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Title: The Shifting Commodity of Language: Chinese and Japanese Language Learning at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

About the I am a first year Masters student in the department of East Asian

Author: Languages and Cultures studying modern and premodern Japanese literature. My interests include (but are by no means limited to) gender and sexuality in manga, homosocial bonding in Japanese and English literature, and Shakespeare in Japanese drama. I am currently working on a paper comparing the nanshoku (boy love) of Ihara Saikaku's "Nanshoku Ookagami" ("The Great Mirror of Male Love") and the shounen-ai (boys' love) of contemporary shoujo (girls') manga as well as a translation of Kisaragi Koharu's play, "Romeo and Freesia at the Table", which is based on Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet". (PAR) I graduated from Vassar College 07' with an AB in English and Japanese.

Keywords: Chinese, Japanese, language, flexible capital, neoliberal youth

Abstract: Through this project we sought to discover to what degree students' motives for studying Chinese and Japanese reflect the changing global status of China and Japan: essentially, whether or not Chinese is replacing Japanese as the business language of choice for students, and theorized that Japanese was largely left to those interested in entertainment. We were also interested to if these students viewed language acquisition as an advantage in the global labor market and what factors outside this potential market value may have motivated them to choose one language over the other. We investigated these questions by interviewing four non-heritage, advanced students of Japanese and four non-heritage, advanced students of Chinese as well as reflecting on our own observations and experiences within the department of East Asian Languages and Cultures. (PAR) We found that by and large our results reflected our initial hypothesis: Chinese students in particular were highly aware of the advantage and commodity they gained in their future careers by learning Chinese and began their studies with that goal in mind, while Japanese students tended to be more focused on personal growth and passion for Japanese popular culture and entertainment mediums and any decision to use the language in their career developed over the course of their studies. Students of both disciplines plan to live and work in America, but all are aware that knowing an East Asian language allows them to compete and participate in a global economy.

Response Week Two: Neoliberalism --"The Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism,
Paper #1: Cultural Politics and the Attack on Democracy" by Lisa Duggan --"The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics" by Henry Giroux --"Neoliberalism and Masculinity: Racialisation and the Contradictions of Schooling and for 11-14 Year Olds" by Ann Pheonix I

first heard the term “neoliberalism” last semester in the EALC Proseminar, a course designed to accustom new graduate students to graduate writing and the major academic theories they might encounter in their studies. Although we initially spent a fair amount of time working on political and socioeconomic theories, the only mention we had of neoliberalism was a word of caution: the term, Professor Goodman warned, is highly misleading. I did not know the extent of the truth of his statement until I read the articles intended for this week’s discussion. Neoliberalism, according to the authors of all three articles, is seemingly just another word to refer to the rampant outbreak of Bush-esque conservatism prevalent in America (though Pheonix focuses her attention on its implications in England), and in fact has little if anything to do with the way those of our generation classify liberalism. In the first chapter of “The Twilight of Equality”, Duggan lays out the history of liberalism in American politics, from its initial crusade to emancipate white men, through its 20th and 21st century struggles to retain privacy in the home while placing public regulations on economy and businesses and occasionally fighting to reduce discrimination in the public/private sphere. She also takes the time to contrast the various stages of liberalism with conservatism and ultimately arrives at neoliberalism, describing it as seeking to privatize all business actions while directing the flow of wealth upward—not exactly in line with the beliefs of “liberals” we’re used to seeing attacked on T.V. Her second chapter reveals that this desire to control economic capital and move it away from public institutions such as universities (in the case of Duggan’s argument, SUNY New Paltz) is typically masked by the ultra-conservative, fundamentalist approach towards culture and society, manipulating the public by framing its motives within the context of so-called “culture wars”—one does not have to work to come up with half a dozen examples of this in recent years. Having attended Vassar College, a fellow upstate New York school, I can safely say that New Paltz hasn’t given in to those whose criticism is described in Duggan’s book, but has continued to draw the wrath of neoliberal groups. Henry Giroux continues Duggan’s concerns regarding the implications of neoliberalism in today’s society in “The Terror of Neoliberalism”, analyzing the “official” definition of neoliberalism and announcing that it has failed in all of its objectives and in fact does exactly the opposite of what it supposedly intends (though if one takes into account everything all three articles say about the practice of neoliberalism it would seem that its results and not its purported aim are the true goal of its practitioners). Neoliberalism, according to Giroux, results in the crippling of the poor, contributes to higher crime, racism, and youth unemployment rates, and of course, the U.S. resorting to terrorist activities and mentality in order to route out “terrorism”—the neoliberal world, says Duggan, is a dangerous place to live. In a global context, neoliberalism is responsible for making already rich, typically Western countries, even richer, while removing money and

resources from less affluent countries. The privatization it champions also has the unfortunate affect of turning news stations and schools into biased or skewed institutions for political (and often neoliberal) propaganda. The picture Duggan paints is decidedly grim. But he places his hope in the growing number of alliances between academic intellectuals, artists, and organizations seeking social change (feminists, environmentalists, gay and civil rights activists etc.) who work against the alarming increase of a global, neoliberal mentality. Ann Phoenix's article examines perhaps the most specific negative consequences of neoliberalism, investigating its effects on young boys age 11-14 in London schools. According to Phoenix, despite its typical bias in favor of men, neoliberalism's emphasis on "masculinity" actually places boys at a disadvantage in school for studying and avoiding detention is viewed as a feminine activity and will likely lead to being the victim of bullying and ridicule. The first two articles implied that the gleanings of neoliberalism were positive only for the practitioners, but Phoenix reveals that in some cases, such as the performance of schoolboys, the neoliberals' own practices and beliefs act as an impediment to individual success. While all three authors may have a slightly different definition and interpretation of the term "neoliberalism", the negative implications they feel it has on society seem unanimous and interrelated. The ever-hungry maw of neoliberalism threatens to devour the world we live in: these authors directly or indirectly send out the call to muster for intellectuals and activists who would stop it, and I for one intend to answer.

Response Paper #2: Mentioning "Japanese youth" to much of the world conjures images of anime and manga, lively subcultures, and the serious, studious picture many have of Japanese students. However, anyone who has spent time living in Japan can attest to the increasing anxiety felt by the adult population of Japan in connection with the country's youth, as seen in the essays of Yoda Tomiko and Andrea G. Arai.

