

Exploring the Role Perceptions of University English Teachers: A Comparison Between Japanese and Non-Japanese Teachers*

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore how university English teachers in Japan perceived their various teaching roles (their role perceptions) and to investigate how such perceptions were constructed. Following a series of qualitative studies (Moritani, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019), the author conducted a questionnaire survey in which 328 university English teachers took part. In this paper, Japanese teachers of English ($n = 170$) and non-Japanese teachers of English ($n = 158$) were compared regarding their role perceptions. Their role perceptions implied that both groups of teachers tended to be oriented to student-centered teaching rather than teacher-centered teaching, but this tendency was more evident among non-Japanese English teachers. The paper discusses how professional development, such as pre-service teacher education programs and ongoing professional development activities, may constitute a significant influence on role perceptions. It also discusses beliefs regarding explicit grammar instruction, as well as how strongly held beliefs regarding the perceived importance of being Japanese (in the case of Japanese teachers) and of being (near-) native English speakers (in the case of non-Japanese teachers) may also influence perceptions of their teaching roles.

1. Introduction

This paper reports the findings of a questionnaire survey which is part of a larger research project that explored how university English teachers in Japan perceived their roles as teachers and what factors influenced their perceptions. The study of language teacher cognition, which encompasses the broad mental constructs such as thoughts, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that language teachers possess, has provided insights into teachers' classroom practices and their decision-making for a few decades (Borg, 2003, 2006, 2012). Similar studies have also been conducted in the Japanese context, but

they have mainly dealt with secondary school teachers (e.g., Nishimuro & Borg, 2013) and little attention has been paid to university English teachers (Nagatomo, 2012). Nagatomo (2012) pointed out the lack of studies in this context and investigated the cognitions of Japanese teachers who taught English at Japanese universities, noting that these teachers had significant influence over English education in Japan. However, as suggested by Shimo (2016), investigating both Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and non-Japanese teachers of English (NJTEs) is important because English programs with both JTEs and NJTEs have become more common than they were 10 years ago, when Nagatomo's study was conducted. Unlike assistant language teachers at secondary schools, NJTEs at universities are likely to have more direct influences on students' learning outcomes because they plan and imple-

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ment lessons on their own. Thus, the current research project included both groups of university English teachers and aimed to gain additional insights into the cognitions of teachers in this context.

Previously, the author of this research conducted a series of qualitative studies (Moritani, 2018, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019) and investigated both JTEs and NJTEs in terms of their role perceptions (see Section 2.1 for details about role perceptions). The results showed some differences between both teacher groups; however, owing to the nature of the qualitative methodology of the studies, whether the participants in these studies could actually represent the entire population of the two teacher groups. Thus, the current study examined a sizable sample of teachers in the two groups to quantitatively find out the differences as well as similarities regarding their role perceptions. In addition, the questionnaire survey administered in this study obtained a large quantity of data. Hence, this paper reports only results of the between-group comparison regarding teachers' role perceptions and discusses the potential influences on these role perceptions.

2. Theoretical Background of the Study

2.1 Role perceptions

The current research project, briefly introduced above and explained further in a later section, used role perceptions as a key concept. Role perceptions have been defined as “the configuration of interpretations that language teachers attach to themselves, as related to the different roles they enact and the different professional activities that they participate in as well as how others see these roles and activities” (Farrell,

2011, p. 55).¹⁾ Farrell identified 16 roles that three experienced English as a second language (ESL) teachers in Canada perceived to play, such as communication controller and presenter, based on a series of group discussions. However, as Farrell (2011) commented, teachers' role perceptions can be context-sensitive because each teacher is likely to have developed their own teaching style in keeping with their specific teaching contexts. More research on the topic in various teaching contexts is necessary; however, no studies have focused on this aspect of cognitions of English teachers at Japanese universities. Furthermore, Farrell (2011) emphasized the importance of this conception for language teachers' sense-making of their role as a professional, and noted that the interpretation of teachers' roles was “central to the beliefs, assumptions, values, and practices that guide teachers both inside and outside the classroom” (p. 54). This suggests that investigating role perceptions would thus illuminate an important aspect relevant to the study of language teacher cognitions.

