

‘THAT MOVIE WAS SO HILARIOUS *NE!*’
THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE INTERACTIONAL PARTICLES
NE, YO, AND YONE IN L2 CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

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By
Saori Hoshi

Dissertation Committee:

Dina R. Yoshimi, Chairperson
Andre Haag
Kazue Kanno
Yumiko Tateyama
Christina Higgins

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By

Saori Hoshi

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines the development of L2 interactional competence (Hall, 1999; He & Young, 1998) by JFL learners in an explicitly instructed setting as evidenced by their metapragmatic development and use of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in unscripted conversations with NSs and peer learners. More specifically, the study aims to investigate the role of pragmatics-focused instruction in the learners' ability to participate in a range of assessment activities (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992) using the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as resources to co-construct stance and achieve intersubjectivity (e.g., Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012; Kärkkäinen, 2006) between participants in an ongoing interaction.

To bridge the gap between the paucity of instructional treatment and the highly frequent use of the interactional particles in mundane Japanese conversation, an instructional approach that incorporated awareness-raising and conversational activities was proposed and implemented in a third semester JFL course for one semester. In order to examine the effects of instruction on the development of interactional competence as evidenced by the learners' use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation sessions, the study focuses on the following perspectives: 1) learners' metapragmatic understanding of the variability in particle function and in the meanings that the particles can index; 2) learners' use of the particles in ways that are consistent with what they were taught, and that potentially extend beyond their instructed learning in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation; and 3) the learners' demonstration of ability to deploy these particles as resources for joint stance taking in the conversations with NS partners and peer learners in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

Findings from the experimental group learners' performance from the pre- and post-tests provide evidence that they have demonstrated metalinguistic development of the discourse functions of the particles in the described discourse situations. The conversation data revealed that the learners' development of interactional competence is evidenced by their increasing ability to attend to, and design their own talk in a way for it to be understood and responded to by the recipient (Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016) through the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* for achieving joint construction of stance and intersubjectivity with their conversational partners. Moreover, the learners' greater understanding and use of the particles through the instruction facilitate the emergence of learners' agency, which provides the learners with an increased capacity to actively pick up linguistic affordances to develop their personal voice (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013) to interact more creatively and meaningfully with their conversational partners.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF EXCERPTS	xv
LIST OF TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	xvii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and rationale for the study	1
1.2 Japanese interactional particles in L1 and L2 contexts.....	5
1.3 Significance of the study.....	8
1.4 Organization of the dissertation	13
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1 Introduction.....	15
2.2 Theoretical framework.....	16
2.2.1 Interactional competence.....	16
2.2.2 Stance taking as joint activity.....	20
2.3 Literature review: Japanese interactional particles <i>ne, yo, and yone</i>	25
2.3.1 Discourse particles across languages	25
2.3.2 Functions and uses of Japanese interactional particles	27
2.3.3 Stance taking and Japanese interactional particles.....	30
2.3.4 Intersubjectivity and Japanese interactional particles	32
2.3.5 L1 and L2 acquisitional studies of Japanese interactional particles.....	35
CHAPTER 3: THE STUDY	40
3.1 Analytical framework	40
3.2 Background of the study and research questions.....	48
3.3 Instructional approach for the present study.....	52
3.4 Study design.....	53
3.5 Instructional treatment	56
3.6 Methodology	59
3.6.1 Data collection.....	59
3.6.2 Participants	60
3.6.3 Procedures for analysis.....	61

CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS' METAPRAGMATIC AWARENESS OF JAPANESE INTERACTIONAL PARTICLES <i>NE, YO, AND YONE</i>	64
4.1 Evaluating student metapragmatic awareness in the pre- and post-tests	66
4.1.1 Nonuse of a particle.....	68
4.1.2 <i>Ne</i>	68
4.1.3 <i>Yo</i>	70
4.1.4 <i>Yone</i>	71
4.2 Fill-in-the-blank questions	75
4.2.1 Quantitative analysis	77
4.2.2 Qualitative analysis	84
4.2.2.1 <i>Question</i> [a].....	84
4.2.2.2 <i>Question</i> [b]	86
4.2.3 Relationship between metapragmatic development and oral performance using the particles.....	90
4.3 Learners' self-evaluation of their ability to use particles.....	94
4.3.1 Comparison of self-evaluation of the ability to use all particles between two groups.....	95
4.3.2 Self-evaluation of the ability to use the individual particles	97
4.3.3 Relationship between self-evaluations of the ability to use the particles and oral performance	104
4.4 Discussion.....	107
CHAPTER 5: LEARNERS' EMERGENT USE OF <i>NE, YO, AND YONE</i> IN CONVERSATION SESSIONS WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS AND PEERS	118
5.1 Learners' particle use in the pre-instruction period	119
5.1.1 Particle use by the experimental group	120
5.1.1.1 <i>Minimal response turns</i>	121
5.1.1.2 <i>Absence of particle use</i>	123
5.1.1.3 <i>Ne-marked assessment in the follow-up turn</i>	129
5.1.1.4 <i>Ne-marked assessment in other positions</i>	132
5.1.2 Particle use by the control group.....	135
5.1.3 Summary	138
5.2 Learners' particle use in the post-instruction period.....	140
5.2.1 Particle use by the control group.....	141
5.2.2 Use of <i>ne</i> by the experimental group.....	149
5.2.2.1 <i>Assessment in the follow-up turn</i>	152
5.2.2.2 <i>Assessment in the initial turn</i>	160
5.2.2.3 <i>Extended ne-marked assessment</i>	167
5.2.3 Use of <i>yo</i> by the experimental group.....	171
5.2.3.1 <i>Yo-marked assessment as informing for others' interest</i>	174
5.2.3.2 <i>Yo in news telling</i>	182
5.2.3.3 <i>Yo in claiming epistemic asymmetry</i>	184
5.2.3.4 <i>Extended yo-marked assessment</i>	189
5.2.4 Use of <i>yone</i> by the experimental group.....	192

5.2.4.1	<i>Yone in confirming equivalent epistemic stance</i>	195
5.2.4.2	<i>Yone in making the same-degree evaluation</i>	201
5.2.5	Particle use in peer-peer interaction	205
5.3	Discussion.....	214
CHAPTER 6: DEVELOPMENT OF INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE		
BEYOND INSTRUCTION: LEARNERS' GROWTH IN PARTICLE		
USE IN CONVERSATION SESSIONS		
6.1	Extended usage of the particles.....	220
6.1.1	Uninstructed <i>ne</i>	225
6.1.1.1	<i>Ne for explicit display of understanding</i>	225
6.1.1.2	<i>Ne in response position</i>	231
6.1.2	Uninstructed <i>yo</i>	236
6.1.2.1	<i>Yo to provide a basis for a claim of epistemic primacy</i>	236
6.1.2.2	<i>Yo to pursue recipient's registration of talk</i>	238
6.2	Anomalous use of the particles	242
6.2.1	Anomalous <i>ne</i>	245
6.2.1.1	<i>Misuse of ne in place of yone</i>	247
6.2.1.2	<i>Overproduction of ne for newly shared information</i>	254
6.2.2	Impact of anomalous particle use on subsequent interaction.....	258
6.3	Discussion.....	263
6.3.1	Evidence of extended learning.....	263
6.3.2	Anomalous particle use	266
CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION		
7.1	Overview.....	271
7.2	Summary of the findings.....	272
7.2.1	Research question 1: Learners' metapragmatic development.....	274
7.2.2	Research question 2: Learners' instructed use of the particles	278
7.2.3	Research question 3: Learners' extended and anomalous usage of the particles	282
7.3	Implications for teaching	286
7.4	Limitations of the study and directions for future research	289
APPENDIX A:.....		
APPENDIX B:.....		
APPENDIX C:.....		
APPENDIX D:.....		
APPENDIX E:.....		
REFERENCES:		

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Assessment activities involving the deployment of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i>	46
Table 2.	Timeline for the instructions and conversation sessions for the experimental group	55
Table 3.	Timeline for the instructions and conversation sessions for the control group	55
Table 4.	Learner-friendly description of pragmatic functions and (non)uses of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> and <i>yone</i>	57
Table 5.	Students' Japanese learning experience and language exposure outside of class.....	60
Table 6.	Pre- and Post-test results of the fill-in-the-blank questions (experimental and control groups)	78
Table 7.	Number of experimental group students (N=14) who selected <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> as (in)correct forms in the fill-in-the-blank questions of the pre- and post-tests	81
Table 8.	Number of control group students (N=9) who selected <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> as (in)correct forms in the fill-in-the-blank questions of the pre- and post-tests	81
Table 9.	Learners' use of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> with NS partners (Session 2, experimental group).....	120
Table 10.	Learners' use of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> with NS partners (Session 2, control group).....	120
Table 11.	Use of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> in conversations with NS partners (Session 3, control group).....	142
Table 12.	Use of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> in conversations with NS partners (Session 4, control group).....	142
Table 13.	Learners' use of <i>ne</i> with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group).....	150
Table 14.	Learners' use of <i>ne</i> with NS partner (Session 4, experimental group)	151
Table 15.	Learners' use of <i>yo</i> with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group).....	173
Table 16.	Learners' use of <i>yo</i> with NS partners (Session 4, experimental group).....	174

Table 17. Learners' use of <i>yone</i> with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group).....	193
Table 18. Learners' use of <i>yone</i> with NS partners (Session 4, experimental group).....	194
Table 19. Anomalous use of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> , and <i>yone</i> by the experimental group in conversations with NS partners	244
Table 20. Anomalous use of <i>ne</i> by the individual experimental group students in conversations with NS partners	245
Table 21. Types of anomalous <i>ne</i> by the experimental group in conversations with NS partners	246

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Pre-test confidence levels between two groups (all particles)	96
Figure 2. Post-test confidence levels between two groups (all particles)	96
Figure 3. Pre-test confidence levels of the individual particles (experimental group)	98
Figure 4. Post-test confidence levels of the individual particles (experimental group)	98
Figure 5. Pre-test confidence levels of the individual particles (control group)	101
Figure 6. Post-test confidence levels of the individual particles (control group).....	101
Figure 7. Experimental group learners' use of <i>ne</i> in Session 3 (Post-1) period.....	221
Figure 8. Experimental group learners' use of <i>ne</i> in Session 4 (Post- 2) period.....	221
Figure 9. Experimental group learners' use of <i>yo</i> in Session 3 (Post-1) period.....	223
Figure 10. Experimental group learners' use of <i>yo</i> in Session 4 (Post-2) period.....	223
Figure 11. Frequency in the use of particles by the experimental group students (N=14) in conversation sessions with NS partners	243
Figure 12. Anomalous usage of particles by the experimental group students (N=14) in conversation sessions with NS partners	243

LIST OF EXCERPTS

Excerpt 1	23
Excerpt 2	41
Excerpt 3	43
Excerpt 4	122
Excerpt 5	123
Excerpt 6	125
Excerpt 7	129
Excerpt 8	133
Excerpt 9	136
Excerpt 10	144
Excerpt 11	146
Excerpt 12	153
Excerpt 13	157
Excerpt 14	161
Excerpt 15	164
Excerpt 16	167
Excerpt 17	175
Excerpt 18	176
Excerpt 19	179
Excerpt 20	182
Excerpt 21	185
Excerpt 22	187
Excerpt 23	190

Excerpt 24	195
Excerpt 25	198
Excerpt 26	201
Excerpt 27	205
Excerpt 28	208
Excerpt 29	211
Excerpt 30	226
Excerpt 31	228
Excerpt 32	232
Excerpt 33	233
Excerpt 34	236
Excerpt 35	239
Excerpt 36	248
Excerpt 37	251
Excerpt 38	254
Excerpt 39	258
Excerpt 40	261

LIST OF TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Transcription conventions

bold	portion highlighted for reader attention
CAPITAL	increased volume
ˊ	continuing intonation
ˋ	falling intonation
?	question intonation
ˆ	rising intonation
!	animated tone
(.)	brief pause
(0.0)	elapsed time in seconds
:	extension of the preceding vowel
=	latched utterances
-	cut-off speech
[]	overlapped utterances
‘ ’	quoted phrases
(())	comment by the transcriber
hah hah	laughter tokens

Abbreviations used in word-by-word glosses

AUX	auxiliary
COP	various forms of copula verb <i>be</i>
CP	conjunctive particle
IP	interactional particle
LK	linking nominal
LOC	locative marker
NEG	negative morpheme
NOM	nominalizer
O	object marker
PST	past tense
Q	question marker
QT	quotative marker
SUB	subject marker
TOP	topic marker

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

...the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

Ludwig Wittgenstein, 2003, p. 18

Meaning *happens* in and by means of an encounter with a painting, with a text, with a dance performance.

Maxine Greene, 2000, p. 139

1.1 Background and rationale for the study

When people converse, they draw on a wide range of interactional resources (i.e., prosodic, linguistic, sequential and nonverbal resources) to design their talk in such a way that it responds appropriately to other interlocutors' previous utterances and actions. What is more, competent use of these resources involves more than communicating referential information with other interlocutors; people need to know how to display various stances toward the conveyed message in relation to the addressee, including *affective stances* (feelings, moods, dispositions and attitudes), as well as *epistemic stances* (knowledge and certainty of propositions) about the ongoing interaction (Besnier, 1990; Ochs, 1996, 2000; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989), and these stances are not situated primarily within the minds of individual speakers, but rather emerge from dialogic interaction between interlocutors in particular sequential contexts (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Golato, 2012; Kärkkäinen, 2006; Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012; Morita, 2015). The perspective of these everyday capacities that people knowingly or unknowingly enact as social beings, or *interactional competence* (Hall, 1995; Hall, et al., 2011; He & Young, 1998), reflects a shift in view from talk as being the knowledge or the possession of an individual person to talk as locally situated and jointly constructed by all participants in discourse.

A growing body of studies focusing on the development of learner L2 interactional competence has documented how L2 learners jointly construct and accomplish the interactional work with co-participants through the use of linguistic and interactional resources over time. Such studies have, in particular, considered learners' changing participation in social interaction within and beyond classroom settings including study-abroad contexts (Sahlström, 2011; Dings, 2007, 2014; Hellerman, 2008; M. Ishida, 2006, 2009; Nguyen, 2012; Ohta, 2001; Shively, 2015; Taguchi, 2015; Yagi, 2007; Young & Miller, 2004). They have also considered the role of instruction in the development of interactional competence through pragmatics-focused and/or CA-informed approaches (e.g., Barraja-Rohan, 1997, 2011; Davies, 2004; Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006; Schauer, 2006; Tateyama, 2009). For example, Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm (2006) demonstrated that explicit instruction using CA-based authentic materials had a positive effect on learners' ability to anticipate, interpret and produce socio-pragmatically relevant conduct, i.e., common sequence structures for telephone openings in German.

While these previous interventional studies have contributed pedagogical models that demonstrate a) the relevance of CA to L2 teaching and b) the learner's raised awareness of and use of interactional resources to perform certain speech acts at the discourse level, little work has investigated how L2 learners can be instructed to develop their interactional competencies in the construction of affect, stance, and intersubjectivity with other interlocutors in open-ended conversational practices; in other words, how learners use a range of interactional resources to manage and display their affective and epistemic stances towards the co-participant's ongoing talk for the building of intersubjectivity and interpersonal relationships. Iwai (2010, 2013) and Ohta (1999,

2001) are among the few classroom-based studies that address the importance of the learners' development of interactional resources to express affect and accomplish an action of relating to others in ways that more closely reflect everyday Japanese conversation. Iwai (2013) reported on the effect of pragmatics-focused instruction on the JFL learners' developing use of a pragmatic resource *-n desu* to engage in small talk as a social activity to co-construct sociability, rapport, and identity in interaction with a native speaker of Japanese. Ohta (2001) examined how learners are socialized in communicative classrooms to become empathetic listeners in the expressions of acknowledgment and alignment towards their interlocutors' utterances using a Japanese interactional particle *ne*.

Applying L2 instruction to the development of interactional competence with a focus on Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, the present study examines the effect of instruction on learners' cultural and metapragmatic understandings of the functional and sociolinguistic variations of the particles, and their appropriate use in unscripted conversation with Japanese native speaker peers. Japanese interactional particles provide their wide range of discourse functions (e.g., informing, eliciting and displaying alignment, enhancing the position of tellership, etc.) co-constructed and achieved by participants in moment-to-moment interaction (Hayano, 2011; Morita, 2005, 2012ab, 2015; Tanaka, 2000). These particles are thus highly useful interactional resources because of the role they play in creating, negotiating, and constructing interpersonal relationships among interlocutors in Japanese communication.

Effective use of Japanese interactional particles entails the speaker's ability to attend to and interpret what was previously said, and contingently respond by expressing

alignment, seeking confirmation, or involving the co-participants in the assessment activity toward the entity referred to in an ongoing conversation. In addition, while every language has verbal and non-verbal resources to express stance, Japanese is characterized by its interactional particles as indexing both affective and epistemic stances that speakers of Japanese employ in interaction and they emerge as a result of joint activity between participants rather than a matter of the expression of internal psychological states of an individual speaker (Kärkkäinen, 2006; Morita, 2015). Therefore, the ability to use interactional particles appropriately as a resource for stance taking is what learners must develop as an aspect of interactional competence for successful communication in Japanese.

Although highly frequent use of interactional particles is observed among speakers of Japanese in colloquial utterances, the instruction of *how* the interactional particles are used in Japanese conversation is rather scarce. Furthermore, despite their ubiquitous appearances in textbook dialogs and sentence structures, the general description of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* presented in existing L2 materials often fails to represent their pragmatic functions and use. While the oversimplification of the contextual component of the language in pedagogical materials might make language easier to teach, the learners' language use will likely be incomplete and, in some cases, anomalous. In teaching the 'interactional' nature of the particles as linguistic, cultural, and interactional resources in Japanese communication, it is thus necessary to develop instructional materials that highlight how these particles are used among speakers of Japanese, how they emerge in and through interaction, and the ways in which a speaker's use of the particles and their

functional variants contribute to the achievement of intersubjectivity among participants engaging in Japanese conversation.

1.2 Japanese interactional particles in L1 and L2 contexts

In early sociolinguistic studies of the acquisition of Japanese, Clancy (1986) proposes that the basis of Japanese communicative style in Japanese is a set of cultural values that emphasize *omoiyari* ('empathy') over explicit verbal communication. Japanese conversation puts emphasis on mutual coordination and "seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship and recognizing that one's behavior is determined, contingent on, and to large extent organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others in the relationship" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 277). In the same vein, the Japanese anthropologist Lebra (2004) defines the Japanese as "a self as contingent on other, subject on object, the person as interpersonal, not as oppositionally autonomous" (p. 20). In other words, an ideal form of interaction in Japanese is not one in which the speakers express their wishes and needs and listeners understand and comply, but rather one in which each party anticipates the needs and wants of the other for establishing social bonds and rapport between participants of a conversation. As one of the most characteristic features of Japanese communicative style, the expression of affect, such as showing and soliciting empathy and feelings of sharedness among people, can also be realized through use of interactional particles by which individuals from under the age of 2 are socialized to display their affective and epistemic dispositions in interactional engagements with others (Clancy, 1985, Maynard, 2005). Ochs and Schieffelin (1989) define affect as an interactive, social phenomenon as part of human information processing and development; affect is not simply a kind of

information encoded in language; rather, it is “crucial to social referencing in which affective information is sought out and used to assess how one might construct a next interactional move” (p. 10).

While the acquisition of linguistic expression of affect in Japanese and other languages has received much attention in L1 research on language socialization (e.g., Clancy, 1999; Cook, 1990; Ochs, 1988; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Suzuki, 1999; Wierzbicka, 1992), little is known about how L2 instruction might help learners to express affect in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways, because the teaching of the social and cultural conventions of emotional expression is “often ignored or sidelined in the teaching of an additional language” (Swain, 2013, p. 205). For learners of Japanese as a second/foreign language, the acquisition of interactional particles is critical to successful communication of affective and epistemic stance in Japanese. Although the use of the particles is unproblematic for native speakers and learners who have access to similar linguistic resources in their L1, it has proved quite difficult to learn for most L2 learners of Japanese (e.g., Ohta, 1994; Masuda, 2009; Saigo, 2011; Sawyer, 1992). However, some research has shown that particles are not resistant to instruction and that learning in both classroom and study abroad contexts can benefit the learner’s developmental use of Japanese interactional particles: JFL learners’ development in acknowledgement and alignment sequences with the particle *ne* in teacher-student and peer-peer interactions (Ohta, 1999, 2001); JSL learners’ development of *ne* in semi-structured interviews between learner and NS (Sawyer, 1992); English-speaking learners’ use including some anomalous uses of the particle *ne* in conversations with native speakers during a 2-month summer program in Japan (Yoshimi, 1999); a

single JFL learner's use of *ne* in making assessment/alignments in a wider range of sequential contexts (M. Ishida, 2009); and the use of the particle *ne* by six JFL learners interacting with native speaker peers during a summer program abroad in Japan (Masuda, 2011).

Studies by M. Ishida (2009) and Masuda (2011) have both demonstrated the development of interactional competence by L2 learners in study-abroad contexts, evidenced by their increasing use of the particle *ne* to take a point of view or align with the stance expressed by an interlocutor. Interestingly, however, Masuda's study also revealed that despite ample input gained from instruction and peer interaction during his stay in Japan, one male learner showed incomplete understanding of sociolinguistic variation regarding the use of *ne*¹, saying that this particle sounds rather feminine, like the use of tag-questions in English and conflicts with the learner's own social identity. This leads to the question of whether it is sufficient to learn interactional competence simply by participating in extended interaction in the target language community.

Reviewing relevant literature on the effect of study abroad on the development of pragmatic competence, Kasper and Rose (2002) concluded that "spending time in the target community is not panacea, length of residence is not a reliable predictor, and the L2 classroom can be a productive social context" (p. 230). In other words, exposure to discursive practice in a second language community alone may not result in learners' full-fledged understanding of the complexity and variability in situated language use. Applying first-year JFL classroom interactions to the development of interactional competence, Ohta (1999, 2001) proposed a developmental sequence in alignment and

¹ The particle *ne* is commonly used in both male and female speech. However, sentence endings with *wa ne* and an adjectival noun such as *kirei* ('beautiful') followed by *ne* tend to sound more feminine to speakers of Japanese.

assessment expressions, especially those that make use of the affective particle *ne*. Her findings suggest that the L2 classroom provides learning opportunities in which learners are socialized into developing a variety of linguistic resources including the particle and others expressing affect (e.g., alignment, empathy) in linguistically and culturally organized ways.

1.3 Significance of the present study

Previous research has yielded empirical evidence that the development of the ability to use one interactional particle, *ne*, is enabled as a result of sufficient input in the right contexts (e.g., study abroad and classroom interactions with teachers and peers), but little has been documented regarding learners' developmental trajectory and ultimate attainment of interactional particles other than *ne* and whether these particles can be explicitly taught and appropriated for use by L2 classroom learners when they engage in face-to-face interaction with Japanese native speakers and peers. One exception is Kakegawa's (2009) study on the instructional effects on learners' increasing use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, *no* and *yone* via email correspondence with native speakers. However, Kakegawa's study is limited in that its focus is on the learners' particle use in email messages, i.e., a written discourse which does not require spontaneous production of language but allows for planning and editing. Therefore, more research is needed to address the role of instruction in the development of the ability to use these particles as interactional resources for stance taking in ongoing conversational practices. In this study, I examine the effect of instruction on a) learners' metapragmatic understanding of discourse functions of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* and b) how these particles are used by the learners as resources to co-construct affective and epistemic stance as they build

rapport and interpersonal relationships with interlocutors who are more competent conversationalists of Japanese.

The concept of interactional competence rests on an understanding that an individual's knowledge and employment of linguistic and interactional resources is contingent upon what other participants do in interactive practices (Hall, 1995; Young, 2011). In other words, it involves not only employment of those resources in an ongoing interaction but also the capacity to monitor the linguistic details of the co-participant's utterances and project context-sensitive actions based on both sequential and linguistic resources (Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016; Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011, 2015). Hall (1999) asserts that interactional competence in interactive practices is acquired through two pedagogical moments: "through guided participation with more expert participants, and through the conscious systematic study of them in which learners mindfully abstract, reflect upon and speculate upon the patterns of use" (p. 140).

Applying this insight to classroom language teaching, we could then pose the following question: If students tend to learn L2 forms bound up to a particular context, how can we teach the language in a way that equips them to transcend contexts and appropriate what they learned within and beyond the classroom? Just like competent users of the target language, learners also need to know the rules or patterns of language use not only in terms of sentence grammar but also in terms of *interactional grammar* (M. Ishida, 2006; Selting & Couper-Kuhlen, 2001), which constitutes language forms as what they do in interaction, not what they mean. Thus, an implementation of L2 instruction that incorporates teaching of interactional grammar including interactional particles that learners can use to 'do together with others' is critical to the development of interactional

competence, because the effective use of the particles entails the learner's ability to know which particle to use (or not to use) in order to develop a topic, interpret, evaluate or respond to the contents of other speakers' utterances, as well as the ability to know how a particular choice of a particle projects relevant next actions (Auer, 2005) in an ongoing interaction.

Instructional approaches to the development of the L2 ability to use the language in novel contexts have been addressed by Larsen-Freeman (2003), who calls for the need to teach grammar as an adaptive, emergent system. She stresses the importance of explicit instruction coupled with opportunities for learners to use their L2 resources in psychologically authentic activities, or what Segalowitz and Trofimovich (2012) refer to as "open-skill environments" as opposed to "closed-skill environments." They suggest that in closed-skill environments where minimal variation takes place, learning can be achieved by repeating an action as precisely as possible, whereas open-skill environments are much more demanding in that learners need to deal with interruptions and changes, and respond to them as they occur in real time (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2013). In the present study, participants are provided with opportunities for learning in both closed-skill and open-skill environments. In the former, the focus of instruction is on the development of learners' cultural and metapragmatic understanding recruited through explicit instruction. In contrast, the instruction in the latter conditions considers how linguistic affordances made available through interactions with native speaker peers may enable opportunities of learning as the enhanced ability to take up and appropriate these particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as interactional resources for affective and epistemic stance taking with other interlocutors in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. As van

Lier (2008) states, language learning is “the process of finding one’s way in the linguistic world – and taking an increasingly active role in developing one’s own constitutive role in it” (p. 177).

Over the last decade, a number of instructional methods and techniques have been proposed and implemented, and the instructional approach that employs explicit pragmatics-focused instruction with expanded opportunities for communicative practice has been shown to have beneficial effects on the transformation of learners’ interactional abilities (Felix-Brasdefer, 2006; House, 1996; K. Ishida, 2009ab; Iwai, 2010, 2013; Yoshimi, 2001, 2008). For example, Yoshimi (2001) found that explicit instruction of metapragmatic information combined with communicative practice and corrective feedback benefited the learners’ use of Japanese discourse markers in extended tellings. Other studies that adopted these components of explicit instruction include K. Ishida (2009ab) and Iwai (2010, 2013), which reported on the effectiveness of the instructional approach on the development of JFL learners’ pragmatic competence. K. Ishida showed that explicit instruction that uses awareness-raising and conversation sessions with Japanese native speakers contributed to the learners’ metapragmatic understanding of the plain and *desu/masu* polite forms as markers of affective stance and their expanded use of the forms in conversation. Thus, the previous research has provided empirical evidence that teaching of L2 pragmatics inclusive of the various components of explicit instruction (i.e., awareness-raising activity, conversation sessions where students use the language in an open-skilled environment) enables the learners to engage in real-time conversational contexts where they use the target L2 resources in ways that are more consistent with the everyday communicative practices of the target speech community.

The present study continues this line of research by investigating the effects of a) pragmatics-oriented instruction that incorporates metapragmatic information and b) conversation sessions with native speakers on the development of interactional competence with a focus on the use of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* among JFL learners enrolled in a third-semester Japanese class at an American university. More specifically, this study focuses on learner development of abilities to conceptualize and use the particles as linguistic, cultural, and interactional resources for participating competently in Japanese peer conversation. In addition, this study is based on the perspectives that *i*) understanding language learners requires moving beyond the lens of the native speaker of the target language (Kramersch, 1993; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013); and that *ii*) the teaching of pragmatics should be viewed as a process of raising students' awareness regarding language and culture as descriptive, diverse and individual rather than prescriptive, monolithic and collective (Kubota, 2003; Levy, 2007; Mori, 2009). In other words, stylistic variation can also be found among individual NS speakers, depending on the addressee, the formality of the situation, social class, gender, or identity they want to present to others (Eckert & Rickford, 2001; Macauley, 2002). Based on these perspectives, the goal of the present study is not to identify the extent to which the learners approximate some ideal native speakers of Japanese in the particular uses of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conversation, but to examine how the learners can demonstrate change in participation through their enhanced awareness of a wide range of stances that the particles can index, as well as their individual *choice* for adopting such L2 resources as their personal voice in such ways that are socially

acceptable and mutually recognizable to both the learners and the members of the target speech community.

In this study, I will examine the effectiveness of instructional intervention in the development of interactional competence as evidenced by the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* from the following points: 1) learners' metapragmatic understanding of variability in function and meaning that the particles can index; 2) learners' use of the particles in ways that are consistent with what they were taught, and that potentially extend beyond their instructed learning in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation; and 3) the learners' demonstration of ability to deploy these particles as linguistic and interactional resources for stance taking as joint engagement with native speaker and learner peers in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

1.4 Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides the reader with an overview of the theoretical framework and previous literature that has informed this study. Chapter 3 outlines the research design of this study. A description of the analytical framework and research questions is followed by the proposal for pragmatics-focused instruction and research methodology, including data collection procedures and the data analysis procedures employed in the study. Chapters 4 through 6 constitute the analytic chapters of the present study. Chapter 4 presents the quantitative and qualitative results of the pre- and post-tests in regard to the learners' metapragmatic understanding of discourse functions of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*. In Chapters 5 and 6, the analyses mainly focus on the learners' productive use of the particles in ways that are

consistent with what they were taught in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation, and that potentially extend beyond their instructed learning, including evidence of anomalous particle use. Chapter 7 concludes this dissertation with a summary of the relevant findings obtained, followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study and the implications for pedagogy and future research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I first provide an outline of *interactional competence* (Hall et al., 2011; He & Young, 1998), the primary theoretical construct of the present study. This construct is based on the notion that participating in spoken communication requires the knowledge of, and the ability to use, an array of interactional resources mutually employed and shared by all participants in context. Then I discuss other theories that have been instrumental in informing and shaping the construct of interactional competence, including a notion of stance taking as jointly constructed activity between participants in dialogic interaction (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Golato, 2012; Kärkkäinen, 2006; Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012), and explain how such activity can be achieved through the deployment of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in Japanese conversation.

Following the explanation of this work's stance, I review a number of studies that are relevant to the present study, including literature on various functions of the particles and stances to be indexed by them in L1 Japanese (e.g., Cook, 1990, 1992; Hayano, 2011; Izuhara, 2003; Kamio, 1990, 1994; Katagiri, 2007; Masuoka, 1991; Maynard, 1993; Morita, 2005, 2012ab, 2015; Saigo, 2011; Tanaka, 2000; Yoshimi, 1997) as well as L2 acquisitional studies that have provided a model for understanding the development of interactional competence through the use of a particle *ne* by JFL learners in the study-abroad and classroom contexts (e.g., M. Ishida, 2009; Masuda, 2011; Ohta, 2001; Sawyer, 1992; Yoshimi, 1999). Lastly, I discuss the empirical basis for the proposal for an

explicit instructional approach to developing L2 ability evidenced by the learners' competent use of particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* as interactional resources for participating in Japanese conversational practices, which serves as the primary pedagogical focus of the present study.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Interactional competence

The recognition of social interaction as the crucial site where the shaping of language (as well as cognition) occurs is an impetus in the shifting view of understanding of L2 learning from a mastery of discrete linguistic resources as static properties to language use, that is, an emergent state mutually constructed among participants (Block, 2003; Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007; Kasper, 1997, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2011, 2013; Pekarek Doehler, 2010). This constructivist view of interaction and competence has also been articulated by various researchers. In an early paper, Kramsch (1986) referred to it as *interactional competence*, arguing that the performance of L2 speakers should not simply be measured based on grammatical accuracy and that the focus needs to be shifted to interactional competence, the skills and knowledge that individuals employ to bring about successful interaction. A more recent formulation of the term was introduced by Jacoby and Ochs (1995), who define interactional competence as “the joint creation of a form, interpretation, stance, action, activity, identity, institution, skill, ideology, emotion, or other culturally meaningful reality” (p. 171).

Another perspective that advances the understanding of interactional competence is Hall's (1993, 1995) idea of “interactive practices.” Drawing on Hymes' (1972)

ethnography of speaking framework for her study of interactive practices in the language classroom, Hall (1995) proposes that interactive practices do not involve the individuals' spontaneous utterances free from social constraints, but are structured moments of face-to-face interaction "whereby individuals come together to create, articulate, and manage their collective histories via the use of sociohistorically defined and valued resources" (p. 207). Interactive practices are recurring episodes of talk that are of social and cultural significance to a community of speakers and interactional competence relies on the speaker's ability to use resources available through interactive practices (Young, 2011).

To identify different features of interactional competence, Young (2002) later elaborated Hall's framework by proposing at least six kinds of interactional resources participants bring to an interactive practice: 1) rhetorical scripts (i.e. knowledge of sequences of speech acts that are linked to a given type), 2) register (e.g., technical/expert vocabulary), 3) patterns of turn-taking, 4) topic management, 5) participation framework (i.e. novice-expert, speaker-hearer roles), and 6) boundary signaling devices. It has been pointed out that while these components are not in contrast with early models of Canale and Swain's (1980) communicative competence, the fundamental difference is that interactional competence views these components not as independent from each other and from social contexts, but as working in unison in a face-to-face interaction and shared among participants in interaction (Hall & Pekarek Doehler, 2011; Young, 2013). This makes reference to the reconceptualization of communicative competence made possible by SLA scholars including Celce-Murcia (2007) and He and Young (1998), who foreground the fact that all interaction (both verbal and nonverbal) is co-constructed; rather than viewing communicative competence as what an *individual* needs to know to

communicate, interactional competence accounts for how participants *jointly* construct meanings by drawing on a range of interactional resources to manage and sustain social interaction —“Interactional competence is not what a person *knows*, it is what a person *does* together with others” (Young, 2011, p. 430, italics in original). Hall and Pekarek Doehler (2011) conceptualize interaction as a goal-oriented and context-specific activity that draws on a range of participants’ interactional resources, both linguistic and non-linguistic, for the task of co-construction of meaning-making. The following is their definition of interactional competence:

IC [interactional competence] includes knowledge of social-context-specific communicative events or activity types, their typical goals and trajectories of actions by which the goals are realized and the conventional behaviors by which participants’ roles and role relationships are accomplished. Also included is the ability to deploy and to recognize context-specific patterns by which turns are taken, actions are organized, and practices are ordered. And it includes the prosodic, linguistic, sequential and nonverbal resources conventionally used for producing and interpreting turns and actions, to construct them so that they are recognizable for others, and to repair problems in maintaining shared understanding of the interactional work we and our interlocutors are accomplishing together (Hall & Pekarek Doehler, 2011, p. 1-2).

These definitions lead us to consider what interactional resources are needed to jointly construct various social actions, for instance, between buying a coffee at a café and taking part in a conversation after buying the coffee. Both endeavors require one to understand the specifics of interaction – goals, activity types, participants’ roles, and conventions of speech (Taguchi, 2015). At the same time, they entail, to a greater or lesser degree, the employment of a diverse range of interactional resources so that participants can align and adapt their actions to the unfolding discourse and engage in an ongoing process of trying to make sense of each other.

More recent CA-informed research on L2 interactional competence suggests that the development of interactional competence hinges on a *diversification* of the L2 speakers' techniques for the 'here-and-now' of the interaction (Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2015; Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016); it entails not only an ability to monitor the linguistic details of co-participants' prior turns, but also an increased capacity to recipient-design their talk as well as to use grammar as an interactional resource, i.e., as an on-going response to the pressure of discourse rather than a prerequisite of communication (Bybee, 2006; Bybee & Hopper, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2003, 2011; Ochs, Schegloff & Thompson, 1996). Hopper's (1987) proposal of grammar as *emergent* does not view grammar as:

a prior possession attributable in identical form to both speaker and hearer. Its forms are not fixed templates, but are negotiable in face to face interaction in ways that reflect the individual speakers' past experience of these forms, and their assessment of the present context, including especially their interlocutors, whose experiences and assessments may be quite different (p. 142).

Hopper's concept of emergent grammar in turn resonates with Hall and Pekarek Doehler's (2011) claim that interactional competence is socially grounded in that it is part of people's context-specific structures of expectations; yet these structures are not static but rather dynamic and malleable, and their meanings are situated in culturally organized communicative practices. Hence, from the perspective of interactional competence, the speaker's use of linguistic and interactional resources is motivated by the speaker's attention or orientation to the content of the preceding talk, and/or his or her projection of a new interactional opportunity space where utterances or actions continue to be received, negotiated and co-constructed by the participants in the ongoing flow of conversation.

The goal of the present study is to provide evidence that people's collaborative use of a range of interactional resources with their co-participants can be a pre-requisite for successful communication within and beyond the target speech community. Therefore, an increased capacity to negotiate and construct the use of such resources as Japanese interactional particles in social interaction is a crucial component for the development of L2 interactional competence, which enables the learners to participate competently in culturally framed communicative practices.

2.2.2 Stance taking as joint activity

In order to become a competent member of any community, one needs to know what linguistic and interactional resources to use to express one's point of view, or stance. Stance is often realized through the expression of a person's mood, attitude, feeling, or disposition (*affective stance*), as well as that of a person's knowledge and beliefs, such as degrees of certainty towards the truth of the propositional content (*epistemic stance*) in an ongoing interaction. Ochs (1996) claims that both epistemic and affective stances serve as "basic linguistic resources for constructing/realizing social acts and social identities" (p. 420). Du Bois (2007) extended Ochs' (1996, 2002) notion of stance and argued that very little is understood about stance in terms of how people construct it with others in dialogic interaction and its contribution to the consequences of the co-participants' actions.

In linguistics, the notion of stance has been treated as belonging to an essentially private domain of subjectivity originating within the psyche of the individual speaker, whose affect, attitudes and beliefs are present in grammatical and lexical markers he or she produces (Finegan, 1995; Langacker, 1985). In discourse-functional and linguistic

anthropological studies, however, subjectivity and affect have been demonstrated to influence a wider range of aspects of language structure and use than has been thought (e.g., Ochs, 1988; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1989; Iwasaki, 1993; Bybee & Hopper, 2001). Ochs and Schieffelin (1989) maintain that linguistic resources across languages for expressing affective and epistemic stances include, not only the lexicon, but grammatical and syntactic structures, as well as phonological and discourse features. In their view, vital to successful participation in every community is the ability to recognize and respond appropriately to a range of linguistic features such as affect keys (cf. Hymes, 1972; Gumperz, 1977) provided by others in given utterance sequences.

More recent studies in interactional linguistics have shown that stance taking is not an isolated mental activity of an individual speaker but rather emerges in the sequential organization of interaction between interlocutors (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Du Bois, 2007; Golato, 2012; Kärkkäinen, 2006; Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012; Wu, 2004). As Wu (2004) observes, this body of work does not primarily aim at identifying linguistic markers of stance, but instead approaches stance as “an emergent product which is shaped by, and itself shapes, the unfolding development of interaction” (p. 3). In other words, each act of stance taking operates not only within the turn of the current speaker but across interlocutors’ turns as well. Kärkkäinen (2006) addresses the necessary implications for this notion of stance for linguistic research: stance is something jointly oriented to by the co-participants and such a view allows us to observe linguistic patterns of stance taking that “go beyond specific, discrete grammatical or lexical devices analyzable in a single-speaker’s utterance” (p. 724). Within this perspective, Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012) further elaborate on the structure of stance taking as:

...an activity jointly oriented to by conversational co-participants, involving coordination beyond the current turn and even beyond adjacent turns. The implications extend still further, as one can claim that stance both derives from and has consequences for social actors, whose lives are impacted by the stances they and others take (p. 443).

Du Bois (2007) first addressed the need to explore theoretical and analytical resources to account for stance taking as joint activity between participants and as consequential for social action. Du Bois (2007) argues that the micro-level analysis of stance taking in sequential interaction; that is, no stance stands in isolation, but each stance is rather specific to, for example, “the participants it indexes, the objects it evaluates, and the dimensions of sociocultural values it invokes” (p.172). This perspective is also in tune with the concern of Ochs (1996), who argued how affective and epistemic stances encoded in a language help to negotiate and construct people’s social acts and social identities.

More recent research adopts the dialogic-sequential approach to stance taking from the perspectives of intersubjectivity. For example, Kärkkäinen (2006) argues for the essentially intersubjective nature of stance taking in assessments, opinions, or other types of evaluative turns, focusing on an epistemic stance marking (i.e., *I think*). She stresses that *I think*, or what appears to be a subjective dimension of language, is actually intersubjective; for intersubjectivity is a quality inherent to the sequential process of stance taking in which any particular linguistic resources employed by a single speaker emerge as a result of dialogic interaction that reflects “syntactic, semantic, and prosodic resonances between the contributions of different speakers” (Kärkkäinen, 2006, p. 724). This gives rise to what Du Bois (2007) refers to as “the shared stance object” (p. 159), which represents the basis for the achievement of intersubjectivity.

Another relevant area of research is that of Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012), Golato (2012), and Couper-Kuhlen (2012), which associates stance with the domains of affect and emotion as they arise in interaction. Focusing on stance taking in assessment and alignment activities (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Pomerantz, 1984), Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012) present a view of stance taking as “a triplex act” which participants 1) evaluate something, and 2) position themselves, and 3) align with co-participants in interaction (p.433). Du Bois and Kärkkäinen argue that, applied to the domain of emotion, the expression of affect is itself an act of taking a stance. As Du Bois (2007) puts it, affect entails participants making visible and/or hearable and thereby publicly available something which is inferred by others to be an affective stance. Relevant to this view, Couper-Kuhlen (2012) refers to Goodwin and Goodwin (2000) when describing affect as “lodged within specific sequential positions in interaction” (Goodwin & Goodwin, p. 243); that is, any affect displays are “*situated*, localized with reference to ongoing activities and specific to particular actions being accomplished at particular moments in time” (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012, p. 454). The following excerpt from Du Bois (2007) well demonstrates how the particular linguistic structure that indexes the speaker’s affective stance at line 4 (*I’m so glad*) develops across several earlier turns in the interaction:

Excerpt 1: [Du Bois, 2007, p. 154, modified]

- (Jeff is talking on the phone to Jill about her friend who is visiting her)
- 1 JEFF: Are you guys having fun?
 - 2 JILL: Y:es:.
 - 3 (0.6)
 - 4 JEFF: (TSK) I’m so glad.

Here the stance utterance *I'm so glad* emerges from something like *I'm so glad you guys are having fun*, in response to Jill's positive answer in (*Y:es:*) at line 2. Even if what Jeff is so glad about is left unarticulated within the stance utterance itself, it does not mean that the participants are not orienting to a stance object. Jeff's utterance at line 4 indicates that his affective evaluation (*so glad*) occurs as a result of this sequentially ordered interaction from which stance emerges in the first place.

A third kind of stance-indexing act is alignment. Alignment is a term that has been conceived of in various forms in research on interaction. Explicitly arguing from a sociocognitive perspective, Atkinson et al. (2007) define alignment as "the complex means by which human beings effect coordinated interaction, and maintain that interaction in dynamically adaptive ways" (p. 169). Tecedor (2016) argues that serving as an addition to the list of interactional resources, alignment refers to the ways in which interactants "demonstrate their active involvement by verbally indicating their understanding of their interlocutor's message and/or by taking a personal stance regarding that message" (p. 25). Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012) take it a step further arguing that alignment is a "subtly nuanced domain of social action" (p. 440); in other words, when two participants are engaging in interaction, they should be understood to be involved in the alignment process in which they converge or diverge to varying degrees (Du Bois, 2007). Alignment activity, in this sense, allows us to display and negotiate differential personal stances as essential resources for achieving intersubjectivity between participants in the interaction.

A growing body of SLA research using sociocultural and socio-interactionalist approaches has recognized that L2 learners can learn to use interactional resources

including alignment moves in collaborative interaction with other interlocutors (e.g., Cekaite, 2007; Dings, 2014; Ohta, 2001; Tecedor, 2016). Competent participation through another language, just as in one's first language, requires not only the ability to develop sociocultural understanding of linguistic resources (e.g., how to express affective and epistemic dispositions), but also the ability to use them appropriately for joint stance construction and achievement of intersubjectivity with other interlocutors. Ochs (2002) argues that in order to be counted as culturally competent, one cannot simply count on participating in communicative practices where rules and actions for participation are stable and fixed; one must also learn how to draw on a repertoire of linguistic resources to express particular stances, acts, activities and identities in "*the emergent, contingent interactional construction of social realities*" (p. 104, italics in original).

This concept of stance taking as emergent, joint activity is indeed useful in understanding ways in which L2 learners develop their language resources, especially from the perspective of interactional competence and its implications for pedagogical approaches, i.e., to develop this facility for effective communication in the target language. More specifically, the present study focuses on how L2 learners of Japanese benefit from pragmatics-focused instruction in their development of interactionally competent use of Japanese interactional particles for constructing stances that organize their intersubjectivity through interaction with NS partners and peer learners.

2.3 Literature review: Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*

2.3.1 Discourse particles across languages

Discourse particles are not unique to the Japanese language. With their versatile functions and highly ubiquitous use in spoken or colloquial written discourse,

interactional or discourse particles have been extensively discussed within and across languages, e.g., English *oh*, *y'know*, *I mean*, and *well* as items from the category of so-called 'discourse/pragmatic marker' (Aijmer, 2013; Fox-Tree & Schrock, 2002; Fraser, 1999; Heritage, 1984; Schiffrin, 1987); *ne*, *yo*, *zo*, *ze*, *sa*, *no*, and *yone* in Japanese (e.g., Cook, 1990, 1992; Hayano, 2011; Izuhara, 2003; Kamio, 1990; 1994; Katagiri, 2007; Lee, 2007; Masuoka, 1991; Maynard, 1993; Morita, 2005, 2012ab; Ogi, 2017; Saigo, 2011; Tanaka, 2000; Yoshimi, 1997); *kwun*, *ney*, *nikka*, and *tela* in Korean (Rhee, 2012; Strauss, 2005); *kato* in Finnish (Hakulinen & Seppänen, 1992); *ey* in the Shishan dialect of Southern China (Strauss & Xiang, 2009); and *la*, *wut*, and *meh* in Singapore English (Wong, 2004). These particles occur in a variety of interactional contexts and serve to display solidarity, emphasize epistemic and/or affective disparity, strengthen and mitigate the assertiveness of an utterance, and call attention to the newsworthiness of particular elements in just-produced utterances as well as pinpoint communicative discrepancies within prior discourse, among other functions.

Some discourse particles are non-referential in the sense that they do not contribute to referential meaning but provide information about the speaker, the addressee, or the speech context (Silverstein, 1976). In cases where particles have concrete meanings (e.g., Finnish *kato*, lit. 'to look' in Hakulinen & Seppänen, 1992, English discourse markers *y'know*, *I mean*, etc. in Schiffrin, 1987; Schourup, 1999), their original referential meanings are highly abstract in that they fulfill a broad range of contextual and interpersonal functions. Use of particles can convey conversational uptake or project a new utterance, and can also shift the context of an ongoing social interaction. Though not a unified group, particles across languages overlap in respect to

their discourse functions to index the speaker's stance towards the addressee or the referent assessed, interpersonal relationships among participants, and culture-specific modes of social interaction.

2.3.2 Functions and use of Japanese interactional particles

Japanese interactional particles, such as *ne*, *sa*, *yo*, *zo*, *no*, and *yone*, are noted for their versatile functions and highly ubiquitous use in spoken utterances as well as in colloquial style written forms. They are called non-referential indexes in the sense that they do not contribute to referential meaning but signal diverse social meanings (Cook, 1992; Silverstein, 1976), and Japanese spontaneous talk requires the use of these particles to accomplish certain discourse functions. For instance, the particle *ne* has been reported to be one of the most frequently occurring particles in Japanese conversation (Maynard, 1993; Suzuki, 1990). *Ne* is often translated as 'isn't it' or 'right?' in English but it is not associated with inarticulateness in speech, as is often the case with English discourse markers such as 'you know' (M. Ishida, 2006; Katagiri, 2007).

Numerous studies of Japanese interactional particles have been undertaken to identify their central meanings and functions, and have yet to provide a plausible, unified account for the functionality of the particles (cf. Morita, 2005; Ogi, 2017; Saigo, 2011). Earlier Japanese linguistic studies have considered the characteristics of the particles as indicating the speaker's discrete attitudinal, affective and/or epistemic stance; that is, they have been viewed as the linguistic resources that speakers deploy to display their subjective propositional attitudes to their interlocutors (Tokieda, 1951; Iwasaki, 1993). For example, *ne* is used when the speaker and the addressee share their knowledge of the information being conveyed, whereas *yo* is used to make the addressees pay attention to

the information that they do not share. This position is associated particularly with the work of Masuoka (1991), Masuoka and Takubo (1989), and Oso (1986). Cognitive interpretations of the particles suggest that *ne* marks preceding information that is more accessible to the hearer, while *yo* marks certain information that is more accessible to the speaker than to the hearer (Kamio, 1997; Maynard, 1997). While *ne* and *yo* have been extensively studied in the relevant research, *yone* remains little examined despite its highly frequent occurrence in Japanese conversation. Yet, some efforts have been made to examine the functions of *yone* (Izuhara, 1993, 2003; Ko, 2011; Saigo, 2011). In these studies, *yone* is used when the speaker wishes to confirm whether or not the addressee shares the speaker's understanding or recognition of the topic under discussion, or to elicit the addressee's involvement in the alignment with the speaker's cognitive stance (Izuhara, 2003). Compared to Miyazaki's (2000) proposal of *ne* which indicates the speaker's display or elicitation of 'on-the-spot' alignment with the addressee, the speaker using *yone* wishes to elicit the addressee's alignment or confirmation about the content that has presumably been known to both the speaker and the addressee (Ko, 2011; Saigo, 2011) or even about something that is not shared in recognition between interlocutors (McGloin & Xu, 2014).

In addition to the studies that have commonly viewed the particles as markers that indicate the speakers' attitudinal stances toward the propositional content of their utterances, some studies have focused more on the relational discourse functions between speaker and addressee that the particles encode. Yoshimi (1997) argues that both *ne* and *yo* index the speaker's affective position: *ne* indexes the speaker's shared affective stance with the addressee whereas *yo* marks the speaker's non-shared affective stance with the

addressee. Relevant claims are also found in Cook (1990, 1992) arguing that *ne* directly indexes ‘affective common ground’ and indirectly indexes various conversational functions that require the addressee’s cooperation.

Some researchers argue for a more interaction-based analysis to understand how participants’ use of particles is oriented to and invoked by the sequential development of naturally occurring conversation. With its close attention to participants’ turns at talk, conversation analysis (CA) has been employed to explicate the contingent use of the particles in naturally occurring Japanese conversation. Tanaka (2000) discusses the respective turn-taking operations of the particle *ne*, depending on its positioning and the immediate sequential context: e.g., summoning and attention-getting (turn-initial); competing for the floor (turn-internal); reconfirming an agreed point (turn-final). Furthermore, her analysis provides evidence that a turn-final *ne* is used when participants orient to the invitation or elicitation of a preferred response from the recipient in the next turn; however, the activities made relevant by turn-final *ne* encompass a wider order of (dis)affiliative action, which may entail the recipient’s agreement or disagreement with a comment made by the speaker in the immediate interactional contexts. Morita (2005) argues that the general function of an interactional particle in Japanese is to express a speaker’s interactional concern at the particular point in the talk where the particle is deployed, and to create an interactional opportunity space in which participants can indicate, negotiate, and/or pre-empt actual or potential contingency problems. Morita (2005, 2012a) presents a detailed CA-analysis of sequential development of turns to demonstrate how *ne* contextualizes participants’ display of alignment as a relevant concern in the developing course of ongoing interaction. According to Morita (2005), *ne*

does not inherently mark some cognitive notion of ‘shared information’; *ne* contributes to the interactional achievement of the interlocutors, that is, the situated meaning and function of the particle emerge through their joint action.

Taking the same approach, another study by Morita (2012b) attempts to find the core semantics of the particle *yo* and examines the sequential environment where *yo* is deployed. Her analysis reveals that unlike particle *ne*, *yo* attaches to the end of recognizably complete turn constructional units (TCUs). Because of its invariable appearance at the TCU position, *yo* marks that the current action or move needs to be interactionally “registered” for the recipient’s critical involvement in the ongoing development of talk-in-progress (Morita, 2012b, p. 1721). Morita further claims that the explicit marking of *yo* does not regard the relative amount of knowledge that a speaker possesses in relation to her interlocutor, but rather her own “free-standing interactional rights to tellership and assessment” (p. 1740). This is closely associated with the interpretation of what Hayano (2011) terms “epistemic primacy” (Raymond & Heritage, 2006, p.689). Hayano (2011) argues that in a *yo*-marked utterance, the speaker claims to be in a “one-up” position on the addressee in terms of knowledge about the referent (p. 60).

2.3.3 Stance taking and Japanese interactional particles

Evidence of the sequential effects of interactional particles in conversation has also led Morita (2015) to argue that the particles such as *ne* and *yo* serve as interactional resources for collaborative stance building between participants for the ongoing co-construction of the current talk; in other words, rather than stance being seen as being communicated through *a priori* stance markers that directly index the speaker’s

subjective propositional attitudes to their interlocutors (e.g., Iwasaki, 1993; Masuoka, 1991; Maynard, 1993; Tokieda, 1951), interactional particles are resources that participants employ to negotiate their respective stance in the context of real-time interaction. Morita (2015) describes,

Such particle use can and does end up yielding various situated epistemic and attitudinal ‘hearings’ which may be further connected to larger issues of affect and evidentiality, with which these particles often (but not always) are associated...such particular stance ‘meanings’ emerge by virtue of the placement of the IPs in a particular sequential position within an on-going activity first and foremost (p. 11).

Morita’s claim of stance building through the contingent use of interactional particles *ne* and *yo* lends support to the findings from Golato (2012) on a German response particle *oh*. Unlike English *oh* that marks both affective and epistemic changes of state, German *oh* expresses a change of affective state with *oh*, and a change of epistemic/cognitive state (e.g., upon receipt of news) with *ach*. By associating the expression of emotion with the concept of stance, Golato argues that the affective particle *oh* displays changes in affective self-positioning by prior informing: “This emotion is not reported on, but instead is portrayed as being experienced at the moment when the *oh* is uttered” (p. 253). In other words, the particle *oh* itself does not report or describe emotion, but with the production of *oh* in a particular sequential position, emotion (e.g., empathy) is presented as experienced at that moment or “the lived experience” (Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012, p. 436). Morita’s (2015) view of stance-building is consistent with other recent works on stance in interactional linguistics that have revealed that stance emerges as a result of each participant’s mutual positioning toward the ongoing activity, enacted by sequential positions and prosody, and linguistic and nonlinguistic resources

such as gestures, gaze, and body posture for moment-to-moment participation framework stance display (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Du Bois, 2007; Goodwin, 2007; Kärkkäinen, 2006; Wu, 2004).

The interaction-based approach to the study of stance has highlighted the view of emergent stance as an interactional product and has shown that any particular stance realized through resources such as interactional particles occurs through the real-time negotiation of the participation framework. In other words, a certain deployment of particles is *only* made possible by participants' display of understanding of such instances of particle use, and thus pragmatic and sequential phenomena should not be treated as discrete (Saigo, 2011). Studies undertaken within the framework of interactional linguistics reveal that Japanese interactional particles provide crucial resources that interlocutors can employ to explicitly display their orientation to the co-construction of stance and intersubjectivity in diverse interactional activities.

2.3.4 Intersubjectivity and Japanese interactional particles

Japanese linguistics has a long tradition of documenting a variety of subjective and intersubjective expressions that encode the speakers' voice and attitudes, and emotion toward the content of information and toward the other conversation participants (Iwasaki, 1993; Kuroda, 1973; Maynard, 1993, 2002; Onodera 2000; Shinzato, 2006, 2014; Watanabe, 1953). The concept of (inter)subjectivity is often associated with Benveniste (1971 [1958]), who maintains that subjectivity is the expression of "the attitude of the speaker with the statement he is making" (p. 299). While subjectivity involves a process whereby meanings become more deeply centered on the speaker, Traugott (2003) maintains that intersubjectivity involves the speaker/writers' attention to

the addressee/reader in a speech event. Some studies in traditional Japanese linguistics have contributed to our understanding of the process of subjectification to intersubjectification in the historical development of honorific systems and modality expressions (Kinsui, 2005; Takayama, 2002). This diachronic process from subjectification to intersubjectification matches the unidirectional order of the synchronic counterpart in the layered structure model of Japanese predicates (Shinzato, 2006; 2014); that is, meanings move from proposition, to subjectivity, and then to intersubjectivity. In Japanese, the intersubjective meanings tend to be expressed towards the utterance-initial and final positions, as exemplified by interactional particles (Hayashi, 1983; Minami, 1974; Noda, 1997; Onodera & Suzuki, 2007). For instance, the Japanese equivalent to *There will be a test tomorrow* can be expressed using an interactional particle *ne* as shown below: the propositional content is followed by *nda* (the plain form of *no desu*), expressing the speaker's judgment, and then the entire content is directed toward the addressee for alignment seeking, indexed by the particle *ne*.

