German Teachers' Classroom Language Seen From the Learners' Perspective

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How do Japanese students of German perceive their teachers' language of instruction? In pursuit of answering this question, a survey was carried out with 3 learner groups of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd- year students. Containing open and closed questions, the survey aimed at getting the students' opinion on their teacher's use of German and Japanese in class and their preferences for which of these languages should be used for certain teaching purposes. The results show that the higher the L2 competence of the students, the more they are inclined towards being taught in the target language. Also, differences between the learner groups were revealed concerning their language preference for certain teaching purposes, such as explaining, correcting, or giving instructions regarding exercises. The learners' feedback will provide an incentive for German teachers to reflect on their language of instruction and adjust it to better accommodate students' expectations and needs.

日本人のドイツ語学習者は、教師が使用するクラスルーム言語をどのように捉えているのであろうか。この問題に答えるにあたり、1年次、2年次、3年次の学生に対して質的・量的な質問項目を含むアンケート調査を行った。あわせて、特定の指導目的においてどの言語が使用されることを彼らは好むのかについても質問項目を設定した。このアンケートの結果から以下のことが明らかとなった。すなわち学習者は言語レベルが向上するに伴い、目標言語であるドイツ語が使用されることを望んでいた。また、説明、訂正、あるいは練習問題の説明などの特定の指導目的において、それぞれの学習グループ間では使用されるクラスルーム言語の要望に違いが見られた。ドイツ語教師にとって学習者のフィードバックは、自身が指導している言語を考察し、学習者の期待と要望に沿った指導を行うための指針となると思われる。

THE LANGUAGE the teacher uses in the classroom is crucial for learners' L2 acquisition, especially if the classroom is their only chance to hear or interact in the target language. The monolingual teaching context in Japan offers German as a foreign language (GFL) teachers the opportunity to use both the students' native language Japanese as well as their target language German as a medium of instruction. Most German teachers may use both languages to varying degrees and for various purposes. However, often the choice of language is not deeply reflected on and is driven by routines or considerations of convenience.

In an attempt to improve my language of instruction, I am currently conducting an action research study (based on Elliot, 1991). In a previous publication I have already analysed and evaluated my use of Japanese and German during GFL instruction (Harting, 2012). This paper will focus on students' perception of my instruction language in order to accommodate it more to their wishes and needs. My hypothesis is that the higher the students' L2 competence, the

higher is also their expectation for the target language to be the language of classroom interaction.

In order to test this hypothesis and to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of my language use, I conducted a written survey after the completion of three German courses of 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-year students. After providing some background information on previous studies on classroom language and demonstrating the methodological approach of this study, the qualitative and quantitative results of the survey will be presented.

Previous Studies on Classroom Language

Since the language the teacher uses for instruction is a very individual and often also sensitive issue, studies in this field, in particular empirical ones, are rather rare. As far as foreign language teaching in Japan is concerned, most studies focus on English. For German, only Gunske von Kölln (2010) touched on this issue in an action research study designed to compare an inductive and a deductive teaching approach. The results, measured by the students' performance on a test, suggest that the inductive approach, which also contained more L2 instruction, was more effective. However, since the language of instruction was only one variable among many, more research is needed to see how the teacher's language choice influences acquisition.

There are differing opinions among researchers and practitioners as to what extent and for which purposes students' L1 should be used in L2 instruction. While some promote the use of the students' L1 for interactional benefits, which ease communication and build better relationships between the teachers and the students (Nakayama, 2002; Holthouse, 2006), others believe that comparisons of linguistic structures between the students' L1 and L2 should be accounted for in the teachers' input, because in their acquisition process, learners resort to their L1 as a matter of course (Harbord, 1992; Kasjan, 2004).

Following the ideals of Krashen's (1985) natural approach, some teachers still favour using the target language only. However, it is meanwhile generally acknowledged that the students' L1 can be used as a valuable resource in L2 instruction. To what degree and for which purposes this is brought about depends on the teaching context (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). This context varies with factors such as the teachers' and the students' competence in the languages concerned, the expectation of the institution and colleagues, the goal of the class, the motivation of the students, and the teacher's stance on using the students' L1.

To give learners the chance to benefit as much as possible from the teacher's input, the language used in the L2 classroom has to be pedagogically motivated. Therefore, the teacher's choice of either L1 or L2 for instruction should be determined by which of them will serve a given teaching purpose best. It has been noted, however, that teachers are not always aware of their language choice, and that they switch between the students' L1 and L2 intuitively rather than purposefully (Kim & Elder, 2008; Polio & Duff, 1994). In order for teachers to become more aware of their language use, Yonesaka and Metoki (2007) have developed a practical checklist called *Functions of Instructor First-language Use (FIFU)*, which encourages teachers to investigate their own teaching practices. The checklist contains questions on their choice of either L1 or L2 for certain teaching purposes and helps them to reflect on and improve their teaching routines.

