Using Video Clips Versus Movie Transcripts in Teaching Requests to JFL Learners: Investigating Japanese Pragmatics Instruction for Beginners

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Investigating Japanese Pragmatics Instruction for Beginners[1]

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to determine how movie-based online lessons can assist learners of Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) in developing their comprehension of the Japanese request speech act. Authentic Japanese language input was excerpted from movies of Japanese daily life and separated into videos and transcripts of the same scenes. The materials were used to create online lessons. Forty-three beginner-level JFL students from seven public universities in Malaysia participated in this study. Two experimental groups completed online lessons based on videos and transcripts, respectively, while the control group received no instruction. Post-test results were analysed quantitatively, while the participants' learning diaries and interviews offered qualitative data that aided in clarifying their discovery process. Two main areas of concern were identified as a result of the findings. First, pragmatics training materials for beginners show potential, but they must be carefully designed to avoid unduly burdening low-proficiency learners. Second, online courses are an efficient method of increasing learners' pragmatic knowledge of Japanese request expressions. When the same consciousness-raising activities are applied, movie-based input transcripts result in somewhat greater comprehension than videos, but are almost as effective overall. While videos can be difficult for beginners, they are also engaging and contribute to learners' motivation. To summarise, the pragmatics training tools developed in this study have the potential to assist students in developing an awareness of Japanese requests.

Key Words: *Interlanguage pragmatics, pragmatics instruction, Japanese, CALL, online*

INTRODUCTION

Although the request speech act is a popular issue in interlanguage pragmatics, the majority of research has focused on requests in English as a Second or Foreign Language (Taguchi, 2015). However, pragmatic features are frequently language-specific, and additional research is needed in less commonly taught languages such as Japanese (Godwin-Jones, 2013) which, despite being a popular interlanguage pragmatics field, needs to be more available to English-speaking scholars.

The pragmatic aspect targeted by this study's instructional procedure is comprehension of the

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Japanese request speech act. The simple act of making a request in any language is rife with potential face-threatening acts, and this is even more so in Japanese, where the sociopragmatics of requesting behaviour make it an especially difficult pragmatic point for learners to acquire.

That being said, technological applications have been found to be beneficial in pragmatics instruction. Although making requests in Japanese necessitates various strategies in addition to linguistic competence, it is believed that the use of movies will assist learners in mastering this speech act. In this study, consciousness-raising exercises are utilised in conjunction with materials from Japanese movies in two different presentation modes: videos and transcripts; the input and tasks are combined in self-access online lessons. The primary goal of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the two presentation modes when teaching requests to JFL beginners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Even though pragmatics is typically taught to advanced learners who are believed to be more linguistically prepared for such difficult concepts, Walker (2011) recommends that such concepts be introduced to low-level learners from the start, as this will facilitate their acquisition of more complicated structures later on. She highlights the challenge of learning Japanese speech styles, "one of the most difficult linguistic features to acquire because there is no neutral style in Japanese. The most appropriate style must be selected according to the interlocutor's age, social status, intimacy, formality of situation, etc. and the style selected can constantly change depending on various contextual and psychological factors" (p. 336). However, Walker cautions that the complex system may be too challenging for learners, and thus it is important to identify the most effective way of introducing it to beginners.

In Kahraman and Akkuş (2007), Turkish learners of Japanese were asked to make requests in two different situations: to a professor and to a friend. They were mostly able to make pragmatically appropriate requests to the professor, but when making a request to friends the authors found that learners would fail: a large number of the learners used the polite form with friends. The authors speculated that the reason behind this failure was because the request forms taught in their textbook were all in polite form. Furthermore, most of the learners had never been to Japan and therefore most of their encounters with Japanese people were with professors, not young native speakers. The authors suggest exposing students to different situations where requests can be done, and not just in an academic setting.

