

THE EFFECT OF PODCAST TASKS ON STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE IN A BEGINNING LEVEL JAPANESE LANGUAGE COURSE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	American College Test
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
CAL	Center for Applied Linguistics
CD-ROM	Compact Disk Read-Only Memory
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ENT	Entire Semester Treatment Group
ES	Early Semester Treatment Group
GL	Generative Learning
GPA	Grade Point Average
HA	High Achieving Group
IQR	Interquartile Range
IT	Information Technology
JPN101	Beginning Japanese I
JPT	Japanese Proficiency Test
LA	Low Achieving Group
LCTL	Less Commonly Taught Language
LS	Late Semester Treatment Group
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
ML	Multimedia Learning
MLA	Modern Language Association
MSLQ	Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement
PT	Podcast Tasks
RSS	Really Simple Syndication
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SETUS	Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey
TBLL	Task-Based Language Learning
UG	Universal Grammar
U.S.	United States
WCU	Western Carolina University

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF PODCAST TASKS ON STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE IN A BEGINNING LEVEL JAPANESE LANGUAGE COURSE

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As the growing popularity of podcasting and its application in education become more apparent, there have been a number of studies on the academic use of podcasts. A podcast is a digital file that can be delivered automatically to a device such as a portable media player or a computer via the Internet. However, the majority of research studied the use of instructor-generated podcasts for reviewing materials and supplemental materials. Little research has focused on learner-generated podcasts as a learning tool. Only a few studies investigated how podcast production could contribute to students learning, and these previous studies were not theory-based. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of podcast tasks (PTs) on students' engagement and performance in a beginning level Japanese course. This study utilized student production of a series of PTs of vocabulary and grammar, as a treatment, and assigned three groups: Early Semester (ES), Late Semester (LS), and Entire Semester (ENT). ES worked on the PTs during the first half of the semester. LS worked on the PTs during the last half of the semester. ENT worked on the PTs for an entire semester. The study investigated differences in students' engagement and performance based on treatment conditions. Student engagement was defined as motivation and self-regulation in this study. A

student engagement survey, adapted items from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), was used to collect data. The students' performance was assessed by two sets of pre-tests and post-tests for their literacy skills including the comprehension of written Japanese grammar and vocabulary. The study also examined differences in students' engagement and performance in a high achieving (HA) group and a low achieving (LA) group determined by their Grade Point Average (GPA). Though more than 60% of participants expressed that they enjoyed working on podcasts and would not mind using them as a learning tool, working on PTs did not make a statistically significant difference on students' engagement or performance. LS had the highest mean motivation and self-regulation score, but that score was probably due to the effect of outliers in this small group. ENT scored the lowest on both the motivation and the self-regulation scales. The result of the Japanese language tests indicated that all groups made statistically significant gains on both post-tests, but the gains on the first test were statistically significantly higher than the gains on the second test. There was no statistical difference among the three groups in their gains. Among HA and LA, the sample cell size was too small to determine if there was any statistically significant difference although HA outperformed LA. Recommendations for future research include replication of the study with a much larger sample size, use of video podcast (vodcast) as a task instead of enhanced podcast and multiple administrations of a students' engagement survey instead of one time at the end. Recommendations for future practice include application of learner digital media production into students' learning process and environment.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

Foreign language education in the United States (U.S.) has changed over time in choice of languages, learning theories and teaching approaches. Sterniak (2008) stated that the choice of languages in U.S. foreign language education reflects immigration trends in this country. For instance, German and French were taught prominently because the immigrants were primarily from European nations during the 1700s and 1800s. In the 1900s, as the U.S. accepted more immigrants from different parts of the world, the choice of foreign language programs expanded (Sterniak, 2008).

Simultaneously, the field of language acquisition attracted many educators and theorists in the 1900s. Many researchers from different fields have attempted to explain how one acquires a language (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010). Skinner (1957), from a Behaviorist approach, believed that one would acquire a language through a stimulus-response formula. He claimed that learning a language would be much like behavioral changes based on a series of stimulus-responses. However, Chomsky (1959) did not agree with the behavioral explanation of language acquisition and proposed a theory of Universal Grammar (UG). He argued that people already had prior knowledge as to how languages functioned, and all they had to do was to set the parameters of a target language. Though UG theory has been influential in the field of linguistics study, some argue that UG theory did not quite explain how one would process language learning (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Cognitive theorists, such as McLaughlin (1987, 1990), viewed language acquisition as one of many cognitive learning skills. McLaughlin (1987, 1990) claimed that when processing information

became automatic, long-term memory would store old information, hence short-term memory would be able to process new information. Thus suggesting long-term memory is difficult to erase and this is how one acquires a language (McLaughlin 1987, 1990; Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

As much as the impact that Behaviorism and Cognitive theory have had, these theories were not primarily for the explanation of second language acquisition. Krashen (1981, 1982) applied the concept of UG theory and Cognitive theory into the development of five hypotheses. They are: (1) Acquisition-learning hypothesis, (2) Monitor hypothesis, (3) $i + 1$ hypothesis, (4) Natural order hypothesis, and (5) Affective filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1981, 1982). Though his hypotheses have come under attack by many linguists, his hypotheses have been influential in the field of second language acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

Along with the flourishing of second language acquisition research, a number of teaching methods have been developed, applied, and subsequently replaced by newer approaches (Coleman & Klapper, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Titone, 1968; Toussaint, 2005). The Grammar-Translation method was developed as one of the first forms of teaching a second language, and it is still practiced in some places today. This method focuses only on syntax and disregards speaking and listening skills of language learning (Coleman & Klapper, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Titone, 1968; Toussaint, 2005). Following the Grammar-Translation method, the Direct method was developed to address audible aspects of language learning (Coleman & Klapper, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Toussaint, 2005), but this method was criticized for overlooking grammatical explanation and focusing too much on

replicating a natural environment (Powell, 1937). While the Direct method was popular in Europe, the Reading approach attracted some attention in the U.S. This method was developed to address the lack of focus on literacy skills in the Direct method (Mora, 2008; Richards & Rogers, 2001). The Audiolingual method, as the first scientific language teaching methodology, is very similar to the Direct method. However, these two methods differ in focus. The Direct method emphasizes vocabulary use within particular contexts whereas the Audiolingual method focuses on the sentence patterns in given situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Prior to the Communicative approach, many language teaching methods focused on accuracy in language use (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). However, some educators began to notice that students knew the rules, but could not communicate in real life situations (Widdowson, 1978). To address this issue, the Communicative approach emphasized communicative competence along with linguistic competence (Hymes, 1971; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Schulz, 2006; Wilkins, 1976).

One of the most recent developments in Communicative language teaching is Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL). The central idea of the TBLL approach is to communicate with others in the target language to complete a meaningful task. The approach provides a meaningful task, and learners are interested and engaged in completing the task. The learners use a target language to complete a meaningful task along the way (Bowen, 2010; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001). Larsen-Freeman (2000) noted that approaches that encourage learners' interaction in the target language have been prominent since the 1990s. She also pointed out that, in the new millennium, it

would be particularly important that language teachers invest in learning the latest language pedagogy, and in implementing innovative technology (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

In the 1940s, computers were used in math and science classes, but those computers were not necessarily for personal use. However, personal computers became available in the 1970s, and the era of digital technology began (Molnar, 1997). Since the 1960s, numerous technological advances have been enriching the field of language teaching and learning. For instance, various computer programs running CD-ROMS were dominant technology during 1980s. The vast improvement of technology allowed more capable and user-friendly software to create video and audio files that would enrich teaching and learning materials (Davies, 2002). Podcasting is one of the technological advances that have been widely accepted in educational setting. A podcast is a digital media file that can contain audio files, video files, or synchronized audio and image files. A podcast can be disseminated easily from a dedicated server or a webpage to devices such as a desktop computer, a laptop or handheld devices. For example, a recording of a radio show and a lecture or a slideshow with a narrative can be uploaded by producers and downloaded by consumers very easily. Many universities have been using video clips, sound files, and other digital media files to provide materials to students (Dale & McCarthy, 2006; Evans, 2008; Lee & Chan, 2007).

As more educational podcasts become available, a number of studies have been conducted to examine the educational value of podcast use in the classroom (Abt & Barry, 2007; Armstrong, Tucker, & Massad, 2009; Carle, Jaffee, & Miller, 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Dupagne, Millette, & Grinfeder, 2009; Lord, 2008; Nicholson, Irvine, & Tooley, 2010). The profile of podcast use in various studies was mainly either to

distribute materials such as recorded lectures or to provide supplemental materials. Kay (2012) stated that there were only a few studies focused on student-created podcasts. In addition, Hew (2009) pointed out that the majority of studies reviewed focused on “the features of tools and procedures” (p. 343), and suggested that future research should include theory-based studies on the use of podcasts.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of assignments, called podcast tasks (PTs), on students’ engagement and performance in a beginning level Japanese language course at a regional comprehensive university. In this study, the participants completed a certain number of the PTs for the course based on three different treatment conditions. Participants were measured for their level of engagement and their Japanese language competency gains. The quantitative data were collected on both the Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) and the Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT) among students who were in the Beginning Japanese I (JPN101) at Western Carolina University (WCU) in Cullowhee, North Carolina.

Significance of the Topic

Foreign Language Education in the United States

In 1979, the presidential commission reported that Americans were seriously incompetent in both their foreign language skills and their understanding of other cultures outside of the United States. Simon (1980) stated that “Americanization” (p. 12) could explain how Americans remained unaware of others. Many immigrants tried to become Americans as they went through cultural assimilation in the U.S. where heavily accented English and different types of clothing became embarrassing deficiencies rather than marks of unique cultural representation. He also pointed out that the lack of a universal

foreign language curriculum and qualified teachers did little to help the situation.

Following the 1979 report, the presidential commission suggested that federal funding be used to establish multiple language centers across the nation, a national curriculum for foreign languages, and a teacher-training program to address these issues.

Levine (2011) reports that in 1965 the ratio of student enrollment in foreign language programs to the overall student enrollment in colleges and universities was 16.5 to 100, which is the highest number since the Modern Language Association (MLA) started the survey back in 1965. In 1980, however, the ratio was as low as 7.2 per 100, and there has been only a slight increase in the number between 2006 through 2009. For this time period, 8.6 per 100 students enrolled in language programs. Though the number of students studying a foreign language has increased, it is still relatively small in comparison to total enrollment in colleges and universities (Levine, 2011).

While the MLA survey indicated that more American college students have been studying foreign languages (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2010), Pufahl and Rhodes (2011) pointed out that there has been a decrease in the number of foreign language programs among elementary and middle schools between 1998-2008. They surveyed over 5,000 public and private K-12 schools in the U.S. to study the trends in foreign language instruction (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011). However, the survey also reported some positive aspects of foreign language instruction, such as the high school level not experiencing any decrease in foreign language programs, the wider variety of foreign languages offered and more authentic or technology-enhanced materials integrated in foreign language programs (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2011).

Despite the fact that many advocates have been arguing the necessity of foreign language education for American youths (Duncan, 2010; Hamayan, 1986; Panetta, 1999; Yankelovich, 2005), the United States still remains the “land of monolingual” (Simon, 1980, p. 1). Shin and Kominski (2010) reported that about 20% of Americans aged five or older speak another language at home. Of those, 23.6 million (43%) were native-born U.S. citizen. It appears that eight percent of native-born Americans aged five or older reported that they spoke another language.

While some argue that Americans should remain monolingual and the U.S. should not promote multilingualism (Nordlinger, 2008; Raff, 2006; Summers, 2012; Stephens, 2007), others strongly urge Americans to consider investing in international education and foreign language education (Hamayan, 1986; Panetta, 1999; Van Roekel, 2010; Yankelovich, 2005). Van Roekel (2010) addressed the significance of preparing American youths for the 21st century, and Friedman (2007) points out that the world is shrinking in terms of the global economy and that it is crucial for Americans to develop skills to thrive in the global market. Being multilingual definitely is an advantage for employability in the global market, but that is not the only benefit of being multilingual. Some researchers point out that students who have had exposure to some foreign language instruction perform better on verbal tests than those who do not study another language (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Cade, 1997; Carr, 1994). Exposure to a foreign language will also help cultivate one’s cultural awareness in addition to academic benefits. Some studies show that students who learn a foreign language are more open to other cultures than those who do not study another language (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Riestra & Johnson, 1964).

Along with personal benefits, multilingualism can contribute to national security. Panetta (1999) alerted Americans to how little they knew about the rest of the world, and he encouraged American youths to realize the significance of knowing another language. He argued that foreign language instruction should be more encouraged so that Americans could understand how to communicate with people from other cultures. Understanding of other cultures and interaction with people from other cultures would help America build relationships with other nations to work together (U.S. Department of State, 2011).

As important as it is to recognize the need and the benefits of foreign language education (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Cade, 1997; Carr, 1994; Duncan, 2010; Hamayan, 1986; Panetta, 1999; Riestra & Johnson, 1964; Van Roekel, 2010; Yankelovich, 2005), it is necessary to strategize how to promote foreign language education. Pufahl, Rhodes, and Christian (2001) identified some important characteristics that successful foreign language education should have: start language program early; improve teacher preparation programs; conduct longitudinal studies; and identify how technology can improve foreign language education. Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that technology brought a new innovation to language teaching method. According to Prensky (2001), average college graduates spend more time playing video games or watching TVs than reading books, which suggests that it might be beneficial to utilize technological devices to attract today's students.

Podcasting in Education

A podcast is a digital file that can be delivered automatically to a device such as a portable media player or a computer via the Internet. According to Cheng (2009), Adam

Curry and Dave Weiner developed a system to deliver a series of audio files from their web page in 2004. With the ease of disseminating digital files through the Really Simple Syndication (RSS), podcasts have attracted a sizeable American audience. In 2010, 23% of Americans claimed that they had listened to podcasts (Olmstead, Mitchell, & Rosenstiel, 2011). The contents of podcasts include, but are not limited to music, radio shows, technology, and many more. By 2010, there were about 90,000 podcasts released (Olmstead et al., 2011). The number of available podcasts is exponentially higher today.

The growing popularity of podcasting has attracted the attention of higher educational institutions, some of which have started delivering recorded lectures to students on campus. Duke University implemented an initiative to study academic use of handheld multimedia players among first-year college students in 2004 (Belanger, 2005). During the initiative, students had access to various podcasts to download and use for their classes. Overall, the response from both faculty members and students was positive. In 2007, Apple announced the launching of iTunes U, which is a repository of podcasts uploaded by producers at many universities. As of November 2012, 369 American colleges and universities are using iTunes U to deliver various kinds of podcasts and videocasts to their students (Apple Inc., 2012).

Podcasting in education became more prominent when iTunes U was implemented in 2007. Wolfson and Neumayr (2010) stated that 350,000 podcasts were available from these iTunes U sites to more than 300 million iTunes U users. According to Dalrymple (2011), iTunes U downloads topped 600 million and more than 1000 universities and colleges had active sites worldwide. In 2012, educators can create their own course through the iTunes U course manager site for free (Heim, 2012).

One of the advantages of podcasting is the ease of accessibility to digital media files. The RSS not only allows listeners or viewers to listen, watch, or store podcasts, but also subscribe to channels of their choice so that when a new episode becomes available, it will be automatically downloaded to any registered devices. Another advantage of podcasts is that audio files and visual files can be synchronized easily to provide two types of information simultaneously and effectively. Originally, podcasting was only able to deliver audio files or visual files separately. Now, software can combine both visual and audio files into an enhanced, synchronized podcast that is more appealing to the content providers and to the consumers. While many audio podcasts, such as radio shows, are still available, the enhanced podcasts have become more popular and available (Dale & McCarthy, 2006; Evans, 2008; Lee & Chan, 2007).

As a wider variety of podcasts became available, researchers saw an opportunity to examine their educational value. Hew (2009) reviewed 30 peer-reviewed articles focused on audio podcasts in academic use. Though he initially found 153 articles about podcasts, he chose 30 articles because the rest of the articles were not empirical studies on podcasts use in education. The findings revealed that there were two types of podcasts used in all of the studies: those produced by teachers or students in a classroom context and those produced independent of a classroom context and made available to the public. He pointed out that the majority of studies focused on the use of podcasts for reviewing materials and preparation for exams (Hew, 2009).

Following Hew's study, Kay (2012) conducted a review of the research on video podcasts. His review was exclusively peer-reviewed journal articles on video podcasts. He stated that there were only a few studies about the video podcast prior to 2006, but

more than 50 articles have been published between 2006 and 2011. Among these studies, the most common focus is to investigate how students use podcasts. There were only a few studies that dealt with student-generated podcasts. Kay (2012) also pointed out that the majority of studies were not theory-based but rather focused on students' use of, and attitudes towards, podcasts.

Prior studies on academic use of podcasts mainly focused on how podcasts might contribute to student learning for reviewing materials or as supplemental materials. Studies have not necessarily focused on how producing podcasts might contribute to student learning (Abt & Barry, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2009; Carle et al, 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Dupagne et al., 2009; Lord, 2008; Nicholson et al., 2010).

Some studies investigated how making podcasts could contribute to student comprehension of materials and subjects, but there are only a few studies that have investigated the educational value of making podcasts based on any learning theory. As more podcasts become available and more educational institutions seem to join iTunes U (Dalrymple, 2011; Wolfson & Neumayr, 2010), it is imperative that the pedagogical value of podcasts be examined in conjunction with educational learning theories.

Conceptual Framework

There are multiple theories, hypotheses, and approaches that provide the framework for this study. The main focus of this study is to investigate the effect of podcast production on students' learning. The Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) approach shaped the form of the treatment used in this study. The Generative Learning (GL) theory was used to determine the type of tasks. According to GL theory, students should make something instead of accepting and memorizing given information to

connect the old and new information to construct new knowledge. Mayer's (2001) Multimedia Learning (ML) theory led to enhanced podcasts, which allow still images and audio files combined synchronously, because using visual and audio stimuli could be more effective than either using a single stimuli or interfering with one's capacity of processing information. Cognitive overload occurs when the amount, the type or the presentation of information interferes with one's capacity to process the information. For instance, a series of images with texts and audio might provide too much work for one's mind to process because one's mind would have to decide whether to connect audio with images or texts. Paivio (1986) stated that visual stimuli would activate a different part of the brain from the area that the audible stimuli would activate. This process would allow the brain to encode a piece of information visually and audibly, which would help one recall the same information in two ways. The Mayer model would allow for enhanced podcast production because the participants would create audio and pair it with images. Krashen's (1981, 1982) *i+1* hypothesis was used to determine the timeline of tasks so that students would have known information as well as new information, which could be challenging, yet comprehensible.

Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) Approach

Larsen-Freeman (2000) presented the TBLL theory as one of the leading contemporary communicative approaches to language learning. The TBLL essentially allows learners to use the targeted language to complete tasks collaboratively. It takes learners away from focusing on learning about the targeted language itself, but rather encourages learners to use the targeted language to communicate with each other to work on the tasks (Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001). Seemingly, the TBLL approach may

not be suitable for beginning level language learners, but the TBLL approach can be successful with beginning level language learners (Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001). The current study was done in a beginning level Japanese language course. The TBLL approach was used to focus on the interaction between the products (podcasts) and the participants instead of interaction among the participants, which ideally would make the PTs inherently motivating. Typically the tasks in the TBLL approach are completed by a group of students, but the tasks in this study were done individually.

Multimedia Learning (ML) Theory

According to Mayer (2001), when one receives information using verbal and nonverbal stimuli can enhance one's cognition simultaneously rather than by itself. The ML theory stems from Paivio's Dual-Coding theory. The Dual-Coding theory basically suggests that visual and auditory stimuli can help one's cognition because it is coding a piece of information using two different stimuli, visual and audible, rather than one stimulus. However, Paivio (1986) also suggested that cognitive overload can occur when two different images are accompanied by a narration, simultaneously. For instance, having images of an object and the speaker with the voice of the speaker could potentially cause more confusion because of the diversion of attention. Hence, as long as the PTs were structured so that the podcast image and audio mutually reinforced one another, then it might help students learn effectively without causing cognitive overload. Though the ML theory was primarily focused on consumer perspective, the theory was applied to the PTs because the participants recorded their own voice and synchronized with slides with Japanese characters.

Generative Learning (GL) Theory

Wittrock (1974) suggested that when students were able to connect prior knowledge with new information, their comprehension of new information would become concrete. According to this theory, a learner must be an active participant in generating new knowledge instead of merely accepting new information. The PTs were structured so that the students would be able to integrate a small piece of new information with previously learned information. There were two types of PTs in this study. One was a vocabulary task and the other one was a grammar point task. The GL theory could work in both tasks because a list of vocabulary from each lesson was categorized by parts of speech and the learners could use newly introduced vocabulary with already studied sentence structures. A grammar podcast would also work because the task was based on class work and included related, but new grammar.

***i*+1 Hypothesis**

Krashen (1981, 1982) argued that when learners were given meaningful input that was slightly more advanced than what they already knew, learners could benefit more from the input than repeating what they already knew. He defined this type of input as *i*+1, in which *i* would be an input and 1 would signify the level of difficulty that was added to the input. This hypothesis echoes the GL theory, and it helped shape the contexts of the PTs in the current study. In addition, the hypothesis provided the motivational framework of the PTs as to the timing of the PTs assigned so that the contents of the PT would be comprehensible, yet challenging.

Discussion of Conceptual Framework

The Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) approach determined the role that the Podcast Tasks (PTs) played in student learning. The TBLL approach provided students an opportunity to interact with the materials by using them to complete tasks. The objective of the PTs was to complete a series of podcasts using the given materials. The Multimedia Learning (ML) theory was applied to determine whether the tasks should be an audio file, a visual file, a synchronized audio-visual file, or a video file. The ML theory suggests that using visual and audible stimuli would be more effective than using one stimuli to code a piece of information so that the piece of information could be accessed in two ways. In the current study, a synchronized audio-visual file, enhanced podcast is the best fit over other forms of podcasts. The video file could be used, but simultaneous feed of an image, sound, and text (subtitles) file might cause diversion of attention. Hence the ML theory helped eliminate other possible forms of podcasts such as an audio podcast or video podcast (vodcasts). The vodcast is defined as a video recording in this study. It is different from an enhanced podcast because enhanced podcasts use still images or slides with voice over while a vodcast does not use still images. The Generative Learning (GL) theory advocates the idea of creating podcasts to generate new knowledge based on the connection of old and new information. The PTs are designed to encourage students to engage in making their own teaching materials with both old and new information to build new knowledge.

According to Newmann (1992), student engagement is the key to their success in their academic work. Newmann (1992) defined student engagement as “students’ psychological investment in and effort directed toward learning, understanding, or

mastering the knowledge, skills, or crafts that academic work is intended to promote” (p. 12). From this perspective, the PTs would encourage students to invest in understanding the course materials. Podcasting was originally developed to disseminate information via the Internet. Therefore, the nature of podcasting was to produce podcasts for a certain target audience, but not necessarily for producers themselves in terms of understanding or mastering the information. By assigning students the PTs, it was intended that students would take interest in actively articulating old and new information to acquire the Japanese language skills. Hence, the GL theory played a significant role in conceptualizing this study.

Krashen’s $i+1$ hypothesis was used to determine not only the contents of the PTs, but also how the PTs could best be assigned in a timely manner so that the contents of the PTs would be comprehensible, yet challenging. Krashen (1981, 1982) argued that meaningful input when acquiring a language was very important because it would stimulate learners’ motivation. The meaningful input had to be challenging, but could not be too hard or too easy, because it would be counterproductive when the input was too easy or too difficult to comprehend. Hence the $i+1$ hypothesis was used to determine the degree of difficulty regarding the input given as well as the timing to maintain a balance of easiness and difficulty.

Statement of the Problem

Podcasting seems to be gaining popularity not only for entertainment purposes, but also for educational ones. Since 2007, many universities have been implementing iTunes U as a portal to disseminate educational contents to learners. Whether they are

simple recorded lectures or advanced edited video, podcasts are widely available and students have access to the contents as long as they are connected electronically.

The current literature suggests that students, who have used podcasts, have positive attitudes toward podcasting, probably because this medium allows the students to catch up with missed lectures, review materials from the lectures, or prepare for exams. However, podcasts are not only for the listeners or viewers, but also producers. The majority of studies conducted to examine the educational value of podcasting have focused mainly on the perspective from listeners and viewers of podcasts. Only a few studies have investigated how production of podcasts might affect learners.

If podcasting continues to be a form of digital files delivery system, its mobility and accessibility will not be the only benefit to users. While it is true that the mobility and accessibility of digital contents made podcasts attractive, a few studies suggested that podcast production could potentially be a learning tool to provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences. However, the previous literature on podcasting has not explored this aspect of podcasting and the theory-based research is almost non-existent. The theory-based research on the educational value of podcast production should be examined.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of the Podcast Tasks (PTs) on students' engagement and performance in an introductory Japanese language course. The guiding questions of this study were:

1. How did students respond to PTs in a beginning level Japanese language class?

2. What was the effect of PT on students' engagement in a beginning Japanese language course?
 - a. Was the effect of PT treatment on students' engagement different among three different groups?
 - b. Was the effect of PT treatment on students' engagement different on high and low achieving students?
3. What was the effect of PT on students' performance on the Japanese proficiency tests in a beginning level Japanese language course?
 - a. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the early semester treatment group?
 - b. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the late semester treatment group?
 - c. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the entire semester treatment group?
 - d. Was the effect of PT treatment different among three different groups?
 - e. Was the effect of PTs on students' performance on Japanese proficiency tests different for high and low achieving students?

Research Methodology

The current study used a quasi-experimental design with alternating treatment. A quasi-experimental design was chosen because it was not ideal to randomly assign the participants with or without treatment individually in the same section. Randomization of sample would be desirable for an experimental study (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002), but it was not possible to control interaction among the participants in the same

section. Therefore I decided to assign with or without treatment by section instead of by individual.

The current study used two instruments to assess the effect of the students' engagement and performance. I developed a survey, Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS), adapting several items from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE; Kuh, et al., 2012), and Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Pintrich, Smith, Garcia & McKeachie, 1991). The students' engagement was defined as motivation and self-regulation in this study. The survey included 26 items, in which both motivation and self-regulation scales had eight items. The SETUS also included a couple of Likert-scale type items and an open-ended item to examine students' preferences on the PTs. The SETUS was administered online at the end last two weeks of the study.

The second instrument I developed was a Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT). There were two different JPTs developed for this study. The first JPT included listening comprehension, grammar and a vocabulary section using multiple choice, true and false, jumbled sentence, and matching formats. The maximum possible points were 51. The pre-test and the post-test were the same, but the pre-test was given on paper before a treatment started, and the post-test was given online after the first unit. Before the second unit began, the second JPT pre-test was administered. The maximum possible points of the second JPT pre-test were 41 points, and the test was administered on paper before the second unit started. The maximum possible points of the post-test were 57 points. Sixteen items from the JPT test were included in the second JPT post-test. The second JPT post-test was given online. The second JPTs included listening comprehension, grammar,

vocabulary, and reading sections using multiple choice, true and false, jumbled sentence, short answer and matching formats. The development of both instruments is explained in chapter three.

In addition to the two sets of data collected from the SETUS and the JPTs, the participants' Grade Point Average (GPA) were used to help determine the effect of the PTs in terms of a high achieving (HA) group and a low achieving (LA) group. Two groups were determined based on the descriptive statistics of their GPAs. The data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics, a Kruskal-Wallis H test and a Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test to determine the effect of the PTs in terms of the participants' performance.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was exclusively limited to a college-level beginning Japanese language course for undergraduate students with no prior Japanese language learning experience at the university level. The current study investigated the effect of the PTs on the students' engagement defined as motivation and self-regulation. The study compared the result of Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) by the treatment condition at the end of the study. Therefore, the study did not investigate the change of students' engagement during the course of this study. The study was also limited to investigate the effect of the PTs on students' performance based on the Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT). The study did not include the effect of PT on students' oral proficiency skills.

