

Exploring the Potential of Subtitled Foreign Media

for the Learning of Conventional Expressions

by

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Abstract

Subtitled media have been found to be a beneficial tool in the acquisition of second language vocabulary, particularly for beginner-level learners. The present study follows up on Koolstra and Beentjes' (1999) suggestion that subtitled media may also be helpful in learning expressions and their associated contexts. Six beginner-level learners of Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) were taught the same thirty conventional expressions taken from a subtitled Japanese television drama – a control group without pragmatic instruction and a treatment group viewing the drama while taking note of form, meaning, and context of the expressions, as per Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis. All participants were tested prior and subsequently with an oral discourse completion task (ODCT) and interviewed regarding their experiences. The results suggest that utilizing a target language television drama may be more beneficial than traditional methodology in multiple ways for learners both immediately and long-term.

Keywords: L2 pragmatic competence, conventional expressions, subtitles, Japanese as a foreign language (JFL)

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables.....	vii
List of Figures	ix
List of Appendices	x
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Background and research questions.....	1
1.2 Organization of the present study.....	3
Chapter 2: Literature Review	4
2.1 Introduction	4
2.2 Subtitle and SLA studies	5
2.3 Pragmatics and pragmatic competence	11
2.4 Conventional expressions.....	13
2.5 Politeness and formality in Japanese	15
2.6 Rationale for teaching conventional expressions	16
2.7 Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis	19
2.8 Interlanguage	21
2.9 Conclusion.....	24
Chapter 3: Methodology	26

3.1	Study design overview	26
3.2	Participants	27
3.3	Procedures	31
3.3.1	<i>The preparation period</i>	31
3.3.2	<i>The treatment period</i>	36
3.3.3	<i>The culmination period</i>	42
3.4	Sources of data	45
Chapter 4: Results.....		48
4.1	Findings.....	48
4.2	Group-level findings.....	48
4.2.1	<i>At the onset</i>	48
4.2.2	<i>Following the treatment period</i>	51
4.2.3	<i>Over time</i>	57
4.3	Individual-level findings	62
4.3.1	<i>Louis</i>	62
4.3.2	<i>Brad</i>	66
4.3.3	<i>Jason</i>	68
4.3.4	<i>Victor</i>	72
4.3.5	<i>Shawn</i>	74
4.3.6	<i>Idina</i>	76
4.4	Summary	78
Chapter 5: Discussion.....		80
5.1	Introduction	80
5.2	Interlanguage development.....	82

5.3	What learners need to know in regards to conventional expressions	90
5.4	Formality judgments	94
5.5	An examination of the drama method.....	97
5.6	Frequency and saliency	101
5.7	Conclusion.....	103
Chapter 6: Conclusions		104
6.1	The major findings and limitations of the present study	104
6.2	The implications of the present study for future research and teaching	105
References		107
Appendices		120

List of Tables

Table 1: Participant background information.....	29
Table 2: The 30 target Japanese conventional expressions.....	32
Table 3: Pre-test prompts and intended answers.....	37
Table 4: Prompts changed on post-test.....	43
Table 5: Prompts added to delayed post-test.....	45
Table 6: Control group pre-test results.....	48
Table 7: Treatment group pre-test results.....	49
Table 8: Previously learned Japanese expressions.....	50
Table 9: Control group post-test results.....	51
Table 10: Treatment group post-test results.....	51
Table 11: Expressions successfully learned by each group.....	53
Table 12: Results of expressions encountered once by treatment group.....	55
Table 13: Control group improvement scores (by correct responses).....	55
Table 14: Treatment group improvement scores (by correct responses).....	56
Table 15: Control group improvement scores (by correct and alternative responses).....	56
Table 16: Treatment group improvement scores (by correct and alternative responses).....	57
Table 17: Control group delayed post-test results.....	58

Table 18: Treatment group delayed post-test results.....	58
Table 19: Control group reduction scores.....	59
Table 20: Treatment group reduction scores.....	59
Table 21: Retention of “old” and “new” expressions by control group.....	60
Table 22: Retention of “old” and “new” expressions by treatment group.....	60

List of Figures

Figure 1: Visual representation of Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis.....	20
Figure 2: Integrated representation of pragmatic competence.....	21
Figure 3: Organizing structure of this case study.....	27
Figure 4: An example of a test item as it appears on <i>Moodle</i> “quiz”.....	38
Figure 5: An example of part of an activity sheet for the treatment group.....	41
Figure 6: Amalgamated theory of the required knowledge for pragmatic competence in L2 conventional expressions.....	94

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Control group activity sheets.....	120
Appendix B: Treatment group activity sheets.....	124
Appendix C: Interview guide.....	129
Appendix D: Control group interview transcript.....	131
Appendix E: Treatment group interview transcript.....	134
Appendix F: Pre-test results.....	146
Appendix G: Post-test results.....	148
Appendix H: Delayed post-test results.....	150

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and research questions

Japanese is one of the most commonly learned languages in the world. In 2012, the number of learners rose yet again to four million (“More people studying Japanese”, 2013). At the midsize Canadian university in which the present study took place, Japanese is the second-most studied foreign language (after Spanish).

Perhaps what makes Japanese unique compared to other foreign languages in North America is that, in spite of it having little instrumental value (aside from an intention to work in Japan, of course), many students opt to learn Japanese for the sake of interest (Fukunaga, 2006). Many of those students are interested in Japanese popular media culture, such as *manga* (comics), *anime* (animation), video games, Japanese music, game shows, and television dramas (“More people studying Japanese”, 2013). Due to their media interest, some learners begin their formal language study already familiar with some Japanese words and expressions.

This phenomenon mirrors what European researchers have found in regards to children’s knowledge of English prior to commencing formal English language education. The explanation, they discovered, was that the children were incidentally acquiring English from subtitled English-language media, such as movies, television programs, and video games (Kuppens, 2010; Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999). It is plausible, then, that Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) learners are also benefiting from such media exposure.

In fact, research into subtitled media and its effects on second language acquisition (SLA) has demonstrated that viewing such media benefits (e.g., d’Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999; Kuppens, 2010; Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999) and motivates (Danan, 2004) language learners.

However, the field has almost exclusively been interested in vocabulary learning (however, see Borrás & Lafayette [1994] for speaking skills and Van Lommel, Laenen, and d'Ydewalle [2006] for grammar acquisition). A longitudinal (as proposed by Vulchanova, Aurstad, Kvitnes, & Eshuis, 2015) case study examining subtitled media and potential *pragmatic* gains in a language other than English (e.g., Garza, 1991) would address a few gaps in subtitle research.

In that way, the present study brings together two areas of SLA – subtitles and pragmatics – in a way that has not been previously accomplished. The rather large field of pragmatics, or in this case, interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) is further narrowed to focus on *conventional expressions*; that is, phrases uttered predictably in certain contexts such as “No problem” and “Thank goodness.” Such expressions make up a significant portion of daily conversation and are an important part of polite discourse in many cultures (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012). This is particularly true in Japanese, where “in many situations, there is no phrase better than the set phrase” (Kaneko, 1992, p. 18). In general, language learners do not use conventional expressions as often or as appropriately as native speakers (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009), which can result in at best a funny story but at worst a damaged relationship (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001).

Pragmatics and conventional expressions are an important and yet often neglected aspect of language learning (Taguchi, 2011). Unfortunately, even when conventional expressions are addressed in FL classes, they are often treated as simple vocabulary items, despite being much more complex. The need for finding a better methodology is evident. Is it possible that subtitled foreign language media could prove a (more) useful teaching tool?

Theoretically backed by Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis (that learners must draw attention to form, meaning/function, and context), the present study is guided by the following research questions:

Q1: Are subtitled foreign media beneficial for the acquisition of pragmatic competence?

Q1a: Do learners believe them to be useful?

Q2: Is drawing attention to form, function, and context of conventional expressions with the use of subtitled foreign media more effective than teaching conventional expressions as vocabulary items?

1.2 Organization of the present study

In order to address those questions and explore this topic, a detailed case study was carried out in the form of a pedagogical intervention on a small number of beginner-level learners of JFL. Thirty Japanese conventional expressions were taken from the first five episodes of the popular 2008 drama, *Last Friends*. The details of the methodology and the decisions that went into it are laid out in Chapter 3. Before that, in Chapter 2, a description of the main topics of this thesis are provided, including a review of previous relevant subtitle studies, the theory of pragmatic competence, an examination of conventional expressions and their importance, an exposition of Schmidt's noticing hypothesis, and a brief introduction to common interlanguage processes.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the present study, focusing on the outcomes of the pre-test and post-tests first at the group level and then at the individual level before Chapter 5 delves deeper into the larger topics that emerged and how they relate to previous research and theories and to what the participants shared during the interviews. Chapter 5 also critically reflects on this study and the methodology it explored. Finally, Chapter 6 contains the conclusions of this study, wrapping it up and setting an eye on the future of subtitles and pragmatics research and teaching.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Put succinctly, the present study is a subtitle study on the learning of conventional expressions in a foreign language. It explores the effects of using *regular subtitles* (henceforth simply “subtitles”) – that is, an imperfect first language (L1) textual translation of streaming second language (L2) audio set to the background of visual stimuli, such as a movie or television show. This study, therefore, belongs in the same category as previous studies examining all types of on-screen text (including reversed subtitling, captions, and keyword captions) and their effect on second language acquisition (SLA). Throughout this thesis, the terms “learn” and “acquire” will be used interchangeably, in the style of subtitle studies (Matielo, D’Ely, & Baretta, 2015), rather than attempting to disentangle the two ideas, which is not the purpose of the present study.

The focus of this study, rather, is on conventional expressions (a.k.a. *formulaic language*, *formulas*, *pragmatic routines*, *situation-based utterances or SBUs*, *multiword units*, and *conversational routines*). *Conventional expressions* can be defined as set phrases that are used predictably in certain contexts such as “It’s nice to meet you,” “I’m sorry,” and “Thank God.” As will be discussed further, conventional expressions are an important and worthwhile target feature of language learning. The target language (TL) in the present study is a foreign one (i.e., Japanese), by which is meant a language not commonly spoken in the community (i.e., Canada).

In order to provide the background necessary for this study, the following literature review will first briefly discuss the field of subtitle and SLA studies with particular relevance to this study, before considering pragmatics in general and conventional expressions in particular. This will be followed by the rationale behind teaching pragmatic expressions and the key

theories in pragmatics research: Schmidt's noticing hypothesis and the interlanguage hypothesis. Finally, the conclusion section will review the gaps that this present study will fill as well as make the objectives of this study explicit.

2.2 Subtitle and SLA studies

Research on the potential of subtitled media as a language learning resource began in the early 1980s when foreign language teachers began to experiment with using subtitled films and television shows in their classrooms (Gambier, Caimi, & Mariotti, 2015) and has since expanded into its own field of academic study, cumulating in the 2015 release of the book, *Subtitles and Language Learning* (Gambier et al., 2015). The studies have encompassed many variables and been so wide-ranging in scope that, although generally quite positive (Matielo et al., 2015; Montero Perez, Van den Noortgate, & Desmet, 2013), they are difficult to compare (Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008; Montero Perez et al., 2013b). Studies have covered all levels of proficiency from pre-beginners (as in no experience with the language) (e.g., d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999; Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999; Van Lommel et al., 2006; Kuppens, 2010) to advanced (e.g., Garza, 1991; Markham, 1999; Vulchanova et al., 2015), on various modalities from music videos (e.g., Garza, 1991) to cartoons (e.g., Van Lommel et al., 2006; Karakas & Sariçoban, 2012; Vulchanova et al., 2015) to films (e.g., Stewart & Pertusa, 2004; Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008; Garnier, 2014), and with multiple target languages including French (e.g., Lambert & Holobow, 1984; Danan, 1992; Borrás & Lafayette, 1994; Montero Perez, Peters, & Desmet, 2013; Garnier, 2014), Spanish (e.g., Stewart & Pertusa, 2004), Danish (e.g., d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999), and of course, English (e.g., Neuman & Koskinen, 1992; Markham, 1999; Kuppens, 2010; Wang, 2012; Vulchanova et al., 2015). One thing they do usually have in common is the aspect of language examined: vocabulary acquisition. See Borrás and Lafayette (1994) for speaking skills,

however, or d'Ydewalle and Van de Poel (1999) for syntax and morphology, and Van Lommel and associates (2006) for grammar acquisition.

Yet another characteristic of subtitle studies that adds to the colourful variety is that there is more than one form of subtitle. In actuality there are four types: *regular subtitles* (L2 audio + L1 text), *reversed subtitles* (L1 audio + L2 text), *captions* (L2 audio + L2 text), and *keyword captions* (L2 audio + L2 keyword-only text). Reversed subtitling, while much less familiar, has been shown to be quite promising (e.g., Danan, 1992; Garnier, 2014; d'Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999). Captions (a.k.a. *L2 subtitles*, *bimodal input*, *intralingual subtitles*, and *teletext*) have also proved to be successful with learners (e.g., Garza, 1991; Markham, 1999; Borrás & Lafayette, 1994).

When it comes to regular subtitles, however, the research is less congruent. "Watching films with subtitles is a popular activity among languages learners," Garnier (2014, p. 21) notes, and in fact, Europeans have been found to incidentally and intentionally acquire English from subtitled American television and films (Danan, 2004; Kuppens, 2010). Opponents argue, however, that subtitles are distracting and are a hindrance to language learning. As Stewart and Pertusa (2004) put it, although L1 subtitles provide "students with the always-welcome opportunity to better understand what is happening on screen, [they do] not encourage learners to use their previously acquired listening skills" (p. 438). That belief, while seemingly common-sense, is incorrect. In their review of the literature, Matielo, D'Ely, and Baretta (2015) pointed out that one of the greatest contributions of a study by Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) is that "the word recognition in the no subtitles condition was not superior to the subtitled condition, suggesting that the belief that reading subtitles might distract viewers from hearing [L2] words may be just a belief" (p. 168). Dual-task experiments have provided support for this idea,

demonstrating that viewers *do* attend to both the L1 and L2 input in parallel (Vulchanova et al., 2015; Danan, 2004).

Some studies on subtitles have not been entirely positive. Spanish language teachers Stewart and Pertusa (2004) subjected their intermediate-level university students to the viewing of two full-length Spanish films, approximately half the students with regular (English) subtitles and half with Spanish captions. All the students were pre-tested and post-tested with a multiple choice (MC) test on vocabulary present in the films. The improvements were minimal, with the captions group outperforming the subtitles group. The anonymous questionnaire revealed that students strongly believed in the benefits of captions over subtitles for language learning.

Similarly, Hayati and Mohmedi (2011) tested high “intermediate” learners of English in Iran with an immediate MC vocabulary post-test after viewing thirty minutes of BBC mini documentaries on weather. The university students viewed the videos with either Persian subtitles, English captions, or video-only. They were also encouraged to write down their views on the usefulness of subtitles for language learning. The caption group performed best, followed by the Persian subtitle group, and then the video-only condition. While some students expressed that they “needed” Persian subtitles, many viewed them as too “distracting” and preferred captions.

Vulchanova and her colleagues’ (2015) study in Norway was a little different. They tested “intermediate” and “advanced” teenage learners of English on their comprehension and vocabulary gains following the viewing of a single episode of *Family Guy* with either regular subtitles, reversed subtitles, or no on-screen text. The immediate comprehension MC test found that both subtitle groups gained, with very little difference between them. Meanwhile, the delayed MC word recognition and definition task showed no long-term benefits.

However, the previously discussed three studies were less interested in the potential benefits of subtitles than comparing them to the form of on-screen text the researchers believed to be superior: captions. Unlike those studies, Karakas and Sariçoban (2012) directly compared a subtitles condition to a no-subtitles condition. They tested upper-intermediate Turkish learners of English on their vocabulary development on eighteen target verbs taken from two episodes of *Family Guy*. In this case, while the subtitles group improved, it was not statistically superior to the no-subtitles group. They argued, therefore, that it was the viewing of the cartoon itself that was beneficial, with the subtitles having little effect.

The problem with all four of the above studies, however, is that the participants were too proficient to truly benefit from regular subtitles. Recall that all those studies worked with so-called “intermediate” to “advanced” learners. Since its inception, research in subtitles and SLA has been trying to determine the best form of subtitles for different levels of language learners. The general consensus is a sort of linear progression from regular subtitles for beginners, followed by reversed subtitles and/or captions, until gradually no on-screen text is required (Matielo et al., 2015; Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008; Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011). Beginners are believed to benefit the most from L1 subtitles, or as Danan (1992) calls it, the “native language crutch,” because “captions cannot compensate for an excessively wide gap” between the learner’s ability and the language in the video (Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008, p. 70). Rather than a “crutch,” which sounds somewhat demeaning, regular subtitles can be thought of like training wheels on a bicycle: something a beginner relies on until they can do without. After all, as a 2009 study by Webb and Rodgers humbly reminds us, learners would need to know 95% of the words present in audiovisual media to understand it (as cited in Montero Perez et al., 2013a). Beginners clearly require some L1 assistance, which regular subtitles provide. In 2008, Bianchi

and Ciabattoni completed a comprehensive study involving beginners to advanced learners of English in Italy. They tested the learners on their content comprehension and vocabulary acquisition after watching clips from either a film with low correspondence between script and visuals (*Fantasia*) or high correspondence (*Harry Potter*) with either regular subtitles, captions, or no “text aids.” They concluded that

the three proficiency groups benefited to different extents from the various types of text aids: on the whole, beginners were advantaged to a greater degree by subtitles, while more advanced levels gained more advantage from captions. This may partly be due to the fact that subtitles are processed automatically, while captions require a higher level of knowledge of the language before they can be processed without interfering (at least to a minimal extent) with other cognitive processes (listening and taking stock of the video content) (p. 87).

Regular subtitles were also found to be more effective than reversed subtitles for beginners and pre-beginners by d’Ydewalle and Van de Poel (1999). They showed a ten minute still-motion movie to Flemish children who were beginners in French and pre-beginners of Danish under five audio-subtitle conditions: Dutch-French, French-Dutch, Dutch-Danish, Danish-Dutch, and Dutch-Dutch (the control group). After testing them with a MC quiz on vocabulary translation (with words that appeared at least four times in the film), syntax, and morphology, they discovered that the foreign language was best in the soundtrack (i.e., regular subtitles) and that there was “real but limited foreign-language acquisition by children watching a subtitled movie, despite the short exposure” (p. 242).

Similarly, Dutch researchers Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) found that both pre-beginners (grade 4) and beginners (grade 6) of English in the Netherlands learned more new words after

watching a short film with Dutch subtitles than without. All 246 children were instructed to “just watch” a 15-minute documentary on grizzly bears twice. Following that, they were given an immediate MC vocabulary test in which the English stem was spoken and the Dutch possible equivalents were written, an auditory word recognition task, and a questionnaire about the frequency of viewing subtitled media at home. While students in the un-subbed condition still acquired new words, the subtitled group performed better. Unsurprisingly, the beginners outperformed the pre-beginners. And, interestingly, children who reported to habitually watching subtitled media at home performed significantly better than those who had less experience with subtitles.

More recently, Kuppens (2010) investigated an interesting phenomenon in Belgium. The eleven-year-old Flemish children in that study had not yet begun formal education in English, and yet they already had some knowledge and ability in the language. Kuppens tested 361 children on their translation skills (from Dutch to English and English to Dutch) orally (as they were assumed to be unfamiliar with English spelling) and compared that to the amount of time the children spent watching subtitled audiovisual media, listening to English music, and playing video games in English. Watching subtitled media proved the most powerful factor aiding the children’s language abilities and that, similar to Koolstra and Beentjes’ (1999) study, the more they watched, the better they performed.

Evidently, there is much to be further examined in regards to subtitles and SLA. For one, subtitle research has called for research with non-European target languages (e.g., Garza, 1991). The field also requires more longitudinal studies, with long-term effects, and to allow learners more interaction with the media. As well, a language feature other than vocabulary should be studied. While Koolstra and Beentjes (1999) suggested that subtitled media may aid learners in

learning expressions and which contexts they are used, that has yet to be studied. In Danan's 1992 study, the best-learned words seemed to be those that appeared at the end of an utterance followed by a moment of silence. Presumably, words in that space are more salient than those that must be picked out of a stream of input, and the silence allows for more processing of what was just heard and read. It follows that pragmatic expressions, which are predominantly stand-alone phrases, present an interesting target feature for subtitle research. Therefore, the intent of the present study is to address those gaps.

2.3 Pragmatics and pragmatic competence

Pragmatics researcher Bardovi-Harlig's simple "cocktail party definition" of *pragmatics* is "the study of how-to-say-what-to-whom-when" (2013, p. 68), highlighting the importance of context in this subfield of linguistics. More formally, *pragmatics* is described as "the study of communicative action in its social context" (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p.2). Pragmatics is made up of two components: *pragmalinguistics*, which is concerned with the linguistic resources necessary to convey and interpret meaning and intention, and *sociopragmatics*, which focuses on the assessment of the context and the proper behaviour as called for by culture-appropriate norms (Taguchi, 2011; Ishihara, 2007; Kasper & Rose, 2001).

By extension, one who has "the ability to use language appropriately in a social context" (Taguchi, 2009, p.1) is said to have *pragmatic competence*. In other words, pragmatic competence "entails knowledge of forms, as well as their functional possibilities, and contextual requirements that determine form-function mappings" (Taguchi, 2011, p. 290), which is at least partially conscious (Schmidt, 1993). Not surprisingly, second language learners demonstrate less pragmatic competence than native speakers (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009). Bardovi-Harlig (2001) proposed five factors to account for that difference. The first is the availability of input. She

argued that classrooms and textbooks do not provide the necessary relevant pragmatic information and examples. For example, despite being of higher status, Japanese teachers often speak in a polite register, modelling that form for students while at the same time neglecting the casual form. Language textbooks are no better. While pragmatic information is often starkly missing from textbooks, if it is included it is “frequently wrong,” notes Schmidt (1993, p. 22) since “textbook writers... almost always rely on intuition rather than empirical data.”

The second reason non-native speakers suffer pragmatically is due to the influence of instruction. Unfortunately, educators are often more interested in grammatical accuracy than conversational ability. The third reason is, of course, a difference in proficiency level. Pragmatic competence and grammatical competence, while separate, are related (Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012) and as such, learners are less proficient in both areas. Fourthly, language learners have notably less exposure to the language in question than native speakers. And finally, both positive and negative transfer exists. *Transfer* is said to occur when one known language influences the acquisition and/or production of another language (Ortega, 2009; Lightbown & Spada, 2013) – which may be positive (when the transfer results in correct language) or negative (when the influence has an adverse effect on the L2). For example, Japanese learners of English have been found to use, like they would in Japanese, apologies to show gratitude (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Conversely, non-native speakers of Japanese often use *ありがとう* (*arigatō*; “thanks”) to express gratitude when a native speaker would use *すみません* (*sumimasen*) (Tateyama, 2001).

Like pragmatics in general, pragmatic competence is made up of two parts: *pragmalinguistic competence/knowledge* and *sociolinguistic competence/knowledge* (Wood, 2015; Taguchi, 2011). The former involves making “mappings between form and function” while the latter has to do with mappings between “function and context” (Edmonds, 2014, p. 74).

To use conventional expressions as one area of pragmatics, one's pragmlinguistic competence would be knowledge of "the linguistic form of the expression" and one's sociopragmatic competence would be "the [appropriate] use of the expression in context" (Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012, p.81). For example, knowing the form "No thanks" and that it is used to refuse an offer would be part of one's pragmlinguistic competence and being able to use that expression in an appropriate context (time, place, relationship to interlocutor, etc.) would be part of one's sociopragmatic competence.

2.4 Conventional expressions

To further narrow the topic, the present study is interested in only one part of pragmatics, one "key" (Wood, 2015) area of pragmatic competence: conventional expressions.

"Conventional expressions," explains Bardovi-Harlig (2009), "consist of strings such as *No problem*, *Nice to meet you*, and *That'd be great*, which native speakers use predictably in certain contexts" (p. 756). They are "stable in form and relatively frequent" (Edmonds, 2014, p. 72). Conventional expressions are a type of formulaic language (Wood, 2015) that include speech acts such as greetings, apologies, gratitude, and so on, as well as situation-based utterances (SBUs) such as "How do you do?" when meeting someone or "Welcome aboard!" when people board a ship or airplane (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012). They make up a significant amount of communication (Tateyama, 2001; Bardovi-Harlig, 2012), especially in Japanese (Norton, 1996).

Although mostly fixed, conventional expressions can sometimes have "several surface variants" (Edmonds, 2014, p. 78) such as "It's nice/great/good to see you (again)" (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009). To use a Japanese example, a common expression of gratitude for the hard work of fellow workers in Japan can be said as *otsukare*, *otsukaresama*, *otsukaresamadesu*, or

otsukaresamadeshita (the latter two being more polite). Similarly, the Japanese expression for “long time no see” has three variants: *hisashiburi*, *ohisashiburi*, and *ohisashiburidesu* (with increasing politeness).

