The Impact of Short-Term Strategy Training in Requests for Clarification in the
Japanese Classroom

by

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Abstract

This study examined whether short-term strategy training would benefit Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) learners' abilities to resolve communication difficulties using requests for clarification (RC) - strategies to request repetition, clarification, or confirmation. Two groups of high-beginner university JFL students (n=12) participated in two sessions of peer communicative practice, with one of the groups (n=6) receiving RC training prior to the sessions. The effects of the training were measured by the frequency of RC usage during the participant interviews with Japanese native speakers in pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests. A stimulated recall after the post-test was conducted to understand factors of RC use. Test results revealed an increase in the number of RC used and use of different types of RC immediately after the training. Stimulated recall results confirmed that RC were used when encountering comprehension issues and were not used when there was a partial to full understanding.

Keywords: strategic competence, communication strategies (CS), strategy training, request for clarification (RC), Japanese as a foreign language (JFL)

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Gap

The present study investigated the impact of short-term (intensive) training in strategy use (in particular, requests for clarification (RC)) on the development of strategic competence – defined as “knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or insufficient competence” (Canale & Swain, 1980, pp. 29-30) and to “enhance the effectiveness of communication” (Canale, 1983, p. 10) by learners of Japanese as a foreign language (JFL). In Canale and Swain’s (1980) framework, strategic competence is one of three components that, they argued, are necessary for the development of communicative competence. The other two are grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence; in 1983, another competence was added to the framework – discourse competence (Canale, 1983). Although strategic competence is important for effective interaction in any language, little has been done to investigate the impact of strategy training, especially short-term intensive training, on the learners’ ability to understand and properly use RC in conversations. This is especially the case for learners of Japanese. Lack of commercially available materials that contain explicit information about RC and provide practice (Igarashi, 1999; Thomson, 1994) exacerbates the situation further and leaves the teachers to deal with and find time for focus on CS within an already content-heavy curriculum.

In second language communication, learners, especially at the beginner level, may encounter various problems due to their limited L2 knowledge. Scholars agree that communication strategies (CS) (i.e., a set of conscious and problem-oriented strategies learners use to overcome problems during oral communication, Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997;

Færch & Kasper, 1983) are effective in facilitating second language (L2) communication, and learners who receive instruction on CS are more effective at solving communication-related problems than those who do not (Færch & Kasper, 1983; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991). While research on CS has shown gains in learner proficiency and usage of CS in the long-term (6-14 weeks) (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995, Nakatani, 2005, Rabab'ah, 2015), little has been done to determine whether the same benefits would arise after short-term training and with languages others than English.

The focus of this study is on one particular CS, namely requests for clarification (RC), which are defined as interactional modifications in reaction to comprehension problems (Ortega, 2009). Because of their effectiveness in resolving common comprehension issues (Thomson, 1994), RC are frequently used among JFL learners (Ozaki, 1993). RC are essential for L2 learners as their use increases comprehensibility of input and highlights problematic L2 forms in both input and output, making them available for learning (Pica, 1994). According to Krashen's (1985) Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, the most significant source of L2 learning is comprehensible input, which Long (1996) expanded on with the Interaction Hypothesis, stating that interactionally modified input helps language learning. Typically, this modification is triggered by RC during communication (Ortega, 2009). That is, a learner's use of RC provides a good indication of the communicative problems he or she is facing, allowing the interlocutor to cater to these difficulties and help the learner solve those specific problems through input modification.

Despite the presumed advantages of RC use, few materials that focus on the development of strategic competence in JFL teaching exist. For example, a limited number of textbooks provide explicit instructions or exercises on RC (Thomson, 1994; Igarashi, 1999). It, then, comes

as no surprise that learners of Japanese not only know a limited number of RC, but are also unaware of effective and situation-appropriate RC (Ozaki, 1993; Igarashi, 1999; Fukutomi, 2012). This situation has prompted Igarashi (1999) and others to call for classroom-based training in RC that would help learners understand the different functions RC play and provide opportunities for practice.

With the growing popularity of Japanese as a foreign language (L2) (The Japan Foundation, 2013) and the need for learners of Japanese to become communicatively competent, this study sheds light on advantages that short-term strategy training can bring to improve the effectiveness of classroom instruction and to help learners successfully obtain the skills necessary for communication.

1.2 Organization of the Present Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 2 presents theoretical background on communicative competence, strategic competence, communication strategy, and requests for clarification, including previous studies on teaching communication strategies in the language classroom with an emphasis on the Japanese language classroom. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used to conduct this study. The description includes participants' background, design of strategy training used as well as procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study to show how the training affected learners' use of RC. The final chapter, Chapter 5, discusses the obtained results, points out limitations of the study, suggests pedagogical implications, and highlights possible future research directions for strategy teaching in the classroom.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents prior research on strategic competence in communicative competence in the Japanese language context in particular. This chapter first discusses the background information about communicative competence and then focuses on strategic competence. The review then moves onto a discussion of communication strategies (CS), which are an essential component of strategic competence. After that, the discussion shifts to CS in a Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) context with a concentration on requests for clarification (RC) and presents the definitions and empirical studies conducted on RC in JFL. The chapter concludes with the research questions that guided this study.

2.1 Communicative Competence

Initially, Chomsky (1965) established the terms “competence” and “performance”. “Competence” is the knowledge of language and “performance” is the realization of this knowledge through output (speaking and writing). Chomsky’s (1965) primary concern was competence since performance can be affected by external factors (i.e. distractions, interruptions) and as such, does not reflect one’s knowledge of the language. Critics argued that Chomsky’s exclusive focus on competence ignored the social factors of language. Hymes (1972), for example, challenged the limitations of competence by illustrating a scenario with a person who produced grammatically accurate, but completely random, sentences, demonstrating that such a person could not be understood. Hymes (1972) argued for the need to broaden the focus of the term “competence” to also include the production of the most appropriate linguistic form in a given situation. That is, Hymes argued for communicative competence to include both linguistic competence (the production of grammatically accurate sentences) and sociolinguistic competence (selecting appropriate language for different situations). In light of Hymes’

argument, several scholars have broadened the concept and definition of communicative competence. Canale (1983), for example, defined communicative competence as the “knowledge and skills required for communication” (p. 5).

2.1.1 Strategic Competence

Canale and Swain’s (1980) framework of communicative competence is considered to be an authoritative source for discussing communicative competence within second language pedagogy (Brown, 2002; Celce-Murcia, 2007). In their framework, communicative competence is made of three components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Canale (1983) later added the fourth component of discourse competence. While grammatical competence is “the knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology” (Canale, 1983, p. 29), sociolinguistic competence refers to the knowledge of “the sociocultural rules of use and rules of discourse” (ibid, p. 30). Strategic competence is mastering “verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (p. 30) to “enhance the effectiveness of communication (e.g., deliberately slow and soft speech for rhetorical effect)” (Canale, 1983, p. 10). Finally, discourse competence is the “mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres” (Canale, 1983, p. 9).

While the specific focus of this study is strategic competence as defined by Canale (1983), other frameworks also included the component within their models of communicative competence (e.g. Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Celce-Murcia 2007). Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) defined strategic competence as the “knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them” (p. 26) and went

so far as to represent strategic competence as an inventory of strategies that compensate for deficiencies in other competences (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Celce-Murcia, 2007).

While the initial model proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) was limited to communication strategies as strategic competence, in light of other researchers' work (e.g., Oxford, 2001) on additional strategies relevant to language learning, in 2007, Celce-Murcia updated her model of strategic competence to include learning strategies alongside communication strategies. In this new version, learning strategies relate to input (processing, storage, and retrieval of messages from others) and CS relate to output (how learners express meaning or deliver messages to others) (Brown, 2000). In other words, learning strategies focus on understating how individuals learn a language and communication strategies focus on how individuals communicate.

Looking at strategic competence from the assessment standpoint, Bachman (1990) defined it as "the mental capacity for implementing the components of language competence in conceptualized communicative language use" (p. 84). That is, in Bachman's view, strategic competence serves a separate function in communicative language ability in that it assists in making decisions for communicating (Brown, 2000). However, these models are established for the purposes of language assessment whereas the study being reported on here is primarily concerned with teaching CS in the L2 classroom and as such, uses Canale and Swain's (1980) framework to operationalize its definition of strategic competence. In this study, the focus of the training was the participants' verbal use of RC. Therefore, strategic competence is defined here as verbal communication strategies that can be used to compensate for communication issues that arise from limited competence.

2.1.2 Communication Strategies

2.1.2.1 Definitions

Within Canale and Swain's (1980) definition of strategic competence is the term "communication strategies" (CS), which can generally be viewed from two standpoints: interactional and psycholinguistic (Dörnyei & Scott, 1997). While the interactional view considers how "learners use strategies during interaction that could help [them] to improve negotiation of meaning and the overall effectiveness of their message" (Nakatani & Goh, 2007, p. 207), the psycholinguistic view looks at "mental processes that underlie learners' language behaviour when dealing with lexical and discourse problems" (ibid, p. 207).

According to Tarone (1980), who supports the interactional view (Kahnji, 1996; Nakatani & Goh, 2007), CS are the "mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (p. 420). She adds that the learner's intention for CS is "to clarify intended meaning rather than simply correct linguistic form" (Tarone, 1980, p. 424). Canale (1983) is another researcher who shares the interactional perspective and has identified two fundamental functions of CS to (1) compensate for communication problems and (2) to enhance the effectiveness of communication. Canale's idea expands the role of CS beyond overcoming the lack of linguistic knowledge to enhancing the interaction between interlocutors.

According to the interactional view, there is an emphasis on the use of CS through interaction with interlocutors. This emphasis is justified because how a learner chooses which CS to use is influenced not only by the learner's own knowledge, but also from the "interlocutor's linguistic competence and [their] knowledge of the topic of discourse" (Corder, 1983, p. 15) and may impact the negotiation of meaning (Nakatani & Goh, 2007) (i.e., moves by either

interlocutor to aid understanding amidst comprehension problems (Ortega, 2009)). To conclude, the interactional view sees CS as a part of communication through interactions with interlocutors.

On the other hand, the psycholinguistic view considers CS as a part of the learner's mental process that influences production of output. The psycholinguistic model is divided into two phases: the planning phase and the execution phase (Færch & Kasper, 1983). The planning phase is used "to develop a plan, the execution of which will result in an action which will lead to the actional goal" (Færch & Kasper, 1983, p. 23) and it is in this phase that communication strategies are used. The execution phase is the execution of the plan. According to Færch and Kasper (1983), communication strategies are "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p. 36). In the psycholinguistic view, CS is considered to be a tool to prepare for communication and is not considered to be a function of communication for conveying a message with interlocutors.

Although there are two different views on CS, two common ideas that are shared within both perspectives are problem-orientedness and consciousness (Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Færch & Kasper, 1983). First, problem-orientedness refers to "the idea that strategies are used only when a speaker perceives that there is a problem which may interrupt communication" (Bialystok, 1990, p. 3). Similarly, Færch and Kasper (1983) make the distinction that strategies can only be applied to goals that the individual is having difficulties reaching. Second, consciousness is the idea that CS are a conscious process that learners use. However, there are problems with defining what learners are conscious of. Dörnyei and Scott (1997) pointed out that learners may be conscious of the "language problem", conscious of the "intent/attempt to solve this problem", or conscious of "the repertoire of potentially applicable

CS” (p.184). Færch and Kasper (1983) also mention that “[t]here are various problems in defining communication strategies as consciously employed plans” (p. 35) highlighting that there are likely degrees of consciousness. Since the aim of the study is to investigate learners’ use of CS during interactions with native speakers, the design of the investigation followed the interactional view where CS is used to compensate for communication problems and to enhance conversation with interlocutors.

2.1.2.2 Taxonomies

At the same time as scholars were defining CS, they also tried to categorize different communicative strategies – an action that resulted in many competing taxonomies (e.g., Bialystok, 1983; Dörnyei & Scott, 1997; Færch & Kasper, 1983, Tarone, 1977; Paribakht, 1985). Dörnyei and Scott (1997) analyzed different taxonomies and categorized the strategies into two broad types: (1) achievement/compensatory strategies (attempts to solve problems using existing knowledge or techniques) and (2) avoidance strategies (abandoning problems in communication) – these are presented in Table 1. While avoidance strategies deal with message abandonment (leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties) and topic avoidance (avoiding topics areas or concepts which pose language difficulties), achievement/compensatory strategies allow for problem solving in communication. The focus of this study is on requests for clarification, categorized as an appeal for help under achievement/compensatory strategies in Dörnyei and Scott’s classification, which are attempts to solve problems using existing knowledge or techniques. Requests for clarification appear as item 11, as “appeal for help”, amongst nine other achievement/compensatory strategies, such as circumlocution (describing or exemplifying the target object or action) and approximation (using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible). Because Dörnyei and

Scott's (1997) classification is seen as good basis for further discussion of CS (Brown, 2002), it was adopted here.

Table 1

Communication Strategies (adapted from Dörnyei, 1995)

Avoidance Strategies

1. Message abandonment - leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties
2. Topic avoidance - avoiding topics areas or concepts which pose language difficulties

Achievement or Compensatory Strategies

3. Circumlocution - describing or exemplifying the target object or action (e.g., *the thing you open bottles with* for *corkscrew*)
 4. Approximation - using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g., *ship* for *sail boat*)
 5. Use of all-purpose words - extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (e.g., the overuse of *thing*, *stuff*, *make*, *do* as well as using words like *thigie*, *what-do-you-call-it*)
 6. Word-coinage - creating a nonexistent L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g., *vegetarianist* for *vegetarian*)
 7. Use of nonlinguistic means - mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation
 8. Literal translation - translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2
 9. Foreignizing - using a L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically (i.e., with a L2 pronunciation) and/or morphologically (e.g., adding to it a L2 suffix)
 10. Code switching - using a L1 word with L1 pronunciation or a L3 word with L3 pronunciation
 11. Appeal for help - turning to the conversation partner for help either directly (e.g., "What do you call...?") or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression)
 12. Use of fillers/hesitation devices - using fillings words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., "well", "now let me see", "as a matter of fact")
-

2.1.3 Studies on CS

In addition to the existing definitions and taxonomies of CS, several scholars have investigated how learners' proficiency in the target language affects their strategy use during interaction (e.g., Khanji, 1996; Naktani, 2006). Khanji (1996) and Naktani (2006), for example, both used role-plays to investigate how learners use CS without instruction in the English as a foreign language classroom in Jordan (Khanji, 1996) and Japan (Nakatani, 2006). While Khanji's study was a descriptive study, Nakatani's study was mixed methods using participant questionnaire data, where they reflected on their use of CS on a Likert scale, and these views were correlated with test scores. While both researchers used roleplaying tasks, Khanji counted the number of CS and analysed the frequency of CS types used where Nakatani rated the interactions using his own rating system and analysed the data with questionnaire data to see any correlations. Overall, the studies show that there is a positive correlation between CS and learner fluency in that the learners who used more CS achieved higher proficiency (Khanji, 1996; Naktani, 2006).

What's more, Khanji's (1996) study revealed that learners' proficiency level may correlate positively with the types of CS they use. Khanji (1996) investigated the use of CS without instruction by Jordanian EFL learners in the Intensive English program where he audiotaped eight hours of discourse data (roleplaying in pairs with scenarios) produced by 36 learners of different proficiencies (low, intermediate, and advanced) and analyzed their use of CS by counting the number of times each type of CS (e.g., repetition, message abandonment, topic shift) was used. The results showed that the low-level learners tended to use repetition (immediate repetition of an utterance in an expanded form in order to gain time) and message abandonment (abortion of communication with no appeal for help) in their interactions. The

intermediate-level learners, in turn, used transliteration (literal translation from their L1) and semantic contiguity (use another term that shares a similar meaning). Finally, the advanced-level learners used topic shift (changing the topic when encountering difficulties in current topic) and semantic contiguity (replacing a lexical item with one that shares similar semantic features).

Additionally, Nakatani (2006) researched how learners' proficiency affects their recognition of CS. First, Nakatani conducted speaking tests to investigate the participants' use of CS during conversation. The participants were 62 female students enrolled in an English as foreign language class at the university. The participants' Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) scores ranged from 230 to 435 and their listening comprehension, according to Nakatani (2006), was relatively low. The participants were given a speaking test where they roleplayed as travellers arranging a trip at a travel agency. The interactions were rated by two native speakers who graded them using seven different levels created by Nakatani, beginning at level one for participants who could only answer simple questions with long pauses to level seven for participants who communicated effectively with few errors. After the speaking test, students completed an "Oral Communication Strategy Inventory" questionnaire which investigates the learners' self-recognition of their use of CS in communicative tasks. For the analysis, students were divided into three groups based on their speaking test scores: high, mid, and low proficiency. For the data analysis, Nakatani only used the data of students in high proficiency and low proficiency groups. The results showed that students in the higher proficiency group reported more awareness of using CS strategies to keep the conversation going and to maintain interaction through negotiation of meaning which includes the use of fillers, circumlocution, repetition, and comprehension checks. The lower proficiency group, in turn, reported using more message abandonment strategies than the higher proficiency group.

To sum up, Khanji and Nakatani's studies show correlations between learners' proficiency and the types of CS used. There are also implications that CS is developed alongside the language, with Paribakht (1985) saying that "learners' use of CS has specific characteristics at different developmental stages of their interlanguages. That is, learners seem to abandon or adopt certain CS, and also alter their proportional use of certain strategies as they approach the target language" (p. 141). Despite the importance of these findings, they have stemmed from investigations from the English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, with virtually no studies (to the best of the knowledge of this researcher) done on the subject within the Japanese language classroom; this, hence, intensifies the need and urgency for the study reported on in this thesis.

2.1.4 Teaching CS

Despite research into the use of CS in the language classroom described above, the teaching of strategic competence has largely been neglected (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991). This is despite its importance in dealing with communication issues and providing "the learner with a sense of security in the language by allowing him/her room to manoeuvre in times of difficulty" (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991, p. 22), which is valuable for learners at the beginner level to maintain conversations (Faucette, 2001).

Richards (1990) has argued that there are two approaches for teaching speaking skills in general: indirect and direct. The indirect approach is one "in which conversational competence is seen as the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction" (Richard, 1990, p. 76) while the direct approach is more systematic with the teacher raising awareness of conversational rules and directly providing learners with specific language input (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994, p.

41). Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994), in turn, posited that these two approaches could be used in the teaching of CS.

The two approaches are not significantly different; given the same task, both approaches would be similar with the exception that the direct approach employs more explicit instructions than the indirect one. Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) suggested three elements for the direct teaching approach:

1. Adding specific language input (e.g., providing phrases students need to use in communicative activities)
2. Increasing the role of consciousness raising (e.g., highlighting the focus of a communicative task)
3. Sequencing communicative tasks systematically (e.g., using successive tasks to build upon previous knowledge while introducing new concepts)

The direct approach can be seen as supporting the Noticing Hypothesis, introduced by Schmidt (1995), who emphasized that “to learn any aspect of L2 (from sounds, to words, to grammar, to pragmatics), learners need to notice the relevant material in the linguistic data afforded by the environment” (Ortega, 2009, p. 63). Furthermore, frequently recognizing this relevant material increases the learners’ chances for learning it whereas not recognizing it does not give learners the chance to process and acquire it (Schmidt, 2001).

Another relevant theory that supports the direct approach is the skill acquisition theory (DeKeyser, 2015), which defines learning as transformation from a conscious, controlled performance to an automatic one (Ortega, 2009). That is, learners begin using skills based on explicit instructions and, through practice, are able to convert that knowledge into “ability for use, or implicit-procedural knowledge made up of automatic routines” (Ortega, 2009, p. 84).