Similarly, Okutsu (2000) who studied the requests made by learners of Japanese in the United States, in comparison with native speakers found that learners understood the distinction between polite style and plain style, but they did not always know how to use it. In one of the tasks where the conversation was supposed to be between friends, the native speakers used the plain style whereas most of the learners used the polite style. However, this issue can be resolved by explicit instruction; Tateyama's (2007) study showed that consciousness-raising tasks and communication practice worked well in improving learners' use of Japanese requests, helping them to use more varied strategies and avoid sticking to the familiar 'classroom talk'.

Although most pragmatics instruction is carried out in the classroom, there have been efforts to move it outside, and online, as well. Among the researchers who have used websites to teach pragmatics are

subfield pioneers Cohen and Ishihara (2005), who created a website with audio materials to teach speech acts to JFL learners, and Yang (2017), who used a self-access website to teach Chinese gratitude expressions through video. These self-contained pragmatics websites can also be used to prepare for study abroad: Teng and Fei (2013) developed an audio-based course to prepare students for their study abroad experience in China, similar to a video-based online tutorial used to teach Spanish speech acts to students preparing to travel overseas (Russell & Vásquez, 2018).

The online platform lends itself well to using audio-visual materials such as videos, which are a well-established source of input for pragmatics training materials in the language learning classroom. Typically, videos from films or television shows are chosen, though occasionally, excerpts from news broadcasts and commercials are used. When compared to other sources of input, such as audio materials utilised by Moradkhan and Jalayer (2010) or textbook dialogues used by Jalilifar and Mostatabi (2015), the audio-visual features of videos are deemed a bonus.

However, from one point of view, the validity of these comparisons is debatable, since they do not prove that videos are effective simply because they are videos. A more rigorous approach to evaluating videos as an effective teaching material would be to use the same source, i.e. movies, and transpose them into two different tasks: one using an audio-visual medium, or videos, and another using a written medium, or transcripts.

Current literature suggests that movies are useful for teaching pragmatics since they are an accessible source of authentic input. The audio-visuals that supplement video clips are seen to awaken learners' interest and allow greater understanding and retention of pragmatic points. Hashemian, Domakani and Ansari (2016) used movie analysis to scaffold learners' understanding of requests and apologies in English, with the result that the experimental group developed a more varied range of speech act strategies following intervention, in contrast to the control group that continued using the same set of strategies. Similarly, Qi and Lai (2017, p. 29) used two different instructional approaches to teach requests in Chinese using video clips of situational comedies, noting that the use of videos was "because they contained contextualized language input that [was] an effective means of presenting pragmatic features." Their results showed that learners who were taught using the explicit-inductive approach improved more than those who were taught using the explicit-deductive approach.

However, this begs the question: is the value of movies only in the triple combination of script, audio, and video, or is the mere analysis of the movie dialogues adequate when shorn of its audio-visuals? Limited research in this aspect is encouraging. Chan (2017), for example, made use of transcripts of natural data in teaching business English, and found that despite the difficulties learners faced in understanding the unfamiliar transcript data, they still perceived it as being beneficial in acquiring strategies and phrases associated with workplace language.

Whilst Chan (2017) is the only researcher found to have made sole use of transcripts as the source of pragmatics teaching material, other scholars have used scripts to supplement their use of audio or video clips. Whether the flow of the lesson is from watching videos to reading transcripts, or vice versa, this seems to indicate that transcript use might help supplement the audio-visuals. For example, Crandall and Basturkmen (2004) used both audio recordings and transcripts of naturally-occurring conversations to teach pragmatics, while Derakhshan and Eslami (2015) used clips from American TV shows and a movie

to implement speech act training with three different groups. In the latter study, all participants watched the video clips and studied the transcripts. The first group discussed ways of using speech acts in the target language, from interlocutor relationships to strategies. The second group performed different role-plays based on the videos. The third group was the interactive translation group, which translated the video clips together as a group while verbalising their choices and decisions.

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether movie scripts are more beneficial when translated into an audio-visual medium such as video clips, or whether simply having linguistic input in the form of written transcripts is sufficient to increase learners' pragmatic awareness.