When it comes to communication, conventional expressions are very important. Coulmas (1981) went as far as to assert that “they are *essential* in the handling of day-to-day situations” (p. 4; emphasis added). Kaneko (1992) added that “in many situations, there is no phrase better than the set phrase” (p. 18) and Bardovi-Harlig (2012) noted that conventional expressions are an important part of polite discourse in various cultures. This is perhaps especially true in Japanese, where “the use of appropriate fixed expressions is very important, particularly in formal situations” (Cook, 2001, p. 92). In Japan, conventional expressions are part of *aisatsu* (Ide, 1998). As Ide (1998) explains, *aisatsu*

refers to a wide variety of fixed verbal formulae and nonverbal rituals that mark demeanor among the interactants. The types of *aisatsu* range from casual everyday verbal routines such as greetings like *ohayoo* (‘good morning’), saying *ojama shimasu* (literally meaning ‘I will get in the way’) upon entering someone’s living or working space, thanking and apologizing when the situation requires, etc. (p. 526).

Not only are conventional expressions essential and polite, but they are even “obligatory to a greater or lesser extent,” according to Coulmas (1979, p. 252). “The misuse of, or failure to use, an obligatory formula is very revealing,” (Coulmas, 1979, p. 252) and therefore, unfortunately, second language learners often stick out like a sore, un-pragmatically competent thumb. Learners use less conventional expressions less competently than native speakers, which may be due to their “lack of familiarity with some expressions; overuse of familiar expressions,

which subsequently reduces the opportunity to use more target like expressions; level of development; and sociopragmatic knowledge” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009, p. 755).

2.5 Politeness and formality in Japanese

In Japanese, politeness and formality are two intertwined concepts present in the grammar of the language. They are inherent in the verbs, while also sometimes present in the nouns as well (i.e., there is sometimes a more or less polite word for the same thing or the presence/absence of a politeness-marker prefix). When it comes to verbs, there is generally three levels of formality: casual, polite, and honorific/humble.

The highest form, called *keigo* (敬語), is the least common. On the other end of the spectrum is the casual form (*kudaketa nihongo*; 砕けた日本語). Polite form (*teineigo*; 丁寧語) is considered the “safe” middle ground and is therefore usually the first taught to learners (followed by casual, and eventually, *keigo*). Since verbs conjugated in polite form are longer and end in *-masu* or *-desu*, this form is also referred to as *long form* or *masu/desu form*. This form is generally used with people of higher status (including those older and above oneself in society) and people one does not know well (including strangers and acquaintances) and is therefore sometimes referred to as formal form.

Casual form (or the informal form), on the other hand, is the shorter form present in dictionaries, giving it the names *dictionary form*, *short form*, and *plain form*. Roughly speaking, it is the form used with people equal or below oneself in society (such as people younger than oneself, friends, and coworkers of an equal or lesser rank). Some relationships, such as parents and romantic partners are less straightforward, although oftentimes the casual form is used.

The decision as to which formality level to use is a delicate and important matter. Speaking casually with superiors is considered disrespectful and rude, while at the same time, being too

polite with equals can be considered standoffish or condescending. The *Genki* textbook introduces the casual form in Chapter 8, stating:

It may not be easy to decide when it is appropriate to switch to short forms. First of all, Japanese speakers are often very conscious of seniority... Second, licence to use short forms is not mutual; senior partners may feel perfectly justified in using short forms while expecting their junior partners to continue addressing them with long forms (Banno et al., 2011, p. 157).

Conventional expressions in Japanese carry a certain level of politeness. Some expressions (such as those used when arriving or departing from home) have a fixed level of formality, whereas others have different surface variants to express different levels of formality. For example, *ありがとう* (*arigatō*) is the casual form for “thanks” while *ありがとうごさいます* (*arigatō gozaimasu*) is the polite or formal form for “thank you.” Likewise, *おはよう* (*ohayō*) denotes a casual “(good) morning” while the polite form is *おはようございます* (*ohayō gozaimasu*).

2.6 Rationale for teaching conventional expressions

Although learners often struggle to acquire even common expressions (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009; Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012; Hagiwara, 2009), learning them is crucial, as such expressions provide learners with an arsenal of utterances that they can use in a variety of social situations that will be understood and accepted by their interlocutors (Bardovi-Harlig, 2014). Notwithstanding the fact that pragmatic development is a slow process (Yoshimi, 2009; Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012), “high-frequency formulas are the social norm in certain contexts

and reasonable acquisitional targets for L2 learners” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012, p. 213). Learners of JFL are no longer “off the hook” when it comes to being expected to speak Japanese politely and similarly to native speakers (Yoshimi, 2009). It is important, then, that conventional expressions be learned.

An important question is whether or not conventional expressions can be taught. In 1994, Wildner-Bassett found that beginner learners of German “improved considerably in their ability to use routine formulas after having received instruction” (Tateyama, 2001, p. 200). Three years later, Tateyama and her colleagues found similar results with beginner students of Japanese, who benefited from explicit instruction on *sumimasen* and related expressions (Tateyama, 2001). Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga (2012) used “guided metapragmatic noticing activities” with transcripts of relevant examples from the hit television show *Friends* to teach thirty conventional expressions to intensive ESL learners. While each group was taught a different list of expressions, both completed a pre-test, longitudinal instruction, and a post-test. The tests were an aural recognition task and an oral production task – a computer-delivered oral discourse completion task (ODCT) in which the participants were given seven seconds to respond to each situation prompt that appeared on screen. Using this method, both groups improved significantly on the expressions they were taught, but they could not extend that success to expressions they did not examine.

Rafieyan and his colleagues (2014) also taught a variety of English conventional expressions to undergrad EFL learners in Iran. Their forty-five adult participants were randomly divided into three groups: a) Experimental 1, which were taught using the Focus on Form method, with videos and texts “flooded” with target language expressions; b) Experimental 2, which were taught with a Focus on Forms method, using explanations and role-plays; and c) the

control group, who were only taught grammatical features of English. A computer-delivered ODCT post-test found that both experimental groups significantly outperformed the control group, but there was no significant difference between the two experimental groups. This study's finding suggests that it is beneficial to teach expressions, regardless if done implicitly (without comprehensive teacher explanation) or explicitly (with said explanation).

Years earlier, Tateyama (2001) came to similar conclusions after her longitudinal study with JFL learners. She focused on attention-getters (such as *anō*), apologies (such as *mōshiwake arimasen*), and gratitude expressions (such as *dōmo*). She pitted an explicit group taught using video clips (including from Japanese dramas), handouts with contexts, and explanations against an implicit group told to simply watch the clips twice and to pay attention to the expressions. As well, all students were asked to write one paragraph on what they learned after each treatment session and to complete worksheets with written discourse completion tasks (WDCTs). The post-tests revealed that while both groups improved, they were not statistically significantly different. The explicit group performed better, but the implicit group did slightly better on the role-plays. Tateyama (2001) concluded that “even without explicit instruction, learners are capable of figuring out pragmatic rules of the target language to a certain degree” (p. 209).

Generally, research in the teaching of pragmatics has found that “instruction is better than noninstruction for pragmatic development” (Taguchi, 2011, p. 291). And because research has shown that “L2 pragmatics is teachable and instruction does make a difference, researchers have strived for more effective ways to implement L2 pragmatics instruction” (Li, 2012, p. 404). There have been explicit interventions in which the pragmatic rules are explained and practice is conducted and implicit interventions in which learners are provided with plenty of input and practice but must make such discoveries on their own (Taguchi, 2011). While some, such as

Yoshimi (2009) argue in favour of the explicit approach (along with practice and corrective feedback), overall, “there is no consensus on the ideal method of teaching target language pragmatics in foreign language classrooms” (Rafieyan, Sharafi-Nejad, & Eng, 2014, p. 1586).

What many researchers *do* seem to agree on is that Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis is a key theory for the teaching and learning of L2 pragmatics.

2.7 Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis

As Taguchi (2011) puts it, “the SLA theory that has provided the strongest impetus for pragmatics intervention studies is Schmidt’s (1993) noticing hypothesis, which claims that learners must notice L2 features in input for subsequent development to occur in the acquisition of these features” (p. 291). In his own words, Schmidt (1993) claims that “it is necessary to notice the occurrence of linguistic forms in order for them to serve as intake for learning” (p. 27). According to the noticing hypothesis, in order to be learned, the language feature(s) must be noticed; if it is not noticed, it is not learned (Ortega, 2009; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). In regards to pragmatics, Ishihara (2007) clarifies that “[a]lthough ‘noticing’ does not necessarily *guarantee* L2 pragmatic learning, it is claimed to be a *necessary condition*; mere exposure to the L2 is unlikely to lead to learners’ ‘noticing’ of pragmatic features and ‘understanding’ of general pragmatic norms” (p. 22; emphasis added). Schmidt himself distinguishes between *noticing* and *understanding*:

For example, a second language learner might simply notice that a native speaker used a particular form of address on a particular occasion, or at a deeper level the learner might understand the significance of such a form, realizing that the form used was appropriate because of status differences between speaker and hearer (1993, p. 26).

In other words, while noticing is crucial, understanding is what occurs when that knowledge is organized for future use (Schmidt, 1993). Noticing itself is made up of two parts: “detection plus controlled activation into the focus of conscious attention” (Ortega, 2009, p. 95). While *detection* is mere unconscious “registration” of a target feature (Ortega, 2009), *attention* refers to the conscious “orientation of mental powers” (VanPatten & Williams, 2015, p. 277). In sum, from the input, or what “the language the learner is exposed to” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 219), the learner must notice by detecting and then focusing attention on a particular aspect of language in order for that piece of input to become intake, which is then incorporated into a deeper and more complex understanding of the target language. For the convenience of visual learners, Figure 1 may be seen below.

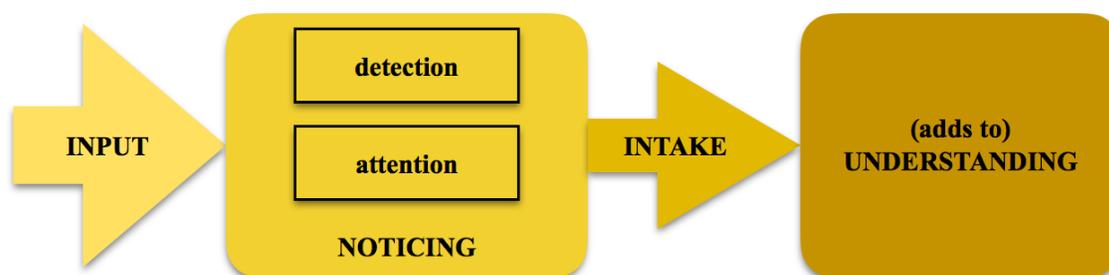


Figure 1. Visual representation of Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis.

With respect to conventional expressions, *what* must the learner notice? According to Schmidt (1993), “[f]or the learning of pragmatics in a second language, attention to linguistic forms, functional meanings, and the relevant contextual features is required” (p. 35). Put differently, learners must notice and to some extent understand (Schmidt, 1993) the linguistic form, functional meaning (a.k.a. social meaning), and context of conventional expressions in

order to learn them (Taguchi, 2011; Cook, 2001; Schmidt, 1993). The three necessary aspects can be pictured as points on a triangle, which together form pragmatic competence (see Figure 2).

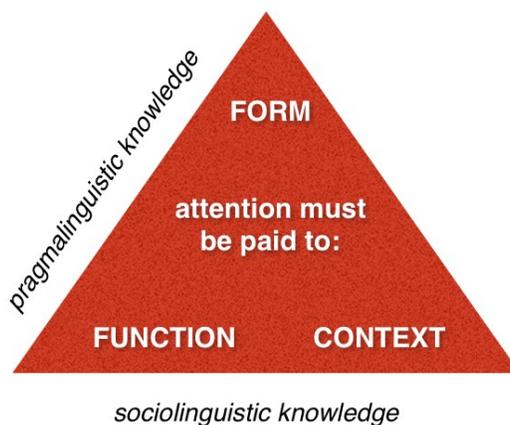


Figure 2. Integrated representation of pragmatic competence.

The *form* is the linguistic realization of an expression, and includes its pronunciation and intonation. After all, it is not enough to simply know an expression, but also to know how to say it (hedged, hesitantly, softly, quickly, etc.) (Tateyama, 2001). The *meaning* or *function* refers, of course, to the intended message and purpose of the utterance. Often it is not the literal meaning, but the implied meaning that is important (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). And finally, important *contextual features* may include the time, place, relationship between the interlocutors, the social norms, and so on (Cutting, 2005).

2.8 Interlanguage

Like pragmatics is one part of language, one's pragmatic competence is one piece of one's interlanguage. As one's pragmatic competence improves, their interlanguage develops.

Interlanguage is a term coined by Selinker in 1972 (Van Patten & Williams, 2015) for "learners' developing second language knowledge" (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 43). It is a mental system that shares some similarities with the L1, some with the L2, and some

characteristics that hold true of interlanguage systems in general. It is dynamic and ever-evolving towards L2 norms. Needless to say, when studying learners' pragmatic development, or interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), the interlanguage hypothesis is integral (Mori, 2009).

According to formula-based learning theories, the registration (i.e., making a form-function connection) of formulas, such as conventional expressions, is the first step in acquisition. Following that, "information about the frequencies... and contexts of exemplars is implicitly encoded in memory upon each new encounter" (Ortega, 2009, p. 115).

The form-function mapping may also be adapted in light of new information. This is precisely what Bardovi-Harlig (2014) concluded after her study on L2 learners' comprehension of conventional expressions, writing: "the evidence suggests that learners gradually associate meanings with expressions, that these meanings may be refined, and that there may be several steps between learning the form of an expression and confident use" (p. 55).

From examinations of learner productions, researchers have found evidence of the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of the interlanguage. As Ortega described it, "learners' internal knowledge systems continually engage in processes of building, revising, expanding and refining L2 representations, as the new grammar develops" (2009, p. 275). The development is not always a linear progression of improvement, however. Various processes – which can work for or against the learner – are at work, five of which are: 1) transfer, 2) complexification, 3) overgeneralization, 4) restructuring, and 5) simplification (Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012; Ortega, 2009).

Transfer occurs when a previously learned language system affects the acquisition and/or production of a second language. Transfer can be negative (a.k.a. *interference*) or positive, depending on whether it is hindering or helpful. Any aspect of the language can be affected, from

the sounds to the grammar to pragmatic norms.

The *complexification hypothesis* was originally proposed in regard to grammatical development in L2 learners and has since been adapted for ILP as well (Barron, 2003). According to the complexification hypothesis, learners progress in their development from relatively easier forms (less structurally complex and therefore easier to process) to progressively more complex forms. Ultimately, learners' pragmatic choices are constrained by their proficiency level (Taguchi, 2011).

Overgeneralization is a classic example of “typical learner behaviour” (Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012, p. 275). It occurs when a learner overextends their use of a form or rule into contexts where it is not appropriate.

Restructuring is part of the constant change interlanguages undergo, and is defined as “the process of self-reorganization of grammar knowledge representations” (Ortega, 2009, p. 117). The changes may be big or small, fast or slow, correct or incorrect. A common restructuring pattern is referred to as *U-shaped behaviour*. Like the letter U, this pattern is observed when a learner initially uses a rule or form (such as an expression) correctly, then incorrectly as adjustments are made, and later produces the form correctly again. It is believed that the initial correctness is based mostly on memorization, but after the dip in performance, the underlying understanding of the form or rule has improved (Ortega, 2009).

The fifth and final common process in interlanguage development is simplification. *Simplification* is a strategy prevalent in beginner-level learners when they must convey a message with little language ability (Ortega, 2009). It can be observed in instances of Anderson's *one-to-one principle*, which claims that beginner level learners initially make an assumption of “one form to one meaning” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2015, p. 56; emphasis removed). In other words, to

keep the language simple as they grapple to understand it, beginners will often associate one expression with one meaning (or function) and conversely, one function for one expression. Although this is a natural interlanguage process, it is further encouraged by language textbooks, which often only give one function for one form (Tateyama, 2001). For example, the *Genki* textbook presents “thank you” as the only meaning associated with どうも (*dōmo*) despite it being “an all-encompassing expression” (Kaneko, 1992) that can be used to apologize and greet as well as thank someone (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1977). Gradually, when learners come to understand that there are “multiple forms for one function or multiple functions for one form” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013, p. 78, parentheses removed), they have reached the stage Anderson dubbed *multifunctionality*.

2.9 Conclusion

The present study addresses multiple gaps in the literature. It is a subtitle study that is longitudinal (as called for by Matielo et al., 2015 and Vulchanova et al., 2015), that examines a different area of language acquisition (namely, conventional expressions), in which the learning will be intentional (which is much less done than incidental learning; although see Garnier, 2014 for an exception), the learners are beginners (which have been relatively neglected; Matielo et al., 2015), and the target language is non-European (as called for by Garza, 1991).

Researchers in subtitles and SLA have been searching for potential benefits of subtitles and how they can be best utilized for language learners, while ILP researchers have been experimenting with different teaching methodologies. The present study brings the two fields together, allowing them to complement each other. It is both a subtitle study and an interlanguage pragmatics study that examines the usefulness of subtitled media in teaching

pragmatics. The target language is Japanese, a language that, while the second-most studied language in interlanguage pragmatics (Kasper, 2009), has yet to be studied in subtitle and SLA research (although see Kambara, 2011 for a study on correcting pragmatic errors in Japanese using film clips).

The next chapter will explore in detail the methodology of the present study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Study design overview

The overall structure of the present study is a case study, a fitting format for an exploration into a new topic (Dörnyei, 2007). It is also longitudinal in nature, something subtitle studies have called for (e.g., Vulchanova et al., 2015). Subtitle studies in the past were predominately short-term, often with a single treatment period and immediate post-test. Such designs do not address longer exposures to the treatment nor long-term effects of said treatment. In this study both issues are addressed.

As well, each of the guiding research questions were incorporated into the design, restated below.

Q1: Are subtitled foreign media beneficial for the acquisition of pragmatic competence?

Q1a: Do learners believe them to be useful?

Q2: Is drawing attention to form, function, and context of conventional expressions with the use of subtitled foreign media more effective than teaching conventional expressions as vocabulary items?

In order to ascertain the usefulness of subtitled foreign media as a teaching and learning methodology, the present study followed a pre-test post-test structure (that is, a similar test before and after the treatment period). A delayed post-test was added to confirm the effectiveness of the method. Comparing the results of the pre-test and post-tests provides evidence to support Q1.

Q1a aimed to examine learners' beliefs about the teaching methodology and therefore interviews were incorporated into the design. Additionally, a comparison of this new proposed teaching methodology to the more common and traditional method was conducted. Therefore, there were two groups of participants: a treatment group (who learned the expressions using the foreign media) and a control group (who learned the expressions as if they were vocabulary items). The structure of the investigation is outlined in Figure 3 below.

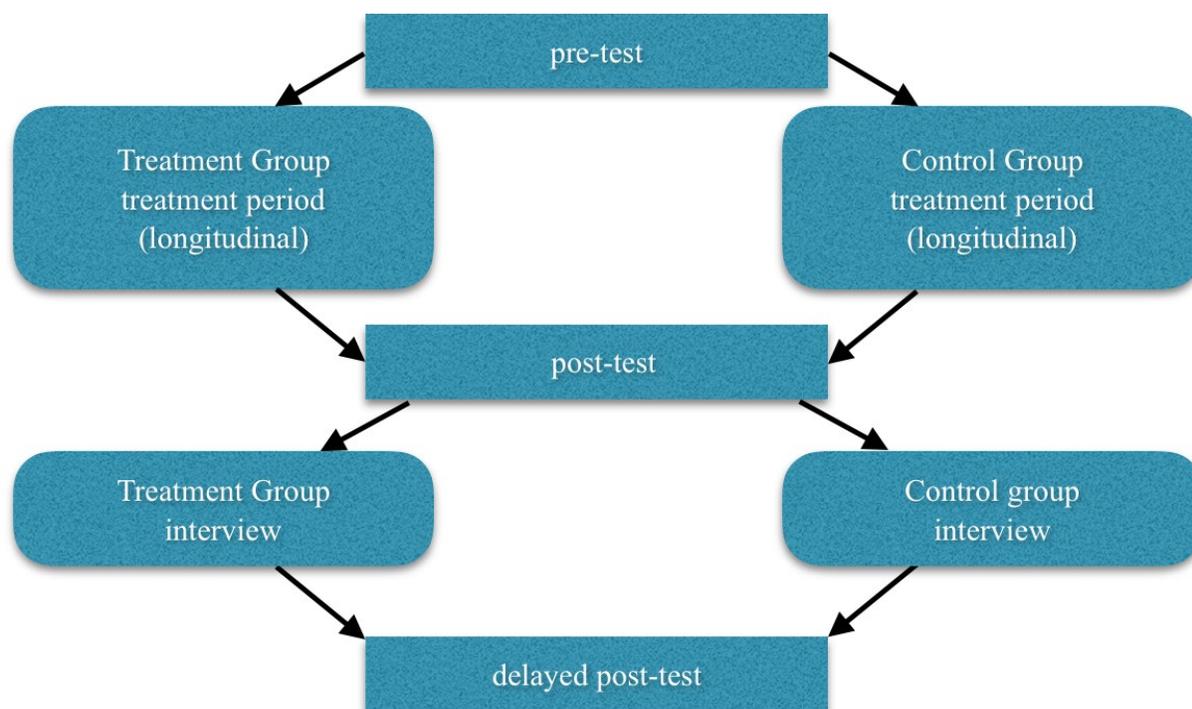


Figure 3. Organizing structure of this case study.

3.2 Participants

In total, six participants were recruited for this study. All were beginner-level students in their first year of study of JFL at Carleton University. Five out of the six participants responded to an invitation to take part in a mini-course on Japanese expressions provided by the researcher.

One of the five invited his friend to join in, bringing the total to six. Although the students were from different classes and taught by different instructors, all were following the same textbook (*Genki: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese* provided by The Japan Times), and by the end of the semester had all reached the same chapter.

Following the reading and signing of the necessary ethics forms, each student was administered a brief background questionnaire. Many subtitle-related studies in the past have begun with a background questionnaire (e.g., Danan, 1992; Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999; Markham, 1999; Vulchanova et al., 2015) in an attempt to find any possible connections between such information and the results of their studies. The present study was interested in such background factors as participants' known languages, motivations for learning Japanese and previous exposure to Japanese media in order to see if such factors influenced the participants' experiences and results. The languages question is rather standard in SLA studies, but the other two questions were more pertinent to this particular study. Motivation is a key factor in SLA, with some – particularly Dörnyei (2001) – going as far as to call motivation “a principal determinant of second language acquisition” (p. 43). Would students with stronger motivations or media orientations fare better in this study? As well, since this study involved using a Japanese television drama, the amount of exposure the participants had with that and similar media was also considered relevant information. Would whether or not the learner habitually watched Japanese media make a difference? According to Koolstra & Beentjes' 1999 study, children who habitually watched subtitled media performed significantly better than their unaccustomed counterparts. A later study published in 2015 found the opposite to be true (Vulchanova et al., 2015). Whether it is a beneficial or detrimental factor, previous exposure was considered consequential enough to be included. The results of the questionnaire are presented

below in Table 1. (Please note that each participant was given a pseudonym.)

Next, the participants needed to be divided into two groups. This was accomplished based on their availability (which was also included in the questionnaire) for convenience and their first language background, for diversity. The first four students were divided into two groups of two students each to form the control group and the treatment group. The fifth student (Idina) joined later and was added to the treatment group. Lastly, one of the treatment group members (Jason) invited his friend (Shawn) to join him after the second session, resulting in four students in that group.

Table 1.

Participant background information.

Participant	Group	Known languages, in order of proficiency	Motivations for learning Japanese	Exposure to Japanese media
<i>Louis</i>	C	1. English 2. Cantonese 3. French	"I'm studying Japanese because I thought it'd be fun to learn a new language and I kind of like the culture."	Music: 1h/week Movies: N/A Dramas: N/A TV: N/A
<i>Brad</i>	C	1. English 2. Arabic	"hobby, passing fancy"	Music: 4h/week Movies: N/A Dramas: 12h/week TV: N/A
<i>Jason</i>	T	1. English 2. Mandarin 3. Japanese	"I am interested in Japanese culture, but more honestly, I learn Japanese for the goal of watching <i>anime</i> with subtitles."	Music: 2h/week Movies: N/A Dramas: N/A TV: 2h/week
<i>Victor</i>	T	1. English 2. French 3. Ingala	"I like the language and the music."	Music: "um, a lot" Movies: N/A Dramas: N/A TV: 4h/week
<i>Idina</i>	T	1. Mandarin 2. English	"I love learning languages and am interested in Japanese."	Music: N/A Movies: N/A Dramas: N/A TV: 3h/week
<i>Shawn</i>	T	1. Mandarin 2. English 3. Japanese 4. Spanish	"One of the reasons is that I think Japanese culture is very fascinating. It attracts me to learn more about Japan. The other reason is that I watch Japanese dramas a lot."	Music: 2h/week Movies: 1/month Dramas: 3h/week TV: 1h/week

Note: C stands for "control group" and T for "treatment group."

As Table 1 shows, the majority of participants were male (5/6) and/or Chinese speakers (4/6). This is not peculiar, as most Japanese classes at Carleton University are approximately half male, and many students of the language are Chinese. Interestingly, none of the participants mentioned motivations that could be described as *instrumental* (that is, a desire to learn the language for its usefulness in a different venture, such as getting a job), *extrinsic* (that is, brought about by outside forces, such as requiring a language minor) or *integrative* (language learning due to a desire to integrate with the language community) (Ortega, 2009).