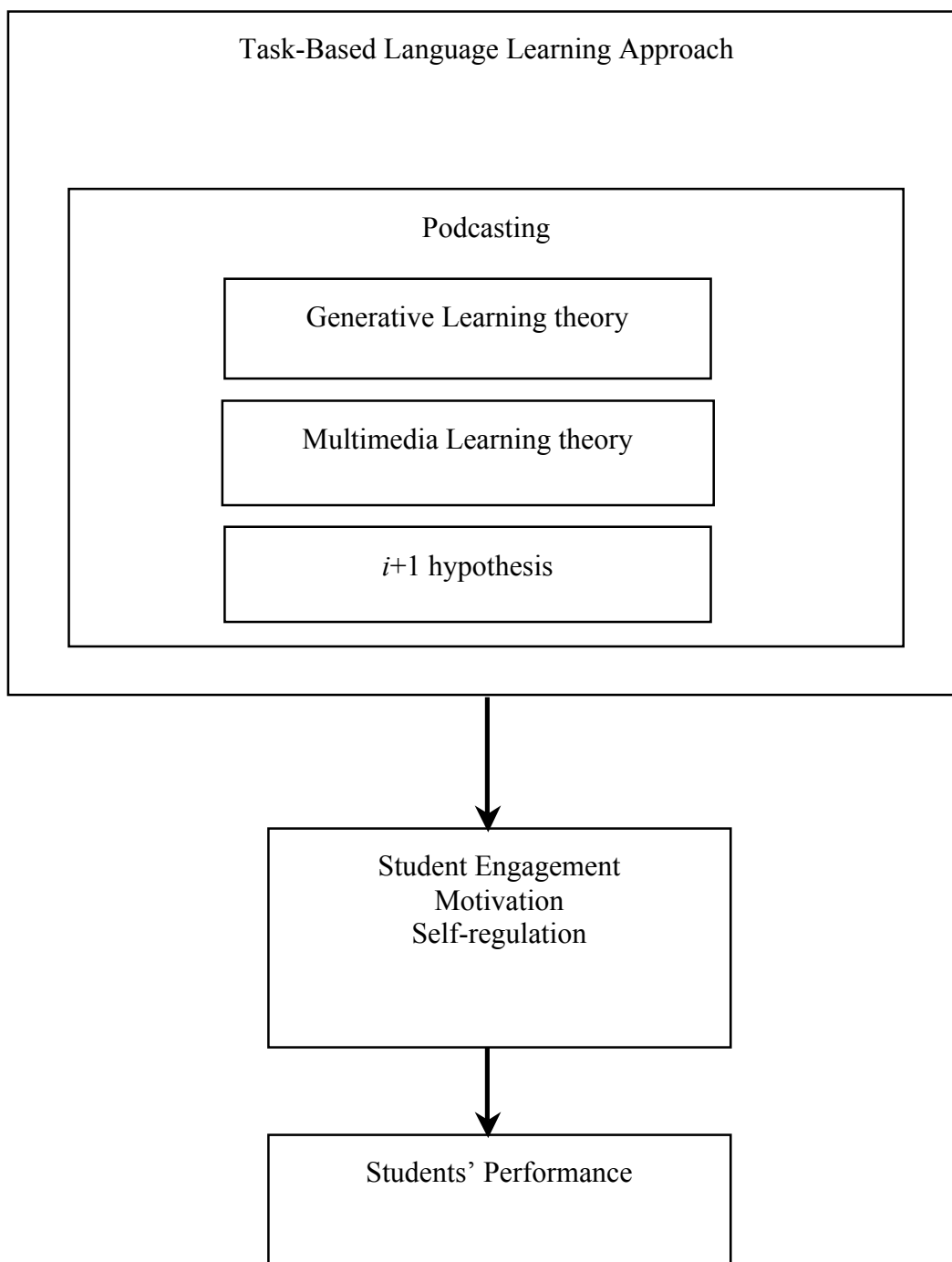


Figure 1. The conceptual framework for this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a general background of foreign language education in the U.S, second language learning theories, and teaching approaches. The first part discusses the history and the current state of foreign language education in the U.S. The second part discusses the development of second language learning theories deriving from how one acquires the first language. The third part discusses the development of language teaching methods. The fourth section discusses the role of technology in education and the use of podcasting as a pedagogical tool to engage students in learning.

Language Use in the U.S.

There is no language policy in the U.S. constitution. In fact, the English language is not an official language of the U.S. (Spolsky, 2011). Yet the 2010 U.S. Census indicates that more than 80% of Americans over the age five speak only English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Shin and Ortman (2011) predicted that the English language will remain the primary language used in the U.S. even though the number of multilingual speakers, mostly immigrants, in the U.S. will increase between 2010 and 2020 (Shin & Ortman, 2011).

Though the majority of Americans are monolingual, the number of American college students studying a foreign language has increased between 2006 and 2009 (Furman et al., 2010). The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has been actively promoting foreign language education in cooperation with many organizations and government agencies, such as the Center for Applied Linguistics

(CAL) and the federal and state-level Departments of Education (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Center for Applied Linguistics, 2012).

Despite efforts to promote foreign language education, only a small portion of Americans can speak a language other than English, and more than half of American multilingual speakers include immigrants, their descendants and naturalized citizens (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). It is no coincidence that many multilingual speakers are from outside of the U.S., as the first known group of foreign language speakers in the U.S. was immigrants from Europe (Sterniak, 2008).

History of Foreign Language Education in the U.S.

The history of foreign language learning in the U.S. started with a variety of groups of immigrants from Europe in the 1700s. Many private schools offered a variety of foreign languages. In the 1800s, French and German became the more prominent languages for Americans to learn (Sterniak, 2008, p. 75). Sterniak looked at the relationship between the number of immigrants and foreign language education during this time frame. In the 1800s, the U.S. had more French and German immigrants, especially Germans, and many German language programs were established during that time.

In the 1900s, the U.S. experienced a series of conflicts with non-English speaking nations such as Germany, Russia (former Soviet Union), Japan, Korea, and Cuba to name a few. Such conflicts impacted the demographics of immigrants to the U.S. as well as the variety of foreign language programs, and the increase in less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) or critical language programs, based on political and economic

reasons. These languages include Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, Japanese and Farsi (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2006; Sterniak, 2008).

Currently, there are more than 200 different languages taught in the U.S. (Furman et al., 2010). Yet the number of American multilingual speakers is still small. Some argue that English has become the common world language and that there is no need for Americans to learn a foreign language (Nordlinger, 2008; Summers, 2012) while others argue that the shortage of funding, qualified teachers, training, and the lack of K-12 language programs is contributing to the small number of multilingual Americans (Rhodes & Branaman, 1999; Sigsbee, 2002).

Simon (1980) shared his concern regarding Americans' interest in learning foreign languages. In the same essay, Simon claimed that that only about 18% of American high school students studied a foreign language in 1976. Of those, 4% studied a foreign language more than two years while school children in France were required to take at least four years of a foreign language education from sixth grade level. Though he called America "the land of the Monolingual" (Simon, 1980, p. 1), the book was originally published in 1980, so much of his data may not apply today. However, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, fewer than 10% of Americans can speak a language other than English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This figure suggests that America could still be considered "the land of the Monolinguals" (Simon, 1980, p. 1).

At the same time, English is considered to be the most widely spoken language in the world, that is, *lingua franca*. *Lingua franca* (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.). means a common language used to communicate among people with various mother tongues. There are approximately 335 million English speakers in the world. Of

those, 225 million are Americans. By sheer number of speakers, Mandarin Chinese has about one billion speakers, but English is spoken in 55 countries as an official language and all 335 million English speakers are spread out over 101 countries. Hence, although the English language ranks third as far as the number of speakers is concerned, its ubiquity makes it the most commonly spoken language in the world (Lewis, Simons & Fenning, 2013).

The fact that English is *lingua franca* might allow Americans to communicate with people from other countries in English, but there are many concerns about Americans being monolingual. In 1979, the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies urged Americans to seriously consider learning modern foreign languages and engaging in international studies to raise cultural awareness in the U.S. The President's Commission recommended that the federal government invest in foreign language and international education by producing more teachers and programs starting in primary and secondary schools as well as offering scholarships and grant programs. The Commission, formed in 1978, spent a year evaluating the foreign language and international education in the U.S. from primary education to post-secondary education. The Commission included the statement, "Americans' incompetence in foreign languages is nothing short of scandalous, and it is becoming worse" (President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, 1979, p. 10). Following the presidential commission report and recommendations to revitalize foreign language and international education some activities took place, such as the establishment of foreign language centers and the reorganization of foreign language programs in K-16 curriculum.

Unfortunately, those measures did not have a lasting effect on Americans' foreign language competency. Twenty years later, Leon Panetta, the Secretary of Defense, stated, "In reviewing the status of foreign language training in the key areas covered by the Commission, the results are disappointing. They have become yet another chapter in the sad history of foreign language training in the United States" (Panetta, 1999, p. 2).

A decade later, Duncan, the Secretary of Education, (2010) shared his concern that America had been expecting other countries to speak its language instead of learning other languages. He stated that the K-16 education should play an important role in filling the language gap between young Americans and their counterparts in the rest of the world. He pointed out that only 18% of Americans speak another language other than English while 53% of citizens in Europe speak more than one language. He also mentioned that in addition to traditional European languages such as German, French, and Spanish, less commonly taught languages such as Chinese, Arabic, or Farsi language should become more available in the U.S. Although the focus of his address seemed to be mainly based on the matter of national security as well as the competitiveness of Americans in the global economy, more consideration should be given to mastering another language besides English to better understand people from different cultures (Duncan, 2010; U.S. Department of State, 2011).

On the other hand, some argue that learning a foreign language may not be a good investment for Americans as English has become *lingua franca*. Summers (2012) has argued that foreign language education might not be worthwhile as English has become the world's common language. He also pointed out that the availability of translators has made foreign language learning pointless. Nordlinger (2008) stated that Americans

should not be ashamed of being monolingual. Many Europeans become multilingual out of necessity due to geographical reasons. Many Americans are bilingual near borders. English is the global language so Americans do not need to learn a foreign language (Nordlinger, 2008). Stephens (2007) suggested that libraries should not offer materials in multiple languages because availability of those materials could prevent non-native English speakers from learning English.

There is no denying that English is *lingua franca* (Grimes & Grimes, 2000), that English as the U.S. national language might bring unity among all American citizens (King, 2007); and that multilingualism in the U.S. might do more harm than good to immigrants (Nordlinger, 2008; Raff, 2006; Stephens, 2007). At the same time, being bilingual or multilingual might benefit American youths.

Rise of Foreign Language Education

Despite all of the efforts to encourage Americans to learn languages other than English, it is of a great concern that many Americans remain monolingual and seem to be uninterested in learning about other cultures. Simon (1980) mentioned that many two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities offer fewer opportunities to learn a foreign language or require students to learn a foreign language when most developed nations or developing nations offer a foreign language learning opportunity from the elementary school level.

There are a number of developments that suggest that Americans are taking more interest in learning other languages and cultures. U.S. foreign language education programs have traditionally been limited to Spanish, German and French. In fact, according to the MLA's survey results (Furman, et al., 2010), 51% of the 1,682,627

foreign language learners in the U.S. study Spanish, 13% of them study French and 6% of them study German. Though Chinese and Arabic had significant increases in enrollment between 2000 and 2006, the number of Arabic and Chinese learners are still relatively small compared to the learners of Spanish, German, and French. There are slightly more Japanese language learners than Chinese language learners, but the difference is less than one percentage point (Furman et al., 2010).

The MLA survey results delivered a hopeful perspective that more U.S. college students were enrolled in foreign language programs in comparison to the enrollment in 2002. In 2002, there were 1,397,253 foreign language learners, while in 2009 there were 1,682,627 foreign language learners, which is a 6.6% increase (Furman et al., 2010).

In addition to the steady rise of American college students studying foreign languages, the ACTFL launched the nationwide campaign called “Discover Languages: Discover the World” (2005). The campaign claims to alert all Americans about the importance of better understanding of the world through learning another language (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2005). Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addressed the launching of the “100,000 Strong” initiative in 2010 in Beijing. The initiative became official following President Obama’s comment in 2009 that he would like to see 100,000 Americans studying in China for the next four years (Babb, 2011). Moreover, there are a number of initiatives and organizations that promote the importance of learning other languages including the Department of Defense, the ACTFL, and Fulbright Scholarships. The ACTFL has been proactively encouraging American children to learn foreign languages and Fulbright scholarships have been providing opportunities for those who wish to study a foreign language or engage in

international studies/research to be a global citizen in the 21st century (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Panetta, 1999; Yankelovich, 2005)

Benefits of Foreign Language Proficiency

Even though the implementation of foreign language programs might not have garnered much attention from the American public, foreign language education for American youth is absolutely necessary (Hamayan, 1986; Panetta, 1999; Yankelovich, 2005). Foreign language proficiency is believed to have many positive influences not only on individual matters such as academics and cultural awareness, but also on collective matters, such as competitiveness in global economy and national security matters (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Center for Applied Linguistics, 2012; Panetta, 1999). As the world is getting smaller in its fluidity of information and human resources, it is absolutely crucial for individuals to become more sensitive toward cultural differences and be able to communicate more effectively to better understand each other (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Center for Applied Linguistics 2012; Friedman, 2007; Panetta, 1999; Yankelovich, 2005). Proficiency in multiple languages has a range of benefits including one's marketability in employment, higher performance in academics, better awareness of cultural sensitivity, and understanding of national security.

Global market and employability. During his presidential campaign in 2008, Senator Obama pointed out that it is very important for American youth to be able to speak more than one language, in part because they could be more marketable in the global economy if they could speak more than just English (Gavrilovic, 2008). Van Roekel (2010) addressed the importance of preparing all American students to develop

global competence through public education in a National Education Association (NEA) policy brief. He stated that global competence should include international awareness, appreciation of cultural diversity, proficiency in foreign languages, and competitive skills. Friedman (2007) pointed out that since the world is shrinking in terms of economy and information technology (IT), Americans should be aware of the significance of developing global competitiveness for the 21st century.

Knowing a foreign language also makes individuals more marketable in the domestic market. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2012), the job outlook for interpreters and translators is expected to increase by 42% in the period of 2010-2012, which is much faster than the average of all occupations. Those who can speak Spanish can expect a number of job opportunities in healthcare and law due to the projected increase of the Hispanic population.

Foreign language and academics. Children benefit in a number of ways from learning another language, including better academic achievement, enhancement of language skills in their first language, and cultivation of one's cultural awareness (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Marcos, 1997).

One of the most claimed academic benefits of learning a second language is better performance on standardized tests. A number of studies indicate that children who were bilingual or received second language instruction performed better in their verbal and math skills (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Cade, 1997; Carr, 1994) than children who were monolingual or received no second language instruction.

For instance, Cooper (1987) conducted a study to investigate how a foreign language experience might influence Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American

College Test (ACT) scores. He randomly sampled 1,778 high school students from a large metropolitan area. Of 1,778 students, 1,333 students took at least one year of a foreign language. The study compared the test scores on math and verbal skills from the SAT and the ACT to measure if there was any correlation between foreign language experience and scores on these standardized tests. The results indicated that the group with foreign language experience scored higher than the group that did not study a foreign language. The study also looked at whether the length of foreign language instruction might produce better scores on the SAT and ACT. The result showed that the longer students studied a foreign language, the higher their scores on those tests.

Rafferty (1986) examined the effect of foreign language education on the Louisiana Basic Skills Language Arts Test among third, fourth, and fifth graders. The students, total of 13,200, were divided into foreign language and non-foreign language groups in conjunction with ethnic background, gender and grade level. The results indicated that those who had school-based foreign language instruction outperformed the non-foreign language group.

Foreign language and cultural awareness. Not only does foreign language learning help enhance one's achievement in test scores, but it also helps learners develop more positive attitudes towards cultures other than their own. One study compared the attitude difference between two groups of second graders towards the target language and its culture. The group that received additive bilingual instruction showed a more positive attitude toward the target language and its culture compared to those who were in monolingual settings (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991).

Another study examined differences in attitudes toward other cultures among those who studied a foreign language and those who did not. The study revealed that the group with foreign language education showed significantly more positive attitudes toward other cultures compared to those who did not study a foreign language (Riestra & Johnson, 1964).

The ACTFL developed the national standard for foreign language education in 1996. The standard features the importance of cultures, connections, communication, comparisons and communities (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2006). For instance, students in the German program at Georgetown University incorporate newspaper articles, video clips and advertisements to develop their German language skills so that they can communicate with native speakers of German with more culturally enriched backgrounds (Bollag, 2008). Straight (2009) took the idea even further asserting that “Our national needs for more college-educated bilingual citizens demands a new range of activities by FL departments” (p. 625). He referred to “culture and language across the curriculum” (p. 625), which emphasizes the significant role of foreign language departments at any higher education institution. It is essential for foreign language departments to ensure that students will have opportunities not only to learn a target language and its culture, but also be able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired outside of classroom settings (Bollag, 2008; Ingram, 2007; Morgan, 1993; Straight 2009).

National security and foreign language. The benefits of learning a foreign language reach beyond the personal level. Many argue that understanding other cultures through learning another language can contribute to national security as well. Panetta

(1999) pointed out that national security will benefit from Americans' knowledge of foreign languages in addition to cultivation of one's awareness of other cultures. The 9/11 incident was a wakeup call for many Americans to realize how little they knew about the world outside of the U.S. The rise of student enrollment in Arabic programs after the incident was phenomenal. The most recent survey results showed that there was a 46.3% increase in Arabic courses in higher education and the enrollment grew by 126.5% in comparison to the previous survey conducted in 2009. Currently, Arabic ranks as the 8th most studied foreign language in the U.S. This is a prime example of how national security affects foreign language education in the U.S. It is interesting to note that the popularity of Chinese language programs has increased dramatically in the late 1990s and 2000s. This is due to not only China's impact on the global market, but also the rise of the Chinese military (Arnoldy, 2007; Furman et al., 2010; Stewart & Wang, 2008).

Second Language Learning Theories, Approaches, and Hypotheses

It is still a mystery as to how exactly humans acquire a second language. Some argue that we acquire a second language (L2) in the same way as we acquire a first language (L1) while others claim that there are some commonalities, but also some important differences between how one acquires L1 and L2 (Chomsky, 1986; Ellis, 1997; Krashen, 1981, 1982; VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

Behaviorism in Language Learning

Behaviorists considered language learning to be much like other learning habits, and it occurred through the repetition of the stimulus-response pairing. Behaviorist theories inspired the Audiolingual method. The Audiolingual method, also known as the Army Method, uses drills to dictate the practice of language derived from the behaviorist

theory of language learning. When children learn a language, they receive inputs and replicate the inputs they receive. This idea was prominent between the 1940s and 1960s (Ellis, 1997; Mitchell & Myles, 2004, VanPatten & Williams, 2007).

Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG) Theory

Chomsky (1959), however, challenged the idea of behavioristic language learning by arguing that humans were born with the innate knowledge of language that could assess what was right or wrong even though one might have never heard of the input. His criticism of behaviorism was that when a child acquires a language, she/he would not only repeat the input, but also could construct much more complicated sentences than they had heard before. If behaviorism theory was correct, then a child could never compose a complicated sentence without receiving the exact input (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Chomsky's idea that innate knowledge plays a key role in one's language development became prominent in the 1970s as the behaviorist theories of language learning withered under Chomsky's critique (VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

According to Chomsky's idea of innate knowledge, which plays an extremely important role in his UG theory, one acquires a language because knowledge of how language works is embedded in the brain. Chomsky's UG theory claimed that humans are born with the knowledge of human language in the abstract. He argued that human beings already know how language works. Children can detect inaccuracy in the input they receive because of the inborn knowledge of language. Based on this hypothesis, Chomsky argued that language acquisition is parameter setting. The differences between languages are differences in parameter settings. All languages have directional markers. For instance, English parameter sets the preposition as, "from Cullowhee", while

Japanese parameter sets the postposition as, “Culowhee kara” (Chomsky, 1959; Ellis, 1997; VanPatten & Benati, 2010; VanPatten & Williams, 2007).

Though Chomsky’s UG theory is not necessarily geared toward second language acquisition, many theorists have incorporated UG theory into second language acquisition theory. One study investigated the presence of UG among Korean native speakers studying English and native English speakers. Thirty-nine native English speakers and 104 Korean native speakers with advanced English language skill were tested about their knowledge regarding the “*wanna* contraction” (Kweon & Bley-Vroman, 2011, p. 208).

A sequence of *want to* can be contracted to *wanna* in informal spoken English. But, the *wanna* contraction cannot occur when a wh-word inserts a subject between *want* and *to*. When forming wh-questions, wh-words are placed at the beginning of the sentence. If a wh-word traces an object, the *wanna* contraction is possible. However, it is impossible to use the *wanna* contraction when a wh-word traces a subject placed between *want* and *to*. Native speakers of English know this abstract rule from the operation of UG, but non-native speakers would not know this abstract rule (Kweon & Bley-Vroman, 2011).

In this study, the participants were separated into four categories—conservative, correctly differential, backward, and overgeneral—based on their responses to three experiments. The conservative category had those who did not use the *wanna* contraction. The correctly differential category had those who used the *wanna* contraction correctly, and the backward category reversed their answer. The overgeneral category had those who used the *wanna* contraction for everything.

The study revealed that there was definitely the presence of UG among native English speakers, but not necessarily among non-native English speakers. Non-native English speakers were categorized in all four of groups while native English speakers were only in conservative, correctly different, and overgeneral (Kweon & Bley-Vroman, 2011).

Another study examined the presence of UG among the adult Japanese language learners. Kanno (1996) focused on a certain grammatical phenomenon observed in the Japanese syntax, but not in English syntax. In this study Kanno focused on the null argument rule: which he defined as “A null subject in an embedded clause can refer freely to the matrix subject; a null object cannot” (p. 399). In English, the sentence “Tanaka said Deborah saw him” is ambiguous as far as “him” not specifically indicating whether “him” is “Tanaka” or the third person not mentioned in the sentence. However, the same sentence in Japanese would not allow “Tanaka” to be “him”, but “the third person”. Kanno (1996) suggested that the only explanation of the subjects’ understanding this syntactical concept is either through an instruction or access to the UG.

The subjects were 31 students who were in their fourth semester of Japanese class. The subjects were native English speakers and none of them had lived in Japan prior to this experiment. The control group of 24 Japanese native speakers took the same assessment as the subjects did for comparison. The test consisted of ten questions, in which the participants identified to whom an omitted subject or object referred in a simple question and answer setting.

The test results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in terms of understanding the null

argument in Japanese syntax. The experimental group also displayed that they were able to differentiate the null subject and the null object. Hence the researcher concluded that the UG was accessible in second language acquisition in this study.

Cognitive Theory

While Chomsky's UG theory is undeniably influential to second language acquisition research, some researchers argued that the UG theory focused heavily on syntax, but not as much in how learners processed language learning. Unlike the UG theory based researchers, Cognitive theorists viewed second language learning as equal to other kinds of learning and acknowledged that there are individual differences in how learners approach second language acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). This is called Cognitive theory, and it has become prominent in second language acquisition research since the 1980s (Ellis, 1997; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010; VanPatten & Williams, 2007).

In Cognitive theory, the central interest is to understand how humans process a set of new information, apply it to pre-existing knowledge and acquire new skills. Hence, the Theorists attempt to prove that language learning occurs in the same way as learning social studies or strategy games (VanPatten & Benati, 2010). There are two groups of Cognitive theorists. The first group is interested in how one processes second language skills and develops skills while the second group is focused on how one acquires a second language by communication and polishes language skills (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

The first school of thought, processing theory, claims that one learns a second language through processing and analyzing input to restructure new knowledge and store

it as a long-term memory. When the restructured information becomes a long-term memory, the knowledge will be withdrawn automatically according to inputs. The repeated process of using the new information will be a base for rebuilding more complicated knowledge (Mitchell and Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

The second school of thought is called connectionist, emergentist, or associative theory. In this theory, the number of exposures to a second language lets learners find associations between new information and link them together so that the information becomes rule-like. However, the essence of connectionism is not necessarily about linking new pieces of information, but rather the connection between the input and appropriate output within a context. In other words, when the linkage of two pieces of information recurs, the degree of association between them becomes stronger, hence one's mind chooses an appropriate output based on rules or regulations learned from exposure to the new information (McLaughlin, 1987, 1990; VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory

While Skinner's Behaviorism theory, Chomsky's UG theory and the Cognitive theories helped explain impacts on language acquisition, these theories were not specifically geared toward second language acquisition. However, Stephen Krashen applied Chomsky's UG theory into his second language acquisition theory, and developed five hypotheses on second language acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Krashen's second language acquisition theory had the following five hypotheses: (1) Acquisition-learning hypothesis; (2) Monitor hypothesis; (3) $i + 1$ hypothesis; (4) Natural order hypothesis; and (5) Affective filter hypothesis (Krashen, 1981, 1982; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010).

Krashen (1981, 1982) strongly emphasized that acquiring a second language is different from learning a second language. Krashen pointed out that acquisition of a second language occurs subconsciously and only acquisition can lead one to reach fluency in a foreign or second language. According to Krashen, learning a second language is intentional and intentional learning focuses on accuracy of how language works, but will not lead one to reach fluency as long as it is intentional. When learning a second language, we try to learn the system of the second language and vocabulary intentionally. Learning a second language is to know about the language. However, acquiring a second language will occur subconsciously, much like how a child learns a first language. Acquisition will lead one to reach fluency (Krahsen, 1981, 1982).

As Krashen separates acquisition and learning, the monitor hypothesis falls in the learning category rather than the acquisition category. Krashen stated that the monitor occurs when one produces outputs and tries to make corrections utilizing known or learned rules of grammar. When monitoring occurs, there has to be enough time to make correction before outputs occur. Hence, monitoring rarely has a role to play in daily conversation because there will not be enough time to make correction when conversations happens spontaneously. Monitoring occurs when one has more time to evaluate his or her outputs such as in writing (Krahsen, 1981, 1982).

Krashen also pointed out the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition. The language framework is acquired piece by piece. The integration of old and new information would be beneficial only when learners could make sense of those two pieces of information put together (Wittrock, 1974). If the input is too easy or too hard, then the input will not help learners acquire the target language. He suggested that

the input must be a little hard to understand, but not too hard to understand. If the content of the input is extremely hard to understand, the learners will never be able to use the input effectively. For instance, a complete language immersion environment for those who have no knowledge of the language will gain nothing from the experience. However, if learners had a little bit of prior experience in learning the target language, the immersion experience would give the learners a much richer experience. On the other hand, if the content of the input is very easy to understand, the learner will gain nothing because the input will not give anything new to the learner (Krahsen, 1981, 1982).

According to Krashen, the acquisition of grammar tends to follow a natural flow of the grammar when acquiring a language. Krashen called this Natural Order Hypothesis. He claimed that there seem to be some grammatical structures learned before other grammatical structures would be learned, and these structures are learned in different order depending on whether one is learning a first or second language. The natural order is not dependent on a learners' first language, age, or the amount of exposure to the second language (Krahsen, 1981, 1982).

Later in his career, Krashen acknowledged that one's motivation, environment, or even anxiety might play a role in language acquisition. This is called the Affective Filter hypothesis. However, Krashen pointed out that these variables are of concern only when interfering with language acquisition. He did not believe that these variables will influence language acquisition positively in terms of the speed or the efficacy of one's language acquisition process (Krahsen, 1981, 1982). Though Krashen's hypotheses were developed primarily for second language acquisition, practical applications of his

hypotheses have mixed results (Neuman & Koskinen, 1993; Payne, 2011; Rodrigo, Krashen, & Gibbons 2004).

Payne (2011) studied the effect of the input hypothesis on French language acquisition among 11-12 years old students at a school in South Yorkshire, England. In this study, the participants received an oral intervention and a written intervention. At the beginning of each lesson, students listened to the teacher repeating a new phrase, which was a class command, with quiet gestures during the oral intervention. The written intervention had a different new phrase from the oral intervention and students copied down a sentence in each lesson. The teacher did not use any English during the interventions. After each intervention, the teacher tested students to see if they understood each phrase.

The test results indicated that 88% of the participants comprehended oral instruction and at the end of the study, 64% of students acquired the 10 phrases. In other words, those students fully understood the phrases and were able to reproduce them orally. On the other hand, most of the students did very poorly on the written portion of the tests. At the end of the study only 36% of students acquired the 10 phrases introduced in writing. It took more than five lessons for most of the students to fully understand the new phrases.

Though the oral portion of this investigation seemingly supported the input theory, the test result might have allowed extraneous variables to contribute to the students' performance such as body language, or observing their classmates. Payne (2011) also pointed out that the definition of comprehensible input was vague and became disjointed when applied to the actual classroom setting because the input

hypothesis does not specify whether it is for an individual or for a group. He concluded that while the input theory seemed to work, it might not be practical in a classroom setting.