Language teacher cognitions can be defined as a “complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs that language teachers draw on in their work” (Borg, 2006, p. 272). A substantial body of studies has investigated language teacher cognitions and provided evidence for the connections between individual teachers' cognitions and their classroom practices (e.g., Johnson, 1992; Woods, 1996). Johnson (1992) examined ESL reading teachers' methodological orientation of language teaching and their practices and found the connections between them. She concluded that teachers' methodological orientations correspond to their practices and different meth-

odological orientations can result in different teaching practices. Moreover, Breen et al. (2001) showed the connections between the pedagogical principles that ESL teachers possessed and their practices. However, they also pointed out that their study participants who held the same pedagogical principles externalized them differently in their practices. They therefore suggested that teachers have personalized configurations of pedagogical principles. Studies such as Basturkmen et al. (2004) and Ng and Farrell (2003) indicated the incongruence of teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices. Ng and Farrell (2003) examined four secondary school English teachers in Singapore and showed that these teachers gave explicit error corrections in contradiction to their stated beliefs owing to time restriction. They further pointed out that contextual factors such as time constraints and high-stake examinations affected teachers' decision-making processes. All these previous studies have indicated the complexity of teacher cognitions, and it is now believed that what teachers do is not fully understood without considering their cognitions that interact with the context surrounding teachers.

Farrell (2011), mentioned above, asserted that role perceptions were one of the constructs of language teacher cognitions and that such role perceptions are fundamentally related to other dimensions of language teacher cognition, such as knowledge and beliefs. If this is the case, the findings of studies that investigate the role perceptions of language teachers can provide additional insights into the complex nature of language teacher cognitions within specific contexts; in the current study, the context is that of English teaching at a Japanese university.

2.2 Native and non-native English teachers

From ideological and political perspectives, dichotomizing language teachers into native and non-native speakers has been criticized (e.g., Holliday, 2005, 2006). In these perspectives, such divisions are considered to create prejudice and the discrimination and marginalization of "the other" (Holliday, 2005; Houghton & Rivers, 2013). However, from educational perspectives, comparing the two groups of teachers can be important with respect to their teaching practices and the subsequent student learning outcomes (Medgyes, 1992).

Previous studies have shown the differences in teaching practices between native and non-native English-speaking teachers (Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Medgyes, 1992, 2001). Reves and Medgyes (1994) conducted an international questionnaire survey with 216 teachers, of which 90% were non-native English-speaking teachers. About 66% of their sample responded that there were differences in teaching behaviors between native and non-native teachers. In the subsequent study, Medgyes (2001) summarized the differences in their teaching behaviors and characterized them based on the following four areas: use of English, general attitude, attitude to teaching the language, and attitude to teaching culture. The current research project compared JTEs and NJTEs, which may include near-native English-speaking teachers, because the teaching practices of these two groups may differ, as Medgyes' (2001) characterization implies. If this is the case, the cognitions of the two groups are also likely to differ.

In the Japanese university context, Matsuura, Chiba, and Hilderbrandt (2001) compared the beliefs of JTEs and NJTEs as part of their study

that mainly examined the differences in beliefs between students and teachers. They found the differences in the perceived importance of instructional areas between the two teacher groups. In their study, compared with JTEs, NJTEs perceived speaking and non-verbal cues as more important. More recently, Shimo (2016) compared these two teacher groups²⁾ using a questionnaire survey with respect to their perceptions of students' personalities and attitudes. She reported some similarities and differences between the groups; one difference that she pointed out was related to teachers' perceptions regarding their students' preferences regarding class format. In her study, the JTE group believed more strongly than the NJTE group that their students liked a class format in which they have frequent opportunities to initiate activities. In contrast, the NJTE group more strongly believed that their students liked to receive explanations from teachers. In the following study, Shimo (2018) indicated that the JTE group believed more strongly than the NJTE group that their students wanted teachers to use more Japanese, while the NJTE group believed more strongly that their students wanted their teachers to use more English. These findings are relevant for the current study because if these teacher groups' perceptions of their students differ, the teachers belonging to the different groups might play different roles in class in order to adjust to their students in keeping with their perceptions.

The results of these studies indicated that JTEs and NJTEs at Japanese universities have distinct characteristics in certain respects, but no conclusion has been reached, due to the paucity of related studies. Considering the complex nature of language teacher cognitions, exploring

other aspects of language teacher cognitions is likely to add to (or counter) the existing evidence on the issue. In such explorations, the factors that cause the differences between groups should also be investigated, if any, which can contribute to better understand English teachers and English teaching at Japanese universities.

3. The Current Research Project

The current research project has been undertaken to further explore the similarities and differences in role perceptions between JTEs and NJTEs teaching at Japanese universities and the factors that contributed to the construction of the role perceptions. Role perceptions are used instead of focusing on specific aspects of teaching because, as reviewed earlier, this concept can be one of the fundamental conceptions of teaching and be deeply related to other important aspects of teacher cognitions such as beliefs and values. Thus, studies focusing on role perceptions are likely to reveal the factors that underpinned the classroom practices of both groups of university English teachers.