METHOD

The study was designed as a randomised controlled trial, including pre- and post-tests, experimental and control groups, and an intervention.

Participants

Forty-three university students who have taken Japanese as an elective course for at least one semester participated in this study. They represent seven public universities in Malaysia. 14 were male and 29 were female. Their age ranged between 20 and 26 years old. Their self-reported Japanese language proficiency ranged from beginner ($n=23$) to lower-intermediate ($n=14$). They were recruited on a voluntary basis, and signed a consent form regarding, among others, anonymity and the ability to withdraw from the study at any point.

Instruments

A preliminary questionnaire was employed as a recruitment tool for Japanese language learners who fit the scope of beginner and lower-intermediate level learners of Japanese.

The second instrument was the multiple choice discourse completion task (MDCT) which was used for the pre- and post-tests. It was used to measure the participants' comprehension of the targeted pragmatic feature; as such, it is a tool that measures reception and not production skills. The MDCT was employed instead of a written discourse completion task (WDCT) due to the fact that it was easier to administer and grade, as well as being more accessible to lower level learners.

The third tool was a set of online lessons. Included with the lessons was the self-reported prior and current knowledge questionnaire, used to gauge the participants' perception of their own pragmatic ability, as well as a learning diary which each participant in the experimental group was asked to keep during their online learning process.

The final instrument was the retrospective interview which was carried out after the post-test via Zoom, an online conferencing software. The interview questions were semi-structured around these themes: usefulness, strengths, weaknesses, suggestion for improvement, fun factor, input type, task type, level of difficulty, and instruction method.

Procedures

The participants were randomly assigned to two experimental groups and one control group. The study took place during their semester break, during which none of them received formal instruction in Japanese. All three groups sat for the pre-test. Following this, the two experimental groups were given treatment over a period of two weeks, but the third group did no additional activities. After the intervention period, all three groups sat for the post-test.

The first experimental group was given input in the form of videos, which they used to complete online lessons consisting of a series of pragmatics exercises. The online lessons were taught using an explicit-inductive instructional paradigm, as suggested by Glaser (2013). This means that students were encouraged to conduct their own research and come up with their own solutions before being given a set of pragmatics principles at the conclusion of the lessons. Omar's (2019) study found that this paradigm is effective for teaching pragmatics, even to beginners in JFL. The other experimental group was provided with transcripts to serve as a source of pragmatic information; they viewed screencaps from the same movie scenes and read the transcripts. Following intervention, it was hypothesised that the Video group would demonstrate more pragmatic awareness than the Transcript group.

MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

When choosing the type of video input, the most authentic would be unscripted, naturally occurring exchanges. However, collecting this volume of data was deemed impractical, which is why the researcher chose pre-produced movies. Despite being scripted, movies are still considered authentic materials. Rose (1994, p. 58) cautioned against using video in pragmatics training, stating that "(m)ost video is scripted, and thus is not authentic speech. However, this does not disqualify it from use in EFL settings, where it is most likely the closest learners will come to authentic language", with the advantage that videos offer rich input that can be replayed indefinitely, which works well with consciousness-raising tasks.

It is critical to remember that the target audience for movies is not language learners, but language users. For Japanese movies in particular, the primary audience is composed of native Japanese speakers who reside in Japan, which suits the purposes of language learners, particularly when it comes to modelling the language correctly.

However, the fact that movie dialogues are not naturally occurring conversations and occasionally deviate from what would be considered genuine dialogue must be considered. In this example, attention was taken to select movies that depict everyday Japanese life rather than those with fantastical or action-packed components. Selected scenes are ones in which the plot is self-evident and the characters' relationship is fairly clear. For clarity, several sequences had to be trimmed or cut-and-spliced.

The movies were chosen in accordance with the theme of contemporary Japanese daily life. This was done to expose participants to a variety of circumstances in which requests were utilised normally; hence, action movies, science fiction, fantasy, and historical movies were removed. Care was taken to include only movies produced within the last 15 years that met the criteria. Sixteen movies were ultimately selected for this purpose.

