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Learning, Motivation, and Self : A Diary Study of an ESL Teacher's Year in a Japanese Language Classroom

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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Laura Ruth Hawks for the Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages were presented April 19, 2000, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Laura Ruth Hawks for the Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages presented April 19, 2000.

Title: Learning, Motivation, and Self: A Diary Study of an ESL Teacher's Year in a Japanese Language Classroom.

Using a journal kept during a year in a second-year level Japanese language class, a diary study of an adult's foreign language experience was undertaken by an ESL teacher and graduate student. Kept as a means of releasing the anger, stress, and frustration that initially accompanied the learning experience, the journal provides a basis for the analysis of cultural, pedagogical, and personal variables that affected the learning process.

The introspective and longitudinal nature of the study provides not only a description of the learning environment and teaching method over time, but also illuminates otherwise unobservable aspects of the learning experience, and how changes in emotions, motivation, and attitudes came about during the year.

The analysis of the journal entries led to a list of variables which appeared frequently or that were perceived to be important in the learning process. Further analysis showed that these variables could be assigned to two distinct domains: situational or personal. Situational variables include the teaching methodology and its classroom application, memorization, culture learning, and the classroom environment. The personal variables

identified were language anxiety, motivation, and self-identity as a learner. Coping strategies were also identified as an important factor in the learning experience.

The study reveals how the learning experience caused conflict within three distinct, yet related, spheres of the diarist's self: the learning self, the motivational self, and the existential self. Resolution of conflict was brought about by changes in the teaching of some of the instructors accompanied by changes in attitude on the part of the diarist. Over the course of the year, the diarist brought about a transition from high anxiety and frustration with the learning experience to modified optimism, reflecting the realignment of personal variables and a greater understanding and acceptance of the situational variables.

LEARNING, MOTIVATION, AND SELF: A DIARY STUDY OF AN ESL TEACHER'S YEAR IN A JAPANESE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study proposes to examine, through an analysis of the journal I kept for almost the entire period of second-year Japanese (I began the journal two weeks after beginning the fall term), how I adapted to a foreign language methodology and classroom culture that I was initially bitterly opposed to and upset with, and how the inner conflicts brought about by the learning experience were resolved. The study will analyze themes I perceived to be important in my learning experiences during the year, interpret the role of affective variables on that learning experience, and examine how a desire to persist in learning Japanese was eventually facilitated.

Within two weeks of beginning second-year Japanese in the fall term of 1997, I was so angry and disoriented that I felt I needed to keep a journal of the experience, something I had never done before. My emotional reactions to the teaching method were some of the strongest I had ever experienced, and friends, family, and classmates listened to me rant and complain bitterly on an almost daily basis about my Japanese class and the teaching methodology.

I had already successfully completed two years of college-level Japanese for my undergraduate degree, but as it had been four years since I had studied or used any Japanese, and because the teaching methodology used at my university was so different from any of my previous language

learning experiences, I felt I needed to repeat the second-year course in order to be able to pass the one term of third year necessary to fulfill the foreign language requirement for my master's degree. My initial motivations for repeating second-year Japanese were purely instrumental (Gardner & Lambert,1985). I had no desire to learn to speak or integrate with native speakers of Japanese as it was unlikely I would ever return to Japan to live or teach. However, I had neither the time nor motivation to begin learning another language.

During the very first session of the fall term, I noticed an immediate difference from any previous Japanese class I had taken . Although all my previous Japanese classes had been conducted entirely in Japanese, as this one was, there was now a tension present in the classroom that I had not experienced before. The syllabus had assigned a conversation for the first session, but as a newcomer to the method I had no idea that it was to be memorized, and I was completely unprepared to perform the conversation without my text. Students who had come from first-year Japanese at the university did have the conversation memorized, and the instructor quickly moved to them; I was not called on or given a chance to speak again during the class period. It was the way I felt about not being prepared that was so different and unsettling. It became almost immediately apparent that the classroom practice for this method would not be following the American norms I was accustomed to or comfortable with, and that the relationship between student and instructor would be very different from anything I had previously encountered.

The methodology's reputation preceded my enrollment in second-year Japanese. Friends who had already taken Japanese at the university had been unhappy with the teaching methodology, and had me convinced that I would dislike it intensely as well. Even as I became accustomed to classroom procedures, the required dependence on memory still came as a shock and caused me a great deal of anguish and frustration. As an older student with a full graduate courseload and family obligations, it was difficult to memorize and practice the conversations and drill patterns for class sessions, let alone spend the two hours a day on them that one teaching assistant suggested. While the conversations seemed somewhat relevant and therefore easier to memorize, I had trouble incorporating many of the drill patterns from the chapters into my learning. I found that in spite of spending time memorizing the drills and their grammar patterns for the next day's class, by the next morning I would have forgotten them all, and nothing I tried seemed to make the drills or their structural points remain in my head.

Class evaluation was based on quizzes, homework assignments, a final exam interview, and a daily evaluation of our performance during the class periods by the teaching assistants and reading/writing instructor. Each instructor's teaching style was quite different, and as a result the classroom environment often felt unsafe as it was difficult to know how one was being evaluated from day to day. I became exceedingly anxious over my performance in class in spite of taking the class in a pass/no pass status, and used my journal not only to write about my experiences and feelings but also to release some of the extreme tension I began to experience. My reactions to the class soon followed what Leary and Kowalski (1995) have

defined as manifestations of social anxiety: arousal mediated responses, (outward physical indications of anxiety); disaffiliate behavior (avoidance and withdrawal from the anxiety-producing situation); and image protection behavior (avoidance of risk-taking and disapproval). I often perspired heavily, my hands shook, I felt nauseous, and at times felt my throat closing because I was so afraid I would make an error when called upon to speak in class. Withdrawal also occurred, and I began to do what I thought was the minimum needed in order to pass. I often purposely did not attend class. The anger and depression generated by my Japanese class eventually carried over into other realms of my education, and for a time I began to doubt whether I could even finish my master's program. I felt completely intimidated by not only the Japanese language but the methodology as well, and my discomfort grew as the course progressed.

I continued to feel angry and miserable during the first and for most of the second term of the year; was often extremely anxious before, during, and after class; and I was not very motivated to learn. I wanted only to pass and be done with learning Japanese. During the first weeks of the third term, however, my attitude and motivation slowly began to change. For the third term I had moved from the daily morning section to a twice-weekly evening section and felt an immediate connection with the class members, some of whom were older students like myself. I also learned I had earned the equivalent of an A grade for the preceding terms, and one day the course coordinator suggested that I think about continuing Japanese in order to try and earn the endorsement to teach Japanese as a foreign language. This suggestion caused me to reflect on and reassess my aptitude for learning Japanese, the rationale of the Japanese program at my

university, and my feelings about the Japanese language and culture, and I eventually decided I would like to continue for another full year of Japanese in order to try to earn the teaching endorsement.

THE JORDEN METHOD

I had seriously considered majoring in Japanese as an undergraduate, but upon examining the text that was used at the university I would graduate from, I decided against it. The text, Japanese: The Spoken Language, written by Eleanor H. Jorden and Mari Noda (1987), is the foundation of the "Jorden method" for learning Japanese. The method stresses an analysis of Japanese grammar and pragmatics, and is strongly grounded in a philosophy of language taught *in* culture versus alongside culture (Quinn, 1988). While the methodology emphasizes the primacy of spoken Japanese over the written language, the goal of the Jorden method is to help learners become not only proficient in spoken and written Japanese but also able to understand and use pragmatically appropriate Japanese.

Lessons consist of core conversations which introduce grammatical structures and pragmatic information in authentic settings, accompanied by translations and supplementary vocabulary. Miscellaneous notes follow to explain social, cultural, and linguistic information contained in the core conversations. New grammatical structures are explained in detail in the Structural Patterns section, and are followed by drills which focus on the structural patterns and vocabulary introduced in the chapter. At the end of each chapter are application exercises, utilization exercises, "eavesdropping" listening exercises, and a check-up section on new grammar points raised in

the chapter. The entire text is written in *rômaji*, or roman script, and uses an adaptation of the *Shin-kunrei-shiki* ('New Official Style') for all Japanese words, not the more familiar Hepburn system[1] of *rômaji* . Explanations and questions are in English, and all Japanese used in the book is directly translated for the reader. Another text, Japanese: The Written Language, is used for the reading and writing portion of the class.

Second-year Japanese is divided into five sections weekly, each of which meets for 50 minutes. Three of these are called "act" sections, and are led by a native speaker of Japanese. Only Japanese is spoken during these sections, in which core conversations and drill patterns are practiced. Another section is called the "fact" section, where English is spoken and where grammar, culture, and other information relevant to the learning of Japanese is discussed. Quizzes are generally given in this section. Reading and writing are taught in the remaining section, and both English and Japanese are used, according to the lesson requirements.

The method advocates a "team approach" to teaching Japanese. Native speakers serve as authentic models of the target language for the "act" sections, and non-native speakers of Japanese offer cultural and structural analyses of various aspects of the language in the "fact" sections. The team approach aims to overcome what Jorden has called the "paradox

[1]The Hepburn style of romanization is based on the pronunciation and spelling of Western languages. Vowels are pronounced as those in the Romance languages, consonants as those in English, and double vowels are indicated with a diacritic mark over a single vowel. The Hepburn style is considered relatively easy for English-speaking students to master. The style used in Japanese: The Spoken Language, on the other hand, is an adaptation of the *Shin-kunrei-shiki* style, and more directly tied to the structure of the Japanese writing system. For example, the word *rômaji* would be written *rômazi* in the *Shin-kunrei-shiki* style, and *roomazi* in the JSL style. It takes a little bit longer for English-speaking students to master the JSL style, and Jorden admits that students that have used only Hepburn can find the transition to the JSL style "a bit difficult" (Jorden & Noda, 1987, p. 21).

in Japanese language classrooms, where "native instructors trained only as classroom technicians are not equipped to analyze their own behavior and values beyond the level of casual observation" (Jorden, 1992, p. 161). The trained non-native speaker of Japanese, on the other hand, is able to offer linguistic and cultural analyses of Japanese in ways that are meaningful to students from the same base-language background.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

For most of the first two terms in my second-year Japanese class, I could not imagine continuing any further in the program than I absolutely needed to. In fact, I often felt so miserable that I would think about how I could fulfill my foreign language requirement in some other way, even going so far as to imagine that it might be worth my while to delay my degree completion in order to start and become qualified in another foreign language. My reasons for not continuing were that Japanese was too difficult, I was too old and removed from Japan for further employment there, and the teaching methodology was a poor fit for my learning style. And yet, I did continue, and by the end of the year I had not only achieved more and learned more than I had anticipated, but had found a desire to persist in learning Japanese, and a desire to go beyond what was required for my degree.

When I reread my journal for the first time, I was struck by the profound misery and unhappiness that permeated my entries during the first two terms. Also quite evident was the anger I felt toward the methodology and classroom procedures. Entries during the third term,

however, began to show a changing, more positive outlook toward the program, and a coming-to-terms with both the learning experience and with myself as a student of a very difficult foreign language. The range of emotions and reactions, and the changes that are documented in my journal led to this thesis. Given how miserable and angry I felt about the classroom culture and the teaching methodology at the beginning and during the middle of the year:

1. What changes occurred within me or within the program which led to my decision to continue learning Japanese in order to try and earn an endorsement to teach it as a foreign language?

2. What important themes in my learning experience emerged as being the most responsible for my early dissatisfaction? How was I able to identify and resolve the conflicts I had not only with the program, but within myself?

REASON FOR THE STUDY

A diary study in second language learning is an introspective, first-person account of the second language experience of an individual, and can offer insights into facets of the second language experience that are often missed by or are inaccessible to an external observer (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983). Although the introspective nature of the diary study is one of its strengths, it is also one of its limitations because it is an analysis of only one learner's experience, and conclusions and interpretations cannot easily be

generalized to other language learners. Diary research, however, can be hypothesis-generating, and insights gained from the study can be the basis for further controlled, experimental studies.

I believe at this time my journal is unique in that it examines a full year of an older adult learner's experience in a Japanese language classroom. The journal entries provide a means of gaining insight into how an adult learner adapts to different affective factors in the process of learning a foreign language, in particular, a non-cognate language like Japanese; and how the adult learner is able to resolve inner conflicts in order to persist in the learning of the language. While my need to keep a journal arose out of the anguish, confusion, and anger of my own second-language learning experience, I believe the implications of the experience can provide insights both to myself, and to other teachers of English as a second or foreign language.

In this study I will share and examine the journal I kept during a year of studying Japanese. I will discuss and evaluate the experiences and themes which contributed to my early dissatisfaction with the program as well as those which encouraged me to eventually continue to study Japanese. While the language experience described in the journal is peculiar to myself and the study of Japanese, I will link these experiences to a wider discussion of the conflicts that may occur for many adult second language learners or those studying a non-cognate language.

The study offers insights into the power of particular affective variables on the adult second language learner, and offers an awareness of how a second language program or instructor might ameliorate the effects of these variables on the second language learning experience. The study

also shows how reducing language anxiety for the adult learner and relieving cultural disequilibrium in the classroom can increase student motivation to continue learning a foreign or second language.

Chapter Two contains the review of the literature covering the diary study as a form of research; the affective variables of motivation and anxiety; the study of Japanese as a foreign language; and culture learning in the language classroom. Chapter Three describes the methodology used in keeping the journal and in analyzing journal entries, and includes a personal learning history. Chapter Four presents the analysis of journal entries, examines recurring themes, and assesses the personal and classroom variables which influenced my learning experience. Chapter Five discusses implications of the diary study for teachers of English as a second or foreign language, and indicates limitations of the study and areas for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature begins with an overview of introspective research in second language acquisition and the diary study as a particular genre of introspective research. It continues with a survey of literature on affective variables in second language learning, focusing on the variables of motivation and anxiety; summarizes the study of Japanese as a foreign language; and concludes with an overview of culture learning in the language classroom.

INTROSPECTIVE RESEARCH IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Introspection has been steadily gaining ground as a research method in second language acquisition as a way of probing learners' underlying knowledge about how they learn a second language. Introspective research can provide a means for discerning processes that are not accessible to observation or testing. Faerch and Kasper (1987), in their overview of introspective methods and data collection criteria in second language research, observe that introspective research allows a means of solving some of the ambiguity between process and product in second language learning, and note that introspective research can illuminate psychological dimensions of second language learning such as attitudes, motivation, and other affective variables that are often not revealed in observational, experimental, or other qualitative studies. Faerch and Kasper outline six areas of classification criteria for the collection of introspective data: the object of

introspection; the relation of the research to concrete action; the temporal relation of the research to action; whether or not the informant has been trained; the elicitation procedure used; and whether or not a combination of methods is used in the research.

Grotjahn (1987) adds that the selection of a specific form of introspective data collection does not preclude a means of analysis. In his review of introspective methods, Grotjahn maintains that qualitative refers "simultaneously to the manner of data collection, of theory construction and of data analysis as well as to the social and philosophical orientation of the investigation in question" (p.58). While the term *analysis* is usually employed to define the conversion process of qualitative data into an "authoritative written account," analysis in fact forms only one of three parts of the process, the other two being *description* and *interpretation* (Wolcott, 1994). None of the three parts are mutually exclusive of the others, nor are lines of demarcation between the three clearly drawn. Wolcott points out that while the analysis of qualitative data may in fact form the core of the written account of a study, there are no set percentages for combining the three, and the ratios of description, analysis, and interpretation to each other should be determined by the particular purpose of the study.

Introspective research includes the subject not only as an object of research, but as an informant who holds equal rights with the researchers, and whose subjective views are of importance to the process of theory construction (Grotjahn, 1987). Introspective research is "theory-driven research" as compared to "data-driven research," and while it can be argued that introspection does not provide generalizable results, it does allow for an

"interpretive recognition of the structures of sense, of the view of the world and of self, as well as of everyday knowledge" (Grotjahn, 1987, p. 66).

Gillette (1987) used introspective data to analyze the learning approaches of two successful French language students. The introspective approach, she holds, allows the researcher to consider the language learner as a whole person in the learning environment and she argues that there is something lost when the learner is an anonymous subject in an observational or quantitative study. The two learners, she discovered in her analysis, differed in motivation and personality, but shared a common sensitivity to other cultures, a "top-down" approach to learning with a focus on meaning and not form, were willing to take risks in order to learn, and were in full control of their own learning processes. The results, Gillette concludes, were not generalizable, but allowed other language learners a means of assessing their own behavior and strategies in the second language classroom.

THE DIARY STUDY IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION RESEARCH

Diary studies have come into their own as a form of research only within the last twenty years, and there are relatively few published studies. As a method of introspective research, diary studies generally fall under the exploratory-interpretive paradigm of research; that is, they are non-experimental, the data collected is qualitative, and the analysis of the data is interpretive (Grotjahn, 1987). The use of diary studies in second language acquisition research can be either purely introspective,where the diarist

analyzes his or her own learning experience, or more non-introspective, where the diary is analyzed by another researcher (Matsumoto, 1993).

Bailey and Ochsner (1983) define a diary study in second language research as:

> an account of a second language experience as recorded in a first-person journal . . . the central characteristic of the diary studies is that they are introspective: the diarist studies his [sic] own teaching or learning. Thus he [sic] can report . . . on facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer. (p. 189)

Matsumoto (1987) lists several advantages diary studies have in their qualitative approach to second language learning research. First, their holistic nature allows for all aspects of the learning experience to be explored, rather than the one or few preselected aspects that are investigated in more process-oriented research. Second, as a form of hypothesis-generating research, a diary study can often identify variables that play important roles in second language learning, and can lead to further controlled, experimental research. Third, the data collected in a diary can be seen as being the most "natural,' and the most directly connected to the natural classroom setting. Matsumoto notes that "the diary study's chief virtue in this regard is that it requires little research intrusion" (1987, p. 26), and avoids the effects that observational research often contribute. Fourth, the diary study can illuminate aspects often hidden in second language acquisition such as affective variables, learning styles and strategies, or other personal variables. Finally, the diary study can go beyond merely being a research tool and can serve to highlight self-awareness in second language learning and lead to self-evaluation and self-improvement. The diary can

also serve as a therapeutic tool for learners, and allow them to identify and overcome factors which may be hindering their second language learning.

Bailey and Ochsner (1983) outline five steps that should be taken when conducting a diary study:

1. The diarist gives an account of her personal language learning (or teaching) history. This is an important step as "what the diarist perceives as real may be more important to that person's language-learning experience than any external reality" (Bailey, 1990, p.6). The language learning history also provides insight into the diarist's personality, and allows the reader the opportunity to identify with the diarist as one would with a fictional character in a novel (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983).

2. The diarist systematically records events, details, and feelings about the current language experience in a confidential and candid diary. Bailey (1983) stresses that conditions for writing in the journal should be made as pleasant as possible, and also recommends that the time one spends writing in his or her journal should at least equal the amount of time spent in class (1990). The length of time between classroom experience and its corresponding journal entry can vary, and writing can take place during the language class, immediately after class, or at a later time. It is important, however, that the diarist be consistent and faithful in keeping the journal (Bailey, 1990). The diarist should describe or note the frequency of journal entries, and if necessary or pertinent to the research, reasons for their omission (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983). Also, Bailey and Ochsner stress that the learning or teaching environment be described.

3. The diarist revises the journal entries for public viewing (i.e. names and other identifying information are changed or omitted); meanings are

clarified. Bailey warns against changing the names and dates so much that the data are damaged or diluted. Misleading descriptions can distort readers' conclusions about the research.

4. The diarist studies the diary entries, and identifies patterns and significant events.

5. Factors identified as important to the language learning or teaching are interpreted and discussed in the finished diary study.

In a review of diary studies, Matsumoto (1987) poses three limitations to diary study research. The most obvious limitation is the diary study's lack of generalizability; that the introspective interpretations are unique to the diarist. Bailey (1983) and other diarists, however, believe that the lack of generalizability is not a problem, that the strength of these studies is that they can uncover often hidden personal variables in second language learning and acquisition. Matsumoto also claims that the introspective diary study puts a double burden on the learner: keeping a diary and learning a language. Finally, she notes that diary study research is time-consuming, and Bailey and Ochsner (1983) point out that it often takes as long to write about the data as it does to analyze it.

Matsumoto (1987) suggests that in order to increase generalizability, several diaries instead of only one should be analyzed in order to avoid the "idiosyncrasy of the findings" that come when doing a self-observational study. To increase the reliability of findings she also recommends that the diaries should be analyzed by more than one person. She claims that it is not easy to decide on the "significant" patterns and factors in the second language learning experience, and in order to avoid subjective judgments and make results more reliable, analysis of journals should be done by at

least two, or ideally, more researchers. A further limitation of diary studies she notes is that validity can be diminished if entries to the journal are not made openly and honestly, and Matsumoto suggests that journals' authors remain anonymous. However, knowing that others may read the diary and possibly analyze events, diarists may subconsciously or consciously write things that are desirable and refrain from detrimental entries about themselves or the teachers (Matsumoto, 1987). To avoid this, she recommends that diaries be supplemented with questionnaires and personal interviews to gain more accurate information about the language learning processes.

Most early published diary studies were of the purely introspective type. Francine Schumann, along with her husband, John, kept diaries of their acquisition of Arabic in Tunisia, and of Persian in the United States and Iran, and collaborated on a diary study of their experiences. Schumann (1978) further analyzed her diaries in order to look at variables she felt were particular to her learning experience. These included the "nesting patterns" of non-native speakers within the target language country, competition versus cooperation in second language learning, the role of the expatriate community in hindering the second language learning of a newcomer, the disadvantages of being an English-speaking second language learner, and the problems of being a woman trying to learn Persian in Iran.

Kathleen Bailey, of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, is one of the pioneers in using diary studies for second language research. She first published an introspective study of her own learning experience in a university French class (1978). She found that the learning environment, the teaching style, and her need for positive feedback were important variables

in her language learning experience. She later used the same diary and ten others to analyze the factors of competitiveness and anxiety, and proposed a hypothesis that anxiety in the language classroom can either cause or be aggravated by the learner's competitiveness, if learners believe themselves to be less proficient than others in the class (1983).

Matsumoto (1996) reported that having Japanese college students keep diaries of their classroom second language learning experience and then analyze their entries helped to raise their awareness of the learning process, and helped them organize thoughts which might have remained hidden or unconscious.

Ogulnik (1998) kept a diary of her language learning experience while she was studying Japanese while working as an English teacher in Hiroshima. Her diary study revealed a link between language learning and identity; in particular, how a knowledge of one's place in society is encoded into language. Her diary entries revealed that her language learning involved not only understanding Japanese vocabulary and grammar, but also included the process of acquiring a role as a female non-native speaker of Japanese. She recognized that because she was a foreign woman, learning Japanese entailed her having to fit into a particular place in Japanese society. She also observed that the structure of the Japanese language and her inability to express her feelings or needs reminded her of how she feels controlled as a woman in her native culture.

AFFECTIVE VARIABLES IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Affective variables are social and psychological factors which can interfere with or enhance the acquisition of a second language. No matter the teaching methodology used, or the aptitude of the learner, variables such as attitudes, motivation, self esteem, ego permeability, or other personality factors play important, and often independent roles in second language learning.

Krashen (1981; 1985) hypothesized that language learners have an "affective filter," or mental block that can prevent those who are acquiring language from completely utilizing the comprehensible input received in the second language. The filter is "raised" when the learner is lacking in self-esteem and self confidence, is anxious, or is unmotivated, and is "lowered" when the learner is unconcerned with the possibility of failure in language acquisition. According to Krashen, the affective filter gains strength during puberty, the "critical period" in second language acquisition, and adults may be unable to ever fully lower their affective filter during second language learning, thereby preventing them from ever attaining native-like proficiency in the second language.

Affective variables may play a more influential role than maturational factors in adult second language learning (J.H. Schumann, 1976). Adult learners, Schumann explains, are secure in their native language, and are not threatened by rejection when speaking or listening. When learning a second language, however, adults are placed in a dependent state, often unable to articulate clearly what they are cognitively able to reason in their native language, and their inadequacies and insecurities can bring about language

shock and a resistance to learning the second language. While culture shock can be briefly described as the disequilibrium or emotional disturbance which occurs when adjusting to a new cultural environment, language shock occurs when one is unable to communicate or interact with others because they do not know another language. The language shock often experienced by adult learners can cause culture shock and possible negative attitudes toward the target culture (Smalley, 1963).

Motivation in Second and Foreign Language Learning

Motivation as a factor in second language learning was first proposed by Gardner and Lambert, who argued that aptitude together with motivation was responsible for successful language learning (1959). Gardner and Lambert (1972) later posited two types of motivation: integrative, where the learner wishes to identify and communicate with the target language group, and instrumental, where the second language will be used only for utilitarian purposes, such as fulfilling course requirements or doing research. They hypothesized that an integratively motivated learner would be more successful in acquiring a second language, but they eventually accepted that a learner who was studying a second language for instrumental purposes could be just as motivated and successful. Schumann (1975) believes the adoption of an integrative motivation towards learning a second language is one means for adult learners to achieve success in second language acquisition. Motivation to learn a second language, however, goes beyond wanting or needing to learn the language, and Gardner and

Lalonde (1985) defined a motivated individual as one who has the desire to achieve a goal, works diligently towards that goal, and enjoys the learning process.

While the constructs of integrative and instrumental motivation have governed most of the research and discourse on motivation in second language learning, they have also been shown to limit definitions of and research about motivation in language learning. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) claim that because integrative and instrumental approaches are social-psychological, they emphasize the goals of language learners only in regards to their attitudes about the target language and culture, or their professional ambitions. Also, integrative and instrumental approaches tend to group affective factors and motivation together, thereby making it difficult to define motivation on its own as a force in second language learning. Van Lier (1996) proposes a third limitation of relying solely on integrative and instrumental approaches as they identify

> motivation with long-term goals and purposes, and [do] not consider here-and-now interest in the task, the joy of exploration or working together, natural curiosity, and other factors operating in the immediate learning context (p.105)

Van Lier proposes a reconceptualization of motivation, one that places intrinsic motivation at the center, along with its interactions with different types of extrinsic motivation, or motivation that is "other-related." Intrinsic motivation has been defined as motivation which comes from within or is caused by the person (Deci & Ryan, 1991). According to van Lier (1996), extrinsically motivated actions need to blend with intrinsically motivated actions so that what has been "other-regulated" becomes self-regulated in the language learner. Intrinsic motivation becomes an active

factor in second language learning when there is a good balance between a learner's skills and the challenges presented in the learning environment. It can provide a link between past sources of motivation, such as needs, and future sources of motivation, such as goals (van Lier, 1996).

There is a close relationship between achievement in the language classroom and motivation, but various forms of achievement assessment, including tests and grades, are effective in assisting motivation only if the learner does not perceive himself or herself to be controlled by the assessment. Research by Deci and Ryan (1992) on the relationship between intrinsic motivation and achievement suggests that the relationship between a learner's experience of competence and external feedback is very delicately balanced. When feedback is determined to be controlling, not only intrinsic motivation but personal commitment tend to decrease. The desire for personal achievement in terms of a student's skills, knowledge, and social relationships, is also closely tied to one's intrinsic motivation (van Lier, 1991).

Motivation has also been identified as a key mediating factor in persistence in second language learning. In a study conducted to determine the personal factors related to persistence in second language learning, Clement, Smythe, and Gardner (1978) found that while a student's aptitude has a clear influence on a student's decision to continue the study of a second language, this influence is strongly mediated by motivation. They also determined that as there is an intimate relationship between attitudes and motivation, efforts should be made to increase positive attitudes toward the target language and culture in order to facilitate persistence in studying the language.

Although motivation was identified as a factor in second language learning almost 30 years ago, it is only recently that the foreign language community has started to pay attention to the effects of motivation on second language learning (Young, 1991). Crookes and Schmidt (1991) claim that in spite of the interest that many researchers have in motivation, it is not a subject of any broad investigation in applied linguistics.

Second Language Anxiety

Foreign or second language anxiety (hereafter referred to as language anxiety) has been reliably and validly identified and measured as a distinct form of anxiety related to learning a second or foreign language, and research has shown that language anxiety functions independently of test or other forms of anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1991; Horwitz, 1991; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Language anxiety has been shown to be a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning processes" (Horwitz, et al., 1991, p. 31). Language anxiety includes the subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry, and studies on language anxiety have shown that it can directly affect the communicative strategies students employ in the language class (Horwitz, et al., 1991). Anxiety in the language classroom can result from a variety of factors: erroneous learner beliefs regarding language learning; personal and interpersonal anxieties; instructor beliefs about language learning and teaching; classroom procedures; and language testing (Young, 1991). While anxiety is usually considered to be *debilitating*; that is, interfering with learning or causing a student to withdraw from the learning experience, in

certain instances it can also be *facilitating* motivating the student to study and concentrate on language learning (Bailey, 1983).

Manifestations of language anxiety can closely resemble reactions to what has been called social anxiety (Leary & Kowalski, 1995). Social anxiety includes the constructs of speech anxiety, stage fright, embarrassment, and shyness. Reactions to anxiety-producing incidents and situations include arousal-mediated responses, i.e. shaking, perspiring, fidgeting, or feeling nauseated; disaffiliate behavior, which includes avoiding eye contact, sitting at the rear of the classroom, or refraining from volunteering or answering questions; and image-protection behavior, such as downplaying any previous knowledge or experience.

Research has shown that debilitating language anxiety adversely influences language learning both in the input and output stages of learning. Anxious students may not comprehend the input as well because of short-term memory loss related to anxiety, and production also suffers as anxiety can interfere with the long-term memory process (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Results from a qualitative study using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope indicated that language anxiety specifically was responsible for approximately 25% of the variance in final grades (Horwitz & Young, 1991). An increase in motivation has been shown to result from language learners adopting attitudes and strategies to reduce second language anxiety, regardless of the methodology used to teach the language (Young, 1991).

Most studies of language anxiety have been conducted in classrooms where the foreign language studied has been an Indo-European one, such as French, Spanish, or German. In a study focusing on language anxiety in a

Japanese language classroom, Aida (1994) found that a fair amount of anxiety exists, with a third or more of the students indicating anxiety agreement with items on the survey reflecting language anxiety. The factors she found that influenced students' anxiety beyond speech anxiety, a fear of negative evaluation, or a fear of failing the class were how comfortable students felt when speaking with native speakers of Japanese and students' attitudes toward the Japanese class itself. Aida's research showed lower levels of anxiety for those who had previously been to Japan.

The ninety-six second-year students included in Aida's research project were studying Japanese for three reasons: to fulfill the university foreign language requirement; to satisfy a personal interest in the language; or to meet a Japanese or Asian Studies major requirement. There was no difference in anxiety levels when all three groups were compared; however, when the Major group was removed and the Elective and Required groups compared, those taking the class to fulfill a language requirement showed a significantly higher level of anxiety. The results of the study indicated that these students may be less likely to study Japanese beyond the required classes, and, therefore, that the attrition rate might be high between lower and upper-division classes.

A further anxiety-causing aspect in second language learning is the concept that acquisition of a second language can be a threat to a sense of self, as the language one speaks forms an integral part of one's identity (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). Existential anxiety can be an intrinsic part of second language anxiety as learning a second language "touches the core of one's self-identity, one's self image," with the learner's line of thought continuing, "'If I learn another language, I will somehow lose myself; I, as I

know myself to be, will cease to exist'" (Rardin in Young, 1992, p. 168). Adult learners in particular typically perceive of themselves as intelligent and socially aware individuals, and are rarely challenged when they communicate in their native language. The second language learning context, however, can be quite different:

> Because individual communication attempts will be evaluated according to uncertain or even unknown linguistic and sociocultural standards . . . any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear or even panic. . . . adult language learners' self-perceptions of genuineness in presenting themselves to others may be threatened by the limited range of meaning and affect that can be deliberately communicated. (Horwitz, et al., 1991, p. 31)

Student surveys have shown that the greatest source of anxiety for second or foreign language learners is having to speak the target language in front of their classmates, followed by making pronunciation errors, and the frustration of not being able to communicate effectively in the target language. That many students had to work far harder for their language classes, yet did not do as well as in other courses also caused anxiety and a feeling of being less in control (Price, 1991).

The social context of the second language classroom that the instructor establishes can also have a powerful effect on the anxiety levels of students, and classroom culture is often mediated by what J.H. Schumann (1976) has defined as *social distance*. Social distance exists where the cultures of the native language and target language are not congruent, where the two groups may hold negative attitudes toward one another, and where those

learning the second language intend to remain in the target language or culture for only a short period of time.

JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Although affective variables may play a role in the learning of any language, their potential for disruption in the second language learning process increases when the language is not a cognate of English. Japanese, a non-Indo-European language, is one of four languages that the Foreign Service Institute and Defense Language Institute have classified as the most difficult for native English speakers to learn (the others are Chinese, Arabic, and Korean). The category a language is placed in is determined by the number of instructional hours needed to reach a prescribed level of proficiency. Proficiency scales range from 0 to 5, with 0 equaling no functional proficiency and 5 the proficiency level of an educated native speaker (Walton, 1992). Foreign Service Institute experience has shown that it takes approximately 480 contact hours to reach level 2 for a Category-1 language (at 30 contact hours per week), but 1320 contact hours to reach the same level of proficiency for a Category-4 language. If one received ten hours per week of instruction at the beginning level, and five hours per week at the intermediate level, it would take approximately eight years of academic study to reach a level 2 proficiency rating in a Category-4 language. Using the same scale of academic instruction, it would take only one and a half years to reach the same proficiency level in a Category-1 language (Walton, 1992).

Because of the wide differences in the time it takes to become proficient in Japanese versus Category-1 or Category-2 languages, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) established separate proficiency guidelines for Japanese (1987). The guidelines for Japanese, like the generic proficiency scales established by ACTFL, present a hierarchy of features of integrated performance in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The specific guidelines for Japanese are given next to the generic language proficiency guidelines in order to more clearly see the necessary characteristics for proficiency in Japanese in comparison to the generic guidelines. Rather than identifying a particular set of skills or abilities required at each level, the Japanese guidelines suggest functional examples of non-native ability at particular stages.

Not only do the writing systems of Category-4 languages increase the difficulty in learning them, but how these languages are used for interpersonal and interpretive communication also makes their learning more difficult:

> The learner must not only come to see the world or 'Reality' in ways quite different from those described by the traditionally taught Indo-European languages, but must also learn to encode this new perception into language use. The honorific system of Japanese and its grammatical encoding in the language code is a typical example. (Walton, 1992, p. 3)

The learning of a "truly foreign language" (Jorden & Walton, 1987) such as Japanese requires that students learn not only what should and should not be said in social interaction, but what topics can and cannot be brought up with whom and when, and how the social status and familiarity of the speaker and listener must always be considered in any speech act (Walton,1992). When learning Japanese, one must become aware of the

concepts of *uchi* and *soto*, or "inside" and "outside." These orientations are linked in Japanese with definitions of self and one's place in society, and understandings of *uchi* and *soto* are crucial in determining how one places oneself in relation to not only his or her interlocutor, but to whom one or what one is speaking about as well. A linguistic form in Japanese, such as an honorific, can illustrate the sociocultural dimensions of a communication context "including emotional and social relationships between speaker and addressee, or speaker and referent" (Bachnik, 1994, p. 13). Also, in Japanese, "self" is not a fixed identity as it is in English; rather, the boundaries of *uchi* and *soto*, and therefore self, are "fluid" and shift depending on the context and the participants. The speaker must continually calculate who is *uchi* (in-group) or who is *soto* (out-group) in any particular communication act, and reference their word choice or morphology accordingly (Wetzel, 1994).

Expectations of a teacher's classroom role and social standing differ greatly between Japanese and Americans, and can cause feelings of social distance from the language and culture in the Japanese language classroom. The potential for misunderstanding and miscommunication can be great because of cultural differences in perceptions of a teacher's role and authority (Rhee & Watanabe, 1993). In Japan, the teacher is automatically viewed as the authority in the classroom, contrasted with an American model of the teacher as a developer of individual ideals. In the United States, teachers are not automatically granted the respect of their students as they are in Japan, but must earn it. Japanese instructors believe that American students often fail to use the correct form of address with them, fail to offer them appropriate assistance, or approach the teacher with questions or requests which threaten or downplay their authority. American students, on

the other hand, often find a Japanese instructor aloof, insensitive, or overly rigid (Rhee & Watanabe, 1993).

The learning of Japanese by a native English speaker requires what Jorden has described as a "broad linguistic and cultural jump" (1986, p.141). The linguistic and cultural mindsets of native English speakers act as powerful, automatic filters through which understanding and acceptance of differences in the Japanese language and cultural practices must pass, and Jorden points out that Japanese language instructors need an understanding of the cultural mindset of their students, and how their students are socialized in their culture as much as the student of Japanese needs to develop an understanding of the Japanese cultural mindset (1986).

The native speaker of Japanese cannot know what it is like to function as a foreigner in their society. The integration into Japanese society by a non-Japanese is highly unlikely, and a foreigner in Japanese society will always remain a foreigner, always an outsider no matter his or her linguistic or intercultural skills. Miller (1977, cited in Haugh, 1998) has claimed that Japanese people become uncomfortable when a foreigner can speak Japanese like a native speaker, and he has described this phenomenon in what he has called the "Law of Inverse Returns:"

> Every non-Japanese who becomes involved in learning the Japanese language must contend with a facet of sociolinguistic behavior that can be called the law of inverse returns. This law holds that the better you get at the language, the less credit you are given for your accomplishments; the more fluently you speak it, the less your hard-won skills will do for you in the way of making friends and favorably impressing people; but by the same token the less you do with the language; the more you will be praised and encouraged by Japanese society in general and your friends in particular. (p. 78)

A code of interpersonal behaviors for foreigners speaking Japanese exists which contrasts with that expected of native Japanese (Walton, 1992). Kasper observes that non-native speakers using appropriate pragmatic forms combined with "clear markers of non-membership" (1997, p.117) may be better received by native Japanese speakers. It has also been suggested that a better proficiency-scale target in Japanese for a non-native speaker might be based on that of the "ideal foreigner" versus an educated native speaker (Walton, 1992). Siegel (1996) reports that in communicative situations in Japan, in addition to choosing the correct register and grammatical coding, non-native speakers must also learn to choose which language they will communicate in. English is most often used with non-Asians in Japan, even if communication is begun in Japanese, and often Japanese and English are mixed in interactions.

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN CULTURE

Byram has written that "language is not simply a reflector of an objective cultural reality. It is an integral part of that reality through which other parts are shaped and interpreted" (1991, p. 18). Culture learning in the language classroom, however, has often focused on what Jorden (1992) has defined as *learned culture*, or culture that must be studied and learned by both natives and foreigners alike. Learned culture can be divided into the categories of aesthetic culture (i.e. art, music, literature), informational culture (i.e facts about the population, government, education, or history), and skill culture (i.e. cooking, arts and crafts, or performance). In contrast, *acquired culture* forms the deep culture of a society, and represents the

mindset and behavioral and attitudinal framework, usually below the level of awareness, that supports daily conduct and language use.

> How individuals interact and interrelate, how they define the self, how they view time and space, their attitudes towards foreigners, their attitudes toward language–foreign and native–all these are part of acquired culture, the driving force that is omnipresent. (Jorden, 1992, p. 157)

At the lowest levels of proficiency in a foreign language, connections between learned culture and the language usually must be taught in the base language, and these lessons do nothing to improve proficiency in the target language or increase an understanding of the target language acquired culture. Too often, Jorden (1992) argues, language is taught alongside culture while the emphasis should be on language taught *in* culture, where language use is but one representation of the culture. The deep mindset of acquired culture allows native speakers of a language to communicate with other native speakers, and is what often makes it so difficult for non-native speakers to learn to communicate effectively with native speakers (Kramsch, 1993) and become acculturated in the target culture.