Rather, their motivations were largely derived from an interest in language-learning itself or Japanese culture. In their paper on learners' motivational profiles, Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) describe *cultural interest* as “the appreciation of cultural products associated with the particular L2 and conveyed by media” (p. 618). Learners with this type of motivation desire to learn the language in order to better understand media in that language (Ortega, 2009). It is probable that most of the participants in the present study have that particular orientation to various degrees. In fact, Victor is a big fan of Japanese music, and Jason describes a desire to better understand *anime* (Japanese animation).

Only two of the six participants (Brad and Shawn) claimed to habitually watch Japanese dramas, one in each group. Four of the six stated they watch Japanese television programs, the most likely format being *anime*. Instead, the main media exposure these students have with Japanese is through music. Five participants responded that they listen to Japanese music, ranging from an hour a week to rather frequently. This suggests that the participants were somewhat accustomed to listening to native speakers of Japanese, albeit not in the form of natural communication.

3.3 Procedures

The data collection procedures of the present study can be broken down into three periods: the Preparation Period, the Treatment Period, and the Culmination Period.

3.3.1 The preparation period

As the name suggests, the Preparation Period took place before the study began. The use of a Japanese television drama as opposed to other forms of media was chosen because it may be the medium best suited for SLA purposes. Like films, dramas provide “appealing samples of authentic language” (Kuppens, 2010, p. 65). However, previous studies have found films to be too lengthy (Stewart & Pertusa, 2004) and animated cartoons to be too short (Karakas & Sariçoban, 2012). At approximately 47 minutes long, television drama episodes may be the optimal amount of exposure. Dramas are also well-suited for longitudinal studies as they are composed of sequential and connected episodes.

Five different dramas were examined before one was selected. At last, a drama entitled *Last Friends* (ラスト・フレンズ) was chosen for its clear and authentic everyday language as well as its interesting storyline and captivating characters. *Last Friends* originally aired on Fuji TV in Japan from April to June 2008. It follows the story of six characters who struggle with issues such as domestic abuse, loneliness, infidelity, sexuality and gender identity. It starred Nagasawa Masami, Ueno Juri, Nishikido Ryō, and Eita. It was immensely popular, with both the series and the actors winning multiple awards including “Best Drama” at the 57th Television Drama Academy Awards.

All conventional expressions contained in the first five episodes were extracted and listed. The next step was to select the key expressions for this study. Previous pragmatics studies have predominately worked with speech acts such as apologizing (e.g., Maeshiba, Yoshinaga, Kasper,

& Ross, 1995), refusing (e.g., Taguchi, 2008), thanking (e.g., Zavalova, 2015), requesting (e.g., Li, 2012), or a combination of speech acts (e.g., Tateyama, 2001; Akai, 2007). Instead, in the spirit of situation-based utterances (SBUs), the expressions were grouped categorically by the type of situation in which they are used. Out of those categories, I settled on expressions related to coming and going. The first five episodes of *Last Friends* contained thirty such expressions, a healthy amount for a longitudinal study. Accordingly, Tateyama (2001) argued that the beginner stage is a good time to teach various basic expressions, and Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga (2012) added that the expressions taught should be common and helpful for students. I believe the thirty key expressions (listed in Table 2 below) fall under that description. In fact, eleven of these expressions are taught in the textbook in the chapters covered in the first year of study (namely the greetings, such as “Good morning,” “Good afternoon,” “Good evening,” and “Goodnight”).

Table 2.

The 30 target Japanese conventional expressions.

Japanese Conventional Expression	English Meaning
じゃ (ね) <i>ja (ne)</i>	Bye (casual; on phone)
じゃ (行く・また・ね) <i>ja (iku/mata/ne)</i>	Bye (casual)
どうぞ <i>dōzo</i>	Please come in
はい <i>hai</i>	(Yes,) coming
失礼します <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>	Excuse me / Goodbye (on phone; polite)
さようなら <i>sayōnara</i>	Farewell
もしもし <i>moshimoshi</i>	Hello (on phone)
行ってきます <i>ittekimasu</i>	“I’m leaving home”
行ってらっしゃい <i>itterasshai</i>	“Have a nice day”
ただいま <i>tadaima</i>	“I’m home”

おかえり (なさい) <i>okaeri(nasai)</i>	“Welcome home”
(お) 久しぶり <i>(o)hisashiburi</i>	Long time no see (casual)
お久しぶりです <i>ohisashibruidesu</i>	Long time no see (polite)
お待たせ <i>omatase</i>	Sorry to make you wait (casual)
お待たせしました <i>omataseshimashita</i>	Sorry to make you wait (polite)
お疲れ (様) <i>otsukare(sama)</i>	“Good work today” (casual)
お疲れ様です・でした <i>otsukaresamadesu/deshita</i>	“Good work today” (polite)
ようこそ <i>yōkoso</i>	Welcome
いらっしゃい (ませ) <i>irasshai(mase)</i>	Welcome
こんにちは <i>konnichiwa</i>	Good afternoon/Hello
おはよう <i>ohayō</i>	Good morning (casual)
おはようございます <i>ohayōgozaimasu</i>	Good morning (polite)
こんばんは <i>konbanwa</i>	Good evening
おやすみ (なさい) <i>oyasumi(nasai)</i>	Goodnight
どうも <i>dōmo</i>	Hello
こっち (こっち) <i>kocchi (kocchi)</i>	Over here
もう行かなきゃ <i>mōikanakya</i>	I gotta go (casual)
また来ます <i>matakimasu</i>	I’ll come again
(ちょっと) 待って <i>(chotto)matte</i>	Wait (a moment)
お邪魔します <i>ojamashimasu</i>	“I’m sorry for the intrusion”

Note 1: Parentheses in the left column denote optional additions to the expressions, while parentheses in the right column distinguish the level of formality. Expression meanings in quotation marks are loose English equivalents, given that there are no true English equivalents of such culturally-bound expressions.

Note 2: The Revised Hepburn Romanization system is used when Japanese is transliterated into English in the present study. Vowels with a diacritic are pronounced longer than vowels without.

Given that there were 30 expressions and five sessions, the next step was to divide the expressions accordingly. For the control group, the expressions were simply divided and organized into five categories. Each session was designed to introduce a short list of related expressions, as displayed below.

Session 1: Greetings

- *ohayō* (“Good morning”; casual)
- *ohayōgozaimasu* (“Good morning”; polite)
- *konnichiwa* (“Good afternoon/Hello”)
- *konbanwa* (“Good evening”)
- *oyasumi(nasai)* (“Goodnight”)
- *dōmo* (“Hello”)
- *moshimoshi* (“Hello”; on phone)

Session 2: Entering/Leaving the Home

- *ittekimasu* (said by person leaving)
- *itterasshai* (said by person remaining)
- *tadaima* (said by person arriving)
- *okaeri(nasai)* (said by person already home)
- *ojamashimasu* (said when entering another’s home)

Session 3: Waiting and Time-Related

- *(chotto) matte* (“Wait”)
- *omatase* (“Sorry to make you wait”; casual)
- *omataseshimashita* (“Sorry to make you wait”; polite)
- *(o)hisashiburi* (“Long time no see”; casual)
- *ohisashiburidesu* (“Long time no see”; polite)

Session 4: Coming & Entering

- *hai* (“Coming!”)
- *dōzo* (“Please come in”)
- *kocchi(kocchi)* (“Over here”)
- *irasshai(mase)* (“Welcome”; usually to place of business)
- *yōkoso* (“Welcome”)

Session 5: Leave-Taking

- *ja* (“Bye” on phone)
- *ja (iku/ne/mata)* (“Bye/See you/Later”)
- *mōikanakya* (“I gotta go”)
- *matakimasu* (“I’ll come again”)
- *shitsurēshimasu* (“Excuse me”/ “Goodbye” on phone, polite)
- *otsukare(sama)* (said when leaving work to equals or subordinates)

- *otsukaresamadeshita* (said when leaving work to higher-ups)
- *sayōnara* (“Farewell”)

Splitting up the expressions for the treatment group sessions presented challenges, given that the majority of expressions were present in more than one of the first five episodes of the drama. Therefore, each expression in its multiple contexts was reviewed once more, in order to choose the best instances of each expression. The result was five sessions, following each of the first five episodes of *Last Friends*, and a short list of expressions to introduce for each, as displayed below.

Session 1: Episode 1 (“The troubles we keep to ourselves”)

- *(chotto) matte*
- *oyasumi(nasai)*
- *otsukaresama*
- *otsukaresamadesu*
- *okaeri(nasai)*
- *tadaima*
- *ojamashimasu*

Session 2: Episode 2 (“A life-and-death secret”)

- *mōikanakya*
- *kocchi (kocchi)*
- *dōmo*
- *konnichiwa*
- *omatase*
- *ja*
- *ja (iku/mata/ne)*

Session 3: Episode 3 (“A love that eats away life”)

- *yōkoso*
- *omataseshimashita*
- *itterasshai*
- *dōzo*
- *matakimasu*

Session 4: Episode 4 (“A bond torn apart”)

- *ohayō*
- *ohayōgozaimasu*
- *ittekimasu*

- *moshimoshi*
- *hai*
- *irasshai(mase)*

Session 5: Episode 5 (“A night of shock”)

- *sayōnara*
- *konbanwa*
- *(o)hisashiburi*
- *ohisashiburidesu*
- *shitsurēshimasu*

3.3.2 The treatment period

The treatment period consisted of administering a pre-test to all participants individually and then conducting five sessions each for the control and treatment groups. Inspired by Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga’s (2012) computer-administered oral discourse completion task (ODCT), a similar test was created on *Moodle*, an internet program for generating online courses. For each of the thirty expressions, a prompt was devised that intended to set up an appropriate context for the expression. The prompts were written after careful research into the expressions, and then checked with two native speakers of Japanese, who offered feedback for improving the prompts. Care was taken to not use the same scenarios as present in the drama, so as not to provide the treatment group with an unfair advantage. The thirty prompts (listed below in Table 3) were then uploaded to a “quiz” on *Moodle*. While taking the online quiz, one by one, in random order, the written prompts would appear on screen. Once the participant read the prompt and considered an appropriate expression, they would click the “Record” button and speak into the computer’s microphone, and click “Next” to continue. The program sent every response to the teacher’s log-in (my own), organized by student and question number for straightforward evaluation. Figure 4 shows an example of a pre-test item.

Table 3

Pre-test prompts and intended answers.

Pre-test Prompts	Intended Answers/Expressions
1. You see an acquaintance on the street. You greet them with:	こんにちは <i>konnichiwa</i>
2. You meet your good friend in the morning. You say:	おはよう <i>ohayō</i>
3. You walk into work in the morning and spot your boss. You say to them:	おはようございます <i>ohayōgozaimasu</i>
4. You pass a neighbour as you return home at night. You greet them with:	こんばんは <i>konbanwa</i>
5. You tuck your young child into bed at night. As you turn off the light, you say:	おやすみ (なさい) <i>oyasumi(nasai)</i>
6. Before you leave the house, you turn to your mother and say:	行ってきます <i>ittekimasu</i>
7. Your wife/husband is leaving for work. As they head out the door, you say:	行ってらっしゃい <i>itterasshai</i>
8. You've returned home. As you take off your shoes, you call out:	ただいま <i>tadaima</i>
9. Your roommate returns home. You greet them with:	おかえり (なさい) <i>okaeri(nasai)</i>
10. You often go to a family restaurant. You will be going there again soon. As you leave, you tell the owner:	また来ます <i>matakimasu</i>
11. You were hanging out with friends but you have to go now. You tell them:	もう行かなきゃ <i>mōikanakya</i>
12. You work in a Japanese restaurant. New customers enter. You and your coworkers shout out in unison:	いらっしゃい (ませ) <i>irasshai(mase)</i>
13. Your phone rings. You answer it by saying:	もしもし <i>moshimoshi</i>
14. The doorbell rings. You assure the person you're coming by calling out:	はい <i>hai</i>
15. You attend school in Japan. When class ends, everyone stands, bows to Sensei, and says:	さようなら <i>sayōnara</i>
16. You finish talking to your girlfriend/boyfriend on the phone. You end the call with:	じゃ (ね) <i>ja(ne)</i>
17. You were spending time with friends, but now you're leaving. Before you go, you say to them:	じゃ (行く・また・ね) <i>ja(iku/mata/ne)</i>
18. You have arrived at your hotel in Japan. The hotel receptionist greets you with:	ようこそ <i>yōkoso</i>
19. You meet your friend's parents for the first time. As a short,	どうも

simple greeting, you say:	<i>dōmo</i>
20. You are a doctor. Your patient has arrived and knocked on your office door. You say to them:	どうぞ <i>dōzo</i>
21. You are waiting for your friend where you said you would meet. He arrives but doesn't see you. You get his attention with:	こっち (こっち) <i>kocchi(kocchi)</i>
22. Your friend is leaving but you just thought of something you need to tell her. You stop her with:	(ちょっと) 待って <i>(chotto)matte</i>
23. Your brother meets with you to catch up. It's been years since you saw each other. Upon seeing him again, you say:	(お) 久しぶり <i>(o)hisashiburi</i>
24. By chance, you bump into your friend's parents. You haven't seen them in a while. You say:	お久しぶりです <i>ohisashiburidesu</i>
25. Your subordinate is done work for the day. Before you leave, you say to them:	お疲れ (様) <i>otsukare(sama)</i>
26. Every day as you leave work, you and your colleagues say to each other:	お疲れ様です <i>otsukaresamadesu</i>
27. You were late meeting your friend. You thank them for the wait by saying:	お待たせ <i>omatase</i>
28. You work as a waiter/waitress. The food came slow, and when you bring it, you say to the customers:	お待たせしました <i>omataseshimashita</i>
29. You just had a meeting with Sensei. As you leave her office, you say:	失礼します <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>
30. You were invited to your neighbour's house for dinner. As you enter their house, you say:	お邪魔します <i>ojamashimasu</i>

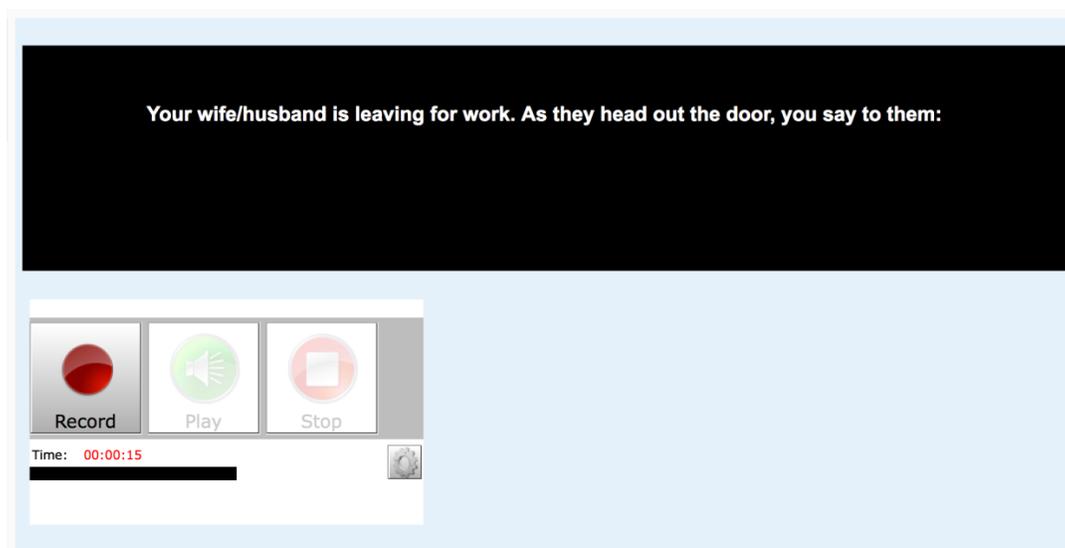


Figure 4. An example of a test item as it appears on Moodle “quiz.”

In their study, Bardovi-Harlig and Vellenga (2012) gave their intermediate intensive ESL students seven seconds to respond to each prompt, holding that “the short time was designed to promote the use of conventional expressions if learners knew them, given the widely held claim that conventional speech provides an advantage when planning time was short” (p. 79-80).

However, the present study involved beginner-level students, most of whom did not hold English (the language of the test prompts) as their native language, and so a longer response opportunity was given. The pre-test therefore had a total of eight minutes. Participants could spend as little or as much time as desired on each prompt, but the test would time-out after eight minutes had passed.

Oral Discourse Completion Tasks (ODCTs) are one of the six types of tasks commonly used to test pragmatic competence, the others being other forms of DCTs, role-plays, and self-assessments (Brown, 2001). Like any testing apparatus, it has its shortcomings. DCTs have been criticized for being less demanding than real face-time, lacking in conversational turn-taking, and that they are capable of being misunderstood by participants (Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012), not to mention that the computer-administered version requires technology (Brown, 2001). In spite of these shortcomings, an oral DCT was appealing as, unlike multiple choice DCTs, written DCTs, or self-assessment, it is oral, and furthermore, unlike role-plays, it is quick, concise, and relatively easy to score.

After the participants had completed the pre-test individually, they were divided into two groups, the treatment group and the control group, for the treatment period. The two groups were made to mirror each other as much as possible so that their main difference lay in the teaching methodology. Each group met with me for five sessions, during which a number of expressions were introduced and an activity was completed, as it is known that passive viewing results in

weak uptake (Wood, 2015). However, due to their differing natures (watching clips from a drama as opposed to more classical methodology), each treatment group session was approximately an hour in length total, whereas each control group session was approximately 30 minutes long.

The methodology for the control group was modelled after “traditional” teacher-oriented practices, a present-practice-produce “PPP” sequence. The expressions were taught like vocabulary items, giving this group the nickname “the vocabulary group.” Along with the spelling and pronunciation, the literal meanings of the expressions and whether it is considered polite or casual was taught, but any pragmatic information was intentionally omitted. During these sessions, I, the teacher, introduced the expressions on the whiteboard, the students repeated their pronunciation after me, and then they practiced the expressions, using vocabulary-like activities such as fill-in-the-blanks and matching (see Appendix A). The activity sheets were collected, corrected, and returned to the students.

The treatment group underwent a different methodology. Rather than presenting the expressions myself, they were revealed through watching episodes of *Last Friends*. The students in what was dubbed “the drama group” were asked to first watch the episode on their own time, to get an understanding of the story and its characters. Since learners are known to orient first towards meaning (VanPatten, 2015), they were asked to simply watch the episodes themselves to know the story. Then, it was assumed, more attention could be paid to the *form* of the expressions during the sessions. Adhering to Schmidt’s noticing hypothesis, pragmatics researchers have argued that learners’ attention must be drawn to the linguistic form, social meaning, and social context (Cook, 2001). For each session, the treatment group participants completed an activity sheet (Appendix B) Taguchi would call a “consciousness-raising task.” As

she describes them, “consciousness-raising tasks typically have learners listen to conversations either through video or audio, with attention directed to the target pragmatic features and sociolinguistic variables of particular speech events (e.g., setting, participant relations)” (2011, p. 296). Each activity sheet was a chart that the students would fill in as everyone watched the clips together. Each chart followed the outline given in Figure 5, differing only in the time frames for each episode:

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: <i>(What does it mean? Why say it?)</i>	Context: <i>(Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)</i>
17:29			
17:43			
21:24			

Figure 5. An example of part of an activity sheet for the treatment group.

After the clip was played, students were asked what they heard. The expression was then written on the board and students were encouraged to fill out the other two columns. During the first sessions, the teacher would ask questions about the context but gradually, the students were weaned off guidance from the teacher. Occasionally, pragmatic information on the phrases that was not evident from the video clip was explicitly instructed, for example, that どうも (*dōmo*) as “Hello” is more often used by men (Kaneko, 1992) and that it sounds more polite if said slowly (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1977).

3.3.3 The culmination period

The third and final period consisted of three parts: the post-test, the delayed post-test, and the interviews. The culmination period was a crucial stage as it is where the majority of data was collected.

The post-test immediately followed the last session for each group. In order for the results to be comparable to the pre-test, the post-test was predominantly the same as the pre-test. That being said, in part to avoid testing familiarity, some prompts were changed. The results of the pre-test were used as a basis for improving the test itself. In other words, after reviewing the results of the pre-test and reconsidering the prompts, some were changed if found to be misleading or commonly misunderstood. For two prompts (#10 and #11), italics were added to highlight the key information for choosing the desired expression, as opposed to similar expressions. The prompt changes are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4

Prompts changed on post-test.

Question	Intended Answer	Original Prompt	New Prompt
10	また来ます (I'll come again)	You often go to a family restaurant. You will be going there again soon. As you leave, you tell the owner:	You often go to a family restaurant. <i>You will be going there again soon.</i> As you leave, you tell the owner:
11	もう行かなきゃ (I gotta go)	You were hanging out with friends but you have to go now. You tell them:	You were hanging out with friends but <i>you have to go now.</i> You tell them:
15	さようなら (Farewell)	You attend school in Japan. When class ends, everyone stands, bows to Sensei, and says:	Your friend is emigrating far away and you may never see them again. In parting, you say:
19	どうも (Hello)	You meet your friend's parents for the first time. As a short, simple greeting, you say:	You meet another man in passing. You greet him briefly by bowing your head and saying:
21	こっち (こっち) (Over here)	You are waiting for your friend where you said you would meet. He arrives but doesn't see you. You get his attention with:	You are waiting for your friend where you said you would meet. He arrives but doesn't see you. You call him over with:
26	お疲れ様です (“You've worked hard”)	Every day as you leave work, you and your colleagues say to each other:	Your senpai is leaving work for the day. As she leaves, you say to her:

Note: *Sensei* is Japanese for “Teacher” and *senpai* means “upperclassman.”

The participants' comments were also taken into consideration when editing the post-test. The time was extended to 10 minutes, as eight minutes was found to be too short with all but one of the students having timed out before attempting two thirds of the questions. Since some participants expressed discomfort with the computer-delivered method, the post-test was administrated by the researcher acting like a computer (i.e., giving no feedback). If the answers were incorrect, the participants' responses were quickly jotted down for later analysis.

Following the post-test were the interviews. The interviews were intended to investigate the participants' experiences and beliefs about conventional expressions and how they are and should be taught. This component followed in the footsteps of earlier subtitle studies that were interested in learners' beliefs (e.g., Montero Perez et al., 2013; Stewart & Pertusa, 2004; Hayati

& Mohmedi, 2011). The interviews were also included as a good fit to this particular case study. As Dörnyei (2007) noted, “in educational contexts [interviews] are... often used for programme evaluation to assess the effectiveness of a particular course to understand what was or was not working and why” (p. 146). Therefore, a focus-group interview for the treatment group and a one-on-one interview with a participant from the control group (since unfortunately, only one participant took part) were conducted following Dörnyei’s (2007) instructions. Some of the questions were the same for both groups in order to compare the answers, while other questions were specialized towards their differing experiences (see Appendix C). During the focus-group interview, the researcher acted mostly as a mediator and attempted to hear all voices by asking the less talkative individuals directly. Both interviews were conducted as comfortably as possible, were recorded using an iPod, and were later transcribed (see Appendices D & E).

A month after the immediate post-test was the delayed post-test, included in order to gauge the long-term effectiveness of the two methodologies. The delayed post-test was similar to the previous two tests and once again computer-delivered and individually completed. However, in order to address conventional expressions with more than one common situation as well as to tease out more differences between the control and treatment groups, ten more prompts were added and the length was extended to twelve minutes. The ten additional prompts are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5

Prompts added to delayed post-test.

Additional Post-test Prompts	Intended Answers/Expressions
31. You were talking to your boss on the phone. As you hang up, you say:	失礼します <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>
32. You pick up your younger sister from work. She looks tired. You greet her with:	お疲れ (様) <i>otsukare(sama)</i>
33. You are having dinner with friends but your phone rings. It's important. Before you leave to answer it, you tell your friends:	(ちょっと) 待って <i>(chotto)matte</i>
34. Sadly, your grandfather has died. At his funeral, you bow to his picture and say:	さようなら <i>sayōnara</i>
35. After putting a stranger on hold, you restart the conversation with:	お待たせしました <i>omataseshimashita</i>
36. On your morning walk, you pass a child who waves to you and smiles. You greet them with:	おはよう <i>ohayō</i>
37. You are satisfied with the service at your mechanic's. You'll be returning in a couple months. You say to him:	また来ます <i>matakimasu</i>
38. You have moved to a new city in Japan. Your neighbours welcome you with:	ようこそ <i>yōkoso</i>
39. At noon, you walk into a convenience store. The cashier says "irasshai". You reply:	こんにちは / どうも <i>konnichiwa / dōmo</i>
40. You meet a stranger on the street. They greet you with "konnichiwa". You reply:	こんにちは / どうも <i>konnichiwa / dōmo</i>

3.4 Sources of data

Due to its case study nature, data for the present study was collected from three differing sources: (a) the formal testing (i.e., the pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test), (b) informal observations throughout the treatment period (of the students and their progress), and (c) the interviews. All data was analyzed predominately qualitatively, although some quantitative analysis was done with the formal testing. More specifically, the intention was to discern if and how the treatments were helpful for the students, and if the treatment methodology proved to be more effective. The three different sources of information were intended to provide alternative perspectives; in particular, those concerning the students' performance, progress, and opinions.

