

STOCKHOLMS UNIVERSITET
Institutionen för orientaliska språk

Input and Learning Materials

An evaluation of dialogues in textbooks for Learners of Japanese

Bachelor Thesis in Japanese Studies

Spring Semester 2012

Andreas Bengtsson

Advisor: Mitsuyo Kuwano-Lidén

Abstract

There has been considerably discussion about whether materials used in language teaching should include authentic language or not. Textbooks used in language teaching rarely use authentic materials, instead opting for created material, which is supposed to be representative of authentic discourse but adjusted for language teaching. In this study, the language used in dialogues in the textbook *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* is examined by native speakers of Japanese, and they answer a questionnaire to show what they think of the language used in the dialogues. From the results, it is clear that they have few problems with the Japanese in the textbook, even though the language is not authentic. There are, however, several areas that can be improved, such as providing more information about *how* conversations are held in Japanese.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
Conventions	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Earlier Research	7
2.1 Second Language Acquisition.....	7
2.2 Second Language Teaching.....	7
2.3 Correct Japanese	8
2.4 Authenticity	10
2.5 Textbooks	11
3. Materials and Methods.....	13
3.1 Data	13
3.2 Questionnaire	13
3.3 Respondents	15
3.4 Procedure	15
3.5 Selection of Source Material.....	16
3.6 Analysis.....	17
4. Results.....	18
4.1 Grammar	18
4.2 Vocabulary.....	19
4.3 Conversation	20
4.4 Other Thoughts	21
4.5 How Different Groups Answered	22
5. Discussion	26
5.1 Grammar	26
5.2 Vocabulary.....	27
5.3 Conversation	27
5.4 Differences for Variables.....	28
5.5 Limitations	29
6. Conclusion	31
References	32
Appendix 1	35
Questionnaire	35
Appendix 2.....	37
C3D2 (Dialogue 2 in chapter 3).....	37
C4D3 (Dialogue 3 in chapter 4).....	38

Conventions

In this study, Japanese words are romanised using the Modified Hepburn Romanization system, and they are written in italics. In a few cases, Japanese words are written using Japanese character, in which case the reading is written out between slashes, after the word. All translations from Japanese to English, and from Swedish to English, have been carried out by the author of this study unless otherwise stated. Book titles will be written in italics.

The following acronyms and short forms will be used in this study:

SLA	Second Language Acquisition
L2-learners	Second Language Learners
L2-teaching	Second Language Teaching
JSL	Japanese as a Second Language

1. Introduction

Although there has been a great deal of discoveries, about how languages work and how they are learned, in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)¹ and applied linguistic, the research results have not always been applied to actual language teaching.² Even research results that have large impact on the scientific discourse often have little, or no, impact on actual language teaching.

One example of the above is the discussion about the usage of "authentic materials" or "created materials" in textbooks used in language teaching. There has been, and is, a discrepancy between researchers and creators of textbooks, which can be seen in the increased call for authentic materials in learning materials, as compared to the low amount of authentic materials in textbooks at the moment.³ This problem affects second language learners (L2-learners)⁴ directly, since there is a difference between how the target language is presented in textbooks, and how the target language is used by native speakers.⁵

This is something that I have experienced on several occasions. While studying Japanese at Stockholm University, Sweden, I often found that words are used differently in actual Japanese compared to what was written in my textbooks. The same can be said for other things taught in the textbooks, such as expressions or grammar. Furthermore, I found that the way I speak Japanese changed drastically during an exchange year in Japan, and I can no longer say that the Japanese portrayed in the textbooks I used during my own studies are representative of how I speak, even though they should form the basis of my Japanese.

Fortunately, the way textbooks are designed is changing; more and more research results are being incorporated in new or revised textbooks. While this is a welcome change, it also brings the need of further textbooks analysis, in order to see what has improved, and how it has improved; what still needs improvement; and to provide further assistance for creators of textbooks.

¹ The acronym "SLA" will be used for "Second Language Acquisition" henceforth..

² Long, Michael and Doughty, Catherine, *The Handbook of Language Teaching*, Chichester, U.K. And Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, p.315; Gilmore, Alex, "Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning", *Language Teaching*, 40, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 99-103..

³ Gilmore, p. 97.

⁴ "L2-learners" will be used instead of "Second Language Learners" henceforth.

⁵ Nunan, David, *Language Teaching Methodology: A textbook for teachers*, Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International 1991, p. 216.

The objective of this study is to provide insight about possible problems with the Japanese language presented in dialogues found in intermediate level textbooks for Japanese as a second language (JSL)⁶ learners. The different problems examined in this study are related to the grammar and vocabulary, as well as to the appropriateness of utterances for the different contexts, and this is examined from an input-perspective. Providing insight about the possible problems is done by asking native speakers what they think of the dialogues, whether they think the dialogues differ from authentic Japanese, and, if they differ, in what way the dialogues differ from authentic Japanese. The research questions are:

1: What do native speakers of Japanese think about the dialogues used in intermediate level textbooks designed for JSL learners?

2: What do they think about the grammar, vocabulary and the conversations in dialogues found in textbooks, as compared to authentic discourse?

In this study, I will argue that while the Japanese used in textbooks is correct for the most part, there are still areas that require improvements. The results show that the language in the dialogue is somewhat formal, especially when considering the word usage and not enough information is given about how conversations are conducted in Japanese.

⁶ The acronym "JSL" will be used instead of "Japanese as a Second Language" henceforth.

2. Earlier Research

In this section, I will discuss the earlier research relating to the research question.

2.1 Second Language Acquisition

The field of SLA deals with learning a language other than one's mother tongue. As summarized by Saville-Troike, "It refers both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children, and to the process of learning that language." The research spans questions about "what", "how" and "why". What learners know and what they learn, how they learn a second language, and why some are more successful in their acquisition of a second language than others.⁷

There are clear differences between native speakers and L2 learners in many aspects, such as pronunciation. Being able to speak a language does not necessarily mean that you have knowledge *about* the language, such as why something is conjugated the way it is.⁸ In addition, L2 learners usually speak differently from native speakers, particularly in regards to pronunciation, and it is rare that they achieve the same competence as native speakers.⁹

2.2 Second Language Teaching

Research about SLA is closely related to L2 teaching¹⁰ and the results from SLA research effect L2 teaching, and in extension how textbooks are created; although it sometimes takes considerable time before any effect is noticeable.¹¹ One example of this is how findings in research concerning, "the

⁷ Saville-Troike, Muriel, *Introducing second language acquisition*, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006, p. 2.

⁸ Klein, Wolfgang, *Second language acquisition*, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986, p. 54-55.

⁹ Klein, p. 138; Brown, Cynthia, "The Interrelation between Speech Perception and Phonological Acquisition from Infant to Adult", in Archibald, John, *Second Language Acquisition and Linguistics Theory*, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000, p. 4-5.

¹⁰ "L2-teaching" will be used instead of "Second Language Teaching" henceforth.

