For our group project, we were interested in finding out if and why the Chinese language is overtaking the Japanese language here on the UIUC campus. Our group consisted of four researchers broken up into two language groups: Chinese and Japanese. Between our group, we conducted a total of eight interviews which helped us to find the answer to this question. Our first questions we used were quite broad so we decided to narrow our questions based on the answers we received on the first interview with the non-heritage advanced learners. After we narrowed our questions, our road to success and understanding of this language phenomenon helped us drastically in our final presentation at the EIU conference and final paper.

Response Paper #1: Change, choice, chances, and competition; the four C’s of neoliberalism. As defined by dictionary.com, neoliberalism is a political movement in the 1960’s that blends traditional liberal concerns for social justice with an emphasis on economic growth. Lisa Duggan’s, “The Twilight of Equality,” Ann Phoenix’s, “Youth and Society,” and Henry Giroux’s, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics” all touch upon, influence and make drastic points concerning this term and its impact on today’s societies. (P)“Capitalists could actually bring down capitalism” (New York Times). This is just the start of Duggan’s attempt to make the public aware of how neoliberalism is affecting our world and future. She starts off by introducing the origin of this term as well as how the economy and social issues/concerns have been heavily divided. Beginning in chapter 1,” Downsizing Democracy,” we become aware of just how apparent social injustices have become. For example, our elders (former contributors to our “survival” as a country) are being cut drastically from social security and health care while our government raises taxes to support a never-ending war in the Middle East even though a large majority of American citizens disagree with the Bush administration’s decision on this topic. This is one point that shows us how visually disgusting it is knowing our people’s voices have little impact on decisions made. Chapter 2, “The Incredible Shrinking Public,” discusses an annual conference held in Bernard College in 1982 that was meant to address the issue regarding women’s sexual freedom and suffrage but became a hot topic and heavily controversial and scrutinized. Instead of addressing issues such as freedom, marriage and sexuality, changing patterns in Africa and sexual choices, it focused on topics such as sex toys for women, S/M and queer sexuality. These
types of topics outraged many conservatives by focusing on prior controversial topics that were not so controversial catalyzing a more open approach to those discussion topics. Although there were many angered conservatives, I believe it was a smart move and cemented a growing link for not only feminists but for all liberals. Regarding chapter 1 on the “downfall” of democracy, it’s difficult to agree or disagree with what she was trying to portray. As a liberal, I enjoy seeing advancements made through technology and science because of the choices that we have yet it’s important that the government plays some role in deciding what’s right and wrong (ethical or non-ethical) before large mistakes are made. (P)Are education and masculinity intertwined? Ann Phoenix, professor of social and developmental psychology reports a study of young masculinities in 11-14 year-old boys in London during 1998 and 1999. The studies conducted showed that being good at sports, toughness, style and not being seen to get on with schoolwork is the road to popularity, girls and acceptance by your peers. During a child’s education, one is able to identify objects and certain information that will help them to develop into an individual. This contradicts neoliberalism because it’s positioned on the fact that everyone is identical in some ways and preaches the 4 C’s. For example, if you have the choice to not change (or have one mind set) and those around you have conformed to ideals that are now being pushed on you that threaten your ideals, who’s to say what is right and what is wrong? It becomes difficult for me to think in a deep mindset about such a topic because one thought continues to contradict another. (P)“America as we know it is falling apart, fast.” After reading Henry Giroux’s, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of cultural politics,” this was the first thought that came to mind. Although it’s freighting, it’s become a reality as each day passes. Giroux describes our near future as being militaristic and uncompassionate. “Under neoliberalism everything is either for sale or is plundered for profit” (Giroux, Henry). I agree with his statement especially when it comes to our environment. Considering we’re a country with an enormous amount of wealth and power, simple changes in everyday life that would lead to a healthier, cleaner environment for our next generations to come has turned out to be irrelevant. The issue of corporations not paying taxes is a huge reminder of a crumbling society where wealth and money are held higher then the basic rights of people. Not only are Americans effected by this, but he also makes a grand point about how our government implicates and imposes harsh rules and regulations to those countries in dyer need of loans. (P)All three of these articles addressed a clear, yet difficult understanding of neoliberalism. After reading all three, I thought it was easier to think about this term on a broad scale for it becomes too intertwined and confusing if thought about in a detailed manner. I agree with many points made by all authors yet have formed my own opinions based on their writings. If I were to study this topic deeply, it would be much easier and
enriching to understand if I had a year-to-year basis on what happened economically and socially. (P) The four C’s of neoliberalism; change, choice, chances and competition impact our world heavily. Neoliberalism, a political movement in the 1960’s that blends traditional liberal concerns for social justice with an emphasis on economic growth is portrayed through Duggan’s, “The Twilight of Equality,” Phoenix’s, “Youth and Society,” and Giroux’s, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics.” All three authors influence, touch upon and make drastic points concerning the world society.

