Investigating Beliefs:
A Case Study of Japanese Onomatopoeia

TSYGALNITSKY Elena

Abstract

The present study investigated beliefs of 102 Japanese learners about Japanese onomatopoeia and about Japanese language. The analysis was conducted on two levels: practical level and theoretical level. On the practical level, learners' beliefs were analyzed to be applied to the context of Japanese language learning. On the theoretical level, an attempt was made to inquire into the structure of learners' beliefs by distinguishing between different kinds of beliefs (narrow-scope beliefs (beliefs about onomatopoeia) and broad-scope beliefs (beliefs about Japanese language)) and investigating relationships between them. The beliefs were identified by a factor analyses and the correlations between the beliefs were checked by a correlation coefficient analysis. The analysis of the narrow-scope beliefs showed that notwithstanding the perceived difficulties of onomatopoeia, the learners are aware of the importance of acquiring it and have a desire to study it. As for the broad-scope beliefs, the integrative aspects of interest and enjoyment were identified as motivating the learners to engage in Japanese language learning together with the instrumental aspects concerning personal profit and career. Practical and theoretical implications of the results are discussed.

Key words: Japanese onomatopoeia, narrow-scope beliefs, broad-scope beliefs

1 Introduction

1.1 Theoretical framework

Research on beliefs about language learning, pioneered by Horwitz (1987), ranges from measuring instruments to theoretical frameworks. The overview of beliefs research provided by Bernat et al. (2005) demonstrates that the main body of research[1] has been conducted in EFL

[1] Three approaches in beliefs research are analyzed in Barcelos (2000) and are summarized in Bernat et al, (2005): (1) the normative approach conducted by Horwitz (e.g. 1987), characterized by the use of Likert-scale

contexts. However, numerous studies provide evidence of a "context-specific" nature of beliefs (e.g., Lee, 2003, Katagiri, 2005, Kitani, 1998). Likewise, research on motivation in SLA, which is concerned with exploring attitudes towards the target language and therefore partly overlaps with beliefs research, has shown differences between SLA and FLL contexts (Dörnyei, 1990). That is, the results of previous research conducted in EFL contexts cannot be automatically applied to SL contexts.

Moreover, as reported in Dörnyei (2001), various studies have indicated the theoretical significance of task-based approaches, which make it possible to break down the complex L2 learning process into components with well-defined boundaries and are therefore helpful in creating meaningful insights into various dimensions of L2 processing. Also, research shows that learners' beliefs are a complicated phenomenon, and "cannot be reduced to a single dimension but are composed of multiple, autonomous dimensions, each of which has unique effects on learning" (Mori, 1999a: 382).

Given the complexity of learners' beliefs and the importance of context-specific and task-based approaches, the present study attempts to inquire into the structure of learners' beliefs by breaking down the complicated phenomenon of beliefs and the complicated phenomenon of the language studied into smaller units and investigating relationships between different units within the broader network of learners' beliefs.

The specific context of this study is that of vocabulary acquisition in Japanese, more specifically, acquisition of Japanese onomatopoeia[2]. Onomatopoeia has been chosen as the subject of investigation due to the following reasons. Onomatopoetic expressions in Japanese are said to form a domain of words, which are systematic in that they share phonological, morphological and syntactical properties and are abundant in mimetic expressions (Kakehi et al., (ed.) 1993, Tamori et al., 1999, Tamori, 2002). From a pragmatic point of view, onomatopoeic words are frequently used in various contexts in Japanese.[3] Thus, it is the frequency of use, systematic nature of

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questionnaires (one of the findings of these studies is that learner beliefs about language learning are context specific); (2) the metacognitive approach, which describes beliefs as "stable, statable, although sometimes incorrect nowledge learners acquired about language"; (3) the contextual approach, which views beliefs as "embedded in students' contexts".

[2] See 1.2 for a definition of "onomatopoeia".

[3] See Schourup (1993) for an analysis of dispersion of onomatopoeia in different contexts. Data on numbers of onomatopoeia differ according to sources, ranging from 2000 words (Mikami, 2004) to 2500 (Murata, 1993) and 3000 words (Tamori et al., 1999). These discrepancies are explained by the fact that Mikami, for example, refers to

Japanese onomatopoeia and abundance of mimesis that distinguish it from onomatopoeia in other languages.[4] Moreover, onomatopoeic expressions also describe psychological states and are referred to as the "language of feelings" (e.g., Tamori, 1993, 2002, Tamori et al., 1999, Osaka, 1999). It is this aspect of being a tool for expressing feelings, emotions and personal sensitive issues that makes the process of mastering onomatopoeia quite a challenging task. Expression of subtle nuances of feelings requires a high level of proficiency in any foreign language; in Japanese it requires knowledge of onomatopoeia. That is, the first reason is the special status of onomatopoeia in Japanese as opposed to many other languages.