The transcribed interviews were analyzed by looking for both emerging themes and student voices that mirrored their performance in the testing. As for the tests, each student's responses were recorded and evaluated against the intended responses. Since the pre-test was completed using the computer program, it could not be determined whether the questions that were unanswered were skipped by the participants or had yet to be viewed before the time limit ran out. Therefore, any questions without audio files were simply graded: N/A. This problem did not occur with the post-tests. The immediate post-test, performed in person with an extended time limit, did not time out. Any questions skipped, then, were marked as incorrect, as the student either did not know the appropriate expression or could not produce it under the real-time pressure of the test. By the delayed post-test, a solution to the unanswered prompts was discovered. The last answered question could be determined by the time stamp. Therefore, unanswered prompts before the final answered question were considered intentionally skipped and therefore wrong. Prompts after the last answered question were understood to have not been seen and therefore not applicable (N/A).

Needless to say, if the participant produced the desired expression in response to the prompt, that item was marked as correct. Pronunciation mistakes on voicing (for example, producing a [d] instead of a [t]) were considered as simply misspoken and were ignored. After all, the tests were meant to look for knowledge of the conventional expressions and not pronunciation skills. A slightly different surface variant or the addition of another phrase or expression were also permissible.

If the student gave an expression inappropriate for the given situation, however, (for example, saying "Good evening" when the prompt read that it was only 3PM), that question was graded as incorrect. Using an improper formality level (such as using polite form with friends or

casual form with superiors) was considered improper and was as such graded as incorrect.

Significant mispronunciations, English responses, and meaningless utterances were also marked as incorrect.

However, some student responses to the test prompts were neither correct nor incorrect. If the student's response was possible in the given situation, it was graded as falling under a third category – alternative possibilities – and was not included in the counts for either correct or incorrect. While there was a single intended response for each prompt, other responses were also appropriate in the given situations. For the responses that I had difficulty deciding if they were incorrect or possible, the input of a trusted native speaker was sought and received. Once all the student responses were categorized, various avenues were explored in the search for patterns and answers.

The results are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Results

4.1 Findings

This chapter will present the findings from the present study organized by the level of analysis, from the group level to the individual level. It will focus predominately on the results of the pre-test and post-tests, as the interviews produced more qualitative findings which are best examined along with the overarching themes in the next chapter.

4.2 Group-level findings

4.2.1 At the onset

All members of both the treatment group and the control group took part in the 30-item computer-administered ODCT pre-test. As the results of that pre-test show (Table 6 & Table 7), there was a slight difference in proficiency between the two groups from the beginning. The control group outperformed the treatment group, on average, by 0.5 points (for the number of incorrect responses) to 4 points (for the number of correct and alternative responses combined).

Table 6

Control group pre-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Louis	18/30	9	4	13	5
Brad	13/30	8	2	10	3
Group Average	15.5	8.5	3	11.5	4

Table 7

Treatment group pre-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Jason	19/30	7	4	11	8
Victor	4/30	4	0	4	0
Shawn	16/30	5	2	7	9
Idina	11/30 ^a	6	2	8	1
Group Average	12.5	5.5	2	7.5	4.5

^a : Idina took the pre-test after attending one session. Therefore, the two responses that she attempted and got correct because she had just learned them in the session were removed from consideration.

Every participant but one (Brad) timed out on the pre-test and were therefore not able to show the true extent of their abilities. Had there not been a time limit, the scores would have likely been higher.

The pre-test results were also examined to see whether or not the students knew the expressions they had supposedly previously learned in their regular Japanese classes. Thirteen of the thirty target expressions were found within the course textbook up to the chapter the students were covering at that time. Those expressions and the participants' results for them are displayed in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Previously learned Japanese expressions.

	Louis	Brad	Jason	Victor	Shawn	Idina
<i>Konnichiwa</i>	O	O	X		O	O
<i>Ohayō</i>	O	O	O			
<i>Ohayōgozaimasu</i>		O	X	O		X
<i>Konbanwa</i>	O	O	O			
<i>Oyasumi(nasai)</i>	O	O		O		O
<i>Ittekimasu</i>		O		O	X	O
<i>Itterasshai</i>	O			O		O
<i>Tadaima</i>	O		O		X	
<i>Okaeri(nasai)</i>			O		X	
<i>Irasshai(mase)</i>	O		O			
<i>Moshimoshi</i>	O	O			O	
<i>Sayōnara</i>	X		(alt.)			
<i>(Chotto)matte</i>		O	O		O	

Note: In Japanese style, O denotes correct responses and X incorrect responses. Items that were not attempted (either due to timing out or skipping) are left blank and (alt.) is short for “alternative response.”

From these results, it can be argued that all students (and as such, both groups) predominately knew what they had previously learned in class. It is safe to assume that the items that were not answered by the students would have been answered correctly if they could have attempted the question. There are, however, two notable exceptions: *ohayō gozaimasu* (formal “Good morning”) and *sayōnara* (“Farewell”). The former was answered incorrectly by two students (Jason and Idina), both of whom answered the prompt with an inappropriate level of formality. In other words, they likely knew the form *ohayō gozaimasu* but chose to respond with the informal version *ohayō*. This suggests that there may have been issues with making formality judgments – a topic explored in detail later. The second exception is *sayōnara*, which no participant answered correctly. Looking again at the prompt (i.e., “You attend school in Japan. When class ends, everyone stands, bows to Sensei and says:”), it is possible that the students lacked the cultural background knowledge necessary to answer that prompt correctly. This was a leading reason that that particular prompt was changed for the post-tests.

4.2.2 Following the treatment period

Once the treatment period had ended, all participants took part individually in the 30-item researcher-administered ODCT post-test. This time, no participant timed out and therefore a better reflection of their pragmatic proficiencies could be calculated. More specifically, all items were presented, and it could then be determined which items had been skipped. Skipped items were regarded as both un-attempted and incorrect. The results of the immediate post-test are displayed in Table 9 and Table 10 below.

Table 9

Control group post-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Louis	29/30	22	1	23	7
Brad	21/30	10	5	15	15
Group Average	25	16	3	19	11

Table 10

Treatment group post-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Jason	27/30	19	6	25	5
Victor	16/30	16	0	16	14
Shawn	29/30	18	5	23	7
Idina	26/30	20	4	24	6
Group Average	24.5	18.25	3.75	22	8

The results of the immediate post-test reveal that the treatment group overcame their initial handicap and slightly outperformed the control group. They came out on top for the number of correct responses (by 2.25 points), the number of correct and alternative responses combined (by 3 points), and for the least number of incorrect responses (by 3 points).

It should be noted, however, that the participants were not instructed as to whether they could review their notes beforehand or not. As such, Louis studied for forty-five minutes prior to his post-test, and Jason and Shawn studied as well, although for much less time. This unanticipated factor may have inflated their scores.

The analysis of the post-test results also involved examining the results from the perspective of the items themselves – the expressions. How many expressions were successfully learned for each group? To answer this, “successfully learned” was experimentally defined as those expressions which were produced appropriately during the post-test. Given the differing sizes of the two groups, expressions which were produced appropriately by the majority (3/4) of the treatment group members was considered successfully learned, whereas both members of the control group must have produced the expression appropriately to be counted, since there were unfortunately only two members of that group. Under these constrictions, the control group successfully learned a total of eight expressions, while the treatment group over doubled that, with a total of 17 expressions (see Appendices F-H for full results). The successfully-learned expressions for both groups are listed in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Expressions successfully learned by each group.

Expressions Successfully Learned (2/2) for the Control Group	Expressions Successfully Learned (3/4) for the Treatment Group
<i>Ohayō</i>	<i>Ohayō</i>
<i>Itterasshai</i>	<i>Ohayōgozaimasu</i>
<i>Irasshai(mase)</i>	<i>Irasshai(mase)</i>
<i>Moshimoshi</i>	<i>Moshimoshi</i>
<i>Hai(hai)</i>	<i>Ittekimasu</i>
<i>Sayōnara</i>	<i>Sayōnara</i>
<i>Ja(iku/mata/ne)</i>	<i>Ja(iku/mata/ne)</i>
<i>dōzo</i>	<i>Konbanwa</i>
	<i>Oyasumi(nasai)</i>
	<i>Hai(hai)</i>
	<i>Tadaima</i>
	<i>Ja(ne)</i>
	<i>Okaeri(nasai)</i>
	<i>(Chotto)matte</i>
	<i>Otsukare(sama)</i>
	<i>Otsukaresamadeshita</i>
	<i>Shitsurēshimasu</i>

Perhaps more so than the test scores, that the treatment group successfully produced more than double what the control group did is evidence that the treatment method was more effective than the control method for learning conventional expressions in Japanese.

Of the eight expressions successfully learned by the control group, only three of them were new (namely *hai*, *ja mata*, and *dōzo*). However, these three expressions can be easily acquired. The students already knew the form *hai* for a different meaning (“yes”). Therefore, they merely learned that *hai* can also mean “coming.” The case for *dōzo* was likely the same. The textbook teaches the form *dōzo* when handing someone something, such as a restaurant menu. As such, another meaning (“come in”) was added to their internal lexicon. As for *ja (mata/ne)*, that expression is very short and simple, frequent in dramas and *anime* that Louis and Brad habitually watch, and is related to the form *jā* (meaning “then,”) that the students had previously

encountered in their regular Japanese classes.

This line of inquiry with the expressions successfully learned by the treatment group was more interesting and fruitful. Putting aside the 11 expressions that were previously learned, six of the 17 expressions were new: *hai(hai)*, *ja(ne)*, *ja(iku)*, *otsukare(sama)*, *otsukaresamadeshita*, and *shitsurēshimasu*. Analysis revealed that these expressions were either salient (as revealed by the participants in the interview, namely *hai* and *shitsurēshimasu*) or frequent (the two forms each of *ja* and *otsukaresama*) in the drama and the activity sheets. In fact, the two forms each of *ja(iku)(ne)* and *otsukare(sama)(deshita)* were encountered a total of five and eight times respectively – the most out of all target expressions. Frequency was likely an important factor.

An examination of the expressions encountered only once in the treatment period revealed that those expressions either failed to be successfully produced by more than one of the participants or were previously learned and therefore “safe,” so to speak (see Table 12). The only exception to this rule was *dōmo*, which was successfully produced by two of the four treatment group members. This expression was perhaps unique in the memory of the students as the only example of gendered language. In other words, *dōmo* was the only expression taught which was discussed to be more of a masculine expression, perhaps making it more memorable. Interestingly, *itterasshai* was not “safe” despite being previously learned. However, it is highly likely that one of the participants (Idina) simply had a slip of the tongue, producing the similar-sounding *irasshaimase* instead.

Table 12
Results of expressions encountered once by treatment group.

Expression	Number of Participants Producing it Correctly	Judgment
<i>Konnichiwa</i>	2/4	Previously learned
<i>Oyasumi(nasai)</i>	3/4	Previously learned
<i>Ittekimasu</i>	3/4	Previously learned
<i>Itterasshai</i>	1/4	Previously learned but failed
<i>Okaeri(nasai)</i>	3/4	Previously learned
<i>Matakimasu</i>	1/4	Failed
<i>Mōikanakya</i>	0/4	Failed
<i>Moshimoshi</i>	4/4	Previously learned
<i>Sayōnara</i>	4/4	Previously learned
<i>Yōkoso</i>	0/4	Failed
<i>Dōmo</i>	2/4	Exception
<i>Ojamashimasu</i>	0/4	Failed

Note: In this table, a judgment of “failed” means that the expression was produced correctly by only one or none of the members of the treatment group.

Yet more evidence that the treatment method was effective is that the treatment group improved considerably more than the control group from the pre-test to the post-test, suggesting that they reaped more benefits. As Table 13 and Table 14 show, the treatment group improved by 13 points, on average, whereas the control group improved eight points on average. More impressively, the percent increase for every member of the treatment group is higher than that of the control group members. Both interventions were effective, but the drama method appears to have been more effective.

Table 13
Control group improvement scores (by correct responses).

Participant	Number of Correct Responses: Pre-Test	Number of Correct Responses: Post-Test	Improvement	Percent Increase
Louis	9	22	+13	144%
Brad	8	10	+2	25%
Group Average			+8	85%

Note: The group average score is rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 14

Treatment group improvement scores (by correct responses).

Participant	Number of Correct Responses: Pre-Test	Number of Correct Responses: Post-Test	Improvement	Percent Increase
Jason	7	19	+12	171%
Victor	4	16	+12	300%
Shawn	5	18	+13	260%
Idina	6	20	+14	233%
Group Average			+13	241%

Note: The group average score is rounded to the nearest whole number.

That difference is even greater (7 points) when the number of correct and alternative responses are combined and taken into consideration, as seen in Table 15 and Table 16. Once again the percent increase improvement score for every member of the treatment group is higher than that of the control group members.

Table 15

Control group improvement scores (by correct and alternative responses).

Participant	Number of Correct and Alternative Responses: Pre-Test	Number of Correct and Alternative Responses: Post-Test	Improvement	Percent Increase
Louis	13	23	+10	77%
Brad	10	15	+5	50%
Group Average			+8	64%

Note: The group average score is rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 16

Treatment group improvement scores (by correct and alternative responses).

Participant	Number of Correct and Alternative Responses: Pre-Test	Number of Correct and Alternative Responses: Post-Test	Improvement	Percent Increase
Jason	11	25	+14	127%
Victor	4	16	+12	300%
Shawn	7	23	+16	229%
Idina	8	24	+16	200%
Group Average			+15	214%

Note: The group average score is rounded to the nearest whole number.

It should be noted, however, that part of the reason for such high improvement scores is due to the fact that some prompts were not answered for the pre-test despite the participants likely knowing the answer, thus widening the gap between the pre- and post-test scores. That there was more time given for the post-test and some students studied while others did not are also factors not to be ignored.

Regardless, in sum, the results of the post-test suggest that while both interventions were beneficial for the acquisition of Japanese conventional expressions, it is quite possible that the treatment method – using a Japanese drama – is more effective than more traditional vocabulary-focused teaching methods.

4.2.3 Over time

As outlined in the methodology section, participants were encouraged to participate in the computer-administered ODCT delayed post-test a month after taking the immediate post-test. Unfortunately, only four students completed the test; two from each group. Unlike the previous

two tests, this test contained 10 new prompts, bringing the total item count to 40. The results of the delayed post-test can be seen in Table 17 and Table 18 below.

Table 17

Control group delayed post-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Louis	40/40	19	10	29	11
Brad	26/40	13	7	20	20
Group Average	33	16	8.5	24.5	15.5

Table 18

Treatment group delayed post-test results.

Participant	Number of items attempted	Number of correct responses	Number of alternative responses	Number of correct & alternative responses	Number of incorrect responses
Jason	38/40	24	4	28	12
Idina^a	33/40	25	5	30	8
Group Average	35.5	24.5	4.5	29	10

^a : Idina was the only participant to time out, leaving two items unattempted. Those two items were considered neither attempted nor incorrect, and as such, were removed from consideration.

The delayed post-test results reveal that once again the treatment group outperformed the control group. The treatment group averaged more correct responses (by 8.5 points), more correct and alternative responses combined (by 4.5 points), and fewer incorrect responses (by 5.5 points). Even when the results are split into the original thirty prompts and the ten new prompts, the treatment group outperformed the control group in both categories (see Appendices F-H for

complete results). These results show that, over time, the treatment group maintained their superior performance.

The results of the treatment group also displayed less reduction (i.e., apparent loss) than that of the control group. If only the results from the original thirty prompts are compared against the results of the thirty prompts of the immediate post-test, the treatment group very slightly decreased the least (by 0.5 points). As Table 19 and Table 20 show, both groups showed very minimal reduction. In fact, one student (Brad) actually improved over time, albeit by only two points.

Table 19

Control group reduction scores.

Participant	Number correct on immediate post-test	Number correct on delayed post-test	Difference
Louis	22	18	-4
Brad	10	12	+2
Group Average			-1

Table 20

Treatment group reduction scores.

Participant	Number correct on immediate post-test	Number correct on delayed post-test	Difference
Jason	19	19	0
Idina	20	19	-1
Group Average			-0.5

The comparison of results between the immediate and delayed post-tests becomes even more interesting when the expressions are divided between those previously learned in the

regular Japanese language classes and those introduced during the treatment period of this study. In other words, of the correct responses given in each post-test by each participant, how many were so-called “old” expressions and how many were so-called “new” expressions; and more importantly, how did those numbers change over time? Were the old and new expressions remembered, or forgotten? And how do the two groups compare? Table 21 and Table 22 below lay out such numbers, taking only the thirty prompts contained in both post-tests into consideration.

Table 21

Retention of “old” and “new” expressions by control group.

Participant	Old Expressions: Immediate Post-Test	Old Expressions: Delayed Post-Test	Difference	New Expressions: Immediate Post-Test	New Expressions: Delayed Post-Test	Difference
Louis	12	13	+1	10	5	-5
Brad	5	10	+5	5	2	-3
Group Average	8.5	11.5	+3	7.5	3.5	-4

Table 22

Retention of “old” and “new” expressions by treatment group.

Participant	Old Expressions: Immediate Post-Test	Old Expressions: Delayed Post-Test	Difference	New Expressions: Immediate Post-Test	New Expressions: Delayed Post-Test	Difference
Jason	11	12	+1	8	7	-1
Idina	11	12	+1	9	7	-2
Group Average	11	12	+1	8.5	7	-1.5

At first glance, it would appear that, on average, the control group gained more old

expressions. However, this is due to Brad's divergent results. Brad improved from five to ten expressions, conflating the group's average. On the other hand, while both groups seemed to forget some new expressions over time, the treatment group, on average, seemingly forgot the least number of new expressions. Or, to put it simply, the treatment group displayed the least reduction in number of new expressions. This suggests that the treatment method was possibly more effective in creating lasting memories of the new expressions. Conversely, the new expressions were more easily forgotten by the control group, who had learned the expressions without context or pragmatic explanation. As well, it is important to remember that the treatment group successfully produced more old and new expressions on both post-tests.

The fact that a month after the treatment period the number of old expressions produced correctly should increase is another point to ponder. Perhaps returning to Japanese language classes in the new semester provided the students with more input with the old expressions and reaffirmed them in memory. Or perhaps, as the new expressions were forgotten over time, there was less interference between similar expressions. Or perhaps most likely of all, this result is a simple matter of the *testing effect* – that taking a test improves performance and especially that “repeated testing optimize[s] delayed recall” (Metsämuuronen, 2013, p. 11). The participants had been presented with the same prompts three times (with the exception of the few prompts that were changed between the pre-test and immediate post-test), and by that third time knew well the correct response. The testing effect would not have been as helpful for the new expressions since the students had much less exposure to the new expressions; the prompt-expression connection was less straightforward (i.e., the new expressions were not as clearly tied to certain situations as the old expressions – which were predominantly greetings); and the students were never given feedback on their testing performance.

4.3 Individual-level findings

In the tradition of case studies, it is pertinent to examine each participant individually. Interesting and important results can be found by digging deeper into each participant's experience and in comparing and contrasting each case to that of the others.

4.3.1 Louis

The participant called Louis is a Chinese-Canadian who speaks English as his mother tongue. He chose to learn Japanese since he was interested in learning a new language and in Japanese culture. Despite claiming the least outside exposure to the Japanese language (one hour a week of Japanese music), he already knew the expression *じゃね* (casual "bye"), as evidenced in his pre-test. In fact, Louis performed the best of all the participants on the pre-test, with a score of nine correct, four alternative, and five incorrect responses.

Louis was assigned to the control group, the classes of which he attended diligently. He listened well and performed perfectly on his activity sheets. When the post-test came along, he was more comfortable with the person-delivered method and performed very well. In fact, considering only correct responses, Louis was the best student on the immediate post-test. Out of those twenty-two correct responses, he showed evidence of learning the most new expressions (10) and remembering the most previously learned expressions (12). That success is tampered, however, by the fact that he studied for forty-five minutes before taking the post-test – much longer than any other student. Nevertheless, that he had done so is a testament to his hard-working nature.

During the interview, Louis admitted that although he had learned new expressions through the treatment classes, he was not confident he would remember them. That proved to be fairly true, as by the time of the delayed post-test (of which he was instructed not to study for), he had

lost five of the new expressions he had learned. Whether this is due to forgetting the form of the expression or forgetting the context in which it is appropriate is difficult to determine. In one case, however, it was clear that it was the form and not the meaning or function that had been forgotten. During the delayed post-test, when presented with the prompt: “You were invited to your neighbour’s house for dinner. As you enter their house, you say:”, Louis responded “Sorry for intruding?” in English. “Sorry for intruding” is a translation of the expression お邪魔します (*ojamashimasu*), which was the correct answer.

In another instance, it would seem that he had forgotten the culturally-appropriate expression for the context. In response to the prompt: “You finish talking to your girlfriend/boyfriend on the phone. You end the call with:”, Louis said “Love you?” in English on the pre-test (a response culturally and linguistically appropriate in Canadian English), then a variant of the correct expression (じゃ) またね (*ja, mata ne*; casual “later”) on the immediate post-test, but by the delayed post-test he had reverted to his original inclination with あなたが好きです (*anata ga s'ki des'*; formal “I love you”), which is linguistically (a boyfriend would not normally use a formal register with his girlfriend) and pragmatically inappropriate (that would be a rather odd way for a Japanese male to finish a phone call).

That expression was not the only one to show signs of regression. During the pre-test, Louis displayed an over-use of the expression さようなら (*sayōnara*; “goodbye/farewell”). He produced it in response to prompts #10 (leaving a family restaurant) and #25 (greeting a subordinate who is leaving). Both of those contexts are “goodbye” situations, in which Louis said what he probably thought simply meant “Goodbye.” In other words, Louis demonstrated that he knew the form *sayōnara* but did not yet have a grasp of its connotations nor social functions. Despite its fame, *sayōnara* (literally: “If it must be so”) is rarely used by Japanese

speakers as it holds the connotation of parting ways for a long time, or forever (Kaneko, 1992; Mizutani & Mizutani, 1984). Given that Louis did not know the appropriate expressions for those contexts – また来ます (*matakimasu*; “I will come again”) and お疲れさま (*otsukaresama*; casual “You’ve worked hard”), it is not surprising that he produced a different expression. During the immediate post-test, Louis’ use of *sayōnara* was limited to its appropriate context only (prompt #15). However, by the delayed post-test, the boundaries of the expression had once again widened, and Louis produced it inappropriately in response to the new prompt #31 (“You were talking to your boss on the phone. As you hang up, you say:”).

A similar but opposite pattern was found with prompt #17: “You were spending time with friends, but now you’re leaving. Before you go, you say to them:”. This was the prompt that Louis unexpectedly answered correctly during the pre-test with じゃね (*jane*; casual “bye”), responded too formally on the immediate post-test with 失礼します (*shitsurēshimasu*; formal “excuse me”), but responding correctly again with じゃね on the delayed post-test. It is possible that during the treatment period, Louis learned a new way to excuse himself and used that form during the immediate post-test, but by the delayed post-test, had either sorted out the differences in formality between the two expressions or, more likely, forgot the new form. The fact that he did not produce the new form at all on the delayed post-test supports the latter judgment.

Along with prompt #17, Louis showed multiple examples of struggling to make appropriate formality judgements. He spoke:

- casually to his *Sensē* (Teacher) in #29 on the pre-test
- formally to his friends in #11 on the immediate post-test
- formally to his girlfriend in #16 on the delayed post-test (as previously discussed)
- casually to his friend’s parents in #24 on the delayed post-test

- casually to a customer in #28 on the delayed post-test
- formally to a child in #36 on the delayed post-test
- casually with an acquaintance in #37 on the delayed post-test

Louis discussed the difficulty in making formality judgments during the interview. He expressed that in order to know expressions well, he would want to know the “culture norms. [Because the Japanese are] really formal, and informal, and well, really formal. So I guess it can be kinda hard for us [non-native Japanese] to pick out what to say where.” Other than whether an expression was formal or casual, Louis, being part of the control group, was not instructed on the “culture norms” of who it was appropriate to say such expressions to, and when. It would seem that his pragmatic performance suffered for it. Being too casual can be said to be a difference in cultural background. In Canada, it would not be strange to speak casually with a teacher, one’s friend’s parents, a customer, or an acquaintance. In Japan, however, conversing with those people would require a level of politeness. Being too formal with friends, girlfriends, and children is likely due to a different problem. Beginner students of JFL are usually taught formal language (a.k.a. *-masu* form) before informal, and even when informal is introduced, the formal register remains the norm. This means that students such as Louis have very little experience with the informal register, likely causing them to overuse the formal register.

