

A Hollywood English Pronunciation for Japanese Students? An Exploration of Japanese University Students' Attitudes towards Japanese English Pronunciation

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This article reports on a study that evaluated Japanese university students' attitudes towards Japanese English and inner circle English pronunciation, with the aim of gauging their level of acceptance of Japanese movie star Ken Watanabe as an English pronunciation role model. Students completed an online questionnaire that assessed how attractive, comprehensible and achievable they found Watanabe's English pronunciation in comparison to a British and an American actor's speech. The results of the study indicated that respondents regarded Watanabe's pronunciation as being significantly less attractive, but more comprehensible and achievable than that of the other two actors. No significant differences were observed between the responses for the inner circle speakers. Watanabe's Japanese English pronunciation appeared to be perceived as somehow inferior to that of the British and American speakers by participants, and this seems likely to be the main obstacle preventing the adoption of Watanabe as a pronunciation role model by Japanese students of English.

Key words: pronunciation, role model, Japanese, World English

INTRODUCTION

Despite being such an obviously critical part of spoken communication, the area of pronunciation remains a problematic and neglected component of English language teaching, with what is taught based largely on inner circle (as defined by Kachru, 1992) speaker intuitions rather than quantitative research (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Jenkins, 2002). While a lack of consistent and direct attention in the classroom may afford students the opportunity to 'find their own voice', the diversity of Englishes that exist around the world is also a potential source of confusion for learners and could leave many wondering which form of pronunciation they themselves should be attempting to acquire. There is still a strong tendency within Japan to use teaching materials that focus heavily on idealized inner circle pronunciation, in particular American, English models (Matsuda, 2003). The Japanese government also strongly promotes increased exposure to inner circle speakers in the classroom as a measure to improve the overall standard of English (MEXT, 2002; MEXT, 2003); however a significant body of research suggests that mastering such 'native' pronunciation may be beyond the capability of the majority of students by the time they reach their early teenage years (Flege, Yeni-Komshian & Liu, 1999; Morley, 1991; Oyama, 1976; Piske, MacKay & Flege, 2001). It would therefore seem that significant numbers of learners are at risk of setting themselves up with the unachievable goal of sounding like an inner circle 'native speaker', something that has been advised against by linguists as far back as Abercrombie (1949). Dörnyei (2008) proposes that learners' 'future images' of themselves need to be realistic if they are to have a sustained motivational effect; thus, according to his framework of analysis, unattainable pronunciation targets such as those outlined here are likely to be highly detrimental to long-term student motivation.

There is a general consensus among researchers in the field of English as a Lingua Franca that speakers of English in the expanding outer circle need not adhere to inner circle norms (Jenkins, 1998; Seidlhofer, 2005). This, together

with greater recognition of different World Englishes, has opened the door for broader acceptance of language varieties that deviate from the traditional General American (GA) and Received Pronunciation (RP) models, including varieties such as Japanese English and Chinese English (Hu, 2004). While exposure to a wide range of these different Englishes is undoubtedly useful for higher level students, it is the author's contention that for lower level learners a strong emphasis on the most achievable variety of English pronunciation will be most effective in facilitating improvements in spoken communication skills. In line with this, it is proposed that the presence of a 'Japanese English' speaking pronunciation role model would be of great benefit to lower level Japanese students, and that Japanese Hollywood movie star Ken Watanabe would be an appropriate choice of role model for this purpose. The wide availability and high profile of American movies in Japan suggests that a Hollywood movie star would be an engaging and interesting choice for students, and the fact that Watanabe's distinctly Japanese-accented English pronunciation has now graced several well-known movies (*Batman Begins*, 2005; *Letters from Iwo Jima*, 2006; *Memoirs of a Geisha*, 2005; *The Last Samurai*, 2003) without the accompaniment of subtitles indicates that it has, in some sense, already been accepted as both legitimate and intelligible by the American movie industry.

