

Learning Pronunciation and Intonation of Japanese through Drama by Beginning Language Students: A Case for Reflective Journals

Harumi Moore

Australian National University

This paper portrays the benefits of using reflective journals in a tertiary education environment. It focuses its discussion on how the use of a reflective journal brought learners towards a closer approximation of native-like pronunciation and intonation, which was one of the objectives of a drama component in a first year Japanese program at the Australian National University in 1995. The use of the journal enhanced learner consciousness in cognitive and metacognitive learning, and serving as an excellent resource for qualitative research, and enhanced teachers' readiness and their ability to identify and analyse many learning issues. Above all, it fostered empathy among teachers towards students' learning experiences, and developed a sense of a cooperative relationship between students and teachers as co-participants in the learning process.

この論文は、高等教育において日記による内省を使うことの利点を記述する。1995年、オーストラリア国立大学の日本語プログラムの一年めの授業の一部であったドラマの目的の一つは、母語話者のような発音とイントネーションにより近づくことであった。本稿は、そのための学習過程が日記による内省によって、どのように促進されたかを論じる。日記による内省は、学習の認知のおよびメタ認知的側面に関する意識を高め、質的研究のすばらしいリソースとなり、また、教師が学習の問題を特定し、分析するレディネスと能力を高めた。さらに、教師の間に学生の学習経験に対する共感をうみだし、学習のプロセスに共に参加する者として、学生と教師の間に協力的関係を育てた。

Students who study Japanese at the Japan Centre, Australian National University, have mixed backgrounds in relation to previous exposure to Japanese.¹ Expectations held by both students and teachers were that oral fluency, particularly native-like fluency of pronunciation and intonation, could not be acquired just through language classes at a university outside Japan, where contact hours are limited, and opportunity for exposure to the language once one walks out of the classroom is small.

As part of a major curriculum development project, a drama component was introduced into a first year Japanese course in 1995. The rationale of the drama component was multifold: exploring various educational objectives of foreign language learning such as helping students learn a language in cooperative relationships with peers and with the teacher; exposing students to authentic spoken language models from an early stage; challenging students to learn the language without being analytical about every detail of the structure of the language such as the morphological or syntactic structures of a phrase, and teaching body language. In particular, the drama component enabled us to investigate how accurately students could learn the pronunciation and intonation of Japanese through immersing themselves in an intensive and repetitive process of listening to and repeating pieces of language and rote memorization.

Part of this component was the use of student-kept reflective journals. Teachers hoped that keeping reflective journals would promote students' critical thinking skills and enhance their awareness of the learning of pronunciation and intonation. It was hoped that the positive effects of journal-keeping would compensate for the external disadvantage of restricted time for formal classroom interaction and the lack of regular contact with Japanese speakers outside the classroom.

Before describing the progress which was monitored and enhanced through the use of reflective journals, I will first discuss three key issues which form the background to the present study, i.e. the use of reflective journals as a tool for enhancing learner awareness, the mastery of native-like pronunciation and intonation by adults, and the benefits of drama as part of a second language teaching curriculum.

Learner Awareness and Journal Keeping

In education in general, developing autonomous learning or taking control of one's learning has been advocated for some time:

[M]any practitioners throughout the world are trying to establish ways in which they can assist students to become less dependent upon them as teachers and to design courses which involve students more deeply in learning and in making decisions about what they will study. (Boud, 1986, p. 21)

To promote autonomy, teachers and educators have placed increasing stress on observing the process of learning from the learner's point of view, so that teachers can help learners enhance their awareness and

take control of their own learning. Foreign language learning is not an exception:

There is by now a substantial body of research outlining the behaviours learners use and describing the thought processes they engender while learning a foreign or second language. In particular, the focus of research has been on identifying the behaviours and thought processes used by language students to learn a foreign or second language. (Rubin 1987, p. 15)

The growing interest in the study of the benefits of diary-keeping is reflected in the increasing body of literature which not only addresses educational and interpersonal development benefits but also the benefits for teacher education and for understanding the social and cultural norms of students and teachers (Bailey, 1983; Bailey, 1990; Kreeft-Peyton & Reed, 1990; Matsumoto, 1987; Peyton, 1990; Schumann, 1980; Staton, 1987; Staton, Shuy, Peyton & Reed, 1988).

Keeping a learner diary is beneficial for raising awareness of the learning process (Bailey, 1990, p. 223-224) because to a certain extent it helps students to monitor and assess themselves. A learner diary can be used simply as a record-keeping tool. Carver and Dickinson suggest that a learner diary should contain entries such as "Date; Lesson in text book; Main activities; How I performed; What difficulties I had; What difficulties I still have; and What I intend to do next" (cited in Dickinson, 1987, p. 185). Part of Oskarsson's proposed detailed form of a learner diary includes a self-assessment section as well (cited in Dickinson, 1987, p. 186). Learner diaries can be used to explore learning strategies: "the writing of a diary helped her 'evaluate her own learning strategies, enabling her in some cases to manipulate strategies so that she received the most benefit'" (Henze, cited in Rubin, 1987, p. 16). Dickinson (1987) also states that a learner diary is beneficial when used during consultations with the teacher, particularly when the learner is not fully autonomous (p. 185).

Further, the reflective journal, when used to promote dialogue between the student and the teacher, can be a powerful tool from the point of view of qualitative action research, enabling teachers to develop empathy with students. As Bogdan and Biklan (1982) state, "the goal is to understand the subjects' world and to determine how and with what criteria they judge it" (p. 210). Diaries are beneficial as a second language classroom research tool. (see Allwright, 1983; Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988; Richards & Lockhard, 1994)

Because reflective journals act as a direct communication channel between individual students and teachers, they help to deepen the

student-teacher relationship and develop empathy. The original purpose of introducing diary keeping in education was for "better personal communication and mutual understanding between each individual student and teacher" (Staton, 1987, p. 157).