The second reason to address onomatopoeia as a subject of analysis is its difficulty. Difficulties regarding onomatopoeia acquisition have been pointed out by previous research (Osaka, 1999, Hoshino, 1992, Tamori et al., 1999, Hinata et al., 1989). There is also evidence that proficient learners of Japanese are aware of vocabulary acquisition difficulties and insufficiency of their vocabulary abilities (e.g., Aiba, 2005). While Kanji vocabulary has been investigated within the framework of beliefs research (Mori, 1999a, 1999b), no research has been conducted to provide empirical evidence of learners' perception of the difficulty of Japanese onomatopoeia.

In order to reflect on the issues of difficulty and the existence of certain attitudes towards onomatopoeia that might influence educational settings, the present study will examine onomatopoeia from the standpoint of learners of Japanese in terms of beliefs about its difficulty, necessity and importance of acquiring it. On a practical level of analysis, descriptive data of beliefs about onomatopoeia will be provided by identification of beliefs.

However, it is also important to analyze how different beliefs correlate with each other in order to get a fuller picture of the context in question and to analyze the structure of beliefs. Therefore, after identifying beliefs about onomatopoeia, relationships between the beliefs will be discussed.

Moreover, beliefs about onomatopoeia are specific beliefs and therefore shed light on only one specific aspect of Japanese language. In order to establish a connection between the beliefs about onomatopoeia and more general beliefs about Japanese language, this study will analyze the relationship between the two kinds of beliefs. "Orientations[5] to study Japanese", i.e. beliefs that

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mimesis only.

[4] Osaka (1999: 23) claims that some languages, like Eskimo, Urdu, Hindi, and Korean are also abundant in mimetic words. Swahili and some South East Asian languages are worth mentioning, for they are similar to Japanese mimesis due to the frequency of reduplicated morphology.

[5] The study adopts Gardner's (e.g., Gardner et al., 1972, Gardner et al., 1993, Gardner et al., 1997) definition of "Orientations" as "reasons for studying a foreign language", that is, by "orientations for studying Japanese" the

inquire about Japanese language learning in general, are analyzed as general beliefs about Japanese language. The difference between the two different kinds of beliefs can be illustrated with the help of the notion of "scope". In order to differentiate between specific and general beliefs and for representational convenience, learners' beliefs can be divided according to their scope, i.e. to their specificity, into beliefs of narrow scope and beliefs of broad scope. The beliefs that inquire about a specific aspect of language are beliefs of narrow scope, while the beliefs that inquire about the language or language learning in general, are beliefs of broad scope. The beliefs about onomatopoeia are therefore conceptualized as "beliefs of narrow scope" and beliefs about Japanese language, i.e. orientations to study Japanese" as "beliefs of broad scope". On a theoretical level, the study will investigate the relationships: 1. between beliefs of narrow scope (beliefs about onomatopoeia) and 2. between beliefs of narrow scope (beliefs about onomatopoeia) and beliefs of broad scope (orientations for studying Japanese).

That is, the present study aims to conduct an investigation on two levels: practical level, applicable to the educational context of Japanese onomatopoeia acquisition, and the theoretical level, inquiring into the structure of beliefs by analyzing relationships between different beliefs about onomatopoeia and relationships between beliefs of different scopes.

1.2 Onomatopoeia in this study

Onomatopoeic expressions in Japanese are usually divided into words imitating sounds, onomatopoeia (*giongo*), and words imitating modes, mimesis (*gitaigo*). The present study focuses on reduplicated onomatopoeic words, which are considered to be the most representative morphological structure for Japanese onomatopoeia[6]. Moreover, the reduplicated structures are easy to recognize, which is also considered helpful for the framework of the study, which was designed for non-native speakers. Note that the English term "onomatopoeia" is used to refer to

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study refers to beliefs that lead a person to study the language.