Methodological Approach

For this study two types of data were used: audio recordings of my 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-year German classes and a written survey conducted with the students after the completion of each course. The voice recordings served to analyse my use of German and Japanese, which provided the background for evaluating the students' feedback to my instruction language.

This feedback was obtained by a questionnaire that mainly contained closed questions, providing statements on my use of German and Japanese. The students were asked to indicate their level of agreement to these statements on a 5-point scale (-2, -1, 0, 1, 2); negative figures indicate disagreement and positive figures agreement. The same scale was used to measure the students' preference of either German (positive figures) or Japanese (negative figures) for certain teaching purposes, such as explaining, correcting, or giving instructions to exercises. The averages of the students' responses were calculated and are represented in the discussion of the results by symbols indicating (dis)agreement (–, +) or language preference (J, G).

In addition to the closed questions, the students were also asked to comment on their (dis)satisfaction with my language use and to make suggestions for improvement by means of a written comment. These comments were analysed qualitatively and served to explain the quantitative findings. Since the survey was conducted in the students' native language, I translated quotes from their comments into English. The years in brackets at the end of each quote indicate the students' affiliation to one of the three learner groups compared in this study.

Results

Before presenting the students' feedback on my instruction language and their suggestions for improvement, I will characterize the three learner groups and my language of instruction in each group based on the audio recordings.

Variation of Instruction Language According to Learner Groups

The three learner groups under investigation in this study will be referred to as 1st-year, 2nd-year, and 3rd-year students according to their years of study. Background data on these groups are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Learner Groups

Learner Group	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Years of study	1	2	3
Class size	27	14	9
Class type	compulsory	voluntary	voluntary
Faculty	Engineering	mainly Literature	mainly Literature
Level of L2	beginners	upper beginners	lower intermediates
Textbook	Schritte International 1	Schritte International 3	Schritte International 5
Instruction language used	mostly Japanese	German / Japanese	mostly German

As can be seen from Table 1, the three learner groups differed not only in size, but also according to the students' areas of study. All 27 first-year students belonged to the Faculty of Engineering and had chosen German as an elective from among several languages to fulfil the L2 requirement of their degree. Most of the 2nd- and 3rd-year students, on the other hand, were from the Faculty of Literature majoring in German and had chosen the voluntary course under discussion in this paper to improve their general communicative and grammatical skills. According to the students' level of L2 competence, different volumes of the German textbook *Schritte International* were used, which addressed different levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):* level A1 (beginners) for 1st-year students, A2 (upper beginners) for 2nd-year students, and B1

(lower intermediates) for 3rd-year students. Due to the fact that I used different levels of the same textbook series in all of the classes, my approach to instruction and the way I structured lessons and exercises was very similar. However, according to the level of the students' L2 competence, the degree to which I used German or Japanese as the language of instruction varied.

First-year students were mainly instructed in Japanese; German was only used to present and practice (the pronunciation of) new target language items mainly taken from the textbook. Only very marginally did I use German for communicative purposes, for example in speech acts ("Good Morning!" or "Sorry!" or "Thank you!"), in simple commands such as ("Please read" or "Listen to the CD"), or for corrections of students' wrong or mispronounced contributions, in which case I provided the right solution. Whenever I used German, I supported the meaning of my utterance by using realia, repetition, pictures, illustrations (on the black board or from the textbook), gestures, intonation, or translations into the students' L1.

For 2nd-year students I tended to use much more German, often accompanied by a Japanese translation. Compared to 1st-year classes, most of my commands were in German, and I started explaining new vocabulary items by simple descriptions or rewordings in the target language. Also, comprehension checks ("Alright?" or "What does *X* mean?" or "How do you say *X* in Japanese?") and remarks during the lesson ("First we listen to the dialogue and then we will read the text") were provided in German. For explanations of grammar, methods, or contents, however, I mostly used Japanese to ensure that all students could understand these complex utterances.

For 3rd-year students most of my instructions were in German. Even for longer, more complicated grammatical explanations or for the announcement of homework or tests I used the L2. I spoke slowly, stressed key words, and sometimes provided a Japanese translation of a difficult German word that was crucial to understand the meaning. Only for informal chats with the students or for motivating (or in rather rare cases disciplining) them did I resort to their native language. In comparison to the other learner groups, the German I used with 3rd-year students also had a communicative purpose.