The initial primary purpose for incorporating the reflective journal in the Japan Centre course was educational, to heighten learner awareness. If we are to aim for the maximum desired language proficiency in a foreign language learning situation, especially in a country where the target language is not spoken and contact hours are limited, it is even more important to promote conscious and autonomous learning habits. Rubin (1987, p. 17) states "it is essential for students to be able to take control of their own learning process so that they can learn outside the classroom once they are on their own." It is for this reason that reflective journal keeping was incorporated into a Japanese language course at the Australian National University.

Pronunciation

Imperfect mastery of pronunciation and intonation of a second language is heard as a "foreign accent." There appear to be multiple factors contributing to the pronunciation and intonation attained by the second language learner. Some claim that the age at which one starts learning the second language is a crucial factor (Asher & Garcia, 1969; Krashen, Long & Scarcella 1979; Oyama, 1976; Patkowski, 1980; Scovel, 1988; Seliger, 1978; Seliger, Krashen & Ladeford, 1975), which supports a theory of the existence of a critical period (Lennenberg, 1967) or a sensitive period (Lamendella, 1977). Length of residence in a place where the target language is spoken is also suggested to be a factor (Purcell & Suter, 1980).

However, some studies claim that older people are not disadvantaged in the attainment of native-like pronunciation of the second language (e.g. Jones, 1985; Neufeld, 1978; Olson & Samuels, 1973; Snow & Hoefnagel-Höle, 1977). Furthermore, some writers suggest that there are personal factors that are relevant to the degree of attainment of native-like pronunciation and intonation including: difference in individual aptitudes such as "phonetic coding ability" (Carroll, 1981, p. 105); a capacity to mimic sounds in a foreign language (Purcell & Suter, 1980); motivation to pronounce the target language accurately (Purcell & Suter, 1980); the degree of "empathetic capacity," i.e. the more empathic the learner is towards the target language speech community the more likely the attainment of native-like pronunciation (Guiora, Beit-

Hallahmi, Brannon, Dull & Scovel, 1972); the cultural background of the learner (see Paulston, 1978; Busch, 1982), and the degree of phonological interference of the native language (see Odlin, 1989; Purcell & Suter, 1980; Suter, 1976).

Drama

Drama has not only been incorporated in education in general, it has also proved its benefits in second language teaching. Stern (1980, pp. 78-82) argues that drama encourages psychological factors in the learner which help develop communicative competence in the second language, such as enhancing "motivation," "self-esteem," reducing or eliminating "sensitivity to rejection," and increasing capacity for "empathy." Some pedagogical materials have been written for using drama techniques for second language learning (see Holden, 1981; Maley & Duff, 1982; Wessels, 1987). While factors relevant to the learning of pronunciation and intonation of the second language are being studied, there is also a pedagogical interest in the *methods* of teaching pronunciation and intonation (see Brown, 1992; Morley, 1994; Tench, 1981; Wong, 1987). Using drama for teaching pronunciation is one of those methods. Stern (1980) states that dramatics were effective in speech therapy in children for psychological reasons. In a chapter on techniques for improving pronunciation using drama, Wessels (1987, pp. 62) states "speech is more than simply repeating what you hear . . . the shape of the mouth, posture, the mechanics of breathing, and even facial expressions are part and parcel of correct pronunciation."

With these key issues as background, the teachers involved in the present study hoped that rote memorization required by the drama class would help first year students who had not lived in Japan to achieve optimal approximation of native-like pronunciation and intonation, at the same time using reflective journals to enhance the learning process.

The Study

The present study was conducted in the drama component of Spoken Japanese 1, a five-hour-per-week, semester-long unit of the first year Japanese program at the Japan Centre, Australian National University, in 1995. The drama component was one-and-a-half hours in length per week, and was introduced along with the other components as part of an experimental curriculum development project.

Method

Subjects: Subjects were 52 first year students enrolled in the Japanese course Spoken 1. The mother tongue of most was English. There were eight non-native speakers of English, from Korea and Hong Kong. The group included 32 females and 20 males. The subjects were divided into six groups of 2 to 14 students. (The uneven group sizes resulted from other student commitments.) Most subjects had some experience learning elementary Japanese during junior and senior high school. However, a few had no previous knowledge of Japanese.

Teachers: Three teachers were involved in the designing and planning of the drama component. Four teachers, all native speakers of Japanese, did the actual teaching.

Materials: Four different scenarios, short plays, were written by teaching staff at the Japan Centre, aiming for authenticity of colloquial expressions, male and female speech patterns, interruptions, and unfinished sentences. Each play was 12 to 15 minutes in length when acted out. The scenarios differed from dialogues contained in beginners' textbooks, which are usually heavily graded, employ restricted vocabulary and grammar, and use predominantly short sentences. The scenarios were also written so that the difference in the amount of lines to be acted out by each character would help bridge the gap between those who had studied Japanese before and complete beginners. Each script required a different number of roles, so that one could be chosen to match the size of the class. The classroom teachers chose a script in the first meeting according to the number of students enrolled. Students were given scripts in Japanese, along with translations into natural English. The Japanese scripts were written with *kana* and *kanji*. This was intended to give students a visual guide to the word boundaries associated with intonation patterns. Students were not expected to be able to read the *kanji*.