Students are often ill-prepared to succeed in becoming acculturated in the language classroom, especially when the language is a non-cognate of English. Mantle-Bromley (1992) argues that too often teachers assume that the patterns of the target culture can easily be fitted into students' existing cultural framework, and are often unaware of how much preparation is actually needed to prepare students to accept the target culture. Acculturation for students learning a foreign or second language can be difficult and frustrating, entailing an emotional involvement, and, according to Mantle-Bromley (1992), students (and instructors) may often find themselves longing for the easier way of learning *about* culture versus *in*

culture. Culture shock often arises in the language classroom. Culture shock in the language classroom is often accompanied by language shock, where the student is unable to communicate or interact with others except at perhaps the level of a small child (Smalley, 1963). For the student suffering from culture and language shock, language study can become tiring, boring, or frustrating, and can result in less positive attitudes towards the target language (Mantle-Bromley, 1992). Byram claims, however, that:

> it is [this] feeling of being disconcerted which is an indication of a change of attitudes and concepts, of a modification of culture-specific schemata, which cultural awareness should bring about. (1991, p. 24)

In their process of becoming acculturated in the target culture, students need to gain an understanding not only of the target culture mindset, but of their own cultural mindsets as well in order to move to an understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. In order to prepare students for effective cross-cultural learning in the language classroom, Mantle-Bromley (1992) recommends an orientation, or "attitude readiness lessons" which address the following questions: What is culture; what are the levels within culture; what do we look for when we study culture; what is our own culture; and which of our beliefs and behaviors may inhibit language and culture learning (1992, p. 122). Successful language learning *in* culture requires both students and instructors to gain an understanding of the other's culture in relation to their own, based on reflection of both the base and target cultures.

Jorden (1992) states that target language instructors who are trained only as "classroom technicians" are not qualified or able to analyze their own cultural behavior beyond the level of casual observation, and are

therefore not aware of the cultural behavior they are modeling. In a case study of two Japanese instructors, one a native-speaker, and the other American, Ikeda (1996) discovered that the implicit cultural messages each brought to their teaching impacted students' cultural learning in the classroom. Students, she found, tended to pick up a variety of cultural messages implicitly from behavioral factors such as the teachers' use of space in the classroom, the space allowed between student and teacher, the teachers' body language, their clothing, and their paralanguage. Ikeda proposed that language teachers study their own verbal and non-verbal behaviors in the classroom in order to analyze and understand the implicit cultural messages they may be passing on to students.

Byram (1991) recommends an integration of language and culture by using language study as the medium to introduce students to the totality of the target culture. He presents a language and culture teaching process which includes four components: language learning, language awareness, cultural awareness, and cultural experience. The skill oriented language learning and knowledge-oriented cultural experience components should be taught in the second language medium. Language awareness, or sociolinguistic knowledge of the second language, and cultural awareness, should be taught in the base language, and can focus on comparisons between the base and target cultures and languages and support the language learning component. Byram stresses that each component is mutually supportive and integral to the whole learning process, and that the proportion assigned to each component should vary according to the students' language ability level. Jorden and Walton (1987) propose a team-teaching approach in the language classroom, with native-speakers serving

as models of the target language and culture in the skill component of language learning ("act"), and instructors who are native speakers of the base language but fully trained in the target language providing a meaningful analysis of the target language and culture to students ("fact").

As part of the acculturation process , Kramsch (1993) recommends the adoption of a "double-voiced discourse" in the second language classroom, where students move beyond a model of "an ideal native speaker," and attend to both their own agenda in learning as well as that of their instructors; where "language learners can start using the foreign language not merely as imperfect native speakers, but as speakers in their own right" (p.28). A primary task in developing cross-cultural competence in language learning should be for students to look beyond the contexts of knowledge and understanding based on their own and the target culture, and instead look for a "third place" where aspects of both cultures can be observed and examined through a different perspective.

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides a theoretical framework to support the introspective approach that this diary study will undertake, and background on other influential variables in the language learning experience. As the literature suggests, language anxiety, motivation and attitude, the study of Japanese as a foreign language, and the process of language learning in culture can separately influence the study of Japanese, but they also have the potential to overlap within the environment of the Japanese language classroom and cause conflict and frustration. This study will examine the impact of these individual variables upon a language

learning experience, the relationships and connections between these variables, and their influence on an ultimate desire to persist in the study of the Japanese language.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This chapter opens with an overview of my reasons for enrolling in second-year Japanese, and is followed by my personal language learning history prior to the learning experience documented in my journal. The chapter continues with an examination of my journal-keeping process, and concludes with a summary of the procedures that were used in analyzing the journal for this study.

SUBJECT

When I began keeping a journal of my experiences in second-year Japanese, I was a 45 year-old graduate student enrolled in the M.A. TESOL program at my university. Along with completing a core curriculum, the degree also requires a demonstration of proficiency in a second language. Each language department at the university sets its own standards and means of testing, and the proficiency requirement for Japanese can be fulfilled by either passing one term of the third-year level, or through an oral interview with one of the Japanese department staff.

My decision to fulfill my language requirement in Japanese was not an easy one, even though I had studied Japanese as an undergraduate four years earlier and had lived and studied the language in Japan for six-and-a-half years. While I enjoyed learning the language, my Japanese classes had

been without doubt the most difficult college-level courses I had ever taken, requiring an inordinate amount of time and effort in comparison to other courses. Even with the rewards of being able to use and understand Japanese while living in Japan, the language remained an immense challenge. After completing the second-year level of Japanese for the bachelor of arts requirement, however, I came to accept that in spite of enjoying the study of Japanese, doing well and becoming proficient in Japanese as well as doing well in my other courses would involve a workload that I wasn't sure I wanted to take on at that time in my life. I opted instead for a major in Social Sciences, with an emphasis in Asian Studies.

In the spring before I began my Japanese class at the university, my husband and I adopted a baby girl from the People's Republic of China. We had been told by the China adoption community and our adoption agency that our learning to speak Chinese would be a strong means of understanding and maintaining connections to our daughter's birth culture. I did have a strong desire to learn Chinese, but was realistically aware that I did not have the time to begin a formal study of Chinese in order to pass the proficiency requirement for my degree. Faced with a desire to learn another language, and the knowledge that it had been four years since my last formal study of Japanese; that learning Japanese required considerable time and energy; and that the methodology used at the university was completely different from any I had encountered before, it was not without some reluctance and trepidation that I enrolled in Japanese. My intention was to become comfortable with the methodology and renew my level of proficiency at the second-year level in order to pass one term of third year.

Personal Language Learning History

Prior to taking the second-year Japanese course at my university, I had off and on, formally and informally, studied Japanese for over 25 years. During my first year at college I was chosen to participate in an overseas study program to Japan, and so in my first fall term I enrolled in first-year Japanese, and continued studying Japanese the following winter and spring during the five months I was abroad in Japan. The text used at my college and while overseas was Eleanor Jorden's Beginning Japanese, the precursor to Japanese: The Spoken Language. While living in Japan, even though I was studying the language and supposedly had ample opportunities to use what I was learning, I quickly found out that I didn't need or get to use Japanese very much. There was always one member of my different host families who spoke fluent English, a more practical means of communication than my limited Japanese. Many Japanese, I discovered, were also eager to practice their English with me when I was out and about, and helped me get around or make purchases as necessary. As a result, I didn't become interested in learning nor apply myself, although I did earn a B grade each term. My first genuine interest in learning Japanese came when I began to learn the writing system. I would practice for hours reading and writing the Japanese syllabary and some basic *kanji*. I fondly remember walking around Hiroshima with my host mother, stopping frequently to try and read the signs she would point to in order to help me practice and remember the *kana* and *kanji* I was learning. When I returned to school in the United States the following fall, however, I had decided against taking any further Japanese

courses. I planned to go to nursing school and didn't think I would ever need Japanese again.

I returned to Japan as a member of the U.S. Navy's Overseas Family Residency Program in the early 1980s. My husband had been assigned to the USS Midway, homeported in Yokosuka, and we lived in the Yokohama area for three years. I didn't study Japanese formally during our stay, but pursued an independent, informal study of the Japanese writing system and practiced whenever possible what little Japanese I could remember from my earlier lessons. I found I was able to quickly recall the Japanese counting system, and both *hiragana* and *katakana* from before. I also practiced reading and memorizing as many *kanji* as I could for train stations, shops, roads, towns, and cities in the Tokyo area. I found that being able to read a few signs and maps, and being able to use and understand a few basic phrases in Japanese helped my cultural adjustment immensely because it gave me the ability to comprehend a little of what was being said or where I was going rather than becoming totally disoriented. We returned to Japan for a second tour six years later, and we stayed for another three-and-a-half years. During this sojourn, I enrolled in a Japanese course at the language school where I was employed to teach English conversation. The school tested my proficiency level and placed me in the advanced beginner level. My lessons, twice a week for two hours, were for the most part private, and my instructor used the direct method; inside the classroom I did not hear or see any English. I also frequently ran into my instructor at the train station on my way to my class or work, and we used this time for further Japanese conversation practice. All texts and handouts used in my classes were prepared by the language school where I worked. The speaking and

listening portion of the class covered basic Japanese grammar and patterns of speech and were quite difficult for me. The reading and writing portion, however, was even more challenging as I was required to learn around 25 or so new *kanji* characters a week as well as continue practice with *hiragana* and *katakana*. Each weekly reading and writing lesson had a "theme," such as politics or shopping, introduced new *kanji* related to the theme, and included many of the grammar patterns I was learning from the speaking and listening portion. As challenging as these lessons were, I found them stimulating and enjoyed them as I could practice reading and reinforcing what I was learning by trying to read the abundance of authentic materials available to me. Although my speaking and listening skills improved because of the classes, I found once again that most Japanese preferred to speak English with me rather than letting me practice my limited Japanese with them.

The fall after our return to the United States, I returned to college to complete my undergraduate degree. Because I had already completed one year of Japanese earlier, and as I had recently been studying Japanese, I enrolled in second-year Japanese in order to fulfill the foreign language requirement for the bachelor of arts degree. I attended a local community college for one year in order to complete my language and some other degree requirements at a lower cost than the four-year university I would later be attending.

My second-year Japanese class at the community college met twice a week for two-and-a-half hours, and other than the first day of class, English was never used again nor allowed in the classroom throughout the year. There was no one "official" text used; instead, a text produced in Japan, a

book on living in Japan, and handouts prepared by the instructor were used in equal amounts. All were written in Japanese, with *furigana* (small *hiragana* characters) provided above new or difficult *kanji* to aid reading comprehension. No exams were given during the year; students were evaluated by the instructor on their class participation and performance in pair work, group work, individual oral projects, and on written homework assignments and board work during the writing portion of the class. Students were encouraged to use dictionaries to find vocabulary they wished to use that had not been introduced in class. Every week, class time was also set aside for listening, where the class watched and listened to a Japanese film or television program. My study time outside of class averaged between five and seven hours weekly, depending on what we were learning in class and what the written homework entailed. In spite of it being an extremely enjoyable and anxiety-free learning environment, it was still a demanding and challenging program, and I worked hard to earn an A grade each term. Because of previously studying Japanese, the first two terms of the year seemed somewhat easy for me, and I considered continuing in Japanese for my major field of study. In the third term, however, as structures and vocabulary I was not familiar with were introduced, I came to realize how much effort and time it would take for me to continue learning Japanese as a foreign language and do well at it, and I changed my mind about pursuing Japanese as a major. I felt that I could either excel in learning Japanese or in completing my degree, but if pursuing both simultaneously would not do well at either.

INSTRUMENT

The journal that was used for this study was begun approximately two weeks after my second-year Japanese class at the university began. I had never previously kept a journal, nor felt the need to do so, but I felt this time that writing would be a means of releasing some of the tension, frustration, and disequilibrium I was experiencing. Soon after I began the journal, I recalled the use of diary studies in second language acquisition research, and I decided to continue keeping the journal for my thesis research.

The journal that forms the appendix of this study was kept in a 150-page spiral notebook, with all the entries somewhat neatly written in black fountain pen. Although Bailey and Ochsner (1983) suggest that the journal author should take as long to write about the class experience as the length of the class period, and F. Schumann (1978), along with her husband, documented their learning experiences in a detailed, log-type fashion, I decided that the only firm rule I would try to adhere to was to write immediately following each class for a minimum of 20 minutes. I didn't want to be constrained by any style or journal format that might ultimately prove uncomfortable for me, or that I might quickly tire of. I had also recently recovered from tendinitis in my wrist, and knew that I could not write for much longer than 20 minutes without experiencing a great deal of pain. I discovered early on that an incident in class might be all I chose to write about for the day or that it might lead to other thoughts about the class and my learning experience. There were days when I couldn't write for 20 minutes, while at other times, 20 minutes proved not enough time to

record all that I wanted to say about the day's experience. If I missed a class or chose not to write in the journal on a particular day, I included a brief note of explanation in the next entry.

During the fall term I went to the library immediately following Japanese class and wrote in my journal. However, a fellow graduate student commented one day toward the end of the term that the journal was my research data for my thesis; what if it was stolen or lost at school? For the remainder of the fall term and during the winter and spring terms, I kept the journal at home and began writing as soon as I returned from each day's class. In the spring term, I changed to the evening section of second-year Japanese, which met two evenings a week instead of five mornings a week as my previous class had. By the time I arrived home following class in the evening, however, I was too tired to write, and family commitments as well kept me from writing in my journal at night. Instead, I wrote the following morning when I had a quiet house all to myself, continuing to write for a minimum of 20 minutes. I did not cover each 50-minute session of the evening classes in the journal; rather, I treated the entire evening as a class experience, and as a result there are fewer entries for the third term. On the whole, the spring term's entries tend to be more reflective and less emotional than the entries from the first two terms, in large part because of the time between the class sessions and when I wrote about them in the journal. However, I was also beginning research for my thesis during the spring term and could relate much of what I was reading to my classroom and learning experience. Included in the journal are also two entries relating experiences outside of class that were directly related to learning Japanese and the methodology.

My entries in the journal were doubtlessly affected by the underlying knowledge that I would be using them as data for my thesis. I am sure that there were instances and feelings that I refrained from writing about, or wrote differently about, knowing that they would be read by others in the future. Also, the overall tone of the journal is often milder than how I was actually feeling about the class. Still, the writing is for the most part very unpolished and natural, and definitely not my "best." While some entries are quite emotional, in general they are an accurate representation of what I was experiencing in class and reflect the changes that occurred throughout the year, both in the class and within myself. During the time I kept the journal I did not share any of it with anyone else, nor did I go back to reread or adjust anything in it.

The journal's strength, I believe, lies in its documentation of a full year of an adult learner's efforts to learn a Category-4 foreign language and of the influence of affective variables during the process. The journal's introspective and longitudinal nature provides not only a description of the learning environment and teaching method over time, but also illuminates otherwise unobservable aspects of my learning experience, and how changes in emotions, motivation, and attitudes came about during the year.

PROCEDURES

Review and Transcription

I reread my journal for the first time two days after the end of the school year. I intentionally avoided any analysis of it at the time; rather, I wanted to see how my memories of the year, and the changes I knew had

transpired, matched what I had written in the journal. The first reading was intended to let the whole of the journal "wash over me" in order to get a first impression of what I had written about my classroom experience, and of the data I would be using when I conducted the actual analysis.

During the summer following the end of class I began transcribing the journal. Following Bailey and Ochsner's (1983) guidelines, I revised portions of the journal for public consumption by correcting obvious grammatical and spelling errors, removing dates, clarifying meaning if necessary (by placing explanations and missing words or parts of sentences in brackets), and omitting all proper names and replacing them with a single capital letter. To further preserve the anonymity of the teaching staff, all the instructor's ranks were omitted and all were assigned the gender of male. Otherwise, the journal was transcribed exactly as I had written it, including exclamations, and capitalized and underlined words. Japanese words used in the journal were transcribed in italics.

As I was transcribing the journal, I began to keep a general list of the different themes and issues that appeared frequently and therefore seemed most salient to my learning experience. While I was looking specifically for incidents and entries related to anxiety, motivation, and culture shock in the foreign language classroom, if I found other learning issues mentioned repeatedly, they were also included on the list.

Analyzing the Journal

I followed both Schumann's (1978) and Bailey and Ochsner's (1983) guidelines for analyzing the entries in my journal, and carefully read and reread the journal looking for patterns or themes that appeared frequently

or that were perceived to be important in my learning experience. A word count was suggested at one time as a means of determining recurring themes, but I concluded that it would be too time consuming to try and isolate various words and concepts and their relationships to events, and that the results would most likely only appear to reframe the questions. Also, I believed that how I had written about my learning experience in the journal, the personal nature of the entries, did not lend itself to any sort of quantitative analysis; rather, it better fit within an exploratory-interpretive research paradigm, requiring a more interpretive, purely qualitative analysis (Grotjahn, 1987).

Beginning with the list I had created during the transcription, as I read through the journal each time, I highlighted frequently occurring incidents and reflections with different colored pens. The themes that emerged most frequently, and the ones that I perceived as most important were my reaction to the Jorden method and the teaching; motivation; myself as a student and language learner; memorization; language anxiety; cultural adjustment in the classroom; and coping strategies. Hemstreet's (1992) diary study of her overseas cultural adjustment suggested a further differentiation of the identified variables as either personal or situational. Often something I had written would resist being placed in a single category as several different affective factors intersected within an entry, and I further analyzed these entries to determine whether the underlying catalyst was either situational or personal. For example, among entries I had initially grouped under "personal," I found that while some incidents did reveal self-judgements and self-expectations about myself as a learner, others were in

fact more of a response to the teaching methodology or the teaching style of a particular instructor.

I began the journal as a means of coping with the frustration and tension I was experiencing in my second-year Japanese class; therefore, a great many of the entries are negative, reacting against my classroom experience and expressing my frustrations with the Japanese language and the methodology. Prior to beginning the analysis, I was encouraged, however, to "look for the joy" when analyzing the journal entries rather than dwelling on the negative; to search for the times where I expressed enjoyment in the learning experience, and for events that were instrumental in the changes in my attitudes and motivation which developed throughout the year. Looking beyond the negative issues in my entries to the positive aspects allowed me not only to more critically analyze the methodology and the learning experience as a whole, but to take a more concentrated look at myself as both a learner and teacher of a second language.

My journal is an intensely personal document, and reveals much of my private self, not only as a language learner, but as a student in general. In her diary study, Francine Schumann concluded that what she most gained from her analysis was an understanding of how *she* learns a foreign language (1978). I too gained similar insight from my analysis, a deeper understanding of my needs as a second language learner and of how I best learn. While the results of the analysis lack generalizability because of the journal's introspective nature (F. Schumann, 1978; Bailey, 1980; Bailey & Ochsner, 1983; Matsumoto, 1987), I believe that many of the experiences documented in the journal are representative of others who have struggled

to learn Japanese or another non-cognate language, and can ultimately offer insights on the second language learning experience to other learners and to instructors of these languages as well.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will analyze the eight most frequently recurring themes found in my journal, the ones determined to be most important and influential throughout my second-year Japanese course. I will first examine the four most significant situational variables, follow with an analysis of the three most salient personal variables, and close with a look at the coping strategies that I used in my adaptation to the language learning experience.

SITUATIONAL VARIABLES

I define situational variables as those which exercised a strong influence over my learning experience but over which I had no personal control or ability to change; I had to adapt to them. Entries concerning the Jorden method and its classroom application, the memory requirements for the course, language learning in culture, and the classroom environment are woven throughout my journal, and reveal not only the anger, frustration, and confusion I initially experienced in my Japanese class, but describe my eventual adaptation and decision to continue studying Japanese as well.

The Jorden Method and Its Classroom Application

> As I've written in this journal, and as I go through the course, I'm coming to see that my focus has become not so much

> learning Japanese any more, but surviving the method, and the method is the focus of this course, that's for sure. (2/27)

The primary motif woven throughout my journal is my almost year-long struggle with the Jorden method for learning Japanese and my adaptation to it. My entries about the methodology and the teaching of the method form a framework for my entire learning experience, and all other variables influential to my learning must be considered within the context of the Jorden method. Throughout the journal I compare the methodology with past learning experiences; question who the methodology is best suited for and whose needs are being met; rail against the course expectations and grading standards; and ask myself whether I am actually learning Japanese. By the end of the year, however, I had adapted to the methodology, or was at least less frustrated with it, and found that not only had I learned more of the language, but more about the language within Japanese culture and society, and more about who I was as a student and speaker of Japanese. Instrumental in my adaptation and adjustment were changes in the instructional styles of some of the instructors, and the development of an understanding of the background of the Jorden method and the difficulties inherent in learning Japanese.

The Jorden method is based on a philosophy of language as a "patterned way of being and behaving with other people, in a shared world" (Quinn, 1987, p. 224), with language seen as a system, a structure of behaviors which includes phonology, grammar, and pragmatic and cultural knowledge. Jorden posits that learning a language requires learning patterns of behavior, both linguistic and cultural, and that students should only be asked to learn and practice skills that are part of actual language use.

With Japanese, therefore, only the language forms that educated Japanese actually use in daily discourse should be presented, practiced, and learned. The Jorden methodology also maintains that learning a language requires that students obtain not only necessary skills but the means to use them properly; therefore, practice in mastering the skills of a language under the guidance of a skilled instructor is necessary and critical in order to attain proficiency. "The Japanese language," Jorden writes, "should be presented as a system of interlocking parts. Each new piece of structure that is learned can be regarded as another piece of the jigsaw puzzle that meshes with previously acquired pieces to produce a unified picture" (Jorden, 1986, p. 146).

The Jorden method places a strong focus on the pragmatics of Japanese. All too often, Jorden says, students are introduced to "a special dialect heard only in language classrooms that is meant to be easier for foreigners to learn" (Jorden, 1986, p.145). All language presented in the JSL text and in the classroom is, therefore, tied securely to clear contexts in order that students not only learn the importance of context in determining word meaning, but also develop a knowledge of language use within Japanese acquired culture. Accurate pronunciation of Japanese is also stressed, especially at the early stages of learning. "Insistence on accurate pronunciation from the very start of instruction will result in good phonological control indefinitely, whereas bad habits formed initially will be difficult--often impossible--to correct" (Jorden, 1986, p. 145).

Journal entries reveal my early dissatisfaction with the methodology, and express my anger and frustration at having to stay within the confines of what was presented in the text; Jorden's use of the *Shin-kinrei-shiki* style of

rômaji in the text along with few opportunities for learning to read and write Japanese script; the course's emphasis on accurate pronunciation and accompanying amount of classroom correction; and the quantity of memorization the methodology required. The entries, however, also reveal a continuing awareness that I was learning Japanese in spite of my dissatisfaction and frustration.

Personal exploration or expression were not a part of the methodology, especially during the first term and for most of the second. The core conversations, the drills, and the utilization exercises were entirely controlled by the text and the instructors. The drills and core conversations were to be memorized and performed in class, usually just as presented in the text, without deviation. Listening and utilization exercises also asked for a specific answer; there was no allowance for creation or input of other information. Coming from language learning environments where I had been allowed personal input into my learning, I found the Jorden method very frustrating. Soon after I began keeping the journal I wrote:

> I wish we had more chances, or some different ways of learning this stuff. We do have utilization exercises, but the situations are created for you; there's no chance to be creative, or to think of alternate ways of expressing yourself. It <u>has to</u> be what has been prescribed in the book, seemingly without deviation. So I find myself putting it on an index card and tossing it into the dust heap in my brain because it's not useful, or at least not useful to me right now, and definitely not interesting. (10/21)

Following class two days later I wrote:

> . . . I have no ownership in what I'm learning . . . I don't want to be a parrot, and that's what I feel like now. I really don't feel like I've learned anything. . . I want more input into what I'm learning and retaining instead of gritting my teeth each day when I sit down with my text. (10/22)

Having to memorize and then perform both core conversations and drills almost daily, one classmate compared herself to a "trained seal--just giving back information without knowing what it means, or how it will work out in the 'real' world" (10/16), and I also wrote shortly after that "I don't feel like I'm communicating in Japanese, just being asked to remember stock phrases. The language doesn't feel alive to me at all" (10/24), and "I don't feel like we're learning to think on our feet" (10/30).

My journal entries also note my frustration and surprise in not being able to use the Japanese I had previously learned and used, but which had not yet been introduced in the Jorden text. Grammatical patterns were to be learned and used in a particular order based on previously presented and mastered structures.

> . . . I tried out a pattern (verb + being able), but was told that it was a fourth-year pattern so I couldn't use it! So I guess there are still some boundaries I'm not supposed to cross. I learned this pattern when I lived in Japan, and was trying it out again today to see if I could still use it correctly. But, there was that gentle slap on the hand, the "you're not ready yet" rather than a correction and a "you don't need to worry about that form yet." In my earlier class the instructor would have let me use it, from the standpoint that if I don't, I'm going to lose it. There's none of that with the Jorden method. Using what you knew before if it has not been taught yet in the Jorden method is <u>not</u> allowed! (2/24)

Vocabulary that had not yet been introduced in the lessons was also usually not allowed to be used in class. One day, although the entire class already knew the Japanese for the verb "to smoke," as in "to smoke a cigarette" (*suu*), we were told we could not use it as it hadn't yet been introduced in the text. We were instructed instead to use the verb *nomu*, which we only knew to mean "to drink."

My inability to have any say in what or how I was learning led to feelings of alienation from Japanese, and feelings of unworthiness toward the language. Near the end of the second term I wrote: ". . . I feel totally detached from Japanese, like it's almost something I'm not worthy of interacting with except for the parcels Jorden dishes out" (2/23). "Is there anything to like about the course?" I wrote on March 2. "I should like it, it 'fits' supposedly to my learning style, and yet I'm miserable. I know one of the things I hate is that we can only use what Jorden has given us so far."

The text and the use of *rômaji*

The presentation of information in the text also proved to be problematic for me, and I was often completely overloaded by the amount of information Jorden provided.

> Jorden explains things too much, to death sometimes, wanting to make sure we get every nuance of Japanese. I don't want to worry so much about nuance right now. There is too much other stuff required. Actually, I could get buried in nuance to the exclusion of everything else, but what would I be learning then? (11/18)

Although I appreciated the cultural explanations offered in the miscellaneous notes following the core conversations, I found Jorden's explanations of the structural patterns lengthy and complex, containing jargon-like language that often needed deciphering. Understanding Jorden's presentation of structural patterns often involved several readings on my part and were another source of frustration.

> Sometimes when I read Jorden's explanations of Japanese grammar, I feel like I'm learning yet another language. Her explanations do not always go down easy, and I have to reread them several times before I think I grasp what she's getting at. Some explanations are almost too short, and I

> feel like asking, 'well, why don't you spend more time on this? I don't get it either.' (10/20)

In many cases, however, once I fully grasped Jorden's explanation of a structure, the amount of detail broadened my understanding and usage of Japanese grammatical structures, even ones I thought that I had learned in previous Japanese classes. Many of Jorden's explanations allowed me to finally understand not only how and when to use a particular structure, but why to use it.

Information in both the regular and the writing texts was also often awkward or seemed dated, and did not help me in trying to understand and learn the material presented. On February 6 I wrote:

> The writing text gave a couple of examples today of awkward Japanese, at least that's what A said. One was just flat-out weird, but another gave out a form that was contrary to what we've studied. When linking adjectives (or 'adjectivals' as Jorden calls them), the final *i* is dropped and -*kute* is added to the stem. In today's example, the sentence read, *shiroi okii kuruma* ('the big white car'). What we have learned is that it should be *shirokute okii kuruma.* A asked us if we'd learned or studied that form yet. He then said that the example in the book was OK on some occasions, but no indication as when it would be OK to use it. So what do we do with the information? This is not the first time the writing book has been inconsistent with the text. Also, an example given for a reading for one of the characters is also out of date: *akadenwa* ('red telephone'). Red telephones don't exist any more in Japan, but the Jorden text has us learning that. It's like having to know the Japanese for 'Soviets' in the text--out of touch.

According to Jorden, speaking and listening are the primary skills to be learned and practiced in the study of Japanese, particularly at the beginning level. A foundation of the method is that the spoken language is always primary (Jorden, 1986; Wetzel, 1998), and should be introduced

before any written language, as "students must realize that basically a writing system is a symbolization of a language, and language is oral" (Jorden, 1986, p. 145), and "despite the large common ground shared by spoken and written language, special attention must be paid to the lexical and grammatical structures they do not share" (Unger, et. al., 1993, p.14). Romanization is considered the most efficient pedagogical transcription of writing Japanese as it uses an alphabet already familiar to English-speaking students; can indicate each separate phoneme of the language along with notations for rising and falling pitch; and can facilitate morphological variations within particular word forms and word boundaries in Japanese (Unger, et. al, 1993, p. 34). Jorden's choice of *rômaji* for the text, however, and the few opportunities given for reading and writing Japanese were also noted frequently in my journal entries. A primary reason for studying Japanese, and an aspect I had most enjoyed in previous Japanese classes was the opportunity to learn the writing system along with the spoken language. Coming from learning environments where the writing system was taught alongside the spoken language, and having lived in Japan where *rômaji*, if encountered at all, was in the more familiar Hepburn style, Jorden's "method of writing Japanese remains a huge barrier. Sometimes I feel like I'm looking at Navajo when I look at a page of Japanese with all the diacritic marks" (10/27).

The use of *rômaji* in the text was also a frequent topic of complaint among my classmates during the first two terms:

> Another big complaint was the use of *rômaji* in the text. Another student wondered why we couldn't at least be reading *hiragana* with *kanji* gradually brought in. I find it interesting that when the [native Japanese] instructors write

> on the board they don't use Jorden's convoluted *rômaji*, but instead write in Japanese script. 10/30)

> Probably the most universal complaint is Jorden's use of *rômaji*, and the form she uses. Almost everyone wishes we were being taught using *hiragana*, *katakana*, and *kanji*... using her form of *rômaji* is like learning to write a second language or alphabet anyway. (11/19)

In my case, the continued effort of reading the *rômaji* in the text also eventually affected my ability and desire to write in Japanese script.

> For me to learn *kanji*, I need to use and see it over and over, not just once a week, like we do now. I have found myself hardly using *katakana*/*hiragana*/*kanji* at all this term when I write, and I used to use it all the time; in fact, I couldn't imagine using *rômaji* at all. Now I have to almost force myself to write in Japanese script, and I notice my handwriting is getting pretty bad. I used to be so proud of it, too, and was told I had very good writing skills in Japanese (A Chinese man once told me I wrote *kanji* like a native). But no way now. (12/5)

Even though I tried to make myself write in Japanese, by the end of the year I had switched to writing almost completely in *rômaji*, albeit the Hepburn variety. "I've gotten very lazy about writing in Japanese. Even though I know the characters, I now choose *rômaji* over *hiragana* or *kanji*" (4/24).

Pronunciation and error correction

During the first two terms of the year, "act" classes (those taught by Japanese-native instructors) consisted for the most part of the performance of the core conversations and text drills, accompanied by near constant error correction. A metaphor of the methodology being like boot camp emerged in my writing more than once. "Maybe this is like Japanese language boot camp, where they break down what you know so you'll do it the Jorden way, without fail!" (12/2) or "It's like boot camp–we're being molded into

perfect Jorden-method Japanese speakers, with our selves being broken and reshaped according to Jorden rules" (2/24).

Students were told at the beginning of the year that errors and mistakes were expected, and we were encouraged to learn from our mistakes. Error correction, however, although meant to be helpful and encouraging, became a very intimidating and anxious experience for me. Although I expected and welcomed correction on grammatical errors, most of the corrections were made for errors in pronunciation. Usually, students would be asked to listen and repeat a mispronounced word or phrase until it was pronounced correctly, followed by the instructor going through the class asking all other students to pronounce the mispronounced word or phrase. During this process, any other student making a pronunciation error would also be asked to listen and repeat until they pronounced it correctly. It was difficult and often embarrassing to listen to others struggle over and over with their pronunciation, and I typically became extremely anxious as I waited for my turn.

The method's emphasis on accurate pronunciation, and the near constant pronunciation correction the first two terms of the year formed one of the most aggravating aspects of my learning experience. It was frustrating that even when a drill had been done correctly, or the core conversation performed well, instead of a positive remark there would be a correction for a pronunciation error, even a minor one. At the same time, little or no feedback was offered for doing something correctly.

> Today I performed one CC I thought perfectly; it flowed, I bowed in the right places, my pronunciation was good. I still got corrected on one minor point of pronunciation–an American name, no less. Some genuine praise once in

> awhile would be nice, some positive reinforcement. There isn't much of it for the class as a whole. (11/12)

During the second term, some of the quizzes were done over the phone. Information that was to be included in a phone message was given out in class, and then students were to leave a message for an instructor on an answering machine. Grades on the quizzes were based on grammatical accuracy, pronunciation and delivery, and sociolinguistic factors. My journal entry following the return of the results of the first phone quiz expresses my exasperation and irritation with the method's emphasis on completely accurate, native-like pronunciation:

> Boy, today was and is one of those days where I KNOW why I HATE this Jorden method. I am so angry! We got back the results from our first phone quiz, and under the section for pronunciation and delivery I had a point taken off with the comment, 'intonation sounds English .' Like DUH. I <u>am not</u> a native speaker of Japanese, I will never be a native speaker, and there is <u>no way</u> at this point in my life I am going to sound like a native speaker .... The irony of this was that after class I spoke with Y, who when speaking English speaks with a HEAVY Japanese intonation. I cannot imagine telling him or grading him on the fact that his intonation sounds Japanese. Is he communicating? Can I understand him? That's what's important. I could have understood a comment about intonation, but to actually take points (or a point) is just B.S. Y told me that he thought we practiced and needed intonation practice so we didn't 'fossilize.' What a joke! I'm 45 years old--I probably fossilized over 20 years ago! I think that was really hurtful to me, beyond the obvious idiocy I see in the way this was graded, is that my pronunciation is pretty good and on target. No, I don't sound like a native speaker, but I'm a heck of a lot closer than most. (1/22)

I was equally as frustrated following the second phone quiz:

> We got our second phone quiz back, and again, there's the note about intonation! Otherwise a perfect score! I'm not sure what they're trying to say, but the message I'm getting is that unless you're a native speaker, forget it. Merely

> is that unless you're a native speaker, forget it. Merely communicating properly or correctly is not enough, you have to SOUND JAPANESE, LIKE A NATIVE SPEAKER. An impossible quest. (1/27)

Out of five of these phone quizzes, only once was I given full credit for pronunciation, an occasion I noted with genuine joy:

> But I did get a five on one of my phone quizzes!!!!! . . . at least for one brief moment I reached Nirvana. There were no remarks on my feedback, just '5' circled letting me know that I sounded like a native speaker. Oh wow! Of course on my other quiz there was the usual 'you sound English, intonation on ~~ sounds English.' But for a brief moment I was at the summit (to confuse metaphors). (3/2)

During the first term, two journal entries noted feelings of anger and embarrassment over what happened following errors on two consecutive days, the first during the performance of a memorized drill pattern, and the second during a reading exercise:

> . . . the feeling I got was that because I got that part wrong, I wasn't going to get a chance to redeem myself later. I didn't get called on the rest of the class period, and I knew the other stuff. It felt like I was receiving some form of punishment FOR NOT REMEMBERING<u>ONE</u> DRILL! (10/23)

> The first question was 'Who wrote the essay?' The answer, 'I don't know' (*wakarimasen*) was correct as the writer is not known. The instructor then posits that the essay was written by Mr/s. Yamamoto's friend, Mr/s. Tanaka. Again fair enough. I then was asked if Mr/s. Tanaka is at school. From the essay it is not known, so I answer again, 'I don't know' (*wakarimasen*). My *wakarimasen* however is taken to mean I don't understand the question; I have not given the 'correct' response. So, instead of questioning me further, the instructor goes on to another student who gives the 'correct' answer, 'I think he/she is.' Like yesterday, I again felt that I wasn't asked questions again later because I had 'failed' to come up with the proper response the first time. I have noticed that occasionally, when another student struggles, or does not recall the core conversation or drill, they are not called on again, or not used. In my case, usually later I can

> remember drills, or I know the next one, but I have no way to demonstrate it. Today's little incident made me feel angry, and again, embarrassed. (10/24)

I thought perhaps that not being called on was my own perception of what was going on, or that perhaps it was only one instructor doing this, but less than two weeks later a journal entry notes, "A few others have noticed as well that if you make a mistake or don't give the 'correct' answer, you are not called on again, and find it somewhat humiliating. So it's not just me (11/3).

The amount and means of error correction contributed to feelings of anxiety, and a sense of insecurity in using Japanese in the classroom:

> It doesn't feel safe to use the language, to try things out, to use what I know, to make a mistake because I have no idea what's going to be done with the mistake, or if what I say is going to criticized, ignored, or ??? The feeling in class is like being out on a tightrope with no safety net. (1/29)

Towards the end of the year, however, error correction became less and less frequent on the part of all the instructors, especially for pronunciation. Instead, it was students who offered correction for each other. Initially, having other students correct me was uncomfortable, but it eventually led to a less stressful environment in the classroom.

Changes in the instructional style

Around mid-way through the course, some of the instructors began to move away from the strict text-centered drill repetition and try different classroom techniques instead. Early in the second term I had written, "I long for those different types of learning experiences, not the solid listen and repeat drills we do now . . . (1/16)." Any changes from the usual classroom

procedure of having to individually perform memorized drills or core conversations were noted with excitement in my journal, such as "... we actually got to do a brief bit of pair work! It was wonderful...." (11/20) and "M also had us do pair work, and then we did a 'taste test,' or 'consumer survey' which was actually interesting, the first time we've ever done anything like this!" (2/23).

Beginning in the second term and throughout the third term, one instructor in particular began to change how the structural patterns were presented and taught. While students still performed the required core conversations from memory, instead of having the class do drills right from the book, he used the application exercise from the text or created his own drills using the structural patterns we were studying, with the context and content related more to what was happening in the classroom:

> K's use of the drills was great. He took one character, several actions or occurrences, then had us work with a time line as to whether it was occurring, had occurred but was finished, or had been occurring, but was finished just now. The whole class got involved, we all were helping each other out. I made tons of mistakes, but didn't feel shut down or shut out. EVERYONE was making a ton of errors....(4/7)

Another instructor began to shift between the drills in the book and original ones, and also gave us a chance to search for alternative ways of expressing the same utterance:

> R was his usual peppy self.... He can make the dullest drills fun.. I also like it that when one of us says something one way, he asks for alternatives, giving us a chance to think if there are other ways, equally good, of saying something. I still need to talk a lot, and this gives a way of saying things out loud. (4/24)

Although the contexts for the lessons, as well as the use of vocabulary and structures continued to remain tightly controlled by the instructors, as some of them modified their teaching of the material, I found myself enjoying my language classes and becoming less reactive towards the Jorden method, instead developing a new perspective of what the methodology could accomplish. Instead of their usual negative tone, my journal entries began to reflect a more positive attitude towards what was occurring in the classroom and towards the methodology. "I enjoyed class last night," I wrote on April 15. "Boy, it's fun to write that!" Knowing that I wouldn't have to rely on memorization alone to get through some class sessions, but would be permitted to use and adapt what I was studying fostered a change in my attitude toward the course and learning Japanese. An entry which appeared in the journal later in the year expressed a renewed excitement in learning Japanese as a result of the changes in the classroom application of the methodology :

> Last night's classes were like a breakthrough. I knew what was going on and was in control of my Japanese and my learning, and at one point was able to fully (?) be my Japanese self, or the self I'm developing. We have been working with the verbs of giving and receiving, which I am beginning to grasp are a critical feature in the understanding of in-group and out-group in Japanese or at least one critical feature in that understanding. And, I think I'm getting it . . . . My 'breakthrough' came in K's class, when we were doing an exercise where we sat in a semi-circle, and we each 'gave' something to someone else, and talked about it from different perspectives, that of the receiver, giver, or outside viewer. When it was my turn to talk about 'giving' from the perspective of an outside observer, I chose *kudasaru*. The 'situation' was that a teacher had given her students some cookies. K looked puzzled, asked me to try again, and I again used *kudasaimashita*. I explained that C and I were both students, but K still asked me to try again, so I again explained that C and I were in the same 'in-group,' therefore

> I would also use the honorific *kudasaimashita* to refer to a superior giving something to my in-group. K's eyes lit up and he said '*subarashii*--wonderful!' He was impressed that I could make that connection. To me, it meant that I really 'got it,' at least in that situation. It was such a high! (4/22)

I still noted that class sessions where drills were performed verbatim from the book were boring: "Y still stuck close to the drills in the book, but the drills were pretty straightforward so didn't have any difficulty with them," I wrote on April 22, "but they're so boring right out of the book. I love it when the instructors manipulate them, like K often does," and "[K's class] is really, really challenging, but the patterns we work on with him really stick with me" (5/20).