[[[ashita wa tesuto ga aru]		nda]		ne]
proposition	>	subjectivity	>	intersubjectivity
<i>'There will be a test tomorrow'</i>		<i>judgement</i>		<i>toward the addressee</i>

The use of the interactional particles in the sequential order of conversation serves to associate the speaker's action with a preceding or new interactional opportunity by the co-participant (Morita, 2005). The use of the particle *ne* as shown in the above sentence suggests that the speaker does not just express his or her perspectives and attitudes about the propositional content but rather explicitly invites the addressee's alignment and/or the co-participants' joint evaluation of the topic in the ongoing speech event. Therefore, the

speaker's display of stance encoded in a certain lexical choice, i.e., through the deployment of a particle such as *ne*, emerges from an interactional practice engaged in by co-participants in conversation, rather than from the framing of an isolated thought or position of an individual speaker.

The relevance of intersubjectivity is thus explained from the view that certain meanings realized through language are not pre-constructed in the speaker's mind but they are interactively negotiated and achieved by participants (Heritage, 1984; Schegloff, 1992; Schiffrin, 1990). In regard to the achievement of intersubjectivity through the deployment of the particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* in interactional contexts, they commonly share the discourse-pragmatic function of representing the co-participants' move to involve each other in an interactional space wherein they can interpret, (re)negotiate and co-construct meanings for mutual display of understanding in an ongoing interaction. At the same time, their respective functions also differ in the extent to which the speaker involves the addressee in the sharing of his or her perceptions and evaluations of the propositional content in the interaction: *ne* is used when the speaker invites the addressee's affiliative response or alignment to the referent (Morita, 2005; Tanaka, 2000); *yo* is used when the speaker claims to be in a "one-up" position on the addressee in terms of epistemic authority over the referent (Hayano, 2011); and *yone* is used when the speaker solicits the addressee's affiliation by confirming whether or not the participants both share their epistemic stance about the referent (Hayano, 2011; Ko, 2011; Masuda, 2009). It should also be noted that the discursive distribution of the particles in communicative contexts suggests that participants do not necessarily deploy the same particle in the same linguistic environment and that one type of form could index more

than one type of pragmatic meaning depending on the participant's interactional move, his or her social relationship with the addressee(s), and immediate context of linguistic affordances surrounding the interlocutors. In this sense, interactional particles play a major role in the accomplishment of intersubjectivity in that they are among the most ubiquitous and powerful linguistic resources that speakers of Japanese rely on to jointly negotiate and construct stance, and accomplish intersubjective understandings between participants engaging in Japanese conversation.

2.3.5 L1 and L2 acquisitional studies of Japanese interactional particles

In contrast to the early acquisition of interactional particles by native Japanese-speaking children (cf. Clancy, 1985), the difficulty of acquiring *ne*, *yo* and *yone* by adult L2 learners of Japanese has been widely discussed in the literature (e.g., Goto, 1998; M. Ishida, 2009; Ko, 2011; Masuda, 2011; Saigo, 2011; Yoshimi, 1999). Clancy's (1985) extensive study of the L1 acquisition of Japanese reveals that *ne* and *yo* are among the first interactional particles to appear in children's speech at as early as 1.5-2 years old of age. Clancy proposes that these particles are acquired by children with ease because they are able early on to correlate emotional states with these particles. Jones (2007) reported on early development of interactional particles *ne* and *yo* in L2 children moving to Japan for one year. Her case study shows that all three children (aged 7, 5 and 3) began to produce the interactional particles *ne* and *yo* relatively early and used them quite naturally from the beginning. Jones concludes that the ease with which the children acquired interactional particles may be attributed to the high amount of authentic input that they received (e.g. school, friends) and their production of the particles in the immersion contexts.

While interactional particles are acquired by L1 learners and L2 children at a fairly early stage, L2 adult learners embark on a much lengthier process of acquiring the interactional particles. One of the reasons for the difficulties L2 learners encounter in using the particles appropriately stems from the fact that the language classroom environment cannot duplicate the conditions of L1 socialization (Clancy, 1985). Inappropriate use of the particles has often been found even in speech by advanced learners of Japanese (Goto, 1998; Nazikian, 2005, Shibahara, 2002). For example, Shibahara (2002) examines the developmental use of *ne* by intermediate and advanced L2 learners of Japanese in oral proficiency interviews during their 9-month stay in Japan. Her analysis found use of the ‘facilitative’ *ne*, which indexes a shared perspective and elicitation of agreement to be most common, whereas the ‘softening’ *ne*, which is used to impart information that has not been shared by the addressee, was often used inappropriately. Shibahara found that her subjects often used the ‘softening’ *ne* with the *desu/masu* forms unnaturally instead of a discourse marker *-n desu*, a more appropriate form to elicit the addressee’s alignment to unshared information. Nazikian (2005) points out that the incomplete acquisition of interactional particles among advanced L2 learners is attributed to lack of pragmatic instruction that explicitly teaches learners how to use the interactional particles because they have long been treated as peripheral grammar in L2 textbooks for all proficiency levels.

Within the framework for the development of interactional competence in the first-year Japanese language classroom, Ohta (2001) demonstrates that the students began to produce *soo desu ne* (‘That’s right’) or *ii desu ne* (‘That sounds good’) as listener responses. Ohta has proposed a developmental sequence in alignment expressions for

classroom interaction where learners first learn acknowledgment expressions such as *soo desu ka* ('Is that right?'), a response to a speaker telling new information, and later develop alignment and assessment expressions marked with *ne* to coordinate interaction with others. M. Ishida (2009) employed a CA-based approach to document a learner's development of interactional competence with respect to the use of *ne* during study abroad in Japan. The learner in her study began to use *ne* not only in turns where he had displayed agreement but also when presenting a contrastive view or pursuing agreeing responses to his opinion statements. Masuda (2009) reports on the use of interactional particles by Japanese college students compared to that of JFL learners in teacher-student interaction. She found that while the Japanese college students used a wide variety of particles such as *ne*, *yo*, *yone*, *kana*, and *kane* in conversation, the JFL learners performed predominantly with particle *ne*, using it to encode a variety of functions. Another study by Masuda (2011) examines interactional competence as reflected by the use of *ne* among JFL cohorts in Japan, demonstrating that the learners enhance the use of *ne* alignments in a progression that follows Ohta's (2001) developmental sequence for alignment expressions (i.e., moving from acknowledgement to assessment) in classroom interaction. Her data also identified the learners' misuse of *ne* in the initial week of the same study abroad program. This finding, according to Masuda, is consistent with Yoshimi's (1999) proposal that the anomalous use of *ne* stems from a difference between Japanese and English in terms of the epistemic constraints on the construction of sharedness in spoken discourse.

Furthermore, as observed in Masuda's study, the fact that one male learner fails to use *ne*, reporting that plain forms without any interactional particles sound more

masculine, suggests that learner subjectivity (Ishihara & Tarone, 2009; Kramsch, 1993; Kubota, 2003) also needs to be taken into account in the teaching of pragmatics.

Learners' deviation from pragmatic norms is not necessarily an indication of failure to acquire pragmatic competence but could be their *choice* to do so. As Jones and Ono (2005) suggest, learners should not be forced to conform to native speaker norms if they feel uncomfortable doing so. At the same time, a discourse-oriented approach to Japanese pedagogy serves an important role in helping learners understand how real-life interaction can be carried on among speakers of Japanese.

While previous research has yielded empirical evidence that learners can increase use of the particle *ne* in a variety of conversational contexts, there has been no study documenting learners' developmental trajectory and ultimate attainment of other particles such as *yo* and *yone* in the relevant contexts. Kakegawa (2009) reported on evidence of instructional effects on the development of learners' use of particles (*ne*, *yo*, *no* and *yone*) in email correspondences with native speakers; however, the transferability of particle use for written discourse to spoken discourse has not been studied. Mori (2009) points out that use of linguistic resources such as interactional particles in the local contingencies of talk has not yet been fully incorporated into studies of interaction involving L2 learners. Exceptions are M. Ishida (2009), Ohta (1999, 2001), and Masuda (2009, 2011). These studies, however, have focused predominantly on the development of *ne* as an aspect of interactional competence in the study-abroad and L2 classroom-based socialization contexts, and no study has so far investigated the effect of an explicit instructional approach on the development of L2 abilities evidenced by the use of

particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* as interactional resources for participating in Japanese conversational practices in linguistically and culturally organized ways.

The following chapter discusses the research design of this study. A description of the analytical framework and a presentation of the research questions are followed by the demonstration of the proposed instructional approach and research methodology, including data collection procedures and data analysis procedures employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3

THE STUDY

3.1 Analytical framework

Interactional competence accounts for how interactants manage and sustain communication by drawing on jointly enacted interactional resources in interactive practices (Hall, 1995). Interactional competence constitutes the ability to use a set of the conversational mechanisms (linguistic, interactional, paralinguistic, and nonlinguistic resources) that participants bring to and utilize in interaction, doing so in a way that is contingent on the other interactants' moves. In order to identify a learner's development of interactional competence as evidenced by the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as resources for stance taking co-constructed between participants, this study employs the notions of *activity* and *participation* as the frame of reference for analyzing language use situated in interaction and ways in which its deployment constitutes social action.

Hayashi (2014) notes that the notion of activity should be conceptualized as an emerging, dynamic process that is organized by co-participants on a moment-by-moment basis. Central to understanding how an activity is organized as an interactively-constituted phenomenon is the notion of participation (cf. Goffman, 1981; Goodwin, 1981; Goodwin, 1990; Phillips, 1972). In the case of an assessment activity, for example, it invokes a participation framework in which participants express their evaluations and judgments of some particular entities being referred to in an on-going talk (Goodwin, 1986; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, 1992). Additionally, an extended assessment is produced at an interactional place where interlocutors display heightened mutual orientation to the referent during the interaction and often occurs beyond the recipient's

alignment turn to the first speaker's assessment (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). To illustrate what this means, let us examine the following excerpt discussed by Goodwin and Goodwin (1992), in which an assessment used by the first speaker can invite the other interlocutor(s) to participate in a joint assessment activity, including displaying their affective and epistemic involvement in the assessable, the entity being assessed in the ongoing activity. Excerpt 2 from their data illustrates this phenomenon.

Excerpt 2 [Goodwin and Goodwin, 1992, p. 163]

Dianne: Jeff made an asparagus pie
It wɜ s :so [:goo:d]

Tasha: [I love it.

In this activity, the recipient (Tasha) is attending to the speaker's (Dianne) initial evaluation about the assessable (asparagus pie), accompanied by the intensifier *so* and a prosodic move. Dianne's assessment adjective *good* is overlapped with Tasha's initiation of positive assessment, which makes their understanding explicitly congruent, thereby displaying alignment. This sequence of the assessment activity indicates that a speaker's deployment of assessment is not necessarily limited to its placement in the recipient's response turn – it can also occur in the first pair part of an adjacency pair because it is “something that can be responded to, and participated in, in a certain way” (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, p.11); it invokes a participation framework that proposes displays of preferred or dispreferred responses (e.g., agreement or disagreement) to be relevant next actions by recipients (Pomerantz, 1984). Note here that Tasha's conduct, entailing the precision-timing initiation of her own assessment *I love it* towards the emerging course of Dianne's affective utterance, is shaped by her orientation to accomplishing a particular

kind of stance taking and participation, i.e., a display of strong agreement or alignment made relevant by the ongoing activity.

In the present study, owing to the focus on collaborative construction of stance, *activity a*) refers to the ways in which participants align themselves toward the topic-in-progress; and *b*) proposes a particular participation framework in which the participants draw on an array of interactional resources to produce what Hayashi (2014) refers to as “activity-relevant” actions, during the ongoing activity (p. 227). One category of activity analyzed in this study is assessment activity, in which participants deploy interactional resources to evaluate the content of the previous turn and express a personal stance regarding the content, or to initiate an assessment to invite the co-participant’s next interactional moves such as alignment and/or (dis)affiliative responses (Morita, 2005; Tanaka, 2000). More specifically, this study focuses on how learners of Japanese develop the ability to participate in a range of assessment activities fulfilled by the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as a resource to co-construct stance (e.g., affective and epistemic) and achieve intersubjectivity between participants in an ongoing interaction.

Learners’ development of interactional resources in activity-relevant participation has been reported in a growing number of L2 studies (Dings, 2014; Masuda, 2011; Ohta, 2001; Tecedor, 2016). These studies contribute to our understanding of how L2 learners demonstrated changes in the use of linguistic and interactional resources for alignment moves as the evidence of emerging L2 interactional competence. For example, Dings (2014) examined an L2 Spanish learner’s changes in participation in alignment activity, especially focusing on alignment moves including assessments, collaborative

contributions, and collaborative completions as indexes of mutual understanding. Her analysis of the learner's development of alignment moves over the course of the year abroad revealed changes in participation that afforded the learner a more active role in the co-construction of stance and intersubjectivity between conversational co-participants. Focusing on the development of alignment expressions marked with Japanese interactional particle *ne* in an L2 classroom context, Ohta (2001) focused on two interactional moves: acknowledgments and assessments. Acknowledgments indicate that the participant has received the message and is ready to continue, whereas assessments require the expression of one's stance in the activity-relevant contexts. One's ability to construct an appropriate stance with other interlocutors plays an important role in the development of L2 interactional competence because its successful projection requires the participant's close monitoring of what was said in the preceding turn and invokes a particular participation framework in which the participants organize their contribution to the ongoing interaction. To illustrate the learners' increasing participation through the deployment of interactional particle *ne* in the assessment activity, let us turn to the following segment of the excerpt from Ohta (2001), in which the *ne*-marked assessment produced by a learner of Japanese emerged as her display of affective stance towards what her peer partner said in the previous turn.

Excerpt 3 [Ohta, 2001, p. 217-218, modified]

- 09 H: *Sara-san wa?*
'How about you, Sara?'
- 10 Sr: Hmm?
- 11 H: *Sara-san wa?*
'How about you, Sara?'

- 12 Sr: *Eeehh* (.) *Konshu wa:: mm:: isogashikatta desu* (.)
 °*isogashikatta desu.*° (2) *Takusan arubaito o shimashita.* (4) *H-san wa?*
 ‘U::m this week was m:: busy °it was busy°
 I worked a lot. How about you, H-san?’
- 13 H: *Shiken to:: repooto ga takusan arimashita kara* (.) *isogashikatta desu.*
 ‘I had lots of exams and papers so it was busy.’
- 14 Sr: *Taihen desu ne.* (.) ((laugh))
 ‘That’s tough.’
- 15 H: *Soo desu.*
 ‘Yes, it is.’

This segment illustrates a peer-peer interaction in which the students are reflecting on their schedule from the previous week and one of the learners, Sara, uses *taihen* (‘tough’) as her assessment and marks it with the particle *ne* to display her affective stance towards the utterance produced by her partner in the preceding turn (line 14). What should be noted about this segment is that Sara’s display of alignment *ne* in the follow-up assessment *taihen desu ne* (‘That’s tough’) was facilitated by her understanding of the content of her partner’s previous turn, thereby emerging as a result of joint construction of stance in an assessment activity in which Sara adopted an evaluative stance (aligned assessment) in response to her partner’s mentions of busy days at school.

The few studies focusing on the development of alignment expressions by JFL learners in study-abroad contexts (M. Ishida, 2006, 2009; Masuda, 2009, 2011) demonstrate that learners deploy the particle *ne* in assessment functions beyond the follow-up turn but were still demonstrably limited in their use of other interactional particles for participating in a variety of discourse activities. The learners’ performance with a limited set of interactional resources in the activity-relevant contexts suggests that repeated engagement in interactive practices of the target speech community alone may

not necessarily result in desirable outcomes regarding the learners' ability to develop a wider range of interactional resources necessary to participate in the community's communicative practices. Although these studies have documented the learner development of *ne* through socialization with a more competent member of the community (i.e., a native speaker), additional research is needed to investigate the role of L2 instruction in learners' ability to use other interactional particles than *ne* (e.g., *yo* and *yone*) for participating competently in interactive practices established in the target speech community. In the present study, I examine the effects of pragmatics-focused instruction on the learners' changes in participation in a particular interactive practice, i.e., an assessment activity, through the use of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*. Examining how speakers are involved in an assessment activity in Japanese is a particularly informative opportunity to observe their use of interactional particles, since an assessment activity is one of the most salient places where participants display mutual orientations to the deployment of particles for constructing various stances toward the achievement of communicative goals. Table 1 below summarizes examples of activity-relevant participation that involves use of the particles introduced in the pragmatics-focused instruction, namely, assessment activities in which *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* can be deployed as a resource for participants' joint construction of stance in the activity-relevant participation.

Table 1. Assessment activities involving the deployment of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*

Assessment activity
<p>(1) <i>Ne</i> indicates that the recipient's alignment or agreement to the current assessment is relevant next</p> <p>a. first assessment <i>ne</i> marks the current assessment as alignable to the recipient A: sore, pittari da <i>ne</i>. <i>It really suits you.</i></p> <p>b. follow-up assessment <i>ne</i> marks alignment stance motivated by the content of the previous turn A: shuumatsu nanika yotei aru? Any plans this weekend? B: shukudai to baito ga atte... <i>I have homework and job to do...</i> A: ee, taihen da <i>ne</i>. <i>Oh, that sucks.</i></p>
<p>(2) <i>Yo</i> indicates that participants have incongruent epistemic views about the referent</p> <p>a. <i>yo</i>-marked assessment/informing-giving for benefiting others' knowledge A: soo ieba, Hobitto doo datta? <i>By the way, how was 'Hobbit'?</i> B: Hobitto? aa, omoshirokatta <i>yo!</i> <i>'Hobbit'?</i> <i>Yeah, it was good!</i> (sharing B's viewpoint for A's new understanding of the movie)</p> <p>b. <i>yo</i> in claiming epistemic asymmetry/telling for a shift of awareness A: aaa, ato san shuukan de fuyuyasumi da yone? <i>We've got 3 weeks left to winter break, don't we?</i> B: e? ato ikkagetsu aru <i>yo!</i> <i>What? We've got one month left!</i> (giving a new perspective to bring shifts to A's awareness/perception)</p> <p>c. Informing <i>yo</i> in telling and reporting A: shuumatsu, doo datta? <i>How was your weekend?</i> B: maa maa datta kana. a, soo da, Honolulu fesutibaru ni itte kita <i>yo</i>. <i>Not bad, I guess. Oh, I went to Honolulu Festival.</i> A: hee, hanabi mita? <i>Oh, did you watch some fireworks?</i> B: mita, mita. shuumatsu nani shiteta? baito? <i>Yeah, I did. What did you do this weekend? Work?</i> A: soo, baito. choo isogashikatta <i>yo!</i> <i>Yeah, work. It was super busy!</i> (informing something to bring the addressee's attention to what's being said for the progressivity of talk)</p>
<p>(3) <i>Yone</i> claims equivalent knowledge between participants</p> <p>a. <i>yone</i> in framing of question or confirmation indicates that participants negotiate their shared epistemic views about the referent for mutual agreement A: aaa, ato san shuukan de fuyuyasumi da <i>yone?</i> <i>We've got 3 weeks left to winter break, don't we?</i> B: e? ato ikkagetsu da <i>yo!</i> <i>What? We've got one month left!</i></p>

- b. *yone* in the same-degree evaluation
mutually evaluates the referent that participants have equivalent epistemic access to
A: kono aida no tesuto dou datta? *How was the exam the other day?*
B: waa, kikanai de:!! *Ahh, don't ask me about it!*
A: hontou ni muzukashikatta *yone!* *It was so hard!*

In assessment sequences, the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* are not necessarily limited to their placement in the recipient's response turn and also occur in the first, second, and extended assessments. Participants' display of stance marked with *ne* in an assessment establishes a context in which the recipient's alignment is relevant next (Morita, 2005). The marking of *yo* in an assessment indicates the incongruence of epistemic stances between participants (Hayano, 2011); in other words, through the deployment of *yo*, the speaker claims epistemic primacy on the addressee in terms of knowledge about, first-hand experience with, or epistemic access to the referent that they present in an assessment. Another recurrent feature of assessment sequences is the use of *yone*, a particle that the participants employ to negotiate their congruent epistemic views about the referent, or mutually evaluate the referent that they have equivalent access to. Recognition of how these particles are appropriated by L2 learners as interactional resources for joint stance taking in interactive practices is quite useful for the present investigation of the development of interactional competence. With this in mind, the present study examines how learners who received pragmatics-focused instruction can enhance participation in an increasing range of assessment activities through the deployment of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, within which utterances are recipient-designed, negotiated, and co-constructed for stance taking and the achievement of intersubjectivity between participants engaged in conversation.

3.2 Background of the study and research questions

This study examines the effects of an instructional approach to the development of interactional competence as evidenced by the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as interactional resources necessary to participate in interactive practices with a focus on a range of assessment activities in Japanese. The construct of L2 interactional competence posits that learners develop the ability to employ a repertoire of linguistic and interactional resources to jointly construct meanings with other interlocutors in an ongoing interaction. However, within the field of SLA, there has been some debate over whether L2 classroom constitutes a target speech community. Seedhouse (1996) argued that classroom language can be characterized as a type of institutional discourse, where the learners produce the linguistic forms and patterns of interaction for the pedagogical purposes that the teacher introduces. In teacher-fronted classroom contexts, there is often a rigid distribution of roles where one speaker (i.e., the instructor) initiates turns and controls for how long the topic lasts, featuring the IRF (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1985), and such a routine provides little opportunity for learners to develop L2 resources that are needed to carry out authentic communication outside of an L2 classroom (Bannick, 2002; Hall, et al., 2011; Seedhouse 1996; Tecedor, 2016). While the current research views changes in the learners' development of linguistic and interactional resources related to alignment moves as a form of emerging interactional competence (e.g., Dings, 2014; Galaczi, 2014; M. Ishida, 2009; Iwai, 2013; Masuda, 2011; Ohta, 2001; Shively, 2015; Taguchi, 2015; Tecedor, 2016), a review of previous relevant studies suggests that only a few investigations (Iwai, 2013; Ohta, 1999, 2001; Tecedor, 2016) have examined how learners develop the expression of alignment in ways

that move beyond the conventional sequences of classroom discourse in L2 instructional settings.

At a theoretical level, Hall (1999) asserts that the development of interactional competence requires explicit explanations regarding the use of interactional resources in interactive practices as well as recurrent, guided participation in such practices with more capable peers. Larsen-Freeman (2011) also maintains that explicit instruction is essential to direct L2 learners' attention to the use of their language resources, afforded by opportunities for the learners to use them in psychologically authentic activities. Along this line of research inquiry, the present study explores the role of explicit instruction combined with conversational opportunities with more capable peers (native speakers) in the development of interactional competence focusing on the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in a particular interactive practice, namely, assessment activity. In order for students to become interactionally competent in an assessment activity, they need to have the knowledge of *what* interactional resources to use to jointly display and negotiate stances with other interlocutors, and *how* to use those resources for the achievement of shared understanding in the participation framework such activities invoke. Furthermore, following a number of interventional pragmatics studies that have shown how explicit instruction incorporating different components such as awareness-raising, conversation practice, and feedback is necessary for learners to develop their L2 pragmatic features (e.g., House, 1996; K. Ishida, 2009ab; Iwai, 2010, 2013; Kasper & Rose 2002; Narita, 2012; Pearson, 2001; Tateyama, 2009; Yoshimi, 2001), the present study examines whether pragmatics-focused instruction combined with awareness-raising and conversation practice affects JFL learners' ability to develop understanding and use of

these forms as interactional resources for participating competently in Japanese conversation.

With regard to the role of awareness-raising in the acquisition of pragmatics, Kasper and Schmidt (1996) assert that pragmatic development requires a pedagogy which focuses learner attention on the co-occurring features of context and relevant linguistic resources. The rationale for the implementation of pragmatics-oriented instruction is provided by Schmidt's (1993, 1995) noticing hypothesis positing that L2 learners must be guided to first become aware of some pragmatic features in the input before any subsequent processing or intake of that noticed form can take place. By the same token, Willis and Willis (1996) state, "We can provide learners with guidelines and, more importantly, we can provide them with activities which encourage them to think about samples of language and to draw their own conclusions about how the language works" (p. 2).

In his study of the role of awareness in L2 development, Leow (2000) observed that learners who were aware of target grammatical features significantly increased their ability to recognize and produce the target forms in L2 Spanish, whereas learners who were unaware of those features did not. In the present study, learners' awareness, is considered to have been raised if they are able to demonstrate *metapragmatic awareness* of what different stances the use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* indexes, as well as how these resources can be used in ways that are mutually recognizable to learners and members of the target speech community. However, it is not the goal of the present study to simply identify whether the learners memorized what they were taught in terms of the particles and their functions; rather, this study aims to examine how the instructed

learners are able to develop their capacity to reflect on these specific features of the target language and show a deeper appreciation for *what* and *how* interactional particles are used as effective L2 resources for preferred communicative practices in Japanese.

In order to investigate the effects of instruction on the students' learning and subsequent use of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, this study focuses on 1) learners' cultural and metapragmatic awareness of the discourse-pragmatic functions and uses of the particles, and 2) their ability to appropriate their learning of the particles to employ as interactional resources for joint stance taking and achieving the communicative goals of assessment activity during open-ended conversations with Japanese native speakers and peer learners. The learners' awareness of the particles is operationalized as their ability to articulate the discourse-pragmatic functions of each particle used in the assessment sequences of short dialogs in pre- and post- tests including DCTs. The learners' development of interactional competence as demonstrated by the deployment of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* is operationalized in two ways as a) the use of the particles in face-to-face conversations in ways that are consistent with what the learners were taught in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation (See Table 1 for details); and b) the use of the particles in ways that do not reflect what they learned in the target instruction, specifically in terms of the learners' extended use of particles as interactive resources that may be recruited to meet the communicative demands of spontaneous conversations with their conversational partners in the conversation sessions.

Considering the goals presented above, I will address the following research questions:

1. How does pragmatics-focused instruction of interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* affect learners' ability to demonstrate their cultural and metapragmatic awareness of the discourse-pragmatic functions of the particles?
2. How does pragmatics-focused instruction combined with open-ended conversational opportunities with Japanese native peers impact the learners' development of interactional competence as evidenced by the ability to use the particles in ways that were instructed in the classroom in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation?
3. What evidence is there that learners are using the particles in ways that go beyond the instructional treatment, specifically that reflect appropriation of the particles as interactional resources to manage the communicative demands of the conversation in which they participate?

3.3 Instructional approach for the present study

The design of the instructional approach for the present study is informed by previous interventional pragmatics studies that address the effectiveness of different components incorporated into explicit instruction for learners' pragmatic development (e.g., House, 1996; K. Ishida, 2009ab; Iwai, 2010, 2013; Koike & Pearson, 2005; Tateyama, 2001, 2009; Yoshimi, 2001b) as well as the development of instructional approaches that enhance learners' sociolinguistic understanding of variable L2 features beyond their definitions presented in L2 textbooks (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997; Liddicoat, 2006; van Compernelle, 2009; van Compernelle & Williams, 2012). Reviews of the instructional treatment of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in existing L2 textbooks for the present study identified a lack of an explicit account for various discourse-pragmatic functions and use of these particles in terms of 1) overgeneralized presentation of how *ne* and *yo* are used, 2) no descriptions of the functions of *yone*; and 3) no explanations of how speakers can pragmatically use these forms as a resource for display of stance co-constructed between speakers in interaction. (See Appendix A for detailed review.) Understanding these as

factors that are most likely to limit learners' understanding of various stances that the particles can index and their individual choice for using or not using the particles, the pragmatics-focused instruction of the present study was developed such that it allowed the learners to practice the target pragmatic features as interactional resources that could be employed for stance taking and achieving activity-relevant participation, e.g., assessment activity, rather than as an array of discrete grammatical structures (Iwai, 2010). With this pedagogical framework, I designed a pragmatics-focused instructional approach, inclusive of awareness-raising and conversation practice components, which aims at developing 1) learners' metapragmatic understanding of variability in function and use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, and 2) learners' productive ability to use these particles as interactional resources for constructing stance, activity and intersubjectivity in unscripted conversations with Japanese native speakers and peer learners.

3.4 Study design

The study was conducted over the course of one semester for two intact third-semester Japanese classes that meet four days a week. One class, the experimental group of 14 students, received pragmatics-focused instruction on the interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* in addition to the institutionally mandated syllabus over the semester. The other class, the control group of 9 students, followed a regular curriculum, with no explicit instruction on *ne*, *yo* and *yone* throughout the semester. During the semester, there were four conversation sessions to which five Japanese native speaker students were invited for each of the two student-group classrooms respectively. The visiting engaged in unscripted conversations with the students of the experimental and control groups. The entire class hour (50 minutes) was allotted for each of the conversation

classroom peers for 12 to 14 minutes each. Each student was assigned to interact with the same NS partner and with one or two peers throughout all four sessions. The reason for assigning the same NS-learner pairs throughout the study is based on the assumption that use of the interactional particles is more likely to emerge as the participants develop closer interpersonal relationships during a conversation (Morita, 2005). The first two sessions (Session 1 and 2) took place during the pre-instruction period before any explicit instruction of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* had been provided for either student group, and the last two sessions (Session 3 and 4) were held during the post-instruction period (7 weeks) during which approximately 20 minutes out of every 50-minute class session had been directed towards awareness-raising and oral practices as a component of the pragmatics-focused instruction. Students in the control group did not receive such instruction.

The pre- and post-tests were designed to quantitatively and qualitatively examine the effects the pragmatics-focused instruction of *ne*, *yo* and *yone* has on the development of learners' metapragmatic awareness and understanding of the discourse functions and use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*. The content of the tests is nearly identical, except for a few seasonal and topical terms, e.g., exam vs. movie. (See Appendices B and C.) The test questions ask students to 1) to provide definitions of the functions of the particles used in 3 turn types, a response turn, a question and a statement, and 2) to choose the most appropriate form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone*, and nonuse) that would fit in a blank of a short dialogue sequence and write reasons for their choice. In addition to the questions included in the pre-test, the post-test asks students to evaluate their possible growth in use of the particles throughout the semester by marking their degree of progress on a 7-point

Likert scale. The pre- and post-tests (15 to 20 minutes each) were administered to students in both the experimental and control groups at the beginning and the end of the semester, respectively. Tables 2 and 3 summarize the timelines for the pedagogical interventions and conversation sessions for the experimental and control groups.

Table 2. Timeline for the instructions and conversation sessions for the experimental group

Week	Content of instruction	Time allotted
1 - 2	Pre-test	15-20 min
3	Conversation session 1	12-14 min/pair
4 - 7	Pre-instruction	
7	Conversation session 2	12-14 min/pair
8	Target instruction (awareness-raising activity of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> and <i>yone</i>)	20 min
9 - 11	Target instruction (awareness-raising activity of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> and <i>yone</i>)	20 min
11	Conversation session 3	12-14 min/pair
12	Target instruction (awareness-raising activity of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> and <i>yone</i>)	20 min
13 - 15	Target instruction (awareness-raising activity of <i>ne</i> , <i>yo</i> and <i>yone</i>)	20 min
15	Conversation session 4	12-14 min/pair
16	Post-test	15-20 min

Table 3. Timeline for the instructions and conversation sessions for the control group

Week	Content of instruction	Time allotted
1 - 2	Pre-test	15-20 min
3	Conversation session 1	12-14 min/pair
4 - 6	Regular instruction	50 min
6	Conversation session 2	12-14 min/pair
7 - 10	Regular instruction	50 min
10	Conversation session 3	12-14 min/pair
11 - 14	Regular instruction	50 min
14	Conversation session 4	12-14 min/pair
15	Post-test	15-20 min
16	Regular instruction	50 min

3.5 Instructional treatment

During the pre-instruction period (Weeks 1-7), students in the experimental group learned core grammatical structures and vocabulary and practiced them in a variety of dialogs that included turns where *ne* and *yo* are used interactively, but no explicit instruction of the particles was given to this group during this period. Students in the control group followed a regular curriculum, with no instructional focus on particle use for the entire semester.

Over the next two-month target or post-instruction period (Weeks 8-15), approximately 20 to 25 minutes was devoted to awareness-raising/oral activities as a component of the pragmatics-focused instruction on the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conjunction with other target grammatical structures; during this period, students in the experimental group were instructed on how to understand contextual features that would allow speakers to use a particular form in a given moment of interaction and on how the expression of a stance through the use of the form in that situational context would be a relevant conversational move. The pragmatics-focused instruction was designed to explain diverse discourse functions and (non)uses of the interactional particles, and morphosyntactic features that co-occur with the use of the particles as the indexing of different registers². In developing the target instruction, I first identified limitations in the instructional treatment of the particles in *Situational Functional Japanese vol. 2 (SFJ)*, Tsukuba Language Group, 1995), the primary textbook assigned for the courses in which

² The use of Japanese interactional particles entails morphosyntactic modification to index speech styles (i.e., casual/polite, gender-related speech). For example, an adjective *ii* ('good') with the particle *ne* is expressed *ii ne* in casual form and *ii desu ne* in polite form; however, a different adjectival form such as *kantan* ('easy') with *ne* is expressed *kantan da* (plain copula) *ne* in casual form and *kantan desu ne* in polite form. *Kantan ne* without the plain copula *da* is more commonly used among female speakers. In the instruction, students were exposed to these differentiated forms in relation to speech styles, and were encouraged to only use the forms that are unaffected by gender.

the learners in the present study were enrolled. In order to fill the discrepancy between the general description of the interactional particles in some major L2 textbooks used in the universities in the U.S. (as presented in Appendix A) and a wide range of discourse functions evidenced in extensive L2 research on the particles, I created the following learner-friendly resource (Table 4) for students' awareness-raising and as a scaffold for their production in the conversation sessions.

Table 4. Learner-friendly description of pragmatic functions and (non)uses of *ne*, *yo* and *yone*

	Functions
<i>ne</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>ne</i> is used when you as a speaker wants the hearer to stay closely with what you are saying and to share something (experience, opinion, idea, feelings, etc.) from the same vantage point as the addressee - <i>ne</i> in the speaker's speech tends to solicit the addressee's supportive response but does not always lead to the 'preferred' responses from the addressee
<i>yo</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>yo</i> involves the speaker's willingness to provide information FOR the addressee - <i>yo</i> involves the speaker as a 'deliverer' of message/information that is not necessarily shared with the addressee so as to facilitate a topic in talk - <i>yo</i> is used when the speaker intends to change the addressee's awareness of knowledge/thoughts
<i>yone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>yone</i> is used when the speaker assumes that the information has already been known or accessible to the addressee and shares the perspective toward the information - <i>yone</i> involves the speaker's willingness to ask for confirmation about the known/shared information with the addressee
<i>non-use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no particles are used when the speaker does not necessarily have the intention to engage with the addressee or to continue the talk in progress

The pragmatics-focused instruction consisted of two components: awareness-raising and communicative practices for particle use in unscripted conversations with NS partners and peers. The awareness-raising activities included a) the presentation of

models of particle use, b) metapragmatic discussions of the particles' pragmatic functions as presented in Table 4 above and activity-relevant participation involving the use of particles (See Table 1), and c) production of the particles that would contribute to the joint construction of stance in the turns of short or extended dialogs that approximate naturally occurring conversation, followed by a series of oral practice activities. The awareness-raising activities also involved watching video clips (recorded and transcribed interactions between NSs of Japanese) to facilitate learners' understanding of a) ways in which the particles are deployed variably in the sequential development of talk, as well as familiarity with b) the co-occurrence of gestural and prosodic moves with particles as contextualization cues (Auer, 1998; Gumperz, 1982). In the oral production activities, students were asked to come up with their own responses to a given prompt (e.g., *How did you like the movie? – I loved it, it was so hilarious!*), depending on what they would say and how they would say it using their L1 resources and then to practice the Japanese equivalents using the particles appropriate to the stance construction per the learner's target. Yoshimi (2008) refers to this process in which learners draw on their L1 existing competencies as "learner competence" (p.303). Yoshimi further argues that learners' access to the resources (e.g., personal experiences, intuitions, and knowledge) afforded through learner competence supports a wider range of L2 use that moves beyond the textbook discourse.

As for the communicative practice component, it was incorporated in the instructional approach as a series of conversation sessions in which students engaged in one-on-one interactions with their NS partners and classroom peers. In order to obtain as naturalistic an interaction as possible, topic nomination in these conversations was left

entirely in the participants' control, although some suggested topics were provided in case they encountered difficulty with topic development. The goal of this practice was to help learners to engage in psychologically authentic activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, 2011) in which learners have to monitor and adjust language resources to the communicative demands of their participation in real-time interaction. Specifically, it focused on how affordances that potentially became available through interaction with native speaker peers might enable the learners to appropriate the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as a resource for constructing various stances and, in turn, to develop an ongoing conversation with their conversational partners in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

3.6 Methodology

3.6.1 Data collection

The data analyzed for this study were collected from audio- and video-recordings of dyadic interactions (NS-learner and learner-learner dyads). The study was conducted in two intact third-semester Japanese classes at a public university in Hawai'i. The instructor for the experimental group was this researcher. The instructor for the control group was a male, native speaker of English with a near-native fluency in Japanese. In order to see any differences in the understanding and use of the interactional particles between students who received the proposed instruction and those who did not, data was also collected from the control group during the same time period. The data collected include 1) pre- and post-tests administered by the researcher at the beginning and the end of the semester to assess students' metapragmatic development of the interactional particles, 2) transcripts of audio and video recordings of interactions between NS-learner

and learner-learner dyads, and 3) reflection sheets completed by the students in the experimental group immediately after each conversation session regarding their overall impression of the interaction with the native speaker peer and their specific (non)uses of the interactional particles and other target grammar and vocabulary in their conversation.

3.6.2 Participants

The participants in this study consist of 10 native speakers of Japanese, aged 23 to 31, and fourteen students (8 male, 6 female) from the experimental group, and nine students (4 male, 5 female) from the control group of a third-semester Japanese class at the university. The class meets 4 times a week, and each session is 50 minutes long. The students' ages ranged from 18 to 22 for both the experimental and control groups, the average being 19.4 years. Table 5 shown below summarizes students' background information regarding their previous Japanese learning experience including high school and opportunities to hear and/or use the language outside of class (e.g., interaction with family and friends, Japanese animation and dramas, part-time jobs, etc.).

Table 5. Students' Japanese learning experience and language exposure outside of class

	Length of Japanese language learning			Language exposure outside of class
	More than 4 years	2 - 3 years	1 - 2 years	
Experimental group [N=14]	N=4	N=3	N=7	N=8
Control group [N=9]	N=3	N=4	N=2	N=6

Prior to the provision of the pragmatics-focused instruction, the instructor of the experimental group class briefly asked the students about their familiarity with the respective particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*. More than half of the students in this group had

heard all these particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* – in the course of watching Japanese dramas and films, and all students were familiar with formulaic expressions such as *ii desu ne* ('Sounds good') as they have frequently heard or seen the expression in previous instruction; however, most students claimed that they were never quite sure how to use *yo* and *yone* although they have considered these particles to be as important as *ne* in order to “sound more friendly” in Japanese conversation. It can be concluded from the results of this brief survey that despite their prior knowledge that the particles have a range of functions including the expression of friendliness or intimacy, the students seemed to lack an understanding of a variety of interactional and interpersonal dimensions that use of these particles may entail (i.e., intersubjectivity; display of affective and epistemic stances towards the referent) in conversation.

Ten NS participants attending the university as international students from Japan (3 male and 7 female, 7 undergraduates and 3 graduates) were recruited through mutual friends and had no previous Japanese teaching/tutoring background. Prior to the first conversation session for each student group, the researcher of the study held a preparatory meeting with the native speaker participants to discuss guidelines on how to interact with the students in class. Guidelines for NS participants were presented as follows: a) Carry on a conversation as naturally as possible; b) try to have students initiate the talk; c) make sure to minimize the use of English and use Japanese as much as possible; and d) use English only when the students have trouble with comprehension.

3.6.3 Procedures for analysis

In order to determine how the pragmatics-focused instruction might impact learner development in regard to their metapragmatic awareness and productive skills of

the interactional particles for competent participation in Japanese peer conversation, data collected from the control group is compared to the findings from the experimental group.

To address the first research question about the students' ability to demonstrate their metapragmatic awareness of the use of the particles, I prepared pre- and post-tests that closely align with the content of the target instruction with regard to the forms, functions, and activity types. I examined the results of the pre- and post-tests by focusing on changes in 1) the learners' ability to choose an appropriate form that would fit in each blank based on the prompts as well as the quality of the reasons they provided for their choice, 2) their definitions of the functions of each particle used in a response turn, in a question or in a statement, and 3) the evaluation of their own growth in the ability to use the particles over the semester. I also conducted a quantitative analysis between the two groups to compare student performances in the fill-in-the-blanks questions³ and change of confidence levels (on the scale of 1 to 7) for their particle use in the interaction. To address the second research question that investigates the development of interactional competence with respect to the learners' particle use in the conversation sessions, the analysis focuses on discourse evidence in which learners can use the particles in ways that are consistent with what they were taught in the classroom in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation. To address the third research question concerning evidence for learner's use of the particles beyond the instructional treatment, I examine how learners may come to use the particles as interactional resources to manage the communicative demands of their participation in the face-to-face interaction. In

³ To ensure the validity and reliability of the pre- and post-test instruments, NS data was also collected for the fill-in-the-blanks questions presented in the pre- and post-tests. The questions provided for NSs were in Japanese and back-translation was employed to ensure the validity of the instrument. NSs consist of 4 students at the university (2 females and 2 males, aged 26-32) and 6 Japanese native speakers who currently live and work in Japan (5 females and 1 male, aged 33-45). The percentage of agreement on the 10 responses elicited was 100%.

examining this evidence, I evaluate the capacity for pragmatics-focused instruction to enhance learners' understanding of Japanese conversational practices for the construction of stance and intersubjectivity in conversation.

For the conversational data, I also examine non-vocal conduct such as eye-gaze or gesture that may co-occur with the deployment of a particle as an interactional resource for coordinating talk and achieving intersubjectivity between participants (Kita & Ide, 2007; Mori & Hayashi, 2006; Morita, 2005, 2015). In addition, frequency, appropriateness of use⁴ (use that is consistent with what students were taught and which reflects learning beyond instruction), and range of the interactional particles deployed are analyzed between the pre- and post-instruction periods to examine the students' overall changes in participation.

This chapter presented details of the proposed instructional approach which aims at enhancing JFL learners' metapragmatic understanding and use of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as an aspect of L2 interactional competence. It also described the instruments and procedures employed for data collection, namely, the pre- and post-tests, conversation sessions, and reflection sheets completed by the experimental group learners, that are designed to investigate the effectiveness of the proposed instruction on the learners' changes in participation through the deployment of the particles as resources for constructing stance and intersubjectivity in conversation. Subsequent chapters will provide analysis of the collected data and discuss the findings in conjunction with the research questions for the present study.

⁴ Inter-rater reliability was checked by having another native speaker judge the appropriateness of particle use for 90% of the conversational data. The percentage of agreement was 95%. In the present study, particle use in learner's speech is considered accurate if certain particle choice is appropriate in the sequential order of conversation; however, it is still judged appropriate if errors are found in: 1) the conjugation of the preceding predicate; and 2) the gender appropriateness in the use of the particles.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS' METAPRAGMATIC AWARENESS OF JAPANESE INTERACTIONAL PARTICLES *NE*, *YO*, AND *YONE*

This chapter examines the students' responses in the pre- and post-tests with regard to changes in their metapragmatic awareness of various functions and stances indexed by interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* over the semester. An analysis of those changes is presented here to evaluate the effects of the pragmatics-focused instruction. To reiterate, Schmidt (1995, 2001) claims that while noticing is a necessary condition for L2 learning, learners must also demonstrate a conscious awareness of functional meanings and relevant social and contextual features in order to acquire pragmatics of the target language (cf. K. Ishida, 2009ab). The current chapter focuses on changes in learners' metapragmatic awareness of pragmatic-discourse functions of the particles and the contextual features relevant to their use. More specifically, metapragmatic development reflects the learners' demonstration of an increased awareness concerning the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as resources for joint stance taking between participants in given discourse situations. However, it is not a goal of the present study to simply identify whether the learners could articulate what they were taught in terms of the forms and their functions; this study will examine how the instructed learners develop their capacity to pick up on these specific features of the target language and display an enhanced appreciation for how these particles are deployed as interactive resources for maintaining and achieving communicative practices in Japanese.

In order to investigate whether the proposed instructional approach triggers learners' metapragmatic development regarding the target pragmatic features, the pre-

and post-tests were administered to evaluate any changes in the explicit understanding of the functions and uses of particles in described situations for learners in the experimental and control groups. Students were asked 1) to provide written descriptions of pragmatic functions regarding a specific (non)use of particle in each described situation; and 2) to answer fill-in-the-blank questions. Fill-in-the-blank questions required students to choose the most appropriate pragmatic form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone* or nonuse) in the assessment turns of two short dialogues, and subsequently state reasons for their choice. Example dialogues were carefully designed so that the selection of the particles is iconically represented, thereby making more salient a selection of one type of particle over another. The pattern of learner choices will be investigated to evaluate the instructional effectiveness for experimental group learners' 1) metapragmatic development and 2) productive skills in comparison to those in the control group. Additionally, learner written responses will be examined for evidence of qualitative changes and development in learners' awareness of the functions and stances indexed by the particles in the constructed discourse situations.

In addition to the questions included in the pre-test, the post-test also asked students to evaluate their perception of their growth in the use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* over the instruction period. Learners' self-evaluation will be employed 1) to examine changes in learners' confidence levels in their ability to use the particles at the beginning and the end of the semester, and 2) to identify the sources of learners' perceptions of such growth. Additional analysis will focus on how the changes reflected in the learners' self-assessment are associated with their development of interactional

competence using the particles in the conversation sessions, a focal point of discussion in the following two chapters.

4.1 Evaluating student metapragmatic awareness of the particles in the pre- and post-tests

The pre- and post-tests measured learners' metapragmatic awareness of the discourse functions of *ne*, *yo*, *yone* and nonuse in the described discourse contexts. (See Appendices B and C.) Students were presented with the following question and four possible answers: Q: *Kinoo no nihongo no tesuto, doo datta?* ('How was the Japanese test yesterday?') A: a) *Muzukashi katta ne!* b) *Muzukashi katta yo!* c) *Muzukashi katta yone!* and d) *Muzukashi katta!* ('It was difficult!'). Students were asked to explain each of the four answers provided, which differed only with respect to the ending, i.e., the use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, and nonuse of particle, respectively. In order to make distinctions in explaining the pragmatic meaning of a (non)use of particle in an assessment turn, students need to understand the differences in the expression of stance taking through the (non)use of the particles depending on the relationship between Speakers A and B, e.g., whether they are in the same class or not. For example, if B responds by saying *muzukashi katta yo!* ('It was hard!'), it may be that A and B are in the same class and B is asserting that the test was hard for him/her no matter what A thinks of the test; alternately, it may be that B is informing A of the difficulty of the test B took because A and B are not in the same class. The response *muzukashi katta ne!* indicates that B gives an assessment of the test that A can easily align to, since A and B both took the test, or because A, who is not in B's class, has known that B took the test the day before. If A says *muzukashii katta yone!*, it indexes that A and B orient to mutual

evaluations of the test they took the day before. The response *muzukashi katta!* marked with no particle is considered to be a self-directed talk (Morita, 2005) and therefore does not make A's joint assessment relevant next. In this way, the different uses of interactional particles are one way that speakers of Japanese can display their stance and seek shared stance with the interlocutor towards what they are assessing or conveying in the talk. This is also true of L2 learners of Japanese, who need to know how uses of the particles could index various stances for negotiation and achievement of shared perspectives between the participants in the interaction.

Overall demonstration of student written responses in the pre-test revealed that there was no significant difference in the understanding of the functions and (non)uses of particles between the experimental and control groups; although students from both groups demonstrated some textbook-derived knowledge regarding the functions and uses of the particles, they did not appear to have an understanding that the particles serve as a resource for participants' (speaker and addressee) joint stance taking in interaction, as most of the responses were focused on a single speaker's expression of stance through a particle. However, analysis of student written responses in the post-test demonstrated that the experimental group learners demonstrated greater awareness regarding the interpersonal use of particles, while the control group students showed some positive change in their ability to identify such functions.

In what follows, I will provide a summary of student written responses and discuss the changes in metapragmatic awareness of the (non)uses of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* evidenced by their responses on the pre- and post-tests, respectively.

4.1.1 Nonuse of a particle

Analysis of students' pre-test responses in regard to the functions associated with nonuse of a particle (*muzukashi katta!* 'It was hard!') shows that there is no difference in understanding between the experimental and control groups. One experimental group student mentioned the degree of formality, "*same as 'yo' but not as casual*" (James⁵); and the rest of the students commented that it is simply "a plain statement" that the test was difficult.

In the post-test, however, while many students in the experimental and control groups continuously defined the nonuse of a particle by using a pedagogical term "a plain statement," a few students from each group developed their ability to distinguish its functions from those entailing use of particles, showing more awareness that the response without a particle marks a statement that does not anticipate the addressee's involvement in the ongoing assessment talk, such as a display of agreement or alignment: "*just saying it was hard, end of conversation*" (Tara, experimental); "*Plain, no gauge of response. Just a statement*" (Erin, control).

4.1.2 *Ne*

In the pre-test, the majority of students in both groups (19 out of 23 students) commented that the particle *ne* in B's response *muzukashi katta ne* ('It was difficult') is equivalent to the English tag questions such as 'isn't it?' and is used to ask for "*confirmation and agreement*," functions often introduced in the L2 textbooks. Other responses include instances in which *ne* marks intimacy, "*Sounds friendly*" (Kyle, experimental), which was consistent with what a few students in the experimental group

⁵ All learners' names used in the present study are pseudonyms.

mentioned when I first asked the class what they understand about the particles *ne* and *yo* at the pre-instruction stage. Only one student in the experimental group commented on *ne* as a marker to involve the addressee's evaluation of the test: "*This person is trying to get A's approval or response that it was hard*" (Lucas). This suggests that although students in both groups appeared to have some textbook-derived knowledge of the particle *ne* for 'confirmation and agreement', they were not able to develop their awareness of why and how *ne* is marked as a resource for joint stance taking between the speaker and the addressee.

In the post-test, however, more students in both the experimental and control groups defined *ne* as more than a resource used for 'confirmation and agreement'; they showed increased awareness of *ne* for displaying and/or seeking each other's affective stance in the interaction. Eight out of 14 students in the experimental group responded that *ne* allows the speaker to seek shared stance from the addressee, e.g., empathy and/or alignment, toward the difficulty of the test: "*showing sympathy, sympathizing with the person who took the test that yes, it was hard*" (Trey); "*Both persons took it, so they expect each other to feel the same way*" (Emily); "*B is seeking agreement with A that the test was hard*" (Julie). Similar responses were also found among a few students in the control group: "*said to get a response/agreement from another person 'Ahh, that was hard right?'*" (Ken); "*A took the test, so A may agree*" (Mia, control). One control group student responded, "*Speaker A may have already known that B's test would have been hard*" (Erin). This definition is relevant to the use of *ne* in a response position where the hint of the *ne*-utterance is already sufficient for the recipient to align in his/her next turn (Morita, 2005; Shibahara, 2002).

The increased metapragmatic awareness of particle *ne* in the two student groups in the post-test indicates that the implicit socialization opportunities with NS peers allowed the students to analyze the gap between their current and previous knowledge of the functions of *ne*. Additionally, the greater change demonstrated by the experimental group students reflects their metapragmatic development of *ne* as a resource for jointly constructing affective stance between the speakers, the enhanced ability to apply what was discussed in the awareness-raising sessions to the new contexts described in the test questionnaire.

4.1.3 *Yo*

Analysis of student responses about particle *yo* in the pre-test found no qualitative difference in the learners' awareness between the experimental and control groups. One student from the experimental group, showed some awareness that the *yo*-marked response *muzukashi katta yo* ('it [the test] was hard') marks difference in epistemic stance between participants, as follows: "*To clearly establish it [the test] was hard cause the listener would not know*" (Ethan). This is consistent with one of the discourse functions of *yo*, which is often used to highlight the incongruence of the participants' epistemic access to the referent (Hayano, 2011). The rest of the students' responses about *yo* reflects the single speaker's expression of view or stance about the referent (i.e., the difficulty of the test) without taking into account the addressee's position, including "*The response means that it is an individual expression that it was hard*" (Erin, control); "*It's somewhat emphasized, it shows more emphasis*" (Ryan, experimental).

However, analysis of student written responses in the post-test reveals that the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction demonstrated greater awareness

regarding the relational use of *yo* in comparison to those in the control group. Consistent with the increased awareness of *ne* in the post-test, the experimental group students' understanding of *yo* also reflects their increased awareness that is consistent with what was discussed in the awareness-raising sessions: *yo* involves the speaker's (B) epistemic stance toward the referent (i.e., the test) in relation to the addressee's (A) knowledge. Ten out of 14 students in the experimental group explained that *yo* is marked to evaluate and inform something about the test, which may be unknown or inaccessible to A. Such examples include, "*telling A that it [the test] was hard since A didn't take it*" (Tara), "*expressing a new perspective that A did not know of*" (Brian), "*よ [yo] conveys new information that was unknown to A*" (Kyle); and "*The speaker is explaining their own personal thought (considered new info)*" (James). Two out of 9 students in the control group also provided similar responses: "*A did not take the test, so A doesn't know it was hard*" (Mia); "*'yo' was used to express an answer that listener didn't previously know*" (Nick). These descriptions suggest a shift in the learners' awareness that *yo* is not merely used to display the speaker's opinion/stance but also to share a new perspective that is indexed by the speaker to be epistemically incongruent between self and addressee.

4.1.4 *Yone*

The particle *yone* was the least familiar form for L2 learners to define as its functions are almost never introduced in the beginning Japanese textbooks (Ko, 2011). In the pre-test, 20 out of 23 students in the experimental and control groups expressed "*Not sure*" for the use of *yone* in B's response *muzukashi katta yone* ('It [the test] was hard?'); and the rest of them responded by giving English equivalents instead of its functions: "*Wasn't it really hard?*" (Bob, control); "*Don't you think the test was hard?*"

(Julie, experimental); and “*It was so hard! Yes?*” (Nancy, control). These responses indicate that the students’ knowledge of particle *yone* was very limited in that they were not able to provide their definitions more than through English equivalents to the meanings of *yone*, if their interpretations were not entirely mistaken.

In contrast to the students’ overall improved awareness of the functions of *ne* and *yo* over the instruction period, however, analysis of their written responses in the post-test found that there was a significant gap between the two groups in the metapragmatic understanding of *yone*: the experimental group students demonstrated positive changes over time in their ability to analyze the contextual use of *yone*; and the experimental group students outperformed the control group students by displaying greater awareness of the functions of *yone* by the end of the instruction period. As shown earlier, the understanding of *yone* demonstrated by most students in the pre-test was limited in ranging from “*Not sure*” to such English equivalents as “*Don’t you think it was hard?*” (Julie, experimental) and “*It was hard, right?*” (Nancy, control). In the post-test, however, 12 out of 14 students in the experimental group showed greater awareness that reflected an orientation to the target instruction, i.e., the use of *yone* as a resource to confirm if the speaker and the addressee have the same opinion/feelings toward what they are discussing: “*give the opinion and try to confirm it with A*” (Ryan). Notably, out of these 12 students in this group, 3 of them were able to extend beyond what they were instructed and develop their own ways of describing *yone* by using more concrete discourse situations where it might be used: “*Saying that it was hard, assumes that A has knowledge or experience with the test*” (Kelly) “*agreeing with the other person b/c both of you have mutual feelings about the test*” (Fred), “*B is hinting that they both shared a*

common experience and are reminiscing of how it was difficult” (Brian). The development in metapragmatic awareness among the experimental group students in the post-instruction period reflects positive changes in their ability to analyze *yone* as a resource for the speaker to construct his/her stance in relation to the addressee’s knowledge, i.e., to negotiate the sharedness of participants’ epistemic stances over the topic under discussion.

On the other hand, written responses from the control group students in the post-test showed little or no qualitative change in the understanding of *yone* over time, including “*a really strong emphasis on ‘yo’*” (Jess) and “*stating and confirming*” (Jay) as a combined marker of *yo* and *ne*. One control group student commented that *yone* was used for “*stating it [the test] was hard but not completely sure*” (Nick). Although Nick’s response shows some awareness that *yone* might allow the speaker to exchange her opinion with the addressee because she is “*not completely sure*” whether the test was really hard, his understanding is not yet fully developed as to the use of *yone* for what the speaker and the addressee might be doing together in the evaluation of the test, as evident in the responses from the experimental group students in the post-test. The understanding of *yone* demonstrated by the control group students was focused on the speaker’s own action, but not on what the speaker and the addressee might *jointly* accomplish as an indexical resource for establishing both participants’ congruent epistemic views (Hayano, 2011). One possible account for this gap in awareness of *yone* between the two groups at the post-instruction stage may be attributed to the effects of explicit instruction combined with the conversation opportunities with NS peers, which enabled the experimental group students to develop their awareness with regard of the distinctive functions of each

particle (i.e., *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*) as a resource for participants' joint accomplishment of stance, while they did not exhibit such awareness prior to instruction.

In sum, analysis of the written responses in the post-test has shown that the experimental group students demonstrated greater understanding regarding the particles *ne* and *yo*, respectively, as resources for marking shared or non-shared stances between interlocutors, although the control group students also showed some awareness of such functions over time. As the positive change was also demonstrated by the students in the control group, it is unlikely that the pragmatics-focused instruction is the single contributing factor to the learners' enhanced awareness of these particles; indeed, the fact that most students in both groups had already exhibited some basic awareness of the functions and use of *ne* and *yo* at the pre-instruction stage suggests a readiness to continue developing this understanding based on input both from within and outside of the classroom. Learners were also exposed to NSs' particle use in the conversation sessions, creating an opportunity for them to learn implicitly how these particles were being used as they socialized with NS peers. On the other hand, there was clear evidence that the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of their demonstration of increased metapragmatic awareness of the particle *yone* between the pre- and post-tests; their pre-instruction understanding of *yone* was not qualitatively different from that of the control group students, with their mentions of *yone* being equivalent to English tag question, 'don't you think?' or to a combined function of *yo* and *ne* for stating and confirming. However, at the post-instruction stage, while the control group displayed little or no change, the experimental group demonstrated greater awareness of *yone* in ways that reflect what they were taught (i.e., *yone* as a resource to

confirm if the speaker and the addressee have the same opinion/feelings toward what they are discussing), as well as that extend beyond the instruction (i.e., *yone* as a resource for negotiating and establishing the sharedness of both participants' epistemic stances over the topic-in-progress). The greater gap in the metapragmatic development of *yone* as compared to that of *ne* and *yo* between the two groups can be explained by: 1) the effect of the instruction (awareness-raising component) that enabled the experimental group learners to develop their understanding of *yone*, the particle that they possessed no prior knowledge/awareness of in the pre-test survey, and 2) the affordance of conversational opportunities with NS peers provided for the learners to develop their ability to analyze the discourse functions and stances indexed by *yone* in various discourse contexts.

