

**A CASE STUDY  
OF  
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

by  
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*When I observed the Japanese language class at  
Kington High School in June, 1992.*

## ABSTRACT

In 1990 the Japanese Education Department decided to revise its foreign language curriculum and to introduce a communicative competence component. This implied a re-examination of assessment of foreign language education in the four language skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This case study analyses the concept of communicative competence and investigates how we can improve communicative competence in foreign language education.

Fifty Japanese and Australian students at high schools learning each others' language were given questionnaires about their classes in foreign language. The emphasis in this study was on the student's own assessment (self assessment) of their communicative competence. Communicative competence may be defined as the ability to communicate using not only the correct grammar and vocabulary, but to use it in a socially appropriate (for that culture) manner.

The results of the questionnaire and interviews conducted with teachers reveals interesting differences between the two student groups. Japanese students generally felt less confident in their own ability to clearly express ideas in English compared to the Australian students in a similar situation. The results are interpreted in terms of the different methods of teaching typically used in the two countries. In Japan, foreign language education is based on the formalist approach while in Australia the activist approach is favoured.

These two differing approaches are a reflection in part of certain differences in culture and the ultimate goal in foreign language teaching. In Japan, foreign language teaching (predominantly English) is based on the goal of a student's achievement in a written examination for University examination. In Australia there is an emphasis on learning the language as well as aspects of the culture associated with it. As a result Australian students believe that the language is not only enjoyable but also is helpful to their future career. This results in different motivations for the students.

The two approaches to the teaching also result in differences in cognitive ability. The activist approach compared with the formalist approach requires continual participation by the student in the learning process to develop language skills through the active use of language and communicative competence abilities. Japanese students compared with Australian students have a poorer ability in communication, although their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar rules may be greater. They are unable to apply knowledge from one area of language education because their course is not suitably balanced with regard to effective communication.

There are many social factors that impinge on successful foreign language learning. Many of these may be overcome if a balanced curricula is adopted. It is the suggestion of this thesis that in order to improve foreign language education in Japan the cultural differences between the cultures will need to be recognised and appropriate teaching methods adopted.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This paper will analyse the concept of communicative competence and investigate how we can improve communicative competence with regard to the teaching and learning of foreign language in Japan and Australia. The major portion of this thesis is based on a case study of Australian high school students learning Japanese and Japanese students learning English using learner's self assessment. Through a series of questionnaires and interviews communicative competence of Japanese and Australian high school students is assessed. The results of these allow some predictions regarding the ability to effectively teach a foreign language.

### **1.1 Background to the improvement of foreign language education.**

In present Japanese society, the interest in inter-cultural communication, generally called "Internationalized Understanding", is rapidly increasing. Inter-cultural communication is the mechanism by which people from different language backgrounds understand each other.

Only in recent times has the teaching of "English as a Foreign Language" been influenced by communicative teaching methodology. Previously, foreign language teaching in Japanese high schools was content-based and communicative competence was ignored. In 1990, the Japanese Education Department decided to revise the foreign language curricula and to include a communicative competence component. This will involve a re-examination of the assessment of foreign language education in the four language skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Wray (1990:154-155) identifies the weakness in oral communication in English language education in Japan as follows: (Translation from Japanese)



"English language learning in Japan is not efficient. The Japanese study English for six years until they graduate from high school and they can read English quite well; however, almost 90% of students are unable to speak English. This is because the purpose of learning English is centred on the entrance examination to University. Because of this, the English teachers are obliged to teach difficult English grammatical rules and analyses rather than communication through English. Therefore the students lose their willingness to speak English. Most English teachers have ignored oral English education because conversation is not necessary for the entrance examination to University. The pronunciation and communicative methodology of the English teachers is quite poor. The reason they do not teach conversation is that it will not affect their students' chances of entering university."

This statement quite clearly highlights the Japanese education system's concentration on university entrance examinations as the cause of the inadequacy of English language teaching, particularly the lack of communication skills by students.

At present, the study of English in Japanese High Schools is divided into reading and composition; four hours a week for the former and one hour for the latter. The reading material is principally a textbook approved by the Ministry of Education. However, since the Ministry of Education approved texts are inadequate, both in amount and quality, some instructors are forced to use supplementary readers.

Composition is mostly concerned with training in basic sentence patterns. Unfortunately, there is little emphasis on the understanding of spoken English in high schools. The two principle reasons for this are cost related. Firstly, a possible solution might be to attract more teachers from overseas to Japan, however, the cost of hiring qualified personnel is extremely high. This is part of the cause of many lower paid unqualified teachers being employed. This results in much misunderstanding between the Japanese and foreign teachers concerning the correct approach to the subject. Secondly, the high cost of language

laboratory materials and machines required to successfully teach all students is prohibitive.

This results in Japanese high school students being generally poor in English conversation. When they meet foreigners they too often become shy, passive and feel uneasy. This may be to blame, in part, for the perception and misunderstanding of the Japanese character and behaviour when the two cultures first meet. Tsuchiya (1990: 88) listed five reason why students do not feel confident when speaking.

- (1) Students do not have confidence in English Pronunciation.
- (2) Students can not "hit upon" the suitable expression immediately.
- (3) Students pay too much attention to grammar.
- (4) Students are afraid of making errors.
- (5) Students can not understand and thus cannot produce the appropriate expression to respond correctly.

To solve the problems of inadequate speaking and listening ability, the high school curriculum will be revised in 1994. The subject "Oral communication" will be added to improve communicative ability in foreign language learning. The following three tables indicate how this newly revised curriculum is in line with students requirements. Table 1.1 is the result of the authors survey of 100 Japanese junior high school students and 100 senior high school students in 1987 which clearly showed that the majority of students want to learn conversation.

TABLE 1.1: SURVEY BY THE AUTHOR (1987) OF THE SKILLS JAPANESE STUDENTS MOST WANT TO LEARN

STUDENTS AT :	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
CONVERSATION	65%	72.5%
GRAMMAR	20%	17.5%
BOTH	15%	10%

This result is similar to the findings (below) of a survey in two parts conducted by the University English Education Society of 10,000 Japanese University students in 1985. The survey was of students in all faculties, and the questions related specifically to their recent high school experience.

TABLE 1.2: SURVEY BY THE UNIVERSITY ENGLISH EDUCATION SOCIETY(1985).

**(a) ENGLISH SKILLS WHICH STUDENTS MOST WANT TO LEARN :**

SKILL	# STUDENTS	% OF TOTAL
LISTENING	1,480	14.3%
SPEAKING	6,153	59.4%
READING	2,136	20.6%
WRITING	317	3.0%
NO ANSWER	275	2.7%
SURVEY	10,361	100%

**(b) ENGLISH SKILLS AT WHICH STUDENTS THINK THEY ARE BEST**

SKILL	NR STUDENTS	% OF TOTAL
LISTENING	1,401	13.5%
SPEAKING	671	6.5%
READING	7,033	67.7%
WRITING	996	9.5%
NO ANSWER	280	2.7%
TOTAL	10,361	100%

Tables 1.2 a&b clearly indicate the majority of university students (59.4%) want to learn "speaking", whilst a similar percentage (67.7%) believe their strength lies in reading, rather than speaking (6.5%).

TABLE 1.3: REVISED ENGLISH COURSE OF STUDY FOR JAPANESE HIGH SCHOOLS

SUBJECT	UNIT
ENGLISH I	4
ENGLISH II	4
ORAL COMMUNICATION A	2
ORAL COMMUNICATION B	2
ORAL COMMUNICATION C	2
READING	4
WRITING	4

NOTE 1. one unit is 35 x 50 minutes

2. class hours; 40 hours a year at high school

3. class size; 40 - 45 students

4. The criteria of Oral Communication are to learn :

A:-The appropriate expression to show opinions and feelings.

B:-The appropriate way to show confirmation of approval and disapproval.

C:- The appropriate expression to show suggestion, assertion, demonstration

Table 1.3 shows the revised English course. It is more in line with the course that students would like to study, however, the author would like to point out, that even if the language curricula is revised to include communicative competence, it will be difficult for Japanese students to develop communicative competence in a cultural context that is significantly different from their own (illustrated by the Japanese proverbs, "Silence is Golden", "better leave it unsaid"). A revision of the entire curricula, including all aspects of language teaching, will be required before Japanese students will have the ability to successfully communicate ideas in English.

## 1.2 Differences in the social functions of language between Japanese and English societies.

Language plays a limited role in Japanese society. Japanese generally believe that it is unnecessary to speak precisely and explicitly with one another because they

take it for granted that they share a lot of common assumptions. The function of language as a means of social communication in Japan, then, is to emphasize and reinforce the feeling of homogeneity.

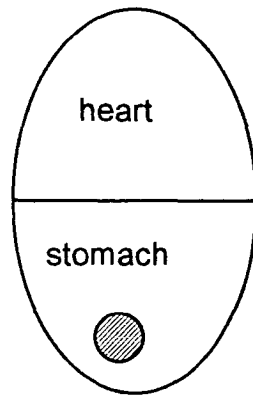
The Japanese language, in contrast to other languages, is often perceived as illogical. A primary reason for this false perception seems to lie not in the structure of the Japanese language, but in the way the Japanese use the language to express themselves.

In comparison, Western English speakers generally state their opinions as explicitly, logically, and objectively as possible by following a step-by-step approach. Such different social functions of language will influence second language learning. The weakness of Japanese communicative ability when learning English is clear from the students' self-assessment of their communicative competence. In the following section the different communication patterns between the Japanese and the Australians will be discussed in detail.

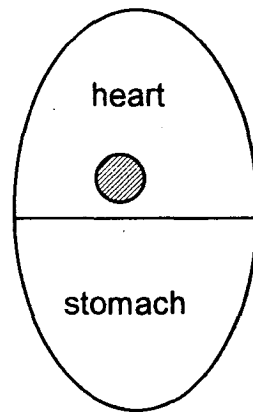
### **1.3 Different communication patterns between Japanese and Australians**

Ishii (1990:103) described the different communication patterns between the Japanese and the Westerners as described in Figure 1.1.

As Figure 1.1 illustrates, the Japanese believe the stomach plays a very important part in communication. Many Japanese idioms use "stomach". For example, "Hara o sagurau" (The literal meaning: to seek for the other's stomach, English translation: to sound out a person's idea), "Hara o watte hanasu" (The literal meaning: to speak by showing his stomach, English translation: to speak frankly) and so on. However, Westerners believe communication is from their heart, for example, "heart to heart communication". Such "heart to heart communication" metaphors were developed by rhetoric in ancient Greece. The Western rhetorical style of communication is based on discussion and dialectics. On the other hand, Japanese communication style is based on mutual respect. This is highlighted by the use of honorific expressions in everyday language use.



1. Japanese communication pattern



2. Westerners communication pattern

FIGURE 1.1: The shaded area shows the position of communication

Too often, Japanese reluctance to be explicit and direct results in misunderstandings when the Japanese interact with foreigners in international communicative settings. In fact, it is frequently voiced that the Japanese hide their true feelings or that they are hard to understand. The author suggests that differences in this "psychology" of language is itself a barrier to the teaching, and particularly the learning of foreign language.

#### **1.4 Significance of study**

A study such as the one conducted allows a comparison of two cultures. This study concentrates on the differences in these cultures and how these effect the teaching, or more specifically, the learning of foreign languages. At present teaching of foreign language in Japan is poor, especially with regard to communication. In Australia language teaching has generally concentrated on the ability to communicate in different languages and generally a component for the understanding of the culture is incorporated. In Japanese classrooms the emphasis is instead on written vocabulary and grammar.

This study, although independent of the Ministry of Education in Japan identifies some of the problems of the present education system in Japan and in particular with English language education. Many of these problems are associated with the teaching method typically used and the desired educational goal. The proposed change in the structure of the course will necessarily require a change in the manner in which it is taught for its ultimate success.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Communicative competence refers to the ability of a speaker to communicate ideas, by both the appropriate use of words and behaviour. This has been identified as a problem for Japanese students learning foreign languages, and specifically English. At present, considerable changes are being made to the way in which English is taught in Japan. Some of these changes take into account present theories on communicative competence and methods by which this can be successfully taught.

This chapter expands on the nature of communicative competence and identifies differences in the Japanese and Australian culture and education systems that are responsible, at least in part, for the difficulties often experienced by Japanese students in learning English. An account of foreign language education in Japan and Australia is also presented.

#### **2.1 Communicative competence and language teaching**

The term "communicative competence" has been defined in many different ways. Backlund (1978:26) defined communicative competence as:

"The ability to demonstrate a knowledge of the socially appropriate communicative behaviour in a given situation."

Communicative competence may further be defined as the ability to select grammatical expressions, which appropriately reflect the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters (Gumperz, 1976:205).

It is clear then, from these two definitions, that communicative competence not only requires a sound knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical rules but also an understanding of the correct manner in which this knowledge should be utilised.



In foreign language teaching this is especially difficult when cultures differ in their use of language and its role in communication.

Native speakers vary greatly in the size and range of the repertoire of communication skills they have available, depending on their social background, interests, membership of various social groups, education and occupation. A speaker's freedom of social action is dependent upon the range of their repertoire, a lack of commands of some communicative codes or styles will seriously limit their freedom in certain situations.

Communication is not only a means to convey information but also to establish and maintain connections with other people. The following three functions are suggested as the main communicative functions;

- (1) Linguistic function: function to convey information,
- (2) Emotional function: function to satisfy self-fulfilment,
- (3) Social function: function to belong to and maintain membership within society.

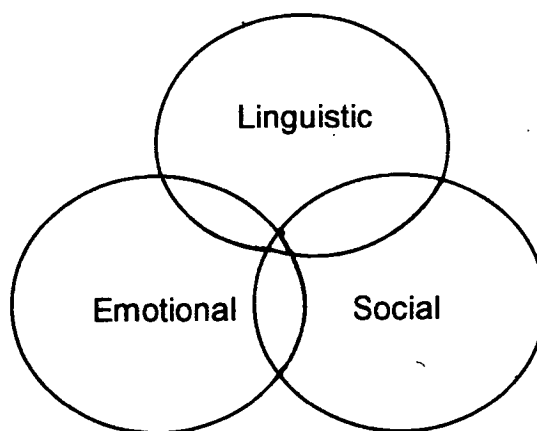


Figure 2.1: Communicative functions in language teaching

As figure 2.1 demonstrates these three functions have an interactive relationship. In other words, if we do not realize that these three functions interact with each other, it is very difficult to proceed to what is appropriate communication within society.

In preparing a communicative teaching program for foreign language we must take account of what the student's needs may be. The social situations in which the student is likely to participate in, the social groups they may aspire to and the associated language requirements should determine language skills taught. This will enable us to set about specifying the linguistic "repertoire" which the student will need to command. It is this repertoire which should form the basis of the syllabus for a learner.

The following section discusses two types of language syllabuses which Davies (1976) described.

### 2.1.1 Types of language syllabuses

Davies (1976) groups curricula into two types; Type A and Type B.

<b>Type A What is to be learnt?</b>	<b>Type B How is it to be learnt?</b>
•Interventionist	Non-interventionist
•External to the learner	Internal to the learner
•Other directed	Inner directed or self-fulfilling
•Determined by authority	Negotiated between learners and teachers
•Teacher as decision maker	Learner and teacher as joint decision makers
•Content (what the subject is to the expert)	Content (what the subject is to the learner)
•Content (a gift to the learner from the teacher)	Content (what the learner extracts )
•Objectives defined in advance	Objectives described afterwards
•Subject emphasis	Process emphasis
•Assessment by achievement or by mastery	Assessment in relationship to learners criteria or success
•Doing things to the learner	Doing things for or with the learner

In relation to language teaching syllabuses, these two types can be summarized in terms of the distinction between an interventionist approach and an experiential approach. The interventionist approach gives priority to the prespecification of linguistic or other content or skill objectives. Conversely, a non-interventionist,

experiential, or "natural growth" approach aims to immerse the learners in real-life communication without any artificial preselection or arrangement of items (Davies, 1976: 45-46). However, the basis for such syllabuses remains essentially the same, that is, it is on objectives to be achieved, content to be learned. Indeed, any such syllabuses are often based on lists of items to be learnt, whether these are grammatical structures, categories of communication, function, or topics.

Rivers (1966:12-13) identifies two approaches, the formalist and the activist approach. Formalists teach mainly from the standpoint of the teacher, while the activists approach concentrates on the standpoint of the students. Nunan (1988:2) notes that the key difference between learner-centred and traditional curriculum development is that, in the former, the curriculum is a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the content of the curriculum and how it is taught. In particular, the traditional approach places the burden for all aspects of curriculum development on the teacher. Shavelson and Stern (1981:477) write that the teaching situation of most teachers is as follows.