The purpose of this study was to gauge Japanese students' reactions to Watanabe's English pronunciation in comparison to two other high profile inner circle Hollywood movie stars. It was theorized that, in terms of phonological achievability at least, Watanabe's English pronunciation was the most suitable role model of the three for Japanese students. However the extent to which the students themselves recognized and embraced this was not clear. A questionnaire was used to assess how attractive, comprehensible and achievable students believed Watanabe's English pronunciation to be in comparison to that of Tom Cruise (North American) and Hugh Grant (British). How attractive students found a particular pronunciation was considered to be key to their acceptance of it as a target, while comprehensibility and achievability were both selected as they were

considered to be essential qualities for a model pronunciation. The author expected that participants would rate Watanabe's English pronunciation as being more achievable and comprehensible than that of the other two actors on account of its phonological proximity to Japanese pronunciation. However a lack of previous research in this area made it difficult to predict how attractive they would find each of the actors' speech. It was anticipated that the results of the study could be used to inform the choice and method of introduction of English pronunciation role models in Japanese classrooms, while also providing insight into students' perceptions of English pronunciation in general.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study was conducted via an online questionnaire, the link to which was only made available to students registered in compulsory English courses at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) in Japan. Students in the Introductory, Fundamental and Intermediate level courses (with corresponding paper-based TOEFL score targets of 400, 450 and 500) of the English program were encouraged by their class instructors to fill in the questionnaire; however, university regulations dictated that it was not possible to make participation mandatory. Students in these courses were specifically targeted as they represented the demographic within the university with the lowest level of English ability, and thus appeared to be an appropriate group for a pronunciation role model to be introduced to. Information about the respondents is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Questionnaire Respondent Information (Excluding Non-Japanese Respondents)

Course Level	Target	Registered Students	Number of responses (N)	Response rate (%)	Gender		Age (M)
	TOEFL PBT Score				Male	Female	
Introductory	400	256	46	18.0	15	31	19
Fundamental	450	333	46	13.8	27	19	19
Intermediate	500	423	92	21.7	49	43	19
Total	-	1012	184	18.2	91	93	19

Instrument

The online questionnaire was developed to feature three embedded video clips and three multi-item scales in Japanese for the purpose of measuring students' perceptions of the attractiveness, comprehensibility and achievability of the actors' English pronunciations. Cruise and Grant were selected as the two inner circle actors as they are also male movie stars who are well known in Japan and are of similar age to Watanabe (Cruise was born in 1962, Grant in 1960, Watanabe in 1959).

The first stage of creating the instrument involved searching the internet for appropriate videos of the three actors to use in the questionnaire. The criteria for video selection were that (i) the video clips should all have high quality audio of the actors speaking at a similar volume, (ii) they should all feature the actors being interviewed about one of their movies in a studio environment, (iii) they should all be hosted on the same, preferably well-known, video hosting site to ensure the greatest degree of consistency and reliable playback possible, (iv) they should all be of similar length, and (v) they should all have been online for enough time and have had enough views to be confidently considered as being in the public domain. The three videos selected fulfilled criteria (i) and (ii) and were all hosted on Youtube, a well-known video hosting site. As of April 24 2009 the least watched video had almost 4,000 views and the most recently posted clip had been online for approximately four months. Accordingly it was felt that the clips could be

safely considered as being in the public domain and therefore available to be used for a study of this nature. It was not possible to find three videos of similar length thus criterion (iv) was not met. This factor was compensated for in the questionnaire design by providing specific instructions to respondents regarding playback repetitions and length. The Cruise video did also feature an additional interviewee; however, a caption near the start of the interview clearly indicated who Cruise was, so there should not have been any confusion for participants. Information about the video clips is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Questionnaire Video Clip Information

Actor	Video Hosting Site	Date Posted	Number of Views (as of April 24th 2009)	Length (minutes:seconds)
Tom Cruise	Youtube	December 26 2008	10 654	4:48
Hugh Grant	Youtube	May 27 2008	3 962	0:40
Ken Watanabe	Youtube	June 9 2007	30 847	3:59