"A Roadmap to Millennial Japan", Yoda Tomiko's introduction to the book *Japan After Japan: Social and Cultural Life from Recessionary 1990s to the Present*, provides a comprehensive look at the economic, politic, and social circumstances in the 1990s that led to Japan's current troubled outlook on its nation's youth. The recession that popped Japan's bubble economy, according to Yoda, caused considerable contention between the way neoliberal and neonational factions viewed the future of Japan. The economic and cultural developments of the consumerist society that grew out of these contending views gave birth to the rising development of subculture and the explosion of media coverage on youth activities that troubled the country (i.e. *enjo kosai*, the Shounen A incident, freeters, and parasite singles), creating an image of a hedonistic, irresponsible, consumerist, freeloading youth that enjoys considerable press.

While Yoda's introduction serves as a broad, historical, socio-economic background for the current issues surrounding youth in Japan, it deals more with

the past and the build-up to the situation we see today, instead of the present climate. Andrea G. Arai's article, "The 'Wild Child' of 1990s Japan" provides a closer look at some of the images of Japanese youth and the incidents that shaped the country's concerns. Arai begins her essay with a glimpse at Miyazaki Hayao's idealized San, a main character in his epic film *Mononokehime*, a "wild child" who is both "feral and fascinating" occupying a space of desire (845). She then introduces a contrasting figure to San and one who has caused considerably more anxiety among the adult population of Japan: the majority of Arai's article analyzes the effect of Shounen A and his 1997 serial killings of elementary students in Kobe on parents in Japan. Arai uses Shounen A to show how the comfortable image of "*futsuu no ko*" an "ordinary child" was shattered, evoking instead the "*kodomo ga hen da*" (children are strange) idea and drawing attention to *gakkyu hokai*, the deterioration of classrooms in Japan. Now Japan must question where in its culture of child-rearing and education it has miss-stepped and struggles to find some way to once again instill the discipline and morals it feels the younger generations are sorely lacking.

The second Arai article, "The Neo-Liberal Subject of Lack and Potential: Developing 'the Frontier Within' and Creating a Reserve Army of Labor in 21st Century Japan" goes into more detail about the steps taken by the government to address the problem of the education of Japanese youth. While many of her broader points from the first article are also addressed here, "The Neo-Liberal Subject" introduces the philosophies of "*ikiru chikara*" (the strength to live) and "the frontier within", as well as the claim that children are not solely to blame for their own condition: to those who reminisced that children were stronger in past years, the chief spokesman on education reform for the Ministry of Education reminds "that parents or adults were better then too" (3). While I found both of Arai's articles considerably more interesting than Yoda's, I remain unconvinced by her reading of Miyazaki's blockbuster hit *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi*. Her arguments that the film symbolizes the failings of parents and that only the child's rediscovery of the gods and traditions of a nostalgic, mystical Japan can save them is, while interesting enough of its own accord, trying too hard to see things that aren't there.

Regardless of whether *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi* is a poster child for Japanese education reform and the forgetful youth, the four months I spent in Japan two years ago were enough to convince me that the problems of education and youth are very much on the minds of both media and politicians in Japan. The anxiety described in these three articles is alive and strong and is likely to continue to be a prominent issue as Japan's aging population is faced with a shrinking youth they see as lacking the obligation and responsibility to care for them.

Response Paper #3: My final interviewee, a girl we will call "Callie", had much in common with Alex. Like Alex, Callie first encountered Japanese four years ago when a

friend introduced her to a dubbed version of the anime Ruroni Kenshin that was running on Cartoon Network at the time. At first, Callie had no idea that Kenshin came from Japan, but she gradually became aware of both that particular series' origins and of the multitude of games she already enjoyed that were Japanese. Her curiosity piqued, Callie began to watch anime in Japanese and tried to teach herself the language as best she could while eagerly delving into as much of Japanese media as she could get her hands on (including the ever-popular Pokemon card game). (PAR) When she arrived at the University of Illinois, Callie was excited to begin to study Japanese "properly", more out of her enjoyment of anime at the time than any particular career goal. However, once again like Alex, Callie was unable to enter the class right away due to its high demand. Callie wrote to her professor begging to be let in and was successful. From that point on, Japanese became a huge part of her life. Callie's whole face lights up when she talks about Japanese, and she leans across the table in excitement. Callie told numerous stories about her encounters with the language outside of class: "Once I overheard some guy in my Astronomy class talking about the Japanese textbook, so I turned to him and started talking in Japanese. It turned out he'd only just started and didn't understand anything I said," she laughed. Callie is apparently always on the lookout for other Japanese speakers and even stalks them in stores on occasion. Sometimes she and a friend will be walking back to the dorms together after class ("and we always talk in Japanese") and someone will call to them and without thinking, they'll inevitably respond in Japanese regardless of whether or not they'll be understood. In these small ways, Japanese has worked itself into the very core of her consciousness. (PAR) Other anecdotes that featured Callie's investment in her language learning included tales of correcting friends' pronunciation of Japanese words such as "karaoke" and "Tokyo" (which American's usually pronounce as "Toe-key-oh", causing Callie to cringe) and aggravated rants on horribly inept English translations of anime and manga. The latter, according to Callie, is one of the reasons she has decided to pursue a career in manga translation—"I want to fix them," she announces with a laugh. Callie made it very clear that her intention to use Japanese in her professional life is one that developed gradually over the course of her studies. It was a decision that caused her parents some grief: "My dad says I should be a scientist or at least study Chinese instead. But now he supports me as long as I can get a job." In order to achieve her goal (and maintain her father's respect), Callie is aware that she needs more than a just a BA in EALC. She has applied for a summer internship working at the Japanese Consulate in Chicago, and plans to participate in the JET program as well as apply to grad school, likely at the University of Illinois (she's not yet sure which she will do first). (PAR) Although she has been studying Japanese for a few years now, Callie has not yet been to Japan. She will spend a year in Kobe before leaving UIUC and if all goes according to

plan, will eventually live there for a year or two through JET, all of which she considers necessary before applying for her dream job: “I think that our Japanese classes here and the manga that we read really shapes the way we view Japan—but I don’t necessarily think that view is right. So I’m going to go and find out.” (PAR) Despite both Alex and Callie’s passionate recitations of their love for Japanese culture (a love that now extends far beyond contemporary popular youth culture) and their mutual desire to spend their professional lives translating, neither one entertains any ideas of settling in Japan for any length of time beyond the couple years they’ve set aside for the JET program. Rather, they will settle here, likely not far from home, and dedicate themselves to spreading Japanese popular media in the U.S. Regardless of location, both girls made it clear that they see themselves taking part in a cultural exchange and dialogue that is bigger than the U.S. and Japan.