The changes in the teaching, I also noted, could be found not only in the presentation of the material, but in the instructor's methods of error correction as well:

> I never feel like I'm doing drills with K, although I recognize the patterns from time to time. R also goes to straight drill from time to time, but usually does something more interesting with them. All three of them really have distinct styles, and we have all kind of learned how to prepare for each of them. . . . I don't want to be like Y (as a teacher, that is--otherwise I like him) and just run through drill, or the CC without variation. At least none of them is going around the room having us repeat something if the pronunciation's not perfect. I'm glad they've stopped, but I wonder why they did? (5/20)

Assessing gains from the methodology

Throughout the year, generally around once a month, I questioned whether I was learning or gaining anything through this methodology. In spite of my unhappiness with the class, the answer was invariably "yes," but

entries note that the gains during the first two terms came wrapped in confusion, frustration, and unhappiness.

> A self-assessment after four weeks: have I learned anything? Some new vocabulary, yes, and one grammar pattern (*kara* for 'because . . .' or 'so . . .'). The rest is all gone, buried somewhere in my brain. I'm not sure at this time whether or not I'm learning anything new, or bringing back what I learned before. For the most part, I feel confused and frustrated. (10/24)

> I have realized, though, that I am learning Japanese. I watched the film *Majo no Kyakuubin* again, and could see how much I understood came from this class. What a miserable way to learn though. (1/20)

> But am I learning anything? I have to say yes. I have learned new forms, but nothing that I feel is particularly useful (except for passing exams). I don't feel like I'm any closer to being able to converse with anyone in Japanese, nor do I feel motivated by what I've learned to even try and speak Japanese with anyone. (1/30)

Instructors' adaptations in teaching the Jorden method, along with my own growing awareness of the difficulties involved in learning Japanese and a greater understanding of what the Jorden method aimed to accomplish allowed me to become more reflective and realistic during the final term about how much I had gained during the year in comparison to previous learning experiences. Less than a month away from the end of the course I was able to reflect:

> It's interesting to me as well that we are studying many of the same patterns as I did before in second year, but that now I understand so much more about them, the why and the when. My knowledge before seemed so superficial, that I just skimmed the surface of the language whereas now I can look at some of the different layers, think about the different layers and how and why they're used. Like *ageru*, *kureru*, and *morau*--I learned those before, briefly, but at one level. Now I've learned to apply those to the concepts of *uchi/soto* and have begun to develop this awareness of how

> the language functions within Japanese culture, and while it gives me a ton to think about when I need to use them, I appreciate having the level of understanding where I do think about them, and where I belong or place myself in relation to the other. (5/6)

Memorization

> It is especially frustrating and maddening when we are asked or expected to recall memorized chucks from even just a week ago. Sorry, but I have too much going on in my life to recall verbatim dialog that was practiced (regurgitated?) a week or more ago. It is difficult enough trying to remember and memorize for the next day, but this stuff is for the most part in and out. (11/6)

The Jorden method requires a substantial amount of memorization, more than I had ever encountered in any previous foreign language course or in any other learning environment. Three times a week class members had to memorize not only a core conversation, which could vary in length from four or five lines of dialog to well over twenty, as well as four or five drills from the text; the drill and core conversation would be performed in the following day's "act" class. Textbooks were not allowed to be open during the "act" classes, and the daily class evaluation was based on the performance of the memorized material, not only on whether one had memorized it but how well one was able to perform the core conversation or respond to an opening exchange in any drill pattern. The memorization of the material was to allow for vocabulary, structural patterns, and pragmatically correct Japanese to be practiced and eventually internalized and automatized, to be recalled and used naturally and appropriately in the future.

Somewhat unaware of the Jorden method before I began the second-year course, I was caught off-guard by the need for memorization during the very first "act" session. I didn't know that the conversations or drills assigned for class were to have been memorized, and the instructor's reaction to my not having the day's assignment memorized was intimidating and embarrassing. Once it was obvious to him that I had not memorized the day's assignment, I was not called on again that day, although I knew the structural point that was being taught from my previous Japanese courses and could have used it in contexts other than the drills or core conversation.

Discourse on human memory often employs a long-term (or permanent) memory and short-term memory dichotomy. Stevick (1996), however, divides memory functions in the language learning process into three distinct segments, and he labels these functions working memory, holding memory, and permanent memory. He gives the metaphor "the Worktable" to the working memory, and notes differences between it and short-term memory. Short term memory, Stevick writes, is a *stage* while the working memory is a *state*, and "with short term memory, we are mainly concerned with what *passes through* it. With the Worktable, we are mainly concerned with what *happens on* it" (1996, p. 28). Explanations of short-term memory also are concerned with duration, or how long data remain available for processing, while the concept of working memory is about capacity, the capability "for consciously handling data from both external and internal sources" (p. 28) at any given time. Permanent memory is what is stored in what Stevick calls "the Files," and is data that can be recalled for not only days, but for years later. Stevick defines holding memory as

slightly different from permanent memory; data are there longer than just a few minutes, but not yet committed to permanent memory. Holding memory is "there at hand; it is ready to be fitted into the Files; but it is also subject to being knocked off onto the floor and lost" (p. 29).

It is the working memory which gives a language learner access to whatever is current in memory storage, allows the learner to use material recently heard, and lets the learner compare items in the working memory and use material intentionally. Among the functions language learners can perform using their working memory are repeating an item just heard, arranging items in a new or different way, or checking permanent memory to see what else is known. The working memory is quite limited, however. As Stevick's metaphor of a worktable suggests, it is a "surface area," and not a permanent file, and the amount of material that can be stored in the working memory at any time is quite limited. Finally, access to this limited amount of material can be affected by factors such as anxiety or other emotions.

The relationship between a learner's working memory and permanent memory is constant and complex. Material which appears in the working memory causes the retrieval of material from permanent memory, and data from permanent memory in turn affects what is currently in working memory, causing and constituting a "stream of the perceptible products of cognitive processes" (Stevick, 1996, p. 30).

Throughout the year I found I had a great deal of trouble transferring newly introduced material into my permanent memory; most vocabulary and structural patterns were replaced with new ones and lost before I could retain them permanently. Even though material built on what had already

been presented, the course moved along at such a rapid pace that I was constantly struggling to keep up with the memorization and retention of new material. Although I had always considered myself to have a good memory, I found the memorization requirements for my Japanese class to be overwhelming, and entries about these difficulties continue throughout the entire year.

Memory and ritual

In addition to presenting a challenge in class, the memory-centered methodology initially caused problems for me outside of class as well, particularly with what Jorden calls "ritual expressions." "Japanese," Jorden and Noda write:

> is particularly rich in ritualized utterances . . . . if we carefully memorize exchanges that are regularly used in specific situations, we are guaranteed to 'say the right thing.' But it also means that if we *don't* memorize . . . . our chances of saying what is appropriate, or even what is comprehensible to the native speaker, are very slim . . . in the area of ritual, rote memorization is the only safe, efficient course. (1987, pp. 309-310)

In my first journal entry, however, I wrote about an experience outside of class, when I attempted to use a memorized ritual from the text with a fellow graduate student who was Japanese:

> I tried to use one of the greeting, or 'ritual' greetings we are told in our text that we must memorize, and was not really surprised to get back a completely different response in return! I practiced on another student, and the response she gave me was one I was familiar with from previous study and my time in Japan, but nothing like the response we were to expect from the book. I looked for the response I was given in earlier sections of the book, and didn't find it anywhere . . . . (10/16)

I also was concerned that the focus on memorization would make it difficult to understand or respond when a native speaker offered alternatives other than what the text had presented:

> Today's conversation was a phone conversation and involved leaving a message. I came away wondering, however, what do you do when you get on the phone and someone doesn't say anything like what you memorized. What then? (10/30)

And, in a situation where I had previously known how to respond in Japanese, I found myself struggling to remember memorized ritual phrases from the text instead of relying on what I already knew:

> I did not go to class today because of an interview for a project required for another class. However, at the interview, I was introduced as someone who was studying and spoke some Japanese (it's on my resume). Well, instead of just coming out with an appropriate greeting/introduction--WHICH I KNOW--I found myself searching my brain for the appropriate memorized chunk of introduction for this situation, and ended up unable to give any introduction at all! The man whom I was introduced to was not impressed, and said, 'Why don't you try *hajimemashite*.' It was embarrassing beyond belief, and I was angry at myself for not using what I already knew, and instead relying on producing a memorized chunk from one of the core conversations or drills. (10/17)

Although the goal of the required memorization was the internalization of structural patterns and vocabulary, I found that the focus on memorization limited my self-confidence in communicating in Japanese. With the emphasis placed on memorizing and adhering strictly to what was presented in the text, as the year progressed I became less and less assured about my ability to communicate with native Japanese speakers, afraid I would not be able to remember the correct utterance for a particular situation, that I might make

a pragmatic error, or that I would not understand or be able to respond properly to their utterance:

> It's so hard to try and put together an original sentence, let alone a conversation. I've lost the ability, and more importantly, the confidence to try and communicate. I used to babble all the time in Japanese, the "monitor" was way down. Now it's turned up high. I'm afraid to speak, afraid to make a mistake. (2/5)

Core conversations and drills

Although there were many notations of the inhibiting effects of memorization, most of my journal entries concerning memorization were about problems I had remembering core conversations and drills that were listened to, practiced, and memorized the day and evening before class, but had usually been forgotten by the next morning. On average I spent at least an hour, if not longer, on what was required for the next day's class, including listening to tape-recordings of the core conversations and drills. I did not find the tapes to be of much help, however, as not only was the rate of speech too rapid for me to follow without the book, but there was also not enough time in between utterances for effective repetition. Stopping and starting the tape repeatedly became extremely frustrating and counter-productive.

On more than one occasion I wrote in my journal of the struggles I had with trying to retain the memorized material and maintaining my other daily routines:

> I spent a good deal of time before I went to bed last night studying and practicing the drills for today, but just couldn't seem to get them to register in my brain. The minute I have to go and do something else besides concentrate on the drills, they're out of my head. And I do have plenty else to think about. So, I looked at them a few minutes before class began, hoping to recapture some of them, but without much

> success. I get called on a fair amount, it seems to me, so I try and want to be prepared. (10/23)
>
> Kind of a review day today. I had to learn one of the CCs from scratch, then review another CC on introductions, and four drills. We did the CC on introductions just a couple of weeks ago, and yet it had almost been totally wiped from my memory by the intervening stuff we have had to learn. Likewise the drills, but forgotten in just one night! I practiced last night for quite some time, but after getting myself off to bed, then running around this morning getting my daughter and myself ready to go to daycare and school respectively, when I opened the book to review the drills it was as if I were looking at them for the first time. (11/12)

Even when I could remember drills or the core conversation, I often had problems delivering them in a natural, relaxed way, either from having to focus on remembering what was to come next, or from feeling anxious about performing it in front of my classmates:

> I memorized the CC--it was fairly straightforward and not too long--but still had trouble this morning recalling parts of it. I could if I thought about it long enough, but not quickly like it's supposed to be performed. The drills--no way. As usual they were almost in and out of my brain instantaneously. I wish they could come up with something more natural, more pleasant, more INTERESTING than those drills. (1/20)
>
> For such an <u>easy</u> CC, I had a terrible time doing it (performing?) in class. I just couldn't seem to get the words to come out! And, last night, when I practiced at home, the words just tripped off my tongue. There is just something about memorizing something and having to spit it back out. M substituted different items in the drill (comparing three or more items) but nothing made it any easier. (2/23)

The amount of material we were expected to memorize and learn, and the rate at which it was presented, also contributed to difficulties in my ability to remember and recall vocabulary and structural patterns. Even toward the end of the year, when I had had plenty of time to adjust to the

amount of memorization required, I still struggled to remember patterns which had been introduced as recently as the week before, let alone those which had been practiced earlier in the year.

> Last night was so hard! I don't know what was up with me, but it seemed I could remember nothing! Lots of memory lapses. Stuff just dumped out, flew out of my brain. We are getting so much stuff right now, though--tons of new grammar patterns, new vocabulary. Last night we began more ritualized greetings, and it seemed like it was just too much. Last week, and the week before, I felt comfortable with *ageru* and *kureru*, but now I can't remember how or when to use them, likewise *morau*. I am waiting for that moment when it all clicks, but am wondering if that ever happens with Japanese. (5/6)

Of all the material that had to be memorized, the drills were the most problematic for me. "Structurally driven and contextually realized" (Quinn, 1987, p. 240) to provide focused practice, and to illustrate differing rhetorical uses of words or grammatical constructions, the drills, Quinn writes, "swing with the rhythm of real interaction" (1987, p. 234). My journal entries, however, note the relationship between my difficulty in remembering the drills to the forms and language given in the text holding no meaning for me. "Drill, drill, drill, and once again with that totally decontextualized stuff right out of the book" I wrote on March 2, and ". . . it's a real effort to get up in the morning and go to class knowing all I'm going to do is repeat stuff which has NO meaning to me, no relevance to me" (2/19).

Research on memory has shown that with other factors in the learning process being more or less equal, an utterance in the target language will have more lasting value the "deeper" the meaning has for the student personally (Stevick, 1996). Although I could perceive the contexts in which the drill patterns were placed as realistic interactions, I was unable to

personally place myself in most of those contexts. The majority of the drills held little depth of meaning for me and therefore had little lasting value in my memory.

> We worked on drills, which of course I couldn't remember even though I'd studied them and worked with them. My memory is just shot. The minute I have to focus on anything other than the drills, my brain just dumps. It doesn't make any difference how long I study, or how short the interval between study and review, if I leave the drills for a moment they're gone. Plus, they're just dead. Just reading and repeating does nothing for me. Maybe that's why I can't remember. It's not until the instructors either write them on the board or put them into meaningful dialogues or exercises that I can begin to grasp what's going on, and they begin to stick. (4/7)

I was not alone in my frustration with the amount of memorization the course required. The memory-centeredness of the method was noted in the journal as a topic of conversation and complaint between my fellow classmates and me, particularly during the first two terms of the year.

> Lots of grumbling about the class when I went in today from other students who were already there. Mostly about all the memorization. One student just didn't feel like he was getting to use Japanese at all, just was memorizing it, and was pretty frustrated. (10/30)

Changes in memorization requirements

A perceptible change in my learning occurred when, for the first time, an instructor did not make us repeat drill patterns from memory; instead, he asked the class for the structural patterns from the day's drills, and wrote them on the board:

> It almost didn't feel like a Jorden method day today. I've thought about why and one of the reasons is that although we had to memorize the CC, the patterns necessary for the drills were written on the board–IN JAPANESE–and as a result instead of wracking my brain to recall one of 5 (!) drill

> patterns for today, I could instead think of which pattern might work with what language/words. (2/24)

As the course continued, while we still were required to memorize core conversations, this particular instructor required less and less straight memorization of the drills, and instead created his own or used the application exercises from the text. While his classes became more stimulating, they were also the most difficult because in order to fully participate I had to know and understand the structural patterns well, rather than relying on memory to get through. I found, however, that not only did I become better at remembering the structural patterns and at using them correctly following his classes, but I also began to enjoy coming to his class. "I missed K's portion, which was too bad because his is the best lesson all week. He is really, really challenging, but the patterns we work on with him really stick with me" (5/20). Other instructors, however, continued to require memorization of drills from the text, and although one instructor often reconfigured the drills to make them more relevant from time to time, remembering the material remained a considerable problem for me.

Finding my memorization techniques inadequate, I tried throughout the year to find other means to get around my continuing struggle with remembering the required material. "I'm finding that if I can concentrate on a couple of things from the lesson I can remember them better, rather than letting everything wash over me trying to take it all in, which is what I was doing before" (4/3). Another technique I tried for remembering core conversations and drills was to first memorize what was being said in English rather than Japanese and then translate the English to Japanese:

> I find, however, that I'm able to relate the Japanese, or what I want to say in Japanese, to an English translation, and this helps me construct or remember the Japanese. One of the CCs, for example, asks someone to take a table upstairs to the *tatami* room. If I can think that first, quickly in English, then it goes quickly into Japanese, and the Japanese makes more sense. (4/29)

This method of trying to remember, however, seemed to defeat the purpose of internalizing the structures and vocabulary, and I eventually gave it up and went back to using my former technique of listening, reading, and repeating the material over and over. I was never able to find any efficient and effective means of remembering material from the text. At the close of the year, when students were asked to evaluate the course, I gave high marks to the pragmatic foundation the course laid down, and to the grammar explanations, but still commented that "there was too much dependence on rote memorization" (6/2).

Language Learning in Culture

> The object of the Jorden method seems to be to not just have you speak Japanese, but to almost <u>be Japanese</u>. The focus on intonation, the long-winded, excruciating detailed grammar explanations, the insistence on explaining every cultural nuance all point to trying to make the student Japanese, or as close to this as possible. Except that we (I) <u>can't</u> be Japanese, EVER. And, I don't want to be Japanese. I just want to learn to communicate in Japanese. (1/22)

Culture shock has been described as the emotional upheaval which results from adjustment to a new cultural surrounding. Along with the distress caused by having to adapt to a different and demanding teaching methodology, my journal reveals that I also suffered from culture shock as I adjusted to learning Japanese *in* culture versus alongside culture. For the

greater part of the year, my Japanese classes not only challenged my identity as a language learner, but caused disruption in my perception of self, of who I was as a non-native speaker of Japanese. With an eventual understanding and acceptance of the cultural underpinnings of the course, however, my culture shock evolved into a desire for cultural adaptation. Kramsch (1993) wrote that in the foreign language classroom, learners need to establish a "third culture" based on perspectives of their native culture and the target culture, yet unbounded by either. The "border crossing" into the third culture "leads a person to realize she is no longer the person she imagined herself to be" (Kramsch, 1993, p. 234). In my case, the development of a "third place" between my American self and a "Japanese self" ultimately allowed for a deeper appreciation of who I was and could be as a speaker of Japanese.

Fundamental to the Jorden method is the difference between "learned culture," culture that is consciously learned by study or imitation, by both natives and foreigners, and "acquired culture," the

> behavioral and attitudinal framework that underlies daily conduct. How individuals interact and interrelate, how they define the self, how they view time and space, their attitudes toward foreigners, their attitude toward language--foreign and native--all these are part of acquired culture. (1996, p. 157)

Linguistically, Japanese is one of the most difficult languages for speakers of English to learn because of its great contrast with English. Not only is the spoken language structurally different from English, but the writing system is highly complex, with the use of appropriate *kanji* determined by context. Culturally, Japanese is also extremely distant from English. There are no neutral speech acts in Japanese as there are in English;

each spoken or written utterance must take into account factors such as who one is speaking or writing to, the speaker's relationship to the interlocutor or audience, the subject matter, the setting, and so forth. Japanese society is made up of interacting social groups, and one must also determine in any situation whether the interlocutor or audience is part of one's in-group (*uchi*) or out-group (*soto*), and adjust their language accordingly. The importance and influence of hierarchical relationships must also be considered in determining the Japanese language forms to be used. Jorden argues that without question, the most difficult aspect of Japanese for the non-native speaker is the choice of maintaining contextually-appropriate politeness and distance when using Japanese (1996, p. 159).

The study and use of *keigo*

The Jorden method places far more emphasis on learning and appropriately using Japanese polite and humble forms (*keigo*) than I had ever encountered in any previous Japanese course, even when I studied in Japan. The difficulties inherent in remembering and choosing the right form were an early source of frustration, and also caused uncomfortable feelings of subservience and unworthiness when using Japanese. I questioned my place in Japanese society as a non-native speaker, and who I would be speaking to and how I would be expected to address them:

> There's a real issue of class orientation here, and I'm wondering just whom I'm learning to speak to. I feel like speaking with the upper class is being emphasized. Hierarchy is important in Japanese no matter what the class one is from, but I'm just a (very) little uncomfortable with what I'm learning, and all the very polite speech at this point in my studying Japanese. I wish I could be working at a level that would be considered polite for me, a non-native

> speaker, and be concerned more with learning how to say things or communicate, rather than worry about whether I was using a correct form. (10/23)

While in one sense I could understand the use of *keigo* as an inherent cultural facet of the language, I wondered why so much emphasis was being placed on students having to learn *keigo* forms at the second year level.

> A light bulb went off today about what's going on with having to learn all these polite and humble and honorific forms. I have been struggling over why at this state of learning the language we are having to learn, and in my case, worry over these forms. I have felt there was something cultural going on, but couldn't put my finger on it until today. Not only are we learning Japanese, but we are attempting to learn to be communicatively competent as well, or at least that's what I think is going on. But then I am puzzled as to why? At this stage of learning?? Why throw something like this into the learning at this point? It is only making the learning of a difficult language even more difficult. What I find especially hard is that even after living and working in Japan, I still wouldn't or don't have a clue as to who is in my in-group or out-group, as they are called by Jorden, or when it is socially correct to humble myself or elevate the other person. We were given an axis on which to plot the verb form against who we are talking about and who we are addressing (talking about as a function of who we are talking to???), but it still doesn't even begin to crack open the door for me. (11/10)

In the "fact" class, which was taught in English, it was noted on more than one occasion that native Japanese speakers also had difficulties using the correct *keigo* forms, a notion I found discouraging:

> It was <u>not</u> helpful to learn that many native speakers of Japanese cannot get these forms correct, that they go to school to learn/practice correct forms. It makes all this so much more intimidating. (10/20)

> Still, it is <u>not</u> helpful to learn, or be reminded, that native Japanese speakers have difficulty with the subtleties in using these forms, and go to schools to learn correct usage, or that

> companies contract out for teachers to come and teach 'proper' language for use in the workplace. (10/27)

My fellow classmates and I pondered the emphasis on pragmatically correct Japanese knowing that it would not always be appreciated by native Japanese speakers. A "law of diminishing returns" (Miller, in Haugh, 1998) has often been cited by foreigners who have learned to speak Japanese well, where "praise for foreigners' competence in Japanese tends to be in indirect proportion to the actual level of proficiency" (Jorden, 1992, p. 162). While the beginning speaker is often praised, flattered, and encouraged when they use Japanese, incorrectly or not, in comparison, a more proficient non-native Japanese speaker can cause feelings of uneasiness for native speakers, with little credit given for the gains in proficiency. Jorden (1992) notes that the strong connection the Japanese have with their language often confounds foreigners: "To be Japanese means that one knows Japanese, and to know Japanese is to be Japanese" (1992, p. 162). A foreigner who speaks Japanese well may seem strange to native Japanese speakers or make them uncomfortable, and the ability to speak linguistically and pragmatically correct Japanese is highly unlikely to provide integration into Japanese society, as foreigners form the ultimate "out-group."

The rationale for our needing to learn pragmatically correct Japanese was often a topic of discussion with fellow students, and I commented on one day's conversation with a fellow student in my journal:

> A fellow classmate remarked that a Japanese friend once told him that he hoped he [my classmate] wouldn't learn to speak Japanese too well. My classmate wondered why, and told his friend that he hoped that someday he [his Japanese friend] would learn to speak English well. The friend replied that when Americans spoke Japanese well they sounded silly. I have often read or heard it said that only a Japanese

> can speak Japanese well. I don't think it's true, but I can imagine a cultural type of feeling that holds their language as 'sacred territory.' It's one of the reasons why I'm uncomfortable dealing with so much function at this point. I want to learn to communicate, I want the confidence to communicate in a way that is acceptable, maybe not perfect, but acceptable to almost all Japanese. (11/10)

Late in the year, I asked one of the Japanese instructors if he felt uncomfortable when a foreigner spoke Japanese well, or thought other Japanese did, he said it was true, that it did seem strange to him.

Confusion over cultural rules and roles

While Jorden gives extensive cultural notes on language use in each chapter, and one class period a week was set aside to discuss cultural and pragmatic aspects of the language, the subtleties of being culturally correct in a particular situation were often beyond my comprehension.

> Yesterday was one of those days that always seem to occur just when I start to think that I could get along with the Jorden method, just when I'm starting to feel positive about learning something. Yesterday was our 'culture' day, for lack of a better term for it. The first thing that was gone over was the scoring on the telephone quiz that we did before this last one. One of the items which accounted for one-half point being taken off was whether or not you asked if it was the person to who you were to leave the message. I was a little incredulous as that person had identified themselves on the recording! I mean, if the answering machine says, 'This is X' do we really need to ask, 'is this X?' before we leave the message. Why would anyone leave a message if they weren't sure? But more interesting, and frustrating, and what made me angry was, how in the heck were we supposed to know this? We've had one or two sections on telephoning in Japanese, and one short CC on leaving a message, and this was not covered. (2/26)

American rules for the classroom didn't always fit. I became confused over what classroom rules could apply when, and ultimately what model applied in the classroom, American or Japanese. In one entry I wrote about what happened when I had not been able to prepare for class:

> I told the instructor after class that my daughter had been ill, and apologized for not knowing the CC. We've been given a clue/hint/message/instruction that we're not to come to class with an excuse. We're supposed to use *moshiwake arimasen*, "I have no excuse." It's culturally very confusing at times. Are we supposed to be like Japanese in a Japanese class, or are we Americans in a Japanese class, or are we one some days and the other on other days? I felt I wasn't supposed to give an excuse, yet others who walked in late gave excuses which seemed to be accepted. It's confusing. (11/5)

The relationship between the teacher and student is also very different in Japanese society. In Japan, the authority of the teacher is assumed, with the teacher always the superior and the student the subordinate (Jorden, 1996; Rhee & Watanabe, 1993). The choice of appropriate polite language is one means of recognizing the social relationship between student and teacher. The primary mode of instruction in Japan, in contrast to the United States, is teacher-centered versus student-centered, with the choice of methodology and material to be taught the decision of the teacher and framed by his or her personal background (Jorden, 1996). Given the differing cultural expectations between native Japanese instructors and American students, the potential for cultural disequilibrium accompanied by miscommunication and misunderstanding is high, thereby hindering classroom communication and the effectiveness of the instruction (Rhee & Watanabe, 1993).

I frequently experienced confusion and anxiety over my role as a student in the classroom, and my relationship with the instructors. Several of the instructors were fellow graduate students in the M.A. TESOL program, and I initially found that because of the traditional Japanese teacher/student relationship that was fostered in class, I no longer knew how to address or relate to these fellow students outside of the Japanese classroom:

> When I meet [K] outside of class, I am absolutely flummoxed as to whether he is in my in-group as a fellow student, or in the out-group as an instructor. The anxiety this produces when I see him is overwhelming, to the point where I can't say anything, and instead of speaking Japanese resort to English and a wave. Before this class I didn't worry about it. I felt comfortable speaking to him in the Japanese I knew. (11/10)

> I am still having problems approaching the [Japanese] instructors. I sense that I am to approach them as teachers, with all the stuff that goes along with that. However, they are my peers as well, students just like me in the M.A. TESOL program. Again, it creates an uneasy tension. Even when I see the instructors out of class, I'm not sure how to react. (11/12)

This confusion over how to interact with my fellow students persisted until I determined that while in class I would respect the traditional Japanese teacher/student relationship, but outside class I would interact with the instructors in English as fellow TESOL graduate students. This helped to quell some of my anxiety over speaking appropriately to them. Relating to the Japanese graduate instructors as peers outside of class allowed me to inquire about points of grammar or pragmatics I didn't fully understand and also to inquire about their teaching techniques.

The cultural disequilibrium caused me to judge, based on my interactions with previous Japanese instructors and other native speakers, which of the instructors seemed to be the "most Japanese." At one point, the instructor that I determined to be "the most Japanese," according to my standards, was the one I found I felt most comfortable with, even though this instructor usually did not vary or change the material from the text:

> . . . he is truly most like the Japanese I studied with in Japan, non-judgmental and to me encouraging . . . he is very non-threatening, unlike the other instructors, who seem much more hyper and strict, quick to correct . . . I wonder how much the Japanese instructors have picked up from American teaching techniques? Have they perhaps created some twisted blend of the worst of Japanese and American teaching techniques? Whatever it is, it makes me nervous, unable to feel calm or relaxed in class. (2/5)

> Although M seems the most Japanese; that is, the least judgmental about our responses (although I think he really is making judgments, but is very good at making you feel like he's not), he still keeps the Jorden drill fairly intact, and as a result, it's BORING. (2/10)

Cultural adjustment

My cultural adjustment was a gradual process, fostered in part by reading about learning language in culture and about the function of the Japanese language within Japanese society and culture, and helped along with the cultural explanations given in class:

> J went into the cultural basis of some of what we are learning which is really helpful for me, and helps to create a feeling of affinity for the language. If I understand why something is going on, beyond the 'because he's so-and-so, and she's so-and-so,' it helps me to gain a greater understanding of the language being used. (10/27)

My outside reading brought about several small epiphanies about what and how I was learning, and the awareness that much of the frustration and

irritation I had been experiencing was a result of the culture shock which can occur within the language classroom. Self-reflection on what I had been experiencing, and the first admission of acceptance was an emotional release:

> I've been thinking a great deal as well about the culture of this language method. I know the Jorden method is teaching culture, but I think all along I've wanted it to teach culture in a way I'm comfortable with, but I'm beginning to think about how realistic that is. When I teach English, when I will teach English in the future, will I adapt my class completely to a way so that my students feel comfortable, or will I be creating a classroom culture that is teaching American culture along with English? This is really an emotional time right now for me, to understand that what I've been experiencing is culture shock, and going through a period of adaptation. It's been so hard to take stock of myself, my reactions, but it's great to realize that I do still love and want to know Japanese. (4/3)

My developing cultural awareness caused me to question at one point whether any sort of cultural introduction to the methodology and the language at the beginning of the course would have been of benefit; whether anything I had learned previously was of value.

> Would having an understanding about this shift, the changes that would need to happen, at the beginning of the course have helped? I don't know. I honestly think I would have listened but not heard, as the saying goes. I just thought I knew so much about Japan, Japanese, and the Japanese. I do know quite a bit, but I'm shocked/surprised now by my naivete as well. I had constructed a place with the language that was comfortable for me. Now I'm (painfully at times) tearing it down, reusing what I can, but building a new schema. It's not easy, but it's exciting, too. (4/15)

The development and discovery of a different self, a "Japanese self," began to become apparent to me as well:

> . . . when I was talking with J, I referred to A a couple of times by his first name, because in our department grad students refer to instructors by their first names. What I found interesting was not that I was really given any clue it

> was wrong, but it felt wrong. My Japanese self, or idea of what was correct, really was in control. This is something I've internalized, I guess. (4/17)

As I grew more comfortable with the cultural learning that was taking place, I began to recognize that I had been functioning within a particular set of boundaries that I had created for myself as a foreigner in Japanese society, and as a non-native speaker of Japanese. I had usually found being a foreigner in Japanese society to be very comfortable position. As a foreigner, a member of the ultimate out-group, I knew that even though I unintentionally committed cultural and behavioral *faux pas* from time to time I would be forgiven for my errors, or for my social ignorance. Frequent, but unintentional, pragmatic errors made when I spoke Japanese were also forgiven. From my foreigner perspective, I could safely observe what was going on without having to open myself up to participate. As the course progressed, I came to realize that my language learning had also always stayed within comfortable foreigner (*gaijin*) boundaries, and that I had chosen the safer means of allowing my knowledge of Japanese to remain within a particular level. With my growing understanding of how the Japanese language functioned within Japanese culture came the desire, however, to step out of the boundary I had created for myself; to step into the "third place" that Kramsch (1993) had written of and that I had searched for earlier in the year:

> Now I've learned to apply . . . the concepts of *uchi/soto* and have begun to develop this awareness of how the language functions within Japanese culture, and while it gives me a ton to think about when I need to use them, I appreciate having the level of understanding where I do think about them, and where I belong or place myself in relation to the other. It's stepping out of that *gaijin* boundary. I don't want to be told

> any more I don't need to know that much, that as a foreigner I only need to know certain things at a certain level. (5/6).

Earlier in the year, when we had been asked to use a direct style of speech, such as one would use within the family or with a close friend, I had written about my discomfort using this level of speech because "although I do understand it, I never had a relationship with anyone in Japan where I felt close enough to use a more direct style" (11/20). While my eventual cultural adjustment and adaptation within my Japanese course allowed me to begin to leave the safe "foreigner space" I had existed in before, I came to understand it did not necessarily mean I would establish relationships where I would be able to use the different language forms I had used. More importantly, I perceived that it meant that I could better understand the social and cultural relationships that existed between native speakers of Japanese and were expressed through language use.

The Classroom Environment

> Everyone in class seems so unhappy and frustrated. It's not conducive to learning, that's for sure. I really don't look forward to class at all. (11/18)

The environment of my Japanese language classroom had a strong effect on my learning experience, and was frequently commented on in my journal. During the first two terms of the year, I was enrolled in the morning section of second-year Japanese, which met Monday through Friday from nine o'clock until nine-fifty. Because of scheduling difficulties, during the third term I enrolled in the evening section, which met for three fifty-minute sessions on Tuesday evenings, and two fifty-minute sessions on Thursday evening. Both morning and evening sections worked from the

same syllabus and schedule of lessons, yet there were unexpected differences between the two groups, especially in the personalities and temperaments of my fellow classmates. These differences had a profound effect on my adaptation to the course, and my eventual decision to continue.

In just a little over a month after the course had begun I wrote my first impression of the morning group of students:

> One thing I'm noticing in class is that there doesn't seem to be the usual bonding that occurs between students in the classroom. Usually, at this point, phone numbers have been exchanged, or there's a feeling of camaraderie, but I'm just not getting that here. It seems that except for a general grumbling before class about all the memorization and how tired we all are of it, everyone mostly sticks to themselves. (11/5)

Following the morning class, students (myself included) immediately dispersed to other classes or endeavors, leaving little opportunity to linger and talk or get to know each other. While students did speak to each other occasionally outside of class, journal entries about the morning group almost always were about shared complaints over the methodology or the bad mood others were in as well.

> Spoke with some of my classmates following class. The frustration level is very high. No one has a clue how they're doing, one remarked that in five weeks he'd learned one thing (me, too), and most everyone is sick to death of memorization. The most common complaint heard today is that they're not getting to use their knowledge at all--it's all canned. (10/31)

I also noticed that students in the morning section did not attend class regularly, and that as the year progressed, fewer and fewer seemed to come to class:

> It's interesting to see who does and does not come to class. I really had thought a few had dropped, but they show up

> once or twice a week still. The ones who were really doing poorly did drop though. . . . It feels like we're all just getting by--there are no real stars. Plenty of grumbling before and after class from everyone, but we're becoming somewhat resigned to it, knowing there's nothing we can do to change it. (12/3)

> Only eight people showed up for class today. One I know has dropped; another seems to only show up on Fridays. Out of a beginning class of [over] 20, only 12 remain, and of that only eight regularly show up. Almost all are counting the days until the end of second year. Only two others plus myself plan to go on. There'll probably be only six or seven of us next year. (3/2)

My impression of a lack of camaraderie between classmates persisted throughout the two terms I was in the morning section, and it is often difficult to know from my entries whether my fellow classmates' seeming dissatisfaction and unhappiness contributed to my anger and frustration with the learning experience, or whether it was my opinions and emotions which were projected onto the other students. I did not function at my best in the mornings, and my arrival in class usually followed a frantic morning routine. Coupled with the difficulties I was having adjusting to the methodology, and the cultural disequilibrium I was experiencing, I most often arrived for class in a pessimistic mood which I may have projected onto the other students.

I immediately noticed a distinct difference in the atmosphere in the classroom when I changed to the evening section for the third term, with the new classroom environment having an almost instantaneous effect on my attitude toward the course and the methodology. Following my first evening in class I wrote:

> I can tell I'm going to like the evening class. Much more relaxed than the morning group, more laid back, more

> rapport between students, it seems. . . . Lots of joking around--just a different atmosphere altogether. Will I learn to like this class? Mornings were awful. Everyone was glum, especially me, and there wasn't the interaction I saw and felt last night. (4/1)

Journal entries soon began to note that classes were "enjoyable" (4/3) or commented on the "great class tonight" (4/7). On April 15 I wrote, "I enjoyed class last night. Boy it's fun to write that!"

Although the material covered in the evening class was the same as that being covered in the morning sessions, the atmosphere of the evening class had a strong effect on my learning. Fellow classmates seemed to help each other out in the evening classes, something I had not noticed happening in the morning sessions. "The whole class got involved, we all were helping each other out. I made tons of mistakes, but didn't feel shut down or shut out," I wrote on April 7.

> There's more cohesiveness, more of a 'group' feeling which did not exist in the morning class. There I felt like everyone was out for themselves. With the evening group I feel like everyone's there to help each other out. It sure has made a difference in how I feel about going to class. (5/8)

Between each class session in the evening was a short break, and instead of having to quickly depart for another class or appointment, students chatted with and got to know each other. And, as there were no further classes in the evenings, students often tended to pair up as they left for the evening, offering another opportunity for them to get to know each other. These were inadvertent results of scheduling, but for me they had the effect of creating a more relaxed, cohesive classroom environment.

Along with students taking the course to fulfill a university language requirement, there were two adults in the evening section taking the course for personal enjoyment and accomplishment:

> There are a couple of adult students who are taking the class for personal fulfillment--one's a doctor, the other a woman married to a Japanese man who is apparently 'relearning' Japanese. They seem to sort of set the tone for the class. (4/1)

I felt these students had an effect on the dynamic of the evening classroom in that they were there to learn without the burden of having to worry about a grade. Their undertaking inspired me and, I felt, others to make more of an effort in class.

I noticed that the cohesiveness of the evening group along with the more relaxed atmosphere appeared to affect the instructors as well. "Even the teachers seem more laid back," I wrote following one evening's class. "They laugh <u>with</u> us over our errors. I don't feel they're so critical."(4/7)

The cohesive, relaxed environment I perceived in the evening section was an important factor in my decision to persist in studying Japanese beyond my degree requirement. In the morning session, my frustration, confusion, and anger were echoed and amplified by others, with little opportunity to find other common ground between us. The perceived social distance that existed between the instructor and the students heightened the actual social distance between them. The experience and atmosphere of the evening class was a reminder that although Japanese remained difficult and challenging, there was joy to be found in sharing and helping others experience success.

PERSONAL VARIABLES

I define personal variables as known aspects of my personality and self-perception which I brought to my learning experience, and over which I could exercise control and modification. The affective variables of language anxiety and motivation were significant influences on my learning throughout the year. The recognition of the influence of both were instrumental in my adaptation and adjustment to the learning experience. Frequent journal entries reveal that another important variable in my effort to learn Japanese was my perception of myself as a learner and student. My eventual awareness and understanding of how these variables were affecting my attitude toward the course and my language learning, along with my conscious efforts to moderate the effects of these variables, became important factors in my eventual decision to persist in the study of Japanese.

Language Anxiety

> I am beginning to understand where much of my anxiety stems from. I may have unconsciously known it before, but it's at my conscious level now, and it's that I can't, and will never be able to meet the standards expected from this method. And, for someone like me, who has always put 150-200% into everything, this is so frustrating. I have been knocking myself out, doing my best, AND IT'S NOT AND NEVER WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH. I have been going into class, trying to 'perform' at my best; it's no wonder I've been a wreck. But as I write now, I'm telling myself 'no more,' The effort, the strain, the anxiety, the frustration just isn't worth it. Not now, anyhow, not at this time in my life. I just have to pass, and that's all I'm going to do. (1/22)

Language anxiety was an almost constant companion throughout the year, although I was most overtly aware of it in the first and second terms.

The anxiety I began experiencing almost immediately after the course began was one of the key reasons I began to keep a journal. The journal provided a means of not only releasing some of the tension, but of working through the anxiety and trying to understand it and lessen its effects. Entries throughout the year note various physical manifestations of language anxiety, my attempts to understand the reasons for my anxiety, and my efforts and eventual ability to control it.

Language anxiety has been defined as a specific or situational anxiety reaction which is limited to the foreign or second language classroom, and can include the subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, worry, or nervousness (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1991; Horwitz & Young, 1991). Language anxiety is often grouped under the more general heading of communication anxiety, the fear or anxiety one feels about orally communicating, and can be observed in the manifestations of stage fright, speech anxiety, and social anxiety among others (Daly, 1991). Language anxiety is most often associated with the tasks of speaking and listening in the foreign language classroom. Language anxiety affects the communicative strategies students use in class, with the anxious student more likely to avoid attempting more complicated communication in the target language. Anxious students in the foreign language classroom are usually fearful of making mistakes in the classroom, feeling constantly tested and perceiving every correction as a failure (Horwitz, et. al, 1986; 1991). They "have difficulty concentrating, become forgetful, sweat, and have palpitations. They exhibit avoidance behavior such as missing class and postponing homework" (Horwitz, et. al, 1986, p. 29).

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986; 1991) also posit that language anxiety has three components: communication apprehension, where the second language learner has mature thoughts, but immature ability in the second language with which to express those thoughts; fear of negative social evaluation, where because of a lack of communication skills in the second language the student fears he or she will not make a proper social impression; and test anxiety, where the language learner has fears over academic evaluation.