Previously, the author of this study conducted a series of qualitative studies regarding role perceptions of university English teachers (Moritani, 2018, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019). Moritani (2018) conducted in-depth interviews with three NJTEs individually and identified 12 typical teaching roles that they perceive themselves to play in class. Some of these roles were English expert, facilitator, and learning advisor. Using the 12 identified teaching roles as examples, subsequent interviews (Moritani, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019) were conducted with 36 university English teachers (JTE = 14; NJTE = 22³⁾) to assess their role perceptions and the

critical factors that influenced their perceptions. Using an inductive approach to qualitative data analysis known as the modified grounded theory approach (Kinoshita, 2003), various teaching roles and critical factors, which included contextual factors, classroom practices, professional development, teacher internal factors, and previous language learning experiences, were identified. These influences were later verified based on language teacher cognition studies.

During these studies, Moritani (2019b) quantitatively compared the role perceptions of 14 JTEs and 16 NJTEs⁴ using the qualitative data obtained. In the interviews conducted by Moritani (2019a) and Moritani & Iwai (2019), the participants were presented a list of teaching roles and were asked to choose the roles that they perceived themselves playing in a multiple-response format. Next, the participants were requested to rank the roles according to their perceived importance. In the analysis, the roles ranked as most important were counted in the respective teacher groups. The results showed the differences between the two groups. The proportion of JTEs who chose motivator as the most important role was larger than that of NJTEs (JTEs: 35.7%; NJTEs: 18.8%). More than half of the NJTEs chose facilitator as the most important role and this proportion is larger than that of JTEs (JTEs: 35.7%; NJTEs: 56.3%). Further, 21.3% of the JTEs perceived language model role is the most important role while only one NJTE thought so (6.7%). Two JTEs (14.3%) thought representative of a foreign culture role was the most important, but no NJTE chose this role as the most important. Another interesting difference found in this study was the designer role. Designing courses, materials, and lesson plans is not part of the teacher

roles performed in class, but two NJTEs (12.5%) chose this role as the most important while no JTE perceived this role with the same importance. These results clearly cannot be generalized owing to the methodological limitations. The author, however, hypothesized that there are in fact differences between the two groups. Moreover, if there are differences in role perceptions between groups, then there are likely to be differences in the factors influencing the formation of the role perceptions identified in the series of qualitative studies. In fact, the JTEs who participated in the interview studies tended to talk about grammar instructions along with their role perceptions, while very few NJTEs made such references in the interviews. Also, the extent of the influence of such beliefs on the role perceptions was unclear in the series of qualitative studies. The same can be said regarding the other critical factors such as professional development and previous language learning experiences. Thus, the current study was performed to clarify these points, and the following research questions were formulated.

RQ1: Are there any differences between the role perceptions of JTEs and NJTEs?

RQ2: How strongly do university English teachers in Japan recognize the factors influencing their role perceptions? Are there any differences in this between JTEs and NJTEs?

4. Method

4.1 Participants

In total, 328 university English teachers who taught at Japanese universities participated in this study. Of these, 170 were JTEs and 158 were NJTEs. An invitation to the online survey

(SurveyMonkey Inc.) was sent via e-mail to the English teachers recruited to the study. Teachers were recruited from the directory of an English language teachers' organization and the program handbook of an annual English teachers' academic conference, or they were personally known to the author. The e-mail included the consent form and the link to the questionnaire. The front page of the questionnaire also contained a consent form. Both consent forms indicated that the survey was conducted on a voluntary basis and that participants could leave the website at any time if they wanted to withdraw from the survey. The website collected data from February 22 to May 10, 2019. E-mails were sent to 1602 teachers, and 342 teachers participated (estimated response rate: 21.3%).

Of the 342 surveys, 14 were excluded owing to the presence of a set response pattern (for example, all responses were "1") or the fact that the respondents characterized themselves solely as researchers. As this study focused on university English teachers, respondents had to identify as either English teachers or English teachers/researchers. As a result, the responses of 170 JTEs and 158 NJTEs were included in the analysis (see Appendix for a summary of the participants).

4.2 Instruments

The questionnaire contained 51 items across five sections. These sections asked about (1) participants' background (Appendix), (2) participants' role perceptions, (3) factors influencing participants' role perceptions, (4) participants' teacher self-efficacy regarding student motivation, and (5) participants' views on the purposes of university English teaching. The current paper

only focuses on Sections 2 and 3, and the analysis results of Sections 4 and 5 have not been reported in this paper. The explanation for these sections of the questionnaire has also been omitted in this paper for brevity. Items for Sections 2 and 3 were created based on the results of Moritani (2019a) and Moritani and Iwai (2019).

