro(a), Japonês(a) ou nikkeijin (uma mistura de Brasileiro com Japonês)?
3. Quando que você chegou no Japão? Quantos anos você tinha? Quando que foi isso (que ano)?
4. Quanto tempo você esta planejando em ficar no Japão?
5. Até que série você estudou no Brasil?
6. Me conte algumas experiências que você teve logo que chegou no Japão (positivas ou negativas).

*Appendix C*  
*Interview guideline in English*

- 1) Tell me the reason why you decided to come to Japan.
- 2) Tell me about your experiences in Japan. You mentioned in your biography that ..... Why did you feel that way?
- 3) How do you think you are perceived by the Japanese people?
- 4) How much Japanese did you know before coming to Japan?
- 5) What is your ability of speaking, listening, reading and writing Japanese  
Please explain using a scale of 0 to 4.  
0= Don't understand at all  
1= Only understand basic and survival sentences  
2= Only Know how to speak  
3= Speak, write and read comfortably  
4= Near native level  
  
Do you want to learn more?
- 6) Tell me about a time that you really felt motivated learning Japanese?  
How long did it last? When did it happen? How did you respond and feel?
- 7) Tell me about a time that you really felt least motivated learning Japanese?  
How long did it last? When did it happen? How did you respond and feel?
- 8) What do you do to motivate yourself to study Japanese?
- 9) What positive and negative experiences did you have learning Japanese and what did you learn from them?
- 10) What advice would you give to *nikkeijin* friends before they come to Japan?

*Appendix D*  
*Guia da entrevista em Português*

- 1) Diga-me a razão por que você decidiu-se vir ao Japão.
- 2) Conte-me as experiências que você teve no Japão. Você mencionou na sua biografia que ..... Por que você acha que se sentiu assim?
- 3) Como você acha que os Japoneses pensam de você?
- 4) Antes de vir ao Japão, quanto que você sabia falar Japonês?
- 5) Qual sua habilidade em falar, ouvir, ler e escrever Japonês? Por favor explique usando uma escala de 0 à 4.
  - 0= Não entendo nada de Japonês
  - 1= Sei apenas o básico como algumas frases
  - 2= Sei apenas falar
  - 3= Sei falar, ler e escrever fluentemente
  - 4= Quase como um nativo

Você gostaria de aprender mais?
- 6) Diga-me alguma vez que você sentiu-se realmente motivada em aprender japonês. Quanto tempo isso durou? Quando que isso aconteceu? Como você respondeu e se sentiu?
- 7) Diga-me alguma vez que você sentiu-se realmente menos motivada em aprender japonês. Quanto tempo isso durou? Quando que isso aconteceu? Como você respondeu e se sentiu?
- 8) O que você faz para motivar-se a estudar Japonês:
- 9) Quais experiências positivas e negativas que você teve quando estava aprendendo Japonês? O que você aprendeu com isso?
- 10) Qual conselho você daria a um amigo *nikkeijin* antes dessa pessoa vir ao Japão?

Appendix E

Consent form (English)

The purpose of this study is to examine *nikkeijin*'s life experiences in Japan and identify what kinds of factors could affect their motivation to learn the language. It is being conducted by Marisa U. Bellini, a graduate student in Language Acquisition, at Brigham Young University. You were selected because of your *nikkeijin* background, age of arrival and the place you first arrived in Japan.

For this study, you will need to do 3 things: 1) Send an email to the researcher about your biography (including your life experiences in Japan), 2) Talk to the researcher online or on the phone to answer the questions about your motivation to learn Japanese, and 3) Talk to the researcher again online or on the phone so that the researcher can confirm if all the answers were analyzed correctly.

There are no risks or dangers for participating in this study and the participation is voluntary. You may discontinue anytime. Your name will not be used when the results of this research are reported. All information collected from you will be kept in a locked room. No one will be able to identify you as a participant.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact the researcher:

Marisa Utida Bellini  
758 Wymount Terrace  
Provo, UT 84604  
Ph. # (801) 378-6184  
Email: [ocimaris2004@yahoo.com](mailto:ocimaris2004@yahoo.com)

I have read and understood this consent form. I choose to participate in this study. I accept all the benefits and risks related to this study.

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Signed

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Date

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Witness

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Date

*Appendix F*

*Documento de permissão (Portuguese)*

O propósito deste estudo é para examinar as experiências das vidas dos *nikkeijin* no Japão e identificar quais os fatores que podem afetar a motivação em aprender a língua. Este estudo está sendo conduzido por Marisa U. Bellini, uma estudante de pós-graduação de Aquisição de Línguas na Universidade de Brigham Young. Você foi selecionado por ser um(a) *nikkeijin*, por sua idade quando chegou no Japão e pelo lugar onde morou pela primeira vez.

Para este estudo, você precisará fazer as seguintes coisas: 1) Mandar um email à pesquisadora com sua biografia (incluindo suas experiências no Japão), 2) Falar com a pesquisadora online ou por telefone para responder as perguntas sobre sua motivação em aprender Japonês, e 3) Falar com a pesquisadora novamente online ou por telefone para que ela possa confirmar se todas as respostas foram analisadas corretamente.

Não há nenhum risco ou perigo em participar deste estudo e a participação é voluntária. Você pode parar em participar a qualquer momento. Seu nome não será usado quando os resultados deste estudo forem reportado. Todas as informações recolhidas serão colocadas numa sala trancada. Ninguém terá o acesso em identificá-lo(a) como participante deste estudo.

Se tiver qualquer pergunta sobre este estudo, favor contactar a pesquisadora:  
Marisa Utida Bellini  
758 Wymount Terrace  
Provo, UT 84604  
Ph. # (801) 378-6184  
Email: [ocimarisa2004@yahoo.com](mailto:ocimarisa2004@yahoo.com)

Eu li e entendi esse documento de permissão . Escolhi em participar deste estudo e aceito todos os benefícios e riscos deste estudo.

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Signed

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Date

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Witness

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Date