Response Paper #2: “Social life.” To many college students in this period of time, this word seems foreign and out of reach due to the overwhelming demand of hours spent studying, pleasing our superiors and bettering ourselves. Although it’s fair to say that all of us have the choice to choose our paths, David Brook’s, “The Organization Kid,” and Katherin Boo’s, “The Best Job In Town,” help to shed light on the reality of today’s youth. (P) Brook’s article deeply touches home in a detailed explanation of how American society has let go of flexibility and experimentation and has opted for a more authoritarian, safer and “by the book” approach to life. He starts off with an introduction of his trip to Princeton University where he receives numerous responses from students via e-mail at odd hours of the night and ponders when students sleep and what their daily schedule entails. The responses he receives opens his eyes to a world much different then he had known at his age as well an insight to what our future may hold. Brooks then goes onto enlightening us about a child’s infancy, elementary school time, playtime, and adolescence. “Accomplishment begins with the first breaths of life” (Brooks). Compared to twenty or thirty years ago where it seemed a mother’s instinct was good enough to raise a child has now turned into an age where mothers’ follow a strict course or plan of action on how to raise a child based on research, books and studies in order to raise a goal-oriented, hard working and respectful son or daughter. While studies have shown certain types of parenting will help to produce this type of offspring, he also brings up how this generation has only seen peace, prosperity and parental protection and hasn’t had to deal with the hardships of an economic depression or major war like Vietnam. While students today may have the luxuries of an “overly safe” environment where education catalyzes prosperity for the future of America, it’s unclear whether we can handle some of the real challenges life has never thrown us. According to the Pew Report, the aftermath of September 11 (one of the only types of “war” our youth has seen) left 18% of people unable to sleep at night. While Brook’s time at college may have thrown him obstacles and helped to prepare him for what was next to come, it seems to be a generation or time where students could bask in the joy of interaction, clubs, dating, etc. While these are all
available to students today, to many it seems like a waste of time knowing they don’t really accomplish anything and really is intended for self-gratification and happiness—something that many of us have forgotten. (P) Boo’s article, “The Best Job In Town,” relays stories of outsourcing and Americanization to the people of Chennai, India. As our world become more globalized relying on technology for millions of transactions done daily, money is by far the number one culprit in losing our “self.” While Americans are uneasy about outsourcing, major corporations have turned to India as a source of cheap labor knowing many of its’ Indian workers have college degrees, speak English, always do an exception job and in some cases, surpass our American workers. Joe and Randy, creators of a computer based company called Office Tiger, employs hard workers such as Harish, a local of Chennai who teaches Western business tools and has climbed the ladder that now helps support his family. Although he’s able to give back to his parents and family, he says his job requires hours of work leaving him with no sleep, no time for friends or family, or time to even look out toward the sea. As business and clientele grew, Joe’s life seemed to become that of Harish’s—little time for anything but work. This article shows us how workers today as well as the future will be based on how fast things get done as well as the expense people will do them for. (P) Both of the articles derive the fact that Neoliberalism is alive in the U.S. and is slowly spreading to countries such as India. They give a sense of how people have become lost and are afraid of the unknown. Brook’s and Boo’s articles share some of the same aspects of the “new life” based on authority, hard work and respect that many of today’s youth as well as Indian youth are portraying. I especially agree with the main points made by Brook on how children are raised these days; in an overprotective environment where mistakes aren’t allowed and the discovering of one’s self becomes more and more difficult because of the rules and regulations set forth. Although I hate to say it, many of my “choices” are a representation of our molded society. Today’s world has become a major competition where one must go to drastic measures to outshine and be seen. Especially in Japan where schooling seems to be much more rigorous and involved than in the U.S., childrens’ lives are dependent on test scores and the amount of knowledge one can learn. I enjoyed the third to last paragraph by Boo where Harish leaves work early due to tiredness and is able to smell the sea while riding his bike. We sometimes forget the simple pleasures in life, how they can make us feel and how they can bring about simplicity and stabilization. It’s fascinating to know that although Harish and Joe live in opposite places, they have become a produce of neoliberalism. (P) Is what we’re doing for our youth helping or hindering our society? One way to help others understand youth today is through Boo’s and Brook’s articles. They both portray a sense of achievement, respect and education yet one important thing remains lost—our “self.”
Response Paper #3: "I hope that my child will be a person who can be useful in society." This was the response that many parents gave when asked what they wanted most for their child. Although this response may seem vague and quite simple, Anagnost’s, “Imagining Global Futures in China: The Child as a Sign of Value,” Austin’s, “Youth, Neoliberalism, Ethics: Some Questions,” and Ong’s, “Neoliberalism As Exception” inform and shed light upon the effects of neoliberalism between the Asian and American world and how education is the forefront for growth and prosperity. (P)While some of the world views China’s one child policy as a way to control population, Anagnost points out that it goes well beyond the issue of population and introduces readers to a new China where education has become the main focus of life not only for their family but for their country as well. "China has encouraged urban parents to improve the quality of their child through scientific methods of “superior nurture” (Anagnost). Like Katherin Boo’s article, “The Best Job In Town,” Chinese parents are making drastic changes in their lives in order to bear a child who’s respectful, intelligent and can make it in a competitive and often intimidating world. Mothers are urged to spend time with one another in a social environment exchanging thoughts and advice on the newest educational toys, nutritional supplements, after school programs and private tutors. They’re also charged with the responsibility of interacting with the child to realize the potential and strengths that can differentiate them in a world of fierce competition. Before this generation, the father’s sole purpose was to work and provide a safe financial nest that held the family together. His role as a parent now includes encouraging independence and introducing him/her to a large social world. Like author David Brooks once said, “Accomplishments begin with the first breaths of life.” With the use of educational studies and statistics, parents now understand some of the best ways in order to create a glamorous child from the first days of life. With these new roles intact, parents are seeing their children achieving and growing into people they once wish they could’ve become. Suppressed and unable to participate in college learning due to a ten year hiatus during the Cultural Revolution, the parent’s generation was forced to learn skills from peasants that in today’s world are no longer valued. Today’s generation of children in China are now seen as the future of China and the bridge to a more successful and powerful land where they’re able to compete with major countries such as America, Japan and Europe. Although this plan of action taking place all over China seems to be the best answer for the country as a whole in terms of climbing the social and economic ladder, the immobilization of the child due to long study hours has increased suicide rates, obesity and an overall sense of unhappiness. Neoliberalism seems to have created a huge division where one’s happiness and sense of well being is being substituted for the achievements through education. (P)"Education is a technology of power involved in the construction of modern ethics and knowledges, the beliefs, attitudes, and skills that shape new kinds of
knowledgeable subjects" (Ong). In this article, Ong stresses how pre
decentralized China has now become an educational power front where
parents push their children to pursue their undergraduate education in
places such as Europe, Australia and of course, America. Since the
1960’s, there’s been a huge influx of Asian and Latin communities in the
higher education system in America opening up the link between the
west and east. American schools are creating more and more cultural
exchange programs in places such as Hong Kong and Singapore where
twenty years ago the only international educational facilities where one
could go to were London and Paris. America now sees that there’s a
huge potential for maximum business growth in many parts of Asia and
have already set up factories and firms in South Korea, Southeast Asia
and China. China’s already fueled by American goods and mass media
providing an overwhelming interest to study abroad. This helps to
promise a bright and glamorous future for the Chinese knowing that the
link between the western and eastern world has finally been developed.
The support of America through programs such as H-1B, a program in
which the computer industry pressures the federal government to
increase the intake of skilled foreign workers provides acceptance and
cultural diversity. American schools also provide the top of the line
education where the Chinese can develop and interact like never before.
Their English skills improve drastically, they’re able to communicate with
people from all over the world and they’re able to earn world-class
credentials and professional skills that no other country on earth can
provide making America the number one destination for academic
learning and growth. Although this type of globalization provides an
increase in education and social understandment, Americans fear the
future knowing that the jobs that support their families are now being
sent overseas. Ong’s article provides a clear understanding of the
present and future of Asia while analyzing China as an up and coming
power machine bridging our world together. (P)
The last and final article
written by Joe Austin, “Youth, Neoliberalism, Ethics: Some Questions,”
provides articles from different areas and authors of writing with
information on growing up postmodern and youth in a risk society.
Neoliberalism has marked a point in time where the youth have become
the risk and can be described as weapons of mass destruction
dismantling adolescence and youth and creating a world where
education and finances are deemed most important. Neoliberalism, or
advanced liberalism provides no space or opportunity for one’s self to
reside and must be governed and constructed to survive. The question
that stands before us is whether the societies we’ve created helps or
hinders us. Like the other articles mentioned above, present and future
generation’s overall happiness and being able to be yourself will be
questioned and scrutinized knowing that you need to put those aside in
order to achieve goals that people before you have set. (P)
The centralization of ending suffering through education and learning may
bring about prosperity in an economic sense but it’s also creating
suffering in a social sense where college and finances are held in a
higher sense of importance rather than one’s overall happiness as a
human being. All three articles, “Imagining Global Futures in China: The
Child as a Sign of Value,” “Neoliberalism as Exception,” and “Youth,
Neoliberalism, Ethics: Some Questions,” all connect in some way or form
to education and globalization. “Which is more important to you- your
education and job, or your social world with friends and family?” You
can’t have both.