Expanding on the skill acquisition theory, Suzuki and DeKeyser (2015) researched what types of practice for grammatical knowledge were effective in the Japanese as a second language classroom. The study compared two different types of practice: distributed practice (long time intervals between training sessions) and massed practice (short time intervals between training sessions). Forty students in total were tasked with learning the “present progressive” Japanese grammatical form over two classes. Twenty-two of them learned the form through distributed practice (with a 7-day interval between the classes), while the other 18 students learned the target through massed practice (with a 1-day interval between classes). All students took part in training sessions (45-50 minutes each) which had four tasks:

1. Vocabulary learning task (describing pictures using uninflected forms of a verb and listened to the present progressive form on the computer)
2. Comprehension practice of sentences with the experimenter (the experimenter read aloud a sentence and students had to choose a card that matched the sentence)
3. Production task (students described a picture to the experimenter)
4. Narrative task (describe what a person in a video was doing).

Between the first and second task, students were asked to read a paper provided with explicit grammar explanations. Suzuki and DeKeyser (2015) compared the accuracy and fluency of the participants in both groups using rule application tests (conjugating verbs learned in training) and picture sentence completion tests (describing pictures using the grammatical forms learned in training). The results showed that both groups produced the grammatical forms with similar accuracy, but that the “massed practice” group had developed more rapid utterances of the form with more automaticity.

It should also be noted that learners will likely not transition between a state of not knowing a CS immediately to understanding it nor using a new form correctly right away. According to Ortega (2009), there are four processes for developing new skills: simplification, overgeneralization, restructuring, and U-shaped development.

Simplification is the process by which messages are conveyed with little language knowledge. Overgeneralization is when a learner applies a form or rule where it is not appropriate. Restructuring is the “process of self-reorganization of grammar knowledge representations” (Ortega, 2009, p. 117). U-shaped development is the theory that when learners begin using a new form they are accurate, but after some time, the accuracy may drop, then finally, learners will again use the form with high accuracy (which may happen through restructuring). These four processes identify how learners may produce new forms and rules incorrectly and how they may eventually correct themselves through restructuring knowledge. Although this theory was devised for grammatical forms in particular, it is arguably also applicable for learning CS.

Ultimately, the direct approach is supported by multiple scholars (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994) and plays a role in the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 2001) and Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser, 2015). As such, most studies on CS employ the direct approach for training (Dörnyei, 1995; Nakatani, 2005; Rabab’ah, 2015) including the present study.

2.1.4.1 Empirical studies on teaching CS

Scholars show that learners who receive instruction on CS are more effective at solving communication-related problems than those who do not (Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991; Færch & Kasper, 1983). There are studies conducted to investigate the effectiveness of CS training. Although most of the studies employed the direct approach, they varied in the number

of CS they focused on, the length of the strategy training, and how they measured the effects of the training. These studies measured the effects of strategy training using original speaking tests (e.g., Nakatani, 2005), measured C-units (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995), or used standardized tests such as IELTS (e.g., Rabab'ah, 2015). While there are differences among the studies, all of them showed higher scores on speaking (measured by the learner's fluency, ability to interact with interlocutors, and flexibility in developing dialogue) or standardized tests and higher C-units, which translates into higher fluency during learners' interactions.

For example, Dörnyei (1995) conducted research to examine the potential usefulness of teaching CS. He focused on three CS: circumlocution (describing a target object or action), fillers (using filling words in pauses to gain time to think), and topic avoidance (avoiding areas of language difficulty). The study included 109 young adults (15 to 18 years old) in an English as a foreign language class in Hungary, with one third of the learners being in the treatment group. Students in the treatment group were given instructions on CS using the direct approach for 6 weeks (three 20 to 40 minutes lessons per week). These instructions demonstrated each CS and the students performed various activities specific to each CS (e.g., for circumlocution, students were tasked with describing objects and abstract notions). After the strategy training, both treatment and control groups took listening and reading tests drawn from the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) and an oral speaking test where they had to talk about abstract topics (e.g., vegetarianism, marriage) for three minutes, describe cartoons, and provide definitions. The results showed that learners in the treatment group showed significant improvement on the usage of CS both in quantity and quality. Learners in the treatment group used more fillers after the treatment and improved their use of circumlocution strategies (i.e. their definitions were judged to be more correct). The speech rate, measured by C-units

(indication of how many words a learner used in his or her utterances), also increased in the treatment group. It is important to note that the treatment group was also asked to complete a questionnaire that probed their perceptions about the received strategy training. Most learners in the treatment group reported the training as favourable and useful.

To investigate the effectiveness of CS awareness-raising training with Japanese college students learning English, Nakatani (2005) focused on six achievement strategies (help-seeking strategies, modified interaction strategies, modified output strategies, time gaining strategies, maintenance strategies, and self-solving strategies) and four reduction strategies (message abundance strategies, first-language-based strategies, inter-language-based reduction strategies, and false starts). He divided students into two groups: the strategy training group and the control group. Over 12 weeks, the strategy training group received explicit explanations on how to use CS. The training was conducted in five phases: review (review CS from previous class), presentation (discuss how to use target CS presented by a teacher), rehearsal (practice target CS with classmates), performance (performing the provided task), and evaluation (self-reflection on their CS use). After each class, students in the treatment group filled self-evaluation notes called strategy diaries to reflect on their performances during the training (the data were not analysed by the researcher). The control group, in turn, engaged in tasks similar to the treatment group but without any explicit instruction on strategy use nor any self-evaluation. The results showed that learners in the strategy group showed higher scores on speaking tests, produced longer utterances than the learners in the control group, and used more achievement strategies than avoidance reduction strategies. This was arguably because the explicit strategy training “enhanced their abilities to negotiate meaning and maintain the conversation flow” (Nakatani, 2005, p. 83). Nakatani (2005) concluded that the training “facilitate[d] target language development” (p. 83).

In the Japanese as a second language context, Kim and Akahori (1997) conducted eight weeks of strategy training (100 minutes once a week, 13 hours in total) with eight international students with 5 to 11 months of prior training in Japanese at a Japanese university. For the strategy training, there were nine target CS (e.g., paraphrase, non-linguistic strategies, intralingual transfer). Students completed tasks in pairs where they were given different stories and retold them to each other. Learners took turns asking their partner questions about their story until they completely understood it. Different stories were provided for each class. The teacher was present to suggest types of CS that learners could use depending on the issues they were facing during the task. It is uncertain how the target CS were taught beyond giving instructions during tasks. Kim and Akahori counted the use of CS and compared the discourse data of all the conversations from the tasks of the first four weeks to the last four weeks of the training and discovered that learners started using more CS and to use them more successfully in the last four weeks of the training.

While the studies conducted by Dörnyei and Nakatani demonstrate the potential of teaching CS, Kim and Akahori's investigation shows that this potential can be realized in a JFL context. Yet, it is difficult to assess how strategy training affects learner proficiency since effectiveness of strategy training was operationalized and measured differently in each of the studies. Despite these differences, all the studies show that CS training can produce positive results and is therefore worth exploring (Nakatani & Goh, 2007); this is especially so in the contexts beyond the English classroom.

2.2 Strategic Competence in Japanese

There are limited studies done on strategic competence in Japanese despite its demonstrated usefulness in the study of Japanese. The studies that have looked into CS instruction of Japanese tend to focus primarily on requests for clarification (RC) which are

interactional modifications in reaction to comprehension problems (Ortega, 2009), foregoing investigations into CS as a whole. The limited focus of these investigations is, however, of no surprise for if CS are ever tackled in a Japanese class, it is usually limited to the information contained in a course-designated coursebook. These, as a rule, provide limited (if any) explicit instructions or exercises on CS and/or RC (Thomson, 1994; Igarashi, 1999). As a result, learners of Japanese not only know a limited number of RC, but are also unaware of effective and situation-appropriate RC (Fukutomi, 2012; Igarashi, 1999; Ozaki, 1993). Yet, RC are important in Japanese communication. This is because the Japanese language features less redundancy than English, which can make it difficult for learners to capture key words in a conversation (Thomson, 1994) and key words to understand the context may be omitted entirely depending on context (i.e. omitting the subject in subsequent sentences). By using RC, a learner can attempt to clarify his/her intentions and those of another speaker during a conversation.

2.2.1 RC and SLA

RC play an essential role in second language acquisition (SLA) for they increase comprehensibility of input and highlight problematic L2 forms in output and input, making them available for learning (Pica, 1994). According to Krashen's (1985) Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, the most significant source of L2 is input that is comprehensible to the learner; yet for this input to aid L2 acquisition, it needs to contain linguistic data that are slightly above the learner's current proficiency level (i.e., $i+1$). To ensure that the input is comprehended, it needs to be modified in line with the learner's current level (Long, 1996); these modifications can take the shape of speaking in short sentences, using less low frequency words and idioms (Long, 1983), and are usually provided by a more advanced interlocutor in response to a signal that the original utterance had not been understood partially or in its entirety. RC have typically been

used to signal the need for such modifications (Ortega, 2009). That is, a learner uses RC to indicate that he or she is struggling to comprehend or communicate a message and may even specify the kinds of comprehension problems they are facing. These RC then prompt the interlocutor to modify their output to assist his or her partner's comprehension.

The role of RC can also be explained through the sociocultural theory which states that “human cognition develops through interaction with the social environment” (Keck & Kim, 2014, p. 156). The central idea of the sociocultural theory is the Zone of Proximal Development which is “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or peer” (Ohta, 2001, p. 9). This collaboration is called scaffolding (i.e., “the role of teachers and others in supporting the learner's development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level” (Raymond, 2000, p. 176)). When learners are working together with teachers or other more proficient peers, they can achieve tasks that the learners cannot do by themselves. They may need assistance in the beginning, but the amount of assistance will decrease eventually. When learners need less scaffolding, it can be seen as a “[sign] of development” (Keck & Kim, 2014, p. 156). Hence, RC enables learners to solve their comprehension issues as they (RC) act as a scaffolding device.

RC are recognized as essential for L2 learners as they promote comprehensible input and highlight problematic L2 forms in interactions. Furthermore, RC work as a scaffolding device for learners to solve issues which lead to their L2 development.

2.2.2 Types of RC

The original three categories of RC were articulated by Long (1980) and included comprehension checks, confirmation checks, and clarification requests. Comprehension checks

are the speaker's request about "whether that speaker's preceding utterance(s) had been understood by the interlocutor" (as cited in Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 410), such as "Do you understand?". Confirmation checks, in turn, are the speaker's "confirmation that the utterance had been correctly understood or correctly heard by the speaker" (as cited in Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 410), such as "Do you mean X?". Lastly, clarification requests are the speaker's request for "clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance(s)" (as cited in Foster & Ohta, 2005, p. 410), such as "What do you mean?". It is important to note that Long's definitions were based on communications he observed between non-native speakers (NNSs) and native speakers (NSs) of English, where the NSs used RC to comprehend the speech of NNSs (Keck & Kim, 2014).

While Long's definitions were based on and centred around the native speaker's use of RC, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) saw RC as learner-centric and included "indications of non/mis-understanding" in their categorization of RC. Hence, their model included the following three requests that could be made primarily by non-native speakers:

1. Repetition Requests: requesting repetition when not hearing or understanding something properly (e.g. "Pardon?" or "Could you say that again?")
2. Confirmation Requests: requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly (e.g. "Did you say X?")
3. Clarification Requests: requesting explanation of unfamiliar meaning structure (e.g. "What do you mean by X?")

Ozaki (1989) also categorized RC similarly to Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) but provided example expressions in Japanese, leading other Japanese researchers to follow his categorizations (e.g., Ozaki, 1993; Tsubaki, 2010). Ozaki's categories were repetition requests, confirmation requests, and explanation requests (the latter being equivalent to Celce-Murcia et al.'s clarification

requests). Although the terms vary slightly from Celce-Murcia et al.'s, the components are identical; Pica (1994) elaborates that no matter what labels are used in the definition, RC is used when a “listener requests message clarification and confirmation and a speaker follows up these requests, often through repeating, elaborating, or simplifying the original message” (Pica, 1994, p. 497).

Since the present study targeted learners' use of RC in a Japanese as a foreign language context (JFL), it follows Celce-Murcia et al.'s (1995) categorization (repetition requests, confirmation requests, and clarification requests) with expressions identified by Ozaki (1989).

2.2.3 Teaching RC

There are many ways to teach CS and there is no single method that will work with all strategies (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991) because each CS requires a different knowledge base or set of skills (i.e., “circumlocution” which appears on Table 1, needs basic vocabulary to describe properties whereas “using fillers” needs a set of common phrases).

As discussed in section 2.1.4, literature on the subject has identified two approaches of teaching CS: direct (providing learners with specific language input) and indirect (relying on the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction as a source for learning). When teaching RC, the direct approach seems preferable as it “provid[es] the learners with specific language input” (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994, p. 41) making it easier for learners to pay attention to input, which Schmidt (1995) says is required to learn effectively. Dörnyei (1995) mentions that some CS, such as request for clarification requires the teaching of some formulaic language (e.g., “What does X mean?”) to help learners use the CS more effectively.

To teach using the direct approach, information gap tasks have been shown to be appropriate for promoting RC since they provide the most opportunities for RC use (Foster & Ohta,

2005). For a practical methodology for RC use in the classroom, Dörnyei & Thurrell (1994) suggest an activity where one student reads a passage and the other student uses the three types of RC to comprehend what the other student is trying to say. These “controlled, task-based interactions particularly those that have a single, convergent outcome, promote a greater number of such repair negotiations than does less structured interaction, whose goal is much more open-ended” (Nakahama, Tyler, & Lier, 2001, p. 378). While these methods were suggested, there were no studies conducted to investigate their effects and compare them to other methods.

In light of the methodology proposed by the preceding studies, the present study used information gap tasks with enough difficulty to promote RC use. However, there is no consensus on what aspects of an L2 are difficult (Housen & Simoens, 2016), and the issue is usually looked at from the point of view of grammar (i.e., specific targets), not necessarily RC use. While this study followed the advice of various scholars in its choice to use the direct approach and information gap tasks, the adopted model of difficulty had to be developed by the researcher in the absence of any specific literature on the subject. The details on how difficulty was established and used in this study are discussed in Chapter 3.

2.2.3.1 Empirical research on RC and RC strategy training in Japanese

The little research that focuses on CS in Japanese tends to focus on RC. It was discovered that RC is frequently used by JFL learners (Ozaki, 1993) for its effectiveness in resolving common comprehension issues (Thomson, 1994).

Ozaki (1993) analyzed discourse data of one-on-one interviews (no details about the contents of the interviews were provided in the paper) between NSs and 31 NNSs and compared the use of RC among beginner and advanced level NSs. The study revealed that beginner learners tended to simply repeat the words or used formulaic expressions (such as “Wakarimasen” (“I do

not understand” or “I do not know”) or “Mou ichido onegai shimasu” (“Could you repeat that again?”)) when they encountered problems whereas advanced learners tended to ask complete questions such as “X wa Y desuka” (“Does X mean Y?”) (Ozaki, 1993).

Another study conducted by Tsubaki (2010) involved 14 weeks of strategy training (five days a week and 180 minutes of class everyday) with a focus on RC for 13 students taking a Japanese course at a university in Japan.

There were four 30 minutes training periods for teaching RC (one training period for each type) with the first 20 minutes focusing on training and the last 10 minutes focusing on reflection. Tsubaki taught RC using information/materials from her own textbook, where the different RC were presented with example dialogues, and the students were asked to practice these. The students also completed exercises (e.g., fill RC in the blanks of written dialogues) on the target RC in each lesson. After the exercises, the students filled a “meta cognitive training sheet” to reflect on and evaluate their achievements after every class.

The students also interviewed Japanese NSs three separate times and completed one roleplaying activity with an NS, with each of the activities taking five to 10 minutes. The first interview activity took place in either a museum or zoo (the setting varied between groups of students) and the students asked the employees questions. The second interview activity involved interviewing any NS about any topic of their choice. The third interview activity was similar to the first activity but involved interviewing employees at Japanese cultural places, such as a dojo or a traditional dancing class instead. Lastly, a roleplaying activity with an NS was done, but the paper did not provide any details about it. In total, 25 minutes were spent on all of the tasks.

Before the first and third activity, for 10 minutes, the students discussed what types of RC would be helpful if they had any comprehension issues and the teacher encouraged the use of RC.

After the same activities, the teacher and students spent another 10 minutes listening to recordings of their interviews and discussed how they used RC and how often they used them during the interview. In the case where a student could not use RC effectively, the teacher taught how they could use RC in the next interview.

The 205 minutes of training, activities, and discussions were spread across the 14 weeks of the Japanese course and Tsubaki counted the students' RC use in the first activity, before the strategy training, and in the third interview, after the strategy training. The study showed that the learners' use of RC increased in the third activity when compared to the first activity. Tsubaki (2010) also pointed out that the quality of the conversations improved after the training in that the participants started to use different types of RC that had not been previously observed in their output. She also reported that post-training some students became more willing to use RC when they had comprehension problems than before the training.

There is limited research investigating the effects of teaching RC. Additionally, these studies have been conducted in Japan where learners have more contact with the target language in their daily lives and there are no studies done in the JFL context, which by definition has limited contact with the target language (Nayar, 1997). This is despite Igarashi (1999) and others calling for classroom-based training in RC that would help learners understand the different functions RC plays and provide opportunities for practice. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effects of short-term RC training in the JFL context.

2.3 Conclusion and Research Questions

Scholars agree that strategic competence is an important element of Communicative Competence. To enhance strategic competence, it may be beneficial for learners to learn and use communication strategies (CS). While research on CS has shown gains in learner proficiency and

usage of CS in the long-term (6-14 weeks) (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Nakatani, 2005; Rabab'ah, 2015), little has been done to determine whether the same benefits would arise after short-term training and with languages others than English.

Although strategic competence is important for effective interaction in Japanese, little has been done to investigate the impact of strategy training, especially short-term intensive training, on the learners' ability to understand and properly use RC in conversations. Furthermore, there is a lack of commercially available materials that contain explicit information about RC and provide practice (Thomson, 1994; Igarashi, 1999). With the growing popularity of Japanese as a L2 (The Japan Foundation, 2013) and the need for learners of Japanese to become communicatively competent, it may be beneficial to investigate whether the short-term strategy training can bring to improve the effectiveness of classroom instruction and to help learners successfully obtain the skills necessary for communication.

With the hope to understand these gaps, the present study investigated the impact of short-term RC training on the development of strategic competence by learners of JFL. The study was guided by the following three research questions:

1. Does short-term RC training increase the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
2. What factors influence the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
3. What are the learners' perceptions about strategy training and the usefulness of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?

The next chapter explains how this study was designed and carried out.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology of the data collection and analysis used in this study. Information about the context and participants as well as the instruments used will be introduced first, followed by a description of the data analysis undertaken.

3.1 Context

3.1.1 Japanese program

There are four different levels of Japanese as foreign language (JFL) offered at the university in Ontario where this study took place. These four levels are first-year, second-year, third-year, and fourth-year courses in ascending difficulty. Students must pass the previous year's course with at least a grade of C (60%) in order to register for the next level. Alternatively, students who have had experience learning Japanese outside the university can take a placement test to determine their proficiency level and register in the level-appropriate course.