Feedback on Teacher's Use of German

As far as my use of German is concerned, my aim was to find out whether the students had sufficient exposure to the target language and whether they were able to understand my L2 utterances. Table 2 lists the students' level of agreement to the statements provided in the questionnaire.

Table 2. Students Views Regarding Teacher's Use of German

Statement on questionnaire	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
There was enough opportunity to use German in exercises.	+ +	+	+ +
There was enough opportunity to hear German.	+	+	+
There was enough opportunity to use German in authentic situations.	– +	–	+
I would like to have had more instructions given in German.	– –	–	+
The teacher's use of German was hard to understand.	–	– +	– –

Note. (+) + (strongly) agree (–) – (strongly) disagree – + indifferent

As the results indicate, students of all levels agreed that they had enough opportunities to hear the target language in the classroom: "It was good that the teacher spoke to us in German a lot and we could listen to his language" (1st year). Also, all students appreciated the fact that they could use the target language within communicative exercises: "I found it particularly helpful that there were lots of opportunities to do speaking exercises in small groups of two to four students. Thanks to these language applications I learnt how to use different expressions and I could also hear how the other students spoke" (3rd year). While learners of all levels agreed that they could use the target language sufficiently in communicative exercises, only 3rd-year students had the impression that there were also enough opportunities to use German in authentic communicative interaction.

Regarding the amount of my target language input, 1st- and 2nd-year students seemed to be satisfied, while 3rd-year students responded that they would like to have had more target language instructions: "The teacher sometimes explained new words not by a Japanese translation, but by using simple German explanations. This method should be used more often" (3rd year). In their comments, 2nd-year students welcomed my ambition to use German increasingly: "It was helpful that the teacher explained the meaning of new words in German" (2nd year). Some also appreciated the challenge of being instructed in the target language: "On principle, instruction was in German only, which meant that I had to give the right amount of focus to the lessons" (2nd year).

As the quantitative data suggest, 1st- and 3rd-year students did not seem to have any difficulties in following my German instructions, while for 2nd-year students too much use of the target language sometimes resulted in a lack of comprehension. In their comments they expressed their wish for more L1 support: "Sometimes it was difficult to understand everything with a German explanation only" (2nd year).

Feedback on Teacher's Use of Japanese

Concerning my use of the students' L1, Table 3 lists the students' level of agreement to the statements provided in the survey.

Table 3. Students Views Regarding Teacher's Use of Japanese

Statement on questionnaire	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
It was helpful that the teacher could speak Japanese.	+ +	+ +	+ +
It was possible to ask questions in Japanese.	+ +	+ +	+
The teacher's use of Japanese was hard to understand.	– –	–	– –
The teacher's code switching (German/Japanese) was irritating.	– –	– –	– –

Note. (+) + (strongly) agree (–) – (strongly) disagree + indifferent

As the results show, learners of all three groups thought it was helpful that I was able to speak Japanese and that they could ask questions in their native language. This is illustrated in the following comments given by 2nd-year students: "I was grateful that the teacher explained difficult things in Japanese" (2nd year) and "Thanks to the fact that the teacher used Japanese quite often, I could easily understand what I was supposed to do" (2nd year).

The fact that from year 2 on I started to make explanations and answer students' questions in the target language seemed to have caused concern for some learners as the following comments show: "The teacher should answer students' questions

in Japanese" (2nd year) and "The teacher's instructions would have been easier to understand if difficult grammatical structures had been explained in Japanese" (2nd year). This reflects the students' difficulties in adjusting to a more L2-based teaching approach, and it indicates their desire for L1 instruction when understanding is crucial.

As far as the quantitative results indicate, my Japanese was overall easy to understand and learners did not think that my frequent code switching between their native and target languages was problematic: "The teacher's language use was well balanced" (3rd year).

Preferred Language of Instruction

Apart from the feedback to my own language of instruction, the students were also asked to indicate their general language preference for different functions of the classroom, such as explaining, correcting, and checking comprehension. Table 4 lists the students' preferences for either German (G) or Japanese (J).

Table 4. Students' Language Preference According to Classroom Functions

Preferred language for …	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
announcements of tests, exams, homework	J	J	J > G
grammar explanations	J	J	J = G
disciplining students	J	J > G	J > G
commands geared at L2 production	J > G	J = G	G > J
explanations of methods	J > G	J = G	G > J
corrections of students' contributions	J > G	G > J	G
informal chats with students	J > G	G > J	G > J
checking students' comprehension	J = G	J = G	G > J
speech acts, such as greetings, thanks, apologies	G	G	G

Note. > slight preference of the language mentioned first; = indifference or equal preference

As the results indicate, students of all learner groups would prefer that their teacher used Japanese when disciplining them or when providing crucial information, such as the announcement of homework, tests, or exams. The same applies to explanations of grammar; only 3rd-year students thought that grammar may as well be explained in the target language.