The next step in the design of the instrument was the creation of multi-item scales to measure students' perceptions of the attractiveness, comprehensibility and achievability of the actors' English pronunciations. The attractiveness scale was designed to measure the degree to which participants liked the way that each of the actors pronounced English in the video clips, the comprehensibility scale measured how easy participants felt that the actors' English pronunciations were to understand, and the achievability scale measured the extent to which the participants felt that they themselves would be able to produce the same pronunciation as the actors. Comprehensibility, rather than intelligibility, was used as the title for the second scale in order to maintain consistency with work done by researchers such as Smith (1992) and Derwing and Munro (1997) who measured intelligibility through cloze tasks and defined comprehensibility as a measure of participant perceptions. Given the differing content of the 'real' video footage used for each actor, it

was felt that it was not possible to construct a meaningful intelligibility test in this study.

The scales consisted of Likert-type items where participants indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements on a six point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. A six point scale was selected in order to avoid the problem of respondents 'sitting on the fence' by choosing a middle value, as they could do with a five point scale.

It was decided that, as many of the respondents were expected to have a low level of English, the questionnaire should be administered in Japanese in order to avoid confusion. With this in mind a mixed pool of seven positively and negatively worded items were initially written in English for each scale and then translated into Japanese by the author. The translated phrases were next given to a native speaker of Japanese with professional translating experience to be translated back into English. Following this, differences between the original statements and the translated English statements were analyzed. Adjustments to the corresponding Japanese were made until both the author and the second translator were satisfied with the accuracy of the translations.

The seven Japanese items for each scale were shown to several Japanese colleagues who noted down any statements that they felt were difficult to understand or too similar. Based on this feedback the scales were reduced to five statements, each with two or three positively worded items and two or three negatively worded items. Instructions for the questionnaire and background information questions were also written in English and translated in the same manner as the statements. The questionnaire was then constructed in Japanese using SurveyGizmo (2005), an online survey construction tool, with the statements mixed in a configuration that ensured no items from the same scale appeared consecutively and that the number of consecutive positive or negative statements was minimized. Answer scales for all three actors were inserted underneath each item. Background questions about participants' sex, age, English course and overseas experience were included on a second page together with a comments section. The background

questions were placed on a second page, in order to prevent the first page from appearing too long to participants, and a progress bar was included in the design to allow respondents to see how far they had progressed through the questionnaire. There were a total of 22 questions in all; the instrument was kept deliberately short in order to avoid problems associated with participant fatigue in studies of this nature.

All three videos of the actors were embedded above the list of 15 items. As the videos were of differing lengths participants were clearly instructed that they should watch a minimum of 40 seconds of each of the videos after adjusting the playback volume to a suitable level (40 seconds was the length of the shortest video) and that they could watch each of the videos as many times as they wished to.

Time constraints did not allow for full piloting of the questionnaire; however, several Japanese colleagues completed a test version to check for any confusing or problematic areas and also to ascertain approximately how long it would take to complete. The feedback obtained suggested that it would take respondents approximately 15 minutes to finish, and this estimate was included in the initial instructions on the instrument.

Procedures

Following approval by the APU Center for Language Education, the author contacted instructors in compulsory APU English courses and asked them to post a link to the questionnaire on their online learning system pages. The English instructors then encouraged students to complete the questionnaire as a voluntary homework assignment by directing them to the link, which was only accessible to students on the compulsory Introductory, Fundamental and Intermediate level English courses. Data was collected over a period of approximately two weeks.

The instructions at the start of the questionnaire clearly stated that students would need to have headphones or speakers attached to their computers in order to participate. It was not possible to monitor the conditions under which

participants completed the questionnaire; however, the nature of the factors being measured, together with the fact that respondents were free to re-watch videos if they wished to, made the presence of variables such as background noise considerably less important than they would have been if the study had involved strict testing of response times or similar measurements.

Data Analysis

The data was downloaded from the instrument in the form of an Excel file. This file was edited to exclude results from the 17 non-Japanese respondents. Negative scale items were recoded and the details of students' stays abroad were also converted into a nominal scale ('Long-term') that denoted whether they had stayed overseas for more than a month continuously or not (it was felt that most stays of a month or more would generally entail a greater degree of interaction with non-Japanese than short term tourism. The author wanted to investigate whether this type of experience had more impact on students' opinions about English pronunciation than visiting a country for a few days of sightseeing). The details of students' stays abroad, and the comments section were then deleted and the edited file, which held the data of 184 respondents, was loaded into SPSS.