¹¹ Long and Doughty, p. 315; Gilmore, p. 99-103.

importance of incorporating communicative perspectives into language teaching,” has caused a shift in focus from grammar to communication in L2 teaching.¹²

According to Klein, “the principal concern of second language teaching is to attain a particular end state in the shortest possible time.”¹³ Depending on circumstances, the desired end state or goal of language learning can be quite different, which can be seen in the differences in language usage by someone who uses the language for doing business and someone who uses it for academic discourse.¹⁴ There are many possible, desirable end states for someone studying Japanese, such as becoming more knowledgeable about Japanese culture and Japanese as a language, becoming able to use it for daily life in Japan, or becoming able to work at a Japanese company.¹⁵ In addition, Heinrich stated that a, “'natural Japanese' (*shizen na nihongo*) is frequently declared as the ultimate aim of JSL teaching.”¹⁶

2.3 Correct Japanese

The idea about a pure, correct form of a language is an old one, and many believe that one variety is the best or the most correct variant. Even though there are many variants of a language, one variant is seen as a standard variant.¹⁷ When teaching a language, this supposedly correct form is most often the variant taught, and this often leads to prescriptiveness in textbooks. Although this might seem like a good thing, by teaching the “most correct” form of a language to non-native speakers, there are actually many problems associated with this kind of prescriptiveness. Concerning this, Heinrich wrote that:

¹² Takashima, Hide and Sugiura, Rie, “Integration of Theory and Practice in Grammar Teaching – Grammmaring, Grammarization and Task activities –”, in Yoshitomi, Asako et al., *Readings in second language pedagogy and second language acquisition in Japanese context*, Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Pub. Co., 2006, p. 59.

¹³ Klein, p.54.

¹⁴ Jenkins, Jennifer et al., “Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca”, *Language Teaching*, 44, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 297-302.

¹⁵ Nakanishi, Yaeko et al., *Jissen Nihongo kyūjuhō*, Tokyo: Baberu Puresu, 1991, p. 31.

¹⁶ Heinrich, Patrick “Language ideology in JFL textbooks”, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 175-176, 2005, p. 219.

¹⁷ Klein, p.140.

Language ideology as it surfaces in teaching materials has an encouraging and a repressive side. On the one hand, it encourages the production of certain varieties, registers and styles; on the other hand it excludes, limits Language ideology in JFL [Japanese as a Foreign Language] textbooks and prohibits deviations from the norms of these varieties, registers and styles. Speaking Japanese and behaving like millions of Japanese native speakers is not enough. Foreign language learners are expected to adhere to more specific norms. The emphasis on correctness found in teaching materials has its origin in elite norms, which would, if applied, also render many Japanese deficient and ignorant of their own native language.¹⁸

It may not be easy to judge if the Japanese in a text is correct for usage as teaching materials or not. It is hard to dispute that some errors, for example grammatical errors, are incorrect, but everything is not identified as incorrect or correct as easily. An utterance can be correct in some circumstances, while being incorrect in others, depending on any number of reasons, such as the person speaking, the context, what is said, or where it is said. Language also changes over time, meaning that new ways of speaking can be seen as incorrect by an older generation.¹⁹

There is no one true form of a language; instead there are a multitude of variations. People from different areas will speak in different ways, and other personal factors, such as gender, have an effect on the language used.²⁰ Depending on circumstances, a JSL speaker could very well use another variant than what is expressed as the norm by textbooks, or books that deal with the correctness of language. One example of this is using dialect when living in an area where the dialect in question is spoken to a larger degree than the standard variant. It might even be beneficial for the learners, giving them tools for expressing their emotions or personalities.²¹

¹⁸ Heinrich, p. 226.

¹⁹ Thomson, Chichiro Kinoshita, "Who is to say 'Your Japanese is incorrect'? Reflections on 'correct' Japanese usage by learners of Japanese", *Japanese Studies*, 30, 3, 2010, p. 429-431.

²⁰ Thomson, p. 430-431; Klein, p. 140.

²¹ Ibid., p. 437.

2.4 Authenticity

Authentic teaching materials have been shown to be useful in language acquisition and many think that the language used in language teaching, and in textbooks, should be authentic and realistic.²² It is sometimes even stated as a condition for reaching an end state where the learner can communicate fluently.²³ In addition, inauthentic materials might mislead students; meaning that they will learn to use the language in a way that differs from native speakers, inauthentic materials does not show a good representation of actual discourse, and therefore leaves learners with faulty language models.²⁴

There are many ways to define authenticity. In this thesis I am using the definition, "An *authentic text* is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort."²⁵

One note of interest is that even though manga are authentic sources of Japanese, and learners have expressed the opinion that reading manga is beneficial for language acquisition, it is not seen as "authentic Japanese" by those very learners.²⁶ This should mean that manga may not be as effective as a reading material as other forms of authentic materials, since learners beliefs have an effect on the language acquisition.²⁷ However, manga has been used successfully as material in JSL teaching,²⁸ and the effect of the beliefs might be negligible.

In contrast to the clamour for authentic materials, there are also those who argue that material may be used, even if it is not authentic, as long as it is realistic.²⁹ Gilmore claimed that, "For students to learn how to manage conversation effectively in the target language, they need to have realistic

²² Richards, Jack and Renandya, Willy, *Methodology in Language Teaching: An anthology of current practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 67; Nunan, p. 216; Mack, Karen, "Perspectives on criteria for an ESL textbook appropriate for Japanese university students", *komyûnikêshonbunka (Communication in Culture)*, 4, 2010, p. 36; Armour, William Spencer, "Reading Japanese by reading 'manga': The rise of 'soft power pedagogy'", *RELC Journal*, 42, 2, 2011, p. 128.

²³ Long and Doughty, p. 142, 152.

²⁴ Nunan, p. 216.

²⁵ Gilmore, p. 98.

²⁶ Spindler, William Jay, *Anime and manga, Japanese foreign language students, and the assumption popular culture has a place in the classroom*, M.A. University of California, Davis: 2010, p. 3.

²⁷ Kajala, Paula and Barcelos, Ana Maria Ferreira, *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches*, Dordrecht, London: Kluwer Academic, 2003, p. 1.

²⁸ Armour, p. 130-131.

²⁹ Long and Doughty, p. 317.

models of proficient users doing the same thing...” He also argued that, ”Authenticity doesn’t necessarily mean ‘good’, just as contrivance doesn’t necessarily mean ‘bad’.”³⁰

Authentic Japanese language materials are one of the most important factors in motivating students to study Japanese. Immersion in authentic materials, such as television shows, movies, music etc., are as important sources of motivation as real life communication with native speakers for many students, and such immersion is helpful for students' learning.³¹

2.5 Textbooks

Reading materials are usually adjusted to the learners' level of proficiency of the target language. In order to ensure acquisition, there must be a large amount of understandable input and vocabulary; unknown parts of the target language's writing system³² and reading material are therefore adjusted in resources used in L2 teaching.³³ Such adjusted input can be helpful for learners' acquisition, even at beginner levels.³⁴

Textbooks fulfil a multitude of purposes in the L2 teaching classroom. They lessen the teachers' workload by providing structure for a program and standardizing instruction. Good textbooks ensure that learners get useful and correct input. They are helpful for less experienced teachers, by providing support and serving as instructional material for teacher training.³⁵ On top of that, they provide material that would be hard for teachers to produce themselves. Textbooks are also helpful for learners, by giving them the opportunity to rehearse and study in advance.³⁶

³⁰ Gilmore, p. 101.

³¹ Matsumoto, Hiroshi, ”Peak learning experiences and language learning: A study of American learners of Japanese”, *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 20, 3, 2007, p. 204, 206.

³² For example, ”kanji” in Japanese.

³³ Ginger, Marcus, ”The role of reading in a Japanese language program: A response to the MLA ad hoc committee”, *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 22, 2010, p. 4.

³⁴ Leung, Ching Yin, ”Extensive reading and language learning: A diary study of a beginning learner of Japanese”, *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 14, 2002, p. 78.

³⁵ Richards and Renandya, p. 66.