When it comes to explaining methods (i.e., explanations of how to perform exercises) and commands geared towards L2 production (e.g., calling students up to answer questions, to read, or to speak), there were marked differences between the three learner groups. While 2nd-year students were undecided in this respect, 1st-year students preferred Japanese and 3rd-year students preferred German. A similar trend was revealed for corrections of students' contributions and for informal chats, although 2nd-year students already showed a slight preference for German here.

As for checking students' comprehension, 1st- and 2nd-year students did not show any particular language preference, while 3rd-year students seemed to slightly prefer German. For speech acts, such as greetings, thanks, or apologies, students of all learner groups again agreed that they should be performed in the target language.

Summary and Discussion

The quantitative results of this study lend support to my hypothesis that the higher the L2 competence of the learners, the more they wish to be instructed in the target language. However, in their written comments students of the same learner group expressed different opinions on the appropriate amount of German or Japanese for their instruction; for some it was too much German, for others not enough.

This suggests that individual differences in learning styles have to be taken into account in L2 instruction. Depending on their cognitive abilities, their social skills, and their motivation for learning the L2, learners with the same level of L2 might respond quite differently towards the language of instruction used. While some might perceive it as a positive challenge to discern relevant information from L2 instructions that are still beyond their own competence, others might be more inclined to receive L1 instructions they could follow more easily.

While it is certainly a desirable aim for teachers to give students as much opportunity as possible to hear and actively use the target language in the classroom, they should also allow students with less tolerance for ambiguity of meaning to be able to follow instructions easily by also using the students' L1. Carrying out this action research project allowed me to reflect more on the language I use in the classroom and to put into question teaching routines that I have built up over years of practice.

Although the quantitative results of the survey support my original intuition to use more L2 in classes with advanced learners, I became aware of individual differences concerning the students' wishes and abilities. To see my language of instruction from the students' perspective provided an incentive for me to experiment with the language I use in the classroom and to regularly obtain feedback from the students. To improve instruction, both teachers as well as students need to have an open mind and flexibility for new approaches. A mutual dialogue on issues such as the teacher's instruction language can certainly help to improve L2 teaching and to build better relations between teachers and students.

Bio Data

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Persistence and Learning Japanese

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Despite large numbers of learners of Japanese in Australia, disturbingly few learners reach an advanced level of the language. Motivation and attitudes have been found to play an important role in persistence in previous L2 motivational research (e.g., Ramage, 1990). A study of over 600 learners of Japanese in Australian universities and senior high schools sought to investigate this issue, focused upon motivation and learner autonomy. In this paper I discuss the predominant factors that influenced intention to continue among participants. An unexpected level of engagement in Japanese popular culture (or J-pop) was found, often providing the motivation not only to take up Japanese but also to continue. The findings link persistence with a developing sense of self-identity as a Japanese speaker among advanced learners, which ties in with Dörnyei's (2009) concept of language identity and the L2 Self.

オーストラリアの日本語学習者数は多いが、日本語上級レベルまで到達する学習者は少ない。先行研究では、学習の継続には動機付けと学習態度が大切な役割を果たすと言われている（例えば、Ramage, 1990)。本研究は、この問題を探究するため、オーストラリアの大学と高校で日本語を履修している学習者600人以上を対象に動機づけと学習者オートノミーに焦点をおいて調査を行った。本稿は、調査結果から浮かび上がった顕著な要因に関して議論する。J-pop文化への興味が非常に高いことが、日本語学習のきっかけともなり、且つ、学習継続の要因の一つであった。上級レベルの学習者の中には日本語話者としてのセルフ・アイデンティティの発展が見受けられた。これは、Dörnyeiが提唱している言語アイデンティティと第二言語話者としての自己の概念に結びつくと考えられる。

Persistence is the focus in this motivational study of learners of Japanese in Australia. Despite a large population of learners of Japanese, fourth largest in the world after South Korea, China, then Indonesia (The Japan Foundation, 2011), disturbingly few learners in Australia reach an advanced level of the language, such as being capable of professional negotiation and business communication. An Australian research project investigated this issue in both universities and senior high schools, seeking to uncover what keeps some learners going while so many others give up along the way. The overall project encompassed surveys of learner autonomy and autonomous learning skills as well as surveys focused on motivation and attitudes. Learner autonomy is considered to have a positive impact upon learning a foreign language, as motivated students tend to direct their own learning, and learner autonomy in turn boosts their motivation (e.g., Dickinson, 1995). Initial findings of the project have been reported previously, but individually, as the school study (Northwood & Thomson, 2010), and the university study (Northwood & Thomson, 2012).