Response Paper #4: Laura C. Nelson’s “The Ambivalent Consumer, Questioning
Consumption in East Asia and the West,” and ”Measured Excess,
Status, Gender, and Consumer Nationalism in South Korea,” are both
detailed portrayals of the national mission in South Korea from the
1960’s to the late 1990’s and the fundamental backbone (the self-
conscious consumer) that shaped Korea from a starving, isolated,
peasant centered third world country to a booming economic
powerhouse able to compete in major transactions/trade, industry and
warfare. Not only does a strong nationalistic pride exist based on future
hopes and aspirations, due to frugality and hard work, Koreans have
taken a huge step in the right direction towards becoming a global key
player. (P) Chapter one of “Measured Excess” entitled “Consumer
Nationalism” opens with Nelson and her mission to study consumer
practice and nationalism. She’s confronted with the painstaking decision
of what type of clipboard and pen she should purchase in order to
conduct her research. Although an anthropologist herself, she surprises
herself by never thinking about where the products are constructed until
confronted by a few native Korean women who’s responses to the
foreign made goods are exactly opposite from one another. One is
disgusted knowing it’s made in Japan while the other adores it, thinking
Japanese products are of much higher quality and better looking. She
then goes onto telling the readers about how shops, restaurants,
apartment complexes, etc. are nearly indistinguishable due to major
company ties between Hyundai, Daiwoo and Kia. Many of these cute
and well-built structures reinforce the idea of homogeneity, social
coherence and the visible signs of national success that I will discuss
later. After this brief introduction of the present South Korea, we learn of
the backbreaking work, suffering, and frugality associated with the past
and how South Korea rose to power. We learn that at the beginning of
the 1960’s, South Korea was ranked as one of the poorest nations
alongside Conga, Kenya and Libya generating an income estimated at
less than $125 million per year due to the failure of developing into an
urban culture or merchant and artisan society such as neighboring China
and Japan. One of the major reasons for such a poverished country was
the split between the two Koreas and the aftermath of WWII. While the
north was adorned with energy generation plants and natural resources,
the southern climate made it possible for fertile rice paddies and vegetation. With communication ties cut off and the crippled countries due to the war, both depended heavily on foreign aid for basic survival. During the 1960’s, President Park had determined that increasing South Korean exports would be necessary to keep afloat a national economy that was dependent upon imports of most raw materials (Nelson). By designing industrial strategies not based on textiles but on heavy industry and chemicals by a few major companies, the amount of exports soared helping to create a stronger nation. In the first years of Park’s administration, his main goals were to promote public welfare, fair distribution of income among the people and freedom from exploitation. Although a few minor setbacks such as wage decreases for workers and high oil prices hindered production, labor hours continued to rise topping International Labor Organization charts in the 1980’s. Although South Korea today is on track financial, economic and social wise, the people of South Korea had to make great sacrifices transitioning from peasant work to industrial and commercial success. Working an extreme amount of hours for low wages under unelected government officials and dedicating their lives to becoming a stronger and successful nation strained the people into becoming fearful that if they didn’t continue this process, they would take huge steps back and return to a 1960’s time. Knowing that only a few decades ago they faced foreign invasion and shame of Japanese colonial domination, the growth of nationalism overwhelmed all of the country. Like China and countries trying to improve their nation, they continued to export millions of dollars of goods while only purchasing domestic made goods and services. This sense of patriotism has shaped South Korea into a country capable of many great things to come. (P)Like the article above, “The Ambivalent Consumer” gives a brief synopsis of economic development in the 1960’s to the 1990’s. Although many suffered in the countryside and urban slums, people sacrificed happiness and their own life in means of achieving an egalitarian society and unified nation. Like China during and after the Cultural Revolution, mothers dedicated their lives to their children’s future and to develop skills to help them become a member of society. This is very similar to Katherine Boo’s article, “The Best Job In Town” where the children are the main focus. The government preached about being frugal with money as to not waste it on material items by putting up posters in public spaces and passing out pamphlets in schools. By wasting money, the nation becomes weaker and the manpower conducted by past generations would be a waste. Also emphasized in this article is how the children of the early 1990’s were seen as endangering the nation through consumer practices. Popular Japanese video games and hard to find manga were being imported illegally while American foods such as pizza and hamburgers were becoming a major influence stressing the Korean government to crack down on such viscous foreign appeal. Picking up from where I left off concerning
homogeneity based on similar looking structures, the government’s stress on domestic rather than international sparked the same looking buildings due to the centralized thoughts of only a few major companies. Also stressed upon in this article is the “buy now pay later” plan. While most if not all transactions were made previous by cash (even to buy houses), the following idea to promote the use of consumer credit after the 1997 Asian financial crises swept the nation in hopes of improving tax collection. Although the first few purchases by consumers were soberly made, debt started to pile up leaving South Korea with the highest credit card debt in the world (Today). Because of this, the society is permeated with anxieties over appropriate consumption use. Although this nation has come far, economic troubles are a daily reminder that the nation is built upon self-conscious consumers and their choices and decisions. (P) Both Laura C. Nelson’s articles, “Measured Success” and “The Ambivalent Consumer introduces us to how far South Korea has come in such a short amount of time. Although credit card debt strickens the nation, the world of peasantry work and horrible conditions are now in the past. Although I respect those who strived (and who are still striving) for their unified Korea, I believe a more international South Korea where more imports and exports of goods and culture will help them to continue their economic growth. South Koreans continue to hope for a unified Korea where prosperous conditions will help to increase nationalistic pride and trade among nations.