"Most teachers are trained to plan instruction by; (a) specifying (behavioural) objectives, (b) specifying student's entry behaviour, (c) selecting and sequencing learning activities so as to move learners from entry behaviours to objectives and (d) evaluating the outcomes of instruction in order to improve planning. While this prescriptive model of planning may be one of the most consistently taught features of the curriculum of teacher education programmes, the model is consistently not used in teachers' planning in schools. Obviously there is a mismatch between the demands of the classroom and the prescriptive planning model."

### **2.1.2 Communicative components**

In this section the author will discuss communicative components in the language classroom. One aspect of creating a communicative classroom is the ability of the teacher in the classroom. The ability to teach a subject is greatly influenced by the syllabus the teacher is required to teach. General education in Japan has been

taught by the Interventionist Approach (Davies' Type A). Even if the teacher wants to use a communicative approach in a language classroom, they are unlikely to know what kinds of classroom practices are necessary to develop communicative skills; the communicative theory will not be translated into communicative activities in the classroom.

Macdonough (1980:311) points out the difficulty of learnability for students as follows:

"Psychologists have objected that there is no reason to assume that linguistic complexity is itself a cause of learning difficulty because many constructions that appear complex in terms of counts of elements or underlying rules are used by native speakers with no hesitation or greater difficulty in execution than appropriate context. This is not to deny that constructions do differ in complexity and learnability, rather it is to claim that the only measure of learnability is actual learning and not predictions derived from linguistic description alone."

The communicative teaching method is centred on the learner-centred syllabus. In other words, we can call the communicative teaching syllabus the process syllabus as Figure 2.2 illustrates.

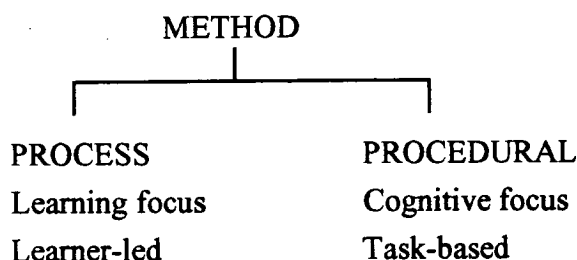


Figure 2.2: The Process Syllabus

Candlin (1984:34) expands on the procedural syllabus to argue for an interactive syllabus and he summarized (1987:5) his process model in Figure 2.3. The planning of language learning and teaching occurs at two levels; curriculum and syllabus.

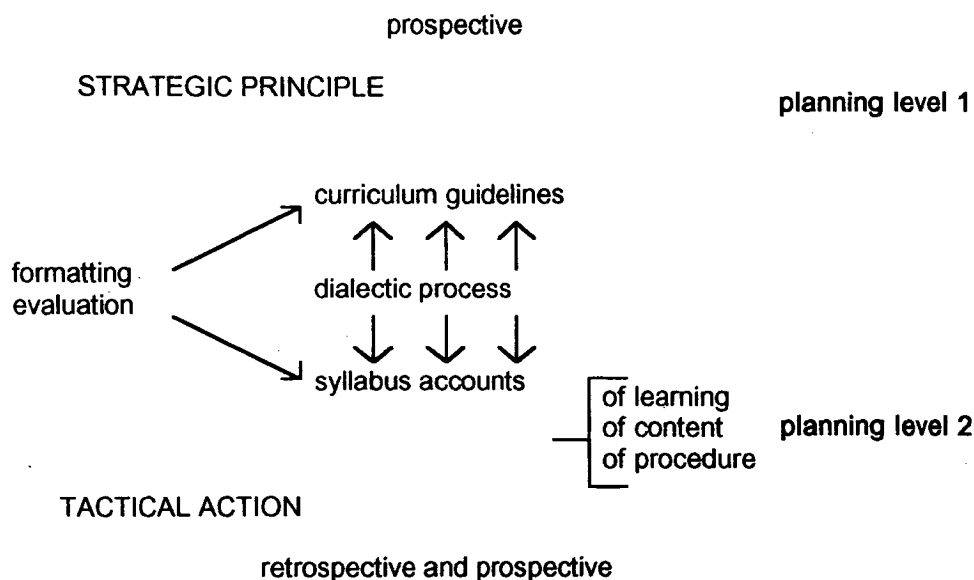


Figure 2.3: The Process Model (from Candlin, 1987:5)

At the level of curriculum guidelines we would find statements about learning in general and learning of particular subject matter, indications of learning purpose and experience, targets and modes of evaluation, role relationships of teachers and learners. In addition Candlin is concerned with "everyday decision making" within the classroom. According to Candlin (1987:6) activities between teachers and students involves three kinds of syllabuses;

- (1) language learning
- (2) content
- (3) actions-"of what was explored and how that was accomplished"

Furthermore, Figure 2.3 indicates that the dialectic process between the level of guidelines and the level of syllabuses allows for curriculum change mediated by requirements in the classroom.

## 2.2 The concept of communication

This section will discuss communicative factors in foreign language education, particularly learning English and Japanese.

Initially, it is necessary to consider the concept of communication. Several recent theories on communication are presented in light of their possible influence on foreign language teaching.

### 2.2.1 The meaning of "communication"

"Communication" involves three elements, the speaker, the hearer and the message. In other words, "communication" is divided into at least two parts, that is, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer, and the speaker and the content of the message separate from the interlocutors.

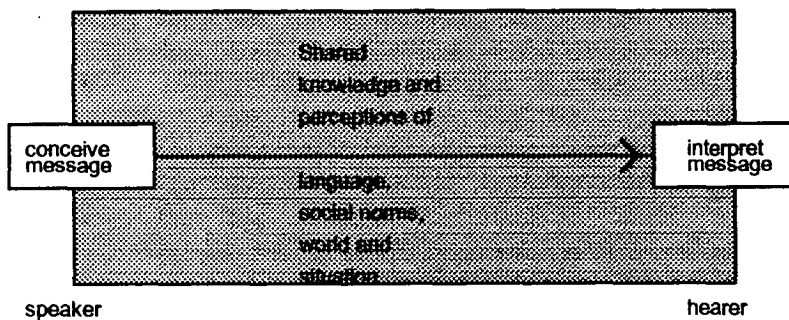


Figure 2.4: Littlewood's representation of communication (from Littlewood (1987))

In Figure 2.4 Littlewood describes the shaded area between the conceived message and the interpreted message as follows:

"....the participants should have a shared pool of knowledge and perceptions about language, social conventions, the world and the immediate situation. For the sake of brevity, I will refer to this common pool simply as "shared knowledge", but we should remember that it also consists of shared perceptions, expectations, assumptions and so on. We should also remember that each participant has a considerable fund of knowledge, expectations etc. which is not shared, but influences how he or she encodes or interprets messages, so that there is considerable scope for misunderstanding." (Littlewood, 1987:14).

A major component of communicative ability is thus what is often called "role-taking", that is, the ability to "put oneself in the other person's shoes", to estimate what knowledge is shared at each moment of the interaction and adapt one's language (or interpretation) accordingly. Some situations, including teaching and cross-cultural communication, place particularly heavy demands on this ability.

Relationships between humans cannot exist without communication because communication occurs when one person conceives some message ("communicative intention") and encodes it in some form, so that the other(s) can interpret it. The interpretation will be related to the present state of shared knowledge, as judged by the hearer. The background knowledge and assumptions which the hearer brings to the interpretation, however, can never be identical to those of the speaker who produced the utterance. Additionally, even if the content of a message/statement is exactly the same, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer will be different depending on who makes the statement. For example, the following two statements, convey different relationships between the speaker and hearer.

- a. Come and see me in the laboratory after class.
- b. Will you come and see me in the laboratory after class ?

The contents of these two statements are the same, however, sentence a. describes a subordinate relationship between the speaker and the hearer. On the contrary, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer in sentence b. indicates they may be on the same level. Not to be able to distinguish the content and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer often causes misunderstanding and communication failure.

This simplified model of communication illustrates the fact, so often stressed nowadays, that we "do things with words". The messages which we conceive and interpret derive their content and purpose from outside language itself. The model also allows for the fact that in some circumstances, for example, if the message is sufficiently straightforward and the relevant shared knowledge is clearly enough established this "action" may take place without using language at

all. In summary, a feature of Japanese society is that verbal language plays a limited role in communication.

### 2.2.2 Communicative functions

Hall (1976) suggested that communication is influenced by context, which he divided into two components; High Context (HC) and Low Context (LC). As Figure 2.5 demonstrates, an HC transaction is one in which the majority of the information is "internalized in the person" with only minimal information in the transmitted message. Alternately, LC transactions must have most of the information in the transmitted message. Hall (1976) illustrated HC and LC transactions with the following example. Twins who have grown up together can/do communicate more economically (HC) than two lawyers during a trial in a courtroom (LC). Generally, HC communication acts as a connecting, cohesive force between people and is long-lived and slow to change. However, LC communication recognises individual differences and provides a mechanism for communication where the context is less well defined. LC communication relies on the majority of the message to be conveyed verbally.

The Japanese culture is an example of a high context culture. The function of language as a means of social communication in this country is to emphasize and reinforce the feeling of homogeneity. People in this system connect with deep human relationships, and they believe it is unnecessary to speak explicitly with one another as it is accepted they share many common assumptions. Contrary to this, individualism is developed and promoted in low context cultures, such as certain areas of the United States of America. In this situation people must clearly establish the message as common assumptions among members are often limited. This results in a necessity to clearly demonstrate their intentions to others. These differences are further illustrated in Figure 2.5.



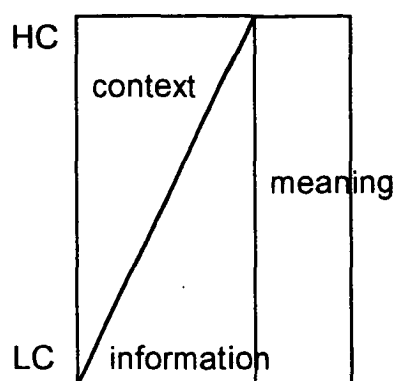


Figure 2.5: The interaction between the cultural context and information (Hall, 1976:102)

Hall's (1976) concept of HC and LC communication can be compared with Bernstein's (1966) theory of "restricted code" and "elaborated code". In the restricted code the use of the linguistic code is mostly restrained, and the message is conveyed through a non-verbal code. Examples of non-verbal code include features such as facial expressions, gestures and intonations. The restricted code communication is comparable to HC communication. Alternately, elaborated code communication depends on the verbal code (comparable to LC communication), which regards non-verbal messages as less important.

Since communication style makes use of language, different communication patterns between HC communication and LC communication introduce us into a domain of communicative activity and skill which is relevant to discussions about teaching methods as well as assessment.

### 2.3 Comparative accounts of Japanese and Australian culture

Differences in culture and language structure between groups of people decrease the efficiency of learning a foreign language. Japanese and Australian students face a number of obstacles in learning the language of the other. For example, learning efficiency may drop because students do not know how to fit into a different culture.

Naotsuka & Sakamoto (1981) suggest that seven obstacles exist to intercultural communication between Japanese and Non-Japanese;

(1) Direct/Indirect expression: Foreigners feel time is wasted because Japanese do not express Yes or No clearly. On the other hand, the Japanese think, it is rude and childish that the foreigners do not pay attention to the other's feeling and foreigners express their own ideas directly.

(2) Sticking to Formality: Foreigners believe Japanese give too much consideration to formal greetings and ceremonies, and the contents of such conferences are not useful because they do not exchange ideas freely. Alternately, Japanese believe it is rude that foreigners only express their thanks when they receive a gift, or are treated kindly, but do not express further thanks after the event.

(3) Privacy: Foreigners think that Japanese are apt to ask private questions regarding age, marital status, and family questions. On the other hand, Japanese think foreigners do not pay enough attention to a person's interests and background.

(4) Arrogance: Foreigners sometimes consider Japanese to be insulting because they do not understand their culture and therefore misunderstand their attitude towards things. However, Japanese consider foreigners rude because they often assert their own ideas without considering others opinions.

(5) Individual/Group: Foreigners criticize Japanese because they do not express their own opinions in a group. At an individual level Japanese are polite and kind, and may express themselves, but in a group they lose their individuality and compromise easily. Yet, Japanese complain that although foreigners insist on the individual rights because of individualism, they do not seem to cooperate.

(6) Decision-Making: The style of decision-making in Japan is based on the "Bottom up style". Foreigners can not understand who has made the decision and therefore who will take responsibility for it. However, Japanese consider the foreign decision-making style is "Top down" which gives the individual responsibility. They believe this style lacks flexibility in its application.

(7) Discussion: In a Western society, when people draw up a project, they try to achieve agreement among fellow workers through discussion at a meeting. In the end, decisions are made according to the majority rule even if some people are persistent in their opposition. In Japanese society, on the contrary, decisions are made on the basis of "unanimity rule". Japanese society operates by group consensus and discourages open confrontation. Foreigners have criticized the Japanese style of decision making because it is not the conclusion of a real discussion. On the other hand, the Japanese criticize the foreign discussion style because they dispute as in a game.

The above mentioned areas are very important factors that can cause misunderstanding in intercultural communication. In order to develop successful "Internationalized Understandings" it is necessary to have both the ability to communicate ideas and an understanding of other cultures. An understanding of factors such as those identified by Naotsuka and Sakamoto (1981) are crucial when foreign language communication between Japanese and other cultures are attempted. In the current Japanese foreign language classroom the teacher focuses on grammatical contents, which do not teach these different cultural factors.

## **2.4 Japanese and Australian education**

The definition of the word "education" in Japanese is represented by the Chinese characters "教文" and "育". "教文" translates as "giving knowledge to children", and "育" as "nurturing the body". Thus the word "education" in Japanese defines two roles: giving knowledge and nurturing the body.

The definition of "Education" in the Oxford English Dictionary is as follows:

"To rear, bringing up (children, animals) by supply of food and attention to physical wants... To bring up (young persons) from childhood, so as to form (their) habits, manners, intellectual and physical aptitudes".

Also, the definition according to Gunter (1985) is:

"Education, in its intentional meaning, is deliberate, purposeful, systematic and responsible intervention by an adult in the situation of a child by his/her assisting, supporting and guiding accompaniment of the latter on their way to adulthood in the true sense, which is worthy of a human being as a goal".

The important difference between the Japanese and English definition is that "Education" in English is an accompaniment of the child by adults toward the child's full adulthood. In other words, the aim of education is to make the adult's assistance and intervention redundant and unnecessary through the achievement of personal autonomy, both morally and intellectually. Whilst in the Japanese context "Education" is dedicated to achieving ultimate scholastic result, it does not "guide the child", by way of accompaniment through to adulthood, but rather is dedicated from childhood to achieving the best possible academic qualifications. In many cases this is aimed at providing entrance to University which is thought to lead to successful employment and satisfactory life style.

Education systems can be classified into primary, secondary and tertiary education. Table 2.1 a&b indicate differences in the aims of the various levels of education between Australia and Japan. These are further highlighted by the activities typically undertaken in the education process.

TABLE 2.1: THE ACTIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM

**(a) Australia**

Level of schooling	Participants	Activity	Aim
Primary	Adult (Teacher)	Parenting	Adulthood
	Child	Learning	
Secondary	Adult (Teacher)	Teaching	Adulthood
	Child	Learning	
Tertiary	Adult (Teacher)	Instructing	Fuller- Adulthood
	Adult (Student)	Learning	

**(b) Japan**

<b>Level of schooling</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Aim</b>
Primary	Adult (Teacher)	Parenting	Discipline
	Child	Learning	
Secondary	Adult (Teacher)	Teaching	Giving
	Child	Learning	Knowledge
Tertiary	Adult (Teacher)	Instructing	Giving
	Adult (Student)	Learning	Knowledge

In Table 2.1 the activities in the classroom and aim of the process clearly indicate the difference in the objectives of the two systems. The Japanese education system does not have the aim of attainment of adulthood, whereas in the Australian system, education in the primary school or home situation by the parents is aimed at assisting the child to attain adulthood. In secondary education, the education is a more formalized and institutionalized version of primary education. However, the educational aim shared by the participants, that is, teacher and the pupil, focuses on the same aim of adulthood. The concept of the attainment of adulthood can be related to Dewey's concept (1916) of "individual freedom".