Causes of anxiety

The anxiety I experienced was caused by a variety of situational and personal factors. I felt anxious waiting to be called on to perform a core conversation or drill, during the actual performance of a core conversation or drill, while choosing the correct pragmatic form when speaking, and in anticipation of my course evaluation.

The first journal entry related to anxiety linked it with a fear of choosing an incorrect form: "I find myself extremely anxious about using the right form in the right place versus just making myself understood" (10/27).

Waiting to be called on for my turn to perform a core conversation or drill also produced the earliest and some of the strongest feelings of anxiety. Daly (1991) notes that for the anxious student, random questioning creates great anxiety because of the unpredictability of what will be required verbally, and so creates a higher apprehension of failure. Never a comfortable speaker in public or in any classroom situation, the idea of

performing in front of my classmates coupled with having to wait an unknown period for my turn was exceedingly anxiety-producing:

> Performing in class today was excruciating. I became more and more anxious waiting for K to call on me. The dialog was long, so he broke it up into bits and pieces, but I still didn't get called on. Finally, when he did call on me, I was the first one to have to perform the entire dialog. After 35 minutes of listening to others, wondering if and when I would be called, my stomach churning, it was all I could do to get out the entire dialog. On top of having to remember it all, I also had to 'create' a new portion of the conversation based on pictures K held up. The whole experience was a complete drain on my nerves, really awful. (10/30)

> Had butterflies in my stomach all during class, and was on edge constantly waiting to be called on to perform. It really is a horrible feeling, the waiting to see if you'll be asked to perform something you're somewhat comfortable with or something you can barely remember, if at all. (11/12)

It was the error correction technique employed by some of the instructors, however, which produced the strongest anxiety reactions. Waiting for a turn to pronounce something correctly because another student had made an error became an agonizing ordeal:

> I just hate it when someone mispronounces something and the instructor goes around the whole room asking everyone to pronounce it correctly, and then correcting people who are having difficulty, making them do it over and over again. It's so embarrassing, and I don't think anything in that class produces more tension, for me at least. Will I do it correctly? Will I choke? Or will I blow it? Who needs this? It is definitely not confidence-building, even if you do get it right. (1/20)

> Boy, I have really come to hate that technique. It's almost the most anxiety/tension producing thing the instructors do. My mouth goes dry, my throat shuts each time they start. (1/26)

Price (1991) posits that one cause for a high level of language anxiety is that foreign language classes usually have a high level of difficulty and are demanding, and the results students achieve in their foreign language class in relation to the amount of work output are often quite poor when compared to the results in their other classes. The course evaluation in second-year Japanese was based not only on scores achieved on exams and quizzes, but on the student's daily performance in class. Jorden writes that:

> From the start, the student will know that the course is difficult but not impossible, expectations are high but not unreasonable, standards are demanding but not out-of-line. Students are always encouraged in their efforts and helped to realize their maximum potential, but there is no praise of shoddy work, and unsatisfactory performance of course means failure. (1986, p. 144)

Even though I was taking the course on a pass/no pass basis, my desire to meet the course standards and do well, along with uncertainty as to how I was doing in the class, fed into my anxiety:

> I have such a feeling of complete disequilibrium in this class, a feeling of having no solid ground beneath me. Every time I feel on a little surer footing, something seems to shift again. First, I have absolutely no idea how I'm doing. I've been given no indication (nor has the rest of the class) of progress being made, areas for improvement, etc. And, I'm not sure if it's intentional or not. Probably not--we did ask for a sort of mid-term report and were told one would be coming this week, but haven't seen it yet. So things feel very shaky. (11/12)

> I don't think getting up and doing a dialog would be so bad if I weren't so scared of looking foolish, or know that I'm being graded each day. Everyone in the class makes mistakes, and they're supposed to be OK--'you learn from them'--but it sure doesn't feel OK to make mistakes. Maybe it's just me and my own obsessive/compulsive need to do well. (11/20)

Discovering that I was doing well, however, did little to relieve my anxiety:

> The fact that I'm doing well in spite of my many errors does not help either. It's the feeling of waiting to perform, of having to remember a script that makes it so difficult, the tension of never knowing when it's going to be your turn. (12/3)

Manifestations of anxiety

The physical manifestations of my anxiety varied. "Butterflies in my stomach" (11/12) progressed to "stomach is churning" (11/14) and to "stomach twisted into a knot" (11/19). It also began to take longer and longer after the class period had ended for the feelings of anxiety to abate.

> I'm sitting here again with my stomach in knots following today's class. It was fairly relaxed, too--not bad, but this seems to be almost an involuntary response now. I'm a complete wreck in and following class. It's disturbing because I like learning Japanese, at least I did before, but now it's so anxiety producing . . . . Time to move on to another subject. Thinking about this is not helping me to unwind . . . . (12/3)

Other physical indications of my anxiety eventually began to appear. An attack of extreme anxiety one day caused a different, and disturbing, reaction which replaced the uneasy feelings I had in my stomach. I began to feel that my throat was tightening and that I was choking when I was called upon, and noted as well that my heart was pounding.

> I suffered a MAJOR case of performance anxiety today. Had the core conversation memorized, but when it came time for delivery, for my turn to perform, I literally choked. My throat closed up. It's amazing and disturbing to me to be having an actual physical response beyond the knot in my stomach. (12/2)

> Today was back to the old grind, and along with it came all the old feelings of tension and anxiety. I find my heart starting to pound before class even starts. Today K let us

> use our books to review. Even using the book, I was having trouble controlling my anxiety. My throat felt like it was closing up. This seems to be the current manifestation of my anxiety. I could not even read without almost panicking. Everyone else seemed to be reading and pronouncing everything so smoothly, while I felt like I was tripping over every word. I have no idea how I actually sounded. (1/6)

One day, my anxiety seemed to manifest itself in an inability to speak above a whisper in class: "I never had that terrible anxious feeling in the pit of my stomach as usual, although I did notice I was barely speaking above a whisper when it was my turn to speak. A new reaction or ????" (1/20)

There were other reactions to my anxiety beyond the physical manifestations I experienced. I began to avoid volunteering to speak or perform in class, and would only respond when called upon by one of the instructors. "I didn't volunteer for any of the CC performances because I was: a) too nervous, as usual . . . . I was able to give the correct response a few times when he asked for it, though" (11/20). I also began to intentionally miss class: "I am finding myself less and less eager to go to class . . . . The whole class experience is so negative" (12/2).

> I didn't go to class today. I've been feeling like I need one morning a week where I don't have to face the drills, the uncertainties, the tension, etc. I need one morning to decompress, so to speak. I find that when I come home after Japanese class, it takes me a while to settle down, to look at other things. I'm so unhappy. I wish I didn't have to take the course at all. (1/29)

In contrast to these experiences, there were class situations where I did not feel nervous or anxious. I never became anxious in the "fact" class session, even if a quiz was being given, as only English was spoken and there was no performance involved. Also, the phone quizzes taken during the second term were noted as being free from anxiety:

> They don't seem to be so bad. I know I'm going to 'perform' so to speak, but it's in private. I don't feel like I'm on stage, and any mistakes I make will be put out for all and any to see and correct. (1/16)

The once-weekly reading and writing class also did not usually cause me to feel anxious, although if the instructor began randomly asking students to read a passage or do some translation, I would sometimes began to become nervous as I waited for my turn, just as I did in the "act" class sessions. On one occasion, the instructor brought in a travel advertisement from a Japanese newspaper, and the class took turns trying to read what Japanese they could in the ad. The opportunity to use authentic materials instead of the text also kept me from becoming anxious over my performance:

> The other great thing today was that I found I wasn't nervous! While the text totally has me rattled, or gets me rattled, I felt no pressure with the authentic materials. I didn't feel like I was performing with it in any way, just using it to learn and experience how Japanese is used in authentic situations. (12/5)

Learning that I had done poorly on a quiz also could calm my nerves during a class session. "One good (?) thing today if I've got to find a silver lining. Getting that lousy score on the quiz took care of my nerves. I just didn't care how I performed today" (11/18). A warm-up period before turning to the core conversations and drills also was noted as being free from anxiety, although it returned the moment the class turned to the assigned core conversations and drills:

> At the beginning of class, the instructor spoke briefly about the weather, and it felt good to be able to say, <u>unmemorized</u>, that November's weather in Japan was nice, and that Nikko was very beautiful in November. He had to stop and explain to everyone where Nikko was, but I kept thinking here

> would have been a chance for the class to warm up, for me and others to elaborate or whatever, but we shifted right into the CCs and drills, and my stomach twisted into a knot. (11/19)

Recognizing and moderating anxiety

During the second term, in my TESOL methodology class, I took the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1990). While I was not surprised to receive my lowest scores under the "remembering more effectively" and "learning with others" strategies, I was surprised to discover that I did not score highly on what I thought were my usual learning strategies, "organizing and evaluating your learning" and "using your mental processes." My highest score came under "managing your emotions," where the strategies of identifying my anxiety; encouraging myself through positive statements; noting physical stress; keeping a language learning journal; and talking with others about my feelings and attitudes about the language learning experience were employed (Oxford, 1990). Surprised by the results, and tired of feeling so anxious, I decided to consciously come to terms with some of the causes of my anxiety.

The first change in attitude noted in my journal was one of letting go, consciously deciding that I would not allow myself to become so upset and anxious about the course. "I am taking a more 'it doesn't matter' attitude this term, not an 'I don't care,' but something to help me relax more" (1/20). I began to volunteer more, figuring that if I volunteered, this would take care of some of the waiting that had caused me so much anxiety:

> I have found myself feeling more relaxed in class, mainly through my own efforts, of telling myself not to worry so much. I am trying to volunteer more rather than wait to be called on (although this is only with the CCs, not the drills)...

> I keep telling myself that it's OK to make mistakes, even though it still doesn't feel OK to make them. But the anxiety level is dropping. I think it's because, as my SILL scores indicated, I'm employing more 'emotional management' techniques instead of focusing on my other learning strategies. However, I really don't think I'm learning as much as I could. By spending all my time making sure my anxiety filter is down, or as down as possible, I'm taking in and using less. (2/13)

Evaluations were given more frequently during the second term and as I began to ascertain that I was performing better than I had thought, I began to become less anxious about class. I also began speaking with some of the instructors outside of class in a more relaxed setting about how my learning was progressing. Discovering from these talks that I was doing well, or as well as expected for someone at the second-year level, also helped to relieve anxiety.

> It is helpful to be able to talk with J in English about how I'm doing, and it helps to relieve much of the anxiety I still carry from time to time. I'm feeling less anxious all the time, though. I do care about how I do, but am feeling more self-assured about what I do and how well I do it. . . I'm feeling less anxious, less angry all the time, and more resigned, I guess. I feel like I'm moving into a new place with this class and method. Much of it has come from making myself 'let it go,' reminding myself that I'm not stupid, and that this teaching method is just a poor match for my learning style. (2/18)

My anxiety also diminished as I became more comfortable with my fellow classmates, although not completely. Although the environment of morning class lacked the camaraderie I was to find in the evening group, I eventually found my place in the class, and was able to relax with my fellow students.

> I'm still terrified somewhat when I have to 'perform' in class, but I'm not having those major physical reactions I did earlier. The longer class is together, the easier it's getting. I don't feel either like I have to prove anything, either to

> myself or the others, which I know was a big issue for me at the beginning of the year. (2/23)

While all the physical indications of anxiety that I had experienced before were finally gone by the end of the second term, I felt that the possibility of their reoccurrence was still strong. I was concerned that a move to a new and different group of classmates in the evening might cause the former indications of anxiety to reappear.

> I've found the physical manifestations of my anxiety have departed, but I know they're still lurking below the surface. I wonder if they'll reappear next term when I move to another group. With the group I'm with now, I'm not so afraid to make an error or not know--we're all in the same boat. (3/2)

Eventually, all that outwardly remained of my anxiety was a continuing inability to perform the core conversations with ease, despite practicing them at home until I could say them quickly and smoothly: "I'm wondering why I still have trouble doing the CCs in class," I wrote on April 29. "Not anything like I did before, but not as smoothly as when I practice them on my own."

By the end of the year I had come to accept that my anxiety was something I could control, even though I could not banish it entirely, nor all the factors that affected it. My last journal entry, written after the final class, was a telling reflection of the lingering intensity and depth of my language anxiety. Though it was months away, "I am already worrying about next year, even as I write this! It's got to be me--I wish I could relax about this" (6/2).

Motivation

> I'm feeling a little sad, too. Japan and Japanese have been part of my life for over 25 years. My focus has always been on Japan. Despite knowing that I won't get back there to work, I still wanted to learn Japanese, to keep that connection. But not this way. Now it's just something I have to do, to complete my language requirement. It's no longer something I want to do. I feel like crying . . . . (1/22)

Journal entries concerning my desire to learn Japanese, my attitudes towards the language class and the language, and my reasons for eventually wanting to continue learning Japanese reveal that motivation played a key role in my language learning experience throughout the year. Although I initially enrolled in the course only to fulfill the language requirement for my degree, I came to see that I enjoyed the challenge of learning Japanese in spite of the very real possibility of my not returning to Japan to live or teach.

Motivation in second language learning has been defined as "the learner's orientation toward the goal of learning a second language" (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991, p. 471). Traditional approaches to studying motivation in second language learning have followed a socio-educational model focusing on learner attitudes toward speakers of the target language and the target culture. Gardner and Lambert (1959) were the first to posit that motivation could be either *integrative*, where the learner wished to interact with target-language speakers and identify in some way with their language community, or *instrumental*, where language learning was done for more functional reasons, such as to pass an examination, meet a language requirement, or acquire a better job or promotion. Integrative motivation was initially believed to better facilitate language learning, but studies have shown that although those who are integratively motivated to

learn a language will most likely be more successful in their efforts, integrative motivation of itself is not necessarily superior to instrumental motivation (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991).

Gardner and Lalonde (1985) claim that motivation involves more than having an orientation toward a goal. A desire to learn a foreign or second language, even a strong desire, is not enough on its own to qualify as motivation; rather, two other equally important aspects are required for successful language acquisition. The motivated language learner, they maintain, is one who not only wants to achieve a goal, but who works hard to achieve that goal, and enjoys the activity involved in learning the language. This model implies that the attitude of the learner toward the language learning situation is as important as the attitude of the learner towards the target language and its speakers.

> . . . to the extent that the major opportunity to learn the second language is a classroom environment, it seems reasonable to propose that evaluative reactions to the language teacher, toward the language course, and toward the materials, etc., will influence the student's level of motivation to learn the language. (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985, p. 8)

Although the instrumental/integrative dichotomy has dominated research on motivation and second language learning, more recently other psychological approaches have been used to understand the relationship between motivation and successful second language acquisition, especially the forces of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. *Intrinsic motivation,* defined as an internal human desire to engage in an activity or task for its own sake and for the enjoyment and sense of accomplishment derived from the performance of the activity or task, is the "human response to innate

psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy" (van Lier, 1996, p. 110). Any outside influence or pressure causing a person to engage in an activity or task, by contrast, is defined as *extrinsic motivation.* Deci and Ryan (1985) separated extrinsic motivation into four types based on the degree in which the motivation is other- or self-regulated: external regulation, where behavior is caused by another person who is present, as in the case of the offer of a reward or the threat of punishment; introjected regulation, like external regulation except that the other person does not have to be present, and so involves internalized rules; identified regulation, where a person values an activity or task and does it not for intrinsic interest but because it has been identified as being instrumental to success; and integrated regulation, where activities are fully self-determined but are personally important for an outcome and not because they are interesting in themselves. Van Lier (1996), however, believes that identified regulation and integrated regulation are not pure forms of extrinsic motivation, but points where extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, or external and internal goals, have merged.

Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are often viewed as unrelated or separate forces, van Lier (1996) believes that they often work in harmony; extrinsic motivation can and should be used to mobilize intrinsic motivation in order to encourage learning.

My reasons for enrolling in second year Japanese had been purely instrumental: I needed to pass one term of third year Japanese to fulfill the foreign language requirement for my degree. Because I knew that learning Japanese via the Jorden method would be quite different from my previous language learning experiences, and because of the length of time that had

passed since I had last studied Japanese, I felt I needed to repeat the second-year level in order to be able to successfully complete the required one term of third-year Japanese. I was well aware that my chances of returning to Japan to teach English were extremely slim. And, I felt guilty deciding to return to the study of a language that I would be unlikely to use in the future instead of attempting to learn Chinese, the native language of my daughter. I realized, however, that I did not have time to begin the study of a new language, especially not one as difficult as Chinese, and I believed that because I had studied Japanese before, the class would be somewhat easy for me, and not require too much effort. Because I had already successfully completed second-year Japanese, I opted for the pass/no pass evaluation option.

Attitude and lack of motivation

Less than three weeks after I began keeping the journal, just a little over a month after starting the course, I first wrote in my journal about motivation, or rather my lack of it. I had deliberately missed class for the first time, something I did not normally do:

> Didn't go to class yesterday as my daughter was sick. I have to admit that [my husband] stayed home from work so that I could go to class, but when it came down to getting myself up and ready to go, I just couldn't do it. I was prepared--knew the answers to the questions and had practiced the drills, but there was a definite lack of motivation. I don't like to miss class, either . . . . (11/5)

As Gardner and Lalonde have suggested, my attitude toward the learning environment affected my motivation to attend class and to learn the language. An inverse relationship between my frustration with the

methodology and my desire to attend class began early on in the first term and continued on into the second: "I don't look forward to class at all. I dread it in fact, and even if I have some motivation to learn when class begins, it's gone by the time class is over" (11/18); "It's getting harder and harder to get up and come to class" (11/19). Following the first day of the second term I wrote, "I felt totally disjointed, out of place, and like I wanted to be anywhere but back in Japanese class again" (1/6), and later in the term I commented, "It's still hard for me though to motivate myself to get up and go to class, to do the work, to even try and remember/learn anything" (1/26). The day before I had written "I wish I could find some reason to get motivated, but I'm not sure I could, at this point, overcome my loathing of the Jorden method" (1/30). "I didn't go to class for the last two days because I really did not feel like going," I wrote on February 5. "I just couldn't memorize another dialog, or get myself motivated to get up and sit in the class for another round of drills."

My lack of motivation is also evident in journal entries where I noted that I did not want or care to do the work the course required of me:

> In some ways, I've shut down, and don't feel like doing the extra for class. Some of it's because it's pass/no pass--it's kind of nice not worry about a grade--but I really feel like the teaching style and the Jorden method as a whole also push me back. I don't feel "encouraged" for some reason to go the extra distance. (11/24)

> A snowy day at home, which is good because I already need a break from class--after only one week! I hate Japanese class. I can't couch it in any other words. It is all I can do to drag myself out of bed each morning to go over the text, and it is only through sheer force of will that I can or try to memorize those CCs. (1/12)

". . . I feel like I'm just going through the motions. Anything to pass and be done with it," I wrote on January 16. "I've lost that drive to do my best, to be the best," and later, "I am feeling motivated to only do the basic work required to pass" (1/27).

The January 16 comment on my lack of motivation noted, "Maybe I'm just resigned to the whole ordeal." During the first term I had also written of my feelings of resignation over knowing that students could do nothing to affect the course: "Resignation is a pretty horrible feeling--not very motivating, obviously" (12/3).

My lack of motivation was eventually manifested in a decreasing desire to write in my journal, even though I had decided to use the journal as research data for my thesis and knew I needed to make regular entries following class:

> I'm not sure if this feeling I've had recently of not wanting to write [in the journal] is directly related to my frustration and general dislike of my Japanese class or ???? I used to need to run and write about the day's class, how much it bothered me. I needed the release of writing in the journal. Now I'm feeling like I want to forget all about the class as soon as I leave. I don't want anything to to remind me of the experience. (1/16)

Recognition of intrinsic motivation

Entries in my journal, however, reveal that I had a strong intrinsic desire to learn Japanese, that I enjoyed the challenge of learning Japanese. Early in the year, in spite of the frustration I was experiencing with the methodology, I wrote:

> I still want to continue--there is still a real desire to learn, or gain some mastery of this language. I enjoy Japanese, the language, that is. It is still a 'secret code' I very much want to decipher. (11/7)

From early on, part of my motivation to learn Japanese had been grounded in a desire to learn and use the written as well as the spoken language. In his Bill of Rights for Language Students, Hammerly (1985) proposes that one right of the language student is "the right to an emphasis on the language skills that each student would like to develop" (p. 215). Although he writes that most students wish to learn to speak the second language and maintain an emphasis on the spoken language, "anyone who wants to learn to read should also have the right to such instruction" (p.216). Because I also wished to learn and interact with written Japanese, the Jorden method's focus on the spoken language and its use of *rômaji* in the text became one of my greatest frustrations with the course:

> I used to love the challenge of reading and writing to trying to decipher text. It was one of the reasons, in fact, that I studied Japanese. Not just because I lived there, but because I wanted to 'know the code.' Japanese writing on signs, in magazines, on TV, etc. was like a secret code, and I wanted to know what it all said. I taught myself *hiragana* and *katakana* so I could figure out more, and tried to learn as many *kanji* as I could. I could almost memorize them, then would go look them up to see how they were read. (2/13)

> I like doing *kanji* work, though. I think learning and reading *kanji* is my favorite part of Japanese. It's the "code" I've always wanted to crack, although as I move on with spoken Japanese I do want to become more proficient as well. (4/24)

The opportunity to learn the written language provided motivation for me to learn the spoken language as well:

> I found myself today, when M passed out examples from Japanese magazines to use for one of the drills, getting so caught up in trying to read what I could on the page that I don't think I would have heard him call my name if he had. I was oblivious to everything around me, I became so immersed in the language on the page, wanting to figure

> out as much as I could. It was wonderful! I know it wouldn't and didn't help me speak Japanese, but for a short while the desire was there. (2/23)

As my language anxiety began to abate, and as I begin to accept that I was doing better in the course than I had previously perceived, I began to allow myself to refocus and reflect on my motivations for learning Japanese. At first, my exasperation with the Jorden method led me to question at times whether I wanted to continue. Early in the second term, for example, when my motivation to continue was very low, I wrote: "I wish in some ways that I had gone with my gut feeling to not do this, to start over with Chinese" (1/26). And, although I could write late in the second term, "I'm on an upswing again, feeling like I'm not doing too badly, feeling like I'm gaining control of my learning instead of the other way around" (3/4), I also confessed the same day:

> There's too much going on here. Lots for me to figure out on why this just isn't working for me. I know too [that] the more miserable I am, the less inclined I am to perform, to want to learn. But, it can't totally be the method, either. Others have persevered and become fluent speakers, or at least competent, comprehensible speakers of Japanese. Maybe you just have to be willing to surrender your will to the Jorden method in order to succeed, but I just can't do that.

Later in the second term, however, reflection on my past connections with Japan, my continuing interest in Japanese culture, and the satisfaction I derived from learning Japanese allowed me to make this journal entry:

> My motivation to finish remains strong, and in spite of accepting that I'll probably never make it back to Japan to teach, I also know and accept that I do love the language and culture, that it's an important part of who I am and where I've been. (2/19)

Allowing myself to let go of some of the inner conflict and guilt I felt over not learning Chinese for my daughter's sake also led me to ponder for the first time whether I might actually continue beyond the required one term of third year in spite of my frustrations with the methodology:

> A small admission. I have secretly been toying with continuing on after the required one term of third year. It's only a thought now, a 'why not?', but I can't quit figure out why I'm thinking about this at all. (2/19)

I discussed my lack of motivation with my instructors, mentioning to one that:

> it's somewhat of a struggle for me, and that I'm kind of in a transition period now as I give up my unrealistic dreams of going back to Japan, so why am I still studying Japanese? But I still need and want to do well. . . . " (2/18)

Another instructor, however, told me in reference to my desire to someday return to Japan, to "'never say never' about getting back to Japan." "Do I dare dream?" I wrote on April 1.

The combination of a strong intrinsic motivation to learn Japanese, along with the glimmer of hope that I might one day be able to return to Japan proved to be a key turning point in my motivation to persist in studying Japanese, in spite of the difficulties I was having with the language and the methodology.

> So what's going on? I really have to think about this, about Japanese, about going on. I do <u>like</u> Japanese, and despite the struggle, I am learning, but I still have <u>NO</u> confidence in myself, a low self-esteem when it comes to Japanese. There's still tons I don't like about the Jorden method, and yet I'm determined to make peace with it, to get the most out of it that I can. I don't think I'll ever get used to those drills, though, or the eavesdropping [listening] exercises, but I do want to go on. (4/1)

> I feel a big change in my attitude toward this class. A couple of weeks ago, even last week I might have said that I had finally come to accept that I have to take this, so why not just go along for the ride and get the most out of it that I can. But there's something else, too, and it's that I still want to learn Japanese; I still want to succeed at learning to speak, read, write, and understand this language. I don't think I could have said that last term, and definitely not first term. And, if the Jorden method is the one means available to me at this time to learn it, then so be it--the end to me far outweighs the means. . . As long as possible I'm going to let myself dream, to hope that I can go back. And, I want to be as prepared as possible, to be a speaker of Japanese. (4/3)

The shift in motivation, the acceptance of my intrinsic interest in learning Japanese, accompanied by changes in the teaching application and the classroom environment, caused an almost 180 degree turn in my attitude towards my Japanese class. I began to look forward to coming to class, I became eager to learn, even though I was not entirely sure what was going on or why the changes had occurred:

> I'm feeling so much more positive about learning Japanese, but I'm still trying to figure out why? I know it's not just that I understand some of the 'whys' of the method; something else has changed as well. I'm learning, enjoying the challenge. Why now? (4/13)

I eventually came to a place in my learning where I could realistically accept that I would probably never go back to Japan, yet still wanted to continue to learn Japanese. The Japanese language, I wrote:

> . . . will be/may be something I will need to work on for the rest of my life. Boy, that's something I could never have thought about a couple of months ago, and here I am now thinking, 'well, maybe I could [do] that.' Right now, I want to do that, but we'll see of course. Being able to go back to Japan would be wonderful, a great opportunity to keep learning, but it's such a long shot. As I said to J, 'the salad days are over' in Japan, never mind my being old, female, and having a family. (4/17)

My new enthusiasm for learning and my heightened motivation was tempered, however, by a growing understanding of how much effort it took, and would take, to truly succeed in learning to speak and write Japanese at even an intermediate level.

> I am waiting for that moment when it all clicks, but am wondering if that ever happens with Japanese. Still . . . I want to go on, I want to learn. A few months ago I would be feeling angry, hating and railing against the method, but now I'm not and am instead trying to think of ways I could be learning it better or more efficiently. I wish I had more time to study. That's my biggest problem now. I just have so much going on with my other classes that I don't have the time to devote to Japanese that I would like. (5/6)

By the end of the year, I had come to an understanding that the amount of effort and concentration required to learn Japanese well would be difficult while I had other graduate classes to complete, and a thesis to undertake. "I know now why I didn't major in Japanese," I wrote on June 2,

> It requires too much work, too much concentration. I just can't be doing anything else and learn Japanese. I knew that four years ago, and it's the same now. . . . I want to learn. I do want to get better. I want to be able to use it as well, and not have this have been merely some academic exercise. (6/2)

Still, I wanted to continue to learn Japanese. I was determined to continue my study of Japanese, to gain as much mastery of the language as I could under the circumstances, and to possibly earn a certificate to teach Japanese.

Learning Style and Self-perception

> In [a linguistics] class yesterday we were shown some examples of course objectives. Three of the four used the word 'develop,' and one used 'establish and maintain.' There's a difference to me--'develop' means giving/teaching students the tools to build on, to go on with learning on their own once a course is finished. 'Establish,' to me anyway, means to present the information in a particular way, without allowing for individual needs or learning styles, and creativity. Sort of the old 'give a man a fish and you've fed him for a day' versus 'teach a man to fish and you've fed him for life' approach. I feel like I'm being handed a fish each day in [Japanese] class. (10/16)

My self-perception and self-esteem as a student and learner form another theme which runs throughout my journal. Many entries contain comparisons of the course with other language learning experiences, reflections on my learning style and language aptitude, worries over the progress I am making, and reactions to scores received on quizzes and homework. Unlike any course I had ever undertaken before, language or otherwise, learning Japanese through the Jorden method challenged everything I knew of myself as a student and learner. I had always maintained high expectations for myself as a student, and was an eager and conscientious learner who earned top grades. But, for the greater part of the first and second terms in my Japanese class, in spite of the effort I put into the course, I was convinced I was doing poorly and not learning anything; at times, I believed I was failing the course, or at least barely passing. Unable to use many of the learning strategies and skills that had worked well for me in previous language courses or language-learning environments, I found myself instead spending a great deal of time trying to develop new strategies and manage my emotions. My self-esteem and confidence as a learner at one point plummeted to where I despaired of ever finishing the

M.A. TESOL degree, let alone the Japanese course. Even when I learned that I had earned the equivalent of an A grade in both the first and second terms, I had come to lack the confidence needed to accept I was doing well. It was not until the course coordinator suggested that I consider undertaking earning the certificate to teach Japanese as a foreign language, and until I began to understand how truly difficult and time-consuming learning Japanese is for a native English speaker, that I could reflect and reevaluate my learning self, and re-establish my self-esteem as a student.

"Self-esteem may be a crucial factor in the learner's ability to overcome occasional setbacks or minor mistakes in the process of learning a second language" (Tarone & Yule, 1989, p. 139). The self-esteem of good learners can keep them from feeling foolish or threatened when they make errors, and learners with high self-esteem tend to be less inhibited in their efforts to reach out. Krashen (1981, 1985) identified self-confidence, or self-esteem (along with anxiety and motivation), as an important affective variable in language learning. Self-confidence, he proposed, enables learners to keep their "affective filter" low, thereby promoting more useful input of the target language; conversely, a lack of self-confidence can inhibit intake as it helps keep the "affective filter" raised, thereby preventing input of the target language.

Lowered self-esteem can result when a student's preferred learning style is in conflict with the teaching methodology or the teaching style of an instructor. While a student's ability and preparation partially govern how much he or she will learn, the relationship between a student's learning style and the teaching style of an instructor or the methodology used can also

have an impact on how much a student will learn (Felder & Rodriguez, 1995). Studies have shown that students can experience stress, frustration, and burnout when they are exposed over long periods of time to teaching styles incompatible with their preferred learning style. They may also begin to suffer from a lack of self-confidence, become discouraged, and decide that they are incapable of learning the subject being taught, and may even give up trying to learn and quit the course (Felder & Rodriguez, 1995).

A student's beliefs about the best way to learn or acquire knowledge are related to his or her previous experiences with different teaching styles in different classes. The learning strategies a student brings to the learning experience result from the student's definition of the learning task he or she is presented with (Elbaum, Berg, & Dodd, 1993). Learning strategies typically used in a second or foreign language learning situation can be either *formal* or *functional.* Formal strategies involve activities which focus on the language itself, such as drills or vocabulary memorization, while functional strategies involve activities that use the target language for communicative purposes. Most traditional foreign language courses emphasize structural mastery of the target language as an important part of the learning task, and although communicative skills are taught, they are emphasized less. In contrast, immersion programs or community foreign language learning experiences typically emphasize communication skills over structural knowledge, by emphasizing communication strategies and downplaying grammatical errors. Prior learning experiences, therefore, can influence how individuals define the task of learning a foreign or second language. In studies done to determine an individual's beliefs about the efficacy of different learning strategies, it was determined that:

> Individuals with immersion experience, and those with a combination of traditional instruction and foreign language community experience, viewed the task of learning a foreign language as involving greater knowledge of communication strategies, and lesser knowledge of grammar, than did individuals with traditional instruction only. (Elbaum, et.al., 1993, p. 330)

Conflict with personal learning style and strategies

Although I am usually a deductive, sensory-type learner, by living for several years in Japan, and learning Japanese primarily through a direct teaching approach, I developed learning strategies which favored a more inductive or intuitive sense, and which favored functional versus formal approaches to language learning. My previous learning experiences also led me to favor more visual and kinetic learning strategies, instead of verbal and reflective ones.

The deductive, formal approach of the Jorden method clashed immediately with the learning strategies that had worked well for me in my previous language learning experiences. The time spent on performing drills and core conversations, the amount of error correction, and the daily evaluation often made the "act" classes seem more about performance than learning to me. Journal entries note my frustration over the lack of more functional-type activities, the emphasis on the drills and core conversations, and my joy with opportunities to use more communicative-type activities.

> What would be so wrong with us working on the drills in pairs, with the teacher walking around and listening to us, correcting us if we needed it, and with a fellow student offering encouragement or assistance if their partner needed help? This being singled out to perform, knowing you are being graded on performance, is so stressful . . . At times I don't feel like I'm learning anything, just flipping through an ever-increasing bundle of index cards in my head to find the

> correct question and its correct response. Not nearly correct, mind you--no room for error--but the correct one. (10/23)

A key language learning strategy for me had always been active experimentation with the language, using it and testing my knowledge of it in different situations. The course, however, gave little opportunity for individual speaking practice outside of the performance of core conversations and drills. In order to have the chance to speak more, I began to answer questions even when I hadn't been called on.

> I also find myself saying the response, or trying out a response, out loud in class. I'm sure it ticks everyone off, including the instructors, but I hate sitting around waiting for a chance to speak. (this only occurs if and when an instructor is asking for an original response). I wish we had more chances in class to practice with each other, to try out what we know more often in original responses, and spent less time waiting to be called on. (12/2)

> I need more practice speaking. I need to talk, to try stuff out, to be sure of my own ability to communicate, but it's just not happening. It's just canned phrases being spit back out, except we are being graded on how we spit them out. . . I long for those different types of learning experiences, not the solid listen and repeat drills we do now, all this memory work with nothing authentic to back it up. (1/16)

The opportunities we were given to use communicative learning strategies were always noted in my journal, along with the enjoyment and satisfaction I gained from doing them:

> And . . . we did some group work! The last 10 minutes of class were spent in small groups where we pretended to be a family. We got to practice with each other, get our stories straight, and then practice with the rest of the class. It was great--it was a wonderful, relaxing way to tryout what we knew. We could even use 'forbidden' vocabulary (words that we supposedly haven't learned yet). Sure wish we could do it more. (10/28)

> . . . we actually got to do a brief bit of pair work! It was wonderful, and something that was apparently unrelated to the core conversation. It felt good to try out what I knew with another student--very relaxing,and for a few moments stress-free as I didn't feel like I was 'performing.' One pair got up and demonstrated after the pair work was done, but that was it! And, the instructor moved around the room listening to us as we spoke--it was GREAT!! (11/20)

At the close of the first term students were asked to fill out a questionnaire on the program, and were allowed to write in what changes they would like to see in the program. I, of course, asked for more communicative-type activities, including pair and small group work. "They must have gotten the message about pair work in the department," I wrote on January 27,

> because we broke off into pairs again today. The trouble is, no one is used to doing pair work, so it's going to take some time. But I hope they keep it up. I like the opportunity to try out a pattern with a partner, to have the instructor stop by to check, offer suggestions, and correct me, but not in front of the whole class.

The desire for more functional learning activities was not confined to the "act" classes; journal entries also note that I desired more of their use in the reading and writing class session as well:

> Writing class today was OK. At least we got to practice writing on the board. Lots of mistakes from everyone, but we get very little time to practice writing. Several today, including me, asked if we could do more board work; that is, taking at least five minutes of each class to go to the board for practice and critique. The answer was, unbelievably, 'only if we have time.' Why can't time be made for this important skill? (1/30)

In the reading and writing class one day, the instructor used an experiential approach to teach the entire class the meaning of a particular vocabulary word I had difficulty remembering. That day's journal entry

expresses both my enjoyment of the learning experience along with my frustration with how the class typically interacted with the material we were expected to learn:

> He asked me a question using the term *hiru*, for which I couldn't remember the meaning. So, to explain it, he gave us an opposite sort of word, *kurai*, meaning 'dark,' and explained it by turning off all the lights in the classroom and shutting the door. Then he turned on all the lights, opened the door, and said *akarui*, 'bright,' then connected that to *hiru*, which means daytime. It was a wonderful learning experience! The interesting and ironic part came a little while later when he asked the class if we remembered the word *kurai*, which of course we all did. He explained we had learned by <u>experiencing</u> the word, and experiential learning was one of the best ways to learn and remember. But the Jorden method is anything but experiential! And, taking the irony a bit further, we didn't experience any of the writing by doing any! We just read canned phrases out of our text--no creation, or experimentation, or trying on of our knowledge at all. (10/31)

<u>Concern over evalution</u>

Unable to judge for most of the course how I was doing, I became overly-concerned with the scores and evaluation I received or would receive, and even though I was taking the course in a pass/no pass status, I set very high expectations for myself:

> I am already beginning to obsess over the final. We get to choose our partner; I'm not sure anyone will want to work with me as I'm so obsessive. We'll see--for me it's more than just doing well, or passing. Because I lived in Japan and have taken second-year before, I really <u>should</u> do well. (11/17)

I noted and commented on almost every quiz, final examination, or homework score as I tried to gauge how I was doing and what I was accomplishing and learning. Even though I could tell that I had acquired

much from my earlier Japanese learning experiences, I still felt at times that I was learning an entirely new language and worried that my expectations of my abilities might be too high:

> I have been thinking about my expectations of this course, and if those expectations are unreal or what?? I have taken second year and passed with flying colors, and I had sort of hoped that this class would reinforce what I already had acquired, or at least refresh my limited abilities. Instead I find myself feeling at times as if I'm learning a whole new language. There are patterns I've learned/studied earlier, but most of it is very unfamiliar and confusing. I wish I knew how I was doing. We are supposed to receive some sort of mid-term evaluation next week. Just hope I am passing. (11/7)

Achievement, van Lier writes, is related to "feeling competent in terms of knowledge and skills, being successful in one's relations with others, and being in control of one's actions and direction" (1996, p. 118). Although most discussions on achievement have dealt with its outer signs, such as evaluations or test results, achievement can also be measured internally through self-perception, personal knowledge, and self-determination (Van Lier, 1996). There is a very delicate balance between feelings of competency and external feedback or evaluation. Intrinsic motivation, creativity, and commitment to learning tend to decrease when feedback is sensed as controlling (Deci & Ryan, 1992), but van Lier points out that "positive feedback can be equally perceived as controlling especially when it occurs in a context in which there is little determination (1996, p. 119).

Unsure of how to judge my abilities, unhappy with the dynamics of the morning class, and having no control or input into what I was learning, I felt neither competent, successful, or in control for most of the first and

second terms and believed at times that I was failing, or at least barely passing the course, even when presented with evidence to the contrary:

> I got a 18.5 and a 17.5 out of 20 on the two quizzes--good marks--but why don't I feel like I'm doing well? I have absolutely no confidence in my abilities in Japanese; it's like I've never studied it before in my life, or been exposed to it. I find it puzzling--I can usually accept and take pride when I'm doing well, BUT NOT IN THIS COURSE. I'm not sure either why that is, except that my self-confidence has been totally destroyed by the method and its demands, even though I'm still able to produce. But I'm used to producing well, and knowing I'm producing well, speaking well, interacting well, and it's just not happening here. (3/2)

Self-esteem as a learner

The discord between my preferred learning strategies and what the methodology required of me not only caused a great deal of frustration and anxiety, but also led to feelings of depression. The stress I was experiencing from my Japanese course was causing me to doubt my abilities as a student in general, and whether I was capable of finishing my master's program. My entry on February 27 was the beginning of several days of reflection in my journal about my learning style, my abilities and needs as a student, and whether I had any aptitude for the Japanese language:

> I have been feeling quite down about all my studies, and for the past month have seriously contemplated quitting the [M.A. TESOL] program, taking the TESOL certificate instead of finishing the M.A. and just getting out. It's been very difficult for me to figure out why, because I have always enjoyed school, studying, doing research. I knew and have accepted that this year would be different with the addition of our daughter to our family, that it would be harder to find time to study, to remain focused, but that isn't what has been eating at me. After some reflection last night, I see that my Japanese class has very much affected how I see myself as a student and how I judge my ability to succeed. I'm told I'm doing well in the class, but don't feel like I'm doing well,

> I don't feel like I'm accomplishing anything or really learning anything. I frankly just don't know how or what I'm doing, why I'm doing it; all I know is that I'm doing something. I feel totally disconnected from all I know about myself as a student, and have come to doubt my abilities not just in Japanese but in my linguistics classes as well, a place where I've always felt grounded. I have begun to wonder if this disorientation, at least for Japanese, is part of the method, like boot camp, where I'm being broken down to be rebuilt as a culturally competent Japanese speaker, but one based on Jorden's view of what that means. All I know is that I'm feeling very disconnected from myself, and I don't like the effect it's having on me overall as a student. My self-esteem seems non-existent at this point. I'm almost daily having to reassure myself of my capabilities, and give myself pep talks to keep on track and finish. (2/27)

At the opening of the third term, looking for a descriptor for the Japanese language, the course coordinator gave me a handout on the Foreign Service Institute's division of languages, based on their degree of difficulty for a native English speaker. It was a revelation as to how difficult the language I was learning truly was. "There are only four Class-4s: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are three of them. So there's one reason I'm having so much trouble!" (4/1). He also informed me that I had earned the equivalent of an A grade during the winter term.