Response Paper #4: As any student who has spent time abroad in Japan or passed by the EUI on campus and observed the sheer number of Koreans studying there can see, the allure of English and the English-speaking world is alive and flourishing. Professor Kelsky’s chapter “Internationalism as Resistance” offers a window into the reasoning and frustrations that contribute to Japanese women’s *akogare* (longing) for the West, while Hyunju Park’s thesis, “Language Ideology, Attitudes and Policies: Global English in South Korea” examines the rationalization behind the desire to officialize and growing necessity to learn English in Korea, the effects of which are seen in the popular film, “Please Teach Me English”. (PAR) In recent years, “internationalist” Japanese women, as Professor Kelsky calls them, have been increasingly visible in both Japanese and foreign media. Japan’s population crisis has drawn considerable attention to the lifestyle choices made by women in Japan, who, pushed down by a firmly patriarchal society that allows little room for movement towards anything but “the domestic stage and status of ‘mother’” (96). Fed up with their constricted place in society a number of women turn towards the international stage (most frequently the United States) as a place of opportunity for both career advancement and self-discovery (and perhaps as a means of finding “mature” and “equal” romance). There are a number of ways in which Japanese women seek liberation abroad: first, the study of English which enables them to occupy posts as interpreters and translators in Japan, where the field is dominated by women, or abroad. Second, through (usually self-funded) study abroad, another practice that is dominated by females and that can unfortunately have the negative side effect of making it more difficult for them to find a job upon returning to Japan. Finally, some women follow the more taxing route of working abroad while still others seek “employment at nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as the United Nations and in foreign-affiliate (*gaishikei*) firms” (100). Women also rally around the west as the standard of modernity and use it as a point of comparison to

the backward attitudes held by Japanese men, a practice which genders the west male and leads to an eroticism of foreigners (one that is blown out of proportion by the media and through the perceptions of American students of Japanese). (PAR) By contrast, Korea's experience with English does not seem to come with the highly gendered qualities illustrated through Professor Kelsky's article about Japan. According to Hyunju Park, the increasing necessity for learning and teaching English derives predominantly from "the perception that English is the decisive factor for access to social position" (35). Essentially, the belief that it is not only beneficial to know English but a requirement for success feeds the frenzied demand for English learning and consequently makes it become a requirement for success. English proficiency has become a "decisive condition for college admission", and according to Park, fuels the growth of English as "a medium of higher education" (36). Park also discusses the rationale behind both sides of the argument to "officialize" English, basically boiling them down to an argument between those who are pro-globalization and internationalism and maintain that through English and these mediums Korea will advance in the world—what they see as a nationalistic view; and those who believe that globalization brought about through the officialization of English is not only fatal to Korean ethnic identity but results in Korea's submission to western dominance. But Park is sure to note that despite this debate that occurs predominantly in the media and the academic world, in practice, English still appears to be "indispensable" to Korea (42). (PAR) The film, "Please Teach Me English" offers a popularized rendition of English language learning in Korea that nevertheless touches on some of the issues discussed by Park in "Language Ideology, Attitudes and Policies". The main character, Candy, is forced to learn English by her coworkers after a foreigner comes in and no one is able to communicate with him. In this way the film gives a nod to the idea that learning English is necessary to succeed in the professional sector. Candy's desire to learn English takes on a personal flavor after she meets (and develops a crush on) fellow student Elvis, who it later turns out is learning English in order to communicate with his long-lost sister who was adopted as a baby by an American couple. The plot of the film is filled with twists and turns, surrealism and silliness, but in the end, Candy and Elvis' admittedly tempestuous study of English pays off: they gain the ability to converse with an American, Elvis' sister and establish a connection abroad, Candy is able to communicate with English-speaking foreigners earning her respect at work, the couple is shown conversing with passing foreigners as they walk through the park, and of course the unlikely pair is brought together romantically. Candy and Elvis' classmates similarly benefit from their studies. Indeed, there seems to be almost a subliminal didactic message at the end of the film: learn English, and all your dreams will come true.

Response Paper #5: In this day and age of MTV, abortion, AIDS, gay marriage and feminism, gender and sexuality have been pushed to the forefront of both media and academia and occupy a prominent position in the way we construct our identities. Lisa Rofel draws upon this idea of sexual subjectivity as part of a larger question of political, social, and transnational identity within a neoliberal structure in her book "Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture" while Takeyama Akiko addresses the complex play of gender roles in the commodified romance of Tokyo host clubs. (PAR) In "Desiring China" Lisa Rofel uses the actions and debates of Beijing's gay population and the practices of consumption and sex as a means through which the greater idea of China and its people as a desiring and desired subject may be examined within a national and transnational framework. She seeks to show that China is not merely part of a "homogenous global identity" but rather participating in complex "transcultural practices" that cannot be limited to the traditional binary transaction of East of West (92). Through conversations with gays in Beijing addressing the problem of marriage and informing parents of one's sexuality, Rofel illustrates the ways in which certain western notions of homosexuality are complicated by a distinctly Chinese society and sense of self, showing that not only is gay subjectivity and place in the social structure shaped by China, but that there is no such thing as a universal Chinese gay subject (her own interjections into the debate express that this cultural complexity behind homosexual identity and behavior extends beyond China). Rofel adds that while "the meaningfulness of sexual desire lies at the heart of creating cultural citizenship" but can also "propel" one into "transnational networks" (106). Rofel also discusses the ways the social atmosphere in which differing generations of Chinese were raised influences their views on consumerism, sex, and self and how these views contribute to conceptions of "cosmopolitanism". Sexual discourse, she writes, has become "a national discourse about normality, about which kinds of citizens will represent China to the world" and uses this discourse to denounce the idea that there is a "simple dichotomy" between a "repressive past and a liberated presence", once again complicating the notion of identity in China (122). [For anyone who is interested in the complexities of gender and sexuality in China as well as the interplay of "transnational practices" between China and the rest of the world, the Asian Educational Media Service has a copy of a documentary following the first performance of "The Vagina Monologues" in Mandarin.] (PAR) Like Rofel, Takeyama Akiko discusses a subject that is usually broken down into simple dichotomies that fail to express the complexities of the practices involved. "Commodified romance in a Tokyo host club" examines the "phenomenon" of host clubs in Japan, establishments that allow women to patronize young, attractive male "hosts" who deliberately place themselves in the chivalrous role of "gentlemen" in order to woo their clients and win their frequent custom. Host clubs have gained a