[6] For a detailed analysis of onomatopoeia morphology and structural peculiarities, see e.g., Kakehi et al., (ed.), 1993, Tamori et al., (1999), Hamano, (1998). It should be noted that Japanese vocabulary also includes onomatopoeia of Chinese origin written in Kanji. The following features describe its characteristics: (1) it is mostly written in Kanji; (2) it lacks the systematic nature of onomatopoeia of Japanese origin, lacking a "root", providing a basis for derivation (e.g., *goro* in *gorori*, *goron*, *gorogoro*); (3) it lacks the sound–symbolic properties of onomatopoeia (correlation between sound and meaning, which is a feature of onomatopoeia by definition); (4) it does not share the frequency of use in various contexts that is characteristic of onomatopoeia of Japanese origin. Due to these features of Chinese onomatopoeia, it is excluded from the discussion of onomatopoeia in this study.

both mimesis and onomatopoeia.

1.3 Beliefs

1.3.1 Narrow-scoped beliefs: beliefs about onomatopoeia

It has been argued that as onomatopoeic words are frequently used in Japanese, these expressions are crucial for a richer vocabulary and should be instructed at earlier stages of acquisition of Japanese (Mikami, 2004). At the same time, there are statements about onomatopoeic expressions being associated with "infant language" in many languages (Kakehi et al., (ed.), 1993, Schourup, 1993). Some sources establish a connection between this association with "childish" or "infant" language and the fact that onomatopoeia has not been researched extensively (e.g., Tamori, 1999, Osaka, 1999). The frequency of use and association with childish language are two different aspects that can shape the attitude towards onomatopoeia. The present study conceptualizes the above aspects as separate beliefs about onomatopoeia, i.e. as beliefs of narrow scope.

The issues introduced earlier regarding (1) the importance of instruction/acquisition of onomatopoeia due to its frequency, (2) the degree of its difficulty, and (3) the existence of a certain prejudice towards it (i.e. considering it to be childish), inspired the following research questions, reflected in learners' beliefs about onomatopoeia, namely (1) Is it necessary/important to study onomatopoeia? (2) Do learners hold a positive attitude towards the acquisition of onomatopoeia? (3) Do learners consider onomatopoeia to be childish?　If so, does it affect their opinion about the necessity to study onomatopoeia? (4) Is onomatopoeia difficult to master? These questions were modified into beliefs. An onomatopoeia belief measuring battery was constructed by reference both to BALLI and AMTB[7].

1.3.2 Broad-scoped beliefs: orientations for studying Japanese

The broad-scoped beliefs are represented by reasons for studying Japanese language, that is, by learners' orientations to study Japanese. A measurement battery consisting of 22 items and titled "Orientations for studying Japanese" was partly generated from Hifumi (2004) and partly

[7] BALLI (The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) was designed for identification of the following five areas of beliefs about language learning: "Foreign Language Aptitude", "The Difficulty of Language Learning", "The Nature of Language Learning", "Learning and Communication Strategies", and "Motivation". The instrument for measuring motivation and attitudes in SLA, AMTB (The Attitudes/ Motivation Test Battery) is composed of "Integrativeness", "Attitudes toward the Learning Situation", "Motivation", "Language Anxiety", and "Other Attributes".

constructed by the investigator.

2 The study

2.1 Method

The data was collected[8] by means of a questionnaire, which consisted of the following parts[9]: (1) Face sheet; (2) a 20-item battery for measurement of the narrow-scoped beliefs; (3) a 22-item battery for measurement of the broad-scoped beliefs.

The data is considered to be representative in terms of the sample's sufficiency for the statistical methods adopted by the study.[10] A reliability index of Cronbach alpha was calculated for all Likert-scale variables and only variables with statistically satisfactory reliability indexes (i.e. with an index of $\alpha>.6$) were included in the analysis.

A pilot study served as a tool for analyzing the readability and comprehensibility of the items in order to avoid ambiguity of notions, explanations and instructions in the principal questionnaire. It also tested the appropriate statistical methods to be adopted in the study. As a result, it was decided to apply the Exploratory Factor Analysis and Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis as the main measurement methods of the study. The Likert-scale items of the questionnaire inquiring about beliefs were arranged in random order to ensure the validity of the data.

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[8] 98 of the 102 participants were recruited by the investigator, so it was possible to check that all items were completed (most of the questionnaires were filled in the investigators' presence, except for a few cases when the participants preferred to submit the questionnaire later). Before filling in the questionnaire, the participants were assured of the confidentiality of the data.