Rodrigo, et al. (2004) examined the efficacy of a comprehensible input-based teaching method in comparison to a traditional teaching approach on students' performance in three different assessments. The study compared two teaching methods in an intermediate level Spanish class at a college level. Out of 76 participants in this study, 33 students were compared for statistical analysis because some of them did not take either pre or post-test, or some of them were bilingual. The subjects were separated by three different instructional methods: an extensive reading approach, an extensive reading and discussion approach, and the traditional approach. The extensive reading approach group was asked to do intensive reading and self-selected reading. For their self-selected reading, the participants were asked to start from materials made for Spanish learners, then easy authentic materials to challenging materials. The extensive reading and discussion approach group read the same materials as the first group, but not self-selected. Instead, the group had in-class discussion on read materials in Spanish only. The traditional group read the materials from the textbook and studied grammar intensively. The group also worked on the compositions. The study lasted one semester and the subjects took a vocabulary checklist test, in which participants place a check mark next to a word they know; a grammar test published by the Ministry of Education and Science of Spain; and the "cloze" test, in which every fifth word was blank in a paragraph.

The results showed that the extensive reading group and the extensive reading and discussion group performed much better than the traditional method group on a

vocabulary test and a grammar test. The extensive reading and discussion group performed better on the cloze test than the traditional method group, but the difference was not statistically significant. Hence, the researchers concluded that comprehensible input does promote one's acquisition better than the traditional method.

Neuman and Koskinen (1993) studied the effect of captioned television as a word learning tool among bilingual speakers. This study had three different purposes. The first purpose was to see whether a captioned TV show would help students learn new vocabulary without any instruction because of auditory and visual stimuli with caption regardless of the level of English skills. The researchers proposed incidental learning as comprehensible input because Krashen (1981, 1982) claimed that acquisition of a second language would occur unconsciously. Hence the captioned TV show would provide an incidental learning opportunity to English learners. The second purpose focused on finding word or video- related variables contributing to students' gain in vocabulary. The third purpose was to investigate whether students' language proficiency level might influence students' understanding of new vocabulary within the context through comprehensible input. The participants were seventh and eighth graders from 17 different middle schools with a total of 129 students. They were divided into four different conditions: captioned television, television with no captions, reading texts with audio, and textbook only. The researchers used a science TV program originally targeted toward 8-12 year-old children. They picked 90 words that are considered to be the most difficult words from the segments of TV shows they edited for this study. The participants took two types of pre-tests before each unit and three types of post-tests. A vocabulary checklist test and a prior knowledge test on conceptual knowledge of each unit were

developed and administered as pre-tests. The post-tests given after each unit included a series of word recognition questions and a series of concept questions. A sentence anomaly test was also administered every three weeks to assess whether the participants understood new vocabulary in the context provided.

The results indicated that the TV caption group outperformed the other three groups in terms of all word tests. Not all differences were statistically significant, but the results were convincing as far as using captioned TV shows as comprehensible input to promote incidental learning. The study also revealed that the participants with higher proficiency skills in L2 scored better on the word meaning post-test and the sentence anomaly tests than those with limited proficiency skills. The study concluded that the higher the learners' proficiency skills are in English, the more benefits they received from comprehensible input.

Language Teaching Methods

Even though researchers have attempted to explain how one would learn a language regardless of L1 or L2, there is no one theory that could explain the whole process of language acquisition. However, these theories helped linguists to develop various kinds of language teaching methods. There are four necessary skills to be developed when language learning occurs (Broady, 2005; Vogt, 2009): speaking, listening, reading and writing. Throughout the history of foreign language education, a number of language learning/teaching methods have developed to build these skills.

Grammar-Translation Method

The grammar–translation method, which spent almost no time using the target language, is believed to be the first language teaching method. This method encourages students to learn grammar and vocabulary and translate text. Johann Seidemstiicker and Karl Plotz advocated this method and their textbooks were carefully designed to illustrate diagrams of sentences and translation of French sentences into German and vice versa (Titone, 1968). The content of texts was not necessarily important to this approach (Coleman & Klapper, 2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Toussaint, 2005). For instance, Thuleen (1996) listed “the house = das Haus, the mouse = die Maus” to describe how the grammar-translation method works. Another example from her website is “Do you have my book? = Hast du mein Buch?”, and this translation is introduced after the intensive grammar lectures in the native language. This approach seemed to work with languages such as Greek or Latin because these languages were heavily focused on the syntax and vocabulary rather than a tool of verbal communication. However, Mora (2008) pointed out that the grammar-translation approach diminished the speaking and listening aspect of language learning. In response to the shortcomings of the grammar-translation approach, the direct method was developed.

Direct Method

The direct method emphasized the use of target language in any form such as practice dialogues, simple questions and answers, or reading texts in the target languages. Young (1922) stated that the direct method focuses on developing language skills “by the immediate or direct use of the foreign tongue” (p. 203). The grammar was briefly introduced and there was no translation in learners’ first language (Coleman & Klapper,

2005; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Toussaint, 2005). Sauveur (1875) believed that the direct method, which is a form of the natural method, could lead learners to acquire the target language by focusing on speaking and miming to convey its meaning. The native language was never used in the classroom, and oral presentations such as questions and answers with demonstration and actions in the target language encouraged learners to acquire the target language naturally. Maximilian Berlitz also used this method, though he never used the term direct method (Richards & Rogers, 2001). This method is especially popular in language immersion/magnet programs. Some researchers have argued that the direct method does not encourage the understanding of grammatical structures or cultural aspects of target languages. Powell (1937) stated that the direct method “frequently wastes a great deal of time” (p. 257) to duplicate a natural environment for learners to be surrounded by the target language in the classroom. However, the method seemed to be popular because it especially encouraged verbal communication in the target language and reading was reserved for advanced learners for their pleasure (Mora, 2008).

Peters (1934) conducted a comparative study to examine the effect of the grammar-translation method and the direct method among 28 freshman students in French class at the Indiana State Teachers College Training School. The participants were divided into two groups and the first group received the grammar-translation based lessons while the other group had the direct method based lessons. All participants took the Otis Self-Administering Tests of Mental Ability and the Iowa Placement Exam at the beginning of the first semester of this study. The researcher used the intelligence test results to assign students to each group to equate the mean scores of both groups. The

participants also took the Charter's Diagnostic Test and the Pressey English test to determine their English language skills and the test results favored in the group with the direct method. To determine students' achievement in French language skills, the participants took the class examinations every six weeks,

The results indicated that the grammar-translation group did better than the direct method group at the end of the first semester and the difference was statistically significant in favor of the grammar-translation group. The dictation exam was also given at the end of the semester to assess students' ability to write sentences. The direct method group did slightly better than the grammar-translation group, but the difference was not statistically significant. The participants took the American Council Beta French Test to more accurately measure the students' achievement. The results indicated that the grammar-translation group's achievement was higher than that of the direct method group. However, at the end of the second semester, the direct method group did better than the grammar-translation group on the end of unit exams and the American Council Beta French Tests. The study concluded that the grammar-translation method allowed students to achieve more at the early stages in this study, but the direct method had advantages such as dictation, reading for speed and correct pronunciation, and grammar.

Reading Approach

In contrast, the reading approach heavily focused on reading materials in the target language. This method became popular in the U.S. in response to the popularity of the direct method in Europe. Because the direct method heavily focused on spoken language, it lacked the development of reading comprehension skills. It was considered that learners would reach fluency by introducing vocabulary and grammar although

vocabulary was more focused than grammar in this approach. This approach was developed in the U.S. and was used until World War II (Mora, 2008; Richards & Rogers, 2001).

Audiolingual Method

In response to the reading approach, the Audiolingual method was developed. The central idea of this method was that humans could learn through repetition and drills, which was based on the idea of Behaviorism, developed by Skinner (1957). In this method, learners will imitate their teachers and receive feedback for their response to achieve acquisition. When learners make errors, they must be corrected with negative feedback. The Audiolingual method resembles the direct method in terms of the use of only target language in the classroom, but one of the major differences is that this method introduces more grammatical structures and less vocabulary than the direct method. The method focuses more on various patterns of sentence structures and use drills repeatedly with enough vocabulary so that learners will grasp the concept of the target language grammatically. The purpose of drills is for learners to develop a habit of using the target language in proper way, hence feedback, regardless of positive or negative, is quite important (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Skinner, 1957).

Communicative Approach

Another approach, which has gained prominence over the previously mentioned methods, is the communicative approach. One of the early developers of this method Wilkins (1976), along with the Council of Europe and other linguists, provided the basic curriculum or syllabus for language courses to meet the needs of learners so that they were able to function in the target language. Each unit addresses learners' needs in a

certain situation to acquire communications skills corresponding to the situation. All units are connected to one another so that learners can apply their skills from previous units (Van Ek & Alexander, 1980). Much like the direct method, the learners use the target language in the contexts that are meaningful to them, but the difference between the direct method and this approach is that it is a more learner-centered approach. Schulz (2006) stated that the communicative approach requires learners to comprehend meaning of information rather than the accuracy of forms in the target language (p. 252). That is, the method encourages learners to make their language learning more meaningful rather than pursuing the perfection of pronunciation or grammatical structures. This does not mean that the approach denies the importance of phonetics or syntax, but the aim is for learners to develop their understanding of the language in a meaningful way so that learners can relate the knowledge outside of class (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Mora, 2008; Schulz, 2006).

Overland, Fields, and Noonan (2011) examined the feasibility of a communicative approach to teach Biblical Hebrew to postsecondary students. This study was a part of a three-year project called the Communicative Hebrew Learning and Teaching project. The project was launched to incorporate a new, communicative approach, because the classical language courses tended to use the grammar-translation method or the Audiolingual method and rarely provided learners an opportunity to acquire a target language in a meaningful way. The project had three phases: planning, training and piloting, and evaluation. During the first phase, the design team learned about the communicative approach and also developed materials that emphasized communicative tasks. Following the first phase, the team went through training for applying a

communicative approach to both the syllabus and the materials prepared by the design team, and they field-tested their communicative language teaching approach as well as the materials in the Biblical Hebrew course for 13 weeks. The communicative approach Biblical Hebrew class was held at seven different institutions, five in the U.S. and two in Brazil and approximately 90-95 students took this course. At the end of the course, both students and instructors filled out written questionnaires about the class, and 63 students and seven teachers responded to the evaluation.

The findings revealed that approximately 88% of students preferred the communicative approach over the traditional method of teaching Biblical Hebrew. Some students commented that using the materials helped them learn to communicate with classmates and the instructor helped them process syntax and vocabulary more than the traditional method. They also felt that communicating in the target language helped them store the new information in their long-term memory.

The instructors pointed out that the communicative approach definitely helped students develop a system to quickly access the language needed to communicate with others. Hence, the students did not need to parse sentences, whether the sentences were given orally or in writing. Simultaneously, the students in the communicative approach class were not effective in decoding sentences as much as those students who studied in the traditional method class.

Overall, the study indicated that the communicative approach to Biblical Hebrew course was well received by the students and the instructors. Although not all students agreed that the approach was effective in learning Biblical Hebrew, the majority of students felt that they gained substantial knowledge of the language and expressed a

desire to see other introductory classical languages courses taught with the same approach. The study also recommended that there should be a longitudinal study using a standardized test to conduct a comparative study.

Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) Approach

Deriving from the communicative approach, the TBLL approach is quite similar to the communicative approach in many ways. It is learner-centered, encourages communication in the target language, and also offers meaningful experiences to the learners. In TBLL approach, a task can be one's daily activities: send an email; place an order at a restaurant; or call friends. The primary goal of tasks utilizes a target language as a communication tool. Hence tasks are not activities such as vocabulary, grammar, conversation exercises, but rather the process of producing an outcome in a target language. For instance, working in pairs on a simple conversation exercise only focuses on practicing a form of speech as an outcome of the exercise. In the TBLL task, however, practicing forms of a target language is not a goal. The aim of TBLL approach is to encourage learners to create their own system to convey their messages to others in real-life settings. A good example of a TBLL task would be a problem-solving task. In a mock business meeting, group members will share their perspectives according to their roles in a company to solve a problem. They would try to convince each other in the process. In this task, the outcome is a solution to the problem and group members have to think quickly to share their views so that they can come to the solution. Therefore, convincing each other in a target language is not a product, but rather a process and it is much more meaningful to learners than practicing a form (Bowen, 2010; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001).

As the TBLL approach gained popularity among language teachers, the approach quickly became the focus of several studies designed to examine its educational value. Kırkgöz (2011) conducted a mixed-method study to examine the attitudes of student teachers towards a speaking course and also its impact on their oral communication skills. There were 28 students who participated in this study. The study designed an English-speaking course to develop oral communications skills through speaking tasks guided by the task-based learning principles. The course was carefully designed to meet students' expectations based on the needs assessment conducted by the researcher. Each student spoke on a few topics and was recorded. They were also interviewed individually afterward to determine their English proficiency level according to a rating system.

The course met three times per week and had an additional one-hour meeting time for viewing and evaluating their tasks. The participants worked in a group of three or four to record their tasks using a camcorder. The tasks were developed from students' interests, needs, and familiarity with the topics. During the face-to-face session, students acquired as much information as possible through task planning activities such as developing a vocabulary list and collecting specific information on each topic. They listened to samples of similar activities done by native English speakers so that students could have a better understanding of the tasks. The results indicated that students' attitudes towards the effect of a speaking course were positive. The students seemed to enjoy the collaborative working environment as well as the video-recording feature of tasks, which stimulated their motivation. The results also showed that students made noticeable improvement in their English speaking skills. The students were asked to speak on the same topics at the end of the course as they did during the needs assessment

process. There was an increase of 43% in the overall average between pre and post speaking test scores.

McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) conducted a case study regarding teachers' and students' perspectives on a task-based English as Foreign Language (EFL) course at a university in Thailand. Thirty-five first-year students in the English department and 13 English instructors participated in this study. The team of EFL teachers at the university designed a syllabus using a task-based approach to stimulate learners' interests, as well as cultivate their cultural awareness in regional and global contexts. The syllabus also included tasks that were practical to learners such as sharing Thai culture with non-Thais or applying to educational programs. The study was conducted in a 12 month course and there were some revisions to the contents as the course progressed. The researchers collected data from various primary and secondary sources such as a series of evaluations at the end of each task, students' learning notes, observations, and interviews.

Overall, both teachers and students indicated positive attitudes towards the task-based approach syllabus, although both groups shared some concerns about the approach. Student participants felt that they became more independent by completing tasks with limited help from their teachers. Some participants stated that the task-based approach helped them develop learning strategies and self-confidence. Both students and teachers shared their concerns about the course's content initially and complained that they were not learning anything because the content was too easy. As the semester progressed and the revisions were made, the participants stopped complaining about the content. Both groups commented that they needed more time to adjust to the task-based approach

because this instructional and learning method was new to both of them. Some students also pointed out that they needed more guidance from teachers to complete tasks because they were worried that they did not understand fully what they were supposed to do. The researchers concluded that the task-based course provided an opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that serve both immediate needs and those likely to be encountered in other academic subjects. The course also encouraged students to expand their knowledge on topics that interest them while developing learning strategies.

Another study that focused on collaborative learning environments, which is one of the features of the TBLL, was conducted among university students in Malaysia (Osman, Nayan, Mansor, Maesin, & Shafie, 2010). The aim of this study was to examine whether collaboration among students on speaking activities would improve their speaking skills and help students lose their anxiety in communicating with others in English. Fifty-six students with intermediate English skills participated in this study. Twenty-eight students in both the experimental group and the control group took pre and post speaking tests. They also took a test with 24 questions as to how they felt about interacting with others in English as a measure of their level of communicative apprehension. Both groups followed the same curriculum for this course except the treatment for the experimental group. The experimental group engaged in activities such as think-pair-share or fishbowl to focus on using English to communicate with other group members. Think-pair-share activity lets students think about a given cue individually, work in pairs to discuss the given cue, than share the discussed idea with the rest of class (McTighe & Lyman, 1988). Fishbowl is a technique that is used to promote cooperative learning. A group of students are equally divided into two groups and one

group engages in discussion while other group observes and takes notes for questions after the inner circle group finishes the discussion.

The results on pre-test and post-test scores indicated that the experimental group had a statistically significant improvement in speaking skills. On the other hand, the control group showed almost no significant difference between pre-test and post-test. The researchers also compared the mean differences between pre-test and post-test of both groups, and the experimental group had bigger difference than the control group. There was almost no reduction in students' anxiety of speaking English to others among the experimental group or the control group. Both groups maintained about the same level of communicative apprehension in a series of group discussions, participation in English class, and public speaking. Both groups showed higher levels of communicative apprehension in interpersonal conversation, which the researcher pointed out, might mean that participants would be more comfortable with a bigger crowd when speaking English. Overall, a collaborative learning environment helped students enhance their English skills more than those who did not have access to such an opportunity (Osman, et al., 2010).

Lai, Zhao, and Wang (2011) examined instructors' and learners' attitudes towards task-based language teaching as well as the effect on students' performance in an online beginning Chinese class. This study took place in a virtual public high school setting. The researchers designed a syllabus utilizing a task-based teaching approach to go with an e-textbook they had been using. Thirty-eight monolingual students and four teachers participated in this study. The age of students ranged from 13 to 18 years old. Seventy-six percent of the participants had studied a foreign language before and 35% of them had taken more than two foreign language courses before. Eighty-eight percent of the

participants never participated in an online class prior to this study and 97% of them never took a foreign language course online before. Four teachers participated in this study and none of them had taught online or used the task-based teaching approach prior to this study. Thirty-six students taking the same beginning Chinese course were placed in the control group for comparison. The control group did not use the task-based syllabus. The researchers collected data from four different kinds of sources; live and recorded synchronous sessions, course evaluation, recorded oral performance, and weekly interviews with teachers. The majority of data came from the experimental group and two kinds of data, background survey and the recordings of oral performance, came from the control group.

The results indicated that both students and teachers had positive reactions to the task-based teaching and learning environment overall. Some students favored the atmosphere where they were allowed to make mistakes because they were able to learn from their own mistakes. They enjoyed working with their class peers collaboratively and also the student-centered learning experience. The four teachers also pointed out that the task-based teaching fostered a good learning environment for students to develop their learning skills. The majority of students were impressed by how much they learned from the task-based activities. More than 80% of students stated that they would like to continue learning Chinese and more than half of those who indicated their wish returned to another online Chinese course. And while the fluency of the experimental group in the oral exam surpassed the control group, the syntactic complexity and accuracy in their oral skills were not significantly higher than those from the control group.

Influence of Technology in Education

The vast improvement of technology has affected instructional methods in many ways since the appearance of the personal computer (Kaczmarek & Landowska, 2006; Necat, 2007; Stevens, 2007). For instance, Punahou school in Hawaii implemented a project where students used a tablet device to learn and discover new knowledge and information. The device serves as their textbook and a tool to complete assignments or take tests (Apple Inc., 2011).

The first appearance of computers in education was in the mid-1940s at Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania. The computers were used in math and science classes for computation. In the 1960s computers were geared toward individualized learning experiences. In 1970s microcomputers and personal computers became available. This era marked the beginning of the revolution of computer and technology in education (Molnar, 1997). The learning environment for students and teachers also has changed significantly and the Internet is considered a revolution in education, especially after it has become available to both teachers and students (Cramer, 2007; Kaczmarek & Landowska, 2006).

The advancement of technology has influenced not only the face-to-face classroom setting, but also the online learning environment. Blackboard and Moodle are online learning management systems, also known as course management systems, that allow both instructors and students to use tools like discussion boards, email, live text and voice chat, dropbox, and wiki pages to allow users to work collaboratively with other classmates online (Blackboard, 2012; El Mansour & Mupinga, 2007; Heirdsfield,

Walker, Tambyah, & Beutel, 2011; Md Ali, & Jaafar, 2010). Complete language courses are now taught online (Lai et al., 2011).

The infrastructure of the Internet and the evolution of technology made even mobile devices such as smart phones into learning tools (Necat, 2007). According to the Horizon Report 2010 edition (The New Media Consortium, 2010):

The portability of mobile devices and their ability to connect to the Internet almost anywhere makes them ideal as a store of reference materials and learning experiences, as well as general-use tools for fieldwork, where they can be used to record observations via voice, text, or multimedia, and access reference sources in real time. (p. 10)

There are also a number of programs that enable users to create enhanced media files, such as podcasts and videocasts, to support instruction in various subjects (Stevens, 2007).

Rise of Podcasting

There is a new trend in distributing educational contents online via podcasts. Apple's iTunes U provides a dedicated server with academic contents that can be available to learners for their enriched learning experiences. A podcast is a digital media file, in which users can synchronize audio and visual aids. It allows users to develop a slide show with pictures and their own recording or whatever background music they choose to include. The early form of podcasts was the recorded midi file. However, as more software became available to incorporate a midi file and visual aids, users started to produce more enhanced podcasts. There are several ways to distribute podcasts. One way is to embed podcasts within a website for viewing and another is to upload the podcast to

a server for distribution. Both teachers and students can upload and download podcasts. There are a number of higher educational institutions adopting iTunes U to disseminate recorded lectures, class materials, or supplemental audio/visual files to enhance students' learning experiences (Apple Inc., 2011).

The greatest advantage of podcasts is that users can combine images and audio files fairly easily. Lazzari (2009) said, "Podcasting is a method for distributing digital video and audio contents over the internet" (p. 2). When users prepare presentations or lectures, the audience can have visual and audio files simultaneously, which is believed to enhance one's cognitive ability (Mayer, 2001). The roots of this theory are in Paivio's (1986) Dual Coding theory. Paivio (1986) suggested that learners' cognitive ability can benefit more when using two different stimuli to receive information rather than one stimulus. Mayer (2001) applied this theory in the multimedia environment. Podcasting first was mainly available in audio files until the availability of software that enables images and audio files (enhanced podcasts). Nowadays, the majority of podcast files are either enhanced podcasts or videocasts, which have a video recording instead of a slide show. Paivio (1986) warned that one's cognitive ability has its limitation and when learners have to split their attention to a person talking, text display, and narration, it is counterproductive because images, in this case the person and the text display, are competing with each other and that interferes with one's cognitive ability. Another great advantage of podcasts is user-friendliness. It is quite easy to download using software such as iTunes, which is free, and as long as users are connected to the Internet, then they can download any podcasts that are open to the public onto their PC and synchronize

their iPod or any portable mp3 player to transfer podcasts to their mobile devices (Apple Inc., 2010).

Related Research on Podcasting

As podcasting gains in popularity due to its capability of combining images and texts as well as user-friendliness, it has caught many researchers' attention regarding its potential as a teaching and learning tool in educational settings (Badowski, 2009; Dale & McCarthy, 2006; Evans, 2008; Lee & Chan 2007). According to Hew (2009) and Kay (2012), more studies have been conducted on podcasts for reviewing materials than for producing learning materials.

Podcast for Reviewing Materials

Duke University was one of the first universities to adopt the iPod project and started distributing recorded lectures. Simultaneously, all incoming freshman received an iPod, mp3 player, for their recreational as well as academic use. At the end of the semester, both instructors and students filled out the survey about their experience with the podcast as a learning tool. Students expressed positive attitudes towards the use of iPods and could potentially take more advantage if they knew how to locate more educational materials online or had better recording devices (Belanger, 2005). A similar project was implemented at University of Washington during the 2005 and 2006 academic year. The pilot program started recording class lectures and made available to students on campus for their use in learning class materials. The pilot program conducted an online survey after the initial year of implementation. The findings of the survey revealed that both students and instructors seemed to be positive about the incorporation of podcasts for the enhancement of students' learning, especially for those who missed

the class. One instructor mentioned how the podcasting might meet various students' needs especially in a large class with 100 or more students. The podcast became helpful for note taking, reviewing the class lecture for homework or for exam preparations, according to some students. While positive attitudes toward podcasting were observed, both students and instructors pointed out some shortcomings as well. Though both students and instructors shared their concern about students' absenteeism, the majority of students responded that the availability of podcasts did not affect their class attendance. Some students pointed out that the podcasting did not record visual aids or classroom discussion very well, which made it hard to follow the lecture. However, overall responses from both instructors and students were very positive towards the podcasts incorporated in courses, and the majority of the participants suggested that podcasting should be available in more courses on campus (Lane, 2006).

Abdous, Facer, and Yen (2012) conducted a comparative study to examine the effect of podcasts embedded in curriculum versus supplemental use for students in foreign language courses. The aim of this study was to find out how podcasts benefited students academically. The study was conducted over several months with different groups of students, in total 337, from 27 different language and literature courses at a university in the middle Atlantic area of the United States. There were 143 participants who used podcasts as an integral part of the curriculum in their language courses such as student presentation, discussion, or guest lectures. One hundred ninety-three participants used podcasts as supplemental materials and podcasts were not strategically integrated into the curriculum. They had access to recorded lectures and they could use those recorded podcasts as supplemental materials. The participants filled out a survey about

their study habits, the level of computer literacy, time spent on completing homework, and demographic data. The participants also responded to a survey concerning their level of comfort using podcasts to develop their language skills. The researchers used participants' final grades to determine how the use of podcasts predicted their academic benefits.

The study indicated that there was a predictive relationship between the use of podcasts and their final grade because about 47% of participants received *A* to *A-* as their final grade. However, as opposed to the researchers' expectations, users in the "supplemental podcasts" group received higher average grades than those in the course with "integrated" podcasts. The researchers concluded that the different use of podcasts led to the different academic outcomes.

Nicholson et al. (2010) conducted a quasi-experimental study to examine the effect of podcasts in an introductory accounting course. The study was designed to investigate whether podcasts would have an impact on student performance. The researchers also investigated personal traits contributing the use of podcasts. The study had two sessions for the participants to attend and each session contained a quiz or survey with a lecture on the topics. After the first session, the treatment group received an email with links to the podcasts while the control group did not receive any email. In the second session, the participants took quizzes regarding the contents of the lectures and also a set of surveys regarding the use of podcasts. Initially, 133 student volunteers responded to a series of survey, but there were only 54 participants who appeared in the second session.

The results indicated that the treatment group had higher mean quiz scores than the control group. Generally, students perceived podcasts as a useful review tool, but

there were some participants who shared concerns such as unclear instruction, time required, or technical issues that prevented them from taking advantage of the podcasts. The researchers concluded that the implementation of podcasts is one of the key elements to enrich students' learning.

Carle et al. (2009) investigated how technology can influence student engagement and achievement in an undergraduate research methods course. The aim of this study was to investigate whether students in the technology-supported group showed more engagement and also higher achievement in a research class than those who did not study in the technology-supported group. The sample was 25 undergraduate students at a mid-sized public university in the U.S. The treatment group received short recordings of discussion with the instructor's comments and also each recorded lecture as a podcast.

For students' achievement records, the researchers included average scores of individual papers, a group paper, and mid-term and final exams. For the students, the participants took a Likert-scale type achievement measurement survey regarding their engagement in the course at the end of the semester. The survey consisted of 30 items regarding students' engagement such as note taking, asking questions, and talking to the instructor outside of the class.

The results indicated that the treatment group showed statistically significant improvement in chapter writing assignments and performed better in exams and final grades. The treatment group also showed more enthusiasm than the control group in course engagement such as note taking, involvement in class discussion, and review of notes. The study concluded that integrating technology into a research method course

enhanced students' engagement and achievement in comparison to the class without technologically enhanced materials.

Abt and Barry (2007) conducted a study to examine the effect of supplemental materials on students' performance in a physiology class. The total of 50 undergraduate students from exercise physiology courses participated in this study. All participants were randomly assigned to the podcast group and the control group. Both groups took the pre-test with 32 multiple-choice questions. The podcast group listened to the supplemental podcasts in addition to regular classroom lectures and the control group received the texts from the podcasts as their supplemental materials. Both groups took the post-test and each group's performance was compared.

The results indicated that the podcast group enhanced their mean score by 46% while the control group improved their mean score by 43%. The difference between the podcast group and the control group in terms of the improvement was small, hence the researchers concluded that it might be worth the effort to deliver supplemental materials through podcasts, but the benefit over written texts might be very little.

Dupagne et al. (2009) investigated whether the use of video recordings (vodcasts) improved student performance in an introductory communication course. The researchers solicited 261 students from several introductory communication theory courses at a university in southeastern part of the U.S. for this study.

The researchers created a series of 12 different vodcasts from TV programs and educational videos. To measure students' outcomes, the participants took three tests. Before each test was administered, the participants were allowed to view four vodcasts. These podcasts were presented in class prior to each test. The researchers collected the

participants' demographic information, ownership of technological devices, computer literacy, their attitudes toward the course, and also reasons for not watching the vodcasts for the tests if they did not watch the vodcasts.

The results revealed that those who did not use the vodcasts as a reviewing tool outperformed those who used vodcasts prior to the tests, contrary to the researchers' prediction. The researchers suggested that the showing of vodcasts in class might have been enough for the participants to understand or take notes that they did not feel necessary to view the vodcasts again. The researchers also pointed out that the group of participants who watched the vodcasts for the test could have included those who missed the class regularly or those who were unprepared for the tests. Overall, the study concluded that the vodcasts did not increase students' academic performance in an introductory communication course.