rather prominent position in Japanese media due to what is seen as an anomaly in their nature by a country who has a well-established male-dominated society immediately suspicious of anything that deviates from the patriarchal norm. As a result, Takeyama notes, both Western and Japanese media have taken to casting the host club practice into predictably binary forms, either asserting that host clubs result in a reversal of traditional gender roles or portraying “female customers as the exploited victims of sleazy, manipulative male hosts” (201). Takeyama goes on to describe the numerous complexities of host-customer interactions as well as the social, cultural, and historical/political background that drives and complicates these exchanges in order to illustrate the “complex and contradictory forces at work on the host club scene” (205). One of her many examples deals with the way in which hosts and customers view their dealings with each other: while the hosts and even the women discuss how the power relations shift during the course of their interactions from the woman, who is initially in control, to the host and the various tricks a host can use to manipulate the women into giving him anything he desires, the women do not see themselves as mindless victims but rather look at their “behavior as a personal choice” (207). Takeyama concludes by pointing out that due to the complex nature of its interactions and the various ways in which it simultaneously reinforces and subverts traditional gender norms and sexual relations, host clubs “reflect the paradoxes inherent in the rapidly changing yet still pervasive gender logic at work in contemporary Japan” (212). [These changes, artfully illustrated by Takeyama in this article, are further displayed and complicated by the emergence of the host club in that ever-present (and difficult) genre of Japanese popular culture, shoujo (girls) manga where it has taken the form of a series called “Ouran koukou hostobu” (Ouran High School Host Club) which features as its main character a girl, mistaken for a boy, who winds up having to join the (male) host club—the manga are currently being translated into English for anyone who is interested in looking further, and the anime will likely appear in America shortly.]

**Response
Paper #6:**

**Response
Paper #7:**

Preliminary Question: Preliminary Question: How do Asian and American students on the UIUC campus view the subject of gaining proficiency or fluency in a foreign language as opposed to a foreigner gaining proficiency in their native language, and how do their views reflect the approaches to neoliberal education undertaken by their native country?

We have seen in readings such as Anagnost and the A*Star Yearbook

that Asian countries are using their education systems to produce a youth that can not only play ball in a global community, but can dominate the court in certain areas. We've also seen that these students frequently spend at least a year if not their entire college experience studying abroad. From my own personal knowledge of and experience in Japan as well as in the EALC department here at Illinois, I have discovered that it is considered an unnatural novelty for a non-Asian student to speak an Asian language with proficiency (and in Japan, these people are paraded around variety T.V. shows like trained monkeys and discriminated against if they stay in Japan for too long), while no one looks askance at the Asian students speaking fluent English. Just yesterday there was an incident in a graduate class where the native Chinese professor admonished her native Chinese students that they could not allow their sole British classmate to continue to write better than them in Chinese and proceeded to discuss how strange it was that he could write and speak so well. According to my informant, no one found it strange that these Chinese students were speaking English and studying alongside native speakers at an American university.

I would like to investigate whether these views are widespread on the UIUC campus and discover what, if anything, it says about the (differing) views Asian countries and America take towards the rest of the world and if this reflects their approach to education in a neoliberal global community.

Interview/Ob serv. #1: After conducting my first interview I discovered that our questions are in need of some refinement, and that those we use for the undergraduate language students are not necessarily appropriate for the EALC graduate students and that certain changes need to be made to our interviewing strategies.

My first interviewee, a 2nd year Masters student of Japanese religion planning to take his exams and graduate in the spring, did not make the decision to study Japanese until graduate school. Prior to entering grad school he did in fact study a European language, albeit a dead one (Biblical Greek), and his decision to begin the study of Japanese stemmed from his switch from researching Judeo-Christian religion to Asian ones. He has recently completed his formal study of Japanese and has begun attempting to obtain a working knowledge of Classical Chinese in order to read Buddhist scriptures.

Having chosen at this time not to continue on to PhD, my interviewee has no concrete plans for his future career, but believes that he will continue to use Japanese in his research as well as in his intellectual exchanges with Japanese colleagues. I feel that it would be beneficial at this point in the interview to add a question about where the graduate student interviewees plan on working: learning

whether they intend to find jobs in America, return to Asia to work, or move to Asia in the case of non-native students such as the ones I am charged with interviewing, would add a profitable dimension to our research. I also discovered in this particular section of the interview that in addition to augmenting the section with further questions one of the existing questions could do with revision. For graduate students, many of whom are nearing the end of their formal studies, the question “Do you plan on studying abroad” and its follow ups, are either past tense or no longer applicable. My interviewee expressed puzzlement at the question while answering that while he had no intention of “studying” abroad, he did see himself doing research or teaching English in Japan in the future.

As expected, some of the most interesting answers I received during the interview came in the section wherein I inquired after the reactions of family, friends, classmates or casual acquaintances when they learned my interviewee was studying Japanese. According to the interviewee, he typically found that people reacted in one of two ways:

1. “Oh really? That’s interesting.”
2. “Why? What are you going to do with *that*?”

The latter is apparently a question that is difficult to answer when one is studying Asian religion and faced with inquiries and expectations after the job opportunities outside academia for a specialist in Japanese Buddhism. However, he informed me that his favorite reaction came from his wife’s acquaintances whenever she tells them that her husband is studying Japanese/Japanese religions: full of polite fascination they press for more information asking “oh, is he Japanese?” The few people in the office at the time who overheard his story laughed for a good three minutes, a couple of them flashing knowing looks our way. Another student inquired after what we were doing, and after I explained about the interview and he’d taken a look at the question I had just asked, he requested that I come to him for my next interview—he said he had enough stories to keep me occupied for at least an hour and I made a mental note to purchase a dictophone at the earliest opportunity.