One of the researchers (the first author of this article) analysed each movie and compiled a list of the

various Japanese request terms. The most commonly recurring ones were chosen from the original list. For instance, the request coding of "desire," such as V-*tai* and *hoshii*, was omitted due to a dearth of examples in the selected movies. Finally, the collection was whittled down to 23 different request expressions.

Scenes from the movies containing the request expressions were extracted and video clips were created in accordance with Berk's (2009) four recommendations: the clip should be as brief as possible, the context should be "authentic, everyday language use," the actions should be directly related to the objectives, and the characters appearing in each clip should be limited to avoid confusing the learners. Each scene lasted no more than 25 seconds. The researcher ultimately collected 90 video segments, which were transcribed in order to produce two types of materials: videos and transcripts.

Due to copyright issues, the movie materials could not be made available on a public website. Therefore, the Google Forms application was used to deliver the online lessons to the participants. The videos were hosted on YouTube unlisted so that they cannot be accessed by outsiders, and subsequently embedded into the Google Forms. The transcripts were directly stored on Google Forms. Links to the online lessons were sent directly to the participants via email. This ensured that the movie materials could only be seen by the researcher and participants, thereby keeping them within an educational, and not public, setting.

The online lessons' consciousness-raising activities were developed from those mentioned in Glaser (2013), Ellis (1991) and Gu (2011). They were grouped into ten lessons based on the 90 movie scenes. Participants first examined requests as they are made by native Japanese speakers in Sections A-H, before consolidating their knowledge through the explicit explanation of pragmatic rules in Sections I and J.

The scenarios were divided across the lessons in accordance with the type of request expression and the lesson's content. Each lesson included two versions: one with input based on video tasks and another with input based on transcripts, both with the same basic questions, as shown in the following table.

Table 1: Online lesson sections

Stage	Section	Consciousness-raising Exercise
Movie-based Video Input or Movie-based Transcript Input	A	Identifying Expressions
	B	Conjugation
	C	Identifying Relationships
	D	Differentiating Giving Verbs
	E	Differentiating Receiving Verbs
	F	Predicting and Comparing Expressions
	G	Assessing Appropriacy
	H	Rationalisation
Reinforcement	I	Grammar Review
	J	Classification & Making Conclusions

RESULTS

Data analysis was carried out through a mixed methods approach. Quantitative measures were in the form of gain scores for pre- and post-tests in the form of multiple choice discourse completion tasks. SPSS

26 and 27 were used to analyse the findings. Qualitative measures consists of learning diary entries and retrospective interviews. NVivo 12 software was used to identify trends and sentiments in the compiled data. The diary entries were compared, and the interviews were transcribed using Otter.ai, a computer-assisted transcription service, then analysed for salient overarching themes to support and explicate the statistical findings.

The test results were analysed using SPSS 26 and 27 following guidance from Laerd Statistics (2015), (2017) and (2018). In line with Larson-Hall and Plonsky's (2015) recommendations, the descriptive statistics report includes the mean, standard deviation, confidence levels and effect size, and also statistical assumptions and relevant accommodations.

There were two versions of the pragmatics comprehension test, both based on the same framework. These two versions were created to control for the level of difficulty effect on the pre-test and post-test. Test A had a moderately acceptable level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .654, while Test B had a low level of .472. Neither alpha was markedly high, possibly due to the small number of items.

Group differences were investigated. A paired-samples t-test can be used to find out the difference in two-group experiments; however, with three-group experiments, there would be an unacceptably high risk of Type I errors when using multiple iterations of the different group combinations. Therefore, an ANCOVA is more appropriate, both because it allows the comparison of more than two groups, and because of its higher power (O'Connell, et al., 2017) and robustness when it comes to violations of normality (Laerd Statistics, 2018).