The first, second, and third-year courses aim to teach beginner Japanese, while the fourth-year course teaches intermediate level Japanese. These Japanese courses draw comparisons to the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) guidelines. The JLPT was established by the Japan Foundation and the Japan Educational Exchanges and Services and is the world-wide proficiency standardized test for non-native Japanese speakers. The JLPT assesses reading and listening comprehension, but it does not assess the production skills: speaking or writing. There are five levels in total (N1 to N5), with the N5 level being the easiest and the N1 level being the hardest. According to the JLPT linguistic requirements for each level, learners at the N5 and N4 levels are at the basic proficiency in Japanese because they can understand typical expressions and comprehend topics about daily life. Learners at the N3 level are of intermediate ability as

they can understand Japanese used in everyday situations and comprehend daily conversations spoken at near-natural speeds. Learners at the N2 and N1 levels are considered advanced in their ability to comprehend Japanese. Additionally, the JLPT assesses knowledge of the Japanese writing systems manifested in the reading comprehension assessment. There are three writing systems in Japanese: hiragana, katakana, and kanji. Hiragana and katakana are phonetic writing systems consisting of 46 characters each. The third writing system, kanji, is made up of thousands of Chinese characters mapped onto Japanese words. The JLPT requirements include learning these writing systems, with learners at the N5 level being expected to know all hiragana and katakana and approximately 100 kanji, and learners at the N1 level needing to know approximately 2000 kanji (similar to the number of kanji Japanese high school graduates are expected to know).

At this university, the first, second, and third-year courses cover material equivalent to levels N5 and N4. By the end of the fourth-year course, the level of understanding is equivalent to the N3 level. Although the focus of the JLPT is reading and listening, the Japanese program at the university focuses on the development of the four skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

By the end of the first-year course, students should develop survival communication skills (e.g., greetings, self-introductions, talking about their daily routines) and be able to read and write Japanese characters: all 46 hiragana, all 46 katakana, and 86 kanji. By the end of the second-year course, students should be able to engage in simple face-to-face conversations on concrete topics (e.g., vacation plans, their personal experiences), using simple but accurate sentences and be able to read and write an additional 106 kanji. Upon the completion of the third-year course, students are able to communicate about abstract topics about themselves (e.g.,

desires and future plans/predictions) and be able to read and write an additional 123 kanji. The fourth-year course shifts the focus from the students' lives and experiences to discussions of abstract topics such as news events and opinions. Additionally, there is a supplemental optional that is offered alongside the third-year course for those who wish to learn more about reading and writing kanji. The courses vary in terms of intensity. For the first-year course, students have a choice between two schedules: four hours of classes per week for 24 weeks over two semesters or eight hours of classes per week for 12 weeks over one semester, with both resulting in a total of 96 hours. For the second-year course, students have eight hours of classes per week for 12 weeks over a semester. For the third-year and fourth-year courses, students are expected to attend three hours of classes per week for 24 weeks over two semesters.

In terms of the textbooks, for the first-year to third-year courses, *Genki I and II: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese* published by The Japan Times and workbooks for these textbooks are used. The textbooks include level-appropriate grammar, vocabulary, dialogues, reading materials, and 317 kanji. Lessons from the textbook are divided among the first to third-year courses. Lessons 1 to 8 are covered in the first-year course, lessons 9 to 15 in the second-year course, and lessons 16 to 23 (the end of the textbook) are addressed in the third-year course. The workbooks are used for homework and consist of various activities, such as written grammar tasks, listening comprehension exercises (with the included audio CD), and kanji writing exercises.

These textbooks and workbooks play essential roles in the Japanese course since they provide exercises for speaking, reading, writing, and reading. Although assessment varies for each instructor, the content taught to the students and what is assessed is primarily based on the textbooks and workbooks. Assessments comes in the form of written tests at the end of each

chapter and at the end of the course, as well as listening comprehension tests, presentation tasks (e.g., presenting cultural topics or performing skits), and speaking tests.

These textbooks have been used in the program for eight years due to their commercial availability in North America, number of supplied exercises, and inclusion of information equivalent to the JLPT N4 level. The textbook for the fourth-year course varies from year to year and is based on the instructor's discretion; however, the chosen textbook must be equivalent to the JLPT N3 level.

Japanese courses at the university are taught by six instructors, five of whom are native speakers and one is a near-native speaker of Japanese. These instructors are seasoned professionals who have taught Japanese for at least 15 years in general and between 1 to 20 years at the participating university in particular.

3.1.2 Third-year Japanese course

For this study, the participants were enrolled in the third-year Japanese course which, according to the syllabus, aims to further develop their Japanese language skills and knowledge acquired in previous courses so that students can express their ideas and thoughts more freely and clearly. Students are expected to engage in discussions of concrete and abstract topics using complex sentences in both formal and informal settings, listen to complex questions and statements on familiar topics, read authentic, real-world materials, and to gain understanding of texts through the use of contextual information; they should also be able to comprehend and write narratives and journal entries.

This third-year Japanese course aims to develop four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing, using a combination of textbook and workbook exercises that focus on target grammar; assignments developed by the instructor are also used. The main grammatical

structures for the first semester (the time when this study took place) describe the actions of giving and receiving services, conveying information sourced elsewhere, honorific expressions, and transitive and intransitive verbs.

A typical third-year class begins with a vocabulary quiz that primarily focuses on vocabulary from the textbook. The quiz is followed by the instructor presenting one or two target grammar structures and asking the students to practice these in the speaking exercises that follow. Each class typically ends with whole class reading of a textbook text out loud.

Students in the Japanese course develop their vocabulary through the textbook, materials provided by the instructor, and journal writing. The vocabulary in the textbook and the workbook is reinforced through various exercises and assessments in the end of class tests.

The majority of the speaking activities are done in pairs and use grammar exercises in their textbooks (controlled to freestyle) and conversational topics (lists of questions from the instructor). For example, there are three exercises in the textbook for practicing how to express information sourced elsewhere. The first exercise involves conjugating sentences into the forms they learned for conveying information learned from others. The next exercise includes pair work where partners discuss news as though it was heard from someone else (three stories are included in the textbook and a fourth must be created by the students). The last exercise is also pair work; one student chooses a topic (e.g., what happened last weekend, family, vacation plans) and discusses it with their partner. Afterwards, the partner must present what was heard to the rest of the class.

To develop reading skills, students read passages from the textbook and engage with extra reading materials provided by the instructor.

For listening skills development, the instructor uses exercises from the workbook and has students listen to Japanese news from the NEWS Web Easy website (<http://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/easy>), which delivers a simplified version of Japanese news (equivalent to the JLPT N4/N5 levels).

Finally, for writing, students complete grammar and kanji exercises from the workbook and write narratives in the form of journal entries on various topics of interest (i.e., hobbies, weekend plans, etc.).

While learners at this level can converse, they have yet to be explicitly introduced to requests for clarification (RC). Students who have previously used Genki I textbook may have been exposed to some RC, but the textbook does not identify them as such. In fact, there are only two RC introduced in the entire book: “Please say it again” and “Please say it slowly”; they appear as example sentences to be used by students in the classroom when they require help with comprehension. Despite their presence in the textbook, the instructors generally do not focus on teaching these RC. It was revealed during the piloting that these two RC are used by a few instructors and only when the students are doing a dictation and miss a prompt and need to ask for repetition of the prompt or for the instructors to slow down. The instructor whose classes were used in this study did not do regular dictations and did not explicitly teach or insist on RC use.

The two sections of the third-year course (i.e., the same course taught at different times) were taught by the same instructor, who is a native Japanese speaker and has been teaching Japanese for 40 years; she has taught this particular course at the university for over 18 years. The instructor focuses on helping her students to establish knowledge of basic grammar,

vocabulary, and pronunciation, so that they may continue to learn the language on their own even after graduation.

3.2 Participants

The participants were JFL students enrolled in a university level course and native speakers of Japanese who served as proficiency testers.

Table 2 illustrates the demographics of the participants (age, gender, linguistic background, etc.) who took part in the study. These were 12 university-level students (seven females and five males) studying JFL in Ontario, Canada. The participants were attending the same third-year Japanese course and volunteered to take part in the study for the opportunity to engage in additional opportunities to speak Japanese outside of their regular Japanese classes. The students ranged from 19 to 31 years of age (mean age: 23) and reported knowing at least two languages. The reported a first languages (L1s) included English (n=6), French (n=2), Mandarin (n=2), Mandarin and Cantonese (n=2), and an English-French bilingual (n=1). Other known languages included Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. The mean length of JFL instruction was two years, achieved either through self-study or as part of an organized course. In terms of contact with Japanese, participants reported watching Japanese anime (n=10), listening to Japanese music (n=5), reading Japanese materials (n=5), and using the language to communicate with family members and friends (n=3). The participants self-rated their Japanese proficiency (using the categories of weak, fair, and excellent) in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. The majority of self-ratings centered on the “fair” ability, meaning that while they felt they could do some things in Japanese with ease, there were still areas the participants needed more information on and/or practice in.

Table 2

Background Information of Research Participants

Name	Sex	Age	L1	Number of L2	Length of Studying Japanese	Self-Rating			
						Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Robert	M	21	E	2	3 years	Excellent	Fair	Fair	Fair
Alice	F	25	Fr	3	2 years	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Michael	M	24	Fr	3	2 years	Weak	Weak	Fair	Fair
David	M	21	E	1	2 years	Weak	Fair	Fair	Fair
John	M	21	Mn	1	3 years	Fair	Excellent	Weak	Weak
Rachel	F	20	E	2	1 year, 6 months	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Sophia	F	19	E	2	1 years	Excellent	Fair	Weak	Weak
James	M	20	E Fr	3	3 years, 5 months	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak
Emma	F	31	E	2	3 years	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak
Emily	F	19	E	2	1 years	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Sarah	F	20	Mn C	1	2 years, 5 months	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Anna	F	20	Mn C	2	3 years	Fair	Weak	Fair	Fair

Legend: M (Male), F (Female), E (English), Fr (French), Mn (Mandarin), C (Cantonese)

Eleven participants said that they had faced challenges while communicating in Japanese in the past. These included lack of vocabulary (n=6), difficulty in listening comprehension (n=2), difficulty in recalling vocabulary on the spot (n=1), and lack of opportunities to practice Japanese outside of class (n=2).

When probed about the current communication issues in Japanese the participants faced, lack of vocabulary was at the top of the list (n=6). Other problems included difficulties in

listening (n=3), learning kanji (n=2), and using colloquialisms (n=1). How each participant tried to solve these challenges varied, even when the challenges were similar. For example, to supplement their lack of vocabulary, the mentioned solutions were asking a speaker to repeat themselves, using English or gestures, and using a dictionary. These responses are supported by the reported self-ratings of “fair” and the fact that the third-year Japanese course is still very much a beginner’s level course. Furthermore, since learning how to better express themselves is one of the objectives of the course that the students were enrolled in at the time of the study, it is not surprising that the lack of vocabulary knowledge affected their ability to adequately express themselves.

To help students overcome some of these common challenges, this study set out to provide instruction on the use of RC since knowing how to ask for help and do so effectively may be a way to resolve communicative challenges and to learn the language in the process. As such, there were two groups; one received instructions on the RC use and the other one did not. Participants were evenly divided into the treatment group and the control group based on the section of the Japanese course they were in. There were six participants in the treatment group (Robert, Alice, Michael, David, John, and Rachel) and six participants in the control group (Sophia, James, Emma, Emily, Sarah, and Anna). As mentioned earlier, the Japanese course that the participants were in included two sections scheduled at different times but were taught by the same instructor. Each section was randomly chosen to serve either as the treatment group or the control group.

Three native speakers (NSs) of Japanese also took part in the study; one of them was the researcher. The researcher conducted the post-test while the other NSs interviewed the participants at the beginning (pre-test) and again, at the end (delayed post-test) of the study. The

NSs were females in their late 20s, born in Japan, and at the time, had been living in Canada between two to three years. The NSs all spoke English fluently and had experience teaching Japanese in the foreign language context. The NS who conducted the pre-test had taught Japanese for three years to children of Japanese heritage living in Canada. The NS who conducted the delayed post-test had served as a volunteer Japanese instructor at a community-based classes for one year. Despite their previous teaching experiences, the NSs were not familiar with the Japanese course the participants were enrolled in, nor were they aware of the participants' knowledge of Japanese (with the exception of the researcher).

3.3 Research Instruments

There were four tools developed for this study: 1) a background questionnaire, 2) strategy training materials, 3) tests (pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test), and 4) a stimulated recall protocol.

3.3.1 Background questionnaire

A four-part questionnaire was developed to obtain background information about the participants (see Appendix A for the whole questionnaire).

The first part was used to understand the demographics of the sample - the participants' age, gender, L1, L2, how long they had been studying Japanese, and the methods they had used to learn Japanese.

In the second part of the questionnaire, using the categories of “weak”, “fair”, and “excellent”, the participants were asked to rate their Japanese proficiency in terms of their ability to listen, speak, read, and write in the language. The self-assessment of proficiency was needed to examine how each participant saw themselves in terms of their ability in Japanese.

The goal of the third part was to determine the kinds of exposure to Japanese the participants had both inside and outside of class. For the in-class activities, participants were asked about how often they spoke Japanese, with whom (i.e., non-native friends/classmates, native friends/classmates, professors, teaching assistances, and/or others), and what kind of speaking activities they did in class. These questions aimed to examine the types of activities the participants were exposed to in class and the kind of activities they perceived as speaking tasks. For the out of class activities, in addition to the same three questions as the ones above, the participants were also probed about the kind of activities they engaged in outside of class (e.g., watching Japanese television shows, reading in Japanese, etc.). These questions were meant to understand each participant's exposure to Japanese outside of the class.

Finally, the participants were asked about any communication issues they had encountered in the past when using Japanese, how they resolved the issues, and what communicative challenges they were facing at present. These questions were designed to learn about the challenges the participants faced when communicating in Japanese.

This questionnaire was in the paper form and written in English to ensure that the participants did not encounter a linguistic barrier in communicating the information sought. The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the study and took 10-15 minutes to complete.

3.3.2 Strategy training for the treatment group

Research shows that learners who receive instruction on RC are more effective at solving communication-related problems than those who do not (Dörnyei, 1995; Nakatani, 2005, Rabab'ah, 2015). Furthermore, Rost and Ross (1991) discovered that after explicit training, learners used RC more often and as a result, their comprehension increased. As mentioned in

Chapter 2, all of these studies employed the direct approach which “provid[es] the learners with specific language input” (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1994, p. 41), and the present study aimed to build upon this approach in the Japanese as a foreign language context. The direct approach was chosen because learners must pay attention to the input in order to learn effectively (Schmidt, 1995).

In light of this, the treatment group (n=6) had two one-hour strategy training classes in the same week with one day in between. The strategy training sessions were conducted by the researcher in Japanese with minimal English use; English was used only to help the participants understand the instructions and/or explanations. Both training sessions were video and audio recorded.

The strategy training targeted three RC: repetition requests (RR), confirmation requests (CF), and clarification requests (CL). Table 3 shows which class each RC was introduced in, the phrases (e.g., “Excuse me but could you say it again, please?”, “You mean X?”, “What does X mean?”) in Japanese, along with an English translation, and example usages.

While the first class focused on RR and CF, the second session focused on CF and CL. According to the pre-test results, participants were aware of and have used RR, therefore, the first class started with something participants already knew, followed by new content (CF). The second class started with a review of CF from the previous class, followed by instruction in CL.

Each class followed the same procedure. Table 4 shows the different sections of the training, a brief explanation of the contents of each section, and how long each part took. There were three sections: introduction, structured practice, freestyle practice, and reflection.

Table 3

Target RC for Strategy Training

Class	Category of RC	Phrases in Japanese	English Translation	Usage
1	Repetition Request (RR)	1) すみません、もういちどお願いします。 2) すみません、ゆっくりお願いします。 3) じどう・・・	1) Excuse me but could you say it again, please? 2) Excuse me but could you speak more slowly, please? 3) X... (where X is a part of the sentence)	1,2) Make polite requests to have something repeated. 3) When only understanding part of a key word or phrase, repeat it hesitantly; this signals to the interlocutor to repeat it.
1,2	Confirmation Request (CF)	1) X ですね。 2) X ですか。	1) It is X, right? 2) You mean X?	1) Repeat or paraphrase to indicate it is understood. 2) Ensure a prediction is correct.
2	Clarification Request (CL)	1) X ってなんですか。 2) X は英語で何ていうんですか。	1) What does X mean? 2) How do you say X in English?	1) Finding out the meaning. 2) Finding an English equivalent.

Table 4

Procedure of Strategy Training

Time (in minutes)	Section	Activity
15	Introduction	Introduce the purpose of the training Present target dialogue Introduce target RC
30	Structured Practice	Information gap task
10	Freestyle Practice	Conversational practice
5	Reflection	Writing reflections on the strategy use

The first 15 minutes (Introduction) were devoted to introducing the content of the training (RC in Japanese) and providing explicit instructions on how to use RC and their functions. Before the instruction, however, the researcher asked participants whether they had encountered difficulties such as not understanding the meaning of words or not being able to follow what is being said in conversations. Then, the researcher shared that there are RC that can be used in conversation to solve comprehension problems.

To introduce the target RC, the participants were given a handout with a transcript of dialogue targeting the two designated RC to be addressed in that particular session. The participants were to read the dialogue, answer questions about it, watch a video of the dialogue, and identify the RC used within it (see Appendix B for the full handouts for each class). The researcher then reviewed the answers with the students as a group and whenever necessary, provided additional explanation and/or clarification. The materials were based on the RC content from Lessons 4 and 5 of the *Situational Functional Japanese* textbook (not used in the participants' Japanese class), which is one of the few textbooks that contain systematic and explicit explanations on RC form, meaning, and use (Thomson, 1994; Igarashi, 1999).

The two dialogues depicted conversations between an international student and a Japanese NS, with the international student (IS) using RC to solve comprehension issues. For example, in the first dialogue (presented below in translation) the international student was asking about the location of a public phone on campus:

NS: "It is next to the vending machine."

IS: "Vending?"

NS: "Vending machine; the machine with cola and juice."

IS: "I understand. Next to the vending machine."

In this example, there are two instances of RC: using RR to understand “vending” and using CF to confirm the response with “I understand. Next to the vending machine.”.

To explicitly show how unknown information could be effectively sought in a conversation, the second part of the handout contained six questions about the dialogue highlighting the communication breakdown depicted in the dialogue, RC use, and how the international student resolved the problem. The questions used simple vocabulary that was deemed level-appropriate for the students in the third-year Japanese course. The questions for the first dialogue, for example, included the following prompts:

1. What was happening in the conversation?
2. What was the international student looking for?
3. Where was the object that the international student was looking for?
4. What does the word “vending machine” mean?
5. Did the international student know the meaning of the word “vending machine”?
6. How did the international student discover the meaning of the word “vending machine”?

After the participants were given the handout, they watched a one-minute video of the same target dialogue from the handout, using the handout as a reference. After watching the video twice, the researcher and the participants discussed the answers for all the questions from the handout as a class.

In the second session, a different dialogue was used and focused on CF and CL. Here, the international student used RC to understand notes on a bulletin board (English translation):

IS: “What is ‘konpa’?”

NS: “A party with teachers and students.”

IS: “I see. How do you read this kanji?”

NS: “It’s pronounced ‘takkyubin’.”

IS: “Takkyubin...”

NS: “Yes. It is a service that delivers packages.”

IS: “Excuse me, how do you say ‘takkyubin’ in English?”

NS: “Delivery service?”

IS: “I see. Thank you.”