Despite the overwhelming success of the previous question and the wealth of information it gleaned, the following two questions in this section were highly flawed. When reworded to match the wording of the first question, they proved more useful and I was quick to pass what I had learned on to my group members. It is very difficult to form interview questions on the subject of the interviewee’s views regarding Asian international students studying at the University of Illinois. Nevertheless, my interviewee answered that he thought it was very interesting when Asian students go to the U.S. to study their own language or culture, as many in the EALC graduate department do, but that he had never actually gotten around to asking any of them why they did so. He assumed it was because the subjects are taught differently here than they would be

in say, Japan. When asked if he thought it had anything to do with where these students intended to seek employment he remarked that he found this a definite possibility, though he had not really thought about it before.

Overall I found my first foray into the field an educational one. Having never studied anthropology before and no idea how to conduct field research I approached this initial interview as a trial run: a chance for me to get my feet wet, see what worked and what didn't, and adjust my questions so as not to embarrass myself in future interviews. As a group, I think we will now be able to phrase our research question in a more informed way, as well as make the necessary changes to our research strategies in order to obtain the greatest possible amount of helpful information.

Group Research Question: Version #3 (PAR) In David Brook's "The Organization Kid," Ann Anagnost's "Child as Value," and the A*Star Yearbook, evidence has pointed towards a heightened sense of global competition in neoliberalizing nations, which in turn focuses attention on particular skills development for children and students. Language is appreciated as one skill that is an asset for international business; Japanese has been a longstanding favorite however, due largely in part to China's meteoric economic ascent, Chinese has emerged as a contending option for students. We are interested in whether - and to what extent - non-heritage Chinese and Japanese Language learners at the University of Illinois see their language acquisition as an advantage in the global labor marketplace. Further, we are interested in exploring the extent of involvement with East Asia that they expect to have in their future lives and careers. We are also interested in what factors outside the potential market value of a given language motivated them to begin their studies (i.e. familial influence, personal interest etc.) as well as whether or not their personal lives are culturally affected through the language learning process.

EUI Links:

Interview/Ob serv. #2: While my first interviewee, an MA student of Japanese religion whose study of the language was a necessity for his research, has become completely useless with regard to the changing direction of this study, my second interview (an EALC major who we will call "Alex") definitely made up for what was missing in the first. Alex's story more than fits the image of what we have hypothesized has become the typical student of Japanese: she began taking the language out of curiosity as an avid fan of anime and manga and wants to become a part of that industry as a translator. She is very much a part of Japanese entertainment fan culture, frequently dressing in shirts depicting anime characters, Japanese, or even American-based webcomics/manga inspired by their Japanese counterparts. She shops at Hot Topic, a hot spot for hair-

dyeing, chain-wearing punk/goth/otaku clientele, watches fansubbed anime online, and occasionally reads anime fanfiction. But Alex's interest in the Japanese language is more than American otakuism run amuck: to her, the language and culture fill a gap in her life caused by immigration and distance from the country of her birth. "It all started four years ago when I picked up the first volume of Ranma ½..." so begins Alex's narration of her entry into the world of Japanese language learning. For her, Japanese is not merely the means to an end—be it fulfilling a foreign language requirement or bettering her chances of finding a job (although her employment goals are very much centered on the Japanese language)—instead, the study of Japanese is a way of life. Alex, who aims to first enter the JET program for a year or two before seeking employment as a translator of Japanese manga or anime "anything fun", first became interested in studying the language through her discovery of the popular manga and anime series Ranma ½, by Rumiko Takahashi. It was her enjoyment of the series that initially led her to sign up for Japanese while registering for courses at her local community college, where she was told by her instructor she must study the required textbooks on her own over the summer. Her first encounter with Japanese language learning began unpleasantly, thanks to a jaded and unhelpful woman working at the college bookstore who insisted they did not carry the textbooks she needed. Alex's unfortunate situation took what she calls a "fateful" turn for the better when an enthusiastic and outgoing upperclassman overheard Alex's trouble and pointed her in the direction of Mitsuwa, a Japanese grocery in Chicago that also houses a small bookstore. Alex had such a great experience at Mitsuwa that she realized before she even left the premises that Japanese was going to be an important, "maybe even the most important" part of her life forever. Although Alex acknowledged that by and large her classmates felt similarly about their studies and were overall a fun and dedicated group, she expressed frustration over certain students' behavior. For someone as dedicated as Alex who had trouble entering Japanese at the University of Illinois in the first place due to high demand for the class, watching students who begged to fill those few valuable seats fall asleep or skip class is a particularly trying experience. Alex's fervor for Japanese language and culture runs deeper than a simple enjoyment of the country's entertainment mediums. Alex hails from England and moved to the United States when she was young, but she always felt like there was a part of her that was missing, the part of her that belonged to England. But her experiences with Japanese solidified her belief that Japan fills the hole that England left in her heart: "I didn't choose Japanese," she says, "to me it felt more like it was destiny." Alex's English background has led to some conflict within her family regarding her chosen field of study and career goals. Before settling in the U.S., Alex's family moved from place to place for a few years, and because of their travels, Alex's mother has felt considerable anxiety since their

arrival in the States that her children would be inclined to wander, and she would be left alone. Out of concern for her mother's reaction, Alex initially had to smuggle manga and other Japan related items into her room, hoping her mother would not discover her interest in the country and language. But once she knew that she wanted to pursue a career in Japanese translation, her mother gradually became reconciled to the idea that her children would leave. Alex looked somewhat uncomfortable and mentioned that her mother still has mixed feeling about the whole affair. She looked away as she said "I don't know how she's going to deal with me being in Japan for a whole year"—but not even concern for her mother will keep Alex away from the country that has become such a huge part of her life. It does not seem to matter that Alex's chosen career path will likely not move her out of the Midwest, where many of the large American based manga and anime translating companies are located: to her mother, the distance that grows between them is cultural rather than physical.

Group Summary: 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

supercede 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.