When used with randomised groups, and provided that statistical assumptions are satisfied (Gliner, Morgan, & Harmon, 2003), ANCOVA reduces error variance (Dimitrov & Rumrill Jr., 2003) as compared to one-way ANOVA and repeated measures ANOVA. In this study, ANCOVA was run using post-test scores, but unlike ANOVA where post-test scores and gain scores produce different results, using gain scores in ANCOVA would produce the same results (O'Connell, et al., 2017).

Therefore, after controlling for pre-test scores, which were used as the covariate, a two-way ANCOVA was conducted to examine the effects of test order and intervention type on post-test scores. There were 43 participants; 24 took Test A as the pre-test, followed by Test B as the post-test. The other 19 participants took the same tests in reverse order. This was done following DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996) to control for both comparison issues, and also pre-test and post-test practice effects.

There was a linear relationship between pre-test and post-test scores for each intervention group, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatter plot. There was homogeneity of regression slopes as determined by a comparison between the two-way ANCOVA model with and without interaction terms, $F(5, 31) = 1.443$, $p = .237$. There was homoscedasticity within groups, as assessed by visual inspection of the studentized residuals plotted against the predicted values for each group. There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variance ($p = .398$).

There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by no cases with studentized residuals greater than ± 3 standard deviations. Following inspection of the ordered leverage values, two cases were determined to have the large leverage value of 0.50. Cook's distance is .21, which is less than 1. Therefore, the high leverage values do not lead to high influence (the influence values for the aforementioned 0.50 cases are

.01). Studentized residuals were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p > .05$). However, ANCOVA is robust to normality violations, especially in small samples (Laerd Statistics, 2018) and the decision was made to proceed with the analysis.

There was no statistically significant interaction between test order and intervention type on post-test scores, whilst controlling for pre-test scores, $F(2, 36) = .857$, $p = .433$, partial $\eta2 = .045$. Therefore, an analysis of the main effects for test order and intervention type was performed.

Data are presented as mean ± standard deviation, and full marks are 9 points. Based on the estimated adjusted marginal means, post-test score was higher for participants who took Test A first, followed by Test B (6.18 ± .491), compared to the participants who took Test B first, followed by Test A (5.69 ± .687), although the results were very far from being statistically significant, $p = .570$. The results indicate that the order of the tests taken by the participants did not affect their post-test scores.

When it comes to intervention type, post-test scores were higher for experimental group participants (Transcript group: 6.84 ± .619; Video group: 6.39 ± .596) compared to Control group participants (4.58 ± .942).

However, there was no statistically significant main effect of intervention type on adjusted marginal mean post-test scores, $F(2, 36) = 2.029$, $p = .146$, partial $\eta2 = .101$. Post-hoc analysis was not performed considering the fairly large p value and small effect size, indicating that the variance in the post-test scores is not attributable to intervention type.

Although results are not statistically significant, i.e. not generalisable to the population, based on the experimental groups' means, the intervention was effective in the sample and shows promise. Online lessons had a positive effect on these JFL learners' comprehension of Japanese request expressions since there was a 40% increase in post-test score when using videos, and an almost 50% increase when using transcripts. Between the two experimental groups, movie-based transcripts were slightly more helpful in developing these learners' pragmatic awareness than movie-based videos: using transcripts resulted in a 7% increase.

DISCUSSION

Pragmatics for Beginners

How can movie-based online lessons on request expressions in Japanese be designed to make the tasks workable and helpful for low-proficiency learners? Developing a pragmatics training course for self-access online learning is challenging. When designing materials for beginners, cognitive load theory, or CLT (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011) should be taken into consideration. Processing of new information without overburdening the cognitive schema is central to CLT; the ease with which this happens is connected to the type of learning task, task presentation and amount of cognitive resources invested (van Merriënboer & Ayres, 2005).

When the learner's working memory cannot cope with the amount and complexity of learning content, cognitive overload happens. Mayer and Moreno (2003) demonstrated several different overload scenarios, and listed suggestions on how to overcome them. The first is when two different processing demands, text and animation, are presented to the learner, creating a split-attention effect. The solution would be to

offload, or reduce, the burden through providing narration instead of on-screen text, which is called the modality effect (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011).