Podcast as a Production Tool

While some studies have shown that podcasting can be effective in terms of delivering information, that is only one aspect of podcasting, and podcasting can do more than disseminate information. Though the number of studies might be not as high as the studies done on podcasts as reviewing materials, there are a small number of studies which have looked at podcasts as production tool.

Armstrong et al. (2009) implemented a podcast project for students in a management information system course at a business college. In this study, 32 students divided into four groups worked on a class project with the component of either videocast or podcast to research one of the management information system fundamentals. The participants went through several stages such as brainstorming and mapping the concept

to materialize their project. To assess the project, the researchers created a series of questionnaires in conjunction with the educational objectives for the project. The educational objectives included topics such as the development of self-reliance with technology, active learning, integrating technology with communication skills and information, and working with others. The participants used a scale from 1-5 to rate to what degree their experience with the podcast project met objectives. The participants also gave their feedback in addition to their rating for the project.

Overall, the participants had positive reactions toward the podcasting project. There were eight educational objectives and the majority of the participants rated their experience with the podcast. The written feedback also indicated that the participants seemingly enjoyed the project. One student indicated his willingness to produce more podcasts with other topics, learning the value of teamwork, and learning new technology. The researchers concluded that when students had control over their podcast project, the project would be successful and encourage active learning. The student-generated podcast project would provide students more opportunities to become proactive in learning.

Ducate and Lomicka (2009) examined the effect of using podcasts for the improvement of students' pronunciation in second language as well as students' perception about the use of podcasts in a second language learning. A total of 22 college students in German and French classes participated in this study. All students were at an intermediate level in their target language and the age range was between 18 and 22 years old. The test was conducted in a period of 16 weeks. The participants produced two different types of podcasts, one was a scripted podcast and the other was an

extemporaneous podcast. In scripted podcasts, participants read five different texts related to study abroad and uploaded to their personal blog page. In extemporaneous podcasts, the participants used five texts from the scripted podcasts as a model for them to record three different podcasts. The audience for the student podcast task in this study was their classmates and the instructors. The participants were required to listen to each other's podcasts and exchange comments on the podcasts. The participants took a pre and post survey regarding their attitudes toward pronunciation and also their background information.

The study results indicated that the podcast project did not improve participants' pronunciation in terms of comprehensibility and accentedness except the gap between the first task and the second task in the extemporaneous podcasts among French speakers. The participants' improvement in pronunciation before and after the project was not statistically significant. Even though the participants did not improve their pronunciation skills, in general, they indicated positive attitudes towards the use of podcast in learning their target language.

Lord (2008) examined the effect of podcasting projects on students' pronunciation, attitudes towards pronunciation, and reactions to the podcast project. The study involved 16 college students in a Spanish phonetics course. Each participant was required to set up and maintain a podcast channel and share podcasts within groups of three to four students. Each group member would receive a notice when another member uploaded a podcast and they responded to each other's podcast. The instructor was not a part of any group, hence each group built their own community through their podcast channels.

The participants took an inventory to assess their attitude towards pronunciation before and after the course. The inventory consisted of 12 Likert-scale type questions regarding the importance of native-like pronunciation in language acquisition. At the end of semester, the participants took the same inventory tests with nine Likert-scale type of questions pertaining to the podcast project. The participants were required to create a total of six different podcasts during the course. The contents of podcasts were predetermined and included tasks such as reading of a short excerpt from a Spanish novel, focus on consonants, and their language background in Spanish. The first and the last task used the same short text from the same novel. After each podcast was uploaded, the participants responded to each other's podcast with at least one positive comment and the constructive criticism. Three graduate students with advanced proficiency skills in Spanish judged the podcasts for overall accuracy in pronunciation.

The results of the pronunciation inventory indicated that there was a significant difference in participants' attitudes toward pronunciation in Spanish overall. A few students showed almost no change or negative attitudes towards the importance of accurate pronunciation in foreign language learning, but the majority of students showed positive attitudes at the end of the semester. The researcher also looked into each survey item to compare the mean score difference of each item between pre-test post inventory. Only one item showed a statistically significant difference between pre-test post survey score. There was a statistically significant class mean difference of the ratings between pre-test post rating scores. Though some participants showed no progress or even lower scores compared to pre-test scores, most participants showed significant improvement in their pronunciation skills through the podcast project. The participants also showed

positive reactions to the podcast project. Some participants indicated that they began to pay more attention to their pronunciation abilities as well as the importance of pronunciation in learning Spanish. The majority of participants appreciated the practical aspects of the Spanish language skills gained through the project and they enjoyed working on the project.

Frydenberg (2008) argued that podcasts would contribute to student learning. He conducted a study to examine student behavior about producing podcasts in conjunction with their perception of publishing podcasts for their class. Fifty-four students from two sections of an introductory technology class at a business college participated in this survey study. The instructor gave participants an extra credit opportunity for making podcasts to cover the contents of lectures to be shared with the entire class. Their upload and download log record was extracted from the server log and the participants filled out the survey regarding their perception on the role of producing podcasts in learning.

The results indicated that production of podcasts encouraged the participants to learn more about podcasting, publishing, file conversion, and various other software applications. The majority of participants had positive reactions to the idea of using podcasts for their own learning. More than half of participants mentioned that they started listening to other podcasts for their own interest. The server logs indicated that the participants' activity became more frequent as the project unintentionally prompted the participants to become competitive in making the podcasts. The researcher concluded that production of podcasts became a useful tool for the enhancement of students' learning in the technology classroom.

Previous studies on podcasting indicated that there were mainly two ways to apply podcasts into educational setting. One way was to use podcasts for reviewing materials or supplementing course materials (Abdous et al., 2012; Belanger, 2005, Dupagne et al., 2009; Lane, 2006; Nicholson et al., 2010) and the other way was to use podcasting production task as a learning tool (Abt & Barry, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2009; Carle et al., 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Frydenberg, 2008; Lord 2008). Several studies suggested that the participants generally had positive attitudes toward podcasts (Armstrong et al., 2009; Belanger, 2005; Lane, 2006; Nicholson et al., 2010), and one study revealed that making podcasts had positive effect on participants' engagement in learning the course materials (Carle et al., 2009). However, these studies were not necessarily based on any learning theory, and it was suggested that the educational value of podcasts should be investigated in conjunction with educational theories (Hew, 2009; Kay, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of the student-generated podcast tasks (PTs) on students' engagement and performance in a beginning level Japanese language course at Western Carolina University (WCU). The purpose of this study and the research questions under investigation are restated in this chapter along with the population and sample, a detailed description of the treatment, the instruments, the implementation of the study and data analysis.

Precisely, the study compared the effect of the PTs as a learning tool as opposed to a series of corresponding pencil-paper assignments. There were three different treatment condition groups in this study, Early Semester treatment group (ES), Late Semester treatment group (LS), and Entire Semester treatment group (ENT). The following were the questions of this study.

1. How did students respond to PTs in a beginning level Japanese language course?
2. What was the effect of PT on students' engagement in a beginning Japanese language course?
 - a. Was the effect of PT treatment on students' engagement different among three different groups?
 - b. Was the effect of PT treatment on students' engagement different for high and low achieving students?
3. What was the effect of PTs on students' performance on the Japanese proficiency tests in a beginning level Japanese language course?

- a. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the early semester treatment group?
- b. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the late semester treatment group?
- c. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the entire semester treatment group?
- d. Was the effect of PT treatment different among three different groups?
- e. Was the effect of PTs on students' performance on Japanese proficiency tests different for high and low achieving students?

The study used a quasi-experimental design with alternating treatment. I created a series of PTs as a treatment for this study. There were two types of podcasts for the participants to make: a vocabulary podcast and a grammar podcast. The participants were required to make slides using a Japanese word processor and to record narratives with their own voice. The detail of the treatment is presented in later section of this chapter.

I randomly assigned three sections of the Beginning Japanese I (JPN101) to ES, LS, and ENT conditions. I developed two instruments for this study: a Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) and the Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT). SETUS was used to measure students' engagement. Two sets of JPTs were used to measure student performance. The dependent variables in this study were the participants' responses to SETUS and their performance on the JPTs. The independent variable was the different PT treatment condition.

Population and Sample

Forty-five (60%) of 75 undergraduate students enrolled in the Beginning Japanese I (JPN101) at Western Carolina University (WCU) participated in this study. Initially, 50 students consented to be part the study, but five students withdrew from the course. The department of Modern Foreign Languages did not offer an official major program in Japanese Studies at the time of study. Therefore all of the students were likely taking this course as an elective or to fulfill the requirement for the Liberal Studies (general education) program. There was, however, a minor program in Japanese, hence some of the students might have taken this course for the Japanese minor. The class standing of participants was a mix of all freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior. The participants' characteristics are further described in chapter four.

Treatment

The treatment in this study was a series of PTs. The PT treatment was given as a part of assignments during the course. Therefore, regardless of students' participation in this study, all enrolled students were required to complete the PTs. The assignment category in this course weighed 15% of the overall course grade.

Each PT had two parts, a vocabulary task and a grammar podcast (see Appendix A). For a vocabulary podcast, the participants made a slide for each word in Japanese and recorded pronouncing each word in Japanese. Providing the English equivalent was optional in audio, but not on slides. For a grammar podcast, the participants made a slide for each grammar point giving an example sentence. The audio for the grammar point included reading each Japanese sentence aloud and explaining of the appropriate grammar point in English, using their own words. The English translations for the example sentences were optional in audio, but not on slides. The participants were

allowed to include English equivalents and translations in audio in case the participants thought it would be helpful for them to study vocabulary and grammar points. The participants were not allowed to include English text on slides so that they could concentrate on Japanese words and phrases.

Krashen's (1981, 1982) *i+1* hypothesis, Wittrock's (1974) Generative Learning (GL) theory and Mayer's (2001) Multimedia Learning (ML) theory were used to craft the PT treatment in this study. These theories and hypothesis were present in both types of the PT treatment.

Krashen (1981, 1982) stated that the input would not become meaningful unless it was challenging, yet comprehensible. The PT had meaningful input because the vocabulary podcast was based on word categories introduced and repeated grammatical structures. The grammar podcast was based on class work and included related, but new grammar points. Therefore, Krashen's *i+1* hypothesis was present in the PT.

Wittrock's (1974) GL theory was also present in the PT because students worked with course-introduced materials and integrated new information. The GL theory was closely related with *i+1* hypothesis. The PT provided an opportunity for the participants to find a link between the old and new information to generate new knowledge.

Mayer's (2001) ML theory was evident in the PT because the participants were required to produce images and audio on their own and edit both elements into a coherent product as a whole. Slides with Japanese characters were considered as an image in the PT so that each slide could be reinforced by audio in Japanese and also English in the grammar podcast. In the process, the participants encoded a piece of information audibly and visually, which served as an essential part of the ML theory.

Research Design

The study was implemented in the Beginning Japanese I (JPN101) course for an entire semester (15 weeks). There were three sections of JPN101. The course met on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. All three sections were offered at different times of day, but the first two sections were adjacent and the third section followed the first two sections after a one-hour lunch break.

The study used a quasi-experimental design. Ideally, randomization of the sample would be desirable (Shadish, et al., 2002), but it was not practical to assign individual students to different treatment conditions within each section. Assigning individual participants with different treatments in the same section would make social interaction among the participants easier than assigning different treatments by section. The social interaction among participants could influence the outcome of the study. Therefore a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent group design was the next best choice for this study.

The study was designed to alternate the treatment between ES and LS, and treat ENT for an entire semester. ENT worked on a series of six PTs throughout the semester while ES and LS worked on three PTs at different times of the semester. ES worked on the PTs during the first seven weeks and LS worked on the PTs during the last seven weeks of the semester.

All groups received the same face-to-face instruction. Each instructional session was recorded and uploaded to the iTunes U at Western Carolina University (WCU). All students had access to a series of recorded lectures during the period of study. To ensure the fidelity of classroom instruction, a colleague, another instructor of Japanese, checked recorded lectures daily to make sure that I taught all three sections in the same manner.

After each face-to-face session, I also checked each session to make sure that instruction was not different depending on the treatment condition and I conducted all sections with the same amount of time, the same materials, and the same activities.

This study was designed to measure the level of students' engagement during the course. The participants filled out SETUS at the end of the study. The level of student engagement in the course plays a significant role to explain students' performance in the course (Newmann, 1992). According to Armstrong et al. (2009), learner generated podcasts engaged students in learning course materials. Assessing students' engagement for the course would help this study address some other factors that might contribute to the students' performance.

The study was also designed to measure the difference in students' performance gains on the two sets of JPTs. The research design incorporated pre-test and post-test design to measure students' performance gains on two sets of JPTs. The pre-test of each JPT was administered before the treatment began and the post-test of each JPT was administered at the end each unit. There were two units in this study. Unit 1 consisted of lessons one, two, and three. Unit 2 consisted of lessons four, five and six. The design of the current study by groups, treatments, and points of data collection is shown in Figure 2.

Group	JPT1Pre	Unit 1	JPT1Post	JPT2Pre	Unit 2	JPT2Post	SETUS
ES	O	X	O	O		O	O
LS	O		O	O	X	O	O
ENT	O	X	O	O	X	O	O

Figure 2. Treatment conditions and times of data collection for all three groups. JPT = Japanese Proficiency Test. SETUS = Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey. O = Observation (data collection). X = Treatment. Blank = No treatment.

Instruments

I developed two instruments for this study. The first instrument was Student Engagement in Technology Use (SETUS) and the second instrument was a Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT). The JPT had both a pre-test and a post-test. I developed two different JPTs according to the contents of units. The SETUS was administered toward the end of the study, but the JPTs were administered at the beginning and the end of each unit.

Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS)

Following is an explanation of the SETUS, the categories, and the process of ensuring the reliability of the SETUS. I developed the SETUS using items from the 2012 version of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE: Kuh et al., 2012), and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ: Pintrich et al., 1991). I chose to combine items from both the NSSE 2012 (Kuh et al.) and the MSLQ (Pintrich et al.) because the NSSE survey (Kuh et al.) items addressed whether the facilitation of the PTs had any effect on students' motivation while the MSLQ (Pintrich et al.) items addressed the effect of the PTs on self-regulated learning. According to Zimmerman (1990), "self-regulated learners proactively seek out information when needed and take the necessary

steps to master it” (p.4). I included both motivation and self-regulation scales in this survey to measure whether the PTs stimulated participants’ motivation to actively engage in mastering the course materials on their own.

The NSSE survey (Kuh et al., 2012) was developed to understand how students perceive institutions affect their academic and personal growth through their undergraduate experience. The survey items 1-8, 17, and 23 were adapted from the 2012 NSSE survey (Kuh et al.). The permission to adapt items from the NSSE survey (Kuh et al.) was approved by Indiana University prior to its administration. The MSLQ (Pintrich et al., 1991) was developed to measure students’ motivation and learning strategies. The MSLQ (Pintrich et al.) has proven to be a reliable measurement of motivation and learning strategies (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005). The MSLQ (Pintrich et al.) consisted of 81 items, and I chose nine items for self-regulated learning strategies. The MSLQ (Pintrich et al.) was in public domain therefore permission was not needed.

The SETUS had a total of 26 items measuring students’ engagement defined as motivation and self-regulation, hours spent on completing the PTs outside of class, helpfulness of podcast in development of language skills, and responses to the PTs (see Appendix B). Eight items (items 1-8) concerning motivation used 4-point Likert-type scale. The choices were: never, sometimes, often and very often. The motivation section included items regarding in-class activities, assignments, and outside class activities such as consulting with tutors or working with classmates. The self-regulation section had eight items (items 9-16) concerning learning strategies to complete assignments, using a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 = not all true of me to 5 = very true of me. One item (item 17) asked to report hours spent on completing podcast tasks. The choice of answers

for this item were 0, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 26-29 and more than 30. The survey also included six items (items 18-23) concerning helpfulness of podcast tasks on learning Kana characters, memorizing vocabulary, developing oral proficiency skills, and understanding course materials. A 4-point Likert-type scale was used for these six items. The choices of answer were: not at all, very little, quite a bit, and very much. Two items (items 24 & 25) were included in this survey to assess students' preferences on podcast tasks. A 4-point Likert-type scale was used for these two items. The choices of answers were: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The last item (item 26) was an open-ended question asking for any comment about podcasting in the JPN 101.

Once the SETUS was completed, I solicited volunteers from an intermediate level Japanese language course at WCU and piloted a survey. Nine students took the SETUS and I recorded their verbal response as they completed the survey. This is called think-aloud technique and is a useful method to learn why certain choices are made among test takers (Trenor, Miller, & Gipson, 2011). This is one of the verbal report methods used to validate survey items (Willis, Royston, & Bereniti, 1991). Based on the responses I received during think-aloud session, I changed the item 6, which was about the use of technology during the course. The item had a list of technologies that did not include podcasts or Blackboard (Blackboard, 2012). Other than the list of technology, which I changed, in item 6, the volunteers seemed to agree that the survey was not confusing, and each item was clearly written.

I ran a reliability analysis on the motivation scale and self-regulation scale based on the responses from the participants (see Appendix C). For the motivation items, each scale was transformed into a numerical scale (never = 1, sometimes = 2, often = 3, very

often = 4), and a reliability analysis was run to determine whether to include all items to calculate a new scale for each item. Because one item (item 6) did not address motivation, it was excluded from the reliability analysis. The reliability analysis on the motivation section ($\alpha = 0.81$) indicated a high level of internal consistency. Another reliability analysis was run to determine the level of internal consistency in the self-regulation section. Before running the analysis, item 15 was reverse coded because the item was negatively worded. The statistics indicated a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.89$) in the self-regulation section.

Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT)

This section explains the two sets of JPTs, the textbook used to create JPTs, the process of developing the JPTs, and the items included in the JPTs. The contents of the first JPT was based on Unit 1 including lessons one, two, and three. The second JPT included the contents from Unit 2 including lessons four, five, and six (see Appendix D).

I created two sets of pre-test post-test based on the contents from the textbook, *みんなの日本語* (3A Network, 1998). I piloted in two sections of JPN 101 in Fall 2010. I categorized each test item according to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and created the table of specifications (see Appendix E) after a consultation (M. Karvonen, personal communication, April 12, 2011). I piloted a revised first test with 20 students in the Beginning Japanese II (JPN102) course. The results indicated that many distractors did not work. Perhaps, the content was too easy for those who took the test. After the second implementation of these two tests, I revised both tests and administered in JPN102 with 15 students. Some items might not have been challenging, but adding more choices to the vocabulary matching section or choosing

similar sounding words for multiple choice in listening comprehension sections made items a more accurate measure of students' gains.

Once I had revised JPTs to accurately measure students' performance, I administered two sets of JPTs to the test groups. The revised first JPT had three parts, listening, grammar and vocabulary. The listening section had 10 multiple-choice items and six true or false items. The grammar section had seven multiple-choice items and three jumble sentences items. The vocabulary section had 25 matching items. These 25 items were separated into two sub-sections. The first sub-section had 11 Japanese words with 14 choices in English equivalent. They were greetings and useful expressions. The second sub-section had 14 items in English words and 17 choices in Japanese. They were all nouns from Unit 1.

The revised second JPT had four parts, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and reading. The second JPT contained 57 items in total. The listening section contained six multiple-choice items and eight true or false items. The grammar section had 12 multiple-choice items, in which five items were from the first JPT. The vocabulary section had 10 short answer items and 11 matching items. The matching items were from the first JPT. The reading section had 11 true or false items.

Implementation of the Study

This section restates the sample size and explains the procedure of soliciting participants, the technology workshop, the classroom instruction, and the data collection procedures. The population of this study was 75 undergraduate students in three sections of JPN101 at WCU.

Forty-five students participated in this study. On the first day of the class, after the introduction of the JPN101 course, I distributed a consent form (see Appendix F) and explained the purpose of this study, their role in this study, and how their information would be used to conduct the study. I also explained confidentiality of their information and asked to sign if they decided to participate in this study. I asked all of the students to take the form home so that they could spend more time to decide whether to take part in this study. Initially 50 students agreed to participate, but five withdrew from the class.

Following receipt of the consent form, I randomly assigned each section as a whole with three different treatment conditions. The three conditions were Early Semester (ES) condition ($N = 18$), Late Semester (LS) condition ($N = 10$), and Entire Semester (ENT) condition ($N = 17$). LS had the lowest number of participants in this study. A possible explanation could be that some students might have felt uncomfortable about their grades being used for the study. There could have been more students in LS, who felt little overwhelmed with the study. However, I explained the purpose of the study to all sections in the same manner, therefore, the lowest number of participants from LS most likely occurred by chance. ES received the PT treatment during the first half of the semester. LS received the PT treatment during the last half of the semester. ENT received the treatment throughout the semester.

After each group was assigned a different PT treatment condition, all groups took the first JPT pre-test on paper for Unit 1. The period was 60 minutes, but the majority of the participants did not use the entire class period to finish the pre-test. Following the pre-test, ES and ENT spent three class periods to learn how to make podcasts using Microsoft Powerpoint and Windows Live Movie Maker before the PT treatment began. The

participants had the choice of using Garageband instead of using Windows Live Movie Maker to produce a podcast.

The purpose of this technology workshop was for the participants to become familiar with the software to produce a podcast. The participants made slides and audio files, and synchronized them to create a podcast. ES group and ENT group participated in the technology workshop following the JPT 1 pre-test, but LS group went through the workshop later in the semester.

During the technology workshop, the participants worked on a podcast containing the first 10 letters of Hiragana, あ、い、う、え、お、か、き、く、け、こ (see Appendix G). The participants used the Microsoft Powerpoint to make 10 slides. Each slide had one Japanese letter. The Roman letters were not allowed to be included in the slides. The audio file for the practice podcast assignment was provided during the workshop. Students were required to complete the practice PT by the end of the workshop.

Simultaneously, the participants learned how to use a Japanese input method editor on a computer with Windows 7 operating system. The participants learned how to type Japanese characters using Roman letters. There were 46 Hiragana characters, and each character had its phonetically assigned Roman letters. For instance, to type the character か, simply type ka in roman letters and hit enter key to confirm the letter か. The participants typed Hiragana characters using phonetically assigned roman letters to display all Hiragana characters. This practice was essential to the PT because the participants made slides using Hiragana characters. LS drew the first 10 Hiragana characters 10 times each on a paper-pencil character assignment while ES and ENT worked on the practice PT.

Once the technology workshop sessions were finished, ES and ENT started the PT treatment. The PT for each lesson included a vocabulary podcast and a grammar podcast. Participants were given a Japanese word list from each lesson for the vocabulary podcast and the participants made a series of slides based on the word list. The participants typed all words in Japanese, one word per slide, and recorded their pronunciation of each word digitally. They were not allowed to use English equivalent on slides, but were allowed to include English audio if it helped the participants to remember the words. The participants packaged the slides and audio recording as a podcast.

A list of grammar points from each lesson accompanied by example sentences was provided. The participants typed all example sentences in Japanese, one sentence per slide, and recorded reading each sentence aloud. Following the reading of each example sentence, the participants explained the grammar point in their own words using English. They were not allowed to use the translation of example sentences on the slides, but were allowed to include it audibly if it helped them understand the grammar point.

While ES and ENT worked on the series of PTs, LS worked on a series of paper-pencil assignment for both a vocabulary section and a grammar point section (see Appendix H). The participants filled in blank for both sections. The same word list for the vocabulary section was used. The participants wrote the English equivalent for each word on the list for the vocabulary section. The same grammar point list was used for each group for the grammar point section. Each grammar point was accompanied by the same example sentence. The participants filled in blanks to complete the grammar explanation in English for each grammar point.

At the end of Unit 1, all groups took the JPT 1 post-test. The post-test was administered online using Blackboard (Blackboard, 2012). The test period was 60 minutes and the participants took the test in a computer lab to allow for monitoring of the students' behavior on computer during the test. The participants' behavior was monitored on the instructor computer so that nobody could use external sources, for instance checking emails, asking friends for help, using an online dictionary, etc., to engage in academic dishonesty, which would have had impact on the results of this study.

Once the JPT 1 post-test was completed, the participants were administered the JPT 2 pre-test. The pre-test was administered on paper. The test time was 60 minutes, but the majority of the participants did not use the entire class period to finish the test. Following the completion of the pre-test, LS went through the technology workshop in the same format as ES and ENT did. The only difference between the two technology workshops was the set of characters used in the practice podcasts. While ES and ENT used the first 10 Hiragana characters for the practice podcasts, LS used the first 10 Katakana characters. The sound for each character used was the same, but characters were drawn differently. ES and ENT worked on a pencil-paper assignment to draw those ten Katakana characters, while LS used computers to type those ten Katakana characters. The treatment was alternated between ES and LS, once we started Unit 2, which contained lessons four, five, and six.

All groups received the same face-to-face instructions. Each session was recorded and uploaded to the iTunes U at WCU. All students had access to a series of recorded lectures during the period of study. During the face-to-face sessions, all groups took Kana character quizzes. These quizzes were not part of the PT treatment. The results of these

quizzes were not part of the outcomes of this study, either. But, typically, these quizzes were part of the classroom instruction in JPN101. There were five Hiragana quizzes administered and the first three quizzes tested 10 characters and the last two quizzes tested eight characters. Each letter was pronounced in random order. For example, the first ten characters were あ、い、う、え、お、か、き、く、け、こ. Each character was pronounced a total of three times and the participants wrote an appropriate character according to what they heard. These quizzes were given to help students match the sound and character.

Once Unit 1 was completed, the participants took an oral performance exam (see Appendix I), where the participants were paired up and worked on the dialogue in Japanese. The oral performance exams were not part of the PT treatment, nor did they serve as part of the outcomes of this study. Rather, the oral exams were part of the typical classroom activities just like Kana characters quizzes. The oral exam had two parts. The first part was regarding personal information. The second part was a role-play, in which each student was assigned to play a customer and a store clerk.

After the oral exam was done, the participants had a review session for Unit 1 and took the first JPT. The review session went briefly over grammar points covered. The review session used an entire period, and the participants took the first JPT during the next face-to-face session online. The period was 50 minutes.

After Unit 1 was done, all groups took the JPT 2 pre-test for Unit 2, which contained lessons four, five, and six. The classroom instruction, quizzes, and the JPT 2 post-test were given in the same manner as Unit 1. However, the quizzes were on Katakana characters instead of Hiragana characters. The oral performance for this unit

was to talk about what they did during the Thanksgiving break. The LS started the PT treatment following the technology workshop and the ES started the pencil-paper assignments. The ENT continued the PT for the second half of the semester. After Unit 2 was done, all groups took the JPT 2 post-test on Blackboard (Blackboard, 2012).

The SETUS was administered during the last two weeks of the study. Before administration of the SETUS, I explained to all of the participants that the purpose of the SETUS was to collect data on the PT treatment, and not necessarily about the overall impression of the course. I mentioned specifically that there was an online course evaluation that they could fill out for the course, but the SETUS was about the PT treatment in the course. I verbally communicated with all of the enrolled students several times during the two weeks of the SETUS deployment.

Data Analysis

The dependent variables in this study were participants' responses to the SETUS and their performance on two JPTs. The independent variable was the PT treatment condition. The SETUS data were collected during the last two weeks of the semester online. Thirty-eight of the original 45 participants completed the SETUS. The first JPT data were collected at the beginning and the end of Unit 1. The second JPT data were collected at the beginning of Unit 2. The JPT pre-tests were administered on paper, but the JPT post-tests were administered online. Forty-five participants completed both sets of JPTs. All of the statistical tests used an alpha level of 0.05.

For research question one, the descriptive statistics of two items (items 24 and 25) used to examine how the participants responded to the PTs. The descriptive statistics of six items (items 18-23) were also used to examine the participants' perceptions on the

PTs in terms of the development of Japanese language skills. The result of the open-ended question were compiled and analyzed to further investigate participants' perceptions on the PTs.

For research question 2-a, the descriptive statistics and the result of a Kruskal-Wallis H test were used to analyze if there was any statistically significant difference among three treatment groups. Seven items were included to compute a new scale and I ran a Kruskal-Wallis H test to analyze the difference among three treatment groups. For the self-regulation section all eight items were included to compute a new scale to run a Kruskal-Wallis H test to analyze the difference among three treatment groups.