The intention in this paper is two-fold: to build upon the earlier reports by bringing together results from *both* school and university studies and to report findings that relate to Japanese mass culture products such as manga, anime, and television drama, referred to here as J-pop. The J-pop phenomenon is possibly the first time in second language learning that students are *using* the language in this way, thereby formulating their own learning direction. Through the Internet and J-pop "communities," learning Japanese as a foreign language increasingly resembles learning in a second language learning context.

The Australia Research Council (ARC) and The Japan Foundation, Sydney, funded this study as part of an ARC Linkage Project led by C. K. Thomson, chief investigator. A pilot study for the overall project was carried out by the chief investigator, using a small group of learners of Japanese. This paper is based on the findings of one part of the project.

Background

Reasons for the popularity of J-pop appear to be diverse. J-pop's "obvious quality, stylistic and thematic complexity, insistent difference from Western pop conventions" is attractive to global consumers, according to Tsutsui (2010, p. 46). Also, a substantial part of the appeal of not only anime, but also manga and sci-fi cinema is "its subversive edge, its tenacious unwillingness to embrace the Hollywood happy ending" (p. 47). The *Japaneseness* of anime and manga is "an essential aspect of the media's appeal to many fans . . . the number of fans who study Japanese, read up on Japanese history, and travel to Japan (or wish they could) is surprisingly high" (Napier, 2007, p. 210). Napier added that although anime and manga contain "Japanese elements" they are separated from reality even more than traditional movies. For example, the characters are both "Japanese" and "nationless." "Thus, when a non-Japanese enjoys or identifies with a character, he is identifying within a highly distinctive fantasyscape that combines elements of 'real' Japan within a cartoon imaginary" (Napier, 2007, p. 210).

Swenson (2007) found J-pop was the reason for initial interest in Japanese culture among American college students, although that did not necessarily mean they were interested in learning the Japanese language. In Swenson's study, many of those interviewed apparently had extensive knowledge of anime, and once an initial interest had been established they were motivated to find out more about Japan.

Motivation

Many theories have been proposed to explain what motivates us, but in the field of L2 learning, the initial concept of motivation came from social psychology, specifically Gardner (1985) and associates, who referred to motivation as follows:

> To the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity. Effort alone does not signify motivation. . . . When the desire to achieve the goal and favourable attitudes toward the goal are linked with the effort or the drive, then we have a motivated organism. (pp. 10-11)

Gardner's (1985) comprehensive description aptly described the highly motivated learners whom every teacher has encountered in the classroom at one time or another. In carrying out a review of relevant literature, I have come to admire Gardner's scientific approach to motivation and the sophisticated level of statistical analyses he has used to back up his tests, outcomes, concepts and theories, a challenge particularly in times predating the personal computer. At the same time, I can understand Ushioda's (2001) stance against so much quantitative research, not least because in this current project some of the most il-

luminating material came from focus group interviews with participants. Being a learner of Japanese myself, I cannot help but support Dörnyei's (2009) latest concept of L2 motivation that proposes a learner develops a self-identity as a speaker of the target language. That it is possible to support more than one major L2 model indicates that perhaps the differences between them are principally a matter of focus, looking at L2 motivation from different angles.

Indeed, Dörnyei (2005) has proposed a possible synthesis of four influential L2 motivational models in the L2 Motivational Self System. According to Dörnyei, the L2 Motivational Self-System shares similarities with the Integrative Motive from Gardner's (2001) Socio-Educational model of SLA and is linked with the Orientations model of Noels (2003) and the Dimensions model of Ushioda (2001). The components of each of the four models fall into three main divisions (see Figure 1).

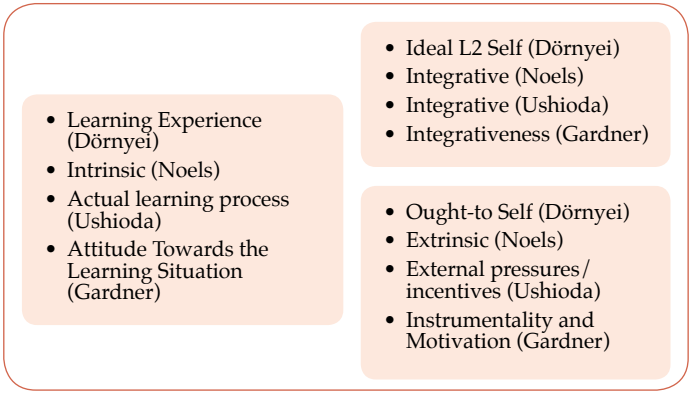

Figure 1. Linking the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005) with Orientations (Noels, 2003), Motivational Dimensions (Ushioda, 2001), and Integrative Motivation (Gardner, 2001). (Adapted from Dörnyei, 2005, p. 105)