³⁶ O’Neill, Robert, ”Why use textbooks?”, *ELT Journal*, 36, 2, 1982, p. 105; Hirata, Yuu, ”Kyôkasho ni tsuite – chûkyûkyôkasho kaiteisagyô wo ki ni –”, *Nihongokyôiku Ronshû (Collection of Papers about Japanese language education)*, 2007, p. 7.

However, there is dissatisfaction about textbooks used in L2 teaching, and not just from researchers. Students find that there is a discrepancy between their interests, which plays a large part in their motivation, and the material presented in textbooks.³⁷ It has been reported that the, "balance between teaching about linguistic norms and actual language is still lacking in even intermediate and advanced course materials."³⁸ Furthermore, textbooks may contain inauthentic language.³⁹ In an article, Gilmore said that, "It has long been recognised that the language presented to students in textbooks is a poor representation of the real thing," and pointed out several flaws in textbooks, such as nonexistence of idioms, under-representation of common lexical items and lack of pragmatic information.⁴⁰ Many of these flaws can be related to the very lack of authentic material that teachers and researchers are criticising.

In addition, textbooks often teach prescriptive language; which in many cases differ from how the language is used by native speakers. In the textbooks, only one alternative for, for example, an utterance or grammatical feature⁴¹ is presented; meaning that the alternative is seen as the only correct way of saying something by learners, even though another alternative might be more common in native speakers' discourse. Those who learn Japanese from interaction with native speakers, and not from studying in a classroom, acquire the most common alternative at an earlier stage than classroom learners. Therefore, the use of textbooks means that classroom learners will acquire a variant of Japanese that might differ from natural discourse.⁴² Thomson calls this variant, "... 'classroom Japanese', which is sometimes outdated, sometimes reflects idealised Japanese... and sometimes reflects unnatural Japanese which we can only encounter in classrooms."⁴³

³⁷ Armour, p. 136.

³⁸ McLelland, Mark and Dasgupta, Romit, *Genders, transgenders and sexualities in Japan*, New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 18.

³⁹ Tomlinson, Brian, *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 90; Richards and Renandya, p. 66.

⁴⁰ Gilmore, p. 98-101.

⁴¹ One examples of this in textbooks used in JSL teaching is the negation of the copula "desu", whose negation "ja arimasen/dewa arimasen" is often presented, but the alternative negation "nai desu" is not.

⁴² Thomson, p. 433-437.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 436-437.

3. Materials and Methods

In this section, I will explain the method used to answer the research question, and the limitations applied to this study.

3.1 Data

The research question is descriptive in nature. I am looking at “what“ native speakers think about the Japanese found in textbooks, both by looking at details, such as the word usage, the grammar, the polite language used, etc.; and by looking at what they think about the dialogues as a whole. I am, in other words, describing the opinions of native speakers. Quantitative data is used to "Describe and explain.",⁴⁴ and provides a relatively small amount of information about a relatively large number of respondents. As described by Taylor, "the major purpose of quantitative research is to make valid and objective descriptions on phenomena."⁴⁵ Therefore, quantitative data was used to answer the research question. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Since this study looked at opinions of over two hundred individuals, interviewing all of them were deemed to be impractical. A questionnaire was judged to be the most appropriate way of gathering the desired data. Questionnaires are also one of the most common methods used when collecting quantitative data.⁴⁶

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section one contained a short explanation of the questionnaire, one of seven dialogues found in *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* and a short explanation of the objective of the dialogue, as stated in the beginning of each chapter. Section two contained three different parts, a face sheet, questions, which were divided into three categories, and one open ended question. The categories were Grammar, Vocabulary, and

⁴⁴ Holme, Idar Magne and Solvang, Bernt Krohn, *Forskningsmetodik: Om kvalitative och kvantitative metoder*, 2:d ed., Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1997, p. 78.

⁴⁵ Taylor, George, *Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in research*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010, p. 52.

⁴⁶ Holme and Solvang, p. 173; Taylor, p. 52.

Conversation. All quantitative questions were formulated as a statement, and were answered by indicating the degree of agreement by marking 1 – 5 on a Likert scale. In other words, the different degrees of agreement were roughly represented by using numbers. 1 indicated that you disagreed completely, 5 indicated that you agreed completely, and 3 was a neutral option. In order to stop respondents from answering the same option, in a mechanical fashion, and to incite them to reflect on their answers, the statements were stated as a positive one in some cases, and a negative statement in other cases. This means that the most positive and desired result will be a 5 for some questions, and a 1 for other questions.⁴⁷ Excluding the face sheet, there were twelve quantitative questions, and six open ended, qualitative questions. The face sheet consisted of seven questions about the respondent; Gender, Age, Mother tongue, Whether they spoke with a dialect other than 'Standard Japanese'⁴⁸ or not, What dialect they spoke with (if they answered "yes" to the previous question), Academic level and Major. Grammar contained three statements, "The grammar is correct", "The grammar is not used in spoken Japanese", and "The grammar is fitting for the context, speaker etc." In addition, there were one open ended question about what is not used in spoken Japanese, and one about what is fitting for the speakers, etc. Vocabulary contained six statements, "The words are normally used", "The words are slang", "The words are technical terms", "The words are written language", "The words are not used nowadays", and "The words are common in spoken Japanese.". In addition, there were one open ended question about what words are not used in contemporary Japanese, if the respondents answered that some words are not used nowadays, and one about in what context words are used. Conversation contained four statements, "The speakers use polite language correctly", "The speakers talk in a normal fashion", and "The dialogue fulfils the stated objective."⁴⁹ In addition, there was one open ended question about what part of the polite language was incorrect. Lastly, there was an open question where the respondents were asked to write any thoughts they had that were not covered in any of the other questions.

⁴⁷ The word "positive" will be used to represent the desired responses for each question, for example that the grammar is used in spoken Japanese, or that the dialogues does not contain technical terms.

⁴⁸ "Standard Japanese" is defined as the Tokyo Dialect in this study.

⁴⁹ It should be noted that "Fulfil the objective" can be interpreted as both "Serve as input, in order to help the student learn the grammar, etc., that is being explained in the chapter.", and "The characters manage to do what they set out to do, for example receive permission to bring a friend home, in the dialogue."

3.3 Respondents

The respondents had to fit two criteria. They had to speak Japanese as a mother tongue and they had to study or teach at a university in Japan. There is a difference in the language ability between native speakers, and those who speak it as a second language.⁵⁰ Even though it is possible that JSL speakers can judge the correctness of a text just as well as a native speaker, there was no way to ensure that their Japanese level was sufficiently advanced. Because of this, native speakers were chosen as respondents, in order to ensure that this difference did not influence the results. The majority of the characters in the dialogues are university students, and a large part of the dialogues take part in a university or university-related, environment. Therefore, university students, who are in a similar environment on a regular basis, were deemed to be able to judge the language used in the dialogues most accurately.

The respondents came from a non-random sample and, other than the criteria described above, there were no selection of the respondents. The sample has characteristics of both a quota sample⁵¹, since the respondents had to fit certain criteria, and a convenience sample.⁵² The respondents were selected based on availability, which means that, "there is no scientific way of generalizing findings from this sample to the population."⁵³ It is also hard to generalize the results from quota samples, although quota samples possess a degree of representativity.⁵⁴ This means that the results from this study cannot be generalized to a population that does not fulfil the stated criteria.

3.4 Procedure

In total, 331 questionnaires were handed out to university students, during different classes at Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan. The questionnaires were divided between seven dialogues, which approximately 50 questionnaires of each. 143 of the questionnaires were handed out during July, 2011 in different classes,⁵⁵ as well as to students studying Japanese pedagogy.⁵⁶ Of the

⁵⁰ Klein, p. 54-55.