4.2 Fill-in-the-blank questions

The purpose of the fill-in-the-blank questions was to examine evidence for change in both the students' metapragmatic awareness of the particles in the constructed discourse contexts as well as in their use of the particles in these constructed settings. The question directed students to select the most appropriate form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone*, and nonuse) in assessment turns embedded in short dialogs and subsequently provide reasons for their choice. The providing of reasons enables the researcher to explore student capability further in situations where the students select the same form as others but with different reasons. It is, therefore, crucial to identify patterns that emerge from additional information provided in support of the learners' responses (Davis, 1995; Enomoto & Marriot, 1994; K. Ishida, 2009b).

The fill-in-the-blank questions contain a set of discourse situations where all three particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* are expected. (See Table 6.) Analysis focuses on evidence for

changes in metapragmatic awareness in terms of the learners' patterns of response demonstrated through their selection of a form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone* and nonuse) as well as written reasons for their choice in the described situations over the instruction period. The questions were designed to assess whether the learners would demonstrate the ability to choose an appropriate particle that fits in the given situations and provide reasons for their choice, with regard to the discourse functions and use of: 1) *ne* in the initial-turn assessment for expressing and eliciting shared stance such as alignment or agreement; 2) *yo* to claim epistemic asymmetry between participants; and 3) *yone* for confirming the participants' equivalent epistemic stance toward the topic under discussion. (See Table 1 in Chapter 3.) As mentioned in the methodology section, an identical version of the fill-in-the-blank questions was administered to NSs of Japanese to ensure that it was a valid tool for examining how respondents choose a form in the given discourse situations. In terms of appropriateness, all the question sets obtained 100% of the native Japanese speakers' agreement. NSs' responses also were consistent with the expected response pattern of the researcher.

While pragmatic functions and use of the particles in various discourse situations were introduced in the pragmatics-focused instruction to the experimental group, none of the discourse situations provided in the pre- and post-tests were identical to those discussed in awareness-raising sessions. Therefore, the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction were required to analyze relevant contextual use of the particles in novel discourse situations. Comparing the responses provided by the experimental group learners to those provided by the control group learners should

illuminate whether the pragmatics-focused instruction is beneficial to changes in metapragmatic awareness with regard to the use of the particles in constructed settings.

In the next two sections, I will first present the pre- and post-test findings of the fill-in-the-blank questions for both the experimental and control groups. Then, I will summarize evidence of quantitative and qualitative changes we may find in the experimental group learners from the test findings.

4.2.1 Quantitative analysis

The following table (Table 6) presents the students' responses on the pre- and post-test sections of the fill-in-the-blank questions, with the appropriate response for each item marked in bold.

Table 6. Pre- and post-test results of the fill-in-the-blank questions (experimental and control groups)

Pre-test	Experimental (N=14)	Control (N=9)
<p>[a] <i>Talking about the Japanese test taken yesterday.</i></p> <p>A: 昨日のテスト、どうだった? <i>How did you do on the test yesterday?</i></p> <p>B: 昨日のテスト? そんなにむずかしくなかったよね? <i>Yesterday's test? I guess it wasn't so hard, was it?</i></p> <p>A: えー? ちょうむずかしかった¹_____。 <i>Are you kidding? It was so hard. (よ yo expected)</i></p>	¹ よ yo = 7 (50%) ね ne = 0 (0%) よね yone = 6 (43%) X = 1 (7%)	¹ よ yo = 2 (22%) ね ne = 3 (33%) よね yone = 4 (44%) X = 0 (0%)
<p>[b] <i>Your friend (B) took you to her/his favorite cafe and had you try a cake your friend likes. You (A) just took your first bite and gave an immediate comment on it.</i></p> <p>A: おいしい²_____。 <i>This cake is good! (ね ne expected)</i></p> <p>B: うん、ほんとうおいしい³_____。 <i>Yeah, it really is, isn't it? (よね yone expected)</i></p>	² よ yo = 7 (50%) ね ne = 4 (29%) よね yone = 3 (21%) X = 0 (0%) ³ よ yo = 4 (29%) ね ne = 5 (35%) よね yone = 4 (29%) X = 1 (7%)	² よ yo = 1 (11%) ね ne = 7 (78%) よね yone = 0 (0%) X = 1 (11%) ³ よ yo = 6 (67%) ね ne = 1 (11%) よね yone = 2 (22%) X = 0 (0%)
Post-test	Experimental (N=14)	Control (N=9)
<p>[a] <i>Talking about the movie "Argo".</i></p> <p>A: アルゴ、どうだった? <i>How did you like the movie?</i></p> <p>B: アルゴ? そんなによくなかったよね? <i>Argo? I guess it wasn't so good, was it?</i></p> <p>A: えー? ちょうよかった¹_____。 <i>Are you kidding? It was so good. (よ yo expected)</i></p>	¹ よ yo = 13 (93%) ね ne = 0 (0%) よね yone = 1 (7%) X = 0 (0%)	¹ よ yo = 6 (67%) ね ne = 0 (0%) よね yone = 3 (33%) X = 0 (0%)
<p>[b] <i>Your friend (B) took you to her/his favorite cafe and had you try a cake your friend likes. You (A) just took your first bite and gave an immediate comment on it.</i></p> <p>A: おいしい²_____。 <i>This cake is good! (ね ne expected)</i></p> <p>B: うん、ほんとうおいしい³_____。 <i>Yeah, it really is, isn't it? (よね yone expected)</i></p>	² よ yo = 9 (64%) ね ne = 3 (22%) よね yone = 2 (14%) X = 0 (0%) ³ よ yo = 1 (7%) ね ne = 3 (22%) よね yone = 9 (64%) X = 1 (7%)	² よ yo = 4 (44%) ね ne = 3 (33%) よね yone = 1 (11%) X = 1 (11%) ³ よ yo = 1 (11%) ね ne = 4 (44%) よね yone = 4 (44%) X = 0 (0%)

Overall analysis of the students' responses to the fill-in-the-blank questions revealed that the experimental group showed greater changes in the appropriate choice of particles *yo* and *yone* than the control group: while 7 students (50%) out of 14 students chose *yo* in the pre-test, 13 students (93%) chose it in the post-test; notably, the number of students who chose *yone* appropriately also increased from 4 (29%) in the pre-test to 9 (64%) in the post-test. Although a similar increase over the instruction period can be observed in the control group (22% to 67% in *yo*, 22% to 44% in *yone*), the overall success rates of this group are relatively low compared to those of the experimental group.

In contrast, both the experimental and control groups demonstrated a markedly reduced capacity to choose the appropriate marking of *ne* in the initial turn between the pre- and post-tests. The number of students who chose *ne* appropriately decreased from 7 (78%) to 3 (33%) for the control group and 4 (29%) to 3 (22%) for the experimental group at the post-instruction stage. The reasons for such negative evidence for both groups could be that 1) more students in the control group might have incidentally chosen the correct particle *ne* since it was the most familiar form compared to the other two at the pre-instruction stage; 2) the experimental group students could not fully develop their understanding of the use of *ne* in the initial-turn assessment compared to that of *ne* in the follow-up turn even after receiving the target instruction. This finding is also consistent with the evidence of the experimental group learners' underuse of the initial-turn assessment *ne* in the conversation sessions.

Further analysis reveals that more students in both groups chose *yo* erroneously where *ne* would be expected at the post-instruction stage (50% to 64% in experimental, 11% to 44% in control); for both groups, only two students selected *ne* appropriately in

both tests and two students who chose *ne* correctly in the pre-test switched their answer to *yo* erroneously in the post-test. The increase in the erroneous choice of *yo* in the post-test suggests that students in both groups might have overgeneralized application of *yo* to this particular discourse context. In addition, the increase in the misuse of *yo* (50% to 64%) for the experimental group might be associated with the reversed effect of instruction on the students' increasing understanding of the functions of other particles than *ne*. The learners' tendency to overuse *yo* following the target instruction was also discussed in Kakegawa (2009). She argued that the overuse of *yo* was not only due to the provision of the instruction but to the fact that *yo* was easier for the learners to use than *ne* in their written discourse since it does not have to take into account what the listener knows. By the same token, Ko (2011) also found that L2 learners of Japanese tend to overuse *yo* when they wish to stress their opinion, thereby making their utterances sound too assertive or unnatural to speakers of Japanese. Such cases are consistent with the findings of the present study, where the students could not fully recognize the context provided in the question ('you gave an immediate comment about the cake your friend likes'), which might have led the students (A) to express their opinion about the cake through the epistemic marker *yo*, instead of using *ne* to give an immediate evaluation in a way that is alignable to the friend's (B) prior knowledge of the cake.

Additionally, closer examination of changes in the individual learners' performance in the fill-in-the-blank questions between the pre- and post-tests revealed that learners in the experimental groups outperformed those in the control group in the appropriate use of *yone* but that learners in both the experimental and control groups did not improve their use of *ne* over time. However, although the experimental group (93%)

on the whole performed significantly better than the control group (67%) in the appropriate use of *yo* by the end of the post-instruction period, there is a greater increase in the number of students who chose *yo* correctly for the control group (56%) than the experimental group (43%) in the post-test. The following tables (Tables 7 and 8) detail the number of the experimental and control group students who selected the (in)correct forms (*ne*, *yo*, and *yone*) between the pre- and post-tests.

Table 7. Number of experimental group students (N=14) who selected *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as (in)correct forms in the fill-in-the-blank questions of the pre- and post-tests

<i>yo</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=7 (50%)	N=6 (43%)
	incorrect	N=0 (0%)	N=1 (7%)
<i>ne</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=2 (14%)	N=1 (8%)
	incorrect	N=2 (14%)	N=9 (64%)
<i>yone</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=3 (21%)	N=6 (43%)
	incorrect	N=1 (7%)	N=4 (29%)

Table 8. Number of control group students (N=9) who selected *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as (in)correct forms in the fill-in-the-blank questions of the pre- and post-tests

<i>yo</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=1 (11%)	N=5 (56%)
	incorrect	N=1 (11%)	N=2 (22%)
<i>ne</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=2 (22%)	N=1 (11%)
	incorrect	N=5 (56%)	N=1 (11%)
<i>yone</i>		Pre-test	
		correct	incorrect
Post-test	correct	N=2 (22%)	N=2 (22%)
	incorrect	N=0 (0%)	N=5 (56%)

As the above tables show, we can see that half of 14 students (50%) in the experimental group had chosen the appropriate particle *yo* in the pre-test, and 6 additional students (43%) who chose other particles than *yo* in the pre-test selected *yo* correctly in the post-test, which comes to a total of 13 out of 14 students (93%) who selected the correct form by the end of the post-instruction period, as shown in Table 6. On the other hand, while only one student (11%) in the control group chose *yo* correctly in both tests, 5 additional students (56%) selected *yo* correctly in the post-test. This positive change evident in the control group may be attributed to the implicit socialization through the conversation sessions with NS peers as well as to some input in and out of the class in which they could possibly have gained more awareness of the target pragmatic norms.

As discussed earlier regarding the overall performance with *ne* between the experimental and control groups, the tables above also reveal that there is no difference in the ability to choose *ne* by individual learners in the two groups. Learners in both groups show a similar pattern in their ability to choose *ne* over the instruction period: two students from each group chose *ne* correctly in both tests, and one additional student used the correct form in the post-test. Notably, 9 out of 14 students (64%) in the experimental group failed to choose *ne* in both tests, indicating that even after receiving the explicit instruction, many students in the experimental group could not fully develop their understanding of the use of *ne* in the initial-turn assessment, and that more students overgeneralized the instructed use of *yo* to the particular discourse context where *ne* would be highly expected.

The tables also show that the experimental group learners outperformed the control group learners in the ability to choose *yone* as the correct form, consistent with

the overall change between the two groups as observed earlier. In addition to the students who chose *yone* correctly in both tests, 6 additional experimental group students (43%) who selected other particles in the pre-test switched their answer to *yone*, while only 2 additional control group students (22%) did so in the post-test. Such discrepancy in the learners' understanding of *yone* compared to that of *ne* and *yo* between the two groups suggests the positive effects of the explicit instruction in promoting the metapragmatic development of the experimental group learners who had displayed little knowledge of the use of *yone* prior to instruction.

Overall results of the pre- and post-tests performed by the individual learners in both experimental and control groups revealed that despite the frequency of input from the interactions with NS partners⁶ as well as from the instruction, one function of one particle appeared to be more impervious to learn than the other two; the particle *ne* in the initial turn seemed to be the most difficult form to produce for many students in both groups, while *yo* could be learned relatively more readily through the implicit socialization in the course of conversations with NSs as well as some input in and out of the classroom (e.g., social media, interactions with the teacher and other capable peers), and learning of *yone* might be more prone to explicit instruction.

In the following section, I will provide a qualitative analysis of the changes demonstrated by the learners in the experimental group compared to those by the control group over the instruction periods with a focus on their written responses provided by the learners in the fill-in-the-blank questions.

⁶ Close analysis of the frequency of particle use by NS participants in both experimental and control groups indicated that 1) there was no gender-derived difference in the frequency of use, 2) *ne* and *yone* appeared more frequently than *yo*; and 3) productive use of particles by the NSs corresponds to the degree of involvement in talk between learner and NS, rather than to the presence of the particles (or lack thereof) in the learners' speech.

4.2.2 Qualitative analysis

The fill-in-the-blank questions were designed to evaluate learners' changes in the ability to choose the appropriate forms for constructed discourse contexts and provide reasons for their choice. To examine the instructional effectiveness for the learners' development reflected in the written responses to the questions, I will conduct a qualitative analysis focusing on the changes in the reasons the learners provided for their choice of a particular form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone*, and nonuse) for each described discourse situation (Question [a] and [b] in Table 6) between the pre- and post-tests.

4.2.2.1 Question [a]

Question [a] describes a situation where in response to A's question, B marks an assessment with *yone* to confirm if A aligns to B's assessment about the referent (the test or the movies), and A disagrees, marking his/her assessment through the epistemic marker *yo*. In order to mark his/her stance through an appropriate particle in this context, the learner first needs to have an awareness 1) that the speakers A and B have epistemically incongruent views about the referent and 2) that this particular discourse situation requires the speaker A to upgrade his/her evaluation by taking a stance that is different from B's (Heritage & Raymond, 2005); and 3) such a stance is often expressed through the epistemic marker *yo* in Japanese conversation (Hayano, 2011).

As the quantitative analysis has shown, 13 out of 14 (93%) experimental group students selected *yo* appropriately for the described situation and provided valid reasons that were consistent with what they had been taught over the course of the instruction period. Written responses by all 13 students but one in the experimental group reflect changes from an awareness of *yo* as an marker of displaying a speaker's own stance or

action in the pre-test (e.g., “*making a statement*”, “*trying to explain something to B*”, “*emphasizing his or her thought*”), to that of *yo* as an index of epistemic incongruence between participants, e.g., to mark that they are in disagreement: “*because you are reporting how you felt about the movie and are in disagreement with B*”; “*A disagrees and brings a new perspective*”; and “*because in opposition, A tells their own personal opinion, which is new info to B*” in the post-test. Such qualitative change was not found in the control group between the pre- and post-tests (e.g., “*emphasize telling how good it was*”, “*Yo is used in status of making it a fact/thought it really was*”), except for one response, “*going against another’s point seems more fit for ‘yo’.*” Despite the positive changes in the number of the students who selected the appropriate form for the described context for both groups, there is a qualitative difference in the metapragmatic awareness displayed by the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction and those who did not.

Closer analysis of the changes in the individual learners’ responses for the experimental group found additional areas of metapragmatic awareness by developing their own ways of defining the functions of *yo* that extend beyond the instruction. Fred, who chose *yo* appropriately in both tests, changed in his responses from “*you are stating that you thought it [the test] was hard*” to “*you are giving a counter-argument*” by the end of the post-instruction period. Another student, Tara, who responded, “*making a statement and not really searching for agreement from partner*” in the pre-test, wrote in the post-test, “*sharing new feelings and want to let them know your opinion.*” The responses provided by these learners illustrate a clear difference in their metapragmatic awareness of the stances indexed by the particle *yo* over the instruction period. That is,

while both experimental and control group students tended to focus on the use of particle *yo* as a resource for indexing the speaker's own stance at the pre-instruction stage, the experimental group students showed greater change in awareness that the speaker's stance taking is jointly constructed by his/her interactional relationship with the addressee's stance. Through their appropriate choice of the forms and comments, both of these learners in the experimental group demonstrated increased awareness that the particle *yo* indexes one's stance of "giving a counter-argument" or "sharing new feelings" when the participants' epistemic stances are incongruent.

4.2.2.2 Question [b]

Question [b] describes a situation where Speaker A gives an immediate comment about the cake that A's friend (B) has recommended. Taking his/her first bite of the cake, Speaker A gives a first assessment, remarking how good the cake tastes. The assessment would then be marked with the particle *ne*, displaying alignment with B (*oishii ne* 'The cake is good!'). In response, B proffers an assessment, confirming that the cake really tastes good. As a person who is already familiar with the taste of the cake, the particle *yone* would be used in the second assessment (*oishii yone* 'it really is, isn't it?') so that B claims to have epistemic access to the referent (*yo*) and invites alignment (*ne*) from A.

As we found in the quantitative analysis, more students in both the experimental and control groups showed an increase in the erroneous choice of *yo* instead of *ne* for this particular assessment turn at the post-instruction period. One possible reason for the overuse of *yo* is evidenced by the written responses provided by some learners who chose *yo* over *ne*: "exclamation, wow this is good, showing your engagement" (control); "A is revealing that the cake is good for the first time" (experimental); "expressing his thought

about how delicious cake is” (experimental). These comments by the learners suggest that they might have overgeneralized application of the epistemic marker *yo* for highlighting the speaker’s opinion about the cake without building upon the addressee’s (B) epistemic stance, i.e., his/her prior knowledge about the cake. Another consideration is that, consistent with the learners’ conversation data which I will detail in the next two chapters, the learner’s metapragmatic awareness of the initial-turn assessment *ne* appears to develop later than that of the follow-up *ne*, since the appropriate use of *ne* in the initial-turn assessment requires the speaker to know whether what is to be assessed is relevant for displaying or/and negotiating alignment in relation to the addressee’s stance, while it seems easier to do so in the recipient’s turn where the assessable has been shared at the time of the receipt.

Analysis also found that significant qualitative changes did not occur for the control group students in their comments of *ne* as “*asking for confirmation*” and “*emphasizing that it is good.*” In contrast, 3 students (22%) of the experimental group who chose *ne* appropriately at the post-instruction stage showed greater awareness of *ne* as more than just agreeing or confirming. For example, Tara, who chose *ne* in both tests, demonstrated a shift in awareness of *ne* from “*asking for agreement*” in the pre-test to “*sharing something that A assumes B knows*” in the post-test. This change reflected in her comment on *ne* indicates the learner’s enhanced awareness of how the speaker builds his/her stance, such as shared affect or alignment, upon the addressee’s (B’s) knowledge about what is being assessed (the taste of the cake). Beth, who chose *yone* in the pre-test, minimally wrote “*A is agreeing*”, but selected *ne* correctly in the post-test with a reason that “*A is sharing an immediate response/thought about the cake with B because you*

know it is a cake that your friend already likes.” While the learner’s understanding of a stance indexed through particle seemed very limited to “*agreeing*” at the pre-instruction stage, she developed her understanding of the expected stance to be constructed upon B’s displayed stance (his/her liking of the cake) by the end of the post-instruction stage.

With regard to Speaker B’s response to A’s assessment, more than half of the experimental group students (64%) chose *yone* appropriately at the post-instruction stage, compared to 29% prior to the target instruction. Most students who chose *yone* appropriately in the pre-test provided reasons focused on Speaker B’s use of *yone* to show his/her ‘emphasis’ and ‘agreement’ regarding A’s comment on the cake, but their mentions failed to take into account how B’s *yone*-marked stance can be constructed upon A’s display of stance in the particular assessment activity. However, at the post-instruction stage, the students in the experimental group demonstrated their increased awareness that *yone* is a resource for joint stance marking between speakers, while those in the control group did not develop such awareness over time. Most responses provided by the experimental group learners reflect greater awareness that *yone* is used to mutually evaluate something between people who have equivalent epistemic access to the referent, which is consistent with what they discussed during the awareness-raising sessions in the target instruction: “*confirming that yes the cake is very good, agreeing or confirming & sharing feelings*”; “*B thinks or knows that it’s good too*”; “*At this point both speakers know that the cake is good and are agreeing.*” On the other hand, the awareness demonstrated by the control group did not change from the single speakers’ attempt to display stance through the particle: “*stating and confirming*”; “*excitedly confirming the*

thought and agreeing,” responses which align with the control group student’s expressed understandings of the individual particles *yo* and *ne*, respectively.

Analysis of the experimental group data also evidenced some qualitative changes in the individual learners’ comments over the instruction period. For example, Lucas, who chose *ne* for showing “*agreement*” in the pre-test, selected *yone* appropriately with a reason that “*B confirms A’s agreement that the cake is delicious*” in the post-test. His comment demonstrates awareness that *yone* is an expected form in this context where B can now expect A to share stance for mutual evaluation of the referent (cake). Moreover, some students in the experimental group displayed greater awareness by commenting on the contingent display of stance indexed by *yone* in this assessment sequence. Fred, while selecting *yo* for “*agreeing with the first statement*” in the pre-test, switched to the correct form *yone* “*since you both have the same experience you are agreeing on that information*” in the post-test. Brian, who also chose *yo* for “*explaining simply it really is good*”, commented in the post-test that “*yone is used because they both shared a common experience and now want to discuss it.*” These students displayed positive changes over time in their ability to understand that *yone* is an expected form in this particular context to evaluate their shared “*common experience*” in tasting the cake. Close examination of the written reasons provided by the experimental group learners reveals that the changes in their awareness of *yone* over the instruction period are much greater than that of *ne* or *yo* respectively, reflecting the fact that most students in this study had indicated lack of understanding regarding the functions of *yone* at the pre-instruction stage. Therefore, the experimental group learners’ reasons in conjunction with their choice of the appropriate form *yone* at the post-instruction stage are associated with the positive effects of

instruction on the learners' metapragmatic development regarding the interactive, contingent nature of particle use for joint stance taking between participants in various discourse situations.

4.2.3 Relationship between metapragmatic development and oral performance using the particles

In this section, we will investigate to what extent learners' metapragmatic development is associated with their oral production of the target pragmatic features in the conversation sessions. Some previous L2 research evidenced a positive relationship between metapragmatic/conceptual knowledge and oral production skills in instructed settings (Narita, 2012; Serrano, 2010; van Compernelle & Williams, 2012). In the present study, however, closer analysis of the learners' metapragmatic knowledge demonstrated in the pre- and post-tests and the conversation data revealed that the *overall* metapragmatic development evident in the experimental group does not directly translate into the *individual* learners' ability to produce the target pragmatic features in spontaneous conversational contexts.

As I discuss more extensively in the next two chapters, the conversation data shows that the experimental group on the whole performed significantly better than the control group in their productive use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in unscripted conversations with native speakers and classroom peers; however, it also identifies within the group individual differences in learner appropriation of metapragmatic knowledge to produce more appropriate output, and specifically three patterns of learner production were noted: 1) learners who were successfully able to use their metapragmatic knowledge in their oral production of the target pragmatic features; 2) learners who showed explicit

metapragmatic knowledge which remained unavailable for application in production; and 3) learners who did not demonstrate explicit knowledge but were able to demonstrate positive changes in their oral performance over time. These findings, especially concerning the negative correlation between metapragmatic development and oral performance, support the claim that the development of metalinguistic knowledge is known to be subject to individual variability, particularly with respect to such facets as analytic skills, L2 proficiency, and learner subjectivity (Kasper, 2001; Ishihara & Tarone, 2009; Pearson, 2001; Ranta, 2002; Roever, 2009; Serrano, 2010). In terms of learning L2 pragmatics, learner subjectivity may affect the extent to which individual L2 learners converge with or diverge from native speaker norms in the process of constructing their social identities across different learning contexts (Liao, 2009; Norton, 2000; Siegal, 1995). On the other hand, although some individual learners may understand the target pragmatic features, they may not necessarily activate such metapragmatic knowledge to produce the target pragmatic expressions in real time, i.e., in the course of ongoing conversational exchange. Furthermore, learners who may be “cognitively ready” to produce certain pragmatic features of a language are not necessarily capable of verbalizing the co-occurring patterns required to produce the appropriate output. In this regard, Schmidt (1990, 2001) also cautioned that lack of self-report by a learner does not necessarily imply lack of awareness because verbal reports cannot be assumed to include everything that L2 learners noticed. This may be the case with the learners in the present study, since developing learners’ verbalization of their metapragmatic knowledge was not part of the instructional goals in the present study. As a result, those learners who were able to produce target pragmatic features without explicit display of metapragmatic

knowledge might have been less advanced in analytic skills than others, while their metapragmatic knowledge has been internalized and has become available for later use.

In the present study, the relationship between learners' metapragmatic knowledge and oral production skills appears more complex than some of the findings from previous studies regarding the instructional effect of awareness-raising components on pragmatic development for L2/JFL learners. (Alcón-Soler, 2007; K. Ishida, 2009ab; Iwai, 2013; Li, 2012; Narita, 2012; Takahashi, 2010; Takimoto, 2009; Tateyama, 2009; Yoshimi, 2001b). In more detail, K. Ishida (2009ab) investigated the effects of awareness-raising and communicative activities on beginning-level learners' pragmatic development on the understanding and use of the Japanese plain and *desu/masu* forms. Narita (2012) investigated the effects of pragmatic consciousness-raising activities on the development of Japanese hearsay evidential markers such as *rashii* ('I heard that') for intermediate-level learners. These two studies showed evidence that the pragmatics-focused instruction enabled the learners to enhance their L2 pragmatic competence in both metapragmatic knowledge and use of the target pragmatic features in oral performances.

The discrepancy between the findings of K. Ishida (2009ab) and Narita (2012) and the present study could be attributed to differences in the contextual conditions that prime the use of the target items, learnability of these forms in relation to learners' proficiency levels, and oral tasks assigned to assess the target L2 competence, e.g., interactional competence. K. Ishida (2009ab) focused on the indexical use of the Japanese plain and *desu/masu* forms and how the learners developed their pragmatic knowledge of the use of these forms in conversational contexts by drawing upon their experience with L1 resources, or learner competence (Yoshimi, 2008). Narita (2012)

attributed findings to the proficiency level of the learners (intermediate-level), who were advanced enough to develop knowledge of the target hearsay evidential markers into production, despite their complicated structures and the absence of the equivalent usage in the learners' L1 system. The learners' successful oral production could also be attributed to the task type employed in her study (use of the target forms in the hearsay report), a more controlled linguistic environment than spontaneous speech where much heavier demands are placed on language processing for L2 learners.

In contrast, the target feature examined in the present study is the ability to use the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in spontaneous speech for beginning-intermediate JFL learners. The acquisition of these forms is even challenging for advanced learners of Japanese in both instructed and uninstructed settings (Goto, 1998; Nazikian, 2005; Shibahara, 2002). In addition, L1 English has no linguistic forms corresponding to these particles, making the learning of their use a truly novel experience. Furthermore, interactional particles in Japanese have linguistically complex features in that they have no referential meaning (Cook, 1992; Silverstein, 1976) yet serve multiple functions with a single form, and have the quality that the particular function emerges *interactionally* as participants attempt to bring each other in and out of various types of conversational sequences (Morita, 2005). In the present study, although the experimental group overall outperformed the control group in the development of metapragmatic knowledge and oral performance using the particles, it appears to be difficult for some learners to activate their acquired knowledge while simultaneously producing pragmatically appropriate forms in the spontaneous conversational contexts. In their study on the impact of different task types (e.g., planned and unplanned production) on students' oral performance in L2 French, French and

Beaulieu (2016) remark, “spontaneous speech production is cognitively demanding, possibly preventing learners from allocating their attentional resources to the appropriate stylistic encoding of their intended speech” (p.67). Seen from this perspective, the gap between metapragmatic development and oral performance gains for some learners in the present study is not an unexpected outcome, given that the task demands (engaging in spontaneous conversations) may have increased students’ cognitive load to such an extent that it prevented them from successfully appropriating their previously learned information into appropriate production of the particles in the conversations.

In addition to the examination of the learners’ performance in the pre- and post-tests, the post-test was also designed to ask learners to evaluate their ability to use the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* at the beginning and the end of the semester respectively. In the last section that follows, we will focus on learners’ self-assessment of their ability to use the target pragmatic features over the semester and its relationship to their actual performance using the particles in the conversation sessions.

4.3 Learners’ self-evaluation of their ability to use particles

Self-evaluation, also known as *self-assessment* or *self-rating*, gives learners the opportunity to analyze their own speech and identify processes and problem areas by rating themselves according to several criteria or dimensions (Préfontaine, 2013). It also relates to the notion of *self-efficacy*, “people’s beliefs in their capabilities to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 2006, p. 307). Learners’ beliefs in their capabilities in performing a task play a vital role in predicting learners’ performance and learning success in different areas of educational contexts including those of second/foreign language (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Graham, 2006; Hsieh & Kang, 2010). In the present

study, the learners were asked in the post-test to evaluate their growth in the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* over the semester by marking the point on a 7-point Likert scale (7 being “most confident” and 1 being “least confident”), and subsequently providing justification of their growth. Learners’ self-evaluation will be quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed to examine the learners’ growth of confidence in their ability to use the particles over the semester, and changes in reasons they provided for their improvement. Additionally, analysis will focus on how learner ratings and changes in the self-evaluation are associated with their actual performance with the use of the particles in the conversation sessions. To investigate the impact of the proposed instruction on the learners’ self-ratings of the ability to use the particles, these data were also collected from learners in the control group.

4.3.1 Comparison of self-evaluation of the ability to use all particles between two groups

The following figures (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate overall self-evaluation of growth in the ability to use all particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* between the experimental group (N=14) and control group (N=9) over the instruction period. Students in the experimental group each evaluate their growth for three respective particles (a total of 42 responses) and those in the control group do the same (a total of 27 responses).

Figure 1. Pre-test confidence levels between two groups (all particles)

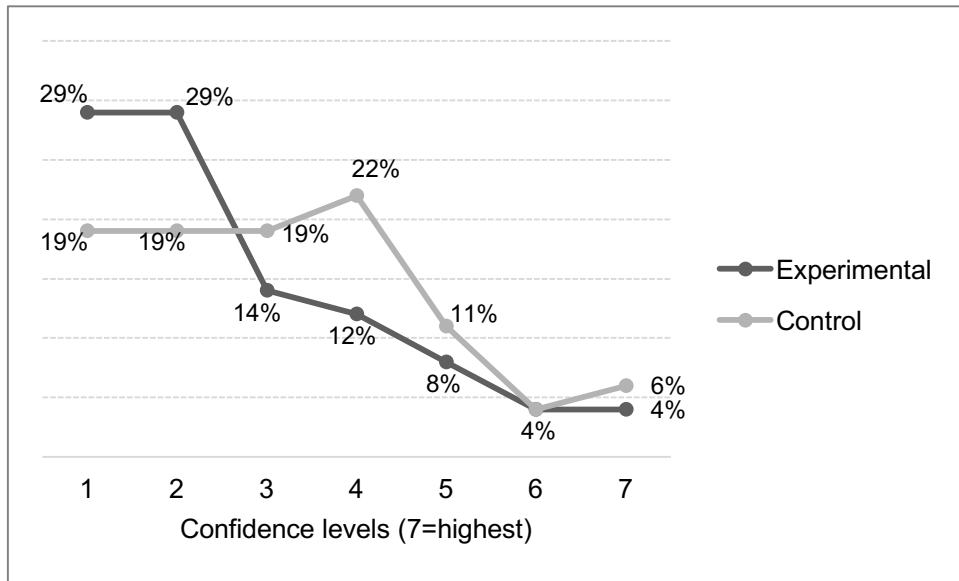
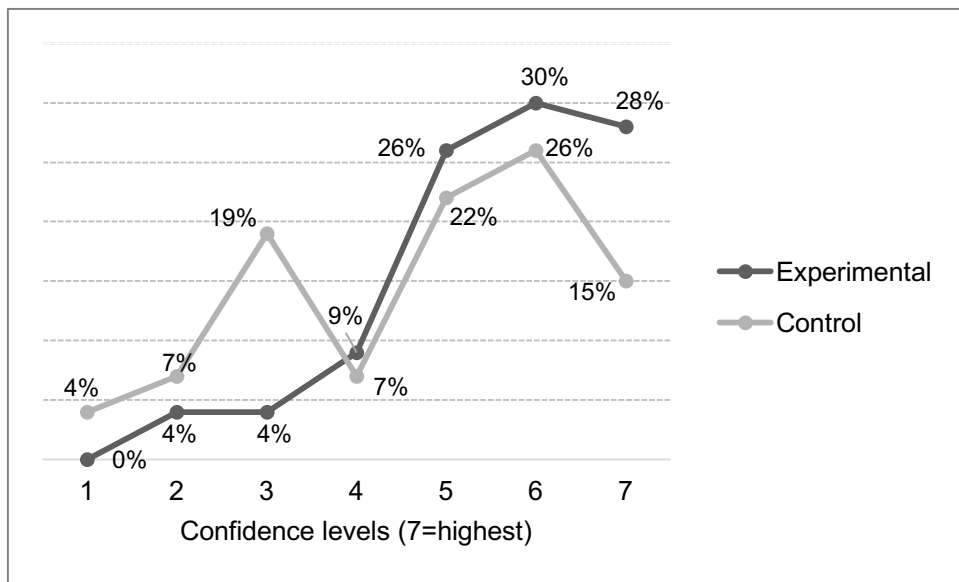


Figure 2. Post-test confidence levels between two groups (all particles)



As an overall tendency, both groups demonstrated similarities in their self-ratings of confidence levels at the pre-instruction stage; most responses from across students and particles for both groups gave the lowest rating of Level 1 and evaluated their growth less highly as the confidence level increases, indicating that only 1 or 2 responses from each

group gave a rating of Level 6 or 7. However, as Figure 2 shows, the two groups showed some different paths in the evaluation of their growth at the post-instruction stage; the experimental group marked a gradual increase in the number of students who evaluated their ability more highly towards Level 6 or 7. While the modal for both groups was a rating of 6 (13 out of 42 responses in experimental and 7 out of 27 in control), a total of 12 responses (28%) in the experimental group gave a highest rating of 7, in contrast to only 4 responses (15 %) in the control group. Moreover, the control group demonstrated some bimodal distribution, especially between the ratings of Levels 3 to 7; 5 responses (19%) were at Level 3 and the percentage dropped to as low as 7 % at Level 4, followed by a rise to 22% at Level 5. This fluctuation in the ratings by the control group indicates that about half of the class has lost its cohesion in the growth in the ability to use the particles over the semester; on the other hand, the consistent rise towards the higher ratings of Level 6 and 7 among the experimental group reflects the effectiveness of interventional treatment on the improvement of particle use for the whole student group by the end of the instruction period.

Now, we will turn to an analysis of learners' self-evaluation of the ability to use the respective particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, as well as reasons for their ratings between the two groups over the instruction period.

4.3.2 Self-evaluation of the ability to use the individual particles

Analysis here will focus on learners' self-evaluation of growth in their ability to use the respective particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* over the semester. Let us first examine the following figures (Figures 3 and 4), which illustrate the number of students in the experimental group according to the ratings they gave for the ability to use the individual

particles at the pre- and post-instruction stages, respectively. Then, the results of the experimental group will be compared to those of the control group to identify differences in how the learners showed changes in their self-evaluation.

Figure 3. Pre-test confidence levels of the individual particles (experimental group)

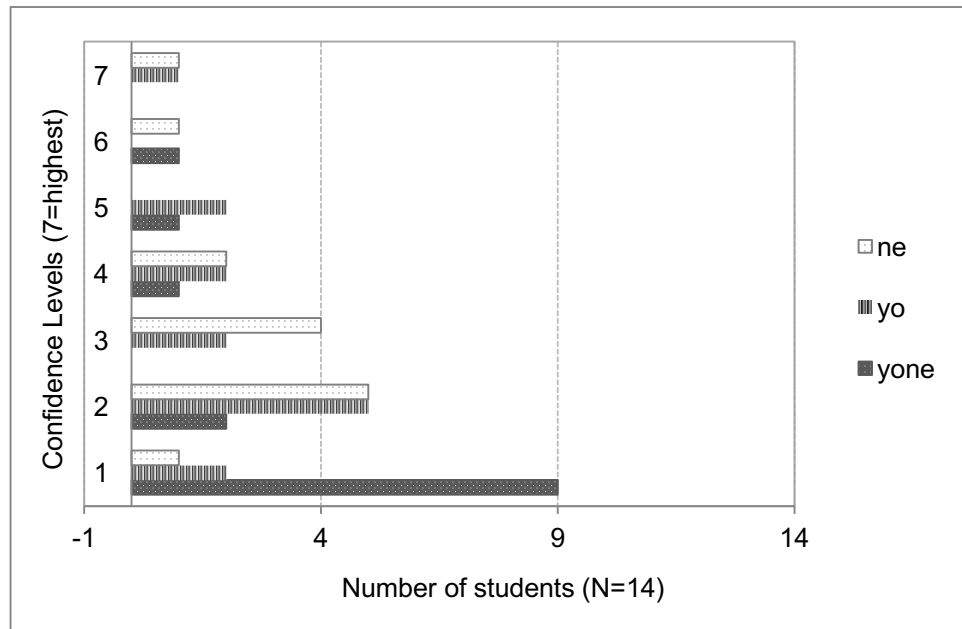
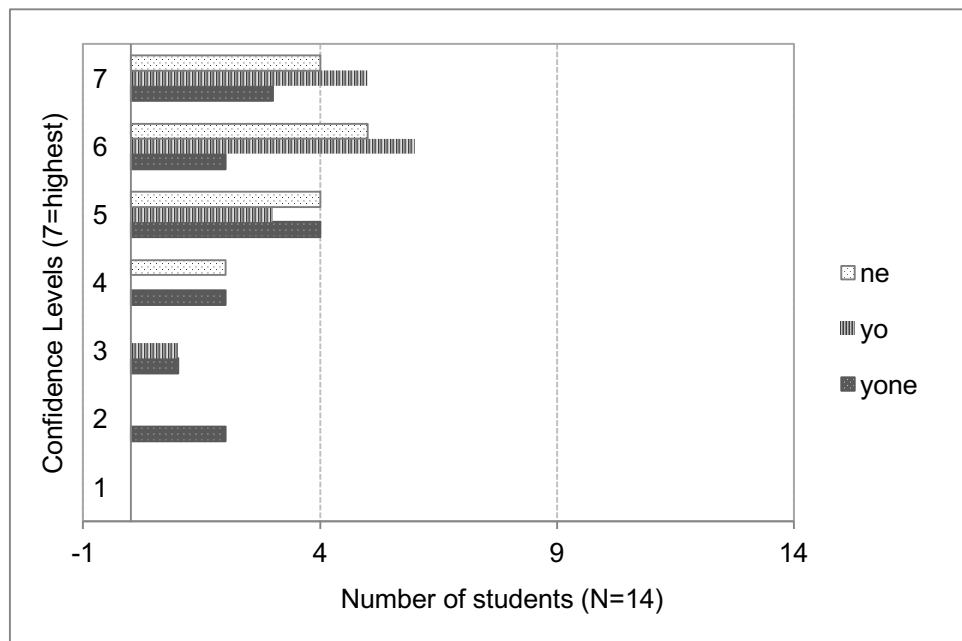


Figure 4. Post-test confidence levels of the individual particles (experimental group)



As we see in Figure 3, at the pre-instruction stage, many students in the experimental group were not confident in their ability to use the individual particles because they rated their ability within the range of Levels 1 to 3, except for a few students giving the higher ratings of 4 to 7. For the use of the respective particles, the most common ratings that the students gave were Level 2 and Level 3 for *ne*, Level 2 for *yo*, and Level 1 for *yone*. For their overall confidence in the usage of all three particles, 12 (86%) out of 14 students gave a low rating of 1 or 2. The lack of confidence that the learners showed towards the use of *yone* is consistent with the responses to the pre-test survey in which most students indicated little or no prior knowledge of the functions of *yone*. The learners' low ratings of the use of *ne* and *yo* indicates that although they showed some awareness of these particles in the pre-test survey, they did not necessarily know how to use them in actual interactions.

However, at the post-instruction stage, we can clearly observe the growth of confidence in the ability to use the respective particles among the students in the experimental group, as shown in Figure 4. The most common ratings for *ne* ranged from Levels 5 to 7; the same with *yo*; however, *yone* was more dispersed in range from Levels 2 to 7, with 5 being the most common rating. Again, this result suggests that *yone* was still the least familiar form for many learners even after they received the target instruction, compared to the other two particles, *ne* and *yo*. For the overall confidence in the usage of all three particles, more than 11 out of 14 students (79%) rated their ability to use them within the range of Levels 5 to 7 at the post-instruction stage, in contrast to their ratings of 1 and 2 at the pre-instruction stage

With regard to the learners' justification for growth in the ability to use the particles, the reason that was consistently found in the learners' responses was the effect of the target instruction that involved awareness-raising activities that "*helped to explain how it [ne] was used and when we are appropriate for the practice*" (Julia), as well as the communicative activity where the learners "*practiced how to apply 'yo'*" (Fred). As for the ability to use *yone*, some learners attributed their enhanced understanding to the instruction that included the explanation and discussion of its functions, especially because they "*didn't have any idea when 'yone' was to be used*" (Brian) and "*thought it was just the same as 'ne'*" (Emily). These reasons the learners provided for their growth indicate that instruction incorporating awareness-raising and communicative practice had a positive effect on the learners' development of self-efficacy concerning the ability to use the particles.

Further analysis of the learners' self-evaluation of growth in the ability to use the individual particles revealed that the change demonstrated by learners in the control group was more moderate than that observed with the experimental group. The following figures (Figures 5 and 6) illustrate the number of students in the control group according to the ratings they gave for their improvement in the ability to use the respective particles over the instruction period.

Figure 5. Pre-test confidence levels of the individual particles (control group)

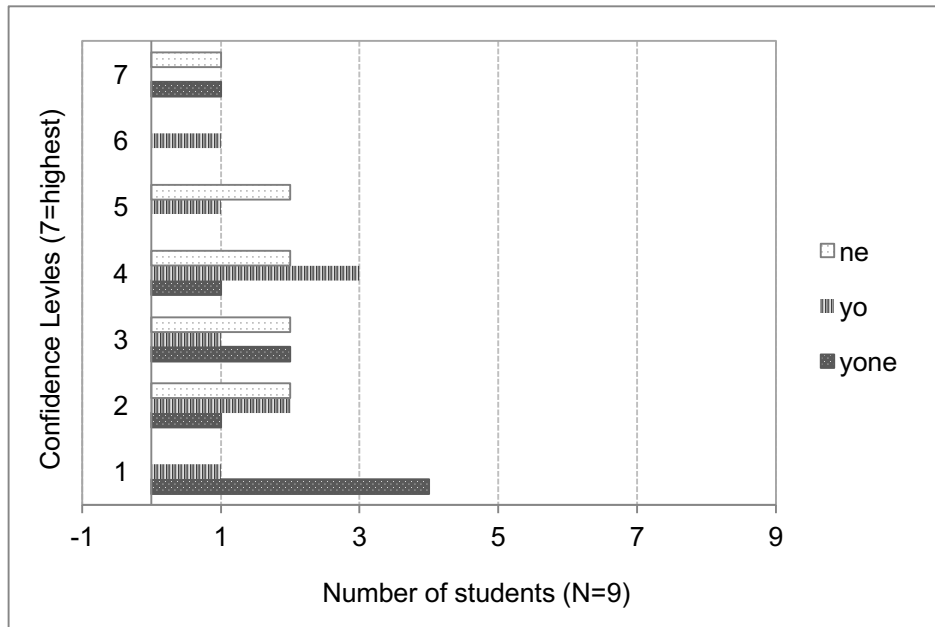
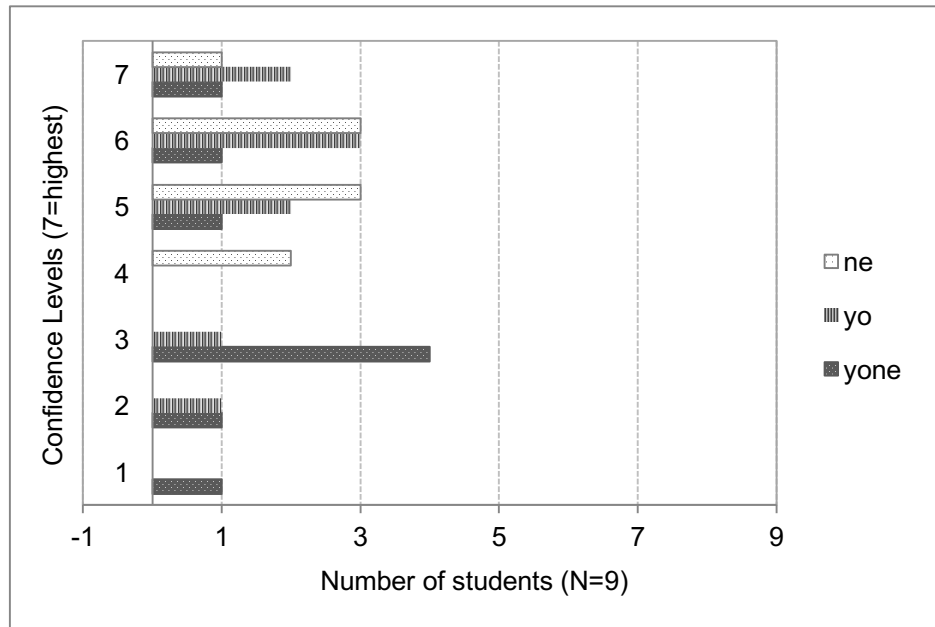


Figure 6. Post-test confidence levels of the individual particles (control group)



As shown in Figure 5, more than half of the students in the control group rated their ability to use the particles within the range of Levels 1 to 4, compared to the experimental group learners whose ratings were concentrated on Levels 1 and 2 at the

pre-instruction stage. This shows that more learners in the experimental group might have been less confident with their use of the particles than those in the control group at the beginning of the semester. With the particle *yone*, however, both the experimental and control groups demonstrated similar behaviors in giving the lowest rating of 1, indicating that the majority of learners in both groups started with the least confidence in their knowledge of how to use *yone*.

When examining the control group learners' ratings at the post-instruction stage in Figure 6, we find that the most common ratings provided by the learners were Levels 5 and 6 for *ne* and *yo*, and Level 3 for *yone*. This suggests that although more learners in the control group showed their confidence in the ability to use the particles *ne* and *yo* towards the end of the post-instruction period, *yone* was still the least familiar form to develop for most learners in this group, as similarly observed in the experimental group. For the growth in the ability to use the particles over the semester, a few learners mentioned that they benefited from watching Japanese dramas or animation, and from interacting with NS peers in the conversation sessions, while others did not provide any reasons for their improvement. One of the control group learners, Erin, commented that her enhanced understanding of *ne* and *yo* was attributed to "*hearing it used more often*" in the conversation sessions, but she gave a lower rating (Level 3) for *yone* on the grounds that it "*did not come up much.*" It can be inferred from these responses that the learners in the control group attributed their self-evaluated growth to more implicit learning opportunities such as socializing with NS peers, as well as the availability of some linguistic affordances in and out of the classroom contexts.

Interestingly, there was one learner in the control group, Ken, who did not evaluate his growth as highly as his other classmates, although he was perhaps the most advanced learner of all the participants in this study. He changed his ratings by only one point (from 4 to 5), commenting that he has not had much practice in conversation with *ne* despite the evidence that he used *ne* productively and appropriately in the conversation sessions. With his use of *yo* and *yone*, however, his ratings remained the same at Level 3 over time, with a reason that he “rarely” uses *yo* or *yone* to new people or people he only knows in class; that is, the learner might have chosen not to produce *yo* or *yone* even when there were opportunities where these particles could have been used in the conversations. However, without a follow-up interview, we cannot determine whether Ken’s choice of not using *yo* and *yone* can be explained by the issue of learner subjectivity or his misconception that *yo* and *yone* can only be used in a close relationship. This example illustrates a clear difference in developing an understanding and use of the particles between the learners who received the pragmatics-focused instruction and those who did not; it might even be difficult for a highly proficient learner like Ken to develop an understanding of how the particles can be used if no instruction was provided. This finding may be related to an instance found in Masuda (2011) where one male learner studying abroad in Japan refused to use *ne* because he misconceived it as a particle for females. These examples from Masuda’s study and from the present study suggest that a strongly held belief may prevent some JFL learners from embracing appropriate input even though they may have ample interaction in the target speech community. In such cases, the important role of explicit instruction in the learner’s greater understanding about the use of the target features in a pragmatically appropriate context becomes clear.

To better understand how the learners' self-evaluation of the target ability relates to their oral performance using the particles, we will now turn to a qualitative analysis of the relationship between the two in the following section.

4.3.3 Relationship between self-evaluations of the ability to use the particles and oral performance

Further analysis of the relationship between the learners' self-evaluations of their ability to use *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* and their oral performance using the particles reveals that there was a positive relationship between the two for the experimental group, while no such relationship was evident in the control group. For instance, Fred and Lucas from the experimental group, who both gave a rating of 7 for their ability of *yo* and *yone* by the end of the semester, demonstrated their increased ability to produce *yo* and *yone* appropriately in the conversation sessions; on the other hand, Jay from the control group, who gave a rating of 7 for all three particles, was only found to produce *ne* in his actual performances throughout the semester. However, additional analysis also found that some learners in both groups rated their particle use as highly as 5 or 6 by the end of the semester, though the ratings did not accurately reflect their actual production of the particles in the conversation sessions; these learners attributed their higher ratings to their enhanced understanding through the explicit instruction for the experimental group, and/or to the frequent exposure to the target forms in the implicit learning opportunities (e.g., conversation sessions with NS peers) for both groups. The gap between self-evaluations of their ability and actual performance also implies that their attempt to 'try out' the particles during the conversation sessions contributed to the growth of the learners' confidence in their ability to use the particles.

The positive relationship between self-evaluations and actual performance for the experimental group, as indicated in the students' responses for their growth in the use of the particles, revealed that the proposed instruction had an overall beneficial effect on the increase of the learners' self-efficacy (e.g., beliefs in the ability to use the particles) and their actual development of interactional competence using the particles. On the other hand, closer analysis also revealed that learners' self-evaluations of their ability did not necessarily correspond to their actual competence at the individual level. This discrepancy can be explained by different variables. People who have experienced successful performance in accomplishing a task tend to have high self-efficacy, and past experiences thus play a vital role in enhancing self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997; Çakir & Alici, 2009; Raoofi et al., 2012).

In addition, students' lack of accuracy in inferring their proficiency can have an impact on variability in self-assessment, because students can be either too harsh or too self-praising and are generally less skilled in accurately estimating their productive skills such as speaking and writing (Ross, 1998). In the present study, the discrepancy between learners' self-ratings of their ability and actual competence suggests that their successful experiences in socializing with NS peers and/or enhanced learning through the target instruction all appeared to affect the development of learners' confidence in using the particles, possibly leading some learners to overestimate their actual competence (MacIntyre et al., 1997; Ross, 1998). However, the learners' overestimation of competence may not necessarily be problematic if a positive bias in one's ability can actually aid the language learning process by increasing the learners' willingness to communicate in the L2 (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996).

Based on these findings from previous L2 studies and from the present study, it can be concluded that: 1) the overall positive relationship between self-assessments and actual L2 competence for the experimental group underscores the critical role of an explicit instructional approach in the development of learners' self-efficacy beliefs as well as performance gains; and 2) the non-linear relationship between learners' self-assessments of their ability and actual performance at the level of individual learners depends on different variables such as learners' L2 proficiency, degrees of self-efficacy beliefs, and the quality of learning experiences. These findings help us to identify some aspects of the complex relationship of the effects of instructional methods in relation to learners' linguistic maturity, the level of cognitive demand and complexity involved in the instructional targets, and the length of instructional treatment (Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Narita, 2012; Roever, 2009; Taguchi, 2011). Similarly, Takahashi (2010) argues that the same interventions that could benefit learners with high proficiency may not equally benefit learners whose linguistic competence is still underdeveloped. It can be argued from the results of the present study that although the overall positive relationship between learners' self-evaluations of the target ability and their actual competence confirms the robustness of the instructional effects, the individual variability in the relationship between the two suggests that a semester-long instruction might not be sufficient for some learners at this level (beginning/intermediate) to be "linguistically ready" to fully develop their ability to use such pragmatically complex L2 resources as interactional particles that would correspond to the growth of their self-confidence. This point regarding time spent on instruction (length of treatment) has also been raised by Yoshimi (2001b) to account for the difficulty students in her study had in developing a

certain aspect of pragmatic resources relevant to the internal structuring of the telling of a personal narrative. Findings of previous research in fact support this claim by showing that the beginning-level JFL learners who received treatment consisting of explicit instruction and conversational practice with NSs for two semesters outperformed those learners who only received said treatment for one semester in L2 pragmatic development of the plain and *desu/masu* forms (K. Ishida, 2009ab) and in participating effectively in the activity of small talk (Iwai, 2010, 2013) in Japanese.

Therefore, sustained, longer-term instruction may be necessary to investigate the effects of instructional treatment for the development of pragmatically complex targets for learners with different proficiency levels and its potential to bridge the gap between learners' perception and knowledge, and their actual performance in L2.

4.4 Discussion

To answer the research question that addresses the instructional effectiveness for the learners' metapragmatic development of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone*, the results of the pre- and post-tests were examined to identify any quantitative and qualitative changes in the awareness of the use of particles in various discourse situations for learners in the experimental and control groups. The questionnaires asked the students 1) to provide written descriptions of pragmatic functions and (non)use of the particles in similar discourse contexts and 2) to answer fill-in-the-blank questions in which they were required to choose the most appropriate form (*ne*, *yo*, and *yone*) embedded in short dialogs, and subsequently give brief explanations for their choice. Analysis of written responses provided by the experimental and control groups revealed patterns which provide evidence for qualitative changes and development in terms of

learners' metapragmatic awareness of the discourse functions and stances indexed by the particles in the described discourse situations. In addition to the questions given in the pre-test, the post-test asked that students in both groups evaluate their possible growth in the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* over the instruction period. Learners' self-evaluations of their ability were employed 1) to analyze learners' confidence levels in their capability of using the particles by marking on a 7-point Likert scale at the beginning and the end of the semester, and 2) to identify the sources of such growth for the two groups. Additionally, analysis also focuses on how the changes reflected in the learners' self-evaluation are associated with their actual competence using the particles in the conversation sessions, which I will extensively discuss in the following two chapters.

Analysis of pre-test data revealed that that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the quality of metapragmatic understanding of the discourse functions of the particles. The learners' descriptions of the functions of each particle provided by most students of both groups resemble those found in the L2 textbooks: *yo* expresses the single speaker's viewpoint or "emphasis" of statement, *ne* is used to ask for confirmation and agreement; and for *yone*, most students provided the English equivalents such as 'don't you think~?' and 'isn't it?' Findings of students' written responses in the pre-test suggest that while they demonstrated some textbook-derived knowledge regarding the particles, most of their mentions narrowly focused on the single speaker's marking of stance through the particles and failed to reflect an awareness that the particles serve a resource for the speaker and the addressee's joint stance-taking in interaction.

Focusing on students' written responses in the post-test, we found that the students who received pragmatics-focused instruction demonstrated greater awareness of the intersubjective use of the particles, while the control group students developed some awareness of such functions. More specifically, both the experimental and control group students demonstrated their understanding of the use of *ne* and *yo* as resources for displaying shared or non-shared stances between interlocutors. The positive change demonstrated by the students in the control group indicates that it is unlikely that the pragmatics-focused instruction is the single contributing factor to the learners' enhanced awareness of the particles; indeed, the fact that most students in both groups had already exhibited some basic awareness of the functions and use of *ne* and *yo* at the pre-instruction stage suggests a readiness to continue developing this understanding based on input both from within and outside of the classroom. The conversation sessions afforded implicit socialization opportunities for the learners to notice and gain more awareness of how these particles were being used as they interacted with NS peers. On the other hand, the experimental group outperformed the control group in their understanding of *yone* over the instruction period, suggesting the effectiveness of explicit instruction on the metapragmatic development of *yone* for the experimental group. The experimental group learners' understanding of *yone* in the pre-test was not qualitatively different from that of the control group learners, with their mentions of *yone* being equivalent to English tag questions such as 'don't you think?' or to a combined function of *yo* and *ne* such as stating and confirming. At the post-instruction stage, however, while the control group showed little or no change in their understanding, the experimental group demonstrated greater awareness of *yone* that reflects what they were instructed and that extends beyond

instruction, in that they developed their own ways of defining the functions and use of *yone* in the described discourse situation.