Dewey (1916) suggested that individual freedom represents the forces of change. The reason that Japanese do not have the aim of adulthood in education has to do with the role of educators. Despite the efforts of the Americans during post World War II occupation to curtail the discrimination built into the structure of the pre-war education system, changes since 1974 have favoured a reversion to a stratified system. This has occurred by institutions making different pedagogical approaches to different educational goals, and by different definitions of what properly constitutes knowledge or subject matter. The Japanese school teacher is looked upon as holding the responsibility for transmitting to the young the values of society, and is expected to maintain this attitude at all times.

The education debate in Japan is typical of all industrialised societies, and centres on whether education should teach knowledge that serves the ideals of the society or whether it is an active learning process for individuals. One reaction in Japan

has been the increase in centralised control of textbooks, curricula and teaching styles. This has meant firm regulation of the teacher's relationship to the knowledge taught. Present weaknesses in Japanese general education will be discussed in detail in the next section.

In Australian education, the relationship of understanding between the educator and the pupil is reciprocal in nature, and is another precondition for educative actions, especially concerning the cognitive aspect of the child's life. The educators task in the education system in Australia is to present a series of practical experiences to the child which provide a framework which serves to modify future learning experiences.

The Australian educator is in fact "a mediator or bridge of the norms and values and the child" (Yonge, 1991) so that as the child progresses on his/her way to adulthood, his/her obedience to the educator hopefully changes to the order of norms and values of the dominant culture, not blind docility to the educator.

In the case of tertiary education, the instructing adult should have adequate knowledge of the learning adult and the learning adult should know that the instructor can and will assist him/her toward his/her particular goal of fuller adulthood.

## **2.5 Present strengths and weaknesses in general education in Japan**

Before the major issue of foreign language teaching can be addressed it will be informative to consider a number of points about the present strengths and weaknesses in the Japanese education system. These will highlight some of the changes required before communicative competence in English can be achieved by Japanese students.

In 1987 the National Council on Education Reform invited educators from overseas to attend a symposium. The resulting report entitled, "Research By The Overseas Educators concerning Japanese Education" described the merits and demerits of Japanese education and contained the following unattributed quotations.

### 1. The merits of Japanese education:

1. It is internationally recognized that Education at primary and junior high school in Japan is highly assessed. The excellence in particular areas of the lower grades at primary school is recognized overseas.
2. The children at primary school follow the school rules, have fine teamwork, know their own responsibilities and behave harmoniously. In addition, they are taught loyalty to the nation and the group, and social discipline is maintained.
3. The educational system at primary school assesses the efforts rather than the nature of children and encourages the children to study hard and maintain the goal of acquiring a scholarship and entering university.

### 2. The demerits of Japanese education:

1. The Japanese educational system at high school is a "Hi-technocrat producing mechanical system", which is based on protecting oriental culture and it ignores the personality of children.
2. The educational system at high schools is oriented towards entrance to universities. Education involves not only acquiring knowledge but also self-discovery and self-esteem and the system, at present, causes some students to lose interest in studying. They need to reform the system of entering universities. Education at Japanese high schools emphasizes the transfer of factual information.

As is shown above, it is clear that overseas educators evaluate the Japanese educational system differently according to the level of education. Primary teachers in particular, use student-centred teaching styles and also use the discovery method of instruction in Japan. Many teachers may not be conscious of the fact that problem solving and discovery methods function as a means to motivate students to learn. These teachers have introduced the methods because they believe that it would be very difficult to attract the attention of learners simply by relying on the teacher-directed, lecture method. Evaluations of

students' achievements, however, are made by attainment tests which measure the degree of acquisition of knowledge.

This knowledge store counts greatly in the tests at school as well as in university entrance examinations. Both teachers and parents are fully aware of the realities of the Japanese educational situation, and their ultimate criteria concerning the success of education is acquisition of knowledge and related skills. For these reasons, the teacher is obliged to use the analytical teaching method.

Dewey's basic theme of problem solving being the most effective method of learning in a child's life is outlined in his book 'Democracy and Education' (1916). However, Japanese culture is not sympathetic to Dewey's theories of education. Although the Japanese are interested in methods which will secure active participation in learning by students, scientific knowledge and skills have mainly been considered as goals to be attained rather than as tools to be used in actual problem solving activities.

In addition to the perceived problems within the classroom and the method of teaching by educators in Japan a number of social factors impinge on the education of the individual. These are:

1. The centralization of government in the educational system.
2. The authorization of textbooks by the Ministry of Education.
3. The over-standardization of the classroom
4. The control of the students at home and outside school.
5. The ignorance of individual students.

(1) The centralization of government in the educational system

In spite of the efforts by the United States of America after World War II, decentralization of the Japanese education system failed, and the Japanese government policy was revised. McCormick and Sugimoto (1986:11) describe the reason for this failure as follows:

"In short, Japan did not experience a radical reconstruction of its state system such as occurred in Germany, but a partial reform. The



defining character of the US impact during the 1945-52 period may be seen in retrospect to have been the purging of elements of the Japanese state which were inimical to the US. The implanting of democracy was limited by the fact that it was instrumental to this main purpose, much as some members of the occupation thought of their mission as a crusade for democracy."

This only partial reform of the Japanese education system shows the preference of the Japanese for a central bureaucratic system rather than one which is democratic and respects individual rights. Japanese people are strongly controlled and governed by society and Nagao (1989:140) mentions the controlled education in Japan as follows:

"In the present schools and curriculum, the important factor is the abstract knowledge rather than the individual attitude. In schools, it is so important to follow the rules and harmonize with each other."

As Nagao mentions, the Japanese are tightly controlled. This idea strongly permeates not only the school system but also Japanese society. This concept blocks independence, creativity and individual freedom in Japanese education.

## (2) The authorization of textbooks by the Ministry of Education

All textbooks up to senior high school level are authorized by the Ministry of Education. The content of textbooks has to cover all syllabuses of required courses of study. Consequently, the content of textbooks is standardised. Standardization of textbooks reflect the Japanese desire to improve living standards, improve their quality of life and also the country's perceived requirement for strong leadership, administration and control. With such a situation it is clearly going to be difficult for students to willingly communicate and exchange original ideas in the classroom.

## (3) Over-standardisation of the classroom

The Japanese educational system provides an inadequate preparation for life because the Japanese teacher cannot develop the abilities of creativity and

originality in the students because of over-standardisation of classroom behaviour. For example, as the teachers do not give students the chance to discuss, debate and give presentations in the classroom, it is very hard for the students to develop critical, analytical and creative minds. When teachers attempt such activities during class, it is said that the teachers are disadvantaging the students for the entrance examination to the universities. As a result, the capable Japanese students are not able to develop their critical thinking, originality and creativity although they are required to research interesting topics and proceed to advanced courses. To expand on this point, Wray (1990:30-36), who has been teaching English and History at Japanese universities for more than three years, mentions the different points of view about discussion held by American university students and Japanese university students. (Translation from Japanese)

"The Japanese students' character is passive. They do not express their own opinions freely and they traditionally believe that expressing different opinions to the teacher is not good. In addition, the Japanese have been brought up to follow group decision rather than a personal decision. On the other hand, the American students are taught to express their opinions and insist on their ideas, even if they are opposite to those of others. The teaching style in Japanese and American classrooms is also different because of the different cultures. When Japanese students attend classes they only take notes during class, however the American students have to participate in class work based on their contributions to discussion. In the American educational system, it is necessary to develop the abilities of creativity, judgement and critique through discussion."

I have noted similar differences in attitude and roles of the teacher and students in my educational experience in Australia. In my survey (1992), I found that Japanese high school students were weak in verbal participation compared to Australian students in the foreign language classroom. I remember clearly what my supervisor at a Japanese university told me, "In Japan teachers judge those students who want to express their ideas strongly as not clever students, because generally speaking, the clever students are quiet during class." His opinion is typical of Japanese teachers.

#### (4) The control of the students at home and outside school

Japanese society is controlled by many rules. This multiplicity of rules is influenced by the values of Confucianism. In addition, the Japanese give priority to order, stability and harmony as a group even if they sacrifice their freedom. Assessment in the Japanese educational system reflects these strong values. The Japanese consider that if people are not controlled by rules and norms, a lot of ambiguities and varieties will arise through individualism. These rules appear to dominate both at school and at home. When asked about this situation, one high school teacher replied that it is necessary to control the negative activities of students in order to help them with their studies. I remember, however, a lot of students complaining of school life because it is controlled by so many rules. Cummings (1980:235) describes Japanese youths as far more likely to feel dissatisfied than the youths of other societies. However, the apparent difference in dissatisfaction between Japanese and other students with school appears to be declining. (See Table 2.2)

TABLE 2.2: A COMPARISON OF THE PROPORTION OF DISSATISFIED JAPANESE YOUTH WITH THE PROPORTIONS IN OTHER ADVANCED SOCIETIES

SURVEY DATE	Japanese Youth		Next Highest Level			
	1973	1987	1973		1987	
DISSATISFACTION:						
Society	73.5	48.7	35.7	US	63.2	FR
School	45.2	31.6	29.0	FR	22.4	FR
Employment	40.0	48.9	24.8	FR	19.7	FR
Family life	30.6	26.0	10.9	FR	14.1	UK
Friends	15.8	10.3	8.0	FR	4.9	FR

Note: US=United States of America, FR=France, UK = England

(SOURCE: Seinen Ishiki Chosa Hokokusho 1973 Tokyo: Sorifu)

#### (5) The ignorance of individual students

The individuality and different ideas of students are ignored by the emphasis on a uniform and standardized education system. Wray (1990:139) identifies the

weakness of the uniform Japanese education as follows: (Translation from Japanese)

"The 20% of low-ranking students feel frustration with the difficulties and uniformity of the curricula and are subjected to humiliation. On the other hand, the ability of the 10% of high ranking students is suppressed by the curricula which does not give enough consideration to individual ability."

As Japan seeks to improve intercultural communication and "Internationalised Understanding" several issues relating to their present social system, particularly their school system, will need to be redressed. The theme of communicative competence, especially in foreign language, lies at the heart of this. Skilbeck (1990:28) clearly identifies some of the problems and changes required within the Japanese education system.

"The Japanese National Council criticised the materialism and conformity of modern society, its neglect of the qualities and needs of individuals and of human values. But education itself must share responsibility: the educators were reproached for failing to keep pace with these changes. From the Japanese perspective, school curricula and pedagogy have a vital role to play in restoring a worthwhile culture. Substantial changes in education are required to equip individuals with the ability to cope with a social change in the future."

## **2.6 Teaching strategy in Japan and Australia**

What are the basic characteristics of contemporary Japanese methods of teaching and how do these methods enable learning and achievement? By describing the basic characteristics of Japanese methods of teaching and learning from a psychological view point, the nature of the analytical Japanese method of teaching can be suggested.

(I) The Whole-Class approach: Teacher-student and student-student interactions

Various kinds of educational methods have flourished and continue to flourish in Japanese schools. Some of these are influenced by foreign theories and methods, and others have been developed by researchers at universities and research institutes in Japan. A number of these methods take the group approach to the learning of intellectual subjects.

TABLE 2.3 (below) from a National Educational Institute survey (1986) shows the outstandingly high average class sizes in Japan compared with other countries.

TABLE 2.3: AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF CLASS SIZE (1986)

	Junior High	High		Junior High	High
<b>Japan</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	Israel	24	18
Belguim	20	14	New Zealand	28	16
Canada	27	23	Scotland	28	22
England	25	10	Sweden	20	22
Finland	22	20	Thailand	42	43
France	24	-	USA	26	22
Hungary	26	26			

Japanese teachers see different benefits in using the whole-class approach. In initial classroom management considerations, the teacher is especially concerned with the group atmosphere of the classroom. The teacher believes that he or she should play an active part in making the classroom atmosphere harmonious and pleasant, so that students will be happy to come to class and will enjoy class activities. Though each teacher realizes the importance of his /her classroom behaviour and personality as factors of classroom atmosphere, it is inevitable that teachers' interaction patterns in the past will have given rise to individual differences in the present reputation of each teacher.

The small group-oriented approach was introduced to Japan after World War II mainly from the United States. Typically, a small group consists of four to eight members. In a class of forty students, which is typical in Japan, five to ten small

groups will be organized. The adoption of this method is to allow each student to actively participate in learning activities. It is also intended to foster a harmonious, constructive classroom atmosphere, because it is expected that a small group will facilitate each student's expression of opinions, production of ideas, and interpersonal interactions. In addition, each small group is expected to work relatively independently from the teacher.

It should be pointed out that this group approach strives for the development and learning of the individual student. This approach makes use of the following three activity types:

- (1) Whole-class activity for problem formulation and for making public the results of group activities.
- (2) Small-group activities for problem solving.
- (3) Individual thinking before and after the group session.

These activities are the most suitable for group problem solving. Such phrases as "enhancing the individual's ability for self-education" and "deepening and sharpening individual thought through interaction with peers" are slogans often seen in the schools. As the Group-Oriented Approach Committee (Zenkoku Shudan - Gakushu Kenkyu Kyogi-kai, 1985) suggests (translated from Japanese):

"The importance of group activities for the development of all of the participants in particular, has recently been given more and more stress"

Japanese teachers believe that the educational goal is to attain the cognitive objectives of a subject, plus the social and attitudinal objectives through group activities. It would seem logical to expect this in a society such as Japan where the role of the group and interactions between teacher and student are important.

As previously mentioned, teachers do not fully understand the patterns of interaction between class members, and many of the educational methods currently used and propagated in Japan cannot work without the teacher understanding classroom interaction patterns.

## (2) Methods of Instruction

Do Japanese teachers aim mainly at the acquisition of factual information by their students, or at the fostering of students' problem solving abilities? With regard to instruction, is the typical Japanese teacher's preferred method lecture or discovery? The following discussion will give a generalized answer to these questions.

According to general impressions, the Japanese method has been typically teacher-directed and has relied on the lecture, aimed at the transmission of factual information held by mankind in general. However this statement appears to be in contradiction of the results published by Kajita et al.(1985) who showed that Japanese teachers seem to emphasize student-centred teaching, problem solving procedures, and learning through discovery.

### **2.7 Communicative competency activities in the foreign language classroom**

Foreign language classrooms present many challenges to teachers and options to the way in which the course is taught. There are many activities which can be used to teach language, some of these are presented below.

Nunan (1988:88) argued the methodology adopted in teaching foreign language should be as follows:

"While accuracy-based activities such as drills and controlled practice will not be prescribed, prominence will be given to activities which promote fluency. Further, it would seem that small groups are probably the most effective way of grouping learners for communicative language work. Performance-based activities such as role play will also be promoted. These suggestions would seem to be supported by both pedagogical and psycholinguistic research".

The rank ordering of teaching activities by perceived usefulness by Eltis and Low (1985) is set out in Table 2.4.

TABLE 2.4: RANK ORDERING OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO PERCEIVED USEFULNESS (Eltis and Low (1985))

Activity	%
Students working in pairs/small groups	80
Role-play	56
Language games	51
Reading topical articles	48
Students making oral presentations	46
Cloze (gap filling) exercises	45
Using video materials	40
Student repeating teacher cue(drill)	34
Exercise in free writing	27
Setting and correction of homework	25
Listening and note-taking	25
Repeating and learning dialogues	21
Students reading aloud in class	20
Exercises in conference writing	18

Teachers were asked to choose the two activities which they found to be most valuable in their teaching. The top five activities are rated as follows:

1. students working, in pairs/small groups
2. language games
3. role play
4. reading topical articles
5. cloze (gap-filling) exercises

It is useful to judge this data against Nunan's (1988:88) suggestion,

"In a learner-centred curriculum, methodology, as much as any other element in the curriculum, must be informed by the attitudes of the learners. What then, do learners think are legitimate learning activities, and how do these compare with the perceptions of the teachers who instruct them?"



### 2.7.1 The categories of communicative competence.

The concept of communicative competence, first put forward by Hymes in a lecture in 1976, turned attention from "the ideal speaker-hearer in homogeneous speech community", pointing out that "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless". He categorizes these communication skills under the followings nine headings.

1. Commencing rules of conversation; when do people start communication?
2. Setting rule; where do people communicate?
3. Participants rule; to make the communication, people must choose an appropriate partner for the conversation.
4. Variety rule; what kind of means do people choose for the communication?
5. Content rules; what content do people convey in communication event ?
6. Form rule; whether one message is correct or not depends on the message.
7. Medium rule; the rule to control the choice and the use of the communication.
8. Operation rule; whether people use the appropriate expressions in a communication.
9. Performance rule; whether people can use various kinds of rules appropriately.