[9] The full version of the questionnaire also contains hypothesized strategies, an onomatopoeia proficiency test, and inquires about learners' background factors. However, due to the fact that the above-listed items are not the subject of this paper, they are excluded from the present discussion. The instructions and items of the questionnaire were provided in both English and Japanese.

[10] In "Quantitative Data Analysis with SPSS Release for Windows- A Guide for Social Scientists" (Bryman et al., 1999) it is argued that the reliability of the factors emerging from a factor analysis depends on the size of a sample. Although there is no consensus on the size of a sample, there is an agreement that there should be more participants than variables, about five participants per variable, and not less than one hundred individuals per analysis. These conditions are fulfilled in the present study.

2.2 Participants

The present study canvassed learners of intermediate Japanese level and higher[11] to participate in the study, using data from 102 participants, all sojourners in Japan. The participants' age ranged from 18 to 37 years, with an average of 26.7 years (one data is missing). 65 (63.7%) were female and 37 (36.3%) male. As the participants come from 34 countries, the data was classified by continent: Asia (62), Europe (26), North and Central America (9), South America (1), Africa (3), Oceania (1). Apart from two company employees (former students), all of the participants presently belong to an institution of tertiary education: graduate students (64), undergraduate students (22), research students (9), researchers (2), and "Other" (5)[12]. Participants' areas of specialization amounted to 31 majors, which were classified by broad field of study,[13] and their length of stay in Japan and length of studying Japanese were on average 2.69 and 5.26 years, respectively[14].

2.3 Results and Discussion

2.3.1 Narrow-scoped beliefs: beliefs about onomatopoeia

An exploratory factor analysis (principal axis factoring) was conducted and 20 items of beliefs about onomatopoeia were subjected to the analysis. Because the orthogonal (varimax) rotation did not produce clearly interpretable factors, an oblique rotation (promax) was used to interpret the rotated factor pattern. During the factor analysis six items were eliminated[15] due to their low

[11] The participants of the present study are learners of Japanese of intermediate level and higher due to the fact that onomatopoeia is mainly acquired at the intermediate level of studying Japanese (see Mikami, 2004).

[12] This category also includes the participants who skipped the question about their status.

[13] The Humanities were dominant with 48 participants, the remainder being distributed as follows: Social Sciences (17), Education and Law, Exact Sciences (11), Medicine (1), Biology, Environmental studies (7), Management and Commerce (5), International Politics (9), Sports Science (2) and Art and Design (2).

[14] Length of stay in Japan ranged from less than one year to ten years, with the total picture as follows: "under one year" (40), "under 3 years" (31), "under 5 years" (17) and "between 5 to 10 years" (14). As for the length of studying Japanese, the shortest period was "less than 2 years" and the longest "around 16 years" with the following overall distribution of data: "less than two years" (20), "2 to 3 years" (22), "between 3 to 5 years" (19), "between 5 to 10 years" (31) and "more than 10 years" (9).

[15] The excluded items were Q_9 "Do you think that as onomatopoeia is mainly used in informal speech, the exaggerated use of it can be impolite?" Q_17 "Do you want to acquire a knowledge of onomatopoeic expressions?" Q_14 "Do you think the way Japanese onomatopoeia is used is difficult?" Q_7 "Do you find onomatopoeic expressions difficult because their meaning is so easy to forget?" Q_2 "Do you think that knowledge of

loading indexes. Four factors were identified, accounting for 67% of the variance and given a title according to the items indicating the factor loading with absolute values greater than .50. The factor loading items are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Factor analysis of the narrow-scoped beliefs: beliefs about onomatopoeia

onomatopoeia is useful for communication with Japanese people?" Q_4 "Do you think onomatopoeia is childish?"