The questions had two response formats. Section 1 contained multiple choice items, whereas Sections 2 and 3 used 7-point Likert scales from 1 (*strongly disagree*) through 4 (*neither agree nor disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). There were six versions of the questionnaire in total, including three counterbalanced questionnaires that presented the items in a different order in two languages (Japanese and English). Offering the questionnaire in these languages mitigated any possible fatigue effects. Items were created in English and translated into Japanese by the researcher. Then, they were back-translated by a native English-speaking university teacher who had passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test N-1. Revisions were made when inconsistencies were found. This ensured that the items were presented with accurate and consistent meanings in both languages. Then, the items were reviewed in two phases by Japanese and non-Japanese applied linguists, educational psychologists, and researchers in related fields. In the first phase, the content validity of the items was established, and the clarity of meaning and wording were checked in the second phase.

Background information. In total, seven multiple choice items asked for participants' gender, employment status, age group, years of university teaching experience, years of English teaching experience, student type (whether they

teach those who majoring in English-related fields or not), and course type (whether it was a compulsory English course and/or a content course, such as literature and cross-cultural communication).

Role perceptions. To assess participants' perceptions of their teaching roles, nine items including one distractor item were used. The items offered participants a range of teaching roles to choose from, including the roles of language model (LM), English expert (EE), transmitter of knowledge (TK), cultural representative (CR), motivator (MO), facilitator (FA), learning advisor (LA), and designer (DE). For example, the item for the language model role was, "I perceive myself as a language model for students."

Factors influencing role perceptions. Items in this section investigated how participants assessed the factors influencing their role perceptions. These factors have been identified as critical in previous studies (Moritani, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019). Initially, this section contained 31 items across seven categories. However, one category, beliefs regarding teacher-centeredness, was eliminated from the analysis because the items in this category were invalid owing to low internal consistency. As a result, this section contained six categories and a total of 28 items. These categories included previous language learning experiences, professional development, expectations, students' characteristics, self-concept, and beliefs regarding grammar teaching. Each category has been explained below, and the number of items has been given. Cronbach's α was calculated using the data from this study.

Previous language learning experiences (LE; three items, $\alpha = .769$). This category assessed participants' evaluation of their past language learning experiences. It is one of the major influences of constructing language teacher cognitions (Borg, 2003). For example, "My teaching style is based on what I experienced in learning foreign language(s) in school."

Professional development (12 items). This category was divided into four subcategories based on previous qualitative studies (Moritani, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019). The relationships between teacher cognitions and professional development, including teacher education programs and in-service teacher training programs, have been investigated in previous studies (e.g., Borg, 2012; Peacock, 2001).

Teacher education/training program (TE; three items, $\alpha = .719$). The items in this subcategory asked participants to evaluate their experiences of undergraduate and graduate teacher education and training or education provided by employers or academic associations. For example, "I learned a lot about how to teach from the education that I received related to language teaching and/or language learning."

Ongoing professional development (OP; three items, $\alpha = .792$). These items asked about teachers' experiences of ongoing professional development, such as attending conferences and workshops. For example, "Participating in self-development activities such as workshops and academic conferences deepened my knowledge about foreign language teaching."

Discussion with coworkers (CO, three items, $\alpha = .879$). These items assessed how participants made use of advice from and discussion with other teachers. For example, “I have improved my teaching skills by talking with the other teachers at my workplace(s) about how to teach.”

Self-study (SS, three items, $\alpha = .676$). These items were about teachers' self-study experiences and asked if self-study was a useful means to improve their teaching. For example, “I have read a lot of books, journals, articles, etc. about foreign language teaching/learning in order to become a better teacher.”

***Expectations* (EXP; four items, $\alpha = .831$).** The items in this category asked how strongly participants felt the expectations from their university regarding teaching. Individual teachers teach in unique contexts; therefore, they may feel context-specific expectations. However, the items in this category were expressed in generic statements to address expectations in various contexts. For example, “I feel that my university expects from me a certain teaching style (to be strict, to teach entertainingly, to introduce foreign cultures, etc.).”

***Student characteristics* (SC; four items, $\alpha = .845$).** This category assessed participants' general opinions and impressions of their students. Japanese university students are often characterized as passive and unmotivated to learn English (Snyder, 2019). Previous qualitative studies (Moritani, 2019a) found similar opinions and impressions. For example, “My students are passive in class.”