These nine categories, particularly appropriacy (in form rule,) acceptability (in medium rule) and feasibility (in operation rule and performance rule), are very difficult to use appropriately in communication and to teach in foreign language education.

### 2.7.2 Communicative skills in English education.

Following are some difficult examples of English and Japanese communicative skills (from Neustupny (1982)).

Example 1: Form rule; There are a lot of mistakes in written correspondence, like the usages of "Dear Sir" at the beginning and "Yours truly" at the ending. In

addition, the names and titles like Professor, Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms, and Miss are one of the difficulties in foreign language education.

Example 2: Medium rule; The Japanese use a lot of non-verbal communication, (High Context communication) particularly the "Japanese smile" which causes misunderstanding with foreigners.

Overseas students in Japan are often surprised at the different teaching style at University because in Japan professional teaching is only conveyed by oral media such as lectures. However, in English speaking countries students have to study not only by lecture but also by use of written information such as journals and serials.

Example 3: Performance rule; When people meet each other in the morning, we know it is polite to say "Hello", but a lot of people do not use this greeting.

### **2.7.3 Communicative skills in Japanese education**

Nagasawa (1988:196) identifies the important Japanese communicative skills as follows:

1. The typical and special type knowledge of the communication in Japanese society.

Example 1: The ordinary conversation stream when someone asks someone else the way on the road.

Example 2: When somebody asks to borrow money, he starts the conversation with the topics of weather and the family condition.

2. The understanding of the communicative rule on the topics of the partner's place and case.

Example 1: The way of behaving at a funeral.

Example 2: The honorific expressions.

Example 3: The way of choosing a suitable topic.

3. The skills which understand the partner's expressions and consequences, and express his own intention.

Example 1: The understanding of expressions which is based on the culture.

4. Various factors that convey meaning to the interlocutor except language.  
Example 1: Eye contact, non-verbal, clothes, the knowledge about the distance from the partner.

These skills are, of course, applicable to all foreign language learning. They are not discrete, but points along a continuum which leads from the simplest non-verbal communication to the most elaborated use of language in communication. It seems reasonable to suppose that this continuum corresponds also to an approximate scale of difficulty which is relevant to our efforts to devise tests for students at various stages of learning. We should remember, however, that within each level many different degrees of complexity are possible, determined by a range of factors which we have scarcely begun to explore in foreign language teaching.

Also, the different conception of "self" between the Japanese and people from English speaking countries can be discussed. To understand the communicative function of concepts such as "self" is useful for foreign language education. I would like to discuss this in detail as follows.

#### 2.7.4 The different conception of "self" between the Japanese and Australians.

Communication is formed by the relationship between "private self" and "public self". Before making one's "self" understood by others it is necessary to be cognizant of the nature of one's own "self". "Self-disclosure" is therefore the starting point of this form of communication.

The above examples are some of the difficult communication skills. The most difficult factor is, however, that speakers have to use a lot of different communicative rules at the same time, and as a result feel much frustration and cultural fatigue, that is an inability to concentrate on cultural differences when communicating to Japanese for long periods of time.

	I know	I do not know
The others know	1 opened window	2 blind window
The others do not know	3 secret window	4 unconscious window

Figure 2.5: The Johari Model

1. The first window: This window is the opened window and this is the self which is known as "myself" and "yourself". This is called "public self" and as the percentage of self-disclosure by Japanese is low, their level of public of public self is lower than people from other countries. In cultures which value "self assertion" like the English speaking countries this tendency is strong in people while on the other hand, it is weak in Japanese culture.

2. The second window: This window shows the 'self' which is not recognized by individuals, but is recognized by others. For example, idiosyncratic gestures, mannerisms, weak points and talents which one does not necessarily recognize in oneself.

3. The third window: This window is called "closed window", because it describes the self which one understands in oneself, but hides from others. For example, the love affairs which are not known by others, childhood events and personal faults. In communication, we have to judge which part of the self one should open or close to others. This "self" of the Japanese is much bigger than for English speaking people. Such "self-disclosure" is connected with the relationship between 'public self' and 'private self', and this concept is strongly influenced by culture.

4. The fourth window: This window is the self which both yourself and the others do not know. For example, the character test, the dream test and spiritual analysis and so on.

As shown above, the disparity of appearances between the private self and public self seen in most Japanese people seems so confusing to foreigners that the Japanese are sometimes mistakenly considered two-faced. The same person can be both rigidly formal in public and very frank and pleasant at a privately held drinking party. He/she may give an evasive or non-committal reply to someone's business request, yet show deep sympathy to that person's personal troubles. Japanese habitually follow pluralistic behavioural patterns according to the occasion, but their private self seems to be dominated by their public self which may also be called "group self."

The Johari Model suggests that the "selves", which show through four windows do not exist independently but are related to each other. The windows are interrelated; when one changes, others change in response.

If we use this theory in foreign language education one must account for the differences in culture associated with the languages. The Asians, particularly the learners from Buddhist cultures feel psychological resistance to reveal their own "self". The functions played by concepts like "individuality" and "self" in the actual foreign language educational setting for communication remains to be examined.

## **2.8 Summary: aspects of communication**

We can look at the features of communication and ask questions about the communicative abilities that are required in order to participate in conversation. Sociopsychological aspects will impinge on communicative ability. If there is a difference between the amount of shared knowledge, or if the speaker must estimate the amount of shared knowledge, then communication will be more difficult. Furthermore, these difficulties are greater when the speaker must adjust from a high context to a low context society. Japan and Australia are examples of these different cultures, and thus present certain difficulties in communication.

Communicative competence in foreign language not only involves a knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of the new language but also an ability to use this knowledge correctly. Social differences or misunderstanding thus may, and often

does, limit successful communication. In some situations psychomotor skills will present difficulties, such as pronunciation and writing skills. This is especially evident when the languages and alphabet are unrelated. This may cause particular difficulties for Japanese and English speaking students learning each others' language.

# CHAPTER 3

## CONDUCT OF A CASE STUDY:

### THE SELF-ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods of the research conducted. Chapter 4 considers the results and discusses them in detail.

Recently Second Language assessment has moved away from teacher-centred assessment to learner-centred assessment. In self-assessment the main point is that learners should state their aims in undertaking the course, and then decide whether or not their aims have been met, and the evidence they have in their portfolios for coming to this decision.

Holec (1985) argues that learners are in a better position than teachers to assess learner performance. The learners possess more information than the teacher about what particular performance to assess, about the criteria on which the learner wishes to focus, and by which standards the learner wishes to assess. A classroom teacher only has knowledge of the learner's performance inside the classroom. Particularly in Second Language Education in Japan, this situation exists strongly as mentioned in Chapter 1.

This case study analyses this concept and investigates how we can improve communicative competence in foreign language education. A comparison is made of Japanese language learners in high schools in Australia to English language learners in Japanese high schools using learner's self-assessment.

In order for teachers to assess communicative competence, and improve it, several factors must be incorporated;

1. **Motivation**; how to encourage the students' motivation for Learning.
2. **Cognition**; how to improve the cognitive ability of students to express themselves in a foreign language.
3. **Emotion**; consideration of the feelings, emotion and will of students.

**4. Practical teaching;** special emphasis on practical teaching, particularly in regard to communication, must be made in order to improve skills.

Difficulties in communicative assessment by teachers may exist in Japan in the language system at present. The Japanese social context does not approve of, nor generally allow, negotiation methods like discussion and dialectics. The effect this has on communicative competence by Japanese students in comparison to students within Australia will become clear.

By comparing the two foreign language learning cases, the author intends to analyse the concept of, and investigate how we can improve, communicative competence in foreign language education.

### **3.1: Method of survey**

The case study was conducted using questionnaires, observations of foreign language classes, and interviews. Questionnaires have an advantage in that large amounts of data may be gathered, from relatively large groups of people. Furthermore, because these questionnaires are anonymous, they tend to be non-invasive and replies are generally honest. The additional use of interviews allows more in-depth data collection and the researcher is able to more effectively examine details from earlier enquiries. However, this method, particularly in this study, has a number of disadvantages. Although questionnaires may be distributed remotely, interviews must be conducted by the prime researcher. In this case both Japanese and Australian participants were interviewed, reducing the number and time available for interviews. Furthermore, comparisons between answers obtained in interview situations are difficult to quantify; a problem easily overcome by standardised questionnaires.

Wherever possible, equal numbers of male and female students were given questionnaires in an attempt to ensure validity to the study. Permission from all the schools involved was sought and received before distribution of questionnaires began. In addition, confidentiality was assured to each participant, and was maintained at all times.



The questionnaires were distributed, in July 1992, to 50 seniors at two Government colleges, Alanvale College and Rosny College in Tasmania, Australia and to 50 seniors at a public high school in Osaka, Japan. Their ages ranged from 16 to 18 years. The questionnaires were recovered from 88 percent of informants. (See Table 3.1).

During the University mid-term break in June, the author had the opportunity to observe the Japanese classes from grade 7 to 10 at five Tasmanian high schools; Kingston High School, Tarooma High School, New Town Boys High School, Friends School and Lambert Cottage School. The purpose was to see how Japanese language and culture are being taught in Tasmania. Four Japanese language teachers were interviewed in reference to the methods of assessment of oral proficiency in June 1992.

The main questions posed by the investigation were:

- (1) To what extent do predictions about Japanese language speaking proficiency affect the student's self-assessment?
- (2) To what extent do predictions about English language speaking proficiency affect the student's self-assessment?
- (3) To what extent is performance, as measured by standardized tests and assessments, related to the rate of student learning?

The case study was conducted using questionnaires, observations of foreign language classes and interviews.

Two questionnaires were prepared as shown in Appendix I (English) and Appendix II (Japanese) Each consisted of four parts:

- [A] Background of the English and Japanese Learners
- [B] The English and Japanese Language
- [C] Self-Assessment of their English and Japanese Language Proficiency
- [D] Self-Assessment of Communicative Competence

Attitudinal assessment (Question D) was analysed according to the linguistic functional factors of Halliday (1973). The classification of linguistic functions which Halliday (1973) suggests are:

- 1. Instrumental Function "I want"
- 2. Regulatory Function "Do as I tell you"
- 3. Interaction Al Function "Me and you"
- 4. Personal Function "Here I come"
- 5. Heuristic Function "Tell me why"
- 6. Imaginative Function "Let's pretend"
- 7. Representational Function "I've got something to tell you"

TABLE 3.1: NUMBER OF INFORMANTS

Sex	Australia	Japan
Male	18 (47%)	22 (50%)
Female	20 (53%)	22 (50%)
Total	38 (100%)	44 (100%)

TABLE 3.2: AGE OF THE INFORMANTS

Age	Australia	Japan
16	25 (66%)	32 (73%)
17	10 (26%)	12 (27%)
18	3 (8%)	

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS OF SURVEY

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the questionnaires handed to foreign language students in Japan and Australia are presented and discussed. Although, the number of informants in this study is not high enough to present an overall view of the educational systems, consistent differences between Japanese and Australian students emerge.

#### 4.1 Language background of the students

One of the major differences between the teaching of foreign languages between Australia and Japan is that in Australia (Tasmania) students are given a choice of which foreign language they would like to study. Typically the choices involve at least French, German, and Japanese and may include languages such as Indonesian or Italian. For example, in one school the students in Grade 7 must study one of three foreign languages (Japanese, French and German) each term as a compulsory subject. In Grade 8 they choose the language they prefer, and then study it through to the end of Grade 10. In Japan only English is available for study. This difference in the foreign language education systems was made clear in the results of the question: "Have you studied any languages other than English/Japanese?"

TABLE 4.1: LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OF STUDENTS

(a) Japanese students (Appendix I-4)

HAVE YOU STUDIED ANY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH?	
YES: 0 (0%)	NO: 44 (100%)

(b) Australian students (Appendix II-7)

HAVE YOU STUDIED ANY LANGUAGE OTHER THAN JAPANESE?	
YES: 36 (95%)	NO: 2 (5%)

Table 4.1 (a) and (b) show that 100% of the Japanese high school students have never studied another language except English, while on the other hand, 95% of the Australian high school students have studied a foreign language other than Japanese.

TABLE 4.2: OTHER LANGUAGES TAUGHT IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS (Appendix II-8)

Language	No.	%
German	15	(40%)
French	10	(26%)
French and German	8	(21%)
Indonesian and Italian	1	(2.6%)
Chinese	1	(2.6%)
Indonesian	1	(2.6%)
Italian, German and Indonesian	1	(2.6%)
Italian, German and French	1	(2.6%)

In addition, from the Table 4.2, it may be determined that 23% of the Australian high school students surveyed have studied three foreign languages, for example Japanese, French and German.

While in the classrooms I was able to perceive the manner in which languages are taught. The purpose of foreign language education in Australia appears to be based on understanding the language as well as the culture. Language ability plays no role in interest in further study and students are able to choose the language that they enjoy most. This has important implications for such things as motivation.

In Japan, English is the only language available and forms an important component of University Entrance Examinations. These differences are further highlighted by Table 4.3; Japanese students have a poorer perceived ability in understanding foreign languages.

The personal perceptions of aural ability of the Australian and Japanese foreign language learners were reported as follows.

TABLE 4.3: PERCEIVED AURAL ABILITY OF STUDENTS (Appendix I-5 and II-11)

(Do you have a good ear for foreign languages?)			
	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW
JAPANESE	2 (5%)	41 (93%)	1 (2%)
AUSTRALIAN	22 (58%)	13 (34%)	3 (8%)

Generally, to have good aural ability is said to be an important aspect when learning foreign languages. According to the survey, as Table 4.3 demonstrates, Japanese high school students learning English believe they are much weaker in aural ability than do Australians learning Japanese. As evidence of their weakness, they point out that they can not understand English pop songs or films.

TABLE 4.4: MEMORY OF STUDENTS (Appendix I-7,II-12)

(Do you have a good memory?)			
	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
JAPANESE	11 (25%)	33 (75%)	
AUSTRALIAN	21 (55%)	12 (32%)	5 (13%)

As Table 4.4 illustrates, when the author asked about their memory a higher percentage of the Australian students said they had a better memory than did the Japanese. Japanese students reported that it was easy to forget the English vocabulary. However, those students who have a good memory use the guessing method when they memorize.

TABLE 4.5: LANGUAGE ANALYSIS BY STUDENTS (Appendix I-8,II-13)

(Do you like to analyse language?)			
	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
JAPANESE	4 (9%)	40 (91%)	0 (0%)
AUSTRALIAN	15 (40%)	23 (60%)	0 (0%)

91% of Japanese students answered "No" to the question "Do you like to analyse languages?" The result is considered to be due to Japanese foreign language education being based on instruction. That is, the teacher gives knowledge to the student by instruction. In the case of the Australian students answering "No", it seems to suggest that language rules are given to the students by the teacher but are not analysed by the students.

The following responses further identify differences in the reasons why Japanese and English students study each other's language. From the responses given by students it is clear that more Australian students enjoy learning Japanese than vice versa. This is emphasized further by the awkwardness students feel when speaking the foreign language. The majority of the Japanese students feel that English will enhance their chances to enter university, whereas, Australian students believe that Japanese will be beneficial to their career. It is interesting to note that both groups of students lack confidence when speaking the language, perhaps indicating a greater emphasis is required on speaking exercises in class.