Loading items	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
Q_19 “Do you find onomatopoeia difficult because at times its exact meaning is not clear even after checking the dictionary?”	.887	.225	.115	-.343
Q_21 “Do you find onomatopoeia difficult because the nuances in the meaning of onomatopoeic words are not clear, for example in words expressing different types of pain, like「*zukizuki*」(i.e., throbbing pain), 「*chikuchiku*」(i.e. pricking pain), 「*shikushiku*」(i.e. griping pain)?”	.811	.117	.094	-.191
Q_20 “Do you find onomatopoeia difficult because there are many similar words and it is not clear which one should be used in which situation?”	.793	.187	.073	-.100
Q_23 “Do you find onomatopoeia difficult because it’s not clear when it should be used?”	.713	.315	.194	.129
Q_6 “Do you find onomatopoeia difficult because even when the meaning of onomatopoeic expression is clear, the appropriate word just wouldn’t come out?”	.574	.196	.278	-.034
Q_18 “Do you find onomatopoeic expressions difficult because it’s hard to memorize them?”	.565	.044	.084	-.028
Q_13 “Do you think onomatopoeia is an important part of Japanese speech?”	.254	.687	.254	-.237
Q_11 “Do you think it is necessary to study Japanese onomatopoeia?”	.107	.680	.374	-.342
Q_12 “Do you think onomatopoeia is widely used in Japan?”	-.046	.659	.338	-.014
Q_22 “Do you think that in order to get a deeper understanding of Japanese culture, one needs to know onomatopoeia?”	.271	.613	.184	-.103
Q_1 “Do you find Japanese onomatopoeia interesting?”	.152	.437	.946	-.039
Q_5 “Do you think that studying of onomatopoeia is fun?”	.215	.345	.847	-.186
Q_10 “Do you think that as onomatopoeia is mainly used in comics and children’s literature, there is no need to study it?”	-.069	-.208	-.133	.686
Q_8 “Do you think that as onomatopoeia is not used in academic papers, its knowledge is not crucial to the Japanese language proficiency?”	-.088	-.121	-.051	.529
% of variance explained by each factor	27	15	7.5	6

The first factor contains six items, which deal with the difficulty of onomatopoeia, namely

difficulties in meaning and in memorizing it, so this factor was titled “Difficulty of onomatopoeia”. The second factor is composed of four items concerning the importance of onomatopoeia in Japanese, its frequency, and the desire to study it. This factor was titled “Importance of onomatopoeia”. The third factor consists of two items concerning interest in onomatopoeia and regarding its study as fun. In other words, it covers the aspects of “interest” and “enjoyment”, which are associated with integrative aspects[16]. Thus, this factor was titled “Integrative orientation towards studying onomatopoeia”. The two items constructing the forth factor are concerned with the limited contexts where onomatopoeia is used (e.g., as it is mainly used in comics and children’s literature and not in academic papers, there is no need to study it). This factor was titled “Limitations of onomatopoeia”.

The factors’ reliability coefficients (α) vary from .640 to .866, except for the factor of “Limitations of onomatopoeia” (α=.588), which was eliminated from further analysis. The remaining three factors with statistically satisfactory reliability indexes were retained for further analysis.

The factor analysis of beliefs about onomatopoeia suggests that although the participants have difficulty in grasping the meaning of onomatopoeia and memorizing it, they are motivated to study it and are aware of the importance and necessity of its acquisition.

2.3.2 Broad-scoped beliefs: orientations for studying Japanese

A 22-item battery served as an instrument for measuring orientations for studying Japanese. A principal factor extraction generated two factors that account for 58% of the variance. Due to the fact that oblique rotation produced more interpretable factors that did the orthogonal rotation, it was used to interpret the rotated pattern of the two factors extracted. 13 items[17] were eliminated during the factor analysis due to their low loading indexes.

The items loading the factors are shown in Table 2.

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[16] See e.g., Gardner, 1972, Gardner et al., 1993.

[17] The items are as follows (each starting with “I am studying Japanese because”): O_1 “…it’s important for my progress at the university”, O_2 “…I want to get high scores at tests”, O_5 “… I want to have a deeper understanding of my mother tongue”, O_10 “… for my self-education”, O_11 “ … it’s an international language”, O_12 “… I need it in my everyday life”, O_14 “… I enjoy my Japanese classes”, O_15 “… I respect my teacher”, O_16 “… it’s an easy language to study”, O_17 “… my friends study it”, O_18 “…I studied it at high school”, O_21 “… I love Japanese music”,O_22 “…my parents urged me to”.