Audio tapes modeled the scripts at a natural speed. Students purchased these for out-of-class preparation.

Procedure: The first half of the semester was used to study the script, paying attention to detail. Students studied the script section by section in class, listening to the teacher and the tape. The teacher gave feedback and correction to the previous week's out-of-class preparation by individual students in class. Time was spent to discuss issues brought up in the journals. In the early stages, reading lines aloud in English was used to help students get into the character and the mood of their lines

as well as to enhance group dynamics. The latter half of the semester was used to put the play together in Japanese. Students directed the play themselves.

Assessment: Two formal assessments were conducted. One was done in Week 8. Teachers felt that it was necessary to give a formal assessment halfway through the semester to encourage students to memorise their lines as well as to learn them with accurate pronunciation and intonation. In the Week 8 assessment, each group was asked to recite part of the script. Although the recitation was performed by the group, students were individually assessed for the degree of accuracy in pronunciation, intonation, and line memorization. The assessment recitation was recorded on audio tapes. Two teachers attended the assessment session for each group. Students were given cue words by one of the teachers when they could not remember a line.

The second assessment was the final performance in Week 13. Pronunciation, intonation, and memorisation of lines were assessed, and additional points given for good acting. Students used props and prepared simple costumes. Teachers helped make some props. All first year students were invited to watch other groups perform. Many also invited friends and families. Teachers at the Japan Centre not directly involved in the drama classes were also invited. The performances were videotaped.

The first assessment constituted 40% of the drama component, and the final assessment 60%. Difficulties experienced with this assessment method are discussed below.

Conscientious completion of journals was encouraged by grading journal-keeping as part of the assessment of the overall five-hour-per-week course.

Reflective journal use: Students were asked to write and submit a weekly (later bi-weekly) journal in English. Journal sheets asked open-ended questions which often addressed issues not only relating directly to pronunciation and intonation but also to learning strategies (see O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1975, 1981; Rubin & Wenden, 1987; Wenden, 1985). In order to enhance metacognitive strategies, i.e. strategies used to "oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning" (Rubin, 1987, p. 25), teachers encouraged students to "plan," "monitor," and "evaluate" through their journals the overall learning process, including time management, and resources and strategies used. Use of cognitive strategies was also consciously explored and identified in journal

questions. Such strategies included "repetition," "rehearsal," "experimentation," "imitation," "attention to detail," "memorization," and "direct analysis" (Rubin, 1987, p. 25). The weekly journal questions were designed as an action research tool, in which issues were addressed as they became relevant. (See Appendix for sample journal questions.)

The Reflective Journals

The reflective journals maintained by the students provide a great deal of information about the learning processes of students studying Japanese as a foreign language. These journals were analysed by the researcher.

The first class was carefully prepared in order to produce a relaxed induction session, so that students could embark on the project with positive, confident attitudes and a clear objective in mind. This session focused on helping students become aware that they could apply their existing knowledge, skills, and experiences to achieve the task set by the drama project, and could take the initiative in this and other learning experiences. The in-class activities included forming a performing group, group reading of the English script, talking about the play, and visualising the characters and scenes. Some students also talked about their individual experiences and the strategies they had previously used, including acting, mimicking other people's speech characteristics, and memorising substantial lengths of text. The feedback from students in the pre-project journal was that they experienced a mixture of excitement and fear. Some comments from students' journals were:

"Excited, but a bit scared."

"It's gonna be enjoyable."

"It's good to study Japanese in different ways."

"Surprised, but it could be fun."

"Surprised, and not looking forward to the drama."

Reading of the English script was repeated during the first few weeks. This helped students become familiar with the development of the story and with their role from an early stage. It was intended that this strategy would help students learn their lines in Japanese as meaningful phrases, rather than having them concentrate unduly on the syntactic construction of the authentic and therefore uncontrolled text. As students were able to read fluently in English, this process facilitated the process of forming group spirit:

"Acting in English put us on the same level, without having to stumble over lines."

"Acting the play in English helps a lot because we get to know the play as well as the other members. This makes it easier when it comes to the Japanese reading to know what sort of expressions to put into our voice."

Without this process, a certain amount of uneasiness would have been expected from students with no background in Japanese when working with students who had studied Japanese before.

Becoming Aware of "Intonation"

From an early stage, students commented in journals about the learning process, especially noting how they came to know something new by paying detailed attention to it. Discovering "intonation" was one of these things. In general, Japanese intonation is not taught in secondary school language classes, mainly because of lack of training, and thus lack of awareness, on the part of teachers. Those students who had studied Japanese before became aware of the rhythm of Japanese intonation for the first time, and the different stress and timing patterns than English. Many students had been imposing English intonation patterns on Japanese speech until then. For example, in their journals, two students said:

"It was difficult to imitate the native's pronunciation and intonation. I had never thought about this aspect of speaking in Japanese before."

"Intonation was almost as hard as pronunciation."

One student expressed that he felt embarrassed to try out the Japanese intonation pattern:

"It sounded silly using different emphasis."

This comment led to a class discussion of what it means to speak a foreign language. Students were assured that there was no need to feel embarrassed, and that the Drama class was an environment in which students were *pretending to be Japanese*.

Uncertainty about whether one can acquire native-like pronunciation and intonation in a foreign language was felt by some students at the outset. They seemed to assume that the ability might be something innate:

"I have very little sense of my own voice. I'll just have to practice listening to it." (This student was a complete beginner but acquired quite an acceptable pronunciation and intonation.)

"Intonation is okay if you have a 'musical ear'."