⁵¹ A sample that is selected by deciding on several quotas beforehand, and then not using results from respondents who does not fulfil all quotas.

⁵² A sample that is selected by choosing respondents that are available to the researcher.

⁵³ Taylor, p. 150.

⁵⁴ Holme and Solvang, p. 183.

⁵⁵ The classes were: Italian, Linguistics, SLA, and Japanese Language.

remaining 188 questionnaires, which were handed out during November and December, 2011, 18 were handed out to students studying Japanese pedagogy, and the rest were handed out in classes.⁵⁷ The majority of the classes were for students in the Department of Arts and Letters at Tohoku University, but several of them were open for students from other departments. I handed out questionnaires in the beginning of a lesson, which was 90 minutes long, and collected the questionnaires in the end of the lesson. In a few cases, respondents returned the questionnaire at a later point in time. In addition, I belonged to the "Laboratory of Japanese Teaching"⁵⁸ during an exchange year at Tohoku University, and were therefore able to hand out questionnaires to other students at the laboratory in question. These were answered out of the context of lessons, and the respondents returned them to my mailbox in the laboratory. Of these 331 questionnaires, a total of 229 were answered, giving an answer frequency of 69,1%. Twenty of the questionnaires were answered by respondents who were not native speakers of Japanese, and therefore did not fulfil the criteria detailed under the heading Respondents. Leaving a total of 209 questionnaires used in the analysis.

3.5 Selection of Source Material

The textbook used in creating the questionnaire, *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* was chosen due to several reasons. Primarily because it was revised in 2008, and the information in it should, therefore, be relative new. In the introduction of the book, the authors state that language changes as time passes and the earlier edition of the book contained outdated information that was not representative of how Japanese is spoken in contemporary Japan.⁵⁹ A large part of the textbook has been rewritten, and it was judged to be a better source than one that is older and contains outdated information. Furthermore, it is stated in the textbook that the focus is on teaching context and functions that are realistic, as well as natural Japanese (*shizen na nihongo*).⁶⁰ In addition, it fulfilled the criteria set up for source material. The first criterion was the textbook's level. *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* is, as is indicated by the name, designed for learners on an intermediate level, which is defined to the level reached after one year of full-time Japanese

⁵⁶ In Japanese, this area of study is called *nihongo kyôikugaku* and is studied by those who wish to teach Japanese.

⁵⁷ The classes were: Inter-cultural communication, Japanese culture, Lexicology, English, and Linguistics.

⁵⁸ *Nihongo kyôikugaku kenkyûshitsu* in Japanese.

⁵⁹ Miura, Akira and McGloin, Naomi Hanaoka, *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese [Revised edition]*, Tokyo: The Japan Times, Ltd. 2008, p. vi.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

studies, constituting 240 hours of lessons. The second criterion was focus on all of the four different parts of language usage; reading, writing, listening and talking.⁶¹

There are a total of 46 dialogues in *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese*, and out of these 46 dialogues, seven were used in the questionnaires. All of the seven dialogues contained at least three of the most common features, and were therefore chosen.⁶² In order to determine which dialogue to use, nationality, gender, and profession of the speakers; if the conversation took place in Japan or not; place where the conversation took place; level of politeness; what was discussed; and activities performed in the dialogues were identified, and coded.

3.6 Analysis

The analysis was performed in three steps. The first step was analysing the answer frequency, and by looking at the mean, median, mode and standard deviation for each question. In order to compare different variables, and to ensure statistical validity, X²-test⁶³ and Mann-Whitney U test⁶⁴ were used. The tests were used to test for independence, i.e. to see if a variable, such as gender, had an effect on how the respondents answered. The X²-test⁶⁵ was used for most questions, and the Mann-Whitney U test was mainly used for questions with a very low answer frequency for the majority of the alternatives. The second step was analysing the qualitative data with a stripped-down version of a phenomenological method of analysis.⁶⁶ Each comment was summarised into its core meaning, which was then divided into one of several categories, such as, "Correct polite language", "Incorrect expression", or "Too polite." Lastly, the qualitative data and the quantitative data were compared, and the qualitative results were used to give a context for the quantitative results, and to give concrete examples of what the respondents alluded to with their quantitative answers.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. vi-vii.

⁶² The dialogues that were used for the questionnaire were; Dialogue 2 in chapter 3 (C3D2), dialogue 3 in chapter 4 (C4D3), dialogue 2 in chapter 5 (C5D2), dialogue 2 in chapter 6 (C6D2), dialogue 3 in chapter 8 (C8D3), dialogue 3 in chapter 12 (C12D3), and dialogue 3 in chapter 15 (C15D3).

⁶³ Butler, Christopher, *Statistics in Linguistics*, <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hlss/llas/statistics-in-linguistics/bkindex.shtml>, (electronical resource, accessed May 24, 2012), 2006, p. 112-123.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 98-102.

⁶⁵ "X²-test" is read "chi-square test".

⁶⁶ Fejes, Andreas and Thornberg, Robert, *Handbok i kvalitativ analys*, Stockholm: Liber, 2009, p. 106.

4. Results

The results of the investigation will be presented in five parts; "Grammar", "Vocabulary", "Conversation", "Other thoughts", and "How different groups answered." The majority of the data presented is quantitative and will be presented using tables, which are then explained in text form. The qualitative data, on the other hand, will be presented wholly in text form.

4.1 Grammar

Table 1: Answer frequency for the grammar part of the questionnaire.

The grammar in the dialogue is:		Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
Grammatically correct.	Count	1	15	17	66	109
	Row N %	0,5%	7,2%	8,2%	31,7%	52,4%
Not used in spoken Japanese.	Count	100	67	24	9	4
	Row N %	49,0%	32,8%	11,8%	4,4%	2,0%
Fitting for the context, speaker, etc.	Count	9	21	27	71	75
	Row N %	4,4%	10,3%	13,3%	35,0%	36,9%

Table 1 shows how the respondents answered to the first group of questions in the questionnaires. 84,1% responded that they agreed with the statement; "The grammar in the dialogue is grammatically correct." More than half answered that they agreed completely. In the same way, 81,8% responded that they disagreed with the statement, "The grammar in the dialogue is not used in spoken Japanese." Since they disagreed with the statement, it means that they think that the grammar in the dialogue is used in spoken Japanese, which is a positive result. Both of these questions have more respondents who answered with the most positive option than the other positive option. The third question, however, have an almost equal amount of answers for both

positive options. 71,9% responded positively, but 14,7% responded negatively, with the remaining 13,3% responding neutrally.

Several respondents pointed out grammatical parts in the dialogue which are usually not found in spoken Japanese, such as the personal pronoun *watashi*, or that common, contracted forms were not used, for example, not dropping the first vowel of a verb when it is used as an auxiliary verb. On the other hand, there were a large amount of respondents who gave positive comments on the usage of polite language the dialogues and how it was correct for the context and speakers. A total of 75 respondents commented that the polite language used was both fitting and correct for the different contexts and speakers.

4.2 Vocabulary

Table 2: Answer frequency for the vocabulary part of the questionnaire.