The descriptive statistics were used to analyze the effect of PT on students' engagement for High Achieving group (HA) and Low Achieving group (LA). All of the participants' GPAs (Grade Point Average) were compiled and the descriptive statistics were used to form two different groups. Two participants were excluded because their GPAs were not available due to their student status at WCU. Hence, 36 participants were divided into two groups based on a GPA of 3.09. Eighteen participants were placed in the HA with the mean GPA of 3.54 and 18 participants were placed in LA with the mean GPA of 2.53. The subdivision of HA and LA in conjunction with three different treatment groups resulted in small cell size for each category. Therefore, inferential statistics were not useful to further analyze the data.

Descriptive statistics and a series of Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test were used to analyze the JPTs results to answer the research question 3-a, b, and c. The descriptive statistics and a Kruskal-Wallis H test were used to analyze the JPT data to answer the research question 3-d. All statistical analyses used a percent correct of the JPT results.

The descriptive statistics were used to analyze the effect of PT on participants' performance for HA and LA group. All of the participants' GPAs were compiled and descriptive statistics were used to form two different groups. Two participants were excluded because their GPAs were not available due to their student status at WCU. Hence, 43 participants were divided into two groups using the GPA of 3.0. Twenty-two participants were placed in the HA with the mean GPA of 3.48 and 21 participants were placed in the LA with the mean GPA of 2.24. The subdivision of HA and LA in conjunction with three different treatment groups resulted in small cell size for each category. Therefore, inferential statistics were not useful to further analyze the data to answer the research question 3-e.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of podcast tasks (PTs) on students' performance and their attitudes toward the PTs in a beginning level Japanese course. The guiding questions of this study were:

1. How did students respond to the PTs in a beginning level Japanese language course?
2. What was the effect of the PTs on students' engagement in a beginning Japanese language course?
 - a. Was the effect of the PT treatment on students' engagement different among three different groups?
 - b. Was the effect of the PT treatment on students' engagement different for high and low achieving students?
3. What was the effect of the PTs on students' performance on the Japanese proficiency tests in a beginning level Japanese language course?
 - a. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the early semester treatment group?
 - b. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the late semester treatment group?
 - c. Was there a relationship between the PT treatment and students' performance in the full semester treatment group?
 - d. Was the effect of the PT treatment different among three different groups?

- e. Was the effect of the PTs on student performance on Japanese proficiency tests different for high and low achieving students?

This chapter presents the description of participants, participants' responses to the PTs during the course, the effect of the PTs on students' engagement, and the effect of the PTs on students' performance. The participants were separated into three groups according to course section which they were enrolled. The first section, designated as Early Semester (ES) treatment group, and had three PTs in the first half of the semester. The second section, designated as Late Semester (LS) treatment group, had three PTs in the last half of the semester. Both groups had three pencil-paper assignments when they did not have the PTs. The third section, designated as Entire (ENT) semester treatment group, had six PTs and no pencil-paper assignments.

Description of the Participants

All participants were undergraduate students at Western Carolina University. They were in a beginning level Japanese language course. The majority of participants were either freshmen (42%) or sophomore (36%) students. There were 24 female participants (53%) and 21 male participants (47%). The most prevalent degree sought by participants was a bachelor degree in science (44%), followed by a bachelor degree in arts (22%). The LS group ($n=10$) had the smallest number of participants in this study. LS was the earliest scheduled section among all three groups. The description of gender, class standing, types of degree sought is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Description of Participants by Gender, Class Standing and Type of Degree Sought

Characteristics	ES (<i>n</i> = 17)		LS (<i>n</i> = 10)		ENT (<i>n</i> = 18)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Gender						
Male	8	47.1	6	60	7	38.9
Female	9	52.9	4	40	11	61.1
Class						
Freshman	6	35.2	2	20	11	61.1
Sophomore	8	47.1	3	30	5	27.8
Junior	2	11.8	2	20		
Senior	1	5.9	3	30	2	11.1
Type of degree						
BA	2	11.8	3	30	5	27.8
BS	8	47.1	5	50	7	38.9
BFA	1	5.9	2	20	3	16.7
Undeclared	6	35.2			3	16.7

Treatment Implementation

Initially, 50 students (67%) agreed to participate in this study, but five students, two from both ES and LS, and one from ENT, withdrew from the course, hence 45 participants (60%) completed both sets of pre-tests and post-tests (JPTs). However, only 38 participants (51%) completed the student engagement survey (SETUS). The number of participants in the JPTs and the SETUS by the groups are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

Number of Eligible Participants in JPT and SETUS

Group	JPT (N = 45)		Survey (N = 38)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
ES	17	37.8	16	42.1
LS	10	22.2	8	21.1
ENT	18	40	14	36.8

All of the participants were required to work on the PTs as treatment throughout the study. The LS and the ES were assigned to work on three PTs and the ENT was assigned to work on six PTs. Fourteen ES participants completed all three PTs while only four LS participants completed all three PTs. Twelve ENT participants completed all six podcasts while one ENT participant did not complete the PTs at all. The summary of the number of the PTs completed is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Number of PTs Completed by Participants

PTs submitted	ES (n = 17)		LS (n = 10)		ENT (n = 18)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
0					1	5.6
1			2	20	2	11.1
2	3	17.6	4	40	1	5.6
3	14	82.4	4	40		
4					2	11.1
5						
6					12	66.7

As far as the hours spent on completing the PTs, the majority of ES participants reported spending up to 10 hours working on the PTs. However, one ES participant spent more than 30 hours to complete the PTs. It is interesting to note that one ES participant spent many hours on the PTs while one ENT participant did not spend any time at all.

Table 4 gives the summary of hours spent on the PTs.

Table 4

Hours Spent on Completing PTs

Hours	ES (<i>n</i> = 16)		LS (<i>n</i> = 8)		ENT (<i>n</i> = 14)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
0					1	7.1
1-5	6	37.5	1	12.5	1	7.1
6-10	5	31.3	5	62.5	4	28.6
11-15	2	12.5	2	25.0	2	14.3
16-20	2	12.5			3	21.4
21-25					2	14.3
26-29					1	7.1
More than 30	1	6.3				

Students' Responses to PTs

At the end of the semester, all of the participants completed a survey, Student Engagement Technology Use Survey (SETUS). The survey contained 26 items addressing attitudes toward PTs, participants' motivation, and self-regulation. This section presents participants' perceptions on the PTs. There were two items using a Likert-type scale for the participants to respond: I enjoyed working on the podcast tasks (item 24); I would like to use podcasts as a learning tool for other courses (item 25).

Overall, 24 participants (63%) agreed with item 24. Also, 24 participants (63%) agreed with item 25. Among those who indicated positive attitudes toward the PTs, six participants (25%) strongly agreed on item 24 and 18 participants (75%) strongly agreed on item 25. There were three ES participants (19%) who strongly disagreed on item 24.

There were also three ENT participants (19%) who strongly disagreed on item 25. While the majority seemed to have enjoyed working on the PTs, there were also those who did not enjoy working on the PTs at all. The complete summary of responses to both items is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Perceived Preference on PTs (N = 38)

Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
24. Enjoyed PTs								
ES	3	18.8	1	6.3	9	56.3	3	18.8
LS	1	12.5	3	37.5	4	50		
ENT	1	7.1	5	35.7	5	35.7	3	21.4
25. Would use in other courses								
ES	3	18.8	1	6.3	10	62.5	2	12.5
LS	1	12.5	3	37.5	4	50		
ENT	1	7.1	5	35.7	6	42.9	2	14.3

In addition to item 24 and item 25, the participants were asked to make any comments regarding the PTs if desired (item 26). The result indicated mixed responses on podcasting. Thirteen participants (34%) made comments on the PTs. Ten participants (26%) left comments on the course and in-class activities. However, 15 participants (40%) did not leave any comments.

Among the responses regarding the PTs, eight participants clearly indicated that podcasts were helpful. One participant said, “I though [*sic*] the podcasts were a very interesting and useful tool for learning.” Two participants mentioned that the PTs helped them retain information more than paper-based assignments. One participant said, “The podcasts actually helped more than filling out the worksheets. I feel much more comfortable with the material from the first part of the semester than the current material.” Another said:

The podcasts were extremely helpful - the only problem was with my room mate [*sic*] who would not like when I had to record my part which made it difficult to keep up with it. But I could definitely tell a difference in how well I retained the information we were learning.

One participant mentioned that the PTs gave her confidence in successfully learning materials. She said:

Having to put the grammar points into my own words and basically teach them was helpful for me. When I'm able to successfully explain something to someone else, I feel like I have successfully learned the topic. The podcasts really helped to solidify the grammatical rules for me.

One participant referred to the integration of technology into schoolwork in addition to helpfulness of the PTs. He said:

I really enjoyed the podcast assignments because we are in the year 2012 and we use technology everyday with just about everything and it is about time that schoolwork caught up to today's modern tech-based society. When I was doing the regular written assignments, I found myself just filling in the answers without

actually taking the time to say the words or practice the language. Podcasts forced me to teach myself the language in a very fun way.

On the other hand, five participants expressed that the PTs did not help them learn the materials, although a few of them admitted that the PTs were interesting. One participant said, “I think the podcasts are a good idea, but I like to learn in a different way. I am very visual, but I remember things more if we talk about them in class.”

Another participant said:

They were very interesting and it was the first time that I ever used it on a normal basis so it was interesting to learn the technology but it really didn't help my skills with japanese [*sic*]. It just seemed like a tedious task that I had to do and something that I could easily forget about. I would have liked actual homework assignments like print outs or worksheets to work on for homework instead. I believe I could have learned more effectively if I was given these items especially since not everything included with the podcast assignments were repeated in class.

In addition to podcast not being helpful, one participant expressed how she despised the PTs. She said:

I HATE podcasts. I spent three hours on one because the slides kept breaking. I honestly don't think I learned anything from them. Often times, I became frustrated and rather than trying to learn the material, my focus would shift to just getting them over with. I like the paper assignments because I could actually concentrate on the material and understand it.

There were six items that assessed how participants believed podcasting helped develop Japanese language skills in terms of learning kana characters, memorizing vocabulary, pronunciation, listening comprehension skills and speaking skills. One item asked whether the podcasting helped in understanding the course materials and ideas (item 23). Overall, the majority of ES and LS participants thought podcasting helped them develop Japanese language skills.

In contrast, more ENT participants felt that podcasting helped little or did not help them develop Japanese language skills. Eight ENT participants (57%) thought the PTs helped a little or did not help them learn kana characters while 11 ES participants (69%) and four LS participants (38%) thought the PTs helped them learn kana characters. Perhaps the majority of ENT participants thought typing Japanese characters was not an effective way to learn kana characters. Or, because ENT had six PTs instead of three PTs that making slides for all PTs got boring and tiring for the ENT participants.

All ES (100%) and the majority of LS (75%) participants thought the PTs helped them memorize vocabulary while six ENT participants (43%) thought the PTs helped a little or did not help them memorize vocabulary. ENT participants had twice the number of the PTs compared to ES or LS participants. Twelve ENT participants (67%) completed all six PTs and two ENT participants completed four PTs, which was more than the ES and the LS participants were assigned.

Although there was a relatively small number of participants across all groups, a few participants felt that the PTs did not help develop any Japanese language skills or understand the course materials at all. Especially in ENT group, at least one participant, if

not two, felt that the PTs did not help develop Japanese language skills or understand the materials at all. The complete summary of responses is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

Perceived Utility of PTs in Developing Japanese Language Skills

Items	Not at all		Very little		Quite a bit		Very much	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Kana characters								
ES	1	6.3	4	25.0	9	56.3	2	12.5
LS	2	25.0	3	37.5	3	25.0	1	12.5
ENT	2	14.3	6	42.9	2	14.3	4	28.6
Vocabulary								
ES					14	87.5	2	12.5
LS	1	12.5	1	12.5	4	50	2	25
ENT	1	7.1	5	35.7	5	35.7	3	21.4
Pronunciation								
ES			1	6.3	12	75.0	3	18.8
LS			1	12.5	5	62.5	2	25
ENT	1	7.1	2	14.3	4	28.6	7	50
Listening skills								
ES			2	12.5	13	81.3	1	6.3
LS			2	25.0	4	50.0	2	25.0
ENT	2	14.3	4	28.6	4	28.6	4	28.6

Speaking skills									
ES					12	75.0		4	25.0
LS			1	12.5	4	50.0		3	37.5
ENT	2	14.3	4	28.6	6	42.9		2	14.3
Understand course materials and ideas									
ES ^a			2	12.5	9	56.3		4	25
LS	1	12.5			4	50.0		3	37.5
ENT	1	7.1	4	28.6	6	42.9		3	21.4

(^a*n* = 15)

Overall, ES and LS participants responded to the PTs more positively than ENT participants did. The PTs helped the majority of participants memorize vocabulary and develop pronunciation, listening, and speaking skills. Thirteen ES participants (81%), seven LS participants (88%) and nine ENT participants (64%) thought the PTs helped them understand the course materials and ideas. Though five ENT participants (36%), one LS participant (13%), and two ES participants (13%) thought the PTs did not help them understand the materials at all, the majority of participants reacted positively to the integration of PTs into language acquisition.

The Effect of PTs on Students' Engagement

Students' engagement was defined by two constructs, motivation and self-regulation. The Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) included 17 items to measure motivation and self-regulation, but one item was deleted before the analysis was run because the item did not address motivation or self-regulation. Before

the SETUS was administered online, the purpose of the survey was explained and it was explicitly made clear that the participants would fill out the survey regarding the podcast task (PT) treatment. There were seven items regarding motivation and eight items regarding self-regulation. The motivation items used a 4-point Likert-type scale of never, sometimes, often, and very often. The self-regulation items used a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1= not all true of me to 5 = very true of me. Items for each scale were averaged to provide a single score for each scale. The descriptive statistics and the new scale for motivation and self-regulation were compiled and analyzed to determine the difference in students' engagement by the PT treatment. Further, the study attempted to investigate if the PT treatment would affect students' engagement differently among high and low achieving participants determined by participants Grade Point Average (GPA).

Differences in Students' Engagement by Treatment Groups

The differences in the effect of the PTs on the students' engagement by treatment condition were examined based on the level of motivation and the degree of self-regulation. A couple of motivation items showed little difference across groups. Nine ES participants (56%) and six LS participants (75%) reported that they often worked harder than expected (item 7) while six ENT participants (43%) reported that they often worked harder than expected. Seemingly more ES and LS participants were motivated to work harder than ENT participants. However, all LS and ENT participants reported that they often completed the assignments, which did not support the group difference in item 7. In addition, nine ES participants (56%) and six ENT participants (43%) responded that they sometimes completed or did not complete the readings. This result also did not agree with the group difference observed in item 7.

More participants from ES (75%) and LS (75%) reported that they discussed the ideas outside of class (item 8) while less than half of ENT (43%) reported that they often discussed the ideas outside of class. This could imply that ES and LS participants were more motivated to seek external sources to complete the PTs. However, seven LS participants (88%) and eight ENT participants (59%) reported that they often completed readings before coming to class (item 4) while nine ES participants (54%) sometimes completed the readings or never completed the readings. The summary of responses for motivation items by group is shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Self-reported Level of Motivation by Groups (N = 38)

Items	Never		Sometimes		Often		Very Often	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1. Asked questions in class								
ES			7	43.8	8	50	1	6.3
LS			4	50	3	40	1	10
ENT	2	14.3	5	35.7	5	35.7	2	14.3
2. Contributed to class discussion								
ES			8	50	5	31.3	3	18.8
LS	2	25	2	25	1	12.5	3	37.5
ENT	2	14.3	6	42.9	4	28.6	2	14.3

3. Integrated ideas on readings ^a								
ES	1	6.3	5	31.3	4	25	5	31.3
LS	1	12.5	1	12.5	3	37.5	3	37.5
ENT	1	7.1	4	28.6	6	42.9	3	21.4
4. Completed readings								
ES	2	12.5	7	43.8	5	31.3	2	12.5
LS	1	12.5			5	62.5	2	25
ENT	1	7.1	5	35.7	4	28.6	4	28.6
5. Completed Assignments								
ES			3	18.8	8	50	5	31.3
LS					1	1	7	87.5
ENT					8	57.1	6	42.9
7. Worked harder than expected								
ES			7	43.8	7	43.8	2	12.5
LS	1	12.5	1	12.5	4	50	2	25
ENT	2	14.3	6	42.9	5	35.7	1	7.1
8. Discussed ideas outside of class								
ES			4	25	4	25	8	50
LS			2	25	3	37.5	3	37.5
ENT	1	7.1	7	50	4	28.6	2	14.3

(^a*n* = 37)

Responses to individual items were combined into a single motivation scale. The mean motivation scale score for LS was slightly higher than ES, and ENT had the lowest mean score on the motivation scale. ($M_{LS} = 3.02$, $SD_{LS} = 0.61$, $M_{ES} = 2.82$, $SD_{ES} = 0.53$, $M_{ENT} = 2.68$, $SD_{ENT} = 0.67$). A Kruskal-Wallis H test was run to determine whether there was any difference among three groups in terms of the level of motivation. The test revealed no statistically significant difference among three treatment conditions, $H(2) = 1.586$, $p = 0.452$, with a mean rank of 19.27 for ES, 22.63 for LS, and 16.64 for the ENT. Even though a couple of motivation items showed a difference among the three groups, and the LS had the highest mean score on the motivation scale, the effect of the PTs on motivation scale among the three groups was not statistically significant.

The other measure of engagement in this study was self-regulation. The responses on some of the self-regulation items indicated that there was a slight difference among three groups. The participants were required to explain grammar points in their own words when working on the PTs. More than two-thirds of ES (69%) and LS (75%) participants reported that putting important ideas into their own words (item 12) was either true or very true of them while less than half of ENT participants (43%) reported that it was true or very true of them.

More ES (69%) and LS (75%) participants responded that preferring challenging class work (item 13) was either true or very true of them while half of ENT participants (50%) stated that it was true or very true of them. This result might explain that more ES and LS participants felt that it was important to put ideas into their own words. The PTs were designed to be comprehensible, yet challenging due to its contents and articulation

of information required to be completed. This might explain why the results of item 12 and item 13 corresponded to each other.

It was also interesting to note that one ENT participant seemed to indicate disinterest in any self-regulation items. However, there was one ENT participant who did not complete any PTs and showed no interest in the PT treatment. Therefore it was not surprising that one participant answered negatively to all self-regulation items. The summary of responses for the self-regulations items is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Self-reported Evaluation of Self-regulation (N = 38)

Items	Not all true of me		Slightly True of me		Halfway true of me		True of me		Very true of me	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
9. Connecting new and old knowledge										
ES					4	25	7	43.8	5	31.3
LS					2	25	5	62.5	1	12.5
ENT	1	7.1			5	35.7	5	35.7	3	21.4
10. Repeating words numerous times										
ES			1	6.3	4	25	9	56.3	2	12.5
LS			2	25			3	37.5	3	37.5
ENT	1	7.1			4	28.6	6	42.9	3	21.4
11. Using old assignments and the textbook										
ES			1	6.3	4	25	10	62.5	1	6.3
LS					1	12.5	4	50	3	37.5
ENT	1	7.1			3	21.4	6	42.9	4	28.6
12. Putting important ideas into my own words										
ES					5	31.3	7	43.8	4	25
LS					2	25	4	50	2	25
ENT	1	7.1	2	14.3	5	35.7	4	28.6	2	14.3

13. Remembering
what was said in class

ES					4	25	7	43.8	5	31.3
LS							3	37.5	5	62.5
ENT	1	7.1			2	14.3	6	42.9	5	35.7

14. Class work being
challenging

ES			1	6.3	4	25	8	50	3	18.8
LS					2	25	4	50	2	25
ENT	1	7.1	1	7.1	5	35.7	2	14.3	5	35.7

15. Giving up work
when it is hard

ES	3	18.8	8	50	3	18.8	2	12.5		
LS	2	25	5	62.5	1	12.5				
ENT	1	7.1	9	64.3	3	21.4			1	7.1

16. Finishing work
even if they are dull

ES					6	37.5	7	43.8	3	18.8
LS					2	25	2	25	4	50
ENT	1	7.1			2	14.3	5	35.7	6	42.9

The LS mean score on self-regulation scale was slightly higher than the ES or the ENT, and the ENT had the lowest mean score on the self-regulation scale ($M_{LS} = 3.84$, $SD_{LS} = 0.43$, $M_{ES} = 3.72$, $SD_{ES} = 0.39$, $M_{ENT} = 3.57$, $SD_{ENT} = 0.78$). A Kruskal-Wallis H test was run to determine whether there was any difference among three groups in terms

of self-regulation. The test revealed no statistically significant difference among three treatment conditions $H(2) = 1.330, p = 0.514$, with a mean rank of 18.84 for the ES, 23.44 for the LS, and 18.00 for the ENT. While a couple of self-regulation items indicated a slight difference between the half semester treatment groups, the LS and the ES, and the ENT, the treatment condition was not statistically significantly different among the three groups.

In summary, the result of the SETUS did not indicate that the effect of the PTs on students' engagement was statistically significantly different by treatment condition. The descriptive statistics indicated that the LS had the highest mean on both motivation and self-regulation scales. The ENT had the lowest mean score on both motivation and self-regulation.

Differences in Students' Engagement by Achievement

The subdivision of Low Achieving group (LA) and High Achieving group (HA), based on GPA, within each treatment group resulted in small cell sizes. Hence, inferential statistics were not useful for further investigation. However, the descriptive statistics seemed to indicate that the HA within each treatment group scored higher on both motivation and self-regulation scales. LSHA had the highest mean among all six subdivided groups on both motivation and self-regulation scales. Table 9 summarizes the descriptive statistics of LA and HA of each treatment condition on motivation and self-regulation scales.

Table 9

Scale Scores by Treatment and Achievement Group

Group	<i>n</i>	Motivation ^a		<i>n</i>	Self-regulation	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
ES						
LA	8	2.73	0.45	9	3.46	0.37
HA	7	2.92	0.63	7	3.95	0.31
LS						
LA	3	2.95	0.58	3	3.63	0.66
HA	5	3.06	0.69	5	4.04	0.22
ENT						
LA	6	2.36	0.75	6	3.10	0.94
HA	6	2.93	0.58	6	3.99	0.37
^(a) <i>n</i> = 37)						

(^a*n* = 37)

The Effect of PTs on Students' Performance

This section presents the analysis of participants' performance gains on two sets of Japanese Proficiency Tests (JPTs). The descriptive statistics of a mean percent correct on each JPT test, a series of Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks tests and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used to analyze whether there was a statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain by the treatment conditions. All of the statistical tests used an alpha level of 0.05. The data came from two sets of JPT pre-tests and post-tests. Each JPT set was administered before and after two separate units. The study also investigated whether the PT treatment affected high and low achieving participants, determined by

participants' Grade Point Average (GPA), differently in conjunction with each treatment condition.

Relationship Between PTs and Students' Performance Within Groups

Early Semester (ES). The percent correct of each Japanese Proficiency Test (JPT) set was compared to determine if the gain on each pre-test to post-test was statistically significant. The group mean of the JPT 1 post-test ($M_{post} = 74.5$, $SD_{post} = 18.1$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 22.3$, $SD_{pre} = 6.2$). The group mean of the JPT 2 post-test ($M_{post} = 54.1$, $SD_{post} = 16.9$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 32.9$, $SD_{pre} = 7.5$). The distribution of percent correct of each test over time is displayed in Figure 3.

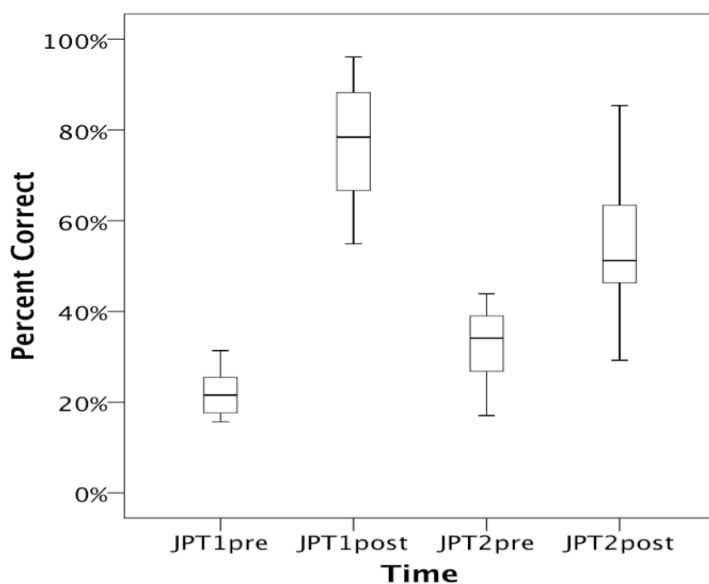


Figure 3. Percent correct of four JPTs (Early Semester treatment group).

The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to post-tests was compared to further investigate if there was any statistical significantly difference in participants performance gain with or without the PT treatment. The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test was 52.2 ($SD = 16.1$). The group mean of the

gain on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test was 21.2 ($SD = 16.4$). A Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was run to investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on both JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to post-tests. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on both sets of JPTs ($Z = -3.574, p < 0.001$) based on positive ranks. The mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 1 gain was 9.5, while the mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 2 gain was 1.0. The results indicated that ES participants had greater gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test than on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test.

Late Semester (LS). The percent correct of each JPT set was compared to determine if the gain on each pre-test to post-test was statistically significant. The group mean of the JPT 1 post-test ($M_{post} = 78.4, SD_{post} = 19.7$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 19.8, SD_{pre} = 11.1$). The group mean of the JPT 2 post-test ($M_{post} = 59.3, SD_{post} = 15.8$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 34.9, SD_{pre} = 14.2$). The distribution of percent correct of each test over time is displayed in Figure 4.

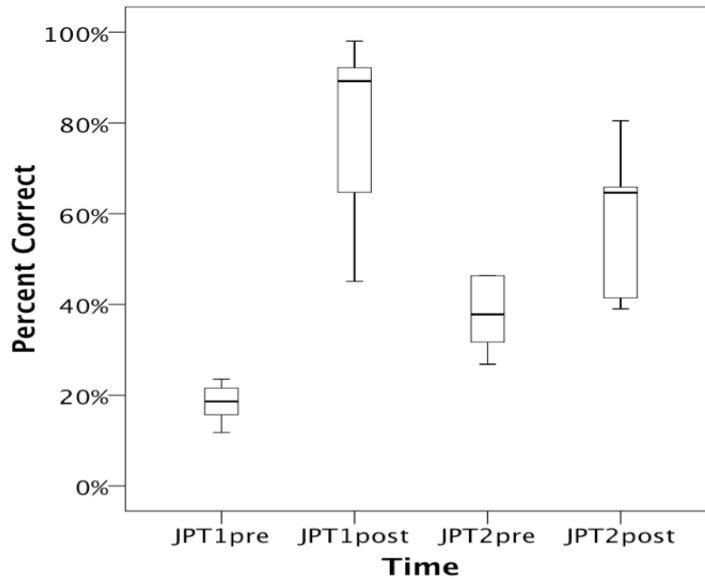


Figure 4. Percent correct of four JPTs (Late Semester treatment group).

The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to post-test was compared to further investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain with or without the PT treatment. The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test was 58.6 ($SD = 18.5$). The group mean of the gain on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test was 24.4 ($SD = 15.5$). A Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was run to investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to the post-tests. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on the two post-tests ($Z = -2.803, p = 0.005$) based on positive ranks. The mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 1 gain was 5.5, while the mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 2 gain was 0.0. The results indicated that the LS participants had greater gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test than on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test.

Entire Semester (ENT). The percent correct of each JPT set was compared to determine if the gain on each post-test was statistically significant. The group mean of the JPT 1 post-test ($M_{post} = 74.6$, $SD_{post} = 22.1$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 20.0$, $SD_{pre} = 7.3$). The group mean of the JPT 2 post-test ($M_{post} = 63.1$, $SD_{post} = 17.2$) was higher than the pre-test ($M_{pre} = 36.2$, $SD_{pre} = 12.2$). The distribution of percent correct of each test over time is displayed in Figure 5.