The main components of Dörnyei's (2005) model, the *Ideal L2 Self*, the *Ought-to L2 Self*, and the *Learning Experience*, are found heading each of the three divisions. In the interest of brevity, the components are not elaborated upon here. It must be noted however, that the divisions are not mutually exclusive, and that a construct such as the Ideal L2 Self is not essentially the same as Integrativeness. Dörnyei incorporated the *possible selves* theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and the Self-Discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) into the L2 Motivational Self System. The basic concept is that a learner might develop a self-image as a speaker of the L2. This would appear to imply a certain level of persistence.

The Study

Participants attended four universities (n = 164) and 10 senior high schools (n = 464) in the Sydney area. Demographics are summarised in Tables A1, A2, and A3 in Appendix A. The school study consisted of Years 10, 11, and 12, the equivalent of senior high school (*kōtōgakkō*) in Japan. There was a second round of data collection in the university study (see Table A3). All participants were current or former learners of Japanese who volunteered to take part.

The Intention to Continue measure allowed the sample to be divided into two groups: those who intended to continue formal study of Japanese (the *stay-ins*), and those who intended to discontinue (the *drop-outs*). Participants were asked to indicate those factors that influenced their intention, using a checklist of options.

Questionnaires

In addition to the demographics questionnaire, the *Motivation and Attitudes* questionnaire consisted of 30 items selected from the Attitude/Motivational Test Battery (Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997), which used a 7-point Likert format. A learner

autonomy questionnaire was divided into two parts: *Habits*, where participants specified how often they used 14 autonomous learning activities both *in* the classroom and *out* of the classroom; and *Activities*, where participants indicated frequency of engagement with a number of learning activities outside the classroom. SPSS 17 was used for analysis.

Interviews

Questionnaire data was augmented with focus group interviews involving another 43 university learners. Interview 1 provided information about autonomous study habits and activities among eight beginners. Interview 2 involved six students considered to be of advanced level: Three had proceeded to an Honours course requiring a 4th year of Japanese language study and research while all had completed 3rd year Japanese (Interviews 1 and 2 are discussed in some detail in Northwood & Thomson, 2012). Interview 3 involved 29 learners of various levels of Japanese proficiency.

Results

Intention to Continue

Hope to travel to Japan, both overall and within each Japanese course, was the reason given most frequently (by over 80% in every course) as influencing the choice to continue in both school and university studies. *Interest in Japanese culture* was the second most frequent factor (see Appendix B, Figures B1 and B2). The hope to travel to Japan appears to be related to the desire to speak the language. However, it may also arise from interest in J-pop, which often motivates fans to find out more about Japan (Napier, 2007; Swensen, 2007).

Interest in the L2 culture has been found to be important in other studies of motivation and persistence (e.g., Ramage, 1990), and among Australian learners of Japanese (e.g., Marriott, Neustupny, & Spence-Brown, 1994). As Japan's cultural influence since the 19th century (e.g., on art) has been extensive (see Napier, 2007), the interest in Japanese culture in the present study is presumably not related to J-pop culture alone. Perhaps some of the interest springs from the mix of modern and ancient that is characteristic of Japan, two extremes that were found in this study. For example, in Interview 3, one student expressed a "really huge interest" in learning to make traditional Japanese sweets [*wagashi*] and another considered an interest in Japanese to be relevant to his future in software engineering.

A strong interest in J-pop was found among participants and was particularly prominent among participants in university study where *enjoy reading manga, watching anime and TV drama* was the third most-frequent reason for continuing to study the language. In the school study this reason ranked fourth, together with *like reading in Japanese*. It is also likely that the reasons *like reading in Japanese* and *like listening to Japanese* (fourth and fifth in priority among university learners) are connected with J-pop. Among those studying Japanese in their 3rd year or later, the most advanced group, the top three options could all be said to involve J-pop (namely, *like listening to Japanese*, *interested in Japanese culture*¸ and *enjoy reading manga, etc*.). Among university learners who participated in the second round of data collection (Round II), *enjoy reading manga, watching anime and TV drama* headed the list as the main reason to continue (at 92%), whereas *useful for my career* ranked eighth in importance.

The *Activities* learner autonomy questionnaire revealed that activities in which high school and university participants most frequently engaged outside the classroom on their own initiative were those involving J-pop. *Watching Japanese TV programs, DVDs or movies*, and *listening to Japanese songs* were the most frequent, and registered midway between *weekly* and *monthly* in frequency. In support of the questionnaire findings, an inter-

est in J-pop was almost taken for granted among students in Interview 3, who also expressed a desire to travel around Japan where the language they had learnt would prove useful.