The participants were then asked the following questions:

1. What was happening in the conversation?
2. Did the international student know the meanings of ‘konpa’ and ‘takkyubin’?
3. What does ‘konpa’ mean?
4. What does ‘takkyubin’ mean?
5. How did the international student learn the meanings of the words?

After answering the comprehension questions, the participants were given a handout with the target RC (two per session) highlighted in the text; each of the RC were also written out in both Japanese and English (to ensure understanding) and information on the meaning as well as when these are to be used was also provided (see Appendix B for the handouts). The handouts illustrated the form, meaning, and use of each RC, which can be found in Table 3 as the Phrases in Japanese, English Translation, and Usage, respectively. The researcher went over these with the participants, answering questions and providing additional explanations as needed.

Following the dialogue activity, the participants completed an information gap task in pairs. Information gap tasks were chosen because they provide the most opportunities for RC use (Foster & Ohta, 2005). Specifically, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1994) proclaimed information gap tasks as the ones that promote the use of RC. After all, these “controlled, task-based interactions particularly those that have a single, convergent outcome, promote a greater number of such repair negotiations than does less structured interaction, whose goal is much more open-ended”

(Nakahama, Tyler, & Lier, 2001, p. 378). The use of such tasks has also been supported by Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis, which states that interactionally modified input helps language learning, and Ortega's (2009) claim that this modification is triggered by RC.

Following Dörnyei and Thurrell's (1994) suggestion, the information gap task used in this study had the participants take turns reading passages while the other participant used the three types of RC to comprehend what the other participant was trying to say. The task was developed by the researcher because there were no commercially available tasks targeting RC use in Japanese (see Appendix C for the handouts and Appendix D for the English translation). For this task, the participants were put in pairs. Participant A was given a full text to read to Participant B, whose version of the text contained 10 blanks. The goal was for Participant B to listen for the missing words as Participant A read the text aloud. Whenever a word was misheard or misunderstood, the listener was expected to use RC to request clarification. As such, the task naturally required genuine exchange of information and the use of RC to clarify the intended meaning. The task was repeated with a different text, this time with Participant B reading a text aloud and Participant A listening for the missing information.

The researcher spent five minutes explaining the goal and instructions for the task to the participants, encouraging the use of the RC phrases from the handout. The participants were also asked not to show each other their assigned dialogue and to communicate orally. Participants were then given five minutes to read, understand, and practice reading out loud the passages on their own and ask the researcher any questions. The participants then spent approximately ten minutes on each passage (total 20 minutes per pair) completing the task. The theme of the text in the first session was "athletes" and "Japanese recipes" in the second session. The choice of topics was motivated by their absence from the course textbook and consecutively, a likely need for RC

use. The order in which the topics were presented was determined by the piloting of instruments in that the testers appeared more comfortable with discussing the athletes than the recipes, the topic they deemed novel and more challenging.

For example, participant A would read aloud, “Mr. Konishiki’s hometown is Hawaii. When he was a high school student, his body was big and he was strong” and participant B’s handout had the same passage with two words missing, “Mr. Konishiki’s () is Hawaii. When he was a high school student, his body was big and he was ()” and would use RC in order to understand the difficult words “hometown” and “strong” to fill in the blanks.

Within each class, an attempt was made to maintain a similar distribution of difficult words for both passages. This was to ensure that both participants in a pair had equal opportunities to use and practice RC. The difficulty of the entire passages was measured using results from the Reading Tutor (the same tool used for the tests). Table 5 shows the results of the Reading Tutor analysis for each passage.

Table 5

Reading Tutor Results for Information Gap Task Passages

Topic	Passage	Total Number of Words	N1	N2 and N3	N4	N5	Out of Scope
Japanese Athletes	A	101	1	15	6	69	10
	B	95	2	13	10	62	8
Japanese Cuisine	A	69	1	10	4	42	12
	B	71	2	11	9	39	10

As shown in Table 5, the A and B passages for each topic had similar number of words with the majority being N5 level words. However, there are also N1, N2, and N3 level words which were considered difficult. Furthermore, the difficult words were chosen to be blank for the fill in the blanks activity to ensure that each participant was equally likely to require RC in order to complete the task.

A pilot test was conducted to examine if the information gap task used vocabulary that a third-year student was unlikely to know. The goal of the pilot test was not to test the entire task, but to ensure that the chosen vocabulary could trigger RC. Two participants who completed the third-year Japanese course and were enrolled in the fourth-year Japanese course participated in the pilot. Fourth-year participants were chosen based primarily on the recommendation of the third-year course instructor; the choice of the students' level was also precipitated by the need to avoid possible contamination of the results as the fourth-year learners were less likely to divulge information about the training to the third-year participants for they were not classmates. The results of the pilot test showed that the missing words for the fill in the blanks activity were unknown to both participants and could trigger RC.

Upon completion of the information gap task, participants engaged in a freestyle conversational practice. There were four questions (written in Japanese) to help the students to start theme-based discussions. For the topic of Japanese athletes, for example, there were questions about sports they liked, sports they played when they were children, and famous athletes from their country of birth that they knew about. For the topic of Japanese cuisine, in turn, the questions focused on the participants' favourite Japanese food and daily eating habits. Participants were encouraged to converse beyond the given questions. On average, the conversations lasted ten minutes.

At the end of each session, the participants in the treatment group were asked questions to reflect on the sessions and the use of RC strategies they learned in the training. This was done for self-reflective training for the participants and were not part of the data analysis. For example, after the first class, the participants answered the following questions: 1) How often did you use the RR strategies demonstrated today to obtain the missing information? 2) How often did you use the CF strategy to confirm your comprehension? 3) How successful was your use of the strategies during class? The first question was designed to see if the participants actively used RC during the class. The second question determined if the participants specifically used CF. The third question was designed to gather personal opinions about RC use from the participants.

At the end of the study, after the delayed post-test, participants in the treatment group were asked to write down their reflections about the strategy training. The researcher gave a note saying, “You had two classes about strategies in Japanese communication. Please write down how you felt about the classes and the usefulness of the content covered to real life conversations.”. This question was meant to obtain the treatment group’s perceptions about the whole study.

3.3.3 Pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test

Because previous studies investigating the use of RC and the effects of strategy training in the JFL context (e.g., Ozaki, 1993; Tsubaki, 2010) have used interviews with native speakers to measure learners’ use of RC, in this study, interviews were conducted to examine the level of the RC use the participants engaged in at the beginning (pre-test), immediately after training (post-test), and again, two weeks after the intervention (delayed post-test).

There were two parts to each interview: in the first part, the NS was the interviewer while the participant was the interviewee (i.e., Part 1); in the second part, the participant was the interviewer and the NS was the interviewee (i.e., Part 2). All the conversations were videotaped. In Part 1, the NS asked the participant seven pre-determined interview questions in the order specified by the researcher (see Table 6). The order of the questions was changed in the post-test and delayed post-test to reduce the chance of the participants memorizing the order between the tests. The questions were established by the researcher in advance to ensure opportunities for the use of RC during the tests.

In order to study RC use, this study attempted to create opportunities for participants to naturally use RC to resolve comprehension problems likely to arise when the participants would need to understand unknown vocabulary during communication. To ensure the need for RC use, the unknown vocabulary had to be seen as difficult in that it was above the participants' current proficiency level (Housen & Simoens, 2016). As such, the study intentionally used words that were above the participants' developmental level (and would be considered difficult) in the tests and strategy training materials. The difficulty of a word in this study was determined in light of two criteria: 1) the difficulty level of the word is categorized by the JLPT as being at the N3, N2, or N1 levels, and 2) the novelty of the word in that it would not have been introduced to the participants by their textbooks, from which they learned most of their vocabulary.

Regarding the first criterion, the JLPT has a unique list of Japanese words¹ for each of the difficulty levels (N5 to N1). These words are expected to be known by test-takers in order to achieve a particular level of proficiency. For example, the test for JLPT N4 contains words from the N4 and N5 lists, but not those from the N3, N2, or N1 lists. Additionally, words that do not

¹ The JLPT does not publish any justifications for the word lists.

appear in any of the lists, such as proper nouns, are categorized as “out of scope”. Since the proficiency level of the participants in this study was between N5 and N4 (equivalent to N5 and emerging N4), they were less likely to know words from the N3 level or above. Therefore, words from the N3 to N1 levels were chosen as difficult words in this study.

Table 6

Part 1 Questions Asked by a native speaker

Order	Question (Japanese)	Question (English translation)
1	<u>ご出身</u> はどちらですか。 <u>Goshusshin</u> wa dochira desuka.	What is your place of <u>origin</u> ?
2	日本語の勉強の <u>理由</u> はなんですか。 Nihongo no benkyou no <u>riyuu</u> wa nandesuka.	What is your <u>reason</u> for studying Japanese?
3	今大学で何を勉強していますか。 Ima daigakude naniwo benkyou siteimasuka.	What are you studying at the university?
4	大学の <u>印象</u> はどうですか。 Daigaku no <u>inshou</u> wa doudesuka.	What is your <u>impression</u> of this university?
5	カナダで行ったほうがいい場所はどこですか。 Canada de ittahouga ii bayo wa dokodesuka.	Where are good places to visit in Canada?
6	夏休みの <u>思い出</u> を教えてください。 Natsuyasumi no <u>omoide</u> wo oshiete kudasai.	Please tell me about your <u>memories</u> of the summer holidays.
7	もし日本に行ったら、何をしたいですか。 Moshi nihon ni ittara naniwo shitai desuka.	If you had a chance to go to Japan, what would you like to do there?

To evaluate the difficulty of words using the JLPT guidelines, an online tool called the Japanese Language Reading Learning Tutorial System (Reading Tutor) (<http://language.tiu.ac.jp>) was used. This tool examines a given text word-by-word and categorizes the difficulty of the vocabulary in it following the JLPT guidelines, resulting in a count for each difficulty level (N5 to N1 and “other”)². The tool does not evaluate the difficulty of a given text (at the sentence or discourse level), instead classifying only the difficulty of the words. Table 7 shows the results of the Reading Tutor’s analysis of the first question from Table 7 “Goshusshin wa dochira desuka.” meaning “What is your place of origin?”. The first column displays the total number of words, the second column displays the number of “out of scope” words, while the last four columns show the number of words at each difficulty level. Figure 1 shows a detailed breakdown of each word for each difficulty level from the same sentence. In this example, only the N2/N3 word, “出身” (“origin”) would be considered difficult.

Table 7

Reading Tutor’s Analysis of the Question 1 “Goshusshin wa dochira desuka.”

語彙総数	級外	N1	N2N3	N4	N5
6	0	0	1	1	4
100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%

² It should be noted that this tool combines the N2 and N3 categories since the N3 difficulty was added in 2010, removing words from the N2 word list to create the new N3 word list, and the tool had not updated its word lists to properly distinguish the differences. At the time of this study, no other tool was available to distinguish words between the N2 and N3 levels. For the purposes of this study, no distinction was required.

級外 ()		
N1 ()		
N2N3 1 (1)	出身	1
N4 1 (1)	ご	1
N5 4 (4)	は	1
	どちら	1
	です	1
	か	1

Figure 1. Reading Tutor's Analysis of Each Word in the Sentence “Goshusshin wa dochira desuka”

Regarding the second criterion, the Japanese program at the university uses vocabulary from the textbook as a guide of the amount of vocabulary knowledge the students are expected to be exposed to/achieve at each level. Therefore, any words not introduced in the textbook are seen as less likely to be known by the participants. The textbook was used as a control feature for vocabulary development and although some of the students did report having access to Japanese outside of class, based on the information from the background questionnaire, that contact was minimal. This was also because of the foreign language context that the classes were provided in, which, by definition, generally enables limited contact with the target language (Nayar, 1997).

In Part 1 of the tests, there was a total of four difficult words (i.e., central to understanding the meaning of a given question) used in the seven questions; these are underlined

in Table 6. The words did not appear in the textbook and according to the Reading Tutor results, were all N1 level words. The third, fifth, and seventh questions intentionally do not include any underlined words and instead, contain vocabulary that according to the course syllabus, the university students in the third-year Japanese course are expected to know. To understand the meaning of the difficult word “reason”, for example, in the “What is your reason for studying Japanese?” question, it was hoped that a participant would likely respond with “What does ‘reason’ mean?” or use another form of RC to get at the intended meaning.

Prior to the actual NS-student interactions, all the questions were pilot-tested with a similar student population to determine if the underlined words in Table 6 were 1) difficult enough to prompt RC use and 2) were necessary to be understood to answer the questions. The pilot study confirmed that the words were unknown to a student in the same third-year Japanese course and that the words were central to understanding each question itself.

In Part 2, the participants were provided with seven questions to ask the NSs in Japanese; the NSs, in turn, were asked to provide the researcher with their answers to control for the number of opportunities for RC use. Table 8 shows the seven questions and answers used in Part 2 of the pre-test (see Appendix E for the answers given in the post-test and delayed post-test). The questions were asked in the order illustrated for all three tests. The questions given to the participants were in Japanese with English translations because the aim was for the participant to understand the meaning of the NS’s answers, not on the accuracy of the questions asked.

Table 8

Part 2 Questions Asked by Participant and Answered by a Native Speaker (NS)

Order	Question (Japanese)	Question (English translation)	NS's Answer (Japanese)	NS's Answer (English translation)
1	カナダで今何をしていますか。	What are you doing in Canada?	平日は語学学校で勉強して、土曜日は日本語教師をしています。	I study at the <u>language</u> school on <u>weekdays</u> and I am a Japanese teacher on Saturday.
2	カナダについてどう思いますか。	What do you think of Canada?	自然が豊かで、人も優しくて、とても住みやすいと思います。	There is a <u>lot of nature</u> , people are kind, and there are nice places to live.
3	どうしてオタワに住むことにしましたか。	Why did you decide to live in Ottawa?	私の <u>旦那</u> はカナダ人で、彼の家族がオタワに住んでいるので、日本から <u>引っ越してきました</u> 。	My <u>husband</u> is Canadian and his family is living in Ottawa, so I <u>moved</u> here from Japan.
4	出身はどちらですか。	Where is your hometown?	東京のこまつがわです。	Komatsugawa in Tokyo.
5	出身地で有名なものはなんですか。	What is your hometown famous for?	<u>こまつな</u> です。	<u>Komatsuna</u> (Japanese mustard spinach).
6	日本でおすすめの場所はどこですか。	What place do you recommend visiting in Japan?	鎌倉です。	Kamakura.
7	どうしてですか。	Why do you recommend visiting that place in Japan?	色々な神社やお寺があって、 <u>おしゃれな雑貨のお店</u> もたくさんあります。	There are lots of shrines and temples, and there are <u>fashionable little shops</u> there.

The underlined words in the answers in Table 8 were the difficult words meant to trigger RC use. For example, a participant would ask the pre-written question, “What are you doing in Canada?” to which the NS would respond with the pre-determined answer of “I study at the language school on weekdays and I am a Japanese teacher on Saturday.”, with the words “language” and “weekdays” being difficult. The intention would be for the participant to ask “What does ‘language’ school mean?”, “What does ‘weekdays’ mean?” or use another RC to understand the provided response.

Unlike Part 1, in Part 2 the participants were not required to use RC in order to move the interview along since the participants’ understanding of the NS’s answer could not be confirmed (i.e., a participant could avoid the NS’s answer and ask the next question without knowing what was said).

The intended answers had been agreed upon by the researcher and NSs prior to the tests. To determine the answers, the researcher sent a list of the seven questions that the participants would ask the NSs and asked each NS to write down their individual answers (for the pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test, the questions were the same, but the answers were different for each NS). Since the original answers from the NSs may have had an uncontrolled number of words that would trigger RC, the researcher edited these answers to maintain similar levels of difficulty across the three tests (as determined based on Reading Tutor results and pilot testing) and to control for the number of words that were intended to trigger RC. For example, the unedited version of the answer “I study at the language school” was “I go to an English school”. It was more likely that the participants would recognize the word “English” so it was replaced with “language”. Another example was the original answer for question five in Table 8, “What is your hometown famous for?” being the “Tokyo Skytree”. The Tokyo Skytree is a well-known

landmark and tourist attraction in Tokyo that participants may have been familiar with and would not require RC to understand. Therefore, through a discussion with the NS, the answer was replaced with a vegetable that does not appear in the textbook used by the participants and would have been less likely to be encountered by the participants outside of class.

To ensure that the answers in Part 2 for the pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test were of similar difficulty and contained difficult words, the contents of the tests were analysed using the Reading Tutor (the same tool used for Part 1). Table 9 shows the Reading Tutor results of the total number of words and the number of words for each JLPT level for all three tests. The majority of the words for all the tests were at the N5 level, which is within the participants' proficiency levels. Furthermore, all tests contained N1, N2, and N3 level words, which were difficult words (as explained in Part 1). This shows that the three tests were of similar difficulty and provided similar opportunities for RC use.

Table 9

Results of the Reading Tutor Analysis of the Interview Answers

Interview	Total Number of Words	N1	N2 and N3	N4	N5	Out of Scope
Pre-Test	84	2	15	8	54	5
Post-Test	81	2	11	8	51	9
Delayed Post-Test	91	4	12	7	55	13

The answers for the pre-interview were also pilot-tested to determine if the underlined words in Table 8 were difficult enough to prompt RC use and if the answers would not be understood without understanding those words. The pilot study confirmed that the words were unknown to a student in the same third-year Japanese course and that the words were central to understanding answers.

Before each test, the NS administering the test had a one-on-one meeting with the researcher to receive training on how to conduct the test. In the meeting, each NS read through the questions for Part 1 and Part 2, and their edited answers for Part 2. They were asked not to change any words or sentences in the given question and answer lists. The NSs were also asked to speak as they would with other NSs in their daily life. Upon a verbal request of repetition or explanation from a participant, the NS could answer such questions as “What is ‘language school’?”. However, they were not allowed to answer any questions in English or react to pauses or silences in order to prompt the student’s use of RC. In the case when the participants kept silent or the interview was not progressing, the NS was permitted to verify with the student whether or not a clarification was required by asking “Do you understand?”, a move defined by Long (1980) as a comprehension check. This was done to help the participants move forward and to complete the interviews in a timely fashion.

All the tests followed the same procedure and lasted ten minutes on average. First, the participant and NS introduced themselves to each other. Next, the NS asked the questions in Part 1, followed by the participant asking the questions in Part 2.

3.3.4 Control group

The control group had the same class structure as the treatment group except for not being given any strategy training and not writing any reflections at the end of the classes and the delayed post-test. Thus, each session was only 40 minutes long (compared to the treatment group where the additional training and reflections took 20 minutes). The information gap task and free-style questions were the same as the treatment group. The researcher was in the class to provide minimal help such as giving instructions for the tasks and to act as a time keeper, but the researcher did not provide any explanations about RC. The control group did not fill out any

reflection notes after completing the tasks in class or after the delayed post-test. The control group also took part in the stimulated recall after the post-test to compare any differences between the treatment group and the control group. The procedure for the stimulated recall was the same for both the treatment group and the control group.

3.3.5 Stimulated recall

Stimulated recall is a method to explore the participants' thoughts by prompting them to recall and report thoughts they had while performing a task (Dornyei, 2007; Mackey & Gass, 2015). The use of the tool was deemed necessary to investigate participants' intentions behind strategy use during communicative tasks (e.g. Nakatani, 2005; Tsubaki, 2010).

When conducting a stimulated recall, Mackey and Gass (2015) recommend collecting data as soon as possible, using strong stimuli (i.e. video recording) to promote reflection, and limiting the extent of instructions provided to avoid researcher interference. To satisfy the criteria, this study collected data immediately after the post-test, used video recordings as the stimuli, asked the participants simple, straightforward questions, and kept the question prompts open-ended.