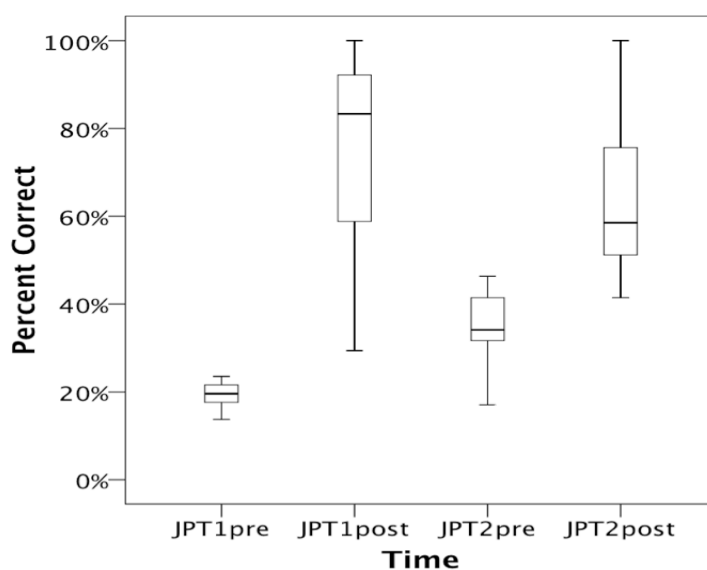


Figure 5. Percent correct of four JPTs (Entire Semester treatment group)

The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to the post-tests was compared to further investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in students' performance gain on each set of JPTs. The group mean of the gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test was 54.6 ($SD = 23.6$). The group mean of the gain on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test was 27.0 ($SD = 17.9$). A Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was run to investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on both JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to the post-tests. The results indicated

that there was a statistically significant difference in participants' performance gain on JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to the post-tests ($Z = -3.245, p = 0.001$) based on positive ranks. The mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 1 gain was 10.67, while the mean of the ranks in favor of the JPT 2 gain was 3.67. The results indicate that the ENT participants had greater gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test than on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test.

Group Differences in Relationship of PTs and Performance by Treatment

First, a Kruskal-Wallis H test was run to determine whether there was any difference in the three groups on the JPT 1 pre-test. Though the sampling process excluded those who had prior experience with the Japanese language, the test was run to ensure that there was no statistically significant difference among the three groups so that one or more groups had no advantage over another group or groups. The test result found no statistically significant difference among the three groups, $\chi^2(2, N = 45) = 1.68, p = 0.43$.

The descriptive statistics of a mean percent correct on gain and a Kruskal-Wallis H test were used to determine whether there was any statistically significant difference in the gain on two sets of JPTs. The ES had the smallest mean gain on JPT 1 ($M_{ES} = 52.2, SD_{ES} = 16.1$) and the smallest mean gain on JPT 2 ($M_{ES} = 21.2, SD_{ES} = 16.4$). The LS had the highest mean ($M_{LS} = 58.6, SD_{LS} = 18.5$) JPT 1 gain, but the JPT 2 gain ($M_{LS} = 24.4, SD_{LS} = 15.5$) was neither the highest nor the lowest. Though ENT group mean gain on JPT 1 ($M_{ENT} = 54.6, SD_{ENT} = 23.6$) was not either highest or the lowest, the ENT had the highest mean gain ($M_{ENT} = 27.0, SD_{ENT} = 17.9$). The summary of medians and interquartile ranges (IQR) of the three groups by all JPTs is displayed in Table 10.

Table 10

Medians and Interquartile Ranges (IQR) of the Three Groups by all JPTs

Group	JPT1Pre		JPT1Post		JPT2Pre		JPT2Post	
	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>IQR</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>IQR</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>IQR</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>IQR</i>
ES	21.6	7.84	78.4	26.47	34.1	13.41	36.8	19.30
LS	18.6	7.35	89.2	31.86	37.8	15.85	46.5	20.61
ENT	19.6	4.90	83.3	34.80	34.1	12.20	42.1	19.74

The compiled descriptive statistics indicated that LS had the highest mean in gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test and ENT had the highest mean in gain on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test. However, a Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed no statistically significant group difference in gain on the JPT 1 tests, $\chi^2(2, N = 45) = 0.66, p = 0.72$. The test also revealed no statistically significant group difference in gain on the JPT 2 tests, $\chi^2(2, N = 45) = 0.72, p = 0.70$. The results seemed to suggest that the timing or the length of PT treatment did not have much effect on participants' academic performance on JPTs. All three groups had greater gain on the JPT 1 pre-test to the post-test than they did on the JPT 2 pre-test to the post-test when compared within groups. It might be possible that the contents became more difficult naturally as the course progressed. Krashen (1981, 1982) claimed that language learners acquire grammatical structure in a certain natural order. He hypothesized that this order occurs independently and should not be disturbed. His hypothesis might not describe the test result directly, but it could explain that as language acquisition progressed, the grammatical materials would be more complicated. It is likely that the natural progress of the course materials became more difficult for the participants to master the content.

It is also possible that the PTs did not provide meaningful input to the participants. As the content became harder in the later lessons, the participants might have had a more difficult time to relate the information given with what they already knew. As Krashen (1981, 1982) and Wittrock (1974) suggested, construction of new knowledge occurs when learners find links between old and new information. Therefore it is necessary for the two sets of information to be relatable, but there might have been a gap between classroom instruction and the required contents of the PTs such that the participants could not take advantage of the treatment. The difference of the JPT pre-tests and post-tests by treatment groups is shown in Figure 6.

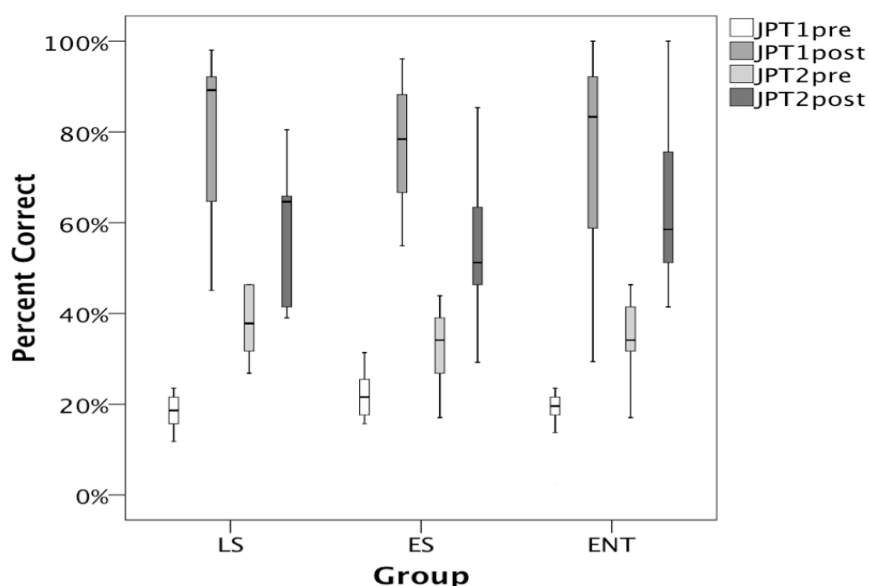


Figure 6. Percent correct of four JPTs by treatment groups

Relationship of PTs and Performance by Achievement

All participants were subdivided into High Achieving (HA) and Low Achieving (LA) based on GPA, within each treatment group, to further investigate the effect of PTs on participants' performance by the three treatment groups. The same process was used

in research question two when the effect of PTs on students' engagement by achievement groups was investigated.

Seemingly, High Achieving (HA) participants in each treatment condition group had higher mean scores than Low Achieving (LA) participants, but due to the small sample size, no statistical test was run to determine if there was any statistically significant difference between HA and LA in conjunction with the different treatment conditions. The comparison of measurement over time by HA and LA is shown in Figure 7.

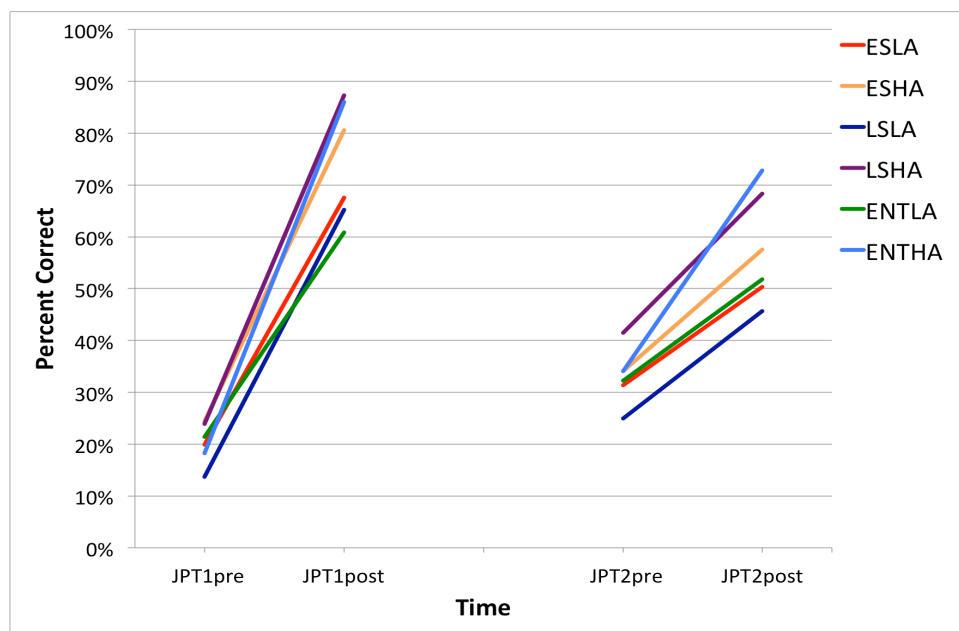


Figure 7. Comparison of gains between high and low achieving groups

Summary

Overall, the results of SETUS indicated that 24 participants (63%) agreed that they enjoyed working on the PTs. Also, 24 participants (63%) agreed that they would not mind using podcasting as learning tool in other courses. However, 25 participants did not leave any comments regarding podcasting. Some participants stated that making podcasts

was an interesting idea and working on PTs helped them understand the course materials. The survey results did not reveal that there was a statistically significant difference in the effect of the PTs on students' engagement by the treatment groups. Each treatment group was separated into HA and LA group based on their GPA to determine if there was any difference between high and low achieving participants. The descriptive statistics seemed to indicate that there was a slight difference between HA and LA regarding motivation and self-regulation, but due to its small sample cell size, no statistical test was run to determine if there was any statistical difference between HA and LA.

The descriptive statistics, a Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test, and a Kruskal-Wallis H test determined the effect of PTs on participants' academic performance. A series of Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test revealed that each group had a statistically significant gain on both JPT 1 and JPT 2 pre-test to the post-tests. Each group had higher mean on the JPT 1 gain than they did on the JPT 2 gain. The same pattern was observed in all three groups.

While gain on both units was statistically significant, a Kruskal-Wallis H test indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the three treatment conditions in gains. Each treatment condition was separated by the HA and the LA to investigate if the effect of PTs was different among the HA and the LA according to each treatment. The sample size was too small in each category to make any inferences statistically, but the descriptive statistics seemingly indicated that the HA outperformed the LA in each condition.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents discussion to address the research questions based on the findings of the study. The chapter also discusses strengths and limitations of the current study, the significance of the study, recommendations for future research, and recommendations for future practice.

The podcast is a form of digital file that can be disseminated online (Lazzari, 2009). Many educational institutions have joined iTunes U to deliver digital contents such as recordings of lecture, and supplemental learning materials to their students (Apple Inc., 2012). Many researchers have started to explore the pedagogical aspect of podcasting in education as more varieties of podcasts become available. Prior studies on academic use of podcasts have mainly focused on podcasts for users, not on impact on producers (Abt & Barry, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2009; Carl et al., 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Dupagne et al., 2009; Lord, 2008; Nicholson et al., 2010).

Some studies investigated how making podcasts could help students understand course materials and subjects, but only a few studies examined the educational value of the podcast as a learning tool based on any learning theory. As more podcasts become available and more educational institutions join iTunes U (Dalrymple, 2011; Wolfson & Neumayr, 2010), it is imperative that the pedagogical value of podcasts be examined in conjunction with educational learning theories.

The current study investigated the effect of podcasting as a learning tool on students' engagement and performance in an introductory Japanese language course. Three sections of the course were assigned to different conditions: the Early Semester

(ES) treatment group; Late Semester (LS) treatment group; and Entire Semester (ENT) treatment group. The participants completed a series of podcast tasks (PTs) during the course of 15 weeks. The participants completed the Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) at the end of the study period to investigate the difference in students' engagement. The participants' performance on two sets of Japanese language proficiency tests (JPT) was measured at four different points in time to examine the difference in performance gain based on three different treatment conditions within-group and between-groups. The results from the SETUS and the JPTs were compiled to address the participants' perceptions of the PTs and the effect of PTs on students' engagement and performance.

Discussion

Participants' Responses to PTs

The SETUS consisted of several items to measure the participants' perceptions of the PTs, as well as the effect of the PTs on motivation and self-regulation. The majority of the participants (63%) reported that they enjoyed working on the PTs, or would not mind using podcasting as a learning tool in other courses. The majority of the participants agreed that the PTs were helpful in memorizing kana characters (55%) and vocabulary (79%), developing pronunciation (87%), listening (68%) and speaking skills (82%), and understanding the course materials (76%). However, written responses regarding podcasting revealed mixed results in terms of participants' perceptions on podcasting. Some participants thought podcasting was an interesting idea and was helpful in learning the course materials while others thought it was time consuming or disruptive to learning.

Although the participants were both producer and user, their perceptions of the PTs seemed to agree with the previous studies on podcast production as a learning tool (Armstrong et al., 2009; Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Frydenberg, 2008; Lord, 2008). Armstrong et al. (2009) pointed out that when the students were in charge of the podcast project, the project would be successful and the students would be engaged in active learning. It is possible 63% of the participants enjoyed the PTs because they felt they were in charge of the PTs. The PTs were intended to be student-centered tasks, so the participants possibly felt positively that they were in charge of the PTs. However, the participants did not have much freedom in terms of contents other than the part where they were supposed to put each grammar explanation in their own words. The PTs had too much focus on making podcasts with given materials, which resulted in not leaving much space for the participants' creativity. From this perspective, it might be too optimistic to determine that those who enjoyed working on the PTs felt as if they were in charge of the PTs.

Another consideration is that, if the participants generated an example Japanese phrase for each grammar point, then the PTs could have been more enjoyable. In the same manner, the participants might have enjoyed the PTs more if they used images of words or action instead of making slides with kana characters for a vocabulary podcast. Though the majority of participants thought the PTs helped them memorize kana characters, 17 participants (45%) thought the PTs helped a little or did not help them memorize kana characters at all. Requiring slides with only kana characters was probably too plain for the participants to enjoy working on the PTs. Instead, the PTs could have used a video recording of the participants acting out verbs or adjectives. If the PTs

allowed the participants to design and make their own podcasts within the framework of synchronized audio and visual files, or even self-recorded video using real objects for words or action of verbs, the participants might have found the PTs more enjoyable.

The majority of the participants reported that making podcasts was helpful to develop some Japanese language skills and to learn the course materials. One participant commented how he enjoyed the PTs because the PTs required him to say words and phrases in Japanese. Lord (2008) found that the majority of participants in her study expressed that they enjoyed working on podcasting assignments and also appreciated the practical aspect of language learning such as practice of Spanish pronunciation. Perhaps some participants found the PTs helpful because the PTs required them to pronounce words and say phrases in Japanese. Or, it is possible that the PTs required the participants to vocalize words and phrases, perhaps repeatedly, which might have led to the development of oral skills. This might explain why the majority of participants thought the PTs were enjoyable.

In addition to incidental practice of repeating words and phrases, the classroom conversational activities could have contributed to the notion that the PTs were helpful. The nature of their face-to-face sessions in a beginning level Japanese course (JPN101) was to work on the oral skills. The participants spent the majority of time working on a series of dialogues or asking each other questions in Japanese. Therefore some participants probably enjoyed the practical aspects of the PTs because they could use words and phrases in class. Those who enjoyed working on the PTs might have thought the PTs were enjoyable because the PTs helped develop the Japanese language skills and

understand the course materials, but not necessarily because they felt they were in charge of the PTs.

Moreover, the timing of the PT treatment could also explain why the majority of ES and ENT participants indicated that they enjoyed the PTs while only half of LS participants did. The ES and ENT participants started working on the PTs during the first half of the semester. Normally, in the researcher's experience, students in Japanese courses start out a semester with excitement, but once they reach the halfway point of the semester, many students start feeling overwhelmed by the amount of information given, especially kana characters and the vocabulary lists. The ES and ENT started the PTs during the time things were still new and perhaps exciting, but the LS had to wait until the second half of the semester to participate in PTs. It could possibly be that the novelty of a new semester or a new class had worn off by the time the LS started the treatment. This might explain why more than half of ES and ENT participants responded that they enjoyed the PTs, while only half of LS participants did.

While some participants found the PTs enjoyable, others thought it was time consuming and disruptive to learning, even though previous studies did not indicate this. Perhaps the PTs were time consuming and disruptive, which might explain why 37% of participants did not seem to enjoy working on the PTs or would not use podcasting as a learning tool. In addition to the lack of freedom in creating podcasts, the PTs gave almost no room for the participants to include images or video recordings that might be more appealing and stimulating to the participants' taste. The PTs focused too much on creating a podcast, but with the predetermined contents and materials. The PTs did not take into account that choices could have been given to the participants as to the type of

podcasts and what materials to use such as images, video recordings, or other materials. The PT treatment might have been perceived as boring because the participants had no choice but to use boring materials. This could explain why more than one-third of the participants responded that they did not enjoy the PTs.

Another possible reason could be that the PTs were never shared with other classmates during the course of study. The nature of podcasting is to broadcast the contents audibly and visually via the Internet. Frydenberg (2008) stated that the participants in his study became more competitive as they shared their podcasts with each other. However, the current study did not have the participants share their podcasts with others. If the participants had shared their podcasts, more participants might have enjoyed the PTs because of the competition. By not including this essential part of podcasting, the PTs might not have been utilized to their best potential to provide the participants a richer experience. This could explain why the majority of participants found the PTs helpful in development of the Japanese language skills, but more than one-third of the participants found the PTs not enjoyable.

It is also possible that the timing of the treatment along with the weighed grade of the PTs in the course grade contributed to the participants not enjoying the PTs. The majority of LS participants (60%) did not complete all three PTs. The ENT participants had more participants (33%) who did not complete all of the PTs when compared to the ES participants (18%). Taking into account that the LS and the ENT participants had the treatment during the second half of the semester, several LS and ENT participants might have calculated the grade for the course and figured that they could pass the course without completing the PTs. If this were the case, some participants might not have

enjoyed the PTs because of the treatment, but simply because they did not complete the tasks.

The number of the PTs assigned probably did not help the results either. While the majority of the participants (63%) completed all PTs, more than one-third did not complete the assignment. One ENT participant did not complete any PTs, and another ENT participant completed only one PT. Because each PT had two separate podcasts assigned, the number of PTs might have been too much for the participants who did not enjoy the PTs. It is possible that the PT treatment disengaged a few participants. One podcast per lesson might have been a better choice than two podcasts.

It is also interesting to note that two participants stated that the PTs did not fit their learning style. This might explain why a couple of participants felt the PTs were rather frustrating or counterproductive. Many students took notes during face-to-face sessions. If the integration of technology was not their choice of learning, then it could likely be that the PT treatment was nothing but tedious work to do. The PTs were part of the course grade, so all enrolled students in JPN101 were required to complete the PTs. Even though only two participants expressed that using technology was not their learning style, other participants may have thought the same thing, but did not care to leave any comment. If technology use were the concern, the PTs would not only be a distraction to their study, but also discouraging to their learning. This could also explain why more than one-third of participants found the PTs not enjoyable.

The PTs were also assigned as an individual task rather than collaborative work between pairs or groups. Even though the approach of the task came from the Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL), in which a task primarily focuses on the interaction among

students, the current study focused on the interaction between the participants and their products individually. The approach of the PT treatment might have given the impression that making the podcast was nothing new compared to pencil-paper assignments except that the PT was done using computer instead of using a worksheet.

While the intention of PTs was to be student-centered and promote enjoyment in making podcasts while incorporating the course materials, it had too many restrictions on the task and lacked the participants' perspective of learning materials. If the PTs had given the participants more room for creativity and an opportunity or venue to share their work, then perhaps more participants would have thought the PTs were enjoyable. The number of PTs could have been less if the PTs gave the participant more freedom to produce. The study could have been more sensitive to the novelty of a new semester or a new course among the participants in terms of the timing of the treatment. The PTs grade contribution to the total course grade along with the timing of the treatment could have been taken into consideration for the design of the current study. As far as the gap between the PTs and the participants learning style was concerned, the study should have taken into consideration that the integration of technology as a learning tool might not be for everyone. If the participants had had more flexibility, such as using their notes and recording themselves using a camcorder, those participants could still use their own notes and read their notes to reinforce their understanding of the information instead of creating something that they would not want to use. The SETUS should have also included an item to address the learning style difference, which might have given much clearer indication for further discussion. Though the majority of the participants still found the PTs enjoyable and helpful in developing the Japanese language skills, it should have been

designed more carefully in terms of the participants' benefits, not for the sake of the perceived educational value in podcast production.

The Effect of PTs on Students' Engagement

The effect of the PTs on students' engagement was measured using the results of motivation scale and self-regulation scale. The current study compared three treatment condition groups, the ES, the LS, and the ENT, to determine if there was any difference in the effect of the PTs on students' engagement by treatment condition. The LS had the highest mean and the ENT had the lowest mean in both motivation and self-regulation scales. The result of a Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed no statistically significant difference in the effect of the PTs on the students' engagement by the three treatment conditions. High Achieving (HA) participants and Low Achieving participants, determined by GPA, reacted to the PT treatment differently according to the descriptive statistics of both motivation and self-regulation scales. HA participants scored higher on both scales than LA participants did across the treatment groups. While it is possible that the PT treatment might have engaged HA participants than it did LA participants, it is likely that HA participants are naturally engaged in their academic endeavor, thus the results were more likely.

One possible reason could be that the purpose of the Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS) was not made very clear to the participants before it was administered. According to Shadish et al. (2002), the findings of tests to show the causal relationship between the independent and the dependent variables can be misrepresented when threats to internal validity occur. In the current study, the construct validity could have been threatened by the ambiguity of the SETUS. The purpose of the

SETUS was explained orally during the face-to-face session twice before the survey became available online. However, the participants might have thought that the survey was about the course, but not necessarily about the PT treatment. Ten participants (26%) left comments about the course, but not about the PT treatment. Though the number was small, this might be an indication that the purpose of the SETUS was not made clear, and the survey was ambiguous enough to confuse the participants. Some of the participants even responded that they enjoyed speaking activities or wished that they could work on vocabulary during class. This seemed to indicate that the participants might have thought the survey was about the course, but not necessarily about the PT treatment. Moreover, 15 (40%) participants did not leave any comment at all. It is possible that the instrument was not designed well to address the trustworthiness of the data in terms of its execution, which limited the validity of the survey results.

The results of SETUS and the number of completed PTs were not consistent in the LS participants' case. The LS participants had the lowest number of participants completing all three PTs, which was half the number of PTs assigned to the ENT participants. The ES had the highest number of the participants completing all three PTs followed by the ENT participants, who had six PTs. If the LS participants had the highest SETUS engagement score, the number of the LS participants completing all three PTs should have been the highest assuming the more the participants were engaged in the PT treatment, the more the LS participants would complete all three PTs. In addition, almost all LS participants reported that they completed the assignment very often, but their response was not reflected in reality. Only 40% of the LS participants actually completed the PTs. From this perspective, one of the possible reasons that the LS had the highest

mean score was due to the smallest number of the participants, which probably hindered the results of the study.

The timing of SETUS given to all three groups probably did not help the results either. Though the LS and ENT worked on the PTs up until a little before the SETUS was given, the ES had almost six weeks interval between the end of the PT treatment and the administration of the SETUS. It is possible that the excitement of working the PTs wore off by the time the ES participants completed the SETUS. Shadish et al. (2002) pointed out that when maturation threat was at play, the validity of the causal relationship between the dependent and the independent variable would be limited. In the current study, because too much time had passed between the PT treatment and the SETUS administration among the ES participants, a maturation threat possibly limited the validity of the results. The ES had the highest number of the participants completing all assigned PTs. But, the ES group mean score on both motivation and self-regulation scales was neither the highest nor the lowest. The six weeks interval between the PT treatment and the SETUS probably was too long to accurately assess the effect of PTs on the ES students' engagement.

Along with the timing of the SETUS, the study did not assess the students' engagement prior to the PT treatment implementation, which might have allowed ambiguous temporal precedence to threaten the internal validity of the results to address the difference in the effect of the PTs on the students' engagement by the treatment conditions. Shadish, et al. (2002) defined ambiguous temporal precedence as one of the threats to internal validity. Ambiguous temporal precedence threat can confuse the cause and the effect of the study because the researcher cannot determine which variable

changed first. The current study assigned the PT treatment condition as the independent variable and the students' engagement as the dependent variable. However, the students' engagement prior to the treatment was never assessed. Therefore the difference among three different conditions could have existed before the PT treatment started. Or, the PT treatment did not matter, but pencil-paper assignments had more effect on the students' engagement. Because ambiguous temporal precedence was likely at play, the validity of the SETUS results was limited.

There was also a good chance that the PT treatment overlooked the participants' perspectives. Newmann (1992) stated that students' engagement was their "psychological investment" (p.12) in academic endeavor and would play a significant role in their academic success. The PT treatment was intended to encourage participants to make their "psychological investment" (Newmann, 1992, p. 12) in acquiring Japanese language skills. Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that the Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) was one of the most prominent communicative approaches in language learning. In the current study the PTs were intended to encourage the participants to interact with their products using the Japanese language rather than interacting among participants, which was not a traditional TBLL approach (Bowen, 2010; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001). But, theoretically, the PTs gave participants an opportunity to use the Japanese language and connect old and new information (Krashen, 1981, 1982; Wittrock, 1974), through audible and visual stimuli (Mayer, 2001) to generate new knowledge (Wittrock, 1974).

However, the PTs did not address the several essential participants' perspectives, which might have made the treatment counterproductive and caused disengagement among the participants. The PTs did not leave any room for the participants' creativity.

The participants were not allowed to choose the type of podcasts, images for words or phrases, except for example sentences for each grammar point. In addition, the PT treatment made the participants create the same kinds of podcasts repeatedly. Even though one of the primary reasons to have the participants make podcasts was to examine the educational value of podcasts from the producer perspective instead of the user perspectives, the PTs probably became dull at one point. Armstrong et al. (2009) stated that participants became involved in making podcasts because the participants felt they were in charge of the project. Frydenberg (2008) also mentioned that the podcast production affected positively on students' learning in his study. But, the PT treatment in this study gave too many restrictions as to the contents, the type of podcasts, and the materials to be used. In other words, the participants could only do so much to make the podcasts more suitable to their needs.

Although the PTs might have given the participants an opportunity to teach themselves the Japanese grammar points, vocalize words and phrases repeatedly, and type Japanese characters, it was impossible to monitor whether the participants watched their own podcasts to reinforce what they had learned or not because there was no follow up once they submitted the products. Therefore it is possible that the participants did not even look at their own work because it was not encouraged, which could have been avoided if the participants had an opportunity to share their work with their classmates.

Because the PTs focused on the interaction between the participants and the products individually, it probably diminished the essence of TBLL approach, which intends that the task be completed collaboratively. If the PT were done collaboratively with less restrictions and encouraged a little bit of competition, it might have been a

much more effective treatment to encourage the participants' performance. If the PTs paid more attention to the participants' point of view instead of the pedagogical point of view, the test results could have been different. Perhaps the ENT had the highest mean score on both motivation and self-regulation scales because they had the most number of PTs and could have had more opportunities to work with others while the ES and LS had less chances. The design of the PTs was probably presumptuous in the sense that making podcasts was equal to engaging assignments. The presence of insensitivity towards the participants might have diminished the potential of the PT treatment as an engaging task. This could have led to the SETUS results finding of no statistically significant difference among the three groups in terms of the students' engagement.

The results of the SETUS found no statistically significant difference among all three different conditions. Construct validity, maturation threat, and ambiguous temporal precedence, might have limited the validity of the study to address the effect of the PTs on students' engagement. The number of participants in the LS group did not contribute to the results either. The PTs treatment lacked sensitivity toward the participants, which might have resulted in disengagement of the participants from the treatment.

The Effect of PTs on Students' Performance

Descriptive statistics and the results of a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test, and a Kruskal-Wallis H test were used to determine the effect of PT on the participants' academic performance on the JPTs. All three groups showed statistically significant gains between each pre-test and post-test of JPTs within groups. There was also a statistically significant difference between the gain on the JPT 1 and 2 pre-tests to the post-tests in favor of the mean ranks on the JPT 1 gain in each group. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was run to examine if there was a statistically significant difference in gain on each set of pre-

tests post-tests between three groups. The results revealed no statistically significant difference between groups.