***Self-concept* (SELF; three items, $\alpha = .842$).**

The items in this category related to how participants viewed themselves. More specifically, the items asked whether participants thought that being Japanese or non-Japanese mattered with regard to being an English teacher. For example, JTEs responded to the following statement: “Being Japanese is an important aspect of my role as a university English teacher.” In contrast, NJTEs responded to the following statement: “Being a native speaker of English (or near-native English-speaking foreign teacher) is an important aspect of my role as a university English teacher.” The wordings of both versions slightly differed. The former asked about being Japanese, which implied nationality and/or growing up and being educated in Japan over and above just speaking the language. The latter asked about being a native speaker or near-native speaker of English regardless of cultural background. The wording followed that of statements found in previous studies and was used to incorporate both the participants' intentions and meanings (Moritani, 2019a; Moritani & Iwai, 2019). For example, in previous studies, Japanese participants commented that sharing with students the same first language and experiences of being Japanese was important to them as English teachers. In contrast, non-Japanese participants emphasized the importance of being a native speaker of English.

***Beliefs regarding grammar teaching* (GT; three items, $\alpha = .829$).** Three items asked about participants' general beliefs regarding explicit grammar instructions. For example, “In English classes, students understand English better when teachers explain grammatical rules explicitly in class.” Previous qualitative studies

found that participants' beliefs about grammar teaching were salient to their role perceptions. These variables may influence teachers' teaching practices.

4.3 Analysis

Variables were compared between JTE and NJTE groups to determine the similarities and differences in their role perceptions. Independent-samples *t*-tests were performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM Corp), version 25.0, to compare the results of the two teacher groups regarding their role perceptions and the factors influencing them. Owing to the necessity for a series of *t*-tests with several dependent variables, significance levels were adjusted using Bonferroni correction in each analysis to avoid type I errors. Significance levels were set at $p < .0062$ and $p < .0055$ for research questions one and two, respectively. When Levene's test indicated unequal variances, Welch's *t*-test results have been reported.

5. Results

Demographic differences were found between both groups. As the Appendix shows, there were recognizable differences between the

JTE and NJTE groups. For example, 21.2% of JTE participants were part-time teachers, whereas only 10.8% of NJTE participants were part-time teachers. Only 11.8% of JTE participants were in their 30s, but their NJTE counterparts reached 24.1%. Noticeable differences were also found in the type of course that the participants taught, the type of student that participants taught, and participants' university teaching experience (the number of years they had spent teaching at Japanese universities). These differences implied that the groups were not strictly comparable. However, statistical analysis was conducted to confirm that demographic variables were not major factors that influenced role perceptions.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, including the mean scores, for each role. Participants were asked to rate how strongly they identified with various role perceptions. Of all participants, LM (4.40), EE (5.02), TK (4.98), and CR (4.7) were rated moderately highly by participants. Roles including MO (5.86), FA (6.23), LA (5.84), and DE (5.57) were rated more highly than the other four roles.

An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the mean scores for each role between the JTE and NJTE groups. There were statisti-

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for group comparison regarding role perceptions

	Total (<i>N</i> = 328)		JTE (<i>n</i> = 170)		NJTE (<i>n</i> = 158)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
<i>Language model</i> (LM)	4.40	1.70	4.32	1.66	4.49	1.74	.93	.350	
<i>English expert</i> (EE)	5.02	1.48	5.05	1.45	4.99	1.51	.32	.745	
<i>Transmitter of knowledge</i> (TK)	4.98	1.37	4.94	1.31	5.05	1.44	.95	.341	
<i>Cultural representative</i> (CR)	4.70	1.56	4.74	1.48	4.66	1.64	.44	.657	
<i>Motivator</i> (MO)	5.86	1.00	5.82	0.94	5.90	1.07	.67	.500	
<i>Facilitator</i> (FA)	6.23	.86	5.96	0.97	6.52	0.60	6.22	.000*	.69 [‡]
<i>Learning advisor</i> (LA)	5.84	.90	5.69	0.93	5.99	0.85	3.09	.002*	.34 [†]
<i>Designer</i> (DE)	5.57	1.39	5.23	1.48	5.93	1.19	4.73	.000*	.52 [‡]

Note. * = $p < .0062$, two-tailed. [†] = small effect size; [‡] = medium effect size.

cally significant differences in the mean scores for FA ($t(327) = 6.22, p = .000$), LA ($t(326.96) = 3.09, p = .002$), and DE ($t(321.57) = 4.73, p = .000$). Medium effect sizes were observed for FA ($d = .69$) and DE ($d = .52$). Compared with the JTE group, the NJTE group rated these roles more highly. There were no significant differences between the groups for the roles of LM, EE, TK, CR, and MO. The NJTE group tended to rate the roles of FA, LA, and DE more highly than the JTE group.