Regarding the fill-in-the-blank questions, analysis focused on evidence for change between the pre- and post-tests demonstrated through the learners' selection of a form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone*, and nonuse) and reasons for their choice of that form in the described situations. Overall analysis of the learners' selection of a form in the fill-in-the-blank section revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the ability to choose *yo* and *yone* as the appropriate forms at the post-instruction stage. However, both the experimental and control groups demonstrated a markedly reduced capacity to choose the appropriate marking of *ne* between the pre- and post-tests. The reasons for such negative evidence for both groups could be that: 1) more students in both groups might have incidentally chosen the correct particle *ne* since it was the most familiar form compared to the other two at the pre-instruction stage; 2) the experimental group students could not fully develop their understanding of the use of *ne* in the initial-turn assessment even after receiving the target instruction. The learners' incomplete understanding of the initial-turn *ne* indicates that it is less accessible to development under the exposure and/or treatment conditions of this study; in speaker turns, it requires the ability to judge whether what is being assessed can be jointly shared or relevant for alignment between participants, while it seems easier to do so in listener turns where the assessable has already been shared at the time of the receipt. This finding is also consistent with the evidence of the experimental group learners' underuse of the initial-turn assessment *ne* in the conversation sessions.

Furthermore, a closer examination of changes in the individual learners' performance in the fill-in-the-blank questions between the pre- and post-tests revealed that although the experimental group (93%) overall performed significantly better than the control group (67%) in the appropriate use of *yo* by the end of the post-instruction period, as indicated in Table 6, as we saw in Tables 7 and 8, the number of individual students who chose *yo* as the correct form in the post-test is greater for the control group (56%) than the experimental group (43%).

On the other hand, Tables 7 and 8 also revealed that there is a decrease in the number of individual students who chose *ne* as the correct form, from 2 (14%) to 1 (8%) for the experimental group, and from 2 (22%) to 1 (11%) for the control group, respectively in the post-test. Surprisingly, 9 students (64%) in the experimental group failed to choose *ne* in both tests and more than half of the students chose *yo* erroneously in the post-test, indicating that many students in the experimental group could not develop their understanding and use of the initial-turn *ne* and have overgeneralized the instructed use of *yo* to the discourse context where *ne* would be highly expected.

In contrast, there was a clear difference in the learners' ability to choose *yone* appropriately between the experimental and control groups over the instruction period, consistent with the overall change between the two groups as observed earlier. The number of students who chose *yone* as the correct form in the post-test increased from 3 (21%) to 6 (43%) for the experimental group, compared to no significant increase from 2 (22%) to 2 (22%) for the control group. Such a discrepancy in the learners' awareness of *yone* between the two groups suggests an important role for pragmatics-focused

instruction in facilitating learners' metapragmatic understanding of less familiar pragmatic features such as *yone*, which are often difficult to learn only through exposure.

Qualitative analysis of students' reasons for their choice in the fill-in-the-blank questions revealed that the experimental group demonstrated greater metapragmatic development than the control group. It reflected changes from an understanding of *yo* as an index of a single speaker's stance or action to that of a resource to display the incongruence of epistemic stance between participants. Most responses provided by the experimental group students illustrated greater understanding that *yone* is used to evaluate something between people who have equivalent epistemic access to the referent. Notably, a few students in the experimental group displayed higher awareness by commenting on the contingent display of stance-taking indexed by *yone* in the assessment sequence including, "*At this point both speakers know that the cake is good and are agreeing*", while the understanding of the control group did not change from a single speaker's attempt to display stance through the particle: "*stating and confirming*"; "*excitedly confirming the thought and agreeing*."

Despite the evidence of relatively inconsistent quantitative gains in the learners' ability to provide the correct particles for the described discourse situations on the post-test within each group, we can see a qualitative difference in how the students discuss the pragmatic functions and uses of the particles between the two groups. That is, while the experimental group learners' pre-instruction understanding was limited to a single speakers' indexing of stance through the particles, they began to develop an awareness that the speaker's stance marking is motivated by his/her interactional relationship with the addressee at the post-instruction stage. For example, 3 students (22%) of the

experimental group who chose *ne* appropriately at the post-instruction stage also showed greater understanding of the functions of *ne* (i.e., more than just agreeing or confirming). The change reflected in the students' comments on *ne* in the post-test indicates their enhanced awareness of how the speaker builds his/her stance, such as shared affect or alignment, upon the addressee's stance about what is being assessed. Similarly, while their pre-instruction understanding of *yone* seemed very limited as in "agreeing," as seen in Beth's comment, the students in the experimental group developed their understanding of the expected stance to be constructed upon B's displayed stance (his/her liking of the cake) by the end of the post-instruction stage. This suggests that the proposed instruction that incorporates awareness-raising and conversation practices had a beneficial effect on learners' increased understanding of the discourse-pragmatic basis for their choices of the target forms in the given discourse contexts.

Additional analysis examined the extent to which learners' metapragmatic development relates to the development of interactional competence focusing on the use of the particles in the conversation sessions. The relationship between learners' metapragmatic knowledge and production skills appeared more complex than some of the findings from previous L2 studies regarding awareness-raising components on pragmatic development for L2 learners. The conversation data revealed that while the experimental group on the whole performed significantly better than the control group in their ability to use the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* productively in the conversation sessions with native speakers and peers, there were individual differences among learners in the experimental group in the application of metapragmatic knowledge to their effective use of the particles: 1) learners who were successfully able to appropriate metapragmatic

knowledge into their oral production of the target pragmatic features; 2) learners who showed explicit metapragmatic knowledge which remained unavailable for application in oral production; and 3) learners who did not demonstrate explicit knowledge but were able to demonstrate positive changes in their oral performance over time. These findings lend support to the previous findings that different variables such as learners' proficiency levels, learner subjectivity, learnability of the target pragmatic forms, and analytic skills might predict the degree to which metapragmatic development affect the learners' ability to produce the target pragmatic forms (Narita, 2012; Roever, 2009; Takahashi, 2010): Even if learners may be able to notice certain pragmatic features, they do not necessarily know how to use the target pragmatic expressions; or those learners who may be "cognitively ready" to produce the target pragmatic features are not necessarily capable of verbalizing the co-occurring patterns required to produce the appropriate pragmatic expressions, which may be the case with the present study.

Additionally, former L2 research on task effects adopting an information-processing perspective has shown that pre-task planning time reduces the burden on students' attentional resources, facilitating their language processing; however, removing the planning time on oral production tasks significantly increases learners' cognitive load, which adversely affects processing skills (Ahmadian, et al., 2015; Ellis, 2009; French & Beaulieu, 2016). In her study on the development of pragmatic comprehension and production of speech acts by EFL learners in Japan, Taguchi (2012) identified the distinct patterns of learner development between *knowledge* required for comprehension and production of speech intentions, and *processing* as the ability to process pragmatic knowledge fluently in real time. She further confirmed that situational variables affect

the rate and patterns of development: the complex nature of linguistic expressions involved in high-imposition speech acts slowed the progress in appropriateness scores, while low-imposition speech acts showed a steady, incremental development over time. In the present study, the evidence of discrepancy between the development of learners' metapragmatic knowledge and oral performance using the particles suggests that the demands of the conversation sessions associated with spontaneous language use may have greatly increased the cognitive load, possibly constraining learners' activation of their acquired knowledge for contextually appropriate uses of the particles in real-time oral performance. This finding is also associated with the recent epistemological shift in SLA theories that underscores a dynamic, complex system perspective in the investigation of language development (e.g., de Bot, 2008; Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). This perspective shares the views that language development is inseparable from context and individuals' interactions with the environment and involves intra- and intervariability, which provides "idiosyncratic details of individual learners' developmental trajectories that are otherwise masked out in the analysis of group-level means" (Taguchi, 2017, p.15).

Focusing on the experimental group learners' self-evaluations of growth in the use of particles over the semester, we found a positive relationship between learners' self-efficacy beliefs and actual competence using the particles, although such a relationship was not evident in the control group. The reasons the experimental group learners provided for their growth indicate that the explicit instructional approach (awareness-raising and communicative practices) benefited the learners' development of self-efficacy beliefs that they can use the particles, as well as their actual use in the conversation

sessions. As observed earlier, Ken, the most advanced control group learner in this study, gave a rating of 3 for his use of *yo* and *yone* throughout the semester, justifying that he “rarely” uses these particles to people who are new and unfamiliar, while his NS partner was found to use all three particles productively with the learner. This example indicates that merely receiving input from the implicit socialization opportunities might not be sufficient to help the learners (re)conceptualize and develop pragmatically appropriate uses of the target forms (cf. Bouton, 1996; K. Ishida, 2009b; Kasper & Roever, 2005) and that instruction is a crucial response to certain areas of L2 pragmatics that are impervious to exposure to target speech norms and an impoverished environment for practice in a foreign language setting (Jeon & Kaya, 2006).

Furthermore, the analysis also identified the gap between learners’ self-ratings and their actual competence at the individual level. This discrepancy suggests that learners’ lack of accuracy in inferring their proficiency and the quality of learning experiences in L2 may impact variability in self-assessment. That is, the learners’ successful learning opportunities in and out of the classroom and/or through the target instruction all appear to have affected the increase of self-efficacy beliefs that they “can do”, which in turn could have triggered some bias or overestimation in the perception of their actual L2 competence (MacIntyre et al., 1997; Ross, 1998).

In sum, findings from the pre- and post-tests support the effectiveness of the proposed instructional approach on the learners’ increased metapragmatic awareness regarding the use of the particles, while there was individual variability within the two groups in the ability to provide the correct particles for the described discourse situations. Especially, the written responses provided by the learners revealed a qualitative

difference in their metapragmatic development regarding the functions and stances indexed by the particles between the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction and those who did not. Greater change demonstrated by the experimental group compared to the control group reflects an enhanced understanding that use of the particles does not merely index a single speaker's stance or action but is rather motivated by the speaker's construction of stance in relation to the addressee's in interaction. Additional analysis of the influence of learners' metapragmatic knowledge on their oral production of the particles evidenced less linearity of the relationship at the individual level, although the experimental group overall performed significantly better than the control group in the ability to produce *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation sessions. Furthermore, the effects of the proposed instruction have also been shown to affect the learners' growth of confidence in the ability to use the target particles, which also corresponds to the development of interactional competence using the particles over the semester.

In the following chapter, we will examine the effectiveness of the instructional approach on the learners' development of interactional competence as evidenced by the increased ability to use the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation sessions with NSs of Japanese and peer learners.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNERS' EMERGENT USE OF *NE*, *YO*, AND *YONE*

IN CONVERSATION SESSIONS WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS AND PEERS

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the learners' production of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conversation sessions with NS conversation partners (CP) and classroom peers. More specifically, to identify instructional effectiveness with respect to the students' use of the particles as linguistic, cultural and interactional resources in spontaneous conversation, the analysis focuses on particle use that is consistent with instructional content, i.e., use of the particles necessary to participate in a variety of joint stance taking activities in Japanese.

The analytical focus is on the experimental group learners' use of particles, with the goal of determining the degree of their uptake of the pragmatics-focused instruction as evidenced in the conversation data collected in Sessions 2, 3 and 4 (Pre-instruction 2, Post-instruction 1, and Post-instruction 2). Data from Session 1 (Pre-instruction 1) is excluded from the present analysis because most of the conversations consist of initial information exchanges between two speakers introducing themselves to each other or conversing for the first time in which use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* would be less expected than a conversational situation in which the participants' relationship has already been established. For example, it is uncommon for the particle *ne* to be used without first establishing that the participants have a prior relationship, nor in formal occasions (Morita, 2005). In this study, both experimental and control group data will be reviewed for evidence of particle use, and the uses in the two data sets will be compared to identify the robustness of interventional effects on the students' use of the target

particles in conversational opportunities with native speakers and peer learners over the semester period.

5.1 Learners' particle use in the pre-instruction period

Comparison of the experimental and control group data in the Pre-instruction 2 period reveals that more students (6 out of 8 students⁷) in the control group produced the particle *ne* appropriately than those (4 out of 14 students, 29%) in the experimental group. Moreover, one student from the control group produced one instance of *yo* appropriately, while one student from the experimental group also used both *yo* and *yone* but did so anomalously. There were quite a few anomalous occurrences of *ne* in both groups (27 in experimental and 13 in control). I will discuss the learners' anomalous particle use in both groups in more detail in the next chapter.

The following tables (Tables 9 and 10) respectively illustrate occurrences of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the utterances of students in the experimental and control groups at the Pre-instruction 2 (Session 2) stage. We can see that students in both groups produced the particle *ne* in assessment turns where interlocutors display their affective involvement in the activity.

⁷ One student in the control group (9 in total) was absent on the day of Session 2 (Pre-instruction 2).

Table 9. Learners' use of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* with NS partners (Session 2, experimental group)

Pre-2 Student (N=14)	<i>ne</i>			<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	Total
	Initial-turn	Follow-up turn	Anomalous	Use (anomalous use)	Use (anomalous use)	
Ryan	0	1	18	0	0	19
Julie	0	4	1	0	0	5
Kelly	0	1	3	0	0	4
Brian	0	0	4	0	0	4
Tara	1	1	1	0	0	3
Trey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ann	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lucas	0	0	0	0	0	0
James	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fred	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emily	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kyle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)
Total	1	7	27	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)

Table 10. Learners' use of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* with NS partners (Session 2, control group)

Session-2 Student (N=9)	<i>ne</i>			<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	Total
	Initial-turn	Follow-up turn	Anomalous	Use (anomalous use)	Use (anomalous use)	
Nancy	0	1	6	0	0	7
Mia	0	2	3	0	0	5
Ken	0	3	1	0	0	4
Jay	0	0	3	0	0	3
Abby	0	0	0	2 (1)	0	2 (1)
Nick	0	2	0	0	0	2
Bob	0	2	0	0	0	2
Jess	0	1	0	0	0	1
Erin	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	0	11	13	2 (1)	0 (0)	26 (1)

5.1.1 Particle use by the experimental group

We first observe evidence of particle use (base-line data) by the experimental group students during conversations with their NS partners. The pre-instruction data reveals that the individual students in this group fall into three different groups: non-users of particles, users of *ne* in the follow-up turn assessment, and one student who used *ne* in the initial turn.

5.1.1.1 Minimal response turns

Out of the non-users of particles in the experimental group (Table 9, first 8 names), some students used minimal expressions of acknowledgment such as reactive tokens *ahh* or English *oh*, and others were able to provide assessments towards the topic in progress but did not mark their assessments in the follow-up turns despite the fact that particle in such turns is highly expected. Emily is one of the students who used minimal listener responses and laughter with no follow-up assessment turns. Emily has studied Japanese for three years and has no daily exposure to Japanese.

Excerpt 4 Emily: Learner Hana: CP Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. Group

- 01 Emily: *fuyu yasumi wa nani suru no?*
winter break TOP what do IP
'What are you gonna do for the winter break?'
- 02 Hana: *fuyuyasumi wa:: bikku airando.*
winter break TOP big island
'I'm going to the Big Island for the winter break.'
- 03 Emily: *(.)n?*
huh
'Huh?'
- 04 Hana: *bikku airando ni(.)iku no.*
big island LOC go IP
'I'm going to the Big Island.'
- 05 (0.8)
- 06 Hana: Big(.)Island_i
- 07 Emily: [ohhh!
oh
'Oh!'
- 08 Hana: [ikimasu.
go
'I'm going there.'
- 09 Emily: hah hah

- 10 Hana: yeaah
yeah
'yeah'
- 11 Emily: [hah hah
- 12 Hana: *itta koto aru?*
go-PST NOM have
'Have you been there?'
- 13 Emily: *nnn*
uhm
'uhm'
- 14 Hana: [*bikku airando.*
big island
'To the Big Island?'

In the beginning of this segment, Emily initially displays difficulty in comprehending where her NS partner Hana plans to go for her winter break, because of her Japanese pronunciation of *bikku airando* ('The Big Island'). As Hana repeats the trouble-source by code-switching to English *Big Island* with a rising intonation in line 6, Emily marks the receipt of new information with the-change-of-state token *ohhh!* (Heritage, 1984) in English in the following turn (line 7). Hana then continues to say with excitement that she is going to the island *yeaaah*, to which Emily responds with laughter (line 11). This particular turn could serve an interactional opportunity for Emily to initiate an assessment activity in response to Hana's trip to the Big Island. This type of interactional sequence (Question, Answer, Follow-up response) is regularly observed in similar contexts that emerge in subsequent conversation sessions. The lack of verbal response in the follow-up turn at line 11 suggests that the learner has yet to develop L2 resources to use assessments and express a personal stance toward the co-participant's talk in the ongoing interaction.

5.1.1.2 Absence of particle use

Two experimental group students, Kyle and Beth, are among those students who used no particles to express alignment in their assessment turns. Kyle has been studying Japanese for one year at college and has occasional exposure to Japanese outside of class when talking with friends. Beth has studied Japanese for five years including high school and has daily interaction with Japanese customers at work (about 8 hours per week). Despite their opportunities for hearing and/or using Japanese outside of the classroom, these students did not use any particles at all, even in discourse environments where use of an interactional particle in the assessment activity would be strongly expected.

Excerpt 5 Kyle: Learner Sumi: CP Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. Group

(Kyle is commenting on the headband that his NS partner, Sumi, is wearing)

- 01 Kyle: hah It's nice.
- 02 (1.5)
- 03 Sumi: *waikiki de katta.*
Waikiki LOC buy-PST
'I bought it in Wakiki.'
- 04 Kyle: *aa! doko desu ka.*
oh where COP Q
Oh! Where?'
- 05 Sumi: *waikiki no:: =*
Waikiki LK
'Wakiki'
- 06 Kyle: = toy store?
- 07 Sumi: [No, Asian stuff =
- 08 Kyle: [aa
oh
'Oh'
- 09 Sumi: = store_z hah

- 10 Kyle: *aaa, ii desu.* ((absence of particle *ne*))
 oh good COP
 ‘Oh, nice.’
- 11 Sumi: *ajian no omise de.*
 Asian LK store LOC
 ‘At an Asian store.’
- 12 Kyle: Yeah, I could never wear a headband.
- 13 Sumi: hah you wanna try? hah

Prior to this segment of interaction, Kyle gave a positive comment in English on his NS partner’s (Sumi) headband saying it is interesting and continues his English assessment *It’s nice* in line 1. After a 1.5 second pause, Sumi responds by saying she bought it in Waikiki. In line 4, Kyle initiates topic development by asking about the store location in Waikiki, *doko desu ka* (‘Where?’). As Sumi is beginning to answer his question by saying *waikiki no::*, Kyle aligns to complete her preceding utterance with an attempt to guess in English, *toy store?* (lines 5 and 6). In the following turn, Sumi immediately negates his guessing in an overlapped turn and continues by saying in English, *Asian stuff store?* in a rising intonation to confirm Kyle’s knowledge about this particular store in Waikiki. Then in line 10, beginning with an acknowledgment token *aaa* (‘ok’) in response to the information just given by Sumi, Kyle gives a positive assessment in Japanese *ii desu* without the particle *ne*, possibly meaning ‘That’s cool’ in English. While the participants maintain alignment to each other’s ongoing talk as evidenced by the co-constructed turns (lines 5 and 6) and collaborative code-switching to English (lines 12 and 13), the explicit absence of the particle *ne* in the assessment *ii desu* produced by the learner results in his producing talk with a tone that indexes psychological distance from the joint activity constructed thus far between the learner and

his conversation partner; in other words, the production of *ii desu* without the particle is a neutral, non-aligning move toward the NS partner's previous talk, positioning the learner as no longer participating in the collaborative construction of stance in the ongoing conversation.

The following excerpt illustrates another instance in which a particle is absent in the learner's use of an assessment turn. Out of 14 students in the experimental group, Beth was one of the students who used a more casual style of Japanese: She predominantly used the plain form in the conversation with her NS partner, Nao. Nao also spoke casually using the plain form throughout the entire conversation session, productively using *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, whereas Beth produced no particles. In this excerpt, Beth produces an assessment turn where another particle *yo*, a resource to advance epistemic authority (Morita, 2002), is expected.

Excerpt 6 Beth: Learner Nao: CP
 Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

- 01 Beth: *ichiban daisukina kurasu wa nani?*
 best favorite class COP what
 'What's your favorite class?'
- 02 Nao: *ichiban daisukina no wa ne::nnnnnn, ichiban sukina no wa ne, watashi no*
 best favorite NOM TOP IP well best favorite NOM TOP IP I LK
- 03 *senmon, suki(.)da kedo,*
 major like COP CP
 'My favorite class is, well, my favorite class is my major, but'
- 04 Beth: *hai.*
 yes
 'Yes.'
- 05 Nao: *muzukashii kedo suki.*
 difficult CP like
 'It's difficult but I like it.'
- 06 Beth: *[a, hai, soo desu ka.*

oh yes so COP Q
'Oh, yes, is that so?'

- 07 Nao: *ja, are? senmon wa nani?*
then well major TOP what
'Then, well, what is your major?'
- 08 Beth: *aa, economics.*
uh economics
'Uh economics.'
- 09 Nao: economics.
- 10 Beth: [*hai, daisuki.*]
yes love
'Yes, I love it.'
- 11 Nao: *DAISUKI:::?*
love
'Do you love it?'
- 12 Beth: [*hai, daisuki.*]
yes love
'Yes, I love it.'
- 13 Nao: [*USO:::!! zettai muzukashi:::!*]
lie absolutely difficult
'You are lying! It's absolutely difficult!'
- 14 Beth: *muzukashikunai.* ((absence of particle *yo*))
difficult-NEG
'It's not difficult.'
- 15 Nao: [*hontoo?*]
really
'Really?'
- 16 Beth: *hai.*
yes
'Yes.'
- 17 Nao: *e? nani? nara donna koto yaru no:::?*
what what then what kind thing do IP
'What? What kind of things do you do then?'

This excerpt opens with Beth initiating a question regarding Nao's favorite class at the university. In line 4, Beth displays her acknowledgement *hai* ('yes') as she finds

that Nao's favorite class is her major. In line 5, Nao expands briefly on her response, *muzukashii kedo suki* ('difficult but I like it'), which Beth acknowledges using a mild display of interest *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?'). Nao then questions Beth, in turn, on the same topic. Beth answers *economics* in English, adding that she 'loves' it, *daisuki*, in Japanese. In the following line, Nao repeats Beth's original comment with marked prosodic move *DAISUKI:::?* ('you LOVE it?'), which indicates a repair initiation, possibly, a challenge to Beth's initial assessment. Nao's highly affective orientation towards Beth's response continues after Beth reiterates that response in line 12: Nao utters *USO:::!!!* ('NO WAY!' lit. 'you must be lying!'), bluntly stating that studying economics is *zettai muzukashii!* ('absolutely difficult!'). The use of volume, elongation, a strong exclamation, as well as a strong intensifier *zettai* in Nao's response turns at lines 11 and 13 all contributes to her display of disalignment as a challenge to Beth's claim that someone could "love" economics, making a display of epistemic authority by Beth, (i.e., to stand her ground) both situationally and sequentially relevant. In reaction, Beth straightforwardly disagrees with Nao by negating Nao's assessment with the negation particle *nai* ('not') and providing her second turn assessment *muzukashikunai* ('it's not difficult') without *yo*, a particle that would be expected in this context (line 14). It is possible that one produces the assessment without *yo*, instead, other available resources such as prosody (i.e., exclamation, *muzukashikunai!* 'it is not difficult!') or repetition (i.e., *muzukashikunai, muzukashikunai* with no particle or politeness ending as an index of strong emotion, cf. Cook, 1999; K. Ishida, 2009ab). However, the lack of these moves in Beth's response shuts down the work of the joint assessment activity that Nao is proposing in her previous turns. Additionally, the absence of particle *yo* with no prosodic

move in Beth's assessment to Nao's affective turns that precede it takes away the interpersonal tones of 'getting to know each other' that the particle *ne* or *yo* can help to accomplish in the building of stance between participants in Japanese conversation.

Hayano (2011) claims that the particle *yo* is often used to mark disagreements and epistemic incongruence, i.e., a gap in knowledgeability between interactants in assessment sequences. In these sequences, because Beth is evaluating her own experiences from a personal perspective, she is uniquely positioned to make epistemic claim that she knows better than Nao does about her perception of studying economics. Therefore, for Beth, marking her assessment with the particle (*muzukashii yo*) would have been more appropriate so as to claim asymmetry in their epistemic stances about her studies of economics, or "epistemic primacy" (Raymond and Heritage, 2006, p. 689) as a basis for her disagreement with Nao. As Hayano claims, highlighting epistemic primacy through *yo* in disagreement or epistemic incongruence does not necessarily undermine social solidarity whereas agreement or epistemic congruence promotes it. A *yo*-marked assessment is one way speakers of Japanese may try to accomplish "a want to claim and prove their uniqueness and distinctiveness from others" (Heritage and Raymond, 2005, p. 36). Learners of Japanese, as well, need to know what interactional resources to use for establishing uniqueness from their interlocutors while at the same time attending to the maintenance of rapport or solidarity so that they can engage more competently in Japanese conversation. The proposed instruction designed for the present study includes teaching the particle *yo* as a resource to mark disagreements and participants' epistemic incongruence toward a given referent in the ongoing interaction. Later in the chapter, we will examine evidence for learners' use of this instructed function of *yo*, and how their

changes in participation through the deployment of particles allow the learners to accomplish joint construction of stance and intersubjectivity when engaging in the conversation sessions with their NS partners and peers.

5.1.1.3 *Ne-marked assessment in the follow-up turn*

The next two excerpts demonstrate that during the pre-instruction period, some students in the experimental group were able to deploy the particle *ne* appropriately in follow-up assessment turns. This is not entirely surprising since, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, even before the target instruction was received, some of the experimental group students noted that they were already aware of their previous exposure to *ne*-marked formulaic expressions (e.g., *ii desu ne* ‘sounds nice’) by hearing or producing it in and outside the classroom (cf. Ohta, 1999, 2001). In Excerpt 7, Julie demonstrates evidence of this awareness through producing a formulaic evaluative comment *ii desu ne:::* (‘sounds nice’) in her response to the content of the utterance produced by her NS partner, Nao, in the preceding turn.

Julie has been studying Japanese for one year at the university and occasionally uses Japanese at work (3 hours per week) off campus where she yet noted that she “never” uses the interactional particles when speaking Japanese. However, her use of *ne* in the follow-up turn appears during the interaction with her NS partner.

Excerpt 7 Julie: Learner Nao: CP
Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

- 01 Julie: *kareshi wa imasu ka?*
boyfriend TOP have Q
‘Do you have a boyfriend?’
- 02 Nao: *kareshi wa(..)imasu.*
boyfriend TOP have

- ‘I do.’
- 03 Julie: *imasu? aa, soo desu ka, ii desu ne:::!*
 have oh so COP Q good COP IP
 ‘You do? Oh, really? That’s nice!’
- 04 Nao: *nihon ni imasu.*
 Japan LOC stay
 ‘He’s in Japan.’
- 05 Julie: *ooo*
 oh
 ‘Oh’
- 06 Nao: [*kareshi, iru?*
 boyfriend have
 Do you have a boyfriend?]
- 07 Julie: *imase:::n.*
 have-NEG
 ‘I don’t.’
- 08 Nao: [*hontoo?*
 really
 ‘Really?’]
- 09 Julie: [*hontoo. hah hah*
 really
 ‘Really.’]
- 10 Nao: *aaa! kawaii noni!*
 ah cute CP
 ‘Ah! You are cute though!’
- 11 Julie: [*ii:::!*
 no
 ‘I’m not!’]

Although this interaction takes place in the second conversation session (Session 2), they seem comfortable enough with each other to openly discuss their respective relationship statuses. In line 1, Julie asks Nao, *kareshi wa imasu ka?* (‘Do you have a boyfriend?’). In line 2 of the response turn, Nao says that she has a boyfriend with a sign of hesitation as demonstrated by a micro pause. In the following turn, Julie uptakes part of Nao’s prior utterance, *imasu?* (‘Do you?’) in a confirmation question immediately

followed by her acknowledgement, *aa, soo desu ka* ('Is that so?' or 'Really?') and her *ne*-marked evaluative comment, *ii desu ne:::!* ('that's nice!'). Compared to what we observed in Excerpt 4 in which the same evaluation (*ii desu*) produced in Kyle's turn lacks the particle *ne*, this learner (Julie) deploys *ne* for appropriate and effective joint construction of stance in the context of assessment activity, i.e., she displays an aligning stance towards Nao's preceding turn (line 2). Additionally, note that the learner's *ne* combines with other prosodic resources such as vowel elongation (*ne:::*) and exclamatory production, which index heightened affective stance (Burdelski, 2013) and reduced display of out-group stance (Cook, 2008), given her use of the distal polite form. This is relevant to what Kärkkäinen (2006) claims about stance taking as a joint activity: the learner's affective stance indexed by *ne* emerges from collaborative interaction between participants in particular dialogic and sequential contexts.

Furthermore, Julie's assessment using *ne* which concurrently functions as an alignment marker creates an opportunity for Nao to expand the ongoing topic by mentioning that her boyfriend is in Japan (line 5) and then to eliciting Julie's answer on the same topic with a switch to the plain form (line 6). Style-shifts from the polite form to the plain form in this turn index that Nao is expressing her less formal and more friendly stance for rapport-building with her partner (Cook, 1999; Geyer, 2008). In the turns that follow (lines 6 to 11), both participants sustain topic development in an extended segment of overlapped interaction, thereby demonstrating strong display of alignment (Dings, 2014). The precision-timing of this part of interaction is especially noteworthy, as Julie's affective response with vowel elongation (*imase:::~n* 'don't have a boyfriend') is immediately overlapped by Nao's confirmation check in a very playful

tone *hontoo?* ('really?'), to which Julie replies with laughter *hontoo* ('I really don't') in an overlapped turn; Then, finding Julie's response somewhat unexpected, Nao gives an affective assessment *kawaii noni!* ('you are cute though!'), and before Nao completes her turn, Julie overlaps Nao's assessment with a strong negation *ie:::!* ('I am not!'). These segments of interaction clearly support the claim by Goodwin and Goodwin (1987) that assessment in talk is not treated as a mere description of something, but rather as something that can be responded to and participated in, where an assessment is being directed to a specific recipient that makes subsequent action (e.g., agreement, disagreement, topic expansion, etc.) on the part of the recipient relevant (Morita, 2005). Julie's assessment marking with *ne* contributes to making the assessable something jointly participated in and interactionally relevant for the shared affect, display of alignment, and achievement of intersubjectivity (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Du Bois & Kärkkäinen, 2012, Morita, 2015).

5.1.1.4 *Ne-marked assessment in other positions*

The previous excerpt, which exhibits the learner's *ne*-marked assessment in the follow-up turn, is provided as an expression of alignment towards the content of the preceding utterance produced by the first speaker. As Table 1 illustrates, there is one instance in which the learner (Tara) produced *ne* in the initial assessment turn for topic facilitation or alignment seeking, a less common use of *ne* that has been identified as difficult for English speaking learners to master (cf. Shibahara, 2002). Tara has studied Japanese for 8 months at the university and has opportunities to use or hear Japanese when interacting with her family members (a few hours per week). At the time of the pre-test data collection, she already seemed familiar with some of the functions that the

particle *ne* may encode: *ne* is used “for situations where the statement wants some sort of agreement from listener.” Her understanding of the function of *ne* reflects her actual particle use in two different positions: one in the follow-up turn and the other in the initial turn (*atsui desu ne*). Observe the segment below where Tara marks her assessment with *ne* in the initial turn when she shifts the topic from talk about her NS partner Hiro’s hometown in Japan to their current, shared location.

Excerpt 8 Tara: Learner Hiro: CP
 Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

- 01 Tara: *takusan yuki?*
 a lot snow
 ‘A lot of snow?’
- 02 Hiro: *a, hai, takusan furimasu ne::.*
 uh yes a lot snow IP
 ‘Uh yes it shows a lot.’
- 03 Tara: *hai, hai, hai.*
 yes yes yes
 ‘Yes, yes, yes.’
- 04 Hiro: *totemo samui desu.*
 very cold COP
 ‘It’s very cold.’
- 05 Tara: *aa, soo desu ne::. demo hawaii wa atsui desu ne::.*
 ah so COP IP but Hawaii TOP hot COP IP
 ‘Ah, that’s right. But it’s hot in Hawaii.’
- 06 Hiro: *soo desu ne::.*
 so COP IP
 ‘That’s right.’

Prior to the segment of this interaction, Tara was asking about the weather in Hiro’s hometown (Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture) located in the northern part of Japan’s main island of Honshu. Recognizing that he is from that particular region, she asks a question, *takusan yuki?* (‘Lots of snow?’) in line 1. Hiro replies that they get a lot of

snow in his hometown, using the particle *ne* (line 2). His deployment of *ne* in this response position is consistent with Morita's (2002) account for the function of *ne* that neutralized epistemic asymmetry, i.e., the speaker's advancing a stance of "weak" or "incomplete" authority in relation to the interlocutor, which consequently invites his/her alignment. Thus, by adding *ne* to his turn, Hiro suggests that his answer is already sufficient for Tara, who is familiar with the weather in Hiro's hometown, to show alignment in the next move and contributes to both participants' achievement of intersubjectivity (Morita, 2005). Tara's repeated acknowledgment in line 3, *hai, hai, hai* ('yes, yes, yes') indicates that her prior knowledge or assumption regarding the heavy snowfall in Hiro's hometown has been validated by his answer provided in the previous turn. In response to Hiro's extended informing that his hometown is very cold in the winter in line 4, Tara aligns with Hiro with an acknowledgment, *aa, soo desu ne* ('yeah, that's right')⁸. Right after this turn, she marks her initial-turn assessment with *ne* using the connective phrase *demo* ('but'), *hawai wa atsui desu ne::* ('but [the weather] in Hawai'i is hot, isn't it?') to shift the topic from the cold climate of Hiro's hometown to the hot weather in Hawai'i where they both live now. Note that her use of *ne* is different from Hiro's earlier *ne* since they both have equal epistemic access to the weather in Hawai'i. This *ne*-marked assessment initiated by Tara elicits Hiro's response, in this case, his *ne*-marked alignment or agreement *soo desu ne* ('That's right') to her initial *ne*-marked assessment.

⁸ Although her deployment of *ne* as an expression of alignment is appropriate in this context, a more natural response may be *soo deshoo ne*. A modal auxiliary *deshoo*, a presumptive form of the copula *desu*, is used to express the speaker's assumption or conjecture (Kamio, 1994; Makino and Tsutsui, 1989) and is more appropriate to use in this turn, because Tara only has the second-hand knowledge about the weather in Hiro's hometown.

The previous excerpts from the pre-instruction data show that some experimental group learners deployed *ne*-marked assessment turns appropriately in the context of a few limited instances of assessment activity, but that there was no evidence of consistent use across similar discourse contexts. In the following section, we will examine how the interactional particles are used by the control group learners in the conversation sessions at the same pre-instruction stage.

5.1.2 Particle use by the control group

The control group data was collected to compare with the experimental group to examine the extent to which the pragmatics-focused instruction impacts the learners' understanding and use of the particles as resources for stance taking and the achievement of intersubjectivity in spontaneous conversation with NS partners and learner peers.

As Tables 9 and 10 show above, more control group students (75%) used the particle *ne* productively than experimental group students (29%) at the pre-instruction stage. Closer analysis of the conversation data for the two student groups at this stage reveals that while particle use by students in the control group was not qualitatively different from the experimental group's use in terms of their predominant use of *ne* in the follow-up assessment turn, there was no production of *ne* in the initial assessment turn. Another difference with the experimental group is that there was no production of *yone* by the control group and only one control group student, Abby, produced two tokens of *yo* during the conversation sessions with her NS partner, Kiko.

Abby has studied Japanese for 5 years and has no daily exposure to Japanese outside of the classroom. Her understanding of the functions of particle *ne* and *yo* was both “emphasis” in the pre-test data. An observation of her particle use in the pre-

instruction sessions (Session 1 and 2) demonstrates that the particle *ne* did not appear in her turns where it would be expected and that there were two occurrences of *yo* with one anomalous use in Session 2. One of the instances where she used *yo* appropriately is presented below.

Excerpt 9 Abby: Learner Kiko: CP
Conversation Session 2, Control group

- 01 Abby: uh
- 02 (0.6)
- 03 Abby: reh-rehearsal *ga arimasu.*
HES-rehearsal SUB have
'I've got some rehearsals for a play.'
- 04 Kiko: *ooo! jya taihen.*
oh then hectic
'Oh! Then things must be hectic.'
- 05 Abby: [*aaa.*
uhm
'Uhm.'
- 06 Kiko: [*isogashii.*
busy
'You are busy.'
- 07 Abby: [*aaa, Kennedy Theater ni*
well LOC
'Well, at Kennedy Theater'
- 08 Kiko: *aaa, soo nan ya.*
oh so COP Q
'Oh, really?'
- 09 Abby: [show(.)*ga arimasu.*
SUB have
'There will be a show.'
- 10 Kiko: [*eee, soo nan ya. sugoi, sugoi.*
oh so COP Q great great
'Oh, really? That sounds great.'
- 11 Abby: *hai.*
yes

- ‘Yes.’
- 12 Kiko: *sugoi, sugoi.*
great great
‘Sounds great.’
- 13 Abby: hah
- 14 (0.7)
- 15 Abby: *tanoshii desu yo.*
fun COP IP
‘It’s fun.’
- 16 Kiko: [u:::n, ii ne! ii desu ne:::. watashi wa, watashi wa nihon kara
yeah good IP good COP IP I TOP I TOP Japan from
- 17 *tomodachi ga kuru kara isshoni asobi ni iku.*
friend SUB come so together hang for go
‘Yeah, that sounds great! Sounds great. My friend from Japan is coming to visit me so we are gonna go and hang out.’

Prior to this segment of the conversation, Abby and her NS partner Kiko were asking each other about their plans for the weekend. Abby is telling Kiko that she has a rehearsal for a play at Kennedy Theater that she is going to be part of. To respond, Kiko provides alignment assessments, *taihen* (‘that’s hard’) and *isogashii* (‘you are busy’) about the rehearsal Abby has to participate in on the weekends (lines 3 and 4). As Abby explains the reason for rehearsing the show that is coming up (line 7), Kiko acknowledges her turn as newsworthy, uttering *soo nan ya* (‘Is that so?’ in Osaka dialect) followed by another affective assessment in repetition, *sugoi, sugoi* (‘awesome’) in line 8. In the following turn, however, Abby responds minimally with *hai* (‘yes’), which does not signal alignment to her partner’s affective involvement. Here we can see the gap in the participants’ orientation to joint construction of stance; that is, while Aki demonstrates strong alignment by producing a number of affective assessments towards Abby’s utterances about her weekend, Abby produces a minimal agreement token (*hai*),

which lacks in orientation to the achievement of the joint stance-indexing work Aki has been unilaterally constructing through her extensive assessment turns.

In response to Kiko's reasserted assessment *sugoi, sugoi*, Abby finally initiates her participation in the assessment activity and marks her first assessment with the particle *yo* (line 15). This use of *yo*, as discussed earlier in Excerpt 2, is not used to display disagreement resulting from epistemic incongruence between interlocutors but is rather used in an assessment whose objective is to present the referent as something that is exclusively accessible to the speaker but not to the recipient (Hayano, 2011). This *yo*-marked assessment produced by Abby refers to her positive feelings (*tanoshii* 'fun') that she has epistemic access to (Pomerantz, 1984) about participating in the play. Then, Kiko overlaps Abby's *yo*-marked utterance with her *aizuchi* or back-channeling *u:::n* (line 16) with vowel elongation expressing the speaker's heightened affect towards Abby's experience with the play. The validity of Abby's contribution to the joint stance-building activity is now ratified by and through Kiko's highly aligning response that overlaps Abby's previous turn. With her timely production of *aizuchi*, Kiko continues to construct her alignment activity by repeating a *ne*-marked assessment using the adjective *ii* ('good') before reorienting to their original topic regarding their plans for the weekend (lines 16 and 17).

5.1.3 Summary

To summarize the evidence of the particle uses by the experimental and control group learners during the pre-instruction period, many of the students did not capitalize on the opportunities to use particles even when the appropriate environment arose and instead relied on other linguistic resources such as acknowledgment tokens (*aa* or English

oh) or/and evaluative comments without particles to provide a turn, thereby missing the opportunity to participate in a joint stance talking activity with their partner. When a particle occurred in the students' utterances, *ne* was predominantly used in agreement (*soo desu ne* 'That's right') and in formulaic expressions (e.g., *ii desu ne* 'Sounds nice') to provide a positive assessment of the content of ongoing talk with their conversational partners. A few other instances of particle use include *ne* in the first assessment turn and an occurrence of *yo*.

The use of *ne* by the learners in the experimental and control groups at the pre-instruction stage is consistent with the findings of Masuda's (2009, 2011) studies on the development of interactional particles by JFL classroom learners and JSL learners in Japan who tend to use *ne* to fulfill different functions in unscripted conversation with NS participants. General evidence of the very limited use, or non-use of other particles such as *yo* and *yone* in the learners' production suggests that many JFL/JSL learners, despite their input outside of the classroom or in a study-abroad setting, have not yet begun to make use of a broader range of linguistic and interactional resources for the joint construction of stance in Japanese conversation.

Findings from the previous studies and the present data have shown that L2 learners' successful deployment of particle *ne* enables them to display mutual orientations with other interlocutors in conjunction with such activities as jointly constructing alignment and intersubjectivity in an ongoing interaction. However, there is no evidence of the learners making use of other interactional functions of particles, i.e., informing and/or contrasting their points (such as disagreement) towards the addressee, or confirming shared understanding or perspectives with the addressee. The robustness

in the relationship between the evidence of particle use and learners' agency (van Lier, 2008) thus remains inconclusive at this stage. In other words, evidence of learning needs to be considered from the perspective of not merely what learners can (re)produce from inputs transmitted to them, but also how they can actively seize on affordances to build their talk and participate in a wider range of discourse activities in L2.

This underscores the importance of examining the effects of instruction on the students' understanding and use of various functions associated with use of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in social interaction. To examine the effectiveness of the proposed instruction on the learners' understanding and use of the particles as linguistic, cultural, and interactional resources for participating in Japanese conversation, we need to identify a) learners' use of the particles in ways that are consistent with what they were instructed; and b) the extent to which the instruction may facilitate the increased use of particles in the conversation sessions with native speakers and peer learners. These points will be pursued in the following sections.

5.2 Learners' particle use in the post-instruction period

In this section, we will turn to evidence of students' use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* with analysis focusing on the ways in which the use reflects what they were taught in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation. Specifically, instructional intervention focused on use of the particles in turn-taking and as interactional devices to move the conversation forward; and on their ability to co-construct affect and epistemic stance with other interlocutors in culturally ordered ways through use of the particles.

Examination of the post-instruction conversation data reveals that while the control group learners demonstrate a significant decrease in the use of particle *ne* and no production of *yo* and *yone*, the learners who received the pragmatics-focused instruction are increasingly able to use *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* productively during their conversations with NS conversation partners and peer learners. In the analysis that follows, we will first turn to evidence of particle use by the control group at the same periods (Session 3 and 4) to identify any other factors that might potentially affect the students' learning of the particles, such as socializing with native speakers in the conversation sessions over time. Then, we will examine the extent to which the pragmatics-focused instruction impacts the learners' appropriation of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as resources for participating in a variety of assessment activities during the post-instruction periods (Post-1 and Post-2).

5.2.1 Particle use by the control group

As presented earlier in Table 10, the pre-instruction conversation data of the control group revealed the learners' relatively prolific use of particle *ne* (11 tokens) in the follow-up assessment turn. The following tables (Tables 11 and 12) illustrate particle use by this group during the post-instruction periods (Session 3 and 4).

Table 11. Use of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conversation with NS partners (Session 3, control group)

Session-3 Student (N=9)	<i>ne</i>			<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	Total
	Initial turn	Follow-up turn	Anomalous	Use (Anomalous use)	Use (Anomalous use)	
Ken	0	3	2	0	0	5
Nick	1	0	2	0	0	3
Mia	0	1	0	0	0	1
Erin	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jay	0	0	1	0	0	1
Jess	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bob	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nancy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abby	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	4	6	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (0)

Table 12. Use of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conversation with NS partners (Session 4, control group)

Session-4 Student (N=9)	<i>ne</i>			<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	Total
	Initial turn	Follow-up turn	Anomalous	Use (Anomalous use)	Use (Anomalous use)	
Ken	3	0	0	0	0	3
Mia	0	3	0	0	0	3
Jay	0	1	2	0	0	3
Erin	0	1	0	0	0	1
Nick	0	1	0	0	0	1
Jess	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nancy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bob	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abby	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3	6	2	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (0)

Analysis of the conversation data for the control group shows that there has been no significant increase in particle use over the instruction periods. The number of particles produced by the learners decreased from 11 to 9 tokens by the end of the last conversation session (Session 4), and the learner's particle use was consistently limited to particle *ne* throughout the semester. Although *ne* only appeared in the follow-up assessment turn at the pre-instruction stage, as shown in the tables above, *ne* began to emerge in the initial turn as well as in the follow-up turn during the post-instruction

period. Out of all students in the control group, two students (Mia and Ken) used *ne* most productively in conversations with both NS partners and peers. The first learner, Mia, has been studying for more than 2 years with extensive opportunities to use and hear Japanese at work (7 hours per week). She predominantly used *ne* in the follow-up assessment turns, such as *sugoi desu ne* ('That's awesome') in the polite form when talking with her peer. There is one instance where she used her *ne*-marked formulaic expression in the plain form *taihen ne*⁹ ('That's tough') to show her sympathetic alignment towards her NS partner in their last session.

Ken grew up in a Japanese speaking family and had one year of formal Japanese language education during elementary school. However, he rarely speaks with his family in Japanese and has learned most of his Japanese from watching Japanese animation. Although he seems to be the most proficient Japanese speaker of all the student participants in this study, he consistently used *ne* in turns where a particle *yone* would be highly expected during the pre- and post-instruction periods. However, at the post-instruction stages (as indicated in Tables 11 and 12), not only did he continue to use *ne* productively in his follow-up turns, but also produced this particle in the initial-turn positions for a display of alignment, topic expansion, and confirmation-seeking about the content of talk in progress. In Excerpt 10 below, we will examine how his use of *ne* served as a resource to confirm his understanding of what he and his NS partner (Miho) have been discussing thus far and at the same time to develop the ongoing topic.

⁹ *Tainen ne* is more commonly used among female speakers. The gender-neutral form is *taihen da ne* with the inclusion of the plain form (*da*) of the copula *desu*, followed by the particle.

Excerpt 10 Ken: Learner Miho: CP
 Conversation Session 4, Control group

- 01 Miho: *ashita yaru purezenteeshon mo:: essay, tabun nijuu nan peeji gurai* =
 tomorrow do presentation also essay maybe twenty something page about
- 02 Ken: [e:::/ e::/
 wow wow
 'wow!' 'wow!'
- 03 Miho: = *kaita kara.*
 write-PST CP
 'I also wrote about 20 pages of my essay for tomorrow's presentation so'
- 04 Ken: 'ni' 'ni' *tsuite?*
 P P about
 'About the particle 'ni'?'
- 05 Miho: *soo, soo, soo.*
 yeah yeah yeah
 'Yeah, yeah, yeah.'
- 06 Ken: [*sonnani ippai* hah hah
 that many
 'You wrote that many pages'
- 07 Miho: *tarinai mon, peepaa suu.*
 enough-NEG paper number
 'Not enough pages.'
- 08 Ken: e:::/
 wow
 'Wow!'
- 09 Miho: [*honto wa sanjuu nan peeji toka kakitakatta n da kedo,*
 really TOP thirty something page like write-want-PST NOM COP CP
 'Actually I wanted to write thirty something pages, but'
- 10 *tashika peepaa limitto ga sanjuu de, sore ijoo koerarenai kara.*
 supposedly paper limit SUB thirty COP-TE that above go-AUX-NEG CP
 'it was supposed to be up to thirty pages, and cannot go more than that so'
- 11 Ken: *wa:: jaa, kaku no ga suki desu ne.*
 wow then write NOM SUB like COP IP
 'Wow then you like to write.'
- 12 Miho: *u:::~:~:n, sukina wake janai n da kedo ne.*
 well like reason COP-NEG NOM COP CP IP
 'Well, it's not that I like to write.'

- 13 Ken: *sono major ni mui- muiteiru ne.*
that major for HES suit-PROG IP
'You are suited for that major.'
- 14 Miho: *a::: ma::: hah hah*
ah well
'Ah well'
- 15 Ken: *datte, kotoba ga motto motto detekuru kara. omoshiroi.*
cause word SUB more more appear-TE-come CP interesting
'cause you get to write more about it, so it's interesting.'
- 16 Miho: *[ummm, nanka teema*
uhm like theme
- 17 *da roo ne.*
COP AUX IP
'uhm it's probably the theme that got me interested.'
- 18 Ken: *[un.*
yeah
'Yeah.'

In line 1, Miho mentions that she has to write a 20- to 25-page paper on the Japanese dative particle *ni* for her linguistics class. Then Ken overlaps Miho showing strong surprise starting with *e:::!* and continues to comment on the length of the paper Miho has to write on a single grammatical particle (lines 2, 4, and 6). Instead of aligning with Ken, Miho alleges that her assigned paper length is still not long enough to write on this particular particle she is studying (lines 7, 9 and 10). Following another display of surprise *wa::*, Ken produces *jaa* ('then') which marks a pre-closing move to sum up his take on the talk and proposes a *ne*-marked assessment that Miho can possibly align to (line 11). However, by using the connective particle *kedo* ('but') and alignment *ne*, Miho produces a mitigated but disaffiliative response (Tanaka, 2000), which is not a complete opposition to Ken's proposed assessment (Mori, 1999; Morita, 2015). To this, Ken proposes another assessment with *ne* in pursuit of alignment from Miho, who, in the next

turn, responds with *maa* ('well') to indicate her willingness to accept his assessment as a less preferable choice (Okada, 1994) and therefore does so in a way that is not in full alignment with him (line 14).

In the interaction above, the learner has demonstrated fairly developed interactional competence, which reflects his ability to understand the co-participant's talk and maintain stance negotiation for alignment through his assessment turns with *ne*. The following excerpt exhibits that the learners' advanced language control did not result in the deployment of particles other than *ne*. Ken's consistent use of *ne* in the context where *yone* would be expected to claim one's authority over an evaluative statement generates an incongruent effect (Kizu et al., 2013).

Excerpt 11 Ken: Learner Miho: CP
Conversation Session 3, Control group

- 01 Miho: *e, dooshite::?*
oh why
'Oh, why?'
- 02 (1.5)
- 03 Ken: *nanka, umi, ippai mitekita kara.*
well ocean a lot see-TE-come-PST CP
'Well, cause I have seen much of the ocean.'
- 04 Miho: [*a:::,,, betsu ni akogare toka mitaina mono wa*
oh nothing yearning and like thing TOP
- 05 *nai no ne.*
NEG NOM IP
'Oh, you have no longing or anything like that for it.'
- 06 Ken: *zen zen nai.*
at all NEG
'Not at all.'
- 07 Miho: *naruhodo::: so kka:::, watashi umi choo suki da kedo na.*
understand so Q I ocean super like COP CP IP
'Got it. I see. I still love the ocean though.'

- 08 Ken: [a::: hah hah
ah
'Ah'
- 09 Miho: [ato,
and
'And,']
- 10 *shunookeringu toka daibingu toka sa:::*
snorkeling or diving or IP
'You get to do things like snorkeling or scuba diving.'
- 11 Ken: [a:::, sore wa ii ne.
oh that TOP good IP
'Oh, that is nice.'
- 12 Miho: *sakana ga sukina no. choo kawaii.*
fish SUB like IP super cute
'I like fish. They are super cute.'
- 13 Ken: hah hah *tashikani maasharu toka, shunookeringu shitara, ippai kireina =*
certainly Marshall Islands or snorkeling do-PST-if many beautiful
- 14 Miho: [e:::/
wow
'Wow!']
- 15 Ken: = *sakana toka coral reef mo sugoi kireina basho ga aru.*
fish or coral reef also very beautiful place SUB exist
'If you go snorkeling in the Marshall Islands, there are many places where
you get to see beautiful fish and very beautiful coral reefs for sure.'

Prior to this segment of interaction, Ken mentions that he has no particular interest in the ocean because he has seen much of it in Hawai'i and in the Marshall Islands where he grew up. Having been convinced by his reason uttering *naruhodo* ('I see'), Miho yet replies that she loves the ocean, because she can enjoy marine sports like snorkeling or scuba diving (lines 8 and 9). In line 11, with his acknowledgment *a:::*, Ken responded with an aligning assessment with *ne, sore wa ii ne*, which implies 'that is actually something good about the ocean.' Although his use of *ne* in this assessment may at first appear to be appropriate as showing alignment to Miho's talk about the ocean, a

more engaged response would be *ii yone* in this context, because using *yone* allows him to give a general evaluation of the ocean that he already knows about (*yo*), while showing agreement (*ne*) to Miho's positive assessment about the ocean. Therefore, given the participants' establishment of mutual epistemic evaluations over the referent at the time of Ken's utterance in line 11, *yone* would be the appropriate marker for the participants to engage in a more involved construction of joint stance activity through the use of the particle.

The absence of particles other than *ne* in his speech throughout the entire semester can be explained from his incomplete understandings of the functions of *yo* and *yone*, as shown in the pre- and post-tests; for example, he responded in the pre-test that *yo* is used "when explaining something to close friends/family" and *yone* is "to confirm a statement, show affection of equal status"; regarding his use of the particles, he mentioned in the post-test, "I rarely use *yo* to new people. I rarely use *yone* too to new people/people I only know in class." These responses indicate the learner's misinterpretation of sociopragmatic restrictions on their use for people he is not yet familiar with, i.e., his NS partner and classroom peers. Thus, despite his exposure to the productive uses of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* by his NS partner in the conversation sessions, the learner's development of a norm inconsistent with expected use limited his participation to a single-faceted stance taking of negotiating alignment with his partner through *ne*, and did not enable him to deploy other particles as resources to participate in a wider range of stance-indexing activities, such as distinguishing his views from his partner's or inviting the participants' mutual evaluation of what has just been assessed in the ongoing conversation through the uses of *yo* and *yone*.

The control group data at the post-instructional stages (Session 3 and 4) demonstrate that the particle *ne* was predominantly used in follow-up turns and no other particles such as *yo* and *yone* occurred in the students' talk. It could be concluded from the limited production of *ne* by this group throughout all the sessions (11 tokens in Session 2; 5 tokens in Session 3; 9 tokens in Session 4) as well as the absence of other particles *yo* and *yone* in the talk of the control group learners that socializing opportunities with NSs and peers had little impact on the learners' development in use of the particles for participating more competently in various assessment activities in Japanese conversation. We will now turn to particle use by the students who received pragmatics-focused instruction on particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the following sections.

5.2.2 Use of *ne* by the experimental group

In this section, we start by examining any instructional effects on the experimental group students' use of the particle *ne* in a variety of assessment activities. As noted above, in the framework of this study, assessment is not a mere description or comment, but is an activity in which co-participants perform evaluations of topics being discussed within talk. The activity is characterized by participants' co-production of assessment segments that contain e.g., adjectives such as *beautiful* and/or nonverbal means of evaluation (Goodwin, 1980; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992).

The analysis to be presented here focuses on the learners' use of *ne* in different turns of an assessment activity, including *i*) a follow-up assessment as a reaction to the content of the utterance performed by the previous speaker (Ohta, 1999, 2001), *ii*) an initial assessment as a turn that can be responded to by the recipient, and *iii*) an extended assessment that occurs beyond the turn of the recipient's interactional move (e.g.,

alignment) to the speaker's first assessment (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). Analysis focuses on evidence that the learners have appropriated the target instruction of the particle *ne* in ways that reflect what they were taught, such that their talk displays an ability to use the particle to mutually orient to ongoing interaction both as a speaker and listener.

The following tables (Tables 13 and 14) present the experimental group students' use of *ne* in the initial and follow-up assessment turns when they interact with the NS partners during post-instruction periods (Post-1 [Session 3] and Post-2 [Session 4]).

Table 13. Learners' use of *ne* with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group)

Post-1 Student (N=14)	<i>ne</i>				Total
	Assessment activity		Uninstructed <i>ne</i> (Other use)	Anomalous	
	(1) initial turn	(2) follow-up turn			
Ryan	1	2	1	11	15
Julie	0	7	2	1	10
Tara	0	5	2	1	8
Fred	0	2	1	1	4
James	0	1	2	1	4
Kyle	1	0	1	1	3
Trey	0	1	1	0	2
Beth	0	1	0	0	1
Brian	0	1	0	0	1
Emily	0	0	1	0	1
Ann	0	0	1	0	1
Ethan	0	0	0	0	0
Kelly	-	-	-	-	-
Lucas	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2	20	12	16	50

Table 14. Learners' use of *ne* with NS partner (Session 4, experimental group)

Post-2 Student (N=14)	<i>ne</i>				Total
	Assessment activity		Uninstructed <i>ne</i> (Other use)	Anomalous	
	(1) initial turn	(2) follow-up turn			
Ryan	0	3	0	7	10
Julie	1	6	1	0	8
Tara	1	5	1	0	7
Lucas	0	2	0	0	2
Fred	0	2	0	0	2
Brian	0	1	1	0	2
Emily	1	1	0	0	2
Ann	1	1	0	0	2
Kyle	0	1	0	1	2
Beth	0	1	0	1	2
James	0	1	0	0	1
Trey	0	1	0	0	1
Kelly	0	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	25	3	9	51

Focusing on the learners' change in participation with particle use in Session 3, there is variability in the individual learners' production of *ne*: out of 14 students (excluding 2 students who were absent in the session), 9 students produced a total of 17 tokens (4 or fewer for each) and the remaining 3 students a total of 33 tokens (15 or fewer for each). Most importantly, we can find that there is a notable increase in the use of *ne* in the follow-up assessment turn, compared to the pre-instruction stage (from 7 to 20 tokens for Session 3 and 25 tokens for Session 4), and that a few students were able to produce initial-turn *ne* (2 in Session 3 and 4 in Session 4) to facilitate topic introduction and elicit co-participant's involvement in the assessment activity. Furthermore, more students, including those who produced no particles in their assessment turns at the pre-instruction stage, demonstrated their emerging ability to produce *ne* in their participation in an assessment activity. The group's anomalous production of particles as well as their use of *ne* that entails discourse functions not influenced in the instruction will be examined in the next chapter.