Table 2 Factor analysis of the broad-scoped beliefs: orientations for studying Japanese

Loading items	Factors	
	1	2
O_19 “I am studying Japanese because I want to read Japanese magazines, newspapers and novels.”	.754	.226
O_20 “I am studying Japanese because I want to understand Japanese films and TV.”	.716	.193
O_4 “I am studying Japanese because I am seeking a deeper understanding of Japanese culture.”	.704	.406
O_13 “I am studying Japanese because I like this language.”	.690	.112
O_7 “I am studying Japanese because I am interested in cross-cultural differences.”	.672	.382
O_6 “I am studying Japanese because it’s fun.”	.622	.226
O_8 “I am studying Japanese because it’s important for my career.”	.297	.651
O_9 “I am studying Japanese because it’s an advantage to know it.”	.089	.639
O_3 “I am studying Japanese because I need it at work.”	.242	.536
% of variance explained by each factor	35	11

The two factors were titled in accordance with the loading items. Factor 1 was loaded by items dealing with interest in Japanese culture and personal development (O_4, O_19, O_20), fun (O_13, O_6), and interest in cross-cultural differences (O_7). These aspects are of an integrative nature, so this factor was titled “Integrative orientation”. The three items loading Factor 2 concern constructs like future career (O_8), personal advantage (O_9) and need of Japanese at work (O_3). These items are of an instrumental nature, and so the factor was titled “Instrumental orientation”. The eliminated items deal with personal aspects concerning the individual’s environment such as family, friends, mother tongue, work, everyday life, and Japanese language learning settings. These aspects are external in the sense that they affect an individual from the outside. The exclusion of these items suggests that external factors do not play a crucial role in motivating learners of higher levels to engage in language learning. The results thus show that the aspects of interest, fun and enjoyment engage proficient speakers of Japanese in learning the language. The reliability indexes of the two factors were .844 and .640 respectively, which is statistically sufficient, so the factors were retained for further analysis.

2.3.3 Correlation analysis of beliefs

In order to explore the relationship between the narrow-scope beliefs and beliefs of different scopes, the three factors of narrow-scope beliefs and the two broad-scope beliefs were converted

into variables by summarizing the indexes of the loading items. The five new variables were subjected to a Pearson coefficient correlation analysis in order to explore the degree of their mutual correlation. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 3.[18]

Table 3 Correlation analysis of the beliefs of different scopes

Beliefs of different scopes	F1	F2	F3	O1	O2
F1 “Difficulty of onomatopoeia” (α=.866)	1	.433(**)	.259(*)	.189	.180
F2 “Importance of onomatopoeia” (α=.785)	.433(**)	1	.531(**)	.487(**)	.040
F3 “Integrative orientation towards studying onomatopoeia” (α=.854)	.259(*)	.531(**)	1	.554(**)	-.073
O1 “Integrative orientation” (α=.844)	.189	.487(**)	.554(**)	1	.172
O2 “Instrumental orientation” (α=.640)	.180	.040	-.073	.172	1

*p <.05.　**p <.01. N=102.

Statistically significant correlations are emphasized by shadowing. As the shadowed indexes suggest, apart from O2 “Instrumental orientation”, there are high correlations between the variables. First, the relationships between the narrow scope beliefs are analyzed. All three beliefs about onomatopoeia were correlated (F1 and F2 (.433), F1 and F3 (.259), and F2 and F3 (.531)). These correlations mean that beliefs of integrative nature are related and that belief about difficulty is related to the beliefs of integrative nature. That is, the belief in the difficulty of onomatopoeia is related to the desire to acquire it and an awareness of its importance. The finding suggests that acknowledgement of difficulty does not negatively affect the general intention and will to learn, and does not reduce positive attitudes towards onomatopoeia.

As for the relationships between the beliefs of different scopes, the high correlations between the two beliefs of narrow scope F2 and F3 (.531) and their correlations with the broad scope belief O1

[18] For the sake of representational convenience, the beliefs are presented with their abbreviated titles in the vertical row, whereas their full titles are shown in the horizontal row of Table 3 together with the reliability indexes of the Cronbach alpha.

((.487) and (.554) respectively) imply that integrative beliefs have a high degree of mutual correlation, notwithstanding the scope of beliefs. That is, the concepts of interest and enjoyment seem to be strong enough to exceed the borders of different scopes. The factor "Instrumental orientation" however, was not correlated with the beliefs of narrow scope. This implies that instrumental constructs exist separately in the matrix of learners' beliefs.

The high correlations between the beliefs of an integrative nature about onomatopoeia acquisition and integrative orientation for studying Japanese indicate that the learners are generally motivated by integrative constructs. This finding corresponds with the findings of Kubota (2003), who observed 16 proficient speakers of Japanese and found that although their initial orientations[19] to learn Japanese varied, they all had integrative orientations by the time they achieved proficiency. As Kubota's work was conducted in the similar context of sojourn in Japan and the subjects were proficient in Japanese, the findings suggest that integrative orientations are representative of proficient learners.