All participants from both the treatment group and the control group participated in a stimulated recall conducted by the researcher. The stimulated recall was conducted to obtain the participants' perceptions about any difficulties they may have faced during the test. The stimulated recall was conducted in English to ensure no linguistic barriers in obtaining the information sought. The meeting took five minutes for each participant to complete.

The cue for the stimulated recall were video clips taken from the participants' post-test video recordings. Each participant was asked to watch three to four video clips to comment on; the number of the clips was determined by how many RC a student used. That is, while the goal

was to probe the participants' thoughts on when they did ($n=2$) and did not use RC ($n=2$), some did not use enough RC overall. The clips were chosen in real time by the researcher and were shown to the participant using the researcher's laptop. The researcher used her notes to determine when to stop the recording and ask the participants to reflect on their use of RC. After pausing the video, she would prompt reflection with "What were you thinking about at this time?". For example, the following clip was chosen for its RC use in Part 1:

(Clip watched for the stimulated recall)

NS: What is your impression of this university?

Rachel: What is "impression"?

NS: Something you think. What do you think?

(After watching the clip)

Researcher: What were you thinking about at this time?

Rachel: I still didn't understand. I think because I didn't understand vocabulary so I want to hear it in English.

Additionally, the researcher would inquire further, asking participants "Did you understand my answer?" for non-RC use in Part 2 of the test. Asking this provided data on whether or not participants understood the answer and did not require RC or if they did not understand the answer and did not use RC. For example, the following clip from Part 2 was shown:

(Clip watched for the stimulated recall)

Rachel: What are you doing in Canada?

NS: While I am a Japanese teacher, I am also studying to get my Master's degree.

Rachel: I see.

(After watching the clip)

Researcher: Did you understand my answer?

Rachel: I think I was able to understand since I already had an idea of your stance.

During the post-test, it was unclear whether the participant understood the word for “Master’s degree” or not.

3.4 Procedure

Table 10 shows the structure and schedule that the investigation followed. The study took place over five weeks with a two-week gap between the post-test and delayed post-test. In week 1, all participants (n=12) filled out the background questionnaire and had a pre-test in the form of an interview with an NS to measure the usage of RC before the training. In week 2, the treatment group (n=6) had two strategy training classes followed immediately by a post-test and a stimulated recall. Also in week 2, the control group (n=6) completed all the tasks without any strategy training, followed by the same post-test and stimulated recall session as the treatment group. Finally, both groups completed delayed post-tests in week 5.

Table 10

Research Design

	Week 1	Week 2			Week 5
		Day 1	Day 2		
Treatment Group	Pre-Test	Strategy Training 1	Strategy Training 2	Post-Test and Stimulated Recall	Delayed Post-test and Written Reflection
Control Group		Tasks	Tasks		Delayed Post-Test

3.5 Data Analysis

The background questionnaire was analysed qualitatively. To investigate the effects of short-term training and whether it increased the usage of RC, the tests were recorded and transcribed and the use of request strategies were counted based on the categories that were taught in the strategy training sessions for the treatment group. During some tests, the NS and participant conversed beyond the given question and answer lists. For these cases, any RC use was not counted to ensure that the results were not skewed. All test data were transcribed and each use of RC was counted based on the form presented in Table 3 (Target RC for Strategy Training). Furthermore, the participants' reflections and verbal stimulated recall data were analysed qualitatively to evaluate the participants' perceptions. The verbal stimulated recall and participants' reflections were analysed by looking for emerging themes to examine what factors affected the participants' RC use and lack of RC use and participant perceptions that mirrored their performance on the tests. The written reflections after the delayed post-test were analysed to see if the participants had positive or negative perceptions of the training and if it had an effect on RC use or the lack of RC use.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the findings of the study by individually addressing each of the three research questions posed:

1. Does short-term RC training increase the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
2. What factors influence the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
3. What are the learners' perceptions about strategy training and the usefulness of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?

4.1 Research Question 1

To research the effects of short-term strategy training on the use of RC, interactions between the native speakers of Japanese and participants on the three tests were analysed qualitatively, with frequency counts of RC use and RC type (RR, CL, and CF) recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. It is important to note that each participant had a total of seven opportunities to use RC in Part 1 of the interview to answer the NS's questions and seven opportunities for RC use in Part 2 to respond to the NS's answers. As such, the scores reported in this section account only for the RCs used by participants during the pre-determined questions and answers; any conversations extending beyond these points were not accounted for. The results will be first presented per group and then per participant to account for possible differences that may be overlooked when reporting group totals alone.

4.1.1 Overall use of RC per group

As Table 10 shows, out of the possible 42 instances of RC used in Part 1, on the pre-test (7 opportunities for RC use x 6 participants), the participants in the treatment group used a total

of 16 RC, whereas those in the control group produced 14 instances of RC. The situation was similar for Part 2, with there being 12 instances of RC use in the treatment group and 13 instances for the control group. The combined values, hence, equalled 28 RC instances for the treatment group and 27 instances for the control group. On the post-test, the treatment group produced 24 RC in Part 1 while the control group used 11 RC. In Part 2 of the post-test, the RC usage for the treatment group was 19 and 13 for the control group. The post-test totals equalled 43 instances employed by the treatment group and 24 by the control group. Finally, on the delayed post-test in Part 1, the number of RC used by the treatment group was 16 and 10 for the control group. In Part 2, both groups produced 14 instances of RC each. The delayed post-test totals were 30 instances of RC produced by the treatment group and 24 by the controls.

Table 10

RC Use per Group Across Tests

	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
	Part 1	Part 2	Total	Part 1	Part 2	Total	Part 1	Part 2	Total
Control Group (n=6)	14	13	27	11	13	24	10	14	24
Treatment Group (n=6)	16	12	28	24	19	43	16	14	30

While both the treatment and control groups had similar instances of RC use on the pre-test, the control group's RC use declined but the treatment group's RC usage increased on the post-test. Finally, on the delayed post-test, both the treatment and control groups' RC usage reverted to values similar to those on the pre-test. The t-test showed no significant difference in scores on the pre-test for the control group ($M=4.5$, $SD=1.05$) and the treatment group ($M=4.7$, $SD=2.87$; $t(10)=.133$, $p=.89$, two-tailed), which suggests that the two groups were similar in terms of RC ability at the beginning of the study. On the post-test, the t-test showed no

significant difference in scores on the pre-test for the control group ($M=7.17$, $SD=5.71$) and the treatment group ($M=4.0$, $SD=2.28$; $t(10)=-.833$, $p=.89$, two-tailed). On the delayed post-test, the t-test showed no significant difference in scores on the pre-test for the control group ($M=5.0$, $SD=3.69$) and the treatment group ($M=4.0$, $SD=2.45$; $t(10)=.553$, $p=.592$, two-tailed). The t-test revealed that there were no significant differences statistically. However, there were qualitative differences based on the frequency count between the control group and the treatment group. These findings suggest that the training for the treatment group had an immediate effect on the frequency of RC usage, with the treatment group using more than twice as much RC as the control group. However, this effect was not sustained as the treatment group's RC usage on the delayed test returned to its pre-test values.

4.1.2 Types of RC used by groups

Table 11 shows RC types used by the groups across the tests. On Part 1 of the pre-test, the treatment group used RR (Repetition Request) 11 times, CL (Clarification Request) 3 times, and CF (Confirmation Request) 2 times. Similarly, the control group used RR 10 times, CL 2 times, and CF 2 times. On Part 2 of the pre-test, the treatment group used RR 10 times, CL 0 times, and CF 2 times while the control group used RR 12 times, CL 1 time, and CF 0 times. On Part 1 of the post-test, the treatment group used RR 18 times, CL 4 times, and CF 2 times, while the control group used RR 6 times, CL 4 times, and CF 1 time. On Part 2 of the post-test, the treatment group produced RR 10 times, CL 4 times, and CF 5 times. The control group produced RR 6 times, CL 3 times, and CF 4 times. Lastly, on Part 1 of the delayed post-test, the treatment group used RR 8 times, CL 4 times, and CF 4 times. The control group used RR 7 times, CL 0 times, and CF 3 times. On Part 2, the treatment group used RR 12 times and CL and CF 1 time each. The control group used RR 10 times, CL 3 times, and CF 1 time.

Table 11

Types of RC Used per Group Across Tests

		Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
		Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2
Control Group (n=6)	RR	10	12	6	6	7	10
	CL	2	1	4	3	0	3
	CF	2	0	1	4	3	1
Treatment Group (n=6)	RR	11	10	18	10	8	12
	CL	3	0	4	4	4	1
	CF	2	2	2	5	4	1

Among the three types of RC, RR is the dominant type used across all the tests for both treatment and control groups. Furthermore, each type of RC was used at least once on all the tests. Although both groups used more CL and CF on the post-test than on the pre-test, the control group's usage of RR declined whereas the treatment group's usage increased. Hence, the overall RC usage across the three tests showed an increase on the post-test for the treatment group followed by a return to the pre-test value on the delayed post-test.

4.1.3 Overall RC use per participant

Table 12 shows the RC use per participant. John, for example, used RC three times on Part 1 of the pre-test and two times on Part 2. On the post-test, he used RC three times in Part 1 but no RC use in Part 2. Lastly, on the delayed post-test, he used RC once in Part 1 and once again in Part 2.

Table 12

RC Use per Participant Across Tests

		Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
		Part1(/7)	Part2(/7)	Part1	Part2	Part1	Part 2
Treatment Group	John	3	2	3	0	1	1
	Rachel	1	0	3	4	3	4
	Alice	1	2	3	1	3	1
	Robert	3	0	3	4	0	0
	Michael	4	4	6	6	4	6
	David	4	4	6	4	5	2
Control Group	Emma	3	1	3	1	4	0
	Emily	3	3	1	4	0	4
	Sophia	3	2	2	0	2	3
	Anna	1	2	0	2	0	1
	Sarah	2	2	2	1	1	1
	James	2	3	3	5	3	5

Most participants in the treatment group used more RC during the post-test than on the pre-test, but used less RC on the delayed post-test than on the post-test. The exceptions were John, whose RC use declined across the three tests, and Rachel, who maintained her increased RC use from the post-test to the delayed post-test. Furthermore, Michael and David had more RC use than the other participants on the three tests. Finally, while Robert followed the same pattern as the other participants in the treatment group, he was the only participant who did not use any RC on the delayed post-test.

4.1.4 Types of RC used per participant

Table 13 presents the types of RC used by individual participants. As a rule, RR use tended to dominate across the tests for both parts. Rachel and Robert stand out as they were the only participants in the treatment group to exclusively use RR on the pre-test, but on the post-test, they were the only ones in the treatment group who used non-RR RC (that is, CL and CF

Table 13

Types of RC Used per Participant Across Tests

			Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
			Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2
Treatment Group	John	RR	1	2	2	0	0	1
		CL	0	0	0	0	0	0
		CF	2	0	1	0	1	0
	Rachel	RR	1	0	2	1	2	3
		CL	0	0	1	2	1	0
		CF	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Alice	RR	1	0	2	0	2	1
		CL	0	0	0	0	0	0
		CF	0	2	1	1	1	0
	Robert	RR	3	0	2	1	0	0
		CL	0	0	1	1	0	0
		CF	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Michael	RR	3	4	6	5	3	5
		CL	1	0	0	0	0	1
		CF	0	0	0	1	1	0
	David	RR	2	4	4	3	1	2
		CL	2	0	2	1	3	0
		CF	0	0	0	0	1	0
Control Group	Emma	RR	2	1	1	1	3	0
		CL	1	0	2	0	0	0
		CF	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Emily	RR	3	3	1	3	0	4
		CL	0	0	0	0	0	0
		CF	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Sophia	RR	1	2	1	0	2	2
		CL	1	0	0	0	0	0
		CF	1	0	1	0	0	1
	Anna	RR	0	2	0	1	0	0
		CL	0	0	0	0	0	1
		CF	1	0	0	1	0	0
	Sarah	RR	2	1	2	0	0	1
		CL	0	1	0	1	0	0
		CF	0	0	0	0	1	0
	James	RR	2	3	1	1	2	3
		CL	0	0	2	2	0	2
		CF	0	0	0	2	1	0

combined) the most. Furthermore, James from the control group followed a similar pattern where he only used RR on the pre-test and used the most CL and CF on the post-test despite not having received any RC training.

4.1.5 Effectiveness of Strategy Training

It is argued that based on the frequency counts reported above the strategy training the participants in the treatment group received may have impacted their ability to request clarification of meaning in their interactions with the NSs. Evidence for this comes from observations of changes in interaction patterns among the participants across the tests. The changes were manifested in terms of (1) RC use and (2) the sequencing of RC in interaction.

In terms of the varied RC use, Rachel and Robert amended how they used RC. Rachel, for example, mixed English and Japanese when using RR on the pre-test (ex. “Repeat, please”, with “repeat” being said in English, and “please” being said in Japanese) but on the post-test, she used the correct form she learned during the strategy training. Robert, in turn, used RC incorrectly at first (Example 1), but on the post-test, he had the necessary tools to seek the clarification he needed, using CL (Example 2). What’s more, this target-like RC usage carried over into the delayed post-test.

Example 1

NS: What is your reason for studying Japanese?

Robert: Uhhh...“reason”, “reason”, “reason”. (RR) “Reason” of meaning? (CL)

NS: Why? Why are you studying Japanese?

Example 2

NS: What is your reason for studying Japanese?

Robert: My reason for studying Japanese...What is the meaning of “reason” in English? (CL)

NS: “Reason”.

Robert: I would like to go to Japan and I want to live there.

The effect of training can also be attributed to the fact that all of the participants in the treatment group utilized the same types of RC in the same order (RR followed by CL) at least once. For example, Rachel followed this pattern in Part 1 of the post-test (Example 3).

Example 3

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Rachel: Could you repeat again? (RR)

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Rachel: What does “impression” mean? (CL)

Despite asking for repetition differently, Michael (Example 4) used the same type of RC and the order in which RC were used was identical to Rachel’s.

Example 4

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Michael: Could you speak more slowly? (RR)

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Michael: What does “impression” mean? (CL)

Unlike the participants in the treatment group, there were not many changes across the tests in how RC were used by the control group. Those participants who understood the questions answered immediately and did not need to use RC to clarify the meaning. However, participants who could not understand either kept silent or said “Wakarimasen” to mean “I don’t understand” or “I don’t know” and waited for the NS’s help. This was the case for Emma whose use of RC did not appear to change from the pre-test (Example 5) to post-test (Example 6).

Example 5

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Emma: Impression? (RR) The impression of the university...I don't know. Sorry.

NS: You don't understand the question or don't know the word? What is your impression of the university?

Emma: What does "impression" mean? (CL?)

Example 6

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Emma: Sorry. Again? (RR) [Gestures to repeat]

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Emma: What is "impression"? (CL)

As a rule, RC usage in the control group was rare. While Sophia, for instance, did not use RC, Emma and Sarah each had only used it once. Instead, the three participants reacted to the NS' responses by nodding their heads or saying "Yes" and/or "I see." James, however, appeared to be aware of the role of RC and was observed using them nine times across the tests (Example 7).

Example 7

James: What are you doing in Canada?

NS: I study at the language school on weekdays and I am a Japanese teacher on Saturday.

James: What does "Masters" mean? (CL)

James's awareness of the purpose of RC use is supported by his explanation during the stimulated recall when he said, "I thought I don't really know what word this is, but it sounded

like an important word in the sentence and I understood most of the sentence so I knew that if I asked what this word was I could piece together what the meaning was.”

4.1.6 RC attempts

Because only the first RC attempt (successful or not) was used to calculate group totals (Table 10), the reported values may be misrepresenting the real picture of RC use. To counter this possibility, a decision was made to calculate the total number of attempts that learners in each group made to use RC. That is, while the majority of students needed only one attempt to understand the intended meaning of an utterance, other learners required 2-3 attempts to do the same. In line with the sociocultural theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (i.e., “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or peer”, Ohta, 2001, p. 9) in particular, it may be argued that the number of attempts made by a learner to comprehend a question/statement may indicate the level of independence (i.e., “self-regulation”) she/he possesses and consecutively, point to her/his current level of L2 development (i.e., proficiency). Hence, the number of attempts needed by each learner to understand the intended meaning was equated to the notion of scaffolding (i.e., “the role of teachers and others in supporting the learner’s development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level” (Raymond, 2000, p. 176)) in that the more help a learner needed, the lower his/her L2 level would be; alternatively, those who used fewer attempts to comprehend the message would be deemed as more advanced. In what follows, the attempts made by each group are presented first; those made by each learner are detailed afterwards.

4.1.6.1 RC attempts per group

As shown in Table 14, on the first part of the pre-test, to understand the meaning of the seven questions (i.e., total opportunities for RC use) the participants in the treatment group made 27 attempts whereas the control group made 22 attempts. In Part 2, there were 14 attempts for the treatment group and 18 attempts for the control group. The number of total attempts on the pre-test was similar between groups, with 41 attempts made by the treatment group and 40 attempts made by the control group. On Part 1 of the post-test, the treatment group attempted to use RC 52 times and the control group produced 19 attempts. On Part 2, there were 28 attempts for the treatment group and 20 for the control group. The total attempts for the post-test was 80 for the treatment group and 39 for the control group. Finally, for Part 1 of the delayed post-test, the number of attempts by the treatment group was 21 and the control group was 13. On Part 2, the treatment group made 23 attempts and the control group made 21 attempts. The total attempts on the delayed post-test was 44 for the treatment group and 34 for the control group.

Table 14

RC Attempts per Group Across Tests

	Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed post-test		
	Part 1	Part 2	Total	Part 1	Part 2	Total	Part 1	Part 2	Total
Control Group (n=6)	22	18	40	19	20	39	13	21	34
Treatment Group (n=6)	27	14	41	52	28	80	21	23	44

The data revealed that, similar to the group totals reported in Table 10, the RC attempts made by the treatment group increased after the strategy training. Although the numbers were similar between the two groups on the pre-test, the treatment group had almost doubled the

number of RC attempts on the post-test while the control group maintained a similar number of attempts across the tests. However, the number of attempts made by the treatment group on the delayed post-test fell back to the values exhibited on the pre-test. These results suggest that, overall, the training had similar effects on both RC usage and RC attempts. Additionally, the treatment group tended to use more RC on Part 1 (when the students needed to respond to questions) than on Part 2 (when learners had to ask questions) of the pre-test and post-test. However, the number of attempts on both parts of the delayed post-test were similar. The gap between RC usage may suggest that the type of activity (i.e. answering questions or responding to answers), may influence whether or not RC are used. That is, in Part 2, participants in both groups were observed mostly responding with “Okay” or “Yes” after they heard the NS’s answers, without making an effort to understand the answers provided. This reaction may be due to the task itself in that the participants did not have to understand the meaning to move on to the next question.

Table 15 shows the types of RC attempts by the groups across the tests. On Part 1 of the pre-test, the treatment group used RR 15 times, CL 8 times, and CF 4 times. Similarly, the control group used RR 15 times, CL 4 times, and CF 3 times. On the post-test, the treatment group used RR 24 times, CL 21 times, and CF 7 times, while the control group used RR 7 times, CL 8 times, and CF 4 times. Lastly, on the delayed post-test, the treatment group used RR 10 times, CL 7 times, and CF 4 times. The control group used RR 7 times, CL 1 time, and CF 5 times.