As Table 14 above shows, learners' performance in Session 4 reflects greater change in participation in the increased use of *ne* in the follow-up assessment turns (25 tokens) as well as in the initial assessment turns (4 tokens), as their anomalous use decreased to approximately half the number of the tokens that learners produced in the preceding session and there was significantly less uninstructed use of *ne* among the learners. These figures strongly suggest that the majority of learners in the experimental group have benefited from the instruction in their development of interactional competence with the appropriate use of *ne* as a resource to participate in the different turns of assessment activity. In the following section, we will first examine the learners' emerging use of *ne* in the follow-up assessment turn.

5.2.2.1 Assessment in the follow-up turn

Analysis of the conversation data at the post-instruction stage demonstrates that, consistent with the findings of previous research (Sawyer, 1992, among others) the experimental group learners in the present study show a pattern of starting their use of *ne* in assessment turns. The significant increase in the learners' use of *ne* in the assessment activity over the instruction periods suggests that the proposed instruction had a beneficial effect on their development of interactional competence as evidenced by the enhanced ability to participate in the assessment activity using the appropriate stance marker.

The pre-instruction data (Table 9) showed that individual learners in the experimental group started from different points with respect to the contexts in which they produced *ne*: There were a few learners (Kelly, Julie, Ryan, and Tara) who used *ne* in the display of alignment and assessment marking prior to instruction, whereas some

learners such as Kyle (Excerpt 1) did not produce any particles even when there were appropriate opportunities for such use. As found in several previous studies (M. Ishida, 2009; Iwai, 2010; Masuda, 2011; Ohta, 2001; Yoshimi, 1999), some learners in the present study also produced the alignment token *soo desu ne* ‘that’s right’ inappropriately in place of *a soo desu ka* (‘oh, is that so?’) when acknowledging new information provided in the immediately preceding turn produced by the first speaker. The following learner, Brian, was typical of those learners who tended to use *ne* anomalously in the acknowledgment turn. At the pre-instruction stage, he continued to produce the alignment expression *soo desu ne* anomalously when the acknowledgment token *soo desu ka* would be expected as a response to a new piece of information provided by his NS partner. This finding is consistent with Yoshimi’s (1999) claim that the prevalence of the learners’ anomalous use of *ne* in acknowledgment turns is due to the difference between Japanese and English in epistemic constraints as well as in the resources available for the construction of shared stance between participants. However, Brian’s post-instruction data reveal that other use of *ne* besides the agreement expression *soo desu ne* began to appear in Session 3 and that by the end of Session 4, he demonstrated more competent performance of displaying alignment through his acknowledgment *soo desu ka* as well as through production of *ne*-marked assessments in response to the co-participant’s (Hana) talk. Observe the excerpt below.

Excerpt 12 Brian: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Brian: *ee, saikin, doo?*
um recently how
‘uhm how is everything these days?’
- 02 Hana: *saikin ne, chotto isogashii.*

- recently IP a little busy
'I've been a bit busy recently.'
- 03 Brian: [oh, *chotto ishogashii* hah
oh a little busy
'Oh, you are a little busy'
- 04 Hana: *un.*
yeah
'Yeah.'
- 05 Brian: *eeto, uhm (.) nani o (.) shimashi(.)ta?*
well uhm what O do-PAST
'Well. uhm what did you do?'
- 06 Hana: *purezenteeshon ga futatsu atte, peepaa; hitotsu atte, chotto isogashii desu.*
presentation SUB two have-TW and paper one have-TE a little busy COP
'I have two presentations and one paper, and I'm a little busy.'
- 07 Brian: [oo oo oo
oh oh oh
'oh' 'oh' 'oh']
- 08 *soo desu ka. hee (.) taihen da ne::.*
so COP Q wow hard COP IP
'I see. Gee that's tough.'
- 09 Hana: *taihen da yo::.* hah hah
hard COP IP
'It is tough.'
- 10 Brian: [hah hah
- 11 Hana: *socchi wa doo?*
you TOP how
'How about yourself?'
- 12 Brian: *totemo isogashikatta.*
very busy-PAST
'I was very busy.'
- 13 Hana: [*n.*
yeah
'Yeah.'

Brian's interactional competence emerges through the multi-productions of precision-timed back-channeling *aizuchi*, *oo* ('uh huh') while attending to Hana's previous turn, followed by a proper display of acknowledgment *soo desu ka* ('really?'),

and an aligning assessment using *ne* that includes the copula *da* following the adjective *taihen* ('tough') at line 8. Note that the placements of his *aizuchi* are not of a random occurrence but appear at locations in Hana's production of her talk that indicates likely continuation of Hana's turn. Such *aizuchi* occurring at non-transition relevant places have been interpreted as a sign of emotional support for the turn-holder that the listener expresses to preempt a potentially competitive situation or a threat of a turn change that the turn-holder would have faced in Japanese conversation (Kita & Ide, 2007). Brian's third *aizuchi* in line 7 appears before the ending of Hana's previous turn, immediately followed by his acknowledgment *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?') and *hee* ('oh'), a news-receipt token to a prior informing (cf. Iwasaki, 1997) or an assessment of the preceding talk as newsworthy (Mori, 2006). With the token *hee* as his reaction to the news delivered by Hana, Brian then produces his *ne*-marked assessment, *taihen da ne::* ('that's tough'). In this assessment turn, Brian, as a college student himself, displays his strong empathy for Hana's heavy school work through a prolonged production of *ne::*. His speech style and the prosodic move in the production of *ne::* index his construction of alignment and shared affect with Hana in the joint stance-taking activity. In his reflection sheet, Brian specifically mentions the use of *ne* in his talk, "regarding how she [Hana] has been lately, I would say *taihen da ne* to show empathy." His comment indicates the learner's awareness of what resources to use in an assessment that shows alignment and contributes to the construction of a joint affective stance towards his partner's talk. In her uptake of Brian's aligned assessment *taihen da ne*, Hana produces an assessment using the same adjective segment *taihen* ('tough'), marking it with the epistemic marker *yo* (line 9). By using *yo*, Hana redefines the referent such that it is exclusively accessible to

her – the one who has been overwhelmed with the heavy load of school work – not Brian. Hana’s *yo*-marked assessment can be presented as an interactional move that differentiates her stance from Brian’s *without undermining the maintenance of solidarity between the participants* in the joint assessment activity, and this turn is followed by the participants’ mutual engagement in laughter which marks the achievement of intersubjectivity (Heritage, 1984). This excerpt demonstrates how the learner’s emerging interactional competence is demonstrated through his enhanced listenership with *aizuchi* and the use of *ne* with an appropriate paralinguistic contextualization cue as resources to display affective alignment to the ongoing talk and jointly construct stance with his NS partner in the accomplishment of the assessment activity.

Goodwin and Goodwin (1987) have noted in their work on assessment that the use of contrastive tense (i.e., past tense for indexing the speaker’s direct experience and present tense for general opinion) marks two distinct stances toward the item being assessed. The following excerpt illustrates the learners’ deployment of *ne* in his follow-up assessment which contains an adjective in the past form *yokatta* (‘was great’). At the pre-instruction stage, Ryan used *ne* most frequently but also produced the largest number of anomalous uses of *ne* out of all students in the experimental group at the pre-instruction stage. The intent behind Ryan’s anomalous use of *ne* in a number of his utterances in these pre-instruction sessions is evident in what he wrote in his reflection sheet after Session 2: “I used a lot of *ne* in the conversation which helped it to sound more friendly.” This comment suggests that his lack of understanding of *ne* as a joint stance-indexing resource resulted in the excessive and often anomalous use of the particle.

However, Ryan’s post-instruction conversation data evidence the development of interactional competence through his decreased use of anomalous *ne* and the demonstration of more capability of using *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* productively for participating in a variety of assessment activities. The excerpt below illustrates one of the instances where Ryan produces a *ne*-marked assessment using an adjectival phrase in the past form *yokatta* (‘must have been great’) to evaluate a specific experience that his NS partner had.

Excerpt 13 Ryan: Learner Hana: CP
 Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Ryan: *sankusugibingu wa.: nani o shita?*
 Thanksgiving TOP what O do-PST
 ‘What did you do for Thanksgiving?’
- 02 Hana: *tomodachi dooshi de atsumatte, tomodachi ga atsumatte =*
 friends each other with gather-TE friends SUB gather-TE
 ‘My friends and I got together and’
- 03 Ryan: [ohhh
 oh
 ‘Oh’
- 04 Hana: = *sankusugibingu shita.*
 Thanksgiving do-PST
 ‘we had our Thanksgiving.’
- 05 Ryan: [*yokatta ne.:!*
 good-PST IP
 ‘Must have been great.’
- 06 Hana: [*soo, tanoshikatta.*
 yes fun-PST
 ‘Yeah I had a fun time.’
- 07 Ryan: *boku wa.: hawaikai no kazoku to:.- ni kaerimashita.*
 I TOP Hawaii Kai LK family with LOC return-PST
 ‘I went back to Hawaii Kai where my family is.’
- 08 Hana: [*hatt* ((sound of excitement))
- 09 *de, paati?*
 then party
 ‘Then, you had a party with your folks?’

- 10 Ryan: *a, hai, soo desu ne::*.
uh yes so COP IP
'Uh, yes, that's right.'
- 11 Hana: [aa, sugoi, tanoshisoo. tanoshikatta?
ah great fun-AUX fun-PST
'Ah, great it sounds like fun. Did you have a fun time?'
- 12 Ryan: *tanoshikatta::*.
fun-PST
'It was fun.'
- 13 Hana: *yokatta ne.*
good-PST IP
'Must have been great.'
- 14 Ryan: yeahhhh
yeah
'Yeah.'

The segment begins with Ryan's initiating a question of what his NS partner (Hana) did for Thanksgiving. While Hana is describing how she spent her first Thanksgiving, Ryan produces an acknowledgment token *ohhh* and an affective assessment using an adjective *ii* ('good') in the past form, *yokatta ne::!* ('must have been great'), with the vowel elongation as an expression of heightened affect. Note that Ryan produced his affective assessment *yokatta ne::* before Hana completes her turn (line 5). Such overlapping responses initiated with precision-timing constitutes an index of interactional competence, i.e., learner's competent use of linguistic resources for precision-timed uptake of the interlocutors' talk as participation in joint stance-indexing of alignment in the assessment activity. An assessment using an adjective in the present form *ii ne* ('sounds good') could also have been appropriate to index a more generalized stance (Heritage, 2002) toward Hana's relating of her Thanksgiving, but by changing aspect from *ii ne* to *yokatta ne*, Ryan is displaying greater affective involvement in his evaluation of *how* Hana spent her Thanksgiving i.e., getting together with her friends.

Furthermore, Ryan's *ne*-marked assessment is not treated as a reaction to the previous construction of utterances but rather marks the assessment as something interactionally relevant for his recipient, such as display of alignment or agreement (Morita, 2005). His successful use of *ne* prompts the participants' mutual engagement in a sequence of assessment practices in the turns that follow: Hana's agreement *soo* ('yes') is produced in overlap with Ryan's *ne*-assessment and she continues with her own assessment *tanoshikatta* ('It was fun') with no particle marking, which indicates the closure of the current assessment activity. The subsequent sequence from line 7 to 14 represents another joint assessment activity in which Ryan now speaks about his Thanksgiving party with his family, for which Hana provides multiple aligning assessments such as *sugoi* ('awesome'), *tanoshisoo* ('sounds like fun') and then incorporates the same assessment initiated by Ryan *yokatta ne* in response to his assessment *tanoshikatta.:* ('it was fun') about the specifics of the Thanksgiving dinner he had with his family.

As such, the learner's use of *ne*-marked assessment not only represents his competent enactment of listenership through the acknowledgment token *ohh* that overlaps his NS partner's talk and of displaying affective alignment toward the topic-in-progress (Hana's Thanksgiving) in the assessment activity but also helps to contextualize that particular *ne*-marked assessment as something responded to and jointly participated in the subsequent assessment practices for the achievement of intersubjectivity between participants in the interaction.

Findings from the preceding two excerpts above support a claim of the effects of pragmatics-focused instruction on the learners' development of interactional competence

as demonstrated by their emerging use of *ne* in the follow-up assessment as a resource for negotiation of alignment and shared affect with their NS partners in joint stance-indexing activity. Their competent use of assessment *ne* involves a complex process beyond the construction of such turn as a response to the co-participant's previous utterance; it also marks the assessment as something responded to by the recipient and/or something jointly participated in, so that the participants can engage in the collaborative construction of affect, stance, and activity by employing a variety of linguistic and interactional resources (e.g., back-channeling *aizuchi*; an elongated form of *ne::*; acknowledgment tokens such as *ohhh*, *hee*, and *soo desu ka*) for the accomplishment of intersubjectivity. Furthermore, the construction of learners' *ne*-assessments entails pragmalinguistic competence, which requires their knowledge and use of grammatical resources to index a stance relevant to the contingencies of the activity for pragmatic effectiveness (e.g., adding the plain copula *da* to the adjective *taihen* 'hard' for a gender-neutral form; morphological changes in the adjectival form from *ii* 'good' to the past form *yokatta* 'must have been great').

In the next section, we will examine learners' use of *ne* in the initial assessment turn, another instructional component of the pragmatics-focused instruction of the present study.

5.2.2.2 *Assessment in the initial turn*

The use of *ne* in the assessment activity is not limited to the uptake position where the participants express their evaluations in response to the previously produced utterances. The particle *ne* also occurs in the initial turn where the speaker marks the assessment as something interactionally relevant on the part of the recipient, i.e.,

alignment and topic expansion to the entity referred to. In this section, we will observe the evidence that learners' use of *ne* emerges beyond the follow-up assessment turns, specifically through their involvement in conversation in relation to *ne*-marked assessment in the initial turn during the post-instruction period.

The pre-instruction conversation data showed that there was only one student (Tara) who deployed *ne* in her initial assessment turn to invite agreement from her NS partner on the topic in progress. (See Excerpt 15.) As Tables 13 and 14 above indicate, the use of initial-turn *ne* in the conversation sessions increases to a steady degree among some of the experimental group students in the post-instruction periods. However, this use of initial-turn *ne* is still underdeveloped compared to the use of *ne* in the follow-up turn, which is consistent with the results of the pre- and post-tests that had revealed many students in the experimental group demonstrated difficulty developing their understanding of the use of initial-turn *ne* for the described discourse situations even after receiving the target instruction.

In the pragmatics-focused instruction, students were taught to develop an understanding that the initial *ne* in assessment sequences occurs when participants evaluate something that they have equivalent access to, and the speaker often marks the first assessment with *ne* for alignment seeking and/or topic expansion about the referent (e.g., the weather, food, school work). Now we will examine the learners' emerging use of *ne* in the initial turn of the assessment activity, as illustrated in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 14 Ryan: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

01 Hana: *taihensoo, saiensu.*
hard-AUX science
'It sounds hard to study science.'

- 02 Ryan: [nnn, soo desu. takusan shukudai ga arimasu:::
 uhm so COP a lot homework SUB have
 ‘uhm it is. We have a lot of homework.’
- 03 Hana: [hee, riidingu?
 oh reading
 Oh, reading?’
- 04 Ryan: aa, ano:: suugaku.
 uhm well math
 ‘uhm well, we have math.’
- 05 Hana: toku?
 solve
 ‘Solving math problems?’
- 06 Ryan: hai.
 yes
 ‘Yes.’
- 07 Hana: nnn ((frowning face))
 ah
 ‘Ah’
- 08 Ryan: ((tongue click)) ((sighing)) iya da **ne!** hah
 terrible COP IP
 ‘It sucks!’
- 09 Hana: [iya da ne, iya da ne, taihensoo,
 terrible COP IP hard-AUX
 ‘It does, it does, sounds hard’
- 10 sore wa.
 that TOP
 ‘it does sound hard.’
- 11 Ryan: [hah hah

In NS-learner interactions, one of the predominant topics is schoolwork. In assessment sequences on this topic, participants often have equivalent access to the assessable which they are evaluating since it is mutually familiar and sharable, and the opportunity for alignment is enhanced. The excerpt above illustrates this case. Ryan and his NS partner Hana are both busy with schoolwork and Hana shows her sympathy over the fact that Ryan is a science major, saying *taihen soo* (‘sounds like a lot of work’) in

line 1. Ryan comments that he has a lot of homework (line 2), which receives an interest marker *hee* from Hana, followed immediately by a nomination for co-telling about Ryan's situation *riidingu?* ('reading?'), i.e., her nomination of the type of homework he has. Hana's nomination (*riidingu*) at line 3 triggers a repair activity as Ryan corrects it to *suugaku*, meaning math problems. Hana's minimal response *nnn* at line 7 does not indicate her lack of interest in Ryan's talk but rather her overwhelmed reaction about the type of homework (math problems) that is different from reading assignments she would more likely receive in her major studies. Then in line 8, following a tongue click and a sigh, Ryan initiates his first assessment with *ne*, using a more strongly-marked affect index, *iya da* ('It sucks'),

By proffering his assessment with *ne* in the initial turn, Ryan is marking that he and his partner are both "in the same boat" as college students loaded with a lot of schoolwork, which Hana can also align to as something burdensome. Goodwin and Goodwin's (1987) statement that "[a]ssessments reveal not just neutral objects in the world, but an alignment taken up toward phenomena by a particular actor" (p. 28) can account for the deployment of *ne* that is effective in constructing a joint stance-indexing activity for participants: Ryan's display of competence in his construction of stance through *ne* in this particular assessment turn explicitly marks that assessment interactionally relevant for Hana's joint participation in the assessment activity initiated by Ryan – Hana displays her strong alignment with the emphatic attitude expressed by the repetition of Ryan's initial assessment, *iya da ne, iya da ne* (Strauss, 1995; Strauss and Kawanishi, 1996).

The following excerpt illustrates an instance in which the learner's display of interactional competence is evidenced through the strategic use of *ne* in her initial-turn assessment in a transition relevance place where she self-selects herself as the next speaker faced with a complete cessation of topical talk and turn-taking.

Excerpt 15 Julie: Learner Nao: CP
 Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Nao: *mainichi hataraku?*
 every day work
 'Do you work every day?'
- 02 Julie: ((shaking head))
- 03 Nao: *kinyoobi to nichiyooobi?*
 Friday and Sunday
 'You work on Friday and Sunday?'
- 04 Julie: [n hai.
 yeah yes
 'yeah' 'yes'
- 05 Nao: *okke, okke, okke.*
 ok ok ok
 'ok, ok, ok.'
- 06 Julie: [n.
 yeah
 'Yeah.'
- 07 (1.5)
- 08 Julie: ((pointing to Nao's cell phone case)) *kore wa kawaii ne!*
 this TOP cute IP
 'This is cute!'
- 09 Nao: [*ne, arigatoo!*
 IP thank you
 'It is, thanks!'
- 10 Julie: [*n, doko de*
 ya where LOC
- 11 *kaimasu- kaimashita ka.*
 HES buy-PST Q
 'Where did you buy it?'
- 12 Nao: [*onrain de kaimashita.*

online with buy-PST
'I bought it online.'

13 Julie: *yasukatta desu ka.*
cheap-PST COP Q
'Was it cheap?'

14 Nao: [*yasukatta. gohyaku en gurai.*
cheap-PST five hundred yen about
'It was cheap. About five hundred yen.'

15 Julie: [*gohyaku? oo, ii ne::!*
five hundred wow good IP
'Five hundred yen? Nice!'

16 Nao: *yasui yone! demo chotto koware soona n desu ne!*
cheap IP but a little break-AUX NOM COP IP
'Isn't it? But it looks like it's going to break soon!'

Prior to this segment of the interaction, the NS partner (Nao) told the learner (Julie) that she wanted to stop by the shop where the learner works part-time. However, in the beginning of the interaction (lines 1 to 4), we find that when Nao is trying to develop the current talk by asking questions regarding the days of the week Julie works at the shop, Julie, on the other hand, provides increasingly minimal, almost non-committal responses. Finding that Julie works on Friday and Sunday, Nao responds with an explicit display of acknowledgement *okke, okke, okke* ('ok, ok, ok'), which overlaps with Julie's another minimal response *n* ('yeah') with no expansion on her turn, marking the closure of the current topic (line 6). Then, following a lengthy pause at line 7, which indicates that neither of the interlocutors holds a floor, Julie then nominates herself as the next speaker, initiating her first *ne*-marked assessment *kawaii ne!* ('This is cute!') while pointing to Nao's cellphone cover, which marks the start of a new topic (line 8). Nao immediately picks up her cellphone and overlaps with the stand-alone *ne* as a resource to co-construct affective alignment with Julie in the ongoing assessment activity. In the

next few turns, Julie expands on the topic by asking follow-up questions about Nao's cellphone cover (lines 10, 11 and 13), to which Nao replies saying that she bought it online for about as cheap as 500 yen, which is worth about 5 dollars. Before Nao completes her turn, Julie demonstrates precision-timing uptake by repeating what she just heard (*gohyaku en* '500 yen') and produces a highly affective *ne*-marked assessment towards the ongoing topic, evidenced by a prolonged form of the particle *ne::* and a shift to the plain form of the adjective *ii* (line 15) as an expression of the speaker's spontaneous emotion (Ishida, 2009ab).

It should also be noted that Julie's follow-up assessment *ii ne* expressed in the plain form aligns with Nao's shift from the polite form in line 12 to the plain form at line 14. Julie's style-shifting to the casual speech with the use of *ne* in this assessment sequence is another indicator of the learner's interactional competence in the construction of joint affective stance with her conversation partner, Nao. Also, Julie's marking of *ne* in this assessment turn indicates that the co-participant's display of alignment is relevant in the subsequent sequence. In response to Julie's assessment, Nao then reasserts her assessment with particle *yone* (*yasui yone* 'isn't it cheap?') in line 14 as part of an extended assessment activity where she pursues to elicit Julie's assessment about the topic (the price of the cellphone cover). Here again, we see that Julie's deployment of *ne* at line 15 is not simply an agreement or confirmation marker, but rather serves as a resource for joint stance taking, in which the participants further negotiate alignment in the ongoing assessment activity. Julie's effective deployment of the particle *ne* in the initial and follow-up assessment positions indicates that the learner has demonstrated interactional competence using the particle as a resource to make a topic transition in a

way that can be participated in by her NS peer (Nao) for joint assessment in the turns that follow (line 8), as well as to display alignment toward the referent being assessed (line 15).

Evidence of the learners' deployment of *ne* in the initial- and follow-up assessment positions as observed in the preceding excerpts supports the effectiveness of the instruction for the learners' development of interactional competence through their use of the particle, as well as other interactional resources such as overlapped utterances and precision-timing of uptake and responses that contribute to the achievement of a joint stance-indexing activity (e.g., negotiation of alignment) with their conversation partners.

5.2.2.3 *Extended ne-marked assessment*

So far we have observed that an assessment activity enables participants in the interaction to display stance, such as alignment with the point of view of the co-participant. However, the display of alignment, which is often realized through the use of *ne* in an assessment turn or stand-alone *ne*, is not necessarily limited to the utterance immediately following the initial assessment; participants' extended assessments are also often found to continue beyond the turn of the interlocutor who initiated the assessment (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987, 1992). The following excerpt shows an instance of extended assessment activity in which the learner uses the particle *ne* as an extended assessment (line 14) beyond the 3rd turn assessment produced by her NS partner (line 9).

Excerpt 16 Beth: Learner Nao: CP
Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

01 Beth: *hai. takai tokoro wa:: kowai.*
yes high place TOP scared
'Yes, I'm scared of height.'

- 02 Nao: *[hontoo? soshitara tomodachi ga ima*
really then friends SUB now
- 03 *issho ni sukaidaibingu ikoo tte.*
together with skydiving go-AUX QT
'Really? Now my friends asked me to go skydiving with them.'
- ((a few lines omitted))
- 07 Nao: *kokorohen ni aru mitai, hawai deζ*
aroundn here LOC exist like Hawaii LOC
'Looks like there are some spots around here for skydiving in Hawaii.'
- 08 Beth: oh.
- 09 Nao: *demo chotto kowai* ((first assessment))
but a little scary
'But it's a little scary.'
- 10 Beth: *HA::i.* ((strong agreement))
yes
'YES.'
- 11 Nao: *yone?*
IP
'Isn't it?'
- 12 Beth: hah hah
- 13 Nao: *demo tomodachi ga,*
but friends SUB
'But my friends asked me'
- 14 Beth: *[sugoi ne.* ((extended assessment))
awesome IP
'Awesome.'
- 15 Nao: *[no, no, no watashi wa ikitakunaiζ (.) kowai*
no no no I TOP go-AUX-NEG scared
- 16 *kara::, yaritakunakute:: sukaidaibingu. demo tomodachi ga 'Let's go!' tte.*
CP do-AUX-NEG skydiving but friends SUB QT
'No, no, no I do not want to go because I'm scared and do not want to go
skydiving, but my friends said, 'Let's go!'
- 17 Beth: *aaaa, hah*
oh
'Oh'
- 18 Nao: *[hyuuu mitai na. kowai! mitai na.*
(jumping sound) like scary like

‘hyuuu it’s like “so scary!”’

The learner, Beth, did not use any particles at all when there were appropriate opportunities for them during the pre-instruction stage (as shown as in Excerpt 2). However, after the instructional period, she became more capable of using the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in different assessment activities. This excerpt illustrates an instance where the learner’s use of the particle *ne* emerged in an extended assessment activity; beyond the turn where Beth strongly agrees with the assessment *chotto kowai* (‘a bit scary’) initiated by her NS partner Nao, Beth produces a second assessment *sugoi ne* (‘that’s awesome’), marking a different stance than her previous stance, i.e., strong agreement, to Nao’s feeling about skydiving in the preceding talk.

In line 1, Beth states that she is afraid of heights, by making her own assessment *kowai* (‘scary’), which triggers Nao’s initiation of talk about being invited to go skydiving with her friend. Then in line 9, Nao starts with the same assessment *kowai* with a particle *yone* with rising intonation, to elicit Beth’s confirmation her assertion while also eliciting alignment from Beth, whom Nao assumes must also be afraid of skydiving since she is afraid of heights (line 11). In her response to Nao’s assessment with *yone*, Beth shows her strong agreement saying *HA::i* (‘YE::s’) with an elongated vowel and high volume (line 10), and responds with laughter in her next turn (line 12). Nao then begins her utterance with a contrastive connective *demo* to stress that it is not her but her friend that wants to go skydiving. Before Nao completes her utterance, Beth cuts in and continues her extended assessment *sugoi ne* (‘that’s awesome/crazy’) to praise Nao’s attempt to go skydiving despite her reluctance (line 14).

Note that, unlike the previous excerpts showing that *ne* becomes a resource to make the recipient's joint assessment (such as alignment and shared affect) relevant next, Beth's extended assessment with *ne* does not receive an affirmative response from Nao (Tanaka, 2000), who instead displays strong disagreement by code-switching to English and providing three tokens of "no" before resuming her talk in Japanese (line 15). Nao's explicit display of non-alignment is also manifested through her overt use of contrastive particle *wa* with the first-person pronoun *watashi* (i.e., it's not *me* but *my friend* who wants to go skydiving), and her use of postposing, *yaritakunakute:: sukaidaibingu* ('do not wanna go skydiving'), an index of strong emotional stance (Ono, 2006) in the second clause of her turn. Having completed rectifying Beth's misunderstanding of her stance towards skydiving, Nao now returns to the turn she began producing in line 13, a turn in which she highlights her friend's eagerness to go skydiving, not hers. In response to this turn, Beth produces a change of state token *aaaa* ('oh') to signal her uptake of Nao's intended talk, at which point Nao immediately recycles her previous assessment *kowai* ('scary') about skydiving with upgraded assessments such as onomatopoeic *hyuuu* and self-quoted speech (line 18). In this excerpt, we can see that the learner has developed the use of *ne* as a resource for extended assessment activity: Beth's precision-timing assessment with an appropriate marking of *ne* pushes Nao to initiate repair for the gap between the participants' assessment about the topic in question, followed by Beth's signal of uptake on the repair with little disruption to the flow of talk.

The analysis of the learners' use of the particle *ne* at the post-instructional stages reveals that some students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction have demonstrated their ability to use the particle *ne* in the initial-turn assessment turn beyond

listener responses. Although there exist individual differences in particle use at the onset of the conversation sessions, all students collectively but one were able to deploy the particle *ne* when there were appropriate opportunities for use in the follow-up, initial, and/or extended assessments by the end of the post-instruction period (Post-2, Session 4). The learners' successful deployment of *ne* with other interactional resources (e.g., overlapped turns, precision-timing of uptake and response, shift in speech style) in the assessment activity is realized through their emerging interactional competence in maintaining conversational flow (initial *ne*), attending to and understanding the content of the co-participant's talk, and providing assessments for the joint construction of stance (e.g., alignment, extended assessment practice) toward the referent with the co-participant in the conversation.

Next, we will observe the emerging use of interactional particle *yo* by the instructed learners and how they use this particle as a resource to express affective and epistemic stances, stances that are distinct from those realized through the use of *ne*, when they engage in conversations with their NS partners and classroom peers.

5.2.3 Use of *yo* by the experimental group

Compared to the acquisition of *ne* by L2 learners of Japanese, research documenting their productive use of interactional particle *yo* is extremely limited, and Kakegawa (2009), who examines the effects of instruction on students' development of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in email correspondence with native speakers, is a rare exception. The absence of particle uses by L2 learners in Japanese spoken discourse is compatible with previous findings (e.g., Masuda, 2009; Saywer, 1992; Shibahara, 2002); these studies

note that *yo* and *yone* rarely occur in English-speaking JFL learners' conversations even after they have lived in Japan for an extended period of time.

The particle *yo* has distinct functions from those of the particle *ne* in terms of its indexing of the speaker's stance toward the conveyed message in collaboration to the addressee. For instance, when Speaker A says "*kono hon, omoshirokatta ne*" ('This book was fun to read, wasn't it?') to a friend B, A is evaluating the book as an object that is mutually known and sharable by them, thereby proffering his/her assessment as something B can also align to. However, A would say "*kono hon, omoshirokatta yo*" ('I'm telling you, this book was fun to read') if A was to evaluate a book that is unknown to B and let B know about the book so that B might (or might not) want to read it in the future. More specifically, A uses the particle *yo* as an interactional resource to invoke what Heritage and Raymond (2005) refer to as "epistemic rights" (p. 19), to inform the friend about or share an assessment of the book. The particle *yo* is used to index the speaker's claim to "be in a 'one-up' position on the addressee in terms of knowledge about, or epistemic access to, the referent" (Hayano, 2011, p. 60). Thus, by deploying *yo*, the participants can engage in different stance-indexing activities, such as news telling, informing, and claiming epistemic asymmetry to emphasize their authority in that telling and secure the appropriate "registration" of *yo*-marked talk by the participants (Morita, 2012b, p. 1725).

The following two tables (Tables 15 and 16) exhibit the experimental group students' use of the particle *yo* during their conversations with the NS partners at the post-instructional stages. Compared to the emerging yet sparse use of *yo* by a small number of students (n=4) in Session 3, more than half of the students (n=7) evidence

either emergent use or a significant growth in the use of *yo* by the end of Session 4. The pragmatics-focused instruction the students received on the use of *yo* includes its functions in a variety of stance-indexing activities, such as informing for others' interest, highlighting epistemic incongruence between participants, and news telling/reporting as a response to a question. The analysis of data focuses on the students' contingent use of *yo* in conjunction with these assessment practices.

Table 15. Learners' use of *yo* with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group)

Post-1 Student (N=14)	<i>yo</i>					
	Assessment activity			Uninstructed <i>yo</i> (Other use)	Anomalous	Total
	(3) informing for others' interest	(4) epistemic incongruence	(5) reporting/news telling			
Fred	2	1	1	0	0	4
Tara	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ryan	0	0	0	1	0	1
Ann	0	0	1	0	0	1
Beth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emily	0	0	0	0	0	0
James	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kyle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kelly	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lucas	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2	2	2	1	0	7

Table 16. Learners' use of *yo* with NS partners (Session 4, experimental group)

Post-2 Student (N=14)	<i>yo</i>					
	Assessment activity			Uninstructed <i>yo</i> (Other use)	Anomalous	Total
	(3) informing for others' interest	(4) epistemic incongruence	(5) reporting/news telling			
Lucas	1	0	1	4	0	6
Beth	2	0	0	2	0	4
Tara	2	0	0	0	0	2
Emily	0	0	1	1	0	2
Julie	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kyle	0	0	0	1	0	1
Kelly	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ryan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fred	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ann	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trey	0	0	0	0	0	0
James	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	0	2	8	0	17

In the section below, we will first look at assessment sequences where the speaker is evaluating the referent as something that he/she has experienced (or known) but that the recipient has not. In such cases, the learners produce a *yo*-marked assessment in their joint stance-indexing activity.

5.2.3.1 *Yo*-marked assessment as informing for others' interest

The particle *yo*, just like *ne*, occurs in assessment turns, including first and second turn assessments, and extended assessments (Morita, 2012b). In question-answer sequences, for example, speakers use *yo* in their response turn to provide information for the recipient's understanding or to heighten the recipient's interest in the topic in question. The example below illustrates a learner's (Kelly) use of *yo* in her assessment about a movie she has watched in response to her NS partner's (Hana) question regarding the movie.

Excerpt 17 Kelly: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Kelly: hah hah *un, ano, ano::*: ‘Twilight’ *mo mita*.
yeah well well also watch-PST
‘Yeah, well, well I also watched the movie “Twilight”.’
- 02 Hana: *aa, jo- johnny deppu?*
oh HES Johnny Depp
‘Oh, Johnny Depp is in it?’
- 03 Kelly: *un, ie, ano* Robert Pattinson =
yeah no well
‘Yeah, no, well Robert Pattinson’
- 04 Hana: *[aa,*
oh
‘Oh.’
- 05 Kelly: = *to, aa,* Taylor Lautner.
and uhm
‘and uhm Taylor Lautner.’
- 06 Hana: *[un, un, omoshiro soo, sore wa.*
yeah yeah interesting-AUX that TOP
‘Yeah, yeah, it sounds interesting, it does.’
- 07 Kelly: [hah
- 08 Hana: *omoshirokatta?*
interesting-PST
‘Was it interesting?’
- 09 Kelly: *n, omoshirokatta yo.* hah
yeah interesting-PST IP
‘Yeah, it was interesting.’
- 10 Hana: *[atode mitemiyoo.*
later watch-AUX
‘I will check it out later on.’
- 11 Kelly: *nnn!*
yeah
‘Yeah!’

In Kelly’s pre-instruction data, when the same question-answer sequence occurs, *yo* would be expected. In that instance, she responds to Hana’s question of whether her

favorite clothing store in Japan is just as expensive in Hawai‘i, *takai?* (‘Is it expensive in Hawai‘i?’). First, let us observe Kelly’s anomalous use in the pre-instructional stage in Excerpt 18 below.

Excerpt 18 Kelly: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

- 01 Hana: *suki.*
like
‘I like it.’
- 02 Kelly: [*un.*
yeah
‘Yeah.’
- 03 Hana: [*demo nihon da to sugoku takai.*
but Japan COP if very expensive
‘But it would be very expensive in Japan.’
- 04 Kelly: *ooo, soo desu ka::.*
oh so COP Q
‘Oh, is it?’
- 05 Hana: [*holistaa, hawai de wa sonna ni, doo?*
Hollister Hawaii LOC TOP that how
‘Hollister is not that expensive? How are they?’
- 06 Kelly: [*nnn*
well
‘Well’
- 07 Hana: *takai?*
expensive
‘Are they expensive?’
- 08 Kelly: *aa, yasui desu ne:::* ((anomalous use))
well cheap COP IP
‘Well, they are cheap.’
- 09 Hana: *yasui no?*
cheap IP
‘They are cheap?’
- 10 Kelly: [*hai, seeru ga aru.*
yes sale SUB have
‘Yes, they have sales.’

- 11 Hana: *a, seeru oshiete kudasai.*
oh sale tell-TE please
'Oh, sale, tell me more about it please.'

Kelly, who works at Hana's favorite clothing store in Hawai'i, responds to Hana's question commenting *yasui desu ne* instead of *yasui desu yo* ('It's cheap [because of the sale]'), a *yo*-marked assessment that would be more appropriate in this context to display her epistemic stance in the sharing of new information for her partner's interest in the topic under discussion.

Immediately prior to Excerpt 17, Kelly and Hana were discussing the movies that they had seen recently and found to be interesting. Then, Kelly brings up a specific movie called *Twilight* (line 1), which prompts Hana to ask about who performed in the movie. As Kelly starts to list names of actors in the movie (line 3), Hana responds with aligning receipt tokens *aa* ('oh') and *un, un* ('yeah, yeah') in an overlapped turn and gives a comment as a display of her interest in the movie while at the same time marking her non-knowing status with the secondhand evidential marker *-soo*, (*omoshirosoo sore wa* 'it sounds interesting') at line 6. Then, Hana further initiates an assessment activity *omoshirokatta?* ('Was it [the movie] fun?') by orienting to Kelly as a person who knows better about the movie than she does. To respond, Kelly uses an epistemic marker *yo* (*n, omoshirokatta yo* 'yeah, it was') in her assessment about the movie as something that the speaker has direct access to but the recipient does not. By so doing, Kelly is able to display her one-up position in the telling that indexes her exclusive familiarity with the referent (Hayano, 2011), and at the same time to make an affective move that can also be 'considerate' (*omoiyari*, Lebra, 1976) towards Hana's interest in the topic (the movie) being discussed. The affective expression of *yo* is discussed in Yoshimi (1997), claiming

that *yo* acts as an index of the speaker's different attitudes from a strong expression of his/her desired goal (e.g., 'The movie was fun to watch, so you should watch it') to a soft suggestion for the addressee's well-being in mind (e.g., 'The movie was fun to watch, and I think you'd like it'). This excerpt shows that the learner's successful use of *yo* in the assessment sequence demonstrates the emergence of interactional competence in the appropriate construction of stance for informing her partner of the movie as an aligning act that helps to fill the co-participants' epistemic gap about the movie in question, and foster Hana hearsay-based interest in it.

Moreover, while the particle *ne* often marks utterances as interactionally relevant for the recipient's next move such as alignment, deploying *yo* is a pragmatic move in conversation that indexes the speaker's expectation of the recipient's understanding or registering of such explicitly marked concerns of the speaker (Morita, 2012b). Morita also found that the recipients of *yo*-marked turns commonly provide explicit responses that involve minimal tokens of acknowledgment and close the *yo*-marked sequence. This excerpt also clearly shows that the recipient (Hana) accepts the learner's *yo*-marked reply as informative and supportive of her positive stance towards the movie; she aligns with these facets of Kelly's *yo*-marked assessment by stating she intends to watch the movie, a turn which marks the closing of the assessment activity sequence.

In the next example, I will present another instance of *yo* in which the learner used the particle to mark her assessment about a place that is new to the NS partner.

Excerpt 19 Beth: Learner Nao: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

01 Beth: *konshuumatsu, nani ka (..) yotei aru?*
this weekend anything plan have
'Do you have any plans this weekend?'

- 02 Nao: *konshuumatsu wa, umi ni iku kana. tabun.*
this weekend TOP ocean LOC go wonder perhaps
'Perhaps I'm going to the beach I guess.'
- 03 Beth [ooo
oh
'Oh']
- 04 Nao: *ka- kairuaꜱ*
HES Kailua
'Ka, Kailua?'
- 05 Beth: Kailua?
- 06 Nao: [maybeꜱ]
- 07 Beth: [*kirei(.)da yo::*
pretty COP IP
'It's beautiful.']
- 08 Nao: [*hontoo?*
really
'Really?']
- 09 Beth: *hai.*
yes
'Yes.'
- 10 Nao: [*itta koto nai.*
go-PST NOM NEG
'Haven't been there.']
- 11 Beth: [*demo*
but
'But']
- 12 Nao: *un,*
yeah
'Yeah'
- 13 Beth: *chotto*, windy =
a little windy
'It's a little windy.'
- 14 Nao: = *aa, aa, kaze ga tsuyoi?*
oh oh wind SUB strong
'Oh, oh, the wind is strong?'
- 15 Beth: [*hai, kaze ga tsuyoi. dakara, sunaꜱ*
yes wind SUB strong so sand
'Yes, the wind is strong so it's sandyꜱ']

The learner's (Beth) use of *yo* appears at the last conversation session (Session 4), and this excerpt which occurs when the learner and her NS partner Nao are talking about their upcoming weekend plans exemplifies one of her emerging *yo* uses. In line 2, Nao replies that she may go to the beach this weekend, trying to articulate the name of the beach (Kailua Beach) with some disfluency at first (*ka-kairua*) and a rising intonation that signals uncertainty regarding the correct pronunciation. Hearing Nao pronounce the name in a somewhat disfluent manner, Beth assumes that Nao may not have been to the beach yet and provides her first assessment marked with *yo* (*kirei(.)da yo::* 'It's pretty') in reference to the beach (line 7). When speakers make an assessment in the first position, they claim and exhibit independent access to the referent (Pomerantz, 1984). If her assumption is correct, *yo* would be an appropriate particle to use in this context because her assessment enables Beth, who is a long-time resident of O'ahu, to position herself as the more knowing participant with respect to her partner Nao, a new exchange student from Japan. Thus, by using *yo* in her assessment, Beth signals her epistemic authority which makes her subsequent informing talk relevant to Nao, who she may assume will be unfamiliar with many places on the island.

What is notable in this excerpt is that the learner demonstrates interactional competence by using *yo* with her attention to the implications of the co-constructed talk that precedes her proffer of the *yo*-marked assessment. The deployment of *yo* in this turn is only made possible through the assumption that her partner may have no prior experience of going to the specific beach and therefore has no epistemic rights to evaluate the place; another possibility might be the use of particle *yone* (*kirei da yone* 'it's pretty, isn't it?') to indicate that both participants share equivalent access to the referent. In

addition to the emergence of interactional competence with the particle *yo*, the proposed instruction appears to have a positive impact on the learner's grammatical competence in producing co-occurring linguistic features with the *yo*-marked utterance, as is evidenced through her increasing control of inserting the plain form of the copula *da* for this adjectival type, *kirei* ('pretty') following a micro pause. Different from the *i*-adjectives such as *ii* ('good') or *omoshiroi* ('interesting'), this *na*-adjective *kirei* requires the copula *da* before a particle is appended, and such grammatical modification is normally quite challenging for learners at this level even with focused grammatical instruction and practice.

Moreover, the learner's production of the particle *yo::* with the vowel elongation, which indexes affective stance, leads to a joint assessment activity in which Nao, the recipient of the *yo*-assessment, reacts with a receipt token, *hontoo?* ('Really?'). This token marks that the new information about the beach is received and understood by the recipient. As Beth hears Nao explicitly stating that she has never been to the beach, she provides an extended assessment about the beach incorporating both the evaluative quantifier *chotto* ('a little') followed by an English word ('windy'); this assessment activity is initiated with *demo* ('but'), the connective phrase that presents her extended assessment as being in contrast with her first positive assessment with *yo*.

In her reflection sheet, Beth mentions her awareness of using interactional particles, including *yo*, frequently as she develops her conversational relationship with her NS partner Nao over time: "*A lot of yo was used, and I tried my best to incorporate the interactional particles into my Japanese. Compared to the last sessions I felt like this one was the best because I was able to speak with NS more freely.*" This excerpt

demonstrates that the learner’s emerging interactional competence is evident in her own awareness of deploying *yo* as a resource to engage more “freely” in the conversation with her NS peer, and specifically, to construct her epistemic stance in providing helpful information for her NS peer who is still new to Hawai‘i as well as in making her affective move (*omoiyari*) to fulfill her partner’s new understanding of a place of interest in the interaction.

5.2.3.2 *Yo in news telling*

The particle *yo* attaches to the turn of any joint stance-indexing activity type (e.g., request, assessment, and answer) in all sequential positions, i.e. first pair part, second pair part, and third position (cf. Morita, 2012b). While the *yo*-marked response we saw in the previous excerpts (Excerpts 17 and 19) provides as a piece of information provided for a topic of interest (e.g., movies, a new sightseeing place) that concerns the addressee in a question-and-answer sequence, the following use of *yo* in the excerpt below occurs in the informing of news or updates in the same sequential position.

Excerpt 20 Ann: Learner Sumi: CP
 Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Ann: *Sumi san wa saikin, doo?*
 Sumi TOP recently how
 ‘How are things lately, Sumi?’
- 02 Sumi: *saikin wa, benkyoo mo ganbatteru shi, takusan asobi ni ittemasu.*
 recently TOP study also thrive-PROG CP a lot hang out for go-PROG
 ‘I’ve been studying hard and playing hard these days.’
- 03 *Ann wa, saikin wa doo?*
 Ann TOP recently TOP how
 ‘How are things lately, Ann?’
- 04 Ann: *saikin wa::: choo isogashii yo:::!*
 recently TOP super busy IP
 ‘Recently I’m super busy!’

- 05 Sumi: [hah hah hah
- 06 Ann: [hah *takusan shukudai ga aru.*
a lot homework SUB have
'I have a lot of homework.'
- 07 Sumi: [*nn, na- nani ga*
well HES what SUB
- 08 *isogashii no?*
busy IP
'Well, What, what is keeping you busy?'
- 09 Ann: ((unintelligible))*toka, shukudai, tesuto desu.*
or homework test COP
'((unintelligible)) or homework, tests....'
- 10 Sumi: [*n, n, maakingu dakke?*
yeah yeah marketing COP Q
'Yeah, did you say you are majoring in marketing?'
- 11 Ann: [*maakingu jyanai, bijinesu.*
marketing COP-NRG business
'It's not marketing, it's business.'
- 12 Sumi: [*bijinesu,*
business
'Business'
- 13 *sore. hah*
that
'that's it.'

Ann has studied Japanese for 1.5 years and her part-time work allows her to use and hear Japanese a couple of hours per week. During the pre-instructional stages, Ann's participation in the conversational activity seemed receptive in that she only answered questions initiated by her NS partner Sumi and there was no evidence of particle use. However, the post-instruction data reveals that her particle use emerges as she begins to take more initiative in the conversation. In the excerpt above, Sumi responds to the question initiated by Ann by saying that she has been studying and playing hard lately (line 2). Then Sumi questions Ann on the same topic, for which Ann marks her response

with *yo*, claiming her epistemic stance in the informing of how busy she has been lately. Her use of *yo* in this sequence is appropriate in explicitly inviting the recipient's attention to or "registration" (Morita, 2012) of what she has been up to lately; notably Sumi's response at line 2 was not marked with *yo*, making it a conversational move which does not require the recipient's involvement. Ann's strong affect in the telling is expressed by using the slang word used among young people *choo* ('super') and elongating the vowel, *yo:::/*, which triggers Sumi's uptake with joint laughter in an overlapped turn (line 5). Sharing moments of laughter with Sumi, Ann continues on to say that she has a lot of homework to do. However, Ann's additional statement receives a minimal response token *nnn* from Sumi, which suggests that Sumi expects more reasons for Ann being 'super' busy lately. Following her minimal response, Sumi initiates an extended assessment activity about Ann's earlier *yo*-marked response by pursuing to ask Ann what is it that is keeping her busy. Here, Ann's effective use of *yo* in the news telling sequence invites the recipient's further involvement in that *yo*-marked talk while creating an interactional space for the co-participants to sustain topic development.

5.2.3.3 *Yo in claiming epistemic asymmetry*

Masuoka (1991) says that the particle *yo* is used when interactants are disagreeing with each other or there is a gap in their respective knowledgeability. Hanano (2011) also demonstrates many instances in which *yo* is used when there is asymmetry in knowledge between interactants, such as often occurs when showing disagreement. The following analysis of the learners' use of the particle *yo* shows how they deploy the particle *yo* as a way to highlight (and potentially fill in) an epistemic gap in perspectives between participants.

The learner, Tara, is one of the most productive users of the particle *ne*, and has demonstrated her ability to use *ne* in different assessment turns prior to the provision of the target instruction. (See Excerpt 5 for her first assessment with *ne*.) Tara's interactional competence in using the particle *yo* is manifested through her producing a *yo*-marked concern as a response to her NS partner's (Hiro) plans on Friday afternoon, the day they interacted. Interestingly, the identical use of *yo* by a NS partner was also found in my pilot study¹⁰. First, I will show the NS-learner data from my pilot study below (Excerpt 21) in which the NS partner deployed *yo* as a claim of epistemic primacy to the learner's awareness of the unfavorable status of studying on Friday. I will then show how the learner Tara used *yo* in a similar interactional environment with her NS partner (Excerpt 22) in the present study.

Excerpt 21 Rick: Learner Nao: CP
Pilot study

- 01 Nao: *kyoo wa:: nani o shimasu ka, gakkoo ga owattara.*
today TOP what O do Q school SUB finish-PST-if
'What are you gonna do today after school?'
- 02 (1.5)
- 03 Rick: *benkyoo shimasu.*
study do
'I'm going to study.'
- 03 Nao: *aaa! erai!*
oh proud
'Oh! I'm proud of you!'
- 04 (1.0)
- 05 Nao: *kyoo, kinyoobi da yo! hah hah It's Friday!*
today Friday COP IP
'Today is Friday!'

¹⁰ Participants from the pilot study consist of different NS-learner pairs from the one excerpted in the present study.

- 06 Rick: I know, I know.
- 07 Nao: *benkyoo shinakute daijoobu.* hah
study do-NEG-TE all right
'You don't have to study.'
- 08 Rick: Mon- *uhh*
HES uhm
'Mon- uhm'
- 09 Nao: *getsuyoobi?*
Monday
'Monday?'
- 10 Rick: [*getsuyoobi, exam desu.*
Monday exam COP
'I have an exam on Monday.'
- 11 Nao: *nan no? nan no tesuto desu ka.*
what LK what LK test COP Q
'What exam? What exam do you have?'

This excerpt represents a segment of interaction between Rick, the learner and his NS partner Nao discussing their plans on Friday, the day the session takes place. After a pause, Rick responds to Nao's question at line 1 by saying he is going to study. Following an interjection *aaa!* ('ohh!'), Nao praises Rick for studying on Friday, and then provides her assessment with an epistemic marker *yo* with laughter before she explains in English that it is Friday so he does not have to study (line 5). By using *yo*, Nao orients to the incongruencies in their respective epistemic stances regarding the idea of studying on Friday afternoon, the end of the week. At the same time, Nao deploys *yo* in her assessment so that the recipient (Rick) is expected to register (Morita, 2012b) and demonstrate his understanding of her *yo*-marked concern that there is no need to study on Friday. To this, Rick also responds by code-switching to English, *I know, I know*, as an explicit acknowledgment of Nao's *yo*-marked concern. His joint stance taking indexed through the English acknowledgment token in repetition involves more than agreement to

Nao; he claims equal epistemic access to the referent, indicating that he already knows that it is Friday and does not need a reminder for that.

The excerpt below provides evidence in which a learner (Tara) used *yo* in a similar interactional context with her NS partner (Hiro) in the present study.

Excerpt 22 Tara: Learner Hiro: CP
Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Tara: *ano:: kyoo wa nnnn nani o shimasu ka.*
well today TOP uhm what O do Q
'Well, what are you going to do today?'
- 02 Hiro: *kyoo wa ummm shukudai o shimasu::: un shuku- benkyoo.*
Today TOP uhm homework O do uhm HES study
'I'm going to do my homework today, uhm home- study.'
- 03 Tara: *SOO desu ka:::? hah [hah hah hah*
so COP Q
'REAlly?'
- 04 Hiro: *[ato, ato wa*
and and TOP
'and, and then'
- 05 Tara: *kinyoobi desu yo:::!* hah [hah hah hah hah hah
Friday COP IP
'It's Friday!'
- 06 Hiro: *[so- so- a, soreto*
HES HES um and
'and then'
- 07 *[jogingu shimasu.*
jogging do
'I'm going jogging.'
- 08 Tara: *[hah hah hah hah aaaa!*
ah
'ah!'

As we observed in Excerpt 21, the beginning of this interaction illustrates that the participants discuss their plans after school. Here, the learner Tara asks Hiro the same

question about his plans for the day (Friday) of the conversation session. In his response, Hiro begins with *kyoo wa* ('as for today') after a .5 second pause, and continues on to say that he is going to do his homework (line 2). However, his speech in line 2 shows a sign of hesitance with the elongated vowel of the verb *shimasu:::*, followed by the replacement of the cut-off word *shuku-* ('homework') with *benkyoo* ('studying'). Such delays marked with a pause, a vowel elongation, and a cut-off in speech are characteristic of dispreferred responses (Heritage, 1984), that is, an unexpected reply for Tara to hear on Friday, the end of the week when studying is commonly left for later by many college students. It can be argued that Hiro's disfluency is associated with his anticipation of what comes next, such as the other interlocutor's non-verbal behaviors (e.g., laughter, expression of surprise) in reaction to his response.

Then in line 3, Tara reacts to Hiro by uttering *SOO desu ka:::?* ('Really?') in a rather teasing tone, followed by a stretch of laughter, which is overlapped by the beginning of Hiro's flustered response, *ato, ato wa* ('and, and') in line 4. Immediately after a short pause, Tara produces her affective assessment with a prolonged form of *yo:::!* to contest Hiro's plans for studying on Friday, although it is mitigated by an extended laughter that co-occurs with the turn (Haakana, 2001). In using *yo*, Tara highlights an epistemic gap in their perspectives on what they might do on Friday (between studying and leaving it behind for later), possibly to change Hiro's awareness of how she (and others) evaluate the idea of studying at the end of the week. In this excerpt, the learner's affect display of the *yo*-turn marked with the vowel elongation *yo:::!* and the laughter that follows prompts Hiro to lose control of his own speech with cut-offs, *so- so-a, soreto* ('an- an- and then') and to provide more 'preferred' response that Tara might

align to and assess with a more positive stance *joggingu shimasu* ('I'm going jogging') in the subsequent turn (lines 6 and 7). Tara's contingent use of *yo* indicates the emergence of interactional competence in terms of the ability to appropriately display affect in marking her epistemic stance in response to the previous utterance produced by Hiro and to prepare the recipient (Hiro) to register her *yo*-marked concerns and design his subsequent turn accordingly, in this case, by reformulating his answer in a way that aligns more with the *yo*-assessment initiated by Tara.

5.2.3.4 *Extended yo-marked assessment*

As Goodwin and Goodwin (1987) note in their analysis of organization of assessments, an extended assessment activity engages the interlocutors in "heightened mutual orientation and action" (p. 7) where they become involved in the ongoing interaction by aligning or positioning themselves in relation to the assessor's point of view. In this regard, Du Bois and Kärkkäinen (2012) argue that alignment "is not to be collapsed with agreement or affiliation, nor should it be treated as binary or dichotomous" (p. 440), and it thus becomes key to understanding of intersubjectivity as collaboratively constructed in interaction.

In the earlier excerpt (Excerpt 16), we observed an instance of extended assessment activity in which the learner aligns with her NS partner using an assessment marked with *ne* towards the turn of the interlocutor who initiated the assessment. In the excerpt that follows, the participants' mutual orientation to the ongoing talk is realized through the learner's use of *yo* in the second assessment turn that immediately follows the *ne*-marked assessment initiated by her partner.

Excerpt 23 Emily: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Emily: *raigakki, eeto (.)* economics class
next semester well economics class
'I'm going to take an economics class next semester'
- 02 Hana: *aa, keizai.*
ah economics
'Ah economics.'
- 03 Emily: *ongaku kurasu to =*
music class and
'a music class and'
- 04 Hana: [aaa
ah
'ah']
- 05 Emily: = *to aato kurasu.*
and art class
'and an art class.'
- 06 Hana: [ooo!
oh
'Oh!']
- 07 Emily: [accounting]
- 08 Hana: *kaikei*
accounting
'accounting'
- 09 Emily: *ha:::i.* business law.
yes business law
'Yes. Business law.'
- 10 Hana: *aaa, bijinesu. sugo:::i!*
oh business great
'Oh, business. That's crazy!'
- 11 Emily: *ha:::i.* hah hah
yes
'Yes.'
- 12 Hana: [hah hah *sugo:::i!*
great
'Crazy!']
- 13 Emily: [hah hah]

- 14 Hana: *[takusan!*
a lot
'Many classes!'
- 15 Emily: [hah
- 16 Hana: *sugoi ne:::*
great IP
'That's crazy.'
- 17 Emily: [hah *isogashii yo:::*!
busy IP
'I will be busy!'
- 18 Hana: [*un, totemo isogashii yo:::*!
yeah very busy IP
'Yeah, you will be very busy!'

Prior to this interaction, the NS partner asks the learner Emily what classes she is going to take in the next semester. As Emily starts to list her classes, her NS partner Hana responds by producing multiple assessments using different phrases *sugoi* ('amazing') and *takusan* ('numerous') as indexes of highly affective reaction towards the ongoing topic. Then in line 16, Hana repeats her assessment *sugoi* followed by the particle *ne* to invite agreement from Emily. However, instead of simply agreeing with Hana, Emily provides an extended assessment, marking it with *yo* (line 17). Her use of *yo* here is not to disagree with Hana's *ne*-assessment but to reevaluate it from *sugoi* to *isogashii* ('busy') to claim epistemic primacy as the one who knows she will be busy next semester; that is, by differentiating her evaluative stance from Hana's, Emily not only claims to know better than Hana but displays it through an evaluation that more uniquely singles her out (Hayano, 2011). Hana then produces an agreement token *un* ('yeah'), which displays her registration of the prior *yo*-marked turn, and incorporates her uptake of the same assessment initiated by Emily (*isogashii yo*) in the evaluation of her own

upcoming schedule, thereby constructing affective stance that is epistemically congruent with Emily's.