Table 2 indicates the findings of the factors influencing role perceptions. Factors concerning professional development, including TE (JTE mean score = 5.62, NJTE mean score = 5.84), OP (JTE mean score = 5.48, NJTE mean score = 5.65), and SS (JTE mean score = 5.60, NJTE mean score = 6.03), were rated relatively highly. This suggested that participants valued previous professional development opportunities. Their previous language learning experiences had less impact on their teaching (JTE mean score = 4.22, NJTE mean score = 4.19). Average scores for EXP (JTE mean score = 4.11, NJTE mean score = 3.96) and SC (JTE mean score = 3.83, NJTE mean score = 4.13) were around the median (4.0) of

the scale.

The NJTE group assessed their self-study as the most profitable among the nine variables measured (mean score = 6.03). This was less evident among the JTE participants, as evidenced by their mean score of 5.60. There was a significant difference between the groups with a small effect size ($t(326) = 4.16, p = .000, d = .46$).

The JTE participants rated two variables as significantly higher than the NJTE group with a medium effect size. First, for SELF, the JTE group's mean score was 5.21 but that of the NJTE group was slightly over the median point of the scale, 4.35 ($t(326) = 5.69, p = .000, d = .63$). The JTE group tended to regard being Japanese as important, while this tendency for the NJTEs being (near-) native English speakers was not salient. There was also a significant difference between the two groups with a medium effect size for GT. However, the scores were not very high. One was slightly above the median point (JTE mean score = 4.42), and the other was just below the median (NJTE mean score = 3.68). Overall, GT had a stronger influence on the JTEs than the NJTEs ($t(326) = 5.50, p = .000, d = .61$), but the overall influence of GT was quite weak

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for group comparison regarding influential factors

	JTE ($n = 170$)		NJTE ($n = 158$)		t	p	d
	M	SD	M	SD			
<i>Previous language learning experiences (LE)</i>	4.22	1.29	4.19	1.35	.21	.827	
<i>Teacher education programs (TE)</i>	5.62	1.13	5.84	1.09	1.80	.072	
<i>Ongoing professional development (OP)</i>	5.48	1.24	5.65	1.27	1.22	.223	
<i>Self-study (SS)</i>	5.60	.90	6.03	.98	4.16	.000*	.46 [†]
<i>Coworkers (CO)</i>	4.54	1.45	4.94	1.63	2.40	.017	
<i>Expectations (EXP)</i>	4.11	1.44	3.96	1.41	.98	.327	
<i>Student characteristics (SC)</i>	3.83	1.25	4.13	1.33	2.15	.033	
<i>Self-concept (SELF)</i>	5.21	1.25	4.35	1.49	5.69	.000*	.63 [†]
<i>Beliefs regarding grammar teaching (GT)</i>	4.42	1.19	3.68	1.23	5.50	.000*	.61 [†]

Note. * = $p < .0055$, two-tailed. [†] = small effect size; [‡] = medium effect size.

in both groups.

6. Discussion

Results showed the similarities and differences between JTEs and NJTEs regarding their role perceptions and the factors influencing them. Overall, role perceptions were similar between the groups. Teachers did not identify very strongly with language model (LM), English expert (EE), transmitter of knowledge (TK), or cultural representative (CR), but they did identify strongly with motivator (MO), facilitator (FA), learning advisor (LA), and designer (DE). The former set of roles has often been linked to the teacher-centered approach, while the latter has been linked to the student-centered approach (e.g., Nunan & Lamb, 1996). Student-centered roles were rated more highly than teacher-centered roles in both groups, which implied that university English teachers tended to be oriented to student-centered teaching, regardless of whether they were JTE or NJTE. In the past, university English courses were taught by Japanese teachers from linguistics or literature backgrounds, and their classes involved teaching students about English in Japanese and explaining grammar in Japanese (Nagasawa, 2004; Seargeant, 2009). Also, Medgyes (2001) characterized that non-native English-speaking teachers can be better suppliers of knowledge about English because they can use students' first language. However, the results of the current study did not support this interpretation because there were no between-group differences regarding the perceived roles as English expert (EE), and transmitter of knowledge (TK). Teachers' academic background can be used as explanation for these disagreements with the previous

research. A recent survey on university English teachers by the JACET (Japan Association of College English Teachers) 4th Survey Committee on English Education (2018) showed that the percentage of Japanese teachers with linguistics and literature backgrounds decreased from 50.9% in 2003 to 25% in 2017. Almost two-thirds (62.8%) of the survey respondents in 2017 had English language teaching or applied linguistics backgrounds. Most of the in-service JTEs have such academic backgrounds and seem to be acquainted with student-centered approaches.