Table 15

Types of RC Attempts per Group Across Tests

		Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
		Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2
Control	RR	15	13	7	6	7	14
Group	CL	4	3	8	7	1	5
(n=6)	CF	3	2	4	7	5	2
Treatment	RR	15	10	24	13	10	28
Group	CL	8	2	21	6	7	10
(n=6)	CF	4	2	7	9	4	6

Most of the trends seen in Table 11 (Types of RC Used per Group Across Tests) also apply here: RR was the dominant type, all types of RC were used on the post-test, but the RR use did not decline on the post-test for the treatment group when it came to attempts. However, Table 15 also revealed that the treatment group significantly increased its attempts to use CL on the post-test, almost matching that of the RR usage. Interestingly, the observed increases occurred disproportionately to the amount of training given for each type, with CF having been taught twice and the others only once. However, on the delayed post-test, both groups attempted to use more RR than the other types of RC combined.

4.1.6.2 RC attempts per participant

Table 16 shows the number of RC attempts for each participant. John (of the treatment group), for example, made five attempts to use RC in Part 1 of the pre-test and two attempts in Part 2. For the post-test, he made six attempts in Part 1 and no attempts in Part 2. Finally, for the delayed post-test, he used RC once in Part 1 and once again in Part 2.

Table 16

RC Attempts per Participant Across Tests

		Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
		Part1 (/7)	Part2 (/7)	Part1	Part2	Part1	Part 2
Treatment Group	John	5	2	6	0	1	1
	Rachel	1	0	6	4	4	6
	Alice	1	1	6	2	3	1
	Robert	6	0	6	4	0	0
	Michael	8	6	11	12	8	10
	David	6	5	17	6	5	5
Control Group	Emma	5	1	4	1	5	0
	Emily	5	5	2	6	0	6
	Sophia	4	3	5	0	2	5
	Anna	1	2	0	3	0	1
	Sarah	4	2	4	1	1	1
	James	3	5	4	9	5	8

Moreover, in light of the discussion on ZPD above, the students in the treatment group could generally be classified into three proficiency groups: low, intermediate, and advanced. Because Rachel and Alice used few RC (i.e., Rachel used only RR on the pre-test and Alice used RR and CF once each) on the pre-test but produced more RC attempts on the post-test (they used CL and CF more on the post-test) and maintained that number on the delayed post-test, they can be said to belong to the “low” proficiency group. Interestingly, post training, their proficiency increased.

Similarly, it can be argued that at the outset Michael and David had some proficiency in RC (i.e., their proficiency could be classified as intermediate) since they both used some RC on the pre-test and made the most RC attempts across the tests. The strategy training may have given them more confidence to attempt RC use, which may have resulted in the decline of the RC attempts they needed on the delayed post-test to understand the interlocutor’s message; in

other words, the provided training and practice tasks may have increased their knowledge of and ability to use RC.

Finally, John and Robert may be classified as being advanced in their RC proficiency from the start. This is because they both used some RC during the pre-test and had little to no increase of RC use on the post-test; on the delayed test, they stopped using RC altogether. This suggests that the training may have asserted their knowledge of RC use and have given them the confidence *not* to use RC when the intended meaning was clear. In fact, when asked about his lack of RC use on the delayed post-test, Robert explained that because “[he] remembered [that question] being asked last week” he felt he understood its meaning and as such, forewent the use of RC.

Table 17 illustrates the types of RC attempted by the participants. Similar to the results from Table 13 (RC Use per Participant Across Tests), RR was the dominant RC type being attempted. There were, however, notable exceptions. In the treatment group, for example, Michael, David, Alice, and Rachel differed from the norm whereas in the control group, James, Emily, Sophia, and Anna were different.

In the treatment group, Michael and David not only made more RC attempts overall, but had more attempts for each of the three types (with the exceptions of Michael’s usage of CL and David’s usage of CF). Similarly, Rachel, who maintained her increased RC attempts from the post-test to the delayed post-test, used different types of RC between the two tests (used CL the most during the post-test, but used RR the most during the delayed post-test). Alice, in turn, increased her attempts at RC use on the post-test, increasing the use of CF in particular; this is unique in that CF was used the least overall.

Table 17

Types of RC Attempts per Participant Across Tests

			Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed post-test	
			Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2	Part 1	Part 2
Treatment Group	John	RR	1	2	2	0	0	1
		CL	1	0	2	0	0	0
		CF	3	0	2	0	1	0
	Rachel	RR	1	0	2	1	2	4
		CL	0	0	4	2	2	0
		CF	0	0	0	1	0	2
	Alice	RR	1	0	3	0	2	1
		CL	0	0	1	0	0	0
		CF	0	1	2	2	1	0
	Robert	RR	4	0	3	1	0	0
		CL	2	0	3	1	0	0
		CF	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Michael	RR	5	5	6	7	5	8
		CL	2	0	4	1	2	2
		CF	1	1	1	4	1	0
	David	RR	3	3	8	4	1	4
		CL	3	2	7	2	3	1
		CF	0	0	2	0	1	0
Control Group	Emma	RR	3	1	1	1	3	0
		CL	2	0	3	0	1	0
		CF	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Emily	RR	4	3	1	3	0	5
		CL	1	1	1	2	0	1
		CF	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Sophia	RR	2	2	2	0	2	3
		CL	1	1	0	0	0	0
		CF	1	0	3	0	0	2
	Anna	RR	0	2	0	1	0	0
		CL	0	0	0	0	0	1
		CF	1	0	0	2	0	0
	Sarah	RR	4	1	2	0	0	1
		CL	0	1	1	1	0	0
		CF	0	0	1	0	1	0
	James	RR	2	4	1	1	2	5
		CL	0	0	3	4	0	3
		CF	1	1	0	4	3	0

In the control group, James did not use CL at all on the pre-test, but used it more than every other participant in both groups (except for David in the treatment group) on the post-test. Within the context of the control group, Emily used the most RR while Sophia and Anna used CF more than CL.

4.1.7 Summary

Overall, the results show that short-term training increased RC usage. Specifically, investigating each attempt to use RC showed a significant increase in CL and CF usage after the training. Also, while RR did increase after the training, RR usage was generally dominant across both groups. However, these effects do not seem to last as the increases were not maintained at the time of the delayed post-test.

4.2 Research Question 2

To examine the possible factors that influenced the participants' RC use, responses from the verbal stimulated recall were analysed for emerging themes. All participants from both the treatment group (n=6) and the control group (n=6) participated in the stimulated recall that was conducted by the researcher. Individually, the participants were shown two clips of RC use and two clips of non-RC use from their post-tests, chosen in real-time (by chance, no instances of CF use were chosen as this type was not used much). After watching each clip, the participants were asked to reflect on their thoughts about a given episode (i.e., "What were you thinking at that moment?") to help the researcher understand their perceptions of RC use and RC non-use. For the RC non-use instances, in particular, they were additionally asked if they had understood the meaning intended by the NSs in Part 2 of the tests (i.e., "Did you understand the answer?").

The results revealed that both the control and treatment groups shared similar thoughts for what influenced them to use or not to use RC. The factors for using RC were to ease

processing and to understand words that were important to make meaning of the supplied questions and/or responses. On the other hand, the participants chose not to use RC when they were able to recognize the meaning of the prompts/items either partially or in their entirety and when their RC behaviour was influenced by the interview design.

4.2.1. Reasons for RC use

Different types of RC were used in different situations to ease processing. Some participants used RR when they could not hear the original utterance. This was the case for Emma in the control group who mentioned that she was “bad at hearing” and Rachel from the treatment group who, in some cases, said that the NS was speaking “too fast”.

Participants also used RR to supplement what they had heard. While Michael from the treatment group reported using RR “to confirm the pronunciation” of what the NS had said, Rachel used RR whenever she “need[ed] to hear [the sentence] a second time to understand.” Interestingly, Michael was the only one who also used RR for a different purpose - “to make sure I get the whole sentence I just repeat it completely.” Hence, although technically he used RR (i.e., he repeated a sentence), his intention was not to request any help but to give himself extra time to process a given utterance.

CL was used when clarification of meaning for a specific word was needed. Robert from the treatment group explained his use of CL by “I just never heard the word before or at least I don’t remember hearing the word...I understood everything up to that and I got caught up on that one word”. Other learners like Alice (treatment group) used CL when she recognized a word but was unable to recall its meaning during communication.

Finally, RC was used to understand words important to the meaning of a given question or answer. James, from the control group, explained his use of RC in this way: “I thought I don’t

really know what word this is, but it sounded like an important word in the sentence and I understood most of the sentence so I knew that if I asked what this word was I could piece together what the meaning was.”

4.2.2. Reasons for lack of RC use

One reason given for not using RC was recognizing the meaning of the difficult target words in the questions/answers. For example, when Robert (treatment group) was asked about his memories from his summer vacation, he was able to respond without using RC. After watching a clip that cued this instance, Robert explained not needing RC in the following way: “I believe I remembered [the question] being asked last week and I remember I had to ask about it...but this time I [kind of] remembered it.”

Compared to Part 1, participants used fewer RCs in Part 2. A common reason from both the control and treatment group was that the NSs’ answers were partially understood (treatment group=3; control group=4). For example, when Alice (treatment group) was given an answer about a type of food, although she did not understand the answer, she knew it was related to food and that she could discover its meaning on her own after the test. Similarly, Michael (treatment group) said that, “I think I should’ve asked more information about the sentence, but I...forgot to ask.”

Finally, Michael attributed his limited use of RC to the fact that he was being interviewed and did not feel it appropriate to ask questions - “I guess because of the interview environment. If you were to say that in a casual conversation, not an interview place, then I would’ve asked.” Furthermore, Sophia (control group) felt that because of its design, Part 2 provided no incentive for her to understand the meaning of difficult words since there was no need to push the

conversation further - “I think [Part 2] is a lot easier because it’s already written for me so I don’t have to think, and I can just read it.”

To summarize, the participants used RC to overcome comprehension problems of the target words in the NS’s questions and/or answers. On the other hand, they did not use RC when they had no comprehension problems or partially understood what the NS had said. The former justification was mostly used for Part 1 while the latter for Part 2. It is also important to note that the design of the tests (interviews) may have prevented the participants from using RC.

4.3 Research Question 3

To examine the treatment group’s perceptions of the training and its usefulness, written reflections collected after the delayed post-test were analyzed qualitatively. Participants (n=6) wrote about how they felt about the training and any connections they saw between real life conversations and the strategy training.

The majority of the participants (n=5) found the sessions and strategy instruction useful and helpful. For example, Rachel, whose RC use increased on the post-test and who was able to maintain it on the delayed post-test wrote, “The strategies I learned in classes have been very helpful in that it is much easier to ask for clarification on things I don’t understand.” Similarly, Robert said that while strategies “may slow down the conversation”, they ultimately “help [him] comprehend the conversation more and allow [him] to continue conversing.” Finally, Michael said that his “listening comprehension is not good” and that he thought “the strategies are good as I often use them in conversations.” On the other hand, while David felt that he could “use these strategies to help clarify specific phrases and words”, he could use them only “if [the speakers] understand some English.” This may be because CL includes the expression, “What does this mean in English?” which can only be useful with speakers who understand English.

In sum, the treatment group's written reflections show that most of the participants in the treatment group perceived strategy training as useful and helpful to overcome comprehension problems in interaction.

4.4 Summary

Overall, the short-term training increased RC use and was perceived to be helpful by the participants. That said, these increases did not last until the delayed post-test. The primary factor for using RC was to resolve comprehension issues while the factors for not using RC were either not having comprehension issues or having had partial understanding of what had been said.

Looking into the distribution of the RC used in Part 1 and Part 2 of the tests showed that RC was largely used in Part 1, when the participants were tasked with answering questions, and used less in Part 2, when they had to ask questions without necessarily needing to understand the given responses. This may suggest that the type of activity has an effect on RC use.

Furthermore, examining the specific types of RC used showed that RR was the most used type of RC regardless of training; this may be attributed to the participants' prior knowledge of the technique. That said, after the training, CL and CF experienced major increases in the number of attempts, which may speak to the effectiveness of the training for new types of RC.

These findings will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter highlights the findings of the current investigation and explains them in light of the existing research on teaching strategic competence in the classroom. Following this, implications for teaching requests for clarification (RC) and the limitations of the study are discussed. The chapter concludes with an overview of future research directions for RC instruction.

The present investigation examined whether short-term strategy training would benefit Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) learners' abilities to resolve communication difficulties using RC. There were three research questions that guided this study:

1. Does short-term RC training increase the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
2. What factors influence the use of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?
3. What are the learners' perceptions about strategy training and the usefulness of RC among a sample of JFL learners at a university in Ontario?

The study employed a pre-test/post-test design with the control group and treatment group of high-beginner university JFL students ($n=12$). The treatment group received two strategy training sessions (one hour each for a total of two hours over a period of one week), which employed the direct approach in RC instruction in that the participants were provided with explicit instruction on how RC function and how to use them in conversation. The focus of the training was on three types of RC: repetition requests (RR) (e.g. "Pardon?" or "Could you say that again?"), confirmation requests (CF) (e.g. "Did you say X?"), and clarification requests (CL) (e.g. "What do you mean by X?"). After the instruction, the participants completed information

gap tasks to practice RC use. The control group, however, only completed information gap tasks and did not receive any instruction on RC use or function.

The effects of the training were measured by the frequency counts of RC use during the participants' interviews with Japanese native speakers in pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests. A stimulated recall after the post-test was conducted with both groups (n=12) to understand the factors for RC use and non-use, and only the participants from the treatment group completed reflection notes on how they felt about the training they had received.

5.1 Research Question 1: Effects of Short-Term Strategy Training

Research question 1 aimed to investigate if short-term RC training would increase the use of RC. The results showed both treatment and control groups used RC with similar frequency on the pre-test. However, the frequency of RC used by the treatment group increased immediately after the strategy training, including a significant increase in CL and CF usage; there were no changes for the control group in terms of RC frequency or types used on the post-test or delayed post-test. However, the increase observed in the treatment group at the post-test was not maintained on the delayed post-test, with the values reverting to the pre-test frequencies.

5.1.1 Frequency RC use immediately after the training

The increase in the frequency of RC for the treatment group immediately after the training is in line with that of Tsubaki's (2010) study which showed similar effects of training on RC use. There, after 205 minutes of strategy training that was spread over 14 weeks, the 13 university-level students of Japanese as a second language began using more RC in interviews with Japanese native speakers. The results of the present study are also in line with Kim and Akahori's (1997) study on the use of communication strategies (CS) in a Japanese as a second language context, where after eight weeks of strategy training (100 minutes once a week, 13

hours in total) 8 international students of Japanese with prior training in Japanese started using more CS in the last four weeks of the training in the classroom information gap tasks. These studies and the present one together show that strategy training can influence the frequency with which RC and CS are used post training.

Tsubaki (2010) also reported that after the training some students became more willing to use RC to solve comprehension problems than before the training. It is, hence, reasonable to assume that the increase in the frequency of RC use in the present study signals the participants' increased confidence and willingness to use more RC than prior to training. In fact, the participants from the treatment group spoke of the positive impact that their newly acquired knowledge of RC has brought to their ability to communicate in Japanese. The majority of the participants (n=5) found the practice sessions and strategy instruction to be useful and helpful. For example, Rachel wrote that knowing RC made it "much easier to ask for clarification on things [she didn't] understand", and Robert said that "the lessons learned in the classes will help [him] greatly...[to] comprehend the conversation more and allow [him] to continue conversing".

It is interesting to note that the training, even in the short term, may have similar effects on RC use as those reported in studies that used long term training (e.g., Kim and Akahori, 1997; Tsubaki, 2010). That is, Kim and Akahori's (1997) study exposed participants to 13 hours of training over an eight-week period with one information gap task per week; Tsubaki's (2010) RC training lasted 205 minutes over 14 weeks with one communicative exercise per class (three written fill-in-the-blank dialogues and one roleplaying task). Meanwhile, the present study had two hours of training over one week with one information gap task per class, which makes this study's training lowest in intensity compared to Kim and Akahori's (1997) and Tsubaki's (2010) studies. And, this is despite the present study having a similar increase in RC use immediately

after the training as the other studies. Therefore, this suggests that the intensity of training may not play a role when it comes to RC use immediately after instruction.

5.1.2 Frequency of RC use on the delayed post-test

Although the RC use spiked immediately after the training, the results of the delayed post-test showed a regression to the pre-test values. Since other studies in the Japanese as a second language context (e.g., Kim & Akahori, 1997; Tsubaki, 2010) and in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context (e.g., Dörnyei, 1995; Nakatani, 2005; Rabab'ah, 2015) did not conduct delayed post-tests, it is difficult to conclude whether or not longer training results in longer lasting results in that the participants continue to use RC at an increased rate long after the training. Several hypotheses as to why the frequency of RC use was not sustained are offered next.

First, the participants may not have needed any scaffolding and the decrease of RC use may be interpreted as a sign of their second language development. This can be explained by way of the sociocultural theory and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In this study, RC can be considered as a scaffolding device to help the participants resolve comprehension issues. Therefore, within the context of ZPD, the frequency of RC used by a participant may indicate their level of independence (i.e. “self-regulation”) in that the higher RC use suggests a lower level of independence (because more scaffolding is required) whereas the lower rate of RC use may suggest a higher level of independence. Applying these concepts to this study means that on the post-test, since the RC use was frequent, the participants’ self-regulation was insufficient to accomplish the task independently and RC was used as a scaffold. It then follows that since the frequency of the RC use on the delayed post-test decreased, the participants became more self-sufficient and required less external help. This explanation finds support in the concept of ZPD

in that while learners may need external assistance at the beginning, the amount of assistance they may require during the learning process is likely to decrease (Keck & Kim, 2014).

Using the same notion of external help and the participants' self-regulation, another possible scenario for the decrease in RC use on the delayed post-test is that while the participants' self-regulation ability may have still been insufficient to complete the task independently, the NSs voluntarily scaffolded any comprehension issues they saw as impeding the students' comprehension – that is, the NSs would ask the participants whether they had understood the question prior to them explicitly requesting assistance. The assistance provided by the NSs may be seen as RC from Long's (1980) perspective where the native speakers (NSs) use RC to comprehend the speech of non-native speakers (NNSs) (Keck & Kim, 2014). During the tests, volunteer NSs were instructed not to answer any questions in English or to react to any pauses or silences to prompt the participants' use of RC. In the case when the participants kept silent or the interview was not progressing, the NS was permitted to verify with the student whether or not a clarification was required by asking "Do you understand?", a move defined by Long (1980) as a comprehension check. This was done to help the participants move forward and to complete the interviews in a timely fashion. However, during the test, NSs often provided external help using the term "Do you understand?" before the participants showed their non-understanding by using RC (however, there is no quantitative evidence as Long's NS-driven RC was not part of the data collection for this study). This early prompting from the NSs may be masking whether the participant's self-regulation was sufficient to answer the question or if it circumvented the participants' need to use RC. This premature reaction by the NSs may be due to their previous involvement with learners of Japanese in Canada and the need to support the participants in their effort to communicate. The design of the test assumed the participants using

RC to make up for their lack of self-regulation and the native speaker - to provide scaffolding. However, if the NS provided external help before the participant was given a chance to use RC, the frequency of RC use would be low despite the participant's level of self-regulation. Hence, it could be argued that the drop in RC use on the delayed post-test may not be representative of the participants' true knowledge of RC and consequently, their ability to self-regulate.