Although claiming epistemic primacy inherently suggests asymmetrical, differentiated epistemic stances between interactants, it does not necessarily undermine social solidarity (Heritage, 2002). The above example was one such case. The learner's use of *yo* in the extended assessment towards the topic in progress marks her appropriate display of epistemic claim without highlighting incongruence in the co-participants' epistemic stance and invokes their subsequent involvement in the ongoing activity and joint construction of stance to work towards the intersubjectivity of the participants in the interaction. In the next sections below, I will show increasing uses of the particle *yone* among the students in the experimental group at the post-instruction stages.

5.2.4 Use of *yone* in assessment/confirmation activity

The particle *yone* shares both functions of *yo* and *ne* where the speaker is claiming epistemic authority toward the utterance while requiring the addressee's validation (Hayano, 2011; Kizu et al., 2013). Another perspective on *yone* is to invite and confirm a shared understanding of the content of the utterance between the interactants (Hasunuma, 1995; Izumura, 2003, Saigo, 2011). Some L2 studies have reported that *yone* is rarely used among even advanced learners of Japanese (Goto, 1998) and that *ne* is erroneously used to replace *yone* in the spoken data of many L2 learners (Kizu et al., 2013; Masuda, 2009; Mine, 1995).

The present data evidence that the appropriate use of *yone* began to appear among the experimental group learners during the Post-instruction 2 (Session 4) period, while it only identified erroneous instances in the Pre-instruction and Post-instruction 1 (Session

3) periods. In the post-instruction 1 period, the learners' erroneous use of *yone* occurred in the sequential positions where *ne* or *yo* would be highly expected and their attempts to incorporate other particles than *ne* in their talk resulted in the unnaturalness of utterances. Such erroneous cases will be discussed in the next chapter.

The following tables present the learners' increasing use of *yone* over the two post-instruction periods.

Table 17. Learners' use of *yone* with NS partners (Session 3, experimental group)

Post-1 Student (N=14)	<i>yone</i>			
	Assessment activity		Anomalous	Total
	Confirmation question	Confirming shared evaluation		
Ethan	0	0	1	1
Tara	0	0	1	1
Trey	0	0	1	1
Ryan	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	0	0	0
Beth	0	0	0	0
James	0	0	0	0
Kyle	0	0	0	0
Fred	0	0	0	0
Brian	0	0	0	0
Ann	0	0	0	0
Emily	0	0	0	0
Kelly	-	-	-	-
Lucas	-	-	-	-
Total	0	0	3	3

Table 18. Learners' use of *yone* with NS partners (Session 4, experimental group)

Post-2 Student (N=14)	<i>yone</i>			
	Assessment activity		Anomalous	Total
	Confirmation question	Confirming shared evaluation		
Beth	1	1	0	2
Ryan	0	1	0	1
Trey	1	0	0	1
Lucas	1	0	0	1
Tara	0	0	0	0
Kelly	0	0	0	0
James	0	0	0	0
Brian	0	0	0	0
Fred	0	0	0	0
Emily	0	0	0	0
Ann	0	0	0	0
Kyle	0	0	0	0
Julie	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0
Total	3	2	0	5

Compared to the increased number of *ne* and *yo* over the two post-instruction periods, the small number of *yone* use is associated with the difficulty of using *yone* that some students in the experimental group expressed in the reflection sheet for the last conversation session. The students indicated that although they attempted to incorporate *yone* in their talk, they were still “*not sure how to use it*” (Ann) and “*not comfortable using it*” (Kyle). This might be related to the complexity in the functions of *yone*, the appropriate use of which requires the speaker’s online awareness or assumption that the interactants have shared epistemic access to the referent usually from distinct sources for joint assessment in an ongoing conversation. The following sections detail the learners’ instructed use of *yone*, a particle used to confirm if participants have equivalent epistemic stance towards the referent being assessed.

5.2.4.1 *Yone* in confirming equivalent epistemic stance

We first observe an instance in which the learner (Trey) uses *yone* appropriately to confirm if he and his NS partner have shared knowledge regarding gift exchange for Christmas in Japan.

Excerpt 24 Trey: Learner Sumi: CP Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Sumi: *are, jya, besutofurendo jyanakute, tomodachi ni ageru tte koto?*
well then bestfriend COP-NEG-TE friend to give QT NOM
'Well then, you give them to your friends, but not to your bestfriend?'
- 02 Trey: *nn. ii.*
yeah right
'Yeah, no need.'
- 03 Sumi: *besutofurendo wa ii.*
best friend TOP right
'No need to give it to your bestfriend.'
- 04 Trey: *ii.*
right
'No.'
- 05 Sumi: *tomodachi wa ageru.*
friend TOP give
'You give it to your friends.'
- 06 Trey: *un.*
yeah
'Yeah.'
- 07 Sumi: ok.
- 08 Trey: [*un.*
yeah
'Yep.'
- 09 Sumi: *muzukashii ne. hah*
difficult IP
'That's confusing.'
- 10 Trey: *demo nihon de =*
but Japan LOC
'But in Japan'

- 11 Sumi: [*un, un*
 yeah yeah
 ‘yeah, yeah’
- 12 Trey: = *kanojo ka kareshi ni ageru (0.3) dake yone?*
 girlfriend or boyfriend to give only IP
 ‘People only give presents to their boyfriend and girlfriend, right?’
- 13 Sumi: *soo da ne, n, n, n. kareshi toka kanojo toka tomodachi dooshi de (0.5) paatii*
 so TOP IP yeah boyfriend or girlfriend or friend mutual in party
- 14 *shitari toka de =*
 do-PST-AUX or and
 ‘That’s right, yeah. To your boyfriend and girlfriend, or you throw a party
 among friends and’
- 15 Trey: [*aaa*
 oh
 ‘oh’
- 16 Sumi: = *purezento kookan.*
 present exchange
 ‘exchange presents.’
- 17 Trey: *aa, ok. hah*
 oh ok
 ‘Oh, ok.’

Out of all students in the experimental group, Trey interacts most frequently with his Japanese-speaking friends outside of the classroom. His NS partner, Sumi, also happened to be one of his native Japanese friends that he met at school. Like Beth, Trey is also familiar with the casual speech style because of his exposure to interaction outside of class and input from Japanese films and dramas, but his pre-instruction conversation data identified no evidence of particle use. It is only during the post-instruction periods that particles *ne* and *yo* emerge in his conversations with the NS partner and peers.

Prior to this excerpt, Trey mentioned that, in Hawaii, it is not necessary to give Christmas gifts to best friends though he does it for other friends. The beginning of this excerpt exhibits that Sumi is confirming if her interpretation is correct (line 1), to which

Trey responds saying *ii*, implying “no need (to give Christmas gifts to best friends)” in Japanese (line 2). Sumi’s confirmation regarding the ongoing topic continues on until line 7, where she finally closes her turn with an acknowledgment token in English, *ok*. Following Trey’s response in Japanese *un* (‘yeah’), Sumi gives her own assessment with *ne* (*muzukashii ne* ‘it’s confusing’) about the concept of gift giving in America to invite Trey’s alignment to her view. To her *ne*-marked assessment, however, Trey proffers no explicit display of uptake or alignment as a dispreferred response (Pomerantz, 1984), and instead initiates his turn using the connective phrase *demo* (‘but’) to present his view that is contrastive to what they have thus far discussed in the preceding talk (lines 10 and 12). In this turn, he uses *yone* to confirm if his knowledge about gift exchange for Christmas in Japan matches Sumi’s, that people only give presents for their boyfriend or girlfriend. While *ne*-marked assessments often indicate that the recipient’s subsequent agreement is interactionally relevant, *yone* makes the recipient’s explicit alignment towards the participants’ shared epistemic views relevant next. The learner’s question marked with *yone* receives Sumi’s explicit alignment to his claim through *soo da ne* (‘that’s right’) and her repeated response tokens, *n, n, n* (‘yeah, yeah, yeah’), followed by the reassertion of her epistemic view that Japanese people do exchange Christmas gifts with their partners or friends. Given Trey’s epistemic claim toward the issue (gift exchange in Japan) and his request for validation or alignment from Sumi, who is assumed to be equally knowledgeable about the issue, his use of *yone* is appropriate in this particular assessment activity.

Although the learner’s appropriate use of *yone* in the ongoing activity reflects emerging interactional competence, his grammatical construction of the *yone*-marked

utterance is still incomplete in the absence of the plain copula *da* following the noun clause (*ageru dake* ‘giving only to’) unless he orients to feminine-like speech. Presenting co-occurring linguistic features involving the use of particle, such as inserting the copula *da* when following nouns and *na*-adjectives for gender-neutral expressions was part of the target instruction, but there seems to be individual variability in the development of this particular grammatical construction involving the employment of the copula *da*, including the successful case observed in Excerpt 19 where the learner marked the *yo*-marked assessment (*kirei da yo* ‘I’m telling you it’s pretty’). The following excerpt illustrates such a case with the use of *yone*.

Excerpt 25 Lucas: Learner Fumiya: CP
 Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Fumiya: *ore mo eigo de essee kakitakunai* hah
 I also English in essay write-NEG-AUX
 ‘I do not want to write an essay in English’
- 02 Lucas: *[hai, hai, hai.*
 yes yes yes
 ‘yes, yes, yes’
- 03 Fumiya: hah
- 04 Lucas: *ano, kenkyuuronbun kaku no ga daikirai.*
 well research paper write NOM SUB hate
 ‘Well, I hate writing research paper’
- 05 Fumiya: *[aaaaa*
 yeah
 ‘yeah’
- 06 Lucas: *hai.*
 yes
 ‘Yes.’
- 07 Fumiya: ((clearing throat)) *kenkyuuronbun, kenkyuuronbun, hontoo ni, moo* ((sigh))
 research paper research paper really indeed
 ‘Research paper, research paper really indeed bothers me’
- 08 Lucas: hah *ano, saikorojii no senmon =*

well psychology LK major

- 09 Fumiya: [un
yeah
'yeah']
- 10 Lucas: = *da yone?*
COP IP
'Well, you major in psychology, right'
- 11 Fumiya: ((nod))
- 12 Lucas: *saikorojii wa donna-*
psychology TOP what kind
'What kind of psychology'
- 13 Fumiya: *eeto, donna saikorojii? guruupu saikorojii, shuu- shuudan shinrigaku.*
well what kind psychology group psychology HES collective psychology
'Well what kind of psychology? Group psychology, collective psychology.'
- 14 Lucas: [aaa
oh
'oh']
- 15 Fumiya: *nanka shuudan no shinri.* hah
like collective LK psychology
'It's like collective psychology.'

Lucas is one of the long-term learners of Japanese (7 years), and yet has no opportunities to use or hear Japanese outside of class. The post-instruction conversation data found that he began to use *ne* and *yo* productively but *yone* did not appear until this last conversation session (Session 4). His emerging interactional competence is not only realized through the use of *yone* with the copula *da* in the latched utterance, but also through the ability to develop talk contingently upon his uptake of the preceding nonverbal response produced by his NS partner.

The beginning of this excerpt illustrates that Lucas and his NS partner Fumiya are both complaining about writing assignments. Fumiya mentions how much he does not like to write research papers in English, to which Lucas shows total alignment through the positive response token in repetition, *hai, hai, hai* ('yes, yes, yes') in an overlapped

turn. In the subsequent sequences (lines 4 to 7), the participants both display shared affect against the writing of research papers, as evident through Lucas' 'loathsome' feelings (*daikirai* 'to hate') about writing as well as Fumiya's strong reluctance, *hontoo ni moo* ('[I] really [don't wanna write papers] anymore'). Then, Lucas initiates a topic shift from research paper to Fumiya's major using the particle *yone* (line 10). The learner's choice of *yone* here appears to be appropriate as a resource to reconfirm if Fumiya is a psychology major, based on his prior knowledge gained from conversation in their previous sessions (*saikorojii no senmon da yone?* 'You are a psychology major, right?'). In contrast to what we just observed in the preceding excerpt (Excerpt 24), the learner in this excerpt exhibits more control in producing *yone* in the particular grammatical and syntactic construction accompanying the copula *da* that occurs with the noun *saikorojii* ('psychology'). In addition, note that the learner's *yone*-marked utterance starts with the copula *da* at the beginning of a new turn, immediately following Fumiya's response *un* ('yeah') to the question continuing from the preceding turn (line 8). This is what Young (2007) refers to as concept of *boundaries* under the framework of interactional competence: Boundaries are interactional resources defined as "opening and closing acts of a particular practice that serve to distinguish a given practice from adjacent talk" (p. 71). Since interactional resources are not fixed but are dependent on the contexts that are constantly changing during the course of interaction, the language users' interactional competence requires them to adapt to changing contexts and transit between interactional practices (Taguchi, 2014). Therefore, the construction of the latched utterances reflects the learner's enhanced interactional competence to monitor and respond to co-participants' talk in progress, as it is evidenced from his successful

display of stance indexed by *yone* for initiating topic development between the sequential boundaries (lines 8 and 10) as well as from his immediately subsequent turn to expand topic about Fumiya's major, *saikorojii wa donna* ('What kind of psychology') as soon as the *yone*-marked question was confirmed by his partner in a nonverbal form (nodding) at line 11.

5.2.4.2 *Yone in making the same-degree evaluation*

Particles *ne* and *yone* often occur in an assessment sequence when interactants share equivalent access to the referent being assessed (Hayano, 2011). The difference between the two is that *yone* is used to invite a shared cognitive representation from the recipient and to evaluate something that interactants have equivalent epistemic access to, while *ne* is to invite the recipient's validation, such as alignment, towards the referent (Kizu et al., 2013). In this section, we will examine how the instructed learners develop their use of *yone* as a resource to jointly assess the referent that participants have equivalent epistemic access to. The present data found that there are quite a few instances where the learners tend to use *ne* in these particular contexts where *yone* would be normally expected. Compared to the function of *yone* in a question form that we observed in the previous two excerpts, this type of *yone* is particularly difficult for language learners because the participants are expected to assume or judge that their epistemic access to the referent is mutually shareable for joint assessment. One of the two instances will be presented below.

Excerpt 26 Ryan: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

01 Hana: *takusan tabeta. taakii, hamu, panpukin pai* =
a lot eat-PST turkey ham pumpkin pie

- 'I ate a lot. Turkey, ham, and pumpkin pie'
- 02 Ryan: [oooo
yeah
'Yeah']
- 03 Hana: = *ato, razuberii, razuberii*
and raspberry raspberry
'and, raspberry, raspberry'
- 04 Ryan: *hai.*
yes
'Yes.'
- 05 Hana: *nanka koo*
somehow this

(1.0)
- 06 Hana: *jamu mitai.*
jam like
'It's like jam.'
- 07 Ryan: [ooo! soo desu ne::: oishii:::!
yeah so COP IP delicious
'Yeah, that's right. It's good.']
- 08 Hana: *takusan, takusan.*
a lot a lot
'Lots and lots of food.'
- 09 Ryan: hah
- 10 (1.0)
- 11 Ryan: *oishii yone:::*
delicious IP
'Isn't it delicious?'
- 12 Hana: *zenbu tabete.*
all eat-TE
'I ate it all and'
- 13 Ryan: hah hah *boku mo takusan tabemono o tabemashita.*
I also lot food O eat-PST
'I ate lots of food too.'
- 14 Hana: [nn, taakii?
yeah turkey
'Yeah, turkey?']

This excerpt represents talk about their respective Thanksgiving dinners. Prior to this excerpt, Ryan asks his NS partner (Hana) about her Thanksgiving. Hana replies by listing kinds of food she ate for her Thanksgiving dinner (lines 1 to 3). When Hana describes that she ate something like ‘jam’ in line 6, Ryan overlaps Hana producing a change of state marker *ooo!* (‘Oh!’) followed by the formulaic expression *soo desu ne:::* (‘That’s right’) to show agreement with Hana (line 7). This use of *ne* would be appropriate in that Thanksgiving food such as cranberry sauce is something familiar and sharable that he can align to. Immediately after the alignment, he provides an assessment with the elongation of the vowel *oishii:::* (‘It’s delicious!’), which would be possible with or without the particle *yone*, and the absence of the particle in the assessment indexes the speaker’s spontaneous display of strong affect (Ishida, 2009ab) towards this particular Thanksgiving food (e.g., “I love that!”).

Then in line 8, Hana stresses that she ate a plenty of food by repeating the adverb *takusan, takusan* (‘lots and lots’). In response to her assessment, Ryan makes an assessment using the particle *yone* this time, *oishii yone:::* (‘It’s delicious, isn’t it?’) in line 11. By marking his assessment with *yone*, Ryan claims to have epistemic access to the kinds of Thanksgiving food, while at the same time inviting Hana in the joint assessment of the food that is now familiar to her. Thus, *yone* is used to share equivalent epistemic views about the referent (Thanksgiving food) that Ryan and Hana can jointly evaluate despite not having the same Thanksgiving dinner. In the next turn, instead of simply showing alignment to Ryan’s comment on the food, Hana upgrades her assessment from *takusan tabeta* (‘I ate a lot’) to *zenbu tabete* (‘I ate it all’). Then in line 13, upon his comprehension of Hana’s previous comment, Ryan re-orientes to what she

had said in line 1 *takusan tabeta* to give his own response, reflecting his own “similar but not the same” experience, *boku mo takusan tabemono o tabemashita* (‘I ate lots of food too’).

We have so far observed that the learners who received the pragmatics-focused instruction have been increasingly able to use the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation sessions with their NS partners. What is significant in the post-instruction data is that the increase in particle use by experimental group learners reflects the emergence of learner agency (van Lier, 2008), which requires the learners to “invest physical, mental, and emotional energy in the language produced” (p. 178). In other words, these learners are no longer passive learners who simply produce or repeat a linguistic piece when they are asked to do so, but actively pick up linguistic affordances in the ongoing flow of conversation to use the L2 creatively and meaningfully with others. On the other hand, there was no evidence of use of other particles than *ne* in the control group learners, who were given equal opportunity to engage with native speakers in the conversation sessions. This implies that the mere socializing opportunities with the members of the target speech community (i.e., NS peers) alone is unlikely to serve as an effective means for raising learner awareness of linguistic affordances for the development of learner agency in relation to the development of the target L2 forms. Evidence of the emergent use of *yo* and *yone* in addition to *ne* observed among the experimental group learners indeed provides the grounds for understanding the effects of instruction on the emergence of L2 interactional competence, the ability to deploy the particles as linguistic, cultural and interactional resources for stance taking as the co-participants engage in a wider range of discourse activities.

The present study also examines evidence of the growth in particle use in peer-peer interaction, considering the nature of interactional particles that occur more often in a conversational situation in which the participants' relationship is already established. The following section will present the learners' use of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in their conversational engagement with their peers during the post-instructional periods.

5.2.5 Particle use in peer-peer interaction

Analysis of peer-peer interaction data revealed that the students in both experimental and control groups used the particle *ne* more often than they did in NS-learner interactions. Students in both groups only used *ne* in the follow-up assessment turns prior to instruction, while particles other than *ne* began to appear in the speech of experimental group students in conversation with their peers during the post-instruction periods. Now we will turn to three instances from the post-instruction conversation data in which *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* are used between the experimental group students. Notably, some of the students in this group begin to use a new particle that did not occur in their interactions with their NS partners.

Excerpt 27 Lucas: Learner Fred: Learner
 Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Fred: *etto::, raishuu no getsuyoobi ni kanji kuizu(.)da yone?*
 well next week LK Monday on kanji quiz COP IP
 'Well, we have a kanji quiz next week, do we?'
- 02 Lucas: *un.*
 yeah
 'Yeah.'
- 03 Fred: *etto, kanji kuizu, nani- nani o*
 well kanji quiz HES what O
 'Well, on the kanji quiz what'
- 04 (1.0)

- 05 Fred: How do you say what's on the test?
- 06 Lucas: *a, ano::, 85 peeji o benkyoosuru yo.*
uh well 85 page O study IP
'Uh, well, you study on page 85.'
- 07 Fred: *a, ano::, kanji- kanji no yomigana toka(.)o oboeru? eeto, ooi, ooi kanji-*
uh well HES kanji LK reading or O remember well numerous kanji
'Oh, well do we remember how to read kanji? Well numerous kanji'
- 08 Lucas: *takusan kanji*
many kanji
'Many kanji'
- 09 Fred: *[takusan kanji =*
many kanji
- 10 Lucas: *= ga aru.*
SUB have
'there are.'
- 11 (2.0)
- 12 Lucas: *ano, raigakki(.) ni donna kurasu o toritai?*
well next semester for what kind of class O take-AUX
'Well, what classes do you want to take next semester?'
- 13 Fred: *aaa, raigakki no sukejuuru?*
oh next semester LK schedule
'Oh, you mean next semester's schedule?'
- 14 Lucas: *hai.*
yes
'Yes.'
- 15 Fred: *amerika no rekishi to::, tetsugaku to::, nihongo to::, eeto::, eeto:::,,, pacific island*
America LK history and philosophy and Japanese and well well pacific island
- 16 *no rekishi to::, eeto:::, itsutsu no kurasu.*
LK history and well five LK class
'I will take American history, philosophy, Japanese, and well Pacific Island history, and well five classes.'
- 17 Lucas: *taihen **ne**, taihen da **ne**:::*
hard IP hard COP IP
'That's tough.'
- 18 Fred: *Lucas san wa?*
Lucas TOP

‘How about you, Lucas?’

19 Lucas: *ee::to, ajia bunka toka, ano::, nihongo toka, kankokugo toka, writing intensive no*
well Asia culture like well Japanese or Korean or writing intensive LK

20 *kurasu o toroo to omou.*
class O take-AUX QT think
‘Well, I think I will take classes like Asian culture, Japanese, Korean, and a writing intensive class.’

Fred has studied Japanese for more than 3 years and has occasional exposure to Japanese animation and music outside of class. His post-instruction conversation data demonstrates that Fred used *ne* and *yo* productively but did not use *yone* in the interaction with his NS partner. In this peer-peer interaction, however, his use of *yone* occurs as a resource to confirm with his peer partner (Lucas) if their kanji quiz will be held next Monday (line 1). Lucas subsequently answers with *un* (‘yeah’). When Fred asks further about the quiz partially in English after a short pause, Lucas responds by telling him to study on page 85 using the particle *yo*, an epistemic marker (line 6), in the next turn. Through *yo*, Lucas claims to know better than Fred about where to study for the quiz. In line 12, Lucas initiates a new topic by asking Fred what classes he wants to take next semester. Fred says five classes by listing their names, which elicits Lucas’ empathetic assessment marked with *ne* (line 17), *taihen da ne:::* (‘that’s tough’) with vowel elongation. In this turn he initially produces the utterance *taihen ne* without the copula *da*, and immediately provides self-repair by adding the copula. The learner’s self-initiated repair suggests that he has demonstrated enhanced awareness of the co-occurring structure of *ne* and more regulated control of constructing a target-like assessment turn through the particle. His reflection sheet for the last conversation session indicates that

the use of *ne* in an assessment such as *taihen da ne* shows “emotional empathy in the conversation.”

In this excerpt, it should also be noted that the learners’ emerging interactional competence seems to entail more than the use of the particles in the appropriate contexts. In line 5, Fred produces the trouble source *ooi kanj* (‘numerous kanji’), for which Luca gives a recast by reformulating it to *takusan kanji* (‘a lot of kanji’). In the succeeding turn, Fred takes up the phrase *takusan kanji* in repetition, and Lucas completes the turn by providing the predicate *ga aru* (‘we have [a lot of kanji to remember]’) in a form of co-construction (lines 7 and 8). In Jacoby and Ochs’ (1995) term, interactional competence involves *co-construction*, in which participants make use of joint turn construction to interactively achieve shared perspective and understanding of the talk-in-progress (Hayashi, 2014; Taguchi, 2014, 2015). Similar to the contingent use of the particles, joint turn construction requires the speaker to attend to the projection of co-participants’ action and recognize what actions are relevant next. Both the joint turn construction and the appropriate use of particles examined here serve as important interactional resources that the learners employ to sustain topic development and shape their contributions to the talk in order to achieve intersubjectivity between the participants.

The next example illustrates how the learner’s use of *yone* in an assessment turn invites her peer to display his total alignment using a stand-alone *ne*.

Excerpt 28 Tara: Learner Ryan: Learner
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

01 Tara: *regisutoreeshon o shimasu ka.*
registration O do Q
‘Are you going to do your registration?’

- 02 Ryan: *iie. tabun sanjuunichi*
no maybe the 31st
'No, maybe on the 31st.'
- 03 Tara: [aaa
oh
'oh']
- 04 Ryan: [*chotto osoi desu ne::*.
a little late COP IP
'It's a little late']
- 05 Tara: *soo desu ne::*.
so COP IP
'It is.'
- 06 Ryan: [hah]
- 07 Tara: [*aa, watashi wa kyoo regisutoreeshon o shimasu.*
well I TOP today registration O do
'I'm doing my registration today.']
- 08 Ryan: *un, juuji ni?*
yeah 12 o'clock at
'Yeah, at 12 o'clock?'
- 09 Tara: *hai, hai.*
yes yes
'Yes, yes.'
- 10 Ryan: *ii desu ne. onrain?*
nice COP IP online
'That's nice. You do it online?'
- 11 Tara: *hai, hai! aaaaa! stressful(.)desu yone::!*
yes yes ah stressful COP IP
'Yes, yes! Ah! It's stressful, isn't it!'
- 12 Ryan: [*ne::!*
IP
'It is!']

Tara and Ryan talk about the upcoming class registration. Ryan says his registration happens on the 30th, which he comments on as being a little late using the particle *ne* to elicit Tara's alignment (line 4). Tara replies saying *soo desu ne* to show her agreement and adds that she will do her registration today (line 7). Acknowledging that

she is going to register at an earlier date than he is, Ryan produces a formulaic expression *ii desu ne* ('that's great') and continues to ask if she will do it online. In line 11, as she responds with *hai, hai* ('yes, yes') and *aaaaaa!*, an affective attitude with the elongated vowel and high volume, Tara makes her complaint using an English adjective, *stressful(.)desu yone* ('it's stressful, isn't it?') about the upcoming registration. Her assessment with *yone* confirms that both Tara and Ryan, as being college students, have mutual epistemic access to the issue (registration process) and can share their evaluation of it.

Tara's successful use of *yone* is not of an incidental occurrence, but results from her increased awareness of the contexts in which she can use this particle and how her use of particles can affect the flow of the conversation: In her reflection sheet, Tara writes, "*I tried using yone more often*" and "*I feel that I could utilize what I had learned in class more confidently which made the sentences I used more complex and more fluid in conversation.*" In the succeeding turn, Ryan's response consists of a stand-alone *ne*, overlapping Tara's preceding *yone* assessment. (line 12). Such an assessment sequence involving *yone* followed by *ne* tends to occur in naturally-occurring conversation between native speakers of Japanese, and a lone-standing *ne* in a response turn is deployed for the explicit marking of alignment (Morita, 2005). Here, Ryan's agreement expressed by the prolonged vowel *ne:::* displays the speaker's total alignment to the first assessment produced by Tara and successfully serves to share mutual affect and accomplish the participants' intersubjective understandings towards the topic under discussion. Not being part of the target instruction, the learner's use of a lone-standing *ne* provides evidence of learning that extends beyond what was taught in the instruction.

The last example is from a peer-peer interaction in which the learner (Kyle) has demonstrated higher control of using the particles *ne* and *yo* as he and his peer partner (Julie) are teasing each other in the conversation.

Excerpt 29 Julie: Learner Kyle: Learner
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Julie: *Kyle san wa, kongakki doo?*
Kyle TOP this semester how
'How is everything this semester, Kyle?'
- 02 Kyle: *aaa, boku mo taihen desu.*
uhm I also hard COP
'Uhm It's been tough with me too.'
- 03 Julie: *un.*
yeah
'Yeah.'
- 04 Kyle: *aaa, eeto::, nihongo kurasu wa totemo muzukashii desu.*
uhm well Japanese class TOP very difficult COP
'Uhm well Japanese class is very difficult.'
- 05 Julie: *ee? hontoo? hah*
What really
'What? Really?'
- 06 Kyle: *aaa*
uh
'Uhm'
- 07 Julie: *kinoo, nn, ara moana de atarashii(.)bakku o kaimashita.*
yesterday Ala Moana at new bag O buy-PST
'I bought a new bag yesterday at Ala Moana shopping mall.'
- 08 Kyle: *aa, soo desu ka.*
oh so COP Q
'Oh, did you?'
- 09 Julie: ((showing her bag to Kyle)) *hah kirei desu ka.*
pretty COP Q
'Is it pretty?'
- 10 Kyle: *totemo kawaii desu ne:::!*
very cute COP IP
'It's very cute!'
- 11 Julie: [hah hah

- 12 Kyle: *aa, shuumatsu wa nani o(.)yotei ga arimasu ka.*
 uhm weekend TOP what O plan SUB have Q
 ‘Uhm do you have any plans this weekend?’
- 13 Julie: *aa, shuumatsu nn, arubaito ga arimasu. ato, shukudai- shukudai o*
 uhm weekend well part-time job SUB have and HES homework O
 (1.0)
- 14 *shimasu.*
 do
 ‘Well, I have my part-time job on the weekends. And I do my homework.’
- 15 Kyle: *aaa! tanoshii desu ne::!*
 oh fun COP IP
 ‘Oh! That sounds like fun!’
- 16 Julie: *iyaaa, tanoshikunai!*
 no fun-NEG
 ‘No, it’s not fun!’
- 17 Kyle: *aaa, tanoshii yo! hah*
 ah fun IP
 ‘Oh, it’s fun!’
- 18 Julie: [hah Kyle san wa yotei ga arimasu ka.
 Kyle TOP plan SUB have Q
 ‘Do you have any plans, Kyle?’

Because Julie and Kyle have become good friends by doing their pair work regularly throughout the semester, they seem comfortable enough to act more playfully in their talk. This can be witnessed from the beginning of this interaction. For example, finding that Japanese class has been very difficult for Kyle this semester (line 4), she responds with *ee? hontoo?* (‘What? Really?’) in a teasing tone with laughter, instead of giving sympathetic assessments such as *taihen da ne* (‘that’s hard’) observed more frequently in the previous NS-learner or other peer-peer interactions. Kyle’s minimal response *uhh* marks the end of the current topic, signaling the possibility of the next speaker’s self-selection of a turn. Julie then initiates a new turn by showing her new bag

and asks Kyle if it is pretty. In response, he makes a comment with *ne, kawaii desu ne::!* ('It's so cute!') in a playful manner, which leads Julie to laugh in the subsequent turn.

At line 12, Kyle nominates himself as the next speaker to initiate a question to ask Julie about plans for the weekend. When Julie replies that she will have her part-time job and do her homework, Kyle provides another aligning *ne*-marked comment *tanoshii desu ne::!* ('That sounds like fun!') in order to tease Julie (line 15). To this assessment, Julie offers a response marked with a negative word, *iyaaa* ('no'), and makes a strong assertion that her weekend is not going to be fun, *tanoshikunai!* which represents a plain statement without particle. As this turn indicates, the explicit lack of affiliative stance in the second assessment position displays a dispreferred response to Kyle's first assessment with *ne*. This serves as another example to illustrate that the marking of an assessment with *ne* does not always guarantee total alignment from the recipient, and itself becomes a subject for negotiation instead (Morita, 2005; Tanaka, 2000).

Having failed to receive explicit alignment from Julie, Kyle reasserts his initial assessment again, marking it with *yo*, an epistemic stance marker (line 17). Pomerantz (1984) calls such move in the third position a "disagreement sequence" (p. 68): when the second assessment speaker disagrees with the first speaker, the first speaker often reasserts the position s/he has taken in the third position, upgrading the intensity of the evaluation. Here, Kyle, who is disagreed with by the recipient, Julie, upgrades his initial assessment using the particle *yo*, not to highlight epistemic asymmetry that could undermine social solidarity (Heritage, 2002), but rather to enhance interpersonal rapport by strategically choosing to differentiate his stance from Julie's through the use of *yo*.

The playfulness of this exchange is also evident in the laughter token at the end of Kyle's turn and the paired token produced by Julie in her talk following Kyle's tease.

Next, I will sum up the findings from the data of both experimental and control groups. Then I will discuss the extent to which the pragmatics-focused instruction affects the learners' emergence of interactional competence in relation to the contingent use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversations with native speakers and peers.

5.3 Discussion

In order to investigate the effectiveness of pragmatics-focused instruction on the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in unscripted conversations with native speakers and peer learners, the learners' particle use was compared between the experimental and control groups over the three instructional periods (Session 2 [Pre-2], Session 3 [Post-1], and Session 4 [Post-2]). In addition, the reflection sheets filled out by the experimental group students after each conversation session were also analyzed to identify any evidence for increased awareness of their own use of the particles in the engagement with NS partners and peers. Comparative analysis of the conversation data between the two groups during the pre-instruction period reveals that many students in both groups did not capitalize on the opportunities to use particles even in the appropriate environment and instead relied on other language resources such as acknowledgment tokens (*aa* or English *oh*) and/or evaluative comments without particles. When a particle occurred in the students' utterances, *ne* was predominantly used to show agreement (*soo desu ne* 'That's right') to the partner's previous utterance and in the formulaic expressions (e.g., *ii desu ne* 'Sounds nice') to evaluate the content of ongoing talk. The learners' very limited use or non-use of particles suggests that many JFL/JSL learners,

even when they have input outside of the classroom or in a study-abroad setting, have not yet begun to make use of a broader range of linguistic, as opposed to paralinguistic, resources for the appropriate expression of affective and epistemic stance in the co-construction of talk.

When the learners make use of particle *ne* appropriately, these uses of *ne* have enabled the learners to make affective and aligning evaluations such as *ii desu ne* ('That's nice') towards the co-participant's talk in the ongoing conversations. However, there is little or no evidence in their making use of other interactional functions fulfilled by *ne* and other particles such as *yo* and *yone*, i.e., negotiating alignment with the addressee, developing topics, informing and/or contrasting their points (such as disagreement) towards the addressee, or confirming shared understanding or perspectives with the addressee. In other words, the learners' interactional competence has not emerged in relation to their use of these particles as resources to participate in a wider range of discourse activities. This underscores the importance of examining the role of pragmatics-focused instruction in the learners' understanding of the diverse functions of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* and contingent use of the particles in Japanese conversation.

To address the second research question that investigates the impact of instructional treatment on the experimental group learners' development of interactional competence with respect to their use of the particles as resources for constructing stance taking (affective and epistemic stance) with the co-participant in interaction, I aimed to identify a) the learners' production of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in ways that are consistent with what they were instructed; and b) the extent to which the pragmatics-focused instruction

may facilitate the emergent use of the particles by the learners in the co-construction of conversation with native speakers and peer learners.

With regard to the use of the particles in the post-instruction periods (Post-1 and Post-2) among the experimental group learners, they have become increasingly able to participate in a wider range of discourse activities through the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversations with their NS partners and peer learners, whereas that was not the case with the control group learners. *Ne* was consistently used among the control group learners, and even a highly proficient learner (Ken) in the control group continued to use *ne* in some contexts where *yone* would be more appropriate. The use of the particles by the experimental group learners increased in frequency, quality and variety, which is consistent with the comments in the reflection sheets regarding their increased awareness of the functions and use of each particle in conversation. In particular, the experimental group learners have demonstrated their ability to deploy the particles to express affect and epistemic stance, to negotiate alignment, to expand on the ongoing topic, to confirm and establish mutual understanding of the referent, all pointing to the development of interactional competence.

Analysis of the learners' use of the particle *ne* at the post-instructional stages reveals that the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction have demonstrated their ability to use the particle *ne* for participating in a variety of assessment activities beyond listener responses in the follow-up turn, such as displaying/eliciting alignment from the recipient, or developing a topic in the ongoing conversation. For example, as shown in Excerpt 15, Julie's effective deployment of the particle *ne* in the initial assessment position indicates that the learner has demonstrated

the increased ability to deploy *ne* as an interactional resource to display affective stance toward the referent being assessed, to make topic transitions, and to recipient-design her *ne*-marked turn in a way for it to invite her NS partner's joint assessment of the topic-in-progress in the ongoing conversation (Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016). Although the learners' use of *ne* in the initial turn emerged over the semester, it still seemed underdeveloped compared to their use of *ne* in the follow-up turn. This is consistent with the results of the pre- and post-tests that revealed many students in the experimental group could not fully develop their understanding of the use of initial-turn *ne* for the described discourse situations. The underuse of *ne* in the initial turn by the learners in the conversation sessions suggests that their understanding of the initial-turn assessment *ne* appears to emerge later than that of the follow-up *ne* in the developmental sequence, because in speaker turns, it requires the ability to judge whether what is being assessed can be jointly shared or relevant for alignment between participants, while it seems easier to do so in listener turns where the assessable has already been shared at the time of the receipt. Lastly, the learners' emerging interactional competence is also evidenced through their contingent use of other interactional resources such as a variety of acknowledgment tokens including *aa*, *soo desu ka* ('oh, really?'), *oo* ('uh huh'), and *hee* ('oh') in attending to the co-participant's talk, which seem to facilitate the effective use of *ne* in the subsequent assessment turns.

The learners' successful deployment of *yo* is realized through their enhanced ability to make an epistemic claim in the discourse activities such as informing, assessment marking or news telling in relation to the recipient's current knowledge, and secure the recipient's understanding or registration of *yo*-marked utterances (Morita,

2012b, 2015). Though still less frequent in use than *ne* and *yo*, the learners' use of *yone* has also emerged, to confirm or establish mutual epistemic access to the referent with the NS partners or peers. The learner's assessment with *yone* marks the participants' joint assessment towards their known referent and provides an interactionally negotiable space for their subsequent move in the development of the course of interaction. The learners' contingent use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in interaction marks their appropriate display of affective and epistemic stance towards the referent and invokes the participants' further involvement in the topic-in-progress, and negotiation or co-construction of stances to work towards intersubjective understandings between participants engaged in the interaction.

Although there exist individual differences in the process of learning the particles among the learners, a developmental sequence in the use of the particles seems consistent with Mine's (1995) findings that the mastery of *yone* occurs only after that of both *ne* and *yo* among JFL learners in Japan. This finding is not surprising if learners are able to first develop the target linguistic resources such as the particle *ne* in listener response turns before they could do so in speaker turns (K. Ishida, 2009a; Ohta, 2001; Yoshimi, 1999). As found in the present study, the use of *ne* in other positions, as well as *yo* and *yone* appear later in the developmental sequence, because they are the linguistic resources that tend to occur in speaker turns, where they actively contribute to the interaction, e.g., by initiating or shifting topics, or by making transitions in conversation.

Furthermore, the increase in particle use by the experimental group learners reflects the emergence of learner agency (van Lier, 2008) – these learners actively display mutual orientations to the development of talk and stance taking motivated through the

use of the particles. Considering no growth in use of other particles than *ne* in the control group learners in the conversation sessions, we cannot determine if implicit socialization opportunities with native speakers alone help to provide effective linguistic affordances for the development of learner agency with the target pragmatic forms. Increased use of *yo* and *yone* in addition to *ne* observed among the experimental group learners provides the grounds for understanding the beneficial effects of instruction that incorporates metapragmatic discussions and conversation sessions on the emergence of L2 interactional competence, the ability to deploy the particles as linguistic, cultural and interactional resources for stance taking as the participants engage in a different range of discourse activities.

In the following chapter, I will first summarize the findings focusing on evidence of the use of the particles in ways that extend beyond what the learners were instructed, specifically that reflect appropriation of the particles as interactive resources that may be recruited to manage the communicative demands of their participation in the face-to-face interaction. Then, I will discuss the anomalous occurrence of particles used among the learners and how the erroneous use impacts the subsequent sequences of interaction, especially with the particle *ne*.

CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

BEYOND INSTRUCTION:

LEARNERS' GROWTH OF PARTICLE USE IN CONVERSATION SESSIONS

This chapter will qualitatively examine the experimental group learners' talk for evidence of use of the particles that extends beyond what was taught in the instruction, specifically focusing on how providing the conversational opportunities for the learners as an instructional treatment enables their effective uptake of the particles as interactive resources for displaying stance to manage the communicative demands of spontaneous conversation with the NS peers. In addition, this chapter will also present learners' anomalous particle usage as evidence of their incomplete understanding of what they were taught in the pragmatics-focused instruction.

Findings here stem from the examination of the post-instructional conversation data of the experimental group. Analysis of the learners' extended uses of the particles will focus on their appropriation of *ne* and *yo*, as there was no evidence of extended use with *yone*. Analysis of the learners' anomalous production includes the overproduction of alignment *ne* in positions where *yo* and *yone* would be highly expected and how such erroneous use may fail to support a joint stance indexing activity between participants in interaction, i.e., the absence of interactional competence in the learners.

6.1 Extended usage of the particles

Analysis of the experimental group learners' conversation data revealed that some of the students were able to appropriate the target particles as interactional resources to

manage the ongoing interaction with their NS partners in ways that extend beyond what they were taught. Our focus here is the learners' extended uses of *ne* and *yo*. The following figures (Figures 7 to 10) present their uninstructed (extended) uses of the particles *ne* and *yo* in relation to other instructed and anomalous uses during the post-instruction period (Post-1 and Post-2).

Figure 7. Experimental group learners' use of *ne* in Session 3 (Post-1) period

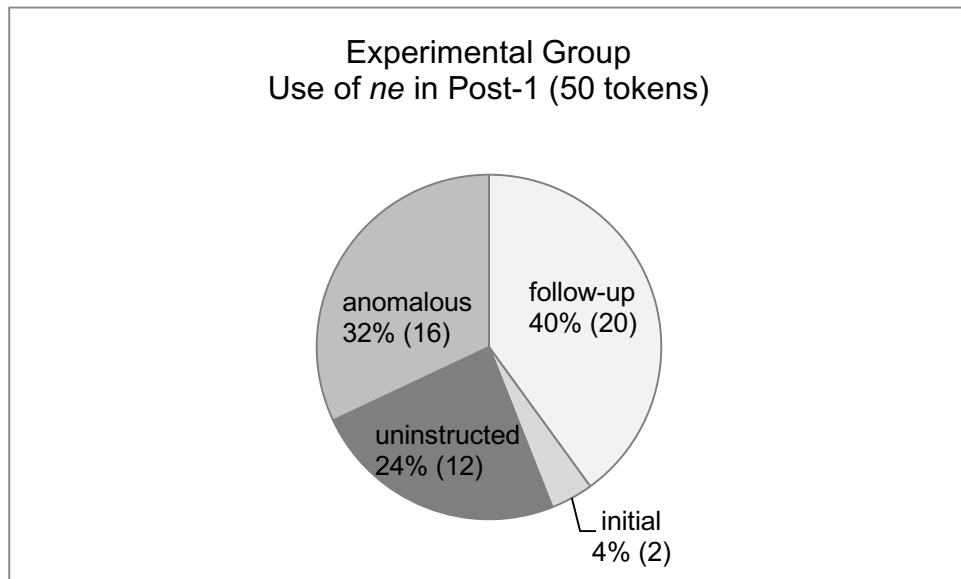
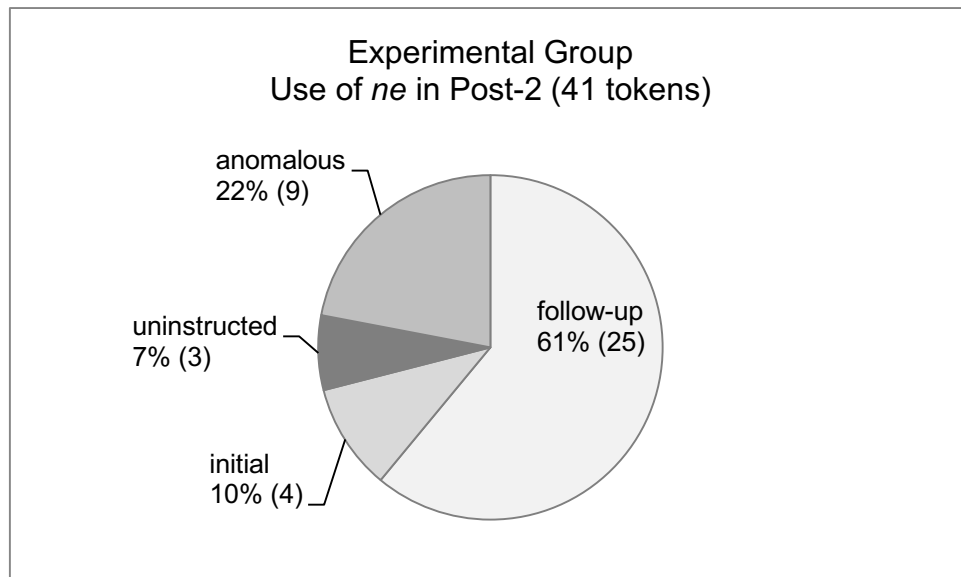


Figure 8. Experimental group learners' use of *ne* in Session 4 (Post- 2) period



The figures above show the total number of *ne* produced by the learners in the experimental group as well as their respective uses of the particle over the post-instruction periods. While the total number of *ne* produced decreased from 50 to 41 tokens, anomalous use of *ne* decreased from 16 tokens (32%) to 9 tokens (22%) over the two periods. The learners' appropriate use of *ne* increased from 20 tokens (40%) to 25 tokens (61%) for the follow-up assessment turn and from 2 tokens (4%) to 4 tokens (10%) for the initial turn respectively. As for the learners' uninstructed (extended) use of *ne*, the number decreased from 12 tokens (24%) to 3 tokens (7%).

Examination of the change in the number of learners who produced *ne* over the post-instruction periods reveals that out of 14 students in the experimental group, the number increased from 8 to 12 students for *ne* in the follow-up turn; from 2 to 4 additional students (6 students in total) for *ne* in the initial turn, and decreased from 9 to 3 students (2 out of 9 students are the same and one additional student) for the uninstructed use; and from 6 to 4 students (3 out of 6 are the same and one additional student) for the anomalous use. The significant decrease in the learners' uninstructed use of *ne* at the Post-2 stage indicates that more students relied on use of the particles in ways that are more consistent with what they were instructed, while fewer students produced *ne* anomalously by the end of the Post-2 period.

Figure 9. Experimental group learners' use of *yo* in Session 3 (Post-1) period

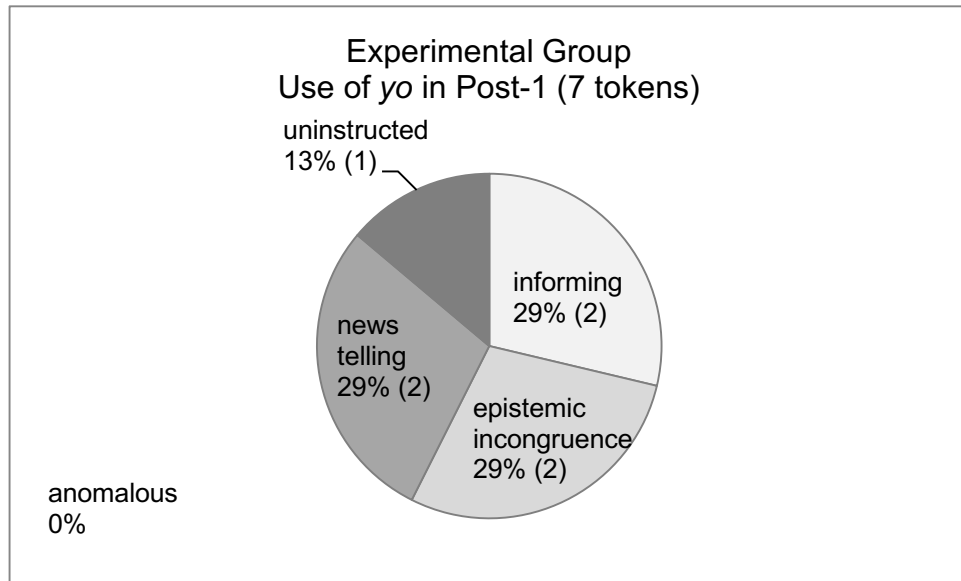
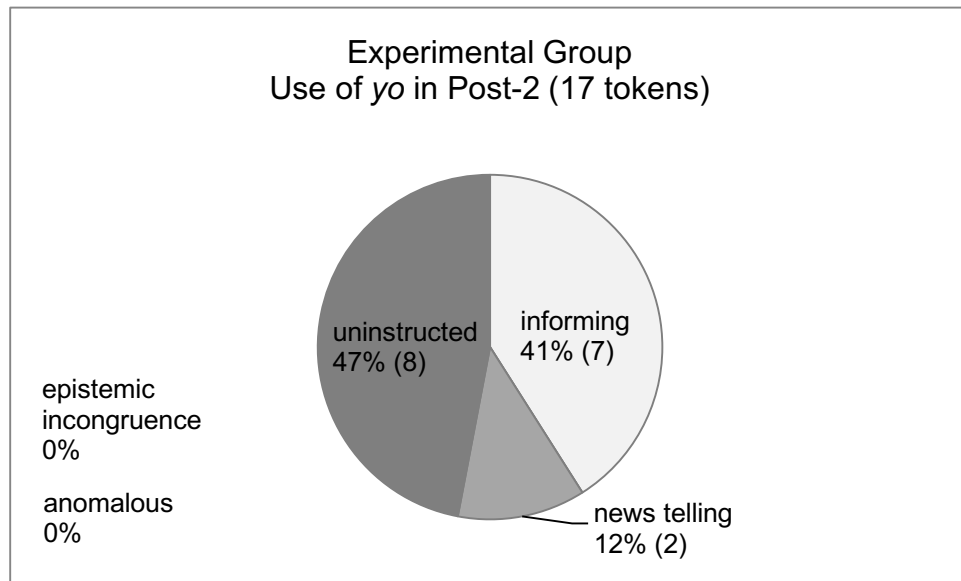


Figure 10. Experimental group learners' use of *yo* in Session 4 (Post-2) period



Figures 9 and 10 above display the total number of *yo* produced by the experimental group learners and their respective uses of the particle in the post-instruction periods. As the two figures indicate, we can find a significant increase in the

number of *yo* used appropriately by the learners in this group (from 7 to 17 tokens) and there was no evidence of anomalous *yo* produced by the learners over these two periods.

Among the instructed uses of *yo* (assessment/informing, news telling, and epistemic incongruence), the number of informing *yo* produced by the learners shows the greatest increase at the Post-2 stage, which indicates that more students were able to mark *yo* appropriately in the informing sequences where they present information as something that their NS peers want to know with regard to the ongoing topic (e.g., movie, place of interest). At the Post-1 stage, only one student produced 2 tokens of informing *yo* (29%); however, 5 additional students produced a total of 7 tokens (41%) at the Post-2 stage. While the number of news telling *yo* produced remains the same over these two periods, a total of 4 students used it by the end of the Post-2 stage. The decrease from 2 tokens of epistemic incongruence *yo* (29%) at the Post-1 stage to no evidence of use (0%) by the end of the Post-2 stage is noteworthy; the reason could be that since this type of *yo* is used to mark disagreements or to highlight the speakers' different stances toward the referent being assessed, it might remain difficult for many of these students to use appropriately without sounding too assertive toward their NS partners with when they have just begun to develop an interpersonal relationship in the conversation sessions.

Most notably, as the number of uninstructed *yo* produced by the learners increased from 1 (13%) to 8 tokens (48%), the number of students who were able to use it also increased from 1 to 4 additional students by the end of the Post-2 stage. This positive change with the learners' use of uninstructed *yo* suggests that it is not only the instructional treatment but conversational opportunities with NS peers that allowed for the learners' effective uptake and appropriation of *yo* as an interactional resource for

claiming epistemic stance toward the referent as they become more engaged in their talk with NS peers.

In the following sections, we will examine how the learners' extended use of the respective particles *ne* and *yo* serves as a resource to shape their contribution to spontaneous talk with NS partners.

6.1.1 Uninstructed *ne*

Learners' uninstructed use of particle *ne* consists of 1) *ne* for explicit display of understanding what is newly informed in the co-construction of talk, and 2) *ne* in response positions, or what Shibahara (2002) calls "softener *ne*" (p. 21) to refer to information that is not shared with the addressee but that warrants the participants' shared perspective of the situation. (Also see Kamio, 1997 for his account of "optional *ne*.") According to Shibahara (2002), softener *ne* is used when the *ne*-speaker provides information as something that is not accessible to the recipient but is sufficient to secure the recipient's affiliative response to the *ne*-marked utterance in the next move. Although these pragmatic functions of *ne* were not taught in the target instruction, some learners were able to appropriate this type of *ne* to display their already aligned stance toward the ongoing interaction, which in turn suggests that alignment or confirmation from the recipient is to some extent expected (Morita, 2005).

6.1.1.1 *Ne for explicit display of understanding*

Unlike *yone*, which is used to confirm the participants' shared understanding of the topic at hand, *ne* is used for the speaker's explicit display of understanding of what was newly informed in the preceding turns of talk and confirm if the recipient can align

to it. Subsequently, such a move with *ne* indicates that confirmation or an aligning response from the recipient becomes the expected next action. First, we will look at this particular use of *ne* by one of the NS participants in the conversation session. And in the example that follows, we will turn to the learner's use of *ne* when he was interacting with his NS partner.

Excerpt 30 Trey: Learner Sumi: CP
Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

- 01 Sumi: *aaa, 'Hotaru no haka'?*
ah, firefly LK grave
'Ah, you mean the movie "Hotaru no haka"?'
- 02 Trey: ((unintelligible))
- 03 Sumi: *are nakeru yone. atashi are mite, itsumo ippai naite =*
that cry IP I that watch-TE always a lot cry-TE
'That movie makes my cry. I always cry watching it'
- 04 Trey: [n::
yeah
'yeah']
- 05 Sumi: = *kanashiku naru.*
sad become
'It makes me sad'
- 06 Trey: *tottemo kanashii.*
very sad
'It makes me very sad'
- 07 Sumi: [u::n.
yeah
'yeah']
- 08 Trey: *a, soshite "ichi rittoru no namida" de ka-kanashikatta.*
um and one liter LK tear with sad-COP-PAST
'um, and the movie "ich rittoru no namida" made me sad.'
- 09 Sumi: [n, n, n
yeah yeah yeah
'Yeah, yeah, yeah']
- 10 *aaaa*
ah

‘ah’

- 11 Trey: [chotto namida.
a little tear
‘It brings me a little tear.’
- 12 Sumi: *wakaru::: sugoi ippai miteru n da ne.*
understand very a lot watch NOM COP IP
‘I totally understand. You sure do watch a whole lot of movies.’
- 13 Trey: [n, n
yeah yeah
‘yeah, yeah’
- 14 Sumi: [*korette, miru toki wa*
this-QT watch when TOP
- 15 *nihongo de miteru no?*
Japanese in watch NOM
‘Do you watch these movies in Japanese when you watch them?’

Prior to this segment of interaction, Trey and Sumi were talking about Japanese animation films by Hayao Miyazaki. In response to Trey’s assessment that one of his films *Hotaru no haka* (‘Grave of the Fireflies’) is very sad, Sumi mentions that the movie always makes her feel sad and cry. Trey then brings up another Japanese film, adding that it also made him cry a little (line 11). After showing her highly affiliative response *wakaru:::* (‘I totally understand’), Sumi concludes that Trey has watched many Japanese films and dramas, using *ne* (line 12). Note that her comment includes *n da* (the plain form of *n desu*), a discourse marker that can help the speaker “maintain a conversational tone in his/her talk” (Yoshimi, 2001a, p.9). That is, Sumi’s use of *n da* indicates that she, as an interested conversational partner, displays her explicit understanding of what she and Trey have shared in their talk thus far. By adding *ne* to this component of the turn, the speaker displays explicitly her aligned stance to the other’s informing, and subsequently, confirmation or alignment becomes the next relevant action (Morita, 2005).

Demonstrably, Trey's alignment to Sumi's comment with *ne* is achieved through his positive response, *n, n* ('yeah, yeah'), produced in precision-timed turn-final overlap, prompting Sumi to further ask whether the learner watches Japanese movies in Japanese. Sumi's use of *ne* in the excerpt above is consistent with what the learners were taught in the instruction in that *ne* is used in an assessment to display the speaker's affective stance toward the preceding utterance or to indicate that the recipient's alignment to the *ne*-marked assessment is relevant in the next turn; however, the learners did not receive explicit instruction on the use of *ne* to elicit the recipient's alignment to the speaker's understanding of what was newly informed in the preceding turns of talk, as we have observed in Sumi's use of *ne* in the excerpt above.

Now, let us turn to the learner's extended use of *ne* in a similar context. Brian was one of the students who did not produce particles other than *ne* throughout the sessions. However, the post-instruction conversation data shows that Brian's emerging interactional competence involves a decrease in his anomalous use of *soo desu ne* for the acknowledgment turn *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?') and his increasing use of the follow-up assessment *ne*. (See Excerpt 12.) In this way, his participation demonstrates more active listenership and higher control of assessment turns in the appropriate contexts. In the excerpt below, his extended use of *ne* appears in the last conversation session when he gives a comment after understanding about the number of *kanji* characters his NS partner had to learn in school.