Response Paper #5: Hanser’s, “The Chinese Enterprising Self: Young, Educated Urbanites and the Search for Work,” Nickola Pazderik’s, “Smile Chaoyang,” and Lisa Hoffman’s, “Autonomous Choices and Patriotic Professionalism,” introduce us to the late-socialist China where individuals are given the choice for what type of job they would like to pursue based on interests and the path to self-discovery. The film, “China Blue” on the other hand depicts a Maoist time where the bottom peasant class works long hours without choice. These four combined depict China in several ways and how China is globalizing and connecting with the rest of the world. (P) Hanser’s, “The Chinese Enterprising Self: Young, Educated Urbanites and the Search for Work” hit upon the positive and negative effects of job choice in China in the late 80’s to the mid-to late 90’s. “I feel like [my generation] is on the border of something” (Xiaoping, Li). Like Xiaoping, many of the other twenty-two urban youth aged nineteen to twenty-nine who were interviewed by Hanser in the summer of 1998 felt relatively the same. During Hanser’s research in northern and northeastern China, she noticed a plethora of youth turning their heads against the past generations socialistic government idea of forcing jobs upon citizens who’s main interests and skills weren’t considered. The “new” emerging China has opened the door for choice among Chinese urban youth catalyzing a growth for autonomy and mobility thus setting the tone for a more freedom based country for current and future generations to come.
Fifty-two percent of the interviewed concluded that “suitability to one's individual skills and strengths” (fuhe geren de techang) was the most important criteria in choosing a job. Although one must always consider finances, urban youth see jobs as a main underlying way for self-exploration, direction in life and maturation. Many youth are straying away from the idea of staying at a job for long periods of time and are opting for short time work in which one can perfect certain skills, have time for self-reflection and move onto other opportunities in turn giving them the chance to enhance prior learned skills and learn new skills that will benefit them in the search for their true “self.” Although this neoliberal change has given choice to many compared to the job selection in Mao's China, disappointments and inequalities such as a general “sense of unsteadiness” have come into play. With changes in the labor market, many have expressed a lack of confidence in one’s ability or desire to compete. Finding a suitable job that fits one’s self has become a major hurdle that’s added stress and worry to those who've yet to find “that” job and who have searched and searched and in the end come up short. Many feel disillusioned and have discovered that this newly found freedom of choice has left them abandoned in a world where they’re unable to compete. These two types of expressions support the idea that neoliberalism is extreme leaving little room for the “in-between.” (P)

“Smile Chaoyang,” written by Nickola Pazderic, focuses on State Neo-Confucianism, a modern adaptation of a millennium-old value system and Enlightenment, a system that rationalizes a utopian hope that universities will serve to liberate humans from drudgery and suffering through the application of reason to the problems of humanity at Chaoyang University of Technology (CYUT) in Taiwan. Before going into these, a brief introduction of the school, environment and students is given. CYUT is a private tertiary-level institution in a technical track system for students who’ve failed the highly competitive Taiwanese examination system. There are roughly 13,000 students with a faculty 350 who’ve adorned and induced a sense of happiness through quasi-scientific questionnaires, fliers and bright colored posters with messages influencing students to smile and say hello. After this introduction to the school as a whole, we learn of the role of State Neo-Confucianism and its everyday role in the lives of students. During the author’s tenure at CYUT, he found that all students believe that “building the society” is the number one responsibility of young people; not reading books conscientiously, exercising the body or establishing the family. Also, a state-sponsored organization known as “China Youth National Salvation Corps,” (who’s original aim was to prepare boys for military service but later became a Boy-Scout service) acts as a business model for the school. First year students are required to clean the school Monday through Friday as a part of a labor education system. Like many schools in Japan today, students are required to take out the classroom trash, sweep classrooms and hallways before and after school and clean the
chalkboards. The highest values of this system are harmony of social relations, conformity to group norms and respect for superiors. We then learn of Enlightenment or the Democratic-Consumerist where students consume and produce themselves as consumable long after the Nationalist retreat to Taiwan in 1949. Research in many fields by students and citizens was heavily policed and restricted and those who were intellects at the time were severely punished or extradited and killed. Although this period of time may be seen as a socialistic view due to its ostracizing of choice and freedom, the death of President Chiang Ching-kuo brought a new independence for humanities and social sciences. While there was a freedom for these types of expressions, CYUT is heavily based on student/teacher ties where the individual isn’t seen as much compared to the group and those who defied or were seen more as an individual were scrutinized. Lastly, the author touches upon “Smile Chaoyang” which is written in bold English letters signifies globalization and how students now realize that the methods taught at CYUT can be traded for hard currency such as cars, houses, trips, etc. This article heavily points out how neoliberalism has shaped Taiwans’ people through government and global practices of employing the idea of Taiwan as a whole, not as individual people. (P)Lisa Hoffman’s, “Autonomous Choices and Patriotic Professionalism: On Governmentality In Late-Socialist China” presents the choice and autonomy of new techniques governing late-socialist China. Expressed heavily in Hanser’s articles, China in the 80’s and 90’s became able to choose their jobs based on interest and how it would help them develop rather than being forced into a job by their government. This is an example of how neoliberalism has replaced state planning and how talent, human resources and human capital are seen as national power and strength thus implementing the idea of how one’s self and interests play a huge role in the determination of success. Another similarity to that of Hanser’s article is how Hoffman introduces us to recent college graduates who are well educated and are major assets to companies. Many continue to say that the development and maturation of one’s self is held highest when applying for a job while security and finances are at the bottom of importance. The last part of the article stresses upon patriotism and autonomy responsibility. According to the Vice President of a major university in Beijing, “It is necessary to make it known to students that innovation is not for showing off but to acquire a sense of responsibility to the state and the Chinese nation.” Wen Shubang, a senior at DUT is a perfect example of national strength and pride. He had chosen a lower paying job over a higher paying job because he was able to showcase his knowledge and skills learned in college to do his job to the best of his ability catalyzing a happy worker. This type of thinking is part of a changing China where the detailed formation and self-discovery of a one’s self is used to strengthen a nation. (P)Lastly, “China Blue,” directed by Micha X. Peled, tells the story of young female
workers in a Shaxi blue jean assembling company. Everyday life of these girls (who are as young as ten) is depicted through fifteen-hour workdays where their pay is minimal and their cramped, dark living quarters become a short-term escape from the demanding workday that starts early the next morning. Unlike the articles by Hanser, Pazderik, and Hoffman, the girls in this movie are from remote peasant villages where the only choice for survival is to work and live in these horrible garment factories. They’re given no choice due to being born into the peasant class and must continue the backbreaking work in order to supply money for their ailing families. “China Blue” portrays the human face of globalization and how the demand for cheap goods has sparked an industry where humans are treated like animals. (P)Hanser’s, “The Chinese Enterprising Self: Young, Educated Urbanites and the Search for Work,” Nickola Pazderik’s, “Smile Chaoyang,” and Lisa Hoffman’s, “Autonomous Choices and Patriotic Professionalism help us to discover this “new” China while the film, “China Blue” depicts a Maoist time period in a modern time. All four combined are seen in a neoliberalist way where the Chinese are pushed to help China grow economically.