The words used are:		Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
Normally used.	Count	6	2	11	53	136
	Row N %	2,9%	1,0%	5,3%	25,5%	65,4%
Slang.	Count	103	58	21	18	7
	Row N %	49,8%	28,0%	10,1%	8,7%	3,4%
Technical terms.	Count	155	31	10	4	7
	Row N %	74,9%	15,0%	4,8%	1,9%	3,4%
Written language.	Count	71	70	40	16	10
	Row N %	34,3%	33,8%	19,3%	7,7%	4,8%
Not used nowadays.	Count	164	21	4	1	2
	Row N %	85,4%	10,9%	2,1%	0,5%	1,0%
Common in spoken Japanese.	Count	6	9	13	78	84
	Row N %	3,2%	4,7%	6,8%	41,1%	44,2%

Table 2 shows how the respondents answered to the second group of questions in the questionnaires. For the most part, they answered very positively. 90,9% agreed that the words in the dialogue are normally used words. Close to 80% disagreed with the statement, "The words used are slang", and almost half of the respondents disagreed completely. Almost everyone responded that there are no technical terms (a total of 90,9% disagreeing with 74,9% disagreeing completely) or that there are no words that are not used nowadays (96,3% disagreeing with 85,4% disagreeing completely). In addition, 85,2% responded that the words in the dialogue are common in spoken Japanese, with approximately as many agreeing completely as those who agreed somewhat. Most responded that they disagreed with the statement "The words used are written language". However, there were only one third who disagreed completely, with another third who disagreed somewhat. A total of 12,5% agreed with the statement and 19,3% responded that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

4.3 Conversation

Table 3: Answer frequency for the conversation part of the questionnaire.

Conversation		Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
The speakers use polite language correctly.	Count	5	14	15	88	69
	Row N %	2,6%	7,3%	7,9%	46,1%	36,1%
The speakers talk in a normal fashion.	Count	3	6	25	87	69
	Row N %	1,6%	3,2%	13,2%	45,8%	36,3%
The dialogue fulfils the stated objective.	Count	3	2	17	71	99
	Row N %	1,6%	1,0%	8,9%	37,0%	51,6%

Table 3 show how the respondents answered to the third group of questions in the questionnaires. 82,2% agreed to the statement, "The speakers use polite language correctly.", as well as to the statement, "The speakers talk in a normal fashion." Concerning the statement, "The dialogue fulfils the objective.", a total of 88,6% responded that they agreed, with more than half agreeing completely.

As many as 15 respondents pointed out expressions that were incorrect, when considering the context of the dialogues. Most of these comments related to the usage of polite language, especially the polite language used when talking about oneself to a superior.

4.4 Other Thoughts

There were also 15 comments in the final open question about incorrect expressions. However, most of the comments were about different parts of the respective dialogues, such as the usage of a less common way of negation or the usage of expressions that are somewhat too formal. One expression that several respondents commented on is *uchi no haisha* which is uttered with the intended meaning of, "our dentist/the dentist we usually go to". The respondents commented that the expression sounds unnatural unless the dentist in question is a family member. This might, for example, be related to the usage of the kanji “家” */uchi/*, which is also used to mean "home" or "house".

A note of interest is that seven respondents pointed out one particular kanji, i.e. one character of the logographic writing system used in Japanese, was incorrect and that another one, with a similar meaning, should be used instead. There are no other comments about the kanji usage and this particular example stands out. The respondents thought that the kanji 込, used to mean crowded, is incorrect and that the kanji 混, with the same meaning, should be used instead. 込 is used in the verb *komu*, in the sense of a restaurant being crowded. While both kanji can be, and has been, used for the same verb, the meaning of 込 has the nuance of including something, or adding something to something else, while the meaning of 混 has the nuance of blending or a state of confusion.⁶⁷ 込 was used for the normal way of writing *komu* previously, but it has been replaced with 混 in later years. This shift happened after the publication of the revised edition of *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* and is an example of the importance of having information that is as up-to-date as possible.

⁶⁷ According to the author's observation.

4.5 How Different Groups Answered

Table 4: Answer frequency for the statement "The grammar in the dialogue is not used in spoken Japanese", depending on if the respondent speak with a dialect other than the Tokyo Dialect, or not.

The Grammar in the Dialogue is not Used in Spoken Japanese			Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
Have a Dialect other than "Standard Japanese" (Tokyo Dialect)	Yes	Count	32	12	12	3	0
		Row N %	54,2%	20,3%	20,3%	5,1%	0,0%
	No	Count	67	55	12	6	4
		Row N %	46,5%	38,2%	8,3%	4,2%	2,8%

There was a statistically significant difference, $X^2(4, n=203)=11,374, p < 0,05$, in what the respondents answered for the statement "The grammar is not used in spoken Japanese", depending on if they spoke with a dialect other than Standard Japanese or not. While both groups still responded in a positive way, those who did not speak Standard Japanese had a much larger group that responded neutrally and therefore less who responded positively.

Table 5: Answer frequency for the statement "The words used are technical terms", depending on the respondent's gender.

The Words used are Technical Terms			Disagree Completely	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree Completely
Gender	Female	Count	102	14	5	2	4
		Row N %	80,3%	11,0%	3,9%	1,6%	3,1%
	Male	Count	53	17	5	2	3
		Row N %	66,2%	21,2%	6,2%	2,5%	3,8%

A Mann-Whitney U test was carried out to see if there was a statistical difference in how females and males answered to the questionnaire. There was a slight difference (The mean ranks for Female and Male were 98,59 and 112,59, respectively; $U = 4392.5, Z = -2.157, p < 0.05$) in the answers for "The words used are technical terms.", depending on the gender of the respondents. While both females and males mostly answered that they disagreed with the statement (91,3% females, and 87,4% males disagreed), there were more females who disagreed completely (80,3%) as compared to males who disagreed completely (66,2%), showing a much larger percentage of the male group thought that there were some technical terms in the dialogue, as compared to the female group. The

reason for this could be that female native speakers of Japanese use more advanced words than male speakers of Japanese, and therefore does not consider those words to be technical terms.

When looking at the mean for the different dialogues, there were quite large differences between the dialogues. However, it seems like they cancelled out each other and the only statistically significant differences were whether the dialogue contained slang, $X^2(24, n=207)=43,586, p < 0,01$.

Table 6: Answer frequency for the statement "The words used are slang", depending on the dialogue.

The words used are slang.			Disagree Completely	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree Completely
Dialogue ⁶⁸	C12D3	Count	18	5	0	0	0
		Row N %	78,3%	21,7%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
	C15D3	Count	10	14	8	8	2
		Row N %	23,8%	33,3%	19,0%	19,0%	4,8%
	C3D2	Count	18	5	2	1	2
		Row N %	64,3%	17,9%	7,1%	3,6%	7,1%
	C4D3	Count	16	5	3	1	0
		Row N %	64,0%	20,0%	12,0%	4,0%	0,0%
	C5D2	Count	18	6	1	2	2
		Row N %	62,1%	20,7%	3,4%	6,9%	6,9%
	C6D2	Count	16	15	4	2	1
		Row N %	42,1%	39,5%	10,5%	5,3%	2,6%
	C8D3	Count	7	8	3	4	0
		Row N %	31,8%	36,4%	13,6%	18,2%	0,0%

The number of respondents who are older than 25 years were not enough for statistical analysis⁶⁹ But there were a difference in answers between the groups "Younger than 20 years old" and "Between 21 and 25 years old". Older respondents were more likely to disagree that the words in the dialogues are slang than younger respondents, $X^2(4, n=192)=11,362, p < 0.01$.

⁶⁸ Each dialogue had a code assigned to it. In the code, "C" stands for "Chapter", and "D" stands for "Dialogue". In other words, the code "C12D3" means that it is the third dialogue in the twelfth chapter.