The fact that most students were able to imitate the native Japanese teacher in class, however, provided evidence that it may be possible for most students to develop this aspect of the language to a certain extent.

Exploring Strategies

Throughout the process, students explored different methods of achieving better pronunciation and intonation. The earliest sign of their realization that different strategies may yield different outcomes was experienced in one of the classes in Week 3. The class started off with students mimicking the teacher's pronunciation and intonation line by line. Everyone had a corresponding English script. Students were copying the teacher very accurately. The teacher was aware of the native-like pronunciation and intonation being produced. At this stage, students had not been given the Japanese script. The class was asked how they felt about this blind mimicking, and most of them were comfortable with it. However, some students expressed uneasiness at not being able to see what they were saying in Japanese. At this point, students were given the Japanese script. Practice continued, and students who had some knowledge of Japanese started to look at the Japanese script while repeating the lines after the teacher. Immediately, the teacher noted a drastic drop in the accuracy of intonation. The following are some of the entries from that week's journal:

"I think that repeating the sentences after the teacher for pronunciation and production is fantastic. I felt I got more out of it when we didn't have the script in front of us—because as soon as the script was in front of me I began to have problems . . . and couldn't take in the intonation as well as before."

"I think it was better going through it without having the Japanese script to distract us. It was more beneficial just blindly mimicking the intonation."

It was generally felt that from an early stage "listening to the model" was the most effective method to help the acquisition of accurate pronunciation and intonation, and most students proposed that they would use the model tape as much as possible for out-of-class preparation, planning on:

" . . . listening to the tape to get the pronunciation and intonation."

"Listening to the tape and subconsciously becoming aware and used to the natural tone/pattern of the language."

Many students realized that "repetition" was very important from an early stage:

"I listened over and over again to the tape. I think it's working Repetition is my biggest help."

"I listen to the tape and repeat with it at the same time. I find that this is perhaps the best method, as I can repeat the rise and fall of intonation. Constant repetition also helps."

One student drew intonation lines in the script as visual cues for the rise and fall of intonation:

"I drew _ and – symbols for the intonation. This helped. . . ."

The fact that there were many lines to memorize demanded that students use the script for this task. But how they incorporated the audio and visual resources differed from one student to another:

"Listening to the tape as well as reading the script was usually a very effective method for me."

"I go through the script at least once, almost every day. I read my parts out aloud which I find works. I also listen to the tape while looking at the script."

Sometimes students used the script and the tape simultaneously, listening to the tape while visually following the lines in the script. Sometimes students used only one of the resources, reading aloud, for example, while looking at the script.

Differences in Learning Styles

Students used to analytical modes of learning experienced uneasiness in learning their lines solely by mimicking without understanding the detailed grammatical constructions. This problem was anticipated, because, in the interest of authenticity, the script was not graded for beginners. The journal question asked, "How do you feel about learning lines which are beyond your grammatical knowledge?" Some students expressed frustration:

"I'm finding it quite hard, because it's hard to memorize something you can't really understand or know the full meaning."

"I don't like saying things I don't understand."

On the other hand, some students were happy with the task:

"It doesn't really bother me. Just to know them and what they mean will be great satisfaction."

"It's not too hard, because I have a general understanding of what I'm saying. So it doesn't bother me."

The following entry illustrates the determination students needed to succeed in achieving the objective of the drama class of learning the lines and acting them with native-like pronunciation and intonation. This student had an analytical approach to language, but consciously challenged herself to use a method which she felt she needed:

"I decided not to get stressed out if I didn't understand the grammatical structure—but it doesn't really bother me now as I can still learn my lines without this knowledge. I probably will go over the script and look at the grammar though, now that I'm more familiar with it." [This student had no prior knowledge of Japanese but with persistent effort achieved excellent pronunciation and intonation.]

Each of the six classes discussed the differences in learning styles among learners. They confirmed what Rubin (1987) points out:

[G]iven the same learning environment, the same target language, the same native language, and the same language level, some learners will be more analytic in their approach to the learning task while others will be more intuitive; some learners will prefer to use written materials to access a foreign language while other will prefer to hear the language. (p. 15)

In class discussion, students also agreed that the learning method one personally feels comfortable to use may not be the most effective one for achieving a specific learning goal. They felt that they should be open to experimenting with new methods, and should monitor and evaluate regularly.

Metacognitive Strategies

The journal invited students to describe how they were planning, monitoring and evaluating the learning process, to enhance their awareness of the metacognitive strategies (see O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Küpper & Russo, 1985; Rubin, 1981, 1987; Seliger, 1984; Wenden, 1987). Planning and monitoring of out-of-class preparation was frequently evident in journal entries:

"Everything went to plan. It gets easier every day I listen again to the tape."

"I listened to the tape and read the dialogue a lot this week."

Long-term planning was also observed. These students were determined to get used to the sound of the language before using the script:

"I plan to listen to the whole tape. Then, block by block, perhaps, listening to the tape, copying the intonation without looking at the script, and as it begins to sound more familiar, I will start reading from the script. . . ."

"I hope to improve my fluency and intonation by 1) listening to the tape as often as possible, 2) listening to small sections and copying the intonation and 3) listening to small sections and being able to read along."

Monitoring and evaluating the method against the outcome was evident in the following journal entries:

"Constant repetition, and writing lines out worked OK. However, taping my speaking may work better. Try that this week."

"Sometimes I keep stopping after every line and other times I will go right through the section which helps me get an idea of the flow of the lines."

Other conscious planning included dividing the task into manageable chunks:

"I think I would probably go over my lines in the blocks that they are in, rather going through the whole play every time."