Response Paper #6:

Response Paper #7:

Preliminary Question: After hearing a few responses during today’s class, I quickly agreed with Rachel Lenz’s proposal on how foreigners are viewed learning English in an English setting as well as how native English speakers are portrayed or viewed when learning an Asian language such as Japanese, Korean or Chinese. As Asia becomes a key dominant player in our globalized community, more and more students are turning away from the traditional languages taught in school (Spanish, French and German). Although enrollment in Asian languages is steadily increasing, native English speakers, especially those in America who are being trained in an Asian language are viewed by others as being "crazy" because the East Asian languages seem to be completely different from European languages and the difficulty level seems to be much higher. Because UIUC has a plethora of students from the East Asian countries, information and data will abundant while interviews will be within reach for research. Although similar to Lenz’s proposal, my proposal is as follows: "How are American Caucasian students enrolled in East Asian Language classes portrayed compared to American Caucasian students studying European languages?"

Interview/Ob serv. #1: After conducting my first interview/observation with Yuzhen Li, a junior here at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, I came to realize that there’s much more to the study of an East Asian Language then just the language portion itself. Not only does this study reflect upon past,
present and future experiences, it defines them in a way that will help them in their future endeavors as well as grow and mature into young, goal-oriented, hardworking entrepreneurs. (P) Originally born in China and relocating to the U.S. at an early age, Yuzhen Li is a first generation American studying Economics, International Studies and Japanese. She also has two other sisters here at the U of I studying Art and International Studies. Before starting the question portion of the interview, we openly shared our thoughts of international travel and the impacts of experiencing different cultures and societies. While Yuzhen discussed her past summer abroad experience in Hong Kong, I noticed the excitement in her voice, the happy smile on her face and an overwhelming sense of euphoria throughout her body. When Li goes abroad, (whether for school or vacation) she explains that everything is an adventure; going shopping, going down to the local grocery store and even stepping outside to view the surroundings. “Waking up everyday to a life of unknowns and self-discovery makes me work harder and promote myself more throughout daily life.” She says that meeting new people you can teach and learn from is also interesting because it gives you a broader understanding of people in general. This kind of everyday life in a foreign country makes life more exciting knowing that there’s always new things to discover and study catalyzing an urge to devote a major portion of her life to a life of being an entrepreneur. (P) During the question portion of the interview, I was extremely excited to learn of the many differences and similarities we have when it comes to the topic of learning Japanese and the study of East Asia. I first asked her why she decided to learn Japanese over a European Language since the majority of junior high and high schools around the U.S. only offer the basic French, Spanish and German. She concluded that although she studied Spanish in high school, she grew tired of the language and had no interest whatsoever by the end of her study. From an early age, she was fascinated with Japanese anime, cartoons and dramas and because of her Chinese roots and fluency in Mandarin and Cantonese, she feels that she has a greater connection with East Asia. Although Yuzhen still holds an interest for manga, she explains that many of her friends and family are surprised to find out that that’s not her main reason for studying Japanese and are quite surprised. “Many people study Japanese just because of Manga and Anime but that’s only a small portion of what Japan has to offer.” She also says that friends wonder why she’s decided to study Japanese because she’s already fluent in Chinese, so why continue to study other East Asian languages? This response bridged the connection with the following question, “Do you plan to use your foreign language skills in the future?” Because of the wonderful past experiences going abroad and learning about Japan, she has a strong sense of wanting to work and reside in Japan either working for a major company dealing with foreign/international relations or something on the lines of multicultural communication/translation, like
myself. Although this is just one goal of hers, she says she won’t limit herself to job-hunting in Japan but will also look for work in major metropolitan areas in China. With all of these goals and aspirations in mind, I asked her whether she was planning on going abroad for school and what she will be able to achieve is she does. I learned that she’s been accepted to do a year abroad study in Nagoya, Japan this fall to next fall and although she’s going alone, she’s excited knowing that this experience will be different from other experiences abroad. “I now realize that my dreams of working abroad aren’t just dreams anymore. I know that I’ll be graduating soon after I return from Japan and understand that it’s tangible and that I can actually do it.” Li knows that life abroad will be difficult but there’s so much to learn from the people and everything around her that it will open up her eyes even more as well as being able to get her name out to major cooperations while gaining acquaintances. This recent shock of reality has given her an adrenalin rush to continue her studies in Japanese, International Relations and Economics, as they’re the road to achieving her dreams. (P)

The last question portion of this interview dealt with her feeling on the issues of Asian students learning/studying English at the U of I and why she thinks there are so many Asian International Students at the U of I. “I think that they’re very brave leading a new life in America knowing that they’re on their own to figure things out. Because of the many connections with major universities in East Asia and the U of I, I think their main reason for coming to the U of I is to improve their English which in turn will help them find a place in the job market. There are also many clubs and extra curricular activities for them to participate in.” She concludes that English is the language that connects us all and that it’s essential for everyone to know. These last two questions wrapped up the interview and our time together leaving me with a better sense of why International students come to the U of I. (P)

Speaking with Yuzhen Li about her past, present and future aspirations and dreams was eye opening and exciting. Not only did I learn a great deal about her, thoughts and insights about International Students from East Asia studying at the U of I, but also the similarities and differences that we both share. Li is a bright, intelligent young woman who will in coming years make her mark and find her place in the world. Although she still has a few years before graduating and going out into the real world, her dreams of traveling, being an entrepreneur and leaving her mark in this world keep her well grounded and headed in the right direction.