Histogram plots were used to check the normality of the distribution for each of the items. Taking into account the large sample size it was felt that the deviations from normality that existed were not sufficient to throw statistical test results into question. Reliability analysis was then carried out for each of the multi-item scales. Following examination of the Cronbach α coefficients one question was deleted from the attractiveness scale in order to achieve optimal overall reliability. The final Cronbach coefficients for the nine scales that were calculated are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Reliability Analysis for Multi-Item Scales

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach α
Cruise Attractiveness	4	.75
Grant Attractiveness	4	.82
Watanabe Attractiveness	4	.88
Cruise Comprehensibility	5	.85
Grant Comprehensibility	5	.90
Watanabe Comprehensibility	5	.82
Cruise Achievability	5	.77
Grant Achievability	5	.78
Watanabe Achievability	5	.80

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Differences in Attractiveness, Comprehensibility and Achievability

Table 4 below illustrates the results obtained from the study. Inspection of the mean scores suggested that Watanabe's English pronunciation was perceived by the participants to be less attractive, but more comprehensible and achievable than the other two actors' pronunciations. Repeated measures ANOVA tests verified that the differences in the mean scores for Watanabe and the other two actors were statistically significant in all three categories, while no significant differences at all were found between the scores for Cruise and Grant. These results indicate that the main obstacle teachers are likely to face in introducing Watanabe as an English pronunciation role model is Japanese students' preference for inner circle pronunciation. The success of such an introduction would therefore appear to be highly dependant on the strategies that teachers can use to make students view his pronunciation in a more attractive light.

TABLE 4
Comparison of Attractiveness, Comprehensibility and Achievability Scores for
Cruise, Grant and Watanabe

	M (SD) (n = 184)			F (d, Error)
	Tom Cruise	Hugh Grant	Ken Watanabe	
Attractiveness	4.88 (.87)	4.86 (1.02)	3.68 (1.38)	76.14*** (1.76, 321.51)
Comprehensibility	3.89 (1.11)	4.08 (1.22)	4.63 (1.04)	21.20*** (2.00, 366.00)
Achievability	2.78 (.94)	2.95 (.97)	4.48 (1.02)	223.71* (1.88, 343.09)

Note. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

The Influence of Background Variables

Independent samples t-tests and ANOVAs were used to gauge whether or not the background variables measured in the questionnaire had an effect on the results obtained. The only significant results yielded by the ANOVA tests were that, as can be seen in Table 5, students in higher level English classes regarded Grant's pronunciation to be both more attractive and more comprehensible than lower level students did (no significant difference was observed for any of the other actors). This trend was thought to be largely explained by the abundance of instructors from the UK employed on the APU English course. Respondent age was not found to have any significant effect on the scores.

T-tests revealed that female respondents ($M = 4.69$, $SD = .96$) found Watanabe's English pronunciation significantly more achievable than male respondents ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.04$) did, $t(182) = 2.79$, $p < .01$, and that there were some significant differences between those students that had stayed abroad for over a month and those that had not (as denominated by the Long term scale). More specifically, students who had spent more than a month abroad rated Watanabe's pronunciation as being less attractive, and Cruise and Grant's pronunciation as more comprehensible than the other respondents did (see Table 6). These results suggest that spending an extended period of time abroad may encourage some learners to adopt a potentially unrealistic inner circle pronunciation ideal. It was also somewhat