The second problem is when the content of the lesson is "conceptually complex" (Mayer and Moreno, 2003, p. 47) and presented continuously; this can be overcome through segmenting, or dividing the materials into more easily-digestible chunks. Similarly, pre-training also works in this case, by providing simpler items first that will contribute to the understanding of the overall concept, followed by more difficult items. Lessons should also be focused; irrelevant material should be omitted to reduce cognitive overload. When this is not possible, perhaps due to readymade materials that cannot be edited, signalling can be used "by providing cues… about how to select and organize the material" (p. 48).

In short, by mediating lesson content and adjusting them to the learners' level, even complex materials such as pragmatics can be approachable for learners.

From the findings, it is clear that pragmatics awareness is achievable even for low-proficiency learners, and teachers should not delay the introduction of pragmatics until learners reach a higher level of proficiency. However, there is a need to carefully design the instructional materials to cater for any issues that beginners might face. For example, even though the use of authentic, though scripted, materials like movies as input is not out of reach for beginners, care must be taken to lower the cognitive load by using very short excerpts and allowing learners to pause and replay as they wish. By scaffolding content and using consciousness-raising tasks, pragmatics can be introduced to beginners.

The Materials Development section detailed the efforts the researcher made to make the movie-based materials easier for beginners in accordance with CLT. Yet even these attempts seemed to fall short, since the participants considered some of the videos to be a little too challenging. In this case, it would be helpful for the teacher to point out since the authentic materials simulates natural conversation, it is good training even for beginner-level learners to attune their listening skills to the fast pace of native speaker speech.

Also, since pragmatics can be a complex topic, comprehension and not production should be the initial goal. To this end, consciousness-raising tasks that help learners to notice the differences in the target language are vital in pragmatics training courses.

Presentation Mode

As to whether videos had a more significant effect in developing learners' pragmatic awareness, or comprehension, of Japanese request expressions, as compared to transcripts, the quantitative analysis reveals that both experimental groups improved compared to the Control group: the Video group by 40% and the Transcript group by almost 50%. The Transcript group (6.84 ± .619) performed only slightly better than the Video group (6.39 ± .596) in the post-test. This result was not statistically significant. However, the qualitative analysis also shows that Video group complained about the videos being too fast and indistinct, indicating that it was more challenging to watch videos compared to reading transcripts, even though in the end they performed almost similarly well in the post-test.

Based on the results, transcript-only materials seem to be sufficient, and would be a good form of input for low-tech instruction. In contrast, although videos add a fun factor to learning, their speed and inaudibility can create a cognitive burden. This can be mediated through learner control, segmenting and

activating schemata. Captioning, which combines transcripts and videos, might also help.

Between the two experimental groups, the Video group participants had more trouble when completing the tasks. The videos were hard to understand, not only because of the unfamiliar content, but because of the unclear enunciation and the speed of these authentic materials. For example, they found it hard to differentiate the similar sounds of words with and without the small *tsu*. In addition, they had to try to understand the videos without either Japanese or English subtitles, and with gaps in their comprehension due to lack of vocabulary.

The responses from the participants who had the lowest gain scores reinforce this analysis. The participant who had the lowest gain score, -4 (meaning his post-test score dropped 4 points compared to his pre-test score) initially expressed that expressions in Japanese "is easy to remember if we keep practicing", but later noted that the concepts were unclear.

Another participant lost 3 points. This participant was from the Video group, and claimed that "watching the videos can help me understand more easily and it is quite interesting." However, he still faced problems when the speakers spoke too fast, necessitating guessing of the answers on his part, which is similar to the experience of another Video group participant who dropped 2 points in the post-test.