The study further investigated the difference in the effect of PT treatment on HA participants and LA participants, determined by GPA. HA participants had higher mean on their gains on both JPT post-tests than LA participants did across the treatment groups. While it is possible that the PT treatment was more effective among HA participants than it was among LA participants, it was like due to the nature of HA participants being more engaged in their academic endeavor.

All groups had statistically significant gains on both JPT pre-tests to the post-tests, but the gain from the JPT 1 tests was much higher than it was on the JPT 2 tests in each group. Before the treatment implementation began, all participants across the treatment groups took the JPT 1 pre-test. The results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference across the treatment condition groups thus no group had any advantage over others. Each group had greater gain on the JPT 1 tests in comparison to the gain on JPT 2 tests. But, the between-group comparison of the participants' performance revealed no statistically significant difference, which probably meant that the different treatment conditions had no academic performance effect. The results seemed to indicate that either the PT treatment of pencil-paper assignment with classroom instruction led all the groups to statistically significant gain on both sets of JPTs. However, the results could not specify whether the PTs, the pencil-paper assignments or classroom instruction worked, or the combination of the two or all three factors together led to the results. There was also a good chance that none of these factors contributed to the results, but other factors might have played a role.

One of the possible explanations is that the contents from the Unit 1 were easier than the contents from the Unit 2. The textbook used during this study started with greetings, numbers, and self-introduction. Unit 1 did not include verb conjugation, which was introduced in the Unit 2. The sentence structures from the Unit 2 were a little more complicated than the sentence structures from the Unit 1. This might explain why each group had the same trend of the greater gain on the JPT 1 tests over the gain on the JPT 2 tests.

Also, the JPT 2 tests had more questions requiring higher order thinking skills than the questions from the JPT 1 tests. The JPT 2 test might have been much harder than the JPT 1 test. In addition to the gap between the contents of the Unit 1 and 2, the gap in required thinking skills might have contributed to the results. Furthermore, it could be that access to external resources such as a Japanese tutor, online resources, or their own study group might have contributed the significant gain on both sets of JPTs. No control was exerted over these resources during the course of study. Many students in all sections of Beginning Japanese I (JPN 101) used their handheld devices to either search words or phrases, even using Japanese language applications during conversational activities. If access to those resources were as easy as observed in class, it was fairly easy to look for materials online.

In answering two previous research questions: how did students respond to PT in a beginning level Japanese language class; what was the effect of PT on students' engagement in a beginning Japanese language class, the PTs might have had some flaws in the treatment. While the PTs were designed utilizing multiple learning theories such as the TBLL approach (Bowen, 2010; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2001), Generative

Learning (GL) theory (Wittrock, 1974), Multimedia Learning (ML) theory (Mayer, 2001), and $i + 1$ hypothesis (Krashen, 1981, 1982), the design completely ignored the interactive parts of the TBLL approach, and did not include user perspective of podcasts. The previous studies on podcast production (Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Lord, 2008) and TBLL approach (Kırkgöz 2011; Osman, et al, 2010) focused on task completion, especially in development of oral proficiency skills. However the current study focused only on measuring syntax and vocabulary as outcomes.

The PT treatment also did not allow the participants to be creative. If the PT treatment had more flexibility in the materials that could be used or the type of podcasts, and interaction of others, either from the producer or user perspectives, the result could have been different. If the PTs were more attentive to the participants' needs, it could have promoted more engagement, which might have yielded different results.

Because of the main focus of the PT treatment, there might have been a gap between the JPTs and the PT treatment. The PT treatment primarily dealt with Japanese syntax and vocabulary and had less attention to oral proficiency. The purpose of the PTs was for the participants to interact with the course materials by articulating information from their reading and the in-class activities. Wittrock (1974) argued the importance of linking old and new information for learners to construct knowledge and Krashen (1981, 1982) hypothesized that the new information should be relatable to the old information, yet challenging so that the input would be meaningful when acquiring a language. As much as the contents of the JPTs reflected what was introduced in class and the textbook, there might have been disconnect between the JPTs and the treatment. The majority of the participants reported that the PT helped them memorize vocabulary, develop

pronunciation and speaking skills and listening comprehension skills. Even though the majority of the participants also reported that the treatment helped them understand the course materials, the results might have been different if oral proficiency skills were included in measure of academic performance.

Though a Kruskal-Wallis H test was run to ensure that there was no statistically significant difference among three treatment groups regarding the prior knowledge of the Japanese language, it is possible that the selection threat was at play. Shadish, et al. (2002) defined selection threat as bias existing among the sample that might interfere with independent variables. In the current study, the selection threat was seemingly minimized by the random assignment of the treatment conditions by group. However, the LS participants in particular showed unique characteristics of the participants. The LS was the first section of the course on every class meeting. The LS had the lowest number of the participants who completed all three PTs among the three groups. The LS scored the highest on the motivation scale, but their gain on the JPT 2 tests was the lowest among the three groups. In addition to the smallest number of the participants, it is possible that the LS group had some characteristics that were not observed in other treatment groups. Half of the LS participants were either juniors or seniors while the majority of the ES and ENT participants were freshman or sophomore. Perhaps, these juniors and seniors in the LS group figured out that they did as much as they needed to do on the PTs and the JPT 2 tests to pass this course. This might explain the inconsistency of the LS participants' behavior during the course of this study. If this were the case, the selection threat limited the validity of the results.

As far as the effect of PTs on the participants' academic performance was concerned, all of the participants within each group made statistically significant gains on both sets of JPTs, but it was not necessarily because of the different treatment conditions. There was a good chance that other factors contributed to the results of this study: pencil-paper assignments; the treatment lacking the sensitivity toward the participants' needs; the gap in the JPTs and the treatment; and the selection threat to the internal validity.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This section presents strengths and limitations of the current study. The current study had a few strengths in bringing new insights to the current literature in podcasting and Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) research. Though a couple of threats to the internal validity were addressed, there were several limitations to this study.

The majority of previous studies have investigated the pedagogical value of podcasting from the perspective of podcast user rather than podcast producer (Kay, 2012). Additionally, a number of previous studies on podcasts were not theory-based research (Hew, 2009). The current study used multiple learning theories to design the PT treatment, and investigated the effect of PT treatment from the producer point of view. The study provided new insights to the current literature on podcasts research. The study also provided new insights to the TBLL approach. The previous TBLL research seemed to focus on collaborative work among participants to complete a task, which could lead to the better academic achievement. The current study applied the concept of the interaction between the products and the participants rather than among the participants. Though the findings did not indicate that the treatment had a significant effect on the students'

engagement or performance, the majority of the participants regarded the treatment as being helpful for the development the Japanese language skills.

Additionally, the design of the study addressed a few threats to internal validity to minimize limitations to the findings of the study. Testing threat occurs when the same test is given multiple times within a short period of time (Shadish, et al., 2002). In this study, the testing threat was minimized because there was a five weeks interval between the two sets JPTs. The JPT 2 post-test included 16 items from the JPT 1 test, but these 16 items were excluded from the statistical analyses.

Instrumentation threat can happen when the change in the instrument occurs (Shadish, et al., 2002). In this study the instrumentation threat was addressed because the SETUS was only given once at the end of the study. The instrumentation threat to the JPTs was minimized because there was no change in JPT 1 tests. The JPT 2 tests had differences, but the added items on the JPT 2 post-test were excluded from the statistical analyses. Therefore, the instrumentation threat was addressed.

To minimize the difference in the effect of classroom instruction on the study findings, all group followed the same detailed daily lesson plans. Each lecture was recorded and reviewed daily by another Japanese instructor at Western Carolina University to monitor inconsistency across the different sections.

On the contrary, the current study had several limitations to the findings of the study. Shadish, et al. (2002) stated that there were always several threats to internal validity that might explain a causal relationship between two variables other than intended inferences in any studies. In this study, the construct threat was present due to a couple of factors. First, the purpose of the Student Engagement in Technology Use

Survey (SETUS) was likely unclear to the participants. Second, the treatment included a speaking component, but the study did not measure oral proficiency skills as outcomes. Therefore the validity of the results was limited.

Ambiguous temporal precedence was also likely present, which limited the validity of the findings. Because the design of the study failed to assess the students' engagement before the PT treatment started, the results of the SETUS could have been skewed from the beginning, but there was no way to ensure that was not the case. The maturation threat was present because the ES group had a six-week interval between the end of the PT treatment and the time the SETUS was given. The result of the SETUS from the ES group could have come from something other than the PT treatment. The selection threat was probably present although the random assignment of the treatment condition by group might have minimized the threat. The LS group indicated an inconsistency in the lowest number of the participants completed all of the PTs, yet the highest mean score on motivation scale.

Attrition means that participants drop out of a study (Shadish, et al., 2002). When the participants drop out of the study, differential attrition threat can limit the internal validity of the study findings because the difference in the results of the multiple comparison groups could be due to the differential loss of the participants instead of the differential treatment. Differential attrition was likely at play to limit the results of this study because a total of five participants (10% of ES, 17% of LS, 5% of ENT) dropped out from all treatment conditions. The findings of the current study could have also been affected by treatment diffusion among the participants. This could have happened among the ES and the LS group as the two sections were scheduled one after another. There was

one-hour break between the ES and the ENT groups, so there might not have been treatment diffusion among the ES and ENT group. However, interaction among the participants outside of the classroom could have happened during the course of study, which might have affected the findings of this study.

Regression threat means the tendency of extreme scores regressing toward mean over time (Shadish, et al., 2002). In the current study, regression threat was not addressed in the case of the ENT group. The SETUS results indicated that one participant was completely disengaged from the PT treatment, which probably led to potentially not invalid scores on JPTs. Therefore, regression threat was likely at play and limited the validity of the study findings.

Significance of the Study

The current study informs not only language teachers, but also teachers from other disciplines that students might enjoy making podcasts. The majority of the participants responded that they enjoyed making podcasts and would not mind using it for the other courses. The majority of the participants also found podcasting to be helpful for developing new language skills. The study provided evidence that the participants were interested in making podcasts. Though the study did not take the assessment of oral proficiency skills into account to measure the effect of the PT treatment on the participants' academic performance, it has provided the framework and the direction for future research to further investigate the educational value of podcast production. All teachers might want to consider using podcast production as a learning tool. Additionally, The PT treatment used in the current study has established the practical application of multiple learning theories to develop podcast production tasks.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several recommendations for future research based on the results of this study. The first recommendation is to give more freedom to the podcast tasks (PTs). In the current study, the participants had almost no control over the PTs except the part where they explained the grammar in their own words. The constraints on the PTs were likely self-destructive from the student-centered task point of view. The design of the PTs neglected the essence of podcasting, which was to produce materials freely and disseminate. But the current study prevented the participants from creating their own materials, and basically had them put in a factory line to produce podcasts according to the manual. Instead of diminishing the most exciting part of podcast production, it is recommended that the PTs should allow more creativity within a certain framework.

The second recommendation is to assess oral proficiency language skills instead of the participants' syntactical knowledge or the vocabulary bank. This does not mean that the syntax and the vocabulary should be excluded, but rather design the PTs to feature the development of oral skills, listening skills, syntactical knowledge, and vocabulary. The writing skills could also be included if the PTs had been used as a digital storytelling task. In this way, the participants can use their syntactical knowledge to compose a paragraph using the vocabulary, practice reading the paragraph and record the narrative. The assessment should be done on the final product of podcast using rubrics for pronunciation, accuracy of the syntax, and the level or the number of vocabulary used in the story the participants are telling.

The third recommendation is to have the participants create various types of podcasts and determine what type of podcasts might be more effective in engaging the

participants or in achieving better performance. The current study utilized Multimedia Learning Theory (Mayer, 2001) to choose enhanced podcasts as a treatment, but videocasts might be more attractive to this younger generation as they have been exposed to multimedia files on a daily basis. Making videocasts might address the time-consuming process of making enhanced podcasts.

The fourth recommendation is to have the participants work on the PTs using various types of software to examine which software might be more effective to make the PTs. The current study results indicated that the making podcasts could be time consuming. Future study could provide the evidence as to which software could minimize time consuming aspect of making podcasts, the focus of other future study could benefit from using the most suitable software to have the participants work on the PTs.

The fifth recommendation is to measure the level of students' engagement before and after the PT treatment to examine if there was any change in the students' engagement. The current study measured students' engagement at the end of the semester. A couple of threats were not addressed because of the design of this study. Therefore the validity of the results was limited. Ducate and Lomicka (2009) measured the change of students' perception in the use of podcasting in language learning. Future study should test the students' engagement with or without treatment to examine the difference, if any.

The sixth recommendation is that future research could be a study focusing on retention of information using a PT treatment. The current study did not investigate the effect of PTs on retaining information, but future research should investigate whether a PT treatment can help participants retain information longer than a non-PT treatment.

When old information and new information are connected, the newly articulated information becomes beneficial to learners (Wittorck, 1974), and becomes long-term memory (Mitchell and Myles, 2004; VanPatten & Benati, 2010). Future research could investigate whether a PT can contribute to retention of information.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that podcast production be incorporated into language acquisition. Previous studies indicated that podcasts can be great supplemental materials for reviewing. Rather than using just podcasts to review information, students can be assigned to create podcasts using a target language, and students can possibly share their podcasts with others in class or online. Rainie (2007) reported that “The audience for YouTube and other internet video sites has risen sharply in the past year. Nearly half of online adults now say they have visited such sites” (p. 3). It is only natural to think that the thirst of youth for producing their materials to be shared online is rising. Rather than dismissing the opportunity to attract students in engaging academic activities using the technology, it seems logical to take advantage of students as producers of their own learning materials. It is hopeful that the application of digital media production can and will enrich student’ learning processes and environments.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effect of PTs on the students’ engagement and performance in an introductory level Japanese language course. While the PTs did not have a statistically significant effect on students’ engagement or performance, the majority of participants reported enjoyed making

podcasts, and found the PTs to be helpful in developing the Japanese language skills.

This is an encouraging response because making podcasts could potentially be a great learning tool not only in language learning, but learning in general. Making podcasts still might not be a first choice for those who are not proficient in technology. However, podcast production can give a sense of ownership of assignments (Armstrong et al., 2009). Though the current study had too many restrictions on the PTs, the PTs, with more freedom, could promote active learning. Ownership and active learning are “psychological investments” (Newmann, 1992, p.12). It is premature to determine that podcast production has any educational value, but several positive comments indicated making podcasts helped solidify the concept of grammar. Having to actually pronounce words was helpful and implied that podcast production as learning tool is worth exploring.

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APPENDIX A: Podcast Tasks (PTs)

Podcast Assignment # 1

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 1. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
わたし	watashi	I
～じん	~jin	suffix (a national of)
せんせい	sensei	teacher
がくせい	gakusei	student
かいしゃいん	kaishain	company employee
だいがく	daigaku	university, college
びょういん	byouin	hospital
でんき	denki	light, electricity
だれ	dare	who
～さい	~sai	suffix ~ years old
なんさい	nansai	how old
はい	hai	yes
いいえ	iie	no
おなまえは	onamaewa	What is your name?
はじめまして	hajimemashite	How do you do?
どうぞよろしく	douzoyoroshiku	Nice to meet you.
～からきました	~karakimashita	I am (came) from ~

Podcast Assignment # 2

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 1. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: X は Y です。

X wa Y desu.

Example sentence: わたしはかいしゃいんです。

Watashi wa kaishain desu.

The grammar point 2: X は Y じゃありません。

X wa Y ja arimasen.

Example sentence: わたしはがくせいじゃありません。

Watashi wa gakusei ja arimasen.

The grammar point 3: X は Y ですか。

X wa Y desu ka.

Example sentence: さとうさんはがくせいですか。

Satou san wa gakusei desuka

The grammar point 4: X も Y です。

X mo Y desu.

Example sentence: やまださんがかいしゃいんです。

Yamada san mo kaishain desu.

Podcast Assignment #3

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 2. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
これ	kore	this (thing here)
それ	sore	that (thing near you)
あれ	are	that (thing over there)
この～	kono	this ～, this ～ here
その～	sono	that ～, that ～ near you
あの～	ano	that ～, that ～ over there
ほん	hon	book
じしょ	jisho	dictionary
ざっし	zasshi	magazine
しんぶん	shinbun	newspaper
えんぴつ	enpitsu	pencil
かぎ	kagi	key
とけい	tokei	watch, clock
かさ	kasa	umbrella
かばん	kaban	bag, briefcase
つくえ	tsukue	desk
いす	isu	chair
えいご	eigo	the English language
にほんご	nihongo	the Japanese language
なん	nan	what
どうも	doumo	Well, thanks
ありがとう	arigatou	Thank you

Podcast Assignment #4

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 2. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: これ(kore)/それ(sore)/あれ(are)

Example sentence: これはほんです。Kore wa hon desu.

The grammar point 2: この N(kono)/その N (sono)/あの N (ano)

Example sentence: このじしょはわたしのです。Kono jisho wa watashino desu.

The grammar point 3: そうです(soudesu)/そうじゃありません(soujaarimasen)

Example sentences: それはつくえですか。Sorewa tukue desuka

はい、そうです。Hai, soudesu

いいえ、そうじゃありません。Iie, soujaarimasen

The grammar point 4: X の Y - X no Y

Example sentences:

わたしはだいがくのせんせいです。Watashi wa daigaku no sensei desu

これはにほんごのほんです。Kore wa nihongo no hon desu

これはわたしのかばんです。Kore wa watashi no kaban desu

Podcast Assignment #5

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 3. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
ここ	koko	here, this place
そこ	soko	there, that place near you
あそこ	asoko	that place over there
どこ	doko	where, what place
こちら	kochira	this way, this place
そちら	sochira	that way, that place near you
あちら	achira	that way, that place over there
どちら	dochira	which way, where
きょうしつ	kyoushitsu	classroom
しょくどう	shokudou	dining hall, cafeteria
へや	heya	room
(お)くに	(o)kuni	country
かいしゃ	kaisha	company
うち	uchi	house, home
でんわ	denwa	telephone, telephone call
くつ	kutsu	shoes
たばこ	tabako	tobacco, cigarette
～かい	～kai	～th floor
なんがい (なんかい)	nangai (nankai)	what floor
～えん	～en	～yen
いくら	ikura	how much
ひゃく	hyaku	hundred
せん	sen	thousand
まん	man	ten thousand
すみません	sumimasen	Excuse me.
(～を)ください	(～wo) kudasai	Give me (～), please

Podcast Assignment #6

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 3. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: ここ(kore)/そこ(sore)/あそこ(are)

Example sentence: ここはしょくどうです。Koko wa shokudou desu.

The grammar point 2: こちら(kochira)/そちら(sochira)/あちら(achira)

Example sentence: おてあらいはあちらです。Otearai wa achira desu.

The grammar point 3: XはY(place)です。

Example sentences: しょくどうはあそこです。Shokudou wa asoko desu
 ここはとうきょうです。Koko wa Tokyo desu
 せんせいはきょうしつです。Sensei wa kyoushitsu desu

The grammar point 4: どこ(doko)/どちら(dochira)

Example sentences:

 きょうしつはどこですか。Kyoushitsu wa doko desu
 (お)くにはどちらですか。O kuni wa dochira desuka.

Podcast Assignment #7

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 4. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
おきます	okimasu	get up, wake up
ねます	nemasu	sleep, go to bed
はたらきます	hatarakimasu	work
やすみます	yasumimasu	take a rest, take a holiday
べんきょうします	benkyoushimasu	study
おわります	owarimasu	finish
デパート	depa-to	department store
ぎんこう	ginkou	bank
ゆうびんきょく	yuubinkyoku	post office
としょかん	toshokan	library
びじゅつかん	bijutsukan	museum
いま	ima	now
～じ	ji	～ o'clock
～ふん(ふん)	hun (pun)	～ minute
はん	han	half
ごぜん	gozen	a.m., morning
ごご	gogo	p.m., afternoon
あさ	asa	morning
ひる	hiru	daytime, noon
ばん (よる)	ban (yoru)	night, evening
おととい	ototoi	the day before yesterday
きのう	kinou	yesterday
きょう	kyou	today
あした	ashita	tomorrow
あさって	asatte	the day after tomorrow
やすみ	yasumi	rest, a holiday, a day off
まいあさ	maiasa	every morning
まいばん	maiban	every night
まいにち	mainichi	everyday
ばんごう	bangou	number
～から	～kara	from ~
～まで	～made	up to ~, until ~

Podcast Assignment #8

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 4. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: verbs

Example sentences:

- present affirmative: わたしはまいにち べんきょうします。
 Watashi wa mainichi benkyoushimasu.
- present negative: わたしはまいにち べんきょうしません。
 Watashi wa mainichi benkyoushimasen.
- past affirmative: きのう、べんきょうしました。
 Kinou, benkyoushimashita.
- past negative: きのう、べんきょうしませんでした。
 Kinou, benkyoushimasendeshita.

The grammar point 2: time に action

Example sentence: 7 じはん に おきます。Shichiji ni okimasu.

The grammar point 3: ～から～まで

Example sentences: 9 じ から 5 じ まで はたらきます。
 Kuji kara goji made hatarakimasu.

カロウイー から アシュビル まで 1 じかん かかります。
 Cullowhee kara Asheville made ichijikan kakarimasu.

The grammar point 4: A と B

Example sentence: ぎんこう の やすみ は どうようび と にちようび です。
 Ginko no yasumi wa doyouubi to nichiyoubi desu.

The grammar point 5: ～ね

Example sentences: たいへん です ね。Taihendesune.

ぎんこう の やすみ は どうようび と にちようび です ね。
 Ginko no yasumi wa doyouubi to nichiyoubi desu ne.

Podcast Assignment #9

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 5. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
いきます	ikimasu	go
きます	kimasu	come
かえります	kaerimasu	go home, return
がっこう	gakkou	school
スーパー	su-pa-	supermarket
えき	eki	station
ひこうき	hikouki	airplane
ふね	hune	ship
でんしゃ	densha	electric train
ちかてつ	chikatetsu	subway, underground
しんかんせん	shinkansen	bullet train
バス	basu	bus
タクシー	takushi-	taxi
じてんしゃ	jitensha	bicycle
あるいて	aruite	on foot
ともだち	tomodachi	friend
かぞく	kazoku	family
せんしゅう	senshuu	last week
こんしゅう	konshuu	this week
らいしゅう	raishuu	next week
せんげつ	sengetsu	last month
こんげつ	kongetsu	this month
らいげつ	raigetsu	next month
きょねん	kyonen	last year
ことし	kotoshi	this year
らいねん	rainen	next year
～がつ	～gatsu	～th month of the year
いつ	itsu	when
たんじょうび	tanjoubi	birthday
どういたしまして	doutashimashite	You're welcome
おおさかじょう	oosakajou	Osaka castle

Podcast Assignment #10

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 5. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: いきます／きます／かえます

Example sentences:

わたしは きょねん アメリカ へ きました。

Watashi wa kyonen America e kimashita.

わたしは らいねん にほん へ いきます。

Watashi wa rainen nihon e ikimasu.

あした、うち へ かえます。

Ashita uchi e kaerimasu.

The grammar point 2: どこ(へ)もいきません／いきませんでした

Example sentence: あしたはどこ(へ)もいきません。

Ashita wa doko (e) mo ikimasen.

The grammar point 3: ～でいきます／きます／かえます

Example sentences: くるま で がっこう へ きました。

Kuruma de gakkou e kimashita.

あるいて がっこう へ いきます。

Aruite gakkou e ikimasu.

The grammar point 4: person/animal と verbs

Example sentence: ともだち と くるま で タコベル へ きました。

Tomodachi to kuruma de Taco Bell e ikimashita.

The grammar point 5: いつ

Example sentence: いつ アメリカ へ きましたか。

Itsu America e kimashitaka.

Podcast Assignment #11

Make a podcast includes the list of vocabulary and phrases from Lesson 6. Each slide can have only one word or one phrase in Japanese and English equivalent cannot be included. Your own recording of each word or phrase in Japanese should be included. English audio is optional.

List of Vocabulary

Japanese word	Romanized	English
たべます	tabemasu	eat
のみます	nomimasu	drink
すいます	suimasu	smoke
みます	mimasu	see, look at, watch
ききます	kikimasu	hear, listen
よみます	yomimasu	read
かきます	kakimasu	write, draw, paint
かいます	kaimasu	buy
とります	torimasu	take
します	shimasu	do
あいます	aimasu	meet
あさごはん	asagohan	breakfast
ひるごはん	hirugohan	lunch
ばんごはん	bangohan	dinner
パン	pan	bread
にく	niku	meat
さかな	sakana	fish
やさい	yasai	vegetable
くだもの	kudamono	fruit
みず	mizu	water
おちゃ	ocha	tea, green tea
こうちゃ	koucha	black tea
ジュース	ju-su	juice
ビール	bi-ru	beer
(お)さけ	(o)sake	sake, alcohol
ビデオ	bideo	video
えいが	eiga	movie
てがみ	tegami	letter
しゃしん	shashin	photograph
レストラン	resutoran	restaurant
しゅくだい	shukudai	homework
テニス	tenisu	tennis
サッカー	sakka-	soccer
(お)はなみ	(o)hanami	cherry-blossom viewing
いっしょに	isshoni	together
ちょっと	chotto	a little while, a little bit
いつも	itsumo	always, usually
ときどき	tokidoki	sometimes
それから	sorekara	after that, and then
いいですね	iidesune	That's good.
おおさかじょうこうえん	oosakajoukouen	Osaka castle park

Podcast Assignment #12

Make a podcast includes the list of sentences and grammar points from Lesson 6. Each slide can have only one sentence with the equivalent grammar point. You must explain the grammar point in your own words. You can refer to textbook or podcasts (itunes.wcu.edu). Each slide can have only an example sentence in Japanese. English translation cannot be on the slide, but can be included orally. The grammar explanation should be done in English.

The grammar point 1: N を transitive verbs

Example sentences:

すし を たべます。

Sushi wo tabemasu.

おちゃ を のみます。

Ocha wo nomimasu.

サッカー を します。

Soccer wo shimasu.

The grammar point 2: place で verbs

Example sentence: レストラン で すし を たべます。

Resutoran de sushi wo tabemasu.

The grammar point 3: なに

Example sentences: なに を しますか。

Nani wo shimasuka

The grammar point 4: verb ませんか

Example sentence: あした、いっしょに えいが を みませんか。

Ashita isshoni eiga wo mimasenka.

The grammar point 5: verb ましょう

Example sentence: ここで、ちょっと やすみましょう。

Kokode, chotto yasumimashou.

APPENDIX B: Student Engagement in Technology Use Survey (SETUS)

(Course is unavailable to students) End of Semester Survey
 Preview Survey: End of Semester Survey

Edit Mode is: ON 7

Preview Survey: End of Semester Survey

Description
 Instructions
 Multiple Attempts: Not allowed. This Survey can only be taken once.
 Force Completion: This Survey can be saved and resumed later.

Save All Answers
 Save and Submit

Question 1
Save Answer

In your experience, about how often have you done each of the following (Items 1–8) in JPN 101?

Never
 Sometimes (once/month or less)
 Often (every other week)
 Very often (weekly)

Asked questions during class.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 2
Save Answer

Contributed to class discussions.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 3
Save Answer

Worked on assignments that required integrating ideas or information from various sources.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 4
Save Answer

Came to class having completed readings.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 5
Save Answer

Came to class having completed assignments.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 6
Save Answer

Used an electronic medium (Blackboard, Internet, iTunes U, etc) to discuss and complete an assignment.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 7
Save Answer

Worked harder than I thought I could to meet the instructor's standards or expectations.

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

Question 8
Save Answer

Discussed ideas from my readings or classes with others outside of class (students, tutors, etc.).

☐ 1. Never ☐ 2. Sometimes ☐ 3. Often ☐ 4. Very Often

<p>Question 9</p> <p>Please respond to the questions below (items 9–16) using the following scale (1 = not all true of me to 5 = very true of me) When working on podcast tasks, I try to connect the things I am reading about with what I already know.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 10</p> <p>When I work on podcast tasks for this class, I say the words over and over to myself to help me remember.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 11</p> <p>I use what I have learned from old lesson assignments and the textbook to do new assignments.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 12</p> <p>When I work on assignments I put important ideas into my own words.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 13</p> <p>When I do homework I try to remember what sensei said in class so I can finish the homework correctly.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 14</p> <p>I prefer class work that is challenging so I can learn new things.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 15</p> <p>When work is hard I either give up or study only the easy parts.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 16</p> <p>Even when the assignments are dull and uninteresting I keep working and I finish.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. <input type="radio"/> 2. <input type="radio"/> 3. <input type="radio"/> 4. <input type="radio"/> 5.</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 17</p> <p>About how many hours did you spend on podcast tasks this semester (not including your technology workshop hours)?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1–5 <input type="radio"/> 6–10 <input type="radio"/> 11–15 <input type="radio"/> 16–20 <input type="radio"/> 21–25 <input type="radio"/> 26–29 <input type="radio"/> more than 30</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 18</p> <p>In JPN 101, how much have podcast tasks helped you with each of the following (items 18–23)? learn hiragana and katakana characters.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. Not at all <input type="radio"/> 2. Very little <input type="radio"/> 3. Quite a bit <input type="radio"/> 4. Very much</p>	Save Answer
<p>Question 19</p> <p>memorize vocabulary in Japanese.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1. Not at all <input type="radio"/> 2. Very little <input type="radio"/> 3. Quite a bit <input type="radio"/> 4. Very much</p>	Save Answer

Question 20

Save Answer

my pronunciation skill in Japanese.