TABLE 5
Comparison of Scores across English Course Levels

	M (SD)			F (2, 181)
	Introductory (n = 46)	Fundamental (n = 46)	Intermediate (n = 92)	
Cruise Attractiveness	4.62 (.79)	4.96 (.77)	4.97 (.93)	2.74
Grant Attractiveness	4.54 (1.05)	4.80 (1.05)	5.05 (.97)	3.96*
Watanabe Attractiveness	3.90 (1.37)	3.63 (1.37)	3.59 (1.39)	.83
Cruise Comprehensibility	3.60 (1.02)	3.99 (1.11)	3.98 (1.14)	2.02
Grant Comprehensibility	3.64 (1.18)	3.91 (1.23)	4.37 (1.17)	6.40**
Watanabe Comprehensibility	4.69 (.95)	4.54 (1.05)	4.65 (1.09)	.27
Cruise Achievability	2.73 (.98)	3.00 (1.03)	2.68 (.86)	1.89
Grant Achievability	2.79 (.98)	3.05 (1.03)	2.97 (.93)	.89
Watanabe Achievability	4.23 (1.18)	4.43 (.93)	4.64 (.95)	2.69

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

unexpected that members of the opposite sex to Watanabe considered his pronunciation to be easier to imitate than members of the same sex did, though perhaps suggestive of a higher level of phonological awareness or confidence in the female students of the sample.

TABLE 6
T-tests Comparing the Responses of Students who had Stayed Overseas for More than One Month and Less than One Month

	M (SD)		d	t
	More than 1 month (n = 29)	Less than 1 month (n = 155)		
Cruise Attractiveness	5.12 (.86)	4.83 (.86)	182.00	1.67
Grant Attractiveness	4.90 (1.23)	4.85 (.99)	182.00	.22
Watanabe Attractiveness	2.80 (1.36)	3.84 (1.32)	182.00	-3.88***
Cruise Comprehensibility	4.49 (1.26)	3.77 (1.05)	182.00	3.27***
Grant Comprehensibility	4.57 (1.29)	3.98 (1.19)	182.00	2.42*
Watanabe Comprehensibility	4.19 (1.39)	4.72 (.95)	33.00	-1.94
Cruise Achievability	3.17 (1.24)	2.70 (.86)	33.19	1.96
Grant Achievability	3.15 (.99)	2.91 (.96)	182.00	1.24
Watanabe Achievability	4.51 (1.27)	4.48 (.97)	182.00	.15

Note. *p < .05. ***p < .001.

Correlation Between Scales

Correlations between the multi-item scales for each actor are listed in Table 7 below.

TABLE 7
Correlations Between Multi-Item Scales for Each of the Three Actors (Pearson's Coefficients)

	Attractiveness	Comprehensibility	Achievability
Cruise			
Attractiveness	--	.38**	-.06
Comprehensibility		--	.50**
Achievability			--
Grant			
Attractiveness	--	.68**	.22**
Comprehensibility		--	.53**
Achievability			--
Watanabe			
Attractiveness	--	.42**	-.20**
Comprehensibility		--	.36**
Achievability			--

Note. **p < .01.

Total word count (excluding abstract, including tables, references and appendix) = 6,354 words

The correlations between attractiveness and comprehensibility, then again between comprehensibility and achievability were reasonably strong for all three of the actors. The data indicated a less consistent relationship between attractiveness and achievability however, with these two variables displaying weak positive correlation for Grant, weak negative correlation for Watanabe and no significant correlation at all for Cruise. These results suggested that comprehensibility may have been a central 'linking', and possibly even determining, factor for the other two variables; the better that students could understand a style of English pronunciation, the more likely they were to find it attractive and believe that they themselves can imitate it. More research,

however, needs to be done to establish the existence and causality of this potential relationship.

If the relationship noted above exists as proposed, then this suggests that instructors considering the introduction of an English pronunciation role model for Japanese students would be well advised to select a phonologically suitable model themselves and then work initially on increasing students' understanding of that pronunciation (rather than focusing on productive skills). The results obtained here suggest that once students have begun to find the pronunciation in question more comprehensible, then this may also have a positive effect on how attractive and achievable they find it, thus creating a more favorable environment for students to attempt to produce the pronunciation themselves. Although further research is undoubtedly needed to verify such a relationship, the suggestion that Japanese students should be given time to improve their listening ability with a given style of pronunciation before attempting to imitate it appears to be sensible, practical advice for teachers. Indeed a strong focus on listening alone at the start of intensive English language programs is a strategy also advocated by the Focal Skills Approach (Hastings, 1995) and implemented at institutions such as the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.