⁶⁹ 15 respondents in total, spread between the ages of 26 to 65.

Table 7: Answer frequency for the statement "The words used are slang", depending on the respondent's age.

The Words used are Slang			Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
Age	-20	Count	56	40	17	15	3
		Row N %	42,7%	30,5%	13,0%	11,5%	2,3%
	21-25	Count	39	17	3	1	1
		Row N %	63,9%	27,9%	4,9%	1,6%	1,6%

Table 8: Answer frequency for the statement "The grammar in the dialogue is grammatically correct", depending on the respondent's majors.

The Grammar in the Dialogue is Grammatically Correct			Disagree completely	Disagree somewhat	Neutral	Agree somewhat	Agree completely
Major	Mixed	Count	0	6	7	27	35
		Row N %	0,0%	8,0%	9,3%	36,0%	46,7%
	Unknown	Count	0	6	0	15	28
		Row N %	0,0%	12,2%	0,0%	30,6%	57,1%
	Japanese Language	Count	0	0	3	4	1
		Row N %	0,0%	0,0%	37,5%	50,0%	12,5%
	Linguistics	Count	0	1	1	5	18
		Row N %	0,0%	4,0%	4,0%	20,0%	72,0%
	Japanese Teaching	Count	1	2	6	15	27
		Row N %	2,0%	3,9%	11,8%	29,4%	52,9%

When looking at all different majors, there is only a statistically significant difference, $X^2(16, n=208)=27,858, p < 0,05$, for the statement, "The grammar in the dialogue is grammatically correct." While about 80% of most groups agreed, there is a difference in the degree to which they responded. Those who studied linguistics had a larger percentage that agreed completely than the other groups, the group with mixed majors had more who agreed somewhat than most other groups, and those who studied the Japanese Language⁷⁰ had a much larger percentage that responded neutrally than the other groups.⁷¹

⁷⁰ In Japanese, this area of study is called *kokugo*, which is the study of a national language.

⁷¹ It is worth noting that there were only eight respondents in the group "Japanese Language" and the number of respondents is therefore not sufficient for statistical analysis.

Table 9: Means, count of responses and standard deviation for the statistically significantly different questions for the majors "Language" and "Linguistics".

Question		Correct Grammar	Nor used in Spoken Japanese	Fulfils the stated objective
Major				
Japanese Language	Mean	3,75	1,87	4,00
	N	8	8	8
	Std. Deviation	,707	,641	,535
Linguistics	Mean	4,60	1,28	4,75
	N	25	25	24
	Std. Deviation	,764	,542	,532
Total	Mean	4,39	1,42	4,56
	N	33	33	32
	Std. Deviation	,827	,614	,619

It is interesting to note the difference in responses between those who studied Linguistics and those who studied the Japanese Language. Using a Mann-Whitney U Test, it was concluded that there were statistically significant differences for how the two groups responded to the statement "The grammar in the dialogue is grammatically correct" (The mean ranks for Japanese Language and Linguistics were 9,31 and 19,46, respectively; $U = 38,5$, $Z = -2,911$, $p < 0,01$), "The grammar in the dialogue is not used in spoken Japanese." (The mean rank for Japanese Language was 23,38 and the mean rank for Linguistics was 14,96; $U = 49$, $Z = -2,534$, $p < 0,05$), and "The dialogue fulfils the stated objective." (The mean ranks for Japanese Language and Linguistics were 8,63 and 19,13, respectively; $U = 33$, $Z = -3,218$, $p < 0,01$). Those who studied Linguistics responded in a much more positive fashion for all questions.

5. Discussion

The discussion is divided into five parts. I will focus on the responses to the grammar in the first part, on the responses to the vocabulary in the second part, on the respondents' opinions about the conversations in the third part, on the differences for the different variables in the fourth part, and on the limitations of this investigation in the fifth part,.

5.1 Grammar

The grammar used in the dialogues is considered to be correct, for the most part. While there are some things that were deemed to be incorrect by the respondents, those things were related to expressions and how they were used rather than as purely grammatical functions. The Japanese in the dialogues is, however, somewhat different from spoken Japanese at times. It is more formal, in the word usage and in the low use of contractions, such as omitting the first vowel in auxiliary verbs. While the grammar is somewhat formal and "stiff", it is fitting for the speakers and the contexts for the most part. The polite Japanese in particular was used appropriately, which, for example, can be seen in the many comments about one of the dialogues which featured an interview. Several comments pointed out that, "Using polite language is appropriate in an interview situation." One particular grammatical function which received particular attention from the respondents was whether to use *to* or *tte*. They are two forms of the same particle, which can be used when quoting or to something as an indirect object. *To* is a more polite form, often used in writing, and *tte* is a contracted form, which is common in spoken language. The contracted form was used in some dialogues, and the respondents commented that it was correct to use the contracted form. The more polite form was used in other dialogues, and in these cases, the respondents commented that it felt too formal when you used that form. This indicates that the contracted, more colloquial form is more commonly used by native speakers in spoken Japanese, and that such forms should be emphasized in textbooks.

5.2 Vocabulary

The vocabulary used in the dialogues is deemed to be normally used words to a large degree. Most of the words are used in contemporary, spoken Japanese and there are very little or no technical terms. In contrast, a small amount of slang is used, and there is a slight tendency of using words that are common in written language, which adds to the somewhat formal Japanese found in the dialogues. In addition, a synonym is more fitting than the word used in some cases.⁷² This, however, is an exception more than rule. As a whole, the vocabulary used in the dialogues is fitting and, as one respondent put it, the conversations are, "...normal conversation that could exist in reality."

5.3 Conversation

The majority of the respondents gave positive responses for all questions regarding the conversation as a whole. The polite Japanese was used correctly, even though there was some uncertainty among the respondents about what was the correct way in some cases; the speakers spoke in a normal fashion, with a few exceptions where the dialogue, "felt wrong" for a respondent; and the respondents felt that the dialogue fulfilled the objective, even though it is debatable whether the respondents fully understood the objective of each dialogue.

There were two points of interest among the comments about the conversation. The first one is the lack of *aizuchi*, which are interjections that are used during conversations to show that you are listening, to express your reaction to what the speaker said, to indicate that you want to say something etc.⁷³ According to Saft, they are, "sometimes referred to as 'reactive tokens' or 'backchannels'.", in English.⁷⁴ Several respondents pointed out the lack of *aizuchi* in the dialogues. The second one is, like several respondents noted, that a spoken conversation will, "feel unnatural when written down." Although a necessary evil, the difference in how a conversation feels when hearing it and reading it will have an effect the investigation undertaken in this thesis. The textbook comes with CDs containing all the dialogues, and listening to the dialogues could be helpful for

⁷² One example of this is in the context of the "address" for a letter. In the dialogue in question, the loan word *adoresu* is used as an explanation, but several respondents thought that the Japanese word *atesaki* would be more fitting.

⁷³ Maynard, Senko, *Te iu ka, yappari nihongo da yo ne – Kaiwa ni hizomu nihonjin no kimochi*, Tokyo: Taishûkan Shoten, 2009 p. 142.

⁷⁴ Saft, Scott, "Exploring *aizuchi* as resources in Japanese social interaction: The case of a political discussion program", *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 2007, p. 1290–1292.

learners, for example, by giving them a more natural feel for the language used. Although it is hard to use *aizuchi* in a written conversation, these CDs could also be a potential medium for introducing *aizuchi* to learners.