3　Conclusion: Implications and Questions for Future Research

The present study investigated Japanese learners' beliefs regarding one construct of Japanese vocabulary, onomatopoeia, within the broader framework of Japanese language learning. The study distinguished between beliefs of narrow scope (beliefs about onomatopoeia) and beliefs of broad scope (orientations for studying Japanese). The beliefs of two kinds were identified by factor analyses and the correlations between the beliefs were checked by correlation analysis.

The factor analysis of narrow-scope beliefs showed that the learners find onomatopoeia and its acquisition difficult due to meaning and memorizing difficulties of onomatopoeia. Nevertheless, they are aware of the importance of acquiring it and have a desire to study it. On the practical level, identifications of these beliefs suggest that the importance of acquiring onomatopoeia must not be underestimated.

The factor analysis of broad-scope beliefs showed a high degree of factors of an integrative nature. The concepts of interest and enjoyment were identified as motivating proficient speakers to engage in Japanese language learning. Instrumental aspects concerning personal profit and career were also indentified as motivating the learners. It should be noted that external factors like family and

[19] Kubota (2003) uses the term "motivation". In some studies "motivation" and "orientation" are used interchangeably or without clarifying the distinction between the two terms. It is, however, assumed that Kubota uses "motivation" in the sense of "reasons to learn". Therefore, the term matches the definition of "orientation" in the present study. Kubota's results are thus compatible to the results of the present study.

educational settings were not identified as part of the factors, so that it can be assumed that these constructs are not central in motivating proficient learners.

The finding that proficient learners have strong beliefs of integrative nature suggests that educators should realize that integrative beliefs about the target language can help learners to persist in their language learning. In order to make these findings more applicable to educational settings, future research needs to be conducted to investigate which learners' factors are responsible for shaping their beliefs of different scopes.

On the theoretical level, the analysis of relationships between the beliefs of narrow scope showed that the belief about the difficulty of onomatopoeia was related to the beliefs of integrative nature. This means that awareness of difficulty does not prevent learners from studying the language. Future research needs to investigate the beliefs about the difficulty of different scopes in order to analyze how they interact with other beliefs and how they affect language learning.

The analysis also established a link between the beliefs of integrative nature of different scopes, i.e. narrow-scoped and broad-scoped beliefs of integrative nature were highly interrelated. In other words, those who study Japanese because they are motivated by integrative aspects of interest and enjoyment also hold positive beliefs about the acquisition of onomatopoeia. That is, the integrative aspects, as opposed to aspects of an instrumental nature, seem to exist on separate levels of the matrix of learners' beliefs.

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(Elena TSYGALNITSKY・Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Doctoral Program in Literature and Linguistics.)

ビリーフの研究
日本語オノマトペに関する事例研究

ツィガルニツカヤ　レナ

本研究は、日本語学習者のビリーフに焦点を当て、理論的観点および教育実践の観点からの分析を目指すものである。理論的な観点では、ビリーフの構造を調べることが目的である。日本語学習者のビリーフを「広いスコープのビリーフ」及び「狭いスコープのビリーフ」に分類し、日本語に対するビリーフ「広いスコープのビリーフ」および日本語オノマトペに対するビリーフ「狭いスコープのビリーフ」を明らかにし、両者の関係を調べた。異なるスコープのビリーフ関係を調べることで、ビリーフ体系の構造が考察可能になると思われる。

教育上の観点では、これまであまり研究されていなかったオノマトペに対するビリーフ及び日本語学習に対するビリーフを調べ、日本語教育の現場にとっての意義について考察した。102 名の中上級の学習者からのデータを統計処理し、因子分析により、狭いスコープのビリーフ「オノマトペの困難さ」、「オノマトペの重要性」、「オノマトペ学習統合的志向」、「オノマトペの使用される限られた文脈」、また広いスコープのビリーフとして「統合的志向」と「道具的学習」が得られた。相関係数分析では、統合的ビリーフの間に有意な相関が見られた。このことから、統合的な要素は異なるスコープにおいて存在することが分かった。教育現場で生かすような具体的な対策を考えるためには、学習者のビリーフと学習者要因との関係を調べる必要があると思われる。今後の課題としたい。