"Long lines are difficult to memorize—it helps to break them up into smaller parts."

Those students separated the immediate task (learning correct pronunciation and intonation of a phrase) from a larger task (learning a whole sentence) and directed their attention to what they considered an achievable goal.

Paying Attention to Detail

Throughout the semester, students' skills in paying attention to detail were challenged. Two assigned tasks gave them specific opportunities to listen to their projection very carefully. The first of these was to record their lines and compare their tape to the model tape. All students perceived a difference. However, students varied in their ability to analyse the details. Some students heard only that there was something different, but could not identify the difference:

"I'm not sure what it is. I can hear these differences. But I can not pin it down."

"It's difficult to pin it down—because I don't think I can hear it very well."

"I don't think I sound Japanese."

"Mine is far less 'native' sounding!"

"My accent is fairly Australian. . . ."

Some commented on the intonation:

"I can't really pin it down. But as I mentioned above, my intonation is not quite the same as the taped version."

"Yes, my accent is still fairly Australian and I have trouble following the ups and downs of intonation."

"Yes, my recorded production sounds terrible. The intonation is not nearly as good or as clear as the tape."

One detail that many students had problems with was the intonation pattern of a "yes/no" question in Japanese. The English intonation pattern for a "yes/no" question was strongly imposed on the Japanese. It was very hard to avoid raising the pitch prior to the question particle *ka*:

"I also tend to raise my voice at the end of a question, instead of dropping it before *ka*."

Through careful study of the Japanese intonation patterns, one student discovered her habit in using rising intonation even for declarative sentences:

"It was also hard not to raise the intonation at the end of a normal [declarative] sentence as we tend to do in English."

Young Australians tend to raise the pitch at the end of declarative sentences as if to say "Are you listening to me?"

Sometimes students were able to pinpoint and articulate the difference between their pronunciation and the native model:

"I think my main problems are the devoiced vowels and nasalised /g/."

Students' words intuitively describing a certain discovery in their journals were brought into the classroom for elaboration, to help impart a more technical understanding of the perceived phenomena. The use of words such as "exaggerated" and "bounce" reflected the students' perception of the imposition of English intonation pattern into Japanese:

"I think I'm trying too hard with my intonation, because some parts of what I've said sounds exaggerated."

"I need to pronounce words with less 'bounce'—make them along the one level."

Another example was drawn from the next entry:

"Mine is far less 'native sounding'! I can't consciously avoid pronouncing each and every syllable."

What this student meant was he was having a problem pronouncing vowels with even length. The class agreed that this was because he was imposing an English intonation pattern onto Japanese, making some vowels longer than others. The class discussed how English stress patterns

affect the characteristics of syllables, resulting in the difference in vowel qualities. For example, in English, a stress-timed language, vowels in the stressed syllables are longer, louder and higher-pitched compared to weakened vowels in unstressed syllables. This does not happen in Japanese, where the intonation pattern is characterised mainly by pitch differences.

The use of journals thus constantly helped students connect the identification of specific phenomena they experienced to the wider perspective of problems experienced in foreign language learning.

In another task, students were encouraged to try to imagine how the lines should sound before they said them, and to compare that with what they heard or what they delivered, as some musicians are said to do. Most students said that they could imagine how the lines should sound. Some said that the imagined sounds were those of the native speakers which they heard on the tape, or heard spoken by the class teacher:

"My imagined production is more likely an aural reproduction of a native speaker's speech."

"In my head I can hear exactly how the tape sounded and try to repeat it. I don't know why it doesn't come out right sometimes, but I can hear the difference in my voice from what is in my head."

"It is easier to think of the correct intonation in your head because you can remember what has been said by the teacher and this is in your memory."

"I imagine how the teachers would pronounce the line and what their voices sound like."

Generally students perceived the gap between imagined sounds and their attempts:

"Yes, (what I say) differs, because when it comes out, it is a lot slower."

"The difficulty for me is knowing, and getting right when to change pitch."

"No, no. I don't know. I think that what I imagined is right. However, my English intonation interferes when I speak."

"It is very difficult to actualise what you mentally planned because what you think in your head never sounds like what you say. The imagined production does not really sound like what I actually say, I don't think. However it is very difficult to analyse this."

Many comments were made pointing out the difference in the speed of speech:

"The tape is also said at a much faster speed and there are few breaks in the sentences."

"I can not speak at the same speed as the people on the tape. This is very difficult."

"I speak a lot slower than the tape."

Some students thought that the difference resulted from a lack of physical readiness to produce certain sounds and mimic intonation:

"Since my tongue is not used to speaking with Japanese pronunciation and intonation, I might need to take some time to get used to them. That may be the reason why my actual production does not follow my mental production."

"I imagined much better than the actual delivery. My tongue is very undexterous."

"Getting my mouth (lips, tongue) to form the right shapes—this affects my pronunciation—sometimes I can clearly hear it in my head. But as it is so fast, . . . my mouth lags behind."

"It is more difficult to say something as fast as you think it, especially for some particular sounds I am not used to, like the /r/ and sounds of the /k/ when devoiced."

Students and teachers accepted this lag between recognition and production ability as a part of the learning process. However, knowing that they could produce a much better quality projection by immediately repeating after the teacher in the classroom gave them confidence that the gap could be narrowed with persistent practice.