5.4 Differences for Variables

There were generally only small differences between most groups. These differences were not statistically significant, for the most part, and were not very large even when statistically significant. It seems like factors such as gender, academic level or whether the respondent spoke with a dialect or not had a very small effect on how respondents evaluated the text.

On the other hand, it seems like age had an effect on how the respondents answered. A minor, but clear, difference could be seen between how those who were younger than 20 years old, and those who were older than 20 years old answered. Those who were older responded more positively in some cases, and more negatively in others; possibly indicating that the language used in some dialogues are more fitting for younger students, and the language used in other dialogues might be more fitting for older students. The characters in the dialogues are, for the most part, university students and, while their age is never stated explicitly, there is a possibility that they are both older and younger than 20 years old. It is therefore possible that the differences between how the two age groups responded depend on how old the characters are and what kind of Japanese they speak.

In addition, some dialogues received a higher rating than the average rating, while other dialogues received a lower rating, even though the differences between the dialogues as a whole were not statistically significant. One dialogue, which contained an interview between a native speaker of Japanese and an American who lived in Japan until starting to study at university, received lower results for most questions. The same happened to another dialogue, which contained a conversation about looking for part-time job, between a foreign student at a Japanese university and a counsellor for foreign students. In both of these dialogues, a non-native speaker of Japanese spoke to a native one, and used somewhat informal Japanese. As comparison, two dialogues, where foreign students talk with Japanese teachers and ask them for assistance in some manner, received a rating that was higher than the overall rating. The student talks politely to the teacher in both cases, and the respondents commented that this was good, since they were, "using polite language properly." This

seems to be the major difference between the four dialogues in question. In two of them, the non-native speakers of Japanese use polite language, while they do not use polite language in the other two. However, many respondents commented on how it was correct to speak "informally" in an interview and in conversations between people who have met several times before, such as a foreign student and a counsellor for foreign students. Therefore it seems unlikely that the difference lay only in the use of polite Japanese. The dialogues with the more positive reviews came earlier in the textbook, while the other two came later in the textbook, so it is possible that the dialogues with simpler language received better response, simply because the respondents might have thought that it was easier to say if something was correct or not. Another alternative is that the respondents thought that simpler Japanese is more fitting for learners, perhaps as a form of foreigner talk, which is that native speakers of a language adjust their speech when talking to a non-native speaker, in order to make it easier for the non-native speaker to understand.⁷⁵

One last note of interest is that those who studied Linguistics responded more positively than those who studies Japanese Language, for all questions about grammar and the majority of the questions about the conversation. While the small number of respondents who studied the Japanese Language makes it hard, if not impossible, to draw any conclusion from this data, it is still noteworthy to find that there is such a large difference between students who study areas that, logically speaking, should be closely related.

5.5 Limitations

When looking at the results from this study, there are several things to keep in mind. Firstly, it is hard to generalise the results to all native speakers of Japanese, since the sample of respondents was non-random. While it is possible to generalise to the population made up by university students, studying at an undergraduate level, it is highly possible that elementary level students, graduates who are working, elderly etc. have a different opinion than the one stated in this study.

⁷⁵ Lightbown, Patsy and Spada, Nina, *How languages are learned, 3:d ed.*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 32-33.

Secondly, it is important to note that respondents might have interpreted the statement “The dialogue fulfils the stated objective.” in different ways. It is possible that some interpreted it in a different way than intended,⁷⁶ and this adds a degree of uncertainty to the results for this question.

Thirdly, the questionnaire used a Likert scale for the majority of the questions, in order to investigate what the respondents thought about the dialogues, and this adds a certain degree of uncertainty to the results. Although the respondents made the selection between the numbers one to five, the numbers approximately represented the degree to which they agreed with a statement. In other words, the respondents used an ordinal scale when responding. This means that the difference between "one" (which stands for, "I disagree completely") and "two" (which stands for, "I disagree somewhat") will be different from respondent to respondent. Means, and answer frequencies, have been used to compare different variables in this study to explain results, and the degree of uncertainty that comes from the usage of Likert scales means that a small difference might be insignificant. Because of this, I chose not to discuss results when the difference between the answer frequencies was less than 10% for any of the options.

Lastly, the textbook used in the creation of the questionnaire is not necessarily representative for all textbooks used in Japanese Language Teaching. While it was revised in 2008, and attention was put on problems found in research on textbook analysis, it is hard to say how, and in what manner, it differs from other textbooks. The textbook in this study was chosen as a case study and the good and bad qualities of it might be different than those in other textbooks, although the results of this study could be used to give indications about what to look for when acquiring textbooks for JSL Teaching.

⁷⁶ I.e. “Serve as input, in order to help the student learn the grammar, etc., explained in the chapter.”

6. Conclusion

In this study, I have looked at what native speakers of Japanese think about the dialogues found in the textbook "An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese", giving specific focus to the grammar and the vocabulary found in the dialogues, as well as to the conversations as a whole. To investigate this, a questionnaire, mostly containing quantitative questions, were handed out to and answered by university students at Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan.

The results indicate that the respondents, on the whole, think that dialogues are good. They judge that the grammar is not only correct, but it is also used in a way that is fitting for the context; that the vocabulary used consists of common words and there are only low amounts of slang and technical terms; that the polite language used in the different dialogues fit the conversations in question; and that, combined with the fact that the speakers speak in a normal fashion for the most part, help form "natural" conversation that, "could be real conversations." In addition, it seems like they thought that the dialogues fulfilled the objective of the chapters they belonged to.

However, the results indicate that there are a few things that could be improved. Several of the dialogues had a somewhat "formal feeling", and contained words that are more commonly found in written discourse. There was also less usage of contraction than is common in spoken Japanese. Furthermore, there are some things that could be improved in the way the textbooks portray conversations in Japanese, such as the addition of *aizuchi*. One possible way of solving this problem is including such features in the CDs that come with the textbook.

If those things are pointed out in class by a teacher, I feel that *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese* is fitting as instruction material, and the input provided by it is correct for JSL learners. While there might be other problems, relating to areas such as pedagogy, this study only deals with the dialogues from an input perspective. More evaluation of the textbook in question, as well as other textbooks like it, with a focus on these other areas would be helpful for teachers and creators of textbooks alike. Since a few respondents pointed out that it feels weird to read a spoken conversation written down, it would also be interesting to see an adaptation of this investigation, where the respondents get to listen to the conversations, which are included in the CDs that come with the textbook, instead of reading a transcript of them.

References

- Armour, William Spencer, "Reading Japanese by reading 'manga': The rise of 'soft power pedagogy'", *RELC Journal*, 42, 2, 2011.
- Brown, Cynthia, "The Interrelation between Speech Perception and Phonological Acquisition from Infant to Adult", in Archibald, John, *Second Language Acquisition and Linguistics Theory*, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2000.
- Butler, Christopher, *Statistics in Linguistics*, <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hlss/llas/statistics-in-linguistics/bkindex.shtml>, (electronical resource, accessed May 24, 2012), 2006.
- Fejes, Andreas and Thornberg, Robert, *Handbok i kvalitativ analys*, Stockholm: Liber, 2009.
- Gilmore, Alex, "Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning", *Language Teaching*, 40, Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Ginger, Marcus, "The role of reading in a Japanese language program: A response to the MLA ad hoc committee", *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 22, 2010.
- Heinrich, Patrick "Language ideology in JFL textbooks", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 175-175, 2005.
- Hirata, Yuu, "Kyôkasho ni tsuite – chûkyûkyôkasho kaiteisagyô wo ki ni –", *Nihongokyôiku Ronshû (Collection of Papers about Japanese language education)*, 2007.
- Holme, Idar Magne and Solvang, Bernt Krohn, *Forskningsmetodik: Om kvalitativa och kvantitativa metoder*, 2:d ed., Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1997.
- Jenkins, Jennifer et al., "Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca", *Language Teaching*, 44, Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Kajala, Paula and Barcelos, Ana Maria Ferreira, *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches*, Dordrecht, London: Kluwer Academic, 2003.
- Klein, Wolfgang, *Second language acquisition*, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986.
- Leung, Ching Yin, "Extensive reading and language learning: A diary study of a beginning learner of Japanese", *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 14, 2002.