The participants were also asked about their views regarding the video-based and transcript-based online lessons. Most thought that the best choice would be a combination of both, especially since their level was still low. They felt that the advantage of the videos was that they enabled them to see the relationship between the characters and how they spoke to each other, while the speed of the dialogues would be made up by the presence of the transcripts. The video clips were helpful to show the relationships between the interlocutors, but the transcripts would support comprehension of the high-speed conversations. Therefore, having both at the same time was ideal, especially for beginners. Another option was adding captions on the videos using both the Japanese transcripts and English subtitles.

However, if pushed to make a choice, some of the participants preferred videos because of the listening practice, models for speaking and pronunciation, and also to familiarise themselves with the Japanese language. One participant also described videos as "more challenging" in a positive sense. Some said they were more "visual" and therefore preferred videos, which helped them to memorise the expressions. In addition, unlike transcripts, videos are more likely to retain the viewers' attention even when they cannot understand what is being said. Besides that, because it is easier for the reader to zoom in on specific words in a written transcript, there is the possibility that they will not read through the whole thing, whereas with videos the viewer would have to watch it from start to finish in order to be able to find the answers. Also, facial expressions and other non-verbal cues were helpful to comprehension. The participants also found using videos effective, not just because they can replay the videos as many times as necessary, but also because the video speed could be slowed down to help them catch the words.

Other participants thought that this was still a drawback; even with repeated replays they still found some of the conversations unclear and hard to understand. They were of the opinion that transcripts were better, because videos were too difficult to understand without any subtitles. In addition, the fast pace of speaking in the Japanese movies of daily life were too much even for participants who were used to listening to anime voice actors; the lines in anime were said to be more easily comprehended. The added cognitive burden of trying to decipher what was being said, as well as the longer time taken, was considered by

some participants to make things much harder, compared to the transcripts where all the contents of the conversation was already written on the page. They felt that the videos went too fast for them to catch the conversations, and appreciated the fact that the transcript-based exercises had written text.

Previous studies have used transcripts, for example Chan (2017), which used conversational analysis-style transcripts based on authentic workplace data to teach business English (in contrast to the present study which used scripted materials from movies), but most other studies have made use of transcripts in conjunction with audio or video recordings. The question might arise: would transcript-only exercises be enough, without audio-visual media to supplement understanding?

The findings certainly seem to indicate that transcript-based materials are sufficient, and this bodes well for classrooms that face technological issues; instructors who do not have access to laptops and projectors, computers, and big-screen TVs, still can train their students' pragmatics awareness by going back to that basic skill: reading texts in the target language.

In fact, going by the participants' responses in this study, it would appear that video-based input is the cause of more frustration compared to transcript-based input. For example, many participants remarked on the speed and inaudibility of the conversations in the videos, and how hard the words were to catch. Although this frustration did not adversely affect their performance in the post-test, the participants made a valuable suggestion in saying that both text and visuals should be used in pragmatics instruction in the form of video clips combined with Japanese and English subtitles. Winke, Gass and Sydorenko (2010) studied subtitles, or captioning, on videos in several different language classes. They found that having captions helped the learners do better in vocabulary tests.

However, another study (Moussa-Inaty, Ayres, & Sweller, 2012) found that presentation modes can have different effects depending on the test. They conducted an experiment where learners were divided into three groups; each group received a different input: Read Only, Listen Only and Read + Listen. Although all three groups performed similarly well in a reading post-test, the Read + Listen combination-mode group did markedly worse in the listening post-test compared to the single-mode groups.

Sweller et al. (2011) point out that the use of videos in teaching, or what they call "instructional animations" (p. 222), is not always appropriate and often produces mixed results; extra care must be taken to mediate their use for learners. This can be done through providing learner control, segmenting the information into smaller chunks of shorter length, or activating prior knowledge schemata, all of which are working load-reducing methods that are also suggested by Mayer and Moreno (2003).

A group of researchers in Germany (Kramer, König, Strauß, & Kaspar, 2020) carried out a study on pre-service teachers' classroom management practices using videos, transcripts, and a combination of both as input. Interestingly, the two groups that received videos as input increased their pre-test scores, while the transcript group did not. Also, the combination group improved the most among the three groups.