J-Pop and Learning Japanese

Michelle and Vanessa (both pseudonyms) in Interview 3 appeared to be highly motivated to learn Japanese in terms of motivational desire, intensity (effort), and positive attitudes toward learning, the three components that make up Motivation in Gardner's (1985) Socio-Educational model and in the Attitude/Motivational Test Battery. Vanessa used J-pop both for enjoyment and as a tool for learning Japanese and commented, "You just want to be able to understand the drama and anime yourself; you don't want to wait for a week or two weeks for other peoples' translation" (Vanessa interview, 20 Sep 2010). Vanessa particularly enjoyed watching Japanese comedy shows and thought that consequently her listening ability was better than that of her classmates. Michelle expressed a very strong interest in J-pop. In fact, the reason driving Michelle to "speak and listen really fluently" she said, was to be able to watch Japanese drama and to read manga without having to continually rely on a dictionary. As she put it:

> Originally, I had no interest in Japanese culture, didn't even know it existed, in a sense, but then my friend introduced me to manga, anime, pop culture, drama, and because I started to watch that in the 1st year [of my studies], oh, I just loved it so much, that the 2nd year, I had to study Japanese. . . . I want to translate myself. I think you enjoy it more if you understand it just by listening. So I thought, I'll push myself and learn Japanese. . . . So it's just out of interest. . . . I just want to learn more. (Michelle interview, 20 Sep 2010)

Vanessa saw herself using Japanese in a future career, possibly banking, alongside her bilingual skills in Chinese and English. Michelle, on the other hand, thought that the only way she would use Japanese (with her science degree) was to travel to Japan, perhaps to follow her interest in making traditional Japanese sweets. Vanessa and Michelle, along with others in Interview 3, showed a real desire to speak the language, apparently connected with the desire to travel to Japan. Although not mentioned in interviews, perhaps more advanced learners were aware that J-pop activities provide few opportunities for output in Japanese.

Discussion

The latest survey by The Japan Foundation (2011) appears to be the first to empirically document the influence of J-pop products in relation to Japanese language education. Under the category of "knowledge-based tendencies," the newly added *learning about manga, anime, etc.* was rated the second most popular purpose for Japanese language study among 14,000 participants worldwide. When accounting for education level, it also ranked third globally among 3,000 learners in Higher Education (p. 9).

Questionnaires and interviews indicated that interest in J-pop motivated many participants to take up Japanese and to continue studying, particularly at the university level. The two learners in Interview 3, Vanessa and Michelle, illustrate the drive to learn Japanese that an interest in J-pop can evoke. However, it takes more than a love of manga and anime to continue to an advanced (e.g., 3rd-year university) level of Japanese; considerable effort is also necessary. The motivation of J-pop appears to be the activity itself, the inherent enjoyment. However, for some, perhaps, J-pop is more than this; it is possibly related to self-identity.

Lending support to Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System and the concept of language identity, advanced learners such

as Vanessa (Interview 3) seemingly envisioned a future that included Japanese in their everyday lives. Similarly, among the most advanced learners in Interview 2 (all pseudonyms), Pam became interested in pursuing a career path in science research in Japan; while Abe envisaged a teaching career after changing his major from International Studies to Linguistics and Japanese. Jim, after completing a Commerce degree and thereby fulfilling his parents' wishes, wanted to go on to postgraduate study in either interpreting or teaching, which would enable him to use Japanese. Keith, on the other hand, planned to go to Japan on a working holiday.

Visualisation is widely used in the sporting world where, for example, Olympic athletes make use of a vision as a motive to enable them to envision their success, which might also have application in the classroom. Having students examine their futures and think about goals that are important to them might increase their motivation, according to Markus and Nurius (1986). "The more vivid and elaborate the possible self, the more motivationally effective it is expected to be" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 100). Dörnyei (2009) noted that, if being proficient in the language is truly part of one's *ideal* or *ought-to self*, it will act as a powerful motivator to learn the language in order to reduce the discrepancy between the current self and the possible self.

Concluding Remarks

In this study of learners of Japanese in Australian universities and senior high schools, the two main factors that influenced participants to continue formal study were *hope to travel to Japan* and *interest in Japanese culture*. It was proposed that the former is connected to a desire to speak Japanese while the latter relates to traditional Japanese culture and its more modern counterpart, J-pop.