- ☐ 1. Not at all ☐ 2. Very little ☐ 3. Quite a bit ☐ 4. Very much

Question 21

Save Answer

my listening comprehension skill in Japanese.

- ☐ 1. Not at all ☐ 2. Very little ☐ 3. Quite a bit ☐ 4. Very much

Question 22

Save Answer

my speaking skill in Japanese.

- ☐ 1. Not at all ☐ 2. Very little ☐ 3. Quite a bit ☐ 4. Very much

Question 23

Save Answer

my understanding of course materials and ideas.

- ☐ 1. Not at all ☐ 2. Very little ☐ 3. Quite a bit ☐ 4. Very much

Question 24

Save Answer

Please respond to the statements below using the following scale:

Strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree

I enjoyed working on podcast tasks.

- ☐ 1. strongly disagree ☐ 2. disagree ☐ 3. agree ☐ 4. strongly agree

Question 25

Save Answer

I would like to use podcasts as a learning tool for other courses.

- ☐ 1. strongly disagree ☐ 2. disagree ☐ 3. agree ☐ 4. strongly agree

Question 26

Save Answer

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with podcasting in JPN 101 this semester?

Rich text editor toolbar with options for Normal, Bold, Italic, Underline, Text Color, Background Color, Bulleted List, Numbered List, Indent, Outdent, and a text area for input.

Save and Submit

Click Save and Submit to save and submit. Click Save All Answers to save all answers.

Save All Answers

Save and Submit

APPENDIX C: Tables of Reliability Analysis Statistics

Motivation items

Items	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
Asked questions in class	0.67	0.78
Contributed to class discussion	0.60	0.79
Integrated ideas on readings	0.67	0.78
Completed readings	0.58	0.80
Completed Assignments	0.27	0.84
Worked harder than expected	0.69	0.79
Discussed ideas outside of class	0.47	0.81

Self-Regulation Items

Items	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
Connecting new and old knowledge	0.64	0.88
Repeating words numerous times	0.70	0.88
Using old assignments and the textbook	0.68	0.88
Putting important ideas into my own words	0.57	0.89
Remembering what was said in class	0.78	0.87
Class work being challenging	0.70	0.88
Giving up work when it is hard	0.57	0.89
Finishing work even if they are dull	0.75	0.87

APPENDIX D: Japanese Proficiency Tests (JPTs)

JPN 101 Fall 12

Pre-test & post-test

Name: _____

Listening	Grammar	Vocabulary	Total
/16	/10	/25	/51

Listening: Please listen to the sound file and answer the following questions.

1. Please circle the correct answer. (1 x 4 = 4)

- A What did sensei say?
- a. Good morning
 - b. Good afternoon
 - c. Good evening
 - d. Good catch
- B What did sensei say?
- a. Good morning
 - b. Good afternoon
 - c. Good-bye
 - d. Good night
- C What did sensei say?
- a. Thank you
 - b. Thank you very much
 - c. Excuse me
 - d. Please
- D What did sensei say?
- a. Once more
 - b. Do you understand
 - c. Yes, I understand
 - d. No, I do not understand

2. Please circle the correct answer. (1 X 6 = 6)

1. Mr. Miller is 35 years old.
- True False
2. Mr. Miller is from England.
- True False
3. Ms. Sato is 34 years old.
- True False
4. Ms. Sato is from South Korea.
- True False
5. Mr. Santos is 30 years old.
- True False

6. Mr. Santos is from Brazil.
True False
3. Listen to the dialogue and answer the following questions. (1 X 3 = 3)
1. Where is the wine section?
 - a. 5th floor
 - b. 6th floor
 - c. 7th floor
 - d. 8th floor
 2. The wine is...
 - a. French
 - b. Italian
 - c. Spanish
 - d. California
 3. How much is the wine?
 - a. 1200 yen
 - b. 2200 yen
 - c. 3200 yen
 - d. 4200 yen
4. Listen to the dialogue and answer the following questions. (1 X 3 = 3)
1. This is ...

すし	さしみ
----	-----
 2. This is...

hamburger	cheeseburger
-----------	--------------
 3. This is...

video	TV
-------	----

Grammar

1. Choose and circle the correct answer. (1X 7 = 7)

A. I am American.

- a. わたし はアメリカ人です。
- b. わたしたち
- c. あなた

B. Where is the library?

- | | | |
|--------------|-------|------|
| <u>としょかん</u> | a. ここ | ですか。 |
| | b. どこ | |
| | c. そこ | |

C. Sensei is not a Japanese person.

- せんせい は にほんじん a. です。
 b. ますです。
 c. じゃありません。

D. This is Sensei's computer.

- これはせんせい a. は コンピューターです。
 b. か
 c. の

E. Sensei is also a student.

- せんせい a. は がくせいです。
 b. も
 c. の

F. Is this a cassette tape?

- これはカセットテープ a. ですね。
 b. ですか。
 c. ですよ。

G. The bathroom is over there.

- トイレは a. あれ です。
 b. あそこ
 c. あの

2. Place them in the correct order according to the English equivalent. (1 X 3 = 3)

A. That (over there) is my car.

- () () () ()
 a. じどうしゃ
 b. わたしの
 c. です
 d. あれは

B. Whose notebook (ノート) is this?

- () () () ()
 a. ですか
 b. ノート
 c. これは
 d. だれの

C. That is a bottle of German (ドイツ) beer (ビール).

- () () () ()
 a. ドイツの
 b. それは
 c. ビール
 d. です

3. Match the following words. (1 X 11 = 11)

- () おはようございます
- () こんにちは
- () こんばんは
- () ありがとう
- () おやすみなさい
- () はじめまして
- () どうぞよろしく
- () さようなら
- () すみません
- () アメリカからきました
- () おなまえは

- a. Good-bye
- b. Excuse me; I am sorry.
- c. I came from America.
- d. Good morning
- e. What is your name?
- f. Thank you.
- g. Good night
- h. How do you do?
- i. Good afternoon
- j. Good evening
- k. Nice to meet you.
- l. I understand.
- m. Sit down.
- n. Pay attention.

4. Match the following words. (1 X 14 = 14)

- () textbook
- () window
- () pencil
- () bag
- () company
- () desk
- () chair
- () umbrella
- () tobacco
- () book
- () watch; clock
- () shoes
- () teacher
- () student

- a. がくせい
- b. きょうかしよ
- c. かいしゃ
- d. せんせい
- e. とけい
- f. ぎんこういん
- g. まど
- h. かさ
- i. えんぴつ
- j. いしゃ
- k. つくえ
- l. くつ
- m. たばこ
- n. ほん
- o. かいしゃいん
- p. かばん
- q. いす

JPN 101 Fall 12

Pre-test for Unit 2

Name: _____

Listening	Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Total
/14	/7	/10	/10	/41

Listening:

1. Please circle the correct answer. (1 x 3 = 3)

- A What will Mr. Miller and Mrs. Sato do tomorrow?
- They will go and eat at a restaurant.
 - They will go to the library.
 - They will go to the coffee shop.
 - They will go to the cherry blossom viewing.
- B What time are they meeting?
- 9 o'clock
 - 10 o'clock
 - 11 o'clock
 - 12 o'clock
- C Where are they meeting?
- Osaka department
 - Osaka Castle park station
 - Osaka Castle park
 - The Osaka dome

2. Please circle the correct answer. (1 X 8 = 8)

- Takeda sensei wakes up at 6 am.
True False
- Emiko sensei wakes up at 7 am.
True False
- Takeda sensei eats breakfast at 8sm.
True False
- Takeda sensei goes to school at 9 am.
True False
- Emiko sensei east lunch at 12 pm.
True False
- Takeda sensei does not eat lunch.
True False
- Takeda sensei goes home at 11:30 pm.
True False
- Emiko sensei goes to bed at 11:30 pm.
True False

3. Listen to the dialogue and answer the following questions. (1 X 3 = 3)

1. What did the host father do today?
 - b. He played tennis.
 - b. He watched TV at home.
 - c. He went shopping.
 - d. He ate a hamburger.
 - e. He read a book.
2. What did the host mother do today?
 - b. She played a video game.
 - b. She ate sushi.
 - c. She went to a department store.
 - d. She watched a movie.
 - e. She wrote a letter.
3. What are Mary and her host father going to do tomorrow?
 - b. They will go to a department store.
 - b. They will watch a movie.
 - c. They will eat Chinese food.
 - d. They will play tennis.
 - e. They will play baseball.

Grammar

1. Choose and circle the correct answer. (1 X 7 = 7)

A. I do not eat breakfast.

- わたしはあさごはんを
- a. たべません。
 - b. たべます。
 - c. たべますせん。

B. I go to library everyday.

- わたたしはまいにちとしょかん
- a. は いきます。
 - b. を
 - c. に

C. Takeda sensei often plays baseball.

- たけだせんせいは
- a. ときどき やきゅうをします。
 - b. たいてい
 - c. いつも

D. I wake up at 6 am everyday.

- わたしはまいにち6じ
- a. を おきます。
 - b. は
 - c. に

E. What shall we watch?

なにを

- a. みません。
- b. みましよう。
- c. みましようか。

F. Would you like to drink something?

なに a. を のみますか。
b. か
c. も

G. I won't go anywhere.

わたしはどこ a. でも いきません。
b. にも
c. か

Vocabulary

1. Conjugate the following verbs into the **PAST TENSE AFFIRMATIVE**. (1 X 5 = 5)

a. to listen _____

b. to return

c. to buy _____

d. to meet

e. to do

2. Conjugate the following verbs into the **INVITATIONAL FORM**. (1 X 5 = 5)

a. to listen

b. to return

c. to buy _____

d. to meet

e. to do

Reading: Read the paragraph and answer the following questions (1 X 10 = 10).

わたしはまいにち ごぜん ろくじにおきます。そして、ごぜん ろくじはん にごっこう
にいきます。ごぜん しちじ にごっこう で あさごはん を たべます。すし を たべます
。そして、ごぜん はちじ に ほんご の クラス にいきます。そして、ごご じゅうにじ
にごっこう で ひるごはん を たべます。ピザ を たべます。そして、ごご よじ に としょ
かん にいきます。としょかん で べんきょう します。そして、ごご しちじ に うち に か
えります。そして、ごぜん じゅうにじ に ばんごはん を たべます。そして、ごぜん に じ
に ねます。

then

1. Sensei wakes up at 5am.
True False
2. Sensei eats breakfast at home.
True False
3. Sensei eats sushi.
True False
4. Sensei goes to school at 7am.
True False
5. Sensei does not eat lunch.
True False
6. Sensei goes to Japanese class at 4pm.
True False
7. Sensei reads books at library.
True False
8. Sensei goes home at 7pm.
True False
9. Sensei eats dinner at 11pm.
True False
10. Sensei goes to bed at 2am
True False

APPENDIX E: Table of Specifications

Piloted Unit Test 1

Sections	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create	Total
Listening Comprehension	7	9					16
Grammar		8	3				11
Vocabulary	2						2

Piloted Unit Test 2

Sections	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create	Total
Listening Comprehension		14					14
Grammar		13					13
Reading				10			10
Vocabulary	1		10				11

APPENDIX F: Consent Form

Consent Form

Western Carolina University
Department of Modern Foreign Languages
McKee 118
Cullowhee, NC 28723
Phone: 828-227-7241

Principal Investigator (PI): Masafumi Takeda
Phone: 828-227-3905

Project Title: The Effectiveness of Podcasting on Students' Performance and students' perceptions of podcasting in a Beginning Japanese Course.

Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in a study conducted in an introductory Japanese course at Western Carolina University. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of podcast tasks on students' performance, engagement and perceptions in a Japanese language class.

As part of your assignments for JPN 101 course, you will be asked to create a series of enhanced podcasts to help you learn grammar and vocabulary. You will also be working traditional paper assignments as well. In this study, I would like to find out whether completing podcasting tasks help you learn Japanese characters and vocabulary more efficiently and grasp better understanding of Japanese grammar in comparison to paper-based assignments. I will also ask you to fill out a survey at the end of the semester about your thoughts on podcasting as a learning tool.

If you chose to participate in this study, I would ask you to take a pre-test prior to each unit that contains three lessons each. The results of the pre-test will not be used toward your course grade. After taking the pre-tests, you will learn how to produce a podcast and type in Japanese characters. Once you learn how to create podcasts, you will be assigned to make two types of podcasts. The first one is basically flashcards with audio in a movie format. The second one is similar to a small presentation with synchronized slides and audio. If you worked on podcasting tasks during the first unit, you would be working on traditional paper tasks for the rest of the semester. If you worked on the paper-based tasks during the first unit, you would be working on podcasting tasks for the second unit. At the end of the first unit, you will be taking a post-test for

the unit. The results of the post-test will be graded and used as part of your grade.

These tasks are regular assignments for this course, hence you would be working on these tasks regardless of your participation in this study. I will be using the results of these assessments to determine if podcast tasks would help you learn Japanese more efficiently than other tasks. In order to determine whether the podcast tasks are contributing to better performance on the assessment, I would like to have your permission to access your GPA and SAT scores. The survey about your experience during this study will be used to assess whether podcasting can be a generative learning tool or not. The information I obtain from two unit tests will remain confidential. If you agree to participate in this study and sign this consent form, you have given me permission to use your test results for this study.

There are no known risks or ethical issues associated with this study. Participation is voluntary, therefore your decision will not affect your relationship with the researcher, your grade in this class, your standing in your academic program, or your relationship with the department of Modern Foreign Languages, the college of Arts and Sciences, or Western Carolina University. Your participation may have no immediate benefits to you, but it will be very important for the Japanese program, prospective students, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Should you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Masafumi Takeda (mtakeda@wcu.edu/828.227.3905) or Dr. Meagan Karvonen (karvonen@wcu.edu/828.227.3323), who is the chair of the dissertation committee.

The Internal Review Board (IRB) has approved this study. If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment as a participant in this study, please contact the chair of the IRB at 227-7212 or irb@wcu.edu.

My signature below indicates I am at least 18 years old. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the study and I am willing to participate.

Printed name of Participant

Signature of Participant

date

APPENDIX G: Practice Podcast Tasks

Practice Podcast 1

Make a podcast includes the list of Kana letter you see below. Each slide can have only one letter and a roman letter for the sound cannot be included. I provided an audio file for this assignment.

List of Kana letters

Hiragana

あ
い
う
え
お
か
き
く
け
こ

Practice Podcast

Make a podcast of kana characters as you did for the practice podcast 1. Each slide can have only one letter and a roman letter for the sound cannot be included. Instead of using the provided sound file, you have to record your own voice pronouncing each letter.

APPENDIX H: Paper-pencil Tasks

Lesson 1 Assignment 1

Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	name _____ English
わたし	watashi	_____
～じん	~jin	_____
せんせい	sensei	_____
がくせい	gakusei	_____
かいしゃいん	kaishain	_____
だいがく	daigaku	_____
びょういん	byouin	_____
でんき	denki	_____
だれ	dare	_____
～さい	~sai	_____
なんさい	nansai	_____
はい	hai	_____
いいえ	iie	_____
おなまえは	onamaewa	_____
はじめまして	hajimemashite	_____
どうぞよろしく	douzoyoroshiku	_____
～からきました	~karakimashita	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: X は Y です。 X wa Y desu.

The particle は indicates _____.

です is _____.

Example sentence: わたしはかいしゃいんです。

Watashi wa kaishain desu.

The grammar point 2: X は Y じゃありません。 X wa Y ja arimasen.

じゃありません is the _____ of です。

Example sentence: わたしはがくせいじゃありません。

Watashi wa gakusei ja arimasen.

The grammar point 3: X は Y ですか。 X wa Y desu ka.

The particle か indicates _____.

Example sentence: さとうさんはがくせいですか。

Satou san wa gakusei desuka

The grammar point 4: X も Y です。 X mo Y desu.

The particle も indicates _____.

Example sentence: やまださんもかいしゃいんです。

Yamada san mo kaishain desu.

Lesson 2 Assignment 2

name_____

Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	English
これ	kore	_____
それ	sore	_____
あれ	are	_____
この～	kono	_____
その～	sono	_____
あの～	ano	_____
ほん	hon	_____
じしょ	jisho	_____
ざっし	zasshi	_____
しんぶん	shinbun	_____
えんぴつ	enpitsu	_____
かぎ	kagi	_____
とけい	tokei	_____
かさ	kasa	_____
かばん	kaban	_____
つくえ	tsukue	_____
いす	isu	_____
えいご	eigo	_____
にほんご	nihongo	_____
なん	nan	_____
どうも	doumo	_____
ありがとう	arigatou	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: これ(kore)／それ(sore)／あれ(are)

これ／それ／あれ are _____. They work as _____.
_____.

これ refers to _____.

それ refers to _____.

あれ refers to _____.

Example sentence: これはほんです。Kore wa hon desu.

The grammar point 2: この N(kono)／その N (sono)／あの N (ano)

この／その／あの modify_____.

この refers to _____.

その refers to _____.

あの refers to _____.

Example sentence: このじしょはわたしのです。Kono jisho wa watashino desu.

The grammar point 3: そうです(soudesu)／そうじゃありません(soujaarimasen)

そうです／そうじゃありません can be used to answer _____
in the case of _____.

Example sentences: それはつくえですか。Sorewa tukue desuka

はい、そうです。Hai, soudesu

いいえ、そうじゃありません。Iie, soujaarimasen

The grammar point 4: X の Y X no Y

The particle の explains 1._____, 2._____
_____, 3._____.

Example sentences:

わたしはだいがくのせんせいです。Watashi wa daigaku no sensei desu

これはにほんごのほんです。Kore wa nihongo no hon desu

これはわたしのかばんです。Kore wa watashi no kaban desu

Lesson 3 Assignment 3

name _____

Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	English
ここ	koko	_____
そこ	soko	_____
あそこ	asoko	_____
どこ	doko	_____
こちら	kochira	_____
そちら	sochira	_____
あちら	achira	_____
どちら	dochira	_____
きょうしつ	kyoushitsu	_____
しょくどう	shokudou	_____
へや	heya	_____
(お)くに	(o)kuni	_____
かいしゃ	kaisha	_____
うち	uchi	_____
でんわ	denwa	_____
くつ	kutsu	_____
たばこ	tabako	_____
〜かい	~kai	_____
なんがい (なんかい)	nangai (nankai)	_____
〜えん	~en	_____
いくら	ikura	_____
ひゃく	hyaku	_____
せん	sen	_____
まん	man	_____
すみません	sumimasen	_____
(〜を)ください	(~wo) kudasai	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: ここ(kore)/そこ(sore)/あそこ(are)

ここ/そこ/あそこ are _____ referring to _____.

ここ refers to _____.

そこ refers to _____.

あそこ refers to _____.

Example sentence: ここはしょくどうです。Koko wa shokudou desu.

The grammar point 2: こちら(kochira)/そちら(sochira)/あちら(achira)

こちら/そちら/あちら are _____ referring to _____. They

are also used to indicate _____.

こちら refers to _____.

そちら refers to _____.

あちら refers to _____.

Example sentence: おてあらいはあちらです。Otearai wa achira desu.

The grammar point 3: XはY(place)です。

You can explain _____ things, places or people are using this sentence pattern.

Example sentences: しょくどうはあそこです。Shokudou wa asoko desu

ここはとうきょうです。Koko wa Tokyo desu

せんせいはきょうしつです。Sensei wa kyoushitsu desu

The grammar point 4: どこ(doko)/どちら(dochira)

どこ means _____, and どちら means _____.

Example sentences:

きょうしつはどこですか。Kyoushitsu wa doko desu

(お)くにはどちらですか。O kuni wa dochira desuka.

(お) is a _____, which indicates one's _____.

Lesson 4 Assignment 4

1. Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	English
おきます	okimasu	_____
ねます	nemasu	_____
はたらきます	hatarakimasu	_____
やすみます	yasumimasu	_____
benkyoushimasu	benkyoushimasu	_____
おわります	owarimasu	_____
デパート	depa-to	_____
ぎんこう	ginkou	_____
ゆうびんきょく	yuubinkyoku	_____
としょかん	toshokan	_____
bijutsukan	bijutsukan	_____
いま	ima	_____
〜じ	ji	_____
〜ふん(ぶん)	hun (pun)	_____
はん	han	_____
gozen	gozen	_____
gogo	gogo	_____
asa	asa	_____
hiru	hiru	_____
ban (yoru)	ban (yoru)	_____
ototoi	ototoi	_____
kinou	kinou	_____
kyou	kyou	_____
ashita	ashita	_____
asatte	asatte	_____
yasumi	yasumi	_____
maiasa	maiasa	_____
maiban	maiban	_____
mainichi	mainichi	_____
bangou	bangou	_____
〜から	~kara	_____
〜まで	~made	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: Verbs – a verb with ます is a _____, and makes a sentence _____. ます implies _____ and _____.

ます indicates present/future _____.

ません indicates present/future _____.

ました indicates past _____.

ませんでした indicates _____.

Example sentences: わたしはまいにち べんきょうします。

Watashi wa mainichi benkyoushimasu.

わたしはまいにち べんきょうしません。

Watashi wa mainichi benkyoushimasen.

きのう、べんきょうしました。

Kinou, benkyoushimashita.

きのう、べんきょうしませんでした。

Kinou, benkyoushimasendeshita.

The grammar point 2: time に action

The particle に is used to indicate _____.

Example sentence: 7 じはん に おきます。Shichiji ni okimasu.

The grammar point 3: ～から～まで

～から～まで indicates _____, and _____.

Example sentences: 9 じ から 5 じ まで はたらきます。

Kuji kara goji made hatarakimasu.

カロウイー から アシュビル まで 1 じかん かかります。

Cullowhee kara Asheville made ichijikan kakarimasu.

The grammar point 4: A と B

と connects _____.

Example sentence: ぎんこう の やすみ は どようび と にちようび です。

Ginko no yasumi wa doyoubi to nichiyoubi desu.

The grammar point 5: ～ね

Example sentences: たいへん です ね。Taihendesune.

ね is used to express _____. It also is used to _____.

ぎんこう の やすみ は どようび と にちようび です ね。

Ginko no yasumi wa doyoubi to nichiyoubi desu ne.

Lesson 5 Assignment 5

1. Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	English
いきます	ikimasu	_____
きます	kimasu	_____
かえます	kaerimasu	_____
がっこう	gakkou	_____
スーパー	su-pa-	_____
えき	eki	_____
ひこうき	hikouki	_____
ふね	hune	_____
でんしゃ	densha	_____
ちかてつ	chikatetsu	_____
しんかんせん	shinkansen	_____
バス	basu	_____
タクシー	takushi-	_____
じてんしゃ	jitensha	_____
あるいて	aruite	_____
ともだち	tomodachi	_____
かぞく	kazoku	_____
せんしゅう	senshuu	_____
こんしゅう	konshuu	_____
らいしゅう	raishuu	_____
せんげつ	sengetsu	_____
こんげつ	kongetsu	_____
らいげつ	raigetsu	_____
きょねん	kyonen	_____
ことし	kotoshi	_____
らいねん	rainen	_____
~がつ	~gatsu	_____
いつ	itsu	_____
たんじょうび	tanjoubi	_____
どういたしまして	doutashimashite	_____
おおさかじょう	oosakajou	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: いきます／きます／かえます

いきます／きます／かえます indicates _____ to a place and the particle
 ____ is placed before いきます／きます／かえます.

Example sentences:

わたしは きょねん アメリカ へ きました。

Watashi wa kyonen America e kimashita.

わたしは らいねん にほん へ いきます。

Watashi wa rainen nihon e ikimasu.

あした、うち へ かえます。

Ashita uchi e kaerimasu.

The grammar point 2: どこ(へ)もいきません／いきませんでした

When the particle ____ is placed after interrogatives, it means

_____.

Example sentence: あしたはどこ(へ)もいきません。

Ashita wa doko (e) mo ikimasen.

The grammar point 3: ～でいきます／きます／かえます

The particle で indicates _____. When you _____ to
 somewhere, you _____ で, but you can use _____.

Example sentences: くるま で がっこう へ きました。

Kuruma de gakkou e kimashita.

あるいて がっこう へ いきます。

Aruite gakkou e ikimasu.

The grammar point 4: person/animal と verbs

The particle と is used when _____.

Example sentence: ともだち と くるま で タコベル へ きました。

Tomodachi to kuruma de Taco Bell e ikimashita.

The grammar point 5: いつ

いつ is used to _____.

Example sentence: いつ アメリカ へ きましたか。

Itsu America e kimashitaka.

Lesson 6 Assignment 6

1. Write down English equivalent for each item below.

Japanese word	Romanized	English
たべます	tabemasu	_____
のみます	nomimasu	_____
すいます	suimasu	_____
みます	mimasu	_____
ききます	kikimasu	_____
よみます	yomimasu	_____
かきます	kakimasu	_____
かいます	kaimasu	_____
とります	torimasu	_____
します	shimasu	_____
あいます	aimasu	_____
あさごはん	asagohan	_____
ひるごはん	hirugohan	_____
ばんごはん	bangohan	_____
パン	pan	_____
にく	niku	_____
さかな	sakana	_____
やさい	yasai	_____
くだもの	kudamono	_____
みず	mizu	_____
おちゃ	ocha	_____
こうちゃ	koucha	_____
ジュース	ju-su	_____
ビール	bi-ru	_____
(お)さけ	(o)sake	_____
ビデオ	bideo	_____
えいが	eiga	_____
てがみ	tegami	_____
しゃしん	shashin	_____
レストラン	resutoran	_____
しゅくだい	shukudai	_____
テニス	tenisu	_____
サッカー	sakka-	_____
(お)はなみ	(o)hanami	_____
いっしょに	isshoni	_____
ちょっと	chotto	_____
いつも	itsumo	_____
ときどき	tokidoki	_____
それから	sorekara	_____
いいですね	iidesune	_____
おおさかじょうこうえん	oosakajoukouen	_____

2. Fill in the blanks.

The grammar point 1: N を transitive verbs

The particle ____ indicates _____.

Example sentences:

すし を たべます。

Sushi wo tabemasu.

おちゃ を のみます。

Ocha wo nomimasu.

サッカー を します。

Soccer wo shimasu.

The grammar point 2: place で verbs

The particle ____ indicates _____.

Example sentence: レストラン で すし を たべます。

Resutoran de sushi wo tabemasu.

The grammar point 3: なに

なに means _____, and the question なにをしますか is a question

_____.

Example sentences: なに を しますか。

Nani wo shimasuka

The grammar point 4: verb ませんか

You can use ませんか to _____.

Example sentence: あした、いっしょに えいが を みませんか。

Ashita issshoni eiga wo mimasenka.

The grammar point 5: verb ましょう

ましょう is used to _____.

Example sentence: ここで、ちょっと やすみましょう。

Kokode, chotto yasumimashou.

APPENDIX I: Oral Performance

Oral Performance 1

Part A: You are in a beginning level Japanese class, and this is your first day of the class. You are meeting with your classmates for the first time. Find out the following information from your classmate.

Name

Age

Where she/he is from

You must greet each other appropriately.

Part B: You will be assigned as a customer or a store clerk. There will be two items with price.

Customer: First, find out what items are, and ask how much each item is. Then decide which item to buy.

Store clerk: Tell your customer what items are and give price for each item. Don't forget to thank your customer.

Oral Performance 2

You came back from the Thanksgiving break. Talk about what you did during the break.
Then, ask each other's plan for the winter break.
You must include the following items.

At least FIVE different verbs

Past tense of verbs (at least one)

Future tense of verbs (at least one)

Negative form of verbs (at least one)

At least four different grammar points from the list below.

Nouns from lesson 4-6

Interrogatives + か

Interrogatives + も

Time

で (means of transportation)

place で action

Invitational form of verbs

Volitional form of verbs

A と B

Person/animal と action

いつ