TABLE 4.6: DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY STUDENTS IN STUDYING FOREIGN LANGUAGE, AND REASONS FOR IT'S STUDY

(a) Japanese students (Appendix I-7)

(Do you agree with the following statements?)					
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Learning English is enjoyable.	2 (5%)	15 (34%)	15 (34%)	9 (20%)	3 (7%)
2. I don't feel awkward when using English.	3 (7%)	5 (11%)	18 (41%)	16 (36%)	2 (5%)
3. When using English I feel foreign.	1 (2%)	2 (5%)	10 (23%)	11 (25%)	20 (45%)
4. A good knowledge of English will help my career.	1 (2%)	9 (21%)	11 (25%)	22 (50%)	1 (2%)
5. English class concentrates on entrance examination	5 (11%)	16 (36%)	17 (39%)	5 (11%)	1 (3%)
6. I want to learn conversation during class.	5 (11%)	9 (21%)	20 (46%)	5 (11%)	5 (11%)
7. No opportunity to speak English	15 (34%)	15 (34%)	8 (18%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)
8. I lack confidence when speaking English.	24 (55%)	13 (30%)	5 (11%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
9. English pronunciation is hard to learn.	20 (46%)	15 (34%)	5 (11%)	4 (9%)	0
10. I like to see English speaking film and TV.	5 (11%)	11 (25%)	13 (30%)	9 (20%)	6 (14%)

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

1; strongly agree 2; moderately agree 3; no opinion 4; moderately disagree 5; strongly disagree

(b): Australian students (Appendix II-3)

(Do you agree with the following statements?)					
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Learning Japanese is enjoyable.	15 (39%)	10 (53%)	2 (5%)	1 (3%)	0
2.I don't feel awkward when using Japanese.	7 (18%)	18 (47%)	5 (13%)	7 (18%)	1 (3%)
3.When using Japanese, I feel foreign.	5 (13%)	8 (21%)	17 (45%)	3 (8%)	5 (13%)
4.A good knowledge of Japanese will help my career very much.	25 (66%)	8 (21%)	3 (13%)	0	0
5.I like talking Japanese to Japanese.	7 (18%)	10 (26%)	16 (43%)	5 (13%)	0
6.A command of Japanese is very helpful.	17 (44%)	11 (30%)	10 (26%)	0	0
7.I lack confidence when speaking Japanese.	8 (21%)	20 (53%)	3 (8%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)
8.Japanese pronunciation is hard to learn.	5 (13%)	8 (21%)	2 (5%)	18 (47%)	5 (13%)
9.Japanese writing (kanji)is hard to learn.	8 (21%)	12 (32%)	2 (5%)	13 (34%)	3 (8%)
10.The Japanese language sounds nice.	6 (16%)	10 (26%)	14 (37%)	5 (13%)	3 (8%)
11. Speaking Japanese is more difficult than reading.	12 (32%)	8 (21%)	5 (13%)	10 (26%)	3 (8%)
12.I like to see Japanese speaking films and TV.	5 (13%)	13 (34%)	10 (26%)	5 (13%)	5 (13%)
13.I want to have more opportunity to use Japanese.	18 (47%)	14 (37%)	5 (13%)	0	1 (3%)

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

1; strongly agree 2; moderately agree 3; no opinion 4; moderately disagree 5; strongly disagree



4.2 A study of motivation and the acquirement of the four language skills

Motivation seems to be the most important condition for achieving in any learning, let alone the acquisition of a second language. Lambert (1972:291) classified the motivation for acquisition of a foreign language into the instrumental motive and the integrative motive, and his thoughts are paraphrased as follows. He believes the orientation is "instrumental" in form if the purpose of language study reflects a practical value of linguistic achievement. For example, learning a foreign language to benefit one's career. Orientation is "integrative" if the student is oriented to learn more about the other culture and community as if they desired to belong to or become a potential member of the other group.

We can ask whether the instrumental motive or the integrative motive is better for the acquisition of a second language? Generally, Japanese students at junior high school do not start learning a foreign language by their own will, and they do not know how a foreign language is associated with their private life. Therefore they learn for instrumental motives. Japanese and Australian students motives, as they were revealed in this study, are compared in Table 4.7

TABLE 4.7: THE PERCEIVED USEFULNESS OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN FUTURE CAREER BY STUDENTS

(A good knowledge of English/Japanese will help my career very much)	
	STRONGLY AGREE
Japanese learners (English)	1 (2%)
Australian learners (Japanese)	25 (66%)

Gardner (1977:235) suggests, the integrative motive is more effective than the instrumental motive for learning a foreign language:

"The concept of the integrative motive implies that successful second language acquisition depends upon a willingness (or desire) to be like valued members of the other language community. The acquisition of a new language involves more than just the acquisition of a new set of

verbal habits. The language student must adopt various features of behaviour which characterize the other linguistic community."

Bastall (1978:3), comparing the integrative motive with the cultural aspect, notes:

"It is interesting to note in this connection that Gardner and his associates have recently begun to depart somewhat from their original view that success in foreign language learning is crucially dependent upon the adoption of an integrative orientation towards the foreign culture. It is now suggested that an integrative orientation may not inevitably lead to superior achievement in foreign language learning if the cultural context is one in which the acquisition of the foreign language has obvious practical value."

According to the results shown in Table 4.7, Australian students have different instrumental motives than Japanese students. This result shows that Japanese students believe that learning English is not useful in their future career, however, Australian students believe the reason they learn Japanese is that it may be useful in their future career. This different point of view is very important for analysing the communicative competency of these students.

We must consider the integrative motive in terms of the culture of the country. In Table 4.6 (a) and (b), an interesting result concerned the question "When using English, I feel foreign." and "When using Japanese, I feel foreign." The percentage of the Japanese students with this feeling is lower than for the Australian students. This result may suggest the Japanese students are more used to the sound of English, perhaps from listening to English speaking radio programs and movies.

Let us consider the significance of this result. As question seven in Table 4.6 (a) and (b) show, for both the Japanese and Australian students the percentage who strongly agree and agree is high. Even if the students have a high integrative motive, it is clear that they do not have enough opportunities to practice speaking when they learn a foreign language.

### 4.3 Self-assessment of the basic language skills

TABLE 4.8: SELF ASSESSMENT OF THE FOUR BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS

(Appendix I, II-I)

(How would assess your proficiency in English/Japanese?)									
	1	2		3		4		5	
	JS	JS	AS	JS	AS	JS	AS	JS	AS
L	03 (07%)	11 (25%)	05 (13%)	23 (52%)	24 (64%)	23 (52%)	7 (16%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
S	06 (14%)	21 (48%)	07 (08%)	17 (38%)	17 (45%)	0 (0%)	14 (37%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
R	01 (02%)	07 (16%)	06 (16%)	22 (50%)	14 (37%)	14 (32%)	18 (47%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
W	05 (12%)	17 (39%)	06 (16%)	12 (27%)	17 (45%)	9 (20%)	15 (39%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

NOTE: L; Listening, S; Speaking, R; Reading, W; Writing

1; Not at all, 2; Elementary, 3; Working knowledge, 4; Fairly fluent, 5; Fluent

Four skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing are used to assess language proficiency. Concerning speaking ability, the percentage of Japanese students who thought their level was "elementary" is higher than the Australian students who thought they had "working knowledge" or were "fairly fluent", (Table 4.8). This result shows Australian students are more confident of their ability to speak a foreign language than Japanese students although their proficiency level was the same. In addition, both Japanese and Australian students think their listening ability is at the "working knowledge" level.

Then what is the most preferred skill for Japanese students? As Table 4.9 demonstrates, Japanese students prefer Composition (45%), Reading (25%) and Writing (12%) compared to Conversation (9%). This result supports the contention that Japanese English Education is focused not on communication, but on the University entrance examination as mentioned in Chapter 2. However, in the question "What do you want to learn the most?", 50% of the Japanese students answered conversation (Table 4.10). This result was the same as the one I found in 1987 (Refer to Chapter 2). The most disliked classroom work for a Japanese student is composition (26%) and conversation (25%). They think composition is an interesting class, but dislike it. The reasons they gave were that they cannot write sentences, they do not like grammar and it is too difficult (Table 4.11).

They also think conversation is important, but dislike it. The students said they do not know what to say, they cannot make conversation, their pronunciation is not good and it is too difficult.

Tables 4.9 (a) and (b) reveal an interesting result. Australian students like "Pair work" rather than "Individual work" and "Group work". Having observed Australian classrooms for one and a half years and noting the frequent use of pair work, I find this to be a most interesting result. In the case of English education in Japan, the classroom work is conducted basically around "Group work" and "Individual work". Even if the teachers try to use "Pair work", it does not work well because students say that they are too shy to speak in pairs, and they ask "What do I say in pair work?" This survey was very useful in understanding the different points of view between Japanese students and Australian students concerning language classroom organization.

TABLE 4.9: STUDENT INTEREST IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES (Appendix I-2)

(a) Japanese students

(What is the most interesting class?)	
Reading	11 (25%)
Writing	5 (12%)
Composition	20 (45%)
Conversation	4 (9%)
No answer	4 (9%)

(b) Australian students (Appendix II-2)

(What is the most interesting classwork?)	
Individual work	6 (16%)
Pair work	16 (42%)
Group work	11 (29%)
Work as a whole	5 (13%)

TABLE 4.10: THE PREFERRED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES (Appendix I-4)

Japanese students

(What do you want to learn the most?)	
Reading	1 (2%)
Writing	9 (21%)
Composition	11 (25%)
Conversation	22 (50%)
No answer	1 (2%)

TABLE 4.11: THE MOST DISLIKED CLASS (Appendix I-5)

Japanese students

(What is the most disliked form of classwork?)	
Reading	9 (21%)
Writing	9 (21%)
Composition	12 (26%)
Conversation	11 (25%)
No answer	3 (7%)

#### 4.4 A discussion of self-assessment of aural and oral ability in foreign language

Holec (1985:152-158) suggests that two steps will have to be taken if the learner is going to be able to evaluate his own performances. These steps are:

- (a) the technical level: What are the skills that need to be acquired?
- (b) the psychological level: What is the learner's role in the learning process?

This section will survey the technical level, particularly the aural and oral ability. To judge aural ability the following ten self rating criteria were chosen, referring to the theory of Halliday (1973).

#### 4.4.1 The study of self-assessment of aural ability

The criteria of aural ability:

1. I can understand simple questions about my name, address, family, interests.
2. I can understand a telephone conversation, when I know the speaker.
3. I can understand a telephone conversation, when a stranger phones.
4. I can understand what people who work in banks, shops etc. say to me.
5. I can understand native speakers when they talk to each other.
6. I can understand the contents of a movie.
7. I can understand the main points of the radio news.
8. I can understand the main points of a class that I know something about.
9. I can understand the main points of a class on a topic that is new to me.
10. I can take notes of the main points during classes in English.

As shown in Table 4.8, Japanese high school students learning English think they are much weaker in aural ability than do Australians learning Japanese. Further evidence for this was found when participants responded to the above criteria.

In the criterion "I can understand simple questions about my name; address, family, interests", more than 70% of Australian learning Japanese answered "Fairly good" or "Well", however, 70% of Japanese learning English answered "Not at all" or "Only a little". This result is interesting because both the Japanese students and the Australian students learn the foreign language for a similar time, from two years to four years. Two factors are suggested to explain this result.

##### 1. The different language structures between English and Japanese

The written languages of the world may be roughly divided into those with phonetic characters and those with ideographic characters. Brooks (1964:18-19) says that knowing the origin of a language is also an important element for its learning.

"A theory of language must take into account not only its nature and function but also its origin, its diversification, its evolution, and its acquisition. All one can say with certainty about the origin of

language is that it must have originated somehow, sometime, somewhere. So deeply hidden in the mists of the past are its beginnings that almost no serious writer of the present day gives the problem more than passing mention. Yet, in the light of current knowledge, certain statements can be made about the origin of language, for which one can claim only a greater or lesser degree of likelihood. The beginnings of language probably stand as a principal line of demarcation separating man from the other primates. The constant readiness of the ear to respond to stimuli from all points in the environment irrespective of the position of the body and of a source of light, added to the great variety, the universal availability, and the triviality of speech sounds, tended to make vocal signs the most direct and the easiest medium for symbolizing the multiform phenomena of life."

The learning of the English language may be difficult for Japanese students, unless the letters are learnt together with the sounds. In the case of the Japanese language the written language was developed into a spoken language and young Japanese learn their spoken language through the written language. For example, teachers use picture cards when teaching Japanese scripts. It seems reasonable that the same process should follow when learning a foreign language; that is, the process going from letters to sounds, not from sounds to letters, is a necessary procedure for the Japanese to learn a foreign language efficiently. Most Australians learning Japanese say Japanese is easy to learn except for the problem of Kanji (Chinese writing), however, this does not impinge on their aural ability.

## 2. The different language teaching methods used by English and Japanese teachers.

As in Table 4.9 (a) almost 80% of the Japanese students like "Reading, Writing, Composition". This reflects the fact that English language education is centred on the entrance examination to University. Because of this, the teaching method is based on formal approaches through the medium of the written language. Rivers (1966: 12-13) identifies the differences between the Activist and Formalist teaching approaches to the four basic language skills as follows:

1. Activist teaching has sought to familiarize the student first with the forms of language used, for general communication in speech and in less formal writing. Activists lay emphasis on oral understanding and speaking as basic to fluent reading and original writing.

2. Formalist teaching has often been based on artificial exercises and led to a stilted use of language, emphasizing the features of the written language used in literary work. Formalists tend to value highly skill in reading and accurate writing (especially as demonstrated by the ability to translate).

English teachers appear more likely to adopt the former approach, while Japanese teachers the latter.

#### 4.4.2 The study of self-assessment of oral ability

The criteria of oral ability:

1. People can understand me when I speak.
2. I can pronounce words clearly.
3. I can talk about familiar, everyday things.
4. I can quickly say what I want to in conversation.
5. I can ask questions in class if I have not understood.
6. I can give a prepared talk in my area of interest or study.
7. I can talk about an article or text that I have read in English.
8. I can take part in classroom discussions.
9. I can ask questions in official situations.
10. I can speak without making grammatical mistakes.

Similarly to the self assessment of aural ability, 80% of the Japanese learning English answered "Not at all" and "Only a little" in all criteria of oral abilities. However, most of the Australians learning Japanese answered "Average". It reflects the different teaching methods as discussed above. Since the activist approach requires continual participation by the student in the learning process in order to develop language skills through active use, Australian students learning Japanese have many opportunities to participate in class work. However, the



Japanese are taught English by the formalist approach and so they do not receive adequate opportunities to involve themselves in participating because the students receive instruction passively and apply it as directed.

Holec (1985: 154-155) suggests the learner should have the following technical training, and should have the ability in particular to:

1. stand back and study their own performance objectively (listen to himself talk, to re-read what they have written)
2. discover and use those categories of analysis which they regard as relevant (this is where the earlier discussion of criteria is relevant)
3. use their descriptive knowledge of the language (using examples to illustrate the rules): if necessary, this knowledge can be supplemented by written reference works including dictionaries, grammars, notes, and lists.
4. be able to take into account the conditions in which the performance was produced, so as to be able to decide whether or not it is representative.
5. be able to clearly define the objectives for self-assessment.
6. adapt their standards of acceptability according to the point in the learning programme which has been reached and the aspect of performance being observed.

Until recently, criteria 4, 5, and 6 had been ignored by Japanese English teaching. To clarify these points, I would like to discuss Communicative Competence referring to the classification of linguistic functions which Halliday (1973) suggested.

#### **4.5 Self-assessment of communicative competence**

Students were asked to rate their own communicative competence using a number of criteria on a five-point scale. This form of rating specific competence is useful for understanding how learners reflect on their own competence. The scale rated comprehension, appropriacy of response, fluency, and accuracy of grammar in conversation. I analysed attitudinal assessment according to the seven linguistic functional factors of Halliday (1973), which are:

1. instrumental function,
2. regulatory function,
3. interaction function,
4. personal function,
5. heuristic function,
6. imaginative function and
7. representation I function.

TABLE 4.12: THE SEVEN SITUATIONS CHOSEN TO REPRESENT THE FUNCTIONS OF HALLIDAY (1973) (See Appendix I, II-D)

SITUATION	LINGUISTIC FUNCTIONS
(1) To make a speech for your friend's wedding ceremony.	Instrumental Function
(2) To make sure of the time and the place over the phone.	Representational Function
(3) Presenting oneself for an interview to be accepted as an exchange student.	Interactional Function
(4) To express your opinion from the positive and negative standpoints in a debate.	Personal Function
(5) To tell an imaginary story.	Imaginative Function
(6) To explain a diagram to do with comparative research.	Heuristic Function
(7) To exchange a clothes item for another because it does not fit you.	Regulatory Function

TABLE 4.13: STUDENT ABILITY TO MAKE A SPEECH

## (a) Japanese students

Situation I; Today you went to the Sheraton Hotel and made a speech for your friend's wedding ceremony. How well did you do in this area?					
<b>Communicative ability</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Comprehension	22 (50%)	14 (32%)	8 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Response	16 (36%)	23 (52%)	5 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Fluency	26 (59%)	10 (23%)	8 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Accuracy	24 (55%)	12 (27%)	8 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

## (b) Australian students

<b>Communicative ability</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>?</b>
Comprehension	0 (0%)	8 (21%)	18 (48%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)	5 (13%)
Response	2 (5%)	7 (18%)	18 (48%)	6 (16%)	0 (0%)	5 (13%)
Fluency	2 (5%)	6 (16%)	15 (39%)	9 (24%)	2 (5%)	4 (11%)
Accuracy	2 (5%)	9 (24%)	22 (58%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	3 (7%)

Note 1: Not well, 2: Elementary, 3: Average, 4: Fairly fluent, 5: Fluent, ?: Don't know

This situation asked students to rate their performance following a speech at a friend's wedding ceremony. Students had to consider appropriacy of greeting idioms, and the speech made in either English or Japanese. Table 4.13 (b) shows that almost 50% of the Australian students answered average in all abilities. Conversely, 80% of Japanese students chose the answer "not at all" or "elementary". It is somewhat surprising that the results differ because each group had received a similar amount of teaching. It is interesting to note that Japanese students believe they are less fluent and accurate in speaking than their Australian counterparts, again reflecting differences in teaching method.