Excerpt 31 Brian: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

01 Brian: *takusan?*
a lot
'A lot?'

- 02 Hana: [takusa::n!
a lot
'A lot!'
- 03 Brian: [hah
- 04 Hana: *dai- shoogakkoo no(.)koro kara, from elementary school*
big elementary LK time from
'Since I was in elementary school'
- 05 Brian: *soo desu ka:::*
so COP Q
'Oh, I see'
- 06 Hana: [soo, dakara ne::, takusan sen toka nisen toka
Right therefore IP a lot one thousand like two thousand like
'so we learn a lot like one thousand or two thousands of them'
- 07 Brian: *nisen.*
two thousand
'Two thousand'
- 08 Hana: [nisen. two thousand_i
two thousand
'Two thousand. two thousand_i'
- 09 Brian: (0.8)
- 10 *o:::/ hah hah*
wow
'wow!'
- 11 Hana: [sono kurai.
that about
'About two thousand.'
- 12 Brian: *o:::, hontoo?*
wow really
'Wow, really?'
- 13 Hana: *moo, shogakkoo ichi nensei kara zu:::tto(0.5)renshuu =*
already elementary first grade from all the way practice
'We have been practicing kanji since the first grade in elementary school'
- 14 Brian: [o:::
oh
'oh'
- 15 Hana: = *shiteta kara, hah*
do-PROG-PAST CP
'We have been practicing so'

- 16 Brian: [hah hah o:::, hah a, *takusan kanji ga arimasu*(0.5)*ne*:::
w ow um a lot kanji SUB have IP
'Wow, you have a lot of kanji to learn'
- 17 Hana: [un,
yeah
'Yeah'
- 18 *takusan.*
a lot
'A lot'
- 18 Brian: [*kanji.* hah
kanji
'kanji'
- 19 Hana: [*soo da yo*::: hah
so COP IP
'That's right'

Right before this interaction, Brian asked Hana how many *kanji* characters she knows. Before she finishes her turn, Brian guesses *takusan?* ('many?') at line 1. Hana immediately replies that she has learned many *kanji* characters since elementary school (line 4). To this, Brian provides *soo desu ka*::, an appropriate acknowledgment turn where he had constantly used *ne* anomalously during the pre-instruction periods. Hana mentions that she now knows about 1000 or 2000 characters because she has practiced *kanji* since the first grade (line 15). Besides an acknowledgment *soo desu ka*:: ('is that so?'), Brian's receipt tokens such as, *o*:::!' ('wow!') and *hontoo?* ('really?') in the succeeding turns indicate that Hana's informing of *kanji* learning for native speakers is particularly new to Brian, who is now an active participant in the talk. At line 16, he provides his concluding comment *takusan kanji ga arimasu ne*¹¹ ('you've got many *kanji* characters [to learn]') based on what he understood from what was newly informed by

¹¹ As shown in the NS's production of *ne* in the previous example (Excerpt 31), the use of *ne* with a discourse marker *n desu* (e.g., *kanji ga takusan aru n desu ne*) would have been more common as a response, since *n desu* indexes shared understanding the topic at hand, creating a sense of solidarity between interactants (Yoshimi, 2001a; Iwai, 2010, 2013).

Hana about kanji learning. Here, Brian's comment with *ne* is qualitatively different from the follow-up assessment *ne* as a listener's response to the immediately preceding utterance of the first speaker; in this interaction, the learner's slight .5 pause before adding *ne* in his turn indicates that he is processing the details of the previously co-constructed talk before he can explicitly mark his concluding remark as making confirmation or alignment relevant next. Brian marks explicit appreciation for what Hana has said about kanji learning with *ne*, suggesting that his comment can be readily confirmed or aligned to by his recipient. Hana displays her alignment by replying *un, takusan* ('yeah, many'), which overlaps Brian's comment even before he finishes his assessment with *ne*.

What this excerpt shows us is that although this particular function of *ne* was not explicitly taught in the instruction, the learner was able to demonstrate his developing interactional competence through his active listenership and explicit display of understanding of what he and his NS have co-constructed in their preceding talk, which subsequently enables the NS partner to respond in a more aligned manner and achieve intersubjectivity between the participants. In the following section, we will examine the learner's uses of *ne* in a response position as a resource which contributes to the participants' expression of mutual affect and shared perspective of the topic at hand.

6.1.1.2 *Ne in response position*

Besides what we observed so far with the functions of *ne*, *ne* can also be used in a response to a question, or a response to another's assertion of fact. First, let us examine an excerpt from Morita (2005), where *ne* is deployed in an answer to a question in a naturally-occurring conversation between L1 speakers of Japanese. What we will notice

in this excerpt is the native speaker's use of *ne* in a response turn (*chotto ne* 'a little') containing information that is exclusively held by the *ne*-speaker, consistent with the function of softener *ne* (Shibahara, 2002). Then, we will examine an instance where the learner in the present study provides the same response *chotto ne* in a similar context of an assessment sequence.

Excerpt 32 [Morita, 2005, p. 132, modified]

- 01 Yae: *demo nookoodai mo minasan genki desu ka.*
but Nookoodai also everyone well COP Q
'but is everyone in Nookoodai doing well?'
- 02 Shigeo: *chotto ne.*
a little IP
'a little.'
- 03 *oneesan no karada no guai ga chotto ne.*
big sister LK body LK condition SUB a little IP
'The sister's health condition is a little.'
- 04 Yae: *oneesan ne. obaachan doo shita?*
big sister IP grandma how do-PAST
'Big sister. How was Grandma?'

The segment above illustrates how Shigeo forms his answer with *ne* to a question initiated by one of his relatives, Yae. In this excerpt, Morita (2005) demonstrates how Shigeo's reply with *ne* to Yae's question does not support Kamio's (1997) claim for the use of *ne* based on *sharedness of information theory* (i.e., information is marked with *ne* when it is either shared by the participants, or known for certain by the recipient), since the information in question is exclusively accessible to the speaker (Shigeo), who knows about his cousin's health condition, while Yae may not. However, by marking this utterance with *ne*, Shigeo can indicate that his reply is sufficient to secure Yae's alignment as a next relevant action. And demonstrably, this invites Yae's alignment with

ne, thereby achieving their shared perspective of the situation (i.e., his sister's health conditions), before Yae initiates another inquiry about their grandmother in the next turn in the continuation of her turn (line 4).

Now we will turn to the learner's use of *ne* in this type of response position. Julie is another productive user of *ne*, not only in the follow-up assessment turn but in the initial assessment turn. (See Excerpt 13.) We will observe the learner's marking of *ne* in her response turn, and how such a turn is already sufficient for the interlocutor to align in the next move, as observed in Morita's example above.

Excerpt 33 Julie: Learner Nao: CP
 Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Nao: *watashi wa yottsu*_ζ
 I TOP four
 'I'm taking four classes_ζ'
- 02 Julie: *yottsu. major wa nan desu ka.*
 four TOP what COP Q
 'Four. What is your major?'
- 03 Nao: linguistics.
- 04 Julie: [linguistics.
- 05 Nao: *nande, mejaa wa nan desu ka.*
 why major TOP what COP Q
 'why, what is your major?'
- 06 (1.0)
- 07 Julie: business.
 business
 'Its' business.'
- 08 Nao: *bijinesu.*
 business
 'Business.'
- 09 Julie: [*n.*
 yeah
 'yeah'

- 10 Nao: *e? taihen tte kiku yo, bijinesu.*
 what hard QT hear IP business
 ‘What? I hear Business is hard to study.’
- 11 Julie: *chotto(.)ne!*
 a little IP
 ‘a little hard!’
- 12 Nao: [ne::!
 IP
 ‘I agree!’
- 13 Julie: *daikirai!*
 hate
 ‘I hate it!’
- 13 Nao: [*daikirai?* hah hah
 hate
 ‘You hate it?’
- 14 Julie: [hah
- 15 Nao: [hah *so kka, so kka:::*
 so Q so Q
 ‘I see, I see.’

In this segment of interaction, Julie and Nao are discussing their majors and how many classes they are taking in the next semester. After responding that her major is linguistics, Nao questions Julie on the same topic. When Julie replies that she is majoring in business, Nao uses the particle *yo* to assert that she has heard that studying business is hard. To this statement, Julie responds first with the adverbial phrase *chotto* (‘a little’) followed by *ne*. This *ne*-marked response lacks any explicit denotative word, but refers to Nao’s assessment in the previous turn, *taihen* (‘hard’) about her major studies. *Daikirai!* (‘I hate it!’) in the subsequent turn at line 13 is a more precise response to Nao’s prior assertion. Morita (2005) argues that the marking of *ne* in such a formulaic fragment-seeming utterance as *chotto* (‘a little’) “contextualizes the possible negativity suggested by this answer as something to which the recipient’s alignment is a relevant

concern” (p.132). Therefore, the *ne*-reply, though the information is exclusive to Julie, is already sufficient for Nao to show alignment in the next move. In producing *ne*, it is critical for Julie to recognize at the moment what kind of stance Nao is displaying toward the studies of business in the preceding turn (line 10) and construct her own stance by building on Nao’s to make a relevant contribution to the ongoing talk. Julie’s reply with *ne*, in turn, invites Nao’s sustained alignment expressed by an elongated stand-alone *ne:::/* and an overlapped turn, constituting their mutual understanding of the situation. In the next turn, Julie then upgrades the intensity of her evaluation from *chotto ne* (‘a little [hard]’) to *daikirai* (‘I hate it!’), which prompts Nao’s confirmation *daikirai?* (‘you hate it?’) followed by her laughter (line 13). The subsequent exchange of laughter and Nao’s acknowledgment turn *sokka* (‘I see’) marks the accomplishment of the participants’ intersubjective understandings of the topic at hand.

The participants in M. Ishida (2009) and Masuda (2011) also demonstrate similar use of softener *ne* (Shibahara, 2002) by JFL learners at a relatively early stage of their stay in Japan. They maintain that this type of *ne* can be facilitated through out-of-classroom experiences such as interactive study abroad situations. From the observation of the classroom learners’ data of the present study, however, it can also be argued that providing learners with the opportunities to interact spontaneously in the target language as an instructional component is beneficial to the development of learners’ interactional competence, in that such interactions can enrich classroom talk to provide for classroom learners access to a feature of talk available to learners in L2 immersion contexts.

In the next section, we will examine the learners’ extended use of the particle *yo* and how it helped them to achieve joint stance-indexing activities with their interlocutors.

6.1.2 Uninstructed *yo*

In the previous chapter, we observed the learners' use of the particle *yo* as per the instruction provided, i.e., the speaker employs *yo* to claim his or her epistemic primacy over the referent being assessed in relation to the co-participant's epistemic stance. Additional analysis of the data also revealed that some learners demonstrated the ability to use *yo* in ways other than those modeled through the instruction. Our focus here is the learners' extended use of *yo* as a resource to provide support to their claim of epistemic primacy while agreeing with the basic valence of the evaluation proffered by the first speaker (Hayano, 2011).

6.1.2.1 *Yo to provide a basis for a claim of epistemic primacy*

Hayano (2011) argues that while the particle *yo* is often used to mark epistemic incongruence between interactants such as disagreements, *yo* can also be used when interactants are in agreement but differentiate their evaluative stances in order to provide a basis for their claim of epistemic primacy. The example below illustrates such a case where the learner (Kyle) deploys *yo* to claim his epistemic primacy over the topic at hand while agreeing to the evaluative stance of his NS partner (Sumi).

Excerpt 34 Kyle: Learner Sumi: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Sumi: *att, haiwei de:::* is that highway?
oh highway LOC
'ah on the highway'
- 02 Kyle: yeah, highway, freeway_i
- 03 Sumi: Pregnant woman gave birth *desho?*
COP-AUX
'a pregnant woman gave birth, right?'
- 04 Kyle: *aaa! ano, kinoo,* police officer *o* deliver it?

also would have been communicatively acceptable with the use of particles *ne* or *yone*, to display alignment or establish congruent epistemic views towards the referent. However, by differentiating his stance from Sumi's through *yo*, Kyle is claiming to know *thoroughly* about the incident. Here, Kyle's assessment with *yo* involves more than agreeing; he highlights epistemic primacy over the referent, while Sumi knows as much. His epistemic claim through *yo* does not lead Sumi to insist on further evaluation of the incident, since *yo* is used as a marker of "authority on the part of the speaker that is not open to negotiation on the part of the hearer" (Morita, 2002, p. 227). Their mutual laughter that follows the *yo*-turn marks the participants' achievement of shared stance and the closing of the current topic.

The last example of the learners' appropriation of *yo* in novel functions illustrates an instance in which the learner deploys the particle as an index of strong desire to visit the place in Japan his NS partner is originally from.

6.1.2.2 *Yo to pursue recipient's registration of talk*

Besides *ne* and *yone*, Lucas is a productive user of *yo* in conversation with his NS partner (Fumiya) and peers. In his reflection sheet on the last conversation session, he mentions that he used *yo* to share what happened recently or new information with others, such as *saikin wa isogashii yo* ('it's been so darn busy these days!'). The learner's enhanced awareness of the discourse functions of *yo* enabled him to deploy the particle in his responses to the NS partner's questions, such as *saikin wa doo?* ('How's everything?') and *Kapolei mo umi toka kirei?* ('Does Kapolei [a town on Oahu Island] also have nice beaches?'). In addition, further examination of the learner's post-instructional conversation data identifies four occurrences of uninstructed *yo* as a resource to explicitly

highlight the recipient's involvement in the *yo*-marked statement (Lee, 2007; Morita, 2012b). Observe one of the instances below.

Excerpt 35 Lucas: Learner Fumiya: CP
Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Fumiya: *za japan, nanka nihon tte kanji.*
the Japan like Japan QT feeling
'it does feel like Japan.'
- 02 Lucas: *hai.*
yes
'yes'
- 03 Fumiya: *are wa ii ne.*
that TOP good IP
'that place is nice.'
- 04 Lucas: [n.
yeah
'yeah.'
- 05 Fumiya: [*tashika ni.*
certainly P
'it certainly is.'
- 06 (1.0)
- 07 Lucas: *att, Okinawa ni sunda-*
oh, Okinawa LOC lived
'oh, did you live in Okinawa'
- 08 Fumiya: [*Okinawa ni sunderu.*
Okinawa LOC live-PROG
'I live in Okinawa.'
- 09 Lucas: *a, hai, aaa, Okinawa(.)ni mo ikitai yo!*
oh yes ah Okinawa LOC also go-AUX IP
'oh yes ah I also want to go to Okinawa!'
- 10 Fumiya: *aaa, Okinawa ii yo. Okinawa oide yo!*
ah Okinawa good IP Okinawa come IP
'ah, Okinawa is nice. You should come to Okinawa!'
- 11 Lucas: [*un, Okinawa to hawai wa chotto(.)*
yeah Okinawa and Hawaii TOP a little
'yeah, are Okinawa and Hawaii a little'

- 12 *niteiru?*
resemble
'similar?'
- 13 Fumiya: [*niteru.*
resemble
'they are.')
- 14 (1.0)
- 15 Fumiya: *niteru.*
resemble
'they are.')
- 16 Lucas: [*hai.*
yes
'yes.')
- 17 Fumiya: [*soo soo soo soo. nanka umi, Okinawa mo chiisai shima*
yes yes yes yes like ocean Okinawa also small island
'yes yes yes yes. like the ocean, Okinawa is also a small island']
- 18 *da kara, umi kirei da shi.*
COP so ocean pretty COP CP
'so the ocean is pretty.'
- 19 Lucas: [*nnnn!*
yeah
'yeah!']

At line 1, Fumiya responds by saying *za japan, nanka nihon tte kanji* ('It really does feel like "THE JAPAN") to refer to the temples in Kyoto that Lucas mentioned earlier in his talk. By adding a positive comment, *are wa ii ne* ('they are nice'), Fumiya shows his agreement to Lucas' initial assessment about the temples in Kyoto (which is not shown in this excerpt). Fumiya's further alignment *tashikani* ('certainly') indexes the closing of the current assessment activity and a shift to a new topic initiated by Lucas, who, after a micro pause, begins to reconfirm if Fumiya has lived in Okinawa (line 7). Acknowledging that Fumiya replies that he still resides in Okinawa, Lucas expresses his eagerness to visit Okinawa in addition to other places in Japan, through a co-occurring

interjection *aaa* ('ahhh') and an epistemic marker *yo* (line 9). His deployment of *yo* is not to highlight the participants' orientations to the incongruence of their epistemic stance, but to explicitly pursue the recipient's registration (Morita, 2012b) of his strong desire to visit Okinawa, the place his NS partner is from. Besides his appropriate stance-marking through *yo* here, the learner's control of expressing strong affect through casual speech (*ikitai* 'I wanna go') makes possible the deployment of *yo* as indexing the speaker's internal emotions and his close relationship with the addressee (Yoshimi, 1997).

Deploying *yo* is a way for speakers to explicitly create a place for the recipient to register *yo*-marked talk and display a response that appropriately completes the interaction. In the following turn (line 10), Fumiya's explicit acknowledgment is expressed through *aaa* ('yaaaah'), followed by his response. This turn consists of two separate TCUs marked with *yo*, in which Fumiya suggests that Okinawa is such a nice place and that Lucas should come to visit there, displaying a strong solidarity and virtual absence of social distance with the learner (cf. Yoshimi, 1997). Both participants' reciprocal displays of affective stance through the particle *yo* indicate that they mutually orient to achieving rapport and friendly relationship; and at the same time, Fumiya's stance indexed through *yo* is qualitatively different from Lucas', as he invokes a basis for claiming that he knows Okinawa better than Lucas, who has not visited Okinawa, while Fumiya shares the first-hand knowledge of his hometown. To this, Lucas promptly responds with a casual receipt token *un* ('sure'), and continues on to expand on the ongoing topic (Hawai'i and Okinawa) that is mutually familiar to them.

We can see that learner development of interactional competence is not limited to the increased ability to produce a target particle in an utterance; it also involves the

ability to closely monitor the co-participant's current talk and decide what responsive actions and stance are relevant next in the sequential interactions. As observed in the excerpt above, the learner's emerging interactional competence is not only realized by a timely deployment of the particle *yo* as a resource for joint stance taking but also a higher control of designing turns in ways that contribute to the co-construction of talk (i.e., initiating and developing topics) as well as to the achievement of intersubjective understanding and stance with his NS partner.

Now let us turn to the analysis of anomalous particles usage among the experimental group learners. In what follows, we will focus on such evidence and its impact on the subsequent sequence of interaction.

6.2 Anomalous use of the particles

Notably, learners' successful appropriation of the particles involves an overall increase in appropriate use as well as a decrease in anomalous use of all three particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation with NS partners over the course of the semester, as shown in the following figures.

Figure 11. Frequency in the use of particles by the experimental group students (N=14) in conversation sessions with NS partners

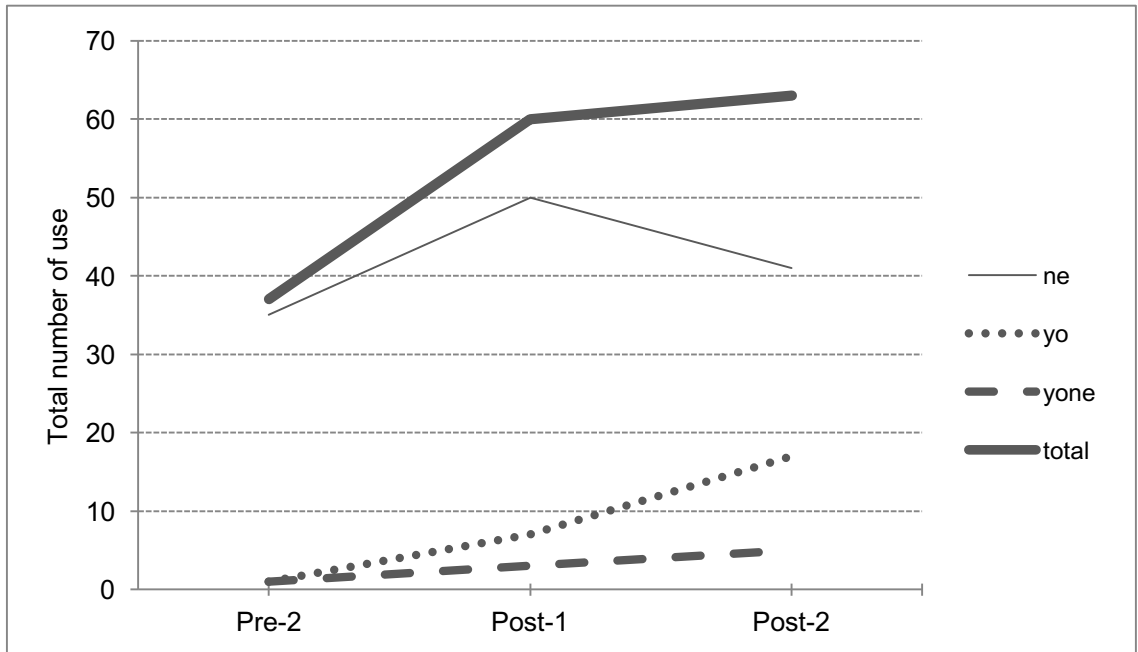
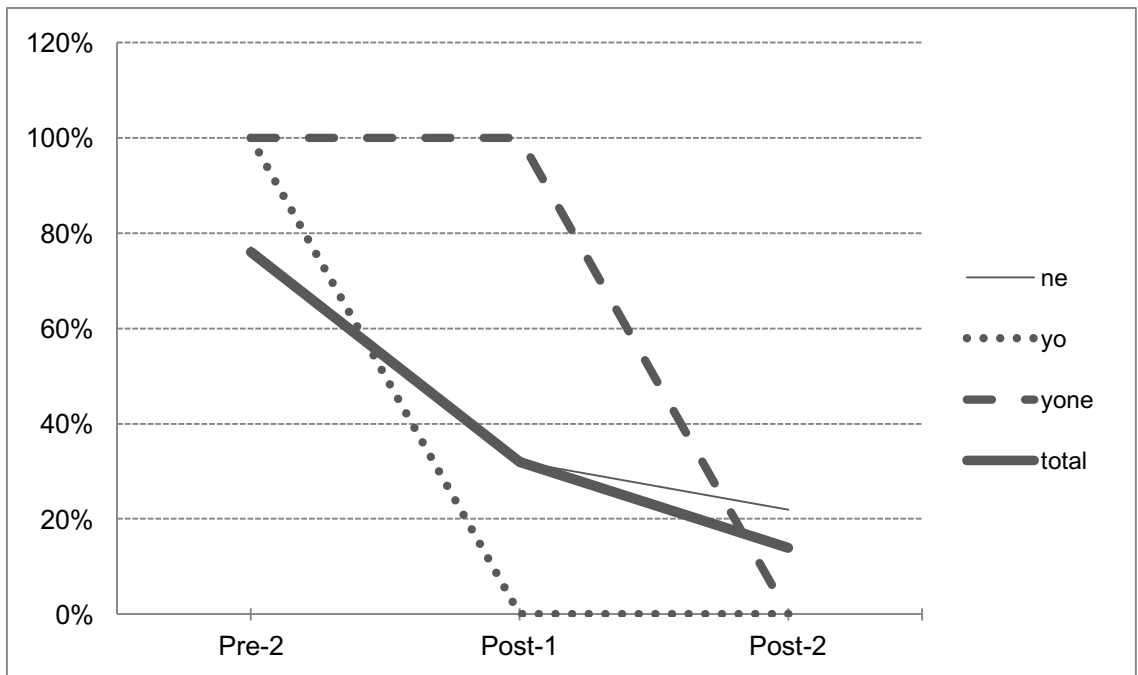


Figure 12. Anomalous usage of particles by the experimental group students (N=14) in conversation sessions with NS partners



The table below illustrates the learners' anomalous uses of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, providing evidence of the instructional effectiveness as is evident in the decrease (76% to 32% to 14%) in anomalous use over the respective instructional periods (Pre-2, Post-1 and Post-2).

Table 19. Anomalous use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* by the experimental group in conversations with NS partners*

Experimental group				
Session	<i>ne</i>	<i>yo</i>	<i>yone</i>	Total
Pre-2	27/35	1/1	1/1	29/37 (76%)
Post-1	16/50	0/7	3/3	19/60 (32%)
Post-2	9/41	0/17	0/5	9/63 (14%)

* Values on the right side indicate total incidence of the particles and values on the left indicate incidence of anomalous use.

The table above reveals that erroneous production of *yo* and *yone* among the experimental group has disappeared by the end of Post-2 stage, while anomalous *ne* persists through time, although at a much lower rate. All three occurrences of anomalous *yone* at the Post-1 stage appeared in the positions where *ne* would be expected. The following table (Table 20) presents anomalous use of *ne* by the individual experimental group learners over the instruction period, indicating that Ryan is the most frequent producer of anomalous *ne* throughout the semester. A close examination of his anomalous use found that he was the only user that overproduced *ne* in the sharing of new information that his NS partner could not possibly validate or align to, which resulted in the unnaturalness of some of his utterances. However, even without explicit feedback on learners' particle use, Ryan's anomalous *ne* demonstrated a gradual decrease over the semester (18 to 11 to 7). Other evidence of anomalous *ne* by Ryan and other learners included its occurrence in place of an acknowledgment *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?')

and in the sequential position where *yone* would be more highly expected, which I will explain more extensively in the following sections of the chapter.

Table 20. Anomalous use of *ne* by the individual experimental group students in conversations with NS partners

Experimental group				
Student (N=14)	Anomalous <i>ne</i>			Total
	Pre-2	Post-1	Post-2	
Ryan	18	11	7	36
Brian	4	0	0	4
Kelly	3	-	0	3
Julie	1	1	0	2
Kyle	0	1	1	2
Tara	1	1	0	2
Beth	0	0	1	1
James	0	1	0	1
Fred	0	1	0	1
Lucas	0	-	0	0
Trey	0	0	0	0
Ethan	0	0	0	0
Ann	0	0	0	0
Emily	0	0	0	0
Total	27	16	9	52

6.2.1 Anomalous *ne*

Table 21 presented below details the locations of learners' anomalous use of *ne* among the experimental group. Unlike the decreased use of anomalous *yo* and *yone*, anomalous *ne* continued to occur in the following positions: 1) anomalous use of *ne* in a turn that acknowledges receipt of new information, i.e., turns where *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?') is expected; 2) misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* as confirming the interlocutors' mutual epistemic access to the referent; and 3) overproduction of *ne* for unshared information between interlocutors.

Table 21. Types of anomalous *ne* by the experimental group in conversations with NS partners*

Experimental group			
Session	Anomalous use of <i>soo desu ne</i>	Misuse of <i>ne</i> in place of <i>yone</i>	Overproduction of <i>ne</i>
Pre-2	10/27 (37%)	4/27 (15%)	13/27 (48%)
Post-1	5/16 (31%)	3/16 (19%)	8/16 (50%)
Post-2	2/9 (22%)	4/9 (44%)	3/9 (34%)

* Values on the right side indicate total incidence of the particles and values on the left indicate incidence of anomalous use.

The misuse of *soo desu ne* is consistent with the findings of Masuda (2011) and Yoshimi (1999), both of whom demonstrate that JFL learners in Japan were found to produce the formulaic response turn *soo desu ne* ('That's right') anomalously in contexts where *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?'), which acknowledges receipt of new information, would be expected. *Soo desu ne* can be used to index the speaker's alignment to information that is already known or shared between interlocutors; *soo desu ka* is more appropriate for acknowledging information that he/she has no epistemic access to. The anomalous use of *soo desu ne* among students in the present study is consistent with Yoshimi's (1999) claim that the anomaly stems from a violation of Japanese epistemic constraints on the construction of shared perspectives; in other words, English speakers tend to use *ne* to refer to information that they believe is (newly) shared, while Japanese counterparts do not view it as shared. As Table 20 above shows, the anomalous use of *soo desu ne* demonstrates a gradual decrease over the semester (37% to 31% to 22%), as the number of students who used *soo desu ne* anomalously decreased from 3 (Pre-2) to 2 (Post-1), and to 1 (Post-2). The decrease of anomalous *soo desu ne* also indicates that the students began to use *soo desu ne* in the appropriate contexts and did not confuse it with the acknowledgment token *soo desu ka* after receiving the pragmatics-focused instruction.

Although the functional difference between *soo desu ka* and *soo desu ne* was not explicitly introduced in the target instruction, the decrease in the misuse of *soo desu ne* among the experimental group learners suggests a positive effect of instruction on the learners' control of using *ne* as an index of shared topic, such as display of alignment, not as an acknowledgment to what is newly informed in the interaction (Iwai, 2010).

6.2.1.1 *Misuse of ne in place of yone*

Other anomalous uses include the erroneous marking of *ne* in an assessment that is used to establish participants' reciprocal epistemic stance through *yone*. In contrast to the learners' appropriate use of *yone* in a question form (Excerpts 22, 23 and 25), assessment marking with *yone* seemed more difficult to acquire, although successful use did begin to appear among some experimental group learners (Excerpts 24 and 26). As Table 21 shows, the misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* in an assessment was persistently found throughout the semester (15% to 19% to 44%) compared to other features of anomalous occurrences with *ne*. The number of students who used *ne* anomalously in place of *yone* increased from 2 (Pre-2) to 3 (Post-1 and Post-2) and a total of 6 students used anomalous *ne* in this way throughout the semester. However, 3 out of these 6 students were also able to produce *yone* in the appropriate contexts in the post-instruction period. This indicates that although the students did demonstrate a gradual increase in their appropriate use of *yone* over the semester (5 tokens in total), more than half of the students did not capitalize on the opportunity to deploy *yone* in the contexts where it is appropriate to use.

The following examples exhibit that the learners used anomalous *ne* in their assessment turns where *yone* would be expected. While *ne* is usually used to show the

speaker's alignment to the content of the previous utterance and/or to invite the recipient's agreement to the first assessment in the next turn, *yone* marking evaluates an assessable to which both participants share epistemic access. Excerpt 36 shown below represents a typical instance in which the learner marks an assessment anomalously using *ne*, even though the participants can establish congruent epistemic views on the topic under discussion, which expects the use of *yone* instead. The second example, Excerpt 37, illustrates that the *ne*-marked assessment would have been more natural with the use of *yo* or *yone* for achieving joint stance taking between participants.

Excerpt 36 Kyle: Learner Sumi: CP
 Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Kyle: *fuyuyasumi wa nani o shiteimashita ka.*
 winter break TOP what O do-PROG-PST Q
 'What did you do for the winter break?'
- 02 Sumi: *fuyuyasumi wa, biichi ni itte, ato wa.: takusan kankooj =*
 winter break TOP beach LOC go-TE and TOP a lot sightseeing
 'For the winter break I went to the beach and sightseeing.'
- 03 Kyle: ((nod))
- 04 Sumi: = *shiteta.*
 do-PROG-PST
 'I did a lot of (sightseeing).'
- 05 Kyle: [*aa, biichi doko desu ka.*
 ah beach where COP Q
 'Where is the beach (you went to)?'
- 06 Sumi: *etto:::*
 well
 'Let's see'
- 07 (1.0)
- 08 Sumi: *ara moana biichi paakuj*
 Ala Moana beach park
 'Ala Moana Beach Park.'
- 09 Kyle: [((nod))

- 10 Sumi: *ato::* ((thinking face)) hah ((pointing to the direction))
and
'And'
- 11 Kyle: [(smiling)] hah
- 12 Sumi: *waimanaroꞌ*
Waimanalo
'Waimanaloꞌ'
- 13 Kyle: ((pointing to the direction))((unintelligible))
- 14 Sumi: [*un*, near the Makapu.
yeah
'Yeah, near Makapu.'
- 15 Kyle: Sandy Beach?
- 16 Sumi: *n::: around there hah anohen to:::* hah
uh around there and
'uhm I went around there, and'
- 17 Kyle: hah
- 18 Sumi: *ato::: a::: wasurechatta!* hah
and ah forget-RES-PAST
'and uhm I forgot!'
- 19 Kyle: [*aaa! a::: ara moana biichi:::*
ah uhm Ala Moana beach
- 20 *kirei desu ne.* ((anomalous))
beautiful COP IP
'Ah! uhm Ala Moana Beach is pretty.'
- 21 Sumi: [*nnn, kirei datta.*
yeah beautiful COP-PST
'Yeah, it was pretty.'
- 22 Kyle: ((nod))
- 23 Sumi: *demo oyoganakatta.*
but swim-NEG-PST
'But I didn't swim.'

At the beginning of the interaction, Sumi mentions that she went to some beaches on Oahu for the winter break and then, responding to Kyle's question (line 5), she names

a couple of them. After supporting Sumi's efforts to recall the names of the beaches she went to, Kyle makes a positive assessment about Ala Moana Beach, one of the island's major beaches that Sumi visited during the vacation (line 20). This assessment is marked with *ne* (*kirei desu ne* 'it's pretty'). This expression *kirei desu ne* would be acceptable in an assessment whose objective is to present the speaker's immediate impression or reaction (e.g., when seeing someone wearing a pretty dress, when stepping onto a beautiful sand beach for the first time, etc.). However, since Kyle, as a local person, already knows as much as Sumi about Ala Moana Beach, the use of particle *yone* (*kirei desu yone* 'Isn't it beautiful?'), not *ne*, would have been more appropriate in his assessment, given the participants' mutual epistemic stances at the time of the utterance in line 20. Furthermore, the need for *yone* here supports the learner's move to resume a topic (Ala Moana Beach Park) that first appeared in line 8 and to evaluate it as a newly nominated topic while requesting Sumi's subsequent involvement in the assessment activity.

However, it should also be noted that although *yone* is an expected form in this type of assessment marking, the learners' use of *ne* here (and observed throughout the semester) is consistent with the shift in learner participation noted above, that is, from that of being merely a passive user of the language to playing a more active role in the practice of stance-taking as joint activity; even anomalous uses such as this one reflect their growing interactional competence in terms of deploying the particle as a resource to mark their stance relevant for the next interactional move, such as alignment or negotiation of stance on the part of the recipient. Demonstrably, Kyle's *ne*-marked turn prompts Sumi's strong alignment with the elongation *nnn* ('yaaaah') to the assessment

initiated by him, followed by a proffer of her second assessment using the same segment *kirei*, marking the participants' shared epistemic stance in evaluating the place (the beach) that is mutually known to them. At the same time, by being an active listener and nominating a component of Sumi's response about the preceding topical talk, Kyle collaboratively constructs a new next topic with Sumi, which she pursues in line 23.

The next example shows that the learner relies on the use of *ne* in the context where *yone* and *yo* would be preferred in the assessment activity.

Excerpt 37 Tara: Learner Hiro: CP
 Conversation Session 4 (Post-2), Exp. group

- 01 Hiro: *ato wa haikingu no mono ga hoshii.*
 and TOP hiking LK thing SUB want
 'And I want some hiking stuff.'
- 02 Tara: *un.*
 yeah
 'Yeah.'
- 03 Hiro: *haikingu aitemu.*
 hiking item
 'Hiking items'
- 04 Tara: *hai, hai, hai.*
 yes yes yes
 'Yes, yes, yes.'
- 05 Hiro: [*un, dakara spootsu-*
 yeah so sports
 'Yeah, so I will check out Sports'
- 06 Tara: [*ano, Sports Authority =*
 well, Sports Authority
 'Well, Sports Authority'
- 07 Hiro: = *toka ne. n =*
 like IP yeah
 'Or something like that. Yeah.'
- 08 Tara: = *ga suki desu.*
 SUB like COP
 'I like it.'

- 09 Hiro: *n, ii kana:: tte.*
yeah good I wonder QT
'Yeah, I wonder that's a good place to shop.'
- 10 Tara: [*nnn, chotto takai desu ne:::*. ((anomalous))
well a little expensive COP IP
'Well, it's a little expensive.'
- 11 Hiro: *a, soo!*
oh so
'Oh, really?'
- 12 Tara: [*hai, chotto takai.*
yes a little expensive
'Yes, it's a little expensive.'
- 13 Hiro: [*ee, ja doko ga- doko ga ii?*
oh then where SUB-HES where SUB good
'Oh, then where is good to go?'
- 14 Tara: *u::n, Nordstrom Rack_i*
uhm Nordstrom Rack
'uhm, Nordstrom Rack_i'

Prior to this interaction, Tara and her NS partner Hiro were talking about where to buy sporting goods in town. In hearing that Hiro wants to buy some hiking items, Tara suggests a specific retail store, the same one that is on Hiro's mind (lines 3 to 6). In the next turn, Hiro completes Tara's turn by providing a latched utterance *toka ne* ('something like') to show that this is the kind of store that might have the goods he wants to purchase. Although they display shared stance about Sports Authority as a potential store at which to shop through co-construction in the preceding turns, Tara then reformulates her assessment with *ne*, adding that it is a little expensive to shop at the store (line 10). The use of *ne* would be acceptable to give a first-time, immediate reaction in assessment (e.g., *takai desu ne* as a comment on a shirt shown by a store clerk). However, in order to elicit Hiro's opinion and alignment about the retail prices of the store that is presumably known to both of them, *yone* would be appropriate to deploy

(*takai desu yone* ‘isn’t it expensive [to shop at the store]?’). To this assessment, Hiro responds *a, soo!* (“Oh, is it really?”) with a sign of surprise in the next turn, indicating that he displays no knowledge of the referent and thus the incongruence of the participants’ epistemic stances has been established. Another possibility includes a use of *yo*¹² for Tara to claim epistemic primacy over Hiro, who knows of the store but not of their retail prices (*takai desu yo* ‘I’m telling you it’s expensive [to shop at the store].’).

It can be argued that learners’ underdevelopment of *yone* observed in the assessment activity reflects their single-faceted understanding of alignment, although their uses of *ne* nonetheless are effectively received and understood by the NS partners in the ongoing assessment activity, without communication breakdown or disruption to the flow of the conversation. However, the learners have yet to develop an understanding of how to use other resources such as *yone* to display and negotiate their mutual stance toward epistemically equivalent knowledge between participants. This calls for the implementation of an instructional approach that considers demonstrating the distinctiveness in functions and sequential occurrences between *ne* and *yone*, and variant uses of *ne* in conjunction with other interactional resources such as the clause-final particles *kedo* and *kara* (‘because’), such that the learners would be able to develop more than one way of constructing their stances toward their communicative action and the interactional consequences of this action with the interlocutors.

¹² The alternative to *yone* or *yo* in this context is the combined use of a clause-final connective particle *kedo* (‘but’) and the particle *ne*, which can occur without a corresponding main clause. The connective particle *kedo* indexes that the speaker displays what might turn out to be a challenge to what was previously talked about, but could frame his or her position “not as a complete opposition to the proffered opinion or evaluation, but as something additional to it” (Mori, 1999, p. 109). An assessment using *kedo* does not necessarily contest the participants’ prior assessment about the store and thereby implies that “we both agree that the store is a good place to shop, *but* I forgot to mention a disqualifying feature (high prices) of the store.” Adding *ne* would thus allow the speaker to design her action carefully so as to attenuate its confrontation in relation to the participants’ mutual alignment to the prior assessment (Morita, 2015).

6.2.1.2 Overproduction of *ne* for newly shared information

Earlier in the chapter, we observed the learner's ability to appropriate the particles in a way that extends beyond their instructed learning, as evident in Julie's deployment of *ne* in her response to her partner's assertion (Excerpt 33). While the basic function of *ne* serves as a resource with which to negotiate alignment toward the referent that is mutually known to both the speaker and the addressee, *ne* can also occur in a response position if the *ne*-marked reply, though the information is not shared between the participants, is already sufficient enough to secure the recipient's alignment (Morita, 2005). By the same token, Shibahara (2002) calls the function of this type of *ne* a "softener" (p. 21); that is, it refers to information that is not shared with the addressee but that warrants the participants' mutual orientation to the situation.

However, previous studies revealed that even advanced learners studying abroad in Japan tend to overuse softener *ne* for a new piece of information that is unlikely to receive the recipient's alignment, which makes their utterances sound unnatural to speakers of Japanese (Shibahara, 2002; Usami, 1997). The following excerpt exemplifies such a case.

Excerpt 38 Ryan: Learner Hana: CP
Conversation Session 2 (Pre-2), Exp. group

01 Ryan: *doyoobi ni arubaito ga arimasu ne:::* ((anomalous))
Saturday on part-time job SUB have IP
'I have my part-time job on Saturday.'

02 Hana: [un.
yeah
'yeah.'

03 Ryan: *demo, a:: kinyoobi ni, um, uchi ni(.) kaerimashita ne.* ((anomalous))
but ah Friday on uhm home LOC return-PAST IP
'But on Friday uhm I went home.'

- 04 (1.0)
- 05 Hana: *u::::n, uchi ni kaetta, uchi-*
uhm home LOC return-PST home
'uhm you went home, home'
- 06 Ryan: *kazoku no uchi de*
family LK home LOC
'at my family home'
- 07 Hana: *[u::::n*
uhm
'uhm'
- 08 (2.5)
- 09 Hana: *doko ni*
where LOC
- 10 Ryan: *um hawaikai ni(.) imasu ne:::* ((anomalous))
uhm Hawaii Kai LOC stay IP
'uhm they live in Hawaii Kai.'
- 11 Hana: *[a:::!/ chotto tooi desu ne.*
oh a little far COP IP
'Oh! it's a little far.'

This learner, Ryan, is the most frequent user of *ne* out of all the learners and his overuse of *ne* continued until the end of Post-2 period. As Table 21 above shows, his overproduction of *ne* appeared consistently until the Post-1 stage (constituting about half of all learners' anomalous use of *ne*), and began to decrease by the end of the Post-2 stage (34%). From this finding, it could be concluded that although the function of *ne* as a softener was not included in the target instruction, the decrease in the learner's anomalous use of *ne* reflects the instructional effectiveness for his increased awareness of the basic function of *ne* for the sharing of information that is only alignable between participants.

Prior to this interaction, Hana asks Ryan about his typical weekend plans. In line 1, he replies that he has a part-time job on Saturdays, using *ne*. His response with *ne*

would have been appropriate to a question like *shuumatsu wa arubaito?* ('You have to work on the weekend?'), whose adjacent pair constitutes a shared topic that is likely to secure the co-participant's alignment to it. A more natural response would be *-ga arimasu*, a declarative statement, or *-ga aru n desu yo*, which relates one's statement to the ongoing topic (*n desu*) while marking its content as something noteworthy with the epistemic stance marker *yo* (Yoshimi, 1997, 2001a). By using *ne* in this position, Ryan "qualifies" this information as one over which both the speaker and the hearer (Hana) have authority, which consequently invites her uptake (Kizu et al., 2013, p. 111). However, since his *ne*-marked reply contains new information to Hana, it is not clear what Hana's uptake should be, and how she could possibly validate it, as is observed from her minimal response *un* ('yeah') in the succeeding turn (line 2). The significant epistemic gaps in the *ne*-marked talk invited by Ryan further reflect the challenges for the recipient (Hana) who has no basis for alignment: Ryan mentions that he went home on Friday using *ne*, which invokes a significant pause followed by a non-aligning response *u:::n* in Hana's next turns where she signals confusion and clarifies about his "home" (line 5). Then Ryan responds with *ne* (line 10) when Hana asks where in town his family lives. Again, his reply would have been appropriate without *ne*, since it is new information to Hana (his family is in Hawai'i Kai) that her alignment is not relevant in the next turn. As we can observe from Hana's move in the next turn (line 11), she comments that his home is a bit far before hearing Ryan complete his turn with *ne*. This indicates that his answer (*hawaikai ni imasu* '[my family] is in Hawai'i Kai') to her question is already sufficient for Hana to respond as her next move and therefore her alignment to his *ne*-marked reply is irrelevant in her turn.

Shibahara (2002) argues that *ne* as a softener is almost never introduced in classroom instruction, especially as compared to *ne* in assessment, despite its frequent appearance in L2 textbooks and in naturally occurring conversations among speakers of Japanese. Her study also reported that the acquisition of softener *ne* appears to be quite challenging even for intermediate/advanced learners of Japanese in the study-abroad context, despite these learners' possibly having more exposure to Japanese interactions outside the classroom. Again, this suggests the critical role of instructional treatment for learners in their developing how to use interactional particles as a resource for participating in various discourse activities, since merely providing opportunities for implicit socialization with speakers of Japanese proves insufficient for understanding the diverse discourse functions of the particles and promoting JFL/JSL learners' competent use in Japanese conversation.

Data observed thus far have mainly focused on the evidence of anomalous particle uses by the learners. However, within the development of L2 interactional competence as an increased ability to elicit recipient uptake (Pekarek Doehler & Berger, 2016) and achieve joint stance construction between participants, we also need to examine how the speaker's uses of particles may be received and understood by the recipient for shaping the subsequent construction of interaction. The last section that follows will illuminate how the learners' anomalous production of the particles (*ne* and *yone*) is oriented to by their NS partners and affects the subsequent sequences of talk, such as a noticeable absence of recipient's display of alignment and disruption to the flow of the conversation between participants.

6.2.2 Impact of anomalous particle use on subsequent interaction

Together with the deployment of particles, the choice of prosodic patterns serves as a critical interactional resource that speakers of Japanese rely on to achieve shared understanding or intersubjectivity on the ongoing topic between participants in interaction (Kärkkäinen, 2006). The following excerpt exemplifies a case in which the learner's (Tara) anomalous intonation of particle *ne* failed to elicit adequate recipient uptake from her NS partner (Hiro), thereby contributing to the co-participants' delayed achievement of intersubjectivity in the interaction.

Excerpt 39 Tara: Learner Hiro: CP Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Hiro: *ano ne, tabun nettofrikkususu de kari- karite, hah*
well IP maybe Netflix with HES-rent
'Well, I perhaps rent some movies from Netflix'
- 02 Tara: [aaa hai hah
oh yes
'Oh yes'
- 03 *netflix wa suki desu ne.* ((flat intonation))
Netflix TOP like COP IP
'[I] like Netflix.'
- 04 Hiro: *un. a, soo desu ka.*
yeah oh so COP Q
'Yeah, oh you do?'
- 05 Tara: [watashi mo suki desu.
I also like COP
'I also like Netflix.'
- 06 Hiro: [*a, soo desu ka.*
oh so COP Q
'Oh, you do too?'
- 07 Tara: [*yone* hah ((anomalous))
IP
'Isn't it?'
- 08 Hiro: *aa, ja, saikin eiga, eiga nani mimashita ka.*

oh then recently movie movie what watch-PST Q
'Oh, then what movie did you watch recently?'

Tara is one of the students who use the particles most productively among the experimental group. Prior to this segment of the interaction, Tara asks Hiro if he watches any movies these days. He replies that he often rents movies from Netflix and that he may also rent one to watch on the weekends. To this, Tara uses *ne* in her response turn (line 2). A prolonged form of *ne:::* as a softener would be acceptable to index 'I like Netflix', since her response is epistemically and affectively alignable with Hiro, another frequent user of Netflix. An alternative response would be a confirmation question with *ne* uttered in a rising intonation (*Netflix ga suki desu ne?* 'You like Netflix huh?'). However, Tara utters *ne* with no prosodic move (a flat intonation), which invoked disruption in Hiro's subsequent uptake (line 4). This is clearly evidenced as Hiro, in the same turn, initially provides an agreement token, *un* ('yeah') to the confirmation question, and abruptly displays a change of state *a, soo desu ka* ('oh, is that so?') as an acknowledgment to Tara's prior statement. Before Hiro completes his acknowledgment turn, Tara initiates her turn by clarifying that she also likes Netflix (line 5). To this, Hiro repeats his acknowledgment, *soo desu ka*, which is overlapped with her stand-alone *yone* in the next turn (line 7).

The particle *yone*, unlike *ne*, cannot be used in isolation unless it occurs with a predicate (*desu/da*) for achieving shared stance/perspective in joint turn construction (Hayashi, 2014). If the particle *yone* were to be deployed here, a more syntactically complete turn such as *Netflix (wa) ii yone* ('Netflix is great, yeah?') would be appropriate as an extended assessment. Tara's use of a stand-alone *yone*, though it is grammatically unacceptable, can also be understood as the learner's self-repair to re-construct a shared

stance with her NS partner toward the topic-in-progress (i.e., evaluation about Netflix) at a point where her *ne*-marked utterance triggered a disruption to the flow of talk, as indicated in Hiro's uptake at line 4. Consequently, however, the learner's ungrammatical construction of *yone* fails to invite an opportunity for the recipient's (Hiro) next interactional move such as display of alignment to her proffered assessment, instead resulting in Hiro's shifting topics from the website to the movies the learner has watched recently (line 8).

What this excerpt shows us is that although the learner's use of *ne* itself is not entirely anomalous, the flat intonation of the particle produced by the learner leads to the recipient's misinterpretation of her intended stance, marking shifts to the brief repair sequences before the participants' shared understanding has been re-established (lines 3 to 6). In addition, the learner's ungrammatical construction of *yone* and its subsequent consequence of unsuccessful stance construction between the participants in the assessment activity suggest that within the perspective of L2 interactional competence, learners need to know not only *what* interactive resources to use in an ongoing interaction but also *how* to shape their own grammatical as well as prosodic conducts with these resources for successfully achieving co-construction of stance and intersubjectivity with their co-participants in meaning-making activities.

The last example below illustrates another instance in which the learner's anomalous use of the particle *yone* invokes an explicit display of non-alignment on the part of the recipient.

Excerpt 40 Trey: Learner Sumi: CP
Conversation Session 3 (Post-1), Exp. group

- 01 Sumi: *waikiki ni itte,*
Waikiki LOC go-TE
- 02 (1.5)
- 03 Sumi: *hito ga ippai ita.*
people SUB a lot exist-PST
'We went to Waikiki and there were many people.'
- 04 Trey: [*paati ni, paati o deta.*
party LOC party O leave-PST
'Party, you left the party.'
- 05 Sumi: *un un.*
yeah yeah.
'Yeah, yeah.'
- 06 Trey: *o::::*
oh
'Oh'
- 07 Sumi: *paati wa sugu kaette, waikiki ni itte, ippai shashin totte, ouchi ni*
party TOP soon leave Waikiki LOC go-TE many pictures take-TE homeLOC
- 08 *kaetta.*
return
'We left the party soon, and went to Waikiki, took a lot of picture, and went home.'
- 09 (1.0)
- 10 Trey: *ii yone::::* ((anomalous))
nice IP
'That sounds nice.'
- 11 (1.5)
- 12 Trey: *a, daigaku ryoo ni iru?*
oh college dorm LOC stay
'Oh, do you stay at a college dorm?'
- 13 Sumi: *a, unn, unto ne, wai emu shii ee wakarū?*
oh, yeah well IP YMCA know
'Oh, yeah, well, do you know YMCA?'
- 14 Trey: *aaa.*
oh
'Oh.'

Trey and Sumi have mutual Japanese friends, who had informed Trey of what they did with Sumi for Halloween prior to the conversation session. Trey is confirming what he knew about how Sumi spent her Halloween with their friends (line 4). Sumi agrees by nodding in the next turn and begins to explicate what she did for Halloween (lines 5 and 7). After a short pause, Trey provides a positive assessment with *yone* (line 10). The marking of *yone* here is unacceptable because using *yo* allows Trey to claim his equivalent access to the referent, i.e., that he knows as much as Sumi about what she did for Halloween although he only knows about it second-hand and partially through their mutual friends. A more acceptable assessment would be marked with the particle *ne* (e.g., *ii ne* or *yokatta ne* ‘That sounds nice’) as an aligning response to what he just heard. In this particular context, an occurrence of *yone* would only be possible if Trey and Sumi spent their Halloween together, so that they could mutually evaluate their shared experience in retrospect. I argue that the learner’s misconstrual of *yone* could be attributed to his attempt to highlight the personal basis for his evaluation about Sumi’s Halloween: “Sounds good (to me).” This *yone*-comment, however, failed to secure reciprocity, as demonstrated by a noticeable 1.5-second pause (line 11). In a naturally-occurring conversation between native speakers of Japanese, the explicit lack of alignment *ne* in the second assessment position displays a dispreferred response or reservation about total alignment to the first speaker’s assessment (Morita, 2005, Pomerantz, 1984); however in this L2 interaction, it can be argued that the NS’s dispreferred response to the learner’s proffered assessment at line 9 particularly results from her inability to construct a coherent aligning stance with the anomalous particle usage in the learner’s turn.

6.3 Discussion

This chapter investigated the learners' emerging use of the particles in ways that did not reflect what was taught in the instruction. In particular, this chapter focused on both the learners' extended and anomalous particle use. Analyses of the learners' extended and anomalous uses of particle can provide insight into the importance of instruction in the learners' changes in participation in terms of their ability to appropriate the particles as a resource for joint stance taking in the conversations with NS interlocutors. Below, I will summarize the findings from the conversation data of the experimental group collected over the three instructional periods (Pre-2, Post-1 and Post-2 periods).

6.3.1 Evidence of extended learning

Examination of learners' production of the particles in the conversation sessions found that some learners demonstrated their ability to appropriate the particles *ne* and *yo* in ways that extend beyond instruction as interactive resources to manage the ongoing interactions with their NS interlocutors.

With regard to the extended use of *ne* among learners, analysis revealed the learner's emerging use of *ne* for explicit display of understanding of the co-participant's talk (Excerpt 31). Different from *yone*, which is used to confirm the participants' shared understanding of the topic at hand, this type of *ne* is used to confirm if the recipient can align to the speaker's explicit appreciation for the import of what was newly informed in the preceding turns of talk. The learner (Brian) deployed *ne* in his remark on the number of kanji characters his NS partner (Hana) knows. His use of *ne* in this turn is qualitatively different from the follow-up assessment *ne* as a listener's response to the

immediately preceding utterance; in this interaction, the learner needs to pay close attention to the details of what the co-participant is saying before he can explicitly mark the import of his turn as one that makes confirmation or alignment relevant next. Brian's emerging interactional competence involves more than the deployment of *ne*; his active listenership, demonstrated through reactive tokens such as *soo desu ka::* ('is that so?'), *o::!* ('wow!') and *hontoo?* ('really?') towards the ongoing talk, contributes to the appropriate marking of explicit appreciation for what the learner was newly informed by the partner about kanji learning with the particle *ne*.

Another use of *ne* appeared in a response position. In producing *ne* in this position, the learner (Julie) suggests that her response is already sufficient for the interlocutor to align in the next move. Excerpt 33 illustrates her use of *ne* which occurred in a formulaic fragment-seeming utterance (*chotto ne*). Julie's *ne*-marked response lacks any explicit descriptive word, but is already sufficient for the participants to achieve shared perspective of the situation, as indicated in Nao's total display of agreement with *ne* in the subsequent turn. Their reciprocal deployment of *ne* in this sequence of assessment activity indicates that both participants display congruent understanding of the subject matter through "engineering their moves in specifically alignment-inviting ways" (Morita, 2005, p. 133). Participants' intersubjectivity on the topic at hand is achieved by their co-construction of aligned stances towards the referent in this inexplicit talk.

The uninstructed use of *yo* reflects the learners' ability to use the particle as a resource to upgrade the intensity of the evaluation of the shared/known referent as a basis for their display of epistemic stance. In Excerpt 34, we observed how the learner (Kyle)

deployed *yo* in the claim of his epistemic primacy over the referent that he and his NS partner (Sumi) have equivalent epistemic access to. While Sumi gave her evaluation of the shared topic (an incident on the highway) though *yone*, Kyle reasserted his assessment with *yo*. His assessment with *yo* involves more than agreeing on the basic valence of the evaluative stance; the use of *yo* in Kyle's turn in contrast to the use of *yone* in his partner's turn indicates that he highlights his first-hand knowledge of the referent and claims epistemic primacy over Sumi, who knows as much. Excerpt 35 shows another instance where *yo* was deployed to explicitly pursue the recipient's uptake of the speaker's expressed concern. In this turn, the learner (Lucas) used *yo* to communicate his strong desire to visit Okinawa, his partner's (Fumiya) hometown, to his partner in conversation. Then, Fumiya indicates a strong acknowledgment of Lucas' expressed desire with *aaa* ('yaaaah') and marks his own statements with the repeated use of *yo*, in which he suggests that the learner come to visit his hometown. Both participants' affective and epistemic displays of stance through their reciprocal uses of *yo* index that they mutually orient to achieving a friendly, interpersonal relationship through talk.

Within the framework of L2 interactional competence, the findings demonstrated that the deployment of interactional particles requires the speaker's attention to the details of the co-participant's talk before he or she determines at the moment what responsive action and stance are relevant next. As in the examples shown above, learners' emerging interactional competence is not only evidenced through their appropriation of the particles as interactive resource for joint stance taking with the interlocutors, but also through their higher control of designing turns in a way for them to be received and understood by the recipient for the maintenance and development of an ongoing talk.

Previous L2 studies have shown that learners' increasing use of interactional particles in L2 talk can be facilitated through out-of-classroom experiences such as interactive study abroad situations (M. Ishida, 2009; Masuda, 2011; Shibahara, 2002). However, it can be argued from the present data that L2 learners can be explicitly instructed to develop their ability to use a wide range of interactional particles in a variety of assessment activities in Japanese. Again, this underscores the significance of L2 instruction that provides conversational opportunities for learners to develop a repertoire of L2 resources including interactional particles for participating competently in joint stance-taking activities in Japanese conversation.

6.3.2 Anomalous particle use

The findings of the present data suggest that the pragmatics-focused instruction contributed to the experimental group learners' successful appropriation of the particles in relation to an overall increase in the use of the particles, as well as a decrease in anomalous use over the course of the semester (76% to 32% to 14%). In addition, analysis revealed that while the learners demonstrated a decrease in the anomalous use of *yo* and *yone*, their anomalous production of *ne* persisted in the following positions: 1) anomalous use of *ne* in a turn that acknowledges receipt of new information *soo desu ka* ('Is that so?'); 2) misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* as confirming the interlocutors' mutual epistemic access to the referent; and 3) overproduction of *ne* for unshared information between interlocutors.

The anomalous use of *soo desu ne* among students in the present data is consistent with Yoshimi's (1999) claim that the anomaly stems from a violation of Japanese epistemic constraints on the construction of shared perspectives; in other words, English

speakers tend to use *ne* to refer to information that they believe is shared, while Japanese counterparts do not view it as shared. By the same token, the difference between English and Japanese in how speakers epistemically present their information is consistent with the learners' anomalous use of *ne* as a softener for information that is not shared between participants (Shibahara, 2002). Earlier in the chapter, we examined the learner's appropriation of softener *ne* to refer to new information that makes relevant participants' mutual alignment to the situation (Excerpt 33). However, in Excerpt 37, a learner (Ryan) from the experimental group was observed to overproduce *ne* in the sharing of new information that the recipient (Hana) could not possibly validate or align with, which resulted in the unnaturalness of some of his utterances and a disruption in the flow of the talk. The learner's overproduction of *ne* is also associated with the findings from Shibahara (2002), which reported that the development of *ne* as a softener is difficult even for intermediate and advanced learners of Japanese in the study-abroad context, who may have ample input from Japanese interactions outside the classroom. These findings reflect a need to further develop pragmatics-focused L2 instruction on interactional particles, since the mere opportunities for implicit socialization with speakers of Japanese appears to be insufficient to socialize JFL/JSL learners' understanding and competent use of particles in Japanese conversation.