> I told him that it sure didn't feel like I was doing A work, but I was I guess . . . . He and I talked a bit about what's going on, my self-expectations, the method, and he really surprised me by telling me I might consider getting the Japanese teaching certificate. That blew me away--I see myself as such a novice, and yet here I was being told this was something I could do. (4/1)

The knowledge that I was doing well enough for the head of the department to suggest I go on for the teaching certificate, combined with the more comfortable environment of the evening session, the change in the teaching approach of some of the instructors, and a growing understanding

of how difficult it was for me, a native English speaker, to learn Japanese, caused a change in my attitude towards the class and towards my abilities as a student of Japanese:

> I have been reassessing my abilities lately after getting what were A's in the past two term, and have decided not to be so hard on myself. I don't know why my expectations have been so high. I have been expecting myself to be almost fluent, and feeling very stupid because I just don't get it and can't remember stuff most of the time. (4/4)

> I'm beginning to see that I've been very, very difficult on myself because I wasn't perfect. Japanese, I'm learning, is very difficult, way beyond how I thought it was, and that I just need to cut myself some slack. J has given me some reading about Japanese being a Class-4 language and what Jorden calls a 'truly foreign language' for native English speakers, which have truly helped me to enjoy learning more. But this will be/may be something I will need to work on for the rest of my life. Boy, that's something I could never have thought about a couple of months ago, and here I am now thinking, 'well, maybe I could [do]that.' (4/17)

Reading outside of class about the issues older students can face when learning a second language also helped me to understand, and eventually accept, how being an older learner had affected my self-perception and self-esteem as a language learner.

> It's been both a blessing and a curse, I think, to be learning more about the difficulties in being an adult language learner. It's so hard to be in such a dependent, child-like position, to feel like such an idiot when I know I'm capable of so much more. (6/2)

Although the methodology for the most part conflicted with my preferred learning style, and although I never stopped having problems with the memorization, accepting that I was a better student than I had thought, and understanding how difficult it was to learn Japanese allowed

me to look at the Jorden method for what it did offer instead of what it didn't. I found I became less frustrated and angry with both the method and myself, and was finally able to relax and focus on my learning, on what I did well, and what I could improve:

> I got back the last two quizzes last night. I did so-so on the eavesdropping quiz, as I expected. Only 14 out of 20, but their decontextualization makes them so difficult for me. I think this type of exercise at a more advanced level might work better, but where I'm at now I need to have the listening contextualized. On the grammar quiz from two weeks ago I got a 17.5 out of 20! And a little *yoku de kimashita* ['good job'] stamp! So what does this mean? That I'm still doing intake on the grammar, focusing there, I guess. Production and receptive skills are lagging way behind. I feel like I'm still in a 'silent period' . . . having a better understanding of how difficult Japanese is to learn has really helped me to put it all in perspective and not be so hard on myself over my slow progression. I just thought I needed to be, had to be so much better than I am now, when I'm doing fine. I am getting <u>better</u>, too, and things <u>are</u> falling into place. (5/6)

COPING STRATEGIES

> This journal helps--it calms me down. I don't think I'd be getting through this year if not for the chance to write about it. (1/12)

The discipline of keeping a journal played a crucial role in my ability to cope with the stress and frustration I experienced throughout my year of learning Japanese. Kathleen Adams, a therapist, says that journal writing allows people to "literally get to read their own minds"(in Kalb,1999, p.76), and the writing process helps to build self-esteem. Bailey (1983) also notes that the act of keeping a journal when learning a language can be therapeutic, even if the writer never intends to systematically review the entries. A language learning journal allows the student "to document, and

perhaps overcome, avoid, or counteract factors that are apparently detrimental to his or her language learning" (Bailey, 1983, p. 98). Writing, it is believed, can help the writer transform the "ruminations in [their] minds into coherent stories" (Kalb, 1999, pp. 75-76) as well as possibly dull the emotional impact of an experience.

Begun as a way to release the stress and irritation I was experiencing, the journal was not only a safe place to vent my frustrations but a way of stepping back and analyzing my reactions to the learning experience. At the beginning of the year, the journal served mainly as a much needed form of release: "Thank goodness for this journal. I think I would have gone mad by now if not for the opportunity to write every day" (11/19). Later in the year, journal-keeping at times became more of a chore, and at one point in the year, it seemed to be almost an extension of the class.

> I'm not sure if this feeling I've had of not wanting to write [in the journal] is directly related to my frustration and general dislike of my Japanese class or ???? I used to need to run and write about the day's class, how much it bothered me. Now I'm feeling like I want to forget all about the class as soon as I leave. I don't want anything to remind me of the experience. (1/16)

By the end of the year, however, I was more comfortable again with writing about my learning experience. Combined with the changes that were occurring in the classroom, continued writing in the journal allowed me to become more aware of the presence and effects of various factors in my learning, to accept the changes that were occurring and to cope with the factors in the classroom and methodology that continued to cause frustration.

Besides keeping a journal, deliberate absences from class also served as a means of coping with the tension I was experiencing. While my avoidance of class was most directly related to the language anxiety I was experiencing, taking a day off once a week, and allowing myself some time to "decompress" (1/29), proved to be extremely beneficial, and helped to reduce the anxiety I was experiencing during the first and second terms. My need to have a day off from class diminished and finally disappeared as I became more comfortable with the learning environment, and as I began to accept I was doing better than I had believed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The analysis of my journal examines the changes which occurred within me and with my language class which led to a decision to continue learning Japanese beyond the requirements for my degree. The analysis also reveals the themes in my learning experience which were most responsible for my early dissatisfaction. The discussion of the diary analysis will be organized and framed by the conflicts experienced, identified, and resolved within three aspects of the self.

The chapter will begin with an examination of the conflicts encountered in my language learning experience, and how resolution of these conflicts was brought about as determined through the analysis of the diary entries. Implications for the field of teaching English as a second or foreign language that can be drawn from the study will follow, and the chapter will close with limitations of the study and some suggestions for further research.

CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

> K and I spoke after class for a few minutes about how I felt about the program. Had it changed? I think it has, it's more communicative than when I started which I like. I'm doing more, creating more rather than just spitting back stuff out of the book, but I've changed too. That's what I'm realizing these days. I saw where I wrote the last time that something else besides knowing the 'whys' of the method

> had changed, but I'm realizing that it's me who's changed, who seems to have found a Japanese voice, or at least the beginnings of one. I've been having all these little epiphanies lately, little lights going on where a piece of the experience is suddenly illuminated. It's sort of like things being in a shadow, dark and indeterminate, and suddenly a light is turned on overhead spotlighting that area so you can see what it really is, rather than what you imagined. And so far there have been no monsters lurking in the corners; there really were things there that I just couldn't see clearly. What has changed, I realized, is that I have allowed myself to change, to let go of a part of me that I was really holding on to tightly. It is really scary at this point in my life to change (and I've been through a lot of changes recently, again). What I considered fundamental parts of my being, aspects of my way of viewing the world and how I learn Japanese, I see now, had to shift to new perspectives on how language is used, how language is learned, and in shifting perspective I had to change part of myself. (4/15)

The journal I kept during my year in a second-year Japanese class reveals that I experienced not only conflicts with the program and the methodology throughout the year, but conflicts within myself as well. The journal provided me a means of expressing the conflicts I was experiencing along with a way of identifying some of their causes. It also illuminated how I came to resolve the conflicts I experienced, or gained a better understanding of the methodology, either through changes that occurred within the program or changes that occurred within myself.

As the end of the year neared, I sensed that I had experienced conflict within three distinct areas of myself: my learning self, how I saw myself as a student and a learner of Japanese; my motivational self, my reasons and rationale for being in the Japanese course; and my existential self, who I saw myself to be as a non-native speaker of Japanese. When I read through my journal entries for the first time, and when I examined them more closely in the analysis, they overwhelmingly supported my sense of these three

spheres of conflict. The examination of the journal also led to a realization that in order for a desire to persist in learning Japanese to come about, resolution had to occur in all three areas of conflict. Because these three spheres were not mutually exclusive of each other, but intertwined with and overlapped the others, I believe that if I had been unable to resolve all three spheres of conflict, I would not have wanted to continue beyond the requisite term of third year required for my degree.

This thesis is an examination of what I learned about how I best learn a second language, of what I thought I knew about myself as a language learner, and of what I discovered about myself in the process of learning Japanese as a foreign language using the Jorden method. The discussion will look more closely at the three spheres of conflict identified above, identify what I believe caused conflicts to occur, and what changed either within myself or within the program so resolution could occur, and a desire to persist could be facilitated.

The Learning Self

> I leave [my Japanese class] each day drained, from the not-learning as well as from the tense interactions among my classmates. There are too many distractions, too many conflicts. At first it feels like high school, then junior high, and finally grade school. Driving to class each morning, my stomach knots the way it did when I was a kid waiting for the school bus to come. After a week in this Japanese course, I'm so demoralized that I actually make a stack of all the books I've written and put it on my desk, just beyond my Japanese homework assignments, as a tangible and consoling reminder that I am not that schoolgirl anymore but a professor at a prestigious university. (Davidson, 1993, p. 217)

Before I began keeping a journal, I had not been a reflective learner. To the contrary, I was quite analytical, and quite adept at keeping the "I" out of all my coursework. Learning was not about me or what I thought or felt about a subject; it was only about acquiring knowledge and facts. I did recognize in myself a love of learning, but I had never analyzed or thought much about how I learned best, or what my preferred learning styles might be. And, until I began studying Japanese through the Jorden method, my sense of self as a learner had never been challenged.

The analysis of my journal showed that conflict within my learning self came from two different directions: the Jorden method's clash with my preferred learning style, and my self-perception as an adult learner, with the conflict between my learning style and the methodology the more influential of the two.

Conflict between my learning style and methodology

In hindsight, conflict between my preferred learning style and the Jorden method was inevitable. The methodology's more formal approach to language learning was in direct conflict with every other language learning experience I had previously had, either in a classroom or in Japan, where I had relied on more functional approaches to learning Japanese. The methodology conflicted as well with my own beliefs about language instruction. The Jorden method required a heavy dependence on a learning technique, memorization, that I not only had little experience with, but as it turned out, was not very good at no matter what I tried. What I was required to memorize I usually found irrelevant to my life, classroom situation, and my future use of Japanese. Finally, where I had always been

an autonomous learner, eager to explore and try out what I had learned on my own, under the Jorden method, at the second-year level, autonomy was not overly encouraged. Rather than feeling empowered by my language learning, I came to see myself as having less and less control over my learning agenda and experience.

The conflict and resulting stress I experienced can be seen as a conflict between two different ways of viewing language learning. The Jorden method follows more closely what Stevick (1996) labels Utopian conclusions about language learning. Under the Utopian model, language is viewed as an object first rather than a medium, and the most important thing about the object of language is its form; decisions about which linguistic forms and social conventions are determined by a group of socially powerful people, usually the upper middle class, and other language forms are suppressed or their usage not encouraged. Language that is inconsistent with native monolingual speakers' use is not acceptable, and non-native speakers will be judged every time they speak, and their utterances considered unacceptable if they do not follow certain conventions. Using the correct form is more important than being comprehensible; therefore, the Utopian language instructor serves mainly as a judge and corrector.

My own views of language instruction, and my previous Japanese learning experiences more closely followed what Stevick (1996) labels Arcadian conclusions. Under an Arcadian model, language is viewed as a means of creating and exchanging meaning with other people, and through the exchange of meaning, self-discovery is possible. Creating and exchanging meaning provides a way of expressing one's own freedom and autonomy, and for recognizing the freedom and autonomy of others. In

order to exchange meaning, one needs to be able to use and know the conventions of the language and culture, but the use of correct forms is less important than producing comprehensible communication. The role of the Arcadian language teacher is to serve mainly as a resource and facilitator.

While the Utopian model is often viewed as more "realistic and responsible" (Stevick, 1996, p.160), and in many ways fits well with Japanese cultural views of their language and the role of the teacher in Japanese society, for me, as an older, American learner it proved to be overly constrictive and not consistent with my needs as a language learner. However, the method's focus on form did give me a greater awareness of the importance and value of a strong structural foundation in language learning, and by the end of the year I found I had gained a deeper understanding of many Japanese grammatical structures that had been presented to me earlier but that I had never fully understood.

Conflict with self-identity as a learner

The other cause of conflict within my learning self came from how I perceived myself as a learner in contrast with how I actually was progressing in my efforts to learn Japanese. The knowledge that I was being evaluated daily on my performance in class, the amount and intensity of error correction coupled with a lack of positive reinforcement, and an early lack of feedback left me unable to gauge any sense of achievement. With these factors added to the difficulties inherent in learning Japanese, I became unsure of my ability to succeed in my Japanese class, and eventually in my overall abilities as a student. Although I had not written any books that I could set on my desk, like Davidson I also found myself often looking

elsewhere for tangible examples that I was a successful student, not only in order to prove to myself that I was capable of finishing not only the Japanese course, but my TESOL degree program as well. And, even when presented with proof that I was doing well in my Japanese course, it was not until the head of the program suggested that I might try the course to teach Japanese as a foreign language that I could believe and accept that I was actually progressing in my language learning.

My inability throughout the year to memorize core conversations and required drills and retain them for the next day's class had a profound effect on my perception of myself as a learner. I had always been a student who "got it," who was able to produce not only what was required but beyond. In my Japanese class, however, I often found myself unable to remember the structural patterns in the drills, let alone the vocabulary, and as a result I not only judged the methodology, but myself, as inadequate. I often found myself feeling jealous when others could remember drills and I couldn't, or I reproached myself for not being able to clear away other distractions so that I could focus and remember the day's requirements and learn from them.

Although the conflict between my beliefs about language learning and the methodology contributed to the language anxiety I experienced (Young, 1991), the performance of memorized material as the primary criterion for daily evaluation formed the main basis of my language anxiety. Initially unable to base a sense of achievement on anything other than how I believed I had performed each day in class, and knowing that I was going to be graded on that performance, I began to place more importance on the correct performance of the memorized material rather than the actual learning of it. I also began to suffer from a form of social anxiety most

closely associated with "stage fright," or the anxiety experienced "when performing or speaking before others" (Leary & Kowalski, 1995, p. 102). Journal entries note that I often berated myself for not doing a good job even though I felt I had tried; or feeling cheated when only given one chance to perform, making a mistake and then not being called on again; or feeling that I felt I might have done better if I had tried harder or not had so many distractions outside of class.

The early amount of and form of error correction coupled with a lack of positive feedback from the instructors also contributed to my uncertainties and anxieties as a learner. I became extremely anxious over making errors when I performed a drill or core conversation, or when called on to pronounce a word that another student had mispronounced, and the anticipation of making an error led to feelings of anxiety that began as soon as I entered the classroom in the morning, before class even began. Students, Hammerly (1985) maintains, have the right to have their errors corrected both promptly, persistently, and kindly, and not correcting errors can lead to a false sense of confidence in their abilities. However, instead of being a learning opportunity, the error correction technique of stopping each time an error was made and going around the room having each student pronounce the word or phrase became for me yet another individual performance, another chance to fail again. In my case, while I expected errors to be corrected, it was the frequency of the correction, when they were corrected, and how they were corrected (Young, 1991) that added to my anxiety.

Conflict resolution

Resolution of the conflicts within the learning self came about from not only a change in the teaching practice of some of the instructors, but also from a conscious effort on my part to reduce my anxiety, and from the discovery of the difficulty inherent for English speakers when learning Japanese. Resolving these conflicts allowed me to evaluate how much I had actually learned from the methodology and the depth of what I was learning.

While methodology guidelines state that drills included in the text should not be presented for memorization, but instead as rehearsals for more focused classroom practice, during the first two terms the drills done in the class were for the most part taken directly from the book, where a prompt from the text was given, and the appropriate response from the text required in return. As some of the instructors moved away from the strict repetition of drills from the text towards the end of the second term and in the third term, and instead used the application exercises in the text; changed the drills to ones more relevant to students' or classroom experience; or created their own exercises, I was able to return to some of the learning techniques that worked best for me instead of having to rely so much on memorization. As a result, I felt more in control of my own learning. Being a more autonomous learner led to a greater sense of achievement, and allowed me to access my knowledge of myself as a learner, and focus more on self-assessment and self-regulation in my learning, rather than only the performance of the material.

My conscious efforts to reduce my language anxiety, even when I was not fully aware of what was causing it, let me eventually move away from a

focus on the negative aspects of the learning experience, and instead evaluate more positively what I was learning, and where I could better apply my efforts in learning Japanese. Less anxiety meant less time spent on emotional management, and I became better able to concentrate on the language forms I was learning, and better able to retain them as well.

Finally, discovering that Japanese is rated by the Foreign Service Institute as a Class-4 language for native English speakers took an enormous amount of pressure off the expectations I held for myself as a learner, and allowed me to better focus on how much I was learning rather than how much I wasn't. I had come into the program believing that I should and could achieve a comprehension and production level far above what I found myself achieving, but these achievements were based on self-comparisons with what learners of Class-1 and Class-2 languages at the second-year level were able to do. Discovering that Japanese was a "truly foreign language" for native English speakers (Jorden & Walton, 1986), and accepting the inherent difficulties that can arise for English speakers when learning Japanese helped me to release many of the unrealistic expectations I held for myself as a learner of Japanese, and helped to increase my interest and motivation to learn.

The Motivational Self

> . . .externally controlled actions can only be beneficial if they gradually fall in step with intrinsically motivated actions, so that other-regulation can become self-regulation. The most effective way to do this is to stimulate intrinsic motivation, so as to take advantage of natural interests, curiosity, and emergent rewards. Not doing so is like sailing into the wind. (van Lier, 1996, p. 112).

My previous attempts to learn Japanese had been for integrative reasons (Gardner, 1959): I was either going to Japan for overseas study, I was living in Japan, or I was continuing my study of Japanese in hopes of returning to Japan to live and work, and I wanted to be able to integrate and communicate with native Japanese speakers. My reason for enrolling in the second-year Japanese course written about in my journal, however, was instrumental: I needed to pass one term of third-year Japanese to fulfill the foreign language requirement for my masters degree, and I decided that I would have a better chance of passing if I repeated the second-year level. When I began the Japanese course, I knew and accepted that it was highly unlikely that I could or would return to Japan to work. My husband and I had also adopted a child from China, and I felt that I should learn Chinese (Mandarin) instead of continuing with Japanese. My decision to enroll in the second-year Japanese course at my university required a great deal of thought, and was not easily made. One of my foremost considerations against enrolling in the second-year course was that it was taught using the unfamiliar Jorden method, a methodology that others I knew had been unhappy with. I realized, however, that I realistically did not have time to begin learning a different foreign language to fulfill the language requirement, especially a language as difficult as Chinese. I also thought that because I had already taken and passed the second-year level of Japanese for my undergraduate degree that the year would basically be a "review," and not require much time or effort on my part.

Conflict within my motivational self began almost immediately, and as with the learning self, existed on two different levels. On one level, the methodology did little to facilitate any motivation I had or might have to

learn Japanese. But at a deeper level, I was not able nor at times willing to identify or even contemplate the strong intrinsic motivation I still had to learn Japanese, regardless of the methodology. I had considered majoring in Japanese at one point in my academic career, and had enjoyed the challenges associated with learning both spoken and written Japanese in the past. This time, however, unhappy and frustrated, for most of the year I allowed myself to focus only on the extrinsic aspects of my learning experience, and as a result experienced conflict over a growing awareness that I enjoyed learning Japanese in spite of the Jorden method.

Conflict with the methodology

Journal entries show that the Jorden method had an extremely strong extrinsic influence over my motivation throughout the year, and over my desire to persist in learning Japanese. Several reasons for the methodology's effect on my attitude towards learning are revealed in the journal, including but not limited to the lack of autonomy and control I felt over my learning, and a lack of personal relevance in the drills and conversations; the use of *rômaji* in the text and lack of opportunities to learn and practice Japanese writing skills; and the amount of language anxiety I experienced. The negative classroom environment of the first two terms also contributed to a lack of motivation to learn.

Motivated behavior is closely related to intentional behavior, and intentionality is closely related to the ability to choose from a variety of options (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; van Lier, 1996). Intentionality is also closely linked to affect, and affect and intentionality together can control or influence the amount of effort expended in an activity (van Lier, 1996). The

course's initial overall dependence on memorized conversations and drills for the "act" classes removed almost all aspects of self-regulation and choice I had in my learning experience, and was the aspect journal entries showed to be most responsible for a lack of motivation throughout the first two terms. I felt stifled and frustrated by the lack of creativity allowed, which in turn affected my opportunities to personally commit to learning the structural patterns and vocabulary. For much of the year, I allowed any intrinsic motivation I held for learning Japanese to become buried under a need to memorize and perform with as little error as possible, and as a result, during the first two terms motivation to attend class nearly disappeared, as well as any motivation I had to actually learn Japanese beyond what was required to get through the class. The lack of autonomy and control in the classroom also led to a sense of social and cultural distance from the language that I had not experienced before, and I often felt that while I might learn to speak Japanese, I would never be a speaker of Japanese, that I could never claim any ownership of the language or my ability to use it.

The method's focus on the spoken language, and the limited opportunities to interact with written Japanese, also diminished my motivation. One of the reasons I had initially wanted to study Japanese, and one of the reasons I had enjoyed learning, was because of the opportunity to learn written Japanese. When I lived in Japan, I was overwhelmed by the written Japanese all around me, and felt lost and restricted by my inability to read all but a small portion of it. I discovered that being able to read even a small amount of Japanese gave me a sense of connection to where I was, and a greater sense of connection to the spoken language as well. The text's

exclusive use of an unfamiliar form of *rômaji* along with the limited opportunities to see and use *hiragana*, *katakana*, and *kanji*, served to distance me from Japanese rather than connect me to it.

The language anxiety that I experienced also influenced my motivation. Rather than enjoying the learning experience, I came to dread going to class. Previously a "self-started" language learner, where I would begin with something I want to say, and use the models available to me to say it, I found myself instead in a "reflective" learning situation, giving back only what was given to me, without deviation (Stevick, 1996). Instead of granting me independence, responsibility, and self-sufficiency in learning, and allowing me to build on my strategies and strengths to develop proficiency in Japanese, the methodology instead initially removed these factors from my learning experience, causing me to become defensive, anxious, and as a result, unmotivated. Learning Japanese under the Jorden method became "a means of adapting to academic requirements . . . but like a suit of armor [was] a burden, to be worn as little as possible and cast off entirely (i.e. forgotten) at the first safe opportunity" (Stevick, 1996, p. 196).

Conflict with intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation has been defined as motivation that comes from within, or that is caused by the person, versus extrinsic motivation, motivation that comes from the outside. In hindsight it seems strange that I experienced conflict over manifestations of my own intrinsic motivation to learn Japanese, and yet several journal entries show that I was not only somewhat surprised when intrinsic desires to learn and continue learning

Japanese surfaced, but conflicted as well as to what to do with these feelings, and how to act on them.

Because of my initial unhappiness and frustration with the Jorden method, I came to believe, and in fact wanted to believe, that it had completely destroyed any and all motivation I had to learn a language I had previously enjoyed learning. However, even early journal entries reveal that I was aware of a strong internal desire to learn Japanese, and that I still enjoyed the challenge of learning Japanese, regardless of the methodology. It was several months, however, before I could allow myself to recognize and accept the intrinsic desire I had to learn Japanese and the enjoyment I got from learning Japanese, and give it value over the attitudes I held toward the methodology and the lack of motivation I felt as a result of my dissatisfaction with the methodology.

Van Lier (1996) maintains that although it may seem that intrinsic motivation on its own might be insufficient "to account for all the–pleasant and unpleasant–things we get involved in"(p. 110), it can also be assumed that "adult humans are able to see a greater ultimate good beyond a present evil, and therefore actions that are not 'fun' do not necessarily conflict with intrinsic motivation" (p.110). While the Jorden method on the whole did not facilitate the intrinsic motivation I held, I allowed my unhappiness with the methodology to initially overrule any enjoyment I found in learning Japanese, resulting in conflict when expressions and feelings of internally-derived motivation arose.

Unification of the motivational self

The ability to express in my journal the enjoyment I continued to experience in learning Japanese, combined with changes in the teaching application of the methodology in the third term and the move to the more communal evening section, helped me to eventually recognize the conflict I was experiencing between extrinsically controlled factors in the learning environment and my own intrinsic motivation. Held back initially by the strict reliance on memorization and performance, the opportunities for more autonomous learning towards the end of the second term and in the third term allowed me to again feel some responsibility and control over my learning. Not knowing how or what exercises would be done in some of the "act" classes let me again begin to assume the role of a "self-starting" learner versus a "reflective" learner, and I became more motivated to study and understand the structural patterns so as to be able to use them in class exercises. I also began to occasionally experience what Csikszentmihalyi (1990) calls "flow," experiencing enjoyment in the learning experience from not only the successful completion of an activity, but from the feelings of competence and success bought about by the challenges the unscripted activities required. As a result, I became more eager to attend class, and could begin to admit in my journal that I was actually enjoying my learning. This change in the teaching application of some of the instructors along with the relaxed, mutual camaraderie of the evening section caused the classroom experience to become more one of participation versus performance, and helped to reduce my language anxiety and further facilitate my motivation to both attend class and learn.

My growing enjoyment of the learning experience also allowed me to reflect more on my personal connections to Japan and the Japanese language, eventually letting me accept that the enjoyment I received in learning Japanese was not only a part of my past, but continued to be a part of who I presently was. An instructor's telling me one day to "never say never" over the possibility of returning to Japan helped me as well to reflect on and connect with the positive feelings I held toward the culture and the language, and I was eventually able to discard much of the guilt I carried into the course because I was not learning Chinese for my daughter's sake. I came to accept that "just as we are responsible for our own feelings, we are responsible for our own motivation" (Wlodkowski, 1978, p. 14), and became more able to let my own intrinsic desire to learn and persist guide my attitudes towards the class, rather than any negative feelings I had towards the methodology.

The Existential Self

> Japan is an underachiever's fantasy of success, a place where you can have recognition without effort . . . It can easily go to your head. I've seen numerous Westerners come to believe they are glamorous, brilliant, and important as the Japanese pretend they are. Conversely, long term residents of Japan are often made to feel as if they will never measure up. I've heard the very same person who has complimented me on my Japanese make a point of correcting the pronunciation or usage of a friend who is a professional translator. Whether you are applauded or criticized, as a foreigner in Japan you're never invisible, (Davidson, 1993, p.283).

When I lived in Japan, I was treated like a celebrity. My Japanese friends, my coworkers, and even strangers supported this identity: my polite, but extremely limited, Japanese was unceasingly complimented;

special efforts were constantly made on my behalf; and I was continually forgiven for the verbal and social *faux pas* I committed. In Japan, I lived within a safe space, a "foreigner space," where I could shelter and manipulate my American sense of self against the unknowns of Japanese language and society.

Prior to learning Japanese from the Jorden method, my language learning experiences had always supported this safe sense of self as no matter how functional the approach, I was always taught what Jorden has named *gaijingo*[1], "a special dialect . . . that is meant to be easier for foreigners to understand" (1986, p. 145). I learned only one sociopragmatic level of politeness, one which effectively kept me a certain distance from native speakers, and kept them a certain distance from me as well, preserving the walls I had built around my "foreigner space." For the most part, I was completely unaware of the varying levels of politeness and distance that native speakers employ depending on the context of the communication act, unaware that:

> Proper use of Japanese teaches one that a human being is always and inevitably involved in a multiplicity of social relationships. Boundaries between self and other are fluid and constantly changing, depending on context and on the social positioning people adopt in particular situations, (Kondo, 1990, p. 31).

Conflict within the adult self

As with my learning self and my motivational self, conflict within my existential self operated at two levels. On one level was the conflict I experienced as an adult learner in the process of learning a foreign language, but on another level was conflict which resulted from having the sense of

[1] *Gaijingo* is created from the words *gaijin* , which means "outsider" or "foreigner," and *go*, which means "language."

self I had previously acquired when speaking and learning Japanese threatened.

As an adult, native speaker of English, and as a graduate student, I have few problems expressing and understanding complex ideas, thoughts, and emotions. I am able to choose words accurately and effectively to reflect what I am thinking and want to communicate. Because of this, I have a strong sense of who I am when I speak English. The process of learning a second or foreign language, however, goes right to the core of one's self-identity and one's self image, often causing students, particularly adults and adolescents, to feel that they will lose their self, their identity, when they learn a second language (Young, 1992).

It is often difficult for adults in particular to take on the new identity that comes with learning a second language, as language forms one of the most critical aspects of self-representation. Adults have usually developed a strong "language ego," or language boundary which is constructed from the development of the lexis, syntax, morphology, and phonology of the adult's native language (Guiora, 1972; Schumann, 1975). As one develops into an adult, the language boundaries become less permeable, particularly, Guiora (1972) argues, those associated with pronunciation. Maintenance of one's native pronunciation therefore becomes one means of protecting one's native language identity, and a means of signaling membership in a distinctive social group.

In my Japanese class I developed deep feelings of insufficiency and confusion about my adult identity, arising not only from an inability to correctly choose words and structures to communicate in Japanese, but because I could often not pronounce Japanese with sufficient accuracy. I was

not allowed to use the coping mechanisms that worked for me, that protected my identity as a competent, healthy adult. Schumann (1975) defines one aspect of a healthy adult as the ability to "handle routine matters with a minimum of energy and . . . marshal the maximum amount of energy to handle problems and unpredictable events" (p. 212).

When adults communicate in their native language, when they cannot locate a correct word or turn of phrase to express themselves, feelings of dissatisfaction and even guilt can arise, and these sensations can become even more heightened for adults learning a second language (J.H. Schumann, 1975). Even though I could recognize and accept my inability to express myself completely and accurately in Japanese, I was still willing to try to communicate with the Japanese I did know, willing to possibly use an incorrect word and fail in an effort to express myself or grasp a new expression or structure. Instead, I felt confined by the language and forms the methodology allowed me to use, and the inability to try to express any thoughts of my own. As a result, not only did I spend a maximum amount of energy on handling the "problems and unpredictable events" inherent in second language learning, but I also ended up expending an equal amount of energy handling the routine matters posed by the methodology, such as memorization of conversations and drills. Frequently unable to draw on my abilities and adult coping skills, as well as unable to try to express my thoughts in Japanese, I often felt less competent than a child.

As I was able to assume a more autonomous role in my learning, and as the amount of error correction diminished, the conflicts within my adult sense of self lessened. Being able to try out what I had learned in unrehearsed situations rather than only memorize and perform strictly

controlled input allowed me to feel more competent in my adult abilities to deal with the problems and unpredictable events inherent in second language learning.

Conflict within the *gaijin* self

Most of the emotional upset and disequilibrium I experienced throughout the year was a result of culture shock caused from Japanese being taught *in* culture instead of alongside culture. Because I had previously lived in Japan, and had studied Japanese before, I did not believe I could or would suffer from culture shock, and it was not until I undertook the analysis of my journal that I recognized that this was a primary reason behind much of my anger and frustration throughout the year.

While living in Japan and in previous Japanese language-learning experiences, I developed a strong sense of who I was as a foreigner in Japan, and within Japanese society. This identity had been created over time through interaction with Japanese friends, instructors, students, and coworkers, and I had established a safe and comfortable space for myself as a foreigner within Japanese society. This foreigner, or *gaijin,* space I maintained around my identity was one that I felt the Japanese I interacted with expected and felt comfortable with as well.

The Jorden method, from the first lesson and without warning, invaded my *gaijin* space, and threatened to the core my *gaijin* sense of self. I quickly found that most of the skills I had developed for coping in Japanese society didn't work in my Japanese class. I was no longer a pampered foreigner and forgiven for my mistakes; instead, I now found that mine and my classmates' every mistake was immediately and somewhat harshly, I

felt, corrected. I was now expected to interact with instructors as my superiors and use honorific language forms with them, instructors that outside of class were my academic equals. Even more difficult was being asked to learn and use the humble *keigo* forms. The focus on correctly using honorific and humbling language in the classroom soon caused me to feel unworthy of interacting with or using Japanese at all. The core conversations and drills we memorized often had me and my classmates assuming what I perceived were subservient roles, and this caused a great deal of conflict with the *gaijin* self I had established, and with the role I had previously held and assumed I would have if I returned to Japan as an English instructor. I came to resent that I was not being given the status and attention I had formerly received as an American trying to learn Japanese.

I was greatly conflicted over what need I had for the language I was being asked to learn, for all the levels of politeness I was being asked to memorize and use. All my past experience in Japan and with Japanese native speakers had taught me that I, as an outsider, did not need to know these levels of politeness, that Japanese people did not expect me to know these forms, and in fact, felt strange when foreigners were able to use them accurately.

Journal entries show that this conflict between my sense of self and what the methodology expected eventually reached a point where I felt that I was being asked to become Japanese, that I was being asked to give up my identity and adopt a new, "Japanese self," when I was neither willing nor ready to do so.

Constructing a "third place"

"Language learning, be it primary or secondary, entails a process of fitting into one's place in society, or rather, one's imposed place" (Ogulnik,1998, p. 141), and learning a language involves not only learning the grammar and structures of that language, but acquiring a role and persona, and knowing how to act within the social confines of that role (Ogulnik, 1998). Beyond learning forms which express politeness and formality, learning Japanese means learning that one's role and place within Japanese society is encoded in language use. In Japan, one's place in society, and one's membership within a group is constantly shifting, and language is adjusted to match the social context within which one finds oneself (Kondo, 1990; Wetzel, 1994). The Western sense of self, of ego, does not exist in Japanese. Self in Japanese is fluid, and determined by whether one positions oneself within or outside of a particular group.

Toward the middle of the year, a journal entry notes that when I watched and listened to a Japanese animated film that I had seen several times before, I was able to understand a great deal more of the language, and recognized many of the *keigo* forms that I had been learning in class. Near the end of the year, I also wrote in my journal about how I felt when I could recognize and understand the polite language between Japanese women I was teaching English to, and my surprise at how many honorifics were being used between these women whom I viewed as more or less social equals. Because of these experiences, I began to realize that the *gaijin* self I had created had kept me from understanding the social roles and relationships between Japanese native speakers. I was able to understand and accept that although I would always remain a foreigner, an outsider, in

Japanese society, by gaining a greater command and comprehension of the different levels of politeness and formality and their use within the Japanese language, I could move closer to experiencing and understanding social relationships within Japanese society as expressed through language use.

Several times in the journal I stated a desire to find a "third place," a place of comfort between my own cultural expectations and knowledge and the cultural expectations of the course. This third place was based on Kramsch's (1993) model of a "sphere of interculturality," where a "third perspective" has been developed, a new perspective created from an ability to view not only one's own culture as an insider, but another culture as both an insider and outsider. Experiences outside of class, plus readings on the role of language in determining one's social position and identity in Japanese society, helped me to begin to develop a third place for myself, and a new perspective on the importance of learning and using *keigo* forms. The opportunities to hear and recognize the differing levels of politeness and formality between characters in a Japanese film, and between native speakers of Japanese facilitated an understanding of how the language and its varying levels of distance and politeness were used in authentic interaction, and helped me to develop a sense of relationships and hierarchies in Japanese society that I had previously missed.

Although I continued to experience difficulties with the mechanics of the methodology, I came to see that I was not expected to "become Japanese;" rather, I was learning a means of understanding the cultural interactions and relationships between Japanese native speakers that are encoded in the Japanese language. As a result, while my *gaijin* self did not entirely disappear, I was able to begin to create a new self, one that could

function more comfortably within the classroom and I hoped within Japanese society. More than any other aspect of the learning experience, it was the development of this third place with its accompanying sense of identity as a speaker of Japanese that led to a desire to persist in learning the Japanese language.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Although the language learning experience analyzed in this study took place in a Japanese language classroom, and although the introspective nature of this diary study precludes it from producing any generalizable results or applications, the study does point to some areas of consideration for teachers of English as a second or foreign language, and for TESOL instructor training programs.

Methodology and Pedagogical Technique

One of the primary causes of conflict within my learning experience was the strict adherence to a particular teaching methodology and its pedagogical techniques. Students have their own agendas for language learning which can clash with the teaching agenda of a particular methodology, and "the conflict is heightened by the fact that students' performance is not judged on the basis of [students'] own goals but on the goals of the teacher" (F. Schumann, 1978, p. 52). Maintaining one's own language learning agenda under these difficult circumstances requires a

great deal of self-determination. Students may react so negatively to a particular methodology or teaching agenda that they abandon language study completely. Other students, for a variety of reasons, may continue to study a language in a situation they find difficult, but may feel they have to supplement classroom instruction with the help of tutors or others outside of class (F. Schumann, 1978), possibly creating or increasing an aversion toward language learning in the classroom.

Teachers of English may find using and adapting teaching techniques from a variety of methods, ones that accommodate a variety of learning style preferences to be more efficacious in the long run than strictly adhering to one methodology. English as a second language teachers, in particular those who will be teaching English overseas, should also consider the teaching practices most commonly preferred for language teaching and learning in students' native cultures when planning their own teaching. The communicative or functional approach that is currently favored in second language instruction in the United States can clash with international students' past training and learning experiences which may have favored a more formal approach to language learning. Because students are both influenced and inhibited by the instructional and learning schema they bring to a language learning situation, American teachers using a communicative or functional approach may find themselves spending more time preparing students to participate in activities, or find students resisting activities, rather than focusing on the language learning intended. If students' backgrounds have favored a formal, structural approach to language learning, a reduction in the amount of functional or communicative activities, a gradual change to a communicative approach, or an explanation of the method and the

rationale for it may prove more effective in helping students from other cultures adapt to and participate in the communicative classroom environment and learning experience.

Preparing Students for Language Learning in Culture

A critical factor in the development of a desire to persist in learning Japanese was overcoming the culture shock I experienced in the language classroom. Learning a second language, I discovered, goes beyond putting new words into syntactical structures and revising linguistic patterns. Learning a second language also involves investigating one's own cultural beliefs; learning and accepting the different cultural patterns and attitudes that are encoded into language use; and examining one's own culturally-bound sense of self.

By preparing students cognitively and emotionally for the cultural differences they may encounter during the language learning process, by preparing students for the distress and frustration they may experience in the language classroom, the language teacher can help alleviate culture shock and ease student's eventual acculturation to the target culture. Moderating culture shock and its accompanying emotional disequilibrium can allow students to more quickly develop positive and realistic attitudes toward the target language and culture, and facilitate increased motivation to learn and a desire to persist in learning.

Even with the seeming ubiquity of Western, and in particular, American, culture throughout the world, students learning English can find themselves confused and disoriented in the ESL classroom. Student-teacher relationships and the social positions teachers and students fill in American

society may be different than what students are accustomed to; the relevance of the curriculum in the English language classroom may be unlike that of the students' native countries (Hofstede, 1986); expectations of students' production and participation in and out of the classroom may differ from those in their home countries; and actual English language use in culture may be different from students' expectations based on the type and amount of previous exposure to English.

Byram (1991) maintains that it is "misguided to teach as if learners can acquire foreign cultural concepts, values, and behaviors as if they were *tabula rasa;* just as it is misguided to teach language structures as if there will be no transfer from the first language" (p. 18). Preparing students for culture learning in the language classroom can begin with helping them define what culture is in general; having them explore the types and levels of culture, or subcultures, that exist within societies; and helping them become aware of what they should be looking for as they study culture. Before beginning to examine the target culture, and the role of language use in that culture, students should be given the opportunity to investigate their own culture, and which personal cultural beliefs and behaviors may inhibit language and culture learning, and eventual understanding and acceptance of the target culture (Mantle-Bromley, 1992). Culture learning can be accomplished through readings, discussion, and classroom exercises, such as those involving critical incidents that might occur in the language classroom, and can cover topics of social distance (J.H. Schumann, 1976), ethnocentrism and identity, stereotypes, negative attitudes, and attitude change (Mantle-Bromley, 1992). These types of activities should be conducted in the students' native language if possible, by an instructor familiar with both their

own and the target culture. Offering cultural learning prior to language learning can lead to students' understanding of their own ethnocentrism and cultural biases, the stereotypes they may hold of the target culture, and new ways of perceiving behaviors and language use that differ from their own.