Cárdenas-Claros and Campos-Ibaceta (2018) also employed transcripts together with videos; however, rather than examining the effectiveness, their study focused on how the learners made use of the transcripts in learning English. They discovered that "transcripts aided text comprehension, task completion, and the learning of key aspects of the foreign language (pronunciation, vocabulary, and reading comprehension)", and were "useful for recovering from breakdowns in comprehension due to lack of confidence, lack

of knowledge of the language, and technical issues experienced with the listening platform" (p. 160).

Another study (Homer, Plass, & Blake, 2008) examined the effects of video input on cognitive load. The researchers found that lecturers in video format, as compared to audio format, resulted in a greater cognitive load. However, a follow-up study revealed that this was actually related to learning style; visual learners actually experienced less cognitive load when watching videos, as compared to simply listening to lecturers.

An exploratory study was conducted with a small group of French language learners (Danan, 2016) to see whether videos with captions or transcripts were more effective. High-proficiency learners tended to lean towards transcripts, while beginners found captions more helpful. It should be noted that to control the amount of exposure to the input in both groups, the transcripts were provided only for the duration of the video. However, this was enough time for some of the learners to quickly preview the materials.

Mayer et al. (2014) found that videos supplement understanding, but caution that there is a risk to adding captions to videos from a CLT point of view. Although the aim may be to support the spoken words by putting them onscreen, the learners would have to divide their attention to both the video and the text, resulting in a higher cognitive load. In addition, when it comes to using captions in language learning, where the captions are in the target language, learners would find it even more challenging to process, resulting in redundancy.

Materials developers would have to attempt to balance between using high-CLT-load videos that pique learners' interest but are more challenging to beginners, and low-CLT-load transcripts that have the advantage of being low-tech, yet may be less engaging to learners.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to determine the effectiveness of video clips versus movie transcripts in Japanese pragmatics instruction. The findings shed light on how pragmatics might be made more relevant to learners who are not constantly exposed to the target language, such as those in the JFL context in Malaysia. Japanese language learners in other countries frequently have difficulties in obtaining access to native speakers and authentic materials. Even when students do watch Japanese movies, dramas, and anime, the absence of explicit pragmatics instruction in these real materials makes learning challenging. This study demonstrates that video-based online lessons may be able to compensate for the lack of exposure to everyday Japanese that other Japanese learners may encounter when studying abroad in Japan.

The quantitative analysis reveals that both experimental groups fared marginally better than the control group in the post-test following intervention, demonstrating the likely efficiency of training. However, this was not a significant difference in general, and the more critical component was having accompanying exercises, or consciousness-raising tasks, that drew the participants' attention to the desired pragmatic elements in the input. The demanding nature of the discovery process in the explicit-inductive approach also helped participants become more conscious of differences in the language.

Although the differences between groups were not statistically significant, indicating that the variation was not explained by intervention, a slightly higher mean in the Transcript group's results may imply an advantage over the Video group, which can be studied further in the future with a bigger sample size.

The Video group's performance was unexpected, given previous language learning research demonstrating the benefits of video materials in pragmatics instruction. However, this could be due to the fact that videos impose a greater cognitive load, interfering with working memory: both advantage and disadvantage were in conflict, resulting in less-than-stellar performance.

To summarise, online lessons are an effective way of increasing learners' pragmatic awareness of, or comprehension of, Japanese request expressions. When the same consciousness-raising activities are applied, movie-based input transcripts result in somewhat greater comprehension than videos, but are almost as effective overall. While videos can be difficult for beginners, they are also engaging, particularly for visual learners, and contribute to learners' motivation.

The findings indicate that the movie-based resources generated during the research period have the potential to assist learners in developing a greater awareness of pragmatics. However, the materials should be carefully crafted to reduce the input's inadequacies, such as the potential cognitive load associated with movies.

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