For our group project, we’re asking the question, “Do students study an East Asian Language primarily based on self-interest or are there other forces or factors such as their families opinions or current trends in the job market that pursue them to choose this path?” Some of the questions based on the question proposed above are reflected below: Is your study of an East Asian Language purely based on your choice? Has your
family had any impact on your decision to study an East Asian Language? As current trends in the global market are readily changing, has your reason for studying a foreign language been impacted from this? Do you think you will be better off financially knowing an East Asian Language rather than other foreign languages such as French, Spanish or German? Culturally and society wise, do you feel a better connection or understanding knowing an East Asian Language?

**EUI Links:** After searching the EUI Archives, I came upon research that directly connects with some of our questions. This study concentrates strictly on why Korean International students (primarily ESA students) have chosen the U of I for their studies as well as major influences that impacted their decision.


Another archive that I found interesting is one that deals with Chinese students enrolled in Chinese classes in order to further their Chinese languages skills and regain language skills lost due to English being their first language. It poses the question and asks their viewpoints on maintaining their native language onto subsequent generations and if fluency in their native language is necessary. This research will help us determine the actual goals of relearning/refreshing their Chinese skills and if it’s their choice or if pressure from their parents’ generation has pushed them into enrolling in Chinese classes.

http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/bitstream/2142/3725/2/ResearchProcess.doc

**Interview/Ob serv. #2:** My second interview regarding our project presented itself much different than that of the first one I did with Yuzhen Li about three weeks ago. Raheem Syed, a twenty-two year old senior computer science major here at UIUC sees his study of Japanese primarily as a way of fulfilling an inner passion that has evolved over the years yet sees his Japanese experience as a possible connection with future jobs and careers. (P)Like many Americans, Raheem was at one time enrolled in Spanish, one of the more popular languages offered here in the U.S. yet his interest in Japanese, which stems from the beautiful dialect, popular anime and his participation in martial arts has evolved over time giving him a deep appreciation for Japan, the language and its culture. While Raheem debated whether taking Chinese, due to the fact that China’s economy and population is booming, he believes that Japanese is still and will be in the future one of the main business languages with a vast amount of opportunities not only for foreigners but for smaller, up and coming Japanese companies to go global. He also adds that the Chinese dialect is extremely difficult while the Japanese dialect is much easier. (P)Although Raheem has only been involved in Japanese for a few years while taking a few intensive classes in between semesters, his appreciation for languages, cultures and the difficulties that arise from these has deepened catalyzing a deeper interest and yearning to continue his education in Japanese. While the language courses offered
here at UIUC have great teachers and are structured well, they seem to be an easy A for Syed pointing out that although the material covered up until now has been rather easy, he knows that the classroom experience and real world experience of speaking with natives is completely different. Next semester, he plans on taking the business/conversational Japanese class knowing that the other option (intensive writing) can be learned on one’s own while conversing with a native is an opportunity you must take hold of and learn from. (P)While many of us have a broad idea of what our future maybe due to our major(s) in college, he’s in the same boat when it comes to pinpointing a certain career that he may have down the road. He says he would like to reside in America knowing that recent graduates holding a B.A. in computer science will come out earning more money in the U.S. while those with the same B.A. in Japan will make significantly less. Although he’s not opposed to working abroad for an American company, he has no plans whatsoever of working for a Japanese company and living abroad for long periods of time unless the opportunity for financial gain is great enough. He may want to use his degree as giving him leverage to build and operate his own business or consulting company. (P)Regarding his family and life at home, he points out that taking Japanese is strictly his own choice and there’s been no influence by his parents. This was very interesting to hear about knowing that he’s like many other neoliberal youth today that are opting to take classes in order to fulfill personal interests on the side and from there continuing to flourish and grow as an individual. During the interview, he wanted to make a clear point that Japanese and the culture define his interests while his studies in computer science will lead him to a career where he can support himself financially. (P)Although Syed doesn’t know what the future may hold for him, it seems that his present studies and interests are putting him in the best place for future endeavors and opportunities. The main difference between Li and Syed are that Li’s study of Japanese and culture are her underlying way of gaining a future career while Syed’s interest in Japanese help him to grow and define him as a person. INTERVIEW #3 My third and final interview with James Kim, a senior majoring in EALC with a concentration in Japanese and a minor in Business presented himself as being free spirited yet determined and goal driven to use his language and business skills in his further career. Introduced at a young age to anime and manga by his older brother who also speaks fluent Japanese, James quickly became enthralled with the Japanese language saying, “It’s a beautiful sound that flows together nicely.” With this inner passion and graduation soon approaching, James hopes to work for a company dealing primarily with international business and or international relations where he can use both Japanese, Korean (his second language after English) as well as the skills learned throughout his studies in business. He seems open to working in the U.S. but expresses a passion knowing there’s a strong possibility that he may find work in an East Asian country. Knowing full
well that the future for the United States appears dim compared to the up
and coming, soon to be superpower China, James remains confident
with a bright outlook on the future of Japan and its economy commenting
on the strength of the entertainment business as well as small
companies that have and are going global in countries all around the
world. (P)Commenting on the classroom aspect here at UIUC, James
feels that the materials provided have given him the opportunities to
showcase his Japanese skills especially with an all-Japanese faculty. He
points out that that in high-school, most of his foreign language teachers
were Americans where he felt like he wasn’t given the full language
training package due to the teachers not being from Spanish, French, or
German backgrounds. As a higher-level language student, he enjoys
learning not only conversational skills but business skills too as they
relate to his minor in business. Although he enjoys the classroom
experience, he comments that those around him are quiet and
somewhat unresponsive when asked a question in Japanese. He points
out that he feels different then other students in that Japanese is just a
requirement to fulfill a part needed for their major while language is
something that defines who he is and where he sees himself in the near
future. “Language not only connects us globally through business
transactions but it’s also the root for cultural learning and understanding.”
(P)While James has only been to Japan for a layover, he remembers
Japan to be one of the busiest places he’s ever seen with bustling cars,
trains and millions of people which he comments on as probably being a
very exciting place to live and work, especially for young entrepreneurs
like himself. Although prices are astronomically high in Japan, James
isn’t one to spend money on material items such as lavish clothing and
things he knows he doesn’t need. I found this to be surprising
considering many of my friends here at UIUC who are involved with
business say that they’re only going into that field due to financial gain
and opportunities to “live it big.” While he knows he must be able to pay
off student debt post graduation, he feels that fulfilling his inner passions
pave the way for success knowing that you must love what you do and
be happy with yourself at the end of the day. Up until this point, his
parents and family have been supportive of his decisions yet reluctant in
his choice of studying Japanese, not Chinese. They feel that Chinese will
be the future language for business and that the opportunities for work
will be greater. (P)With James’s confidence and open and exciting
outlook on life, he feels that although the job market seems to become
more and more difficult due to the increase in college graduates, his
personality, passion for business, languages and cultures will help him to
fulfill the goals he’s set forth for himself. In addition, he says that he’s
trusting of himself, isn’t afraid to take risks and grabs hold of
opportunities.