A final issue that cropped up in Louis’ results was that sometimes he only had a loose control of the form of an expression. During the pre-test and immediate post-test, Louis produced three expressions with incorrect syllables. In the pre-test, he produced *hi-*sha-shi-bu-ri* instead of *hi-sa-shi-bu-ri*. In the post-test, he pronounced *shi-tsu-rē-shi-mas’* as *shi-*te-rē-shi-mas’* and *o-tsu-ka-re-sa-ma* as *o-*te-*ke-*go-sa-ma*. These utterances are perfect examples of what has been called the “bathtub effect” (Aitchison, 2003) – that learners learn and remember best the

beginning of a word or sentence followed by the end, and then the middle. I would hypothesize that the two forms were not yet solidified in his mental lexicon. It is also possible that, like other English native-speakers learning Japanese, he struggles with producing the [tsu] sound. The [tsu] syllable is not a part of any other target expression, and therefore there is no other evidence to support or negate that theory.

4.3.2 Brad

Brad, the Arabic speaker, was the second student assigned to the control group of my study. Unlike his classmates, Brad claimed to spend much more time outside of class with the Japanese language – four hours a week with Japanese music and twelve hours a week watching Japanese dramas. However, he is probably the least-motivated participant, describing his motivation as a “hobby, passing fancy.” Despite such a high amount of extra exposure to Japanese, Brad displayed no evidence of extra knowledge in the pre-test. In the delayed post-test, however, he produced two expressions that were not taught, but were alternatively appropriate to the situations: おい (oi, to get attention) and ごめんください (gomenkudasai, another expression used when entering someone else’s home). It is possible that he learned these expressions during his regular Japanese classes, but also possible that he picked them up himself through his extra-curricular activities.

Since he was not present for the post-test session, Brad was the only participant to take all three tests through the computer-delivered method. He completed them quickly, always skipping the items he did not know, so that he never timed out. With each test, his performance improved, but he remained the least-improved student overall. For the immediate post-test, Brad appeared to learn the second-least new expressions (five) and remembered the least previously learned expressions (five). By the delayed post-test, he lost three “new” expressions but gained five “old”

ones.

Like Louis, Brad also overused さようなら (*sayōnara*; Goodbye/Farewell) on his pre-test. In fact, he used it for three different leave-taking situations (prompts #11, #17, and #29). This is not surprising, as the overuse of *sayōnara* by learners of Japanese is observably common. It is possible that, at the time of the pre-test, Brad only knew one way to say “goodbye” and therefore used that expression in every leave-taking situation to which he did not know an alternative expression. That problem of overextending the appropriate contexts for *sayōnara* remained in the immediate post-test, when he used it again for prompt #29 (“You just had a meeting with Sensei. As you leave her office, you say:”). Interestingly, despite no further instruction on the use of that expression, Brad chose not to answer #29 in the delayed post-test, and showed no other signs of overgeneralization.

Also like his classmates, Brad struggled with making appropriate formality judgments (although to a lesser extent). He spoke:

- casually with his boss in #3 on the immediate post-test
- formally with his mother in #6 on the immediate post-test
- formally in a casual situation in #9 on the immediate post-test
- casually with his friend’s parents in #24 on the delayed post-test

As well, out of the four pairs of expressions with casual and formal forms, Brad only showed evidence of being able to remember and distinguish one pair – おはよう (casual “Good morning”) and おはようございます (formal “Good morning”) – on the pre-test and delayed post-test (on the immediate post-test, he used only the casual form in both contexts). On the activity sheets, Brad occasionally made errors in the level of politeness he used. He had asked me, “But what if you want to be polite to your friends?”. In trying to help him without giving too

much pragmatic information, I replied, “It’s best not to think of it as polite-impolite or formal-informal, but like ‘language I use with people close to me’ and ‘language I use with people not so close to me’.” After that discussion, he continued to make errors. But it is possible that such “errors” were actually intentional. It is possible that he, like other learners of JFL, reject the politeness distinctions. This would be congruent with previous studies, which found “that learners may contest, resist, and on occasion transform L2 pragmatic practices and ideologies” (Kasper, 2009, p.xv), often due to their culturally-acquired ideologies or personal beliefs.

A third and final issue that appeared in the analysis of Brad’s results is that he occasionally mis-categorized time-constricted expressions. He was the only student to display this rather curious error. In both post-tests, Brad used the expression *こんばんは* (*konbanwa*; “Good evening”) in prompt #1 which stated that it was 3:00PM. The appropriate expression for that time would be *こんにちは* (*konnichiwa*; “Good afternoon”). In the delayed post-test, he also produced *こんにちは* in response to prompt #36 which stated that it was morning (and therefore, the appropriate greeting would be *おはよう*, *ohayō*, “Good morning”). There could be multiple explanations for this. Perhaps he simply misread the prompts. Perhaps, since it was getting dark around 3:00PM at that time in Canada, he said “Good evening” instead. Perhaps he never learned that such expressions were constrained to certain time periods. Or perhaps the expressions were classified differently in his mind, *konnichiwa* as simply “Hello” with no time-constraints, and *konbanwa* as used for any time after noon.

4.3.3 Jason

Jason is the pseudonym given to a Chinese international student who was the first to volunteer for this study. Like many of his peers, Jason was interested in learning Japanese in order to someday be able to watch Japanese animation (*anime*) without subtitles. Although he

watched many hours of *anime* in the past, his busy university schedule had constricted him to only two hours a week of *anime* and two hours a week of Japanese music. On the pre-test, he demonstrated that he already knew the expressions *じゃね* (casual “bye”) and *久しぶり* (casual “long time, no see”), despite not having yet formally learned those expressions in class.

Jason was put in the treatment group. He was a very motivated student in those classes. Although he did not take many notes, he listened intently and asked many (often pragmatic) questions. When quizzed, he clearly knew and understood much more than he wrote down on his activity sheets. Throughout the interview, it was evident he remembered the scenes with the expressions well. He even attempted to practice the new expressions he learned in live situations with me and his Japanese teacher. His strongest language remained Mandarin Chinese, however, and he had to ask for clarification on the meanings of “subordinate” and “acquaintance,” which were used in the tests.

For the pre-test, Jason attempted the highest number of prompts (19/30) and performed third-best. On the post-test, he greatly improved and was the best student when both correct and alternative responses are considered. On the delayed post-test his results were remarkably similar. He gained one “old” expression and lost one “new” one, while answering half of the new prompts correctly.

Jason’s performance on those three tests tell an interesting story of language learning in progress. As previously mentioned, Jason showed evidence of having already encountered the expression *(お)久しぶり(です)* (“long time, no see”). However, that knowledge was originally incomplete. He produced **sa-shi-bu-ri* without the necessary first syllable *hi*. He also displayed knowledge of the two forms of the expression (polite and casual), albeit in the wrong contexts. When the expression was presented in the drama, Jason commented that he could not hear the

characters pronouncing the *hi* sound. Indeed it was not very audible. Regardless, he learned that the *hi* was meant to be present and that an *o-* prefix was optional, adding a little more politeness to the expression. On the immediate post-test, both forms of the expression were articulated perfectly in their corresponding contexts. A month later on the delayed post-test, however, his responses had reverted to **sashiburi* for both prompts (#23 and #24), giving him an incorrect mark for both. This suggests that rather than what he was taught, Jason remembered what he had heard. It also seems that perhaps, like during the pre-test, Jason did not consider one's friend's parents to be people to which the formal register should be used.

Nevertheless, learning to make formality judgments was progress that was very evident, both to me as the researcher, and he himself as the learner. Similar to his peers, Jason originally made multiple formality errors in the pre-test. He spoke:

- casually to an acquaintance in #1
- casually to his boss in #3
- formally to a friend in #21
- formally to his brother in #23
- casually to his friend's parents in #24

Such errors can be explained as simply not knowing a casual greeting (as in #21) and possibly not making the same politeness distinctions as a Japanese person would (as in #1 and #24). On the post-test, however, Jason produced no formality errors. Through watching the Japanese drama, the Japanese social hierarchy came into focus for him. He quickly picked up my quip that the “customer is God” and repeated it during another customer-related context in regards to the level of politeness used by the character. He also discussed during the interview how he noticed, while watching the drama, that “[i]n Japan, we [respect] the *senpai*, or even

parents... The Japanese culture is totally different with Canadian culture. There's some similarity with Chinese culture, but [it's] not the same... Even their social structure..." While he successfully remembered and used the appropriate level of politeness for the original thirty prompts, Jason responded to three of the new prompts on the delayed post-test with an inappropriate level of formality: casual with a stranger in #35, formal with a child in #36, and casual with an acquaintance in #37.

Like Louis and Brad, Jason too overused *sayōnara* ("Goodbye/Farewell") during the pre-test, in bidding his subordinate (prompt #25) and teacher (prompt #29) goodbye. Like the others, he probably simply thought of that expression as it was taught to him – to simply mean "Goodbye." When that comparatively-rare expression came up at last in episode 5 of *Last Friends*, Jason immediately realized its connotation of finality. When asked what *sayōnara* meant, he responded, "Farewell" (which is probably a better translation than "Goodbye," which is commonly used in textbooks). Following that lesson, he only used *sayōnara* when appropriate in the immediate and delayed post-tests – with one exception. Jason replied with *sayōnara* to prompt #38 in the delayed post-test (i.e., "You have moved to a new city in Japan. Your neighbours welcome you with:"). What likely happened there was Jason accidentally switched the context from being welcomed in a new city to taking leave of one's old city. In this case, it is more likely that Jason misinterpreted the prompt than he misunderstood the pragmatics of the expression.

Jason was usually very careful with his language production. He showed only one example of L1 phonological interference, pronouncing *chotto-matte* in #22 on the post-test as **chotto-made*. As well, in response to #1 on the pre-test, he began to reply *ohayō* before he caught himself and realized his mistake.

4.3.4 Victor

Victor was the second member of the treatment group, and the only member of that group to speak English as a first language. He frequently listened to Japanese music, which was one of his main inspirations to learn the Japanese language. Victor also claimed to watch four hours a week of Japanese television (probably *anime*). Despite all that outside exposure, Victor displayed no extra knowledge during the pre-test. However, there are two plausible explanations for that. The first is that Victor may have been acquiring different vocabulary from his media exposure. During the interview, he discussed how “one of the first words [he] ever learned” was from an *anime*; an expletive that “one of [his] favourite antagonists said [...] a lot and it kinda stuck eventually.” This suggests that Victor was in fact acquiring Japanese through his media exposure, but different items than the test was looking for.

The second explanation is that Victor displayed strong testing anxiety during the pre- and post-test (unfortunately, Victor did not take the delayed post-test). Learners, to various degrees, often feel anxious when taking a test, but when that anxiety is too overwhelming, it becomes debilitating (Fox & Cheng, 2007). The fact that the test responses were timed likely added more pressure and increased his anxiety (DeLuca, Cheng, Fox, Doe, & Li, 2013). Victor commented that the computer-administered pre-test was “awkward” and confided that his brain “froze” (a common account of the experience of testing anxiety). Not long into that test, he stopped and simply stared at the screen until the test timed out. Unfortunately, he did not fare much better with the researcher-delivered post-test. Without considering the prompts, he quickly skipped the majority of them. After the test was completed, he told me that I had made him nervous, that while I was attempting to give nothing away I was acting like I “didn’t care about [his] answers.” Victor’s strong testing anxiety means that, unfortunately, his performance on both tests cannot

fully represent his knowledge nor ability. He was not keen on risk-taking, either, seemingly only answering the prompts he was positive he was correct on. As such, he left many prompts blank but made no true errors. The expressions he was most confident in were the previously learned expressions, which he produced 12 of the 13 correctly on the post-test. As for the new expressions presented during the treatment period, Victor only showed evidence of learning four of them: はい (*hai*), お疲れ様 (*otsukaresama*), お疲れ様でした (*otsukaresamadeshita*), and 失礼します (*shitsurēshimasu*). During the interview, Victor confessed that he was “too into” the storyline of the drama to notice much else. The four expressions he did learn could have been learned because they were memorable (as in the case of *hai*), recent (as in the case of *shitsurēshimasu*, which was presented during the final session before the test), and frequent (as in the case of *otsukaresama/-deshita*, which combined were the most frequently encountered expression for the treatment group, at a total of eight times). Of course, Victor may have been forming an idea of other expressions, but did not feel confident enough in them to produce them during a test. Interestingly, however, he was the only participant not to produce the expression じゃね (*jane*) despite its frequency and simplicity.

Victor was also unique in that he appeared not to have difficulties with formality. During the post-test, he either knew both the formal and casual forms (as in prompts #2/#3 and #25/#26) or he did not reply to either of the pairs (as in prompts #23/#24 and #27/#28). He made no errors in formality in the pre-test, either.

While the treatment method did help Victor acquire four new expressions (without negatively affecting his knowledge of previously learned expressions), he benefited by far the least in his group. He reported during the interview that he did not prefer one method over the

other. His results damper the success of his group, and suggest that perhaps the drama method is not a good fit for every student.

4.3.5 Shawn

Shawn was invited to take part in this study by his friend, Jason. He also spoke Mandarin as a first language and was interested in Japanese culture. His “other reason” for learning Japanese was his interest in Japanese dramas. In fact, Shawn had the most varied exposure to the Japanese language. He claimed to watch three hours a week of Japanese dramas, one hour a week of Japanese television, and approximately one Japanese movie per month. He also listens to about two hours a week of Japanese music.

Shawn demonstrated perhaps the best evidence for the learning benefits of foreign media. On the pre-test, he tied with his friend Jason for the most examples of extra expressions (*jane* and *ohisashiburi*) and displayed knowledge of another expression he probably learned from media during the interview. During the interview, he said that he learned from the sessions and enjoyed them. He also agreed that he occasionally acquires Japanese from dramas and mentioned, “I think dramas [are] always an option for me to improve my Japanese.” While watching the drama clips intently, Shawn would repeat aloud vocabulary and expressions that he heard. His notes, while lacking any pragmatic information, were flawless.

Shawn improved greatly between the pre- and post-tests (although he attempted the delayed post-test, computer malfunctioning resulted in that data being unusable). If both correct and alternative responses are taken into consideration, Shawn tied with Idina for being the most improved student (by 16 points). If only correct responses are considered, he tied for second place with Louis (by 13 points). Along with Jason, he was the only student to decrease the number of incorrect responses. And, like Louis, Shawn attempted the most items on the post-test,

despite being somewhat uncomfortable with in-person testing. Shawn was unique, however, in that he was the only participant to learn more new expressions (10) than “old” ones (8). This curious result suggests that the treatment method may have been more beneficial for him than the more “traditional” method of his regular Japanese classes.

His success aside, Shawn’s results contain a variety of mistakes. Like his peers, Shawn, too, misused *sayōnara* in the pre-test. Despite knowing *jane* and using it elsewhere (prompts #6, #17, #29), he instead used *sayōnara* with friends in prompt #16. It is likely he did not realize the connotations of that “goodbye” until he witnessed the scene in *Last Friends*. For the post-test, he only used that expression in its appropriate situation. Similarly, Shawn overextended his use of *moshimoshi* (“Hello” on the phone) in the pre-test by using it in response to a knock at the door in prompt #14. Perhaps in this case as well he did not know that *moshimoshi* is (predominately) restricted to use on the telephone, which he subsequently learned during the treatment period, and did not make that mistake again on the post-test.

Not all his errors in the pre-test were corrected in the post-test, however. His use of *konbanwa* (“Good evening”) increased on the post-test, resulting in him using it inappropriately two times (in the afternoon in prompt #1 and before bed in prompt #5). As well, despite improving in his formality decisions (i.e., correcting three instances – prompts #6, #23, and #29) by the post-test, he incorrectly used the casual “Good morning” (*ohayō*) with his boss in prompt #3.

Curiously, Shawn’s chosen expressions sometimes suggested a different interpretation of the provided contexts. He was the only participant to respond correctly to prompt #28 on the post-test (“You work as a waiter/waitress. The food came slow, and when you bring it, you say to the customers:”). Unlike his peers, who chose to apologize generally (*sumimasen*) in that

situation, Shawn was able to read between the lines, so to speak, and apologize specifically for the wait (*omataseshimashita*). In other instances, however, he seemingly switched roles with the imaginary interlocutor. In prompt #7, rather than bid goodbye to one leaving the house (*itterasshai*), Shawn bid goodbye as if he were leaving (*jane*). In #20, rather than responding as the doctor saying “Come in” (*dōzo*), he responded what the patient might say (*shitsurēshimasu*). And in #21, rather than call his friend over with *kocchikocchi*, he said *omatase* (“Thanks for waiting”) as if he were the person to arrive. If he had been the other interlocutor in those situations, his expressions would have been appropriate. This suggests that perhaps Shawn had a good understanding of the expressions but simply misinterpreted the prompts; a fault in his test-taking and not his pragmatic competence.

4.3.6 Idina

The only female participant was Idina. She is a Chinese international student, and was interested in learning Japanese for the intrinsic enjoyment of language learning itself. She was also a fan of *anime*, watching three hours per week. Idina joined the treatment group last (at session three), but remained there diligently up to and including the delayed post-test. During the interview, she expressed that she found the sessions more interesting than her regular Japanese classes and the drama story interesting as well.

Idina was a very good student. She was the only participant in the treatment group to take pragmatic notes. She wrote down notes on the context such as “after work” (for *otsukaresamadeshita*), on the formality such as “the full sentence is said to a person of higher level/status” (for *ohayōgozaimasu*), and even on how it was articulated such as “in a cute way” (for the character’s sing-song pronunciation of *hai-hai*). Even without studying her notes, Idina was the most improved student considering only correct answers and tied with Shawn for the

most improved student considering both correct and alternative responses. On the delayed post-test, she was the only student to time out, but still performed the best (with 25 correct answers and the least, at eight, incorrect answers). Between the immediate and delayed post-tests, she only very slightly regressed, losing two “new” expressions but gaining one “old” expression back. Simply put, her learning largely stood the test of time.

Idina displayed very little difficulty with formality judgments. Her pre-test results show only one instance of a formality issue: using the casual “Good morning” (*ohayō*) with her boss in prompt #3. Despite no corrective feedback, that error was corrected in both post-tests. With the addition of ten new prompts, however, one new formality error cropped up in the delayed post-test, when she once again spoke casually to her boss (#31). Idina discussed the saliency of Japanese politeness in the drama during the interview: “When they say ‘excuse me’ or something, they, like, bow to each other. Just, they really say things in a polite way. That’s different from our culture.”

Other than for prompt #3, Idina did not change her answers between the pre- and immediate post-test. That being said, she did slip up on prompt #7, uttering *irasshaimase* instead of the similar-sounding *itterasshai* (which she did use correctly in the pre-test). She was monitoring her own language production, however, and confessed after the immediate post-test that she realized she had mixed that expression up and had remembered others after she skipped them (such as prompt #9, *okaeri*). She also said that she knew what she had to say in prompts #23 and #24 (*hisashiburi* and *ohisashiburidesu*) and that they differed in formality, but could not recall the form of the expressions at the time. On the delayed post-test, she responded to one correctly and timed out before she could answer the other one, which seems to suggest that she did in fact know those expressions.

Idina was the only treatment group member to misuse *sayōnara* in the immediate post-test. She responded with that expression to prompt #29 (“You just had a meeting with Sensei. As you leave her office, you say:”). This was the same mistake that two other participants (Brad and Jason) made in the pre-test. Although Idina learned the finality connotation contained in that expression, she likely reverted to what she and many of her peers say in that situation in real-life (Fukuda-Oddie, 2007). Of all the prompts, #29 is perhaps the most relatable to JFL students’ real lives. JFL students commonly bid their teachers goodbye with *sayōnara* and are likely not corrected for doing so. But by the delayed post-test, Idina seemed to have lost faith in that response and decided to skip prompt #29 instead. This suggests that she understood her previous response to be incorrect, but could not think of an appropriate alternative and therefore chose not to respond.

Idina also proved that she can apply her knowledge of Japanese expressions to new situations. She performed best of the four participants who answered the ten new prompts in the delayed post-test, with six correct answers, one alternative answer, and three incorrect answers.

4.4 Summary

Considering the brief duration of the treatment period (from 2.5 to 5 hours), all participants – but especially those in the treatment group – improved significantly in their pragmatic development, both in the sense of improving their proficiency with conventional expressions and in a general sense of increased pragmatic awareness, particularly in regards to formality in Japanese. While the control group initially outperformed the treatment group, the latter greatly improved and performed better on the two post-tests. That the treatment group was superior considering both the tests scores and the number of expressions successfully learned strongly suggests that they benefited more from their method immediately and in the long term.

A close qualitative analysis of the individual results revealed some common areas of difficulty for the students including an overuse of *sayōnara*, struggles with formality judgments, and occasional misinterpretations of the context. There were also interesting individual differences between the participants including testing anxiety and an incomplete knowledge of forms. A careful analysis of the expressions themselves and their success or lack thereof in being acquired suggested that important factors include familiarity with the expression, frequency, and saliency. These findings are further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to discern whether or not viewing a subtitled Japanese drama while drawing attention to form, function, and context was beneficial for the learning of conventional expressions, and if learners believed them to be so. The results from the previous chapter suggest that the method under examination was in fact beneficial.

In regards to the first research question – Are subtitled foreign media beneficial for the acquisition of pragmatic competence? – the results of the treatment group were positive both as a group and individually, strongly suggesting that yes, the media are beneficial for that intention. The interviews revealed that the students did believe the method to be beneficial. All the members of the treatment group agreed that they both enjoyed and learned from the experience, adding that the drama helped them remember the expressions and provided examples of authentic pronunciation and intonation. Unlike some previous studies (such as Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011 & Stewart and Pertusa, 2004), the students did not comment that the subtitles were “distracting,” probably because they were both accustomed to them and required them at their level of proficiency. Even Louis, a member of the control group, thought that the drama method would “theoretically” be helpful, in that it would provide “a sense of context.” It should be noted, however, that the students did not necessarily prefer the method under study. They still believed that their teachers’ more traditional methods (such as using the textbook and powerpoint presentations) were also helpful in learning expressions and some participants claimed that they would prefer immersion in the L2 environment and/or a native speaker of Japanese to help them acquire Japanese expressions.

As for the second research question:

Is drawing attention to form, function, and context of conventional expressions with the use of subtitled foreign media more effective than teaching conventional expressions as vocabulary items?

In the present study, the treatment group, who were taught with attention paid to form, function, and context, outperformed the control group, taught only the expressions and their translations. The treatment group was more successful in terms of the number of expressions successfully learned as a group (17 as opposed to eight), in terms of a better rate of improvement than the control group, and even in retaining more expressions than the control group over time. These results coincide with previous studies that found that teaching pragmatics, and specifically pragmatic expressions, is a worthwhile pedagogical endeavour (Taguchi, 2011; Bardovi-Harlig & Vellenga, 2012; Li, 2012; Zavialova, 2015). Rather than comparing implicit and explicit methods to teach L2 expressions (as in Rafieyan et al., 2015 and Tateyama, 2001), this study compared a new method to the status quo and found that the new method is likely more effective. Like some previous studies in the field of subtitles and SLA, the results of this study support the idea that regular subtitles are a beneficial learning aid for beginner level learners (Matielo et al., 2015; Bianchi & Ciabattini, 2008; Hayati & Mohmedi, 2011).

This chapter will pick up from the findings of the previous chapter and consider in more depth the larger themes and ideas that arose from this study. In other words, this chapter takes a step back from the data in order to see the bigger picture. It will begin with a brief discussion on how the results show evidence of interlanguage improvement rather than a straightforward perfect acquisition of expressions. It will then examine what the students believed they needed to learn in regards to expressions, what the evidence suggests they need to know, and what theorists

argue they need to know, with relevance to one struggle most participants faced: formality judgments. The chapter will follow that with how the drama method addresses those concerns, while not neglecting the weaknesses of the method, before wrapping up with the evident importance of frequency and saliency when teaching and/or learning L2 conventional expressions.

5.2 Interlanguage development

Rather than perfect acquisition, what the results show is noticeable *improvement* in the pragmatic competence of the participants, especially those of the treatment group.

During the treatment period of the present study, the interlanguage of each participant was gradually improving. In accordance with formula-based learning theories, the first time the participants encountered a new expression, a meaning was associated with it, perhaps the translation in the subtitles or the one provided by the instructor. Each time the expression was encountered again – in the drama, for instance – the interlanguage knowledge of that expression was expanded with additional information, such as about the context(s) or intonation.

One sign of that progress may be the unpacking of a formulaic expression. As Edmonds (2014) notes, “it is often claimed that a multiword unit is stored as such in the mental lexicon and, thus, is retrieved as a whole” (p. 74). Put differently, it is commonly believed that formulaic phrases are initially acquired as analyzed wholes. This could be observed in the participants’ initial production of ちよっと待って (*chottomatte*) as that single invariant form. On the pre-test and immediate post-test, all participants in this study who answered the question correctly responded to prompt #22 with *chottomatte* – in the exact same form they had previously learned in their regular Japanese classes. However, by the time of the delayed post-test, the four

participants each responded to the prompt with a different surface variant (*matte*, *mattekudasai*, *chotto*, and *chottomatte*) suggesting that they had unpacked the expression into its parts and could express it differently than originally learned.

The learners' internal understandings of the expressions, as part of their interlanguage, cannot be directly observed, but rather examined through learner productions in the L2 (Ortega, 2009), as with the previous example of *chottomatte*. In fact, all five interlanguage processes (transfer, complexification, overgeneralization, restructuring, and simplification) as well as remapping are present in the data obtained from this study.