Participants' Comments

The comments left by students in the optional comments box on the questionnaire also provided some insight into respondent opinions. In particular it was notable that, although there were no comments indicating that students found Cruise or Grant's pronunciation unattractive, several participants expressed a dislike for Watanabe's speech. A number of respondents additionally stated that they did not want to pronounce English like Watanabe, or that their goal was to sound like a 'native speaker' of English. Even though comments such as these were only left by a small proportion of participants, they did highlight the existence of students who are setting themselves pronunciation goals that are likely to be unattainable.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the administration of the questionnaire in this study as a voluntary assignment online allowed for the convenient collection of a relatively large amount of data, it also resulted in the sample being unrepresentative of the compulsory English course population. The students that completed the questionnaire were likely more interested in participating in research projects, more enthusiastic about their studies, more familiar with the online learning system, better at remembering teachers' instructions and more likely to have free time to spend online than the non-respondents. It is not possible to demonstrate conclusively that factors such as these would not have influenced the results. However, it does seem unlikely that any of the differences listed above would directly affect students' relative assessments of the three actors' English pronunciations. With this in mind it is the author's contention that the results obtained here have a greater degree of generalizability than the low response rate of the study might initially suggest. The response rate could be improved in future studies by selecting a smaller sample population and ensuring that initial non-respondents are provided with some form of 'reminder' message asking them to complete the questionnaire.

It was also possible that, despite instructions telling respondents to focus only on the actors' English pronunciation, students' feelings towards the actors' personalities and appearance may have influenced their answers. As the aim of this project was to assess the suitability of the actors as pronunciation role models, this was not seen as being a significant problem. Inevitably students' feelings about the actors were likely to influence whether or not they would be motivated to use them as a pronunciation role model anyway. If similar studies are conducted in the future, however, then it may be advisable to include an additional scale assessing how attractive students found each of the actors in order to account for this factor.

CONCLUSION

Despite its limitations, the results of this study indicate that there were significant differences in Japanese students' attitudes toward the English pronunciation of the three actors. While participants appeared to recognize the higher level of achievability and comprehensibility (to themselves at least) of Watanabe's English pronunciation, they still found it significantly less attractive than that of the American and British actors Cruise and Grant. It would therefore seem that some groundwork needs to be done by teachers considering using Watanabe as an English pronunciation role model in order to increase the attractiveness of his English pronunciation in the eyes of Japanese students.

The study also suggests that initially working to increase the comprehensibility of Watanabe's, or indeed any prospective role model's, pronunciation to students may have a positive effect on both how attractive they find it and how confident they are that they can replicate it, thus creating a more favorable environment for the students to attempt to produce the pronunciation themselves. Some form of awareness-raising about the wide variety of Englishes that exist in the world is another possible strategy that may improve perceptions of attractiveness. Informing students about studies on intelligibility that suggest that inner circle English pronunciation is not necessarily the most widely understood form, for example Smith (1992), and that strong accents, as judged by inner circle speakers, do not necessarily affect intelligibility (Derwing & Munro, 1997; Munro & Derwing, 1995) may also have a positive effect on student perceptions of Watanabe's English pronunciation.

The work done here focuses very specifically on one possible English pronunciation role model for Japanese students; however it would be both interesting and informative to see how students evaluated other potential role models. Very little work has been done in this area, and accordingly there are many possibilities for further research. One example would be assessing whether potential English pronunciation role models in other expanding outer

circle nations are evaluated in a similar manner. It would also be useful to investigate how attractive and comprehensible Watanabe's pronunciation is to English speakers in other expanding outer circle countries, particularly those with which Japan has strong economic and geographical links such as Korea and China.