This interpretation is supported by the results of the current study. The participants gave relatively high scores on the items regarding professional development (Table 2). This indicated that both groups considered professional development to have significant influence on various aspects of participants' professional lives, including their role perceptions. In the field of language teacher cognitions, an important discussion is that about the impact of teacher education and training programs on teacher cognitions, especially beliefs. Some studies have claimed that educational programs have an insufficient impact on beliefs, which form through teachers' experiences as students (e.g., Peacock, 2001). In this study, on the contrary, in-service university English teachers in Japan reported that the impact of teacher education programs outweighed that of previous language learning experiences. The current study did not focus on beliefs concerning the effectiveness of teacher education programs; moreover, the present study's method, including the participants and their contexts, differed from previous studies that focused on teacher education programs. Because of this, interpreting the results in the context of previous

research is difficult. However, the results of the current study clearly indicated the importance of professional development programs for university English teachers in Japan.

In response to research question one (Are there any differences between the role perceptions of JTEs and NJTEs?), there were differences in the results. NJTEs perceived themselves playing student-centered roles more strongly than JTEs. As Moritani (2019b) suggested, NJTEs perceived themselves as facilitator (FA) and designer (DE) more strongly than JTEs. In contrast, the assessment on language model (LM), cultural representative (CR), and motivator (MO), which were found to be more important for JTEs in Moritani's study (2019b), was not found to be significantly different in the current study. It also became clear that increasing students' motivation is important for teachers in both of the teacher groups. Moritani (2019b) reported that his JTE participants tended to choose motivator as their most important role more than his NJTE participants did, but the current study showed that both groups assessed motivator (MO) relatively high, and there was no significant difference between groups. In summary, both teacher groups perceived themselves playing more student-centered roles than teacher-centered roles, but this tendency is more evident in NJTEs.

To understand why the role perceptions differed, the factors influencing role perceptions were compared between the two groups (research question two). For one thing, professional development, mentioned above, can be a major factor that could result in the differences seen in the role perceptions reported between the two groups. The quality and content of such professional development activities, as well as individual

teachers' receptiveness to such activities, may account for these differences. Teachers who had more professional development opportunities allowing them to learn student-centered approaches were likely to perceive facilitator (FA), learning advisor (LA), and designer (DE) as important roles. Thus, it can be inferred that a relatively large number of NJTEs had professional development opportunities to familiarize themselves with student-centered approaches.

The results showed the significant differences between the groups with medium effect size in self-concept (SELF) and beliefs regarding grammar teaching (GT). The JTE group valued their identity and experience as Japanese users and learners of English (JTE: 5.21). However, the influence of this factor did not appear clearly in language model (LM) in their role perceptions. In Moritani and Iwai's study (2019), a number of JTEs commented that being Japanese who use English was important for students. The high self-concept (SELF) score of JTEs was supposed to contribute to a high language model (LM) score in the role perceptions, but the actual score was not high (4.32). Rather, the JTE group valued their experiences as a Japanese learner of English, as evinced in the high learning advisor score (LA: 5.69). The self-concept (SELF) score of the NJTE group was 4.35 with a relatively high standard deviation (1.49). This may be related to their role perceptions and a language model (LM). The language model (LM) score of the NJTE group in the current study was not high (4.49), but the score also had a relatively large standard deviation (1.74), which indicated that teachers diverged from each other in terms of their perceptions of this role. Moritani (2019a) reported that NJTEs have various views on using the native speaker

as language model. He provided two contrasting views held by non-Japanese participants. One participant commented that a native-English speaking teacher should be a model for students, while another commented that the native speaker model was unacceptable. In the present study, the NJTEs who rated self-concept (SELF) highly were also likely to rate language model (LM) highly and vice versa. Future analysis should investigate the correlation between language model (LM) and self-concept (SELF) scores.