The Conflict Between the Substantial Memorization Task and the Accurate Learning of Pronunciation and Intonation

Although students' awareness of authentic pronunciation and intonation was gradually increasing, this was not necessarily reflected in the performance of many students in the first drama test, which was held in Week 8. Only a handful of students demonstrated convincingly good pronunciation and intonation in the test. The main reason attributed to this was that the assessment criteria also included memorization. Although students' memorization exceeded expectations, their pronunciation and intonation in general were not so accurate. Some students commented in the Week 8 journal after the test that they could not concentrate both on remembering their lines accurately and also on delivering with authentic pronunciation and intonation:

"I did not think it was a very good test for our intonation ability as I had to concentrate too much on just memorising the lines rather than how to say them properly."

The teachers felt at this stage that the effort needed to approximate authentic pronunciation and intonation may well be in conflict with the effort to memorize the lines. This led the teachers to seek students' opinions as to whether acquiring native-like pronunciation and intonation conflicted with memorization. The Week 10 journal addressed this issue, and the responses were divided into two groups. Some said the two did not conflict:

"There is no conflict if the lines are memorized by listening to the tape rather than just reading the script."

"To fluently and authentically deliver my lines I have to know both the lines and intonation. If I don't know the rhythm and intonation, then I don't know my lines. For me I learn the intonation like a song, then within that structure, I have to fit sounds in. If I leave out a sound (a word or syllable) it sounds and feels wrong."

"I don't think there is a conflict between delivering memorized lines and pronunciation and intonation. I think they're related, and when I was memorising my lines, I tried to perfect the intonation and pronunciation at the same time as memorising my lines. It was much easier that way."

Others said that the two conflicted:

"Because I have to concentrate so much on remembering my lines I find it very hard to make any lines sound as fluent or as authentic in pronunciation as I would like."

"My problem is that I have memorized the Romanised version of my lines [which the student produced for himself] and therefore my pronunciation and intonation may not be fluent because I will be delivering the lines from memory of the Romanised script."

From this it is clear that there was a difference perceived by students in the correlation between mastery of pronunciation and intonation and the effort put into memorization. Memorization strategy was important: those who said memorization did not conflict with pronunciation and intonation incorporated from the beginning the material they had to memorize with how that material sounded during out-of-class preparation. Students who said that they conflicted relied heavily on visual memorization, especially in the process of getting ready for the first test. Those students who did well in memorization but did not get good marks on pronunciation and intonation proposed in the same journal that they would concentrate on perfecting the prosodic quality of the memorized lines. However, some students commented that although they were prepared to work hard on correcting pronunciation and

intonation for the final performance, it would be difficult, now that they had memorized the lines with their own interpretation of the sounds:

"I find that whatever I learn first tends to stay with me. Therefore, if there is no effort, uncorrected mistakes remain - I think it takes more concentration to correct a mistake that's planted in my lines than to learn a new line."

The teachers' assessment of the accuracy of pronunciation and intonation in the first test led them to evaluate the appropriateness of the weight placed on memorization. They felt that students who sacrificed accurate pronunciation and intonation in the interest of memorization would not succeed in later correcting inaccurately learned pronunciation and intonation. This prediction was later found to be correct. Memorizing lines was a large task. Some sentences were complex and long, as authenticity required. Students also had to learn parts of others' lines so that they knew when it was their turn to speak. Listening to the tape alone did not give sufficient stimulus for learning lines. Students needed to use visual clues as well, and some students relied too much on the most comfortable input, the script.

The Final Outcome

For a beginners' course, the final (assessed) performances by most groups were of a high standard as productions. However, even those students who did well in the first test in pronunciation and intonation did not do as well in the final performance. This seemed to be due to their nervousness at performing in front of the audience, being assessed, and needing to pay attention to all the tasks associated with the performance:

"The only trouble is when I am stressed or nervous I revert back to my original pronunciation even though I know the learned way as soon I finish my lines."

"I think to have our pronunciation and intonation examined, we should have been examined separately because it was difficult to coordinate acting and lines as well as pronunciation. My pronunciation is much better when I just say all my lines."

This made the teachers wonder whether assessing pronunciation and intonation during the final performance was an appropriate method of assessment. I felt that although drama and performance were useful for learning native-like pronunciation and intonation, performance should not be exclusively used to assess pronunciation and intonation outcomes.

Students' Evaluation

Students experienced a great deal of satisfaction learning through the drama project, and a lot of positive comments were made in the post-project journal relating to perceived improvement in pronunciation and intonation:

"I think [I] was all right before, but am much better now! Before, I didn't really know the Japanese intonation—only what I thought might be the Japanese intonation."

"Improved a lot! I would be interested to listen to the first tape we made to see how much I improved."

"As I had no experience of Japanese before, . . . my pronunciation and intonation has been moulded from the course. Drama has given me more confidence in Japanese. Yes, my Japanese has improved."

Some students commented that although they saw improvement, it was not perfect:

"Much better, but still not very good."

"Better intonation but my pronunciation does not seem a lot better. Some improvement. A long way to go."

It seems that, most importantly, this exercise enhanced an awareness of the importance of pronunciation and intonation, although there was a great variety in the degree of mastery of native-like pronunciation and intonation.

"I think that since my pronunciation and intonation have improved, I feel that I have achieved something through this drama project, that I'm one step closer to being really fluent in Japanese."

"Because there are certain Japanese phrases engraved in my head, those form the basis of what I can now hear as correct and incorrect intonation patterns."

"I now know to make my intonation go up for questions and down for statements and so will be able to hear that when other people are speaking. Listening to the tape repeatedly helped me to understand the overall sound of sentences."

Some students stated that they gained confidence in speaking in Japanese:

"It didn't hurt at all. My pronunciation and intonation did improve a bit. It was a very long learning process and I'm glad I've reached the end and been quite successful. I think it's given me greater confidence to speak Japanese in the future."

