



# Motivation: What's the point?

Stephen Ryan, Waseda University

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Japan Association for Language Education and Technology (LET), 8 October, 2016





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# Outline

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- ❖ Overview of established motivation research
- ❖ Consider some of the problems applying these within the Japanese English learning context
- ❖ Slightly rethink how we conceptualise motivation and achievement in English education.



# Motivation research and practice

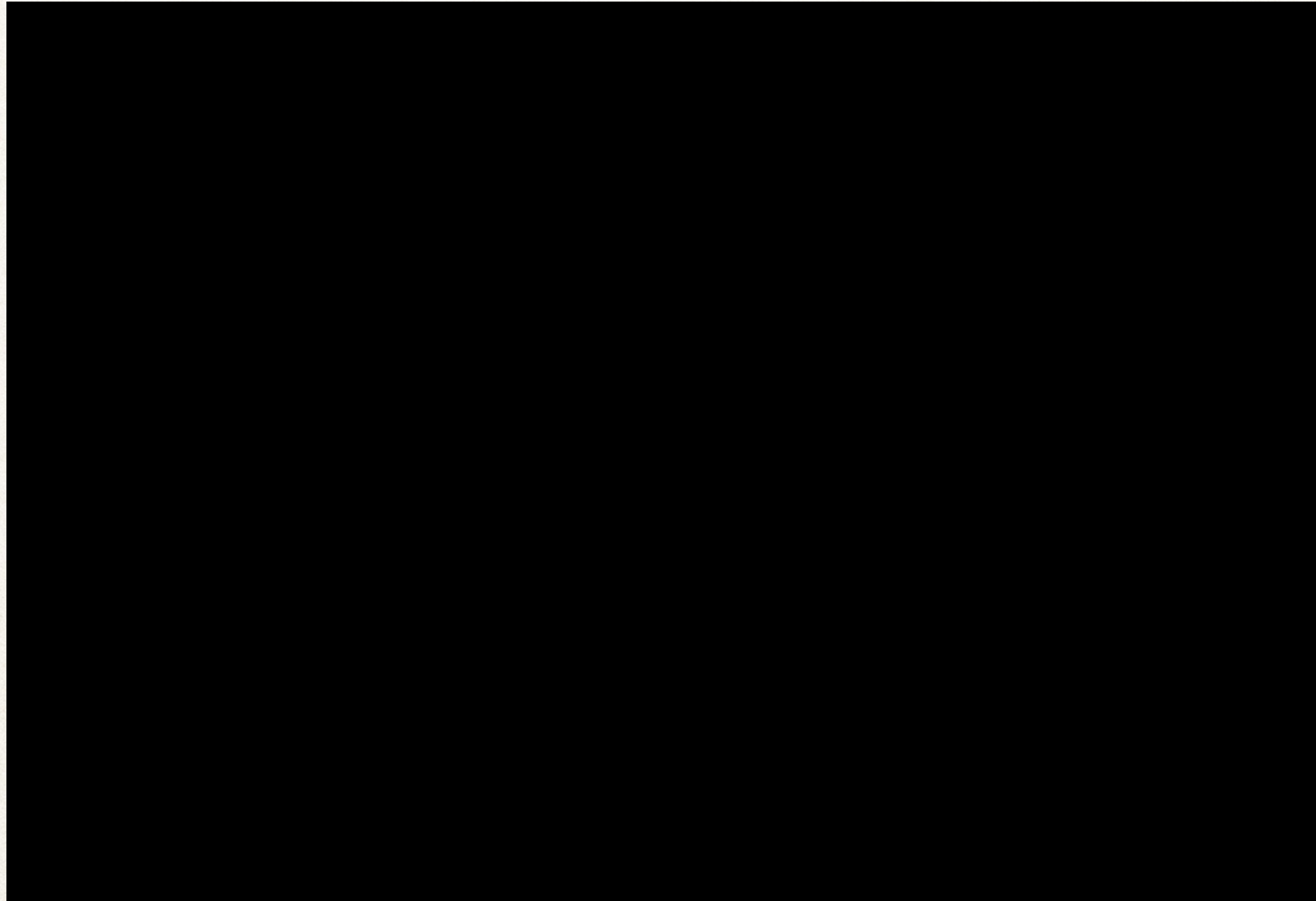
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- ❖ “where theory and practice intersect most comfortably” (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015)
- ❖ Huge interest in recent years—especially in Japan—and great changes in how we think about the motivation to learn a foreign language
- ❖ Change from the idea of motivation as external to motivation as internal



# External motivation

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Kohn, A. (1993). *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise and other bribes.*



# Motivation from within

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- ❖ Self-determination, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002)
- ❖ **L2 Motivational Self System** (Dörnyei, 2009)
- ❖ Ideal L2 self; ought-to L2 self; language learning experience
- ❖ Vision



# The story so far ...

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- ❖ “Japanese people study English for 6 years and ...”
  - ❖ The shifting focus of language education
    - ❖ From language, teachers, and teaching
    - ❖ To language learners and language learning
    - ❖ To the whole person and ...?



# Positive communication

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- ❖ Comes from positive psychology (Seligman, 2002)
- ❖ "Micro moments of positive resonance" (Fredrickson, 2014)
- ❖ Communication is a fundamental human need
- ❖ Communication can enrich and improve our lives (Pitts & Socha, 2012)
  - ❖ Communication behaviour: *greeting, asking, complimenting, disclosing, encouraging, listening*



# Points to consider

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- ❖ How do we understand motivation in a way that considers the whole person?
- ❖ If we are looking at the whole person, then how do we reconceptualize language teaching?
- ❖ What do we do about people who are unmotivated to learn English for good reasons?
- ❖ How do we define our own success as teachers and the success of learners in our classrooms?



# References

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