This next situation (Table 4.14) asked students to assess their ability to debate in English/Japanese. This situation focused on the personal function of the linguistic factors to debate.

TABLE 4.14: STUDENTS ABILITY TO DEBATE

## (a) Japanese students

Today the debate for the economic relationship between Japan was held. You had to express your opinion from the positive and negative standpoints. How well did you do?					
<b>Communicative ability</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Comprehension	27 (61%)	13 (32%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Response	31 (71%)	11 (25%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Fluency	29 (66%)	13 (30%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Accuracy	30 (68%)	10 (23%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

## (b) Australian students

<b>Communicative ability</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>?</b>
Comprehension	2 (5%)	17 (45%)	8 (21%)	5 (13%)	2 (5%)	4 (11%)
Response	3 (8%)	16 (42%)	10 (26%)	5 (13%)	3 (8%)	1 (3%)
Fluency	2 (11%)	10 (25%)	10 (26%)	8 (21%)	2 (5%)	4 (11%)
Accuracy	5 (13%)	12 (31%)	10 (26%)	4 (11%)	4 (11%)	3 (8%)

**Note 1:** Not well, 2: Elementary, 3: Average, 4: Fairly fluent, 5: Fluent, ?: Don't know

This result is similar to the situation described previously. Japanese students do not perceive themselves as having as much ability to communicate as Australian students. In fact, the differences between the two groups are even more striking in this example.

These results lead us to wonder why Japanese students perceive themselves as having such low English communicative ability. It may be due to the teaching method as mentioned in the section on self-assessment of aural ability and oral ability. Alternatively, the different communication style adopted by the Japanese and English when speaking their native language may be reflected in their communicative ability in the second language.

Backman (1990: 73) defines communicative language ability as consisting of knowledge, and skill, and he proposes three components; language competence, strategic competence, and the psychophysiological mechanisms, needed to implement those abilities in language use (Fig. 4.1).

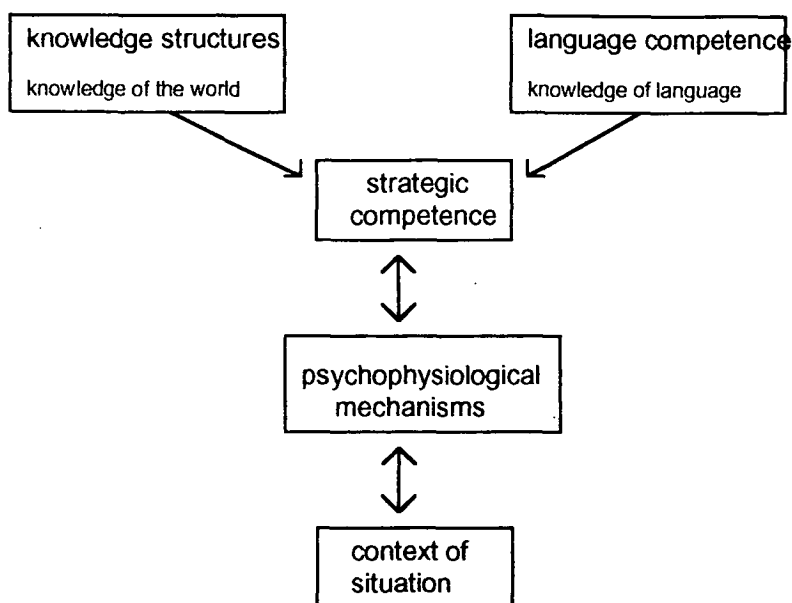


Figure 4.1: Components of communicative language ability in communicative language use

The importance of the psychophysiological element in a model of communicative language use is that it acknowledges that learner's prior knowledge and suppositions will influence the ways they interpret and express language. Clearly, experiences gained by Japanese students speaking their own language are unable to be effectively adapted to second language learning.

#### **4.6 A survey of communicative competence assessment by Australian teachers**

Finally, I would like to describe how the Australian Japanese language teachers assess their student's communicative competence and performances in class work. This survey was conducted by interviewing four Japanese language teachers whom I observed in Hobart in June 1992.

Teachers were asked the following question: "How do you assess the students communicative competence and performances?" Their responses are listed below.

**Teacher A:**

"I use role play and take a video of the verbal performance of the students including a section on non-verbal behaviour. And later, watching the video I get an indication of the student's communicative competence and performance."

**Teacher B:**

"The assessment of reading, listening and writing are easier because the outcome and final goal of the students can be judged by scores. But the assessment of speaking is very difficult. Most students do not have enough confidence in speaking, because they do not have the opportunity to speak Japanese even if they learn it at school. So I invite Japanese guests to my Japanese language class to brush up their communicative competence. I assess the student's performances while the guests are speaking to them."

**Teacher C:**

"I used to assess their communicative competence through teaching the cultural points, for example, cooking a Japanese dish, singing Japanese songs, reading old Japanese stories in English."

**Teacher D:**

"I think that language learning is the means to understanding different cultures and societies. I want to create a closer relationship with students than that in Japan by using pair work according to various kinds of Japanese situations."

As shown above, the teachers used a range of methods to assess communicative competence and performances. The teachers expected the students to be involved and participating in classroom activities communicative situations as much as possible. The assessment procedures centred on students using pair work, role play and having a video taken of the verbal and non-verbal performances of the students.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Overview**

In light of the planned changes in the curriculum for foreign language teaching in Japan and the previously identified problems with the present system, this results of this study are helpful in examining communicative competence in foreign language education. This was achieved by comparing the responses by students to a questionnaire that, in addition to asking a number of preliminary questions, concentrated on their own assessment (self-assessment) of their ability in a foreign language. Students from Japanese and Australian high schools, with two to four years experience in foreign language, were questioned and differences in their responses identified. In particular the results indicate a need to focus on issues of:

1. Motivation; how to encourage the student's motivation for learning.
2. Cognition; how to improve the cognitive ability of students and improve their expression in foreign language.
3. Cultural differences; consideration of the feelings, emotion and will of students.

Aspects of particular relevance to the practical teaching of foreign language are discussed in section 5.4.

#### **5.1 Motivation**

Motivation seems to be an important condition for assisting learning achievement. Generally, Japanese students at junior high school do not start learning a foreign language of their own accord, and do not know how a foreign language is associated with their general education. As a result, instrumental motivation is the key to their learning. The results of this survey indicate that Australian students have different motivations to Japanese students. Australian students believe that learning Japanese will be useful in their future career. Australian

students may be said to learn foreign language for integrative reasons. Certainly previous work has identified the integrative motive as more effective in foreign language education (Gardner, 1977). However, Bastall (1978) suggests that the instrumental motive may be effective if the learning of a foreign language has obvious practical value. However, Japanese teachers do not appear to supply the context for this type of learning, as few Japanese students know how English will help them in future or how it relates to their general education.

In addition, Australian students learning Japanese may be more likely to display aptitude in communicative competence because many of them choose to continue Japanese education over other foreign languages or even other disciplines. Those students with poor aptitude or ability in Japanese are unlikely to continue its study. In the Japanese system, English is the most common foreign language and all students must study it. English in written form is an important component of University entrance exams, which remain one of the major aims of most students.

## **5.2 Cognition**

This study highlighted some of the different teaching practices available to teachers of foreign language and the practices generally adopted by the teachers from Japan and Australia. The focus was on the differences between activist teaching and formalist teaching. The two methods have different success, particularly in regard to foreign language education and communicative competence. As English language education in Japan is centred on the entrance examination to University, the teaching method is based on the formalist approach through the medium of the written language. Students do not have opportunity to involve themselves in active communication, because the students receive instruction passively and apply it as directed. As a result Japanese students have a poorer ability in communication using a foreign language. This was most evident when the responses of students to their own perceived communicative competence were compared. Japanese students of English typically rated themselves as poorer in most aspects of communication compared to their Australian counterparts. This is despite the fact that all students have received a similar amount of teaching in each other's language. Japanese students



perceived themselves as less competent on all aspects of communication studied, comprehension, ability to respond, fluency and accuracy.

Language education in Australia is generally based on the activist approach. The activist approach requires continual participation by the student in the learning process to develop language skills through active use. Australian students learning Japanese have many opportunities to participate in class work and improve aspects of their communication skills. This method is also more likely to be successful in teaching aspects of language education such as the culture and customs associated with the language. This can be important later in applying knowledge of vocabulary and grammar learnt, to opportunities for communication. Such different teaching methods contribute to the fact that Japanese students learning English lack aural, oral, and communicative ability compared with Australians learning Japanese.

### **5.3 Cultural differences**

Distinct differences exist between the Japanese and Australian culture. This is reflected in their speech patterns and the way in which communication is carried out. It will be difficult for Japanese students to develop communicative ability in a foreign language in a cultural context that is significantly different from their own.

The Japanese and Western people use language in a different manner. Western people, in contrast to Japanese people, generally state their opinions as explicitly, logically, and objectively as possible by following a "step-by-step" approach whereas Westerners have trouble with the Japanese language because they do not understand the logic behind it. Several differences between the role of, and manner of communication Japanese and other cultures are identified in Chapter 2. These differences may be the reason some Japanese students have particular difficulties in expressing themselves in a foreign language. This is reflected not only in their communication ability outside the classroom, but also within the classroom when they are required to practise situations or work in small groups.

Australian students may experience difficulty also, but many of these are overcome by the emphasis on the understanding of the Japanese culture as part of the language curriculum. In order to improve communicative competence by Japanese students learning English it will be first necessary to improve the understanding of the Western (Australian, for example) culture by students; a point identified as crucial by Naotsuka and Sakamoto (1981).

## **5.4 Teaching communicative competence**

### **5.4.1 Aspects of communication**

Many aspects are involved in learning and communicating in a foreign language. These include;

1. Sociopsychological,
2. Cognitive,
3. Grammatical and lexical,
4. Social and
5. Psychomotor.

It is necessary to balance these aspects in order to successfully teach communicative competence. For example, cross-cultural communication relies on a knowledge of not only the vocabulary and grammar but the correct social situation to use it. Furthermore, the communicator must have the psychomotor skills and cognitive ability to carry out the skill and be understood. The need for balance is highlighted by the inadequacy of some Japanese students in communicating in English. Although they have the necessary knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, they have a poor understanding of social factors, and thus a poor ability to implement this knowledge. The ability to use language for communication may be thought of as a skill. As with many skills, language may be mastered through training; when the skill is mastered, the intended act is performed quickly, correctly and eventually, automatically. Language performance is controlled and sustained by communication.

### 5.4.2 Student performance

Communicative competence may be regarded as a performance based skill. Students will perform better if they are motivated and receive encouragement. The results of this study reveal that Australian students like, and participate in, interactive, motivating classroom activities. This teaching style is based on the experiential method. Japanese teaching methodology is based on the interventionist method, which does not encourage student interaction in the classroom. Japanese teachers are weak at making students perform communicatively in classroom activities in comparison to their Australian counterparts. This may be a reflection in part of historical differences in the language systems; the Japanese language is listener-oriented, and the English language is speaker-oriented.

Recently, assessment within foreign language curricula has moved away from a teacher dominated domain to one in which the student is given some control over the assessment of their own performance and future direction. If implemented appropriately in foreign language education then this method has the advantage of increasing student motivation and self-esteem. However, this study and previous work has identified difficulties in the Japanese system in regard to utilising these types of approaches.

### 5.4.3 Communicative competence as a humanistic interaction

Communication through language, whether using a newly acquired second language or the native language, involves interaction between people. In the past, and presently, although to a lesser extent, education was based on learning from textbooks. This type of teaching does not involve human interaction and therefore is particularly unsuitable for language education. If human beings rely only on textbooks, the true human dimension of communication is ignored. Although it is necessary for teachers to use devices such as textbooks as tools, it is important for both the teacher and the students to emphasise realistic or social situations where knowledge may be applied. This has been one criticism of English education in Japan, students are unable to apply knowledge and in some cases the ability to speak English is sacrificed for greater knowledge of written

words and grammar. This again highlights the different teaching methods of Japanese and Australian teachers; teacher centred teaching, memorization, and education based on pure knowledge are apt to ignore the humanity of students. If such considerations are applied to foreign language teaching, the need for concurrent consideration of cultural aspects becomes evident.

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# Appendix I

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR JAPANESE ?

RECENTLY A LOT OF AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDY JAPANESE.  
THIS SURVEY INVESTIGATES YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT JAPANESE LANGUAGE,  
SELF-ASSESSMENT OF YOUR JAPANESE ABILITY AND THE JAPANESE.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME, AS THIS DATA WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

### PART A: BACKGROUND OF YOUR JAPANESE LEARNING

1. Sex: 2. Age:
3. a) District of origin :  
b) Place of birth :  
c) Country from which your parents come :
4. How many years have you studied Japanese ?
5. What is your most commonly used language ?  
a) With your parents :  
b) With your friends or your neighbourhood :
6. What is your most important language; the language you spoke in your childhood ?
7. Have you studied any languages other than Japanese ? Yes/No
8. If "yes" please list the language(s).
9. Have you lived in a Japanese speaking country ? Yes/No
10. If the answer is "yes", for how long ?
11. Do you have a good ear for foreign languages ? Yes/No  
Other(explain)
12. Do you have a good memory ? Yes/No  
Other(explain)
13. Do you like to analyse languages ? (Do you like to work out the language for yourself or do you prefer the teacher to tell you the rules ?)

## PART B: JAPANESE LANGUAGE

- (i) 1. How would you assess your proficiency in Japanese ?

	ELEMENTARY	WORKING KNOWLEDGE	FAIRLY FLUENT	FLUENT
a. LISTENING				
b. SPEAKING				
c. READING				
d. WRITING				

2. What is your most interesting classroom work in a conversation class ? (Put the circle which is suitable on the number.)

a. individual work   b. pair work   c. group work   d. work as a whole class  
d. other(                      )

3. Do you agree with the following statements ? Indicate by putting a mark in one of the columns. The following number indicate like  
1 strongly agree   2 moderately agree   3 no opinion   4 moderately disagree   5 strongly disagree

(2) <u>STATEMENT</u>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Learning Japanese is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't feel awkward when using Japanese.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When using Japanese I feel foreign.	1	2	3	4	5
4. A good knowledge of Japanese will help my career very much.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I like talking Japanese to Japanese people.	1	2	3	4	5
6. A command of Japanese is very helpful.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I lack confidence when speaking Japanese.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Japanese pronunciation is hard to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Japanese writing(kanji) is hard to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The Japanese language sounds nice.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Speaking Japanese is more difficult than read.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I like to see Japanese speaking films and TV.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I want to have more opportunity to use Japanese.	1	2	3	4	5

PART C: SELF ASSESSMENT OF YOUR JAPANESE PROFICIENCY (1)

LISTENING

Put a tick [ ] in the right hand column if this skill is important to you when you learn Japanese. And write the number 1 Not at all 2 Only a little 3 Average 4 Fairly well 5 Well in the column to show how well you can do the tasks described below. Write a [?] if you don't know. Think about what you will have to listen to in Japanese. If it is not listed below, please add it in the \* empty spaces.

STATEMENT

[ ]

1. I can understand simple questions about my name, address, family, interests etc.

[ ]

2. I can understand a telephone conversation, when I know the speaker.

[ ]

3. I can understand a telephone conversation, when a stranger phones.

[ ]

4. I can understand what people who work in banks, shops etc say to me.

[ ]

5. I can understand native speakers when they talk to each other.

[ ]

6. I can understand the teacher when she/he gives simple instructions in class.

[ ]

7. I can understand the main points of the radio news.

[ ]

8. I can understand the main points of a class that I know something about.

[ ]

9. I can understand the main points of a class on a topic that is new to me.

[ ]

10. I can take notes of the main points during classes in Japanese.

[ ]

\* [ ]

### SPEAKING

Put a tick [ ] in the right hand column if this skill is important to you when you learn Japanese. And write the number 1 Not at all 2 Only a little 3 Average 4 Fairly well 5 Well in the column to show how well you can do the tasks described below. Write a question mark [?] if you don't know. Think about what you will have to say in Japanese. If is is not listed below, please add in the \* empty spaces.