**Group** Although we completed 12 interviews, but due to the changing nature of
Summary: our project a few of our initial interviews have limited use in regard to our final inquiry. We sought to discover the motivations behind non-heritage undergraduates choosing to study the Chinese and Japanese languages. In accordance with our hypothesis we found that those students studying Chinese tended to be very goal-oriented and had a very clear idea of using Chinese as an advantage and commodity in their future careers. Those studying Japanese who expressed an interest in entering the entertainment industry developed their careers goals over the course of their studies rather than entering the language learning process with them in mind. Additionally, not all of the Japanese students planned on using the language professionally. Those studying Chinese were very conscious of the flexible capital they gained by learning Chinese. Interestingly both Chinese and Japanese students seeking to use their language skills professionally intend to work either in America or for an American company in Asia short-term as opposed to making a long-term commitment to working in East Asia. However, while they plan predominantly to work in America, they see themselves as global players on an internationally competitive level. Perhaps related to their different motives for studying their respective languages, the Chinese students had a tendency overall to be less invested in the culture whereas the Japanese students showed greater dedication to Japanese culture. We saw this through both their reactions to studying abroad and lifestyle here at the university.

REVISED Revised Group Summary of Findings: (PAR) Although we completed 12 interviews, due to the changing nature of our project a few of our initial interviews have limited use with regard to our final inquiry. We sought to discover the motivations behind non-heritage undergraduates studying the Chinese and Japanese languages at advanced levels. We hypothesized that Chinese is currently displacing Japanese as the East Asian business language of choice for students involved in a career path affected by transnational neoliberalism, while Japanese students are increasingly learning Japanese for personal reasons or out of a desire to work in the entertainment industry. (PAR) In accordance with our hypothesis we found that those students studying Chinese tended to be very goal-oriented and had a very clear idea of using Chinese as an advantage and commodity in their future careers, much like David Brooke’s "skill enhancement" in the "Organization Kid." Those studying Japanese who expressed an interest in entering the entertainment industry developed their career goals over the course of their studies rather than entering the language learning process with them in mind. Additionally, not all of the Japanese students planned on using the language professionally. Those studying Chinese were very conscious of the "flexible capital" (Ong) they gained by learning Chinese, while, overall, Japanese students had a tendency to be less interested in business-oriented careers requiring Japanese fluency. (PAR) Interestingly both Chinese and Japanese students seeking to use their language skills professionally intend to work either in America or for an
American company in Asia on a temporary basis as opposed to making a long-term commitment to working in East Asia. However, while they predominantly plan to work in America, they see themselves as global players on an internationally competitive level. In the case of the Chinese students, this may reflect an awareness of the possibility that China will supersede America economically while giving a nod to the present reality of America as the current world superpower, or simply a faith in the continued success of America. (PAR) Perhaps related to their differing motives for studying their respective languages, the Chinese students had a tendency overall to be less invested in Chinese culture whereas the Japanese students showed greater dedication to Japanese culture. We saw this through both their reactions to studying abroad and lifestyle here at the university. For instance, one Chinese student who proclaimed that he "lived by" the Chinese culture could not name a single example of Chinese culture, save for a trend among women for having pale skin. This, unfortunately, is not even specific to China, but can be seen in various East Asian cultures today. In contrast, two of the Japanese students interviewed talked enthusiastically about the myriad of ways Japanese popular culture has infiltrated their everyday lives, including an enjoyment of both traditional food and candy, reading manga, and deliberately seeking further enrichment in cultural activities. (PAR) Group Summary of Findings (PAR) Although we completed 12 interviews, due to the changing nature of our project a few of our initial interviews have limited use in regard to our final inquiry. We sought to discover the motivations behind non-heritage undergraduates choosing to study the Chinese and Japanese languages. (PAR) In accordance with our hypothesis we found that those students studying Chinese tended to be very goal-oriented and had a very clear idea of using Chinese as an advantage and commodity in their future careers. Those studying Japanese who expressed an interest in entering the entertainment industry developed their careers goals over the course of their studies rather than entering the language learning process with them in mind. Additionally, not all of the Japanese students planned on using the language professionally. Those studying Chinese were very conscious of the flexible capital they gained by learning Chinese. (PAR) Interestingly both Chinese and Japanese students seeking to use their language skills professionally intend to work either in America or for an American company in Asia short-term as opposed to making a long-term commitment to working in East Asia. However, while they plan predominantly to work in America, they see themselves as global players on an internationally competitive level. (PAR) Perhaps related to their different motives for studying their respective languages, the Chinese students had a tendency overall to be less invested in the culture whereas the Japanese students showed greater dedication to Japanese culture. We saw this through both their reactions to studying abroad and their lifestyles here at the university.
Although the term, “neoliberalism” was coined decades ago, the effects of this rapidly growing movement of ideas and opinions has altered communities and societies worldwide catalyzing the lifestyles of global youth to be centralized and molded by change, choice, chance and competition. As westernization has paved the way and become the basis for economic growth among participating countries, East Asian youth have been heavily targeted as “an opening to the future through which national culture can be remade” (Anagnost). Here at UIUC, which was recently named the number one college in America representing the largest community of international students has offered a cultural learning phenomenon where the study of Chinese and Japanese has increased and become more prominent and prevalent among students. Our initial motivation and group project focused on the main reasons why students are drawn to Chinese and Japanese over European languages such as French, German and Spanish and how they plan to use their language and cultural skills in the near future. Our group, comprising of four people where two took on the role of Chinese learners and the other two, Japanese learners came together several times in between the interview processes and compiled our results. Among the eight interviews that were carefully