The decline in RC use on the delayed post-test can also be explained by the skill acquisition theory, which states that learning is a transformation from a conscious, controlled performance to an automatic one, the process that occurs through frequent practice (Ortega, 2009). While the participants were able to use RC extensively during the training, the provided amount of exposure and practice may not have been sufficient for their knowledge of and ability to use RCs to become automatic. This lack of RC exposure and practice is further exasperated by the lack of RC content in the participants' Japanese course that they were attending at the time of the study. Hence, insufficient reinforcement and practice in RC may have resulted in the participants' inability to retain the skills to use RC on the delayed post-test. In light of the skill acquisition theory, this finding may imply that longer-term training that includes ample practice may be necessary for learners' RC use to become automatized. This, of course, is not surprising given that language learning takes time, commitment, and multiple opportunities for genuine communication (Ortega, 2009).

5.1.3 Types of RC used

In addition to analysing the overall RC use across the tests, the individual use of the three types of RC (RR, CL, and CF) were also counted and analysed. The results revealed that RR (e.g., "Could you say it again?", "Could you speak more slowly?") was dominant across the

three tests and the frequency of CL (e.g., “Does X mean Y?”) and CF (e.g. “Did you say X?”) use increased after the training.

5.1.3.1 Treatment group

The finding that RR was the most commonly used RC is supported by Ozaki (1993), who found that if beginner learners of Japanese use RC at all, they tend to use RR. They do so by either repeating the words they were having problems with or by using formulaic expressions such as “Mou ichido onegai shimasu” (“Could you repeat that again, please??”). These reactions were also seen in this study, with participants using RR the most (Example 1 and Example 2):

Example 1 (treatment group):

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Rachel: Could you repeat that again? (RR)

Example 2 (treatment group):

NS: Please tell me about your memories of the summer holidays.

Michael: Please tell me about your memories of the summer holidays. (RR) Well, I often go to Vancouver.

Another reason why RR was used the most is that it was the only type of RC that the participants could have been possibly exposed to in their Japanese course at the university before the training since the structure is discussed in the course textbook. Yet, despite its presence in the textbook, the instructors at the university generally do not focus on teaching RC; this was the case with the participants in this study for their teacher had explicitly reported not instructing learners in the structure or enforcing its use.

Although RR was the most used RC across all tests, the results revealed that the frequency of CL (e.g., “Does X mean Y?”) and CF (e.g. “Did you say X?”) use increased after

the training. This is in line with the observations made by Tsubaki (2010), who noted that the quality of the conversations among her participants (13 students in Japanese course at a university in Japan) improved after the training in that the participants started to use different types of RC that had not been previously observed in their output; she attributed the change to the training the participants had participated in. Similarly, the participants in this study also started using other types of RC after the training. For example, when the participants used different types of RC, they tended to use them alongside or in combination with other types of RC, such as RR followed by CL. All the participants in the treatment group followed this pattern at least once on the post-test.

Example 3 – Rachel:

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Rachel: Could you repeat that again? (RR)

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Rachel: What does “impression” mean? (CL)

NS: What do you think, what do you think?

Rachel: How do you say it in English? (CL)

NS: Impression (said in English).

Rachel: I am really busy, but I think it is fun.

Example 4: - Michael:

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Michael: Could you speak more slowly? (RR)

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Michael: What does “impression” mean in English? (CL)

NS: Impression (said in English).

Michael: About the university?

NS: Yes.

Michael: My impression of the university is good, and the campus is lively.

In both cases, the use of RR followed by CL may have been due to the participants realizing that RR was insufficient in solving their communication problems, pushing them to experiment with other, perhaps more problem-appropriate and effective RC types. In the examples above, Rachel and Michael’s problem stemmed from the non-understanding of the word “impression”, which RR would not have helped to clarify since it would result in the repetition of the problem word. They then decided to use CL to clarify the meaning of the word and ask for an English translation of the word. The choice to use CL here was explained by Rachel in the following way, “I still didn’t understand [the question]. I think because I didn’t understand [the] vocabulary so I want[ed] to hear it in English”. In fact, according to the results from the questionnaire conducted before the start of the study, 6 out of 12 participants reported limited vocabulary as a major issue they faced in communicating in Japanese. Therefore, for at least half of the participants, RR would not have been enough to solve vocabulary problems, leading them to consider using other types of RC, such as CL and CF, to remedy the difficulties in comprehension.

Hence, exposure to the different types of RC through training may have allowed the participants to diversify their RC strategy repertoire, helping them to recognize that certain types of RC may be more effective in addressing communication problems than others.

5.1.3.2 *Control group*

Although the use of the different types of RC in the treatment group increased, not many changes were observed in the types of RC used by the control group. Similar to the treatment group, RR was the most dominantly used RC across all tests. Although the control group exhibited increased CL and CF usage on the post-test compared to the pre-test, the overall use of RR for the control group declined whereas the treatment group's usage increased. However, the increase of CL and CF were attributed to one participant, James, in particular, who used the most CL and CF on the post-test despite not having received any RC training. Yet, the majority of the participants in the control group struggled to comprehend NSs' input. To signal the difficulty, they would either keep silent or say "Wakarimasen" to mean "I don't understand" or "I don't know" and would then wait for the NS to check if they needed help.

Example 5 (Emma – control group):

NS: What is your impression of the university?

Emma: Impression? (RR) The impression of the university...I don't know. Sorry.

NS: You don't understand the question or don't know the word? What is your impression of the university?

Emma: What does "impression" mean? (CL?)

This reaction of saying "I don't know" is not surprising for according to Ozaki (1993), to signal comprehension challenges beginners tend to use formulaic expressions, with "Wakarimasen" (meaning "I don't know" and "I don't understand") being one of the more common ones (Igarashi, 1999). In fact, the textbook used in the Japanese course the participants were attending at the time of the study presents RR and "Wakarimasen" on the same page as useful expressions in the classroom. Yet, the use of "Wakarimasen" is problematic since native

speakers may not understand if the learner does not know the answer or simply does not understand the meaning of the sentence (Igarashi, 1999). The fact that the use of formulaic expressions such as “Wakarimasen” continued throughout the study for the control group signals that training in RC may be useful in helping students identify the RC strategy that may prove most useful in helping them to effectively solve the comprehension issue they are experiencing. As such, Igarashi (1999) recommends that learners of Japanese be instructed in the different types of RC.

5.1.4 Summary

This study has shown two advantages for short-term RC training: 1) an increase in the overall frequency of RC use and 2) the use of different RC types . First, the short-term training was effective in increasing RC use immediately after the training and increasing the confidence and willingness the participants may have felt about using RC. However, this type of training may not be enough to maintain the gains in the long-term since the increase in RC use did not last beyond the post-test. Second, the training was also effective in encouraging the students to use the different types of RC (RR, CL, and CF), which was evidenced by the increased range and variety of the RC types used. It is clear that these results are due to the training since the control group’s use of RC (both in terms of frequency and types) did not change during the investigation.

5.2 Research Questions 2 and 3: Factors for RC Use and Lack of RC Use

Research question 2 aimed to investigate the factors that influenced the participants’ RC use and non- use. The purpose of research question 3, in turn, was to examine the perceptions the participants in the treatment group had about the training they had received. To answer research question 2, stimulated recall sessions were conducted with all participants (control and treatment

groups) whereas written reflections about the training were collected only from the treatment group after the delayed post-test. Stimulated recall results confirmed that RC were used when encountering comprehension issues and were not used when there was a partial to full understanding. The results of the stimulated recall revealed that both the control and treatment groups shared similar thoughts about what influenced them to use or not to use RC. Additionally, participants in the treatment group had positive impressions of the strategy training and they felt that RC was useful in conversations with native speakers.

Both groups identified factors that promoted and inhibited their RC use. RC use dominated when the participants: (1) were aware of their inability to understand the intended meaning and (2) were willing to use RC to get at the meaning they needed to communicate. The two factors that inhibited RC use were (1) the task type and (2) test design. These four factors are discussed below without distinguishing the groups, starting with the factors that positively impacted RC use.

5.2.1 Factors for RC use

There are two possible factors that promoted RC use. The first is awareness of issues and the second is participants' disposition towards Japanese language learning.

5.2.1.1 Awareness of issues

The stimulated recall interviews revealed that the primary factor for using RC was to understand words that were important to make meaning of the supplied questions and/or responses and that the participants in this study were aware of their comprehension problems and reacted to them by using RC to solve them. This awareness is also supported by the results of the questionnaire conducted before the study began. The participants self-rated their Japanese proficiency (using the categories of weak, fair, and excellent) in terms of their listening,

speaking, reading, and writing abilities. The results showed that the majority of the self-ratings centered on the “fair” ability, meaning that while they felt they could do some things in Japanese with ease, there were still areas the participants needed more information on and/or practice in. Furthermore, the questionnaire also revealed the types of issues the participants were facing. Eleven participants said that they had faced challenges while communicating in Japanese in the past. These included limited knowledge of vocabulary (n=6), challenges with listening comprehension (n=2), and difficulty in recalling vocabulary on the spot (n=1).

Furthermore, the stimulated recall revealed that different types of RC were used in different situations to ease processing³. Participants in both groups were aware of the types of issues they were facing on the tests and were able to verbalise why they used RC (without necessarily using RC terminology) in certain situations.

Some participants, for example, used RR (e.g., “Could you say it again?” or “Could you speak more slowly?”) when they could not hear or misheard the original utterance. For example, Emma in the control group mentioned that she was “bad at hearing” and Rachel from the treatment group said that, in some cases, the NS was speaking “too fast”. The purposes mentioned by the participants for using RR are in line with Celce-Murcia et al.’s (1995) definition of RR, which is requesting repetition when not hearing or not understanding something properly. CL (e.g. “Did you say X?”) was used when a word was new or the participants could not recall its precise meaning. Robert (treatment group) explained his use of CL with “I just never heard the word before or at least I don’t remember hearing the word”. Other learners like Alice (treatment group) used CL when she recognized a word but was unable

³ It is important to note that factors that may have affected the use of CF (e.g. “What do you mean by X?”) were not investigated in this study since the researcher, unwittingly did not question the participants about their use of CF during the stimulated recall sessions.

to recall its meaning during communication. James (control group) commented that “[he didn’t] really know what [the word was], but it sounded like an important word in the sentence and...if [he] asked what [that] word was [he] could piece together what the meaning [of the question] was” – this shows that not only did he recognize his inability to understand the word, but he also recognized the need to understand the word because it was key to the meaning of the question.

Overall, the participants were generally aware of the problems they were facing in interaction.

5.2.1.2 Participants’ disposition

Another factor that promoted RC use is the participants’ positive attitude towards strategy training and the study of Japanese in general. Written reflections from the treatment group showed that most of the participants saw strategy training as useful in overcoming comprehension problems in interaction. This is in line with Dörnyei’s (1995) study that showed the participants’ positive attitudes towards strategy training and their perception of CS usefulness (in his study, the focus was on topic avoidance, circumlocution, and fillers) in communication. This positive disposition is further supported by the fact that the participants in this study were all volunteers, who were motivated students and did not mind spending extra hours outside of class to learn Japanese. This desire for more exposure to Japanese was evidenced by the participants’ efforts to watch Japanese anime (n=10), listen to Japanese music (n=5), read Japanese materials (n=5), and communicate with family members and friends in Japanese (n=3). Needless to say, such students are not common and the findings unearthed here may not be common to other learners of Japanese. Therefore, a study conducted in a regular classroom of Japanese may have yielded different outcomes.

5.2.2 Factors for lack of RC use

The participants reported two factors that inhibited their RC use: (1) task type and (2) test design.

5.2.2.1 Types of task

The task type may have also affected the participants' RC use and lack of RC use. This is because Part 1 of the interview (where the participants were asked questions) required the participants to understand the questions in order to answer them whereas Part 2 focused on the information that NSs provided in response to the participants' questions. Hence, the task in Part 1 arguably made RC use mandatory, but the task in Part 2 did not. Foster and Ohta (2005) state that information gap tasks (which are generally used during strategy training) have been shown to be effective in promoting RC because they provide the most opportunities for RC use.

Information gap tasks are "controlled, task-based interactions particularly those that have a single, convergent outcome, promote a greater number of such repair negotiations than does less structures interaction, whose goal is much more open-ended" (Nakahama, Tyler, & Lier, 2001, p. 378).

Part 1 was arguably more similar to information gap tasks in that it had controlled interactions, while Part 2 had open-ended interactions. In Part 1, the participants were asked seven different questions and could not continue the test without answering the questions. Put another way, the NS controlled the interview, not the participants. On the other hand, in Part 2, participants had seven questions to ask the NS and there were no explicit instructions about what they needed to do beyond asking the seven questions. In fact, Sophia in the control group mentioned that Part 2 was easier because the questions were already written down and she could just read them out loud without thinking about their structure or content.

Therefore, Part 1, unlike Part 2, may have prompted more RC use because the interaction was controlled and task-based. It is also possible that the training prepared the participants to use RC in controlled situations but not in open-ended tasks.

5.2.2.2 Test design and administration

Another reason for RC non-use may have stemmed from the test design (interviews) and how the interviews were conducted. In terms of the test design, the content (especially in Part 1) was the same across the three test periods, with the same questions being asked each time (although the order of the questions varied). After hearing the same questions, it is possible that the participants could at least partially comprehend them and not require RC by the time the delayed post-test was done. In fact, some participants recognised the same questions and reported not needing to use RC because they had remembered and understood the meaning of the questions from the previous tests. For example, Robert (treatment group) said that “I believe I remembered [the question] being asked last week and I remember I had to ask about it...but this time I [kind of] remembered it.” Therefore, because the test design exposed the participants to the same questions several times within a short period (over five weeks), it could have affected their RC non-use.

Additionally, the design of the tests may have affected the participants’ performance. David in the control group mentioned that he did not feel it appropriate to ask questions since the tests were similar to an interview; had this been a casual conversation, he would be more open to asking questions. In the present study, although the researcher framed the tests as one-on-one conversations with a native speaker, never explicitly calling it a test, the participants may have been under the impression that the environment was more formal and as such, the perceived test-like situation prevented them from using RC on certain occasions.

There were several factors behind the participants' RC use and non-use. The participants' awareness of their comprehension issues and the support they felt was needed, along with their willingness to study Japanese outside of class may have positively affected their use of RC. On the other hand, whenever the participants felt like they did not need to answer a question or understand what was being said, they chose not to use RC. Lastly, the test design and how it was conducted may have dissuaded the participants from using RC.

5.3 Conclusion

The present study suggests that short-term strategy training in a Japanese foreign language context is as effective as long-term training for increasing RC use immediately after training. In addition to increasing RC use, the short-term training was also found effective in promoting the participants' usage of the three types of RC (repetition requests, clarification requests, and confirmation requests). However, on the delayed post-test, the RC usage frequency reverted to the pre-test values, possibly due to the differences in the individual development of the participants. The study has also identified some possible reasons why students may choose to employ or forego the use of RC in conversation.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

Several pedagogical implications for the Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) classroom and other foreign language classrooms can be drawn from the findings of this study.

Since the results showed an increase in the number of RC used and the diversity in the types of RC used, it is possible that a short educational intervention in RC strategies may be an effective way to help learners understand the importance and function of RC. Teaching RC is beneficial because it plays an essential role in second language acquisition (SLA) since it increases comprehensibility of the input (Long, 1996) and highlights L2 forms that may be

problematic for the learner (Schmidt, 1995, 2001), making them available for learning (Pica, 1994). It also provides “the learner with a sense of security in the language by allowing him/her room to manoeuvre in times of difficulty” (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991, p. 22), which is especially valuable for learners at the beginner level to maintain conversation (Faucette, 2001).

Specifically, in JFL, RC is important for clarifying an interlocutor’s intentions because the Japanese language features less redundancy than English and relevant information may not be repeated in the conversation which can make it difficult for learners to capture key words in a conversation (Thomson, 1994). This, along with points made in chapter 2 (literature review), show the importance of RC in SLA, and in JFL in particular and the benefits of teaching RC in the language classroom despite its absence in many textbooks, as noted by Thomson (1994) and Igarashi (1999).

This study also suggests that explicit instruction on RC is important in the classroom. Participants in this study were exposed to some RC through their course textbooks, but this does not mean that they knew how or when to use RC. This study has shown that explicit explanations on form, meaning, and use along with practice are essential for enabling students to use RC in interactions. Although this study was conducted in the JFL context, it is possible that similar benefits may be found in other languages classes.

Furthermore, although the strategy training only lasted two hours in total, this was enough for learners to not only increase their use of RC but to also vary the types of RC they used to seek comprehension. The short-term nature of the training makes it less of a burden for teachers to implement in their classes. The benefits of strategy training include learners’ awareness of the different functions RC plays depending on the situation and their increased willingness to take risks when trying to understand interactions in Japanese. However, as the

varied frequency of RC attempts have shown, individual differences may influence the effectiveness of training and should be taken into account when designing lesson plans and tasks.

Lastly, as the results showed, task design may affect the frequency with which RC are used. While the participants were actively using RC in controlled tasks, in which they were required to answer questions from native speakers (i.e. Part 1 of this study's tests), they did not use as much RC in the open-styled tasks when they were passively listening to a native speaker's utterances and were not required to demonstrate understanding (i.e. Part 2 of this study's tests). Despite these shortcomings, the immediate increase of RC use in Part 2 shows promise that, through continued training, RC use may be further refined to become an automatic process.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. One of them is the sample size, which was relatively small with only six participants in the treatment group and six participants in the control group. Although the number of participants was similar to the other studies conducted in the Japanese classroom, the number was not enough to conduct statistical analysis to generalize the findings to other learners.

To account for individual differences, strategy training in this study employed various roles (i.e. speaking and listening), methods (i.e. structured practice and freestyle practice), and types of RC. However, due to the small sample size, individual differences may have been exaggerated, and the training that was effective for this particular group may not be for larger samples.

Regarding the participants, the fact that they were volunteers may have skewed the picture because it takes certain people to volunteer. These were motivated individuals, who did not mind spending the extra hours outside of class to learn Japanese. Sadly, these qualities cannot be generalized to all Japanese learners in the foreign language context.

Another limitation is that the participants in the control group were not given the same opportunities as those in the treatment group, and as such, it is unclear what kind of results the control group would have produced had the tables been reversed.

Considering the test design, using the same questions across the tests may have influenced the participants' use of RC. Alternatives could have been to maintain the same difficulty for all tests but use different questions, or to use different difficult words for each test. Because the other studies conducted in the JFL setting did not control for the type of instruction the participants received (with each student experiencing different interactions), it is difficult to compare how the training affected RC use. However, this study showed effects of RC training under controlled condition for all the participants, making it easier to compare the results among the participants.

Furthermore, the study design made it difficult to judge if the participants did not use RC because they did not have any comprehension issues or if they avoided using RC in spite of comprehension issues. The NSs reported that they had the impression that some students did not know what they had said, especially in Part 2. Although during the stimulated recall sessions attempts were made to see if the participants understood the answers in Part 2, these were not consistent for all the participants and questions. By not verifying whether or not the participants understood the answers in Part 2, this study cannot conclusively state whether the RC non-use was due to the responses having been understood or because the responses were not understood and no attempt was made to solve the comprehension issue. Ultimately the gap in frequency of RC use between Part 1 and Part 2 suggest that the type of activity affected the participants' RC use.

5.6 Future Research Directions

The study of strategic competence in the classroom has been neglected (Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1991). This is especially true for the Japanese as a second language and foreign language context, where there is a limited number of studies that focus on strategic competence in general, and on RC in particular. There is also a lack of commercially available materials that contain explicit information about RC and provide opportunities for practice (Thomson, 1994; Igarashi, 1999), leaving teachers to deal with and allocate time to focus on pragmatics within an already content-heavy curriculum. This leaves many possible avenues to continue researching CS.