#### STATEMENT

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
|   | [ ] |
| 1. People can understand me when I speak.                           | [ ] |
| 2. I can pronounce words clearly.                                   | [ ] |
| 3. I can talk about familiar, everyday things.                      | [ ] |
| 4. I can quickly say what I want to in conversation.                | [ ] |
| 5. I can ask questions in class if I have not understood.           | [ ] |
| 6. I can give a prepared talk in my area of interest or study.      | [ ] |
| 7. I can talk about an article or text that I have read in English. | [ ] |
| 8. I can take part in classroom discussions.                        | [ ] |
| 9. I can ask questions in official situations.                      | [ ] |
| 10. I can speak without making grammatical mistakes.                | [ ] |
| *   | [ ] |

PART D: A SELF ASSESSMENT FORM RATING OF COMMUNICATIVE PERFORMANCE

[1] Today you went to the Sheraton Hotel and made a speech for your friend's wedding ceremony. How well did you do in the following area: Comprehension of listeners, your response, fluency and accuracy in grammar and pronunciation.

COMPREHENSION 5 Listeners understood everything with no difficulty.

4

3

2

1 Listeners understood almost nothing.

RESPONSE 5 I could say everything I wanted to say.

4

3

2

1 I could not say anything I wanted to say.

FLUENCY 5 I spoke fluently.

4

3

2

1 I spoke with minimal fluency.

ACCURACY 5 My pronunciation and grammar was very good.

4

3

2

1 My pronunciation and grammar was poor.

[2] Today you meet a Japanese friend for the first time, but you forgot time and the place to have made an appointment. You want to make sure him/her time and the place on phone. How well did you do in the following area: the assessments of the statement are same the above [1].

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

[3] Today you receive the interview for the exchange student to Japan. You have to appeal your intention to go to Japan. How well did you do in the following area.

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

[4] Today the debate for the economic relationship between Japan and Australia have hold. You have to express your opinion from the positive and negative standpoints. How well did you in the following area.

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

[5] Today you have to explain about the imaginary story, 'Life on the Moon.' in your class. How well did you do in the following area.

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

[6] Today you have to explain about the diagram of the comparative unemployment rate in your class. How well did you do in the following area.

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

[7] You bought an overcoat at the department store, but you want to exchange for another one because it doesn't fit to you. How well did you do in the following area.

COMPREHENSION	5	4	3	2	1
RESPONSE	5	4	3	2	1
FLUENCY	5	4	3	2	1
ACCURACY	5	4	3	2	1

## Appendix II

## 高校での英語の授業での自己評価に関するアンケート

このアンケートは高校生が学校での英語の授業をどのように自己評価しているかを調べるためのものです。アンケートは〔A〕英語教育を受ける自分のバックグラウンド〔B〕英語の授業についての自分の意見〔C〕自分の英語力の自己評価(1)〔D〕自分の英語力の自己評価(2)の四部分からなっています。

名前を書く必要はありません。ご協力ありがとうございます。

[A] 英語教育を受けるバックグラウンドについて

1. 性別： 2. 年齢：
3. どのぐらい英語を習っていますか。
4. これまでに英語のほかに外国語を習ったことがありますか。  
はい／いいえ 「はい」と答えた人はどこの国の言葉ですか。
5. これまでに英語を話す国に行ったり、住んだりしたことがありますか。  
はい／いいえ 「はい」と答えた人はどこの国でどのぐらいですか。
6. あなたは外国語（英語）を聞くのにいい耳をしていると思いますか。  
はい／いいえ その理由は？
7. あなたは外国語（英語）を覚えるのに記憶力がいいと思いますか。  
はい／いいえ その理由は？
8. あなたは外国語（英語）を分析するのが好きですか。  
はい／いいえ その理由は？
9. 一週間に何時間英語を勉強していますか。そのうちわけは？  
例：一週間に四時間、GRAMMAR 二時間 READER 二時間
10. 何の教科書を使用していますか。



[B] 英語の授業についての自分の意見

- (1) 1. あなたの英語力を自分でどのように評価しますか。

四技能	全然できない	できない	まあまあ	できる	かなりできる
a. LISTENING					
b. SPEAKING					
c. READING					
d. WRITING					

2. 英語の授業でおもしろい授業はなんですか。(充当する記号を丸印で囲んでください。)

a. READING      b. WRITING      c. COMPOSITION      d. CONVERSATION

3. 2 の答えで CONVERSATION と答えた人はどんな授業が好きですか。

- a. ペアワーク (先生と自分)      b. ペアワーク (自分と友達)  
c. グループワーク (学生同志)      d. グループワーク (先生と学生)

4. 英語の授業のなかで一番習いたいことは何ですか。

a. READING      b. WRITING      c. COMPOSITION      d. CONVERSATION

5. 英語の授業のなかで嫌いなことは何ですか。

a. READING      b. WRITING      c. COMPOSITION      d. CONVERSATION

6. それはなぜですか。

- (2) 7. つぎのことについてどう思いますか。あてはまるものに丸印をつけてください。1. 強く同意    2. 同意    3. わからない    4. 不同意    5. 強く不同意

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| a. 英語を習うのは楽しい。           | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| b. 英語を話す時、いやな感じがする。      | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| c. 英語を話すとき、外国人のような気がする。  | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| d. 英語を知っていると、将来役にたつ。     | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| e. 高校での英語の授業が、受験勉強中心である。 | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| f. 英語の授業でもっと会話を習いたい。     | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| g. 英語を習っても、英語で話すチャンスがない。 | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| h. 英語で話すとき、自信がない。        | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| i. 英語の発音はむずかしい。          | 1   2   3   4   5 |
| j. 英語の映画やテレビを見るのは好きである。  | 1   2   3   4   5 |

[C] 自分の英語力の自己評価 (1)

LISTENING ABILITY (聞き取り能力)

下記のステートメントで、あなたが英語を習う時、必要だと思うものに矢印をつけ、そのあとで自分の聞き取り能力がどの程度であるか自分でつぎの番号をつけて評価してください。

1. 全然できない    2. 少しできる    3. 普通    4. よくできる    5. 完全にできる

わからない時には、?をつけてください。もし付け加えるステートメントがあれば、\*のところに書き加えてください。

ステートメント [    ]

1. 自分の名前、住所、家族、興味などについての簡単な質問を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

2. 知り合いの電話での会話を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

3. 見知らぬ人からの電話を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

4. 銀行や店などで働いている人が言うことを聞き取ることができる [    ]

5. ネイティブの人がお互いに話していることを聞き取ることができる [    ]

6. 映画の内容を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

7. ラジオのニュースのポイントを聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

8. 歌の内容を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

9. 授業中、英語で話された新しい内容を聞き取ることができる。 [    ]

10. 英語で話された内容のポイントをノートすることができる。 [    ]

\* [    ]

\* [    ]

## SPEAKING (スピーキング能力)

下記のステートメントで、あなたが英語を習う時、必要だと思うものに矢印をつけ、そのあとで自分の英語でのスピーキング能力がどの程度であるか自分でつぎの番号つけて評価してください。

1. 全然できない 2. 少しできる 3. 普通 4. よくできる 5. 完全にできる  
わからない時には、?をつけてください。もし付け加えるステートメントがあれば、\*のところに書き加えてください。

ステートメント [ ]

1. 私が英語を話す時、みんな(英語を話す人)は理解してくれる。 [ ]

2. 英語の単語がはっきり発音できる。 [ ]

3. 家族や日常生活について話すことができる。 [ ]

4. 会話で話したいことがすぐに英語で言うことができる。 [ ]

5. わからないことを授業中、英語で質問できる。 [ ]

6. 興味のあることや、勉強について英語で話すことができる。 [ ]

7. 英語で読んだ記事や話について話すことができる。 [ ]

8. 英語でのディスカッションに参加することができる。 [ ]

9. 公式な場面で質問ができる。 [ ]

10. 文法のまちがいなく話すことができる。 [ ]

\* [ ]

\* [ ]

〔D〕自分の英語力の自己評価（2）ー コミュニケーション活動における  
英語力の自己評価

（1）今日、ロイヤルホテルでオーストラリア人の友達の結婚式に出席し、  
英語でスピーチしました。つぎの点がよくできたか自分で評価してください。  
出席者または聞き手の理解力、あなたの反応、なめらかさ、文法と発音の正  
確さ。

理解力 5. 聞き手はまったく問題なく理解できた。

4.

3.

2.

1. 聞き手はほとんど理解しなかった。

反応 5. 自分が言いたいことが全部言えた。

4.

3.

2.

1. 自分が言いたいことが何も言えなかった。

流暢さ 5. なめらかに話せた。

4.

3.

2.

1. なめらかに話せなかった。

正確さ 5. 自分の発音と文法はとてもよくできた。

4.

3.

2.

1. 自分の発音と文法はまったくだめだった。

(2) 今日、この間町で初めて会ったオーストラリアから来た友達と待ち合わせをしていましたが、約束の時間と場所を忘れてしまいました。電話でもう一度時間と場所を確認しました。英語で会話ができましたか。評価のしかたは(1)と同じです。

理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1
正確さ	5	4	3	2	1

(3) 今日、オーストラリアへ行く留学生のためのインタビューの試験を受けました。オーストラリアへ行きたい目的を英語で言えましたか。

理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1

(4) 今日、オーストラリアと日本との経済関係に関するデベートが授業でありました。英語で反対と賛成の立場から自分の意見が言えましたか。

理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1
正確さ	5	4	3	2	1

(5) 今日、英語の授業で「月での生活」と言う題で空想物語を創って話しました。上手に話せましたか。

理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1
正確さ	5	4	3	2	1

(6) 今日、英語の授業で世界の失業者率のグラフを比較して説明しました。

上手に話せましたか。

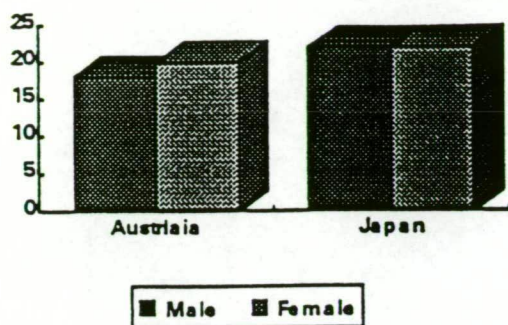
理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1
正確さ	5	4	3	2	1

(7) デパートでコートを買ったんですが、サイズが合わないので取り替えたいです。店員は英語しか話せません。英語でうまく話せましたか。

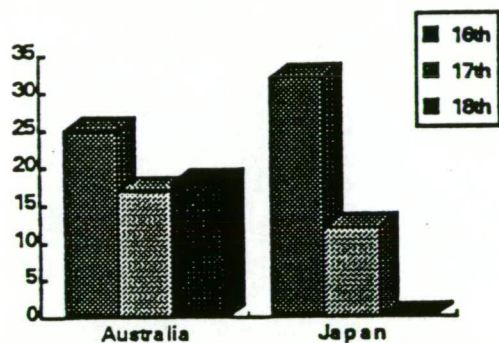
理解力	5	4	3	2	1
反応	5	4	3	2	1
流暢さ	5	4	3	2	1
正確さ	5	4	3	2	1

## Appendix I. II

### [A] A: Background of the Japanese Learning Sex



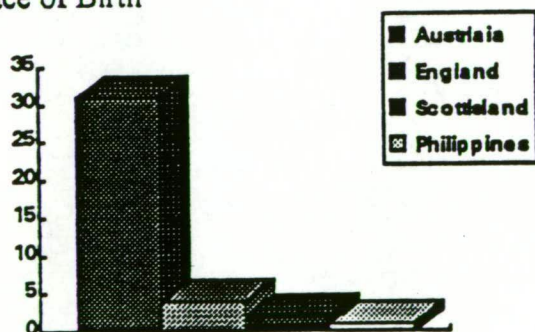
### Age



## Appendix I

### Australian

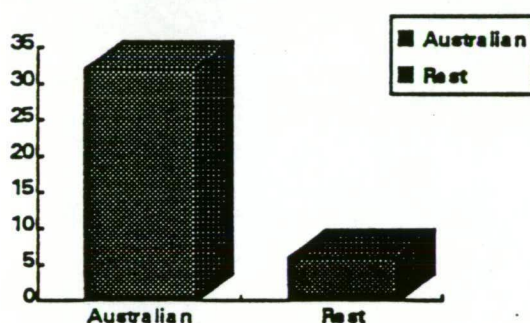
### #Place of Birth



Locality of Australian



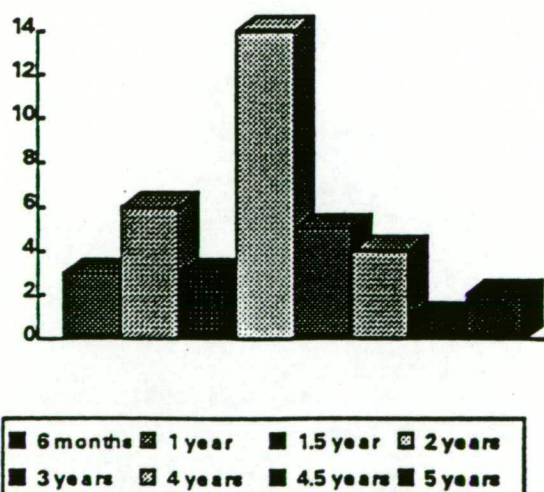
#Country: from which your parents have come



Rest include one each from

German, Philippines, England/Russia, Canada/Australia, England/Australia and NZ/Australia.

#How many years have you studied Japanese?



#What is you most commonly used language?

a)with you parents : English 38 (100%)  
b)with your friends or neibours English 38 (100%)

#What is you most important language ; the language you speake in your childhood?

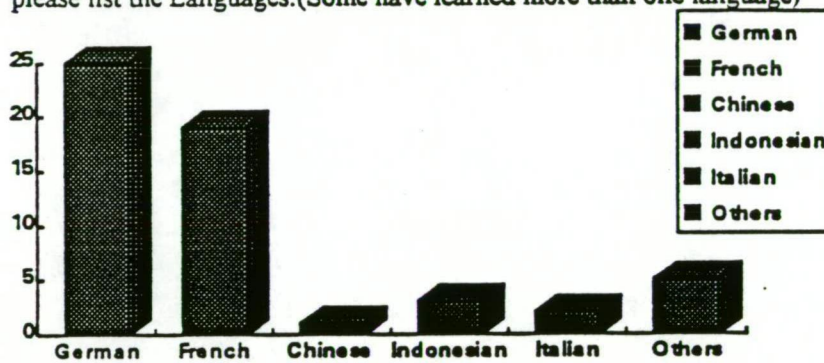
English 38 (100%)



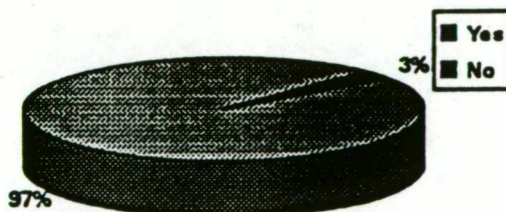
#Have you studied any language other than Japanese?