conducted, we came upon results that fit into the neoliberal enigma that shapes youth choice. Although Japanese was once the business language based on the huge economic boom in the 1980’s and ties between America from early on, Chinese language has steadily increased due to the growing economy and population. These factors, among others heavily weighed the choice and final decision among students whether to study Japanese or Chinese. Our results revealed that those studying Chinese were focused more on the business aspect where financial gains can be made as well as the important, growing linkage between Chinese and American companies. This link between the two countries can readily be seen throughout all parts of China where McDonalds and Walmart has taken over small towns and cities where street vendors and pre modern buildings, ideas and way of life still exist. While the current Chinese language learners expressed that their language skills can be extremely useful in day-to-day interaction regarding their future jobs and careers, they expressed little to no interest in the actual culture itself. These advanced learners who have become well versed in the language aspect seem to be quite ignorant regarding Chinese culture. Many of the interviewees said that their Chinese ability would give them an edge when entering the post-graduate world over those learning European languages stating that the number of French, Spanish and French speakers heavily outweigh those of Chinese thus making Chinese more marketable and useful. Like Brooks, “The Organization Kid” these language learners are investing their time into enhancing their skills for the their future employment and opportunities. The Japanese language learners on the other hand expressed this deep, inner passion for the language through primarily
entertainment and cultural aspects such as manga and anime. Many said that they were introduced to Japanese culture at a very young age by older siblings and friends through the popular comics and television programs such as Pokemon and Doraemon. Aside from the Chinese learners, the Japanese learners said that not only did Japanese fulfill their inner passions but was also a way of life for them. (PAR) With the rise of international careers emerging as globalization becomes a factor among all growing companies, the need for bilingual workers is an essential skill. Although both learners of Chinese and Japanese said that they plan to reside and live in America long-term, those taking Japanese expressed that they would like to try their hand out working international and not limiting themselves just to Japan but to other East Asian countries such as China and Korea. One of students I interviewed is a major in East Asian Languages and Cultures with a minor in business and confidently filled me in on his plans after he graduates next May. He said that he’s looking for a job where he can use Japanese and Korean (his second language after English) and work for those who need his cultural and linguistic skills. He said that although finances were something that he had to think about due to the heavy amount of loans that are paying for his education now, he said that working abroad in a different country would spark his interests more and be more fulfilling then making large amounts of money. The other interviewee, majoring in computer science revealed the exact opposite by stating that Japanese is something to fulfill an inner desire but has no future plans on using it. He plans to start his own business firm but doesn’t see himself working abroad or working with any Japanese companies. Although these two have completely approached Japanese for different reasons, they do share a common bond or interest sparked by an introduction by friends and siblings at an early age. Those studying Chinese seemed to be more goal-oriented studying both business and Chinese yet also planned to reside and live in America with little plans to work abroad for long periods of time. (PAR) With this neoliberal aspect hanging over many students today, outside forces such as family and friends has had drastic effects on the students’ choice. Although a few of those studying Japanese said that the parental factor had little to no impact on them in deciding to study Japanese, one of them did conclude by saying that her parents were quite reluctant knowing that her daughter was learning Japanese thinking that it would take her away from her English roots. One of the Chinese interviewees stated that his parents were first shocked when they heard that he wanted to study Chinese and were completely unsupportive of his choice and went as far as discouraging it. Yet after he told them of the current status of China as an upcoming world power with a growing number of American companies globalizing and taking their ideas over to China, they soon grew to the idea that Chinese would be something very useful and decided that him going abroad for a semester would be beneficial to his education and future.
endeavors. Although there were mixed ideas regarding this issue, most of these youth tended to lean towards their heart and follow the path that they desired. (PAR) In conclusion, we found that in accordance to our hypothesis, Chinese learners leaned more to the business and financial aspect of Chinese while Japanese learners are using Japanese as a way of fulfilling inner passions based on the entertainment business. Although the Japanese language learners were well aware of the economic status of East Asia and how China is an economic powerhouse growing as a rapid pace and how those with the ability to speak Chinese have a huge advantage financial wise, the majority of them have stated that their overall well being job wise is more important then making money.

Reflect: I feel that our project helps to shed light on the growing popularity of Chinese and Japanese at UIUC yet due to time constrains, small pool of interviewees and the narrowness of our project I feel that our data doesn’t show a detailed analysis of the possible opportunities and future goals of students. I feel that this project could be a class in its own where the entire semester should be devoted to finding a complete understanding of this language phenomenon. Regarding the usage of the Moodle I feel that there are many advantages. All group members are able to send and receive messages regarding their progress, problems encountered, etc. Students and professors are able to comment on one another’s work aiding the understanding between all. In addition, future students and those interested in learning about our research are able to access our information especially if we decide to archive. The downfall is that it’s nearly impossible to organize your paper in the manner it should be. Some students found that their computer was able to perform better with the Moodle regarding paragraphs and indentations yet others were never able to do this.

Recommendations: It’s difficult to make any recommendations regarding EIU based on our project yet I do feel that it’s incredibly important that the EALC department make students aware of the business aspect of Japanese and how Japan is a major ally of the U.S. as well as the need for global overseas workers able to aid in the transactions between the two. Regarding Chinese, I feel that the students interviewed knew little to nothing about the culture itself. This is a huge problem because alongside learning a language come the cultural aspects, which are extremely important in not only the business world but also written and oral communication where a small mistake can make a huge difference. Based on our research, I feel that these are the most important pieces of advice that I’m able to offer to the EALC department.