Various types of transfer were observed in the present study. Phonetic transfer was observed when some Chinese-speaking students pronounced the voiceless alveolar stop [t] as its voiced equivalent [d], such as in *chottomatte*. But more important to the focus of this study, pragmatic transfer can also be inferred from the formality "errors." As the results show, most of the participants in this study struggled to make appropriate formality judgments. Often they would use a casual form (such as *ohayō* for "Good morning") when a more formal or polite form should be used (*ohayōgozaimasu*). Both of these examples are instances of negative transfer, which has been found to be more common in FL contexts than SL contexts (Maeshiba et al., 1995). This behaviour can be explained as Canadian pragmatic norms (speaking casually and friendly to most people) affecting the decisions made when speaking in the L2, Japanese, which is more hierarchical and as such, requires distinctions in the formality level depending on the relative status of the interlocutor. In other words, what likely happened here is that Canadian English and/or Chinese pragmatic norms were erroneously transferred to the learners' use of Japanese.

As well, the results of the delayed post-test support the complexification hypothesis in that,

generally, the easier (linguistically and pragmatically) expressions (such as *hai*, *jane*, and *kocchikocchi*) were better remembered and utilized than the more complex expressions (such as *mōikanakya*, *yōkoso*, and *ojamashimasu*). It is possible that some of the expressions may have been too complicated for the participants' level of proficiency. *Mōikanakya* (casual “I have to go”) is comprised of a form (casual negative) and a conjugation (can not not do, or “must”) that the participants had not yet studied at that stage in their learning. Not surprisingly, that expression was only produced by one participant in the immediate post-test (Brad) and by no participant in the delayed post-test.

Overgeneralization was evident in the pre-test, where four of the six participants overgeneralized *sayōnara* (“Farewell”) to situations where it does not belong. At least one participant responded with *sayōnara* in almost every leave-taking situation prompt, namely:

(10) You often go to a family restaurant. You will be going there again soon. As you leave, you tell the owner: [intended answer: *matakimasu*, “I’ll come again.”]

(11) You were hanging out with friends but you have to go now. You tell them: [intended answer: *mōikanakya*, “I gotta go.”]

(16) You finish talking to your girlfriend/boyfriend on the phone. You end the call with: [intended answer: *ja(ne)*, “Bye.”]

(17) You were spending time with friends, but now you’re leaving. Before you go, you say to them: [intended answer: *ja(iku/mata/ne)*, “Bye.”]

(25) Your subordinate is done work for the day. Before you leave, you say to them: [intended answer: *otsukare(sama)*, “Thanks for the hard work.”]

(29) You just had a meeting with Sensei. As you leave her office, you say: [intended answer:

shitsurēshimasu, “Excuse me.”]

As previously discussed, *sayōnara* is actually a rather rare expression (Kaneko, 1992) that carries a connotation of finality (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1984) and is therefore inappropriate in the above contexts, where the speaker intends to see the interlocutors again.

Fortunately, the overgeneralization of *sayōnara* was almost entirely corrected by the post-tests, which is itself an example of the next process: *restructuring*. In the case of *sayōnara*, it is likely the students initially understood it to mean “Goodbye” and to be used similarly to its equivalent expression in English. Through the treatment period, however, they restructured that understanding to a more correct one and as such, the overgeneralization was largely abandoned.

And finally, evidence for the one-to-one principle, as an example of the simplification process, can be observed in this study when participants associated one expression with one function/meaning to the extent of excluding other expressions. This occurred in the case of *yōkoso* (“Welcome”). There were three welcoming expressions among the target expressions of this study: *yōkoso*, *irasshaimase*, and *okaeri*. The latter was previously learned and has a fixed context. It is said by an in-group member already home to another member who has returned home. In this sense, it can be considered to mean “Welcome home” and is paired with the expression *tadaima* (“I’m home”). The second expression, *irasshai(mase)*, was also previously learned. It derives from *keigo*, a very formal form of Japanese, and literally means “Someone honourable is present.” Usually heard in stores or restaurants, it functions as “Welcome” or “Please come in” – but it is occasionally used in home contexts as well. The third expression was new for the participants. *Yōkoso* is a rather formal way of saying “Welcome.” It is usually seen as part of a phrase such as 日本へようこそ (*Nihon e yōkoso*, “Welcome to Japan”). However, it

is sometimes said to welcome someone to a home, and in that sense, its meaning overlaps with the other welcoming expressions. According to the participants' interview, the scene in which *yōkoso* was first encountered in the drama was quite memorable. Expectedly, the participants demonstrated knowledge of *okaeri* and *irasshai(mase)* in the pre-test. On the post-test, only Louis used *yōkoso* appropriately. Four students uttered *irasshai* instead, and one (Victor) did not attempt. Two students displayed some confusion between the three expressions. Brad replied with *yōkoso* in the context of *okaeri* (prompt #9) and Jason said *yōkoso* in response to prompt #20, when he was responding as a doctor to a knock on his office door. By the delayed post-test, *yōkoso* had disappeared. All four respondents used *irasshai* in its place. In other words, since *irasshai* and *yōkoso* were too similar, the participants likely simplified matters and used *irasshai* instead of *yōkoso*.

But what happens when another expression is learned and the learner *is* able to discern a workable difference? In her article on “Developing L2 Pragmatics,” Bardovi-Harlig (2013) discusses that very situation. She gives the example of an English L2 learner who acquires the expression “No problem”:

Adding *no problem* to the repertoire does not just involve the addition of another expression, but rather remapping. *You're welcome* may start as the only reply to *thank you*. If *no problem* is added, however, it may be mapped to the function of deflecting the thanks, while *you're welcome* is remapped to accepting thanks. (p. 78).

To answer the question, then, when a similar expression is successfully learned, *remapping* occurs (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013). One participant in particular (Jason) demonstrated remapping with leave-taking expressions. His pre-test performance suggests that at that time he only knew two ways to excuse himself: *jane* (casual “Bye”) and *sayōnara* (“Farewell”). During the

treatment period, he acquired two new, similar expressions: *otsukaresama(deshita)* (said when leaving work at the end of the day) and *shitsurēshimasu* (said when parting from superiors, either in person or on the phone). It is possible that he initially thought of *jane* as a casual “bye” and *sayōnara* as a politer “goodbye.” Through the treatment period, he restructured his understanding of *sayōnara* (as discussed above) and remapped the other leave-taking situations into their appropriate contexts. On both the immediate and delayed post-tests, he used all the leave-taking expressions in their appropriate contexts. His interlanguage had made room for two new leave-taking expressions and had reorganized his understanding of previous leave-taking expressions.

The one-to-one principle is a rather simple way of looking at things, however. The data suggest that it is more complicated than that. During the interview, Louis discussed how it is difficult to choose the best expression for a situation when there is more than one possibility – which is usually the case. As he put it, “You can say all this, like ‘when you get to someone’s house, you say this’, right? But it’s not like one phrase for everything, right? So I guess trying to figure out which phrase to use is the hard part.”

A closer look at the alternative responses reveal that the connection between contexts and expressions is not so clear-cut. For one, sometimes there can be a different interpretation of the context. Interlanguage pragmatics researcher Bardovi-Harlig (2009) also mentioned this complicating factor, writing, “One factor that lowers learners’ production of a particular target language conventional expression in a given scenario is the interpretation of the context as appropriate for an alternative speech act” (p. 775). She goes on to explain that the various possibilities compete in the learner’s mind, and they may end up choosing something different than a native speaker would in that same situation. This may be due to the learner’s background norms about what kinds of speech act is appropriate, such as acceptance or deflection, gratitude

or apology. In that 2009 study by Bardovi-Harlig, while the vast majority of English native speakers responded to the broken chair scenario (a friend standing on a broken chair to reach the top shelf) with a warning such as “Be careful,” many learners treated it as a context in which to offer help, producing “Can/May I help you?”. The present study found similar patterns. For example, Louis and Jason interpreted leaving their friends in prompt #11 as requiring an apology or excusing expression; namely, *sumimasen* (rather than “I gotta go”). Similarly, on the pre-test, Jason thought the end of class in Japan called for gratitude (*argiatō gozaimasu*) instead of farewell (*sayōnara*). Sometimes it was likely part of the wording of the prompt that caused a different interpretation. Jason, for example, likely interpreted “family restaurant” as his own family or a family he knew well enough for the casual *jane* to be appropriate. Likewise, Louis interpreted prompt #38 (“You have moved to a new city in Japan. Your neighbours welcome you with:”) as a first time meeting requiring *yoroshiku(onegaishimasu)* rather than the intended welcoming context.

At other times, the participants responded to a prompt with a general expression instead of one more specific to the situation. Louis, for example, used a general expression for gratitude (*arigatō*) instead of specific gratitude for work effort (*otsukaresama*) for prompt #25 in the delayed post-test. Four students (Louis, Brad, Jason, and Idina) used a general apology/gratitude expression (see Ide, 1998 for the complicated nature of *sumimasen*) in place of a more specific expression thanking/apologizing for the wait – *omatase(shimashita)* – in prompts #27 and #28 throughout the three tests. These alternative responses may have been examples of what Kasper called the “strategy of least effort” (Barron, 2003; Brown, 2011), which refers to “the tendency for L2 speakers to rely on forms and functions that are highly automated and easily produced and to over-generalize such forms to situations in which a more complex form would be more

appropriate” (Brown, 2011, p. 95). The data suggests that the participants knew what they should say in the situation but could not remember the new, more specific expression and so used a more familiar, general one instead. This was likely compounded by the added pressure of timed responses.

And in yet other cases, there is simply more than one perfectly legitimate expression. *Jā mata* and *mata ashita* carry the same intended meaning as *matakimasu* in prompt #10, as expressed by Brad and Louis, respectfully. Likewise, *ojamashimasu* (prompt #30) is not the only expression for entering another’s home. Jason and Brad’s responses of *shitsurēshimasu* and *gomenkudasai* were equally valid. And *oi* (“hey”), while perhaps more rough and gendered, is also a way to attract a friend’s attention, like *kocchikocchi* (prompt #21).

Most participants showed signs they were either approaching or had reached multifunctionality, at least in regards to certain contexts. The students demonstrated that they knew both *konnichiwa* and *dōmo* and could use them interchangeably as “Hello.” Louis, Shawn, and Idina used both expressions in their appropriate contexts on the post-test, and Brad and Jason were able to use *dōmo* appropriately on the delayed post-test. Prompts #39 and #40, added to the delayed post-test, were considered correct with either *konnichiwa* or *dōmo*. All four respondents responded appropriately to prompt #40, half with *konnichiwa* and half with *dōmo*.

The fact that there is usually not a single appropriate expression for any given situation is a potential downfall to using DCTs in ILP studies. Researchers must decide what to do with the fact that there is often more than one “correct” answer. How does one decide which expressions are right, wrong, or possible? One solution (as in Li, 2012) is to have multiple raters (Brown, 2001). Future research should keep this important factor in mind.

All this demonstrates that all the participants in the present study made progress in their interlanguage development and it is that progress that is proof that intervention – including and especially the treatment method used – is beneficial for L2 learners.

5.3 What learners need to know in regards to conventional expressions

The fact that the control group underperformed the treatment group suggests that a simple PPP method of teaching conventional expressions may be inadequate. Louis, a member of the control group, stated that the way he was taught during the intervention period was similar to how his regular Japanese teacher taught him expressions. He said, “[s]he just gets us to repeat her in front of the class, and then, go from there.” The other students described being instructed in a similar method, either just following the context-less one-to-one-style textbook or “look at the powerpoint and she will read it, and we follow it, and she will explain what that is.” That the treatment group outperformed the control group in this study suggests that such vocabulary-like methods are unsatisfactory for learning conventional expressions and that there are better methods available – and that is another important finding of this study.

Conventional expressions are more complex than simple vocabulary items and require more information to understand and use them competently. Comparing what the students themselves said they need to know in the interviews with their results and what researchers have argued in the past, it seems that all the required information traces back to the two parts of pragmatic competence: pragmalinguistic knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. As Taguchi (2009) explains:

Being pragmatically competent requires both types of knowledge, as well as processing skills that mobilize the knowledge in real time communication. Learners need to have a range of linguistic forms... at their disposal to perform language functions (e.g. greeting).

At the same time, they need to understand sociocultural norms and rules that govern the usage of these forms (e.g. what to say to greet whom). (p. 1-2).

To reiterate, *pragmalinguistic knowledge* entails making the connection between form and function/meaning. It has to do with the expression itself. But more than just knowing the spelling and literal definitions or closest L1 equivalents, learners need to know what an expression *really means*, the actual, intended meaning rather than the surface or apparent meaning. Louis, who as a member of the control group, was not privy to such information, discussed this during the interview. He gave an example from English, saying: “For example, if we say like ‘how are you?’ here, any person learning English would think we’re actually asking how you’re doing. But we’re not. We’re just saying it as, like, ‘yo, ice breaker’ kinda thing.” In this study, he and his fellow control group member did not seem to understand and use *shitsurēshimasu* as well as the treatment group on both post-tests. Evidently, it is more helpful to know that it is an expression used when leaving or hanging up on superiors than to know it means “I’m going to disturb you” or “Excuse me.”

It is also important to know the appropriate and authentic intonation of conventional expressions (Tateyama, 2001). Without this knowledge, learners may unintentionally sound rude in the L2, such as if they said *ja* (“Bye”) too quickly or *moshimoshi* (“Hello?” on the phone) without the questioning intonation. Unfortunately, common classroom practices do not usually address this matter. As Jason mentioned, “even [if] we are just looking at the textbook, even there’s *hiragana* [the syllabic alphabet], we can read it, but we can’t know the intonations.” Teachers often present expressions in an announcement-like fashion, which students then parrot back to them. Because the expressions are given out of context, students are rarely provided with their important accompanying paralinguistic features. “For certain phrases,” Victor noted during

the interview, “I find everyone in the class copies *Sensei*’s intonation.”

Thirdly, as Taguchi (2009) mentioned, learners require a range of possible forms. As previously discussed, only knowing one way to say “goodbye” was problematic for the majority of students in this study.

Sociolinguistic knowledge, again, has to do with making the connection between function and context. In other words, it is knowledge about the appropriate use of conventional expressions. In order to use conventional expressions appropriately, a learner would require some understanding of L2 pragmatic norms, which are theoretically divided into two categories: pragmalinguistic norms and sociopragmatic norms. *Pragmalinguistic norms* govern what a context calls for, linguistically, such as which speech act is required in any given situation (Cohen, 2008). The trick here is to be able to interpret the situation under L2 pragmatic norms. If the L2 pragmatic norms are similar to that of the L1, positive transfer may occur, but if the cultures differ in what the context calls for, negative transfer may occur. Fortunately for the participants in this study, many of the situations and their expressions correlated well with Canadian English norms. Being late for a meeting with a friend, for example, would call for an expression such as “Sorry I’m late” or in Japanese, *omatase*. But the connection between expression and context was not always so clear. As Louis noted, “it can be kinda hard for us [non-native speakers] to pick out what to say where.” He added, “[k]nowing what to say is fine, but knowing *when* to say it is something different.” Jason, for instance, demonstrated that he had learned *yōkoso* and that it is a welcoming expression. During the interview, he claimed that the example from the drama was memorable to him. However, this did not translate into his being able to use the expression in its appropriate context in the post-tests.

Sociopragmatic norms involve the relationship between the interlocutors and what that

relationship requires in the target culture. They are “norms of behavior for realizing the given speech act in a given context, taking into account (i) the culture involved, (ii) the relative age and gender of the interlocutors, (iii) their social class and occupations, and (iv) their roles and status in the interaction” (Cohen, 2008, p. 222). The members of the treatment group came to understand the importance of knowing about the target culture and its social organization, as they discussed in the interview. Throughout the intervention period, those participants learned a fair amount about the level of politeness required between customers and clients, *senpai* (those with more experience in the institution) and *kōhē* (those with less), age differences, about in-group and out-group distinctions, and even a little about gendered language in Japanese from the drama. The difference in sociopragmatic norms between Japanese and Canadian and Chinese cultures was highlighted to them. Sociopragmatic knowledge aids the learner in choosing the appropriate expression and level of politeness in a given situation, which is very important (Ide & Yoshida, 2004). In fact, Taguchi and Sykes (2013) argue that “[t]he ability to use language in socially and culturally appropriate ways is *critical*” (p. 1, emphasis added). Traditional methodologies (such as PPP or grammar translation) usually do not teach students where they fit in the target language society and the language they are expected to use as a result of those roles. But in “order to speak and interpret utterances appropriately, interlocutors need to know what social role they play in a given speech event and what is the normative expectation of that role in society” (Cook, 2001, p. 84).

Amalgamating previous research with the findings of the present study, the required knowledge in regards to the teaching and learning of conventional expressions comes together, depicted below in Figure 6.

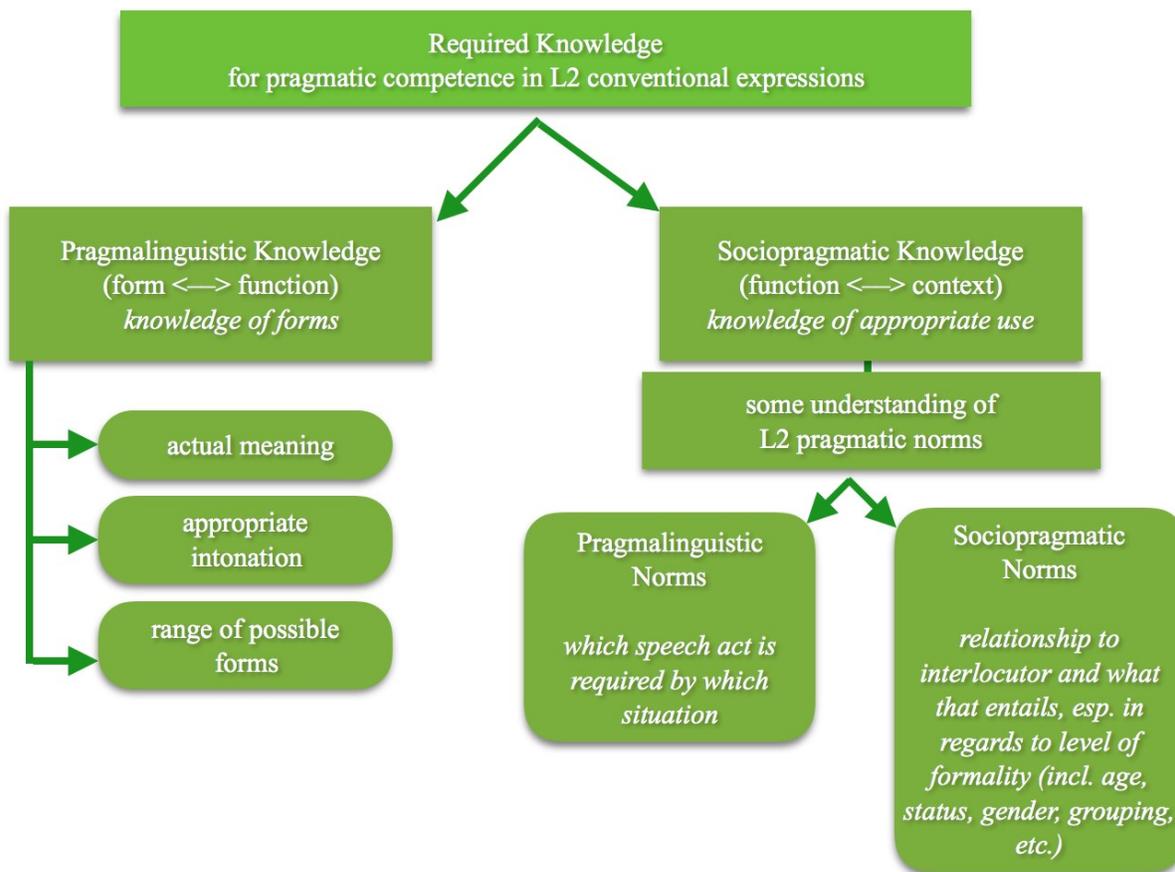


Figure 6. Amalgamated theory of the required knowledge for pragmatic competence in L2 conventional expressions.

5.4 Formality judgments

One of the key areas of sociopragmatic norms that Japanese L2 learners require is an understanding of the Japanese social hierarchy and how that relates to the level of formality used in conventional expressions. Some target expressions included in the present study carry a certain level of politeness. Others were divided into casual and polite pairs of the same expression (namely *ohayō* & *ohayō gozaimasu*, *omatase* & *omataseshimashita*, *hisashiburi* & *ohisashiburidesu*, and *otsukare* and *otsukaresamadeshita*) purposely in order to tease out participants' abilities to make formality-level decisions. Recall that all but one of the students

(Victor) struggled with formality both before and after the treatment period, albeit to various degrees. Sometimes the participants' responses were overly formal and other times they were too casual.

Research in ILP shows that this is a common problem (Bardovi-Harlig, 2013; Cook, 2001). Whether they operate under L1 pragmatic norms (Cook, 2001) or “underdifferentiate such context variables as social distance and social power in the L2” (Kasper & Rose, 2001, p. 6), L2 learners frequently misjudge the level of formality required in L2 situations. Maeshiba and her colleagues (1995), for example, found that most negative transfer between English and Japanese happened in contexts with high power distance because the power distance was perceived differently by L2 speakers. *Power distance* refers to the unequal power relationships in society and how comfortable a society is with those inequalities (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Mori (2009) confessed that even native speakers of Japanese struggle with “judging what is appropriate in a given circumstance” (p. 338), including the use of honorifics and discourse strategies.

The problem stems from the fact that Japanese culture is quite unique and that pragmatic rules are culturally-derived (Taguchi, 2009). First and foremost, Japanese society is organized vertically, or hierarchically. Age, status, and experience in an institution or organization must all be taken into consideration. Those above one in the hierarchy (such as older members of society, parents, customers, teachers, and upperclassman) should be spoken to with more formality and politeness, while those below or equal to oneself (children, friends, underclassman, etc.) can be spoken to more casually or plainly. For learners who come from more egalitarian societies, there is likely to be a learning curve as they adjust to these sociopragmatic norms. As Jason commented during the interview, it is important to know who one is talking to in Japanese in

order to know how polite one must be: “In Japan, we are respecting the *senpai*, or even parents. So we have to use more polite way”. Kasper and Rose (2001) concur, noting that “[p]erforming communicative acts appropriately often involves norms specific to a particular cultural and institutional context” (p. 7).

Secondly, society is divided horizontally as well, with distinctions made between the in-group and the out-group. The *in-group* and *out-group* are social psychology terms for distinctions made between “us” and “them”; in other words, the group of people one considers themselves a member of and the group of people one does not identify with (Aronson, Wilson, Ekert, & Fehr, 2010). While other cultures also make such distinctions, in Japanese, those designations are quite important and make a difference as to which conventional expressions are appropriate or not. For example, *konnichiwa* (“Good afternoon”) and *konbanwa* (“Good evening”) “are used with people who do not belong to one’s own group” (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1977, p. 17). On the other hand, other expressions, such as *ittekimasu* (“I’m leaving”) and *itterasshai* (“Have a good day”) would be inappropriate said to out-group members. When learning conventional expressions, then, learners need to know information regarding its usage, including how polite or casual the expression is, and whether it is for in-group or out-group members.

Research has suggested, however, that even if one knows the L2 pragmatic norms, they may resist them (Kasper, 2009; Ishihara, 2007). Taguchi (2011) describes how “learners of Japanese tended to resist pragmatic use of honorifics or gendered language because of their beliefs in egalitarian social relationships coming from their home culture norms” (p. 303). It is highly possible that some “mistakes” in formality in this study were actually intentional deviations from Japanese L2 sociopragmatic norms. Recall that Brad argued he wanted to sound

more polite to his friends, and consider that Jason may have desired more casual and comfortable interactions with strangers. Ishihara (2007) hypothesized that when “learners encounter new L2 norms that conflict with their often first-culture-based values, they are likely to feel resistant to the L2 norms” (p. 32).

In fact, according to the members of the treatment group, cultural differences – especially in societal structure and politeness – were very noticeable in the drama. With the help of the drama, those participants were able to improve their formality judgments. That is just one of the potential benefits the drama method has to offer, as further discussed in the following section.

5.5 An examination of the drama method

It has been asserted that target language community exposure is the best way to learn conventional expressions (Bardovi-Harlig, 2012; Beckwith & Dewaele, 2012; Rafieyan et al., 2014). The participants in the present study agreed that their preferred method would be to learn through immersion or with the help of a native speaker friend. In the absence of that, however, the drama method presented in this study may be a good substitute. Tateyama (2001) concluded her study on teaching Japanese conventional expressions – in which she also used video clips from Japanese dramas – with the following statement:

In a foreign language setting, where learners have very few opportunities to interact with speakers of the target language outside of class, communicative activities *as well as watching videos* will allow learners to access and integrate sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic knowledge more quickly and efficiently (p. 221, emphasis added).

Researchers have advocated the use of media technology in the second or foreign language classroom for some time (e.g., Jung & Vanderplank, 1994; Danaher & Danaher, 1998; Utashiro

& Kawai, 2009; Taguchi & Sykes, 2013). Television dramas in the target language (subtitled, if required), are arguably a rich and insufficiently tapped resource (Danan, 2004) for learning conventional expressions, and language in general.