First, existing studies on CS are still small in scale and there are no studies conducted in JFL classrooms. Conducting strategy training in a beginner class with more students may reveal different results and it would be interesting to see what role individual differences (e.g., learner's first language, number of languages known, level of Japanese proficiency) may play in the use of RC.

Another area is designing tasks to assess the use of RC or CS in Japanese conversations. Previous studies used original speaking tests specifically designed for a given study (this study is no exception) or standardised English tests such as TOEIC and IELTS. However, there are no standardised Japanese speaking tests available in North America. Therefore, it is difficult for researchers to compare results in any standardized manner. Establishing a well-known standard will help future studies to better compare the chosen methodologies and yielded results. This is also the case for materials on strategy training. Lack of RC coverage in JFL textbooks leads to researchers having to create their own materials, making it impossible to compare the findings across studies and contexts. Additional research in these areas will not only increase our understanding of the underlying processes involved in the study and use of RC, but will also give

Japanese language teachers a direction to focus on when it comes to RC instruction in the classroom.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Questionnaire

Please answer **ALL** the following questions.

Name:	Age:	Gender: ☐ M ☐ F
Major:	Year of Study ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ Other: _____	

- 1) What is your first language? _____
- 2) What language(s) do you know **other than English and Japanese?**

- 3) How long have you been studying Japanese? _____
- 4) By what means have you studied Japanese before taking this Japanese course at the university?
(e.g. online course, tutor, self-study): _____

- 5) Are you currently taking any Japanese courses **outside the university?** If so, where?
☐ yes ☐ no
Location: _____

- 6) How would you rate your Japanese language proficiency in terms of:

Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
☐ weak	☐ weak	☐ weak	☐ weak
☐ fair	☐ fair	☐ fair	☐ fair
☐ excellent	☐ excellent	☐ excellent	☐ excellent

- 7) Please describe what you do in-class and outside of class.

In-Class

How often do you speak Japanese?	
With whom do you practice speaking Japanese?	☐ friends/classmates (non-native) ☐ friends (native speakers) ☐ professors ☐ TAs ☐ others: _____
What kind of speaking activities do you engage in in-class?	

Outside Class

How often do you speak Japanese?	
With whom do you practice speaking Japanese?	☐ friends/classmates (non-native) ☐ friends (native speakers) ☐ professors ☐ TAs ☐ others:
What kind of activities do you engage in outside class (e.g. watching anime and drama, reading)?	

- 8) Have you encountered any issues in communicating in Japanese? If so, please describe one such issue and explain how you resolved it.

☐ yes ☐ no

Issue _____

How you resolved the issue): _____

- 9) Currently, what challenges are you still experiencing when communicating in Japanese?

☐ yes ☐ no

List the challenges: _____

Appendix B

Class Handout for Treatment Group

クラス 1

<会話> シャルマさんと田中さんが大学のキャンパスで話しています。

シャルマ：あの、すみません。

田中：はい。

シャルマ：このへんに、電話ありますか。

田中：電話ね。

シャルマ：ええ。

田中：しょくどう ああ、じどうはんばいき 食堂の自動販売機のとなりにありますよ。

シャルマ：じどう・・・

田中：じどうはんばいき 自動販売機。ほら、あのコーラとかジュースとかの。

シャルマ：ああ。わかりました。**そのとなりですね。**

田中：そう。

シャルマ：どうもすみませんでした。

田中：いいえ。

<質問>

- 1) この会話で何がありましたか。
- 2) シャルマさんは何をさがしていますか。
- 3) さがしているものはどこにありますか。
- 4) じどうはんばいき 自動販売機はなんですか。
- 5) シャルマさんはじどうはんばいき 自動販売機の意味を知っていましたか。
- 6) どうやってじどうはんばいき 自動販売機の意味がわかりましたか。

➤ How to get something you did not catch

- When you did not catch or understand what someone said, you can make a polite request to have it repeated.

すみません、もういちどお願いします。^{ねが}

Excuse me but could you say it again, please?

すみません、ゆっくりお願いします。^{ねが}

Excuse me but could you speak more slowly, please?

- When you could only understand part of a key word or phrase, you can repeat it hesitantly; this also signals to the speaker that you would like it repeated.

じどうはんばいき
田中: 自動販売機のとりにありますよ。

シャルマ: じどう。

田中: じどうはんばいき。

➤ How to confirm you have understood (1)

- To indicate that you are convinced or satisfied with the information given, repeat or paraphrase using ね.

しょくどう じどうはんばいき
田中: 食堂の自動販売機のとりにありますよ

シャルマ: となりですね。

- If the information surprises you, you can show this by using a short rising intonation.

しょくどう じどうはんばいき
田中: 食堂の自動販売機のとりにありますよ

シャルマ: となりですか。

クラス2

<会話> キャンパスの掲示板的^{けいじばん}の前^{まえ}で留学生と山下さんが話しています。

ブラウン：あの、すみません。

山下：はい。

ブラウン：このコンパってなんですか。

山下：ええと、先生や友だちとパーティーをするんですよ。

ブラウン：ああ、そうですか。

シャルマ：この字、何て読むんでしょうか。

学生：ええと、あ、これね。宅急便。

シャルマ：たっきゅうびん・・・。

学生：ええ。ううん・・・荷物^{にもつ}をとどけるサービス。

シャルマ：あの、すみません。英語でなんていうんですか。

学生：ええと、delivery service かな。

シャルマ：ああ、わかりました。どうもありがとうございます。

<質問>

- 1) 2つの会話で何がありましたか。
- 2) 二人の留学生は「コンパ」、「宅急便」の意味を知っていましたか。
- 3) 「コンパ」の意味はなんですか。
- 4) 「宅急便」の意味なんですか。
- 5) どうやって知らない言葉の意味がわかりました。

➤ How to ask for information about a word

- Finding out the meaning.

コンパって何ですか。

What does “Konpa” mean?

() って何ですか。

- Finding out an English or Japanese equivalent.

たっきゅうびん
A: 宅急便は英語で何ていうんですか。

B: Delivery service かな。

A: **Physics** は日本語で何ていうんですか。

ぶつり
B: 物理ですよ。

<Word>は<Language>でなんていうんですか。

➤ How to confirm you have understood (2)

- Finding out if your prediction is correct or not.

きょうじゅ
A: 教授や友達とパーティーをするんですよ。

きょうじゅ
B: 教授って先生ですか。

() って () ですか。

Appendix C

Information Gap Task

Task for Class 1

A

こにしきやそきち

小錦八十吉さん

こにしき りきし かつやく りきし
 小錦さんは有名な力士でした。今はテレビで活躍するタレントです。力士のときは
 たいかい かいゆうしょう こにしき しゅっしん こうこうせい
 大会で3回優勝したことがあります。小錦さんは、ハワイの出身です。高校生
 からだ おお ちからも こにしき こうこう そつぎょうご りきし
 のとき体が大きくて、力持ちでした。小錦さんは、高校を卒業後、すもうの力士
 らいにち にほんじん りきし いっしょ まいにち
 になるために、来日しました。日本人の力士と一緒に、すもうのけいこを毎日しまし
 た。また、はじめて日本へ来たとき、日本語が全然わかりませんでした。でも、
 いっしょう べんきょう いま にほんご
 一生けんめい勉強したので、今は日本語がペラペラです。

りきし かつやく たいかい
 *力士：sumo wrestler 活躍：successful タレント：TV star 大会：tournament

ゆうしょう
 優勝：win a championship 出身：origin 力持ち：strong 来日：come to Japan
 いっしょう
 けいこ：practice 一生けんめい：very hard

B

たにりょうこ

谷亮子さん

たにりょうこ げんざい まえ
 谷亮子さんは現在、()です。その前は、()でした。
 からだ ちい きん
 体は小さいですが、これまで()で()、金メダルを
 ()しました。谷さんは、()2年生の時、柔道を
 はじ こうこうせい
 始めました。そして、高校生のとき、バルセロナオリンピックに()し
 たに ごだいがく じどうしゃ
 ました。谷さんは、その後大学を卒業して、「トヨタ自動車」に()しま
 した。()ながら、柔道を続けました。現在は、柔道を
 ()せいじか にほん しごと
 ()し政治家です。日本のスポーツ()のために仕事を
 しています。

A

こにしきやそきち
小錦八十吉さん

こにしき ゆうめい () でした。いま かつやく ()
小錦さんは有名な () でした。今はテレビで活躍する ()
です。りきし () かい () したことがあります。
こにしき () こうこうせい からだ おお
小錦さんは、ハワイの () です。高校生のとき 体が大きくて、
() でした。こにしき こうこう そつぎょうご りきし
() しました。にほんじん りきし いっしょ () まいにち
日本人の力士と一緒に、すもうの () を毎日
にほん にほんご ぜんぜん
しました。また、はじめて日本へ来たとき、日本語が全然わかりませんでした。でも、
() べんきょう いま にほんご () 勉強したので、今は日本語が、 () です。

B

たにりょうこ
谷亮子さん

たにりょうこ げんざい せいじか まえ じゅうどう せんしゅ からだ ちい
谷亮子さんは現在、政治家です。その前は、柔道の選手でした。体は小さいで
すが、ごりん かい きん かくとく たに しょうがつこう ねんせい
これまで五輪で2回、金メダルを獲得しました。谷さんは、小学校2年生の
とき じゅうどう はじ こうこうせい
時、柔道を始めました。そして、高校生のとき、バルセロナオリンピックに
はつしゅつじょう たに ごだいがく そつぎょう じどうしゃ にゅうしゃ
初出場しました。谷さんは、その後大学を卒業して、「トヨタ自動車」に入社
つと じゅうどう つづ げんざい じゅうどう いんたい せいじか
しました。勤めながら、柔道を続けました。現在は、柔道を引退し政治家です。
にほん しんこう しごと
日本のスポーツ振興のために仕事をしています。

*選手：athlete 五輪：Olympic 獲得：acquire 初出場：debut 入社：join a company
つと いんたい しんこう
勤めながら：while working 引退：retire 振興：promotion, encouragement

Task for Class 2

A や とり
焼き鳥レシピ

ざいりょう

材料：とり肉(450 グラム)、 ()

() の材料：さとう(50 グラム)、しょうゆ(120 ミリリットル)、
みりん(40 ミリリットル)、 () (60 ミリリットル)

1. とり肉と白ねぎを () に切る。
2. () にとり肉と白ねぎを交互に () 。
3. フライパンで () で焼く。焦げ目がついたら、 () 。
4. () でたれの材料を入れて、あたためる。
5. 4のフライパンに3の串をいれて、 () できあがり。

B この や
お好み焼きのレシピ

ざいりょう

こむぎこ

ぶたにく

材料：小麦粉(50 グラム)、だし(100 ミリリットル)、豚肉 (60 グラム)、
キャベツ(100 グラム)、たまご(1 こ) おこのみやきソース、マヨネーズ

1. ボールに小麦粉、だし、たまごを入れてまぜる。
2. その中にキャベツを入れてまぜる。
3. フライパンに 油 をひいて、2を18センチの円で焼く。
4. 3の上に豚肉をおく。3分したら、裏を焼く。
5. 最後に、お好み焼きソース、マヨネーズをかけてできあがり。

ざいりょう

こむぎこ

ぶたにく

* 材料：ingredients 小麦粉：flour だし：soup 豚肉：pork たまご：egg まぜる：mix

あぶら

えん

うら

油 をひく：heat oil on pan 円：circle 焼く：grill おく：put 裏：other side

A や とり 焼き鳥レシピ

ざいりょう しろ
材 料 : とり肉(450 グラム)、白ねぎ(2 本)

ざいりょう
たれの材 料 : さとう(50 グラム)、しょうゆ(120 ミリリットル) 、
みりん(40 ミリリットル)、お酒 (60 ミリリットル)

1. とり肉と白ねぎを3センチに切る。
2. 串にとり肉と白ねぎを交互にさす。
3. フライパンで中火で焼く。焦げ目がついたら、ひっくり返す。
4. べつのフライパンでたれの材 料を入れて、あたためる。
5. 4のフライパンに3の串をいれて、火が通ったらできあがり。

ざいりょう しろ くし
*材 料 : ingredients 白ねぎ : leak たれ : sauce 串 : skewer
こうご や こ め かえ
交互にさす : stick alternatively 焼く : grill 焦げ目 : grilled surface ひっくり返す : flip
とお
火が通る : cooked できあがり : finish

B この や お好み焼きのレシピ

ざいりょう
材 料 : () (50g) 、だし(100ml)、 () (60g)、
キャベツ(100g)、 () (1 こ)、おこのみやきソース、マヨネーズ

1. () に小麦粉、だし、たまごを入れて () 。
2. その中にキャベツを入れてまぜる。
3. フライパンに () をひいて、2を () で焼く。
4. 3の上に () 。3分したら、 () を焼く。
5. 最後に、お好み焼きソース、マヨネーズを、 () できあがり。

Appendix D

Information Gap Task (English Translation)

A Ryoko Tani

Ryoko Tani is a politician. Before she became a politician, she was a judo athlete. Even though she is of small stature, she has won two Olympic gold medals. She started judo when she was in the second grade. She then went to her first Olympics in Barcelona when she was in high school. She then graduated from university and started working at Toyota. While she was working, she continued practicing judo. She has now retired from judo and is now a politician. She is now working for the promotion of Japanese sports.

B Yasokichi Konishiki

Mr. Konishiki was a famous sumo wrestler. He is now a TV personality. When he was a sumo wrestler, he won three division championships. He is from Hawaii. When he was a high school student, he was strong and large. After he graduated from high school, to become a sumo wrestler, he went to Japan. He trained everyday with Japanese sumo wrestlers. Also, when he went to Japan for the first time, he did not understand Japanese, but is now fluent.

A Yakitori Recipe

Ingredients: Chicken (450g), 2 Leeks

Sauce Ingredients: Sugar (50g), Soy Sauce (120ml), Japanese Rice Wine (40ml), Japanese Cooking Wine (60ml)

1. Dice chicken into 3cm cubes and leeks into 3cm pieces
2. Skewer the chicken and scallion pieces onto the sticks, alternating between the two
3. Grill over medium heat, flipping once grill marks appear
4. In a separate pan, mix the sauce ingredients and bring to a boil
5. Dip the cooked skewers in the sauce heating in the pan until the chicken is cooked.

B Okonomiyaki Recipe

Ingredients: Flour (50g), Bonito Stock (100ml), Sliced Pork Belly (60g), Sliced Cabbage (100g), 1 egg, Okonomiyaki Sauce, Mayonnaise

1. Mix the flour, bonito stock, and egg in a bowl.
2. Add cabbage to mixture.
3. Heat oil in a pan and pour batter into 18cm circles.
4. Place slices of pork on top of each circle. Flip after 3 minutes.
5. Once cooked through, add okonomiyaki sauce and mayonnaise to taste and serve.

Appendix E

Answers in Part 2 (Post-Test and Delayed Post-Test)

Post-Test

Question in Japanese	English Translation of the Question	NS's Answer in Japanese	English Translation of NS's Answer
カナダで今何をしていますか。 Ima Canada de naniwo shiteimasuka.	What are you doing in Canada?	日本語の先生をしながら、修士をとるために勉強しています。	While I am a Japanese teacher, I am also studying to get my Master's degree.
カナダについてどう思いますか。 Canada nit suite dou omoimasuka.	What do you think of Canada?	多国籍な国で色々な文化があって、とても住みやすいところだと思います。	It is a multi-national country, there is lots of culture, and I think it is a nice place to live in.
どうしてオタワに住むことにしましたか。 Doushite Ottawa ni sumukotoni shimashitaka.	Why did you decide to live in Ottawa?	大学生のときに交換留学でキングストンで暮らして、とても気に入ったからです。	When I was a university student, I was living in Kingston as part of an exchange programme, and I became to like life in Canada.
出身はどちらですか。 Shusshin wa dochira desuka,	Where is your hometown?	兵庫県の神戸市です。	Kobe in Hyogo.
出身地で有名なものはなんですか。 Shusshinchi de yuumeina monowa nandesuka.	What is your hometown famous for?	六甲山から見える夜の景色です。	The night view from Rokko mountain.

日本でおすすめの場所はどこですか。 Nihon de osusume no basyo wa dokodesuka.	What place do you recommend visiting in Japan?	篠山です。	Sasayama.
どうしてですか。 Doushite desuka.	Why do you recommend visiting that place in Japan?	篠山はおいしい水があって、手打ちそばが食べられます。	In Sasayama, there is good water and you can eat handmade soba.

Delayed Post-Test

Question in Japanese	English Translation of the Question	NS's Answer in Japanese	English Translation of NS's Answer
カナダで今何をしていますか。 Ima Canada de naniwo shiteimasuka.	What are you doing in Canada?	今、訪問看護師として働いています。	I am working as a home-visiting nurse right now.
カナダについてどう思いますか。 Canada nit suite dou omoimasuka.	What do you think of Canada?	日本と比べて、カナダは多国籍な国だと思います。	Compared to Japan, I think Canada is more multi-national.
どうしてオタワに住むことにしましたか。 Doushite Ottawa ni sumukotoni shimashitaka.	Why did you decide to live in Ottawa?	ワーホリで一度オタワに来たことがあって、旦那もオタワに住んでいたからです。	I came to Ottawa for a working holiday, and my husband was also living in Ottawa.

出身はどちらですか。 Shusshin wa dochira desuka,	Where is your hometown?	兵庫県の三田市です。	I am from Sanda city in the Hyogo prefecture.
出身地で有名なものはなんですか。 Shusshinchi de yuumeina monowa nandesuka.	What is your hometown famous for?	人と自然の博物館で、恐竜の化石があります。	The Hitotoshizenno Museum which has fossils of dinosaurs.
日本でおすすめの場所はどこですか。 Nihon de osusume no basyo wa dokodesuka.	What place do you recommend visiting in Japan?	沖縄県の西表島です。	Iriomodejima in Okinawa.
どうしてですか。 Doushite desuka.	Why do you recommend visiting that place in Japan?	前に行ったときに、マングローブの観察やカヌーができて、とてもいい旅行だったからです。	Last time I visited, I went to see mangroves and I canoed, and it was a fun trip.

Appendix F

Ethics Clearance

CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS CLEARANCE

Ethics clearance for the following research has been cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB) at Carleton University. CUREB is constituted and operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2).

Ethics Protocol Clearance ID: Project # 105027

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Eva Kartchava, Carleton University

Research Team (and roles) (If applicable): Kaori Sugimura (Student Research: Master's Student)

Study Title: The Impact of Short-Term Strategy Training in Request for Clarification in Japanese Classroom [Kaori Sugimura]

Funding Source (If applicable):

Effective: October 04, 2016

Expires: October 31, 2017.

Restrictions:

This certification is subject to the following conditions:

1. Clearance is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modification to the approved research must be submitted to CUREB-B. All changes must be approved prior to the continuance of the research.

3. An Annual Application for the renewal of ethics clearance must be submitted and cleared by the above date. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the closure of the file. If funding is associated, funds will be frozen.
4. A closure request must be sent to CUREB-B when the research is complete or terminated.
5. Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to CUREB-B.
6. It is the responsibility of the student to notify their supervisor of any adverse events, changes to their application, or requests to renew/close the protocol.
7. Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2nd edition and the Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.

Please email the Ethics Coordinators at ethics@carleton.ca if you have any questions. If a researcher requires a certificate with a signature, they may contact ethics@carleton.ca to have one generated.

CLEARED BY:

Date:

Andy Adler, PhD, Chair, CUREB-B

October 04, 2016

Shelley Brown, PhD, Vice-Chair, CUREB-B