#If "Yes" please list the Languages.(Some have learned more than one language)

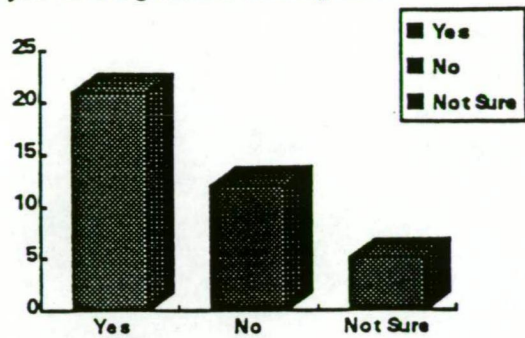


# Have you lived in Japan?

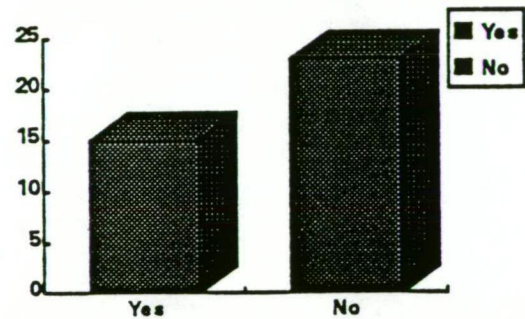


# If the answer "Yes", for how long  
1 years (100%)

# Do you have a good memorising skill?

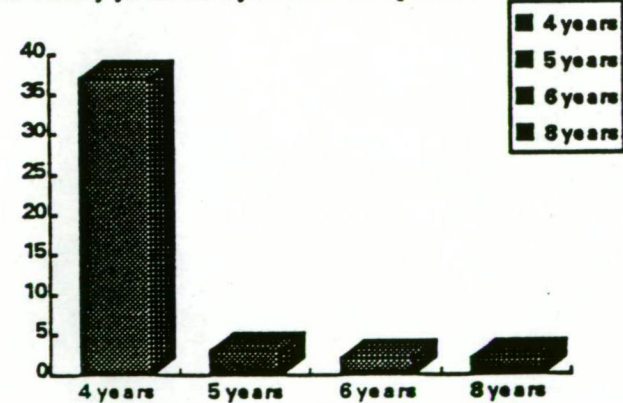


# Do you like to analyse language?

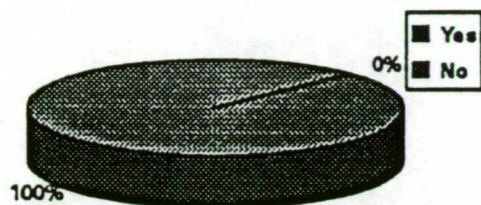


Appendix II  
Japanese

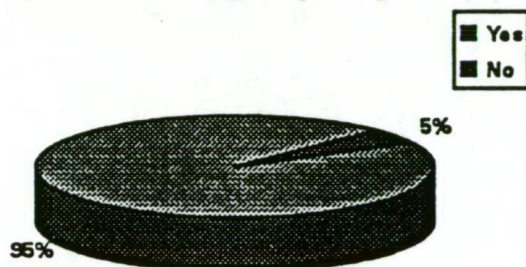
# How many years have you studied Japanese?



# Have you studied any languages other than Japanese

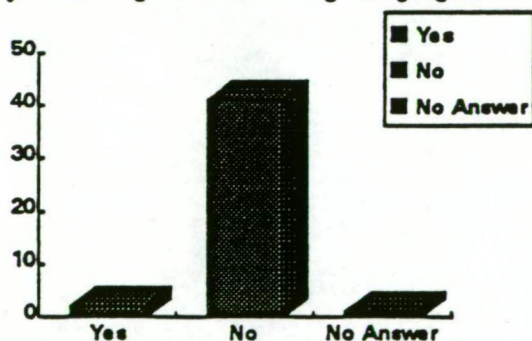


# Have you lived in an English speaking country?



Yes : Hawai and Guam(for a week), Philippine(uncle's house)

# Do you have a good ear for foreign languages?



"No" : Reasons

Not to be able to understand even if listen to the tape and watch teh T.V. (1)

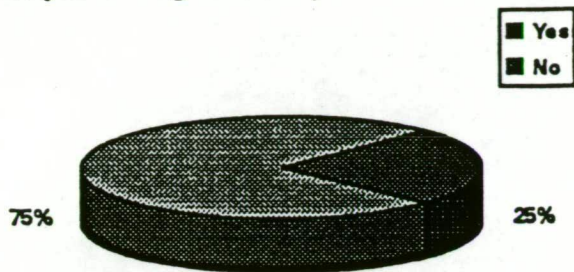
Not to be able to understand the English songs (1)

Not to be able to understand the difference of teh pronunciation (1)

"Yes" Reason

Being able to understand English songs (1)

# Do you have a good memory?



Reasons

Yes

Not to acquire if we don't remember the English vocabulary (1)  
 Easy to remember using the guessing method (1)

No

forget easily (2)  
 not to remember the English songs (1)

#Do you like to analyse English

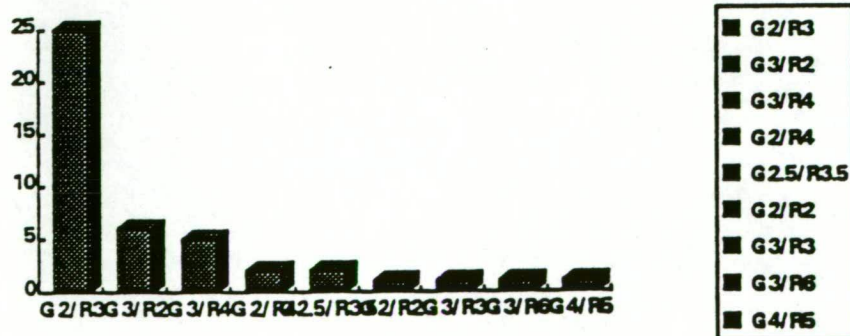


Reasons

No

Difficult (2)  
 Not good at grammar (1)

#How many hours a week do you study English? And what classes?



Appendix I

TABLES  
AUSTRALIAN

[B] Japanese Language

1 How would you assess you proficiency in Japanese?

	Elementary	Working Knowledge	Fairly Fluent	Fluent
Listening	5 (13%)	24 (64%)	7 (18%)	2 (5%)
Speaking	7 (18%)	17 (43%)	14 (37%)	0
Reading	6 (16%)	14 (37%)	18 (47%)	0
Writing	6 (16%)	17 (45%)	15 (39%)	0

2 What is the most interesting class?

- Individual work 6 (16%)
- pair work 16 (42%)
- group work 11 (29%)
- work as a whole 5 (13%)

3 Do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	No opinion	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
Learning Japanese is enjoyable	15(39%)	20(53%)	2(5%)	1(3%)	0
I don't feel awkward when using Japanese	7(18%)	18(47%)	5(13%)	7(18%)	1(5%)
When using Jpn, I feel foreign	5(13%)	8(21%)	17(45%)	3(8%)	5(13%)
A good knowledge of J, will help my career	25(66%)	8(21%)	5(13%)	0	0
I like talking Jpn to Japanese people	7(18%)	10(26%)	16(43%)	5(13%)	0
A command of Japanese is very helpful	17(44%)	11(30%)	10(28%)	0	0
I lack confidence when speaking Jpn	8(21%)	20(53%)	3(8%)	5(13%)	2(5%)
Jpn pronunciation is hard to learn	5(13%)	8(21%)	2(5%)	18(4%)	5(13%)
Japanese writing(kanji) is hard to learn	8(21%)	12(32%)	2(5%)	13(34%)	3(8%)
The Jpn language sounds nice	8(21%)	10(26%)	14(37%)	5(13%)	3(8%)
Speaking Jpn is more difficult	12(32%)	8(21%)	5(13%)	10(26%)	3(8%)
I like to see Jpn speaking films and TV	5(13%)	13(34%)	10(26%)	5(13%)	5(13%)
I want to have more opportunity to use Jpn	18(47%)	14(37%)	5(13%)	0	1(3%)

[C.] Self-Assessment of you Japanese Proficiency

Listening

	Important	Not Important	Not at all	Only a bit	Average	Fairly well
I can understand simple question about my name, address, family, interests etc.	35 92%	0	2 6%	8 23%	15 43%	10 28%
I can understand telephone conversation, when I know the speaker	32 84%	2 6%	13 41%	3 9%	4 13%	7 22%
I can understand a telephone conversation, when a stranger phones	30 79%	6 20%	12 40%	4 13%	4 13%	2 7%
I can understand what people in banks or shops etc, say to me	25 66%	5 20%	10 40%	4 16%	4 16%	2 8%
I can understand native speakers when they talk to each other	26 68%	8 31%	12 46%	0	4 15%	2 8%
I can understand the teacher when s/he gives simple instruction in class	32 84%	2 6%	1 3%	3 9%	10 32%	16 59%



I can understand the main points of the radio news	22 58%	5 23%	1 5%	8 36%	2 9%	4 18%
I can understand the main points of a class that I know something about	26 68%	1 4%	1 4%	7 26%	8 31%	8 31%
I can understand the main points of a class or a topic that is new to me	25 66%	1 4%	4 16%	7 28%	8 32%	5 20%
I can take notes of the main points during class in Japanese	25 66%	2 8%	8 32%	3 12%	5 20%	7 28%

#### Speaking

	Important	Not Important	Not at all	Only a bit	Average	Fairly well
1. People can understand me when I speak	32 84%	4 13%	8 25%	15 46%	5 16%	0 0
2. I can pronounce words clearly	28 74%	2 7%	7 25%	11 39%	6 22%	2 7%
3. I can talk about familiar, everyday things	30 79%	4 13%	8 27%	12 40%	3 10%	3 10%
4. I can quickly say what I want in conversation	25 66%	4 16%	6 24%	10 40%	3 12%	2 8%
5. I can ask question in class if I have not understood	28 68%	0 0	8 35%	5 19%	8 31%	4 15%
6. I can give a prepared talk in my area if interest or study	20 53%	3 15%	3 15%	9 45%	3 15%	2 10%
7. I can talk about an article on text that I have read in English	20 53%	6 30%	8 40%	4 20%	0 0	2 10%
8. I can take part in classroom discussions	30 79%	0 0	6 20%	15 50%	5 17%	3 10%
9. I can ask questions in official situations	20 53%	4 20%	10 50%	5 25%	0 0	1 5%
10. I can speak without making grammatical mistakes	28 74%	4 15%	10 36%	6 21%	6 21%	2 7%

#### [D] Self-Assessment form rating of Communication Performance.

(1)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	0 0%	8 21%	18 48%	5 13%	2 5%	5 13%
Response	2 5%	7 18%	18 48%	6 16%	0 0%	5 13%
Fluency	2 5%	6 16%	15 39%	9 24%	2 5%	4 11%
Accuracy	2 5%	9 24%	22 58%	1 3%	1 3%	3 7%

(2)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	0 0%	9 24%	15 39%	5 13%	5 13%	4 11%
Response	0 0%	5 13%	18 47%	12 32%	1 2%	2 5%

Fluency	1 3%	9 24%	16 42%	7 18%	2 5%	3 8%
Accuracy	0 0%	9 24%	18 47%	5 13%	5 13%	1 3%

(3)	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	7 3%	9 24%	17 44%	3 8%	5 13%	3 8%
Response	0 0%	8 21%	19 50%	6 16%	3 8%	2 5%
Fluency	1 3%	6 16%	18 47%	8 21%	3 8%	2 5%
Accuracy	2 5%	7 18%	16 42%	6 16%	4 11%	3 8%

(4)	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	2 5%	17 45%	8 21%	5 13%	2 5%	4 11%
Response	3 8%	16 42%	10 26%	5 13%	3 8%	1 3%
Fluency	4 11%	10 26%	10 26%	8 21%	2 5%	4 11%
Accuracy	5 13%	12 29%	10 26%	4 11%	4 11%	3 8%

(5)	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	5 13%	9 24%	15 39%	6 16%	1 3%	2 5%
Response	5 13%	7 18%	19 50%	6 16%	0 0%	7 18%
Fluency	5 13%	9 24%	13 34%	11 29%	0 0%	0 0%
Accuracy	5 13%	7 18%	18 47%	4 11%	1 3%	3 8%

(6)	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	0 0%	12 32%	16 42%	2 5%	5 13%	3 8%
Response	0 0%	12 32%	16 42%	5 13%	2 5%	3 8%
Fluency	3 8%	16 42%	9 24%	5 13%	3 8%	2 5%
Accuracy	3 8%	11 29%	16 42%	4 11%	2 5%	2 5%

(7)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well	?
Comprehension	0 0%	10 26%	17 45%	2 5%	6 16%	3 8%
Response	0 0%	10 26%	17 45%	6 16%	2 5%	3 8%
Fluency	2 5%	14 37%	10 26%	5 13%	4 11%	3 8%
Accuracy	2 5%	10 26%	16 42%	3 8%	4 11%	3 8%

## Appendix II

JAPANESE

[B] English Language	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	No opinion	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
a. Learning Japanese is enjoyable	2(5%)	15(34%)	15(34%)	9(20%)	3(7%)
b. I don't feel awkward when using Japanese	3(7%)	5(11%)	18(41%)	16(36%)	2(5%)
c. When using English, I feel foreign	1(2%)	2(5%)	10(23%)	11(25%)	20(45%)
d. A good knowledge of Jp. will help my career	1(2%)	9(21%)	11(25%)	22(50%)	1(2%)
e. English class is concentrated on the ??????	5(11%)	16(36%)	17(39%)	5(11%)	1(3%)
f. I want to learn conversation during class	5(11%)	9(21%)	20(46%)	5(11%)	5(11%)
g. No opportunity to speak English	15(34%)	15(34%)	8(18%)	3(7%)	3(7%)
h. I lack confidence when speaking Japanese	24(55%)	13(30%)	5(11%)	1(2%)	1(2%)
i. English pronunciation is hard to learn	20(46%)	15(34%)	5(11%)	4(9%)	???
j. I like to see English speaking films and TV.	5(11%)	11(25%)	13(30%)	9(20%)	6(14%)

## [C] Self-Assessment of your English Proficiency

## Listening

	Important	Not Important	Not at all	Only a bit	Average	Fairly well
I can understand simple question about my name, address, family, interests etc.	44 100%	7 16%	25 57%	10 23%	2 4%	
I can understand telephone conversation, when I know the speaker	23 52%	14 61%	6 26%	2 9%	1 4%	
I can understand a telephone conversation, when a stranger phones	22 50%	16 73%	6 27%			
I can understand what people in banks or shops etc, say to me	27 61%	19 70%	8 30%			
I can understand native speakers when they talk to each other	8 18%	6 75%		2 25%		
I can understand the contents of the movie	12 27%	9 75%	2 17%	1 8%		
I can understand the main points of the radio news	22 50%	19 86%	3 14%			
I can understand the main points of a class that I know something about	18 41%	9 50%	6 33%	3 17%		
I can understand the main points of a class or a topic that is new to me	26 59%	11 42%	9 35%	5 19%	1 4%	



I can take notes of the main points during class in English	29 66%	19 66%	4 14%	5 17%	1 3%
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#### Speaking

	Important	Not Important	Not at all	Only a bit	Average	Fairly well
1. People can understand me when I speak	40	20	14	6		
2. I can pronounce words clearly	34	5	18	8	3	
3. I can talk about familiar, everyday things	22	9	10	3		
4. I can quickly say what I want in conversation	27	20	5	2		
5. I can ask question in class if I have not understood	9	7	2			
6. I can give a prepared talk in my area if interest or study	12	10	1	1		
7. I can talk about an article on text that I have read in English	10	10				
8. I can take part in classroom discussions	9	8	1			
9. I can ask questions in official situations	17	16	1			
10. I can speak without making grammatical mistakes	31	28	3			

#### [D] Self-Assessment form rating of Communication Performance.

(1)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	22(50%)	14(32%)	8(18%)	0	0
Response	16(36%)	23(52%)	5(12%)	0	0
Fluency	26(59%)	10(23%)	8(18%)	0	0
Accuracy	24(55%)	12(27%)	8(18%)	0	0

(2)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	20(46%)	14(32%)	8(18%)	1(2%)	1(2%)
Response	19(43%)	17(39%)	5(11%)	3(7%)	0
Fluency	22(50%)	15(34%)	6(14%)	0	1(2%)
Accuracy	22(5%)	14(32%)	5(11%)	2(5%)	1(2%)

(3)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	21(48%)	16(36%)	5(11%)	2(5%)	0
Response	22(5%)	14(32%)	6(14%)	1(2%)	1(2%)
Fluency	30(68%)	6(14%)	7(16%)	1(2%)	
Accuracy	30(68%)	8(19%)	5(11%)		1(2%)

(4)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	27(61%)	13(32%)	4(9%)	0	0
Response	31(71%)	11(25%)	1(2%)	1(2%)	0
Fluency	29(66%)	13(30%)	2(4%)	0	0
Accuracy	30(68%)	10(23%)	4(9%)	0	0

(5)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	33(75%)	9(21%)	2(4%)		
Response	33(75%)	10(23%)	1(2%)		
Fluency	35(80%)	9(20%)			
Accuracy	34(77%)	8(18%)	2(5%)		

(6)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	31(70%)	10(23%)	3(7%)		
Response	32(73%)	10(23%)	2(4%)		
Fluency	33(75%)	8(18%)	3(7%)		
Accuracy	33(75%)	8(18%)	3(7%)		

(7)

	Not at all	Not very good	Average	Well	Very Well
Comprehension	26(59%)	12(27%)	6(14%)		
Response	23(52%)	16(36%)	4(10%)	1(2%)	
Fluency	30(68%)	12(27%)	2(5%)		
Accuracy	32(73%)	9(20%)	3(7%)		