Helping students to prepare for the cultural learning inherent in language learning can not only diminish the culture shock that students may experience in the language classroom, but it can lead to students having more positive attitudes toward the target culture, and by extension, the language learning process. Mantle-Bromley (1992) claims that"teaching for cultural understanding is a formidable task. The language teacher must understand that just as language learning is a process, so too is culture learning" (p. 125). Teachers who provide cultural learning alongside language learning may find themselves rewarded, however, with an increase in desired classroom behaviors such as participation and persistence in learning.

Reflection in Teacher Education

In our culture, objective observations and facts are regarded as inviolate. Subjective feelings and observations, on the other hand, especially in the educational setting, are usually not to be trusted, and "the self . . . not a source to be tapped but a danger to be suppressed, not a potential to be fulfilled but an obstacle to be overcome" (Palmer, 1998, p. 18). Subjective assessments, and reflection on past and present learning and teaching experiences, however, can play significant roles in helping ESL teachers develop both a teaching identity and sense of integrity as a teacher. Palmer (1998) defines identity as "a moving intersection of the inner and outer

forces that make me who I am" (p. 13), and integrity as the knowledge of what fits and what doesn't within one's conception of self. "Identity and integrity . . . are subtle dimensions of the complex, demanding, and lifelong process of self-discovery" (Palmer, 1998, p. 13).

The process of keeping a reflective journal, and analyzing it for this study allowed me to connect my own learning experience to my teaching practice in the ESL classroom, and brought about an increased awareness of the problems adults may encounter when learning a second language, and the role affective variables may play in their learning process. Reflection on my year in a foreign language classroom also proved instrumental in helping me to develop a personal teaching philosophy. While a full diary study such as the one undertaken for this thesis is impractical within the confines of a teacher training program, smaller and more frequent opportunities for reflection can nonetheless be useful in helping future ESL teachers recognize the connections between their own experience and teaching practice. It also can facilitate personal behavior changes or changes in teaching practice, develop or adjust a personal teaching philosophy, and increase personal responsibility for professional growth and autonomy.

The self-knowledge that comes from reflective writing, the opportunity for teachers to learn more about who they are, "can . . . reveal rather than conceal the personhood from which good teaching comes" (Palmer, 1998, p. 24). Dialog journals, personal journals, academic journals (Bailey,1990) or reflective papers are some of the ways students in an ESL teacher training program can engage in reflection and subjective assessment of their emerging role as teachers (Bailey, 1990; Numrich, 1996). Increased chances for reflection coupled with meaningful feedback can also provide a

means for teachers-in-training to gain confidence in assessing both experiential- and self-knowledge, and in developing self-confidence as a teacher.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The primary, and greatest limitation, of a diary study is that its findings are not generalizable. A diary study can provide a holistic, in-depth, and longitudinal picture of an individual's language learning experience, and the unique learning history one brings to the language classroom; however, the results of the study are idiosyncratic and cannot be projected onto other learners or learning environments. Although advocates of diary studies admit this is the main weakness of this form of research, they claim that the diary study's strength lies in its ability to uncover personal variables or other unobservable aspects of second language learning, and therefore, attempts to generalize from the study may not be desirable (Matsumoto, 1987).

One means of increasing the reliability of this study would be to have the journal analyzed by another researcher, to discover whether the same significant variables are identified, or whether other variables can be found. Matsumoto (1987) suggests that a diary should be analyzed independently by at least two or more researchers in order to avoid more subjective judgments. One of the problems, however, in having others analyze a journal is that the diarist may alter entries to make them less damaging and more pleasing to the teacher or institution. Matsumoto (1987) suggests augmenting diary analyses with questionnaires and interviews to obtain

more accurate information about the subject's language learning experience and process.

Having all or several members of a Japanese or other language class keep journals of their language learning experiences would also remove some of the idiosyncrasy of the individual diary study. Collecting and quantifying data from a larger sample of journals may produce findings more generalizable to other groups of language learners, as well as add to the validity of the findings.

The individual diary study, however, can be hypothesis-generating, and can lead to further controlled, experimental investigation. Any one of the variables discussed in this study can function as a point of departure for further research. Areas of more focused research could include investigations of the variables of motivation or language anxiety in the second or foreign language classroom; correlations between age and affective variables in second language learning; differences in attitudes toward the learning experience between students studying cognate and non-cognate languages; student attitudes toward particular methodologies and their perceived effectiveness; or a detailed study of students' reasons for quitting or persisting in second language study.

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APPENDIX

The Journal

10/16

Not too bad a day today. More drills with K, and a review of the core conversations. I tried to use one of the greetings, or "ritual" greetings we are told in our text that we must memorize, and was not really surprised to get back a completely different response in return! I practiced on another student, and the response she gave me was one I was familiar with from previous study and my time in Japan, but nothing like the response we were to expect from the book. I looked for the response I was given in earlier sections of the book, and didn't find it anywhere (although I didn't check very carefully). The dialog/conversation we had to memorize is between a man and his wife and someone attached to the Japanese ministry of education--get real! When, or in how many years, would I ever interact professionally with someone at that level? I know that the JET program is done through this ministry, but how many learners in reality are applying for the JET program and may have the opportunity to use these very formal exchanges? My interaction yesterday with a fellow Japanese student reminded me of how much I need and want to learn practical, everyday Japanese.

But did I learn anything from the drills? Maybe. Some patterns do sink in, or I can feel the light bulb going off, but I'm not sure if it's because I've studied Japanese before, or have heard the pattern before or what else it might be. Most of it does not stay with me--it's frustrating as heck.. One classmate remarked that some days she feels like a trained seal--just giving back information without knowing what it means, or how it will work out in the "real" world.

In my ESL in the Workplace class yesterday, we were shown some examples of course objectives. Three of the four used the word "develop," and one used "establish and maintain." There's a difference to me--develop means giving/teaching students the tools to build on, to go on with learning on their own once a course is finished. "Establish," to me anyway, means to present the information in a particular way, without allowing for individual needs or learning styles, and creativity. Sort of the old "give a man a fish and you've fed him for a day" versus "teach a man to fish and you've fed him for life" approach. I feel like I'm being handed a fish each day in class.

Will not be able to go to the writing class tomorrow, which I will genuinely miss. It's my favorite class of the week.

10/17

I did not go to class today because of an interview for a project required for another class. However, at the interview, I was introduced as someone who was studying and spoke some Japanese (it's on my resume). Well, instead of just coming out with an appropriate greet/introduction--WHICH I KNOW--I found myself searching my brain for the appropriate memorized chink of introduction for this situation, and ended up unable to give any introduction at all! the man to whom I was introduced was not impressed, and said, "Why don't you try *hajimemashite*." It was embarrassing beyond belief, and I was angry at myself for not using what I already knew, and instead relying on producing a memorized chunk from one of the core conversations or drills.

10/20

This morning we began with another quiz, and although I felt like I was better prepared than last week, it still felt difficult, and I know I missed several answers, or at least gave answers that were only partially correct. I find it a little difficult and a little strange to see a question in English and then try to respond in Japanese, especially when it concerns points of grammar. I am hoping I can become better adjusted to this, and it will be interesting to see what remains and what doesn't. I'm not sure as of yet how many of these core conversations we're expected to recall. Any one of them, and at a moment's notice--yikes! I have too much going on in my life, and in my head besides Japanese to be able to recall lines of dialog, even ones learned (memorized) a week ago.

After the test/quiz some points of grammar were discussed, such as how concepts of time are expressed in English versus how they are expressed in Japanese. I found the information interesting and somewhat helpful, and will just have to wait and see if I can apply it later. Sometimes when I read Jorden's explanations of Japanese grammar, I feel like I'm learning yet another language. Her explanations do not always go down easy, and I have to reread them several times before I think I grasp what she's getting at. Some explanations are almost too short, and I feel like asking, "well, why don;t you spend more time on this? I don't get it either." The mix of English and Japanese in this course can be very confusing at times, and I have trouble switching from one to the other. In my last efforts at Japanese, where I heard only Japanese spoken in class, I found myself dreaming in Japanese a couple of times! Not that I remembered what I was saying, but that I understood it in the dream. I can't imagine that happening in this second year method.

The class ended with a short presentation about politeness levels and forms, which was interesting cultural information and gave some more understanding as to what we're hearing and learning. It was not helpful to learn that many native speakers of Japanese cannot get these forms correct, that they go to school to learn/practice correct forms. It makes all this so much more intimidating. I guess it's like J said, though--it's important that we try.

10/21

Y was our instructor today. He's my favorite of all the instructors so far. He's very gentle and encouraging, and doesn't make me feel embarrassed when I make a mistake or can't recall a line of dialog or a drill form. We did drills today--they are the bane of my existence. One especially seemed patently ridiculous. It started with "Mr/s. Miyagi has a son, right?" The response is, "He/she does have a child, but I wonder if it isn't a daughter." Yikes. We then were to insert various family members or relations into the drill. The response is quite complicated--lots of particles, negatives and such which all need to be put in the correct order for it to make sense. I was still trying to digest the structures from previous drills, to get them to register, so was barely able to spit out this drill. My ability to remember all this is not very good these days. I'm not sure if it's age, or that I have a lot going on in my life these days which keeps my brain clogged, or some of both. At one point this morning we were asked to recall some dialog from last week. I have had so much stuff to do since last week, that it was a real effort to drag it up and out again. I wish we had more chances, or some different ways of learning this stuff. We do have utilization exercises, but the situations are created for you; there's no chance to be creative, or to think of alternate ways of expressing yourself. It has to be what has been prescribed in the book, seemingly without deviation. So I find myself putting it on an index card and tossing it into the the dust heap in my brain because it's not useful, or at least not useful to me now, and definitely not interesting.

The class appears to be dwindling--only nine students today. Some others may have just been absent, but it's hard to know if they've dropped or not. I am so glad I'm able to take this class pass/no pass. I don't think I would be able to manage it if I was worried about a grade (and I got As before--right now I think I'm barely holding on to a C). I do want to fulfill this proficiency requirement, but what a way to do it.

Tomorrow I begin eavesdropping exercises. I hope to be able to get at least four or five of them done. I'm wondering if the speakers will be even more unintelligible than before.

10/22

I am feeling rather grumbly yet again after class, but was feeling that way before class started. I spent a good deal of time before I went bed last night studying and practicing the drills for today, but just couldn't seem to get them to register in my brain. The minute I have to go and do something else besides concentrate on the drill, they're out of my head. And I do have plenty else to do and think about. So, I looked at them a few minutes before class began, hoping to recapture some of them, but without much success. I get called on a fair amount, it seems to me, so I try and want to be prepared. I can sense that others in class are really struggling with this as well. K will be leading class tomorrow, and of the three instructors, he is the most demanding (but engaging as well) so I will work hard again to be prepared.

I know I am grumbly because I have no ownership in what I'm learning. I am allowed no input, there is no creativity, there is no feeling of learning how to communicate, of <u>trying</u> to communicate with what I know. When I think back on my second-year class at the community college, it was my input, the permission to improvise, to make myself understood in the context of what we were learning that made the class enjoyable. I finished that year wanting to major in Japanese; I cannot even imagine doing so using the Jorden method. I feel fortunate that I still have the (some?) motivation to learn Japanese, and hope that this year and next term don't kill that desire.

I don't want to be a parrot, and that's what I feel like now. I really don't feel like I've learned anything. Trying to keep all the politeness levels straight at this stage of the game is extremely confusing along with all the memorization. I want more input into what I'm learning and retaining instead of gritting my teeth each day when I sit down with my text. *Gaman suru*--I will endure. I'm probably the one with an attitude problem, and in order to succeed will have to change.

10/23

A mixed sort of day in class. Performed the memorized core conversation flawlessly, got phone numbers correct without a hitch, and yet when it came time to produce one of the drills, even though I had studied and practiced, I couldn't remember it to save my soul. And the feeling I got was that because I got that part wrong, I wasn't going to get a chance to redeem myself later. I didn't get called on the rest of the class period, and I knew the other stuff. It felt like I was receiving some form of punishment FOR NOT REMEMBERING <u>ONE</u> DRILL! I'm getting a little angry just thinking about it.

What would be so wrong with us working on the drills in pairs, with the teacher walking around and listening to us, correcting us if we needed it, and with a fellow student offering encouragement or assistance if their partner needed help? This being singled out to perform, knowing you are being graded on performance, is so stressful, and it's a fear of embarrassment which keeps me somewhat motivated to try and know the drills, but it is very hard for me to remember them. At times I don't feel like I'm learning anything, just flipping through an ever-increasing bundle of index cards in my head to find the correct

question and its correct response. Not nearly correct, mind you--no room for error--but the correct ones.

One other thought/question came to me today as well as we went over family terms again. When I lived in Japan, two young Japanese women worked at the Navy Family Service Center, one as the receptionist (Misa), and one as the Japanese cultural assistant (Reiko). Misa was from a working-class background, but spoke English beautifully (she was married to an American in the navy), and was friendly and outgoing. Reiko was from an upper-class background, also spoke English beautifully (learned at the University of Hawaii), and was friendly but not very outgoing. Reiko live at home with her parents, took trips twice a year to the United States (including Hawaii), and dressed in designer clothing. One day Misa told me that Reiko was referred to as an "*ojoosan*," the polite word for daughter, but in this context meant "princess." It was not meant in a good way, but was used as a rather derogatory term. So here now I'm learning the word "*ojoosan*" as the polite term to use for daughter. But I'm confused now. Use with whom? I don't think Misa would like to be called *ojoosan*. I think *musume-san* would suit her fine and be considered polite. There's a real issue of class orientation here, and I'm wondering just whom I'm learning to speak to. I feel like speaking with the upper class is being emphasized. Hierarchy is important in Japanese no matter what the class one is from, but I'm just a (very) little uncomfortable with what I'm learning and all the very polite speech at this point in my studying Japanese. I wish I could be working at a level that would be considered polite for me, a non-native speaker, and be concerned more with learning how to say things or communicate, rather than worrying about whether I was using a correct form.

Class ended with a short writing test. The writing part I knew; however, I was not comfortable with my ability to translate. Oh well.

10/24

Surprise! I got 100% on my writing quiz, even with all my cross outs and awkward translations. A small boost, much needed!

Friday is writing (and reading) day, and we began class taking turns reading a short essay in our text (very easy, I thought--most *kanji* at this time is a repeat for me). I didn't get called on to read, though; fair enough. The instructor (same as yesterday) then began to ask questions about the short essay. The first question was, "Who wrote the essay?" The answer, "I don't know" (*wakarimasen*) was correct as the writer is not known. The instructor then posits that the essay was written by Mr/s. Yamamoto's friend, Mr/s. Tanaka. Again, fair enough. I then was asked if Mr/s. Tanaka is at school. From the essay it is not known, so I answer again, "I don't know" (*wakarimasen*). My *wakarimasen*, however, is taken to mean I don't understand the question; I have not given the "correct" response. So, instead of questioning me further, the instructor goes on to another student who gives the "correct" answer, "I think he/she is." Like yesterday, I again felt that I wasn't asked questions again later because I had "failed" to come up with the proper response the first time. I have noticed that occasionally, when another student struggles, or does not recall the core conversation or drill, they are not called on again, or not used. In my case, usually later I can remember drills, or I know the next one, but I have no way to demonstrate it. Today's little incident made me feel angry, and again, embarrassed.

A self-assessment after four weeks: have I learned anything? Some new vocabulary, yes, and one grammar pattern (*kara* for "because . . ." or "so . . ."). The rest is all gone, buried somewhere in my brain. I'm not sure at this time whether or not I'm learning anything new, or bringing back what I learned before. For the most part, I feel confused and frustrated. I don't feel like I'm communicating in Japanese, just being asked to remember stock phrases. The language doesn't feel alive to me at all.

10/27

Actually quite a satisfying class today, perhaps because we did not have one of those quizzes on points of grammar. J went into the cultural basis of some of what we are learning which is really helpful for me, and helps to create a feeling of affinity for the language. If I understand why something is going on, beyond the "because he's so-and-so, and she's so-and-so," it helps me to gain a greater understanding of the language being used. I brought up my experience with the word *ojoosan*, and was given a good explanation about its use, but the discussion went further into the issue of class in Japan, and its effect on the use of certain forms in Japanese. I am frustrated by having to not only learn but interpret politeness levels and their accompanying vocabulary as we go along, and it was helpful (?), interesting (?) to know that while polite forms are not disappearing in Japan, their use or forum is changing. If I understood J correctly, their use is shifting to a more public vs. private dichotomy as Japanese society becomes more egalitarian. Still, it is <u>not</u> helpful to learn, or be reminded, that native Japanese speakers have difficulty with the subtleties in using these forms, and go to schools to learn correct usage, or that companies contract out for teachers to come and teach "proper" language for use in the workplace. I find myself extremely anxious about using the right form in the right place versus just making myself understood.

When studying Jorden last night, I also found myself flummoxed by her language when giving an explanation. She wrote (on page 322), "Mr. Carter's switch to *arimasen* reflects an avoidance of unrelieved polite-style in the given setting." Huh? I finally understood Jorden's meaning after a more intelligible explanation by J (who by the way said that reading Jorden was at times like reading an army training manual–true!). Jorden's writing style, and her method of writing Japanese still remains a huge barrier. Sometimes I feel like I'm looking at Navajo when I look at a page of Japanese with all the diacritic marks. At times it's an effort to clear my head and get into Jorden-speak, almost a new language in itself.

10/28

Today's class went well, and I attribute it mostly to the fact that I knew the core conversation and the drills. The drills were ones that were easy to remember, and actually useful, unlike some of the convoluted ones we seem to usually have to know. One of today's drills was something like, "That person over there, he's busy, isn't he?" The reply was, "Yes, he is, he's a busy man" or something along those lines. A variety of adjectives were used, and I could actually see where I might use these sentences or ones like them in <u>actual</u> conversation. I felt my pronunciation was good today as well--maybe it's because I'm getting enough rest because of the daylight savings time change (hah). The drills are hard to remember, though. Studied them yesterday, then promptly forgot them. Same thing this morning, but was somehow able to drag them back up for drill practice.

Today's instructor, Y, is the most "gentle" and encouraging with us. If you are having problems, he stays with you until you get it, and gives you the time to figure things out. I can see that "performing" is sheer torture for some of the students, but Y gently nudges them along until they get it out, unlike others who cut you off. With only one classmate today did he leave and ask another student to try, but only because the first student was getting more and more confused as he tried to repeat the drill. Y came right back to him a couple of tries later, and he did fine. He was not excluded from further practice as I have experienced and witnessed with the other instructors.

And . . . we did some group work! The last 10 minutes of class were spent in small groups where we pretended to be a family. We got to practice with each other, get our stories straight, and then practice with the rest of the class. It was great--it was a wonderful,

relaxing way to try out what we knew. We could even use "forbidden" vocabulary (words that we supposedly haven't learned yet). Sure wish we could do it more.
10/30

I'm not quite sure where to begin with today. Class was so-so, the core conversation we had to memorize awful and long; it felt like I was memorizing a movie script or something. I didn't go to class yesterday–just could not face "performing" and felt I needed a break. I should have taken today off.

Lots of grumbling about the class when I went in today from other students who were already there. Mostly about all the memorization. One student just didn't feel like he was getting to use Japanese at all, just was memorizing it, and was pretty frustrated. Another big complaint was the use of *romaji* in the text. Another student wondered why we couldn't at least be reading *hiragana* with *kanji* gradually brought in. I find it interesting that when the [Japanese] instructors write on the board, they don't use Jorden's convoluted *romaji*, but instead write in Japanese script. This class is definitely not using a whole language approach, and after two years of Japanese using Jorden's method of writing Japanese, with only one day of writing practice, I wonder how students fare in Japan in a program like, say, the Waseda program. You definitely don't see *romaji*, and especially not the way Jorden writes it, over in Japan.

Performing in class today was excruciating. I became more and more anxious waiting for K to call on me. The dialog was long, so he broke it up into bits and pieces, but I still didn't get called on. Finally, when he did call on me, I was the first one to have to perform the entire dialog. After 35 minutes of listening to others, wondering if and when I would be called, my stomach churning, it was all I could do to get out the entire dialog. On top of having to remember it all, I also had to "create" a new portion of the conversation based on pictures K held up. The whole experience was a complete drain on my nerves, really awful. I will say though that I like how K has us come up with alternative ways of saying things outside of performing the dialog. I just wish we got more ways/time to practice them.

Today's conversation was a phone conversation and involved leaving a message. I came away wondering, however, what do you do when you get on the phone and someone doesn't say anything like what you memorized? What then? I don't feel like we're learning to think on our feet.
10/31

After all the memorization all week, Fridays are nice--reading and writing. A is relaxed and helpful, although I'm not sure how only 50 minutes once a week of writing practice is helping us learn. For me, it's mainly a repeat of *kanji* that I learned previously but without any real strengthening of that knowledge I'm not sure how much I'm learning. Today we did no writing at all, just spent the 50 minutes reading examples of the writing from our book, and occasionally translating a few sentences. A made a very interesting (and ironic) point today, and I'm not quite sure whether he did it because of the Jorden method or in spite of it. He asked me a question using the term *hiru*, for which I couldn't remember the meaning. So, to explain it, he gave us an opposite sort of word, *kurai*, meaning "dark," and explained it by turning off all the lights in the classroom and shutting the door. Then he turned on all the lights, opened the door, and said *akarui*, "bright," then connected that to *hiru*, which means daytime. It was a wonderful learning experience! The interesting and ironic part came a little while later when he asked the class if we remembered the word *kurai*, which of course we all did. He explained that we had learned by experiencing the word, and experiential learning was one of the best ways to learn and remember. But the Jorden method is anything but experiential! And, taking the irony a bit

further, we didn't experience any of the writing by doing any! We just read canned phrases out of our text--no creation, or experimentation, or trying on of our knowledge at all. A also remarked at one point how he didn't want us to drop out of the class. We had gotten to second year and invested quite a bit to get there. I can't remember what that remark was made in reference to, but sometimes I think if they knew how much the Jorden method is disliked, remarks like some of the above would be avoided.

Spoke with some of my classmates following class. The frustration level VERY high. No one has a clue how they're doing, one remarked that in five weeks he'd learned one thing (me, too), and most everyone is sick to death of memorization. The most common complaint heard today is that they're not getting to use their knowledge at all--it's all canned. A few others have noticed as well that if you make a mistake or don't give the "correct" answer, you are not called on again, and find it somewhat humiliating. So, it's not just me.

Will finish up with those horrid eavesdropping exercises this weekend.

11/3

Lots of grammar today. It was explained in English, but I'm not sure how much I can or will be able to use later, or how much I'll remember. And again, tons of information and instruction on style, politeness levels, etc. When am I going to get to use this stuff? Sometimes I wonder if I will ever be able to use it outside of class, if what I am memorizing will carry outside of the classroom. The exercises all seem to be frozen in a particular place, in a particular context, and I feel like if I tried to use some of it outside of the class I might get some very strange looks. The language doesn't feel like it's alive.

But am I learning or acquiring anything? Or am I just building on what's already there? This is what I'm wondering about right now. Some of the explanations we receive in English reinforce what I already know. I can kind of tell myself, "OK, that's why you say that" even though I know the pattern or how to say it, but some of the explanations are for new stuff [and I don't get it]. Sometimes they're helpful, but other times I want to know why I'm learning this now. Do I really need to know all about extended predicates, all their intricacies now? I've come across them before in Japanese, but was more interested in understanding how to use the pattern, or in which contexts the pattern would be used, rather than have some detailed grammatical explanation for it. Jorden's explanations always leave my head spinning anyway.

We watched the video of the core conversations today--they speak so fast! I know that one of the criteria for our grade is how much we sound like a native speaker, but there's no way I can hope to speak that quickly, or sound that way. I'm too old, as are most of the class members, to ever be able to "sound like a native speaker," and at the speed that's seemingly required to do so. Yes, we should try to pronounce words correctly, but native-like speech is not a realistic goal, and it's scary to think we are being graded accordingly.

11/5

Didn't go to class yesterday as my daughter was sick. I have to admit that [my husband] stayed home from work so that I could go to class, but when it came down to getting myself up and ready to go, I just couldn't do it. I was prepared--knew the answers to the questions and had practiced the drills, but there was a definite lack of motivation. I don't like to miss class, either .... Worked on memorizing two new CCs last night. One was a "review." OK, except that I didn't do first year here so did not previously memorize the conversation. Practiced drills, and went to sleep repeating the CCs to myself. First thing this morning, however I learned I had memorized the wrong conversation back from lesson 9. Very embarrassing, and frustrating as well. I was able to jump into the drills, and did the regular CC just fine, so I guess I redeemed myself. I told the instructor after class that my

daughter had been ill, and apologized for not knowing the CC. We've sort of been given a clue/hint/message/instruction that we're not to come to class with an excuse. We're supposed to use *moshiwake arimasen*, "I have no excuse." It's culturally very confusing at times. Are we supposed to be like Japanese in a Japanese class, or are we Americans in a Japanese class, or are we one some days and the other on other days? I felt I wasn't supposed to give an excuse, yet others who walked in late gave excuses which seemed to be accepted. It's confusing.

One thing I'm noticing in class is that there doesn't seem to be the usual bonding that occurs between students in the classroom. Usually, at this point, phone numbers have been exchanged, or there's a feeling of camaraderie, but I'm just not getting that here. It seems that except for a general grumbling before class about all the memorization and how tired we all are of it, everyone mostly sticks to themselves. Grumblings in the morning include a lot of "why can't we" sort of questions. I get the feeling my classmates, like me, want to be doing more with what we're learning, or at least spending more time on different sections rather than having something new to memorize and agonize over each day.

11/6

Mixed feelings about class today. For the most part, I "performed" well, although not always. I realized how much I draw on what I already know and can see in some ways how far ahead I am of others in the class for having taken second year before. Where I stumble is putting what I know into these canned drills we are required to perform. It is especially frustrating and maddening when we are asked or expected to recall memorized chunks from even just a week ago. Sorry, but I have too much going on in my life to recall verbatim dialog that was practiced (regurgitated?) a week or more ago. It is difficult enough trying to remember and memorize for the next day, but this stuff is for the most part in and out. It is wonderful to see how much I can do from my previous experiences studying Japanese. It's obvious that much has been acquired, versus learned for a day, because after four years of not speaking any Japanese, plenty is still there. The other methods used were definitely doing something right, in my case at least.

There's a classmate who is really struggling with this class, and is on the verge of dropping out. He has studied some Japanese before, lived in Japan, and can communicate in Japanese, at least at a basic level, but probably better than most of us in class. His Japanese is not the highly polished, ultra-polite Japanese we are studying now, but that spoken between friends/contemporaries/colleagues in Japan. He cannot do these memorized drills, though–just falls apart when called on to recite. He could probably think a lot better than most of us on his feet, and even if not "perfect," make himself understood. I really feel for him--he loves Japan and the Japanese language, and really wants to learn, but is totally frustrated by this method. I watch the others in class, too, and it seems like we're all carrying these index cards in our heads, flipping through them for a <u>stock</u> response to a teacher's prompt.

There is nothing more embarrassing than being brought to the front of the class, asked to perform a drill, and not have a clue what the teacher is asking for. So much for confidence building. I do hope I got something out of today's class. Maybe using *mata wa* to join things, but I no way understand it perfectly, or feel at all confident with it. Reading the book only helps a little. I'm a learner who has to hear it several times before it finally sinks in.

11/7

We had another one of those horrible grammar quizzes today, where we are asked to give answers to seemingly minute points of grammar. Even A commented on it, but added something to the effect that quizzes such at these let us know we are trying to learn

one of the world's most difficult languages. He said that the payoff would be two-three years down the line, if we stuck with it. He also mentioned the Japanese language program at the university he had attended and I asked it it was the Jorden method, and he replied, "worse." I don't know if the implication is that this is a difficult or not-so-good teaching method. Anyway, the quiz made my already pounding headache worse. What I find confusing/aggravating about this emphasis on learning the multiple polite forms is that while I heard them on occasion when I was in Japan, I was certainly never expected to know how to use them. Ah well . . . .

I have been thinking about my expectations of this course, and if those expectations are unreal or what?? I have taken second year and passed with flying colors, and I had sort of hoped that this class would reinforce what I already had acquired, or at least refresh my limited abilities. Instead I find myself feeling at times as if I'm learning a whole new language. There are patterns I've learned/studied earlier, but most of it is very unfamiliar and confusing. I wish I knew how I was doing. We are supposed to receive some sort of mid-term evaluation next week. Just hope I am passing.

Writing class was once again more of a reading class. The one-day-a-week method of writing is disconcerting. I found myself writing in *romaji* on the quiz, trying to write the style Jorden uses. I'm almost having as much trouble with that as I might with Japanese writing! Kind of feels like learning a third language, or at least a fourth style/alphabet of Japanese.

I still want to continue--there is still a real desire to learn, or gain some mastery of this language. I <u>enjoy</u> Japanese, the language, that it. It is still a "secret code" I very much want to decipher.

11/10

A light bulb sort of went off today about what's going on with having to learn all these polite and humble and honorific forms. I have been struggling over why at this stage of learning the language we are having to learn,and in my case, worry over these forms. I have felt that there was something cultural going on, but couldn't put my finger on it until today. Not only are we learning Japanese, but we are attempting to learn to be communicatively competent as well, or at least that's what I think is going on. But then I am puzzled as to why? At this stage of learning?? Why throw something like this into the learning at this point? It is only making the learning of a difficult language even <u>more</u> difficult. What I find especially hard is that even after living and working Japan, I still wouldn't or don't have a clue as to who is in my in-group or out-group, as they are called by Jorden, or when it is socially correct to humble myself or elevate the other person. We were given an axis on which to plot the verb form against who were are talking about and who we are addressing (talking about as a function of who we are talking to???), but it still doesn't even begin to crack open the door for me. As an example, one of our instructors is a fellow MA TESOL student. When I meet [K] outside of class, I am absolutely flummoxed as to whether he is in my in-group as a fellow student, or in the out-group as an instructor. The anxiety this produces when I see him is overwhelming, to the point where I can't say anything, and instead of speaking Japanese resort to English and a wave. Before this class, I just didn't worry about it. I felt comfortable speaking to him in the Japanese I knew. It does not help either to hear in class the trouble native speakers of Japanese have with using these forms correctly, that they make mistakes especially with humble forms. I would much rather hear about and practice the language to where my confidence was boosted.

A fellow classmate remarked after class that a Japanese friend once told him that he hoped he [my classmate] wouldn't learn to speak Japanese too well. My classmate wondered why, and told his friend that he hoped that someday he [his Japanese friend]

would learn to speak English well. The friend replied that when Americans spoke Japanese well they sounded silly. I have often read or heard it said that only a Japanese can speak Japanese well. I don't think it's true, but I can imagine a cultural type of feeling that holds their language as "sacred territory." It's one of the reasons why I'm uncomfortable dealing with so much function at this point. I want to learn to communicate, I want the confidence to communicate in a way that is acceptable, maybe not perfect, but acceptable to almost all Japanese.

We were also warned again about asking native speakers about or to explain forms we are using. Huh?

11/12

Kind of a review day today. I had to learn one of the CCs from scratch, then review another CC on introductions, and four drills. We did the CC on introductions just a couple of weeks ago, and yet it had almost been totally wiped from my memory by the intervening stuff we have had to learn. Likewise the drills, but forgotten in just one night! I practiced last night for quite some time, but after getting myself off to bed, then running around this morning getting my daughter and myself ready to go to daycare and school respectively, when I opened the book to review the drills it was as if I were looking at them for the first time. Had butterflies in my stomach all during class, and was on edge constantly waiting to be called on to perform. It really is a horrible feeling, the waiting to see if you'll be asked to perform something you're somewhat comfortable with or something you can barely remember, if at all.

I have such a feeling of complete disequilibrium in this class, a feeling of having no solid ground beneath me. Every time I feel on a little surer footing, something seems to shift again. First, I have absolutely no idea how I'm doing. I've been given no indication (nor has the rest of the class) of progress being made, areas for improvement, etc. And, I'm not sure if it's intentional or not. Probably not--we did ask for a sort of mid-term report and were told one would be coming this week, but haven't seen it yet. So things feel very shaky. I still am having difficult in approaching some of the instructors. I sense that I am to approach them as teachers,with all the stuff that goes along with that. However, they are my peers as well, students just like me in the MA TESOL program. Again, it creates an uneasy tension. Even when I see the instructors out of class, I'm not sure how to react.

I'm trying to find out what I can about the Jorden methodology and some of its pedagogical underpinnings. I think if I understood better what was going on and why, it might help me feel a little more secure. There's something cultural going on that I can't put my finger on, and it's very disconcerting. I can sort of feel everyone in class struggling--I know I'm not the only one.

Today I performed one CC I thought perfectly; it flowed. I bowed in the right places, my pronunciation was good. I still got corrected on one minor point of pronunciation--an American name, no less. Some genuine praise once in awhile would be nice, some positive reinforcement. There isn't much of it for the class as a whole.

11/14

Missed class yesterday (well, I didn't really miss it) because of a doctor's appointment. Left class today with the now ever-present knot it my stomach. Within minutes of class beginning, my stomach is churning, and I'm dreading the moment I will be called on to perform. Will I do it correctly? Will I know what the teacher is asking for, etc.? Class is totally nerve wracking, and it always takes a few minutes after class for my stomach to settle.

Today was a reading/writing class, although again we did no writing. I read the lesson ahead of time and almost without fail had selected the sentences the teacher would

ask for a translation of. The reading is pretty easy for me, or at least it seemed that way today, but I chalk it up to not only having lived in Japan and practicing my reading almost constantly there, but also to my previous second-year class in Japanese, where the class was taught entirely in Japanese script. There was no *romaji* allowed. You had to learn to read or sink. Here I listen to second-year students stumble over what I consider pretty basic stuff. Today the teacher made what I consider a very provocative, and mean, remark following one student's many attempts to correctly read a sentence. "I'm like a shark circling in the water. When you stumble, I taste blood and attack." I didn't get it--what's a remark like that supposed to do for someone's confidence? We're not allowed to help another who's having trouble, either. It's no wonder my stomach's in knots!

11/17

Not such a bad day today. No "performance" required, and most of the structures introduced were ones I'd learned and understood before, like *-nikui* and *-yasui*, and the *-kute* form of adjectives. Trying to distill Jorden's writing into something I can really use and understand can be a chore. She gives out so much information, and I have to really think about what is necessary for me to understand the pattern. Maybe the rest will get in by osmosis. Got back the last eavesdropping exercise, and I got an 18.6 out of 20! Even though the tape was extremely difficult to hear, I am doing all right at comprehension when I have the time. We had an eavesdropping quiz last week, and while I can grasp most of what's being said, and feel like I understand the gist of what's going on, having to translate back into English is very difficult and takes time. I like having to think about and work with Japanese in Japanese rather than go back and forth. For difficult patterns it's OK to have them explained briefly in English, but from past experience I've learned I get more in the long run and retain more if I'm only hearing Japanese. Saw videos as well of the CCs we're learning for this lesson--yikes. They speak very fast on them. No way could I (or anyone in the class) duplicate the speed.

I am already beginning to obsess over the final. We get to choose our partner; I'm not sure anyone will want to work with me as I'm so obsessive. We'll see--for me it's more than just doing well, or passing. Because I lived in Japan and have taken second-year before, I really should do well.

11/18

A truly horrible day today, very depressing all around. Frustrating and discouraging, too. Class began with the return of our eavesdropping quiz--terrible, for me at least. A 9.5 out of a possible 20. I didn't think I had done well, but neither did I imagine I would do this poorly. I told J that I didn't think I would do well. Translation is very difficult (why are we so worried about translation at this point?). When there are so many parts to think about [in the eavesdropping dialog], it is very difficult for me in a short period of time to move things around and put them into English--I forget things, etc. I would rather just be working in Japanese, and learning better how to think in Japanese.

Anyway, then on to drills. Today's were some of the worst we've had yet, and we had four of them on top of two CCs. It was just too much to memorize, for me at least. The rest of our now very small class seemed to be struggling as well, though (only 7 people are now coming to class). The instructor seemed to be speaking especially fast--it was hard to follow along at times.

Everyone in class seems so unhappy and frustrated. It is not conducive to learning, that's for sure. I really don't look forward to class at all. I dread it in fact, and even if I have some motivation to learn when class begins, it's gone by the time class is over. I do want to learn to speak/read/write Japanese better, but this class is killing my desire because it is so frustrating. I just can't remember all that's demanded, or if I do remember for class, it's

frustrating. I just can't remember all that's demanded, or if I do remember for class, it's gone the next day.

One good (?) thing today if I've got to find a silver lining. Getting that lousy score on the quiz took care of my nerves. I just didn't care how I performed today. I miss the structure of my previous Japanese class at the community college--no exams, some homework, lots of group work or pairs work, all in Japanese, and no anxiety. H did grade on performance, but it was done so innocuously that you did not go into class each time stressed out over how you were going to do, or what that day's grade would be. He seemed to have found a wonderful blend of teacher- and student-centered learning, and I remember the class as being easygoing. I also realize that I learned a great deal as well--useful stuff--as I see patterns reappear now in Jorden. Jorden explains things too much, to death sometimes, wanting to make sure we get every nuance of Japanese. I don't want to worry so much about nuance right now. There is too much other stuff required. Actually, I could get buried in nuance to the exclusion of everything else, but what would I be learning then. I hate this course!

11/19

I feel miserable again. I sat through the entire class with my stomach in knots, even though I felt I was well prepared. That old performance anxiety. It was funny though, to have my stomach feel so tense when my head was saying, "I just don't care anymore." All I kept thinking of was all the other things we could be doing to make the learning more meaningful and enjoyable. At the beginning of class, the instructor spoke briefly about the weather, and it felt good to be able to say, unmemorized, that November's weather in Japan was nice, and that Nikko was very beautiful in November. He had to stop and explain to everyone where Nikko was, but I kept thinking here would have been a chance for the class to warm up, for me and others to elaborate or whatever, but we shifted right into the CCs and drills, and my stomach twisted into a knot. I feel at times like I'm in some version of a *juku* [Japanese cram school], and that we're having to memorize and drill for some far-off exam. Except that for most of us there is no such exam way off in the the future. It helps me to think about what it much be like for Japanese students studying for their entrance exams. I'm beginning to feel like once I finish my proficiency requirement that I never want to see or hear Japanese again. It is getting harder and harder to get up and come to class, but I'm making it more than others. I thought our class had dwindled to seven, but four people who hadn't shown up the last couple of days were there today, so the class size is back up. Still, we're at 50% of where the class started, a pretty high attrition rate. I keep thinking over and over about that statement I read in the packet for [Linguistics] 574, that second-language learning will be most successful when the needs of the students are stressed instead of grammar and function. I know I don't feel my needs are being met, and that grammar and function are stressed way too much, and to hear the grumblings from the rest of the class, their needs are not being met, either. Probably the most universal complaint is Jorden's use of *romaji*, and the form she uses. Almost everyone wishes we were being taught using *hiragana*, *katakana*, and *kanji*. Jorden's argument that you learn to speak before you learn to write just doesn't wash. We're all already literate, or we wouldn't be in college, and using her form of *romaji* is like learning to write a second language or alphabet anyway.

Thank goodness for this journal. I think I would have gone mad by now if not for the opportunity to write every day.

11/20

Today was enjoyable, although not without stress. I still left class with my stomach in knots. But . . . we actually got to do a brief bit of pair work! It was wonderful, and something that was apparently unrelated to the core conversation. It felt good to try out what I knew with another student--very relaxing, and for a few moments stress-free as I didn't feel like I was "performing." One pair got up and demonstrated after the pair work was done, but that was it! And, the instructor moved around the room listening to us as we spoke--it was GREAT!! Of course, before the pair work we worked on drills, but our instructor, K, likes to mix things up a bit more than the others, and was very enthusiastic. I blew it right at the start because I couldn't remember the drill exactly. It is so humiliating in the class when you make a mistake. I don't know about the others, but I just want to sink down in my seat and disappear. There's no second chance, no coaxing by the instructor to help you get it right. K does allow a little bit more variation in the answers allowed than others, though.