- Lightbown, Patsy and Spada, Nina, *How languages are learned, 3:d ed.*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Long, Michael and Doughty, Catherine, *The Handbook of Language Teaching*, Chichester, U.K. And Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Mack, Karen, "Perspectives on criteria for an ESL textbook appropriate for Japanese university students", *komyûnikêshonbunka (Communication in Culture)*, 4, 2010.
- Matsumoto, Hiroshi, "Peak learning experiences and language learning: A study of American learners of Japanese", *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 20, 3, 2007.
- Maynard, Senko, *Te iu ka, yappari nihongo da yo ne – Kaiwa ni hizomu nihonjin no kimochi*, Tokyo: Taishûkan Shoten, 2009.
- McLelland, Mark and Dasgupta, Romit, *Genders, transgenders and sexualities in Japan*, New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Miura, Akira and McGloin, Naomi Hanaoka, *An Integrated Approach to Intermediate Japanese [Revised edition]*, Tokyo: The Japan Times, Ltd. 2008.
- Nakanishi, Yaeko et al., *Jissen Nihongo kyûjuhô*, Tokyo: Baberu Puresu, 1991.
- Nunan, David, *Language Teaching Methodology: A textbook for teachers*, Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall International 1991.
- O'Neill, Robert, "Why use textbooks?", *ELT Journal*, 36, 2, 1982.
- Richards, Jack and Renandya, Willy, *Methodology in Language Teaching: An anthology of current practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Saft, Scott, "Exploring *aizuchi* as resources in Japanese social interaction: The case of a political discussion program", *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 2007.
- Saville-Troike, Muriel, *Introducing second language acquisition*, Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006.
- Spindler, William Jay, *Anime and manga, Japanese foreign language students, and the assumption popular culture has a place in the classroom*, M.A. University of California, Davis: 2010.

Takashima, Hide and Sugiura, Rie, "Integration of Theory and Practice in Grammar Teaching – Gramming, Grammarization and Task activities –", in Yoshitomi, Asako et al., *Readings in second language pedagogy and second language acquisition in Japanese context*, Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Pub. Co., 2006.

Taylor, George, *Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in research*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010.

Thomson, Chichiro Kinoshita, "Who is to say 'Your Japanese is incorrect'? Reflections on 'correct' Japanese usage by learners of Japanese", *Japanese Studies*, 30, 3, 2010.

Tomlinson, Brian, *Materials Development in Language Teaching*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

A. 回答者:

性別: 女 / 男 年齢: -20 / 21-25 / 26-30 / 31-40 / 41-50 / 51-65 / 65-

母国語:..... (日本語と答えた方のみ) 方言で話していますか: はい / いいえ

(はいを答えたのみ) どの方言ですか:.....

職業: 学生 / 院生 / 教授 / その他 専攻:.....

(一枚目の会話文が正しいかどうか、1「まったくそう思わない」から5「まったくそう思う」、当たる番号を○で囲んでください)

B. 会話にある文法は:

1: 文法的に正しい: 1 2 3 4 5

2a: 話す時に使わない文法だ: 1 2 3 4 5

2b:(3、4、5と答えた方のみ)どの文法が話す時に使わないか。その文法はいつ使うか

.....

.....

3a: 話題、話し手、場面などに適切な文法だ: 1 2 3 4 5

3b:(3、4、5と答えた方のみ)どの文法がどんな話題、話し手、場面などに適切であるか

.....

.....

C. 話し手が使う単語は:

1: 普通に使われている単語だ: 1 2 3 4 5

2: 俗語/スラングだ: 1 2 3 4 5

3: 専門用語だ: 1 2 3 4 5

4: 書き言葉だ; 1 2 3 4 5

裏面に続く

5a:現在、使われていない単語だ: 1 2 3 4 5

5b: (3、4、5と答えた方のみ)どの単語が現在に使われていないか:.....

.....

6a:会話によく使われている単語だ: 1 2 3 4 5

6b: (1、2、3と答えた方のみ)どの単語がどんな時に使われているか:

.....

.....

D: 会話:

1a:話し手は丁寧語、謙譲語などを適切に使っている: 1 2 3 4 5

1b: (1、2、3と答えた方のみ)何が適切ではないか:.....

.....

2:話し手は普通どおりに話している: 1 2 3 4 5

3:この会話が本来の目的にかなっているか 1 2 3 4 5

E: 会話について他に何か思いつくことなどがあればお願いいたします:

ご協力ありがとうございました。

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 contains examples of the explanatory text for dialogues and the transcript of the dialogues presented to the respondents. The explanatory texts for the majority of the dialogues are identical to the one for C4D3.

C3D2 (Dialogue 2 in chapter 3)

以下の会話は中級レベルの日本語学習者向けの教科書に書いてあるものです。ここで勉強するのはお願いの仕方です。「ちょっとお願いがあるんですけど……」という表現や「いただけませんか」、「いただけないでしょうか」のような依頼の表現を勉強します。

トム・ブラウン、日本語の石山先生の研究室へ推薦状を頼みに行く。

トム： 先生、今、二、三分よろしいでしょうか。

石山： いいですよ。何ですか。

トム： あのう、実は、来年留学したいので奨学金に申し込みたいんですが、推薦状を書いていただけないでしょうか。

石山： ええ、いいですよ。

トム： これが推薦状の用紙です。

石山： ああ、そうですか。あて先は？

トム： アドレスですか。

石山： ええ。

トム： この紙に書いてあります。切手も持ってきました。

石山： 分かりました。締め切りはいつですか。

トム： あのう、「締め切り」って何でしょうか。

石山： いつまでに送ればいいのかっていうことです。

トム： あっ、分かりました。来週の金曜日です。

石山： じゃあ、今週中に出しておきます。

トム： すみません。よろしくお願ひします。

石山： はい。

C4D3 (Dialogue 3 in chapter 4)

以下の会話は中級レベルの日本語学習者向けの教科書に書いてあるものです。

アメリカ人留学生スーザン、ホームステイ先のお母さんに許可を求める。ホームステイ先の家は駅からちょっと遠い。

スーザン: お母さん、ちょっと駅前まで買い物に行きたいんですけど、自転車借りてもいいですか。

お母さん: いいですよ。

スーザン: それから……。

お母さん: 何。

スーザン: アメリカの大学の友達で、今東京で英語を教えている人に、きのう偶然会ったんです。いつかここへ連れてきたいんですけど、いいでしょうか。

お母さん: いいですよ。何ていう人。

スーザン: エミリーっていうんです。日本人の家に一度も行ったことがないなんて言っていました。

お母さん: じゃあ、あした夕食に来てもらったらどう。久しぶりにすきやきにしようと思っていたところだから。

スーザン: 本当にいいですか。

お母さん: もちろん。六時に来てもらったらどう。

スーザン: エミリーは六時まで仕事だって言っていたから、六時半でもかまいませんか。

お母さん: いいですよ。じゃ、六時半にしましょう。

スーザン: ありがとうございます。