The high scores for beliefs regarding grammar teaching (GT) can be discussed with the high student-centeredness of the teachers of both groups. A high GT score implies high ratings of English expert (EE) and transmitter of knowledge (TK) in their role perceptions. However, this was not the case. Although between-group comparison revealed the significant differences of GT, the scores themselves were not very high for both groups (JTE mean score = 4.42, NJTE mean score = 3.68). It should be interpreted that university English teachers do not perceive English expert and transmitter of knowledge strongly because their beliefs regarding grammar teaching is not strong, at least in their teaching context. Instead, lower GT scores can strengthen the perceptions of students-centered roles because tasks and activities are designed to engage students in learning instead of directly teaching them grammar/vocabulary in student-centered classrooms (Nunan, 2015). The items that were created to assess teachers' beliefs regarding student-centeredness were supposed to provide more direct evidence in their role perceptions; however, they were found to be invalid in this study. Future investigation should look into this point.

7. Conclusion

Using role perceptions as a key concept, this study compared two English teacher groups teaching at Japanese universities: JTEs and NJTEs. The results of the questionnaire survey that was developed based on a series of qualitative studies conducted by the author showed the similarities and differences between the two groups. Both teacher groups perceived themselves as playing more student-centered roles than teacher-centered roles, but this tendency was more evident in NJTEs. The potential influences that contributed to the differences such as professional development and self-concept were discussed.

However, considering the complex nature of language teacher cognitions (Borg, 2006), the interplay of role perceptions and some of the factors influencing them are expected to be more complex. Hence, a more sophisticated analysis method, such as path analysis, should be applied. This will advance a more comprehensive understanding of the cognitions of university English teachers regarding their teacher roles.

Notes

- 1) Farrell (2011) used the term "professional role identities" for this concept.
- 2) Shimo (2016, 2018) used "English as a first language teachers" and "Japanese as a first language teachers" to refer to these two English teacher groups.
- 3) The number of NJTEs includes three teachers who took part in the first interview study (Moritani, 2018).
- 4) The number of NJTEs excludes three teacher who took part in the first interview study (Moritani, 2018) and three other teachers who chose not to use the list of teaching roles during their interviews.

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Appendix. Summary of the participants.

		Total (n = 328)	JTE (n = 170)	NJTE (n = 158)
Gender	Male	178 (54.3%)	71 (41.8%)	107 (67.7%)
	Female	142 (43.3%)	98 (57.6%)	44 (27.8%)
	N/A	8 (2.4%)	1 (0.6%)	7 (4.4%)
Employment	Full-time	275 (83.8%)	134 (78.8%)	141 (89.2%)
	Part-time	53 (16.2%)	36 (21.2%)	17 (10.8%)
Age	30s	58 (17.7%)	20 (11.8%)	38 (24.1%)
	40s	109 (33.2%)	51 (30.0%)	58 (36.7%)
	50s	118 (36.0%)	69 (40.6%)	49 (31.0%)
	≥ 60s	43 (13.1%)	30 (17.6%)	13 (8.2%)
University experiences	≤ 5 years	44 (13.4%)	15 (8.8%)	29 (18.4%)
	6–10 years	66 (20.1%)	31 (18.2%)	35 (22.2%)
	11–15 years	78 (23.8%)	39 (22.9%)	39 (24.7%)
	16–20 years	45 (13.7%)	25 (14.7%)	20 (12.7%)
	21–25 years	54 (16.5%)	33 (19.4%)	21 (13.3%)
	26–30 years	27 (8.2%)	19 (11.2%)	8 (5.1%)
	≥ 31 years	14 (4.3%)	8 (4.7%)	6 (3.8%)
Teaching experiences	≤ 5 years	11 (3.6%)	7 (4.1%)	4 (2.5%)
	6–10 years	32 (9.8%)	14 (8.2%)	18 (11.4%)
	11–15 years	63 (19.2%)	31 (18.2%)	32 (20.3%)
	16–20 years	63 (19.2%)	25 (14.7%)	38 (24.1%)
	21–25 years	65 (19.8%)	33 (19.4%)	32 (20.3%)
	26–30 years	50 (15.2%)	29 (17.1%)	21 (13.3%)
	≥ 31 years	44 (13.4%)	31 (18.2%)	13 (8.2%)
Student types	Only English related majors	49 (14.9%)	18 (10.6%)	31 (19.6%)
	Mainly English related majors	65 (19.8%)	30 (17.6%)	35 (22.2%)
	Only other majors	117 (35.7%)	77 (45.3%)	40 (25.3%)
	Mainly other majors	97 (29.6%)	45 (26.5%)	52 (32.9%)
Course types	Only compulsory English	120 (36.6%)	82 (48.2%)	38 (24.1%)
	Mainly compulsory English	150 (45.7%)	57 (33.5%)	93 (58.9%)
	Mainly content courses	58 (17.7%)	31 (18.2%)	27 (17.1%)