It should first be acknowledged that the subtitled drama method is not a perfect method for acquiring conventional expressions. Since “learners tend to pay attention to meaning rather than form in input unless their attention is directed specifically” (Wood, 2015, p. 96), learners need to attend to the form in the soundtrack as well as read the subtitles. This may require viewing the episode or clip(s) more than once (as in this study), which makes this method somewhat time-consuming. Even if learners are attending to the L2 audio input, it can sometimes be difficult to hear expressions clearly in the soundtrack. There may be distracting sounds, or perhaps the actor did not enunciate. Recall that Jason claimed to never hear the /hi/ phoneme at the beginning of *hisashiburi*. The clip from *Last Friends* did not help him discern that initial sound, and his production of that expression suffered for it. And thirdly, being fictional in nature, dramas occasionally provide inauthentic examples of language use. For example, a female character that is masculine may use male language in a drama, while in real life, such usage would be markedly odd. The end result is that “there is no consensus on the ideal method of teaching target language pragmatics in foreign language classrooms” (Rafieyan et al., 2014, p. 1586), but in spite of the potential limitations, using subtitled target language dramas is arguably a good method.

There are many benefits to this method. For one, dramas can bring situations and contexts to light that would otherwise be difficult to do in a classroom (Rostam Shirazi, Hesabi, & Simin, 2016). Dramas also *show* language use rather than *tell* language use, which may be better considering native speakers are usually unaware of their language habits (Ishihara, 2007). In this way, dramas also implicitly teach pragmatic norms by allowing an insight into the culture from

afar. Without going to Japan or interacting with Japanese people, the participants in this study nonetheless made discoveries about Japanese culture and its societal structure by mindful viewing of *Last Friends*. The participants had also commented that the drama method was enjoyable, even more so “than normal ways to teach the Japanese [language].” Watching dramas is an enjoyable, stress-free activity (Rostam Shirazi et al., 2016), which has been argued to lower the affective filter and allow for language learning (Danan, 2004). They can even be motivational. Recall that Jason, and many learners of Japanese, desire to learn the language so as better to understand media in that language, a motivation Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) dubbed *media interest motivation*. In fact, television dramas are arguably more interesting than watching the same movie repeatedly (as in Garnier, 2014), video clips (as common in both subtitle and pragmatic studies), or made-for-learners media (which is also common).

Subtitled dramas are beneficial for language learning in that they provide information via three channels (d’Ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999) – the visual, auditory, and subtitled translation – in sync, “each one potentially enhancing the processing of the other two” (Garnier, 2014, p. 23). Although some viewers find the simultaneous processing initially challenging (Danan, 1992; 2004), learners can improve their skills through experience with subtitled media (Koolstra & Beentjes, 1999). In regards to conventional expressions, dramas contain authentic pronunciation and intonation, as previously discussed. They also provide the form (through the L2 audio), the context (through the video storyline), and meaning (through the storyline and subtitles) necessary for acquiring pragmatic expressions. And importantly, foreign language dramas do not merely provide the expressions, but aid in the memory of said expressions. Unlike Louis, who had encountered the expressions in this study more traditionally, the members of the treatment group believed the drama helped them remember the expressions. As Jason said, “I figure when I

answer the question you ask me again, [in] the [post-] test, for example, like the *kocchi-kocchi*. I was thinking about the context there. Like, Takeru called Michiru, ‘here’.” As it happened, the treatment group did remember more expressions and kept those expressions long term better than the control group, echoing previous studies such as Danan (1992) that found that “video can be a very valuable tool that helps students process, remember, and actively produce foreign terms” (p. 524). Sometimes the scenes themselves were memorable enough to leave a lasting impression of the expression. Other times (such as with *shitsurēshimasu*), the frequency of the expressions in the drama probably aided recall. And at other times, the expressions were accompanied with body language, actions, or facial expressions, which have also been found to help (Wang, 2012). Kambara (2011) strongly advocated for the use of film as a teaching tool, and the same argument can be made for television dramas:

Although conversations in films are usually scripted, they can be sufficiently natural to convince native speakers that they are ‘normal.’ Film has the added advantage of providing verbal interchanges within rich visual contexts, e.g. gesture and facial expression. Students can watch selected clips, observe samples of the linguistic expression in question used in realistic contexts, analyze the usage, and even act out the scene. Teaching the subject via such an activity is far superior to explaining the characteristics in abstract terms (p. 147).

To summarize, subtitled dramas can be used for intentional or incidental learning, inside or outside the classroom (Kuppens, 2010). It could be incorporated into the classroom, perhaps as part of a pragmatics unit; or potentially it could be adapted for other purposes as well. Although the learning in this study was intentional and in the classroom, the method can be adapted for individual learning outside of class. Learners could take note on paper or mentally of expressions

when they encounter them during drama viewing, what the subtitles, dictionaries, and/or native speaker friends tell them they mean, and the contexts in which they encountered them. Since many learners already view L2 media in their own time, they can devise a way to reap more linguistic gains. In this study, Shawn was the most enthusiastic drama viewer, and as he noted, “I think dramas [are] always an option for me to improve my Japanese.”

Kuppens (2010) had suggested that instead of incorporating more subtitled media into the classroom, instructors could instead teach their pupils the skills necessary to learn more from home viewing. She did caution, however, that “[w]hen educators attempt to formalize incidental learning, they might well inhibit it” (p. 80). Likewise, turning a light and enjoyable activity into an intentional learning exercise might be counterproductive. This precaution corresponds with psychological findings that when *extrinsic* motivation (motivation due to outside factors or pressure) is added to an activity that was done due to initial *intrinsic* motivation (that is, for the pleasure of the activity itself), the result is often that the activity is no longer enjoyed (Aronson et al., 2010). Although studies such as this and one by Garnier (2014) make it seem like Kuppens may have been overcautious, more research on this possibility is required.

5.6 Frequency and saliency

Another finding that came of the present study was a reminder of the importance of frequency and saliency when it comes to learning L2 conventional expressions. Frequency was an important factor in determining which expressions were better learned by the treatment group. Recall that the two surface variants of *otsukaresama(deshita)* were encountered eight times combined and both forms of *ja(iku)ne* were, together, encountered five times. Both those expressions were well-remembered, especially in comparison to expressions like *ojamashimasu* and *mōikanakya* which only appeared once each in the drama and were seemingly forgotten by

all members of the treatment group.

Frequency is an important factor in most SLA theories (VanPatten & Williams, 2015). It is particularly relevant in the area of L2 vocabulary, where it has been said that a learner must encounter an item meaningfully multiple times (Boers & Lingstromberg, 2012) – some estimate as high as 16 times – “before it becomes fully established in memory” (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p. 62). It is generally agreed that “learners are sensitive to frequency” (Bardovi-Harlig, 2009, p. 760). Garnier (2014) quotes a 1998 article by Horst and associates that claims that items repeated eight times or more will show signs of “sizeable learning gains” while items repeated five times or less will show much more variation.

Frequency, however, is not the whole story. Some expressions were only encountered once or a few times and were still remembered by at least some of the participants. In some of those cases, the scene from the drama in which the expression was encountered was memorable enough that the expression “stuck” in the mind of the learner. Recall that Jason remembered well the scenes in *Last Friends* in which *yōkoso* and *kocchi-kocchi* were presented. Compared to frequency, saliency as a factor is under-appreciated and under-studied. In her case study of an English L1 learner of French, Garnier (2014) tracked the process of that learner acquiring vocabulary from a subtitled American movie. She suggested that along with frequency, “saliency, imageability, and meaningfulness in the context are likely to have [also] had an effect on which words were learned and which were not” (p. 28) and even went as far as to argue that such factors (along with motivation and aptitude) may in fact be “more important to eventual learning than simple frequency” (p. 29).

It follows then that dramas may be particularly useful to language learners if the expressions are distinctive and/or repeated multiple times throughout the episode and/or series.

5.7 Conclusion

In summary, the findings of the tests and interviews of this case study had much to show and suggest concerning the potential of subtitled foreign media for learning language, particularly conventional expressions. While pragmatic development may be a slow process, the participants showed clear evidence of noteworthy progression, especially considering their proficiency level and the limited intervention period. The results concur with what researchers have argued that learners need to know when it comes to learning conventional expressions. The results also suggest that a PPP-like method, similar to that used with the control group in this study, is probably not as beneficial to students as the treatment, or drama, method. The drama method has many potential benefits and addresses the prerequisites that researchers have argued for. And finally, the results of this study serve as a reminder of the importance of two SLA factors: frequency and saliency.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.1 The major findings and limitations of the present study

The present study set out to discover whether viewing Japanese dramas with attention paid to form, function, and context was beneficial in developing pragmatic competence, specifically in regards to the acquisition of target language conventional expressions. In addition, it intended to discern whether such a method would be more helpful than regular vocabulary-like methods, and what learners thought about the method. To determine this, two groups of students were taught the same target expressions in a succession of intervention sessions, one group using the Japanese drama *Last Friends* and a chart to take notes, and the other using a more commonplace teacher-orientated method, including presentation without pragmatic instruction, repetition, and activities such as matching and multiple choice. All students were then tested using an Oral Discourse Completion Task, once immediately following the last treatment period and researcher-delivered, and once a month later and computer-delivered.

The present study found that the treatment group outperformed the control group on both post-tests, suggesting that the treatment (drama) method was more beneficial than the more traditional (vocabulary-focused) methods both immediately and in the long term. Each member of the treatment group improved their pragmatic competence, and their improvement was found to be greater than that of the control group members. This finding supports the argument in the literature that drawing learners' attention to form, function, and context is crucial in the successful learning of conventional expressions. The participants also found the drama method to be enjoyable, but were hesitant as to the extent of its usefulness.

It was also found that frequency and saliency likely play a role in the acquisition of

conventional expressions. As well, since pragmatic norms derive from cultural norms, some understanding of the L2 culture is helpful in being able to make appropriate decisions in regards to the expected speech act and level of formality. Perhaps in part due to differing cultural backgrounds and/or ideologies, such pragmatic judgments were one of the main areas of difficulty for the participants in this study. Target language television dramas were argued to be valuable in providing pragmatic input for learners, as well as a source of other information such as intonation and common contexts.

The present study, while fruitful, was not without limitations. For one, there were few participants (six), which was not enough to reasonably do statistical analysis or population generalizations. Unlike past studies, the participants in this study did not come from ready-made class groups and were instead individual volunteers who took time out of their busy end-of-term schedules to take part. Because they were busy, not all participants could contribute equally. As well, there was only one non-native Japanese speaker rater of the responses. Although careful research was conducted into the expressions and their norms of use, the study would perhaps have been somewhat more objective with more than one rater, or even with a NS rater. The testing tool was also fallible. As researchers have pointed out before, participants' performance on DCTs do not necessarily transfer to their ability to use the expressions in real life. In a real life situation, the participants would have to read the situation itself rather than rely on a given description. And finally, the researcher did not ask the participants *why* they responded the way they did to the prompts, which would have provided more insight into their interlanguages rather than the fair amount of speculation conducted instead.

6.2 The implications of the present study for future research and teaching

While the present study addressed multiple gaps in the literature of both pragmatics and

subtitles studies, it also produced yet more questions and avenues for future research. First and foremost, another study with more participants could possibly corroborate (or perhaps contradict) the findings of this study and determine whether or not the improvements hold statistical significance. This study could also be adjusted to examine what it is the participants are noticing when they watch a subtitled drama or what would happen if other factors were included, such as corrective feedback or speaking practice activities – or perhaps even a deeper look at individual differences in using this method. This study also opens up the possibility of adapting the drama method for other areas of SLA, such as vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation. As well, the usefulness and effects of subtitled dramas for language learning in non-instructional settings (namely home-viewing) remains largely unaddressed. Perhaps a case study on language learning via home-viewing of Japanese dramas or *anime*, whether intentional or non-intentional, is in order.

The present study also provided further evidence that pragmatics in general and conventional expressions in particular should be taught – and that one potentially beneficial way is to use target language subtitled television dramas. The dramas can either be used in tandem with teaching (as in this study), or outside of the classroom, for homework purposes or as opportunities for individual learning. This study also serves as a reminder that FL learners, cut off from the TL culture, require richer input than their textbooks or teachers usually provide in order to improve their pragmatic competence. When teaching conventional expressions, teachers should help learners pay attention to form, function, and context. They should also consider teaching some cultural understanding, since culture and pragmatics (and in fact language itself) are intricately intertwined.

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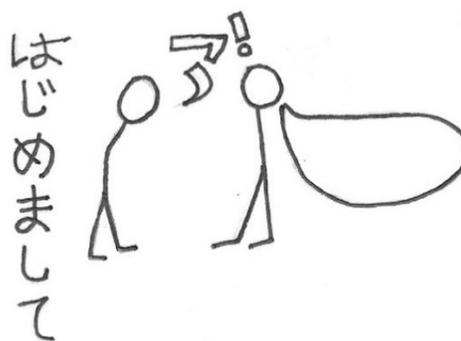
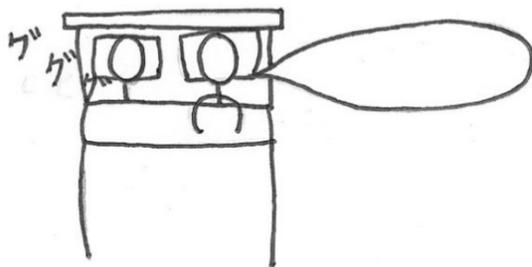
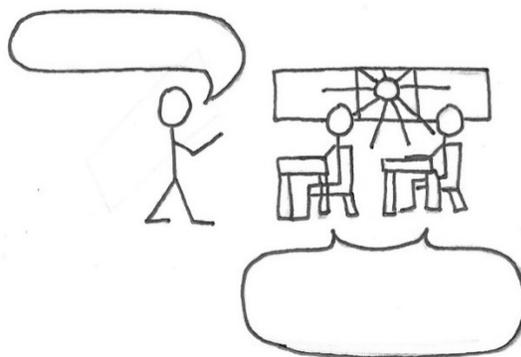
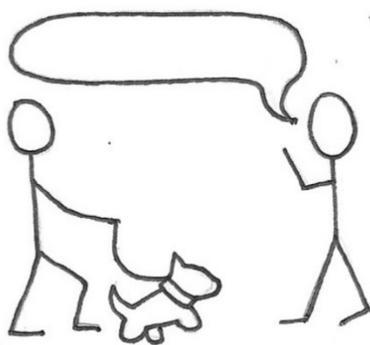
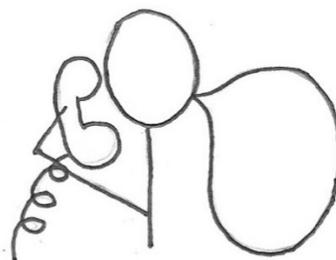
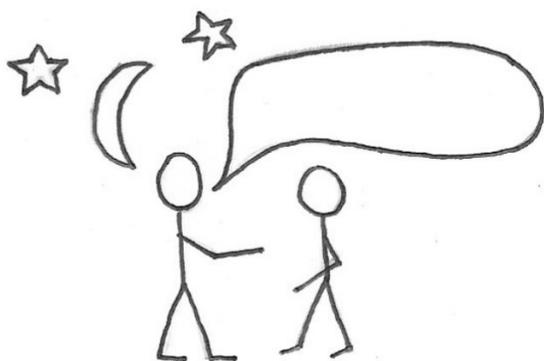
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Appendices

Appendix A

Control group activity sheets

Session 1: Greetings



Session 2: Entering/Leaving the Home

(Students complete role-play practicing the expressions:)

行ってきます
 行ってらっしゃい
 ただいま
 おかえり (なさい)
 おじゃまします

Session 3: Time-Related Expressions

Please fill in the blanks with the appropriate Japanese expression.

1. You were supposed to meet your friend at 2:30. You arrive at 2:45.

You: _____

Friend: ううん。だいじょうぶ。

2. You happen to see one of your high school teachers after a long time.

You: _____

Teacher: ええ、ひさしぶりだね。げんき？

3. Your friend just left your place, but they forgot their wallet. You chase after them.

You: _____

Friend: あ、わすれた。ありがとう。

4. You work in a doctor's office. The doctor is running a little slow today, and his patient has been waiting. You approach the patient.

You: _____

Patient: いま、せんせいにあってもいいですか。

You: はい。こちらです。

5. A new semester begins at school and you see your friends that you haven't seen all summer.

You: _____

Friends: うん、おひさしぶり！やすみはどうだったの？

Session 4: Entering & Coming

Matching

<u>Japanese</u>	<u>English</u>
はい	This way
	Come in
こっちこっち	(I'm) coming
いらっしゃいませ	Welcome (to our home/country)
	I'm here
どうぞ	Welcome (to our store)
ようこそ	Thank you for coming
	Over here

Session 5: Leave-Taking
Matching

1. またきます:
 - a) I'll come again
 - b) I have to go now
 - c) Excuse me
 - d) I'm leaving
2. しつれいします:
 - a) Excuse me
 - b) I have to go now
 - c) Goodbye (formal; on phone)
 - d) Both a and b
 - e) Both a and c
3. おつかれさまでした:
 - a) Excuse me
 - b) Thank you for the hard work (informal)
 - c) Thank you for the hard work (formal)
 - d) Goodbye, sir/madam
4. What does じゃ mean, if said on the phone:
 - a) then
 - b) so
 - c) bye
 - d) okay
5. もういかなきゃ:
 - a) I've gotta go now (formal)
 - b) I've gotta go now (informal)
 - c) I'll come again (formal)
 - d) I'll come again (informal)
6. Which of the following is NOT a casual way to say "bye":
 - a) じゃない
 - b) じゃまた
 - c) じゃいく
 - d) じゃあね
7. さようなら:
 - a) See you later
 - b) Goodbye
 - c) Until next time
 - d) Bye (casual)
8. おつかれさま:
 - a) Excuse me
 - b) Thank you for the hard work (informal)
 - c) Thank you for the hard work (formal)
 - d) Goodbye, sir/madam

Appendix B

Treatment group activity sheets

Session 1: Episode 1

<http://www.dramanice.us/last-friends/watch-last-friends-episode-1-online>

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: <i>(What does it mean? Why say it?)</i>	Context: <i>(Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)</i>
9:15			
24:05			
24:55-25:18			
26:35			
27:23			
29:50			
30:55			
34:34			
35:32			
35:46			
35:50			

Session 2: Episode 2

<http://www.dramanice.us/last-friends/watch-last-friends-episode-2-online>

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: <i>(What does it mean? Why say it?)</i>	Context: <i>(Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)</i>
1:50			
2:00			
9:05-9:08			
13:40-13:44			
15:10			
21:33			
31:33			
37:05-37:18			
42:52			
43:25			

Session 3: Episode 3

<http://www.dramanice.us/last-friends/watch-last-friends-episode-3-online>

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: (What does it mean? Why say it?)	Context: (Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)
17:29			
17:43			
21:24			
24:54			
25:18			
32:55			
39:10			
39:48- 39:50			

Session 4: Episode 4

<http://www.dramanice.us/last-friends/watch-last-friends-episode-4-online>

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: <i>(What does it mean? Why say it?)</i>	Context: <i>(Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)</i>
4:35			
5:10			
11:00			
15:25			
19:25			
26:22			
31:55			
32:55			
33:03			
43:00- 43:04			

Session 5: Episode 5

<http://www.dramanice.us/last-friends/watch-last-friends-episode-5-online>

Time Frame:	Expression:	Meaning: <i>(What does it mean? Why say it?)</i>	Context: <i>(Who is saying it to whom? What is their relationship? Where are they? What time of day is it? What else do you notice?)</i>
1:47			
9:10			
9:30			
9:32-9:34			
9:42			
10:02			
21:55			
22:00			
27:57			
43:15			

Appendix C

Interview Guide

Debriefing

This study was actually an “experiment” in which *there were two groups*. One group (called the treatment group) was taught using a Japanese drama and the other (called the control group) was taught using a more traditional method. The focus of my study has been on *whether subtitled media in the foreign language could be beneficial in learning conventional expressions*. I apologize for not telling you directly, but I didn’t want my results to be affected by that knowledge.

Questions for control group

- > How was the experience of the study for you?
 - Did you enjoy it?
 - Did you learn from it?
- > Do you think learning expressions is important when learning a language?
 - Why (not)?
- > Is how I taught expressions similar to how your professors teach them?
 - How so? / How does she do it?
- > What do you think you need to know to use expressions well?
- > Do you think watching dramas would be helpful to learn Japanese expressions?
 - More than this method?
 - How so?

- > How would you like to learn expressions in the future?
- > Is there anything you'd like to tell me or ask me about any of this?

Questions for treatment group

- > How was the experience of the study for you?
 - Did you enjoy it?
 - Did you learn from it?/ Was it helpful?
- > Do you think learning expressions is important when learning a language?
 - Why (not)?
- > How does your Sensei teach Japanese expressions?
- > What do you think you need to know to use expressions well?
- > What kinds of things did you notice when watching the drama for expressions?
 - Can you give me an example?
- > Would you use this or a similar method to learn expressions in the future?
 - Why (not)?
 - How would you like to learn/be taught expressions?
- > Will you finish this drama on your own time, or watch other Japanese dramas?
- > Is there anything you'd like to tell me or ask me about any of this?

Appendix D

Control group interview transcript

Interviewer: First thing I wanna know: how was the experience of they study for you? ... How did it go?

Louis: I dunno [laughs]. It went fine, I guess.

Interviewer: Yeah? Did you enjoy it?

Louis: Yeah, it was fun.

Interviewer: Did you learn from it?

Louis: Mm-hmm. I don't know if I'll remember it, but um, yeah.

Interviewer: That's alright. Do you think learning expressions is important when learning a language?

Louis: Yeah. Well, see, if you want to get what people say, then I guess, yeah.

Interviewer: Is how I taught expressions kinda similar to how *Sensei* teaches it, or does she teach it differently?

Louis: She hasn't taught expressions in like a lo~ng time; I don't really remember. Well, I don't really see it being any different.

Interviewer: Okay.

Louis: Yeah [laughs]. She just gets us to repeat her in front of the class, and then, go from there.

Interviewer: Right. Does she use the textbook?

Louis: Yeah. We, like, go through the textbook every now and then, yeah. But for learning verbs and stuff, she just – she has like these little flash cards.

Interviewer: Really?

Louis: Yeah. And same with *kanji* as well, so.

Interviewer: Um, do you think that this is a good method for learning expressions, or would you prefer to be taught in a different way?

Louis: What, like in a drama way?

Interviewer: Yeah [laughs].

Louis: I dunno, I don't know what the other way is like, so I can't say anything.

Interviewer: Do you imagine, though, learning expressions from a drama, like seeing them spoken that way by native speakers and that, do you think that would be more helpful than the way that we did it?

Louis: Theoretically, yes. Um, 'cuz I guess you get a sense of context or something.

Interviewer: Right, yeah, that's true. Um, what do you think you need to know to know expressions well? What kind of information do you need?

Louis: Um, culture norms, I'd say. Well, 'cuz they're really formal, and informal, and – well, really formal. So I guess it can be kinda hard for us to pick out what to say where. Which is why I feel a drama would help, but, yeah, I don't know. You can say all this, like 'when you get to someone's house, you say this', right? But, um, it's not just like one phrase for everything, right? So, I guess trying to figure out which phrase to use is the hard part.

Interviewer: That's true, yeah.

Louis: Which is why I need to know what the norms are, I guess.

Interviewer: Right, societal norms...

Louis: Yeah. For example, if we say like "how are you?" here, any person learning English would think we're actually asking how you're doing. But we're not. We're just saying it as, like, "yo, ice breaker" kinda thing, right?

Interviewer: Right [laughs].

Louis: Like, we're not actually asking how they are, but people learning English might assume we are, so. That's a culture norm.

Interviewer: They might give you a more honest answer –

Louis: They would! They would give you an honest answer, yeah.

Interviewer: So how would you compare that to learning expressions in Japanese, then?

Louis: Um, just that, it's difficult. Knowing what to say is fine, but knowing *when* to say it is something different. So, yeah.

Researcher: That's true. Um, so I guess: how would you like to learn expressions in the future? Now that we talked about all these different methods. What do you think is the best?

Louis: Um, immersion, like always.

Researcher: Having a native speaker help you...

Louis: Yeah. Speaking to Japanese people, going to Japan, what have you, yeah.

Researcher: Do you plan on doing that?

Louis: I dunno. [laughs]. I don't plan the future very much. So, yeah.

Researcher: Oh, that's okay. Um, is there anything else you'd like to tell me or ask me about this experiment or the class or anything?

Louis: Mmmm.... not really, no.

Appendix E

Treatment group interview transcript

Interviewer: So my first question is: how was the experience of the study for you guys?

Idina: Interesting.

Jason: Pretty relaxed.

Interviewer: Good. Yeah?

Jason: And, yeah, interesting.

Idina: Yeah, better than normal ways to teach the Japanese.

Researcher: Thank you [laughs].

Shawn: [laughs]

Jason: And I find the time pass really fast.

Victor: Exactly.

Jason: Yeah, I don't figure out one hour just pass by.

Shawn: It's already 3:20 now.

Jason: Yeah, like if I am in a classroom with the traditional way I'm probably gonna check my watch several times.