Paper: Introduction (PAR) It doesn't take degree in East Asian studies to recognize the changing global status of countries like Japan and China. Anyone who has so much as glanced at a news headline in the sidebar on search engines like Google or Yahoo! is at least vaguely aware that

China is emerging as a political and economic power while Japan's economic giant becomes gradually diminished as the population declines. Throughout this course we have seen evidence that American and Asian youth are increasingly aware of the heightened sense of global competition they face in their future careers as the world grows smaller and they are no longer isolated within the walls of a nation-state. Anthropologists such as Aihwa Ong and Ann Anagnost have documented both Asian parents' and children's conscious efforts to make themselves more employable in a global market while the yearbook for a Singapore-based organization called A*Star calls for bright, young, aspiring scientists around the world. David Brooks' expose on Ivy-league students reveals that these efforts to globalize and mold oneself to compete successfully internationally are by no means limited to Asia. In designing our project our group sought to discover if this sense of competition and awareness of the changing status of Asian countries carried through to and affected the motivation for University of Illinois undergrads to study Chinese or Japanese. (PAR) As all four of our group members study either China or Japan, we were all aware that while Japanese has long been considered a valuable language to acquire for success in the business sphere that its place in the world now seems to be geared almost entirely towards its entertainment industry, the legendary "soft power" of Japan. From our position as students in the East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALC) program we'd noticed that Japanese appeared to be increasingly associated with fans of anime, manga and games, known in Japanese as "otaku", and that while Japanese did not seem to be experiencing a drop in popularity (a fact confirmed by two of our interviewees who had to fight tooth and nail for a place in the class), the waiting lists and subsequent demand for Chinese was considerably higher. Meanwhile, outside the EALC program itself, there has been talk recently by key members of the University's administration of increasing the school's focus on China, and a rumor of a potential Confucian Institute (an organization sponsored by the Chinese government and usually located on University campuses that offers courses in Chinese language and culture to the local community) has been floating around the air. In order to discover whether—and to what extent—Chinese and Japanese Language learners here at the University of Illinois reflect these changes and whether or not they view their language acquisition as an advantage in an increasingly global labor market, we interviewed eight non-heritage advanced students of Chinese and Japanese (four per language). Our decision to limit our interviewees to non-heritage students stemmed from our desire to isolate students whose motives for choosing the particular language they are studying are not related to belonging to the same ethnic background as the language in question. Our interest lay in discovering what factors led them to begin their studies (i.e. market value of the language, familial influence, personal interest etc.) and to what extent they planned to be

involved with East Asia in the future. By and large, the response to our inquiries matched our initial hypothesis; however, we found a number of surprises in our results. In order to best analyze our findings, I have divided them into four parts by theme (motivation, cultural interest, the parental factor, and future goals) rather than splitting the results by country so as to provide a side-by-side comparison. (PAR) Initial Motivation (PAR) When we sat down together to compile the results of our research we could see a pattern emerging almost immediately in the way Chinese students had come to the decision to study the language. Overwhelmingly, these students cited China's growing economy and the professional edge they would gain by learning Chinese as the primary reasons they carried through with their studies to the advanced level. But while two of them held this view from the beginning, the other two confessed that their initial decision was driven by other factors: the first admitted that he had chosen to take Chinese because he was tired of European languages and thought that Chinese would be drastically different from the common languages spoken in America, while the second student began studying Chinese in order to prove to her Mandarin-speaking friends that she could. The latter student actually wrote a letter falsely stating her intention to use Chinese professionally as a means to gain enrollment in the overly full course. However, both of these students quickly realized the market value of the Chinese language and their focus (somewhat ironically in the case of the latter) turned towards the global economy and the benefits they could reap in their careers by being able to speak Chinese. Indeed, the student who decided to study Chinese because of its difference from European languages remarked that he believed his language skills to be his "number one selling point" for employers. (PAR) Like the Chinese students, many of the Japanese language learners we interviewed also intended to use Japanese in some way in their future careers. However, we discovered that their desire to use Japanese professionally was not their initial goal or motivation behind their decision to learn Japanese but rather developed over the course of their studies. Every single one of our interviewees who were studying Japanese were introduced to both language and culture through the popular mediums of anime and manga (Japanese animation and graphic novels) and their enjoyment of and interest in Japanese entertainment contributed to their choice to study Japanese (though there were several additional factors). All four interviewees discussed both their motives for learning Japanese and the learning process itself as something that was highly personal. Alex, one of my interviewees, told me that for her, Japanese was not the means to an end, but was a way of life, a sentiment that was echoed by Callie, my second interviewee who stated that she doesn't just learn Japanese, she lives it. The other two students also described Japanese as a means of fulfilling an inner passion as well as for personal growth and expression, both desires that take precedent over any career goals they might have

in mind. Alex, who believes her love of Japanese stems from her need to fill the hole England left in her heart when her family moved to America, goes so far as to say, "I didn't choose Japanese—to me it felt more like destiny." (PAR) Cultural Interest (PAR) As evident from the previous section, the students we interviewed who were studying Japanese are very much involved with Japanese culture. All are interested in popular media such as anime, manga and video games, and a few are disciplined in Japanese martial arts. Students like Alex and Callie very nearly literally eat, sleep, live and breathe all things Japanese. They make trips to Japanese grocers to indulge in popular candy and more traditional cuisine, they use the language in their daily life be it talking to friends, stalking strangers they overhear speaking Japanese, or watching anime, and try to become involved in "higher" Japanese culture that's available on campus (i.e. Japan House, which teaches both the tea ceremony and ikebana). Their devotion to the culture as well as the language seems to stem from the personal nature of their involvement with Japanese, a theory that is largely supported by the corresponding data obtained from those studying Chinese. (PAR) The Chinese students, whose interest in the language was largely the result of a desire to secure their future success professionally, displayed little interest in or knowledge of Chinese culture. One student did mention that the majority of her friends were Chinese, and her boyfriend was a visiting scholar from China, but despite her proximity to these people, she felt that she is unable to adapt socially in China, remarking on her irrevocable "American-ness." Two interviewees mentioned their interest in the culture, but when asked to expound were unable to relay any aspect of it, save a solitary factoid that is true not only of China, but of East Asian women in general. It almost seems as though the desire to study a language for business reasons cancels out any focus on culture while a focus on cultural renders professional motivations peripheral to personal ones. (PAR) The Parental Factor (PAR) Although we were curious about the influence family exerted over these students' choice of language as well as their overall reaction, a few students responded rather dismissively, saying their parents had no influence over them or simply weren't "a factor". However, five students (two studying Chinese, three Japanese) provided very interesting responses to the question. Overall, those studying Chinese seem to have overwhelming parental support for their decision—one student's entire basis for choosing Chinese came from his father, whose place in the corporate world allowed him to experience the high demand for Chinese in business first-hand—but the other student had to work for his parents' eventual approval. Initially his parents were wholly unsupportive because they did not understand his decision. However, once he'd explained the economic value of studying Chinese his parents not only approved but immediately offered to pay to send him to China through a study abroad program. Similarly, Callie, a Japanese student, remarked that her father