Today's CC made me uncomfortable, I think because it was between two men, and one was using the direct style of speech which I've never been comfortable using in Japanese, although I do understand it. I guess it's because I never had a relationship with anyone in Japan where I felt close enough to use a more direct style. I asked if it was OK for me to use such language (*komatta naa*: for "damn it") and was told it was OK, but it still felt pretty uncomfortable. I didn't volunteer for any of the CC performances because I was: a) too nervous, as usual, and b) uncomfortable with the dialog. K did allow us to do it in "distal style," but I was still too nervous. I was able to give the correct response a few time when he asked for it, though.

I don't think getting up and doing a dialog would be so bad if I weren't so scared of looking foolish, or know that I'm being graded <u>each</u> day. Everyone in the class makes mistakes, and they're supposed to be OK--"you learn from them"--but it sure doesn't feel OK to make mistakes.. Maybe it's just me and my own obsessive/compulsive need to do well. I'm not the oldest in class; another woman is older and really struggles, but she hasn't taken Japanese before. All that stuff I learned in SLA [second language acquisition], about accent and difficulty learning a second language when you're older I can really see playing out here. The younger students run circles around us. Ah, to be 18 again, living at home with someone else to do the cooking and cleaning . . . .

11/24

Today was quite short, just sort of a review of what's going to be on the final. Of course the "interview" has me scared out of my wits. The grading criteria is quite strong, with things like near-native pronunciation, appropriate sociolinguistics, etc. [used to determine the grade]. Well, I'll prepare and just do the best I can. In some ways, I've shut down, and don't feel like doing the extra for the class. Some of it's because it's pass/no pass--it's kind of nice not worrying about a grade--but I really feel like the teaching style and the Jorden method as a whole also push me back. I don't feel "encouraged" for some reason to go the extra distance. Apparently I'm doing OK though. Class participation is at 98%, homework at 100%, and quizzes at 76%. Better than I thought, and I'm passing, which is what counts.

I didn't write last Friday, just too much going on, and I didn't get a rise one way or another out of the class. I was prepared for the quiz, but I've felt that way before and done poorly, so will just wait and see. I was asked a question about Nike ("what Oregon company was small but is now big?") in Japanese, and tried to respond beyond the original question with "Phil Knight sold shoes out of the trunk of his car at the beginning." Of course, I got it all wrong, but the instructor came back very or at least somewhat

sarcastically about what I had actually said in Japanese, something about "by the trunk." I shot back with, "well, at least I tried." I was willing to go out on a limb, to make mistakes, in order to learn and communicate, and I was stung and a little angry by the way my mistake was handled. A gentler, more encouraging response would have been nicer, and maybe given others the courage to speak up and try something beyond the pat memorization of our lessons.

I often think of the Kramsch book the grad students read for Cultural Learning in the Classroom, where she talked about finding or creating that third sphere or place between what is you or yours, and what is them or theirs. That's what I feel like I'm doing in this class, trying to find some middle place where I'm comfortable so I can get on with learning Japanese.

Translations will be on the final--yuk. I told the instructor today that I'm very uncomfortable with them. I get the gist of a sentence, its meaning, but actual translation is extremely difficult. One more thing to remember.

12/2

I haven't written for at least a week. Last week I only went to class 2 days, Monday and Wednesday. Tuesday I decided to stay home and work on a major paper due for another class. Wednesday I was suffering from a major case of ennui. It was the day before Thanksgiving, I had handed in my major paper, and in class on Wednesday all we did were dumb, irrelevant drills. The instructor didn't even bother to make them interesting. He just went around the room asking for a drill response after modeling the drill and response for us first. The drills were meaningless, no relation to "real" life. For example, *Dochira* [There are a couple of scratched-out attempts at writing *dochira* and the notation "I can't write anymore because of the blasted *romaji* Jorden uses"] *ga shiroi desu ka*? "Which one is white?" Fair enough. But the response: *Dochira mo shiroi desu kedo . . . .*" "Both are white but . . . (is that all right?)." HUH? There may be some cultural angle to that response with its hedge at the end, but it's never explained to us, and as a result, the drill goes in one ear and out the other. There is just no incentive to retain these patterns.

Today was more of the same. *Kanojo, eegoo oboete imasu ne*? She remembers English, right?" Again, fair enough. But the response: *Aa, oboete iru ka mo shirimasen nee*. "Oh, she may remember--that's right!" What does this mean? If English translations are going to be used, or English at all, it should be in language or sentence patterns that are actually used by native speakers. I just see no reason, nor feel compelled to remember these drills (although I did hear today we may get some on our final).

And I suffered a MAJOR case of performance anxiety today. Had the core conversation memorized, but when it came time for delivery, for my turn to perform, I literally choked. My throat closed up. It's amazing and disturbing to me to be having an actual physical response beyond the knot in my stomach. It is the knowing, however, that you are graded each day on your performance, you accent, pronunciation, speed, ease--EVERYTHING--that is so tension producing. I am finding myself less and less eager to go to class, and a couple others expressed the same feeling. The whole class experience is so negative.

I also find myself saying the response, or trying out a response, outloud in class. I'm sure it ticks everyone off, including the instructors, but I hate sitting around waiting for a chance to speak. (This only occurs if and when an instructor is asking for an original response). I wish we had more chances in class to practice with each other, to try out what we know more often in original responses, and spent less time waiting to be called on.

Another student said his ease with Japanese is diminishing. He feel uncomfortable using it now, and he has lived in Japan! Maybe this is like Japanese language boot camp, where they break down what you know so you'll do it the Jorden way, without fail!

I long for authentic materials .... I can't even begin to think about using anything close to this method to teach ESL.

12/3

I'm sitting here again with my stomach in knots following today's class. It was fairly relaxed, too--not bad, but this seems to be almost an involuntary response now. I'm a complete wreck in and following class. It's disturbing because I like learning Japanese, at least I did before, but now it's so anxiety producing. The fact that I'm doing well in spite of my many errors does not help either. It's the feeling of waiting to perform, of having to remember a script that makes it so difficult, the tension of never knowing when it's going to be <u>your</u> turn. Can I do it? Do I know the correct response? What if I choke? We were told at the beginning of the year that it's OK to make mistakes, but it sure doesn't feel that way. It feels like I'm back in grade school getting a demerit for every wrong thing. Time to move onto another subject. Thinking about this is not helping me to unwind ....

It's interesting to see who does and does not come to class. I really had thought a few had dropped, but they show up once or twice a week still. The ones who were really doing poorly did drop though. There's another woman my age in class who is struggling through this as well, but she is hanging in there. It just feels like we're all just getting by--there are no real stars. Plenty of grumbling before and after class from everyone, but we're becoming somewhat resigned to it, knowing there's nothing we can do to change it. Resignation is a pretty horrible feeling--not very motivating, obviously.

Not much to write today. I need to get studying for the final. I think it's going to be <u>awful</u>, especially the written part, for me. The interview isn't going to be all that easy, either. At the beginning of the year we were told "no surprises." Now we're hearing that they may throw in some drills, or that "anything can happen." Just what I needed--more tension! I'm still looking for that third space Kramsch talks about ....

12/4

Interesting day today. Before class, as usual, a few of us were griping about the Jorden method (especially me!), and how other methods had/could work better for us. One student, though, started raving about how great the Jorden method was, that he was really learning to speak Japanese. I mentioned that her English translations were so unlike how native English speakers talk that I was having to do double translations, from Japanese to the Jorden-speak and then to "normal" English. This guy, however, thought that her translations were the best. Then he went off on some riff about how he was glad to be learning Japanese because he and his friends were sick of some Japanese talking about them and how they would show them! We (another student and I) told him that he would <u>never</u> see *romaji* like Jorden uses in Japan, that you had to have a stronger background in *katakana, hiragana,* and *kanji* than we were getting in this class. He argued that we were getting the language to respond when the bus driver yelled at you for not having the correct change. A couple of us told him that in Japan, the bus driver <u>wouldn't</u> yell at you, that he'd be somewhat polite, and that someone would help you if you were having trouble. He obviously didn't believe us, but the instructor came in then. And ... instead of being K, it was A! So, we did the drills, or we started out doing them with the usual repeat, repeat business. Then he asked for translations. The guy who had argued earlier about how great Jorden was, translated into Jorden-speak. A told him to translate into regular English, that no native speaker talks like Jorden writes. I raised my hand to comment that I was having a

real problem with Jorden's translations because they were *literal* translations, not how we really speak. The other student started in on how great that was, and A basically told him to get a life. He explained a little about Jorden's pedagogy, about her not being into actual translations, but producing patterns that we would hear from native speakers of Japanese. The patterns in the book, however, both English and Japanese, were not ones we would probably actually ever hear spoken by native Japanese speakers or native English speakers. The student tried to argue a little more but A told him to back off, sort of. We eventually went on to the utilization drill. A likes to create little mini-situations or dialogs with them--difficult, but more satisfying than just giving out the standard answers.

I talked briefly with A after class, and asked how frustrating it must be to hear us constantly trip over and screw up our Japanese so much. sort of like a piano teacher hearing the student keep hitting the wrong keys, I imagine. He talked about how much time learning Japanese takes, how much dedication, which most students are, unfortunately, unable to give. I was able to talk a little about how difficult the method was for me, how it wasn't meeting my needs. I sort of need to be more motivated, was his answer, but he understood that it's hard for a grad student to do with so many other requirements.

I'm just grateful that I didn't end up with the usual knot in my stomach. It felt like the pressure was off. I screwed up plenty of the drills, but for some reason today it didn't seem to matter. Wish I could be that way more of the time.

12/5

A red letter day! We used authentic material today as part of our reading/writing class! It was great! A brought in an ad from a newspaper about a travel agency, or agency that arranges homestays, and we got to read that. It was one of the most enjoyable classes that I can remember. Even if we (or I) couldn't read all of the ad, I enjoyed so much trying to read and figure out what things said, especially the *katakana* and *kanji*. For me to learn *kanji*, I need to use it and see it over and over, not just once a week, like we do now. I have found myself hardly using *katakana/hiragana/kanji* at all this term when I write, and I used to use it all the time; in fact I couldn't imagine using *romaji* at all. Now I have to almost force myself to write in Japanese script, and I notice my handwriting is getting pretty bad. I used to be so proud of it, too, and was told I had very good writing skills in Japanese (a Chinese man once told me I wrote *kanji* like a native). But no way now.

I wish we used kanji all the time, or at least more instead of all the romaji we use. It would help.

The other great thing today was that I found I wasn't nervous! While the text totally has me rattled, or gets me rattled, I felt no pressure with the authentic materials. I didn't feel like I was performing with it in any way, just using it to learn and experience how Japanese is used in authentic situations. I'm beginning to feel like it's the artificiality of the Jorden method that is so unnerving, like I'm always memorizing a script for some play that I might or might not be called on to perform in. Also, in my case, the knowledge that I won't be going to Japan to live or work kind of keeps all the artificial stuff dry and uninteresting. But since I have lived in Japan, the authentic stuff is so interesting. I've always seen Japanese as a kind of secret code that I want to understand, and that's what has kept it interesting. The Jorden method just doesn't seem like it's giving me any access to "the code." (Although it is, of course.)

12/10

Oh my gosh. The final--it was awful, the oral part, that is. I didn't think the written part was very challenging, but the oral interview sure was. I have never in my life been so nervous about anything. My partner and I had studied for two days prior, gone over notes, practiced, but it was still awful. It's an hour or so later, and my stomach is still in knots. I did not do well.

We were the second group to go in for the interview. We (my partner and I) had practiced introductions, so we went in and began with one of Jorden's highly ritualized and memorized little introductions Both of us were totally nervous, almost shaking. I felt like throwing up. So we were interviewed, had a little conversations with the "visiting," and answered some questions. Somehow I was able to keep going. I think only once I couldn't reply because I didn't understand the question; my partner missed a couple. I talked about the weather, came up with a name when asked, talked about my family, and a bunch of other stuff that is a total blur. I think I also asked some questions as well--I must have. And finally it was over.

J asked if we were nervous. I made some remark about being amazed the chairs weren't or hadn't been rolling all over the floor from our shaking. He then gave us some instant feedback. Her first comment to me was, "Oh, you guys with a history," meaning that I'd learned Japanese elsewhere and not purely from the Jorden method. I was told I had fallen back on too many "tricks" or patterns I had picked up in Japan which were OK, but not entirely correct. My ritual was perfect, though. Great, I was thinking, I can memorize an introduction, but when it comes to actually communicating, I can't do it. What gets my dander up is that I *was* communicating. The conversation kept moving. I was understanding, I was making myself understood, I was not being rude, but I was not being hyper Jorden-polite which is what mattered. I was told I did include new forms and use them properly, but not enough humble-polite or honorific forms. So, I got a mid-range grade, which I assume is a C. It was very frustrating, but it is over, until next term, that is. And, it was just awful. I love learning Japanese, I love the challenge of the language, but not this way. I don't want to learn to speak like some junior OL [office lady] or some gopher in a Japanese firm, because I will be neither. Ever. I need to learn to speak with other students, or Japanese who are my contemporaries, in a way that is polite but not cloying or false. I want to practice all sorts of ways to give and receive information, introductions, not just memorized rituals that don't always work.

My stomach is still in a knot. At least we got to fill out a comment sheet about the course. I suggested more group or pair work, and a greater access to authentic materials. Drills and dialogs are fine, but not all the time.

I am so looking forward to the break . . . .

1/6

Vacation is over. Class began yesterday with a review by O. I felt totally disjointed, out of place, and like I wanted to be anywhere but back in Japanese class again. We did a review of last term's stuff from the end of the first book (which of course I didn't bring). Stuff sort of floated up from the depths of my memory. We also had to do a little writing review, which wasn't too bad, but I was definitely rusty.

We have two new people in class, one from the evening section, and one transferred over from the community college, from M's class! Wonder how the transfer from M's relaxed style to the Jorden method will go? Today was back to the old grind, and along with it came all the old feelings of tension and anxiety. I find my heart starting to pound before class even starts. Today K let us use our books to review. Even using the book, I was having trouble controlling my anxiety. My throat felt like it was closing up. This seems to

be the current manifestation of my anxiety. I could not even read without almost panicking. Everyone else seemed to be reading and pronouncing everything so smoothly, while I felt like I was tripping over every word. I have no idea how I actually sounded.

I really do not want this anxiety to get in the way of getting through this class. Frankly, it's embarrassing. I'm not even taking the class for a grade, I just have to pass, and yet I'm totally obsessed, it seems, with being as perfect as possible. I know part of it comes from the feeling that I have to do well because I lived in Japan and studied Japanese before. But that didn't make me nervous or anxious when I studied at the community college. It's the performance aspect of it now that's really getting to me, the feeling that I'm on stage having to perform in front of a crowd. The minute the instructor starts going around the room my heart pounds, and my throat starts to shut.

I just hope I can keep it from getting worse as the term progresses.

1/7

Today was the first of our lecture classes for the term--pretty relaxed, as usual. We first went over our finals from last term. I got a 65 out of a possible 71 on the written portion (which I find incredible as I was so nervous I could barely read the test, let alone concentrate on writing, grammar, etc.). On the interview section, I got 43 out of 55. It was/is interesting looking at the evaluation form used. The highest score in each section sort of amazes me, and it's no wonder I'm a nervous wreck. I'm "obsessive/compulsive" (as my husband calls me) about my performance and school work, or "intense," as another friend termed it. I always try to do the best, or at least my best, on any endeavor. But the standards for grading on this interview are beyond what I feel someone learning a language can aspire to, or may get someone like me so stressed out and nervous about meeting the standards that they fail to produce what they are capable of producing. For example, under pronunciation, the top score of 5 points is given to someone whose pronunciation is "near-native, natural accent, excellent pronunciation." It seems so unattainable for anyone in the beginning of a second-year program, for people who do not or have not heard Japanese regularly, and who are old enough to where pronunciation, intonation, and articulation factors are pretty much fixed. I feel like if you cold meet those standards you would not or should not be in second year. 4 points are given for "easily understood, few accent pronunciation errors," which seems more reasonable for someone who had listened to Japanese frequently, lived in Japan, etc. I never used to worry about my pronunciation. I had been told in Japan by Japanese that I sounded near-native much of the time (or were they just being polite?) but now I find it's one of the factors that really makes me nervous. Am I pronouncing to Jorden standards? The other standards for the top scores are equally high, and I can't imagine anyone not being so nervous or anxious about performing that they could function at that level. I did the next highest level on each grading portion, but my partner and I had really practiced. Another classmate was told after the interview, "you didn't practice, did you?" She was stunned because she had practiced, but was so nervous and paired with a student who had lived in Japan for many years and who was proficient far beyond the second year level.

I am already dreading this term--memorization begins again this evening.

1/8

I'm not completely sure why, but today's class wasn't as bad as some. Y was instructing today, and I think a great deal of today's pleasantness is his teaching style. If I had to pick an instructor who was the most laid-back, or easygoing, it would be him. For one thing, he doesn't seem to "pick on" people; that is, if someone makes an error, he doesn't seem to make them an example to the whole class. He does correct mistakes, but does it in a gentle style. Today, for example, there was a difficult pronunciation in the CC:

gaichutsuchuu--"away at this time." Rather than let us stumble over it, or have one person struggle with it, making them stand out, before "performing" the CC he went around the room and had everyone practice. And, he also stumbled over the word herself a couple of times which helped to break some of the tension. Y also opened class with a brief period of "free conversation." He asked me what I had done over the holiday, and then invited others in the class to ask me questions. It also helped to reduce tension, as we weren't all led right into the CC (others were also asked what they did over the holiday, and we had a small discussion about movies we had seen). In these classes, warm-ups like these seem to really help, but we don't always get them. After practicing the CC for awhile, with a few permutations, we went on to the drills, but rather than just reading the ones in the book, he had brought a cookbook and worked the drills around it, which made it somewhat more interesting than what Jorden has in the text. He also had us practice leaving a message with either a secretary or an answering machine, which was really helpful for the telephone quiz we have to do this weekend. I was able to try out a pattern I thought was correct only to find out it's completely wrong in Japanese, and was also able to learn the correct way to say what I need to for the quiz.

It was so nice that Y didn't single people out. We all made errors today, but he very gently corrected us, and then moved on. So often, when someone makes a mistake, the other instructors linger over them, keeping them almost in the spotlight, or they have another student give the correct response (which I find humiliating--I would rather it come from the instructor, the native speaker).

1/12

A snowy day at home, which is good because I already need a break from class--after only one week! I hate Japanese class. I can't couch it in any other words. It is all I can do to drag myself out of bed each morning to go over the text, and it is only through sheer force of will that I can or try to memorize those CCs. Jorden either makes me want to scream, or cry, and I move between the two every time I pick up the text or try to study.

I read for a little bit this morning and also found myself becoming quite angry! I mean, here we are reading the most incredibly convoluted and detailed descriptions of grammar, vocabulary, hierarchy, in-groups, out-groups, and so forth and so on, and yet the Japanese is in *romaji*!! We are apparently literate enough to be reading all her detailed explanations, but like children with their native tongue, we supposedly have to learn to speak before we can learn to read and write. Hence the meager opportunities for reading and the almost non-existent opportunities for writing. I haven't spoken with one person in class (OK, that one guy who thinks Jorden descended from the gods) who doesn't think or want to be exposed to more of the Japanese writing system.

Friday's reading and writing session is a joke. We read for the most part excruciatingly easy sentence or phrases with the *kanji* we are learning, and only occasionally do we get the more complicated sentence which we're then required to translate. Some are so obscure as to be ridiculous. [The previous] Friday's was *asa no chichi*, ("morning's father"), which required a five minute explanation. What was the point? It certainly didn't improve either our reading or writing skills. We only get actual writing practice every other week. The impression I get is that the instructor is very bored with all of it, and on top of being not very tolerant or helpful, it's an almost no-win situation.

It's no wonder I'm a nervous wreck in class. I'm an achiever. I try to do my best, and yet I've never felt so much like I'm swimming upstream, that the whole experience is at worst, useless (at best, frustrating). I just hope I can get through this year, that I don't

become so angry and frustrated and nervous that I do something stupid. When I began, I really wanted to succeed, but I'm slowly starting to not care about it all any more.

This journal helps--it calms me down. I don't think I'd be getting through this year if not for the chance to write about it. I'm ready now to go and tackle the CC. I may be back after struggling through it . . . .

1/16

I'm not sure if this feeling I've had recently of not wanting to write [in the journal] is directly related to my frustration and general dislike of my Japanese class or ???? I used to need to run and write about the day's class, how much it bothered me. I needed the release of writing in the journal. Now I'm feeling like I want to forget all about the class as soon as I leave. I don't want anything to remind me of the experience. In class, I feel like I'm just going through the motions. Anything to pass and be done with it. I've lost that drive to do my best, to be the best. Maybe I'm just resigned to the whole ordeal, or maybe I'm finding that third perspective Kramsch writes about. I hope not--it's still not a comfortable place.

Today and yesterday have both been downers. Y taught yesterday, but I hardly got called on at all. I just sat there, my stomach churning, waiting for my turn to "go on." Of course, I couldn't remember any of the drills either which didn't help.

I had spent the earlier part of the week, during the days off because of snow, memorizing the long CC from 13B which of course we didn't do! The CC from lesson 14 was short, stuff I'd used before, but those drills. I mean, I look at them, memorize them, try them out, practice, and then BAM! they're gone. And, it doesn't help when I'm not called on, either. I need more practice speaking. I need to talk, to try stuff out, to be sure of my own ability to communicate, but it's just not happening. It's just canned phrases being spit back out, except that we're being graded on how we spit them out.

Last evening I watched a Japanese film with my daughter. It was wonderful, and I could understand quite a bit. I originally saw the film when I did second year before, and I remember it as being one of the most positive learning experiences I had. Watching the film (a beautifully animated children's film, *Majo no Kyakuubin*, "Kiki's Delivery Service") and putting together the visual images with the language, I was understanding some of it and wanting to know more, not feeling frustrated or bored that I couldn't understand parts of it. I long for those different types of learning experiences, not the solid listen and repeat drills we do now, all this memory work with nothing authentic to back it up.

Today was more of the same with A. He didn't call on me much, so I sat there again today with a churning stomach, waiting for a turn. The one time he did call on me, I got it wrong. I didn't understand what he was saying. Maybe that's why he didn't come back to me. Or maybe he thinks the others need more practice. I'm not sure. I do know my writing is terrible. I pretty much no longer write in Japanese unless I have to for a homework assignment. My writing looks awful where once it used to flow. My reading still seems to be OK; maybe not as sharp as it once was, but I feel like I'm holding my own there at least. I wish we had more board time though, or writing practice.

Will complete the eavesdropping exercises this weekend, as well as do another phone quiz. They don't seem to be so bad. I know I'm going to "perform" so to speak, but it's in private. I don't feel like I'm on stage, and any mistakes I make will be put out for all and any to see and correct.

1/20

I liked today, although I still kept looking at the clock to see when class would be over. And, I never had that terrible anxious feeling in the pit of my stomach as usual, although I did notice I was barely speaking above a whisper when it was my turn to speak.

A new reaction or ???? I think it had something to do with my confidence, of which I had little today. I memorized the CC--it was fairly straightforward and not too long--but still had trouble this morning recalling parts of it. I could if I thought about it long enough, but not quickly like it's supposed to be be performed. The drills--no way. As usual they were almost in and out of my brain instantaneously. I wish they could come up with something more natural. more pleasant, more INTERESTING than those drills.

K at least tries to make the class somewhat interesting. He has us sit in a semi-circle, and starts class with some structured questioning. This morning it was, "Did you eat breakfast?" and "What did you eat?"--sort of an ice breaker. Then he had us take turns doing the CC in front of the class, but structured it more like we were in a restaurant, where one played the waiter, the other or others, the customer(s). He then had the entire class answer questions about the CC using the new forms. It was still performance, but like I said, not too bad. Except for that whisper. I just couldn't make my voice louder. I still found myself leaping in and trying to answer rather than wait to be called on. I just wish I got more chances to speak. I read over the weekend that using group work gives how ever many groups that many more times to speak, to practice. It's a small enough class where the instructors could monitor the groups to make sure Japanese was being spoken, forms were correct, etc.

K also didn't seem to single people out or avoid anyone. I just hate it when someone mispronounces something and the instructor goes around the whole room asking everyone to pronounce it correctly, and then correcting people who are having difficulty, making them do it over and over again. It's so embarrassing, and I don't think anything in that class produces more tension, for me at least. Will I do it correctly? Will I choke? Or will I blow it? Who needs this? It is definitely not confidence-building, even if you do get it right.

I am taking a more "it doesn't matter" attitude this term, not an "I don't care," but something to help me relax more. I have realized, though, that I am learning Japanese. I watched the film *Majo no Kyakuubin* again, and could see how much I understood came from this class. What a miserable way to learn though.

1/22

Boy, today was and is one of those days where I KNOW why I HATE this Jorden method. I am so angry! We got back the results from our first phone quiz, and under the section for pronunciation and delivery I had a point taken off with the comment, "intonation sounds English." Like DUH. I am not a native speaker of Japanese, I will never be a native speaker, and there is no way at this point in my life I am going to sound like a native speaker. The two instructors who are American don't sound like native speakers, although they're close, but they work with native speakers constantly--I DON'T!

The irony of this was that after class I spoke with Y, who when speaking English speaks with HEAVY Japanese intonation. I cannot imagine telling him or grading him on the fact that his intonation sounds Japanese. Is he communicating? Can I understand him? That's what's important. I could have understood a comment about intonation, but to actually take points (or a point) if just B.S. Y told me that he thought we practiced and needed intonation practice so we didn't "fossilize." What a joke! I'm 45 years old--I probably fossilized over 20 years ago! I think that what was really hurtful to me, beyond the obvious idiocy I see in the way this was graded, is that my pronunciation is pretty good and on target. No, I don't sound like a native speaker, but I'm a heck of a lot closer than most. I made one grammatical error (which I knew I had made the minute I hung up the phone) which I also had a point taken off for, even though that could have been covered in the full point requirements. Really picky--almost like you can't really do well.

And as I write, I realize that this is why I have come to loathe this method so much. The object of the Jorden method seems to be to not just have you speak Japanese, but to almost be Japanese. The focus on intonation, the long-winded, excruciatingly detailed grammar explanations, the insistence on explaining every cultural nuance all point to trying to make the student Japanese, or as close to this as possible. Except that we (I) can't be Japanese, EVER. And, I don't want to be Japanese. I just want to learn to communicate in Japanese. That doesn't seem to be enough though for the Jorden method and its proponents.

I am beginning to understand where much of my anxiety stems from. I may have unconsciously known it before, but it's at my conscious level now, and it's that I can't, and will never be able to meet the standards expected from this method. And, for someone like me, who has always put 150-200% into everything, this is so frustrating. I have been knocking myself out, doing my best, AND IT'S NOT AND NEVER WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH. I have been going into class, trying to "perform" at my best; it's no wonder I've been a wreck. But, as I write now, I'm telling myself "no more." The effort, the strain, the anxiety, the frustration just isn't worth it. Not now, anyhow, not at this time in my life. I just have to pass, and that's all I'm going to do.

I'm feeling a little sad, too. Japan and Japanese have been part of my life for over 25 years. My focus has always been on Japan. Despite knowing that I won't get back there to work, I still wanted to learn Japanese, to keep that connection. But not this way. Now it's just something I have to do, to complete my language requirement. It's no longer something I want to do. I feel like crying . . . .

1/26

Didn't go to class last Friday. I find the reading/writing portion to be almost useless. We just read stuff out of the text, only once have we had something authentic to try and figure out. The writing homework was so uninteresting; write a letter and include the information the book tells you to include. BORING.

Today's class didn't go too badly, but I just don't care any more. I did study last night, but still made a lot of mistakes. I really just didn't care though, although I did pay attention to my English-sounding intonation! Didn't attempt to change it, though. No one else is any better or worse than I am. The teacher today was O (I think that's her name). I quite liked him. He's very serious, but very Japanese, very gentle and non-confrontational, or so it seemed. We worked on utilization drills/exercises, and when mistakes were made or pronunciation was poor, he gently corrected it, and did not go around the room having everyone say it. Boy, I have really come to hate that technique. It's almost the most anxiety/tension producing thing the instructors do. My mouth goes dry, my throat shuts each time they start. But O didn't do it. If we made a mistake, he might have someone else do the exercise over, but he also had it done over if there were no mistakes. And, he even tried five minutes of pair practice at the end of class, each of us asking a partner what we did yesterday. It was nice. His style of teaching, combined with a new attitude of just refusing to care so darn much, made for a not-so-bad morning. I only looked at the clock once, towards the very end, whereas with the others I'm constantly checking the time.

It feels good, or better, now, to let go. I really felt awful last week. It's still hard for me though to motivate myself to get up and go to class, to do the work, to even try and remember/learn anything. Things have sure changed since the beginning of the year. How prophetic were the words and attitudes of others who went through this. I wish, in some ways, that I had gone with my gut feeling to not do this, to start over with Chinese.

I'm interested as well to see the results on the next telephone quiz. Maybe tomorrow.

1/27

I'd like to write that it was another day in hell, but it wasn't too bad actually. Still lots of mistakes, but I still don't care. I'm feeling motivated to only do the basic work required to pass. We got our second phone quiz back, and again, there's the note about intonation! Otherwise, a perfect score! I'm not sure what they're trying to say, but the message I'm getting is that unless you're a native speaker, forget it. Merely communicating properly or correctly is not enough, you have to SOUND JAPANESE, LIKE A NATIVE SPEAKER. An impossible quest. I just finished reading an article for another class about the importance of phonology, and it made me quite nervous. It was like reading some underlying philosophy for the Jorden method, that somehow you can not be a successful L2 speaker if you don't pronounce things "correctly," or nearly like a native speaker. If pronunciation gets in the way of communication/understanding, then by all means pronunciation, intonation, and articulation become an issue, but otherwise? I don't think so. It is true however, that NNS [non-native speakers] are judged by their accents, by listeners' attitudes towards their accents, so a move towards more correct pronunciation can be important. I don't know why, but I felt like it's something more sinister, and having had to participate in pronunciation and intonation drills, I can appreciate how difficult and humiliating they can be, especially at my age, level of learning, etc.

They must have gotten the message about pair work in the department because we broke off into pairs again today. The trouble is, no one is used to doing pair work, so it's going to take some time. But I hope they keep it up. I liked the opportunity to try out a pattern with a partner, to have the instructor stop by to check, offer suggestions, and correct me, but not in front of the whole class.

Interesting, my partner today is a product of the same Japanese program I was in at the community college; we both had the same instructor. Like me, she is MISERABLE with the Jorden method and like I was a few years ago, is/was hoping to major in Japanese but now having serious second thoughts about it. I can really understand her pain and frustration, and I'm glad I never came into the program hoping to major. Giving up Japanese as a major was a difficult decision then, painful, and it's still painful to give up goals of learning the language. I wonder if the method would be more suited to another university or college setting? Here at the university, so many are non-traditional students, hold down full time work outside of school, have families, etc. The method requires an immense amount of time for memorization, practice, etc. Might not another way be better suited to the type of students who attend here?

1/29

I didn't go to class today. I've been feeling like I need one morning a week where I don't have to face the drills, the uncertainties, the tension, etc. I need one morning to decompress, so to speak. I find that when I come home after Japanese class, it takes me a while to settle down, to look at other things. I'm so unhappy. I wish I didn't have to take the course at all. I'm only saved by the fact that I don't need a letter grade, I just need to pass. Maybe if I were a getting a letter grade I might be more motivated, but at this point I doubt it. I'd probably just be that much more miserable.

I've been reading on the whole language approach method to teaching, and one of the concepts that struck me (actually jumped off the page at me) was that of safety, of feeling safe in the learning environment. When I read it, I realized right away that I don't feel safe in my Japanese classroom. It doesn't feel safe to use the language, to try things out, to use what I know, to make a mistake because I have no idea what's going to be done with the mistake, or if what I say is going to be criticized, or ignored, or ??? The feeling in class is like being out on a tightrope with no safety net. It's no wonder I'm so anxious all the time.

As I read through some of the whole language approaches and methods, I realized how many things we could be doing that would facilitate learning. Yesterday, for example, J was talking about both libraries and the address system in Japan, and I was able to tell of some of my experience with it (in English). I thought afterwards, though, that that would have made a good writing exercise; or pair exercise, that I could have written about my experiences as best I could, or dictated them to another student, or just shared with another student, and gotten to try and use the language in a way that would have been non-threatening, or at least less threatening or anxiety-producing than having to try and remember memorized lines from a dialog that hold little to no relevance for me. I feel though, that they would have found a way though to grade it as to make it nerve wracking as well.

Took an eavesdropping quiz yesterday as well. I blew it. I had real trouble understanding the native speakers. I'm not quite sure if that was because I really couldn't hear them, or I just don't care any more, or ??? They're weird little exercises, the eavesdropping ones.

1/30

Writing class today was OK. At least we got to practice writing on the board. Lots of mistake from everyone, but we get very little time to practice writing. Several today, including me, asked if we cold do more board work; that it, taking <u>at least</u> five minutes of each class to go to the board for practice and critique. The answer was, unbelievable, "only if we have time." Why can't time be made for this important skill? Also helpful would be seeing more writing in *kanji/hiragana/katakana* versus *romaji* all the time. The [Japanese] instructors write in Japanese on the board and it's helpful. I remember reading an article written by an Indian businessman in Japan about learning Japanese writing, how frustrating it was for him. He said he would study a *kanji* character 50 times, with no results, but the 51st time it sunk in. I remember agreeing with him because I was studying *kanji* at the time, and it was only repeated exposure to a character that helped me to learn it and remember it. But we just don't seem to get that, and it doesn't seem to be expected of us. Also, more "creative" writing experience would be helpful; that is, using what we know to try and create written work. For example, writing letters, stores, memos, etc. instead of the canned stuff we are getting. It's like I'm in a "business Japanese" course. All the writing, all the dialogs, everything seems geared towards conducting business. There doesn't seem to be much effort at conversation.

But am I learning anything? I have to say yes. I have learned new forms, but nothing that I feel is particularly useful (except for passing exams). I don't feel like I'm any closer to being able to converse with anyone in Japanese, nor do I feel motivated by what I've learned to even try and speak Japanese with anyone.

I've seen a change in only one person's motivation since beginning this year, a man who wants to do a year abroad in the Waseda program. He was able to accept that this was the only place he could afford to study Japanese, and if he wanted to go to Japan next year, he would have to succeed. Last term he was ready to quit, but he is really working at it now. But, he's the only one--everyone else just seems to be slogging through, like me.

I wish I could find some reason to get motivated, but I'm not sure I could, at this point, overcome my loathing of the Jorden method.

2/5

I didn't go to class for the last two days because I really did not feel like going. I just couldn't memorize another dialog, or get myself motivated to get up and sit in the class for another round of drill. Monday with O was, as usual, pleasant; he truly is most like the Japanese I studied with in Japan, non-judgmental and to me encouraging. He brought

props, great props actually, to use when doing the dialog which made it a little more fun and a little less nerve wracking. And, the changes he asked for were small. He is very non-threatening, unlike the other instructors, who seem much more hyper and strict, quick to correct. Which makes me wonder if that's how I come across to my students when I teach. Am I that hyper and threatening when I'm instructing? It's something I'm going to have to watch for. I wonder how much the Japanese instructors have picked up from American teaching techniques. Have they perhaps created some twisted blend of the worst of Japanese and American teaching techniques? Whatever it is, it makes me nervous, unable to feel calm or relaxed in class.

Y seemed a little spacy today, and seemed to be babbling at us a lot in Japanese. It was actually kind of fun. I tentatively tried to speak, to tell him why my back was hurting. I'm so rusty, though. It's so hard to try and put together an original sentence, let alone a conversation. I've lost the ability, and more importantly, the confidence to try and communicate. I used to babble all the time in Japanese, the "monitor" was way down. Now it's turned up high. I'm afraid to speak, afraid to make a mistake. I just can't figure out what they're going to or might do with the mistake. Again, it gives me pause to think about how I'll do with my own students. How will I make them feel safe to try to communicate, to keep trying?

Writing class is tomorrow. Wonder how A will be--goofy or in "shark" mode? I looked at the reading tonight and surprisingly didn't have too much trouble. The reading seems to be easy, the writing, impossible. I tried writing a few characters this evening--just horrible. We'll see what tomorrow brings.

2/6

We did not write today. I'm not sure, however, whether I'm feeling relieved or not. I like the opportunity to write, but didn't much care one way or the other today whether we did or not. A seemed to be in a somewhat goofy mood.

The writing text gave a couple of examples today of awkward Japanese, at least that's what A said. One was just flat-out weird, but another gave out a form that was contrary to what we've studied. When linking adjectives (or "adjectivals," as Jorden calls them), the final *i* is dropped and *-kute* is added to the stem. In today's example, the sentence read, *shiroi okii kuruma* ("the big white car"). What we have learned is that it should be *shirokute okii kuruma*. A asked us if we'd learned or studied that form yet. He then said that the example in the book was OK on some occasions, but no indication as to when it would be OK to use it. So what do we do with the information? This is not the first time the writing book has been inconsistent with the text. Also, an example given for a reading for one of the characters is also out-of-date: *akadenwa* ("red telephone"). Red telephones don't exist any more in Japan, but the Jorden text has us learning that. It's like having to know the Japanese for "Soviets" in the text--out of touch.

The artificiality of the readings drives me nuts. It would be so much better to be reading something authentic, with perhaps *furigana* written over the *kanji* we don't know.

Class was very small today. Only seven showed up. Are people seeing the reading/writing day as a waste of time? Everyone wants to write more, but we just spend the time reading Jorden-created sentences, ones that don't even relate to each other. There is no relevant meaning, no relationship to anything fostered or developed.

2/10

K was our instructor today. I will say he make those stupid drills we are supposed to memorize a little more relevant than what's in the text. The ones Jorden has created are just empty and meaningless; K at least relates them to something that could actually be occurring, or something you might actually say. Although O seems the most Japanese; that

is, the least judgmental about our responses (although I think he really is making judgments, but is very good at making you feel like he's not), he still keeps the Jorden drills fairly intact, and as a result, it's BORING! At least now we are working on a form, the comparative which lends itself to more interesting variations. K closed with pair work today, but all we did was ask our partner a question using the comparative. It would have been a bit more engaging if we could have shared our answers with the class.

I have found myself feeling more relaxed in class, mainly through my own efforts, of telling myself not to worry so much. I am trying to volunteer more rather than wait to be called on (although this is only with the CCs, not the drills. I can't seem to ever remember them, no matter how much I practice. They're in and right back out), and I keep telling myself that it's OK to make mistakes, even though it still doesn't feel OK to make them. But the anxiety level is dropping. I think it's because, as my SILL scores indicated, I'm employing more "emotional management" techniques instead of focusing on my other learning strategies. However, I really don't think I'm learning as much as I could. By spending all my time making sure my anxiety filter is down, or as down as possible, I'm taking in and using less.

2/13

The usual joke of a reading/writing class today. What a waste of time. Read canned sentences out of the book, turned in canned sentences written for homework, read a canned "fax' created for the text and answered canned predictable questions. We had about 10 minutes of board work at the end, and the results were predictable--tons of mistakes as no one gets the chance to read or write except for Fridays. We are not exposed to any Japanese texts, authentic or otherwise, except for the terrible text we use for Friday's class. I used to love the challenge of reading and writing, trying to decipher text. It was one of the reasons, in fact, that I studied Japanese. Not just because I lived there, but because I wanted to "know the code." Japanese writing on signs, in magazines, on TV, etc. was like a secret code, and I wanted to know what it all said. I taught myself *hiragana* and *katakana* so I could figure out more, and tried to learn as many *kanji* as I could. I could almost memorize them, then would go look them up to see how they were read. And now this. My writing ability has deteriorated to that of a child. A once said that we should use *kanji* we know so we don't forget it, and yet we're given no chance to see anything outside of the overly-controlled Jorden text.

A's approach also bothered several of my classmates. He laughs at the errors we make, or ridicules them. One student remarked she was glad she didn't have to go to the board a second time. It was too humiliating and made her too nervous. Surprisingly, I was not nervous because I am beyond caring. the whole process does nothing for me one way or another. You can almost feel A's boredom with having to teach us, his lack of real concern whether we learn or not. I can tell he makes others in class more nervous. I'll never forget that comment of his about being a shark, and smelling blood when someone makes an error or is having trouble.