The results obtained from the questionnaire additionally highlight the broader issue of how the English language itself is viewed in Japan. The comments written by some participants clearly indicate that they do not believe it to be desirable to sound Japanese when speaking English, and that the acquisition of inner circle 'native speaker' pronunciation is often set as a learning target. Comments such as these suggest that, despite its status as a medium for international communication, English is yet to be viewed by many Japanese as a language that they can speak in their own distinct voice. The trend instead still appears to be to look toward the inner circle for guidelines on pronunciation and usage.

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APPENDIX

English translation of the online questionnaire used in the study

English Pronunciation Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to help with my research project - I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nottingham, England and this study is being conducted as part of my MA in Applied Linguistics.

What is this about?

The aim of this questionnaire is to investigate student attitudes toward different types of English pronunciation. I would like to point out that this is not a test and there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers; I am interested in what you think. You will not be asked for your name and the answers that you provide will be entirely anonymous.

How do I fill in the Questionnaire?

You will need to have headphones or speakers attached to your computer

A Hollywood English Pronunciation Role Model for Japanese Students?

in order to complete this questionnaire!

This questionnaire consists of 2 pages - the first page contains 3 short embedded videos and 15 statements about the English pronunciation of the actors featured in the videos. Each statement has a 6 point scale below it ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Please choose points on the scales that best reflect your feelings about the statements with regard to each of the actors. You may watch the videos as many times as you wish and can return to previous answers and pages to change your responses if you would like to.

Example:

<Online image of how to answer a question>

(Q: This actor has beautiful pronunciation)

On the 2nd page you will be asked for a few pieces of information about yourself. You will not be asked for your name or any contact details and the information that you provide will only be used for the purposes of this study. There is also a comments section at the bottom of the page if there is any additional information you would like to provide, or if you have any thoughts on this study that you would like to share with me.

When you have completed all of the questions then please click on the 'Submit your Survey' button at the bottom of page 2. Your answers will not be finalized until you click on this button. I expect that it will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete the entire questionnaire.

Thank you for reading this far. It is now time to watch the videos.

A (Tom Cruise Video) B (Hugh Grant Video) C (Ken Watanabe Video)

Firstly please watch each of the videos and pay attention to the English pronunciation of each of the actors.

- Click once on each of the videos to start them playing (you will need to adjust the volume level) -
- You do not have to watch the whole of each video, however please watch at least 40 seconds of each of them after making any necessary volume adjustments -
- You can watch the videos as many times as you would like to -

Once you have watched all 3 videos then please evaluate the statements below

- Try to focus on evaluating the actors' pronunciation rather than other aspects of their language (such as vocabulary, grammar, etc.) -

1. I like the way that this actor pronounces English

Strongly Disagree · · · · Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

2. It is easy to understand this actor's English pronunciation

Strongly Disagree · · · · Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

3. I would struggle to copy this actor's English pronunciation

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Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

4. This actor's English pronunciation is easy for me to understand

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

5. I am confident that I could speak English using the same pronunciation as this actor

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

6. I dislike the way that this actor says English words

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

7. With practice I could pronounce English like this actor does

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

8. I find it difficult to understand the English pronunciation that this actor uses

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

9. This actor's English pronunciation is unattractive

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

10. I think that I could copy this actor's English pronunciation easily

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

11. This actor's English pronunciation is not very clear

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

12. I would like to pronounce English like this actor

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

13. This actor's pronunciation is hard to understand

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

14. The English pronunciation of this actor is attractive to me

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

A (Tom Cruise)

B (Hugh Grant)

C (Ken Watanabe)

15. It would be difficult for me to pronounce English the way that this actor does

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

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- A (Tom Cruise)
- B (Hugh Grant)
- C (Ken Watanabe)

If you have finished with the questions on this page then please click on the 'next page' button.

Page 2

Thank you for making it this far! I would now like to ask you for some information about yourself:

46. Are you:

- *Female
- *Male

47. Your Nationality:

48. Which APU English course are you currently studying on?:

- *Introduction to English
- *Fundamental English
- *Intermediate English
- *Advanced English 1
- *Advanced English 2

49. How old are you?:

50. Have you ever been abroad (from Japan)?

- *Yes
- *No

51. Please list the names of any countries that you have visited and the approximate length of time that you spent there:

52. Comments: