Title

A Japanese Heritage Speaker's Acquisition of Formal Writing in Japanese and Heritage Motivation: A Case Study

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4sh9g4zf

Author

Ajioka, Mayumi

Publication Date

2024

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

A Japanese Heritage Speaker's Acquisition of Formal Writing in Japanese

and Heritage Motivation:

A Case Study

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of

the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Applied Linguistics

by

Mayumi Ajioka

2024

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Japanese Heritage Speaker's Acquisition of Formal Writing in Japanese

and Heritage Motivation:

A Case Study

by

Mayumi Ajioka

Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Olga T. Yokoyama, Chair

This dissertation study explores a young Japanese heritage language speaker's learning process of formal writing in Japanese. With a rapid increase in immigrants into the U.S. and growing importance of diversity, many researchers have shown interest in immigrant children, i.e., heritage speakers, from educational and research perspectives and have found that many heritage speakers, even though they have a native-like fluency in informal conversations, cannot read and write in their heritage languages as native speakers at their age do. Regarding Japanese heritage speakers, Japanese supplementary schools play an important role in fostering their Japanese proficiency and cultural identities, but once children leave supplementary schools around age nine because of difficulty in curricula, it is hard for them to acquire advanced Japanese afterward.

This dissertation provides a four-week intensive academic Japanese reading and writing program based on a usage-based language acquisition for the Japanese heritage speaker, *Sakura*, who has never attended Japanese schools. Her argument essays drastically improve, which empirically supports the efficacy of usage-based instruction for formal writing to some degree.

The qualitative analysis of this study and its findings suggest multiple implications and possibilities for future research: (1) it is generally held that *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' are more challenging for learners than *wago* 'Japanese native words,' but the most difficult words for *Sakura* are some extremely topic- and genre-specific *wago*; (2) new words are registered in her receptive lexicon through their frequent occurrences, but advancing them to productive lexicon necessitates varying contexts, collocations, and functions; (3) L1 transfer is not limited to beginners, but *Sakura*'s writing also reveals an influence from English to satisfy her L1 linguistic sophistication; and (4) the most crucial factor in *Sakura's* improvement is her strong "mission-like" motivation with a sense of responsibility, which I call *heritage motivation* and which is not extractable from a conventional quantitative approach. This motivation has grown in her mind through a positive attitude, or somatic value, toward Japanese and their culture. It suggests a focal shift from "how teachers can teach learners" to "how teachers and others can nurture their positive somatic value leading to motivation."

The dissertation of Mayumi Ajioka is approved.

Noreen M. Webb

Kie Ross Zuraw

John H. Schumann

Olga T. Yokoyama, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2024

To My Family

&

Sakura

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF GLOSS ABBREVIATIONS

ACC   accusative

ASP   aspect

COMP   complementizer

COP   copula

DAT   dative

EMP   emphasis marker

GEN   genitive

HUM   humble honorific

NEG   negative

NOM   nominative

PAST   past tense

PLAIN   plain form (non-polite form)

POL   polite form

PRES   present tense

PASS   passive suffix

SFP   sentence-final particle

SUF   suffix

TE   *-te* (conjunctive) form

TOP   topic particle

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It has been a long, long way to this achievement. Without the continuous support that I received, I would not have been able to complete my dissertation.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my professor and chair of my dissertation committee, Professor Olga T. Yokoyama, for her thorough guidance, constant encouragement, expert advice, kindness, and patience. This long journey could not have been reached without her. Since the very day I started my graduate study at UCLA, Professor Yokoyama has been offering numerous advice, not only academic and linguistic but also personal, and inspiring my curiosity. She gave me a step-by-step guidance and instruction when I was preparing my dissertation prospectus, funding applications, oral exam, and dissertation. I am grateful to her all through my life for everything she did for me.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee members: Professor John H. Schumann, Professor Kie Zuraw, and Professor Noreen Webb. I am deeply grateful to Professor Schumann for teaching me the value of case studies and the necessity for researchers to analyze learners as independent individuals with affection, emotion, and aptitude. The foundation of my dissertation method was inspired by an autobiography assignment from his class. I also greatly appreciate Professor Zuraw. She has always been encouraging me to attain my goal and giving me a lot of constructive advice and suggestions that I would not notice as a native speaker of Japanese. I am also deeply indebted to Professor Webb for always giving me kind and helpful advice to improve my dissertation. I could not have undertaken this journey without these amazing committee members.

VITA

2008   M.A., Applied Linguistics & TESL, University of California, Los Angeles

2005   M.A., English Language & Literature, Tsuda University, Tokyo, Japan

2016 & 2021   Target Language Expert

              National Foreign Language Center (University of Maryland)

2018   Teaching Fellow, Department of Applied Linguistics, UCLA

2016 – present   Adjunct Faculty, Department of World Language & Literatures

              California State University, San Bernardino

2016 – present   Adjunct Faculty, Crafton Hills College

2016   Adjunct Faculty

              Department of Comparative Literature & Foreign Languages

              University of California, Riverside

2018 – 2019   Dissertation Year Fellowship, Graduate Division, UCLA

2007 – 2019   Graduate Division Fellowship, UCLA

2014 – 2015   The U.S. Department of Education, Foreign Language and Area Studies

              (FLAS) Fellowship for Southeast Asian Studies, UCLA

2014   Lemelson Fellowship on Indonesia, UCLA

2007 – 2013   The Shoyu Club Fellowship, Japan

Selected Publications and Presentations

Kawanishi, Y. & Ajioka, M. (forthcoming). Shokyuu kara chuukyuu o mezasu katsudoo [Activities for novice learners to advance to intermediate level]. In Miura, K. & Watanabe, S. (Eds.), *ACTFL proficiency-based instruction (tentative title)*. Bonjinsha.

Ajioka, M. (2014). Comfortable speech of Japanese for speakers and interlocutors. In S. A. Houghton, D. J. Rivers, & K. Hashimoto (Eds.), Proceedings of the 1st and 2nd International Symposia on Native-Speakerism, Saga University, Saga, Japan, September 28-30, 2014, (pp. 4–18).

Ajioka, M., Kaneyasu, M., Kawanishi, Y., & Iwasaki, S. (2014). *Mikan yo Mikan*: Formulaic constructions and their implicature in conversation. *Japanese/Korean Linguistics, Vol. 21*, (pp. 199–213). Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

Kawanishi, Y. & Ajioka, M. (2014). Ippanka tasuku katsudoo no igi to jissen no teean: chuukyuu kara jookyuu e [Generalization skill: Aiming for advanced level in Japanese]. In N. Sonda & A. Krause (Eds.), *JALT2013 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 568-576). Tokyo: JALT.

Ajioka, M. (March, 2024). The influence of identity for heritage language learning in the context of self-motivation. Poster presented at the Asian Conference on Education & International Development (ACEID 2024), Tokyo, Japan.

Ajioka, M. and Kawanishi, Y. (November, 2015). Formulaic language: 'We use this much formulaic language every day!' A 60-minute-session presentation in the Annual Convention of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), San Diego, CA.

Kawanishi, Y. and Ajioka, M. (March, 2015). Rokuga-kadai to gakusee ni yoru sono jiko-bunseki: meta-ninchiteki-kanten kara no kyooiku-kooka [Recording task and student's self-analyses of it: Its educational effects from the meta-cognitive perspective]. Paper presented in the American Association of Teachers of Japanese (AATJ) Annual Spring Conference, Chicago, IL.

Ajioka, M. and Kawanishi, Y. (Novermber, 2014). Narrative mixer: A short classroom task for OPI advanced level. Paper presented in the Annual Convention of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), San Antonio, TX.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Thesis of the dissertation

The primary aim of this dissertation case study is to explore the acquisition of Japanese academic writing by a young Japanese heritage speaker who had no experience attending a Japanese school during her childhood. Japanese heritage speakers, in general, refer to those whose home language is Japanese and who can speak or understand Japanese to some degree (for details on its definition, see section 1.4.1). Their problem is that, because many heritage language speakers (not limited to Japanese heritage speakers) maintain casual conversation with their family members at home and do not use the language in more formal settings, their languages do not develop beyond casual speech and cannot speak appropriately for their age and situation (Sohn, 1997). Also, most heritage speakers are not good at reading and writing in their heritage language even if they have native-like fluency (Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Kelleher, 2010). In Japanese society, the basic skills required for academic Japanese reading and writing are essential for Japanese heritage language speakers and for any foreign learners of Japanese who are planning to study or work in Japan in the future. Therefore, this dissertation designed a four-week intensive academic reading and writing program to improve the research participant's academic writing proficiency to the level of native Japanese students at her age.

Why are heritage language speakers not able to write as well as they are to speak? This is because of the differences in grammar, vocabulary, and style between conversations and written language. It has been widely observed in various languages that spoken and written discourses are composed of different kinds of language (e.g., Clancy, 1982; Ishiguro, 2011; Iwasaki, 2015;

1

Taylor, 2010). Ajioka (2015) found that all native Japanese students who participated in her study switched their words and grammar when they were asked to write down what they just said, whereas Japanese heritage speakers wrote down their speech with the same words in the same way they just spoke.

I assumed that the fact that the Japanese heritage speakers were not being able to write with appropriate words and grammar was simply because of their lack of experience and exposure to formal written Japanese. I also assumed that it was caused by the lack of appropriate instruction and training of the kind native Japanese students receive in Japan. Thus, I created the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program based on usage-based models of language acquisition (Langacker, 2000b, 2009; Tomasello, 2003), focusing on the differences between spoken and written languages in Japanese. The main claim of this model is that language and lexical items are not fixed or separate from pragmatics, but that they are "conceptualized" (Langacker, 2000b) and changed formally and semantically when they are frequently used (Bybee, 2006). In language acquisition, as well, frequently used linguistic patterns and lexical items are "abstracted from usage events" (Langacker, 2009) and are "categorized and entered in memory" (Bybee, 2006). This cognitive organization, i.e., language learning, also includes learning "genre grammar" (in Multiple Grammar Model proposed by Iwasaki, 2015) which is specific to genres that a learner experiences. The usage-based theory has placed its main focus on conversation and spoken language, and the language acquisition model based on this theory has dealt with first language acquisition.[1] In this dissertation, I will apply the underlying concept of this model to a heritage language speaker's acquisition of formal written language.

---

[1] Some empirical studies have applied usage-based model to second language acquisition, e.g., Eskildsen (2009) and Gettys (2016), but their interests were in learners' speaking proficiency.

In addition, this dissertation study is the first qualitative study to investigate the acquisition of academic Japanese writing skills by a Japanese heritage speaker who has no experience of *hoshuu-jugyookoo* (henceforth, *hoshuukoo*) 'Japanese supplementary school'[2] or *nihongo gakkoo* 'Japanese language school.'[3] Many studies on Japanese heritage speakers examined Japanese heritage children who attended *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary school,' and some of them mentioned that there was an age-related difficulty for Japanese heritage children to acquire advanced Japanese skills, i.e., *kyuusai no kabe* "The Wall at Age Nine" (Kishimoto, 2008; Nakajima, 2016). Kishimoto (2008) mentioned, based on her data, that Japanese heritage children experienced much difficulty learning Japanese at around the age of nine, when the Japanese textbooks[4] used in Japanese supplementary schools become more abstract and complicated. Many Japanese heritage children give up continuing enrollment in supplementary school around that age, Kishimoto (2008) added, and if Japanese heritage children leave Japanese supplementary school at about age nine, their Japanese proficiency in general would decline and become almost unrecoverable. However, there have been no follow-

---

[2] The term *hoshuukoo* '(Japanese) supplementary schools' is an abbreviation of *hoshuu-jugyookoo* '(Japanese) supplementary lesson schools.' This is one of the three options that Japanese children living overseas have to receive school education as in Japan. The three options are: (1) *nihonjin gakkoo* 'schools for Japanese,' (2) *hoshuu-jugyookoo* 'Japanese supplementary lesson schools,' and (3) other schools offering Japanese lessons. *Nihonjin gakkoo* 'schools for Japanese' are full-time schools for Japanese children who are planning to return to Japan and who want to take the same education overseas as in Japan, whereas *hoshuu-jugyookoo* 'Japanese supplementary lesson schools' are for Japanese children who attend local schools on weekdays, and they offer lessons following the curricula in Japan on Saturdays or after local schools on weekday evenings. Both *nihonjin gakkoo* 'schools for Japanese' and *hoshuu-jugyookoo* '(Japanese) supplementary lesson schools' are administered or certified by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (henceforth MEXT). (MEXT n.d.)

[3] The word *nihongo gakkoo* 'Japanese language school' in this dissertation refers to all schools for children which offer lessons for Japanese language but are not certified by MEXT.

[4] In *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary school,' the same textbooks that are used in public schools in Japan are adopted. They are the ones authorized by MEXT and are provided free of charge for children with Japanese nationalities (Asahi Gakuen, 2024).

3

up studies that investigate Japanese heritage children after they leave Japanese supplementary school. Moreover, because most studies of Japanese heritage speakers examined their proficiency in Japanese quantitatively, their subjects were those children attending some Japanese supplementary school. Japanese heritage speakers with no enrollment in Japanese supplementary school have been outside the scope of the research on Japanese heritage speakers. This dissertation study is the first one, though it is a qualitative case study, that analyzes a Japanese heritage speaker, her learning, and her psychology in depth, not as one of the numbers or percentages in a mass, but as an independent human with thoughts, feelings, personalities, preferences, and problems.

Because I analyzed only one research participant, I do not intend to generalize the findings from this study to all Japanese heritage speakers. However, what I found from this study may be applicable to some Japanese heritage speakers who have common goals or problems as my participant. The profiles of Japanese heritage speakers vary, as Douglas (2008) mentioned, compared with those of learners of Japanese as a foreign language or as a second language who typically learn Japanese from textbooks and teachers in the classroom. Teachers need to look at each of their students even when they have, say, 40 students in a class, to answer each of their questions, and to solve each of their problems. Since heritage speakers have individually diverse language backgrounds, language experiences, attitudes towards their heritage languages and cultures, and thus different proficiencies in their heritage languages, they have various aspects that cannot be represented by numbers. This study is the first step towards a deeper analysis of heritage language speakers.

Finally, the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program that was devised in this dissertation study will also be helpful for learners of Japanese as a foreign language

outside Japan and of Japanese as a second language in Japan. The primary indispensable essence is the motivation to learn (Dörnyei, 1994, 1998; Schumann, 1986, 1997, 2001, 2004). Another key requirement is to have specific goals. Of course, knowledge of basic Japanese grammar is required, which is assumed to be equivalent to enrollment in a two-year course of Japanese or higher. As a basic skill of proper writing, the awareness of differences between spoken and written Japanese that was used in this program will help learners achieve their goals as a full-fledged Japanese user.

1.2 Background of the dissertation

The original idea leading to this dissertation study developed from a composition written by a Japanese heritage speaker. He was in the class I taught in 2012, and he seemed to have no difficulty communicating with me all in Japanese. When I read his first Japanese composition, however, it came to me as a huge surprise. He wrote in the same language as the one he spoke. When I read it, it sounded like he was speaking to me. That was the first time I saw writing by a Japanese heritage speaker.

After this happened, I started researching Japanese heritage language speakers and conducted some studies to compare them with Japanese native high school and university students in Japan, focusing on their ability to differentiate their languages in writing from those in conversation. I interviewed both the Japanese heritage speakers and native speakers, then chose one topic out of those we had just talked about, and asked them to write down what they said about the topic. The results showed a sharp difference. The heritage speakers' short compositions appeared like a "transcript" of what they said in our interviews, with no differentiation between written and spoken discourses. The Japanese native speakers, on the

other hand, seemed to have switched their "gears" from a casual conversation mode to a writer's mode, and changed all the informal words, phrases, and morphology to the ones that were appropriate for the styles of formal essays and term papers (Ajioka, 2015; Ajioka & Kawanishi, 2013). It seemed that they instantly comprehended what they were expected to do.

I found this phenomenon extremely interesting. In 2016, I started planning this dissertation study. I studied more about the heritage speakers. Many Japanese or Japanese-heritage parent(s) make their child(ren) attend *nihongo gakkoo* 'Japanese school.' Some of these schools are called *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary school' (for its definition, see footnote 2) and offer curricula following those observed by schools in Japan, with the same textbooks as those used in Japan. These *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary schools' and other Saturday Japanese schools for K-12 children play a significant role in helping Japanese children and teenagers in acquiring and retaining the Japanese language (Douglas, Kataoka, & Chinen, 2013; Kataoka, Koshiyama, & Shibata, 2008; Kataoka & Shibata, 2011) and culture and in fostering their Japanese ethnic identity (Chinen & Tucker, 2006).

Another study also drew my attention, which described the phrase and concept of "The Wall at Age Nine" (Kishimoto 2008, Nakajima 2016). This is a concept generally used in elementary school education and children's cognitive development (for details, see section 2.2). Nakajima (2016) described that in the process of first language acquisition (L1), children acquire conversation skills and basic literacy before age nine, and after that, their higher cognitive skills develop for abstract words and concepts, *kanji* words, reading comprehension, and composition writing skills. In accordance with this cognitive development, the Japanese textbook materials abruptly become advanced around the age of nine. Kishimoto (2008) mentioned that based on her data, Japanese heritage children experience much difficulty continuing Japanese school

6

around the time they turn nine years old, and if they leave *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary school,' their proficiency level declines and become almost unrecoverable. This was a gloomy report.

Thus, in sum, *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary schools' and other Japanese schools for children contribute to their learning Japanese and establishing Japanese identity in general. However, if children cannot keep up with the more advanced and abstract materials around age nine and stop attending the school, then, later in their lives, it is extremely difficult for them to acquire the advanced level of Japanese that they missed. I had two simple questions: (1) Is this true? Is it really so difficult for those who leave Japanese school around the age of nine to resume studying Japanese and succeed in acquiring advanced Japanese? (2) All the children in these studies had the experience of attending Japanese supplementary schools or some other Japanese schools. Then, how about those Japanese heritage speakers with no experience of Japanese education altogether?

To address these questions, I created a four-week intensive reading and writing program for Japanese heritage speakers to improve their academic language proficiency. For their reading assignments, I chose Japanese newspaper editorials, partly because they were often adopted as texts of Japanese reading comprehension exams in high school and university entrance exams in Japan, and partly because they were easy to access online. Since I had already found (Ajioka 2015) that Japanese native students have an ability to differentiate their language depending on their communication modalities, i.e., casual conversation or formal writing, in this dissertation study I decided to focus on the heritage language participant(s), i.e., whether the four-week program for academic reading and writing could enable them to learn the stylistic differences

between speaking and formal writing. The four-week intensive program was designed based on the theory of usage-based language acquisition.

In the next section, I will present the organization of this dissertation. Then, in section 1.4, I will define some important terms that will be used here.

1.3 Organization of the dissertation

In Chapter 2, I will review past studies of three major fields on which I will base this dissertation: heritage language speakers, usage-based theory, and the differences between speaking and writing styles. After examining these three research fields, in Chapter 3, I will discuss some problems they raise, and formulate my three research questions.

Then, in Chapter 4, I will describe the study in detail, first the participant in this case study, and then the procedures and the materials of the four-week intensive program.

Chapter 5 will describe the findings of the study, with some preliminaries about the Japanese language in the first three sections, as they are necessary to understand the findings. Of the various findings, I mention here three areas of interest: the clear improvement of the participant's written Japanese, next some striking data from her daily English journals, and, lastly, the findings from the follow-up interview which was conducted two years after the completion of the program and email exchanges five years after this interview.

Chapter 6 is the discussion section. Based on the findings shown in Chapter 5, I will discuss four topics significant in terms of heritage language acquisition and its analysis: learner's motivation, L1 transfer, usage-based language acquisition, and qualitative approach. Finally, in Chapter 7, I will conclude this dissertation.

1.4 Terms and definitions

This section provides a list of important terms and concepts, and their basic definitions that are operational in this dissertation.

1.4.1 Heritage language speakers

The definition of the heritage language or heritage language learners varies across settings. Kagan (2014) referred to heritage language speakers as "the children of immigrants who communicate at home in their parents' native language," and Kelleher (2010) defined them as those learning a language that has a cultural connection to that language in their family. A broader definition was the one by Kondo-Brown (2003), who said that heritage language speakers were those who learn "any ancestral language such as indigenous, colonial, and immigrant languages" (p. 1) Thus, there are various types of heritage language learners depending on the quality and quantity of exposure to their heritage language. Some have almost no proficiency in their heritage languages so that they have difficulty communicating with their grandparents or cousins, which in turn motivates them to learn the language. Some have a native-like fluency in their heritage language because it is their home language used to communicate with other family members, though they have no literacy in the language.

The most commonly accepted definition for English language settings is the one by Valdes (2000, 2001). She defined heritage language from two different perspectives: (a) as an endangered language with which individuals have an historical and personal connection, regardless of their actual proficiency in the language which is not regularly taught at school; and (b) from the educational perspective, as a non-English language that is used as a home language and whose speaker speaks or at least understands the language and is to some degree bilingual in

that language and in English (Valdes, 2001, p. 38). Most articles dealing with *heritage language* apply Valdes' second definition (e.g., Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Kelleher, 2010; Wiley, 2001). This definition describes the connection between the non-English language and a person, family, or community (Kelleher, 2010) and implies some proficiency in the language, whether the speaker is more comfortable with the heritage language or English.

In the case of Japanese, most studies on Japanese heritage speakers examined children who attended a Japanese supplementary school; most of these children were those (a) who have at least one Japanese parent and (b) whose Japanese parent speaks some Japanese at home. The amount of Japanese spoken by a Japanese parent varies depending on how much communication the Japanese heritage children have with the Japanese speaking parent(s) and how much Japanese the parent(s) speak(s) in general.

This dissertation study defines Japanese heritage speakers as those who (a) have at least one Japanese parent and (b) can use the Japanese language to some degree. The experience of Japanese language education does not matter because the current study deals with a participant who has not experienced a Japanese supplementary school.

1.4.2 Academic Japanese

Many would associate "academic reading" and "academic writing" with theses or academic journals in a certain field. In the four-week Japanese reading and writing program studied in this dissertation, however, the term "academic" does not conform to what is normally used in the academic setting in American university programs. Rather, I follow the usage found in the context of higher education in Japan.

In the context of Japanese school education, the 11th and 12th graders (the second- and third-year students in senior high school in Japanese education system) who plan to proceed to higher education at college or university begin preparing for university entrance examinations. They train themselves to be able to read non-practical, more abstract, and/or philosophical passages which contain more *kanji* 'Chinese character' words (for more information of *kanji* and *kanji* words, see 1.4.3, 1.4.4, and 1.4.5). In most cases, editorials and commentaries from major newspapers are used for this training because these materials are most often selected for the texts in university entrance exams in Japan. They practice writing *shooronbun* 'lit. small essay,' in which they respond to those passages and formulate their opinions on various social issues. In these essays, they are expected to demonstrate their control of *kanji* words, among other intellectual skills. This is the level of competence that was targeted in this research, and this is the definition of "academic writing" and "academic reading" that will be used in the remainder of this dissertation.

1.4.3 Japanese writing system – *hiragana, katakana, and kanji*

The Japanese language is normally represented in writing using three types of characters: *hiragana, katakana*, and *kanji* 'Chinese characters.' (I will not consider here the occasional usage of Roman letters.) The basic and most elementary set of characters is *hiragana*, 46 symbols composing a syllabary which represents the sounds in Japanese. Each *hiragana* character, and some combinations of two *hiragana* characters, represent the sounds of different syllables. *Hiragana* is the first set of Japanese writing system that native-born Japanese children and foreign learners of Japanese learn in the school system. Therefore, the beginners, whether

they be a Japanese child or a foreign learner, tend to write everything in *hiragana*. They can

make themselves understood in writing *hiragana*, though their writing would look childish.

As they learn more of how to write Japanese, they learn two more sets of characters:

katakana and *kanji*. *Katakana* characters, just as *hiragana*, represent the sounds of Japanese.

There are 46 *katakana* characters and each of them (and some combinations of two *katakana*

characters) represents a different syllable. *Katakana* is used to represent borrowings from foreign

languages.

Unlike *hiragana* and *katakana*, *kanji* 'Chinese characters' represent not the sound but the

meaning; they are ideograms (for more descriptions of *kanji*, see the next section 1.4.4). *Kanji* is

the most advanced level of the Japanese writing system. Foreign learners of Japanese generally

start learning *kanji* after they learn *hiragana* and *katakana*. A normal user of Japanese uses these

three types of characters in an appropriate place in an appropriate way.

1.4.4 *Kanji* 'Chinese characters'

As was mentioned in the previous section, *kanji* represents meaning. Some *kanji*

characters are so simple that they have only a few strokes, while others are complicated with

many strokes and are composed of multiple components.

Most Japanese *kanji* characters have more than one reading. The same *kanji* is read in a

different way depending on contexts, formality levels, and words it is involved in. The readings of

kanji are basically categorized into two types: *on-yomi* 'sound reading,' which approximates the

Chinese phonetic reading, and *kun-yomi* 'explanatory reading' which provides the meaning of the

character in native Japanese and the corresponding sound of the Japanese word. Many *kanji*

characters have multiple *on-yomi* readings and *kun-yomi* readings. So, when readers come across

a word written as *kanji*, they need to use the context of the passage to choose the correct reading of *kanji*. This is one of the causes that make it hard for learners of Japanese, whether they be foreign or Japanese learners, to master reading and writing Japanese.

1.4.5 Japanese lexicon

Japanese has synonyms, which are distinguished by formality level (formal or informal) and style (spoken or written), among other things. Users of Japanese are supposed to choose the proper word for each situation if they do not want to sound strange. For example, when one means "expensive," she can use either *taka-i* 'high/expensive' or *kooka-na* 'expensive': the former word, *taka-i* 'high/expensive,' is *wago* 'Japanese native words' and the latter, *kooka-na* 'expensive,' is *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' (for a further explanation of *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' see section 5.0.3).

Generally, *wago* 'Japanese native words are more informal and used in a casual conversation, whereas *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' originally imported from various dynasties of China, are considered to be more formal. They are included in a higher level of curriculum for Japanese students. In the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) as well, the higher level requires more knowledge of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.'

13

CHAPTER 2

Literature background

This chapter reviews past literature on which this dissertation rested and/or to which it had close relationship when I started its project. Four selected fields are as follows: (1) heritage language, particularly heritage language speakers in general and Japanese heritage speakers more specifically, (2) two different language skills, which are termed BICS and CALP, and the concept of "The Wall at Age Nine," (3) a usage-based model of language acquisition, and (4) linguistic differences between conversation and formal writing.

2.1 Heritage language

This section reviews the past studies on heritage language speakers. First, in 2.1.1, I will briefly review the studies on heritage language speakers in general living in the U.S. Then, in 2.1.2, I will review the research more specifically on Japanese heritage language speakers. For the definition of "heritage language speakers," see section 1.4.1.

2.1.1 Heritage language speakers

According to the demographic survey conducted by the US Census Bureau in 2010, the number of people who spoke only English at home was approximately 230 million (79%) whereas the rest of those surveyed (about 60 million; 21%) spoke a language other than English (LOTE) at home at least part of the time (Ryan, 2013). This number, those speaking a LOTE at home, multiplied in 2019: about 67.8 million people (22%) spoke a LOTE at home, which was triple the number that had been found in 1980 (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022b). Of those

languages other than English spoken at home, the highest in the list was Spanish (41.8 million), followed by Chinese (3.5 million), French (2.1 million), Tagalog (1.8 million), and Vietnamese (1.6 million) in the descending order. Japanese was a home language of 0.46 million speakers in the U.S. and was ranked 17th of all the 29 languages other than English spoken at home that were listed (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022a). Back in the twentieth century, those immigrant children were often "left behind" due to their difficulty learning English. However, in the twenty-first century, they have drawn much attention because the importance of their foreign language skills has been recognized for political and economic reasons.

Researchers have shown interest in immigrant children's proficiency in the heritage languages of their family background from the educational and research perspectives. Their proficiency in heritage languages show quite different features from that of foreign or second language learners, and their problems and goals turned out to be also greatly different from those of non-heritage language learners. Those who use their heritage languages at home sound like native speakers, but many of the speakers maintain the casual style they use with their family members and cannot use the language appropriately for their age and situation (Sohn, 1997). Also, many heritage language speakers are not good at reading and writing in their heritage languages, even if they speak with a native-like fluency (Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Kelleher, 2010). Moreover, it has been pointed out that their proficiency in their heritage languages varies and depends on their exposure to the language during their developmental processes (Douglas, 2008; Kelleher, 2010). Immigrant children who moved to the United States before adolescence are more likely to have a full command of English and higher listening and speaking proficiency in their home language, i.e., their heritage language, than learners of the language as a foreign language. Still, much remains to be investigated regarding heritage language speakers.

2.1.2 Japanese heritage language speakers

     In the case of Japanese heritage language (JHL), the number of JHL-speaking children is increasing primarily due to the increase in international marriages and expatriate families from Japanese companies. Kataoka and Shibata (2011) proposed that Japanese children living in the United States can be categorized in the following three groups: (a) those in expatriate families that are staying in the United States only for a few years and shortly will be forced to return to Japan; (b) those with Japanese parents who have been staying in the United States for many years or who have finally decided to live in the United States permanently; and (c) those who were born in the United States and whose one parent is Japanese and the other is not. The children in the first group generally attend *nihonjin gakkoo* 'schools for Japanese' (for details, see footnote 2) within the United States that follow a Japanese curriculum, use the same textbook as schools in Japan, and employ teachers licensed by the Japanese government. In contrast, many of the children in the other two groups speak English as their first language and learn Japanese as their heritage language from their parents or from teachers at *hoshuukoo* 'a Japanese supplementary school' (for details, see footnote 2).

     With the recent increase in the types of Japanese immigrants in the United States, the primary focus of researchers has been on these children's Japanese proficiency, language environment, and instruction at home and school. Some studies have examined JHL children attending a Japanese supplementary school (Chinen & Tucker, 2006; Douglas, Chinen, & Kataoka, 2013; Shibata, 2008), and others have investigated JHL students in universities or colleges (Kanno et al., 2008; Kondo-Brown, 2001; Kondo-Brown, 2005).

Both types of studies on JHL children and university students have suggested the positive influence of Japanese supplementary school on JHL speakers' Japanese proficiency, particularly on their Japanese writing skills (Chinen & Tucker, 2006; Douglas, Kataoka, & Chinen, 2013; Kanno et al., 2008; Kishimoto, 2008). JHL speakers have a huge head start on JFL learners due to their exposure to Japanese at home to some degree. However, exposure to Japanese spoken at home is not sufficient for JHL children to acquire the accuracy and complexity of age-appropriate Japanese proficiency (Kanno et al., 2008). The previous studies have shown that Japanese supplementary schools play a significant role in these children's language-learning processes.

2.2 Two different skills – BICS and CALP – and "The Wall at Age Nine"

There are two terms and concepts for skills of language acquisition focusing on the differences in the stage and difficulty of acquisition: BICS and CALP (Cummins, 1979). BICS, i.e., basic interpersonal communicative skills, refer to the skills and fluency required to have a daily casual conversation. On the other hand, CALP, i.e., cognitive academic language proficiency, concerns "students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school" (Cummins, 2008, p. 71). Cummins (1979) introduced these terms to draw attention to the differences in time required to acquire them. BICS takes only a couple of years for children to acquire, whereas CALP requires more time, effort, and appropriate cognitive development. Cummins (2001) elaborated on these terms and concepts by introducing three concepts: conversational fluency, discrete language skills, and academic language proficiency (pp. 65–66). Conversational fluency corresponds to BICS, and academic language proficiency corresponds to CALP, while discrete language skills

are a new concept and are distinguished from both BICS and CALP. Discrete language skills

refer to the acquisition of alphabets or characters and basic grammar, which takes 1 or 2 years for

immigrant children to master. More advanced academic language skills (such as academic

reading and writing) as well as less frequently used language in a daily conversation (such as

complicated structures and abstract expressions) take much more time to acquire and are

included in the category of academic language proficiency or CALP.

Heritage language speakers have little difficulty in daily conversations in their heritage

language, but many of them are not good at reading and writing and, thus, are not confident in

those skills in the language (Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Kelleher, 2010; Sohn, 1997). Previous

studies (e.g., Cummins, 1979; Kishimoto, 2008; Nakajima, 2016) have pointed out the difference

between communicative and academic language skills. Cummins (1979, 2008) proposed a

distinction between two language skills: basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and

cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which are at either end of the communicative–

academic continuum. Heritage language speakers' daily conversations with their family

members fall into the category of BICS, whereas reading and writing in their heritage language is

an activity pertaining to CALP. In short, heritage language speakers have strong proficiency in

BICS but not in CALP.

There is a well-known age-related term in language acquisition, called the Critical Period

Hypothesis (CPH) (Penfield & Roberts, 1959),[5] but in the field of Japanese language acquisition,

there is another age-related concept that is generally accepted: *kyuu sai no kabe* 'The Wall at

---

[5] The concept of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) was originally proposed by Penfield and Roberts (1959), saying that there is a certain period for learning a language before puberty, and after that, this ability disappears because of the maturational process of the brain. Many SLA researchers had strong interest in this hypothesis and examined it with second language learners of English (e.g., Bialystok & Hakuta, 1999; Birdsong, 1999; Flege, 1999; Hakuta, 1976, 1987; Singleton, 2005).

Age Nine.' Unlike the CPH, which concerns the acquisition of the first language as a whole, the Wall at Age Nine refers to the difficulty in acquiring more advanced, academic Japanese and abstract concept represented by it. It follows that, if we use Cummins's terms for two types of proficiency, i.e., BICS and CALP, Japanese heritage speakers have tremendous difficulty acquiring CALP around the age nine, even if they have native-like fluency in daily conversation, i.e., BICS. The concept of "the Wall at Age Nine" is closely related to children's cognitive development and the curricula for Japanese national language in Japan. Nakajima (2016) described that around the age nine, children's cognition is supposed to have developed to be able to read and comprehend abstractions and to write more complicated *kanji* (p. 238). The curricula for Japanese national language, in accordance with their cognitive development, advance to more abstract, complicated contents. Kishimoto (2008), though she did not use the terms BICS and CALP, noted that Japanese heritage children experienced setbacks in Japanese acquisition at about the age of nine when they faced difficulty learning academic Japanese at their supplementary schools. She pointed out that many JHL children finally gave up attending supplementary schools because of the advanced curricula. Kishimoto (2008) added that children's academic Japanese proficiency would decline after they leave Japanese supplementary school and eventually would be almost unrecoverable. Nakajima (2016) also mentioned that Japanese heritage children experienced "the Wall at Age Nine." She cited Cummins's terms that were mentioned above, i.e., BICS and CALP, and emphasized that the acquisition of CALP took much more time than that of BICS. Although it was generally held that children learned their second language more quickly than adults did, she pointed out, the proficiency that children acquire easily was BICS, but not CALP (p. 44).

2.3 A usage-based model of language acquisition

This dissertation study employed a usage-based model of language acquisition (Bybee 2000, 2006; Kemmer & Barlow, 2000; Langacker, 1987, 2000a, 2000b; Tomasello, 2003) to create the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program for a Japanese heritage speaker who participated in this study. As I mentioned in section 1.1, the claim of usage-based model is that the linguistic system is developed from the repetition of similar instances of use (Kemmer & Barlow, 2000). Through repetition, more general representations, such as phonemes, morphemes, and syntactic patterns are gradually abstracted, and even a highly complex linguistic structure becomes "manipulable as a 'pre-packaged' assembly, no longer requiring conscious attention to its parts or their arrangement" (Langacker, 2000b, p. 93). In short, linguistic patterns, and lexical items and units, are dynamically conceptualized and automatized[6] through a language user's usage events in a "bottom-up" way, and it sharply contrasts with the traditional "top-down" view of generative grammar (Langacker, 2000b, p. 91).

Following this usage-based theoretical framework, and based on an extensive literature review on differences in grammar and lexicon between in conversation and in writing, Iwasaki (2015) proposed "a multiple-grammar model." This model described how children acquire from their linguistic experiences different types of grammar and lexicon that are all appropriate for different genres: they first acquire grammar and lexicon used in conversation, i.e., "a fundamentally distinctive spoken/conversation grammar (SG)," and then gradually learn that a different set of grammar and lexicon is used in writing, i.e., "a formal written language grammar (WG)," and in various genres, which he termed "genre grammar." His contribution is that he

---

[6] Langacker (2000b) refers to it as "entrenched" (p. 93).

expanded a usage-based theory, which was originated from a scholarly interest among cognitive linguists in how language (focusing on spoken language) is acquired, to a "language" or "languages" used in written discourse and in various genres. The data that he provided were all from native speakers in Japanese, which shows that his primary focus was on the language use and acquisition by native speakers.

There have not been sufficiently many studies, especially empirical studies, that explore a usage-based theory on second language acquisition or heritage language speakers. Most studies on the usage-based theory have dealt with normally developing children's first language (English) acquisition focusing on lexicons and morphemes in their speech production and the emergence of language in native speakers' minds from usage (e.g., Barlow, 2013; Bybee, 2000, 2006; Langacker, 1987, 1998, 2000b, 2009; Tomasello, 2001, 2003). As Behrens (2009) stated, however, it "can be extended to multilingual language situations and to language acquisition under special circumstances" (p. 383). Some literature applied the usage-based model to second language acquisition or discussed the application of usage-based approaches to second language learning/instruction (e.g., Eskildsen 2009, Gettys 2016, Tyler 2010, Wulff and Ellis 2018), but their focus was still on learners' speech production.

I believe that saliency and repetition in second/heritage language learners' linguistic events will also promote their learning of written language as well as speech production. Also, it will help them notice linguistic differences between conversation and formal writing.

2.4 Linguistic differences between conversation and formal writing

The status of the differences between spoken and written languages must be mentioned here. There is a rich body of research that examines the differences between spoken and written

language grammars (e.g., Chafe, 1982, 1985; Chafe & Tannen, 1987; Clancy, 1982; Green, 1982; Halliday, 1979; Kroll, 1977; Redeker, 1984; Tannen, 1982a, 1982b, 1985). Japanese has also been noted to exhibit linguistic differences between spoken and written discourses (Clancy, 1982; Fujii & Ono, 2000; Ishiguro, 2011; Iwasaki, 2015; Kawanishi & Iwasaki, 2018; Ono & Suzuki, 1992; Takamatsu & Kikuchi, 2012; Takiura, 2014; Taylor, 2010). For example, Clancy (1982) pointed out that as a function of connecting two clauses of a temporal sequence or causal succession, Japanese spoken discourse employs a non-final verb form *with* a verb morpheme *–te* in the first clause, while written discourse tends to use the non-final verb form *without –te*. Other studies also described various differences in grammar and lexicon between spoken and written discourse, such as differences in particles (Fujii & Ono, 2000; Taylor 2010), in word order (Clancy, 1982; Ono & Suzuki, 2000), in ways of reason-coding (Kawanishi & Iwasaki 2018), and in the number of Sino-Japanese words (*kango*) (Iwasaki, 2015; Kanno, et al., 2008).

Considering the heritage language speakers' proficiency, many of those speakers, particularly when their heritage language is used as a home language, have high proficiency in "spoken" heritage language. Their proficiency in "written" heritage language, however, is not as high, as many researchers have pointed out (e.g., Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Kelleher, 2010; Sohn, 1997). This is reasonable from the usage-based perspective. Thus, this dissertation study provided an intensive usage-based reading and writing program for a heritage language speaker, focusing on the differences between conversation and formal writing, and observed and analyzed the improvement of the participant's proficiency in writing Japanese.

22

CHAPTER 3

Research Questions

This chapter raises three major research questions of this dissertation study. First, I will describe the main problems in the field of Japanese heritage language speakers, which inspired me to launch this study with its intensive reading/writing program. Then, I will raise three major research questions I posited in my dissertation.

3.1 Problems

Before I raise the research questions of this dissertation study, I will describe some problems in the field of Japanese heritage speakers. The first is the need for more qualitative studies to explore the mind, cognition, and emotion of each heritage speaker. As Douglas (2008) suggested, heritage language speakers have different proficiencies and needs depending on their different backgrounds. Douglas (2008) described the diverse profiles of her students at UCLA in 2000 and 2001 and offered individualized curricula to them. Although her classes were relatively small (six students in 2000 and eight students in 2001) and she recognized the importance of learners' individual differences, she analyzed her data quantitatively by using test scores and self-assessment questionnaires.

Thus far, many researchers in the field of Japanese heritage speakers have employed the quantitative approach, viewed the heritage language speakers as a group, and tried to grasp a rough picture of their proficiency, though many of them seem to have been very aware of heritage speakers' diversity. For example, Douglas, Chinen, and Kataoka (2013) compared 108 Japanese heritage children (in grades K–5) to 123 children learning Japanese as a foreign

language (in grades K–5) to examine how their story-writing skills developed as they grew. They analyzed four criteria: (a) text type, (b) text structure, (c) story development and elaborateness, and (d) language use, including Chinese characters (*kanji*). Shibata (2008) examined the particle usage of 1,337 children attending a Japanese supplementary school (in grades 2–9) compared with that of 18,155 native Japanese children living in Japan; she employed case particle tests developed and used in Japan. Regarding the studies of college-level Japanese heritage speakers, Kondo-Brown (2001) examined 57 Japanese heritage students and 585 non-heritage students in University of Hawai'i at Manoa. She used the placement test of the university's Japanese program to investigate the relationship between the duration of students' high school Japanese instruction and their Japanese receptive and productive proficiencies.

In this way, very few studies have examined the Japanese proficiency of heritage language speakers using a qualitative approach. Close observation and investigation of the relationship between each heritage speaker's proficiency and language background is clearly needed. Now is the time when we treat a heritage speaker, not as a number, but as a human being who has a background, experience, and emotions.

Another problem is that most of the previous studies of Japanese heritage speakers investigated the relationship between their Japanese proficiency and language background and/or environment. However, they never addressed the language challenges of Japanese heritage speakers. When a new field starts, we obviously need to begin from grasping the status quo of the problems. However, once we obtain a sufficient amount of data *describing* the problems, we need to move on to the next stage: *explaining* the problems. Then, because of the empirical goal of the field, there should come the final stage: *solving* the problems for the learners' benefit.

Thus, I believe that more productive studies leading to the development of Japanese heritage speakers' proficiency are needed.

Generally overlooked is the more advanced proficiency level of Japanese heritage language speakers, as few studies have explored the development of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP, see section 2.2) among heritage speakers after leaving, or without ever enrolling in, Japanese supplementary schools. Instead, most studies have examined those attending a Japanese supplementary school and concluded that the supplementary schools contributed to the Japanese heritage children's acquisition of Japanese. As Kishimoto (2008) and Nakajima (2016) suggested, however, many Japanese heritage children had difficulty with advanced curricula, e.g., abstract contents and contexts and complicated *kanji*, around age nine and left supplementary schools, i.e., "the Wall at Age Nine" (see section 2.2). Also, studies of heritage language speakers, not only of Japanese but also of other languages, found that they had strong conversation skills, but their CALP was hard to develop without attending a supplementary school. If this is the case, is there then no chance for those who leave the supplementary school around the age of nine to acquire Japanese thereafter? And how about those who did not attend Japanese schools at all? Similar questions were raised by Kishimoto (2008):

> Even if JHL children give up studying Japanese at supplementary school and experience a setback in academic Japanese proficiency, will they still be able to acquire it when they restart to learn Japanese? If it is possible, how fast will they be able to acquire it? This future research topic must provide a hope for learners

who leave *hoshuukoo* 'Japanese supplementary school' and their parents. (pp. 162–163, translated by me)

Thus, more studies are needed to explore those Japanese heritage speakers who either left or never attended Japanese supplementary schools, particularly the reasons they left or never attended, the problems they encountered, and their subsequent lives as young adults.

Finally, there has been no research focusing on Japanese heritage speakers' skill or acquisition of writing more formal, advanced, and academic Japanese, which, in the case of Japanese native speakers, high school seniors aspiring to receive higher education are taught and trained in preparation for college entrance exams. This writing style necessitates formal vocabulary, advanced *kanji* words, and a different set of sentence-ending forms from the language that heritage speakers use in their daily communications at home. This writing skill falls into the CALP, and it is what those Japanese heritage speakers who left supplementary schools around age nine usually miss. This seriously hampers their chances of advancing to higher education in Japan, should they desire to do so.

Considering these problems for the research in Japanese heritage language learners, the four-week academic reading and writing program was organized using newspaper editorials for reading materials and argument essays for writing assignments in this dissertation study. The details of the program will be described in 4.2.2. The next section will put forward the research questions of this study.

3.2 Research questions

The following research questions are proposed for this study.

RQ1: Does the usage-based language learning method help Japanese heritage language speakers learn advanced skills of writing argument essays using appropriate vocabulary and grammar for the genre?

RQ2: Is it possible for Japanese heritage speakers to succeed in mastering advanced writing skills of Japanese without attending a Japanese supplementary school?

Additionally, from the nature inherent in the qualitative approach, this study also raises a rather open-ended question as follows:

RQ3: Are there any interesting findings in the learning process of the participant(s) in this study, such as difficulties and strategies?

In this way, this dissertation study will be open to any kind of findings and new research perspectives in relation to Japanese heritage language speakers, their language learning, and the heritage language instruction.

CHAPTER 4

Study

This chapter describes two key elements of this dissertation study: the participant and the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program. First, in section 4.1, I will portray the participant in detail, particularly about her background in 4.1.1, her Japanese proficiency in the beginning of the program in 4.1.2, and her remarkable feature in 4.1.3. Then, in section 4.2, I will provide a description of procedures for the four-week intensive program and an explanation of each component. The description will begin with the very first step to this program, i.e., recruiting participants, in 4.2.1, then move onto the procedures for the program in 4.2.2, and lastly delineate the types of data that will be used for this dissertation.

4.1 Participant – a female Japanese heritage language learner, Sakura

The participant in the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program was a female university student living in Los Angeles, named Sakura[7] (pseudonym). When she voluntarily participated in this intensive program in May and June 2016, Sakura was a second-year student at UCLA. At the university, she majored in English literature, and enrolled in a Japanese course for heritage language speakers and linguistics courses as well as literature courses. She had an extraordinary passion and enthusiasm to use the Japanese language in the way native speakers did. Therefore, she promptly gave me a positive reply when I recruited some

---

[7] *Sakura* is a Japanese word for cherry blossoms. It is a Japanese national flower and often used for a girl's name. Between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, thousands of cherry trees were planted in Washington, D. C., which were gifts from Tokyo City to reinforce their friendship. For the beauty of *sakura* 'cherry blossom(s)' and its function of bridging between the U.S. and Japan, I gave this word to my participant as her pseudonym.

voluntary participants in this four-week intensive academic reading and writing Japanese program (for the recruitment process, see 4.2.1).

4.1.1 Sakura's background – her family and language

Sakura was born in Los Angeles in 1996. Sakura's parents are both first-generation immigrants to the U.S. Her father is from Laos while her mother is from Niigata Prefecture, Japan. Some of her paternal relatives live in the Los Angeles area, others live in Laos. When she communicates with the relatives in the U.S., Sakura speaks English because she does not know Lao. She has never been to Laos. Her maternal relatives live in Niigata Prefecture in Japan and she has visited them with her mother every two to three years. The last time she visited her Japanese relatives was in 2015. She has a sister who is four years younger than she. Sakura mentions that her sister seems not to have an interest in learning Japanese. All her communications with her younger sister are in English.

As with many other Japanese mothers of international marriage, Sakura's mother tried to have her children speak in Japanese, but she gave it up while they were still young. Sakura recalled that her mother had once told her that she had spoken Japanese before she started school. As was often the case with other heritage language speakers, once she started school and made friends there, the language she used at school, English, became her most essential language to get along in the world. She stopped using Japanese, partly because English became her most comfortable language, and partly because, she added, if she and her mother both communicated in Japanese, her father would not understand them and feel uncomfortable. Once she stopped speaking Japanese, her Japanese speaking skills declined little by little. She could still understand her mother's Japanese and other basic Japanese conversations, but she could not

produce in Japanese what she had in mind. This is what happened to her and her language in her early primary school days.

One remarkable difference between Sakura's mother and other typical Japanese mothers was that she had never made her daughter go to Japanese school. Thus, Sakura had never taken any Japanese class at school until she was a sophomore at UCLA. Her first Japanese class was the one entitled as "Japanese for Heritage Japanese Speakers."[8] Her mother never clarified the reason why she did not make her daughter attend a Japanese school. It may have been because she was satisfied with the situation in which her daughter was able to understand her mother's Japanese, and they could enjoy watching Japanese TV programs together. It may have also been because she did not want to force her daughter to study Japanese, or simply because she could not find an appropriate school nearby her residence. However, one thing is clear: she offered her a huge amount of Japanese through her conversation and pastime of watching Japanese TV. Later in Sakura's life, this huge exposure to Japanese was to facilitate her studying Japanese and reinforce her motivation to master Japanese to a high degree.

After she started middle school, Sakura became absorbed in watching Japanese dramas and variety programs on TV. Before then as well, she watched Japanese TV programs with her mother, but now she got to choose her own favorite Japanese TV programs and celebrities. Her favorite dramas were dramas about school. She watched the dramas every day, with deep curiosity about how those Japanese young students around her age lived their lives. The programs had English subtitles, but she was eager to know what they were actually speaking in Japanese. She took notes when she heard any unfamiliar word or phrase and then looked it up in

---

[8] At UCLA, all the students with some Japanese background or learning experience who want to enroll in a Japanese course are required to take a placement exam and are placed in the class at the right level. The exam includes grammar, *kanji*, reading, writing, and interview. The fact that Sakura was placed in the heritage language speaker's class indicates that she did well enough on all the sections of the exam to be placed in that class.

the dictionary or online. Once she found its meaning, she wrote it down on a flash card or notebook to memorize it. In this way, she learned Japanese words and phrases which her mother did not use. Now she seems to have no difficulty communicating all in Japanese with Japanese native speakers, but she keeps this learning method (i.e., watching TV, looking up words and memorizing them) whenever she has time to enjoy Japanese TV programs.

This learning method of Sakura's suggests two remarkable points: 1) Sakura's great advantage in listening skills; and 2) her extraordinary level of motivation. As anyone who has had experience struggling with a foreign language after puberty would admit, it is extremely difficult for language learners to pick up an unfamiliar word while they are listening and to write it down with the correct spelling. (Probably Sakura spelled it out correctly; otherwise, she could not have obtained its correct meaning.) This indicates that Sakura had a considerably high level of listening proficiency in Japanese at that point even though she did not speak it at all. This was, no doubt, because her mother kept talking to her in Japanese from her birth and gave her a tremendous amount of natural input in Japanese which is a great advantage in heritage language speakers in general.

The second remarkable point is her motivation level. There is a Japanese proverb, "*suki koso mono no joozu nare*," which means "if one likes his business, he practices it very hard and becomes skillful at it quickly." Sakura liked Japanese and Japanese TV programs. Thus, she voluntarily watched the programs and practiced Japanese every day. Although she did not attend any Japanese classes at school, she built up much Japanese vocabulary in this way. This motivation and willingness is the key to her success in learning Japanese. I will deal more with it later in sections 4.1.3, 5.2.1, and 6.1.

Not only did Sakura watch Japanese TV programs, but also she began to listen to Japanese songs. Her favorite was a Japanese young male group of five members named *Arashi*. The group was one of the most popular performers in Japan, so they appeared in multiple variety or music programs every day. This helped Sakura receive another huge exposure to Japanese. She tried to remember the lyrics of their songs, from which she learned literary or poetic words and phrases as well as colloquial ones. In learning the lyrics, she needed to read them. This was how she learned Japanese writing systems. The lyrics involved a lot of *kanji* 'Chinese characters,' so she needed to master them in order to become able to sing her favorite songs perfectly. *Kanji* characters and words are considered as the biggest difficulty, in general, for the learners of Japanese outside Chinese cultural sphere. Since Sakura's most comfortable language was English, reading and understanding Chinese characters were assumed to be tough work for her. However, she overcame this difficulty again by making steady effort, i.e., looking up the words, memorizing them, and singing the songs many times. The knowledge of *kanji* 'Chinese characters' that she gained from the songs greatly helped her understand the academic reading materials in the four-week intensive program she attended (see section 5.2.3 Learning Strategies).

In her high school days, Sakura chose Chinese for her foreign language credits at school. This was because her high school did not offer a Japanese course for foreign language elective courses. She needed to choose one out of four languages: French, Spanish, Chinese, and American sign language. She mentioned that she enrolled in a Chinese course because the school did not have a Japanese course. She also added that she thought Chinese would be useful in her future.

After all, Sakura did not try to converse in Japanese until she started to study Japanese at the university, even though she learned many Japanese words and phrases from TV and songs. Thus, all through her twelve years of schooling (from the primary school to high school), Sakura and her mother had a strange (but typical for heritage language speakers) way of communication. Her mother talked to her in Japanese, but she replied to her in English. Both the mother and the daughter understood the two languages. Sakura understood Japanese her mother spoke to her because she had grown up with her mother's Japanese. Her mother also could understand her daughter's English easily because it was her daughter's language and she knew well what her daughter would do and say.

At UCLA in winter of 2016, Sakura attended a Japanese class for the first time when she was a sophomore. The class was entitled as "Japanese for Heritage Language Speakers." The class focused on reading and writing Japanese because it was expected that heritage language speakers had sufficient speaking skills and no need to learn grammar like learners of Japanese as a foreign language. The Japanese program at UCLA required all students who wanted to attend a Japanese class for the first time to take a placement test which was offered at the beginning of each academic year. The placement test examined the students' skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, *kanji* characters, and grammar. The students were placed in the class of their most appropriate level according to their results of placement test. The fact that Sakura was placed in the heritage speaker's class indicated that her test results showed she had outstanding conversation skills but relatively low reading and writing proficiency.

I first met Sakura in this class, "Japanese for Heritage Language Speakers." After class, we had a short conversation about her Japanese study and my research topic. Since the very beginning of our meeting, Sakura had been extremely motivated to learn Japanese. She asked me

many questions about Japanese, she talked a lot about Japanese, and she laughed a lot. She seemed to be enjoying everything about learning Japanese. All our conversations were made in Japanese from our first meeting. At first, I talked to her in English, but she replied in Japanese. It seemed to me that there would be no problem if we had all our verbal interactions in Japanese, so I switched my language from English to Japanese.

Thus, never did I imagine she had not taken any Japanese classes before that. Of course, she sometimes produced unnatural ways of speaking (however, this sometimes happens to native speakers as well), but she completely understood what I meant in my Japanese speech and used natural communication strategies when she was at a loss of what to say in the way native Japanese speakers would. I was very curious about how she learned Japanese, what she did, what she could do, and what she could not do. In this way, Sakura and I met, and I began to record our conversations before we launched the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program. (For her more detailed life events, see Appendix I.)

4.1.2 Sakura's general Japanese proficiency at the beginning of the study

Before we launched the four-week academic reading and writing program, Sakura and I had four in-person meetings.[9] At each of these meetings, which took approximately 20 – 30 minutes each, I recorded[10] our conversations about various topics and asked her to write about one of them on the spot for about 20 minutes.[11] The first two meetings were set up for the purpose of recruiting students who would willingly cooperate with this dissertation study. Sakura

---

[9] The meetings were held on February 12, March 18, May 5, and May 12, in 2016.

[10] The recordings are audio only. Sakura exclusively preferred audio-recordings.

[11] This approach was taken to collect her writing on February 12, March 18, and May 12. The first two data were handwritten and the last one was typed.

was one of the four candidates. I met with all the four students following the same procedure. After this recruiting phase, Sakura was the only one who volunteered to participate in the four-week program (for more details on recruitment, see sections 4.1.3 and 4.2.1). I set up two more meetings, partly to obtain more information about her and partly to continue with our relationship and determine the best timing for her to start the program. Then, our fifth meeting, on May 26, 2016, was the preparatory meeting of the four-week program,[12] where I explained the details of the program, i.e., what she was supposed to do, what she was not allowed to do, and when we would meet. On the day after this meeting, May 27, Sakura started the tasks of Week 1, i.e., reading the given editorials and writing an English journal every day (for a detailed procedure of the program, see section 4.2.2).

In this section, I will describe Sakura's Japanese proficiency before the beginning of the actual four-week training program in terms of three out of the four basic skills, i.e., listening, speaking, and writing skills,[13] and her learning skills as a whole.

Listening comprehension

Sakura understood almost all my Japanese. From the very beginning of our meetings, I did not need to speak slowly or to consciously keep my articulation especially clear, as many teachers do for their students in the classroom. As far as her comprehension level was concerned, Sakura was at the same level of proficiency as native-born Japanese. She never asked me to

---

[12] This meeting was dedicated to explaining the program's procedures. Sakura did not write Japanese at this meeting.

[13] I did not give her any specific test to measure her reading skills or ask her any questions to check her reading comprehension.

repeat my lines, nor did she mention that she could not follow me. Every time we met and talked, we chatted like high school friends and laughed, enjoying our bouncy dialogues.

Only one question that seemed to cause a slight confusion to her was: *daitai isshuukan ni dore gurai no **peesu** de yomi-masu ka* (lit. 'About what **pace** per week do you read?'). To this question, Sakura did not respond or react promptly, but indirectly asked me for clarification, which is one of the communication strategies that learners tend to employ when having trouble (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; VanPatten & Benati, 2010). She said, ***peesu** desu ka* 'Pace?' So, I added more explanations with examples for clarification.

The word *peesu* 'pace' (a borrowing from English) and the phrase *dore gurai no **peesu** de* 'about what **pace**' in a question are commonly used in Japanese to ask 'how often' as well as 'how fast.' The question above was asking, 'How often or how much do you read in a week?' The meaning of the English word 'pace' was extended, when it entered Japanese, to include frequency, while, as the native speaker of English, Sakura had no way of knowing that.

Speaking proficiency

Sakura's speaking proficiency was not flawless, but in general it did not impede the listener's comprehension. At the very beginning of the interview at our first meeting on February 12, 2016, her voice was so soft and her speech was so fast that I could not catch it and needed to ask her to repeat. Her first words were her name, as happens often during interviews. She gave her first name, her mother's family name, and her father's family name. I was able to catch the first two names, because both were Japanese names, but I had difficulty grasping the appropriate pronunciation of the third, her last name. I pronounced it wrongly a couple of times, which elicited her laughter and seemed to create a relaxing atmosphere. Then, her voice volume slightly

rose, and after that I had no difficulty with her voice. Perhaps the extra quiet onset of the conversation was because of her shyness to talk to a stranger and a lack of confidence in her Japanese speech. She said, when I asked her to write about a given topic at this first meeting, that she would try hard but she knew she did not have a high enough proficiency of writing Japanese. She added that, since she had not had the experience of attending Japanese classes, she did not have confidence that she spoke Japanese correctly.

In terms of her pronunciation, her Japanese speech was not perfect either, especially at our first meeting, but it did not hinder our communication. Her intonation was strange at the very beginning of our first interview. When she spoke about her father, she said *otoosan ga **raosu shusshin** nanode* 'because my father is **from Laos**.' Her pitch accent in the bold type was /ra.O.SU.SHU.sshin/,[14] although in standard Japanese[15] it would be pronounced as /RA.o.su.shu.sshin/. Another conspicuous tendency in her articulation was some regularly missing particular syllables: /de/, /n/ and some vowels were not pronounced or pronounced too weakly to discern. This tendency became less and less noticeable each time we met and talked. It may also have been a sign of her lack of confidence in her Japanese at the beginning of our meetings.

On the other hand, Sakura's words and phrases provided me with an interesting insight; her speech suggested the importance of the amount of exposure to the target language. First, she kept using a polite language to me throughout our meetings. She even knew and used some honorific expressions, such as *gozonji desu ka* 'Do you know it? (honorific verb form),' which

---

[14] The brackets / / are used here to denote pitch accents, as is customary in Japanese dialectology. The usage is to be distinguished from denoting phonemic representation, as in /de/ and /n/ two lines below.

[15] The standard Japanese referred to here is the Tokyo dialect. There are other patterns of pitch accent depending on dialects, but they are not adopted in Japanese instruction for foreigners.

made her speech sound like that of a classy lady. I speculated that her way of speaking might reflect her mother's speaking style. In our interviews, Sakura mentioned retrospectively that she had not spoken Japanese after starting preschool and until she enrolled in the Japanese course during the winter quarter of 2016. In that sense, the state of Sakura's Japanese acquisition at the beginning of the program is reminiscent of that observed at the point of coming out of 'the silent period' proposed by Stephen D. Krashen:[16] many years of vast input from her mother's Japanese, and also from Japanese dramas and variety shows, had accumulated in her mind though she did not speak Japanese, and now it all started pouring out. Some of what she produced was correct and some was wrong. She used the words *ni wari kara san wari* '20 to 30 percent' idiomatically, in a typical Japanese way, rather than using the alternative expression with *paasento* 'percent,' a loanword from English. On the other hand, she used common phrases incorrectly: for example, she mentioned *shiite **to** iu nara* 'if I had to say' but inserting ***to*** in this phrase is ungrammatical, and the correct phrase is *shiite iu nara* (or *shiite ieba*). This suggests that Sakura was in the process of experimenting with various phrases and expressions she had stored. Her speech at the interview revealed that she had acquired a large amount of Japanese vocabulary in her receptive lexicon, and she was trying to move it little by little to her productive lexicon.

---

[16] Krashen and Terrell (1988) described "the silent period" as follows: "It has often been observed, especially with children acquiring a second language, that for several months following the first exposure the acquirer may say very little except for memorized whole sentences (p. 35). This phenomenon, according to Krashen, does not only occur in children's L2 learning, nor does it exclusively mean L2 learners' "silence." Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) also described the case in which students learning L2 responded in their first language as "the silent period." They stated that "(the silent period) approximates what language learners of all ages have been observed to do naturally, and it appears to be more effective than forcing full two-way communication from the very beginning of L2 acquisition" (pp. 25–26).

Writing proficiency

Starting with junior high school, Sakura was absorbed in watching Japanese TV shows and listened to many songs with Japanese lyrics, but she hardly had any experience of reading and writing Japanese. According to her story during the very first interview on February 12, 2016, Sakura's proficiency in writing Japanese was so low that the writing assignments in her heritage Japanese speakers' class took her a long time to complete.

Regarding her early experience with written Japanese, Sakura remembered that there were some Japanese picture books for children at her parents' home. She did not remember, however, if she read those books herself or if her mother read them aloud for her. Assuming that she had not been able to read written Japanese at such young age, she guessed that her mother probably read them for her though she did not remember it clearly. According to Sakura, her mother was not a person to just buy a toy for her children and leave it all up to them. Sakura's mother also provided her with Japanese education videos, children's books on *hiragana* penmanship, and toy blocks with one *hiragana* on each. Sakura recollected enjoying learning *hiragana* from those materials, especially the videos.

However, none of this triggered Sakura to enthusiastically start studying Japanese. She started a regular public elementary school, made friends there, and her primary language shifted to English.[17] During her middle school days, she began to watch Japanese TV dramas, but still her interest did not turn toward written Japanese materials such as books.

The first written Japanese materials that motivated Sakura to eagerly read and study were song lyrics. Shortly after she started to watch Japanese TV shows, she grew interested in Japanese songs, specifically in J-pop. Her mother noticed it and provided support for her,

---

[17] Before this, as Sakura said in her interview, her mother had told her that Sakura spoke Japanese with her mother, English with her father, and Thai with her Thai babysitter (see Appendix I).

downloading her favorite song lyrics from the Internet and showing her how to read and write them in *kanji*. This marked the beginning of her autonomous study of *kanji*. With her mother's initial help and her extraordinary absorption into J-pop songs, she learned many words and *kanji* from their lyrics. She continued doing this, except on the days she was too busy with her high school coursework, all the way up until her interviews with me.

Sakura's exceptional interest in *kanji* and hard work with Japanese lyrics are described in her writing collected before the four-week program, on February 12 (handwritten), March 18 (handwritten), and May 12 (typed). To write Japanese by hand requires substantial knowledge of *kanji*. Sakura wrote 42 *kanji* words (42 types and 60 tokens) out of a 98-content-word composition during our very first meeting on February 12, which made her writing look like that written by a native-born young Japanese. Three frequently used *kanji* words were 書く *kaku* 'to write' (six times), 思う *omou* 'to think' (five times), and 私 *watashi* 'I' (three times). All the other *kanji* words were used once or twice in the writing, and only two incorrect *kanji* occurred. Moreover, Sakura wrote some complicated *kanji* words with many strokes, such as 違い *chigai* 'difference,' 教授 *kyooju* 'professor,' 印象 *inshoo* 'impression,' and 先輩 *senpai* 'senior student.' These demonstrate that Sakura knew a wide variety of *kanji* words and was trying to use them, consciously or unconsciously. This tendency to use as many *kanji* words as possible was observed throughout her writing before and during the program.

Other aspects of Sakura's writing, however, provided clear evidence that she was not an experienced writer of Japanese. Her first composition on February 12 involved some English words that she had difficulty translating into Japanese and just wrote them in English, such as 'email,' 'superiors,' and 'respect.' This tendency was also seen in her second composition on March 18, in which she wrote her university course name and its content in English. In her third

writing on May 12, instead of including English words in her Japanese text, she chose to write

loanwords from English in *katakana*, probably because I asked her to type her assignment rather

than writing by hand. In any case, all the three writing samples included some words that did not

fit well within the Japanese text surrounding them. This suggested that Sakura basically thought

in English, then translated it into Japanese, and in doing so she could not find appropriate

equivalent translations in Japanese.

The last noteworthy Issue in Sakura's writing at this stage was the mixing of spoken

language in them. This was a phenomenon I had expected from my past studies (Ajioka, 2015;

Ajioka & Kawanishi, 2013). One example was her use of contractions by dropping the vowel *i,*

such as *kaite-masu* instead of *kaite-imasu* '(I) am writing' and *omotte-mashita* instead of *omotte-*

imashita '(I) was thinking.' The vowel *i* is frequently dropped in these 'main verb' + 'auxiliary'

verbal phrases in conversation, but it is supposed to be included in writing. Sakura may not have

been aware of that. Another tendency was her sporadic use of colloquial words and phrases. For

example, such words as *narubeku* 'as much as possible' and *ikinari* 'suddenly,' are common in

conversation, but in written essays their more formal equivalents *dekirukagiri* 'as much as

possible' and *totsuzen* 'suddenly,' respectively, are supposed to be used.

Overall, Sakura's writing competence in *kanji* at the beginning of this study was, thus,

surprisingly proficient, much more so than that of average heritage learners of Japanese. On the

other hand, she displayed an insufficient understanding of the distinctions between written and

spoken styles, a challenging point for all speakers who have not learned to control the style of

argument essays.

Sakura's continuous learning skills

During all five meetings[18] before the four-week program, I found Sakura continuously learning. As was described above, Sakura was learning vocabulary and *kanji* from Japanese TV shows and lyrics of songs. She was not simply enjoying watching TV or listening to songs, but also actively picking up unfamiliar words and looking them up in the online dictionary. She sometimes asked her mother for the meaning of words, but then she stopped doing so, partly because the explanation that her mother gave her did not always convince her and partly because she did not want to bother her mother. So, the online dictionary and some apps on the smartphone, such as Hello Talk and Lang-8, were her primary tools for checking the meaning of words she wanted to learn. This is how Sakura increased her vocabulary. She was eager to acquire more words, phrases, and expressions that many Japanese use and to use them in a natural way. Her lexicon was already different from that of those who learned Japanese in the classroom setting.

One thing that amazed me during the meetings with Sakura was that she clearly remembered when, where, and how she learned particular words. From my experience interviewing learners of Japanese, including heritage and foreign learners, I recognized that many of them had difficulty giving an example. When I asked them for comments about their learning or how their class went, they answered, "I learned a lot of words," or "The class was so helpful." If I asked them for more specific comments with an example, however, they often could not say anything. They were able to make general comments, but it seemed difficult for them to provide an example.

---

[18] These five meetings refer to those for recruitment held on February 12 and March 18, those for preparation for the four-week program held on May 5 and May 12, and the pre-program meeting held on May 26.

Sakura, on the other hand, was able to give more than one example very clearly. During the interviews, I often asked her if she knew words that seemed to be unfamiliar to general learners of Japanese, i.e., the words that general Japanese textbooks of elementary to intermediate levels did not include. For example, when I asked her to explain her upbringing in Japanese, I said, *jaa mazu **oitachi** o sukoshi hanashite kudasai,* 'First, please talk about your upbringing.' Then, I thought the word ***oitachi*** 'upbringing' might be unfamiliar to her. So, I asked if she knew its meaning. Sakura answered positively with confidence, adding that she learned the word ***oitachi*** a couple of weeks before, when she watched a Japanese drama whose title was '99.9.' She continued describing the scene where the word in question was used as well as describing the actor who said it, in a delightful manner. It showed me how much she enjoyed learning Japanese and watching dramas in Japanese. It also demonstrated that learning from dramas (and also anime) was effective. Sakura also mentioned during the interviews that she had learned many words from Japanese lyrics, such as *sakura no hanabira* 'the petals of cherry blossoms' and *chiru* 'to disperse,' which average learners did not learn from textbooks. In this case as well, Sakura gave two examples of the words she had learned from song lyrics as the sources of them.

Another remarkable thing that should be noted here is that Sakura was able to coin a new word in Japanese. When I asked her to describe her communication with her mother, she answered that her mother spoke Japanese to her with some English words mixed in. In this narrative, Sakura said, ***wasee-eego** ja nakute **eesee-wago*** mitai '(her mother's language is) not English made in Japan but like Japanese made in America.' In this utterance, she used the existing word ***wasee-eego*** 'English word wrongly coined in Japan' or 'Japanglish' as a model for jokingly creating the non-existing word ***eesee-wago*** 'lit. Japanese word incorrectly coined on the

basis of English.' To represent these words in *kanji*, then the existing word **wasee-eego** is written as 和製英語 (和 'Japan,' 製 'made,' 英 'English,' and 語 'word' or 'language'), and Sakura flipped the two *kanji* characters, **wa** 和 meaning 'Japan' and **ee** 英 meaning 'English,' and generated 英製和語 describing the opposite situation. This is what native-born Japanese often do, and it requires a substantial knowledge of *kanji* characters and their meanings. This example shows that Sakura not only had a good competence in *kanji* but also a good performance in it, and that she had *kanji* in her mind when she spoke to such extent that she could playfully coin a word by swapping two *kanji* characters in the fashion of native Japanese speakers.

To summarize Sakura's Japanese proficiency at the beginning of the study, Sakura was a typical heritage Japanese learner in many ways. Her language was primarily colloquial Japanese which is used within families and close friends. Her speech was based on her mother's language, and on Japanese TV dramas and songs. Thanks to the exposure to these sources, her comprehension of Japanese was almost no problem; in problematic situations, she was able to employ an appropriate communication strategy and solve the problem. Regarding her writing proficiency as well, Sakura shared a characteristic with typical heritage Japanese speakers: she was writing in the same way, with the same words and phrases, as she spoke. She did not shift her language properly from the spoken style to the written one. She did not read Japanese books or newspapers, so she was not accustomed to the words, phrases, and structures that are preferred in written Japanese essays.

On the other hand, compared to other heritage Japanese learners and general foreign learners of Japanese, Sakura's competence and performance of *kanji* were extraordinary. Because she learned vocabulary and *kanji* from lyrics of songs, in addition to Japanese TV

shows, her vocabulary involved some poetic words and phrases, which were quite different from those in Japanese textbooks. She had such a substantial sense of *kanji* that she was able to playfully coin a new word by rearranging the order of *kanji*. But still, her vocabulary was not the same as those used in newspapers, argument essays, and academic papers.

4.1.3 Sakura's individual feature – motivation

One more thing that was noteworthy about Sakura was her extraordinarily high motivation to master Japanese. It was already found before her participation in the program as well as throughout and after it. Her motivation is one of the key factors (perhaps the most important) of her success in this four-week program and will be discussed later in Chapters 5 and 6. This section briefly describes her signs of motivation that were revealed from the series of interviews before we started the four-week program.

Her motivation clearly stood out at the beginning of the recruiting process. Our very first meeting occurred on February 12, 2016. It was part of the recruitment for my dissertation project. I was looking for Japanese heritage speakers who would willingly participate in my four-week intensive Japanese reading and writing program. I joined one of the Japanese classes with the instructor's permission,[19] which was specifically designed for Japanese heritage speakers,[20] and was granted the opportunity to explain my research interest to the class and recruit those who are willing to cooperate with me. Per the agreement between the lecturer and me, I promised the

---

[19] I owe this opportunity to Mr. Eishi Ikeda, a former UCLA lecturer of Japanese.

[20] In this class, the majority were Japanese heritage speakers, one or both of whose parents were Japanese and who had grown up as US citizens. A few students were native-born Japanese, whose both parents were Japanese and whose family was planning to return to Japan in the future. Two students were foreign learners of Japanese, both of whom had a strong interest in Japanese and also had sufficient proficiency in Japanese to take the course together with Japanese or Japanese heritage speakers.

class to offer assistance, and instruction when necessary, to those who decide to participate in my research.

Four students showed interest in my research: one was a Chinese American student with Chinese parents, one was a Japanese heritage learner with Chinese father and Japanese mother, one was a Japanese heritage learner with Japanese parents, and the fourth one was Sakura. I met with each of these four students once in February and once in March. After these two meetings, I explained the procedures of the four-week intensive Japanese reading and writing program for this dissertation study. The former two students told me that they would not join the four-week program. It seemed that their participation in the two interviews was because they enrolled in the Japanese class during the quarter. Once the quarter ended, their interest in Japanese faded, and as a new quarter started, their concerns and interests shifted. The third student, the Japanese American student, showed some interest in the program, but eventually she decided not to join it because of her busy schedule. Her home language was Japanese, so her speech was the same as that of young Japanese living in Japan. Basically, she had no trouble communicating in Japanese. Her writing left much to be improved, because she was writing in a spoken Japanese style as many other heritage speakers do. However, it seemed that it was not her primary concern.

The fourth student, Sakura, was the only student whose motivation never faded. From the very beginning of the series of interviews, she showed a constantly strong passion for the mastery of Japanese. During the interview on March 18, Sakura said that her first experience of taking a Japanese class at UCLA was really good, and that, after this quarter was over, she was planning to keep a diary in Japanese in order to retain her writing skills. Thus, for Sakura, with her motivation, this four-week intensive Japanese reading and writing program was a timely opportunity.

Indeed, in her effort to learn Japanese, Sakura made use of whatever was available. Her primary learning materials were Japanese TV programs and song lyrics. On top of them, however, she also took full advantage of language learning apps for smartphone, such as Hello Talk, and language exchange community websites, such as Lang-8. She enjoyed communicating with other learners and native speakers of Japanese, and learned new words and expressions. Sometimes, she made many flash cards of Japanese phrases and posted them all over the walls of her room. This was not for vocabulary quizzes or final exams. It was just to understand what her favorite idols said on TV and to learn to speak the way they did.

As was described above, Sakura's motivation to master Japanese was clearly outstanding, and quite distinctive from other students already during the interviews before the four-week program started. Once the program launched, her motivation became more clearly observed in her English journal, one of the required tasks during the program, as well as from the very fact that she completed the four-week program without any break or withdrawal. At every step, she proved her ceaseless motivation and discipline. I will return to her motivation in sections 5.2.1, 5.3 and 6.1.

4.2 Four-week intensive academic Japanese reading and writing program

In this section, I will describe the procedures used in the four-week intensive academic Japanese reading and writing program. First, in section 4.2.1, I will present the recruitment method briefly (for detailed information, see section 4.1.3 Sakura's motivation). The recruitment of participants was carried out from January till March in 2016. During this period, I collected some data, e.g., the candidates' writing and interviews, and some of them were taken into consideration for this dissertation study. Then, in section 4.2.2, the procedures of the four-week

intensive program will be described. Lastly, in section 4.2.3, I will briefly explain about the data which are mainly used for this dissertation and about the methods of analysis.

4.2.1 Recruiting participants

At the very first stage of this study, I needed to recruit Japanese heritage language students. I expected three to four students at least. For this recruiting purpose, I observed a Japanese class for Japanese heritage language speakers which was offered in winter quarter[21] of 2016 (see section 4.1.3). In the class, I introduced myself and my research topic to the students, and I asked them to simply have a talk with me after class or with an appointment; first I wanted to know their family and language backgrounds. Four students had an interest in my research. I interviewed all four students around mid-quarter, in February 2016, and then, in March, after the winter quarter ended. Through these two interviews, as was described in section 4.1.3, I obtained only one, but extremely highly motivated participant, Sakura.

During the interview with Sakura held on March 18, I explained to her what she would be required to do and how long the program would last. I also explained that there would be neither credit nor payment for her participation, but that she would be able to read and write more advanced Japanese after the program, which would be her benefit. I also added that I would gladly help her learn Japanese, so if she had any questions outside the program, she could ask me via email. It seemed that she was excited to participate in the program and to start her new study of Japanese. Then, we discussed when we could start the program. We both agreed that we would hold three more meetings: one was on May 5, which was for detailed information on the program's procedures, and the others were on May 12 and 26, which were for interviews and

---

[21] UCLA adopted a quarter system, not a semester one.

writing tasks to assess her proficiency. The results of the assessment are described in sections 4.1.2 and 5.1.1. We started the four-week program on Friday, May 27.

4.2.2 The procedures of the program

This section provides the details on the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program. The major components of this program were academic reading and writing, daily journal, and weekly in-person meetings. I will describe these three components below.

Academic reading and writing

The "academic reading and writing" in this study is not a synonym to "reading journal papers or coursebooks" and "writing a research paper or thesis" as is generally associated with this phrase in the academic context (see section 1.4.2). The term "academic" in this study refers to "a fundamental writing skill" required for high school seniors or first-year university students, involving writing a research paper in the context of education in Japan. To avoid confusion, I will use a term "argument essays" to refer to the participant's written products, although I keep the phrase "academic reading and writing" for the program itself.

During the four-week program, the participant was required to read one Japanese text daily for six days a week. I gave her one day off each week, so she read 24 texts in total. During Week 1, she was just supposed to read some material each day with no writing assignment. The writing assignments started in Week 2. She was required to write a summary of the text that she read on that day and her opinion of it in Japanese. Thus, she wrote 18 argument essays throughout the program.

During Weeks 1 and 2, I did not give any feedback so that I could see the effects of usage-based learning method. After Week 2 was over, I started giving her feedback and corrections. Additionally, at our weekly meeting between Week 2 and Week 3, I provided her with a chart (see Appendix II) on preferred words and phrases for formal Japanese writing, especially argument essays. She was allowed to refer to the chart when she did the writing assignments in Week 3 and after.

As was mentioned above, the participant was supposed to do these reading and writing tasks six days a week, not seven days. After the six-day practice of reading and writing, on the seventh day, we held a meeting for an interview, and I also gave her feedback and answered any of her questions about Japanese, not limited to this program. In addition, during this weekly meeting, the detailed instructions on the tasks for the following week were provided. More details about the regular meetings will be described later in this section.

Texts for academic reading

As I mentioned in the previous section, the "academic reading and writing" for this program refers to the preparation for the writing assignments at higher education, i.e., the training to build the very basic level of writing skills which will be required at university in Japan. Considering the context of Japanese education in Japan, I carefully selected the texts for the reading assignments from the editorials and opinions in major newspapers. These texts served as a "model" for the participant to write her own argument essays. The reasons that I chose editorials for this reading and writing program were as follows. First, academic journal papers in science or social science involved excessively technical vocabulary and were not practical. I did not expect her to be able to read or master those technical terms. Second, most

university entrance examinations adopted newspaper editorials for their Japanese reading comprehension tests or for argument essays; in other words, all young Japanese who desired to study at a college or university were required to know the vocabulary at the editorial level (which includes considerable abstruse, sometimes literary words), and to understand what the author meant (see also section 1.4.2). Therefore, Japanese newspaper editorials can be assumed as an introduction to the academic Japanese that will be used in the university.

During Week 1, the participant, Sakura, read the editorials on various topics. At the weekly meeting after Week 1, I asked her which topic she had an interest in and which topic she thought was difficult. Considering her preferences, strength, and weakness, I arranged the reading topics and materials for Weeks 2 through 4. I also made sure that she would be able to read one topic for a couple of days consecutively. For example, a topic that she was most interested in was "President Obama's visit to Hiroshima." I selected three editorials from three different newspapers, each of them having different viewpoints, and gave them to her for her first three writing assignments on Days 1 – 3 in Week 2. This arrangement was to keep her working on this program with interest and enthusiasm and to reinforce her vocabulary on the specific topic. On the same topic, keywords were repeated, so I expected that reading multiple texts on one topic for a couple of days would facilitate her learning those repeated words (i.e., a usage-based model of instruction, c.f., Bybee, 2006; Langacker, 2000b, 2009). I also expected that multiple occurrences of the same words would save her time for reading and reduce the effort of looking the words up. For the editorial topics and titles, see Appendix III.

Daily English journal

In addition to the Japanese reading and writing assignments, the participant Sakura was required to write a daily journal in English. In her journal, I asked her to write anything she wanted to note, such as the topic of the text, her opinions or comments, her problems or questions, her strategies to overcome the difficulty, and her improvement. The length, style, and structure of the journals were all left to her. What she was requested to do was (1) do the journal task immediately after she finished the academic reading and writing task, (2) use the Microsoft Word file, and (3) send the journal to me along with her daily task of academic writing.

Weekly meeting

As I mentioned above, Sakura and I had a regular meeting on the seventh day of her daily tasks. We met on June 3 (Week 1), June 9 (Week 2), June 16 (Week 3), and June 23 (Week 4). The meeting was about an hour long. I reserved a group study room in the university library to secure a privacy and a quiet environment for the interview and recording purposes. During the meeting, first I asked Sakura if she had any questions on the program or the academic reading materials and, if she had any, I gave her feedback. Next, we had a casual talk about two or three topics for 10 to 20 minutes. I prepared topics in advance for each meeting. One of the topics was closely related to the topic of materials she read during the week. After the casual conversation about those topics, I chose one topic for the subsequent writing task. I tried to choose the topic that I thought she could write on most easily, based on her opinions and willingness to talk during the casual conversation. Then, she wrote on the topic in Japanese for about 20 minutes. She was requested to type it using a computer, not to write it by hand, because if she needed to handwrite it, she would also need to remember and spell out *kanji* characters correctly. This was

assumed to take extra time and effort for her, and I did not want her to concentrate on *kanji*. My interest was more in her learning grammar and vocabulary. This was the primary reason for using computer for this task. The Japanese essays she produced during these weekly meetings were compared with her spoken language in the data analyses.[22]

All the communications during these weekly meetings were made in Japanese: in other words, Sakura had sufficient communication proficiency in Japanese to keep the casual conversations with a native speaker for an hour. All the spoken communications were audio-recorded[23] to be analyzed subsequently.

Pre-program and post-program meetings

Before and after this four-week program, we had three pre-program meetings on May 5, 12, and 26, and one post-program meeting on July 5, 2016.[24] The objectives of these meetings were to get detailed information about the participant, Sakura, through the interviews, to enhance my relationship with her through the casual conversations, and to assess her proficiency in differentiating her language in her speaking style from that in her argument essays.

In the pre-program meetings, Sakura and I had a casual conversation in Japanese about her life and experience learning Japanese. Then, I chose one topic from the conversation we had just exchanged, and I asked her to write in Japanese what she had just said during the conversation. This procedure was taken in our weekly meeting as well. I also conducted an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) based on the guidelines of American Council on Teaching Foreign

---

[22] The results of this analysis will be presented on another occasion in the future.

[23] The participant did not give me permission to take a video of the meeting.

[24] The participant Sakura's writing proficiency at the post-program meeting drastically improved, but it was not included in the analysis for this dissertation. It will be presented on another occasion in the future.

Languages (ACTFL)[25] to examine her Japanese speaking proficiency level by using an official standard. Sakura and I always conversed in Japanese, and I had never experienced a communication problem with her, but I had never officially tested her speaking level. For this dissertation study, I needed to know her level to portray Sakura as the study participant in a more detailed and clear way according to established criteria.[26]

The post-program meeting was scheduled approximately two weeks after the program ended. For these two weeks, I did not contact her or provide any academic Japanese instructions or tasks for her. However, if she wanted to watch Japanese TV or study Japanese by herself, of course she could do so. The purpose of this post-program meeting was to find out how much of what she had learned during the program she was able to retain. Thus, the focus was on her usage of academic Japanese vocabulary and grammar.

In the post-program meeting, we did the same activities as in the pre-program meetings: having a casual conversation in Japanese, writing in Japanese what she said about one selected topic from the conversation, and testing her speaking level by using the ACTFL OPI criteria. Her Japanese essay was compared with her audio-recorded Japanese conversation, to investigate how much difference there was between spoken and written Japanese, i.e., how much formal written style in Japanese she had learned. The two OPI data from pre- and post-program meetings were subsequently rated by two certified ACTFL OPI testers. Again, all the conversations during these meetings were audio-recorded.

---

[25] I was a certified ACTFL OPI Tester from 2012 till 2020.

[26] This unofficial OPI data showed that her speaking proficiency was Advanced Low (AL) on June 3, and then it was Advanced Mid (AM) on July 5. The salient improvement was seen when she was talking about news topics and her opinions. I did not include this improvement in her speaking proficiency in the analyses and discussions, because it was out of focus of this dissertation. The effects of the usage-based reading and writing program on her speaking proficiency will be the topic of future research.

The collected data were as follows:

1. Sakura's daily Japanese argument essays (18 essays)

2. Sakura's daily retrospective English journals (24 journals)

3. the audio conversation data at the meetings and their transcripts (7 data)

4. Sakura's Japanese argument essays at the meetings (7 essays)

5. the audio data, transcripts, and ratings on OPIs (2 data)

6. the personal email exchanges (in Japanese) between Sakura and me

Next section, 4.2.3, will provide more details about three types of data, from 1 – 3 above.

For the detailed schedules of the program, see Table 4-1 below.

Table 4-1: Daily lesson components and program schedules

WEEK 0 (Pre-program)						5/26 Thu
Components in the program and their abbreviations: • Procedures: I explain the program's procedures to the participant • Reading: The participant reads an editorial a day. • Writing: The participant writes a summary of the editorial and her opinion of it. • Journal: The participant keeps a journal in English after the daily assignment(s). • Meeting: The participant and I have a weekly meeting. • S and W: At the weekly meetings, I interview and converse with the participant. I choose one topic from the conversation and ask her to write about it in Japanese. Later, I compare the language she uses in the conversation (S) with that in her essays (W). • Handout: I give a handout (a chart on words and phrases preferred in the formal written style) to the participant. • OPI: Oral proficiency interviews before and after the program.						- Meeting - Procedures
WEEK 1						
5/27 Fri	5/28 Sat	5/29 Sun	5/30 Mon	5/31 Tue	6/1 Wed	6/2 Thu
- Reading - Journal	- Reading - Journal	- Reading - Journal	- Reading - Journal	- Reading - Journal	- Reading - Journal	
WEEK 2						
6/3 Fri	6/4 Sat	6/5 Sun	6/6 Mon	6/7 Tue	6/8 Wed	6/9 Thu
- Meeting - S and W - OPI - Reading	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Meeting - S and W - Handout

- Writing - Journal						
WEEK 3						
6/10 Fri	6/11 Sat	6/12 Sun	6/13 Mon	6/14 Tue	6/15 Wed	6/16 Thu
- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Meeting - S and W
WEEK 4						
6/17 Fri	6/18 Sat	6/19 Sun	6/20 Mon	6/21 Tue	6/22 Wed	6/23 Thu
- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Reading - Writing - Journal	- Meeting - S and W
No Instruction or Meeting for Two Weeks (6/24~7/4)						
				7/5 Tue		
				- Meeting - OPI - S and W		

4.2.3 The data

Out of the six types of data I obtained from Sakura, which were described in the previous section, I will mainly use the following three types: (1) the 18 daily argument essays written in Japanese by her during Weeks 2 – 4, (2) 24 daily retrospective English journals written by her during Weeks 1 – 4, and (3) seven interview data of in-person meetings with her, including audio files and their transcripts. The remaining three types of data will serve as auxiliary data and occasionally referred to as necessary.

The main objective of this study was to improve the participant's, i.e., Japanese heritage language speaker's academic writing skills using the usage-based approach of language learning. Therefore, her writing, i.e., argument essays on the daily editorials, will be the primary materials to be analyzed. To analyze the efficacy of the usage-based method of this four-week reading and writing program, I will also use, for comparison, her reading assignments, i.e., the daily "model"

56

editorials. Both her essays and editorials are analyzed using a morphological analysis tool[27] and concordance tool.[28] When necessary, her uses of particular words are compared with those in other written texts, using a Japanese written corpus.[29]

To grasp her learning processes and the problems she had with reading and writing assignments, I will also thoroughly analyze her daily English journals. She was supposed to write anything she thought about the daily editorials, such as the obstacles she felt, difficult words, the ways she solved her problems, and her opinions on the topic. Since she kept her daily journal in English, the language she was most comfortable with, my assumption was that the journal entries would reveal her bare feelings and difficulties as a learner.

The last type of data carefully analyzed in this study were interview data, all of which were recorded and transcribed. As a researcher, I appreciated the weekly opportunities to meet with the participant and to ask free questions of her, because they represented a great chance to understand her mind. "Free questions" were the key here. Regarding what she noted in her journals, what she implied but did not write in her journals, what she thought about particular matters, what she knew, and what she did not know, the weekly interviews provided me a precious chance ask her countless *whats*, *whys*, and *hows*. Additionally, thanks to these interview data, I learned her family background, her language learning experience, and her specific goals.

All the other data, i.e., her seven Japanese essays at the meetings and our email communications in Japanese, will serve as supplementary data.

---

[27] I used a free online morphological analysis tool, named Web Chamame, which was offered by National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) and is accessible at: https://chamame.ninjal.ac.jp/.

[28] I used a free concordance tool, named AntConc, which was offered by Professor Laurence Anthony at Waseda University and is downloadable at: https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/.

[29] I used a free online Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), named Shonagon, which was offered by National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) and is accessible at: https://shonagon.ninjal.ac.jp/.

CHAPTER 5

Data analysis and findings

5.0 Some relevant linguistic facts about Japanese

Before discussing my findings from Sakura's writing, I would like to discuss three areas of Japanese written language that learners of Japanese tend to have difficulty with. These areas are mastered by native children at school over a long period of primary and secondary education, via both explicit instruction and implicit linguistic acculturation. As my analysis of Sakura's writing will show in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2, these areas were particularly challenging for her, a heritage learner of Japanese who did not go through the kind of training native children experience. I will first describe in 5.0.1 the sentence-ending forms *desu/masu* vs. *da/de aru*, then in 5.0.2, I will discuss the issues associated with the Japanese writing system, especially with the ideographs *kanji*, and lastly in 5.0.3, I will describe two major categories in Japanese vocabulary, i.e., *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.'

5.0.1 Sentence-ending forms – *desu/masu* vs. *da/de aru*[30]

Sentences in Japanese, an SOV language, end in a predicate, which can be a verb or verb phrase, or an adjective, a noun-adjective, or a noun. In writing, a predicate ends in sentence-final

---

[30] These are present tense declarative forms, used here to represent all tenses and modalities.

forms *desu/masu*[31] or *da/de aru*,[32] which are termed *keetai* 'polite style' and *jootai* 'plain style'

respectively.[33] See example sentences in both styles below.

   (1) Sentences in *keetai* 'polite style'

   a. "verb + *masu*" type

   Kenji   wa   go   ji   ni   oki-masu[34]

   Kenji   TOP   five   o'clock   at   get-up-SUF:POL

   'Kenji gets up at five o'clock.'

   b. "noun + *desu*" type

   Aiko   wa   gakusee   desu

   Aiko   TOP   student   COP:POL

   'Aiko is a student.'

Example (1a) has a polite suffix *-masu* attached to the predicate verb root *oki-* 'to get up,' and

example (1b) has a polite copula *desu* following the predicate noun *gakusee* 'student.'[35]

---

[31] *Desu* is a long polite style copula and *masu* is a polite style verbal suffix; both forms are termed auxiliary in Japanese grammar.

[32] *Da* is a short plain style (auxiliary) copula and *de aru* is its analytical form used in argument essays.

[33] When introducing these forms to English-speaking learners of Japanese, the *desu/masu* style is generally referred to as 'polite form' or 'long form.' The *da* style is labeled 'plain form' or 'short form'; the *de aru* style is first introduced in intermediate or advanced textbooks.

[34] Adding the suffix *-masu* to a verb necessitates verb conjugation. The conjugation patterns depend on verbs. The suffix *masu* is placed after the root of a verb. The verb in the example (1a), to get up, is *oki-ru* in Japanese in its dictionary form: *oki* is its root and *-ru* is its conjugational verb-ending. Thus, 'to get up' in *keetai* 'polite style' is *oki-masu*.

[35] *Keetai* 'polite style' also has the analytical option for structures with copula *de aru*, in which the suffix *-masu* is attached to the verb *aru*, resulting in *de arimasu*. This form is rarely used and appears to be restricted to male speech addressed to superiors. This, however, is a topic for another study.

(2) Sentences in *jootai* 'plain style'

a. "verb + ø" type

   Kenji wa   go ji ni okiru[36]

   Kenji TOP five o'clock at get-up-ø

   'Kenji gets up at five.'

b. "noun + *da*" type

   Aiko   wa   gakusee   da

   Aiko TOP   student   COP:PLAIN

   'Aiko is a student.'

c. "noun + *de aru*" type (in argument essays)

   Aiko wa   gakusee de aru

   Aiko TOP student   COP:PLAIN

   'Aiko is a student.'

In example (2a), the predicate verb has no suffix and the sentence ends in the bare dictionary form *okiru* 'to get up.' Example (2b) has a plain style (auxiliary) copula *da* following the predicate noun *gakusee* 'student.' In example (2c), the predicate noun is followed by the analytical form of the copula (to be exact, a sequence of auxiliary *de* and verb *aru* 'to be').

     The choice between these two sets of suffixes is, broadly speaking, stylistic, and it is subtle and variable in practice. The equivalent distinction between *keetai* 'polite style' and *jootai* 'plain style' is also seen in spoken language, but what interests us in this dissertation is primarily

---

[36] In *jootai* 'plain style,' verbs are used in their dictionary forms (see Figure 1 below).

the written style.[37] Spoken language is relevant here to the extent that Sakura, the participant in this study, was first only exposed to Japanese spoken at home, i.e., as a Japanese heritage speaker. In that sense, her acquisition shared some features with the acquisition of native Japanese children.

Figure 1 below summarizes the sentence-final suffixes in written and spoken styles.
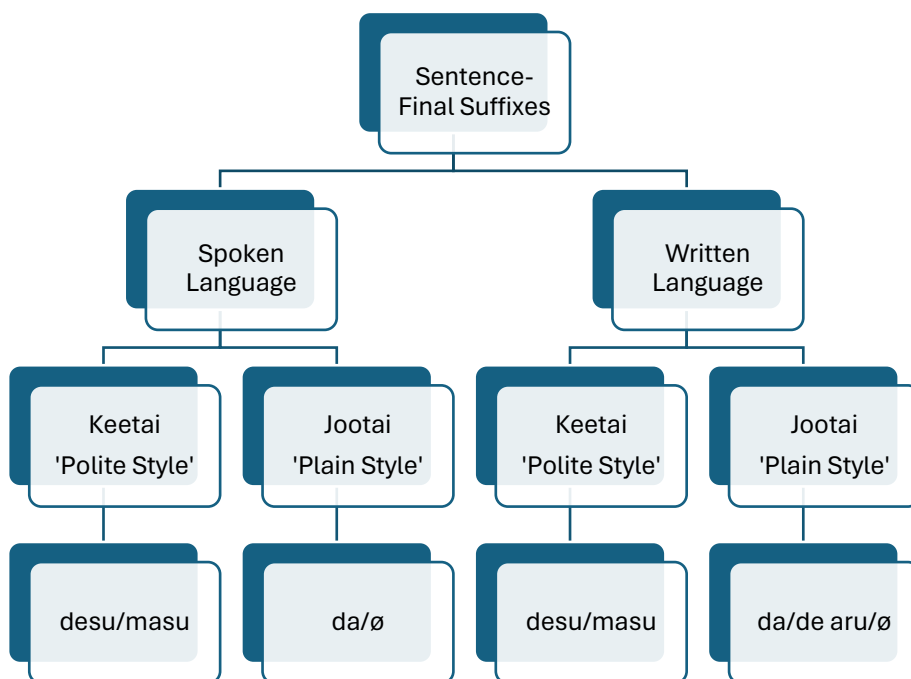
Figure 5-1: The sentence-final suffixes of *keetai* and *jootai* in written and spoken styles

As Figure 1 shows, the polite style *keetai* (*desu/masu*) is used in both spoken and written language. The so-called *jootai* 'plain style,' on the other hand, varies depending on whether the language is spoken or written: while the sentence final *da* and the zero copula are used in both

---

[37] In spoken discourse, there has been a controversy as to whether *desu/masu* is considered to be honorific/polite or not, particularly in terms of the users' stances (Akagi, et al., 2020; Maynard, 1991; Okamoto, 2011; Yamashita 2018). This issue, however, is beside the point here; this dissertation focuses on their use in writing and deals with *desu/masu* as a classroom register, as Yamashita (2018, pp. 366–367) suggested in her analysis of spoken interaction in the classroom setting.

spoken and written language, *de aru* appears almost exclusively in written texts, and is extremely marked in spoken discourse.[38] So, *desu/masu* does not invite learners' confusion because it expresses the speaker's/writer's politeness to the listener(s)/reader(s). However, in the case of *jootai* 'plain style,' the spoken forms, *da* and the zero copula, are informally used between family members and close friends, whereas the written forms, despite the attribution of "plain," *da, de aru*, and the zero copula,[39] are the ones preferred in a formal or academic texts,[40] such as newspaper articles, editorials, academic papers, and argument essays, as those relevant to Sakura's case. Some heritage language speakers hesitate to adopt *da, de aru,* and the zero copula in their argument essays because it is the same form as their home language, consequently writing in the *desu/masu* polite style. It has been pointed out that, generally, heritage language speakers frequently have difficulty acquiring the written register and understanding how the written language differs from the spoken one. They simply write as they speak (Ajioka & Kawanishi, 2013; Kagan & Dillon, 2003).

Stylistically appropriate choice between ending a sentence with *desu/masu* or with *da/de aru* is acquired by native Japanese speaker children through schooling.[41] Throughout the six years of elementary school, children are trained to use *desu/masu* polite forms when they speak to teachers or other seniors. In the curricula of *kokugo* 'national language' for the six years, they

---

[38] It is not that *de aru* is completely impossible in spoken Japanese, if used as quoted speech; numerous examples can be found in Narahara's (2002), also cited in Kaneyasu (2015, p. 212).

[39] This dissertation does not go further linguistically into each function of *da, de aru*, and the zero copula in written texts. For the details of the differences in function and stance between these forms, see e.g., Kaneyasu (2015), Maynard (1985), and Narahara (2002).

[40] In this sense, the label of *jootai* 'plain style' for *da/de aru* in written Japanese is a misnomer, given that the occasions on which these forms are used are formal and certainly not "plain" in the way sentences end in informal domestic/familiar settings.

[41] For the curriculum guideline for Japanese national language released by MEXT (2017), see the Appendix IV.

are supposed to read passages, and write their compositions, all in the polite style, to ensure that they can differentiate their school writing from their private informal writing such as their diaries or scribbled notes to their friends.

Once the children advance to junior high school (Grade 7), their textbooks of Japanese national language change drastically; all the instructions, directions, and reading materials, including novels, commentaries, and poems adopt the *da/de aru* style. This immersion of native children in the *da/de aru* style continues until the end of high school (Grade 12). The transition to school writing from *desu/masu* to *da/de aru* is gradual, but by the time they graduate from junior high school (Grade 9), they gain a sufficient amount and genre-variety of exposure to the *da/de aru* style. This exposure plays a significant role in the maturation of the children's writing. Their textbooks, texts given to them in the exams, and all the published works they are given cultivate their common sense of writing in the *da/de aru* style in their own argument essays. This is how the native Japanese children learn the appropriate style for each genre of writing and this is what is lacking in many Japanese heritage language speakers who have no experience attending school in Japan or supplementary school in foreign countries, especially above grade school.

The difference between *desu/masu* and *da/de aru* essentially lies in whether one is addressing one's reader(s) as persons, i.e., whether the writer is engaged in an interpersonal speech act that impacts the reader and elicits an interpretation or a reaction. Primary school children use *desu/masu* in their compositions and in doing so they address their teachers with the appropriate level of language as respected persons. Once in secondary schools or higher, writers of Japanese choose *da/de aru* in argument essays to make an impersonal assertion addressed to an indefinite or collective reader at large, unconstrained by any reservations or decorum that

personal communication would necessarily require; they learn to keep *desu/masu* (or even a more honorific style) for writing letters, emails, or other written communications directed to specific readers outside the small circle of immediate close friends or family. Acquiring these linguistic distinctions goes hand in hand with the acquisition of social sophistication in the process of maturation.

5.0.2 Difficulties with Japanese *kanji* characters

The Japanese writing system is distinctively complicated and causes unique difficulties for learners. The three major components of the current writing system are: two *kana* syllabaries, i.e., *hiragana* and *katakana*, and ideographs *kanji* (see also sections 1.4.3 and 1.4.4). Japanese sentences, in most cases, are written with *hiragana* and *kanji*:[42] the former are used to represent function words, such as case particles and conjugational endings of verbs and adjectives, and the latter is employed for encoding content words. Everything that is written in *kanji* can be written in *hiragana* or *katakana,* although the reverse is not true. Children in Japan learn 1,026 *kanji*[43] in the course of six years in elementary school and an additional 1,110 *kanji* during the following three years of junior high school (MEXT, 2008). The total of 2,136 *kanji* are the ones people are recommended to use in writing modern Japanese in their daily social lives[44] (Agency for Cultural Affairs, 2016). As a child advances through grades, the number of *kanji* characters in their writing grows, finally making substantial use of the 2,136 *kanji* as a grown-up. Sentences with a

---

[42] *Katakana* is now used to represent particular words, such as loanwords, especially those imported from Western cultures, onomatopoeias, and proper nouns.

[43] These *kanji* are termed *kyooiku kanji* 'education *kanji*' and prescribed by MEXT (2008).

[44] These 2,136 *kanji* are termed *jooyoo kanji* 'commonly used *kanji*,' and are also prescribed by MEXT (2010). Of the 2,136 *jooyoo kanji*, the 1,026 *kanji* which are taught in elementary school are called *kyooiku kanji*.

lot of *hiragana* in them suggest children's writing. To avoid this association, adult speakers of Japanese use a considerable number of *kanji* characters in their writing.

Apart from this social difficulty with the choice between using *kanji* or *kana,* there is an inherent difficulty with using *kanji*, due to the fact that *kanji* is a borrowed script, adapting Chinese ideographs to Japanese writing. The "loaned" nature of *kanji* in Japanese gives rise to the multiplicity of readings each ideograph potentially has in Japanese writing. In Japanese, one *kanji* generally has at least two readings, and sometimes many more. There are two major ways to read one *kanji* in Japanese: (1) the *on*-reading(s), which approximate(s) the original Chinese *kanji* pronunciation and appears in a relatively higher register, and (2) the *kun*-reading(s), which correspond(s) to the basic meaning of the ideograph as it is pronounced in native Japanese words of that meaning, and this reading tends to appear in more casual register. For example, the *kanji* 明 has 12 readings: nine *kun*-readings[45] and three *on*-readings (/myoo/, /mee/, and /min/, depending on the timing of the borrowing).[46] Readers employ their knowledge of *kanji*, their lexicon, and the context to guess the appropriate reading of the *kanji* in the sentence. Therefore, understanding the basic meaning of a *kanji* alone, as speakers of other languages which may use them (e.g., Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese) would, does not yet enable them to *pronounce* them appropriately in Japanese sentences. The same multiplicity of readings and their respective

---

[45] Training in writing requires obligatorily distinguishing these nine *kun*-readings by way of using different combinations of *okurigana* (*kana* added after a Chinese character to show its Japanese inflection) depending on different semantics of the *kanji* 明. These nine readings are denoted here using "+" between the *kanji* and the *okurigana*; slashes "/" are used here, as well as in designation of the three *on*-readings, according to the Japanese linguistic convention and do not make any claims about the phonemic status of their content. These meanings are: (1) 明かり /a+kari/ 'lamp,' (2) 明るい /aka+rui/ 'bright,' (3) 明らかな /aki+rakana/ 'obvious,' (4) 明くる /a+kuru/ 'following' or 'next' (as in *next day*), (5) 明かす /a+kasu/ 'to reveal,' (6) 明く /a+ku/ 'to open' (as in *spacing between*), (7) 明ける /a+keru/ 'to dawn' (as in *day dawned*), (8) 明らむ /aka+ramu/ 'to brighten' (as in *sky brightened*), and (9) 明るむ /aka+rumu/ 'to brighten' (an alternate form of (8)) (Kanji Jiten Online, n.d.).

[46] For more information, see Iwasaki, 2013, pp. 22–23; Miller, 1967, pp. 101–112; Schlegel, 1893, pp. 174–175.

register variation exist for lexical items that consist of a combination of two or more *kanji*. For example, a two-*kanji* word 人気 can be pronounced as either *ninki* or as *hitoke*, meaning 'popularity' and 'an evidence of somebody being there,' respectively. There are also some words with multiple readings that consist of two or more *kanji* characters that are all synonymous but differ in the register level. An example would be 明日, which can be read as *ashita*, or *asu*, or *myoonichi*, all being heterophones meaning 'tomorrow' but chosen depending on the level of formality, communication medium, and attribute or role of the language user.

The last, but most noteworthy, aspect that makes Japanese *kanji* extremely challenging for learners to master is the overwhelming number of their homophones. The *on*-reading that has the biggest number of *kanji* characters is *koo*, which corresponds to 2,647 characters (Taishukanshoten, 2016),[47] such as – to give just three of these homophones – 口 'mouth,' 考 'to think,' and 講 'lecture.' This may be an extreme example, but many sounds sequences of *on*-readings correspond to more than 100 homophonous *kanji* characters. Each of these homophonous *kanji* characters represents a different meaning, so in order to fully use it on a daily basis, Japanese *kanji* users need to know not only how to pronounce a particular *kanji* but also what it means.

For heritage learners of Japanese, as was the case with our subject Sakura, deciding when to use *kanji* vs. *hiragana* was a skill to master in order for her writing to appear properly mature and literate. At the same time, controlling the appropriate reading of *kanji* in a given context was a challenge for her to meet if only because even looking up the "adult" vocabulary in the texts

---

[47] This webpage says that the figure, i.e., 2,647 *kanji* characters, is based on Japan's most comprehensive Chinese-Japanese dictionary called *Dai Kanwa Jiten 'The Great Chinese-Japanese Dictionary'* published by Taishukan Publishing. So, this may seem to be an extreme example, but another online *kanji* dictionary also shows 1,325 *kanji* characters for one *on*-reading *koo* (Kanji Jiten Online, n.d.).

she read and used as the basis of her compositions required an ability to sound them out; learning the active usage of these *kanji* words thus presupposed acquiring the passive ability to read them.

5.0.3 *Wago* 'Japanese native words' and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words'

There are four categories in Japanese vocabulary: (1) *wago*, which involve Japanese native words and are written in *hiragana* or *kanji*, or both, e.g., 食べ物 *tabemono* 'food' and 暖かい *atatakai* 'warm'; (2) *kango*, which involve Sino-Japanese words and are written in *kanji*, e.g., 食物 *shokumotsu* 'food' and 暖房 *danboo* 'heater'; (3) *gairaigo*, which involve loanwords from foreign words other than Chinese and are written in *katakana*, クラス *kurasu* 'class' and コンピューター *konpyuutaa* 'computer'; and (4) *konshugo*, which involve hybrid words consisting of *wago* + *kango, kango* + *gairaigo*, or *gairaigo* + *wago* and are written in combination of *hiragana, katakana,* and *kanji* depending on their etymology, e.g., バス停 *bustee* 'bus stop' (*gairaigo* + *kango*) and 粉ミルク *konamiruku* 'baby formula' (*wago* + *gairaigo*).

The distribution of these four kinds of words depends on communication modes and publication genres. Spoken Japanese in our daily conversation predominantly consists of *wago* 'Japanese native words.' National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) (1995) studied the distribution of these four categories in TV programs including TV commercials between April and June in 1989 and found that 68.6 % of the words were *wago* 'Japanese native words,' 18.3 % were *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' 4.5 % were *gairaigo* 'loanwords,' and 8.6 % were *konshugo* 'hybrid words.' On the other hand, the distribution of these four kinds in written Japanese depends on the genre. In a major newspaper published in 2002, *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' were the highest in terms of both tokens (54.85 %) and types (45.50 %), followed by *wago* 'Japanese native words' (38.60 % in tokens and 38.14 % in types),

gairaigo 'loanwords' (5.10 % in tokens and 9.71 % in types), and *konshugo* 'hybrid words'

(1.45 % in tokens and 6.25 % in types) (Yamaguchi, 2007).[48] Another study (Yamazaki &

Onuma, 2004), which researched the distribution of the four categories in 70 magazines

published in 1994, found that, in terms of tokens, *kango* 'Sino-Chinese words' were used most

frequently (48.1 %), followed by *wago* 'Japanese native words' (37.2 %), *gairaigo* 'loanwords'

(12.2 %), and *konshugo* 'hybrid words' (2.0 %). The same study also found that the distribution

varies across the genres of the magazines studied: female genres of women's magazines and

fashion magazines typically involved more *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *gairaigo*

'loanwords' than *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' while more male-oriented magazines for other

practical purposes like real estate, astronomy, and stock market involved more *kango* 'Sino-

Japanese words' than *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *gairaigo* 'loanwords.' Therefore,

generally, Japanese speakers use *wago* 'Japanese native words' in their spontaneous speech, but

in writing *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' are preferred. Additionally, as the formality of the genre

becomes higher, such as newspapers and magazines for practical purposes, the distribution of

kango 'Sino-Japanese words' becomes also higher.

These results support the past literature on Japanese heritage language speakers that

claimed that they may be good at speaking, but their vocabulary level is limited to that of

elementary school children or home language (Kagan & Dillon, 2003; Sohn 1997). Their writing

also looks like children's compositions (Ajioka & Kawanishi, 2013). Their language was

acquired from their family, TV shows, and, nowadays, social media, and those contexts

predominantly involved *wago* 'Japanese native words.' If they are not trained to read and write

---

[48] Yamaguchi (2007) studied the distribution of these four categories in Mainichi Shimbun by means of random sampling for eight years between 1994 and 2002. There was no drastic change in their distributions throughout the period, so I adapted only the latest data here.

Japanese in Japanese high schools,[49] it is difficult for them to learn *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' and to write an essay fully using them at the level native-educated Japanese of their age do. To convey the same concept, most native Japanese students, who undergo training to write argument essays in Japanese at high school, college/university, or cram school, use *wago* 'Japanese native words' in conversation but choose *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in their essays: they say 言う *iu* 'to say' but write 言及する *genkyuu suru* 'to state,' and they say 調べる *shiraberu* 'to check' but write 調査する *choosa suru* 'to examine' or 研究する *kenkyuu suru* 'to research.' Learners of Japanese as a foreign language first learn *wago* 'Japanese native words,' just as Japanese elementary school children do, because most textbooks for beginners focus on spoken communication in Japanese and thus involve many more *wago* 'Japanese native words' in their vocabulary list than *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.' Mastering *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' is a big challenge for learners that needs to be met to achieve the advanced level, such as the highest N1 level of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).

5.1 Sakura's argument essays in Japanese

This section shows the results of the four-week intensive program particularly regarding Sakura's writing proficiency of argument essays in Japanese. It begins with the characteristics of her writing Japanese at the beginning of the program by analyzing her errors in section 5.1.1. Then, it describes the process of her improvement in 5.1.2. She first corrected simple errors, but

---

[49] Igarashi (2007) compared the distribution of *wago* 'Japanese native words,' *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' *gairaigo* 'loanwords,' and *konshugo* 'hybrid words' in elementary school children's readings with that in high school textbooks, by citing Nomura and Yanase (1979) and Ishiwata (2001) respectively. The elementary school readings involved 78.0 % of *wago*, 18.7 % of *kango*, 2.1 % of *gairaigo*, and 1.2 % *konshugo*, while the high school textbooks involved 40.1 % of *wago*, 52.3 % of *kango*, 1.8 % of *gairaigo*, and 0.7 % of *konshugo*.

some types of errors persisted until the program ended. Besides, during the final week, a new type of unnaturalness in her Japanese appeared, so the section also focuses on this new problem.

5.1.1 Characterization of Sakura's writing in the beginning

The first interview with Sakura

Our pre-program meeting occurred on May 12, 2016. The goal of the meeting was to assess whether Sakura, who, as I had already found out from our initial contact, was a fluent speaker of informal Japanese and was able to control the register shift that should accompany the switch from spoken to written language. This was one of the features of native linguistic competence of Japanese speakers (Ajioka & Kawanishi 2013), and my intention was to doublecheck it in Sakura's case. For most of the time at the meeting, I interviewed her about herself, her family, how she learned Japanese, and how much Japanese she had used in her family. More than 95% of our conversation was in Japanese; the remaining 5% was in English, which in most cases it was I who brought in some English (this was because I was concerned whether Sakura did not understand what I meant; I regretted this later). When she was not sure how she could verbalize her thought in Japanese, she asked me for a permission, asking, in Japanese, *eego de hanashite mo iidesu ka* 'May I speak in English?' This request for a permission only occurred three times during the two-hour meeting. Sakura's utterances were extremely fluent, following the flow of natural casual communication, as if we were engaged in a friendly Japanese conversation. Her control of the registers, however, turned out to be problematic.

Findings in Sakura's writing at the pre-program stage (1): politeness

After receiving a sufficient amount of information about her background, I asked Sakura to write down what she had just described to me orally about her history of learning Japanese. This would reveal how well she controlled register shifts between spoken and written language, which come naturally to native students of her age without them having to be told to write in small essay style.

The obtained data was quite interesting. As I described in 5.0.1, native Japanese high school seniors and university students distinguish the sentence-ending forms depending upon when they are speaking or writing, after they are trained to write argument essays called *shooronbun* 'small essay' to prepare for university entrance examinations. On the contrary, Japanese heritage speakers who have a substantial speaking proficiency, including politeness, do not make a distinction between their language in speaking and writing. Their compositions, in some cases, look like a transcript of their utterances in conversation (Ajioka & Kawanishi, 2013). As I had expected, Sakura did not write in the way Japanese high school students or university students would do. The remarkable characteristic of her writing was that she consistently but gratuitously used the polite form at the sentence ending, such as noun-*desu*, adjective-*desu* and verb-*masu* in her written version, which made her essay sound like that of an elementary school pupil (see 5.0.1 for -*desu* and -*masu* forms).

Findings in Sakura's writing at the pre-program stage (2): katakana words

Another interesting characteristic of Sakura's writing in our in-person meeting that was held on May 12, prior to the four-week program, was that it had the following *katakana* words, some of them recurring many times: (1) words that exist as borrowings in general Japanese

71

speech, such as *anime* (アニメ in *katakana*) 'anime,' *bideo* (ビデオ in *katakana*) 'video,' *anpanman* (アンパンマン in *katakana*) 'Anpanman (the title of a TV anime show for children),' *dorama* (ドラマ in *katakana*) 'drama,' *baraetii* (バラエティー in *katakana*) 'variety,' and *terebi* (テレビ in *katakana*) 'TV'; (2) words that do not need to be and usually are not borrowed from English, such as *ekusupooja* (エクスポージャ in *katakana*) 'exposure' and *guuguru toransureeto* (グーグルトランスレート in *katakana*) 'Google Translate.'[50]

One of the Japanese writing systems, *katakana*, is in most cases used for loanwords with exception of those borrowed from Chinese. Her writing involved many English loanwords as was shown above. Out of them, I want to focus particularly on two words: *ekusupooja* (エクスポージャ in *katakana*) 'exposure' and *guuguru toransureeto* (グーグルトランスレート in *katakana*) 'Google Translate.' These two loanwords suggested that she was writing the Japanese composition while translating English words in her mind into Japanese. What is interesting here is that her Japanese grammar, sentence structure, and pronunciation were excellent while she was speaking, but she did not know or could not retrieve from her Japanese lexicon some words she knew in English (especially nouns), and they were simply transcribed in *katakana*. If it were a composition written by a native Japanese student, *katakana* words would be avoided, except for proper nouns, such as toponyms and andronyms, and would build a completely different structure as follows.

(3) *nihongo wa omoni haha ga hanasu no o kiita no*
     Japanese TOP mainly mother NOM speak NML ACC hear:PAST SFP

---

desu ga

COP but

'As for spoken Japanese, I mainly heard my mother speaking it but …'

On the contrary, the corresponding clause in Sakura's writing was actually as in (4) below, where the boldfaced word was rendered in katakana, marking it as a foreign borrowing.

(4) *nihongo no   hanashi-kotoba   no* **ekusupooja** *wa   omoni   haha   to*

    Japanese GEN speaking-language GEN **exposure** TOP mainly mother with

    no   kaiwa   desu ga

    GEN conversation COP but

    '(My) exposure to spoken language in Japanese was mainly from the

    conversations with my mother but …'

Likewise, the word *guuguru toransureeto* (グーグルトランスレート in *katakana*) 'Google Translate' would be also avoided if a native Japanese student were asked to write a sentence of the same content as Sakura does in (6) below. A natural sentence for a Japanese student would be as in (5):

(5) *ima   wa   dorama ya baraetii bangumi   o   ikashite*

    now TOP drama and variety   program ACC   utilize:TE

shiranai   kotoba ga   dete   kitara

know:NEG   word   NOM   appear:TE   come-if

guuguru *de shirabe jibun no   goi   o*

Google   by look-up self   GEN vocabulary ACC

fuyashite-imasu

increase:TE:ASP:PRES

'Now, (I) take advantage of (TV) dramas and variety shows, and, if a word (I)

don't know appears, (I) look it up in **Google (Translate)** and increase my

vocabulary.'

The sentence in Sakura's writing which involved the *katakana* word for 'translate' and

not just for 'Google' was actually as follows:

(6) *ima   wa dorama ya   baraetii bangumi o   ikashite*

  now TOP drama and variety   program ACC utilize:TE

shiranai   kotoba ga   dete   kitara

know:NEG   word   NOM   appear:TE   come-if

guuguru toransureeto *de shirabe jibun no   goi   o*

google   translate   by look-up   self   GEN vocabulary ACC

fuyashite-imasu

increase:TE:ASP:PRES

74

'Now, (I) take advantage of (TV) dramas and variety shows, and, if a word (I) don't know appears, (I) look it up in **Google Translate** and increase my vocabulary.'

In this context, there would have been no need of specifying the name of the source that was used to look up words. Argument essays, and also academic writing, are the genres which involve a relatively smaller number of *katakana* words (Masuji, 2018). Native Japanese university students would not use many *katakana* words in their argument essays.

It is true that so many English words are flowing into Japan, many of which are difficult to find a Japanese equivalent, such as *sutoresu* (ストレス in *katakana*) 'stress' and *borantia* (ボランティア in *katakana*) 'volunteer' or 'volunteer activity.'[51] It is also the case that the Japanese government and mass media nowadays have a tendency to actively adopt English loanwords (which are modified phonetically so the general public can easily articulate them), even in the cases where the Japanese language has their equivalents that are already used, such as *inbaundo* (インバウンド in *katakana*) 'foreign tourists to Japan' and *paburikku komento* (パブリックコメント in *katakana*) 'the system in which the national/local government solicits public comments on proposed regulations.' Despite this current trend, native young Japanese do not easily use *katakana* words when they write in the academic setting, whenever possible.[52] Sakura's *katakana* words, particularly those for 'exposure' and 'Google Translate,' are possible

---

[51] These examples are from the webpage of Agency for Cultural Affairs (2003).

[52] This is considered to be due to the fact that Japanese high school students are trained to write Japanese language exam tasks or short argument essays in Japanese which have a character limit, not a word limit as in English, in preparation for university entrance examinations. In general, *katakana*, being essentially phonetic symbols, take more space to write compared to their Japanese counterparts in *kanji*. Thus, many young Japanese have a habit of choosing *kanji* words instead of *katakana* loanwords in their essays with a character limit.

to avoid, so they are remarkable characteristics that would not be seen in young Japanese living and attending school in Japan.

Sakura's dependence on English words in *katakana*, i.e., L1 transfer from English, makes sense; she had no Japanese reference on the topic she wrote about. When she was answering the questions during the interview, she also used those English words. It might have been her first time to describe her Japanese learning experience in Japanese. Thus, it must have been natural for her, when trying to express a thought in Japanese for the first time to translate it from English, resorting to *katakana* words. This explanation proved to be accurate at the end of this four-week training.

Sakura's essays during Week 2 of the four-week program

The training in writing argument essays started in Week 2. During the first week, her task was limited to reading assigned materials (see Table 5-1 below). In the writing tasks, Sakura was asked to write two paragraphs in Japanese concerning the topic she read that day: in the first paragraph, she summarized the article, and in the second paragraph, she expressed her reaction to it. During Week 2, when she encountered unfamiliar words or *kanji* and when she wanted to get a proper word for what she meant, she was not allowed to consult any type of aid, such as a dictionary or a smartphone application.[53] Thus, this week demonstrates Sakura's spontaneous, unmodified skills of both reading comprehension and writing of academic Japanese at that point.

---

[53] Sakura used applications such as 'Duolingo' and 'Hello Talk' on a regular basis. She mentioned she preferred these applications to a dictionary, whether it be a hardcopy or online one.

Table 5-1: Weekly reading and writing tasks during the four-week program

Weeks	Tasks
Week 1	Sakura was supposed to: - read assigned materials and - keep journals in English
Week 2	She was supposed to: - read assigned materials, - write short essays in Japanese on the topics she read, and - keep journals in English.
Between Week 2 and Week 3	I gave her a list of preferred words and styles in formal writing and a brief instruction about it
Weeks 3 and 4 (same as Week 2)	She was supposed to: - read assigned materials, - write short essays in Japanese on the topics she read, and - keep journals in English.

In Week 2, Sakura read three articles (Days 1, 2, and 3) on President Obama's visit to Hiroshima, two articles (Days 4 and 5) on Japan's increase in taxation, and one article (Day 6) on *Monju* Nuclear Power Plant (see Table 5-2 below; for the whole list of the article topics, see Appendix III). During the first reading-only week, i.e., Week 1, she read different topics and realized which topic was easier for her to comprehend and which topic she was more interested in. The first topic, Obama's historic visit to Hiroshima, was chosen because she said she wanted to read more about this topic in Japanese. She had followed this news on the topic in English, and she wanted to compare the same topic from the two different perspectives, the US and Japan. The other two topics for Week 2 were her second choices. I also arranged the articles so that Sakura would read on the same topic for multiple days in a row. This was partly because it would help her acquire Japanese vocabulary words more robustly and partly because she requested me to do so for her learning.

Table 5-2: The topics, titles, sources, and publication dates of the articles during Week 2

Days	Topics	Titles	Sources & Publication Dates
Day 1 6/3	Obama's visit to Hiroshima	*Obama shi Hiroshima hoomon 'kaku naki sekai' e saishuppatsu o* 'President Obama's visit to Hiroshima – Restarting for "a world without nuclear weapons"'	The Nishinippon Shimbun, 5/28/2016.
Day 2 6/4		*shazai naki Hiroshima kenka* 'Unapologetically offering flowers to Hiroshima'	Mainichi Shimbun, 06/04/2016. Written by Ito, T.
Day 3 6/5		*bee-daitooryoo no Hiroshima hoomon – kaku naki sekai e no tenkanten ni* 'The US President's visit to Hiroshima – A turning point toward a world without nuclear weapons'	Asahi Shimbun, 05/28/2016.
Day 4 6/6	Japan's increase in taxation	*shushoo to shoohizee – sekai keezai wa kiki zen'ya ka* 'The prime minister and the sales tax – Is the world economy on the eve of crisis?'	Asahi Shimbun, 05/29/2016.
Day 5 6/7		*zoozee saienki hyoomee – mirai e no sekinin wa doko e* 'A pronouncement of another postponement in raising tax – Where will the responsibility for the future (go)'	Mainichi Shimbun, 06/02/2016.
Day 6 6/8	*Monju* Nuclear Power Plant	*Monju – moo hairo ni shite agete* '*Monju* – Please make it decommissioned'	Chunichi Shimbun, 06/04/2016.

Now I will provide the findings in Sakura's essays by the week in detail.

Use of *katakana* loanwords: The most remarkable finding was the striking reduction of *katakana* loanwords in all her essays this week. Conversely, the number of *kanji* words increased drastically. The *katakana* words she used in her essays were virtually all from the editorial articles she had just read (for the list of *katakana* words involved, see Table 5-3 below).

Table 5-3: *Katakana* words used in Sakura's essays during Week 2

Days	Topics	*Katakana* words (borrowing)	
		Proper nouns & scientific borrowings	Words not included in the articles
1 2 3	Obama's visit to Hiroshima	*obama* 'Obama' *puraha* 'Prague' *puuchin* 'Putin' *roshia* 'Russia' *amerika* 'America' *hiroshima* 'Hiroshima'[54] *komento* 'comment' *taimingu* 'timing'	*negatibu* 'negative' *komento* 'comment' *taimingu* 'timing'
4 5	Japan's increase in taxation	*riiman shokku* 'Lehman Shock' (G7) *samitto* 'Summit' *gurafu* 'graph' *deeta* 'data'	*gurafu* 'graph' *deeta* 'data'
6	*Monju* Nuclear Power Plant	*uran* 'uranium' *purutoniumu* 'plutonium' *natoriumu* 'sodium'	

Most of the *katakana* loanwords in her essays were proper nouns and scientific borrowings; they have no other choice but to be transcribed in *katakana*. They were all included in the original articles. Five loanwords were other common nouns, and they were not included in the articles. Four of them were already established borrowings in Japanese, such as those for

---

[54] This is a Japanese toponym, not a loanword from a foreign language. However, in political context, even in Japanese, it is spelled using in *katakana*, perhaps reflecting the adoption of the world's perspective on *Hiroshima* as one of the two atom-bombed cities (the other one is *Nagasaki*). Therefore, spelling Hiroshima with *katakana* represents a borrowing of point of view rather than that of a lexical item.

'comments,' 'timing,' 'graph,' and 'data.' The only *katakana* common noun she used which was not included in the original articles and for which there exists a native Japanese equivalent, was *negatibu* (ネガティブ in *katakana*) 'negative.' The number of *katakana* words in Sakura's essays during Week 2 was markedly smaller than that in her writing at the pre-program stage.

One possible reason for this remarkable decline in one week of the program in Sakura's use of *katakana* borrowings was that she had original texts written in Japanese at her disposal. Through the Week 1 reading assignments, she obtained a considerable amount of vocabulary input from reading on the topic, all of which was appropriate for the purpose of writing academic Japanese. Thus, she did not need to rely on her English lexicon.

This suggests that providing a text written in the target language provides a scaffolding for the learners. It helps them build more vocabulary used in an appropriate way on a particular topic, so they do not need to rely on their pre-existing L1 lexicon to create *katakana* borrowings. Thus, this helps them learn and use the most common or most appropriate words in a particular context.

Error analysis: Another interesting finding was obtained from error count and analysis of her writing. As I noted above, Sakura's Japanese essays were largely well done for a learner's product, so basically her errors were not critical ones that would impair the reader's comprehension of what she meant, but rather minor ones. She had various minor errors in terms of word choice and grammar, such as case particles, demonstratives, and aspectual morphology. She also seemed to have a style confusion and used phrases appropriate for a narrative or for Japanese translation of Confucian texts in her academic writing. Some errors were persistent and hard to get rid of, while others were immediately corrected once I gave her explicit instruction of

them. In the next paragraphs, I will describe some noteworthy errors that Sakura had and discuss what they suggest in detail. I will not perform quantitative analyses of her error counts and types. This is partly because this dissertation study investigates one learner and the counts of errors do not really have significance, and partly because a quantitative analysis of her errors will not clarify the questions raised in this thesis.

The errors Sakura quickly corrected were stylistic inconsistencies and register errors. After Week 2 and Week 3 respectively, I provided her with feedback and corrections as to which words should not be used in this type of academic writing and how they should be corrected. The most salient among the style/register errors were the following two: *kiji iwaku* (記事いわく in her Japanese writing) 'the article says' and *kataru* (語る in her Japanese writing) 'to recount.' She used these words in the introduction paragraphs in almost all her six essays during Week 2 as if she believed they were the appropriate registers for argument essays.

These errors were intriguing. Both words were not completely wrong in a grammatical sense. The situation is more complex. These words are chosen in published materials, such as in magazines and storybooks, and in online Q & A columns, but not used in news articles, governmental documents, and academic papers that purport to be objective, the kind she was writing;[55] in conversation, speakers use them when they intend to show their stylistic sophistication. The word *iwaku* is a nominalized form of the verb 'to say' used in classical

---

[55] The KOTONOHA Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ) 'Shonagon' (NINJAL 2022) contains the following number of occurrences, 100% of them having a human subject: 1) 117 occurrences of *iwaku* 'says' in books, 9 occurrences in magazines, 1 occurrence in newspapers (in the citation of old Chinese literature translated in Japanese), and 43 occurrences in Yahoo! *Chiebukuro* (a free Q & A webpage by Yahoo! Japan), and 2) 252 occurrences of *kataru* 'recount' in books, 140 occurrences in magazines, 74 occurrences in newspapers, and 3 occurrences in Yahoo! *Chiebukuro*. No occurrence of either word is found in white books, school textbooks, PR magazines, Yahoo! Blogs, verses, articles of law, and minutes of Japanese Congress per the Corpus. All the data researched using the Corpus were published between 2001 and 2005 (see https://shonagon.ninjal.ac.jp/search_form).

Japanese literature in the Middle Ages to introduce direct speech; it will be glossed as 'says/said' here, in the absence of a better translation.[56] Surprisingly, Sakura had this archaism in her lexicon. I asked her how she had learned the word. She did not remember, unfortunately, but most likely it was because she had encountered it on Japanese TV variety programs and blogs, and thought it was 'cool.' It illustrates the richness of her vocabulary, especially of receptive or passive vocabulary, much of which in her Japanese was in a 'standby mode,' and could be used when called upon, even though it was not completely in her productive vocabulary that she used in her everyday life. Sakura's choice of the word *kiji* 'the article' as the implicit subject of the word *iwaku* 'to say' was, strictly speaking, a selectional restriction error.[57] In English, inanimate subjects like *kiji* 'article' are not subject to the same selectional restriction as in Japanese. Sakura's error is thus a case of transfer of English selectional restrictions to Japanese at the expense of a stylistic violation.

The other misuse, which persisted in Sakura's writing but was quickly corrected after an explicit instruction, was a verb *kataru* (語る in Japanese) 'to recount' used in the introductory sentence in each of her essays. Sakura used this verb in the introductory sentence to her writing for the day, in the following formula:

---

[56] This usage was particularly observed in the 43 examples of *iwaku* 'says' in Yahoo! *Chiebukuro* in the KOTONOHA 'Shonagon' Corpus (NINJAL, 2022). This online column is where people can freely post their questions and solicit for answers. All these 43 occurrences were found in the respondents' postings, where they quote an authority or a specialist by using *iwaku*. Japanese has other, more standard, options for quoted speech, but by using the word *iwaku*, which was originally used for the Japanese translation of Confucian texts with Confucius as its logical subject, the respondent underscores the authenticity of the quotation, thereby raising his/her authoritativeness.

[57] When *iwaku* 'says' is used after a personal referential term, there is never a case particle (*wa* or *ga*) after the term. On the other hand, when *iwaku* 'says' is used after an inanimate noun, which refers to the source text in which the quotation is cited, the case particle *ni* for location is added after the noun, making it into an adverbial phrase, such as *sho **ni** iwaku* 'in the book, it is said' (NINJAL, 2022). Sakura, however, did not have *ni* particle after *kiji* 'article,' the noun she exclusively used before *iwaku* 'says.' Therefore, Sakura's usage of *iwaku* results in a selectional restriction error.

(7) [TITLE] *to-iu*   *kiji*   *wa*   [TOPIC] *ni-tsuite*   *iken*   *o*   ***kataru***

            COMP   article   TOP   about   opinion   ACC   recount

'The article whose title is [TITLE] **recounts** the (author's) opinion about [TOPIC].'

Her repetitive adoption of this structure in the first sentence of her essays all through Week 2 suggests that she believed this verb was the most appropriate one to use when characterizing the article and evidently was a result of her careful word choice. Again, she did not remember why she chose the verb, but she guessed she had seen it somewhere (probably in a book or a variety show) and she had thought of it as 'formal and cool.' Indeed, this verb is often used in newspapers, magazines, novels, and blogs. When it is chosen for newspaper headlines and magazine covers, it is sometimes used with an inanimate subject metaphorically, such as *Kyoo no shashin wa kataru* 'The story this photo tells (lit. 'today's photo recounts')' (A daily column of Yomiuri Shimbun Online, regularly beginning with photographs)[58]. In the main articles, however, the subject of this verb is always the person who talks. Therefore, Sakura's usage of this verb, *kiji wa kataru* 'the article talks,' was stylistically inappropriate.

What seems to be common in these two errors of Sakura's writing is her use of inanimate subjects that normally do not occur in those contexts in Japanese. Since there is no sample usage of those words with an inanimate subject in authentic publications, she, presumably, used those "cool" words in her own grammar: a clear case of L1 transfer. Her most comfortable language, English, has many structures using an inanimate noun as a subject, such as "The report says …" Thus, her use of the phrases, *kiji iwaku* 'the article says' and *kiji wa kataru* 'the article recounts,' suggests that her basic sentence structures in Japanese are still based on her first language,

---

[58] https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/photograph/kataru/

English. Her academic Japanese essays show that she acquired a rich number of Japanese words and phrases from Japanese TV shows and lyrics, and also from the books and articles she read in the college course for Japanese heritage speakers and in this four-week program. With all this rich vocabulary, nonetheless, when she constructed a Japanese sentence, she still relied on English grammar. This suggests that, since she was an adult second language learner, her first language is deeply instilled in her mind and influences her learning of other languages directly and indirectly. The implied significance of L1 transfer and its theoretical status will be taken up in 6.2.

Another type of error that Sakura consistently made but easily corrected after explicit instruction was her overapplication of polite forms to written Japanese. During Week 2, she kept using polite expressions including honorific expressions such as *moushiageru* 'to say.' In Japanese argument essays, academic writing, news articles, and editorials, the polite form and the honorific/humble expressions are not supposed to be used. Sakura used the polite form in some sentences, presumably because she believed that the polite form was formal and thus appropriate for formal and academic writing. She might have also intended to show her politeness towards her reader. This type of error was easily removed by providing the alternatives more appropriate for academic writing, as in the former error cases of *iwaku*, a nominalized form of the verb 'to say' and *kataru* 'to recount.' This suggests that an extensive exposure to the authentic Japanese written materials is essential to the intermediate and advanced level of learners and that explicit instruction of styles and genres, including the appropriate word choices, will be beneficial.

Considering this phenomenon, Sakura's overuse of polite language is identical to that in other heritage language speakers, who have advanced speaking proficiency of Japanese. Ajioka

84

and Kawanishi (2013) categorized the typical errors in Japanese compositions written by learners of Japanese both as a heritage language (JHL) and as a foreign language (JFL). They were five: 1) interactional errors, 2) contraction errors, 3) wrong word choices, 4) unwarranted ellipses, and 5) politeness overuses (pp. 728–731). They pointed out that the fifth error type, overuse of politeness, was conspicuous in JHL learners' compositions, whereas the first four error types were mainly seen in JFL learners' writing. Ajioka and Kawanishi (2013) also suggested four possible factors leading to the uses of polite expressions in compositions, especially those made by JHL learners: 1) too much focus on communication (in Japanese classes, polite expressions are used); 2) the learners' intention to express their friendliness and politeness (to the readers); 3) the learners' exposure to Japanese language spoken media with its playful mixed uses of registers; and 4) the learners' exposure to mixed uses of spoken and written registers in written materials (such as online blogs and social media) (pp. 731–732). All these possible factors are applicable to Sakura's academic writing and her learning experience. Once taught explicitly that showing politeness was inappropriate in academic writing, Sakura quickly corrected this type of errors as well as those involving *iwaku*, a nominalized form of the verb 'to say,' and *kataru* 'to recount.'

5.1.2 Overall progress in argument essays

After she started the writing assignments in Week 2, Sakura's Japanese argument essays improved steadily. Her vocabulary level and range made a remarkable progress, and some of her errors were corrected because she noticed them herself. I also gave her some instruction at our weekly meetings. Some errors were corrected easily but others persisted. Additionally, and

interestingly, as Sakura got more used to writing her opinions in Japanese, a new type of errors appeared in her essays, as described below in section, Progress feature (4).

Progress feature (1): Shedding simple language transfer features of katakana

The quickest and most remarkable progress was made at the vocabulary level. At the pre-program stage, as could be seen from 5.1.1, Sakura first structured her sentences in English, and then translated them into Japanese. This led her to use many *katakana* borrowings in her early essays. However, after Week 1, Sakura's use of *katakana* words due to L1 transfer disappeared, and instead she began to use more advanced *kanji* words.

During Week 1, Sakura read one newspaper editorial article per day. There, she encountered a lot of advanced level vocabulary, including technical terms that she had probably never heard or used in her daily informal conversation. Judging from what she wrote in her journal, she made a point of learning many words right when she encountered them. It seems to have taken her a lot of time to read through one editorial. Her daily English journal described that she had biggest difficulty with *kanji* words. She noted that "I could recognize (the) individual *kanji* components, but not the word unit as a whole" (Day 1 Week 1). So, she looked up many *kanji* words in the online dictionary and apps. She made this effort during Week 1, and the improvement in her use of *kanji* words in the essays during Week 2 was dramatic. This supports the "involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition" proposed by Hulstijn and Laufer in 2001, which claims that the motivational-cognitive constructs of involvement in the task (p. 544), i.e., *need* to learn the particular words, *search* for their meanings, and *evaluation* of them in the given context, are key to the long-term retention in terms of L2 vocabulary learning. Sakura's progress matched this theory well: during the first week of the program, Sakura *needed*

to read and comprehend the articles of the advanced level in preparation of her writing tasks in the following weeks, so she *searched* the Internet or dictionary for the meanings of words she did not know; she also *evaluated* the new words by comparing them with other words in her lexicon, such as synonyms, antonyms, and other two- or more-*kanji* words that contained the same *kanji*.

Because she made a total commitment to this task, her argument essays during Week 2 (the first week of writing assignments) demonstrated a clear increase in *kanji* words, which generally makes a writing look more formal, advanced, and academic. Concurrently, her overuse of *katakana* words that came from her direct transfer from English disappeared. Here is a comparison between her essays at the pre-program stage and in Week 2 in terms of the *katakana* and *kanji* words:

Table 5-4: The comparison in the percentage of *katakana* and *kanji* word tokens and types between the pre-program stage and Week 2

		Pre-program	Week 2
Katakana	Tokens	7.35 %	2.45%
	Types	6.50 %	2.60%
Kanji	Tokens	16.29 %	30.98 %
	Types	21.95 %	40.95 %

As is shown in Table 5-4, Sakura's use of *katakana* in terms of both tokens and types decreased drastically from the pre-program stage to Week 2, whereas her *kanji* use ratios almost doubled in both tokens and types. Above all, from the viewpoint of the sheer visual appearance

of a Japanese written material, the percentage of *kanji* and *kana* (including *hiragana* and *katakana*) matters. It is generally said that when a Japanese passage involves approximately 70 % of *hiragana* and 30 % of *kanji*, it is easy to read. As the percentage of *hiragana* included becomes higher, the ease of reading declines, the reading time increases, and the passage itself looks like a child's product. Imai and Takamoto (1991) examined the influence of the percentage of *kanji* on readability and found that a passage involving a higher percentage of *kanji* (29.28 %) was easier for 60 Japanese participants to read than the one involving a lower percentage of *kanji* (18.73 %), or the one written all in *hiragana*. Sakura's argument essays during Week 2 achieved this golden ratio and appeared like an essay created by an adult Japanese.

Another interesting result was obtained from the percentage of *kanji* word tokens involved in the editorials that were assigned to Sakura during Week 1. The average percentage of *kanji* word tokens included in them was 31.72 %, and that of *katakana* word tokens was 1.33 %. During the first week of the program, Sakura was not required to write, but she read six editorials in Japanese as models for her writing to be assigned the following weeks, and she must have unconsciously learned how a Japanese essay should look. This suggests the importance of close reading of models and of usage-based language learning. The more in-depth analyses of Sakura's learning of *kanji* words will be given later in this section.

Now let us take a further look at Sakura's improvement of *katakana* words. Table 5-5 below demonstrates the overall progress of Sakura's use of *katakana* words throughout the program.

Table 5-5: The number and categories of *katakana* word tokens and types in Sakura's essays

		Pre-program	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Proper nouns	Tokens	1	45	50	22
	Types	1	7	13	11
Common loanwords	Tokens	16	21	9	11
	Types	5	9	8	7
Idiosyncratic borrowings	Tokens	6	1	0	0
	Types	2	1	0	0
TOTAL	Tokens	23	62	59	33
	Types	8	17	21	18

Table 5-5 categorizes the *katakana* words that Sakura used in her essays into three groups: (1) proper nouns including anthroponyms, toponyms, and anime or book titles, such as オバマ *obama* '(the former President) Obama' and プラハ *puraha* 'Prague,' (2) common loanwords which are borrowings with no Japanese alternatives or which are more generally used than their Japanese equivalents, such as テレビ *terebi* 'TV' and アンケート *ankeeto* 'questionnaire,' and (3) idiosyncratic borrowings generated by Sakura which do have Japanese equivalents actively used, though may be randomly generated by other native speakers as well, such as エクスポージャ *ekusupooja* 'exposure' and トランスレート *toransureeto* 'translate.' The *katakana* loanwords in the former two categories are not problematic. This is for two reasons: first, they have been more largely accepted by native speakers as "Japanese" words and if their Japanese equivalents in *kanji* or *hiragana* were used instead, they would sound rather

outdated or unnatural. And second, the high number of *katakana* proper nouns was inevitable because of the topics of the respective editorials: the editorials on international relations and the US presidential campaign obviously required her to use *katakana* words. Therefore, only the last category of *katakana* in Table 5-5 is problematic and must be attributed to L1 English transfer.

The number of Sakura's idiosyncratic *katakana* borrowings decreased to only one in the course of Week 2. The word used here was ネガティブ *negatibu* 'negative.' It occurred in the first sentence of her essay on Day 2 of Week 2. Sakura started each essay with a sentence briefly summarizing the editorial of the day. The word appeared in this summary sentence:

(8) *"shazai   naki   Hiroshima   kenka"   to-iu daimee no   kiji*

 apology without Hiroshima offering-flowers COMP title   GEN article

wa   Obama daitooryoo no   Hiroshima   hoomon ni-kanshite sukoshi

TOP Obama president GEN Hiroshima visit   regarding   a-little

negatibu *yori-na iken   o   kataru*[59]

negative leaning opinion ACC recount

'The article whose title is "Offering flowers to Hiroshima without apology"

shows a little negative-leaning opinion (that the author has) regarding

President Obama's visit to Hiroshima.'

The loanword *negatibu* 'negative' has a Japanese equivalent: *hiteetekina* 'negative.' Some may prefer using the loanword in spoken Japanese, which has an effect of making the speaker appear familiar with English, internationally minded, or simply intelligent, so it is "cool"

---

[59] Sakura's use of *kataru* is another sign of L1 transfer (see 5.1.1).

among young Japanese. At the same time, overuse of *katakana* words in writing makes the passage look more casual. In the case of Sakura's sentence (8), she did not know the Japanese adjective for 'negative' or could not retrieve it from her lexicon, so she used the borrowing from English. The sentence (8) would be considerably more proper if written as, e.g., in (9).

(9) *"shazai naki Hiroshima kenka" to-iu kiji wa*

apology without Hiroshima offering-flowers COMP article TOP

Obama daitooryoo no Hiroshima hoomon ni-kanshite sukoshi

Obama president GEN Hiroshima visit regarding a-little

hiteetekina tachiba kara kakarete-iru[60]

negative standpoint from write:PASS:TE:ASP

'The article whose title is "Offering flowers to Hiroshima without apology"

is written about President Obama's visit to Hiroshima from a little negative

standpoint.'

The sentence (9) is an example of more appropriate alternatives to be used in argument essays. The point is that an unnecessary loanword should be avoided and replaced by a Japanese alternative and that the words surrounding it should also be modified to a more appropriate set of words and phrases.

The word *negatibu* 'negative' was Sakura's last use of inappropriate loanwords, and thereafter, during Weeks 3 and 4, no use of idiosyncratic borrowings was found in her essays.

---

[60] Sakura's original sentence had an inappropriate use of a verb that seems to have come from her L1 transfer (see the previous footnote), so I modified the whole phrase involving the two inappropriate words, i.e., *negatibu* 'negative' and *kataru* 'to recount' into a proper phrase for an argument essay.

This suggests that the daily in-depth study of Japanese reading materials effectively shaped Sakura's writing style toward the more appropriate one for argument essays. Sakura's eagerness to learn more advanced Japanese provoked her to actively learn a better style from the editorials. She also made a big effort to learn more advanced vocabulary from the materials she read.

In the next section, I will describe Sakura's improvement in her use of *kanji* words in some detail.

Progress feature (2): Enriching her essays with advanced kanji words

In the previous section, I briefly indicated that Sakura's use of *kanji* became closer to that of adult Japanese writers in terms of the proportion of *kanji* to *hiragana*. Now I would like to show her week-by-week improvement of *kanji* use and compare it with the percentage of *kanji* use in the model passages.

Table 5-6: The *kanji* word tokens and types in Sakura's essays and in the editorials assigned during Week 1

	Sakura's essays				Editorials during Week 1
	Pre-program	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	
Tokens	16.29 %	30.98 %	27.97 %	27.63 %	31.72 %
Types	21.95 %	40.95 %	39.72 %	38.22 %	50.09 %

In both tokens and types, we can see a huge growth between the pre-program stage and Week 2. After Week 2, the proportions of *kanji* word tokens and types became stable around 30 % for tokens and 40 % for types. This percentage in terms of *kanji* word tokens, as I

mentioned in the previous section, reached the level of editorials as her general model essays, but when we look at the percentages of *kanji* word types, the figures of Sakura's essays and editorials still show a big gap. Sakura's *kanji* words dramatically grew in variety after the four-week intensive program started, but she still needed 10 % more to achieve the level of native Japanese essay writers.

I have analyzed the quantity of *kanji* words in Sakura's essays this far, but now I will turn the focal point to their quality. Throughout this four-week program, Sakura read and wrote about various topics, such as international relations, politics, economy, election, etc. (for the topic list of the reading assignments, see Appendix III). Each topic had its topic-specific words and terms, which were used repeatedly in the editorials on these topics. Sakura also needed to, or chose to, use those words and terms in her essays, and this accelerated her mastery of using them. Table 5-7 below shows the *kanji* words that most frequently appeared in her 18 essays between Weeks 2 and 4.

Table 5-7: The most frequently used *kanji* words in Sakura's essays during Weeks 2 – 4

Word (All nouns function as adjectives, but only nominal meanings are provided in glosses.)	Rank	Frequency	Range (out of 18 essays)
大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president'	1	55	7
記事 *kiji* 'article'	2	36	14
核 *kaku* 'nucleus'	3	28	4
問題 *mondai* 'problem'	4	23	11
世界 *sekai* 'world'	4	23	8
訪問 *hoomon* 'visit'	6	22	3

米 *bee* 'USA' abbreviation of 米国 *beekoku* 'the USA'	7	20	8
銃 *juu* 'gun'	8	19	1
首相 *shushoo* 'prime minister'	9	18	2
日本 *nihon/nippon* 'Japan'	10	16	9
意見 *iken* 'opinion'	11	15	10
候補 *kooho* 'candidate'	11	15	4
兵器 *heeki* 'weapon'	13	14	3
延期 *enki* 'postponement'	14	13	3
主張 *shuchoo* 'assertion'	15	12	8
会議 *kaigi* 'meeting' 'conference'	15	12	3
時間 *jikan* 'time'	15	12	2
社会 *shakai* 'society'	18	11	5
経済 *keezai* 'economy'	18	11	5
謝罪 *shazai* 'apology'	18	11	3
政治 *seeji* 'politics'	21	10	7
党 *too* '(political) party'	21	10	4
増税 *zoozee* 'tax increase'	21	10	2

Some other words to be discussed below but used less than 10 times:

原爆 (5 times) *genbaku* 'atomic bomb' abbreviation of 原子爆弾 *genshi bakudan* 'atomic bomb'; 投下 (5 times) *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb)'

First, there are words that are often used in the political, economic, or social news. These words were also frequently used in Sakura's essays on various topics. The following 11 words belong to this category: 記事 *kiji* '(news) article' was used 36 times in 14 essays; 問題 *mondai* 'problem' used 23 times in 11 essays; 世界 *sekai* 'world' used 23 times in eight essays; 日本 *nihon/nippon* 'Japan' used 16 times in nine essays; 意見 *iken* 'opinion' used 15 times in 10 essays; 主張 *shuchoo* 'assertion' used 12 times in eight essays; 会議 *kaigi* 'meeting' used 12 times in three essays; 時間 *jikan* 'time' used 12 times in two essays; 社会 *shakai* 'society' used 11 times in five essays; 経済 *keezai* 'economy' used 11 times in five essays; and 政治 *seeji* 'politics' used 10 times in seven essays. Some of these words are also used in our daily language, and Sakura knew these words in *kanji* before she started this intensive program. Therefore, I do not deal with these 11 words here.

a) Topic-specific words

The next category of the *kanji* words in Table 5-7 above is that of the topic-specific words. Included in this category are: 大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president' was used 55 times in seven essays; 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' used 28 times in four essays; 訪問 *hoomon* 'visit' used 22 times in three essays; 銃 *juu* 'gun' used 19 times in one essay; 首相 *shushoo* 'prime minister' used 18 times in two essays; 候補 *kooho* 'candidate' used 15 times in four essays; 兵器 *heeki* 'weapon' used 14 times in three essays; 延期 *enki* 'postponement' used 13 times in three essays; 謝罪 *shazai* 'apology' used 11 times in three essays; 党 *too* '(political) party' used 10 times in four essays; 増税 *zoozee* 'tax increase' used 10 times in two essays; 原爆 *genbaku* 'atomic bomb';

and 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb).' These words were often used in Sakura's essays because of their topics. They are not the kind of vocabulary used in everyday conversations, so these *kanji* words must have been unfamiliar to Sakura, a non-native Japanese speaker. However, because she was supposed to read the same topic for two or three consecutive days, she encountered these topic-specific words over and over again. Because they were keywords in the reading materials, they were also used repeatedly by Sakura in her essays. Thus, Sakura learned new words, and, by using them while she was creating her essays, her knowledge of the words became more robust, and she became more confident in using them.

For example, the *kanji* word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' was involved in the reading assignments regarding President Obama's visit to Hiroshima (Day 4 in Week 1 and Days 1 – 3 in Week 2) and the *Monju* Fast-breeder Reactor (Day 6 in Week 2). It was a keyword in these editorials, but Sakura was evidently not sure what it meant. In her daily journal, she described her first encounter with this word as follows:

(10) One of the words that continued to appear throughout the article was 核軍縮.[61] As I was reading the article, I did not understand what it meant, and as a result I was confused throughout parts of the article. (I did not look it up while reading the article, but I looked it up just now so that I could type it into this journal entry.[62] The article makes much more sense now.) (Day 4 Week 1)

---

[61] 核軍縮 *kaku gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament.'

[62] In order to type *kanji* correctly, one needs to know how to pronounce it correctly and how to Romanize the sound correctly. The fact that Sakura typed her essays correctly for the most part shows that she knew or learned the exact readings of the *kanji* words she used.

The word 核軍縮 *kaku-gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament' was one of the core words in this and all the other editorials she read about President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. It is a compound word consisting of 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' and 軍縮 *gunshuku* 'disarmament.' She must not have known either of them. So, she finally gave up guessing its meaning from the context and looked it up in a dictionary after she read the article through. At this point, she obtained a vague understanding of its meaning. However, we still cannot say she learned the word. This is what another journal entry about the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' says:

(11) Likewise, I encountered the word (?) 核 probably when reading a different Japanese article about President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. At the time, I didn't understand it very well, because when I looked it up, Google Translate informed me that it meant 'nucleus' or 'kernel.' For this reason, I kept associating 核 with corn kernels, even though I already knew that 核 had absolutely nothing to do with corn. Because of this bizarre and involuntary association of my strange brain, I didn't understand the word until the OPI[63] with Mayumi-san.[64] When she asked about current issues that elicited my interest, I mentioned President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. From there, she kept using the word 核兵器,[65] and I finally realized that the 核 from 核兵器 does indeed mean 'nucleus,' as in nuclear weapon … In

---

[63] The OPI here refers to the Oral Proficiency Interview administered by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

[64] This is the way Sakura addresses me.

[65] 核兵器 *kaku-heeki* 'nuclear weapon.'

hindsight, I don't really understand why I didn't see this from the beginning. (Day

1 Week 2)

This journal entry gives us two important points about learning vocabulary. First,

learning a new word requires a proper connection (or association, in Sakura's words) of the word

with pre-existing knowledge in the learner's lexicon. In Sakura's case, her first encounter with

the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' did not successfully lead to her learning it because of her improper

association. She got the meaning of the compound word 核軍縮 *kaku-gunshuku* 'nuclear

disarmament' and managed to understand the article of the day, but the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus'

remained unclear in her lexicon. For her actual acquisition of the target word, she needed more

information to activate her pre-knowledge.

The moment came fortunately between Week 1 and Week 2. At our weekly in-person

meeting, she did not directly ask me what the target word meant, so I did not know she had a

problem with it. However, once I learned of her interest in the articles on the former President

Obama's visit to Hiroshima, I started to talk, in Japanese, about the atomic bomb, nuclear

weapons, and the victims in Hiroshima. Those Japanese words produced by me stimulated her

mind and connected to what she had already known about this *kanji*.

This shows us the second point: learning a word is achieved by multiple encounters with

its different forms, fostering a proper connection with the learner's pre-knowledge. If we had not

talked about Hiroshima, then the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' would not have had the chance to

activate anything and eventually would have evaporated from her memory. Thus, providing

opportunities to encounter target words frequently, i.e., reading multiple materials on the same

topic, is effective. Ideally, a learner should encounter a particular target word in different forms in different contexts within a short period.

Once the word activated other words or information in her memory, Sakura confidently started using it. This word appeared in the articles about the topic of not only Hiroshima but also of nuclear power plants, but this was no longer a problem for her, so she never wrote about it in her daily English journal. Sakura used it in different forms 28 times in four essays written during Week 2, as in Table 5-8 below.

Table 5-8: The frequency and range of the words with 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' in Sakura's essays

Word/phrase	Frequency	Day(s) of occurrence
核兵器 *kakuheeki* 'nuclear weapon'	14	Days 1, 2, 3
核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons'[66]	7	Days 1, 3
核保有国 *kaku hoyuukoku* 'country with nuclear weapons'	2	Day 3
核軍縮 *kaku gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament'	2	Day 3
核依存 *kaku izon* 'nuclear dependence'	1	Day 3
核廃絶 *kaku haizetsu* 'elimination of nuclear weapons'	1	Day 2
核燃料 *kaku nenryoo* 'nuclear fuel'	1	Day 6

---

[66] This phrase is from the former President Obama's speech in Prague, Czech Republic, on April 5, 2009: "So today, I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of *a world without nuclear weapons*" (The White House, 2017). The Japanese translation of this phrase was used multiple times in the editorials that were assigned to Sakura. It seems she liked this Japanese phrase, and she also used it seven times across her different essays.

All the words and phrases in Table 5-8 also appeared in the assigned editorials. Now that during Week 2 Sakura properly understood the meaning of the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' as it appeared in 核兵器 *kakuheeki* 'nuclear weapons,' she was able to master various other words that included 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' to such an extent that she used them freely in her essays. What is particularly interesting in Table 5-8 is her use of 核軍縮 *kaku gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament' and 核燃料 *kaku nenryoo* 'nuclear fuel.' The former word was unfamiliar to her and bothered her during Week 1, but she completely mastered it during Week 2. The latter word, 核燃料 *kaku nenryoo* 'nuclear fuel,' was used on the last day of Week 2 in an editorial on a different topic, i.e., on the Fast-breeder Reactor, but she nevertheless grasped the usage of the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' even in this new context of nuclear power plants and was able to use it in her own essay appropriately. It no longer was associated in her mind with "corn kernels."

Sakura encountered many other topic-specific words during Week 2, such as 原爆 *genbaku* 'atomic bomb' and 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb)' in Table 5-7 above. Especially, the word 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb)' is generally used in an extremely limited way, with "a bomb,"[67] as its direct object, so if she had not read the editorials related to Hiroshima, she would not have acquired it. Sakura commented on topic-specific words in her journal in the following way:

---

[67] The word 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb)' in its verb form, 投下する *tooka suru* 'to drop (a bomb),' is also used as in 資本を投下する *shihon o tooka suru* 'to invest capital' (Weblio, n.d.). However, for general Japanese public, this word is far more commonly used in the context of atomic bombs.

(12) By this point, I'm beginning to pick up and remember *kanji* that had

appeared in previous articles. For example, I can read 大統領,[68] 訪問,[69] 訪れる,[70]

核兵器,[71] and 投下[72] without any issues. It's nice to be able to read an article

without immediately running into problems with *kanji*. (Day 3 Week 2)

Thus, reading multiple materials on the same topic within a short period works for

vocabulary learning.[73] When learners are reading Japanese, grasping *kanji* words is critical for

their understanding the passage. Towards rapid, or at least comfortable, reading comprehension,

they need to process a *kanji* character and/or word instantly and get its meaning and sound. At

the first encounter with an unfamiliar *kanji* word, Sakura had to invest a lot of time and effort

looking it up, but on the fourth day of reading on the same topic (Day 4 in Week 1 and Days 1

through 3 in Week 2), she gained a great deal of pleasure and sense of achievement from being

able to read and comprehend the editorial without difficulty. We should not also forget her effort

to deliberately use the target word in her productive activity, i.e., writing essays. Now many

words she once struggled with entered her lexicon, and moreover, they moved from her stock of

---

[68] 大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president' (see Table 5-3).

[69] 訪問 *hoomon* 'visit' (see Table 5-3).

[70] 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit.'

[71] 核兵器 *kakuheeki* 'nuclear weapon.'

[72] 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb).'

[73] In the field of extensive reading and incidental vocabulary learning, too, the exposure frequency is one of the keys to learners' learning of target words (see e.g., Rott, 1999; Waring & Nation, 2004).

receptive vocabulary to productive vocabulary. I will describe the findings on receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary later in this section.

***Genre-specific words – wago* 'Japanese native words' *vs. kango* 'Sino-Japanese words'**

Another kind of improvement in Sakura's argument essays was found in terms of her word choice, i.e., her improvement in the use of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' (for *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' see 5.0.3). Her essays demonstrated that she learned and became able to use many *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.' The editorials used *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' rather than the equivalent *wago* 'Japanese native words,' so Sakura probably mimicked their vocabulary and style. By using those *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in her essays repeatedly, she seemed to have become accustomed to those advanced-level words.

Table 5-9 below shows the comparison in verb choice between *wago* 'Japanese native words' and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in Sakura's essays.

Table 5-9: The comparison of Sakura's use of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words with her use of their *wago* 'Japanese native words' equivalents in her essays

English Gloss	*Kango* 'Sino-Japanese words'		*Wago* 'Japanese native words'	
		Freq		Freq.
To visit	訪問する *hoomon suru*	22	訪れる *otozureru*	0
To postpone	延期する *enki suru*	13	延ばす *nobasu*	0
To apologize	謝罪する *shazai suru*	11	謝る *ayamaru*	0
To possess	保有する *hoyuu suru*	7	持つ *motsu*	4
	所持する *shoji suru*	6		
To drop	投下する *tooka suru*	5	落とす *otosu*	1

102

To go down	下落する *geraku suru*	2	下がる *sagaru*	1

Table 5-9 shows Sakura's use of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in her essays compared with her use of their equivalents in *wago* 'Japanese native words.' Many *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' nouns can construct verbs simply by adding a verb する *suru* 'to do.' For example, one of the words above, 訪問 *hoomon* 'visit' is a noun by itself, but it can become a verb 訪問する *hoomon suru* 'to visit' by adding する *suru* 'to do.' In either form, nominal or verbal, generally the use of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' is preferable for the formal written materials. Because in the editorials she read as her models, more *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' than *wago* 'Japanese native words' were used, Sakura followed the suit and chose more *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' than their equivalents in *wago* 'Japanese native words.' This choice indicates that by Week 2 she had begun differentiating her lexicon between writing and speaking.

Let us look at each set of words. The first *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in Table 5-9 is 訪問する *hoomon suru* 'to visit.' This word, in either nominal or verbal form, was used in the editorials on 'President Obama's visit to Hiroshima' extremely frequently, so Sakura also chose this *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' very actively. Its equivalent verb in *wago* 'Japanese native word,' 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' never occurred in her essays, but this was because she did not know this *wago* well either, listing it in her journal among the words she learned from reading the articles. This can be seen from her entry (12), which was already excerpted in the previous section, but repeated (and boldfaced) here for convenience:

(12) By this point, I'm beginning to pick up and remember *kanji* that had

appeared in previous articles. For example, I can read 大統領,[74] 訪問,[75] 訪れる,[76]

核兵器,[77] and 投下[78] without any issues. It's nice to be able to read an article

without immediately running into problems with *kanji*. (Day 3 Week 2)

Thus, for Sakura, neither the *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' nor *wago* 'Japanese native

words' meaning 'to visit' were familiar words in this case. In daily conversations, this concept is

represented in a more basic verb 行く *iku* 'to go.' Sakura clearly avoided using this basic verb,

using the most appropriate option for the meaning of 'to visit,' i.e., *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words'

instead. This shows that her word choice improved to match the more advanced level and style

that the genre of argument essays requires.

The frequency comparison of other *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in Table 5-9 also

demonstrates her progress in word choice. The *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' 謝罪する *shazai*

suru 'to apologize' and 投下する *tooka suru* 'to drop,' were also frequently used in the

editorials on President's visit to Hiroshima, and Sakura followed the editorials' wordings and

style in her essays, choosing *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' rather than their equivalents in *wago*

'Japanese native words,' even though they are among the basic colloquial words used in

Japanese daily conversations. Indeed, Sakura used the word 謝罪 *shazai* 'apology' even when

---

[74] 大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president'

[75] 訪問 *hoomon* 'visit'

[76] 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' in *wago* 'Japanese native word'

[77] 核兵器 *kakuheeki* 'nuclear weapon'

[78] 投下 *tooka* 'dropping (a bomb)'

she later wrote on another topic. In her essay on Day 4 Week 3, she used this word again, one week after she read and wrote about President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. This evidently shows that this word now completely established itself in her lexicon for formal writing including argument essays, and that she learned she should choose the *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' options rather than those of *wago* 'Japanese native words' that she used in her daily speech.

Two other pairs of *kango/wago* meaning 'to postpone' and 'to go down' were also used in a topic-specific way in Sakura's essays as well as in the editorials. The *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' meaning 'to postpone' was the keyword in two editorials on 'another postponement of tax increase in Japan' which Sakura read on Days 4 and 5 of Week 2. She learned from the editorials that the word 延期する *enki suru* 'to postpone' was more appropriate in the formal writing rather than a more colloquial equivalent in *wago* 'Japanese native words' 延ばす *nobasu* 'to postpone,' and she used the preferred option 13 times, never choosing its *wago* 'Japanese native words' option. Likewise, the *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' meaning 'to go down (e.g., in value),' i.e., 下落する *geraku suru* 'to depreciate', was actively and properly chosen by Sakura in her essays. This word normally selects 'price' and 'value' as its subject and appears in passages on consumer prices and the gold/stock market. Its *wago* 'Japanese native words' equivalent, i.e., 下がる *sagaru* 'to go down,' has a much broader usage. Thus, this *kango* 'Sino-Japanese' verb is often difficult for even native Japanese to use. Sakura read an editorial on tax increase and consumer prices on Day 4 of Week 2 and another editorial on stock market on Day 2 of Week 4. From these editorials, Sakura must have learned not only this *kango* 'Sino-Japanese word' but also when it could be used. Despite the fact that the word takes a mental effort to use, Sakura proactively used it twice, first with a subject 'consumer prices' and then 'stock prices.'

When she wrote on another topic, she chose the more generally used option, 下がる *sagaru* 'to go down,' instead.

The last verb I analyzed in terms of *kango/wago* differentiation is the one meaning 'to possess.' Like the verb 'to go down' mentioned above, the *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' option of 'to possess' is used deliberately. The colloquial verb that most Japanese, including Sakura, use in their daily spoken language is 持つ *motsu* 'to possess.' It has multiple *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' alternatives used in the formal written materials, and the choice depends on the direct object. During Weeks 1 – 2, Sakura read four articles about Hiroshima, and she must have learned there that a verb 保有する *hoyuu suru* 'to possess' was preferred in argument essays, especially when its object was 'nuclear weapons.' She must have learned the collocational restriction of this verb to the specific object here, because she returned to the *wago* 'Japanese native words' equivalent, i.e., 持つ *motsu* 'to possess,' during Week 3, when its object was 気持ち *kimochi* 'feeling' or 偏見 *henken* 'prejudice.' Then, during Week 4, she encountered another *kango* 'Sino-Japanese word' meaning 'to possess' when she was reading the last editorial of this program about a mass-shooting case, i.e., 所持する *shoji suru* 'to possess, with 'a gun' or 'guns' as its object. Sakura must have learned this option again, with its particular object, and started using it properly seven times in her essay of the day.

As was shown above, Sakura steadily learned new *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' with their specific usages and figured that they were preferred to use in argument essays instead of *wago* 'Japanese native words,' the variety that she casually used herself. This was brought about by her daily close reading the target materials and her proactive use of the target words in her writing assignments.

106

Moving from receptive vocabulary to productive vocabulary

The last thing I will describe here is the process of Sakura's vocabulary moving from receptive to productive lexicon. As was shown in the sections above, Sakura built and expanded her lexicon of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' by means of both reading and writing assignments. Some new *kanji* words started to appear in her argument essays, but some did not. The words Sakura must have learned confidently occurred in her essays often in various forms, and they were all appropriate in their context (e.g., see the words involving 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' in Table 5-8).

Sakura noted in her journal about some words whose meanings she learned but whose functions or usages she could not get for sure. Those words seem to have entered her lexicon of receptive vocabulary, i.e., the words she can read and understand, but it seemed they did not advance into her productive vocabulary, i.e., the words she can actively use in her speech or writing. Here is an excerpt from her journal that describes what is the first, receptive stage of familiarity with a lexical item:

(13) With this article, I did learn a new word: 先送り.[79] Upon looking it up, I discovered that it means postponement, the same as 延期.[80] I'm not entirely certain, but I assume that it is a bit looser in connotation than 延期. (Day 5 Week 2)

---

[79] 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement'

[80] 延期 *enki* 'postponement' (see in Table 5-3).

107

On Days 4 and 5 of Week 2, Sakura read editorial articles on the Japanese government's having postponed raising sales tax again. The word 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' appeared in both editorials: once on Day 4 and five times on Day 5. The word seems not to have drawn her attention on Day 4, but while reading the next editorial, it caught her notice and made her feel curious. From the title and the context, she drew a correct sense of its meaning, but still, she could not achieve the level of confidently using it as she did with its *kango* 'Sino-Japanese' alternative 延期 *enki* 'postponement.'

Another word Sakura could not actively use was 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit.' As with the former example 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement,' this word 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' has a *kango* 'Sino-Japanese' alternative, which is 訪問する *hoomon suru* 'to visit.' Sakura used this alternative 22 times in three essays. However, she never chose the *wago* 'Japanese native' verb 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit.' She made a comment on this word as follows:

(14) When referring to President Obama's visit to Hiroshima, the article used the word 訪れる[81] several times within its first page. I understand that the word means to visit, but I do wonder about the difference between 訪れる and 訪ねる.[82] (Day 1 Week 2)

---

[81] 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit'

[82] 訪ねる *tazuneru* 'to visit'

108

In this journal entry, Sakura described the vagueness of her understanding of the meaning of 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit,' by comparing it with another word she had known 訪ねる *tazuneru* 'to visit.' The simplest distinction between these two apparently similar verbs lies in their objects: 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit (a place) and 訪ねる *tazuneru* 'to visit (a person).'[83] Both verbs can be replaced by their *kango* 'Sino-Japanese' alternative 訪問（する） *hoomon (suru)* 'to visit,' so Sakura chose a safer way and kept using the *kango* 'Sino-Japanese' option.

Thus, those two words, 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' and 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit,' definitely entered her lexicon of receptive vocabulary, but did not further move into her productive vocabulary. Sakura did not choose these words in her writing because she was not confident in their functions and usages. In the reading editorials, both these words are used in a few specific contexts with a few restricted objects. So, Sakura could not experience them fully enough to use more freely and actively in her own written essays. In order to fully master a word and use it in their speech and writing, i.e., to move it from just receptive vocabulary to productive vocabulary, learners probably need to encounter it many times in various contexts, usages, and functions. Only after processing all its various usages and functions do they accumulate enough confidence to start using it in their own writing.

Another interesting finding related to these two words which stayed in her receptive vocabulary is that both are *wago* 'Japanese native words.' In the previous section, I explained that *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' are a bigger challenge for learners than *wago* 'Japanese native

---

[83] The distinction is actually more complex: an online dictionary, Weblio (n.d.), elaborates on it while providing a few examples. Both words can be used to mean 'to visit a person/a place' but 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' only has a noun referring to a place for its direct object. On the other hand, 訪ねる *tazuneru* 'to visit' has a noun representing either a person or a place. Weblio (n.d.) explains that this verb is used to mean (1) to go to a place to meet a person, as in 旧友を訪ねる *kyuuyuu o tazuneru* 'to visit my old friend'; and (2) to go all the way to a place for a particular purpose, as in 秘湯を訪ねる *hitoo o tazuneru* 'to visit a secret hot spring' and 史跡を訪ねる *shiseki o tazuneru* 'to visit a historic site.'

words,' and they are more often used in a formal or academic genre of writing. This is true, but the close analysis of Sakura's essays and journal suggested that some *wago* 'Japanese native words' are more challenging for learners than *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.' Thus, *wago* 'Japanese native words' has at least two tiers: one includes the words in daily use, which Sakura had heard and had spoken in her conversation with her mother, and the other consists of words that are perceived to be fancier, despite being native, and are used in specific contexts with specific collocations.

The words in the second tier must be difficult for learners to master, partly because of the infrequent exposure to them, and partly because of 'avoidance,' one of the communication strategies in SLA observed when learners, given freedom to speak or write, use a limited number of most familiar words and avoid those of which they have only passive knowledge (Dörnyei and Scott, 1997). These challenging *wago* 'Japanese native words,' because of the limiting effect of their topic-, context-, and collocation-specific characteristics, are often replaced by their more broadly used *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' alternatives, e.g., 延期 *enki* 'postponement' for 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' and 訪問する *hoomon suru* 'to visit' for 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit.' She evidently managed to grasp that it is better to use *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in her essays and consistently used them, avoiding 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' and 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' altogether.

This sort of difficulty that is inherent in *wago* 'Japanese native words' has not been raised in the field of Japanese language acquisition. This is probably because the majority of learners belong to the beginner to intermediate level, and they are generally overwhelmed by the difficulty in *kanji* and *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.' However, once they achieve the level at which they manage to understand the meanings of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' or deduce them

110

from the parts of *kanji* and/or the contexts, they, like Sakura, face another challenge: mastering the "fancy" *wago* 'Japanese native words' in a specific use. This becomes an important skill indispensable for those wishing to achieve nativelike idiomaticity that would include mastery of the rich functional and stylistic variety of *wago* 'Japanese native words' in the usage by native speakers. The overlooked role of *wago* 'Japanese native words' in Japanese language instruction is, however, a topic for another study.

Progress feature (3): Shedding honorifics in argument essays

In Section 5.1.1, I briefly described one characteristic, *politeness*, of Sakura's writing at the pre-program stage. "Do not use *desu/masu* sentence-ending forms in your argument essays or academic papers," I gave her this simple instruction after I read her essay at our pre-program meeting. Sakura made a surprising look and asked me in Japanese, "*e, ii n desu ka* 'Is that okay?'" Again, I replied to her briefly, "*un, ii no, soo yuu mono dakara* 'Yes, it's fine, it's a convention.'" Sakura quickly learned what she should do when she was writing what was called an "argument essay," and the sentence-ending *desu/masu* never appeared in her essays during the four-week program.

In other locations of sentences, however, polite or honorific words still occurred. It seemed that showing politeness in her words toward someone older or in a higher position in some way was deeply rooted in her mind, although her way of using the polite language was sometimes wrong. In her very first essay of this four-week program, on Day 1 Week 2, she wrote on President Obama's visit to Hiroshima as follows:

111

(15) *Obama daitooryoo wa   seeshikina shazai   o   **mooshiagenakatta**   ga*

    Obama president TOP official   apology ACC say:HUM:NEG:PAST but

    'President Obama did not say an official apology, but …'

In her essay for this day, she never used *desu/masu* style at the end of sentences, but the verb she used with the subject "President Obama" was a lexically marked synonym for "say." Evidently, she wanted to show respect to President Obama in some way or may have considered it a requirement to use some kind of polite verb with a subject referring to someone in a higher position, such as a president.[84] After I read this essay, I gave her an additional instruction that there is no need to use any kind of honorific or humble expressions for anyone in argument essays. I also explained to her that the word *mooshiageru*[85] 'to say (humble)' is a Humble Polite Expression, so it must not be used when the subject is a person in a higher position. Thereafter, no honorific or humble language occurred in her essays throughout the four-week program.

Another type of improvement concerning politeness was found in her choice of conjunctions. Some Japanese conjunctions involve the polite sentence-ending form *desu* in it, such as *desunode* 'therefore' and *desukara* 'therefore,' which can be rephrased by more appropriate varieties in argument essays and academic papers, such as *shitagatte* 'therefore,' *yueni* 'therefore,' and *soreyueni* 'therefore.' The users can choose the most appropriate one depending on their communication modality, style, and audience. Between Weeks 2 and 3, I

---

[84] Her choice of polite verb was actually wrong. There are two types of honorifics: one is Honorific Polite Expressions, which is used when one is to elevate the speaker's superior, and the other is Humble Polite Expressions, which is used when one is to lower himself/herself or his/her in-group members (Makino & Tsutsui, 1989, p. 36). The verb that Sakura used, *mooshiageru* 'to say' is among the Humble Polite Expressions, and it lowers the subject (in this case, President Obama) against Sakura's expectation. She should have used the corresponding Honorific Polite Expression, i.e., *ossharu* 'to say' to show her politeness toward President Obama.

[85] This is a dictionary form of *mooshiagenakatta* 'did not say (humble)' which she used in her essay.

gave her a list of words preferred for argument essays, including some conjunctions (see Appendix II). After this point, Sakura's word choice of conjunctions dramatically advanced. During Week 2, she used the inappropriate conjunctions, *desukara* 'therefore' three times and *desunode* 'therefore' once, but during Weeks 3 and 4, she stopped using them. Instead, she used more appropriate conjunctions for argument essays, *shitagatte* 'therefore' twice and *soreyueni* 'therefore' twice. She started using other formal conjunctions too, such as *daga* 'however'[86] (three times), *ippoo* 'on the other hand' (once), *dooyooni* 'likewise' (three times), and *sunawachi* 'that is to say' (once). The problem she had with inappropriate polite conjunctions was thus easily corrected by explicit instruction. Sakura acquired a rich variety of conjunctions appropriate for the genre, and this made her essays appear the way argument essays should.

Progress feature (4): Encountering another wall – returning to L1 transfer to be more creative

By the start of Week 4, Sakura's essays had improved in many ways: her sentence structure became closer to Japanese structure than that of English, which led to her abandoning of unnecessary *katakana* words from her L1 transfer; she learned to choose more *kanji* words, especially *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' which are preferred for argument essays; her unnecessary polite expressions also disappeared; and she became able to use various conjunctions to show her logical thinking, which is one of the essential skills in writing argument essays or academic papers in Japanese. I expected that, if she kept working at this rate, Sakura would be able to acquire the skill to produce almost flawless argument essays. Her learning of Japanese essay writing, however, did not show such a simply linear improvement.

---

[86] For this function, other conjunctions, *shikashi* 'however' and *shikashinagara* 'however,' are also preferred options. Sakura knew these two conjunctions before she entered this program and continued using them from Week 2 till Week 4. I do not discuss these conjunctions in this section because their usage didn't constitute any improvement for Sakura.

What appeared at this point was a new type of L1 transfer which had never been seen during Weeks 2 and 3.

Consciously or unconsciously, Sakura stopped writing safer essays relying exclusively on the models she just learned. Instead, she started taking risks to write in more challenging and expressive ways. During Weeks 2 and 3, she used many words which appeared in the editorials, and she clearly began to control this new vocabulary. During the final Week 4, however, her writing became creative, as she tried to express her opinions using her own words. Her challenges sometimes worked out but other times just revealed that she obtained the particular phrase through her L1 transfer. The excerpt (16) below shows one of the successful cases. On Day 5 of Week 4, she wrote about the issue of child labor and expressed her impression of a poem cited there.

(16) *zenbun   wa   hiragana   de,   kodomo   no   mesen   kara*

   entire-text TOP   *hiragana* COP:TE child(ren) GEN   eyes   from

   jidoo-roodoo o   kijutsu-suru kara   koso,   shi   wa   yori hisanna

   child-labor   ACC   describe   because EMP   poem TOP   more   tragic

   mono datta.

   one   COP:PAST

'the entire text was (written) in *hiragana*, and (it) described child labor from children's view, which stood out the tragedy of child labor that the poem described.'

114

This excerpt still leaves something to be improved, but Sakura should be credited for writing it almost all in her own words (the two keywords in this topic, *jidoo-roodoo* 'child labor' and *shi* 'poem,' of course came from the assigned editorial). She succeeded in this challenge to the extent that the sentence makes sense, and it shows she was expressing her thought in an unconstrained way.

The next excerpt (17) is, on the contrary, one of Sakura's failed attempts. She wrote this essay on Day 3 of Week 4, right after she read an editorial about the upcoming House of Councilors election and the ruling party's manipulative pronouncements. The unnatural phrase is boldfaced and translated as is, including its infelicity.

(17) *watashi   wa   kojinteki-ni, iken   o   dangen dekiru   hodo   nihon*

   I   TOP   personally   opinion ACC assert   can   so-much-as Japan

seefu   ni   kuwashiku-nai. daga,   seefu   wa

government DAT familiar:NEG   however government   TOP

toomee-kan   **ga   fusoku-suru** *koto wa   tashika da.*

transparent-feeling NOM   lack   NML TOP   certain COP

'Personally, I'm not so familiar with the Japanese government as to clearly state

my opinion. However, it is certain that the Japanese government **lacks**

transparent feelings.'

In this excerpt (17), Sakura is trying to express her opinion all in her own words. Even the word, *nihon seefu* 'the Japanese government,' which seems to be a keyword here, was not used in the model text. Her point was that the current Japanese government, according to the

editorial, lacked transparency. There are, however, two words in Japanese that correspond to the English "transparency": one is *toomeesee*, which is used in the context of business dealings and government actions, and the other is *toomeekan*, used when describing the beauty of the skin and singers' voices. Obviously, she should have used *toomeesee* here, but evidently she did not know the word and used *toomeekan* instead. Based on what we know about Sakura's love of Japanese TV music and variety programs, Sakura must have been exposed to the word *toomeekan* in those contexts many times, but probably never encountered any contexts in which the word *toomeesee* would be used. This excerpt shows that Sakura was creative, but in being so, she relied on L1 transfer from the English phrase "lacking transparency." The only problem was that for "transparency" she used the word she had often heard in other contexts but inappropriate when discussing the Japanese government, resulting in an unnaturally sounding phrase.

Excerpts (16) and (17) show that at this stage of the program, after Sakura became confident that she could use the words and expressions she learned from the model essays, Sakura began to experiment with language. In doing so, however, she reverted to L1 transfer. She has thus come a full circle, first overcoming L1 transfer by learning to avoid idiosyncratic lexical borrowings, and then returning to L1 transfer in creating her own sentences to express her own opinion in her own words. This will be discussed more later in 6.2.

5.2 Sakura's daily English journals

Now in this section, I will present my findings from Sakura's daily journals in English. Because they were written in her most comfortable language, English, all the 24 journal entries revealed the bare feelings she had and difficulties she experienced and tried to overcome. I chose three conspicuous, and noteworthy, points from her entries and describe them in the following

sections. Those three points are: (1) Sakura's strong motivation, (2) her specific difficulties with *kanji*, and (3) her learning strategies.

5.2.1 Motivation

When I discuss Sakura's success in improving her academic Japanese reading and writing skills, her extraordinarily high motivation deserves to be described in some detail, which I will do in this section. First, when I visited a Japanese class for heritage Japanese speakers to recruit participants in the current four-week academic Japanese reading program, Sakura was the only student who willingly offered me a positive reply. Also, even though the program took her a considerable amount of time and effort, finally Sakura completed the whole program without skipping any of the daily tasks and demonstrated the advancement of her academic reading and writing skills. In the first half of this section, I will describe her strong motivation to improve her Japanese by introducing her entries in the daily English journals. Then, in the second half, I will discuss the origin of her high motivation, what made her so enthusiastic about learning Japanese, by analyzing the data of interviews with her as well as her daily English journal entries.

Sakura's high motivation

In the winter of 2015, three months before the four-week program, I visited a Japanese class for heritage Japanese speakers. This visit was not for the purpose of recruiting participants in my dissertation research, but for a preliminary study to investigate the speaking and writing proficiency of heritage speakers. Most of the students in the class spoke Japanese fluently like young Japanese in Japan. Thus, I was curious about their proficiency of writing Japanese, whether they could use different words and phrases in their writing from those in their

conversation as did Japanese students in Japan. The class involved different types of students: some had Japanese parents and were planning to return to Japan soon, others had one Japanese parent and spoke Japanese with the parent, and others had no Japanese parents but had advanced proficiency of Japanese for some reason.

Four students in the class, including Sakura, offered to join the study. (The fact that Sakura was a member of this class, and of this group of four, demonstrated her high motivation, to begin with.) The teacher of the class kindly gave me some time at the end of class to explain the procedure of the study and what the participants would be required to do. I emphasized that it would be a simple study and take only less than thirty minutes per participant. I also added that the task of the study would be useful for the students to learn more advanced Japanese and that I would help them if they had any questions about Japanese. Probably this appealed to some of the students, and the four particularly enthusiastic students who enrolled in the class volunteered to participate in the study. When I subsequently developed a four-week academic reading and writing program for my dissertation research plan, I expected all these four students would agree to participate in my research. However, after I explained the whole procedure of the program to them and other potential participants, all of them, except Sakura, decided not to join the study. In the end, Sakura was the only person who showed an interest in the program and improving the academic reading and writing proficiency in Japanese.

As is illustrated above, Sakura has an extraordinarily high motivation and enthusiasm about learning academic Japanese. Her distinctive motivation was obvious not only during the process of recruiting participants but also during the four-week program. The program required a high commitment in daily tasks of Japanese reading and writing. Once it started, Sakura continuously demonstrated high motivation and aspiration to learn more advanced Japanese. The

high level of vocabulary and phrases and the abstruse contents of the reading materials would have discouraged most learners of Japanese, but Sakura never gave up the program or even showed the slightest sign of doing so. Sakura organized her daily schedules so that she could make some time for the program every night, and she completed the four-week program.

Sakura's English journals involved several statements explicitly showing her strong motivation. Her motivation and expectation of this four-week program was revealed, for example, in her first journal entry on Day 1, Week 1. In this entry, it seems that she started the program with a huge expectation to improve her Japanese skills. In the very first day of the program, she expressed her difficulty in reading the given materials, especially understanding the meanings of the words in Chinese characters, *kanji*. She also mentioned that she was frustrated at her own inability to remember Chinese characters that she had learned before. However, she attempted various approaches to deduce what they mean, managing to read through the two pages of material. At the closing of her journal entry on Day 1, she commented as follows:

(18) I hope that by the end of this four-week period, I'll be more apparently

advanced in Japanese. (Day 1, Week 1)

Even though Sakura felt frustrated by herself with this academic reading task, she did not give up studying, retaining her hope that she would eventually become a more advanced user of Japanese. She never told me that she wanted to withdraw from the program, even though she had the freedom to do so anytime.

On the next day, Day 2 of Week 1, Sakura added another statement which implied her strong motivation. There again, she expressed her frustration as to her difficulty in retrieving

many words constituted of Chinese characters which she believed she had once seen and looked up their meanings. However, after she expressed her frustration, she revealed her high motivation to improve her Japanese skills without getting discouraged.

(19) Despite my high rate of forgetting, I can't seem to stop making the extra effort to remember all the words I encounter; some part of me believes that if I at least expose myself to these words even if I forget soon them, some part of my brain will register them the next time I see them. (Day 2, Week 1)

After this comment, there were no entries indicating Sakura's learning motivation in her journal until Day 3 of Week 3. Many of her journal entries during this interval were about her struggles to guess the meanings of words with Chinese characters by using her pre-knowledge of other words of the kind that she learned from Japanese TV shows and song lyrics. Her journal entry for each day reveals many of her trials and errors and how she overcame the challenges, though some succeeded but others not. When her deduction was successful, her entry showed her delight in her success, her satisfaction with her efforts being rewarded, her confirmation that her approach was not off the point, and her self-encouragement to learn more Japanese. This last type of comments, her self-encouragement, in most cases indirectly but sometimes directly, express her strong motivation to keep studying Japanese with her equally strong hope for communicating with Japanese people with no difficulty in Japanese one day in the future. Her entry on Day 3 of Week 3 goes:

(20) I feel like with this kind of vocabulary, it'd be easier to have discussions

about American politics (perhaps politics in general) with other Japanese people

in Japanese. (Day 3, Week 3)

The article that was assigned to her on this day was about the 2016 presidential election

in the United States. The vocabulary words included in this article were those at the advanced

level and in the category of politics and election. Sakura confessed her low interest and

knowledge in the field of politics and election even if it is the U.S. election,[87] so reading an

editorial commentary article of this field was presumably much burden for her. It would have

been quite understandable if she had given up continuing this four-week program, or at least

reading this political article. Alternatively, she could have requested me to exclude the articles on

politics and election from then on. However, she did neither, but rather she expressed her desire

to overcome this and talk more freely in Japanese with Japanese people on any kind of topic.

Considering the comments in her journal and the amount of work she endured for four

weeks, the strength of her motivation is obvious. While she did not clarify in her journal what

made her so highly motivated to learn Japanese, in an interview two years after this program she

revealed that her motivation was closely related to her identity as a heritage speaker of Japanese.

Her strong motivation and her self-analysis on it will be presented in section 5.3.1.

---

[87] Sakura wrote about her being unfamiliar with politics and election in her journals every day from Day 1 till Day 3 during Week 3: (1) Because of its (the article's) difficulty, as well as my own ignorance in regard to American politics, the Japanese entry was also a bit difficult to write (Day 1 Week 3); (2) I again feel that this (the article's) difficulty) was not only because of the *kanji* and grammar, but also my own ignorance about American politics … (Day 2 Week 3); and (3) This article about the presidential election in the United States was also a bit difficult to read. I think it's because I'm not too familiar with the election. (Day 3 Week 3)

5.2.2 Understanding the meaning of *kanji* but being unable to pronounce them

Another interesting finding from Sakura's English journals was her knowledge of what a *kanji* means and her application of the knowledge to her guesswork of what a combination of *kanji* characters means. In the reading assignments for this program, there were many *kanji* words, the meaning of which Sakura could deduce correctly but the reading of which she did not know. For example, in the article of Day 5 of Week 3, Sakura encountered a *kanji* word 空腹 *kuufuku* which means 'hunger.' She did not know how to pronounce the word, but she was able to obtain its meaning by way of her "decomposition" approach. The first *kanji* 空 *sora* or *kuu* means 'sky' or 'empty' respectively while the second *kanji* 腹 *hara* or *fuku* means 'stomach' in either way of reading. Thus, she deduced the meaning of the word as 'empty stomach,' i.e., 'hunger,' correctly.

However, Sakura had no way of inferring the correct pronunciation for this word. The difficulty of learning the correct reading of *kanji* words consists in the fact that one *kanji* character generally possesses multiple ways it can be read. In other words, one and the same *kanji* character is read in different ways in different words (for more details, see section 5.0.2). Words determine the reading of *kanji* involved. Two major varieties of *kanji* reading are 1) *kun-yomi* 'the reading of Japanese-origin' and 2) *on-yomi* 'the reading from Chinese pronunciation.' However, many *kanji* characters have multiple varieties in *kun-yomi* and *on-yomi* respectively. Let me take an example of the two *kanji* characters above, 空 and 腹. The first *kanji* character 空 has a total of four readings (three readings of Japanese-origin, *sora* 'sky,' *kara* 'empty,' and *a* 'to become vacant,' and one reading of Chinese-origin, *kuu* 'sky' and 'empty'). On the other hand, the second *kanji* character 腹 has a total of two readings (one is *kun-yomi*, Japanese-origin, *hara* 'stomach,' and the other is *on-yomi*, Chinese-origin, *fuku* 'stomach'). Thus, technically speaking,

there are eight combinations for the reading of these two *kanji* characters, but actually only one

reading is accepted to be correct for this combination of *kanji* characters, which is *kuufuku*

'hunger.'[88]

As was mentioned in earlier sections, Japanese people use their language differently in

their spoken interactions and written discourses. They use different words, grammar, and

expressions in their conversations from those in their academic papers, news reports, and

business or governmental official documents. Basically, in spoken interactions or informal

written discourses such as comments in social media, the readings of Japanese-origin *kun-yomi*,

are used, while in formal writing *kanji* compound words are preferred, and are generally

pronounced in Chinese-origin *on-yomi*. Kanno et al., (2008) pointed out that since *kanji*

compound words, therefore the readings from Chinese *on*-yomi, are more often used in written

discourse and in official documents than the readings of Japanese origin, i.e., *kun-yomi*, which

have the same sounds as the basic words used in the daily conversation. Foreign learners of

Japanese were required to have more knowledge of Chinese-origin readings than that of

Japanese-origin ones to be recognized as an advanced learner of Japanese.

When Sakura first tried to get the meaning of the *kanji* compound word, 空腹 *kuufuku*

'hunger,' she read it as 空なお腹 *kara-na o-naka*[89] 'empty stomach.' It totally makes sense,

because both readings are Japanese-origin *kun-yomi* which she often used in daily conversations.

---

[88] Technically this combination of *kanji* characters has eight possible readings, but in reality, native Japanese users can readily find the only one correct reading. The majority of *kanji* compound words, especially the ones made up of two *kanji* characters, adopt a combination of two *on-yomi* Chinese-origin readings. There are a few exceptions, but generally native Japanese speakers utilize this unwritten rule to guess correct readings of unfamiliar *kanji* compound words. It is assumable that Sakura subconsciously learned this rule in the process of memorizing and reciting her favorite song lyrics.

[89] The meaning of the word Sakura inferred corresponds to the Japanese basic words for empty and for stomach are *kara* and *o-naka* (the female genderlect corresponding to the male *hara* 'abdomen') respectively.

Thus, both *kara-na* 'empty' and *o-naka* 'stomach' were in her vocabulary, but a little more advanced word with Chinese-origin readings *kuufuku* seemed totally unfamiliar to her in the beginning. Sakura added in her journal entry that she could not even guess the pronunciation of the word 空腹 *kuufuku* at first, but that when she was writing the journal, it suddenly popped into her mind. She noted her deduction of the meaning of this work in the following way:

(21) I actually could not read the pronunciation of 空腹 at first. That is, I could

read and understand the meaning of 空腹 (空なお腹: an empty stomach), but my

brain could not think of the correct pronunciation for these two *kanji* put together.

(Day 5, Week 3)

This demonstrates two important implications in learning Japanese: 1) understanding what a *kanji* means is one thing, knowing how it is pronounced is another; and 2) reading and understanding Japanese academic reading materials requires the knowledge of the *kanji* readings from Chinese and of *kanji* compound words, and reflects the advanced level of learning Japanese.

The first Implication closely relates to the advantage of the learners from Chinese culture and/or with the knowledge of Chinese characters. If learners have some knowledge of the meanings of Chinese characters, they can get a rough picture of a written passage in Japanese but may not be able to correctly read the passage aloud. On the other hand, many Japanese heritage language speakers, above all, those who have a first-generation Japanese parent(s) and whose parent(s) speak Japanese at home, can understand most of what is uttered in daily conversations and know many informal words by pronunciation, but do not have much knowledge of *kanji*

124

characters, let alone *kanji* compound words. They are considered to be more advanced Japanese, which is generally taught in a formal education. If Japanese heritage language children did not receive any formal education in Japanese, or if they left Japanese school before they had reached a sufficiently advanced level of Japanese to learn difficult *kanji* characters and *kanji* compound words, it is reasonable that they do not know how to pronounce them, even though they sound fluent in daily conversations.

Thus, there seems to be at least three layers of skills here: (1) knowing and speaking Japanese-origin words, which are used in spoken Japanese and with which Japanese heritage language speakers are familiar; (2) knowing the meaning of *kanji* characters and *kanji* words, but not knowing how to pronounce them in Japanese, which is typical among the learners from *kanji*-using culture who have not yet achieved the advanced level of Japanese; and (3) knowing the meaning of *kanji* characters and *kanji* words, and the pronunciation of them as well, which are generally only achieved by those learners who have attended Japanese classes for more than two years and studied *kanji* hard enough to reach the advanced level. In order to become a well-balanced full-fledged language user of Japanese, a learner is supposed to fulfil all the three skills described above.

As for *kanji* education for children who live in Japan, the meanings of *kanji* characters and how to read and write them are required to be taught in schools by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT). The guideline issued by MEXT shows that children are supposed to learn 1,006 *kanji* characters during the six-year education at elementary schools, then another 1,130 *kanji* characters during the three-year education at junior high schools (MEXT, 2008). Along with these *kanji* characters, they also learn numerous, commonly used compound words which are constituted of those *kanji*

characters. Japanese students at the ages of 7 to 18 learn and practice these *kanji* words at school, as well as being exposed to them and more advanced *kanji* compound words through mass media and in publications, such as TV, newspaper, Internet, novels, and even comic books. In such an environment, they not only get used to their meanings and pronunciations, but also realize the necessity to know how to read and write *kanji* words, and that in most cases their amount of *kanji* knowledge reveals their levels of academic and family background, very much in the same way as Latin/Greek-based vocabulary does in English.

Therefore, for those living outside Japan, Japanese or non-Japanese, the mastery of reading and understanding of academic passages necessitates a considerable amount of effort, which closely relates to the second implication mentioned above: reading and understanding Japanese academic materials requires the knowledge of the *kanji* readings from Chinese and of *kanji* compound words, which pertain to the advanced level of learning Japanese. For the learners of Japanese, the mere knowing of how to write *kanji* correctly requires daily training and high motivation, even more will be required to master the meanings and readings of each *kanji* character and *kanji* word. It would be extremely difficult for learners to master all these aspects of *kanji* if they merely attended Japanese school because their parents told them to do so. In Sakura's case, she was a big fan of a Japanese male singer-group named *Arashi*. This motivated her absorption in their songs and variety shows, and also motivated her to practice and master their song lyrics in their TV shows, including reading and writing *kanji* compound words. Thus, learning to read Japanese in authentic reading materials requires a totally different process from the listening and speaking skills in daily Japanese conversations. It also can be assumed that the difficulty with acquiring *kanji* characters and words is one of the major causes of the Wall at Age Nine for Japanese heritage children.

One interesting entry in Sakura's English journal demonstrates the difference between recognition of a word by sound and by *kanji* representation. She mentioned that a Japanese word *shitsuke* 'discipline for children' was familiar to her because her mother used the word to her many times when she was a child. Thus, she heard it over and over again and recognized it by sound. However, she never knew how to write the word in *kanji*, still less thought there was a *kanji* to represent it. When she was taking a Japanese class for heritage speakers at UCLA, she saw the *kanji* for the word *shitsuke* 'discipline for children' in the PowerPoint slides in her classmates' presentation. It seems to have had a big impact on her. She realized herself that learning through her ears and learning through her eyes were quite different. Ultimately, the *kanji shitsuke* 'discipline for children' entered her receptive vocabulary, but never became part of her productive vocabulary.

> (22) Again, I've been noticing that some of the words are those that I picked up during my Japanese for Heritage Speakers class, probably because we discussed similarly serious topics about current issues in Japan. For instance, one of the slideshow presentations that a student gave discussed the fine line between discipline and abuse. As a result, the words しつけ[90] and 虐待[91] appeared countless times in her presentation. Although I had heard my mother use the term *shitsuke* multiple times, I could never formulate the word on my own until I saw the word on the slides of her presentation. In a similar way, although I knew the word *gyakutai* before (mostly from watching detective dramas about domestic

---

[90] しつけ *shitsuke* 'discipline'

[91] 虐待 *gyakutai* 'abuse'

violence), I did not know the *kanji* for it until my Japanese for Heritage Speakers

class. I still cannot write the *kanji* on my own, however. (Day 6, Week 3)

Excerpt (22) shows that Sakura knew the words しつけ *shitsuke* 'discipline for children'

and 虐待 *gyakutai* 'abuse' from her mother's language and TV shows but she did not know how

to write them in *kanji* (actually, in the case of しつけ *shitsuke* 'discipline for children,' she did

not know that the word HAD a *kanji* to represent it). This is often possible for Japanese heritage

language speakers who have had a wealth of exposure to Japanese in their daily lives. If they are

satisfied that they can only speak casual Japanese, then the knowledge of *kanji* may not be

necessary for them. However, if they aim to achieve a more advanced Japanese user, they will

need to at least understand the meaning of *kanji* characters and/or *kanji* words, though it would

be better if they could pronounce them and write them. Excerpt (22) from Sakura's journal

illustrates that phonological awareness and *kanji* recognition are so different and the latter is a

challenge for Japanese heritage speakers.

5.2.3 Learning Strategies and Processes

This section focuses on Sakura's English journal entries regarding her learning and

reading strategies. During the first week, her comments on her performance in reading

comprehension are negative; most of her comments concern an immense number of unfamiliar

words of *kanji* whose meanings she cannot even guess. Sometimes she shows her frustration that

her lack of *kanji* knowledge slows down her pace of reading. However, from the second week

on, she starts to express more and more positive feelings about her successful reading. Above all,

she notes her pleasure in retrieving the *kanji* knowledge she learned before and her process of

128

guessing the meaning of difficult *kanji* words. This change in her writing indicates that this four-week program helped her feel more confident in academic reading, particularly *kanji* words.

Most of her difficulty in understanding the reading materials came from *kanji* compound words. Japanese reading materials at the advanced level involve a considerable number of *kanji* compound words, a word made up of two or more Chinese characters. Unlike two other Japanese writing systems, i.e., *hiragana* and *katakana* (phonetic lettering systems), each *kanji* has its own meaning(s) and one or more readings. If a learner knows the meaning of each *kanji* of the compound word or the appropriate strategies to guess its meaning correctly, reading comprehension is not a very complicated process. However, for most learners of Japanese outside Chinese culture, mastering and using a sufficient amount of *kanji* to read and comprehend Japanese authentic reading materials is extremely hard work and requires a long-term effort.

Sakura tackled this tough work with her own multiple strategies. One of the main strategies to guess or remember a difficult *kanji* word was to try to retrieve her memory in which she had come across or learned the word before. She had had various opportunities to learn Japanese and *kanji* words. Most of them were those which she enthusiastically sought. Among the opportunities were Japanese variety TV shows, Japanese lyrics of her favorite songs, the classes for Japanese heritage speakers at her university, smartphone apps (Hello Talk and Lang8), crossword puzzles in Japanese, and her mother's words. Above all, the Japanese TV shows and lyrics provided her with a great help when she read the academic reading materials in this program. Sakura made her comments in her journal entries on how helpful these learning resources were when she read the advanced reading materials. Some of those comments are the following.

(23) Again, some of the words I actually just learned in a variety show, either today or yesterday. For example, I learned the *kanji* 淵[92] 'edge' yesterday when the show was describing the 淵 of a mushroom. In a different show, I learned the word 耐火[93] 'fire-resistant' (a word that I find to be very convenient to know), Which contains the 耐 from the word 耐える[94] 'to endure' found in the article. I actually learned this word earlier in my Japanese for Heritage Speakers class, but now that I reinforced it with the variety and with this article, I feel like I will not forget it. (Day 5, Week 3)

(24) I always knew that most of my Japanese vocabulary comes from variety shows and song lyrics (because I don't use many other resources to learn Japanese), but as I reviewed the article to write this journal entry, I was surprised at just how much of the article's *kanji* were recognizable to me due to my "studying" methods with pop culture. This was even more surprising to me because the article was actually relatively easy to read, which would mean that television and music are helping me read news articles about current events??? (Day 6, Week 2)

---

[92] 淵 *fuchi* 'edge'

[93] 耐火 *taika* 'fire-resistant'

[94] 耐える *taeru* 'to endure'

The first excerpt (23) shows Sakura has daily exposure to Japanese and *kanji* through variety shows, and she takes advantage of them to learn difficult Japanese words. It also demonstrates that she has had multiple resources to learn Japanese words, in this case, her university class as well as variety shows. She notes that these multiple encounters with one word reinforce her learning of the word, and that she will never forget it.

In the second excerpt (24), Sakura expresses her surprise at how much vocabulary that she learned from variety shows and lyrics actually helped her read the materials. She found that the *kanji* words used in pop culture also appeared in news articles. This positive surprise of hers surely boosted her confidence in her learning methods and strategies and made her memory of vocabulary more robust.

Another strategy employs Sakura's pre-knowledge of Chinese characters. When she encounters an unfamiliar *kanji* compound word, she tries to decompose it into each *kanji* character, and then she looks for other *kanji* compound words involving the *kanji* character in question. For example, when she encountered an unfamiliar word 最高裁 *saikoosai* 'Supreme Court' in the middle of an article, she broke it down into 最高 *saikoo* 'the highest' and 裁 *sai* 'an abbreviation of 裁判所 *saibansho* 'courthouse.' She knew that the former part 最高 was a word meaning the 'highest.' The latter part 裁 was only one *kanji* character, not a word, but she also knew that the *kanji* 裁 was part of another word 裁判 meaning 'court trial.' In this way, she was able to successfully guess the meaning of the word in question, 最高裁, as Supreme Court.

Sakura made successful guesswork of the meanings of unfamiliar *kanji* compound words by adopting this "decomposition" approach. It seems that she began to mostly enjoy playing the "decomposition" guessing game around Week 2. Each time she came across an unfamiliar *kanji*

compound word, she first attempted to retrieve other words using each *kanji* character

composing the word from her memory. Then, she tried to grasp a common meaning of words,

which helped her determine the concept of the *kanji* character. Next, she went back to the *kanji*

compound word in the reading article, trying to capture what it meant by combining the deduced

meanings of its *kanji* components. Finally, she examined if the meaning of the word she guessed

matched the context and also looked up the word in a dictionary or Google Translate to see if her

guesswork went through the right way. Let us take a look at an excerpt from her journal, on

Day2 of Week 4.

(25) In regard to the words that I did not recognize from the article, I was able to

call out some sort of meaning from their individual kanji components. For

example, the word 指標[95] appeared in the first sentence of the article. I knew the

kanji 指[96] from 指名,[97] 指定,[98] or 指摘,[99] and I knew that the word 標[100] was

similar to the 票[101] from 投票.[102] As a result, I assumed that the word 指標

referred to some kind of diagram or reference marker, which I suppose is similar

---

[95] 指標 *shihyoo* 'index'

[96] 指 *yubi* or *shi* 'finger'

[97] 指名 *shimee* 'nomination'

[98] 指定 *shitee* 'designation'

[99] 指摘 *shiteki* 'pointing out'

[100] 標 *hyoo*, *shirushi*, or *shirube* 'mark'

[101] 票 *hyoo* 'ballot' or 'vote'

[102] 投票 *toohyoo* 'voting'

to the definition of "index" that Google Translate provided for me. (Day 2, Week

4)

The third strategy, which is revealed in the excerpt (25), is the one Sakura employed to guess how to pronounce an unfamiliar *kanji* word. This strategy demonstrates her wide knowledge of *kanji* characters and how they work. Many *kanji* characters are constructed of multiple components, which are called radicals. Some radicals can stand as a basic *kanji* character by themselves, while others exist exclusively as a radical. There are seven specific shapes and positions of radicals that are helpful in looking up a *kanji* character in a dictionary: 1) *hen* (the radicals on the left side), 2) *tsukuri* (the radicals on the right side), 3) *kanmuri* (the radicals of the top), 4) *ashi* (the radicals on the bottom), 5) *kamae* (the radicals enclosing the *kanji*), 6) *tare* (the radicals hanging down on the left), and 7) *nyo* (the radicals enclosing the left and bottom). In most cases, these radicals are closely related to the meaning of *kanji*. The rest of a *kanji* provides its pronunciation. Sakura knew this system and tried to make use of it to figure out how to pronounce a *kanji* character she did not know.

The fourth strategy Sakura used was her pre-knowledge of the Chinese language. Sakura took Chinese courses for three years in her high school days. From this learning experience, she gained much knowledge of Chinese characters, which have much in common with Japanese *kanji*. She took advantage of this knowledge for this academic reading task. It seems that this attempt succeeded in some cases but not in other cases. When her attempt did not work well, it seemed to be because the meaning of the Japanese *kanji* was not the same as that of Chinese *kanji*, or because she applied the Chinese meaning of the *kanji* to the Japanese *kanji* in the wrong way. The excerpt (26) presented below shows the latter case.

(26) I had taken three years of Mandarin Chinese in high school, and know that in

Chinese it means "not," acts very similarly to the English prefix "un-." I suppose

this usage could make sense for the word 没頭,[103] in which case someone could

be perceived as "having no head" for being too engrossed or preoccupied with

something. But what about in the case of 沈没?[104] "Not 沈んでいる"[105] wouldn't

make sense, because the word 沈没 means sinking … In a similar way, how does

没[106] function in 死没?[107] According to Google Translate, 死没 means "date of

death," and 死没者[108] means "victims" … (Day 3, Week 2)

In this excerpt (26), Sakura attempts to deduce the function of the Chinese character, 没

botsu 'death' or 'rejection,' used in Japanese *kanji* compounds. She first retrieved what she

learned in her Chinese class in high school: the Chinese character 没 has a similar function of

negation in Chinese as an English prefix "un-." Thus, she applied the knowledge to a Japanese

kanji compound 没頭 *bottoo* 'absorption.' It worked well. Then, she tried to do the same with

two other Japanese *kanji* compounds 沈没 *chinbotsu* 'sinking' and 死没 *shibotsu* 'death,' but it

---

[103] 没頭 *bottoo* 'absorption'

[104] 沈没 *chinbotsu* 'sinking'

[105] 沈んでいる *shizundeiru* 'sunk' or 'submerged'

[106] 没 *botsu* 'died' or 'rejection'

[107] 死没 *shibotsu* 'death'

[108] 死没者 *shibotsusha* 'victim' or 'the dead'

did not work well for her. The reason that this attempt did not succeed was that she did not know or take into consideration the location of *kanji* in Japanese compounds. When the *kanji* 没 *botsu* is the first *kanji* of a compound word, it functions as a negation, such as an English prefix "un-." However, when it appears in the second *kanji* of a compound word, it functions as a verb meaning "to go down," "to set," "to die," "to sink," or "to become invisible." Therefore, in the case of 沈没 *chinbotsu* and 死没 *shibotsu*, she should have applied one of these meanings: the first word 沈没 *chinbotsu* means "to sink," constituted of 沈 *chin* "to sink" and 没 *botsu* "to sink" and "to become invisible," and the second word 死没 *shibotsu* means "to die,"[109] made up of two *kanji* characters of one meaning, 死 *shi* "to die" and 没 *botsu* "to die."

Sakura's final strategy was the simplest one: looking up a word in a dictionary or Google Translate. She mainly consulted a dictionary when she had no clue to deduce the meaning of word. Some words in the reading articles were totally unfamiliar to her and she could not use any of her strategies mentioned above. In that case, she looked up the unfamiliar word in Google Translate, and tried to associate its meaning with something else she had learned. In addition, even in the case where she could do some deduction for the meaning of an unfamiliar word, after she did as much of it as possible, she looked up the word to see if her deduction was correct.

5.3 A follow-up Interview and email exchanges – Sakura's unceasing motivation

The last data I will present in this chapter is a follow-up interview and our email exchanges. From the very beginning of this dissertation study, Sakura and I talked a lot, which was sometimes a casual conversation about pop culture and college classes and other times a

---

[109] The meaning Sakura noted from Google Translate, "date of death," is not a general meaning of this word. Instead, it is only used in a specific case, such as an inscription of tombstone or chronology.

formal interview as in the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Most of the interview data were used to describe her character and background in the earlier sections (see section 4.1). The additional data I will present below, which was not included in the original plan of this dissertation study, are a phone interview which was conducted on June 10, 2018, two years after the four-week intensive program and email exchanges which occurred in October 2023, five years after the interview.

Out of various findings I obtained from these communications, I focus on her strong, ever-lasting motivation and her self-analysis on its source. First, the follow-up phone interview will be described, and then a summary of our email exchanges will be presented.

5.3.1 The source of Sakura's motivation from the interview data

Where did Sakura's motivation come from? What made her so eager to master Japanese to the level of native-born Japanese? None of the students in the Japanese class for heritage speakers, except Sakura, had so much interest in Japanese as to spend their extra time on studying advanced Japanese. On the other hand, Sakura was different. She volunteered to participate in this program even though it would give her no credits or no certificates for its completion. She purely wanted to learn more Japanese, to advance her Japanese proficiency level closer to Japanese college students or adults in Japan. In this section, I will search the interview data with Sakura for possible sources of Sakura's high motivation to learn Japanese.

The first interview with Sakura, which was a preliminary interview on February 12, 2016, revealed an interesting, in fact, astonishing, fact. Sakura mentioned that although she was highly motivated to learn Japanese and she spoke it well, she did not start to speak Japanese until she attended the Japanese class for heritage speakers at UCLA. Up until her high school days, she

understood some Japanese but did not even try to speak it. When she talked to her mother at home, Sakura spoke English, while her mother used Japanese with some simple words in English, as is seen in many heritage language speakers' home.

In this very first interview, Sakura provided substantial information about her family background and language experience. Her father was from Laos and spoke English. Sakura mentioned that the primary reason she did not speak Japanese at home was that her father did not understand Japanese, and Sakura did not want to make her father feel excluded by her and her mother's communicating in Japanese or to sound like they were talking in secrecy.

Although she did not use Japanese in her verbal communication, Sakura first got an interest in learning Japanese in her seventh-grade days. The catalyst was Japanese TV dramas and variety shows. Sakura retrospectively mentioned that she really made a lot of effort to learn Japanese. When she encountered unfamiliar words or phrases while watching those Japanese TV programs, Sakura consulted a dictionary or the Internet for them. Then, she wrote them down with their English translations on paper and posted them on the wall all around her room. This was her FIRST intentional approach to learn Japanese that she had taken in her life. Also, this was the first demonstration of her high motivation to learn Japanese. Soon after she got interested in Japanese TV programs, Sakura became a big fan of a group of boy singers, named *Arashi*. This provided her with further encouragement to study Japanese. She listened to many of their songs repeatedly, and tried hard to understand what they sang. She read the lyrics through, looked up any unfamiliar word in a dictionary or the Internet, and sang their songs to their CDs. She also needed to learn how to read complicated *kanji* characters the lyrics had. Practice makes perfect. Sakura gradually became able to read the *kanji* words in the lyrics promptly, considerably improving her passive knowledge of Japanese.

There are three intriguing and noteworthy points in Sakura's learning Japanese. One was that, even though she watched the Japanese TV programs with her younger sister, Sakura was the only one who was interested, to be more exact, absorbed, in learning Japanese after that. Her sister enjoyed watching Japanese TV shows with English subtitles with Sakura from time to time, but her interest did not go further to want to watch them without the subtitles. It may be due to the difference in aptitude between Sakura and her sister or due to the difference in their relationship with their Japanese mother and thus the gap in the amount of the exposure to Japanese they could gain from their mother. There should be multiple factors entangled and affecting these sisters' differences. However, one presumably biggest factor was, mentioned Sakura during the interview on May 12, 2016, that her sister had speech disability. Her mother noticed it and consulted a doctor. She considered her speaking Japanese might have affected her daughter's language development, then giving up talking to her younger sister in Japanese. Her decision to communicate in the only one language, English, was intended to save her daughter from the exacerbation of speech difficulty.

Another intriguing point was that Sakura's choice of foreign language course at her high school. Even though Sakura had already had a great interest in learning Japanese, she did not take a Japanese course in her high school.[110] Instead, she took a Chinese course for the required foreign language credits. She did not remember what had made her choose Chinese for the mandatory foreign language credits, she mentioned in the interview, but she believed it had been a good choice because Chinese is one of the languages which have the biggest number of speakers around the world. She also added that the knowledge of Chinese characters she had learned at high school then helped her master Japanese *kanji* words more efficiently.

---

[110] Her high school did not offer Japanese classes when she enrolled in the school (see 4.1.1).

The third interesting point was related to her relationship to others in her learning of Japanese. The previous research suggested that the learner's community or social network helps the learner get motivated to acquire the target language ("acculturation" in Schumann, 1976, 1978, 1986 and "integrative motivation" in Gardner & Lambert, 1972). It is also presumable that a learner would be more easily able to learn the target language if he/she has a "study buddy" or friends who have the same interest as he/she does.[111] However, Sakura did not have any friends who were interested in Japanese dramas or Japanese singers, according to the interview with her. I asked her the same question in different ways multiple times, but her reply was invariantly, "No, there was no one I was talking to about Japanese drama or variety shows. I think I was the only one who was a fan of *Arashi*. My mother also watched Japanese TV shows, but we seldom talked about them." Therefore, "acculturation" and "integrative motivation" does not exactly apply to Sakura's case. Nevertheless, she persistently continued studying Japanese and attempted various approaches to improve her Japanese proficiency. Where does this high motivation of hers come from? Throughout the four-week program, this was a riddle; I interviewed her weekly during the program and consistently inquired her about her motivation indirectly but could not draw any sensible conclusion.

Two years after the four-week program, in the year of 2018, I was able to have another chance to interview Sakura. It was a one-hour follow-up interview, which was carried out entirely in Japanese. This was a natural choice because I immediately grasped that Sakura had made a remarkable progress in her control of the language. The purpose of this interview was to find if the academic Japanese program provided a positive effect on her subsequent life in any way. I was also personally curious about what the life of Sakura, a successful Japanese heritage

---

[111] I also know a few cases in which Japanese heritage children learned Japanese because she wanted to watch Japanese dramas with her mother and chat with her about them.

language speaker, would be like after her graduation. I also wanted to finally find the answer to an old question that had been bothering me all this time: "Why was Sakura's motivation so high that she learned advanced Japanese very quickly even without any enrollment in Japanese school in her childhood?"

In response to my first question, "Do you think the four-week program was helpful in any way?" Sakura mentioned that the program probably helped her improve her comprehension of academic Japanese, though she added that she had also employed many other apps and methods to learn Japanese. Thus, there is no scientific way to isolate the effects of the four-week program from other learning methods and to examine how much it had improved her Japanese proficiency.

More interesting to me was her answer to the second question: Sakura's life after graduation. Her motivation to learn Japanese was still so high that she applied to a Japanese company in California and started her career in a Japanese-speaking environment. Her answer to this second question was clearly related to my third question, which I had been most curious about: Sakura had a distinctive type of motivation, which seemed to be stemming from her identity as a heritage speaker. More on this to follow shortly below.

To return to my second question, Sakura told me that in the September of 2016, which was around three months after this academic Japanese program finished, she went to Tokyo to study at a university in Tokyo during fall quarter. There she took four classes: two were Japanese language classes ("Japanese for heritage speakers" class and "*kanji* 2" class[112]), and the other

---

[112] According to Sakura, this *kanji* course was designed for native Japanese students who returned from overseas because of their father's business, Japanese heritage speakers, like Sakura, and international students. The course had three levels, i.e., *Kanji* 1, *Kanji* 2, and *Kanji* 3. Sakura was placed in the middle-level class after a placement test.

two were American literature (which was her major at UCLA) and English history. All those classes were offered in Japanese and Sakura attended the classes together with native-born Japanese.[113] Taking the courses delivered in Japanese was supposed to be challenging for her; however, she was determined to succeed and motivated enough to do so and completed her courses there. Studying at a university in Japan was one of her dreams she had had for years.

Sakura's process of learning Japanese did not stop there. After she returned from Japan, she enrolled in UCLA again for one quarter, and graduated in the March of 2017 (she completed the four-year university program only in two years and two quarters!). Right after graduation, she applied to a full-time job for a Japanese company in southern California.[114] She started to work at the U.S. headquarters of this company. Most of the employees working at the headquarters were Japanese employees sent from Japan or locally hired Japanese Americans. Her boss only spoke Japanese, so she had to use Japanese all the time when she needed to communicate with others in her office. Her use of English was limited to when she communicated with people working at branches, because they were in most cases local Americans who were hired to attend to American customers and did not speak Japanese. The company's employment of Sakura contributed to her boss and co-workers who communicate in Japanese. It also helped Sakura practice Japanese on a daily basis. She seemed to be enjoying this environment because she could use Japanese with Japanese native speakers in her daily lives. On the other hand, her

---

[113] Most of the students who enrolled in the classes of Japanese for heritage speakers and *kanji* of Level 2 were returnee students, i.e., those students who stayed in a foreign country for some years due to their father's business. These students were born in Japan, had Japanese parents, and were to take the same track as other Japanese students after returning to Japan.

[114] The company that Sakura worked for was a company founded in Japan by a Japanese owner, which offered multi-entertainment facilities. The company had more than 50 branches opened or planning to open across the U.S. as of 2021.

Japanese skills must have been viewed as a great advantage by her future employer. She remembered she was accepted by the company the next day after the interview.

It seems that Sakura obtained a perfect environment for her to learn and use Japanese. However, her desire to learn Japanese and eventually to live like a Japanese person did not allow her to stay in this company for the rest of her life. She mentioned that she had at first intended to work for the company for many years to come, but then she felt like it was something different from what she originally wanted to achieve. Sakura had long wanted to move to Japan and work there. She said it had been her dream since she was 18 years old. However, she did not have a specific idea of what she wanted to do in Japan. Thus, she could not put her dream into practice at that time and decided to work in a Japanese company in the U.S. As a result, she realized that, even though she could use the Japanese language every day, merely working for a Japanese company in the U.S. culture did not satisfy her.

Regarding my third question about what created Sakura's high motivation to learn Japanese, our exchange was quite extended. Her fluent native-sounding responses led to more and more questions, filling up the hour and testifying to her continuing motivation. I needed an explanation for the history of her Japanese language learning as I understood it. The history was quite unusual: The fact that she never enrolled in Japanese school in her childhood, as many other Japanese heritage children did, but taught herself Japanese by using Japanese songs and TV shows after puberty was in itself an intriguing fact that caught my attention at the very beginning. It was attending formal Japanese language instruction for heritage language learners for the first time at UCLA that brought her to the voluntary experimental four-week program organized by me. Her motivation to study Japanese became strikingly visible at this point. Shortly after my four-week intensive academic reading and writing program, she went to a

university in Japan, started to work for a Japanese company after coming back to the U.S., and still now has a strong hope to move to Japan and live there for the rest of her life.

Frankly speaking, I was curious about what Sakura would do in Japan. I posed this question to her in a straightforward way. Then, she returned me a prompt answer, again all in a fluent Japanese. "Yes, I want to work there like you, as a college-level English teacher." She mentioned that it was a decision after a one-year contemplation. She added that she had the plan to live and work in Japan since she was 18 years old. However, at that time she was not able to crystallize any specific idea as to how she could make a living there. She had harbored the dream of moving to Japan for three years at UCLA, seeking for a good way of surviving in Japan. She even attempted to fly away from the U.S. to Japan with no plan after graduation, but it was turned down by her parents. So, after all, her plan to move to Japan did not come true, but she reflected on that event, remarking that her failure to fly away to Japan in turn gave her a good amount of time to reconsider her future plan more seriously and more realistically.

Why is Sakura so determined to move to Japan? Why is she so obsessed with living there? The answer to this question would be closely related to her motivation or the origin of her motivation. Thus, I went on to get down to the main issue: Where does her high motivation come from?

I will now summarize Sakura's answers about the origins of her motivation that she provided in this interview.

To my short and direct question, Sakura offered a long response (more than 20 minutes), in an honest and sincere manner, carefully selecting her wordings. It also seemed like a process through which she was analyzing the origins of her aspiration for Japan, her engagement with Japan, and her Japanese self. With a preface that there was no single cause of her high

143

motivation, Sakura began narrating her memory of a family trip to Japan when she was 18, the

trip that was responsible for her decision to move to Japan someday, as is mentioned above. She,

her mother, and her sister visited her grandparents' home in Japan during the summer vacation.

She recalled the memory, saying that vaguely, she had felt more comfortable in Japan than in the

U.S., in terms of set of values or view of the world. She referred to herself as 40 % American and

60 % Japanese. She also cited her friend's weblog, which was the only part where she spoke

English during this one-hour interview: "and I, I can live comfortably in the United States but I

feel more comfortable in Japan." She remarked that this phrase expresses her feeling most

precisely. She also remembered with delight that her Japanese host family had pointed out they

had thought she sounded like a Japanese from their email exchanges with her.

Again, Sakura went back to my original question ("What motivated her so much about

Japan?") and continued to recollect her life. After all, she mentioned, it was an accumulation of

small and trivial things for her 22-year life, and it was influential enough to lead her to make a

big decision of her life. She felt her ways of thinking were somewhat different from her

American friends' and sometimes it made her feel uncomfortable. She did not specify where her

discomfort came from more in detail immediately. However, after some reflection upon her past

experience, one critical event suddenly occurred to her. It had had, she believed, an impact on

her decision, and more remarkably her identity. This event was her participation in "*Kakehashi*

'Bridging' Project – The Bridge for Tomorrow" ("The Bridge" hereafter),[115] an exchange

program offered by the Japanese government.

---

[115] The Bridge is promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA). It is an exchange program between Japan and North American nations. The Project aims to "promote mutual trust and understanding among the people of Japan, the U.S. and Canada and to build a basis for future friendship and cooperation, to encourage an understanding of Japan, and to convey information about Japan to the public through participants of this project" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2021).

Sakura participated in The Bridge when she was in her second year at UCLA in December of 2015. This experience provided her with an opportunity to realize that she was a Japanese American with a Japanese heritage and that she should contribute to the relationship between the two countries and cultures. This realization of hers closely relates to the second key point of this section, i.e., that Sakura had a distinctive type of motivation, borne out of this experience.

Before her participation in The Bridge, Sakura's motivation to learn Japanese was from her interest: she wanted to learn more Japanese to fully enjoy her favorite songs and to understand more of what was said in her favorite TV shows. Not until she enrolled in the Japanese courses for heritage speakers at UCLA had she spoken Japanese either at home or at school. She recalled that in her high school days her classmates had known a lot more about the Japanese language and culture than she had, and that she felt somewhat behind them. And that was the case during all her high school years.

However, while she participated in The Bridge, Sakura saw other participants around her who are the same Japanese Americans as she was. Some of them were the second generation of Japanese Americans as she was, but most of them were the third or fourth generation. By conversing with those other Japanese Americans, she noticed that there were various types of Japanese Americans, and she realized that many of the Japanese Americans she met in The Bridge could not speak Japanese and/or had little or no knowledge about Japan and the Japanese culture, even though they were JAPANESE Americans. Sakura described her impression at that time that her communication with them had aroused her subconscious Japanese identity, and that she had realized SHE must play the real "Bridge" role between Japan and the U.S. When she was in high school, her classmates knew much about Japan, though they were not Japanese

145

Americans. Now she encountered other Japanese descendants, who knew much less about Japan than her American classmates, in the Japanese governmental event. Her motivation to learn Japanese shifted from the one of cultural interest to the one from a sense of mission. I will discuss this special motivation type later in section 6.1.

5.3.2 Sakura's emails in October 2023

In the fall of 2023, I reached the final stage of writing my dissertation, and I needed to check some facts about Sakura. The last time I emailed her in 2022, she did not reply. I tried emailing her again, wondering where she lived and how. To my surprise, this time, her reply was delivered immediately.

Now, Sakura's written Japanese was perfect. It appeared like an email written by a young educated native Japanese lady. Her use of honorific language was not only correct but also appropriate. We exchanged several emails after that, and all her emails were just perfect. It was no wonder: Sakura said she had lived in Japan for almost FIVE years since December 2018.

In her email, Sakura described her new life in detail. She lived in Tokyo. She taught English at a junior high school and a high school there. She said she lived a happy, fulfilling life. Her strong motivation to master Japanese and to become a "Japanese" finally flew her to the land of her dream.

I did not include these email communications in the main part of my analysis of her motivation. However, I believe that her post-program life between 2016 and 2023 provides us with another good illustration of her strong motivation.

CHAPTER 6

Discussions

In this chapter, I will discuss four points from the findings. The first and the most important point is Sakura's strong motivation. It was an unexpected finding when I first planned this dissertation study. Thus, in section 6.1, past research in language learners' motivation will be reviewed first. Then, I will discuss the finding of this study, Sakura's special motivation type which is possibly peculiar to heritage language speakers. I termed it "heritage speaker motivation." Next, in 6.2, another remarkable point in Sakura's writing, i.e., L1 transfer, will be discussed in relation to bilingualism. Third, the underlying concept of this four-week intensive academic reading and writing program, i.e., usage-based language learning, will be discussed, particularly in terms of its effects. Lastly, I will focus on the benefits of qualitative approach in this dissertation study.

6.1 Sakura's heritage speaker motivation

This dissertation study and the four-week academic reading and writing program were first designed on the basis of usage-based language acquisition theory. The underlying premise was that many Japanese heritage speakers speak Japanese fluently but are not able to write Japanese as the native-born Japanese at about the same age do, and the primary reason why they are not proficient writers in Japanese was their lack of exposure to written Japanese and of chances to write in formal settings. This premise is reasonable, and Sakura's remarkable progress in writing argument essays confirmed the importance of exposure.

After the four-week program was over, however, the most remarkable finding was not the correlation of success and exposure but the correlation of success with Sakura's extraordinarily high motivation throughout the program. Her motivation to have a perfect command of Japanese and to become 'Japanese' never faded. After all, even if a vast amount of exposure to Japanese were poured into the learners, if they responded willy-nilly or refused to learn, they would not learn anything. Therefore, I will present what turned out to be *the* most important factors of Sakura's success, namely her motivation and identity, here in this first section of the discussion.

I will first briefly review the past literature on language learning motivation. Then, I will discuss Sakura's motivation to master Japanese and how her motivation changed at each phase, and then I will show how she discovered her current goal in life based on her being a heritage speaker.

6.1.1 Past literature on language learning motivation

Gardner's instrumental and integrative motivations

The research in motivation in second language acquisition began around the 1960s. The most influential research in those days was those of Gardner and Lambert. Their research first started with learners of French in Canada (Gardner & Lambert, 1959), then expanded to English-speaking learners and French Americans in the US and learners of English in the Philippines (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). They used questionnaires and factor analysis, asking their research participants to fill out the questionnaires and analyzing them by means of the factor analysis. In their studies in 1972, they found two major orientations to determine success in second language learning: instrumental orientation and integrative orientation. The former reflects "the practical value and advantages of learning a new language," and the latter concerns itself with "a sincere

and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 132). From the results of their long-term research, Gardner created the socio-educational model of second language acquisition (Gardner, 2001, 2006). He also developed these questionnaires for broader use and published the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)[116] in 2004 (see Gardner, 2010).

The two orientations, instrumental and integrative, have been referred to in many other studies on motivation. In addition, their questionnaire, AMTB, was used or applied by other researchers to measure learner motivation. However, there were also problems and criticisms about their research. First, the instrumental and integrative motivations are not clearly distinguishable. For example, in the case of a learner of Japanese who loves Japanese culture including anime (integrative orientation) and wants to work for a Japanese anime company (instrumental orientation), it would be difficult to identify which orientation was more salient or influential for his/her learning Japanese. Second, this distinction of orientations of learning a second/foreign language drew the interest of language teachers, but identifying learners' orientation type does not help them with their progress. Third, the studies conducted by Gardner and Lambert (1972), which showed that the integrative motivation would be a better predictor of a learner's success, used North American data, while studies in other parts of the world, especially those on learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), found that the instrumental motivation was more crucial.[117] As Gass and Selinker pointed out in 2001, the types of

---

[116] The AMTB had the translated versions which were used in their research in Brazil, Croatia, Japan, Poland, Romania, and Spain (Catalonia).

[117] Gardner and Lambert's (1972) study of EFL learners in the Philippines also obtained the result showing the instrumental motivation is more dominant than the integrative motivation.

motivation, instrumental or integrative, are influenced by the learner's social milieu, which shows the limitations of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) claims.

Another issue that has been raised about their research and its method is the limitation of a quantitative approach when investigating learners' motivation. This issue is often accompanied by another problem about the reliability of self-reports. The self-assessment of learners varies across individuals, and researchers can only hope that the individual gaps when they fill out the questionnaire will be as small as possible. Besides, when the quantitative results come out, they are all numbers and percentages and it is extremely difficult to know each learner's degree of motivation and motivation antecedent. In this situation, after the turn of the century, the focus on the study of motivation gradually moved to individual differences of language learners.

Schumann's approach from the neurobiological and evolutionary perspective

Schumann (1997, 2001, 2004) had a completely different approach to language learners' motivation. He argued that emotion was the key to second language learning and that it explained why the range of achievement after puberty was enormous (Schumann, 1997, p. xv). He also proposed that language learning could be seen as a form of foraging (Schumann, 2001, p. 21). He described the similarity of these two evolutionarily driven activities from the neurobiological perspective as follows.

> Both learning and foraging involve the generation of an incentive motive or goal and the transformation of that motivation into motor and cognitive activity to achieve the goal. The neural mechanisms subserving these processes may be largely identical. (Schumann, 2001, p. 26)

Schumann (1997) referred to the system that generated the incentive motive, food or knowledge, in human's neural system as 'stimulus appraisal.' According to his hypothesis, the mechanism which generates, maintains, and modulates a goal and also which translates motivation into motor activity is part of human biology, but the stimuli that turn on this system are learned from experience and depend on individuals. Schumann used three terms to describe how the stimulus appraisal works: 'homeostats,' 'sociostats,' and 'somatic value.' Homeostats are the basic biological regulation which innately exists in organisms and moves them into action, such as to feed and to breathe. Sociostats are the innate tendencies of human beings to seek out interaction with other humans. They are revealed in their early lives, when infants vocalize to get the attention of others. These inherited systems biologically affect the activities of human organisms, but they also directly or indirectly influence the third system, which is called somatic value. Somatic value is not innate but is gradually constructed and modified by the experience of the organism. For example, an infant tries to draw his mother's attention by dint of sociostats, and if he receives positive experience repetitively, such as being cherished and feeling safe, then it leads to his positive somatic value. On the contrary, if an infant's experience with its mother is extremely negative, it amplifies his negative somatic value with his mother.[118] In the neural circuits, these systems make a positive stimulus appraisal and release chemicals such as dopamine to the amygdala and the orbitofrontal cortex, which start the mechanism of motor activity.

---

[118] Deleuze (1979) described a French learner of multiple languages who was a schizophrenic. He hated and feared his mother from his early experience, and he even hated her voice and language. This was his reason for learning multiple languages.

In the following sections, I would like to discuss Sakura's case as it can be explained in terms of the aforementioned studies, especially focusing on her high, though shifting, motivation, which has continued for the long term and finally contributed much to her success.

6.1.2 Sakura's motivation to master Japanese

Sakura's motivation to learn Japanese – junior high school days

Sakura's active learning of Japanese started when she was around 12 years old. What first motivated her to embark on this journey of learning Japanese was a Japanese boy band of five members named *Arashi*. Before she became a big fan of *Arashi*, she neither studied Japanese nor thought of doing so. During the interview, she did not talk about why she grew enormously fond of the boy band. She may not have remembered why it happened. It may have been something like the first love or "crush" that almost every adolescent experiences. However, why was it a Japanese band? Why, given that her most comfortable language at this time was English, did she not begin to like an American, British, or Canadian singer or actor?

If we apply Schumann's (1997) neurobiological view of motivation, this question will be answered. Sakura had heard the Japanese language spoken around her since she was very young. Her mother talked to her in Japanese and her relationship with her mother was good. This experience built up a positive somatic value in her neural system. Even though she said she had never spoken Japanese until she enrolled in a Japanese class at UCLA in January 2016,[119] she at least understood most of her mother's Japanese. Thus, Sakura had a good advantage when she started learning Japanese. However, considering the fact that she viewed English as her most comfortable language, "language" alone would not be the key determinant for her "crush" with

---

[119] Sakura's mother said that Sakura spoke Japanese to her during her very early childhood, but Sakura herself did not remember it.

Japanese boys. She grew up surrounded by Asian people: her Japanese mother, her Lao father, and her Thai baby-sitter. These people created a loving, comfortable environment for her while she was very young, and her positive somatic value grew in her mind.

After she "met" the boys of *Arashi*, Sakura purchased their CDs (or asked her mother to buy them). Now she got the lyrics of their songs. She became eager to know what they were singing and to sing with them. This was the first phase of Sakura's learning motivation. If we consider how Gardner and Lambert's theory can account for Sakura's case, this type of motivation may fall into one of the integrative motivation with which a learner wants to get more familiar with the target culture. However, her case will be better explained by Schumann's neurobiological approach in combination with her "crush" phenomenon that almost all teenagers go through. Her study of Japanese started purely because of her love for her secret idols and because she wanted to fully enjoy their songs and TV programs. At the time when she began studying Japanese, her interest was only in her favorite singers, and not in the Japanese culture.

Another interesting point of Sakura's learning of Japanese in the first phase was that she enjoyed her favorite songs, dramas, and variety shows by her favorite boy group, *Arashi*, all by herself. Some teenagers share their favorites with their best friends and enjoy their songs and videos together with them. It helps to create the teenagers' sense of belonging and reinforce their relationships. However, Sakura said that she had never done that. It was all for her own pleasure. She said she did not remember anyone who had had an interest in Japanese songs or singers around her in her junior and senior high school days. Her secret idols, *Arashi*, were literally her secret. This characteristic also marks a difference between Sakura's motivation and the integrative motivation in general.

Sakura's secret idols stayed in her mind and kept motivating her to learn more Japanese.[120] In time, her "crush" on her idols, *Arashi*, turned into a more stable love for them, and her listening to their songs, watching their TV shows, and learning Japanese from their lyrics became more habitual and regular.

The expansion of Sakura's interest in Japanese

After she gained more understanding of song lyrics of her "crush" idols, Sakura's interest in Japanese lyrics expanded to those of other Japanese singers. She listened to as many J-pop songs as she could. It was in her junior and senior high school days. What amazed and impressed me was that she remembered almost all the lyrics with the very high degree of accuracy, despite the years that had passed since she learned them. She sang some songs for me during the interviews for the four-week intensive program, especially when I asked her how she learned a particular word or phrase. Her singing was so fluent that it sounded like a Japanese native teenager was singing.

Thus, she expansively enjoyed Japanese pop songs of various Japanese singers, but her number one idol continued to be *Arashi*. She did not have so much interest in American songs. This is an interesting point. Teenagers tend to be absorbed in songs which have something in common with their feelings and/or experiences, i.e., songs that resonate with them. Despite the fact that she asserted that her first language or most comfortable language was English, her music preferences show that she perceived more empathy and resonation in Japanese songs than in those of her native language, English. This point is also demonstrated by her multiple

---

[120] Her object of love finally transferred from her secret idols, *Arashi*, to her real Japanese boyfriend after she moved to Japan and started to work there. She described this happening in her email to me, "Now that my real life is full of happiness, I do not need to love *Arashi* any longer" (Translated by me).

comments during the interviews: "I feel more comfortable with Japanese than Americans" and "I felt being different from them when I was talking with my classmates." I will discuss more of her comments of this sort later. While the people surrounding her created a positive somatic value toward Japanese in her mind in her early childhood, something "Japanese," i.e., Japanese way of feeling, perceiving and thinking, may have formed in her mind as well.

A big shift in Sakura's motivation type – the Kakehashi Project 'the Bridge'

Sakura's motivation to study Japanese began with a group of Japanese boy singers, but there was an event in which her motivation made a major shift and became a deeper, perpetuating kind of motivation. This pivotal event happened in December 2015, when she was a sophomore at UCLA. Sakura volunteered to participate in the Bridge (see section 5.3.1), which was run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The Ministry promoted Japan's Friendship Ties Programs with other parts of the world, and the *Kakehashi* Project – The Bridge for Tomorrow – was one of them, which exchanged more than 100 youths between the U.S. and Japan. Sakura applied for this program and participated in the one-week homestay program in Japan.

Interestingly enough, Sakura talked about this Bridge for the first time in a follow-up interview, which was held in June 2018, two years after she participated in my four-week Japanese reading and writing program. She may have analyzed her own life after the program, or the multiple questions I asked her, e.g., "What made you so eager to study Japanese?" might have made her ask herself the same question as well. Anyway, Sakura, during the phone interview in 2018, described in retrospect how the Bridge changed her.

155

(27) "Joining the *Kakehashi* 'Bridge,' I met other Japanese heritage speakers for the first time. Some were second-generation Japanese Americans like me, and others were third- or fourth-generation. I was able to communicate with them, and also with native Japanese living in Japan, and it made me realize more strongly that 'I'm Japanese' or 'I'm a Japanese American.' It was probably the first time I started to have that kind of self-awareness. Until I was in high school, there were many young Americans around me who were able to speak Japanese better than I was, or knew more about Japan, Japanese language, and Japanese culture than I did, and (since I did not speak any Japanese to others,) I took it for granted that there were a lot of non-Japanese who knew much more about Japan, and spoke much more Japanese, than I did. It didn't bother me. However, when I joined the Bridge, I saw many Japanese descendants participating in it. They couldn't speak Japanese and they didn't know much about Japan. Maybe, that made me think, 'I need to become a *kakehashi* 'bridge' and act more to bridge between the U.S. and Japan as a Japanese.'"

(From the interview in June 2018. Translated by me.)

This excerpt from the interview with Sakura shows two interesting and noteworthy points: one is that she thought in her high school days that there were many non-Japanese students around her who had a much better command of Japanese than she did as a heritage speaker of Japanese; and the other is that meeting other Japanese heritage speakers who did not speak as much Japanese as she did, in turn, caused her to realize the fact that she was a Japanese, leading her sense of mission to grow together with her self-awareness as a Japanese.

156

She mentioned, when we first talked in 2016, that she had never spoken Japanese until she first enrolled in a Japanese class at UCLA (see 4.1). She also mentioned that she had understood most of the Japanese spoken by her mother and that on TV shows. These facts, combined with the above excerpt from the interview, suggest that Sakura *understood* Japanese quite well, but she did not have enough confidence to speak it in the presence of others. This is supported by the second point shown above. She encountered other Japanese descendants, who did not speak Japanese at all or as well as she did, and it boosted her confidence and drove her to study more about Japan and the Japanese language.

The second interesting point that I mentioned above reveals another type of motivation, which has not been proposed in the field of heritage language study so far. I will call it, as a working term, *heritage motivation*. Sakura's motivation at this phase included a strong sense of mission. She also held a strong feeling of belongingness or identification, and because of it, responsibility to accomplish the mission which was now accompanied by her self-confidence. It may be like a feeling of mission that youths in a deserted village hold to reconstruct their hometown. They are full of love for their village, and they believe they are the only people who can revive the village with much self-confidence to do it. The key elements of this motivation are a sense of mission, a feeling of belongingness, love, and confidence. It may not be necessarily limited to heritage speakers. Foreign language learners may also develop this sense of mission. But all the conditions considered, heritage language speakers would probably have this motivation more often.[121] *Heritage motivation* that I proposed may be a type of integrative motivation, but I argue that it is a different type of motivation in that it already involves a feeling

---

[121] Heritage may also work as a factor to push away from in some cases. My working term, *heritage motivation*, captures only the positive aspects of heritage status and hence is used here only tentatively.

of belonging to the target language community, and is driven by a sense of mission, not merely by a personal interest.

Sakura's high motivation to become a Japanese – the four-week Japanese reading and writing program

After she participated in the Bridge in December 2015, which led to a major shift in her motivation type, though she was not conscious of the shift at that time, back in California, Sakura enrolled in a Japanese course for the first time in her life in January 2016, where we met for the first time as well. Her motivation to learn more advanced Japanese was exceptional, as I mentioned above several times, and no other student showed as high a motivation as she did when I recruited participants in this dissertation study (see sections 4.1.3 and 4.2.1).

Another remarkable indication of Sakura's high motivation was her perseverance in and completion of this four-week program. This program imposed a lot of daily tasks on her: (1) reading an editorial from a major newspaper, (2) writing the summary of the editorial and her opinion on it in Japanese, and (3) writing a daily journal concerning any part of the tasks in English. She was also required to meet me weekly to take an in-person interview and to write a short passage in Japanese for the purpose of checking her progress. It meant that she had to dedicate a considerable amount of time to this program during the four weeks. She may have spent almost all her time outside her coursework. However, she never showed even a slight sign of withdrawing from the program or complaining about the toughness of tasks. All her English journals showed her firm determination to complete the program and become more advanced in Japanese.

(28) With that said, I feel myself becoming more proficient in Japanese, at

least in reading and writing. I hope that by the end of this four-week period,

I'll be more apparently advanced in Japanese.

(Day 1 Week 1 of Sakura's English journal)

This excerpt (28) from Sakura's very first entry of English journal shows her strong hope to improve her proficiency of reading and writing Japanese. It is the last paragraph of her journal of the first day, and before this paragraph, she wrote about how many difficult *kanji* characters and words the editorial assigned on the day contained and how she overcame those difficulties. After making a lot of effort and spending hours completing the task of the first day, she must have been able to imagine that she would have to continue this same laborious task for another three weeks and six days. However, she never revealed any negative comment on her participation in this program, but tackled each daily task with an effort, self-discipline, and strong desire to become a more advanced Japanese user. This strong desire may have stemmed from her sense of mission-like motivation, because her participation in this four-week program happened after she joined the Bridge. She did not mention or write so in the interview or the daily English journals, however.

The follow-up interview and self-analysis

The fact that Sakura did not mention the Bridge as an influential event on her life indicates that at that time, she did not notice how much influence it would have in her later life. As I mentioned in the earlier section, she first mentioned this event in the follow-up interview in June 2018, two years after the four-week program. This interview gave me a lot of information

about what happened to her after the program and what she found through her prolonged self-analysis. Sakura went to Tokyo to study at a university there from September to December in 2016, came back to UCLA in January 2017 and graduated from UCLA in March 2017 (for more specific information of Sakura's life events, see Sakura's timeline). Soon after that, she was hired by a Japanese company and started to work at its US headquarters located in Los Angeles in June 2017. She had been working with many Japanese workers and communicating with them in Japanese all the time, which meant that her dream partially came true. During the follow-up interview, she sounded happy with her environment, but she also said that she still wanted to move to Japan and work there. According to her self-analysis, her experience of participating in the Bridge was the key event for her life, although this was the first time I heard about it.

This provides us with two interesting and important observations: one is the reliability of self-reports in the conventional motivation study, and the other is the importance of self-analysis. The early studies on learners' motivations employed self-reports by questionnaires and factor analysis. They provided interesting findings of two major categories of language learning motivation, i.e., the instrumental motivation and the integrative motivation, but the reliability of self-reports had been questioned (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Tesser & Shaffer, 1990). Sakura's case also casts a question on the method of self-reports by questionnaires in the quantitative approach. If she had taken the questionnaire when she first enrolled in a Japanese course at UCLA in winter 2016, her strong "mission-like" *heritage motivation* would not have been found. The questionnaire would be powerless to find her specific type of motivation or to probe the depth of her feelings as a heritage speaker, her thoughts, and her experiences on which her newly found *heritage motivation* was based. In Sakura's case, only by her prolonged self-analysis did she herself finally realize what motivated her to master Japanese so eagerly and what made her even

160

desire to live in Japan so strongly. Sakura did not mention the Bridge during the four-week program, which means she did not notice how influential it was and would be. It took Sakura a long time, and she probably needed to develop a skill to analyze as well, to connect her experiences and life events with each other and figure out their meanings and influences on her life. Before and during the four-week program, thoroughly impressed by her motivation, I repeatedly asked Sakura during the interviews about her background, life events, how she had learned Japanese that far, and what had motivated her to study Japanese. Regarding the question of what motivated her, she did not have a clear answer at that time. My repeated questioning probably led her to ask herself the same question. She must have eventually found her answer, and that was the Bridge. Thus, incorporating introspection as a factor in studying a learner's motivation is necessary, and it needs to be kept in mind that it does not necessarily come easily or spontaneously. Learners need a guide or training to analyze themselves and a self-analysis may in most cases take a long time. It follows that, to unravel a learner's learning motivation to a profound level, a long-term study including interviews and self-analyses is methodologically critical.

6.2 The role of L1 transfer in L2 writing

Sakura's daily argument essays showed clear evidence that she thought and planned in her first language (L1), English, and then translated her ideas and sentences into the target language (TL), Japanese. During this thinking and translating process, some linguistic features in English which were not found in Japanese were transferred into her Japanese essay (negative transfer). In this section, I first review past studies on L1 transfer and its waxing and waning in

the history, and then argue that L1 transfer to second language (L2)[122] writing is inevitable for adult L2 learners who have developed high skills of logical and/or literary writing in their L1 and who have not had a corresponding amount of experience of L2 reading and writing.

6.2.1 Past literature on L1 transfer – its ups and downs

Early research in the L1 effects on L2 in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) started around 1950, when the area of SLA was greatly influenced by behaviorism (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Karim & Nassaji 2013). "Learning is a cumulative process" (Postman, 1971, p. 1019), and any kind of new learning was considered to be shaped by what the learner had learned previously. Second language learning, like other learned habits, was recognized to involve an influence of a language acquired earlier, which was termed L1 transfer.

When a learner's L1 has many similarities to the target language, it facilitates L2 learning, such as the cases where a German learns English, or a Japanese learns Korean. On the other hand, when a learner's L1 and L2 have more differences than similarities, it may interfere with his/her L2 learning, such as the cases where an American learns Arabic, or a Japanese learns English. The former case is referred to as positive transfer, and the latter as negative transfer. Researchers in the SLA field viewed negative transfer as a major cause of learners' not succeeding in their second language learning. Based on the notion that difference causes difficulty, Lado (1957) formulated the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and the technical procedures to conduct the contrastive analysis in his seminal book, *Linguistics Across Cultures*. The CAH became predominant, and many studies examined the differences in rules and

---

[122] The term "L2" refers here to any language after first language acquisition. Thus, I do not make any distinction here between the second language (learned in the environment where it is used) and a foreign language (learned outside the environment where it is used), or between the second, third, and fourth language.

structures between two languages to predict what differences would make the learning of TL most difficult and to apply it to language learning and instruction.

Around 1970, the CAH gradually lost impetus. The most serious problem was that the behaviorism theory that underlay the CAH, i.e., language learning is a habit, was challenged by Chomsky (1965). However, SLA researchers also demonstrated that the principles of the CAH were problematic. Some empirical studies showed that many of learners' errors in TL were not primarily caused by their native languages (Dulay & Burt, 1974; Touchie, 1986), and that not all the errors which were predicted by the contrastive analysis occurred in leaner's L2 production (Dulay, et al., 1982; Zobl 1980). Additionally, the fundamental assumption of the CAH, 'differences between L1 and L2 lead to difficulty,' was also challenged. Similarities, as well as differences, sometimes caused errors (Dušková, 1984). Also, the definition of "difficulty," whether it was from the perspective of learners or that of teachers/linguists, i.e., whether "difficulty" was equated with "errors," was questioned (Kellerman, 1987). Faced with these criticisms, the CAH lost its ground and significance of "predicting learners' errors," leading to the next phase that is called error analysis.

Learners' errors still drew the interest of SLA researchers, but it was not for the prediction of their difficulties but as a strategy that learners use to make up for their deficiencies in L2 knowledge and skills (Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Koda, 1993; Wolfersberger, 2003). Earlier studies in the days of the CAH focused more on errors on learners' speech production, but in recent years the research interest of L1 transfer has become more varied, such as in L2 writing (Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992; Uzawa, 1996; Wolfersberger, 2003), in contrastive rhetoric in L2 writing (Kubota, 1998), or in L2 sentence comprehension (Koda, 1993).

6.2.2 L1 transfer in Sakura's essays

Section 5.1 showed various types errors that were found in Sakura's argument essays and her gradual advancement throughout the four weeks. Some of her errors were due to her imperfect grammar,[123] but some sentences which seemed unnatural as Japanese were, I suggested, directly translated from English. That is, she first planned her thoughts in English, and then translated them into Japanese. Adult learners have already learned their first language and, by using it, they have expressed their feelings, crystallized their thoughts, and logically persuaded others. In their L2, if they have no experience of doing these things either actively or passively, it is quite understandable for them to resort to their first language (or in this sense, any language in which they have experience of doing them) as a strategy.

In Sakura's case, various kinds of L1 influence were found in her writing on the surface level: words, case particles, and sentence structures. Almost all of them made sense if we assumed that her thought system and sentence-building processes were working in English. The word-level of transfers, which were most explicit where she used *katakana* words, were intentional. Sakura did not know the Japanese translations of particular words, such as "exposure" and "Google Translate," so she decided to write them in *katakana* (see section 5.1.1). This is her choice and thus these examples fall into "L1 transfer" in communication strategies (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997) and "language breakdown" in terms of ACTFL proficiency guidelines (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012). Actually, there is no good

---

[123] It was interesting enough that Sakura's Japanese, when it is spoken, sounded like a native speaker's Japanese. Native Japanese speakers' utterances often involve an ellipsis and mistakes of case particles or words, so her speech, which also missed some case particles and had a few mistakes, sounded natural.

translation of "exposure" as a noun in Japanese, so Japanese native speakers would build a completely different structure as was shown in section 5.1.1.

Thus, Sakura's use of *katakana* words at the beginning stage of the four-week program was due to her transfer of sentence structure from L1 English to L2 Japanese rather than her lack of Japanese vocabulary. Her mental language system first built a sentence in English to communicate her thought, then translated each word into its equivalent in Japanese, and rearranged the words in the appropriate way. She did this instantly and unconsciously.

Sakura's errors in case particles also showed that her sentences were based on her thought in English. The list of those errors is below.

Table 6-1: Sakura's representative errors in case particles[124]

Errors	Correct	English	Day
*... amerika **o** shitagai*	*... amerika **ni** shitagai*	… following America	Day 1 Week 2[125]
*... iken **kara** in'yoo shi*	*... iken **o** in'yoo shi*	… cited **from** the opinion of …	Day 2 Week 2
*... saienki **o** hairyo shita*	*... saienki **ni** hairyo shita*	… considering another postponement	Day 5 Week 2

Most errors that Sakura made in case particles occurred during Week 2. Her errors seem to be from her overuse of the object particle *o* to some direct or indirect objects that are not

---

[124] Some errors in case particles were mixed with other grammatical errors, such as the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs or the confusion of active and passive voices. Those mixed errors are excluded from this list. Only those that clearly showed L1 transfer are collected. This error is also transfer but on the level of structural description of verbal valence. As such, it's not that different from replacing *o* with *ni* etc.

[125] The assignments of writing Japanese argument essays started in Week 2. During the first week, only the reading tasks were assigned (see 4.2.2).

followed by it, e.g., *amerika **o** shitagai* 'following America' and *saienki **o** hairyo shita* 'considering another postponement' in Table 6-1 above. The second error in the list above, *iken kara in'yoo shi* '(be) cited **from** …,' seems to be a clear example of her directly transferring the preposition 'from' in English to its Japanese translation *kara*. In the assignment of Day 3 Week 4, Sakura used the verb *in'yoo suru* 'to cite' again, but there she used the correct particle. So, somewhere between Day 2 Week 2 and Day 3 Week 4, she learned the grammatical way of using the verb, probably from the assigned reading materials. Therefore, these errors occurred from the learner's lack of experience, lack of exposure to authentic materials. Day after day of the program, Sakura gained more experience of reading the models of her argument essays, and her internal grammar was complemented, modified, corrected, and reinforced. During Week 4, the number of her simple errors drastically decreased.

L1 transfer – linguistic sophistication

While she stopped making so many simple L1 transfers or errors at the word and case particle level as she had done at the beginning of the four-week program, Sakura soon started to occasionally produce phrases and sentences that sounded unnatural in Japanese. Her intended meaning was clear, however, especially if one considered what it would be in English translation. This strongly suggested that these awkward structures were influenced by the English structure (see 5.1). Overall, it seems that she was writing more freely and vivaciously and started to develop her own style like creative writing. Her argument essays now showed a different type of L1 influence at the final stage of this four-week program from those prior to and at the beginning of the program.

This new type of L1 influence provided me with two interesting points. One is that those who developed a full-fledged linguistic sophistication in their L1 also strive for attaining the same level of language proficiency in their L2. Sakura majored in English literature at UCLA. She said she loved reading books and the language itself. As a literature major, she appreciated and produced sophisticated literary expressions, and mastered the skill of convincing others logically in English. Once she got more accustomed to the reading and writing tasks of the program and felt relieved from stress against basic grammatical errors, her desire to "write in L2 like in L1" blossomed. She could have kept writing a "fair-to-middling" level of essays, just watching not to make easy grammatical errors. However, she did not choose to do so, and this led her to employ L1 transfer. Since her way of thinking was in English, her way of verbalizing her thoughts also required the structures in English, which were dissimilar from those in Japanese, and they sounded awkward.

Most of the past studies focused on the L1 transfer examples of lower level of learners. Sakura's examples, however, demonstrated that L1 transfer is not only a problem for beginners. Even advanced learners rely on their first language when they were at a loss how to express themselves in the TL. Thus, L1 transfer may be ubiquitous, and it will play a significant role as a strategy in compensating for what a learner lacks in his/her L2. Most empirical studies are dominated by those of beginner's level and by the quantitative approach. However, Sakura, with developed linguistic sophistication in the L1 and more than sufficient level of command in speaking L2, still relied on her L1 for particular rhetorical techniques to express herself. So far, to the best of my understanding, there have been no studies on L1 transfer of intermediate to advanced learners' writing. More research in their level of L1 transfer in a qualitative way will

167

help elucidate how they think and process L2 and cast light on an issue of bilingualism (see next section).

L1 transfer and bilingualism

Another interesting point that Sakura's L1 transfer suggested is that language learning is not a single task to accomplish, but rather it involves myriad fields and domains, each of which has its own set of terms, phrases, and expressions to be learned. This is not necessarily limited to academic fields and professional domains. Rather, it covers all sorts of scenes and *schemata* (Anderson, 1984; Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977; Tajika, 2002; Temma, 1989). Schema theory is a theory in psychology that Frederic Bartlett proposed in 1932 to explain how human memory works. Then, it was expanded to second language reading comprehension by Richard Anderson in 1984. Anderson (1984) stated that "comprehension is a matter of activating or constructing a schema that provides a coherent explanation of objects and events mentioned in a discourse" (pp. 246–247). Temma (1989) illustrated in terms of L2 reading comprehension that one who has no experience of visiting a foreign restaurant, i.e., who has no restaurant schema, such as how to be seated at the table, how to order, and how to pay, will have difficulty reading and comprehending a restaurant-related passage correctly (pp. 51–52) by using the description by Rumelhart and Ortony (1977, p. 118). I suggest that this is also applicable to L2 production, i.e., speaking and writing, as well as L2 reception, i.e., listening and reading. Sakura spoke Japanese fluently in general, as long as she talked about general topics, such as songs, movies, friends, university, and daily lives, because she had a lot of experience, or schemata, of those topics. Once the topic went into politics, economics, and election, she was not so familiar with them and could not talk much about them. However, she had a schema of encountering and

168

skillfully avoiding those topics as Japanese natives would do. Thus, her Japanese speech still sounded very natural. On the contrary, writing Japanese was a different challenge. She did not have much exposure to written materials in Japanese, so she needed to build up her schemata of how to write on each topic and in each genre and how to express herself effectively. Throughout this four-week reading and writing program, she became more accustomed to writing about politics, history, and other academic topics in Japanese, but when she wanted to express her opinions in a more figurative way and with more literary vocabulary, she did not have enough schemata to do so in Japanese, and she ended up of relying on her first language, English.

Then, L2 learning seems like an unbounded expanding jigsaw puzzle. Learners practice basic skills many times to achieve a sufficient proficiency to have a basic communication, and then they find they need many more pieces to assemble. They may believe they will be able to complete the puzzle someday, but once they find and fit those pieces, they realize they will need more pieces for perfection. Likewise, Sakura practiced writing an argument essay every day and improved her skills in the particular areas on the particular topics. Then, she found she needed more experience, knowledge, and skills to express herself more metaphorically. To meet this challenge, more exposure to written materials or direct instruction of how to do it helped. However, once she learned it, she found another gap in the puzzle she needed to fill. Learning is a cumulative process. This is true, but L2 learning, (and actually L1 learning as well), is not merely a cumulative process but also a filling-a-gap process in a vast ever-growing puzzle. Somewhere in this process, a learner may be called a bilingual, but the goal of mastery may not be ever achieved.

6.3 Usage-based language acquisition

The first idea of this four-week intensive program of reading editorials and writing argument essays started based on the "usage-based" theory (Bybee, 2006; Langacker, 1987, 2000a, 2000b; Tomasello, 2003), which claims that it is the frequency of use that constructs language, language change, and language acquisition. From this standpoint, I provided Sakura with newspaper editorials for daily reading during four weeks and assigned a written argument essay on the respective editorial every day in the course of the last three weeks. In this section, I will address the question of whether the usage-based theory worked in Sakura's case, i.e., the case of a heritage Japanese language speaker learning advanced reading and writing. I will begin with vocabulary learning in 6.3.1.

6.3.1 Usage-based acquisition and incidental vocabulary learning

The most conspicuous effect of the usage-based method of language learning came out in Sakura's learning of advanced *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words.' As was shown in Table 5-2 in 5.1.2, Sakura acquired a good number of *kanji* vocabulary from the editorials, by reading them, thinking about them, sometimes checking them, and using them.

The rankings of most frequently used *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' in the editorials during Weeks 1 – 4 and Sakura's essays during Weeks 2 – 4 appear similar (see Table 6-2, below).

Table 6-2: The *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' rankings in the editorials in Weeks 1 – 2 and Sakura's essays in Week 2

Editorials			Sakura's essays	
Words	Frequency	Rank of Frequency	Frequency	Rank of Frequency
核 *kaku* 'nucleus'	90	1	28	3
日本 *nihon/nippon* 'Japan'	83	2	16	10
米国 *beekoku* 'the USA'	55	3	9	31
社会 *shakai* 'society'	53	4	11	18
世界 *sekai* 'world'	51	5	23	4
保育 *hoiku* 'childcare'	51	5	4	87
大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president'	41	7	55	1
首相 *shushoo* 'prime minister'	41	7	18	9
原発 *genpatsu* 'nuclear power plant'	39	9	1	266
問題 *mondai* 'problem'	39	9	23	4
社説 *shasetsu* 'editorial'	36	11	9	31
必要 *hitsuyoo* 'necessary'	35	12	8	40
談話 *danwa* 'statement'[126]	35	12	No occurrence	
訪問 *hoomon* 'visit'	32	14	22	6

---

[126] In the Japanese politics, however, this word is used as a part of proper noun, such as 村山談話 *Murayama danwa* 'the (former prime minister) Murayama statement' which was the official governmental statement on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the end of WWII in 1995, and 安倍談話 *Abe danwa* 'the (former prime minister) Abe statement' which was the official governmental statement on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII in 2015. Both were announced at press conferences. All the occurrences of the word 談話 *danwa* 'statement' in this editorial referred to either one or the other of these statements.

At the vocabulary level, Table 6-2 shows that Sakura often used most of the words from the editorials in her own essays. Some of them were ones she had already known, such as 日本 *nihon/nippon* 'Japan,' 世界 *sekai* 'world,' 社会 *shakai* 'society,' 問題 *mondai* 'problem,' and 必要 *hitsuyoo* 'necessary,' while the other words were the ones selected from among those appearing in the assigned news articles or editorials, but they were new to Sakura. Of those new words, Sakura specifically mentioned the following words as those she learned from the editorials in her journals: 核 *kaku* 'nucleus,' 大統領 *daitooryoo* 'president,' 首相 *shushoo* 'prime minister,' and 訪問 *hoomon* 'visit.'

Particularly supportive of the usage-based theory of vocabulary acquisition is the third most frequently occurring word in the editorials, 米国 *beekoku* 'the USA'. It is a term used specifically in news reports, newspapers, and other formal written materials, and almost never in daily conversations, where アメリカ *amerika* 'the USA' is used. Therefore, this word was also unfamiliar to Sakura, but she understood it and started using in her argument essays. This term is also shortened to 米 *bee* 'the US,' serving as a prefix, such as 米大統領 *bee-daitooryoo* 'the US President' and 米議会 *bee-gikai* 'the US Congress.' Sakura mastered this usage from the editorials and prefixed the term to multiple words in her own essays 20 times, all used appropriately.

Three of the most frequently used words in the editorials, as can be seen in Table 6-2, revealed a problem. Despite their high frequency in the editorials, they had extremely low frequency in Sakura's essays. These words were 保育 *hoiku* 'childcare' (occurring four times), 原発 *genpatsu* 'nuclear power plant' (occurring once), and 談話 *danwa* 'statement' (with no

172

occurrence). It is, however, their high frequency in the Week 1 editorials that accounts for their high overall frequency. For example, out of its 51 appearances, 保育 *hoiku* 'childcare' appeared 47 times on Day 3 Week 1, but only twice during Week 2 and Week 4 each. The words 原発 *genpatsu* 'nuclear power plant' and 談話 *danwa* 'statement' appeared 39 times and 35 times respectively, but out of the overall occurrence (39) of the former word, 原発 *genpatsu* 'nuclear power plant,' 38 times occurred during Week 1 and only once thereafter. The latter word, 談話 *danwa* 'statement,' occurred all the 35 times just on one day, Day 4 Week 1 (see footnote 126).

Sakura's failure to use these three high frequency words in her essays suggests that the problem is more subtle. As described in section 4.2.2, Sakura was not required to write her own essays during Week 1. She was just supposed to read and understand the assigned editorials and to write, in English, what was difficult for her and what she thought about the editorial of the day. She recognized and understood those words from the texts, but she did not actually use them in a productive way. Evidently, just reading these words during Week 1, but never being required to use them in writing, was not sufficient for productive vocabulary acquisition. Thus, she did not move those words from her receptive lexicon to productive lexicon.

Interestingly, on Day 6 Week 2, the word 原子炉 *genshiro* 'nuclear power reactor' appeared four times in the article Sakura read about "a fast-breeder reactor," and in her essay on that topic, she used this word, a near-synonym for 原発 *genpatsu* 'nuclear power plant,' five times. The correlation between Sakura's seeing the word in the editorial of the day and its productive use is striking. It suggests that, although frequency is key to learners' learning, passive activity is not enough for them to be able to truly use what they learned. What is essential for real acquisition of vocabulary is a combination of receptive and productive approaches.

173

So, Sakura's vocabulary acquisition process as discussed above highlights the limitations of the concept of 'incidental vocabulary learning,' studied by e.g., Ahmad, 2012; Hulstijn et al., 1996; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001; Nation 2015; Waring & Nation, 2004; Webb 2008. Incidental vocabulary learning has been popular among language teachers and SLA researchers studying L2 reading and vocabulary acquisition since the 1990s, along with the trend of extensive reading. It suggests that learning vocabulary incidentally through reading is effective for language learners. For example, Ahmad (2012) statistically compared the effect of incidental vocabulary learning with that of intentional vocabulary learning and found that incidental vocabulary learning was significantly more effective than intentional method.

Hultijn et al. (1996) compared three text reading approaches, i.e., reading with marginal glosses (the Gloss group), reading with a dictionary (the Dictionary group), and reading with no help (the Control group), and found that the Gloss group learned and retained the target words most effectively. They suggested that the marginal glosses established the form-meaning matchings in the learners' mental lexicon and the frequency of occurrence reinforced them. On the other hand, the Dictionary group seldom consulted a dictionary and ignored, or made vague inferences of, many of the target words, as the Control group did, which made them fail to achieve a robust form-meaning connection in their lexicon. In Sakura's case, it was confirmed that daily reading of editorials greatly helped her recognize advanced vocabulary, and the frequency of occurrence also helped her build strong form-meaning connections of new words in her lexicon. All this endorses the beneficial effects of incidental vocabulary learning described above.

Productive vocabulary acquisition, however, is not that simple. Most studies examining the effects of incidental vocabulary learning asked the participants in their experiments to read a

174

text and then to take a vocabulary test twice, immediately after reading to check their vocabulary acquisition and a couple of months after reading to confirm their vocabulary retention. That is, what they were investigating was their participants' "receptive" vocabulary acquisition. The claim was that if the subjects were able to recognize a word or to understand it, and then to keep it in their memory after a particular period, it meant that they had learned the word. This is true only partially. In terms of 'incidental vocabulary learning,' Sakura did learn the words 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' and 訪れる *otozureru* 'to visit' (see 5.1.2) and did create a simple "form-meaning" connection in her lexicon at the receptive stage of her learning. If she had taken some kind of "post-reading vocabulary test," she could have answered it correctly, whether it be a translation or multiple-choice test. Nevertheless, she could not use it in her essays. She had not reached the level of using those words confidently. Her knowledge of them was only receptive, not having reached the level of productive knowledge. What was still missing was her knowledge and confidence about their functions, usages, collocations, and differentiation from their likely synonyms. So, she avoided using them. We will now consider the effect of internalizing collocational knowledge of vocabulary in Sakura's case.

6.3.2 Collocations and formulaic language

In Sakura's case, the usage-based language acquisition approach was particularly effective in learning collocations. As Bybee (2006) mentioned in her seminal article on usage-based grammar, "both written and spoken discourse are characterized by the high use of conventionalized word sequences, which include sequences that we might call formulaic language and idioms, but also conventionalized collocations" (p. 713). These sequences are called "formulaic language" (Biber, 2009; Wray, 2013; Wray & Perkins, 2000) or prefabs

(Erman & Warren, 2000). Pawley and Syder (1983) proposed that these formulaic sequences are one of the characteristics of "nativelikeness." The editorials assigned to Sakura in the course of four weeks contained many formulaic expressions including collocations, though they were too numerous to list up. What I will discuss here is the cluster of formulae involving 核 *kaku* 'nucleus.'

As was shown in 5.1.2, the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' was a new word for Sakura. Considering her journal entry about this word (see Excerpt 11 in 5.1.2), Sakura had probably heard the word 核兵器 *kaku-heeki* 'nuclear weapon' but she never separated 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' from 兵器 *heeki* 'weapon.' So, all the phrases and compound words using 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' except 核兵器 *kaku-heeki* 'nuclear weapon' must have been unfamiliar to her. As I described in 5.1.2, however, once she "noticed"[127] the appropriate meaning of the independent word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' and its possible clustering with other words, such as 核保有国 *kaku-hoyuukoku* 'country with nuclear weapons' and 核軍縮 *kaku-gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament,' she started using the words including 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' proactively. Now let us compare the collocations of the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' and their frequency in the 24 editorials with those of Sakura's 18 argument essays in Table 6-3 below.

---

[127] Schmidt (1990) proposed "noticing hypothesis" that "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for converting input to intake" (p. 129). Sakura's "noticing" the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' during our conversation and her frequent use of compound words containing it support this hypothesis.

Table 6-3: The comparison in the collocations and frequency of the word 核 *kaku* 'nucleus' between the editorials and Sakura's essays

Editorials			Sakura's essays	
Words and Phrases	Frequency	Rank of Frequency	Frequency	Rank of Frequency
核兵器 *kaku-heeki* 'nuclear weapon'	18	1	14	1
核廃絶 *kaku-haizetsu* 'elimination of nuclear weapons'	12	2	1	5
核軍縮 *kaku-gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament'	10	3	2	3
核保有国 *kaku-hoyuukoku* 'country with nuclear weapons'	6	4	2	3
核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons'	5	5	7	2
核燃料 *kaku-nenryoo* 'nuclear fuel'	4	6	1	5
核抑止 *kaku-yokushi* 'nuclear deterrance'	4	6	No occurrence	
核の傘 *kaku no kasa* 'nuclear umbrella'	3	8	No occurrence	
核依存 *kaku-izon* 'nuclear dependence'	2	9	2	3
核のない世界 *kaku no nai sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons'	2	9	No occurrence	
核実験 *kaku-jikken* 'nuclear experiment'	2	9	No occurrence	
核戦力 *kaku-senryoku* 'nuclear force'	2	9	No occurrence	
All the words below occurred only once in the editorials and did not appear in Sakura's essays. 核問題 *kaku-mondai* 'nuclear issue'; 核大国 *kaku-taikoku* 'major states with nuclear weapons'; 核弾頭 *kaku-dantoo* 'nuclear warhead'; 核時代 *kaku-jidai* 'nuclear era'; and 核開発 *kaku-kaihatsu* 'nuclear development'				

Table 6-3 above shows that the group of the most frequent items in the editorials, which consists of five compound words and one phrase, was also often used by Sakura in her essays during Week 2. The first five items in the table were the keywords in the editorials and her essays on "President Obama's visit to Hiroshima" during the first three days of Week 2 and the sixth item was an essential term for the topic of "the *Monju* Fast-Breeder Reactor" on the last day of Week 2. For this reason, the high frequency of their occurrence must have helped them enter Sakura's mental lexicon, and the need to reuse them in her essays must have reinforced her mastery of them.

There were three compound words, which have similar meanings to each other, and all of them frequently appeared in the editorials: 核廃絶 *kaku-haizetsu* 'elimination of nuclear weapons' (occurring 12 times and ranked second); 核軍縮 *kaku-gunshuku* 'nuclear disarmament' (occurring 10 times and ranked third); and 核抑止 *kaku-yokushi* 'nuclear deterrence' (occurring four times and ranked sixth). All of these words were highly topic-specific and they are hardly ever used in casual daily conversation. Of these three words, Sakura used the first two in her essays, but the last, least frequent, near-synonym was never used by her. Here again, we can see that the most frequently used words were strongly engraved on her mind.

Another interesting point we can see from Table 6-3 is the different treatment by Sakura of the two synonymous phrases from the editorials, both of which were translations from President Obama's speech. One is 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons,' and it occurred five times and ranked fifth in Table 6-3. The other is 核のない世界 *kaku no nai sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons,' which was used twice and ranked ninth among the phrases and compound words using 核 *kaku* 'nucleus.' Sakura exclusively used the

former, more frequently used, phrase, i.e., 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons,' in her essays. The total number of its occurrence in her essays was seven times, preceded only by the most frequently used keyword 核兵器 *kaku-heeki* 'nuclear weapons.' Notably, 核のない世界 *kaku no nai sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons' (the alternative to 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons') never occurred in her essays. Sakura's salient use of the phrase 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons' cannot be explained only by its high frequency in the model editorials. Other possible reasons are: (1) she herself was a pacifist and the phrase resonated with her, and (2) it was the phrase by the president she respected. But neither of them explains her preference for 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons' over the other, synonymous, translation for 'world without nuclear weapons.'

I propose that the answer lies in formulaicity. Pawley and Syder (1983) said that "*NP be-TENSE sorry to keep-TENSE you waiting*" is a sort of formula with some open slots in which language users can place an arbitrary noun phrase depending on what they mean. The phrase that Sakura chose in her essays, i.e., 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons,' is a formulaic phrase, *NP1 naki NP2* 'NP2 without NP1,' or more tightly, *NP naki sekai* 'world without NP.' The examples can easily be found in song titles and book titles, such as *kimi naki sekai*[128] 'world without you,' *ai naki sekai*[129] 'world without love,' and *oi naki sekai*[130] 'world without aging.' On top of that, the formula, *NP1 naki NP2* 'NP2 without NP1,' has an archaic

---

[128] A song title by Yumi Matsutoya.

[129] A book title by Shion Miura.

[130] This is the title of the Japanese translation of an English book, *Lifespan: Why we age – and why we don't have to*, by David A. Sinclair.

179

feel because of the old Japanese adjective's "case form," *naki* 'without.'[131] This archaic flavor

gives a special, almost poetic ring to the phrase with this formula, 核なき世界 *kaku naki sekai*

'world without nuclear weapons,' and makes its more mundane modern Japanese equivalent, 核

のない世界 *kaku no nai sekai* 'world without nuclear weapons,' sound like its mere gloss. Even

though the editorials used both the old-Japanese and the modern-Japanese phrases with Japanese

quotation marks for the purpose of emphasis, Sakura chose only the old-Japanese alternative,

which shows that Sakura, who had learned Japanese through Japanese songs and TV programs,

perceived the formulaicity that the old-Japanese alternative implied, possibly even including its

poeticity, and employed it productively in her own essays.

6.4 The benefits and limitations of the qualitative approach for this dissertation study

Finally, I will discuss what the qualitative approach gave me and what it did not. When I

first planned this study and the four-week intensive program of reading and writing, I expected I

would have multiple heritage language learner participants and would be able to include, at least,

the simplest quantitative approach in my analyses. After the recruiting period, I got Sakura, the

only participant, but she was an extraordinarily motivated, serious, and hard-working one. The

possibility to exploit the quantitative approach ceased, and I decided to make close analyses of

her English journal, written essays, and interview data. In hindsight, this approach gave me a

wealth of interesting data and numerous valuable seeds for my future research, all of which I

could not have obtained otherwise. In this section, I will discuss the benefits and limitations of a

qualitative approach.

---

[131] This is the noun-qualifying form conjugated the old Japanese adjective なし *nashi* 'not existent.' Its modern Japanese equivalent is ない *nai* 'not existent.' The dictionary form なし *nashi* 'not existent' and the noun-qualifying form なき *naki* 'without' are still used in modern Japanese fixed phrases, proverbs, and idioms.

180

First, the close analysis of Sakura's English journal and interview data, including the regular interviews during the program and the follow-up phone interview two years after, clearly showed *how motivated* she was to master Japanese and to live in Japan as a Japanese. As many researchers have pointed out, reliability of self-report on proficiency and motivation in the quantitative approach is problematic, making it a dubious method for studying motivation. Moreover, if Sakura had participated in a quantitative motivation study, in which she would take a test or Likert-scale survey and be analyzed, e.g., by a factor analysis, then her extraordinarily high motivation and the new distinctive type of "heritage motivation" that was discovered in this study would have been missed, and she would have been dissolved into the mass of self-claiming highly-motivated learners. Our qualitative approach clearly has an advantage over such a quantitative study.

My encounter with Sakura was fortunate. As young as she was, Sakura was an autonomous, perseverant, and hard-working student who had meta-cognitive skills to analyze herself and her learning in an introspective and retrospective way. An individual's inner self can only be observed by that individual. And in some cases it is not elucidated even by the individual, that is, when he/she does not have the skills to make an in-depth analysis of his/her thoughts, feelings, emotions, and what caused them. Sakura had these skills. Or I should say that she gradually acquired them.

Sakura described her learning and her motivation in a detailed and expressive way. She majored in English literature at UCLA. And she said she had a great interest in language itself. Thus, she must have had a talent for writing and describing, and attracting her readers, as well as appreciation for the great masters' works. Throughout the program, however, she did not, or could not, describe what led her to be motivated to master Japanese to as extreme an extent as it

181

did, and to keep her motivation. I asked her this question many times at our weekly meetings during the program. Her answer was always: *nande deshoo, honto ni nande deshoo ne* 'I wonder why, I really don't know why.' It was actually two years after the program, during the follow-up phone interview, that I finally heard the answer to this question from her.

So, this shows that for those two years Sakura had searched for the answer herself. This dissertation study, particularly the weekly interviews and my repeated questions of why, stimulated her introspection, and she embarked on a journey to discover herself. Two years after the program, in the phone interview, she said that she started working at a Japanese company. Five years after this interview, in summer of 2023, we had a nice reunion via email and resumed our communication. Sakura said that she had lived and worked in Tokyo, Japan, for almost three years. Her journey had continued, reaching the place that she had longed for, and will continue. The qualitative approach of this study, and, in this case, a long-range study, resulted in her exploring her inner self and developing her ability to analyze her thoughts, feelings, experience, and background. The qualitative approach taught Sakura, the research participant, something about herself, as well as giving me, the researcher, novel ideas about heritage language speakers.

The second benefit of the qualitative approach, particularly of the close observation and analysis of Sakura's argument essays and English journal, was that they showed me an abundance of interesting and valuable facts in Sakura's trajectory of progress in formal writing. One example was her L1 transfer. By reading a model text every day and writing about it on the basis of usage-based language acquisition, Sakura's simple L1 transfer disappeared rather quickly. Her sentence-building became closer to that of Japanese native speakers, and her sentences came to resemble the model texts. However, her progress did not continue in a linear way. If we dub the simple and quickly-corrected L1 transfer "Stage I L1 transfer", during the

final Week 4 she began to rely on L1 transfer again ("Stage II L1 transfer"). This happened when she tried to express her opinions in a more complex, literary, and sometimes figurative way. It was as if she liberated herself from the confinement of what the argument essays should be, after she thought she mastered the basics of the genre. Her argument essays for Week 4 suggested to me that the way she verbalized her thoughts and feelings and built sentences was fundamentally based on the English structure. And they also raised a new question: Since her writing during Weeks 2 – 3 was properly corrected by the usage-based language learning, her sentences with "Stage II L1 transfer" would also be eventually repaired by the usage-based method, but how soon will this process end? Will she need to continue the usage-based acquisition permanently? This intriguing question would not have resulted from a quantitative study.

The qualitative analysis of Sakura's argument essays and English journal also provided me with a chance to discover the difficulty of some *wago* 'Japanese native words' for learners of Japanese. Past studies, which explored Japanese vocabulary learning and Japanese heritage language speakers, pursued their research on the presumption that *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' are more difficult and advanced vocabulary than *wago* 'Japanese native words' which are used in everyday conversation. Indeed, Japanese native speakers' conversations in informal settings mostly consist of basic *wago* 'Japanese native words.' However, Sakura's English journal showed us that, after she acquired a skill to guess the meanings and readings of *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' she actually had difficulty with *wago* 'Japanese native words.' This revealed the fact, obvious in retrospect, that not all *wago* belong to the basic, everyday layer of vocabulary. Some *wago* are extremely topic-specific and genre-specific, and thus rarely used on the daily informal occasions. In the section of the analysis of such *wago* 'Japanese native words' (see section 5.1.2), only two words, 先送り *sakiokuri* 'postponement' and 訪れる *otozureru* 'to

visit,' were cited from Sakura's journal, but she noted more of them, providing intriguing inferences of their meanings and associations with other words; these were, to name a few, 節目 *fushime* 'milestone,' 経緯 *ikisatsu* 'how something happened,' and あす *asu* 'tomorrow.' The multiple layers of *wago* vocabulary, thrown into relief by Sakura's testimony, introduces a potential corrective into the treatment of *wago* in the teaching of Japanese to adult learners.

If a quantitative method had been taken in this study, I would have needed to select a certain number of target words at the beginning, and, because of my knowledge from past studies, I would have picked up some apparently complicated *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words' for the statistical analysis and not been able to find the covert difficulty that *wago* 'Japanese native words' have.

A qualitative approach, thus, gives a researcher new research questions, new perspectives, and new insight into what has long been taken for granted in L2 acquisition. To take a balanced view, the qualitative and the quantitative approaches each have their own niches. To examine a pre-established hypothesis, we collect a number of participants in the experiment and use the quantitative approach. The more various participants and conditions are applied, the more valid the results will be. The more experiments are conducted, the more reliable the hypothesis will be. On the other hand, in order to explore new vistas and to construct new hypotheses, the qualitative approach, particularly a close observation and analysis, are helpful.

An obvious limitation of this dissertation study is that it had only one participant. Sakura's case clearly cannot be generalized to all the Japanese heritage language speakers. She is extraordinary in her motivation, her linguistic sensibility and her perseverance. But some of her features can in principle be shared by other heritage learners, Japanese or not. Therefore, this

184

study of Japanese heritage language speakers raises some intriguing questions for the advanced

heritage language learners that have not been proposed before.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

As was shown in this dissertation, Sakura was my sole participant, but she also was an extremely motivated and extraordinarily resourceful language learner. From Sakura's data, I found the answers to two of my research questions, i.e., "Does the usage-based method help Japanese heritage language speakers learn advanced writing skills?" and "Will a Japanese heritage speaker be able to succeed in mastering advanced writing skills of Japanese without attending a Japanese supplementary school?" My answers are "yes" to the first question, and "conditionally yes" to the second question.

Through the usage-based reading and writing program, in which Sakura first read the model editorial of the day and then wrote its summary and her opinion on it, improved her essays in many ways. After one week spent just reading the editorials, Sakura started writing her essays, but even her first writing appeared to be quite different from what she wrote in the pre-program stage: her idiosyncratic uses of *katakana* decreased drastically, and instead, her *kanji* vocabulary increased, reaching the native writers' typical ratio of *kanji* to non-*kanji*.

Sakura also learned many topic-specific and genre-specific words, which exclusively appear in the news reports and academic papers on limited topics. She first picked up those words from her model texts, including their meanings and usages, and then proactively tried using them in her argument essays. In doing so, she used several topic-specific words many times during two or three days, which further reinforced her vocabulary learning. In this sense, the specific method used in this four-week intensive program, i.e., returning to one topic for two

or three days, boosted the opportunities for Sakura to use the particular words and made the usage-based learning more effective.

By the usage-based method, Sakura also was able to "upgrade" some words from her receptive to her productive lexicon. She encountered many unfamiliar words in her reading assignments, and sometimes she guessed their meanings and other times looked them up in a dictionary or on the Internet. She thus learned and understood some words, and they entered her lexicon of receptive vocabulary. After she read the assigned editorials, however, she also needed to write summaries of them and her opinions on them. So, she needed to "use" the words she just learned. This "usage-based" process moved the receptive vocabulary into her productive lexicon and consolidated her learning of those words. This is why the answer to my first research question is unequivocally "yes".

Next, to the second research question, i.e., "Will a Japanese heritage speaker be able to succeed in mastering advanced writing skills in Japanese without attending a Japanese supplementary school?" I answered, "Conditionally, yes." There are two reasons for this answer.

One is Sakura's eventual return to a more advanced L1 transfer ("Stage II L1 transfer"). Up to the middle of the program, her learning underwent a monotonic improvement. Her idiosyncratic *katakana* uses, conspicuous before the program, disappeared completely as she overcame her simple L1 transfer ("Stage I L1 transfer"). However, once she gained more confidence in her writing, her creative literary inclination surfaced in her essays, and at this later stage she resorted to phrases or sentences that were based on English structure or metaphors. This leads one to the conclusion that while Sakura succeeded in learning to write the basic level of argument essays following the model texts she read, she did not reach as high a level in her

literary, descriptive, and figurative style in Japanese as she wanted to do, based on her advanced writing skills in English.

The other reason for a modified rather than straight forward "yes" is Sakura's specialness. As was mentioned throughout this dissertation, Sakura was extraordinarily motivated and hard-working. She noted that she wanted to discuss the political issues that she read in the editorials with Japanese native speakers in Japanese someday, and fluently. She said in an interview that she wanted to move to Japan and work there. Her strong yearning and determination underlay her effort and perseverance with this high-demanding four-week program. Therefore, I would answer the second question as: "yes, even, like Sakura, with no experience of the supplementary school at all, Japanese heritage speakers *can* succeed in their study of Japanese, but it happens only *on the condition* that they have extraordinarily strong motivation and passion to master Japanese."

Now I will answer the last, open-ended research question, "Are there any interesting findings in the learning process of the participant(s) in this study, such as difficulties and strategies?" Many interesting facts and new research topics were found. First and foremost, Sakura had the biggest trouble with *kanji* characters and words, and most of her daily English journal was occupied by her problems with specific *kanji* characters. She also wrote about experiences seeing some *kanji* words on TV shows or hearing *kanji* song lyrics and about strategies to guess the meanings of *kanji* words. Using those strategies as a clue, she inferred the meaning of each *kanji* character and *kanji* word, or of each component of the *kanji* character. She also had a sense of achievement and excitement when she saw that she had mastered given *kanji* words. Most of these *kanji* words were *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' which are recognized as

advanced-level vocabulary and also known as one of the most difficult parts of Japanese for learners to master.

However, what was most interesting here is that it was actually not *kango* 'Sino-Japanese words,' that turned out to be the most difficult for her, but some *wago* 'Japanese native words.' In general, *wago* 'Japanese native words' are regarded as the variety of daily use, i.e., the basic Japanese vocabulary that Japanese native speakers use in their everyday interactions. But some words that Sakura never learned how to use, or even couldn't guess the meanings of, were *wago* 'Japanese native words.' Her failure to master these *wago* 'Japanese native words' underscored their complexity and revealed their multiple layers, a point never discussed by anybody. It is true that many *wago* 'Japanese native words' are part of casual everyday domestic communication, and this point is often made. However, there is also a sizeable portion of *wago* 'Japanese native words' that are quite sophisticated and used in particular contexts. Being semantically subtle and of relatively low-frequency, they are rather difficult to master, even by native speakers.

Another interesting finding was the empirical differentiation between receptive and productive vocabulary. A close analysis of Sakura's argument essays revealed that some words were used actively and frequently in her essays, while other words were not. In her English journal she wrote that the less frequently used words in her argument essays were the ones she was not confident enough to use, and they also were the ones that the model editorials did not employ in sufficiently varying functions or contexts. She noted that she understood their meanings but was not sure how to actually use them. The distinction was thus clearly made by her that there was a class of receptive vocabulary, which she could passively recognize when she saw or heard these words, and a class of productive vocabulary, which she could actively use in her speaking or writing activities. The words whose usages Sakura was not sure of evidently

resided in her receptive lexicon but did not advance to her productive vocabulary. Notably, those words were all *wago* 'Japanese native words.'

Finally, this dissertation must conclude with underscoring the importance of motivation in learning. When I first designed this dissertation project, and started recruiting participants in it, I expected around four or five heritage speakers. Actually, four students from the Japanese heritage speakers' class showed interest in my study. However, after I explained the procedure, three of them, one by one, withdrew from this project for various reasons, e.g., having a busy schedule with coursework, and joining a sport team. All these reasons are understandable. Every person has 24 hours in a day, and they need to give priority to each activity. It was just because "learning more advanced Japanese" was not their most highly prioritized activity or goal.

Sakura was different. She was always searching for opportunities to improve her Japanese proficiency. Concurrently with my four-week intensive reading and writing program, she enrolled in a Japanese linguistics class, and two other classes in her major. I knew, and she also knew, that this intensive program will take a lot of time, effort, and energy. I also informed her that she could leave the program anytime she wanted. However, she never gave up and completed the program with no absences or delays. Her daily English journal was filled with positive "self-messages," encouraging herself to achieve the goal. Her vocabulary increased, her *kanji* knowledge became more sophisticated, and her writing skills, especially the skills of writing argument essays, also improved dramatically.

If I look back on the program and Sakura and ask myself what was the crucial factor in her improvement, I say, "It was her strong motivation." The usage-based method worked. My choice and arrangement of the editorials also worked. But if Sakura had not persevered in making the most of every piece of reading she was given, and exploiting every possibility of

190

expressions in her own writing, and if she had slacked off in carrying out a grueling daily routine for four weeks, her spectacular improvement would have been impossible.

The tiny seed of Sakura's high motivation to master Japanese, to discuss even complicated issues in Japanese with native speakers, to move to Japan, and live and work there started to develop when she was a little child. She kept receiving positive vibes through interactions with her Japanese mother and maternal relatives living in Japan. They fostered her positive somatic value (Schumann, 1997, 2001, 2004) silently and unconsciously, so much so, that for a few years she could not identify the reason why she wanted to master Japanese, and to live in Japan for the rest of her life.

Because Sakura, my sole subject, never attended a Japanese supplementary school as a child, I have no answer to the question stated in the beginning of this dissertation regarded "the Wall at Age Nine," i.e., "Is it really so difficult for those who quit Japanese school around the age of nine to resume studying Japanese and succeed in acquiring advanced Japanese?" However, if we return to Schumann's neurobiological approach (1997, 2001, 2004), Sakura's case implies a possible answer. If those children who quit attending Japanese supplementary school had a negative experience with the Japanese language and Japanese school, it will develop their negative somatic value, which will make it harder for them to start studying Japanese again later in their lives. To prevent this from happening, Japanese heritage children need to be given pleasant and enjoyable experience while learning Japanese language and culture, and this will help them create and retain a positive attitude towards the language. Once a more appropriate time comes for them to learn Japanese again, they may be able to do it with joy. This question will be the topic of my next research.

Five years after the follow-up interview with Sakura, we resumed our communication via email. She is now in Japan, enjoying her job there. Her first crush on her secret idols, *Arashi*, transformed into her love towards a real Japanese young man there. "I don't need *Arashi* anymore. I have a better one now,"[132] she told me. And her motivation to master Japanese, and to become a "Japanese," is not subsiding.

---

[132] Sakura's emails were all in Japanese in 2023 (see 5.3.2). This English translation is by me.

Sakura's Timeline

AGE	Concrete events in Sakura's life	Language and Identity Factors
0 – 4	Had a Thai babysitter.	Spoke some Japanese, Thai, and a little English. Played with Japanese toys: wooden blocks having *hiragana* on each side.
5 – 6	Started kindergarten. Started elementary school.	
7 – 10		
11	Started middle school.	Became interested in Japanese.
12		Became a big fan of *Arashi* (Japanese performers). Started to listen to Arashi's songs. Started to memorize their lyrics.
13		Started to watch Japanese TV dramas and variety shows in which the members of *Arashi* appeared. Started to study the Japanese words and expressions she heard in the TV shows. Also started to study *kanji* words she saw in the TV shows.
14	Started high school.	

AGE	Concrete events in Sakura's life	Language and identity factors
15		
16	Started to learn Chinese at a second language course in her high school.	
17	The second year of learning Chinese.	(Around this time) Had a vague wish to work in Japan in the future.
18 (2014)	(MAY) Graduated high school. (JUN) Traveled with her mother and younger sister to her grandparents' home in Niigata, Japan, after graduating from high school. Stayed with her grandparents, uncle, aunt, and cousins. (SEP) Matriculated at UCLA.	Felt more comfortable in Japan than in the U.S.
19 (2015)	(SEP) Started her second year at UCLA. (Around this time) Declared her major as English literature. (DEC) Participated in *Kakehashi* Project – The Bridge for Tomorrow. Stayed in Japan for eight days (12/15 – 12/22).	Was surprised to see that there were participants in the Project who could not spoke Japanese at all. Then, became more interested in Japan and started to search Japan and Japanese culture on YouTube.

194

AGE	Concrete events in Sakura's life	Language and identity factors
20 (2016)	(JAN) Enrolled in the class for Japanese heritage language speakers at UCLA.	This was the first formal Japanese language class that she had ever attended. It was also the only Japanese language class that she enrolled in at UCLA.
	(FEB) Met with me in this class. Volunteered to participate in my preliminary study. Had two 30-minute meetings with me.	
	(MAY) Volunteered to participate in this dissertation study. Started this four-week intensive academic reading and writing program.	
	(JUN) Completed the four-week intensive academic reading and writing program.	
	(JUL) Completed her participation in this dissertation study.	
	(JUL – AUG) Participated in a volunteer activity of teaching English in Japan. Stayed with a Japanese family there.	Felt glad when her host family said she was like a native-born Japanese.
	(SEP – DEC) Attended International Christian University (ICU in Tokyo as an exchange student.	Experienced some awkwardness because her name and appearance were Japanese and people around her expected her to speak and behave like native Japanese.
21 (2017)	(JAN) Returned to UCLA. Enrolled in the winter quarter of her third year there.	(Around this time) Started seriously thinking of moving to Japan after graduation from UCLA. This thought continued all through her remaining college time.

AGE	Concrete events in Sakura's life	Language and identity factors
21 (2017)	(MAR) Graduated from UCLA.	Requested her parents to let her move to Japan after graduation, but it was not approved. Gave it up for a while.
	(JUN) Underwent a job interview with a Japanese company in the U.S. Received a formal job offer on the next day after the interview. Started to work for the company at its U.S. headquarters in Southern California.	Had a wish again to move to Japan someday and teach English at a college or university there.
	(JUN) Attended the UCLA commencement ceremony.	Realized that working as a company employee does not suit her; teaching would be suitable for her.
22 (2018)	(JUN) A follow-up telephone interview with me.	
	(DEC) Moved to Tokyo, Japan.	
23 (2019)	(APR) Started teaching at schools in Tokyo.	
24 – 26 (2020 – 2022)	No contact between Sakura and me.	
27 (2023)	(OCT) Email exchanges resumed between Sakura and me.	Living a happy fulfilled life in Tokyo.

APPENDIX II

Spoken vs. written language (English translation)
(The original handout that was given to Sakura will be in next page.)

	Spoken (Conversation)	**Written (Formal writing)**
Utterance-final particles	-*ne, -yo, -ka,* and *-sa* *Subarashikatta desu **yo*** 'It was wonderful + **yo**.' *Sushi wa oishii desu **ne*** 'Sushi is delicious, **isn't it**?'	No use of *-ne, -yo, -ka,* or *-sa.* *Subarashikatta.* 'It was wonderful.' *Sushi wa oishii.* 'Sushi is delicious.'
Contractions	… ***ja** nai desu.* '(It) **isn't** …' … *shina**kya** ikenai desu.* '(I) gotta do …'	…***de wa** nai* '(It) **is not** …' … *shina**kereba** ikenai.* '(I) have to do …'
Word choices (Degree words)	*Chotto* 'a bit' *Sugoku* 'extremely' *Wari ni/wariai* 'relatively'	*Sukoshi* 'a little' *Hijooni* 'very; extremely' *Hikakuteki* 'relatively'
Conjunctive adverbs	*De* 'then' *Demo* 'but' *Dakara* 'so'	*Sorede* 'then' *Sorekara* 'and then' *Shikashi/shikashinagara* 'however' *Soreyueni/yueni* 'therefore' *Shitagatte* 'accordingly'
Sentence-ending forms	Use contracted form + *desu/masu* … *ja **nai desu*** 'isn't …' … *ja **nakatta desu*** 'wasn't …'	Use short forms. Omit *desu/masu.* … *de wa **nai*** 'is not …' … *de wa **nakatta*** 'was not …'
Ellipsis	Easily recognizable information is often omitted. *Kore wa **watashi no** yori takai desu.* 'This is more expensive than **mine**.'	No information is omitted. *Kore wa **watashi no tokee** yori takai.* 'This is more expensive than **my watch**.'
Politeness	Use polite expressions for superior/older people *Nihon **no kata ga** takusan **irasshaimashita**.* 'A lot of Japanese **people came**.'	Don't use polite expressions. *Ooku no nihonjin ga sanka shita.* 'Many Japanese participated.'
Sentence-ending consistency	Free variation.	Needs to be consistent: Keep *da*, *de aru,* and *de wa nai* throughout an essay.
Conjunctions	A *kara* B. 'A, so B' A *kedo* B. 'A but B'	A *no de* B. 'Because A, B.' A *ga* B. 'Though A, B.'
Vocabulary	No restriction	Sino-Japanese words are preferred.

Spoken vs. written language (Original)
(Sakura received this handout)

	Spoken (Conversation)	**Written (Formal writing)**
Utterance-final particles	ね、よ、か、さ 「すばらしかったです**よ**」 「すしは、おいしいです**ね**」	Don't use ね、よ、か、さ. 「すばらしかった」 「すしはおいしい」
Contractions	～**じゃ**ないです (contracted) ～しな**きゃ**いけないです (same)	～**では**ない (not contracted) ～しな**ければ**いけない (same)
Word choices (Degree words)	ちょっと (a little) すごく (very) 割に／割合 (relatively)	少し (a little) 非常に (very) 比較的 (relatively)
Conjunctive adverbs	で (then) でも (but) だから (so)	それで (then) それから (and then) しかし／しかしながら (however) それゆえに／ゆえに (therefore) したがって (accordingly)
Sentence-ending forms	Use contracted form + *desu/masu*. ～じゃ**ない**です ～じゃ**なかった**です	Use short forms. Omit *desu/masu* ～では**ない** ～では**なかった**
Ellipsis	Easily recognizable information is often omitted. This is more expensive than mine これは、**私の**より高いです。	No information is omitted. This is more expensive than my watch これは、**私の時計**より高い。
Politeness	Use polite expressions for superior/older people. 日本の**方**が、たくさん**いらっしゃいました**。	Don't use polite expressions. 多くの日本人が参加した。
Sentence-ending consistency	Free variation.	Keep short forms throughout an essay. Short Form: ~だ／である、～ではない
Conjunctions	Clause A から、Clause B. Clause A けど、Clause B.	Clause A ので、Clause B. Clause A が、Clause B.
Vocabulary	No restriction	Sino-Japanese words are preferred.

The information of editorials that were used for reading assignments

Week	Day	Topic	Title	Source and publication date
1	1 5/27	World economy	*Senshinkoku wa kinroo unagasu kaikaku o* 'Developed countries (need) a reform which will encourage (people) to work'	Nihon Keizai Shimbun (Nikkei), 5/23/2016.
	2 5/28	On couples using different surnames	*Fuufu no see* 'Family name(s) of married couples'	Mainichi Shimbun, 1/5/2016.
	3 5/29	On the shortage of nursery schools	*Kosodate shiyasui shakai doo tsukuru* 'How can we create a society for easy child-rearing?'	Nikkei, 5/5/2016.
	4 5/30	On President Obama's visit to Hiroshima	*Obama shi Hiroshima hoomon no omomi* 'The weight of (President) Obama's visit to Hiroshima'	Nikkei, 5/28/2016.
	5 5/31	The 70th Anniversary of WWII	*Sengo 70 nen danwa* 'The (official governmental) statement (by Shinzo Abe) on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII'	Mainichi Shimbun, 12/31/2015.
	6 6/1	The 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake	*Jishin taikoku to genpatsu* 'A country with earthquakes and nuclear power plants'	Mainichi Shimbun, 5/4/2016.
2	1 6/3	On President Obama's visit to Hiroshima	*Obama shi Hiroshima hoomon – "kaku naki sekai" e saishuppatsu o* 'President Obama's visit to Hiroshima – Restarting for "a world without nuclear weapons"'	The Nishinippon Shimbun, 5/28/2016.
	2 6/4		*Shazai naki Hiroshima kenka* 'Offering flowers but no apologies to Hiroshima'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/4/2016.

	3 6/5		*Bee-daitooryoo no Hiroshima hoomon – kaku naki sekai e no tenkanten ni* 'The US President's visit to Hiroshima – A turning point toward a world without nuclear weapons'	Asahi Shimbun, 5/28/2016.
	4 6/6	On the increase in Japan's taxation	*Shushoo to shoohizee – sekai keezai wa kiki zen'ya ka* 'The prime minister and the sales tax – Is the world economy on the eve of crisis?'	Asahi Shimbun, 5/29/2016.
	5 6/7		*Zoozee saienki hyoomee – mirai e no sekinin wa doko e* 'A pronouncement of another postponement in raising tax – Where will the responsibility for the future (go)?'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/2/2016.
	6 6/8	*Monju* Nuclear Power Plant	*Monju – moo hairo ni shite agete* '*Monju* – Please make it decommissioned'	Chunichi Shimbun, 6/4/2016.
3	1 6/10	On US Presidential campaign in 2016	*Kurinton shi – kusen no kyookun manande koso* 'Sen. Clinton – Learn a lesson from the difficult campaign'	Asahi Shimbun, 6/9/2016.
	2 6/11		*Kurinton kooho – doomee juushi no genjitsu shisee tsuranuke* 'Candidate Clinton – Stick with the realistic position emphasizing (Japan-US) alliance'	Sankei Shimbun, 6/10/2016.
	3 6/12		*Bee-daitooryoosen – sekai no kenen to mukiae* 'US Presidential campaign – Face concerns that the world has'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/9/2016.
	4 6/13	On a boy left behind by his parents in Hokkaido	*"yasumi-yasumi susunda" – hogosekininsha-iki de soosa sezu* '"Walked ahead resting at times" – (The police determined) not to investigate (the parents) for	Sankei Shimbun, 6/6/2016.

			abandonment by a person responsible for protection'	
	5 6/14		*Okizari danji hogo – zetsuboo no fuchi, yoku zo taeta* 'A boy left behind protected – (You) endured well on an abyss of despair'	Okinawa Times, 6/5/2016.
	6 6/15		*Hokkaido danji hogo – Shitsuke/gyakutai kyookai wa doko ni shikisha ni kiku* 'A boy (left behind) in Hokkaido protected – Asking experts where the boundary lies between discipline and abuse'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/8/2016.
4	1 6/17	Time and work	*Jikan to shigoto* 'Time and work'	Asahi Shimbun, 6/10/2016.
	2 6/18	Awareness of stock market	*Kabuka rendoo no shain shokudoo* 'A company cafeteria linked to its stock price'	Asahi Shimbun, 6/17/2016.
	3 6/19	Problems with nursery schools	*Hoikuen no kaien, enki/chuushi mo* 'The opening of nursery schools postponed or canceled'	Asahi Shimbun, 6/20/2016.
	4 6/20	House of Councilors election	*San'in-sen asu kooji* 'House of Councilors election publicly announced tomorrow'	Asahi Shimbun, 6/21/2016.
	5 6/21	Child labor issue	*Sono ko wa tooku ni iru* 'The child is in a distant place'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/19/2016.
	6 6/22	A mass shooting case and aggression	*Hito ga hito ni taishi koogekiteki ni naru no wa …* 'What makes humans aggressive against (other) humans is …'	Mainichi Shimbun, 6/14/2016.

APPENDIX IV

On stylistic choices:
Some excerpts from Curriculum Guidelines of the National Language
issued by MEXT in 2017

Grades	Guideline Excerpts
1 – 2	Children should be encouraged to: • pay attention to the differences between polite language and plain language when using them and get used to passages written in *keetai* (*desu/masu*). (p. 48)
3 – 4	(Knowledge and skills in all four language skills) Children should be encouraged to: • use polite language in both speaking and writing and pay attention to the differences between *keetai* (*desu/masu*) and *jootai* (*da/de aru*) when they are writing (pp. 83–84). (Writing) Children should be encouraged to: • consider the readers and the purpose of writing, carefully choose the topic from what they have experienced or imagined, and compare and assort the gathered materials to clearly communicate the point (pp. 101–102), and • revise their writing by correcting errors and assuring that their expressions are appropriate for the readers and purpose of their writings (p. 104).
5 – 6	(Knowledge and skills in all four language skills) Children should be encouraged to: • realize that their language functions to build a relationship with others (pp. 115–116), • notice that spoken language differs from written language (pp. 116–117), • understand how a word qualifies another word in a sentence including the word order, how a sentence connects with another sentence, how a story or passage is structured and developed, and the types of stories and passage and their characteristics (pp. 120–121), and • understand honorific expressions that are often used daily and get accustomed to using them (pp. 121–122), (Writing) Children should be encouraged to • contrive their ways of expressing their ideas, by summarizing or elaborating depending on their purposes and/or intentions and by differentiating facts, their impressions, and their opinions in their writings (pp. 141–142).

REFERENCES

Agency for Cultural Affairs (2003). Katakanago no ninchiritsu, rikairitsu, shiyooritsu [The percentages of recognition, comprehension, and usage of *katakana* words]. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technoloogy, Japan. https://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/tokeichosa/kokugo_yoronchosa/h14/katakana_shiyo.html

Agency for Cultural Affairs (2016). *Jooyoo kanji* o shitte imasu ka: Jooyoo kanji shiriizu 1 [Do you know *jooyoo kanji*?: *Jooyoo kanji* series, 1]. *Kotoba no Q & A [Q & A on language]*. Buncul, Agency for Cultural Affairs. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technoloogy, Japan.. https://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/tokeichosa/kokugo_yoronchosa/h14/katakana_shiyo.html

Ahmad, J. (2012). Intentional vs. incidental vocabulary learning. *ELT Research Journal, 1*(1), 71–79.

Akagi, N., Bryce, M., & Suzuki, H. (2020). *Maji ssu ka?* Isn't that honorific?: Ambiguity of new Japanese honorific *ssu*. *Pragmatics and Society, 11*(4), 505–523. https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.16002.aka

Ajioka, M. (2015). A pedagogical suggestion to cultivate JHL speakers' spoken/written language awareness: Based on the multiple grammar model. [Unpublished qualifying paper for PhD program requirement]. University of California, Los Angeles.

Ajioka, M., & Kawanishi, Y. (2013). On increasing instructional emphasis on the differences between written and spoken language grammars. *Proceedings of the 5th Asian Conference in Education, Japan*, 723–734. https://papers.iafor.org/wp-content/uploads/conference-proceedings/ACE/ACE2013_proceedings.pdf

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (2012). *ACTFL Proficiency guidelines*. https://www.actfl.org/uploads/files/general/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012.pdf

Anderson, R. C. (1984). Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory. In R. C. Anderson, J. Osborn, & R. J. Tierney (Eds.), *Learning to read in American schools: Basal readers and content texts* (pp. 243–257). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Asahi Gakuen (2024). *Yoku aru shitsumon: Q12 Kyookasho wa doo sureba ii desu ka [Frequently Asked Questions: Q12 How do I get textbooks?]*. https://www.asahigakuen.com/faq/

Barlow, M. (2013). Individual differences and usage-based grammar. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 18*(4), 443–478. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.18.4.01bar

Bartlett, F. C. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge University Press.

Behrens, H. (2009). Usage-based and emergentist approaches to language acquisition. *Linguistics, 47*(2), 383–411. https://doi.org/10.1515/LING.2009.014

Bialystok, E., & Hakuta, K. (1999). Confounded age: Linguistic and cognitive factors in age differences for second language acquisition. In D. Birdsong (Ed.), *Second language acquisition and the critical period hypothesis*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Biber, D. (2009). A corpus-driven approach to formulaic language in English: Multi-word patterns in speech and writing. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, 14*(3), 275–311. https://doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.14.3.08bib

Birdsong, D. (1999). Introduction: Whys and why nots of the critical period hypothesis for second language acquisition. In D. Birdsong (Ed.), *Second language acquisition and the critical period hypothesis*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bybee, J. (2000). The phonology of the lexicon: Evidence from lexical diffusion. In M. Barlow & S. Kemmer (Eds.), *Usage-based models of language* (pp. 65–85). CSLI Publications.

Bybee, J. (2006). From usage to grammar: The mind's response to repetition. *Language, 82*(4), 711–733. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4490266

Chafe, W. (1982). Integration and involvement in speaking, writing, and oral literature. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy* (pp. 35–53). Ablex.

Chafe, W. (1985). Linguistic differences produced by differences between speaking and writing. In D. R. Olson, N. Torrance, & A. Hildegard (Eds.), *Literacy, language, and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing* (pp. 105–123). Cambridge University Press.

Chafe, W., & Tannen, D. (1987). The relation between written and spoken language. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 16*, 383–407. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.16.100187.002123

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax.* The MIT Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt17kk81z

Chinen, K., & Tucker, G. R. (2006). Heritage language development: Understanding the roles of ethnic identity, schooling and community. In K. Kondo-Brown (Ed.), *Heritage language proficiency development: Focus on East Asian immigrants* (pp. 89–123). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Clancy, P. M. (1982). Written and spoken style in Japanese narratives. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*, (pp. 55–76). Ablex.

Cummins, J. (1979). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working papers on bilingualism, 19*, 121–129.

Cummins, J. (2001). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society* (2nd ed.). California Association for Bilingual Education.

Cummins, J. (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. In B. Street & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education, 2nd Edition, Volume 2: Literacy* (pp. 71–83). Springer Science + Business Media LLC.

Deleuze, G. (1979). The schizopheric and language: Surface and depth in Lewis Carroll and Antonin Artaud. In J. V. Harari (Ed.), *Textual strategies: Perspectives in post-structuralist criticism*. Cornell University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctvr7f6kr.14

Dietrich, S., & Hernandez, E. (2022a). Language use in the United States: 2019. *American Community Survey Reports.* United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2022/acs/acs-50.pdf

Dietrich, S., & Hernandez, E. (2022b). What language do we speak in the United States? United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2022/12/languages-we-speak-in-united-states.html

Dörnyei, Z (1994). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*(3), 273–284. https://doi.org/10.2307/330107

Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, *31*(3), 117–135. https://doi:10.1017/S026144480001315X

Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M. L. (1997). Communication strategies in a second language: Definitions and taxonomies. *Language Learning 47*(1), 173–210. https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.51997005

Douglas, M. O. (2008). A profile of Japanese heritage learners and individualized curriculum. In D. M. Brinton, O. Kagan, & S. Bauckus (Eds.), *Heritage language education: A new field emerging* (pp. 215–226). Routledge.

Douglas, M. O., Chinen, K., & Kataoka, H. C. (2013). Nihongo imaajon puroguramu ni zaiseki suru JHL jidoo no monogatari sanshutsuryoku to gengoryoku no hattatsu nit suite [Development of narrative writing ability and language proficiency in young JHL learners in a Japanese immersion program]. In K. Kondo-Brown, Y. Saito-Zbbott, S. Satsutani, M. Tsutsui, & A. Wehmeyer (Eds.), *New perspectives on Japanese language*

learning linguistics, and culture (pp. 1–25). National Foreign Language Resource Center, University of Hawai'i at Manoa.

Douglas, M. O., Kataoka, H. C., & Chinen, K. (2013). The Development of Japanese as a Heritage Language in the Los Angeles Conurbation. *Heritage Language Journal*, *10*(3), 336-356. https://doi.org/10.46538/hlj.10.3.6

Dulay, H. C., & Burt, M. K. (1974). You can't learn without goofing: An analysis of children's second language 'errors.' In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *Error analysis: Perspectives on second language acquisition* (pp. 107–135). Routledge.

Dulay, H. C., Burt, M. K., & Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Language two*. Oxford University Press.

Dušková, L. (1984). Similarity – an aid or hindrange in foreign language learning? *Folia Linguistica, 18*(1-2), 103–116. https://doi.org/10.1515/flin.1984.18.1-2.103

Erman, B., & Warren, B. (2000). The idiom principle and the open choice principle. *Text & Talk*, *20*(1), 29–62. https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.2000.20.1.29

Eskildsen, S. W. (2009). Constructing another language: Usage-based linguistics in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics, 30*(3), 335–357. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amn037

Flege, J. E. (1999). Age of learning and second language speech. In D. Birdsong (Ed.), *Second language acquisition and the critical period hypothesis*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Fujii, N., & Ono, T. (2000). The occurrence and non-occurrence of the Japanese direct object marker *o* in conversation. *Studies in Language, 24*(1), 1–39. https://doi.org/10.1075/sl.24.1.02fuj

Gardner, R. C. (2001). Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. In Z. Dörnyei & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* (pp. 1–19). University of Hawai'i Press.

Gardner, R. C. (2006). The socio-educational model of Second Language Acquisition: A research paradigm. *EUROSLA Yearbook, 6*(1), 237–260. https://doi.org/10.1075/eurosla.6.14gar

Gardner, R. C. (2010). *Motivation and second language acquisition: The socio-educational model*. Peter Lang.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1959). Motivational Variables in Second Language Acquisition. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 13*(4), 266-272. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0083787

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Newbury House.

Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gettys, S. (2016). Usage-based theory of language and usage-based instruction. *International Journal of Information Communication Technologies and Human Development (IJICTHD), 8*(3), 1-15. http://doi.org/10.4018/IJICTHD.2016070101

Green, G. (1982). Colloquial and literary uses of inversions. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy* (pp. 119–153). Ablex.

Hakuta, K. (1976). A preliminary report on the development of grammatical morphemes in a Japanese girl learning English as a second language. *Working Papers on Bilingualism, 3*, 1–27.

Hakuta, K. (1987). The second-language learner in the context of the study of language acquisition. In P. Homel, M. Palij, & D. Aaronson (Eds.), *Childhood Bilingualism: Aspects of linguistic, cognitive, and social development* (pp. 31-55). Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315802008

Halliday, M. A. K. (1979). Differences between spoken and written language: Some implications for literacy teaching. In G. Page, J. Elkins, & B. O'Connor (Eds.), *Communication through reading. Proceedings of the Fourth Australian Reading Conference* (pp. 37–52). Australian Reading Association.

Hulstijn, J.H. (2001). Intentional and incidental second-language vocabulary learning: A reappraisal of elaboration, rehearsal and automaticity. In P. Robinson (ed.), *Cognition and Second Language Instruction* (pp. 258–286). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524780

Hulstijn, J. H., Hollander, M., & Greidanus, T. (1996). Incidental vocabulary learning by advanced foreign language students: The influence of marginal glosses, dictionary use, and reoccurrence of unknown words. *The Modern Language Journal, 80*(3), 327–339. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1996.tb01614.x

Hulstijn, J. H., & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. *Language Learning, 51*(3), 539–558. https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.00164

Igarashi, Y. (2007). *The changing role of katakana in the Japanese writing system: Processing and pedagogical dimensions for native speakers and foreign learners.* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Victoria]. http://hdl.handle.net/1828/189

Imai, Y., & Takamoto, K. (1991). Nihongo no yomiyasusa ni kansuru kentoo [A study on the readability of Japanese sentences]. *Nara Kyooiku Daigaku Kiyoo [Bulletin Nara University of Education], 40*(1) (Culture & Society), 245–262.

Ishiguro, K. (2011). Hanashi-kotoba to kaki-kotoba: Shonenji kyooiku no kisoshiryoo to shite [Spoken and written languages: As basic data for the education to first-year students]. *Department Bulletin Papers. Cultura Philologica, Hitotsubashi University, 48,*15–35.

Ishiwata, T. (2001). *Gairaigo no soogooteki kenkyuu [The study on loanwords].* Tokyo-Do Shuppan.

Iwasaki, S. (2013). *Japanese* (Revised ed.). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Iwasaki, S. (2015). A multiple-grammar model of speakers' linguistic knowledge. *Cognitive Linguistics, 26*(2), 161–200. https://doi.org/10.1515/cog-2014-0101

Kagan, O., & Dillon, K. (2003). A new perspective on teaching Russian: Focus on the heritage learner. *Heritage Language Journal, 1*(1), 76–90. https://doi.org/10.46538/hlj.1.1.5

Kagan, O. (2014, December 21). Schools should help the children of immigrants become truly bilingual. *LA Times.* http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-1222-kagan-heritage-languages-20141222-story.html

Kaneyasu, M. (2015). Stance taking in Japanese newspaper discourse: The use and non-use of copulas *da* and *dearu*. *Text & Talk, 35*(2), 207–236. https://doi.org/10.1515/text-2014-0035

Kanji Jiten Online (n.d.). こう *koo*. In Kanji Jiten Online. Retrieved May 31, 2024, from https://kanji.jitenon.jp/cat/search.php?getdata=3053_3046&search=match&how=%E6%BC%A2%E5%AD%97

Kanji Jiten Online (n.d.). 明. In Kanji Jiten Online. Retrieved March 1, 2024, from https://kanji.jitenon.jp/kanji/228.html

Kanno, K., Hasegawa, T., Ikeda, K., Ito, Y., & Long, M. H. (2008). Prior language-learning experience and variation in the linguistic profiles of advanced English-speaking learners of Japanese. In D. M. Brinton, O. Kagan, & S. Bauckus (Eds.), *Heritage language education: A new field emerging* (pp. 165–181). Routledge.

Karim, K., & Nassaji, H. (2013). First language transfer in second language writing: An examination of current research. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 1*(1), 117–134. https://ijltr.urmia.ac.ir/article_20456.html

Kataoka, H. C., Koshiyama, Y., & Shibata, S. (2008). Japanese and English language ability of students at supplementary Japanese schools in the United States. In K. Kondo-Brown &

J. D. Brown (Eds.), *Teaching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean heritage language students* (pp. 47–76). Lawrence Earlbaum.

Kataoka, H., & Shibata, S. (2011). Kokusai kekkon no kodomotachi no nihongoryoku to kateegengo: Fuusetsu kara no dakkyaku to kanoosee ni mukete [Japanese language proficiency and home language use among children of international marriages: Breaking free from common assumptions]. *Japanese as a Heritage Language Journal, 4*, 1–40. Retrieved May 29, 2024, from https://www.aatj.org/sites/default/files/uploads/JHLJournalVol04_0.pdf

Kawanishi, Y., & Iwasaki, S. (2018). Reason-coding in Japanese: A Multiple Grammar perspective. In M. E. Hudson, J. Mori, & Y. Matsumoto (Eds.), *Pragmatics of Japanese: Perspectives on grammar, interaction and culture*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.285

Kelleher, A. (2010). What is a heritage language learner? *Heritage Briefs*. Center for Applied Linguistics. https://www.cal.org/heritage/pdfs/briefs/Who-is-a-Heritage-Language-Learner.pdf

Kellerman, E. (1987). *Aspects of transferability in second language acquisition*. [Doctoral dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit te Nijmegen]. https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/2066/113363/mmubn000001_044782926.pdf

Kemmer, S., & Barlow, M. (2000). Introduction. In M. Barlow & S. Kemmer (Eds.), *Usage-based models of language*. CSLI Publications.

Kishimoto, T. (2008). Nigengo o manabu kodomo no hahaoya kyooiku: Kaiwaryoku choosa to dokushoryoku choosa o tooshite [Education to mothers with children learning two languages: Through investigations on conversation and reading abilities]. In G. Sato & H. Kataoka (Eds.), *America de sodatsu nihon no kodomotachi: Bairingaru no hikari to kage [Japanese children growing up in the U.S.: Bilinguals' light and shadow]* (pp. 143–170). Akashi Shoten.

Kobayashi, H., & Rinnert, C. (1992). Effects of first language on second language learning: Translation versus direct composition. *Language Learning, 42*(2), 183–215. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1992.tb00707.x

Koda, K. (1993). Transferred L1 strategies and L2 syntactic structure in L2 sentence comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal, 77*(4), 490–500. https://www.jstor.org/stable/329674

Kondo-Brown, K. (2001). Heritage language students of Japanese in traditional foreign language classes: A preliminary empirical study. *Japanese Language and Literature, 35*(2), 157–179. https://www.jstor.org/stable/489695

Kondo-Brown, K. (2003). Heritage language instruction for post-secondary students from immigrant backgrounds. *Heritage Language Journal, 1*(1), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.46538/hlj.1.1.1

Kondo-Brown, K. (2005). Differences in language skills: Heritage language learner subgroups and foreign language learners. *The Modern Language Journal, 89*(4), 563–581. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00330.x

Kroll, B. (1977). Combining ideas in written and spoken English. In E. O. Keenan & T. L. Bennett (Eds.), *Discourse across time and space. Southern California Occasional Papers in Linguistics, 5,* (pp. 69–108). Department of Linguistics, University of Southern California.

Krashen, S. D., & Terrell, T. D. (1988). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Prentice Hall.

Kubota, R. (1998). An investigation of L1-L2 transfer in writing among Japanese university students: Implications for contrastive rhetoric. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 7*(1), 69–100. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(98)90006-6.

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures*. University of Michigan Press.

Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of cognitive grammar, Vol. 1. Theoretical preliminaries*. Stanford University Press.

Langacker (1998). Conceptualization, symbolization, and grammar. In M. Tomasello (Ed.), *The new psychology of language: Cognitive and functional approaches to language structure* (pp. 1–39). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Langacker, R. W. (2000a). A dynamic usage-based model. In M. Barlow & S. Kemmer (Eds.), *Usage-based models of language* (pp. 1–33). CSLI Publications.

Langacker, R. W. (2000b). *Grammar and conceptualization*. Mouton de Gruyter.

Langacker, R. W. (2009). A dynamic view of usage and language acquisition. *Cognitive Linguistics, 20*(3), 627–640. https://doi.org/10.1515/COGL.2009.027

Laufer, B., & Hulstijn, J. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: The construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics, 22*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/22.1.1

Makino, S., & Tsutsui, M. (1989). *A dictionary of basic Japanese grammar*. The Japan Times Publishing.

Masuji, H. (2018). Gakujutsu zasshi ni okeru katakana no yakuwari to shiyō jittai: Katakana hyōki de shutsugen suru go to kontekusuto to no kanren [The use of katakana in scholarly journals: The influence of context on the appearance of katakana–represented words]. *Kokubungaku Kenkyuu*, *184*, 105–91.

Maynard, S. K. (1985). Choice of predicate and narrative manipulation: Functions of *dearu* and *da* in modern Japanese Fiction. *Poetics, 14*(X), 369–385. https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-422X(85)90034-8.

Maynard, S. K. (1991). Pragmatics of discourse modalilty: A case of *da* and *desu/masu* forms in Japanese. *Journal of Pragmatics, 15*(6), 551–582. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-2166(91)90111-A.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (n.d.). *Zaigai kyooiku shisetsu no gaiyoo [Overview of Japanese educational institutions overseas]*. https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/002/002.htm

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2008). *Chuugakkoo gakushuu shidoo yooryoo kaisetsu: Kokugo [Explanation of Curriculum guidelines for junior high school education: Japanese national language]*. https://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2014/04/15/1234912_2_1.pdf

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2010). *Jooyoo kanji hyoo [A chart of commonly used kanji]*. Japanese Cabinet Notification on November 30, 2010. https://www.bunka.go.jp/kokugo_nihongo/sisaku/joho/joho/kijun/naikaku/pdf/joyokanjihyo_20101130.pdf

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2017). *Shoogakkoo gakushuu shidoo yooryoo kaisetsu: Kokugo hen [Explanation of Curriculum guidelines for elementary school education: Japanese national language]*. https://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2019/03/18/1387017_002.pdf

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) (2021). *People-to-people exchange: KAKEHASHI Project*. https://www.mofa.go.jp/na/na1/page22e_000748.html

Miller, R. A. (1967). *The Japanese language*. University of Chicago Press.

Nakajima, K. (2016). *Bairingaru kyooiku no hoohoo: Juuni-sai made ni oya to kyooshi ga dekiru koto [The methods for bilingual education: What parents and teachers can do by the time a child turns 12]*. ALC Press Inc.

Narahara, T. (2002). *The Japanese copula: Forms and functions*. Palgrave Macmillan.

National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) (1995). Shin "kotoba" shiriizu 15: Nihongo o soto kara nagameru toi 18 [New "language" series 15: Looking at Japanese from Outside Q18]. https://www2.ninjal.ac.jp/past-publications/publication/catalogue/shin_kotoba_series/11_19/pages/kotoba15q18/index.html

Nation, P. (2015). Principles guiding vocabulary learning through extensive reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 27*(1), 136–145.

Nomura, M., & Yanase, T. (1979). Jidoo yomimono no goi koozoo [Word structure in children's readings]. *Keeryoo Kokugogaku [Mathematical Linguistics], 12*(2), 86–95.

Okamoto, S. (2011). The use and interpretation of addressee honorifics and plain forms in Japanese: Diversity, multiplicity, and ambiguity. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*(15), 3673–3688. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.06.012.

Ono, T., & Suzuki, R. (1992). Word order variability in Japanese conversation: Motivations and grammaticization. *Text – Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Discourse*, *12*(3), 429–446. https://doi.org/10.1515/text.1.1992.12.3.429

Pawley, A., & Syder, F. H. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Nativelike selection and nativelike fluency. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 191–226). Longman.

Penfield, W., & Roberts, L. (1959). *Speech and brain mechanisms.* Princeton University Press.

Postman, L. (1971). Transfer, interference and forgetting. In J. W. Kling & L. A. Riggs (Eds.), *Woodworth and Schlosberg's experimental psychology* (pp. 1019–1132). Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Redeker, G. (1984). On differences between spoken and written language. *Discourse Processes, 7*(1), 43–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/01638538409544580

Rott, S. (1999). The effect of exposure frequency on intermediate language learners' incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 21*(4), 589–619. doi:10.1017/S0272263199004039

Rumelhart, D. E., & Ortony, A. (1977). The representation of knowledge in memory. In R. C. Anderson, R. J. Spiro, & W. E. Montabue (Eds.), *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge* (pp. 99–135). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Ryan, C. (2013). Language use in the United States: 2011. *American Community Survey Reports.* United States Census Bureau. https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2013/acs/acs-22/acs-22.pdf

Schmidt, R. W. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 11*(2), 129–158. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/11.2.129

Schumann, J. H. (1976). Second language acquisition: The pidginization hypothesis. *Language Learning, 26*(2), 391–408. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1976.tb00283.x

Schumann, J. H. (1978). The acculturation model for second-language acquisition. In R. C. Gingras, (Ed.), *Second language acquisition and foreign language teaching*. Center for Applied Linguistics.

Schumann, J. H. (1986). Research on the acculturation model for second language acquisition. *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development, 7*(5), 375 – 392. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.1986.9994254

Schumann, J. H. (1997). *The Neurobiology of affect in language learning*. Wiley.

Schumann, J. H. (2001). Learning as foraging. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* Technical Report #23, pp. 21–28). University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.

Schumann, J. H., & Wood, L. A. (2004). The neurobiology of motivation. In J. H. Schumann, S. E. Crowell, N. E. Jones, N. Lee, S. A. Schuchert, & S. A. Wood (Eds.), *The neurobiology of learning: Perspectives from second language acquisition* (pp. 23–42). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Shibata, S. (2008). Amerika no nihongo hoshuukoo no jidoo/seeto no joshi no shuutoku jookyoo: Nihon no jidoo/seeto to no hikaku [Learning Japanese particles among students at supplementary Japanese schools in the United States: The comparison with students in Japan]. *CRIE Review of International Education, 5*, 37–51.

Schlegel, G. (1893). Desultory notes on Japanese lexicography. *T'oung Pao, 4*(2), 174–218. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4524992

Singleton, D. (2005). The critical period hypothesis: A coat of many colours. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 43*(4), 269–285. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2005.43.4.269

Sohn, S. O. (1997). Issues and concerns in teaching multi-level classes: Syllabus design for heritage and non-heritage learners. *The Korean Language in America, 2*, 139–158. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42922218

Taishukanshoten (2016). *Kanji bunka shiryookan: Kanji Q & A Q0096 [Kanji culture museum: Kanji Q & A Q0096]*. https://kanjibunka.com/kanji-faq/old-faq/q0096/#:~:text=%E5%9B%BD%E8%AA%9E%E8%BE%9E%E5%85%B8%E3%81%A7%E3%81%AF%E3%80%81%E3%80%8C%E3%81%97%E3%80%8D,%E3%81%

AE%E3%81%8C%E4%B8%80%E8%88%AC%E7%9A%84%E3%81%A7%E3%81%99%E3%80%82

Tajika, H. (2002). Bunka chishiki [Cultural knowledge]. In Reading Comprehension Research Group in the Institute of Language and Culture at Tsuda University (Eds), *Process and instruction of English reading comprehension* (pp. 229–242). Taishukan Publishing.

Takamatsu, R., & Kikuchi, H. (2012). Dooitsu-taishoo o jujutsu shita hanashi-kotoba to kaki-kotoba no hikaku [Comparison between spoken and written language describing the same object]. *Denshi Joohoo Tsuushin Gakkai Ronbun-shi [Journal of Institute of Electronics, Information, and Communication Engineers] J95-A*(1), 146–156.

Takiura, M. (2014). Hanashi-kotoba to kaki-kotoba no goyooron [Pragmatics of spoken and written language]. In K. Ishiguro & Y. Hashimoto (Eds.), *Hanashi-kotoba to kaki-kotoba no setten [The interface between spoken and written language]* (pp. 75–92). Hituzi Shobo.

Tenma, M. (1989). *Eebun dokkai no sutoratejii [Strategies for English reading comprehension]*. Taishukan Publishing.

Tannen, D. (1982a). Oral and literate strategies in spoken and written narratives. *Language, 58*(1), 1–21.

Tannen, D. (1982b). The oral/literate continuum in discourse. In D. Tannen (Ed.), *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy* (pp. 1–16). Ablex.

Tannen, D. (1985). Relative focus on involvement in oral and written discourse. In D. R. Olson, N. Torrance, & A. Hildyard (Eds.), *Literacy, language, and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing* (pp. 124–147). Cambridge University Press.

Taylor, Y. I. (2010). Approximation *tari* in Japanese: Focus on interaction and information. In S. Iwasaki, H. Hoji, P. M. Clancy, & S.-O. Sohn (Eds.), *Japanese/Korean Linguistics, 17,* 533 – 546.

Tesser, A., & Shaffer, D. R. (1990). Attitudes and attitude change. *Annual Review of Psychology, 41*, 479–523. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.41.020190.002403

The White House President Barack Obama (2017). *Fact sheet: The Prague Nuclear Agenda*. Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, on January 11, 2017. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/11/fact-sheet-prague-nuclear-agenda#:~:text=%E2%80%9CSo%20today%2C%20I%20state%20clearly,will%20take%20patience%20and%20persistence.

Tomasello, M. (2001). First steps toward a usage-based theory of language acquisition. *Cognitive Linguistics, 11*(1–2), 61–82. https://doi.org/10.1515/cogl.2001.012

Tomasello, M. (2003). *Constructing a language: A usage-based theory of language acquisition*. Harvard University Press.

Touchie, H. Y. (1986). Second language learning errors: Their types, causes, and treatment. *JALT Journal, 8*(1), 75 – 80.

Tyler, A. (2010). Usage-based approaches to language and their applications to second language learning. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 30*, 270–291. doi:10.1017/S0267190510000140

Uzawa, K. (1996). Second language learners' processes of L1 writing, L2 writing, and translation from L1 into L2. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 5*(3), 271–294. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(96)90005-3.

Valdes, G. (2000). Introduction. *Spanish for native speakers: AATSP professional development series handbook for teachers K-16* (pp. 1–20). Harcourt College.

Valdes, G. (2001). Heritage language students: Profiles and possibilities. In J. K. Peyton, D. A. Ranard, & S. McGinnis (Eds.), *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource* (pp. 37–77). Center for Applied Linguistics.

VanPatten, B., & Benati, A. G. (2010). *Key terms in second language acquisition*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

Waring, R., & Nation, P. (2004). Second language reading and incidental vocabulary learning. *Angles on the English-speaking World, 4*, 11–23.

Webb, S. (2008). The effects of context on incidental vocabulary learning. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 20*(2), 232–245.

Weblio (n.d.). 訪れる *otozureru*. In Weblio Jisho. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from https://www.weblio.jp/content/%E8%A8%AA%E3%82%8C%E3%82%8B

Weblio (n.d.). 訪ねる *tazuneru*. In Weblio Jisho. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from https://www.weblio.jp/content/%E8%A8%AA%E3%81%AD%E3%82%8B

Weblio (n.d.). 投下する *tooka suru*. In Weblio Jisho. Retrieved April 5, 2024, from https://www.weblio.jp/content/%E6%8A%95%E4%B8%8B%E3%81%99%E3%82%8B

Wiley, T. G. (2001). On defining heritage languages and their speakers. In J. K. Peyton, D. A. Ranard, & S. McGinnis (Eds.), *Heritage language in America: Preserving a national resource* (pp. 29–36). Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wolfersberger, M. (2003). L1 to L2 writing process and strategy transfer: A look at lower proficiency writers. *TESL-EJ, 7*(2), 1–15. https://tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume7/ej26/ej26a6/

Wray, A. (2013). Formulaic language. *Language Teaching, 46*(3), 316–334. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444813000013

Wray, A., & Perkins, R. P. (2000). The functions of formulaic language: An integrated model. *Language Communication, 20*(1), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0271-5309(99)00015-4

Wulff, S.. & Ellis, N. C. (2018). Usage-based approaches to second language acquisition. In D. Miller, F. Bayrarn, J. Rothman, & L. Serratrice (Eds.), *Bilingual cognition and language: The state of the science across its subfields* (pp. 37–56). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Yamaguchi, M. (2007). Shimbun kiji ni okeru goi no jikanteki henka bunseki: goshu to no kankee o chuushin ni. [An analysis of diachronic change in lexicons in newspaper articles – Focusing on word types] *The National Institute for Japanese Language Report, 126, Loanwords in the Public Media: Basic Researches for "Suggestions for Paraphrasing Loanwords,"* 379–386. https://www2.ninjal.ac.jp/gairaigo/Report126/houkoku3-4.pdf

Yamashita, R. (2018). Problems in explaining use of *desu/masu* forms: Evidence from a small community classroom. *Tokyo University Linguistic Papers (TULIP), 39*, 365–380.

Yamazaki, M., & Onuma, E. (2004). Gendai zasshi ni okeru goshu koosee [Distribution of word types in current magazines]. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for Natural Language Processing, 10*. https://www.anlp.jp/proceedings/annual_meeting/2004/pdf_dir/P6-3.pdf

Zobl, H. (1980). The formal and developmental selectivity of L1 influence on L2 acquisition. *Language Learning, 30*(1), 43–57. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1980.tb00150.x