"It's improved my confidence in speaking in Japanese, and given me a better understanding of how the language should be spoken."

Further research is needed to investigate whether or not or to what extent learning outcomes from the drama class can be transferred into the other aspects of language competence, such as listening ability and spontaneous speech, and also whether there are any long-term benefits which will be reflected in further progress by students.

Conclusion

Teachers felt that there were many areas for further improvement in the design of the drama project and the inquiry into whether a drama component can serve as an appropriate medium for learning native-like pronunciation and intonation. The length of the scenarios could have been shorter to lessen the overall amount of memorization for each student, thus avoiding conflict with accurate learning of pronunciation and intonation. Rather than working on a long play for the whole semester, two or more shorter pieces could have been practiced. The length of sentences could have been better controlled in the writing of the script. Although some students enjoyed dealing with longer sentences, these gave other students trouble. The assessment methods used also need revision. Although student progress towards the approximation of native-like pronunciation and intonation was evident in class rehearsals and through reading of the diaries, the formal grading based only on the two performances did not accurately reflect progress. Nervousness and the effort of memorization affected the results. The learning of pronunciation and intonation could have been made part of a continuing assessment process, based on regular performance in class. Alternatively, the group could have made a recording of the performance. Although it was not discussed in this study, working in groups created a problem when, as often happened, groups were missing a person or two in rehearsals. Each of these items presents major issues that need to be explored further.

However, above all, teachers and students felt strongly that student awareness of the learning process towards accurate pronunciation and intonation was greatly enhanced and that the use of reflective journals contributed most significantly to this process. Journals served not only as a tool to promote conscious learning by the students but proved beneficial in many other ways: they served as a rich mine of information from which to generate active class discussion and appropriate

explanation and instruction; assisted teachers in making minor adjustments to the program; gave opportunities for every student to express themselves, especially beneficial for shy students or those who might not have expressed thoughts and feelings otherwise; fostered an open and supportive relationship between teachers and students during the learning experience; enhanced teachers' readiness and their ability to identify learning issues, specific or broad, by paying careful attention to students' words, which assisted in promoting successful teaching. Above all, reflective journals helped all participants develop a sense that both students and teachers were co-experimenters, co-observers and co-learners.

Harumi Moore holds an MA in Applied Linguistics in Japanese from the Australian National University. She is interested in the contrastive linguistics of Japanese and English and applied linguistics. She has taught at the Japan Centre at the ANU and various other institutions. She is currently studying towards a doctoral degree.

Note

1. Students at the Japan Centre include a number who have lived in Japan for up to one year. Those who had lived in Japan were placed in more advanced units from the beginning and did not take part in this drama project.

References

- Allwright, D. (1983). Classroom-centered research on language teaching and learning: A brief historical overview. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 191-204.
- Allwright, D., & Bailey, K.M. (1991). *Focus on the language classroom: An introduction to classroom research for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Asher, J., & Garcia, R. (1969). The optimal age to learn a foreign language. *Modern Language Journal*, 8, 334-341.
- Bailey, K.M. (1983). Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language acquisition. In H.W. Seliger & M.H. Long (Eds.), *Classroom-oriented research in second language acquisition* (pp. 67-103). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Bailey, K.M. (1990). The use of diary studies in teacher education programs. In J. C. Richards & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Second language teacher education* (pp. 215-226). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklan, S.K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Boud, D. (1986). Toward student responsibility for learning. In D. Boud, R. Keogh & D. Walker (Eds.), *Reflection: Turning experience into learning* (pp. 21-37). London: Kogan Page.
- Brown, A. (Ed.) (1992). *Approaches to pronunciation*. London: Macmillan.

- Busch, D. (1982). Introversiion-extroversion and the EFL proficiency of Japanese students. *Language Learning*, 32, 109-132.
- Chaudron, C. (1988). *Second language classroom research: Research on teaching and learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dickinson, L. (1987). *Self-instruction in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Guiora, A., Beit-Hallahmi, B., Brannon, R., Dull, C., & Scovel, T. (1972). The effects of experimentally induced changes in ego states on pronunciation ability in a second language: An exploratory study. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 13, 421-428.
- Holden, S. (1981). *Drama in language teaching*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.
- Jones, M.R. (1985). Rapid learning, language acquisition, and the critical age question: The effect of a silent period on accent in adult second language learners. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas.
- Krashen, S., Long, M., & Scarcella, R. (1979). Age, rate and eventual attainment in second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 13, 573-582.
- Kreeft-Peyton, J., & Reed, L. (1990). *Dialogue journal writing with nonnative speakers of English*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Lamendella, J. (1977). General principles of neurofunctional organization and their manifestations in primary and non-primary language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 27, 155-196.
- Lennenberg, E. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. New York: John Wiley.
- Maley, A., & Duff, A. (1982). *Drama techniques in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Matsumoto, K. (1987). Diary studies of second language acquisition: A critical overview. *JALT Journal*, 9(1), 17-34.
- Morley, J. (Ed.) (1994). *Pronunciation pedagogy and theory: New views, new directions*. Washington DC: TESOL.
- Neufeld, G. (1978). On the acquisition of prosodic and articulatory features in adult language learning. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 34, 163-174.
- O'Malley, J., Chamot, A., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Küpper, L., & Russo, R. (1985). Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate ESL students. *Language Learning*, 35, 21-46.
- O'Malley, J., & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Olson, L., & Samuels, S. (1973). The relationship between age and accuracy of foreign language pronunciation. *Journal of Educational Research*, 66, 263-267.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies*. New York: Newbury House.
- Oyama, S. (1976). A sensitive period in the acquisition of a non-native phonological system. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 5, 261-285.
- Patkowski, M. (1980). The sensitive period for the acquisition of syntax in a second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 30, 449-72. Reprinted in S.