thought she should be a scientist or at least study Chinese, but that he will support her in her Japanese studies as long as she can get job using it. Another Japanese student revealed that his parents were supportive but reluctantly so; they too felt he would be better served professionally were he to have chosen Chinese over Japanese. The most interesting response came from Alex, whose mother's anxiety over her Japanese studies stems not from any concern over Alex's future business prospects but over the possibility that Alex's interest in the Japanese language and culture will separate her from her mother, an Englishwoman already feeling disoriented in a country that is not her home. Because Alex's career path will not likely move her out of the Midwest, the distance her mother fears will grow between them appears to be cultural rather than physical. (PAR) Future Goals (PAR) Nearly all of our interviewees plan to use either Chinese or Japanese in their future careers and have taken a variety of steps to ensure that they will reach their goal. Those studying Chinese all plan to use the language in the business world, though aside from two who expressed an interest in starting their own business, no specifics were given. Alex and Callie, two of the Japanese students, plan to become translators of anime and manga and an additional student wants to use Japanese to further his business career. The remaining student has no current plans to use Japanese specifically in his career (he is a computer science major intending to work in technology) but believes that the personal enrichment he gained from studying it will aid him in his search for employment. Interestingly, most of our interviewees intend to remain in America to pursue their professional goals, while those who do plan to work overseas for a time expressed a reluctance to remain there permanently. The rationalization behind these decisions seem to come from a variety of places: Alex and Callie, as aspiring manga translators, face their best hope of employment in California or the Midwest where the majority of American translation companies are located, while the computer science major feels that he will make considerably more money in the U.S. than he would in Japan. Of the remaining students, some expressed concern about the environment in China and their reservations about raising a family there, some were concerned that they would miss America, and others expressed a strong belief that while China was indeed climbing in the economic world, America would retain its place as #1. Regardless of where they intended to work and why, all of our interviewees were very much aware of their place as players and competitors in a global economy/market and as part of an international exchange. (PAR) Conclusion (PAR) In accordance with our hypothesis we found that students studying Chinese tended to be more goal-oriented with a clear plan of using Chinese as a commodity in their future careers following the pattern of Brook's "Organization Kid" who works towards enhancing his skills for the purpose of future employment (a practice also mentioned by Anagnost when discussing the value China

places on building its children as a sort of commodity so that they may compete both in China and abroad), while overall the Japanese students were more interested in personal passion or development. Those who intended to use Japanese in their professional lives, in the entertainment industry or otherwise, developed those goals over the course of their studies rather than beginning with them in mind, and though they were aware of the same economic situations as the Chinese students they appeared less interested in the business market-value of careers in Japanese. While we are aware that these students are a very small section of East Asian language learners at the University of Illinois and may not be representative of the group as a whole, and while we recognize that no individual's experience with these languages can truly be boiled down to a generalization, the common threads that ran between our interviewees do seem indicative of a bigger picture at the University. Posters advertising for intensive summer language courses feature anime characters for Japanese while our informants tell us students planning to use Chinese professionally are given precedent in the fight for a seat in intro language classes. The University is shifting to reflect the changes in a world hurtling towards neoliberal globalization—or perhaps it is the students themselves who represent that change and we shamelessly cater to our demographic. Either way, the results of our project seem to be just the tip of a very large iceberg that has not yet been brought fully to the surface.

Reflect: I feel that I can offer little useful reflection on the EUI research process given that this was my first (and likely my last) foray into the world of anthropological field work and I have nothing to compare it to. EUI certainly made the process of obtaining the proper documentation in order to begin research very simple; it was incredibly helpful to have all forms and information on Moodle where I could access them whenever I had a question about methodology and what was or wasn't allowed (not to mention whenever I'd lost the blank consent forms I'd printed the night before and needed fresh copies immediately). There are both benefits and problems recording our research online in Moodle: the key benefit is of course that it gives us an opportunity to see not only what our group members are doing but what our classmates (who, in our case, had a much better idea of what they were doing and actual experience with anthropology) are working on. That is extremely helpful when you're not entirely sure you're doing things right and gives us all a chance to work off each other and mutually benefit from our research. The main downfall of the Moodle is that it is very nearly impossible to get the thing to recognize the space between paragraphs and as a result my entries usually look like giant blobs and are very difficult to read. This is frustrating on the part of the writer and I would imagine even more frustrating for readers (it certainly bothered me when I was reading my group members' interviews). I had no qualms about complying with IRB

and thought that what they asked of us was both reasonable and appealed to common sense. The possibility of archiving our work admittedly made me nervous but I recognize that it has the potential to be of great use not only to us, but to future students and other researchers.

Recommendations: I do not feel that I am in the position to make any recommendations to the university as a whole on the basis of our findings. I believe that the EALC department itself is responding less to the university's wishes and more to the student demographic in each language. Our research involved such a small segment of the university's East Asian language learning community that further research (perhaps involving the language professors and TAs, the architects of these classes) is needed before any truly informed recommendation could be made to the university. I would also be interested to see if our findings are limited to large universities like Illinois or if they extend to small liberal arts colleges where both students and schools appear to be less involved in neoliberal globalization and corporatization. Nevertheless, there is one recommendation I feel comfortable making on the basis of our findings for the students of Chinese: it would be beneficial, I believe, to teach them culture as well as the language skills they need to conduct business. If they are to interact with China in their professional lives it would seem prudent to understand where their Chinese business partners are coming from. Otherwise their communication skill seems superficial at best.

Prelim. Research Prop.: Do the experiences and motivations to enter into language study of Chinese and Japanese at small liberal arts colleges differ from those of students at large public universities? And does this question lead to a larger question regarding why the experiences of these students and the educational practices at liberal arts colleges are overlooked in discussions of the effects of neoliberalism and globalization on higher education in America? Harry Harootunian and his colleague Masao Miyoshi have written extensively on the decline of area studies and the liberal arts in general as well as the growing corporatization of universities as schools and companies rush to meet the demands of an increasingly neoliberal global economy. Miyoshi, in his article "The Ivory Tower in Escrow", writes that the curriculum at many, if not most, large universities in America is driven by corporate interests who use the school as a recruiting ground or as a means to conduct their own research and generate patents for less than it would cost them otherwise. Meanwhile, Harootunian attacks the very concept of area studies, revealing that the origin of Asian studies (and Japan studies more specifically) is grounded in the government's desire to first know more about a people they concerned enemies during the war, and then with economic interests as Japan in particular became the poster child of western modernity. These studies, and Miyoshi's observation that neither

universities' administrations nor their students seem to be offering any objection to these developments (and actually may be welcoming them) dovetail nicely with the work of David Brooks in his "Organization Kid", a study of Princeton students and their work towards making themselves as competitive as possible in today's neoliberal global job market. Recently three fellow students and I conducted a study of these neoliberal trends through researching advanced, non-heritage undergraduates' motivation for beginning language study in Chinese and Japanese at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We found that by and large, our results reflected our initial hypothesis that the trends towards globalization and China's rising place on the world stage were leading Chinese to overtake Japanese as the language of choice for business or economy majors, while the study of Japanese was increasingly undertaken by students interested in Japan's "soft power", their enormous entertainment industry, or simply for personal reasons. But neither we nor Miyoshi nor Brooks examined the effects of neoliberalism, globalization, or corporatization outside the big universities like Illinois, which are really only a fraction of the schools that compose higher education in America. (PAR) Although I am currently enrolled in graduate school at one of those large universities, until I graduated last May I attended Vassar College, Yale's sister and part of the larger definition of the "Ivy League" but nevertheless, a small liberal arts school utterly unlike the University of Illinois. When Harootunian, Miyoshi and Brooks' work first came to my attention, I was flummoxed. This was an evaluation of higher education that was completely outside my experience. Vassar, "the hippie school" as my younger sister occasionally calls it, seemed to have isolated and cushioned me from the neoliberalization that was occurring at other institutions—or was it my own naïvete that sheltered me and other students did not share my views or experience? Over the course of the interviewing process for our EUI project as my group members and I sought to discover Illinois students' motivation for studying Chinese and Japanese, I found myself wondering how students' answers would compare at liberal arts schools like Vassar, and whether they would be similarly affected by the desire to compete in a global job market like the Illinois students studying Chinese, or whether they would all be more like the Japanese students, studying either language to fulfill their own personal needs and interests and less in tune with global business trends and the need to compete on an international level. Naturally this curiosity led to the formulation of a second facet to the original project: to discover if and in what ways the motivation to study Chinese and Japanese at a small liberal arts school differs and/or compares to the motivations of students at a large, neoliberally driven university like Illinois. (PAR) The structure of this second project would mirror that of the first: this time, using my connections in Vassar's department of Chinese and Japanese I would contact non-heritage advanced students (both years 3 and 4 are

“advanced” at Vassar—I would limit my field of inquiry to those students entering their 4th year of language study, the highest level offered at Vassar) of Chinese and Japanese and question them about their initial motivation for choosing their particular language, how their views and goals may have changed over the course of their study, what if anything they plan to do with their language skills following graduation, and any factors outside themselves (i.e. family, friends, professors, world trends etc.) that may have prompted or hindered their language study and/or future goals. These interviews can be conducted in a variety of ways depending on the convenience of the students involved. The easiest, and most inexpensive, would be to complete the interviews over the computer program Skype, using the video conference function to enable me to observe my interviewees’ facial expressions as well as their vocal inflections. Skype also features a useful function wherein it allows you to record your audio conversations, thus enabling me to play back the interview whenever needed during the writing process and allowing me during the course of the actual interview to focus on how and why my interviewees are responding the way they are instead of spending all my time trying to write down exactly what they said. Skype is a program already in the possession of many if not most college students, particularly those who have studied abroad, and is available for free download over the internet making it a convenient means of conducting interviews with students who are likely spread out across the country over summer break. A pilgrimage to Vassar to conduct interviews in person is also possible, but is likely to be less productive as Vassar students do not tend to remain on campus over the summer, and my interview pool would be extremely limited. (PAR) It is my belief that by examining the current changes and status of East Asian language studies in both large, public universities and small, private liberal arts colleges instead of limiting those studies to the former that we may paint a clearer, truer picture of the state of student attitudes towards language study in America’s higher education as well as a better understanding of today’s college students. Studies of liberal arts schools and their students have been neglected in recent times, particularly by writers like Miyoshi and Brooks in examinations of the effects of neoliberalism on college students. I would like to discover if this neglect comes from the idea that liberal arts colleges are less affected by global, neoliberal trends, or if neoliberalism does have an effect on them, is it different from that of the students at Illinois and why? And if it turns out that neoliberalism has less of an effect or none at all on liberal arts schools, why should that make them any less worthy of study? There is a bigger picture here than simply the current trends of Chinese and Japanese language studies at large universities versus small colleges: American academia as well as its corporations, may very well be discarding the education practices of liberal arts schools as well as the experiences of their students. Through the lens of Chinese and Japanese language

studies at these two types of schools I hope to begin to answer some of these questions. (PAR) References: (PAR) Brooks, David . "The Organization Kid." Atlantic Monthly. 2001. (hanging indentation)<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200104/brooks> (PAR) Harootunian, Harry. "Chapter 1: Tracking the Dinosaur: Area studies in a (hanging indent) time of Globalism." History's Disquiet: modernity, cultural (hanging indent) practice, and the question of everyday life. Columbia (hanging indent) University Press, 2000. 25-58. Miyoshi, Masao. "The Ivory Tower in Escrow." Learning Places: The Afterlives (hanging indent) of Area Studies. Miyoshi, Masao and H.D. Harootunian (eds.). (hanging indent) Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. (page numbers unknown)