It seems possible to view L2 motivation from different perspectives, as proposed through the synthesis of common components from major motivational models in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. In this study, the most advanced learners in interviews appeared to envision their future as including Japanese, an indication that they were developing an identity as a speaker of Japanese. The advanced learners showed *intensity* (effort), a strong *desire* to learn Japanese, and positive *attitudes towards learning* the language, all of which are necessary elements in a truly motivated individual, according to Gardner (2010).

Engagement in J-pop activities by some learners in this study was indicative of students taking control of their own learning; they created and identified their own goals and activities that could help them to reach those goals. It seems that motivation is very hard to separate from the person, the activity, and the context. To be highly motivated or to develop a sense of identity as a speaker of the L2 is likely to take time and increasing proficiency. Motivation, proficiency, and a sense of identity appear to be manifestations of persistence.

Informed Consent

The author hereby declares that the research subjects gave their informed consent.

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Bio Data

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Appendix A

Table A1. Demographic Details: Round 1, 2009, School Study

Demographics		Count	Percent %
Gender	Female	300	65
	Male	164	35
School Grade	Year 10	256	55
	Year 11	100	22
	Year 12	108	23
Other language spoken	Yes	332	72
	No	132	28
Visited Japan	Yes	182	40
	No	282	60

Table A2. Demographic Details: Round 1, 2009, University Study

Demographics		Count	Percent %
Gender	Female	111	67
	Male	52	32
Japanese level	1st Year	115	70
	2nd Year	33	20
	3rd Year and above	16	10
Major	Arts/Soc. Science	84	51
	Bus/Economics	29	18
	Science	24	15
	Other	27	16
Other language spoken	Yes	123	75
	No	41	25
Visited Japan	Yes	78	48
	No	85	52

Table A3. University Round II, 2010, Survey and Interview 3 Demographics

Demographics		Survey		Interview 3
		Count	Percent %	Count
Gender	Female	17	63	20
	Male	10	37	9
Year of Japanese	1st	2	7	11
	2nd	12	45	2
	3rd	9	34	5
	4th	2	7	5
	Missing	2	7	6
Major	Arts/Soc. Science	13	50	6
	Bus/Economics	5	19	5
	Science	3	12	1
	Internat. Studies	-	-	5
	Other	5	19	1
	Missing	-	-	11
Visited Japan	Yes	16	59	/
	No	11	41	/

Appendix B.

Reasons to Continue

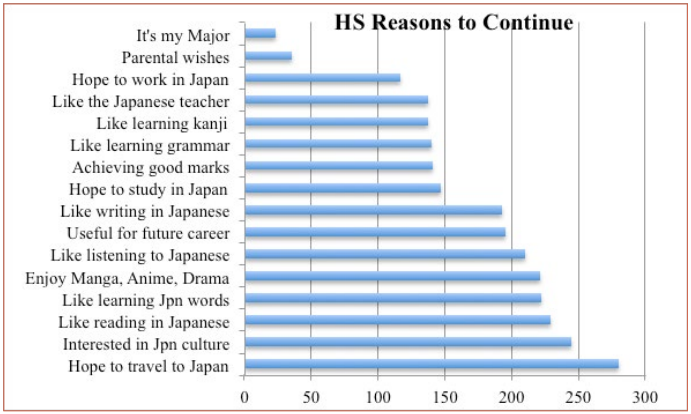

Figure B1. High Schools: Reasons to Continue Versus Frequency (n = 312, multiple answers)

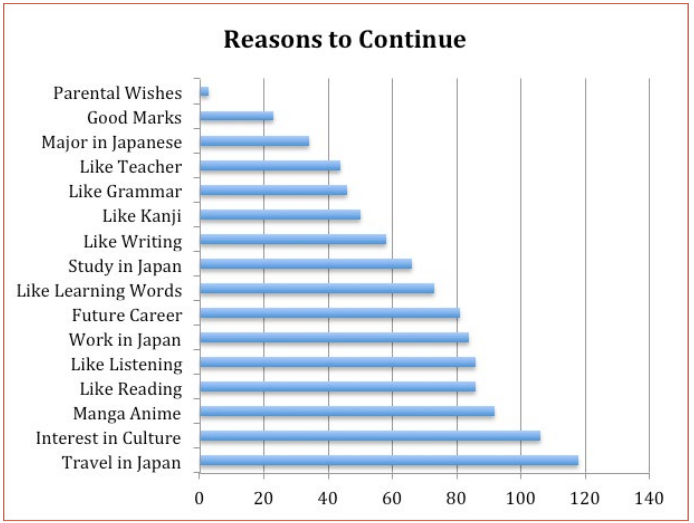

Figure B2. University: Reasons to Continue Versus Frequency (n = 136, multiple answers)