- Krashen, R. Scarcella, & M. Long (Eds.) (1982). *Child-adult differences in second language acquisition* (pp. 52-63). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Paulston, C. (1978). Biculturalism: Some reflections and speculations. *TESOL Quarterly*, 12, 369-380.
- Peyton, J.K. (1990). *Students and teachers writing together: Perspectives on journal writing*. Alexandria, VI: TESOL.
- Purcell, E., & Suter, R. (1980). Predictors of pronunciation accuracy: A reexamination. *Language Learning*, 30, 271-287.
- Richards, J. C., & Lockhard, C. (1994). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the 'good language learner' can teach us. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9, 41-51.
- Rubin, J. (1981). Study of cognitive processes in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 117-131.
- Rubin, J. (1987). Learner strategies: Theoretical assumptions, research history and typology. In J. Rubin & A. Wenden (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 15 - 30). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall International.
- Rubin, J., & Wenden, A. (Eds.). (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall International.
- Schumann, F. (1980). Diary of a language learner: a further analysis. In S. D. Krashen & R. C. Scarcella (Eds.), *Issues in second language research: Selected papers of the Los Angeles second language acquisition research forum* (pp. 51-57). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Scovel, T. (1988). *A time to speak: A psycholinguistic inquiry into the critical period for human speech*. New York: Newbury House/Harper and Row.
- Seliger, H.W. (1978). Implications of a multiple critical periods hypothesis for second language learning. In W. Ritchie (Ed.), *Second language acquisition research* (pp. 11-19). New York: Academic Press.
- Seliger, H.W. (1984). Processing universals in second language acquisition. In F. Eckman, L. Bell, & D. Nelson (Eds.), *Universals of second language acquisition* (pp. 36-47). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Seliger, H.W., Krashen, S., & Ladefoged, P. (1975). Maturation constraints in the acquisition of second language accent. *Language Sciences*, 36, 20-22.
- Snow, C., & Hoefnagel-Hohle. (1977). Age differences in pronunciation of foreign sounds. *Language and Speech*, 20(4), 357-365.
- Staton, J. (1987). The power of responding in dialogue journals. In T. Fulwiler (Ed.), *The journal book* (pp. 47-63). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Staton, J., Shuy, R. W., Peyton, J. K., & Reed, L. (Eds.) (1988). *Dialogue journal communication: Classroom, linguistic, social and cognitive views*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Stern, S. (1980). Drama in second language learning from a psycholinguistic perspective. *Language Learning*, 30, 77-97.
- Suter, R. (1976). Predictors of pronunciation accuracy in second language learning. *Language Learning*, 26, 233-253.
- Tench, P. (1981). *Pronunciation skills*. London: Macmillan.

- Wenden, A. (1985). Learner strategies. *TESOL Newsletter*, 19(5), 4-7.
- Wenden, A. (1987). Metacognition: An expanded view of the cognitive abilities of L2 learners. *Language Learning*, 37, 573-597.
- Wessels, C. (1987). *Resource books for teachers: Drama*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wong, R. (1987). *Teaching pronunciation: Focus on English rhythm and intonation*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

(Received November 12, 1996; revised March 17, 1997)

Appendix: Sample journal questions

(Pre-project journal, Week 2)

- Could you please tell us your overall feeling about the task lying ahead of you?
- Do you feel embarrassed about blindly mimicking Japanese sound and intonation? If so, what do you think you can do to overcome such a feeling?
- What kind of existing knowledge or strategies do you think you will use to help you mimic the pronunciation and intonation?
- How do you feel about memorizing your lines in Japanese? How are you going to manage this task? Does it seem difficult? What makes it difficult?
- How do you feel about working in a group? What kinds of benefits and difficulties can you foresee?

(Asked each week)

- How are you feeling about your learning experience in drama in general?

(Week 3)

- What kind of cues were you paying attention to most in class when you were practicing the lines? (1) listening to the teacher's lines and copying them? (2) looking at the Japanese script? (3) combination of above or any other method? Do you think that the method you used worked for you?
- How do you plan to improve fluency outside the class: how much practice will you do at one time; what method(s) are you planning to use?

(Week 4)

- Did the out-of-class learning go as you planned? What made it difficult? What helped? How many hours did you spend in practice last week? What method(s) did you use? Do you think it (they) worked?
- How are you checking your pronunciation and intonation?

(Week 7)

How do you feel about learning lines which are beyond your grammatical knowledge?

How does your learning experience through the drama project relate to the learning of other components of Spoken Japanese 1?

What did you think of the drama test 1? What do you have to do individually from now on? What do you have to do as a group from now on?

(Week 8)

For those who felt earlier on that not knowing exactly what you are saying interferes with the memorization process, how do you feel about it now after the first test?

(Week 10)

Do you think that there is a conflict between your concentration on delivering the lines from memory and concentration on how fluently you will deliver them with authentic pronunciation and intonation? Do the two efforts conflict with each other or can they be incorporated successfully? How do you propose to do this task successfully?

(Post-project journal)

In order to improve Japanese pronunciation and intonation, do you think the drama project provided you with an appropriate environment and help?

If you think you have improved your pronunciation and intonation, what did you discover and experience from going through such a process, and how do you think and feel about having achieved that goal?

What kind of long-term benefit will this experience have on you?