Researcher: Yeah, me too! I was always surprised, like, "Oh, we're done. It's been an hour." [laughs]

Shawn: It's 3:00 now.

Researcher: Do you need to go?

Shawn: No no no.

Researcher: Okay. If you really need to go –

Jason: He's saying that the time pass really quickly.

Researcher: Ah!

Shawn: I'm so happy.

[everyone laughs]

Researcher: Thank you. Did you guys enjoy it?

Everyone: Yeah.

Researcher: I'm so glad. Did you learn from it?

Shawn: Yeah.

Victor: It would be sad if we didn't.

Researcher: It would, right? I would feel like a failure. Do you think it was helpful for learning expressions?

Shawn: Yeah.

Researcher: Are you just gonna say "yeah" to everything?

[everyone laughs]

Shawn: It is!

Jason: I figure when I answer the question you ask me again, like the test, for example, like the *kocchi-kocchi*, I was thinking about the context there. Like, Takeru called Michiru, like "here." Also, when they are watching the race, they also called Michiru-san, *kocchi-kocchi*.

Researcher: Yeah! So it helped you remember that way?

Jason: Yeah.

Researcher: You guys find that, too?

Others: Yeah.

Researcher: Excellent. Do you think learning expressions is important when learning a language?

Everyone: Yeah.

Idina: Sure.

Researcher: Why?

Victor: If you go to the place of origin, and you're kinda stuck there and don't know any expressions, you're screwed.

Researcher: Mm-hmm.

Jason: And especially if you wanna speak the language –

Idina: – speak more like a native –

Jason: Yeah, more like a native, you have to know the expression.

Shawn: Yeah.

[everyone laughs]

Researcher: You're allowed to disagree with me, by the way [laughs].

Jason: [to Shawn] Could you contribute other things?

Victor: He said it in a different tone this time, that works.

Shawn: Yeah.

Researcher: That's true... what does that different tone mean? [laughs] Um, how does your *Senseis* teach expressions?

Shawn: Just like traditional way.

Idina: Follow the textbook?

Victor: Yeah, follow the textbook, sometimes give examples of like, watch videos.

Shawn: (?) give you like model lesson that you can –

Jason: For us, even more traditional way, like we just look at the powerpoint and she will read it, and we follow it, and she will explain what that is. Sometimes we don't really use it in a context. Like, it will be faster to forget.

Researcher: I see. [to Victor:] Wait, did you say something about videos?

Victor: Sometimes we watch videos, but she reads it, and then we go over it, then she has us pair up and, like, use them in a context or from the textbook and sometimes make something up. Yeah.

Researcher: So were some of the expressions we did in the textbook?

Victor: Some of them. Some of them she mentioned, too.

Idina: Yeah, like “good morning”, “good afternoon” –

Jason: Yeah, yeah.

Shawn: Yeah.

Jason: Just like that. But, like *otsukaresamadesu* or *shitsurēshimasu*, we haven’t learned.

Researcher: Yeah, those aren’t there –at least not yet. Um, so between *Sensei’s* way and this way, which do you like better?

Victor: I can’t choose.

Researcher: That’s fair enough.

Victor: I like both.

Shawn: I can’t tell.

Researcher: You can’t tell? That’s okay. It’s fine, I won’t be offended.

Jason: Well, I feel that this is more interesting. But that one is also helpful.

Idina: Maybe this way is more helpful to learn just some expressions like we use in daily life, and some other words, but other than that, maybe traditional way is better.

Jason: But also, I figure with this, we can even – because they are native speaker, right? So we can even imitate their intonations. That one is pretty important. Like even we are just looking at the textbook, even there’s *hiragana*, we can read from it, but we can’t know the intonations. We cannot say it pretty native way.

Victor: For certain phrases, I find everyone in the class copies *Sensei’s* intonation.

Jason: Yeah.

Victor: It stuck.

Jason: Do they have different accents?

Researcher: Accents?

Idina: I think they do.

Jason: Yeah, in Japan?

Shawn: Yes! Different regions have different accents.

Jason: So do they teach in different accents? [laughs]

Researcher: They are teaching you Standard Japanese.

Jason: Okay [laughs].

Researcher: But there's a whole bunch of regional differences. But I think everyone can understand the standard and speak the standard, but if they're just speaking naturally to their friends, they all have their own –

Shawn: They can recognize where you are from, like from Tokyo, from other places...

Researcher: Exactly. And an accent in Japanese is less about the way you say it, like it is in English, but the words itself.

Shawn: Yeah.

Researcher: Like the words itself would be different or the sound will change.

Shawn: Like some will say [name]-*san*. Maybe other places will say [name]-*han*. Yeah.

Researcher: It will sound quite different. It will still sound like Japanese, but like [laughs].

Shawn: Yes, not [name]-*san*, they will say [name]-*han*.

Researcher: Yeah.

Jason: I know like the, um, Osaka accent is different. They say *oogi* not *ogi*.

Researcher: Okay.

Jason: I don't remember. But there's different.

Researcher: Because this was a drama and it's meant for all of Japan, they are fairly standard stuff, yeah. I mean, they didn't even do sometimes male language, too. They'll pronounce things differently. But there wasn't too much male language in this one so...

Jason: Okay.

Researcher: Um, what do you think you need to know to know expressions well? What kind of information do you need?

Idina: Culture?

Jason: Um, context?

Researcher: Context, yeah?

Jason: Yeah, like who we are talking to. Yeah, like the culture. In Japan, we are respecting the *senpai*, or even parents. So we have to use more polite way, right?

Researcher: Right. Yeah, that's true.

Shawn: Yeah, that's true. [everyone laughs]

Researcher: [laughs] I'm just gonna hire you as a yesman. Um, what kinds of things did you notice when watching the drama for expressions?

Victor: Honestly, I was too into it to notice anything else, I don't know.

Researcher: You were too what, sorry?

Victor: Too into it.

Researcher: Into it, yeah. It's a good story, right?

Idina: Yeah.

Victor: [nods]

Jason: The Japanese culture is totally different with Canadian culture. There's some similarity with Chinese culture, but not the same.

Researcher: Oh, okay.

Jason: Even their social structure...

Shawn: They have so much politeness when they talk.

Researcher: That's true, it was pretty evident, right?

Shawn: Yeah.

Researcher: Especially the customer situations and things like that. Um, can you give me an example? Do you remember a particular moment in the drama that caught your attention for some reason or an expression that really stuck out because of the drama?

Jason: *Kocchi-kocchi* [laughs]

Researcher: [laughs] I was thinking of your example, but I was wondering if they had examples, too.

Shawn: *Hai-hai*.

Researcher: *Hai-hai?* Yeah, especially the tone, right? *Hai-hai~!*

Jason: I have *yōkoso*.

Shawn: “Welcome.”

Researcher: *Yōkoso?* Mm-hmm.

Jason: When they’re welcoming Takeru-san to the home.

Researcher: Sure, yeah, that was pretty memorable. What about you guys?

Idina: When they say “excuse me” or something, they, like, bow to each other. Just, they really say things in a polite way. That’s different from our culture.

Researcher: Yeah.

Jason: I figure that I remember the context of the expression I don’t know. For example, the other, like *konbanwa* or *ohayō*, I couldn’t think of any example from the video.

Researcher: Okay. But those you had previously learned –

Jason: –yeah–

Researcher: –so you were okay with.

Jason: Yeah, I also remember at the bar, Takeru-san say *irasshaimas*.

Researcher: Right, yeah.

Jason: *Irasshaimas~* and he figured out that it’s Ruka.

Researcher: Yes. See, you remember really well! Um, would you use this, or a similar method, to learn expressions in the future?

Shawn: I can’t tell.

Victor: I can’t really do so –

Idina: Maybe I will choose to watch *anime* [laughs].

Jason: *Anime*, yeah.

Victor: I don't *choose* to watch *anime*. But not during exams, because that's –

Idina: [laughs] Yeah, that's true.

Jason: It won't stop! Yeah. The first reason I came to study Japanese is I hope there is one day I can watch *anime* without subtitle.

Idina: Yeah!

Jason: [laughs] And I figure when I started to learn English, I watched drama, and I figured that helped me a lot because I can imitate the intonation from the drama.

Researcher: Right.

Jason: So it made me speak a little bit closer to native.

Victor: Actually, I remember one of the first words I ever learned – although, it's not exactly *inappropriate*, but it's rude, so it's like...

Researcher: From Japanese?

Victor: I was, like, watching – I dunno, because one of my favourite antagonists said it a lot and it kinda stuck eventually, and it was like, yeah...

Researcher: Does it start with a “b”?

Victor: No. It starts with a “k”.

Researcher: Okay.

Victor: It means “scum”.

Researcher: Oh! That's the first one?

Victor: Yeah. It was the first thing that ever stuck out to me.

Shawn: *konoyaro*?

Victor: *Kas*'.

Researcher: Oh.

Jason: *Kas*? What is *kas*?

Researcher: Like, um, a curse word. Yeah.

Jason: Okay.

Researcher: [laughs] That's the *first* one?

Victor: Yeah.

Jason: But I figure there are no swear words in Japanese.

Victor: There are a lot.

Researcher: There's a lot, yeah.

Victor: I love it.

Jason: Okay. But there's no such as F-word in Japanese.

Researcher: Each language chooses different things, themes, for their swear words. Like in English, we use sexual things, like that. But in French they use religious ones. So –

Victor: Exactly.

Jason: Oh, French use religious ones?

Researcher: They use religious words in swear words, so, yeah, it depends on the language.

Victor: It's rather annoying. I don't like swearing in French. Well, I do, I don't like speaking French.

Researcher: Okay, just swearing in French [laughs].

Victor: Yeah, it's more fun. Plus, otherwise, I find I can't really express myself in French, with my tone and stuff, 'cuz it's such a boring language. Too much to memorize and too many different sounds. Just – yuck... Especially Québécois French. I hate it.

Researcher: Yeah. Um, right. So how would you like to learn expressions, then? If you could choose any method.

Victor: Well, if I could *choose* a method, it would be to have my best friend teach me, but he's refused to, so, yeah.

Researcher: Native speakers, why?

Victor: Well he says he doesn't like speaking in Japanese. He finds it awkward.

Researcher: Oh. How about you guys?

Shawn: I can't tell.

[everyone laughs]

Jason: He either say "yes" or "I can't tell" [laughs]

[everyone laughs]

Researcher: What about you? How would you like to be taught?

Idina: I'm not sure. Maybe find native speaker?

Researcher: Mm-hmm.

Idina: And - maybe watching drama and *anime*. But for the grammar part, I think it's better to learn from a teacher.

Researcher: That's true, yeah. Different types of language we might want to learn differently.

Shawn: Well, I think dramas is always an option for me to improve my Japanese. I watch Japanese drama a lot.

Researcher: You told me, in your questionnaire. So you're in the right class [laughs].

Idina: [laughs]

Jason: What? How come I don't know it?

Victor: You never asked.

Jason: What? You mean the class you assisted with [name]-Sensei or this class?

Researcher: Hmm? Oh no, this one instead of – I call the other one "the vocab. class"; that you're in the drama class instead of the vocab class. It's lucky, 'cuz you like dramas [laugh]. So this drama, do you plan on watching on your own time?

Victor: [quickly] Yeah.

Researcher: – or a different drama?

[participants nodding]

Researcher: [to Victor:] Yeah? I know you're ahead already.

Jason: I watch *anime* all the time, even I think the climax of watching *anime* was when I was in Grade 12. I figure when I go to university I don't have that much time to watch it.

Victor: I don't have time but I still do it.

Researcher: Yeah.

Victor: I find, as I get busier, I start watching it more because I can't handle all the work, it's just annoying. So I re-watch the same thing over and over. Yeah. I have a problem.

Researcher: You gotta be careful, or you could become a drama addict like me.

[everyone laughs]

Victor: I don't think that's possible.

Researcher: [laughs]. Um, do you think watching dramas or *anime* is useful for learning expressions or other vocabulary?

Jason: Yeah.

Victor: Mm-hmm.

Jason: There's a very interesting fact. It's very popular in China is Chinese Twitter website. We call it *Wei-bo*.

Researcher: Okay.

Jason: And someone posted, they translated some –

Idina: – oh yeah! They translated expressions –

Jason: – like *Sō desu ka?*

Idina: Yeah. Into English. But first we thought it in Japanese.

Jason: But first what everybody thought about was Japanese. Because they watch *anime* and they learn it from *anime*. Like, all of them are *dōzo or arigatō* – something like that, like the expression. If you translate to English, people can't do it, but if you translate to Japanese, the first thing they will think of is Japanese.

Researcher: Ahhh. Okay.

Shawn: Huh? What?

[Researcher and Idina laugh]

Researcher: Okay, wait, I have a question for you now. Like a real answer one.

Idina: [laughs]

Researcher: So you watch dramas a lot.

Shawn: Yes?

Researcher: Do you pick up things from the dramas?

Shawn: Pick up things?

Researcher: Do you learn expressions or words?

Shawn: Hmm.... kind of. Yeah.

Researcher: Or like cultural stuff? When to say or what to say?

Shawn: Yes, that can certainly learn some expression from drama, and what are you trying to say?

Researcher: Okay, that answers my question. Good job.

[everyone laughs]

Researcher: Last one: Is there anything that you wanted to tell me or ask me about this whole experience? Rant at me for deceiving you? Anything at all?

Jason: *Arigatō gozaimasu* [Thank you].

Researcher: Awww. You're welcome. It was my pleasure.

Shawn: *Arigatō gozaimasu* [Thank you].

Researcher: [laughs] That wasn't really what I was going for, but thank you! No? This is my wrap-up question; trying to make it into a nice little bow moment.

Jason: [laughs]

Victor: I don't think that's going to work very well.

Researcher: Okay, I tried. [Researcher and Idina laugh] *Jaa*.

Appendix F

Pre-test results

	Louis (C)	Brad (C)	Jason (T)	Victor (T)	Shawn (T)	Idina (T)
1) konnichiwa	konnichiwa	konnichiwa	ohayō (<i>but then realized his mistake</i>)	N/A	konnichiwa	konnichiwa
2) ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	N/A	N/A	N/A
3) ohayō gozaimasu	N/A	ohayōgozaimasu	ohayō. ogenkidesuka.	ohayō gozaimasu	N/A	ohayō
4) konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa	N/A	N/A	N/A
5) oyasumi (nasai)	oyasumi	oyasumi	N/A	oyasumi	N/A	oyasumi
6) ittekimasu	N/A	ittekimasu	N/A	ittekimasu	ja, watashi wa ikimasu	ittekimasu
7) itterasshai	itterasshai	N/A	N/A	itterasshai	N/A	itterasshai
8) tadaima	tadaima	N/A	tadaima	N/A	kaerimashita	N/A
9) okaeri(nasai)	N/A	N/A	okaeri	N/A (<i>audio fail</i>)	kaerimashita	N/A
10) matakimasu	sayōnara	N/A	N/A	N/A	ii resutoran desu ne	N/A
11) mōikanakya	don't know	sayōnara	N/A	N/A	N/A	ja iku ne
12) irasshai (mase)	irasshaimase	N/A	irasshaimase	N/A	N/A	N/A
13) moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	N/A	N/A	moshimoshi	N/A
14) hai(hai)	N/A	N/A	moshimoshi? daredesuka?	N/A	moshimoshi	N/A
15) sayōnara	kgray	N/A	arigatōgozaimasu	N/A	N/A	N/A
16) ja(ne)	love you?	N/A	jane	N/A	sayōnara	jane
17) ja (iku/ ne/mata)	jane	sayōnara	N/A	N/A	ii ne. demo, watashi wa ue wo ikimasu. Ja.	jane
18) yōkoso	don't know	N/A	N/A	N/A	konjiwa	N/A
19) dōmo	yoroshiku onegaishimasu	N/A	dōzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu	N/A	konjiwa	N/A
20) dōzo	konnichiwa	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
21) kocchi (kocchi)	N/A	N/A	konnichiwa. doudeimasuka?	N/A	N/A	kocchikocchi

22) (<i>chotto</i>) <i>matte</i>	N/A	chottomatte	chottomatte	N/A	chottomatte	N/A
23) (<i>o</i>) <i>hisashiburi</i>	hishashiburi	N/A	sashiburidesune	N/A	sashiburidesune	N/A
24) <i>ohisash- iburidesu</i>	N/A	N/A	sashiburi	N/A	ohisashiburides u	N/A
25) <i>otsukare (sama)</i>	sayōnara	N/A	sayōnara	N/A	arigatōgozaima su	N/A
26) <i>otsukare- samadesu</i>	mata ashita	N/A	jane	N/A	N/A	N/A
27) <i>omatase</i>	sumimasen	sumimasen	arigatou sumimasen	N/A	N/A	omatase
28) <i>omatase shimashita</i>	N/A	dōzo	N/A	N/A	N/A	sumimasen
29) <i>shitsurē- shimasu</i>	arigatō	sayōnara	sayōnara, sensē. arigatō gozaimasu	N/A	arigatō. jane	N/A
30) <i>ojama- shimasu</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>TOTAL</i>	18/30 9 correct 4 alt. 5 wrong	13/30 8 correct 2 alt. 3 wrong	19/30 7 correct 4 alt. 8 wrong	4/30 4 correct 0 alt. 0 wrong	16/30 5 correct 2 alt. 9 wrong	11/30 6 correct 2 alt. 1 wrong

Appendix G

Post-test results

	Louis (C)	Brad (C)	Jason (T)	Victor (T)	Shawn (T)	Idina (T)
1) kon-nichiwa	konnichiwa	konbanwa	konnichiwa	N/A	konbanwa	konnichiwa
2) ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō
3) ohayō gozaimasu	ohayō gozaimasu	ohayō	ohayō gozaimasu	ohayō gozaimasu	ohayō	ohayō gozaimasu
4) konbanwa	konbanwa	N/A	konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa
5) oyasumi (nasai)	oyasumi	N/A	oyasumi	oyasumi	konbanwa	oyasumi
6) ittekimasu	ittekimasu	ikimasu	N/A	ittekimasu	ittekimasu	idekimasu
7) itterasshai	itterasshai	itterasshai	N/A	itterasshai	ja	irasshaimase
8) tadaima	tadaima	N/A	tadaima	tadaima	kaerimashita	tadaima
9) okaeri (nasai)	itterasshai	yōkoso	okaeri	okaeri	okaeri	N/A
10) mata kimasu	matakimasu	N/A	ja ne	N/A	N/A	madakimasu
11) mō-ikanakya	matakimasu	mōikanakya	ja ne	N/A	ja	ja iku ne
12) irasshai (mase)	irasshai	irasshaimase	irasshai	irasshai	irasshaimase	irasshaimase
13) moshi moshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi
14) hai(hai)	hai	hai	haihai	haihai	haihai	hai
15) sayōnara	sayōnara	sayōnara	sayōnara	sayōnara	sayōnara	sayōnara
16) ja(ne)	mata ne	jane	ja ne	N/A	ja	ja
17) ja (iku/ne/mata)	shiterēshimasu	mōikanakya	ja iku ne	N/A	ja mata ne	jane
18) yōkoso	yōkoso	irasshaimase	irasshai	N/A	irasshai	irasshaimase
19) dōmo	dōmo	konnichiwa	konnichiwa	N/A	dōmo	dōmo
20) dōzo	dōzo	dōzo	yōkoso	N/A	shitsurēshimasu	omatase shimashita
21) kocchi (kocchi)	kocchikocchi	N/A	kocchikocchi	N/A	omatase	kocchikocchi
22) (chotto) matte	chodomatte	kocchikocchi	chottomatte	chottomatte	chottomatte	chottomatte
23) (o) hisashiburi	hisashiburi	N/A	ohisashiburi	N/A	ohisashiburi	N/A

24) <i>ohisashiburidesu</i>	ohisashiburidesu	konnichiwa	ohisashiburidesu	N/A	ohisashiburidesu yo	N/A
25) <i>otsukare (sama)</i>	otekegosamadeshita	otsukare	otsukaresama	otsukaresama	otsukaresama	otsukaresama
26) <i>otsukaresamadesu</i>	otekegosamadeshita	N/A	N/A	otsukaresamadeshita	otsukaresamadeshita	otsukaresamadeshita
27) <i>omatase</i>	omatase	N/A	osentaku	N/A	omatase shimashita	omatase
28) <i>omatase shimashita</i>	sumimasen	sumimasen	sumimasen	N/A	omatase shimashita	sumimasen
29) <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>	shiterēshimasu	sayōnara	shitsurēshimasu	shitsurēshimasu	shitsurēshimasu	sayōnara
30) <i>ojama-shimasu</i>	N/A	N/A	shitsurēshimasu	N/A	konbanwa	N/A
TOTAL	29/30 22 correct 1 alt. 7 wrong	21/30 10 correct 5 alt. 15 wrong	27/30 19 correct 6 alt. 15 wrong	16/30 16 correct 0 alt. 14 wrong	29/30 18 correct 5 alt. 7 wrong	26/30 20 correct 4 alt. 6 wrong

Appendix H

Delayed post-test results

	Louis (C)	Brad (C)	Jason (T)	Idina (T)
1) <i>konnichiwa</i>	konnichiwa	konbanwa	konnichiwa	konnichiwa
2) <i>ohayō</i>	ohayō	ohayō	ohayō	(T/O)
3) <i>ohayōgozaimasu</i>	ohayōgozaimasu	ohayōgozaimasu	ohayōgozaimasu	ohayōgozaimasu
4) <i>konbanwa</i>	konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa	konbanwa
5) <i>oyasumi(nasai)</i>	oyasumi	oyasuminasai	N/A	oyasumi
6) <i>ittekimasu</i>	ittekimasu	ittekimasu	ittekimasu	ittekimasu
7) <i>itterasshai</i>	itterasshai	itterasshai	itterasshai	itterasshai
8) <i>tadaima</i>	tadaima	tadaima	tadaima	tadaima
9) <i>okaeri(nasai)</i>	okaeri	okaerinasai	okaeri	okaeri
10) <i>matakimasu</i>	mata ashita	jaa, mata	ittekimasu	matakimasu
11) <i>mōikanakya</i>	sumimasen	jaa, mata	sumimasen, ja ne	ja, iku ne
12) <i>irasshai(mase)</i>	irasshaimase	N/A	irasshai	irasshaimase
13) <i>moshimoshi</i>	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi	moshimoshi
14) <i>hai(hai)</i>	hai	hai	haihai	N/A
15) <i>sayōnara</i>	sayōnara	N/A	sayōnara	sayōnara
16) <i>ja(ne)</i>	anata ga suki desu	N/A	ja, oku iku	ja
17) <i>ja (iku/ne/mata)</i>	ja ne	N/A	sumimasen, ja ne	ja, iku ne
18) <i>yōkoso</i>	irasshaimase	irasshaimase	irasshaimas'	irasshaimase
19) <i>dōmo</i>	konnichiwa	dōmo	dōmo	konnichiwa
20) <i>dōzo</i>	irasshaimase	N/A	otamase shimashita	dōzo
21) <i>kocchi(kocchi)</i>	kochikocchi	oi	kochikocchi	omatase
22) <i>(chotto)matte</i>	matte	mattekudasai	chotto	chottomatte
23) <i>(o)hisashiburi</i>	hisashiburi	sashiburi	sashiburi	hisashiburi
24) <i>ohisashiburidesu</i>	hisashiburi	hisashiburi	sashiburi	(T/O)
25) <i>otsukare(sama)</i>	arigatō	N/A	otsukare	otsukare
26) <i>otsukaresamadesu</i>	mata ashita	N/A	otsukaresama deshita	itterasshai
27) <i>omatase</i>	omatase	sumimasen okuromashita	otamase	omatase
28) <i>omatas-eshimashita</i>	omatase	sumimasen	N/A	sumimasen
29) <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>	sayōnara	N/A	shitsurēshimasu	N/A
30) <i>ojamashimasu</i>	sorry for intruding?	gomenkudasai	konbanwa	N/A
31) <i>shitsurēshimasu</i>	sayōnara	N/A	ja, shitsurēshimasu	ja ne
32) <i>otsukare(sama)</i>	konnichiwa	N/A	otsukare	otsukare
33) <i>(chotto) matte</i>	sumimasen	N/A	sumimasen	N/A
34) <i>sayōnara</i>	no idea	N/A	sayōnara	sayōnara
35) <i>omatase-shimashita</i>	moshimoshi	sumimasen	otamase	sumimasen
36) <i>ohayō</i>	ohayōgozaimasu	konnichiwa	ohayōgozaimasu	ohayō

37) <i>matakimasu</i>	arigatō	N/A	arigatō	matakimasu
38) <i>yōkoso</i>	yoroshiku	konnichiwa	sayōnara	N/A
39) <i>konnichiwa/dōmo</i>	hai?	N/A	konnichiwa	konnichiwa
40) <i>konnichiwa/dōmo</i>	dōmo	dōmo	konnichiwa	konnichiwa
<i>TOTAL</i>	40/40	26/40	38/40	33/40
	19 (18) correct	13 (12) correct	24 (19) correct	25 (19) correct
	10 (7) alt.	7 (6) alt.	4 (3) alt.	5 (4) alt.
	11 (5) wrong	20 (12) wrong	12 (8) wrong	8 (5) wrong