Other conspicuous anomalous particle use includes the erroneous marking of *ne* in an assessment turn where *yone* would be preferably used to confirm shared epistemic access between participants. The misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* in assessments was persistently detected throughout the semester (15% to 19% to 44%) compared to other features of anomalous occurrences of *ne*. It can be argued that learners'

underdevelopment of *yone* reflects their single-faceted understanding of alignment, although their contingent use of *ne* nonetheless enabled the learners to invite the NS partners in the ongoing assessment activity without communication breakdown or disruption to the flow of the conversation. Indeed, learners' anomalous use of *ne* in place of *yone* reveals that they have demonstrated increasing control of negotiating alignment with others through the particle *ne*, but they have yet to develop how to use other resources such as *yone* to construct stances in the evaluation of epistemically shared referent between participants.

Analysis of the present data also evidenced the impact of learners' anomalous particle use on subsequent sequences of talk. Examples demonstrated that the erroneous production (or prosody) of the particles by the learners failed to secure reciprocity, reflected in, for example, an explicit display of non-alignment on the part of the recipient, or a short disruption to the flow of the conversation between participants. In Excerpt 39, Tara's erroneous prosodic move with *ne* (flat intonation) led to the recipient's (Hiro) delayed response to her intended stance, followed by a shift to brief repair sequences for re-establishing shared understanding between the participants. Excerpt 40 shows that Trey received no response (non-alignment) from his partner Sumi when using *yone* to evaluate a referent that he has partial epistemic access to. The explicit lack of alignment in Sumi's second assessment turn reflects a dispreferred response (Pomerantz, 1984), possibly resulting from her inability to construct an aligning stance with the learner's turn with the anomalous particle usage.

The findings above from the learners' anomalous use of particles provide some implications for teaching oriented to, and learner development of, interactional

competence. First, the learners' increasing use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the assessment activities illustrates a shift in learner participation from that of being a passive user of the language to playing a more active role in co-constructing meanings with others; that is, the learners have demonstrated an increased ability to deploy particles not only as a resource for displaying their stance but also as a resource for eliciting the recipient's next interactional move, such as alignment or negotiation of stances for the achievement of intersubjectivity between participants.

From the perspective of teaching interactional particles, the analysis of how these pragmatic features were understood and used by learners in actual interactions allows us to reflect on the proposed instruction and redesign the instructional approach as necessary; it also involves raising our awareness of the prosodic patterns available for each particle (e.g., vowel elongation, rising/falling intonation) and their subsequent impact on talk, the distinctiveness in function and sequential use between *ne* and *yone*, and variable uses of *ne* in conjunction with other interactional resources such as the clause-final particles *kedo* and *kara* ('because'), so that the learners would be able to develop more than one way of constructing their stance toward their communicative action and the interactional consequences of this action with the interlocutors. The process by which learners develop L2 resources as social actions constitutes a critical step for learners to advance their interactional competence. It is thus the role of L2 instruction to consider not only *what* L2 resources learners can employ in the contingency of interaction but also *how* they can use these resources for a successful co-construction of stance and intersubjectivity in various discourse activities with other interlocutors.

In the final chapter that follows, I first review the ways in which the findings of my analyses in Chapters 4 through 6 have provided answers for each of the research questions regarding the role of pragmatics-focused instruction in the learner development of interactional competence focusing on Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*. Then, I discuss pedagogical implications drawn from the findings of this study with regard to the teaching of interactional particles. Finally, limitations of the present study are discussed and areas for future research are suggested.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Overview

The goal of this dissertation is to examine the development of interactional competence by JFL learners in an explicitly instructed setting as evidenced by their metapragmatic development and use of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in unscripted conversations with NSs and classroom peers. More specifically, the present study has aimed to investigate the role of pragmatics-focused instruction in the learners' ability to participate in a range of assessment activities (Goodwin, 1986; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, 1992) fulfilled by the use of interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as resources to co-construct affective and epistemic stances and achieve intersubjectivity between participants in an ongoing interaction.

To bridge the gap between the paucity of classroom instructional treatment and the highly frequent use of the interactional particles in mundane Japanese conversation, an instructional approach that incorporated awareness-raising and conversational practices was proposed and implemented in a third semester JFL course for one semester. The proposed instructional approach of this study was framed within the perspective of teaching learners how to develop L2 resources in psychologically authentic activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, 2011), or Segalowitz and Trofimovich (2012) refer to as “open-skill environments” where learners learn to notice changes and adapt their L2 resources as they occur in real time; Segalowitz and Trofimovich's (2012) “closed-skill environments” where learning can be achieved by repeating an action as precisely as possible were also a component of the instructional approach. In the present study,

participants were provided with opportunities for learning in both open-skill and closed-skill environments. That is, in the former, the instruction considers how linguistic affordances made available through interactions with native speaker peers may enable evidence of learning as the enhanced ability to use these particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as interactional resources for joint stance taking with other interlocutors in interaction; the focus of instruction in the latter condition is on the development of learners' cultural and metapragmatic understanding recruited through explicit instruction.

In order to examine the effectiveness of instructional intervention in the development of interactional competence as evidenced by the use of interactional particle *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in conversation, I focused on the following perspectives: 1) learners' cultural and metapragmatic understanding of the variability in function and meaning that the particles can index; 2) learners' use of the particles in ways that are consistent with what they were taught, and that potentially extend beyond their instructed learning in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation; and 3) learners' demonstrated use of these particles as resources for joint stance taking in the interactions with NS partners and peer learners in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

7.2 Summary of the findings

One claim made by proponents of the development of L2 interactional competence in instructional settings is that learners' consciousness must be directed through explicit instruction, together with interactional opportunities for the learners to use their language resources in a given discursive practice with more capable peers (Hall, 1995; Larsen-Freeman, 2011). In the present study, learners' consciousness is considered to have been raised if they are able to demonstrate metapragmatic awareness of relevant

contextual features, i.e., how the use of particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* indexes stances, as well as of local cultural expectations regarding how these resources can be used in ways that are mutually identifiable to learners and members of the target speech community. The goal of the analysis in Chapter 4 was to shed light on the learners' metapragmatic development as their ability to articulate the discourse-pragmatic functions of each particle used in the assessment sequences of the described discourse situations in the pre- and post- tests, including the DCTs. The research presented in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively analyzed the learners' development of interactional competence as demonstrated by the deployment of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* as a) the ability to use the particles in face-to-face interaction in ways that are consistent with what the learners were taught in the classroom in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation; and b) the ability to use the particles in ways that extend beyond what learners were taught in the classroom, specifically that reflect appropriation of the particles as interactional resources that may be recruited to meet the communicative demands of spontaneous conversation with their conversational partners. Considering these points above, I posed the following research questions:

1. How does pragmatics-focused instruction of interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone* affect learners' ability to demonstrate their cultural and metapragmatic awareness of the discourse-pragmatic functions of the particles?
2. How does pragmatics-focused instruction combined with open-ended conversational opportunities with Japanese native peers impact the learners' development of interactional competence as evidenced by the ability to use the particles in ways that were instructed in the classroom in terms of form, function, and activity-relevant participation?
3. What evidence is there that learners are using the particles in ways that go beyond the instructional treatment, specifically that reflect appropriation of

the particles as interactional resources to manage the communicative demands of the conversation in which they participate?

7.2.1 Research question 1: Learners' metapragmatic development

To answer the first research question that addresses the instructional effectiveness for the learners' development of metapragmatic awareness of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone*, the results of the pre- and post-tests were examined to identify any quantitative and qualitative changes in the quality of awareness regarding the use of particles in the constructed discourse situations for learners in the experimental and control groups. Analysis of the written responses provided by the students revealed that the experimental group demonstrated greater understanding regarding the particles *ne* and *yo* as resources for marking shared or non-shared stances between interlocutors, although the control group also showed some awareness of such functions over time. However, the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group in terms of their demonstration of increased metapragmatic awareness of the particle *yone* over the instructional period; while the experimental group's pre-instruction understanding of *yone* was not qualitatively different from that of the control group students, they showed greater awareness of *yone* that reflects what they were taught, as well as that extends beyond the instruction. Such richness evident in the ways the experimental group discussed the discourse functions of *yone* is a strong indication that the learners in this group benefited from the awareness-raising component of the instruction which enhanced understanding of *yone*, the particle that they demonstrated no prior knowledge of prior to instruction, and from the conversational opportunities in which the learners developed

their ability to analyze the distinct functions and stances indexed by *yone* in new discourse contexts.

The second part of the pre- and post-tests, the fill-in-the-blank questions, were employed to assess whether the learners would demonstrate the ability to choose an appropriate form (*ne*, *yo*, *yone*, nonuse) that fits in the given discourse situations and provide reasons for their choice. Quantitative analysis revealed that both the experimental and control groups showed positive change in the ability to choose *yo* as a correct form over the semester, although the gains were more consistent for the experimental group. However, both groups demonstrated a markedly reduced capacity to choose the appropriate marking of *ne* between the pre- and post-tests. Surprisingly, 9 students (64%) in the experimental group failed to choose *ne* in both tests and more than half of the students chose *yo* erroneously in the post-test, indicating that many students in the experimental group could not develop a metapragmatic awareness of the use of initial-turn *ne* in an assessment and suggesting that they might have overgeneralized the instructed use of *yo* to a discourse context where *ne* would be highly expected. However, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the ability to choose *yone* appropriately in the post-test. Such discrepancy in the learners' awareness of *yone* between the two groups supports the critical role of the pragmatics-focused instruction in facilitating learners' metapragmatic understanding of less familiar pragmatic features such as *yone*, which are often difficult to learn only through exposure.

Despite the evidence of quantitative gains in the learners' ability to provide the correct particles for the described discourse situations within each group, written reasons for their choices revealed a qualitative difference in the development of their

metapragmatic awareness regarding the functions and stances indexed by the particles between the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction and those who did not. The greater change demonstrated by the experimental group compared to the control group reflected these learners' ability to understand that use of the particles does not merely index a single speaker's stance or action but is rather motivated by the speaker's construction of stance in relation to the addressee's in the course of interaction. For example, a student in the experimental group, Beth, who chose *yone* and minimally wrote "*A is agreeing*" in the pre-test, selected *ne* appropriately in the post-test with a justification that "*A is sharing an immediate response/thought about the cake with B because you know it is a cake that your friend already likes.*" While her pre-instruction understanding of *yone* seemed very limited, expressed simply as "*agreeing*," she developed her understanding of the expected stance to be constructed upon B's displayed stance (his/her liking of the cake) by the end of the post-instruction stage. This supports the effectiveness of the proposed instruction for the learners' increased understanding of the discourse-pragmatic basis for their choices of the target forms in the given discourse contexts.

Additional analysis of the relationship between learners' metapragmatic development and their oral production of the particles evidenced less linearity at the individual level, despite the evidence that the experimental group overall outperformed the control group in the ability to produce *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversation sessions. This finding is consistent with previous findings that different variables such as learners' proficiency levels, learnability of the target pragmatic forms, analytic skills, or cognitive demands of task types might predict the degree to which metapragmatic development

affects the learners' ability to produce the target pragmatic forms (French & Beaulieu, 2016; Narita, 2012; Roever, 2009; Taguchi, 2012; Takahashi, 2010). This also reflects the perspective of language development as a dynamic, complex system in which individual learners are often found to show nonlinear, unpredictable developmental trajectories in their learning processes (cf. de Bot, 2008; Larsen-Freeman, 2011, 2013).

Further analysis of the relationship between the learners' self-evaluations of their growth in their ability to use *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* and their actual competence using the particles revealed that there was a positive relationship between the two for the experimental group, while no such relationship was evident for the control group. The reasons the experimental group learners provided for their growth confirmed that the proposed instructional approach (awareness-raising and communicative practices) benefited the learners' development of self-efficacy beliefs in being able to use the particles, as well as their actual use in the conversation sessions. However, closer examination also evidenced the gap between learners' self-ratings and their actual competence at the individual level. This discrepancy suggests that learners' lack of accuracy in inferring their proficiency and the quality of learning experiences in L2 may impact variability in self-assessment. That is, the learners' successful learning opportunities in and out of the classroom and/or through the target instruction all appeared to affect the increase of self-efficacy beliefs that they "can do", which in turn could have triggered some bias or overestimation in the perception of their actual L2 competence (MacIntyre et al., 1997; Ross, 1998). These findings also help us to understand the effects of instructional methods in relation to learners' linguistic maturity, the level of cognitive demands and complexity involved in the instructional targets, and

the length of instructional treatment (Jeon & Kaya, 2006; Narita, 2012; Roever, 2009; Taguchi, 2011). It can be argued from the results of the present study that sustained, longer-term instruction may be necessary to investigate the effects of instructional treatment for the development of pragmatically complex targets for learners with different proficiency levels and its potential to bridge the gap between learners' perception, knowledge and actual performance in L2.

7.2.2 Research question 2: Learners' instructed use of the particles

To address the second research question that investigates learner development of interactional competence with respect to their use of the interactional particles in the conversation sessions with NS partners and peer learners, the goal of the analysis in Chapter 5 was to identify 1) the learners' production of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in ways that are consistent with what they were instructed; and 2) the extent to which the pragmatics-focused instruction may facilitate the emergent use of the particles by the learners in the co-construction of conversation with native speakers and peer learners.

To summarize the evidence of the particle uses by the experimental and control group learners during the pre-instruction period, many of the students did not capitalize on the opportunities to use particles even when the appropriate environment arose and instead relied on other linguistic resources such as acknowledgment tokens (*aa* or English *oh*) and/or evaluative comments without particles. When a particle occurred in the students' utterances, *ne* was predominantly used in agreement (*soo desu ne* 'That's right') and in formulaic expressions (e.g., *ii desu ne* 'Sounds nice') to show interest in the content of ongoing talk with their conversational partners. However, there is no evidence of the learners making use of other interactional functions of particles fulfilled by *yo* or

yone, i.e., informing and/or contrasting their points (such as disagreement) towards the addressee, or confirming shared understanding or perspectives with the addressee. The robustness in the relationship between the evidence of particle use and learner agency (van Lier, 2008) is thus inconclusive at this stage. In other words, evidence of learning needs to be considered from the perspective of not merely what learners can (re)produce from inputs transmitted to them, but also how they can actively seize on affordances to build their talk and participate in a wider range of discourse activities in L2.

Regarding the use of the particles at the post-instruction stage, the experimental group learners became increasingly able to participate in a wider range of discourse activities through the use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the conversations with their NS partners and peer learners. In particular, the experimental group learners demonstrated their ability to deploy the particles to express affect and epistemic stance, to negotiate alignment, to expand on the ongoing topic, to confirm and establish a mutual understanding of the referent, all reflecting the development of interactional competence. However, such cases were not found in the control group learners. *Ne* was used in a limited matter among the control group learners, and even a highly proficient learner (Ken) in the control group continued to use *ne* in some contexts where *yone* would be expected. The absence of other particles than *ne* in Ken's speech throughout the entire semester, as found in his post-test responses, can be explained from his misinterpretation of sociopragmatic restrictions on the use of other particles for people he is not yet familiar with, i.e., his NS partner and classroom peers. Thus, the development of his own idiosyncratic norm in the learners' linguistic repertoire limited his participation to a single-faceted stance taking through the particle *ne*, and did not enable him to deploy

other particles as resources to participate in a wider range of stance-indexing activities, such as contrasting his views with his partner's or inviting the participants' mutual evaluation of what has just been assessed in the ongoing conversation through the uses of *yo* and *yone*.

Analysis of the learners' use of the particle *ne* at the post-instructional stages revealed that the students who received the pragmatics-focused instruction were able to deploy the particle *ne* for participating in a variety of assessment activities beyond the follow-up turn. Learners' effective use of the particle *ne* in the initial assessment position reflects their increased ability to deploy *ne* as an interactional resource to display affective stance toward the referent being assessed, to make topic transitions, and to invite their conversational partners' joint construction of stance in the ongoing assessment activity while engaging in the conversation. However, although the learners' use of *ne* in the initial turn emerged over the semester, it remained underdeveloped compared to their use of *ne* in the follow-up turn. The underuse of *ne* in the initial turn by the learners in the conversation sessions was consistent with the results of the pre- and post-tests which showed that many students in the experimental group could not fully develop their understanding of the use of *ne* in the initial assessment turn even after receiving the target instruction.

The experimental group learners' successful deployment of *yo* was evidenced through their enhanced ability to make an epistemic claim in the discourse activities such as information giving, assessment marking or news telling in relation to the recipient's current knowledge, and secure the recipient's uptake or registration of *yo*-marked utterances (Morita, 2012b, 2015). The learners' effective use of *yo* enabled the

recipient's joint display of affect towards that *yo*-marked statement while creating an interactional space for the co-participants to sustain topic development. Though still small in number, the learners' use of *yone* also emerged with a function of confirming or establishing mutual epistemic access to the referent with the NS partner or classroom peer. The learners' assessment marking with *yone* made the recipient's alignment to the assessment relevant next and provided an interactionally negotiable space for the participants' evaluation of the topic at hand. The learners' use of the particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in interaction marks their appropriate display of affective and epistemic stance towards the referent and invokes the participants' further involvement in the assessment activity, as well as their negotiation or co-construction of stances to work towards intersubjective understandings between participants in the interaction.

Another finding is that despite the evidence for individual differences in the process of learning the particles among the learners, a developmental sequence in the use of the particles emerged, and said sequence appears to be consistent with Mine's (1995) finding that the mastery of *yone* occurs only after the mastery of both *ne* and *yo* among L2 learners in Japan. This finding is not surprising and in some ways parallels the finding that learners first develop competency in the use of target linguistic resources such as particle *ne* in listener response turns before they do so in speaker turns (K. Ishida, 2009b; Ohta, 2001; Yoshimi, 1999). In the present study, the uses of initial-turn *ne*, *yo* and *yone* emerge later in the developmental sequence. I propose that this is because they serve as linguistic resources that tend to occur in speaker turns, where they actively contribute to initiating topics as well as making transitions in conversation, both conversational moves that entail greater interactional competence.

Considering that there was no evidence of growth in the use of particles other than *ne* among the control group learners, we cannot determine if implicit socialization opportunities with NS peers alone can serve as effective linguistic affordances for the development of the target pragmatic forms. Increased use of *yo* and *yone* in addition to *ne* observed among the experimental group learners provides the grounds for understanding the beneficial effects of instruction that incorporates metapragmatic discussion and conversation sessions on the emergence of L2 interactional competence, and more specifically, on the ability to deploy the particles as linguistic, cultural and interactional resources for stance taking as participants engage in a range of discourse activities.

7.2.3 Research question 3: Learners' extended and anomalous usage of the particles

To address the third question that examines the experimental group learners' talk for evidence of use of the particles that did not reflect what was taught in the instruction, the analysis in Chapter 6 focused on the learners' 1) extended/uninstructed use of *ne* and *yo* as interactive resources for managing the communicative demands of spontaneous conversation with the NS peers; and 2) anomalous particle usage as evidence of their incomplete understanding of what they were taught in the pragmatics-focused instruction.

Analysis of the learners' uninstructed use of *ne* showed that a few learners used *ne* to confirm whether the recipient can align to the speaker's explicit appreciation for what was newly informed by the partner to the speaker in the preceding turns of talk. For example, in Excerpt 31, adding *ne* to his wrap-up remark indicates that the learner (Brian) is processing the details of the previously co-constructed talk before he can explicitly mark his comment as making confirmation or alignment relevant next. Furthermore,

Brian's emerging interactional competence involves more than the deployment of *ne*; his active listenership demonstrated through reactive tokens such as *soo desu ka::* ('is that so?'), *o:::!* ('wow!') and *hontoo?* ('really?') towards the ongoing talk contributes to the sequential appropriateness of his turn marking explicit appreciation for the import of the partner's newly informing talk about kanji learning with the particle *ne*. Another extended use of *ne* appeared in a response position. Excerpt 33 illustrates the learner's (Julie) use of *ne* which occurred in a formulaic fragment-seeming utterance (*chotto ne*). Julie's *ne*-marked response lacks any explicit denotative word, but the hint of her reply already suffices in the participants' intersubjective understandings of the situation, as indicated in her NS partner's (Nao) display of total agreement with *ne* in the subsequent turn.

The learners' uninstructed use of *yo* reflects their ability to use the particle as a resource to upgrade the intensity of the evaluation of the shared referent as a basis for their display of epistemic stance. In Excerpt 34, we observed how the learner (Kyle) deployed *yo* in a claim of epistemic primacy over the referent that he and his NS partner (Sumi) have equivalent epistemic access to (an incident on the highway) reported by the local news media. The use of *yo* in Kyle's turn in contrast to the use of *yone* in his partner's turn indicates that he highlights his first-hand knowledge of the referent and claims epistemic primacy over Sumi, who, based on the public nature of the incident, can be expected to know as much. Excerpt 35 shows another instance where *yo* was deployed to explicitly pursue the recipient's uptake of the speaker's expressed concern. In this turn, the learner (Lucas) used *yo* to communicate his strong desire to visit Okinawa, his partner's (Fumiya) hometown, to his partner in conversation. Then,

Fumiya marks his own statements with the repeated use of *yo*, in which he first produces a turn signaling epistemic primacy and then an invitation to the learner to come visit his hometown. Both participants' affective and epistemic display of stance through their reciprocal uses of *yo* index that they mutually orient to achieving a friendly, interpersonal relationship through talk.

With regard to learners' anomalous use of the particles, analysis revealed that while the learners in the experimental group demonstrated a decrease in the anomalous use of anomalous *yo* and *yone*, their anomalous production of *ne* persisted in the following positions: 1) anomalous use of *ne* in a turn that acknowledges receipt of new information *soo desu ka* ('Really?'); 2) misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* as confirming the interlocutors' mutual epistemic access to the referent; and 3) overproduction of *ne* for unshared information between interlocutors.

The anomalous use of *soo desu ne* among students in the present data is consistent with Yoshimi's (1999) claim that the anomaly stems from a violation of Japanese epistemic constraints on the construction of shared perspectives. In Excerpt 37, a learner (Ryan) from the experimental group overproduced *ne* in the sharing of new information that his NS partner (Hana) could not possibly validate or align to, which resulted in the unnaturalness of some of his utterances. The learner's overproduction of *ne* is also associated with the findings from Shibahara (2002), who reported that the development of *ne* as a softener is difficult even for intermediate and advanced learners of Japanese in the study-abroad context, who may have ample input from Japanese interactions outside the classroom. These findings reflect a need to further develop L2 instruction on interactional particles, since the mere exposure to the target forms and/or implicit

socialization with speakers of Japanese appear to be insufficient to facilitate JFL/JSL learners' understanding and competent use of particles in Japanese conversation.

Other conspicuous anomalous uses of the particle include the erroneous marking of *ne* in an assessment turn where the use of *yone* would be preferable to confirm shared epistemic access between participants. The misuse of *ne* in place of *yone* in assessments was persistent throughout the semester (15% to 19% to 44%) and notable as compared to other features of anomalous occurrences of *ne*. It can be argued that learners' underdevelopment of *yone* reflects their single-faceted understanding of alignment, although their contingent use of *ne* (albeit anomalous) nonetheless enabled the learners to involve the NS partners in the ongoing assessment activity without communication breakdown or disruption to the flow of the conversation. Learners' anomalous use of *ne* in place of *yone* suggests that they have indeed demonstrated increasing control of negotiating alignment with others through the particle *ne*, but they have yet to develop how to use other interactional resources such as *yone* to orient to the mutual evaluation of epistemically congruent referent between participants.

Analysis of the present data also evidenced the impact of learners' anomalous particle use on the subsequent sequences of talk. Examples demonstrated that the erroneous production (or prosody) of the particles by the learners failed to secure the recipients' uptake of their talk, thereby invoking an explicit display of non-alignment on the part of the recipient or a short disruption to the flow of the conversation between participants. In Excerpt 39, Tara's erroneous prosodic move with the particle (*ne* instead of *ne:::* with vowel elongation) led to the recipient's (Hiro) delayed response to her intended stance, marking a shift to brief repair sequences for re-establishing shared

understanding between the participants. Excerpt 40 shows that Trey received non-alignment from his NS partner Sumi when using *yone* to evaluate the referent that he has partial epistemic access to. The explicit lack of alignment in Sumi's second assessment turn reflects a dispreferred response (Pomerantz, 1984), which, in this L2 talk, results from her inability to construct an aligning stance with the learner's turn that contains the anomalous use of the particle *ne*.

The findings above provide some implications for teaching, and learner development, of interactional competence. The incorporation of conversation activities as a component of the instruction provided learners with rich access to linguistic affordances to push the learners beyond what was taught and extend their learning to novel contexts in which they adapt their language resources to meet the communicative demands of spontaneous conversation with the interlocutors. On the other hand, the learners' anomalous use as evidence for incomplete understanding of the particles helps us to redesign particular areas of the instructional treatment that need improvements, such as awareness-raising of the prosodic patterns available for each particle and their subsequent impact on talk, as well as ways in which learners can develop more than one way of constructing their stance through the use of the particles in joint stance-taking activities in conversation. Taking into consideration the design of the instructional approach and the findings of the present study, I will present below implications for teaching, limitations of the study, and directions for future research.

7.3 Implications for teaching

The primary implication of the findings from this study for teaching L2 pragmatics concerns the learning contexts in which language learners can develop their

interactional competence. While previous L2 studies have shown that learners' competent use of an array of interactional resources in L2 talk can be facilitated through out-of-classroom experiences such as study abroad situations (e.g., Dings, 2014; M. Ishida, 2009; Masuda, 2011; Taguchi, 2014, 2015), the findings of the present study underscore a critical role for explicit instruction in the development of L2 pragmatic features that are often impervious to the effects of exposure to and/or implicit socialization with speakers of the target speech community. In particular, this study confirmed that JFL learners who received pragmatics-focused instruction demonstrated their metapragmatic development and increased ability to use a wide range of interactional particles (*ne*, *yo*, and *yone*) as interactive resources for joint stance-indexing activities with their conversational partners in unscripted Japanese conversation.

In order to assist L2 learners to achieve target proficiency, as Larsen-Freeman (2003, 2011) suggests, explicit instruction needs to include awareness-raising activity, supplemented by interactive opportunities for the learners to use their target language in psychologically authentic activities where they take what they learned and apply it to meet the communicative demands of novel situations. A process by which learners develop their L2 in a way that ties these resources to changing conversational contexts constitutes a critical step for learners to advance their interactional competence. As for teaching learners' adaptive use of language, Larsen-Freeman (2013) further asserts that one way to do it is to provide students with slightly varied activities each time in which they must enact and adjust their L2 resources in the socio-historical contexts. As I presented in Chapter 5, the present study confirmed that learners' recurrent engagement in the conversation sessions with NSs and classroom peers as a component of the

instruction enables the learners' changes in participation in relation to their growing use of the particles as resources for joint construction of stance and intersubjectivity with the interlocutors in linguistically and culturally acceptable ways; that is, the learners have demonstrated an increased ability to deploy the particles not only as a resource for displaying particular stances but also as a resource for marking their stance relevant for the recipient's next interactional move, such as display of alignment or further negotiation of stance toward the topic-in-progress in the interaction. This evidence illustrates a shift in learner participation from that of being a passive user of the language to playing a more active role to use their L2 creatively and meaningfully with others in interaction. This also means that L2 learners are able to use the target language as an opportunity to express a personal *voice* (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), voice that reflects more than what the learners could possibly learn from L2 textbooks and/or from the instruction they have received.

Moreover, findings from learners' anomalous usage of the particles in the conversation sessions provide important pedagogical implications. The proposed instruction did not provide opportunities for learners to reflect upon their own particle use in relation to their understanding of the discourse functions of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the awareness-raising or conversational activities. As evident in some interventional studies demonstrating that explicit instruction combined with a feedback component for the learners' productions facilitated the development of target L2 pragmatic features (e.g., House, 1996; Iwai, 2010; Koike & Peterson, 2005; Tateyama, 2001, 2009; Yoshimi, 2001b), another possibility for an instructional approach would be to include corrective feedback by having learners review recorded videos of their own interactions to discuss

their (anomalous) use of the target L2 forms as teachers can draw learners' attention to how speakers select one form over the other to index their stance in relation to their addressee for the contribution to ongoing talk.

From the perspective of teaching interactional particles, the observation of how the particles were understood and later appropriated for use by learners in actual interactions allows us to identify aspects of learners' interactional competence that is less accessible to development under the exposure and/or treatment conditions of this study. One important finding from the present study, as was presented in Chapter 4, is the learner's incomplete understanding of the initial-turn *ne* in assessment activities. The competent use of *ne* in the first speaker's assessment turns requires the ability to judge whether what is being evaluated can be mutually shared or relevant for alignment, while it seems easier to do so in listener turns where the assessable has already been shared between participants at the time of the receipt. A close examination of instructed learners' actual L2 use gives us a better picture of how to modify an instructional approach that considers ways in which learners can develop their understanding and use of interactional resources in speaker turns, where they actively contribute to the interaction, e.g., by initiating topics or making transitions in conversation, as evidence of greater interactional competence. Again, this suggests the significant role of L2 instruction in the learner development of interactional competence, in terms of not only *what* L2 resources to use for managing the contingency of interaction but also *how* to use these resources for successful co-construction of stance and intersubjectivity in various discourse activities with others in the target language.

7.4 Limitations of the study and directions for future research

Possible future studies can be drawn from the findings of the present study. First, this study demonstrated that pragmatics-focused instruction facilitated learning and development of Japanese interactional particles for JFL beginning-intermediate learners. Since it has been addressed that the acquisition of Japanese interactional particles is even difficult for advanced learners of Japanese (Goto, 1998; Nazikian, 2005; Shibahara, 2002), one area for future study is to examine whether pragmatic instruction benefits the development of interactional competence in relation to competent use of interactional particles for learners with higher proficiency.

Second, as a growing number of studies have acknowledged the use of CA-based materials for teaching interactional competence (Barraja-Rohan, 1997, 2011; Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006), the present study has shown that use of interactional particles that co-occurs with other interactional resources, such as reactive token, adjacency pairs, preference organization, and turn-taking, can be taught through learner exposure to the functions of these mechanisms during actual interactions—providing the conversational opportunities as a component of the instruction enabled the learners to develop the array of interactional resources for jointly constructing stance and meaning in the conversations with NSs and classroom peers. As another possible instructional approach for the learner development of interactional competence, utilizing authentic discourse data (e.g., naturally occurring conversation between speakers of Japanese, film scripts, etc.) can help teachers to design awareness-raising activities that guide students to develop an understanding and use of the target pragmatic features in such data. In this study, authentic materials such as transcriptions of naturally-occurring conversation or film

scripts were not introduced to the experimental group class out of consideration for the students' proficiency level (third-semester Japanese) and therefore a set of extended dialogues that approximate naturally-occurring conversations was used instead. However, it is also possible for teachers to control the contents of authentic data relevant to the instructional targets and students' linguistic mastery. For example, if authentic materials are incorporated into instruction for beginning learners, limiting the instructional focus to minimal and highly formulaic routines, especially those that impact learner action and identity (Ochs, 1996), might be helpful to direct the students' attention to the target forms more readily without increasing the burden of their online processing or comprehension.

Third, as presented in Chapter 4, while the qualitative analysis of the pre- and post-tests revealed that the experimental group overall performed significantly better than the control group in their articulation of the discourse functions of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in the described situations, the quantitative analysis yielded somewhat inconclusive results in that the control group learners also showed some positive change in regard to their ability to select correct particles in the given contexts over the instruction period. It could be concluded from this positive change demonstrated by the control group that the learners in this group also may have benefited from the implicit socialization opportunities with NS peers in the conversation sessions where they had exposure to the target pragmatic norms. Therefore, more investigation including a pure control group who receives no treatment is needed to identify sources of improvement in learners' overall performance between the pre- and post-tests.

Another area for future investigation is the relationship between learners' metapragmatic development and oral production skills. This study demonstrated that

there was individual variability in the learner's appropriation of metapragmatic knowledge to produce more appropriate output, including evidence for a discrepancy between metapragmatic development and oral production of particles in the conversation sessions. This tendency could be attributed to such factors as learners' analytic skills, cognitive demands of task types, L2 proficiency, and learner subjectivity. For some learners in this study, the task demands of engaging in spontaneous conversations may have increased the learners' cognitive load to such an extent that it prevented them from activating their acquired metapragmatic knowledge in support of the appropriate production of the particles in the conversations. In this regard, future study should be conducted to investigate how developing learners' analytic skills, use of (para)linguistic resources, and active listenership as a component of pragmatics-focused instruction will help them to produce pragmatically appropriate expressions. The gap between learners' metapragmatic development and oral production skills suggests that we should be cautious in making generalizations about L2 learners as being positioned as "deficient" in relation to the native speaker (Firth & Wagner, 1997; House & Kasper, 2000). Siegal (1996) points out, "second language learners do not merely model native speakers with a desire to emulate, but rather actively create both a new interlanguage and an accompanying identity in the learning process" (p. 36). In the present study, we found that Ken's non-use of *yo* and *yone* in the conversation sessions could be explained by his own incorrectly-held belief that these particles are not used for people with whom he is not familiar. However, it is not yet clear whether the learner's non-use of certain particles stems from his own subjective *choice* despite his proficiency or the development of his idiosyncratic norm. This reflects a need to further explore L2 learners' emic

perspectives regarding how their individual subjectivity might affect their (non)use of certain pragmatic forms. Lastly, more research is needed to examine whether the instructional approach employed in the present study would be beneficial for advanced L2 learners' development of interactional particles and other L2 pragmatic features that are often difficult to acquire through exposure and/or implicit socialization with speakers of the target speech community.

In conclusion, the findings from the present study are positive with regard to L2 pragmatics-focused instruction, suggesting beneficial effects for JFL learners' development of interactional competence as evidenced by the use of Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* in spontaneous conversations. More specifically, the instructed learners demonstrated their increased ability to use the particles as resources for participating in a conversation as a social being, i.e., showing empathy, building rapport, sharing moments of teasing and laughter, giving and inviting personal opinions, initiating and developing topics, etc., as they work towards joint stance taking and the achievement of intersubjectivity with co-participants in the conversation. Moreover, the learners' competent use of the particles for joint stance construction reflects the emergence of learner agency, which allows them to play an active role in managing the ongoing talk and the development of the interpersonal relationship through that talk with the conversational partners. Future study should continue to explore ways in which L2 learners can be instructed to develop a range of linguistic and interactional resources to serve them in constructing their own personal voice — to create, (re)negotiate, and co-construct stances and meanings with others for achieving “doing being ordinary” (Sacks, 1984, p. 414) in their new language.

APPENDIX A

Textbook treatments

Textbook analysis that follows is based on the investigation of three major beginning and intermediate Japanese textbooks circulated for instructional use in American universities: a) *Situational Functional Japanese* (Tsukuba Language Group, 1999), b) *Yookoso!* (Tohsaku, 1999); and c) *Nakama I* (Makino & Hatasa, 1998). In these textbooks, the particles *ne* and *yo* frequently appear in model sentence structures and dialogs of multiple chapters, but the descriptions of the particles are very narrowly defined in comparison to those presented for other core grammatical features and do not provide learners with a sufficient explanation. In contrast to *ne* and *yo*, *yone* is never introduced in any of the textbooks examined.

A close examination of the treatment of *ne* in all three textbooks reveals that *ne* functions as the speaker's request for the addressee's confirmation or agreement with rising intonation, the indication of showing agreement and emotion with falling intonation, and it is presented as the equivalent to English tag questions, such as *...isn't it?*. This finding is consistent with Ko's (2011) analysis of beginning and intermediate Japanese textbooks. According to Ko, there is no mention of other *ne* functions (i.e., the solicitation of the addressee's acceptance of new information/intention provided by the speaker) despite the highly prevalent usage (169 uses) with that specific function throughout the target textbooks. Examples are shown as follows:

(1)

A: Nihon ni donokurai sunde irundesu ka. *How long have you lived in Japan?*

B: Soo desu *ne*. Moo juugo nen gurai desu *ne*. *Let's see. About 15 years.*

(2)

A: nanika attara itsudemo itte *ne*. *Let me know if there is anything I can do to help.*

B: un, arigatou. *Ok, thanks.*

Ko argues, although this particular function of *ne* has not been widely discussed in the relevant literature, it frequently occurs in Japanese mundane conversation. Example (1) shows that with regard to the length of stay in Japan, the speaker B marks the utterance with *ne* by inviting the addressee to accept the information (about 15 years of stay) while confirming it online. On the other hand, the *ne*-marked request in Example (2) indicates that the speaker A invites the addressee B to confirm A's intention to help B anytime.

These examples suggest that there is a clear discrepancy between the actual use of *ne* and its textbook description. Although *ne* tends to appear pervasively in textbook dialogs and sentences, it is often limited to the description of functions such as seeking or displaying agreement/confirmation, independent from the discourse context.

As for *yo*, there seems to be a consensus among the textbooks that *yo* is a marker that provides new information to the addressee. This description of *yo* is misleading because there is a tendency that the learners use *yo* excessively by marking with *yo* any information the speaker considers to be new or newsworthy for the addressee. The

overuse of *yo* is also identified in Kakegawa's (2009) study. Kakegawa mentions that after the intervention of the particles was given, the students' emails were found to contain more *yo* than those by native speakers, although their use of *yo* was not necessarily judged inappropriate.

In addition, *yo* in the textbooks is also commonly defined as a marker to indicate the speaker's strong conviction or to emphasize the propositional content. It has been pointed out that the term "emphasize" may be so abstract that the learners tend to sound too assertive or too pushy by using *yo* in the contexts that it should not be used (Kakegawa, 2009; Ko, 2011; Saigo, 2011), as presented below:

(3)

A: *natsuyasumi, nani ka yotei arimasu ka.* *Do you have any plans for the summer break?*

B: *Hawaii tou ni ikimasu yo.* *I'm going to the Big Island.*

If a student followed the textbook descriptions of *yo* such as "giving new information" or "emphasizing information", B's statement would more likely occur as a response to A's question. This particular use of *yo* in context may render the response sound a little too assertive, especially when the speaker A is someone with a higher status (e.g., professor, boss) or someone that one is not familiar with. However, the assertiveness of B's utterance is mitigated by the predicate *-n desu* added to *yo* (*Hawaii tou ni ikundesu yo*) or by not using *yo* at all (*Hawaii tou ni ikimasu*).

Further textbook analysis reveals that there is no reference to the differential gender-related uses of *ne* and *yo* (e.g., *watashi mo yo* in female speech 'Me, too') and various expressions that entail morphosyntactic modification depending on the type of speech styles (casual or formal) that precedes the particles as well as the corresponding pragmatic functions (e.g., *taihen da ne* [plain], *taihen desu ne* [polite] 'That sounds like a lot of work'; *iku yo* [plain], *iku nda yo* [plain], *ikimasu yo* [polite], *iku ndesu yo* [polite] 'I'm going').

APPENDIX B

Pre-test

Questionnaire on Japanese language learning

Background information:

Name: _____

Native language: _____

How long have you been studying Japanese? _____

Daily opportunities to use and hear Japanese outside of class:

Yes / No [Circle one]

If yes, in what occasions? _____

(e.g., work, family, friends, manga, etc)

For each activity, how often? _____ (e.g., two hours per week)

Questions concerning the Japanese interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*:

In this section, I will ask about your use and understanding of the interactional particles *ne*, *yo* and *yone*. Based on your knowledge about these particles and your current conversational ability, please answer the following questions. This is purely for my own research investigation and your answers will *not* affect the overall course grade of JPN201.

1) In the Japanese classroom, do you hear and/or use *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*?

ne: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

yo: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

yone: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

In what situations do you hear and/or use these particles in the classroom?

ne: _____

yo: _____

yone: _____

If never, why don't you hear and/or use them?

2) When speaking Japanese outside of the classroom, do you hear and/or use *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*?

ne: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

yo: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

yone: (often / sometimes / rarely/ never)

In what situations do you hear and/or use these particles outside of the classroom?

ne: _____

yo: _____

yone: _____

If never, why don't you hear and/or use them?

3) Based on your responses above, provide a brief explanation of what you think the particle means or what you think its function is.

ne: _____

yo: _____

yone: _____

4) Explain why Japanese speakers use these particles in Japanese conversation.

Let's try!

1) In response to the question by Speaker A, each of the following responses by Speaker B is possible but each response has a distinct function. Provide a gloss and/or a brief explanation for each of the responses.

A: 昨日の日本語のテスト、どうだった？ *How was the Japanese test yesterday?*

B: あああ、むずかしかったよ！ *Ahhh, it was hard!*

あああ、むずかしかったね！

あああ、むずかしかったよね！

あああ、むずかしかった！



2) Look at what Speaker A says below. Each of A's utterances holds a slightly different intention despite receiving the same response from Speaker B. Can you explain Speaker A's intention in each of the following exchanges?

yone

A: そういえば、今週末、さおりのたんじょうびだよね？
By the way, Saori's birthday is coming up this weekend, right?



B: そうだね。何あげる？ *Yeah, that's right. What shall we get her?*

ne

A: そういえば、今週末、さおりのたんじょうびだね。
By the way, Saori's birthday is coming up this weekend, right?

B: そうだね。何あげる？ *Yeah, that's right. What shall we get her?*

3) Circle the particle that would most naturally fit in each blank based on the prompts. If you think no particle is necessary, please circle x. If you think there is more than one possibility, circle the particles that would fit and provide a reason for your choice of each use.

a) *You and your classmate are talking about the Japanese test taken yesterday.*

A: 昨日のテスト、どうだった? *How did you do on the test yesterday?*

B: 昨日のテスト?そんなにむずかしくなかったよね?

A: えええ? ちょうむずかしかった____。 *I guess it wasn't so hard, was it?*

Really? It was so hard.

ne yo yone x

Why? _____



b) *Your friend (B) took you to her/his favorite café and had you try a cake your friend likes. You (A) just took your first bite and gave an immediate comment about the cake.*

A: おいしい____。 **ne yo yone x** *This cake is good!*

B: うん。ほんとうおいしい____。 **ne yo yone x** *Yeah, it really is.*

Why? _____

Why? _____



Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX C

Post-test

Questionnaire on Japanese language learning

Name: _____

Are you ready?

In our class, we have learned a little more about Japanese conversation using *ね*, *よ*, and *よね*. Compared to your previous use, do you think you can use these particles in your actual conversation more comfortably now?

Please consider your ability to use each particle and how this ability has changed over the semester. Then, evaluate your growth by marking the point on the scale where you started (at the beginning of the semester) and where you are currently (at this point in the semester).

<i>ne</i>	poor							best	Reason(s) for improvement
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

<i>yo</i>	poor							best	Reason(s) for improvement
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

<i>yone</i>	poor							best	Reason(s) for improvement
Before	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Now	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

What is your current understanding of the use and the function of each particle?

ne: _____

yo: _____

yone: _____

Let's try!

1) In response to the question by Speaker A, each of the following responses by Speaker B response is possible but each response has a distinct function. Provide a gloss and/or a brief explanation for each of the responses.

A: 昨日の日本語のテスト、どうだった? *How was the Japanese test yesterday?*

B: あああ、むずかしかったよ! *Ahhh, it was hard!*

あああ、むずかしかったね!

あああ、むずかしかったよね!

あああ、むずかしかった!



2) Look at what Speaker A says below. Each of A's utterances holds a slightly different intention despite receiving the same response from Speaker B. Can you explain Speaker A's intention in each of the following exchanges?

yone

A: そういえば、もうすぐで春休みだよね?
By the way, the spring break is coming soon, right?

B: うん、そうだね。楽しみ。
Yeah, that's right. I'm looking forward to it.

ne

A: そういえば、もうすぐで春休みだね。
By the way, the spring break is coming soon, right?

B: うん、そうだね。楽しみ。
Yeah, that's right. I'm looking forward to it.



3) Circle the particle that would most naturally fit in each blank based on the prompts. If you think no particle is necessary, please circle x. If you think there is more than one possibility, circle the particles that would fit and provide a reason for your choice of each use.

a) *You and your classmate are talking about the movies.*

A: アルゴ、どうだった？

How was 'Argo'?

B: え、アルゴ？そんなによくなかったよね？
was it?

Oh, Argo? I guess it wasn't so good,

A: え〜〜？ちょうよかった_____。

Whaaat? It was so good!

ne yo yone x

Why? _____



b) *Your friend (B) took you to her/his favorite café and had you try a cake your friend likes. You (A) just took your first bite and gave an immediate comment about the cake.*

A: おいしい_____。

ne yo yone x

This cake is good!

B: うん。ほんとうおいしい_____。

ne yo yone x

Yeah, it really is.

Why? _____

Why? _____



Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX D

Sample reflection sheet for the experimental group

JPN201

Reflection sheet 4 (Native speaker session)

Name: _____

Please write freely about the followings:

1. Your handling of Japanese in the conversation (speaking/listening skills)
2. Use of Japanese in the conversation (any specific grammatical items, vocabulary, expressions, and the interactional particles *ね*, *よ*, *よね* in your talk)
3. Compared to the last two sessions, did you see any changes/development in your conversational skills? (e.g., listener's responses, use of *ね*, *よ*, and *よね*, etc.)



Thanks for your cooperation!

APPENDIX E

Sample teaching materials

The following teaching materials on the interactional particles *ne*, *yo*, and *yone* are some of the excerpts from PowerPoint slides presented to the experimental group class during the instruction period (Week 8-15). During this period, the experimental group class was introduced to these materials in conjunction with other target grammatical structures for approximately 20 to 25 minutes per lesson, as a component of pragmatics-focused instruction on the interactional particles. The proposed instruction was designed to explain diverse discourse functions and (non)uses of *ne*, *yo*, and *yone*, using the learner-friendly resource (Table 4) for promoting students' awareness-raising and as a scaffold for their production in the conversation sessions.

These materials were used for the awareness-raising activities which include:

1) the presentation of models of particle use, 2) metapragmatic discussions of the particles' various functions and stances to be indexed in use, and 3) oral production of the particles that would naturally fit in the contingency of short or extended dialogs that approximate naturally occurring conversation, followed by a series of oral practices. The awareness-raising activities also involved watching video clips (recorded and transcribed interactions between NSs of Japanese) to facilitate learners' awareness and understanding of ways in which the particles are being deployed in the sequential development of talk, as well as with co-occurring features of gestural and prosodic moves that use of the particles may entail.

Sample 1

ね、よ、よね
In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

I guess it was good. I went to Honolulu Fest.
まあまあかな。ホノルルフェスティバルに行ったよ。

How was your weekend?
週末、どうだった？

Ahhh, that sounds good!
ええ？いいね～！

ね、よ、よね
In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

Yeah, they were huge!
うん、ちよう大きかった(よ)！！！！

Did you watch the fireworks?
はなび、見た？

ね、よ、よね
In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

By the way, did you do your Japanese homework?
そういえば、日本語のしゅくだい、した？

Yeah, I did.
うん、したよ。

It was super hard!
ちようむずかしかった(よ)！

ね、よ、よね
In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

Whaaaaat? It sucks!
えええ？いやだな～！

Yeah, I know! It sucks!
うん、いやだよね～。

This よね is 'I know how you feel and let's share our feelings!!!'

ね、よ、よね

In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

How are things going lately?

さいきん、どう?

So busy!

ちよういそがしいよ~!



ね、よ、よね

In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Between friends)

Work?

バイト?

Work and 2 papers to write this week!

今週、バイトとレポート2つもあるよ~!

That's a lot of work!

大変だね~。いそがしいね~。



ね、よ、よね

In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Using です/ます)

How are things going lately?

さいきん、どうですか。

So busy!

とてもいそがしいですよ~!



ね、よ、よね

In this situation, what would you say in Japanese?
(Using です/ます)

Work?

バイトですか?

Work and 2 papers to write this week!

今週、バイトとレポート2つもあるんですよ~!

That's a lot of work!

大変ですね~。いそがしいですね~。



ね、よ、よね 練習!

Let's practice the previous dialog!

- A: 週末、どうだった?
- B: まあまあかな。ホノルルフェスティバルに行ったよ。
- A: ええ? いいね~! はなび、どうだった?
- B: ちよう大きかった(よ)! そういえば、日本語のしゅくだい、した?
- A: うん、したよ。
- B: むずかしかった?
- A: ちようむずかしかった(よ)!
- B: ええ? いやだな~。
- A: うん、いやだよね~。

ね、よ、よね 練習!

(between friends)

- A: さいきん、どう?
- B: ちよういそがしいよ~。
- A: バイト?
- B: 今週、バイトとレポート2つもあるよ~。
- A: 大変だね~。/いそがしいね~。

(using です/ます)

- A: さいきん、どうですか。
- B: とてもいそがしいですよ~。
- A: バイトですか?
- B: 今週、バイトとレポート2つもあるんですよ~。
- A: 大変ですね~。/いそがしいですね~。

Sample 2

You are at a clothing store.
What would you say if you want to try something on?



あの、すみません。これ、着てみてもいいですか。
あの、すみません。これ、着てみたいんですけど。

What would you say if something they tried on fits them well?



"Yeaaaah, it fits you well!" to fit well = ぴったり(な)

Sales clerk: ぴったりですね~。(polite)

Friend: ぴったりだね~。(casual)

You made a comment on how they look and want to SHARE your opinion with the person.

What would you say if someone wants you to try and eat something they made?



"Try some."

Someone: 食べてみてください。(polite)
食べてみて。(casual)

You have the first bite of the cake and make a comment on it. What would you say?



"It's gooooooood!"

You: おいしい!

You are making a statement.

おいしいですね。
おいしいね。

You want to SHARE your opinion with someone.

What about this situation?



ほんとうですか?
ほんとう?
Are you really sure?



"(You may not agree with me, but) it's really good!"

ほんとうおいしいですよ～
ほんとうおいしいよ～。

You want to LET the person KNOW/CHANGE AWARENESS that the cake is really good.

Sample 3

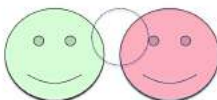
With the use of ね、よ、よね

ね =

sharing some feelings (opinions) with your partner as relatively immediate responses to certain situation

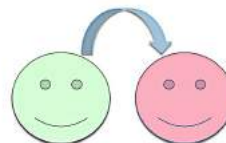
よね =

assuming that you and your partner have shared something in common (information/experience) and talk about it in retrospect



With the use of ね、よ、よね

よ = let others know about something new; give opinions that are different from others'; change others' awareness



With the use of ね、よ、よね

- A: あ、最近、何かおもしろい映画、見た?
B: うん、見た。
A: え、何見たの?
B: _____ っていう映画。
A: え、_____? 私も見た、見た!
B: ほんとう? あの映画、ほんとうおもしろかった____。
A: _____、おもしろかった____!
B: んー。
C: え? 何っていう映画?
A: あ、_____。おもしろいから見てみて。
C: あ、そうなんだ。じゃ、こんど見てみる____。
B: ぜひ、ぜひ。



ビデオを見てみよう。



With the use of ね、よ、よね

A: あ、最近、何かおもしろい映画、見た?
 B: うん、見た。
 A: え、何見たの?
 B: _____ っていう映画。
 A: え、_____? 私も見た、見た!
 B: ほんとう?あの映画、ほんとうおもしろかった よね。
 A: ねー、おもしろかった よね!
 B: んー。
 C: え?何ていう映画?
 A: あ、_____。おもしろいから見てみて。
 C: あ、そうなんだ。じゃ、こんど見てみる ね。
 B: げひ、げひ。



With the use of ね、よ、よね

A: ねー、ねー、ねー、この間の英語のテスト、どうだった?
 B: うわー、聞かないで〜!
 A: ほんとう、リーディングむずかしかった よね。
 C: うん、ほんとう、むずかしかった!
 B: うん、むずかしかった よね。あ、それから、リスニングもむずかしかった!
 C: え?リスニングはそんなにむずかしくなかったと思う よ。
 B: えー?!むずかしかった よ。
 C: むずかしくなかった よ!
 B: むずかしかった よ!
 C: むずかしくなかった よ!
 B: いや、いや、いや。むずかしかったって!
 A: まー、まー、まー。



With the use of ね、よ、よね

A: _____、この間の英語のテスト、どうだった?
 B: うわー、聞かないで〜!
 A: ほんとう、リーディングむずかしかった _____。
 C: うん、ほんとう、むずかしかった!
 B: うん、むずかしかった _____。あ、それから、リスニングもむずかしかった!
 C: え?リスニングはそんなにむずかしくなかったと思う _____。
 B: えー?!むずかしかった _____。
 C: むずかしくなかった _____!
 B: むずかしかった _____!
 C: むずかしくなかった _____!
 B: いや、いや、いや。むずかしかったって!
 A: まー、まー、まー。



With the use of ね、よ、よね

Practice with your partners!

- intonation, gestures, etc
- Eye contact
- Understanding each use of **ね**, **よ**, and **よね** in context

Sample 4

サンクスギビング、どうだった? How was your Thanksgiving?

M: あ、Tono!
 T: あ、Meguppe、ひさしがり。
 M: ひさしがり。
 T: 元気?
 M: うん、元気、元気。
 T: サンクスギビング、どっか行った?
 M: あ、うん、マウイに行って来た _____。
 T: え?いい _____!
 M: うん、すごくよかった _____。
 T: ああ、いいなー。
 M: うん、え、Tonoは?
 T: え?ぼく?ぼくはね、ずっとアルバイトだったんだ _____。
 M: えー、そうなんだー。大変。
 T: あ、そういえば、Native speaker sessionって、金曜日だ _____?
 M: あ、そうだった _____。わー、きんちょうする _____。
 T: え、だいじょうぶだ _____。
 M: だいじょうぶかなー。
 T: だいじょうぶ、だいじょうぶ。
 M: あー、そうかなー。



ビデオを見てみよう。



What are the functions? Discuss with your partner.

M: あ、Tonoi!

T: あ、Meguppe、ひさしぶり。

M: ひさしぶり。

T: 元気?

M: うん、元気、元気。

T: サンクスギビング、どこか行った?

M: あ、うん、マウイに行って来た(よ)。

T: え? いいね!

M: うん、すごくよかった(よ)。

T: ああ、いいなー。

M: うん、え、Tonoiは?

T: え? ぼく? ぼくはね、ずっとアルバイトだったんだ(よ)。

M: えー、そうなんだー。大変。

T: あ、そういえば、Native speaker sessionって、金曜日だよね?

M: あ、そうだったね/よね。わー、きんちようするね/よ。

T: え、だいじょうぶだよ。

M: だいじょうぶかなー。

T: だいじょうぶ、だいじょうぶ。

M: あー、そうかなー。



What are the functions? Discuss with your partner.

M: うん、え、Tonoiは?

T: え? ぼく? ぼくはね、ずっとアルバイトだったんだよ。

M: えー、そうなんだー。大変。

T: あ、そういえば、Native speaker sessionって、金曜日だよね?

M: あ、そうだったね/よね。わー、きんちようするね/よ。

T: え、だいじょうぶだよ。




よね

1. The speaker assumes that the information is also known to the listener and shares the feeling toward the information
2. The speaker assumes that the information is also known to the listener and asks for confirmation about the information

Sample 5

ね、よ、よね


A: あああ、あと3週間で冬休みだ よね ? (1)
 B: え? あと一ヶ月だ よ。(2)
 A: あと一ヶ月か～。冬休み、何かよていある?
 B: うん、ラスベガスに行こうと思って(い)るんだ。
 A: えええ? いい ね/な。(3)



(1) よね = the speaker assumes that the listener already has possessed the information she/he wants to know and makes a confirmation.
 (2) よ = sharing the information that is new or that changes the listener's awareness
 (3) ね = sharing the speaker's feeling and opinion (いい) with the listener

ね、よ、よね

A: 週末、何かした?
 B: うん、ごはん食べに行った -/よ。(1)
 A: え? どこ行ったの?
 B: Yakitori Glad. 知ってる?
 A: えええ? 知ってる～! あそこ、安くて、おいしい よね。(2)
 B: うん、おいしい -/よね。(2)



(1) よ = sharing the information that may not be known to the listener
 - = making a statement
 (2) よね = the speaker assumes that the listener already has possessed some information and intends to share the feeling/opinion in retrospect.

Talk with your partner!

A: あああ、あと3週間で冬休みだ よね ?
 B: え? あと一ヶ月だ よ。(2)
 A: あと一ヶ月か～。冬休み、何かよていある?
 B: うん、____(plan)______と(い)るんだ。
 A: ____ (comment)____。

(1) よね = the speaker assumes that the listener already has possessed the information she/he wants to know and makes a confirmation.
 (2) よ = sharing the information that is new or that changes the listener's awareness
 (3) ね = sharing the speaker's feeling and opinion (いい) with the listener


Sample 6

昨日のクラスの続き Continued from yesterday's class...

A: Did you do anything on the weekends?
 B: I didn't do anything in particular, but I saw Saon Psy at Ala Moana!!!
 A: Whaaaaat? Reaaaaally? THAT Psy from Gangnam Style?
 B: Yeah, I freaked out!
 A: That's so great. Where did you see them?
 B: Do you know the place where there is a café on the second floor (of Ala Moana)?
 A: Yeah.
 B: I saw them there.
 A: Wooooooow!



A: 週末、何かした?
 B: とくに何もなかったけど、アラモアナでさおりがサイとデートしている(いた)の、見たよ～。
 A: えええええ? ほんとう?? あのGangnam Styleのサイだよね?
 B: うん、びっくりした (よ)～。
 A: すごいね～。どこで見たの?
 B: 2階にカフェがあるところ、知ってる?
 A: うん。
 B: そこで見たんだ。
 A: ひえええええ!



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