I sense myself being more able to let go, able to detach myself from the learning process, to concentrate on passing the course versus letting my success or failure affect my self-image or self-esteem. I am accepting that I have no future in Japan, and can feel the anger beginning to well up that I'm now stuck in this course for only a language requirement for my degree. I am angry for the time wasted, for the lost time, for the courses I could be taking.

2/18

Will first write about yesterday as I didn't get a chance. K led the class. We mainly worked with a couple of patterns in comparatives and then incorporated them with one of the drills. Boy, I hate those things, but K at least brings in some props (although the same darn ones every time) so we're not using Jorden's completely artificial ones. At the end of the lesson, K had us ask questions of each other, or at least try to. No one seemed to be able to come up with much of anything for anyone, and at one point K said in a somewhat frustrated tone, "Come on, you guys are in second year" (spoken in Japanese, of course!). The irony of course is that we've been so restricted to memorizing that give a first chance at "free conversation" no one knew what to do. It was sort of like being pushed out on stage with a spotlight on you. You can sing in the shower, or in class, but are suddenly asked to perform solo without any accompaniment.

After class I went to talk with J about my grade so far. I've gotten 87%--just about an A, and he teased me and wanted to know if I didn't want the grade after all. NO WAY! I talked with him about motivation, that it's somewhat of a struggle for me, and that I'm in a kind of transition period now as I give up my unrealistic dreams of going back to Japan, so why am I still studying Japanese? But, I still need and want to do well, and frankly, still have a love for the language and culture. He commented that I'm the over-achiever type, which I find interesting. I certainly don't view myself in this setting as an overachiever; rather as being very lazy and angry, and yet the perception is one of trying hard. It is helpful to be able to talk with J in English about how I'm doing, and it helps to relieve much of the anxiety I still carry from time to time. I'm feeling less anxious all the time, though. I do care about how I do, but am feeling more self-assured about what I do and how well I do it.

And then today: J polled the class to find out how we felt about the daily grading. No one likes it, but there doesn't seem to be a better alternative other than the instructors trying to be more consistent. It was helpful, I think, for many of us to be able to voice our concerns about grading standards and anxieties (two of us brought up incidents of missing something or making a mistake, and then the instructor never calling on us again, and how humiliating that felt). One student was quite vocal about A's tactics in writing class, and that he [the student] doesn't bother to come any more because of the treatment/disdain A shows students. It's hard to speak out like that, but I'm glad someone did! Will there be changes? Who knows?

I'm feeling less anxious, less angry all the time, and more resigned, I guess. I feel like I'm moving into a new place with this class and method. Much of it has come from making myself "let it go," reminding myself that I'm not stupid, and that this teaching method is just a poor match for my learning style.

2/19

The class today started off weird because one other student and I did not get our telephone quizzes back while everyone else did! It was kind of frustrating and upsetting, and initially I was pretty angry, especially as we have another one coming up this weekend. But after I calmed down somewhat I realized I could do the whole exercise over again easily, that it was more the inconvenience of having to do it again that bothered me. I'll email J and see what he wants me to do....

Class today was boring. Y had props, but we still just did the same old boring drills. Boy, I HATE them--it's a real effort to get up in the morning and go to class knowing all I'm going to do is repeat stuff which has NO meaning to me, no relevance to me. J talked yesterday about some of the cultural underpinnings of the Jorden method, how Japanese language and culture are so different from American/English language culture, that the

learning situations needed to be Japanese, or structured in a Japanese way so that we are learning culture along with language. I hope I have that right--it made sense when she said it, and yet it doesn't make me feel any more warmly towards the Jorden method, or any more inclined to do more/better, etc. The method is just so much grammar/translation, with no real relevance to anyone's real life, and at the stage we're at, the level we're at, we should be working on communication (in my humble opinion). A friend who has lived in Japan for many years, and who did the Jorden method told me the other day, "it's rich people's Japanese," and I have to agree. And, as for the cultural aspect, considering that we're learning in an American university/classroom setting, and not in Japan, the cultural aspect should be far more explicit, or dropped, or something. I like the cultural stuff, but when paired with language learning, I'd like it more explicit. I'm struggling too much in this method with grammar points, translations, etc. to be trying to cope with or trying to grasp the subtleties of Japanese culture in this setting.

My motivation to finish remains strong, and in spite of accepting that I'll probably never make it back to Japan to teach, I also know and accept that I do love the language and culture, that it's an important part of who I am and where I've been. Have I learned anything, am I learning anything? I'm not sure any more--maybe it's all acquired stuff floating to the surface. But the anxiety is gone--I've been able to let go of much of that and get on with it, doing what I have to do to finish.

A small admission. I have secretly be toying with continuing on after the required one term of third year. It's only a thought now, a "why not?", but I can't quite figure out why I'm thinking about this at all.

2/20

We saw a "kinder, gentler" A today. Don't know whether J spoke to him or not, but he was more positive than usual. Still, all we did was read stuff out of our "new" book. It is so boring--no writing practice. I am not having much trouble with the reading at all--did I "acquire" these *kanji* earlier? For all the trouble I'm having memorizing the dialogs and drills, the *kanji* for the most part sticks in my brain. Maybe it's the visual nature of reading, I don't know. I find it interesting though that I enjoy doing this so much, canned as it is, although when we lived in Japan I spent a great deal of my time trying to "read" and decipher every bit of writing I saw. I absolutely loved it when I could "crack the code" because that's what Japanese seemed like to me--a secret code. I think that reading requires me to use my stronger and preferred learning strategies, i.e. deductive reasoning, relying on and integrating information I already know, rather than depending on my memory which is how the speaking and listening sections operate.

We also once again talked about Jorden-ese, her "translations" of the Japanese. A said she was "brilliant" in that her method showed that just translating from English didn't make it, that Japanese was so different, and that her English "translations" gave a better feel for the Japanese language (again, I'm paraphrasing and hoping I got this right). I guess what bothers me so much is that if this is the case, why have translations at all? I would much rather never see any any English than to see the Jorden-ese. It is so awkward, and as a native speaker of English, I do spend time translating her English into that of a native speaker--I don't think it can be helped. I think that most of us could grasp the differences in structure if a more accurate, native-like English translation were given. As it is, I know I often fail to get the gist of what the CC or drill is saying or its meaning or pattern in Japanese.

A also said that realistically, most people who learn Japanese end up as translators, and so accurate, native-like translations would be far more practical.

This is where this whole Jorden methodology gets me--who is this language for? Who can really benefit from this course? I think that many who might have enjoyed learning Japanese, and might have wanted to try to understand Japanese culture are really put off by this method. I know I would have been, and I am grateful for the other learning opportunities I had. Jorden method-Japanese is "beltway Japanese." Without my previous learning experiences I doubt that I would be able to go on with this course.

2/23

For such an easy CC, I had a terrible time doing it (performing?) in class. I just couldn't seem to get the words to come out! And, last night, when I practiced at home, the words just tripped off my tongue. There is just something about memorizing something and having to spit it back out. M substituted different items into the drill (comparing three or more items) but nothing made it any easier. And, I wasn't the only one having problems. Everyone seemed to be tripping over it.

O also had us do pair work, and we did a "taste test," or "consumer survey" which was actually interesting, the first time we've ever done anything like this! He had us taste 3 different flavors of crackers, and then we had to report which we like best, which one we didn't like, and which one was OK, but not the preferred flavor. This kind of activity really reminded me of the the ones we did before, where we actually used the language, although in this case we sure didn't deviate much from the CC. Still, there was a purpose to the activity! For our pair work, we were each given a topic, and then surveyed a couple of other people in the class! Again, it stuck right to the CC format, but it was nice to get up and try out the conversation one-on-one, without having the whole class listening. I'm still terrified somewhat when I have to "perform" in class, but I'm not having those major physical reactions I did earlier. The longer the class is together, the easier it's getting. I don't feel either like I have to prove anything, either to myself or the others, which I know was a big issue for me at the beginning of the year.

With all that I'm learning in my methods class, I'm better able to and doing a lot more self-assessment of my abilities in Japanese. I feel in some ways that there's an aptitude thing going on; that there's only so far I can go with this. But, there's also a motivational aspect as well, and coupled with my dislike of the Jorden method, I think it's been holding me back as well. I made tons of errors with my Japanese when I lived in Japan and when I did second year before, but it didn't matter. It was expected that I would make mistakes, and it felt safe to do so. It still doesn't feel safe in this class. And, in Japan, I was of course immersed in Japanese, and in my last class all texts were in Japanese, still an immersion of sorts. Here and now I feel totally detached from Japanese, like it's almost something I'm not worthy of interacting with except for the parcels Jorden dishes out. I need the literal and visual stimulation to learn, to be motivated to learn, that this class just doesn't provide. For example, I found myself today, when O passed out examples from Japanese magazines to use for one of the drills, getting so caught up in trying to read what I could on the page that I don't think I would have heard him call my name, if he had. I was oblivious to everything around me, I became so immersed in the language on the page, wanting to figure out as much as I could. It was wonderful! I know it wouldn't and didn't help me speak Japanese, but for a short while the desire was there!

2/24

All the while during class today all I kept thinking about was that the instructor, K, must be going out of his mind with us. Nobody was quick on the uptake today, and almost one-half of the class didn't show up. But, it's a first for me, that I could actually empathize with the instructor!

It almost didn't feel like a Jorden method day today. I've thought about why and one of the reasons is that although we had to memorize the CC, the patterns necessary for the drills were written on the board--IN JAPANESE--and as a result instead of wracking my brain to recall one of 5 (!) drill patterns for today, I could instead think of which pattern might work with what language/words. It has been the memory-centeredness of this method that has bothered me so much, and yet today, while I still had to rely on memory to create a full utterance or maintain discourse, all the pressure was off. This brings me again to why the class didn't feel like the Jorden method of before, that this is how I learned before. We had to memorize dialogs before, but the focus was not on the perfectly memorized patterns, but on how we could use those patterns. It was OK to look back at the pattern if you needed to, OK to be prompted. In other words, it was OK to make a mistake, to not know right then exactly how to say a canned response. And, it was OK to fall back on what you did know, to see how previous knowledge fit into the new patterns, to try out new stuff to see if it worked. And that's how I learn best--I have needed that freedom to go beyond the tight boundaries of the Jorden method, and today we got the chance!

Interestingly, though, I tried out a pattern (verb + being able), but was told that it was a fourth-year pattern so I couldn't use it! So, I guess there are still boundaries I'm not supposed to cross. I learned this pattern when I lived in Japan, and was trying it out again today to see if I could still use it correctly. But, there was that gentle slap on the hand, the "you're not ready yet" rather than a correction and a "you don't need to worry about that form yet." In my earlier class the instructor would have let me use it, from the standpoint that if I don't, I'm going to lose it. There's none of that with the Jorden method. Using what you knew before if it has not been taught yet in the Jorden method is not allowed! It's like boot camp--we're being molded into perfect Jorden-method Japanese speakers, with our selves being broken down and reshaped according to Jorden rules. I can accept the need or desire for restructuring in a military setting, but now with a language, even one as radically different as Japanese. I know there's the whole cultural element that's being taught, but it's Jorden's perception of Japanese culture, and the segment of Japanese society she is directing us towards. That's why I wish we'd focus more on communication as in any society, culture is multilayered.

2/26

Didn't write yesterday, although I should have. I just didn't feel well.

Yesterday was one of those days that always seem to occur just when I start to think that I could get along with the Jorden method, just when I'm starting to feel positive about learning something. Yesterday was our "culture" day, for lack of a better term for it. The first thing that was gone over was the scoring on the telephone quiz that we did before this last one. One of the items which accounted for one-half point being taken off was whether or not you asked if it was the person to whom you were to leave the message. I was a little incredulous as that person had identified themselves on the recording! I mean, if the answering machine says, "This is X" do we really need to ask "is this X?" before we leave a message? Why would anyone leave a message if they weren't sure? But more interesting, and frustrating, and what made me angry was, how in the heck were we supposed to know this? We've had one or two sections on telephoning in Japanese, and one short CC on leaving a message, and this was not covered. This is where Jorden's view, and that of the upper-class Japanese who teach and grade us, really rubs against me, and my whole learning process right now. Just who do they want me to be, who do they think I'll be talking to, and why do I have to sound like a native speaker? Stuff like this just causes me to shut down.

After that, we did some "eavesdropping" exercises from the end of Chapter 15. Give me a break. First, the tape recording quality is poor; second, the native speakers are speaking at a rate that any FL student at our level should not be expected to completely grasp; third, most, if not all, of the conversations are irrelevant to my needs and experience; fourth, why am I eavesdropping in the first place and why do I care what the people next to me are saying; and fifth and finally, in a real situation, if I didn't understand something, I could ask for them to speak slowly, use a confirmation request, or use some other means to understand what was being said. I hear Japanese about [seven] hours a week, probably a little less, and yet these little conversations we're supposed to eavesdrop on assume hours of listening time, and a familiarity with Japanese that just isn't available in this setting. If I was shutting down before the eavesdropping portion of yesterday's class, by the end of it I was completely turned off. Here I had been so happy to feel like we were finally communicating in Japanese and then all this.

The homework and reading I did for tomorrow also helped to hammer in another nail of discontent. Reading some memo about representatives from the American and French embassies showing up at a meeting holds real relevance to me....

2/27

A typical Friday morning reading and writing class, ending with us going to the board and trying to write and remember *kanji*. I have absolutely no short-term memory, and in trying to write invariable leave out one of the *kanji* characters. But I'm not alone--the whole group is in the same boat. We've asked for more practice, but so far it hasn't come about. Even just to see more writing would be helpful, to read our lessons in Japanese.

I didn't go to class yesterday. I felt physically awful Wednesday evening, sick enough not to feel like memorizing drills and a CC, but I have come to need to have a day off each week, a day to detach and decompress from the method. I have feeling quite down about all my studies, and for the past month have seriously contemplated quitting the [MA TESOL] program, taking the TESOL certificate instead of finishing the MA and just getting out. It's been very difficult for me to figure out why, because I have always enjoyed school, studying, doing research. I knew and have accepted that this year would be different with the addition of K to our family, that it would be harder to find time to study, to remain focused, but that isn't what has been eating at me. After some reflection last night, I see that my Japanese class has very much affected how I see myself as a student and how I judge my ability to succeed. I'm told I'm doing well in the class, but I don't feel like I'm doing well, I don't feel like I'm accomplishing anything or really learning anything. I frankly just don't know how or what I'm doing, why I'm doing it; all I know is that I'm doing something. I feel totally disconnected from all I know about myself as a student, and have come to doubt my abilities not just in Japanese but in my linguistics classes as well, a place where I've always felt grounded. I have began to wonder if this disorientation, at least for Japanese, is part of the process of the method, like boot camp, where I'm being broken down to be rebuilt as a culturally competent Japanese speaker, but one based on Jorden's view of what that means. All I know is that I'm feeling very disconnected from myself, and I don't like the effect it's having on me overall as a student. My self-esteem seems non-existent at this point. I'm almost daily having to reassure myself of my capabilities, and give myself pep talks to keep on track and finish. And I still have two more terms to go!

As I've written in this journal, and as I go through the course, I'm coming to see that my focus has become not so much learning Japanese any more, but surviving the method, and the method is the focus of this course, that's for sure.

3/2

I was totally bored in class today. Drill, drill, drill, and once again with that totally decontextualized stuff right out of the book. O is very Japanese, and where I once liked it (in comparison to the others) I now find it dull. Is there anything to like about the course? I should like it, it "fits" supposedly to my learning style, and yet I'm miserable. I know one of the things I hate is that we can only use what Jorden has given us so far. There's no "scouting," no experimentation. I miss being able to look up a new word in the dictionary or to look or try to understand a form in my Dictionary of Japanese Grammar, which was so helpful before. My dictionaries now sit gathering dust.... I also completely dislike the decontextualization of everything. There are so many ways we could be learning this stuff that would be interesting and exciting, but instead I'm listening to people speaking rapidly as they choose meat. I feel so stifled. Oh well.... I keep trying to figure out how I can get out of third term, second year, but there's no way. I'll never make it through that term of third year.

But I did get a five on one of my phone quizzes!!!!! I am a Buddha! or at least for one brief moment I reached Nirvana. There were no remarks on my feedback, just "5" circled letting me know that I sounded like a native speaker. Oh, wow! Of course on my other quiz there was the usual "you sound English, intonation on ~~ sounds English." But for a brief moment I was at the summit (to confuse metaphors).

I got a 18.5 and a 17.5 out of 20 on the two quizzes--good marks--but why don't I feel like I'm doing well? I have absolutely no confidence in my abilities in Japanese; it's like I've never studied it before in my life, or been exposed to it. I find it puzzling--I can usually accept and take pride when I'm doing well, BUT NOT IN THIS COURSE! I'm not sure either why that is, except that my self-confidence has been totally destroyed by the method and its demands, even though I'm still able to produce. But I'm used to producing well, and knowing I'm producing well, speaking well, interacting well, and it's just not happening here. I've found the physical manifestations of my anxiety have departed, but I know they're still lurking below the surface. I wonder if they'll reappear next term when I move to another group. With the group I'm with now, I'm not so afraid to make an error or not know--we're all in the same boat.

Only eight people showed up for class today. One I know has dropped; another seems to only show up on Fridays. Out of a beginning class of [around] 20, only 12 remain, and of that only eight regularly show up. Almost all are counting the days until the end of second year. Only two others plus myself plan to go on. There'll probably be only six or seven of us next year.

3/3

Tuesday, so we had K. Didn't think many would show up for class, but by the time we started nine were there. The same core group as always. I guess I should describe the "core group." C-san is young, tries real hard and does well, but can't wait for the year to be over. Say's he burned out now. He came into our morning class from the evening class. V-san is 18, makes lots of mistakes, but really tries. He was my partner for last term's exam, and looking back was a good one (although we won't be working together this term). He announced today that he plans to minor in Japanese. B-san is also 18 or 19, was a whiz in Japanese in high school and tested into third year, but decided to "beef up" with second year. He's probably thinking he made a big mistake now. He used to be consistent about showing up, but is missing classes frequently these days. He's always well prepared--really knows his stuff. He'll be my partner for this term's final--I need some bolstering. B-san, like me, took second year at the community college, and is miserable now, but says she plans on continuing with her plan to major in Japanese. I think she and V-san will be the only two

continuing on with me next year. B-san and I commiserate [together] every morning. L-san, who usually sits behind me, is Korean, and her pronunciation is quite good. Like the rest of us though, she struggles with the grammar. She's very quiet and stoic--no one knows if she'll be taking third year. She works very hard with the method--takes copious notes, etc. She's always drilling when I come into class. H is very giggly, not serious about anything. She only intermittently shows up for class (two-three days/week only) and says she's counting the days till second year is over. W-san is an older returning student like myself, and she struggles with Japanese. I would have quit long ago, but she keeps coming back time after time. Her pronunciation is awful, she can't seem to get out a whole sentence, but I really admire her sometimes for trying. The instructors always give her plenty of chances, too. She mentioned something about third year today. She's majoring in International Studies, gets straight As in everything else. She's said she often feels like a trained seal [in Japanese class]. Sometimes it's painful to listen to her, sometimes I just wish she'd quit, but I also admire her for sticking with it even though it's incredibly difficult for her. C-san is a young banker/business type--very cool and has been to Japan (only a couple of us have). If I had to pick someone I knew the least it would be him. He almost always comes with S-san, but she hasn't been there the last couple of days--don't know if she's sick or dropped. C-san knows his stuff and volunteers quite a bit more than the rest of us. Two others, R-san and D-san, show up very intermittently. I'm always surprised to see them, but they may be going to the evening section.

K put the drill patterns on the board again, but they didn't help much. We were doing some incredibly complex sentence patterns, some with four clauses, and everyone was having a great deal of trouble, not only with structure, but with pronunciation, tense, etc. I found that I was still trying to process one group of clauses, but he would move on to the next group, and I ended up totally lost and frustrated. Wonder what he thought of us? Still, he's the most communicative of all the instructors.

Listening exam tomorrow. This time I have the answers and will listen to the tape before I go to sleep so hopefully will do OK. My score counts twice because I missed the last quiz.

3/4

The eavesdropping quiz went pretty well today, I think. You never know until you get them back. It was so helpful to have done the eavesdropping before the quiz and most importantly known the answers, to know if you were hearing things correctly or were way off base. So . . . I'll just have to wait and see.

I'm on an upswing again, feeling like I'm not doing too badly, feeling like I'm gaining control of my learning instead of the other way around. I don't think it's going to last, but at least now, after almost two terms of this, I can have these periods of hopefulness instead of the constant despair I was dealing with before. I can't believe, though, the amount of reflection that I've spent, the reassessing of my goals, the self-reassuring I've had to do in order to maintain my ability to continue. In many ways it's been a good thing to have to do all this self-reflection; I don't think I'll ever teach without thinking about whether or not I'm considering my students' learning styles, spending at least some of the time on activities/learning activities which "fit" different learning styles.

I wonder how much, too, of my difficulties this term have to do with language aptitude. Am I one of those "terminal twos" F talks about (actually more like a "terminal .7" or something). I really would like to take one of those aptitude tests, but I'm not sure I want to find out I have no aptitude, or that I have a high aptitude. Finding out I have a mediocre aptitude would be just about right. Then I can't blame myself too much as I just don't have much of an aptitude, and can't blame the method too much either--I haven't

much of an aptitude. I think if I found I had a high aptitude I'd be pretty mad--sort of like when I was getting Ds in algebra in high school, but testing in the 99th percentile. It was the teaching, but I had wasted almost a full year and killed my GPA.

There's too much going on here. Lots for me to figure out on why this just isn't working for me. I know too [that] the more miserable I am, the less inclined I am to perform, to want to learn. But, it can't totally be the method, either. Others have persevered and become fluent speakers, or at least competent, comprehensible speakers of Japanese. Maybe you just have to be willing to surrender your will to the Jorden method in order to succeed, but I just can't do that.

More drills to work with for tomorrow, oh joy. I'm afraid to look at them. Also some utilization questions. They're not too bad except for having to say exactly what Jorden wants you to say. Oh, for some room to move . . . .

Oh yes, interestingly, several from the evening section were there this morning to retake the eavesdropping quiz, an option not readily available to us in the morning section. We've been told we get things quicker and better than the evening group. I'll find out next term if it's true . . . .

3/16

Well, today was the final. I was no where near as nervous as I was for the first term's final when I thought I'd about die . . . . I had not been to class for over a week due to my daughter's chicken pox, but had studied a lot, and had one practice session with my interview partner. My partner is (was?) probably the top student in class, which made working out the "dialogue" fairly easy and helped me feel much more confident. Interestingly, he will not be back next term. He has had enough of the Jorden method and doesn't think it's doing anything for him.

The written part of the test was actually more difficult than the oral part because it covered material from Chapter 16, which I missed last week, and I had concentrated on Chapters 13-15. Questions in those areas I felt pretty comfortable with, but overall I didn't do well. Of course that made me feel <u>really</u> nervous about the interview section; I mean, if I couldn't do the written part which I had really prepared for . . . .

We had to wait out in the hall for about 10 or so minutes before we went in for our interview. My partner and I chatted, talked with another interview pair, and somehow I got myself calmed down to where I just didn't feel too bad walking in. I sort of took an attitude of the interview being like getting a shot at the doctor's--it's going to hurt for a few minutes, but then it will be over. And besides, my life isn't hanging in the balance over whether or not I'm <u>perfect</u> in the interview (although I'd love to be). The interviewee was K, who can make me nervous, but my partner and I just went in and said what we'd practiced, and kept it going. The only really bad part for me was when we got to the *moo* and *mada* questions. My brain just dumped and I just had to say, "I forget, I'm sorry." I did, surprisingly, get the part about closing the window, which was from Chapter 16. My partner had told me that we might get a question about it, and I had asked him if he could handle it, but when the question came, he didn't understand it. So, I jumped in! I kind of surprised myself that I knew what to say.

We had to answer one "utilization" question, which I guess I did OK on. This was the one area which was <u>really</u> scary as we were told we would be getting a question based on one of 60+ utilizations from Chapters 13, 14, or 15. Yes, 60+! I'm still angry when I think about it--studying and reviewing <u>all</u> of those questions about drove me blind, all because I was going to get <u>one</u> of them. In fact, I think I was <u>more</u> nervous about this question that any other part of the exam.

Of course, the first review I got was again, "Oh you people with a history. You are still using all those habits you picked up." I said I was just trying to keep the conversation going--it's so I can keep on track, but I hate that the exam pigeonholes everything. We're pretty much told every thing we're going to say, times, etc. There's no room for creativity. Oh well, it's over until next term.

4/1

I didn't get a chance to write following class last night. It was too hectic at home. I can tell I'm going to like the evening class. Much more relaxed than the morning group, more laid back, more rapport between students, it seems. There are a couple of adult students who are taking the class for personal fulfillment--one's a doctor, the other a woman married to a Japanese man who is apparently "relearning" Japanese. They seem to sort of set the tone for the class. We started out with Y, then J, and finished with K. Lots of joking around--just a different atmosphere altogether. Will I learn to like this class? Mornings were awful. Everyone was glum, especially me, and there wasn't the interaction I saw and felt last night. We sort of reviewed Chapter 16A last night, and as I missed that week it was all new to me, but I hung in there and seemed to be getting it by the end of the evening. We're working on transitives and intransitives. Always a big pain, but I was sort of getting it. We also had to introduce ourselves--twice--and tell what we did over the holiday. All I did was stay home and play with [my daughter], so not much to say, or very interesting. I kept getting the words for daughter and son mixed up, too, so I'm sure everyone was totally confused as to who I was talking about.

This morning I stopped by to see J to get a description or descriptor (?) for the Japanese program. We finally settled on Class-4! He gave me a handout on different languages, which the Foreign Service Institute has divided into four levels based on how difficult they are to learn. There are only four Class-4s: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean are three of them. So there's one reason I'm having so much trouble! J told me I got an A last term--I was surprised to say the least. I told him that it sure didn't feel like I was doing A work, but I was, I guess. I did well on the final, a 43.5 out of 55 on the interview, and and 41.5 out of 45 on the written (the ones I couldn't answer were thrown out for everyone). He and I talked a bit about what's going on, my self-expectations, the method, and he really surprised me by telling me I might consider getting the Japanese teaching certificate. That blew me away--I see myself a such a novice, and yet here I was being told that this was something I could do.

So what's going on? I really have to think about this, about Japanese, about going on. I do like Japanese, and despite the struggle, I am learning, but I still have NO confidence in myself, a low self-esteem when it comes to Japanese. there's still tons I don't like about the Jorden method, and yet I'm determined to make peace with it, to get the most out of it that I can. I don't think I'll ever get used to those drills, though, or the eavesdropping exercises, but I do want to go on.

Also ran into A and chatted with him. He told me "never say never" about getting back to Japan . . . do I dare dream?

4/3

Again I'm writing the morning after. By the time I get home from class at around 9 pm, I'm exhausted, plus there's my daughter who's up and about. I know I should write as soon as I finish class, or as soon as possible, but for this term, this looks to be it.

Class last night was very enjoyable, although I was very tired by the end of it. I had R for the first time as an instructor--WOW! Very upbeat, very positive, but also very in-your-face. Probably the most "western" of all the teachers so far. But I like his style. I was prepared, too. The CC we had to know was LONG, but logical, so was in a way easier for

me to retain. One of the things I found enjoyable about R's technique was that if you couldn't remember the CC exactly, but could think of another way to say it, that was OK (even encouraged a couple of times). I did learn a couple of new ways to say things. I'm finding that if I can concentrate on a couple of things from the lesson I can remember them better, rather than letting everything wash over me trying to take it all in, which is what I was doing before.

The writing section was OK, too, although I was having difficulty reading by the end of the class as my eyes weren't focusing, and my brain was shutting down. I spent over an hour before class reading this week's lesson, and felt I understood most of the sentences, and yet when I was called on to translate, it was if I'd just read the sentence in Greek. There were a couple of really difficult sentences in the chapter assigned for last night, but no one got them. Reading *kanji* is going OK, but writing is still difficult, and we won't even talk about speaking and listening.

But, I feel a big change in my attitude toward the class. A couple of weeks ago, even last week I might have said that I had finally come to accept that I have to take this, so why not just go along for the ride and get the most out of it that I can. But there's something else, too, and it's that I still want to learn Japanese; I still want to succeed at learning the speak, read, write, and understand this language. I don't think I could have said that last term, and definitely not first term. And, if the Jorden method is the one means available to me at this time to learn it, then so be it--the end to me far outweighs the means.

I've been thinking a great deal as well about the culture of this language method. I know the Jorden method is teaching culture, but I think all along I've wanted it to teach culture in a way I'm comfortable with, but I'm beginning to think about how realistic that is. When I teach English, when I will teach English in the future, will I adapt my class completely to a way so that my students feel comfortable, or will I be creating a classroom culture that is teaching American culture along with English? This is really an emotional time right now for me, to understand that what I've been experiencing is culture shock, and going through a period of adaptation. It's been so hard to take stock of myself, my reactions, but it's great to realize that I do still love and want to know Japanese. And, I still want to go back to Japan, to work and study. As long as possible I'm going to let myself dream, to hope that I can go back. And, I want to be as prepared as possible, to be a speaker of Japanese.

4/4

Didn't have class today, but did participate as a volunteer in a workshop on proficiency interviews for high school teachers of Japanese. We were promised full credit on a 20-point quiz if we participated, so I volunteered. We were scheduled for three different interviews, and all stuck to the same format. The interviews were videotaped and in all three cases (for me at least) the interviewer was a native speaker of Japanese. I was asked first to hold up a name card for the video camera (sort of like having a prison photo taken), and then each time asked (in Japanese) what year student I was. No problem there. There were two rows of cards in front of the interviewer, and each time I was asked to randomly pull out a card (3x) and answer questions on it. After answering the questions, I was asked to choose a card to do a role play. Interestingly I picked the same role play all three times. The role play was to be done as if you were speaking with a friend.

So how do I think I did? I don't know how to assess my abilities any more. Used lots of masu/desu forms--never once used any of the *keigo* forms we've studied. They just don't come naturally to me. Sometimes I had to wrack my brain to remember what a word meant, other times I just had to flat-out say I couldn't remember or didn't know. Once, they asked a question about my son and until I realized they had not asked me about my

daughter I was waxing eloquent about her. Whoops! But, I was able to apologize and change my answer. The role plays were difficult. For all three I had to discuss a party, what food to buy, what to do. I never was able to use the more direct forms one might use with a friend. I stuck to those masu/desu forms, and struggled for things to say. The interviewer also put the role play back in my lap which was frustrating. I was doing all the work. Oh yes, once I had to order at a restaurant. We just finished doing that in class, yet I could remember nothing. Asked and said some real basic stuff, and then sat there. I knew they were expecting more, but I didn't have it.

The most interesting aspect of the whole experience, to me at least, was that I wasn't really very nervous, in spite of the fact that there were six-eight native speakers observing me, and one time, one of the observers was one of my instructors. I just went in and did the best I could. I have been reassessing my abilities lately after getting what were As in the past term terms, and have decided not to be so hard on myself. I don't know why my expectations have been so high. I have been expecting myself to be almost fluent, and feeling very stupid because I just don't get it and can't remember stuff most of the time. I am now craving opportunities to hear Japanese more, not to have to produce so much, but just listen to understand how what I'm learning is being used, in what contexts, etc. Of course the big fantasy is to be back in Japan, to have to be totally contextualized, to have to listen and speak. I don want to continue on, though.

The teachers in each of the three rooms applauded when I finished, but I don't know if I did well or if they were just being polite, being very Japanese. O, who was present at the last interview, told me I did very well, but again . . . .

Of course, I though of the correct or a better way to have answered the questions while I was driving home, and am thinking of some even as I write (like why didn't I use *osokute* when I arrived late at the last interview, and apologize). Production is still not natural, it is still such an effort. But at least I can produce something.

4/7

Great class tonight. I didn't feel like going because I've been suffering from food poisoning but decided I ought to go because I won't be there Thursday because of it being Holy Thursday. But it went great. Y started off. We worked on drill, which of course I couldn't remember even though I'd studied them and worked with them. My memory is just hot. The minute I have to focus on anything other than the drill, my brain just dumps. It doesn't make any difference how long I study, or how short the interval between study and review, if I leave the drills for a moment they're gone. Plus, they're just dead. Just reading and repeating the does nothing for me. Maybe that's why I can't remember. It's not until the instructors write them on the board or put them into meaningful dialogues or exercises that I can begin to grasp what's going on, and they begin to stick.. K's use of the drills was great. He took one character, several actions or occurrences, then had us work with a time line as to whether it was occurring, had occurred but was finished, or had been occurring, but was finished just now. The whole class got involved, we all were helping each other out. I made tons of mistakes, but didn't feel shut down or shut out. EVERYONE was making a ton of errors. The evening class seems so relaxed compared to the morning class. Even the teachers seem more laid back, they laugh with us over our errors. I don't feel they're so critical.

In the middle, we all took the Japanese proficiency exam for the SAT. Took 45 minutes, and we all thought we did OK, but everyone missed way more than half. I only got 19 correct out of 56, and I know I did better than that. All had the same reaction. They couldn't believe they'd missed as many as they had. Our hypothesis was that we were provided with the wrong answer key.

I'm feeling so much more positive about learning Japanese, but I'm still trying to figure out why? I know it's not just that I understand some of the "whys" of the method; something else has changed as well. I'm learning, enjoying the challenge. Why now? I'm also tired . . . more later.

4/15

I enjoyed class last night. Boy, it's fun to write that! Y's part was OK, but he, more than the others, sticks to the drills, sticks to the vocabulary, which at times is irrelevant or weird (why do I need to know the word for missionary right now, or carpenter--aren't those words I could look up if I needed them?). K takes the drill, the pattern, and makes them interesting, and builds on them. Sometimes I don't get where he's going, but I did last night. We're working on verbs of giving and receiving, which I guess are very important in Japan, and really reinforce the hierarchical structure of the language. Which one you use depends on who's giving, who's receiving, and their relationship to you. It's complicated, but I like that I get it! Now if I can just remember them, which is the usual problem. K and I spoke after class for a few minutes about how I felt about the program. Had it changed? I think it has, it's more communicative than when I started, which I like. I'm doing more, creating more rather than just spitting back stuff out of the book, but I've changed too. That's what I'm realizing these days. I saw where I wrote the last time that something else besides knowing the "whys" of the method had changed, but I'm realizing that it's me who's changed, who seems to have found a Japanese voice, or at least the beginnings of one. I've been having all these little epiphanies lately, little lights going on where a piece of the experience is suddenly illuminated. It's sort of like things being in a shadow, dark and indeterminate, and suddenly a light is turned on overhead spotlighting that area so you can see what it really is, rather than what you imagined. And so far there have been no monsters lurking in the corners; there really were things there that I just couldn't see clearly.

What has changed, I realized, is that I have allowed myself to change, to let go of a part of me that I was really holding on to tightly. It is really scary at this point in my life to change (and I've been through a lot of changes recently, but those I embraced willingly, through conscious choice, like becoming a mom again). What I considered fundamental parts of my being, aspects of my way of viewing the world and how I learn Japanese, I see now had to shift to new perspectives on how language is used, how language is learned, and in shifting perspective I had to change part of myself. I think I've seen everyone struggling with this the past two terms. It's not just been me, and I think of all of those who have left the program.

Would having an understanding about this shift, the changes that would need to happen, at the beginning of the course have helped? I don't know. I honestly think I would have listened but not heard, as the saying goes. I just thought I knew so much about Japan, Japanese, and the Japanese. I do know quite a bit, but I'm sort of shocked/surprised now by my naivete as well. I had constructed a place with the language that was comfortable for me. Now I'm (painfully at times) tearing it down, reusing what I can, but building a new schema. It's not easy, but it's also exciting, too.

All the above said, there are still things I will never like or accept about the Jorden method, like those eavesdropping exercises. They are just awful.

4/17

R is really something. It's fun to watch him teach, his reactions, which are exaggerated ones, are great and help us think about what we're saying as well as laugh at our own mistakes (and some of them are pretty bad in he sense if we thought about what we were saying or had just said, really though, we would see how we weren't really listening or thinking about what we were saying!). Anyway, last night's class was good, but

the CC was difficult in that it just didn't trip off our tongues. There were several new vocabulary words as well as a couple of new transitive/intransitive verb forms which are somewhat difficult for me. I have trouble remembering which is which. It still takes quite a bit of very conscious effort to sort them out and produce the correct one. Still, I finally got it last night, and today can still remember which is which. If I stop and think I can remember the ones/pairs we learned last week too, but some review wouldn't hurt as well. The writing part of the class went OK, too. I had no trouble reading and translating the lesson sentences except for a couple, and even my guesses at their translation turned out to be OK. Most of the *kanji* seem to stick in my brain. I guess it's because they're a visual thing, or require visual learning skills, and I'm a visual learner (visual clues would sure help those eavesdropping exercises!). Writing is still difficult though, getting the strokes in order, but R commented that I had beautiful writing! And here I thought I wrote like a child! I'm beginning to see/think that I've just been very, very hard on myself because I wasn't perfect. Japanese, I'm learning, is very difficult, way beyond how I thought it was, and that I just need to cut myself some slack. J has given me some reading about Japanese being a Class-4 language and what Jorden calls a "truly foreign language" for native English speakers, which have truly helped me to enjoy learning more. But this will be/may be something I will need to work on for the rest of my life. Boy, that's something I could never have thought about a couple of months ago, and here I am now thinking, "well, maybe I could [do] that." Right now I want to do that, but we'll see, of course. Being able to go back to Japan would be wonderful, a great opportunity to keep learning, but it's such a long shot. As I said to J, "the salad days are over" in Japan, never mind my being old, female, and having a family.

Oh yes, when I was talking with J, I referred to A a couple of times by his first name, because in our department grad students refer to instructors by their first names. What I found interesting was not that I was really given any clue it was wrong, but it felt wrong. My Japanese self, or idea of what was correct, really was in control. This is something I've internalized, I guess. From now on he'll be "A!"

4/22

Last night's classes were like a breakthrough. I knew what was going on and was in control of my Japanese and my learning, and at one point was able to fully (?) be my Japanese self, or the self I'm developing. We have been working with the verbs of giving and receiving, which I am beginning to grasp are a critical feature in the understanding of in-group and out-group in Japanese or at least one critical feature in that understanding. And, I think I'm getting it, although one fuzzy area is still how you refer to two persons/groups who would both be considered out-group. I'm understanding a little that you "align" yourself with one and which one is shown in the verb of giving you choose. More examples will help. My "breakthrough" came in K's class, when we were doing an exercise where we sat in a semi-circle, and we each "gave" something to someone else, and then talked about it from different perspectives, that of the receiver, giver, or outside viewer. When it was my turn to talk about giving from the perspective of an outside observer, I chose *kudasaru*. The "situation" was that a teacher had given her student some cookies. I used *kudasiamashita* (honorific) to indicate giving I the cookies. K looked puzzled, asked me to try again, and I again used *kudasaimashita*. I explained that C and I were <u>both</u> students, but K still asked me to try again, so I again explained that C and I were in the same "in-group," therefore I would also use the honorific *kudasiamashita* to refer to a superior giving something to my in-group. K's eyes lit up and he said "*subarashii*--wonderful!" He was impressed that I could make that connection. To me, it meant that I really "got it," at least in that situation. It was such a high! The high didn't last long,

though. K had us working on *yori/hodo* at the end and I of course had forgotten all of it, especially *hodo*. Back to the books.

We had a quiz last night as well, mostly on transitive/intransitives, but I think I did fairly well. At first it looked daunting, but I actually was able to figure some of it out from the *kanji* provided! After the quiz, J had us go through a list of transitive/intransitive pairs. Yikes! I will never again feel guilty for teaching the past perfect progressive in ESL/EFL! Japanese transitive/intransitive has it beat hands down. It's difficult, or much of it is because Japanese has a very different concept of time or judging time than we do, and it often requires a shift in perspective in order to choose the correct verb and/or conjugation. J gave us a great worksheet (from which some of the quiz questions had been taken) which was really helpful in getting a better grasp of transitive/intransitive.

Y still stuck close to the drills in the book, but the drills were pretty straightforward so didn't have any difficulty with them. But they're so boring right out of the book. I love it when the instructors manipulate them, like K often does.

4/24

Class sort of flipped around last night and we did reading and writing first, then had R. I had gone over the reading selection pretty well before class so understood most of it (and the part I didn't get at first was so easy I felt stupid when I found out). The *kanji* is fairly easy for me to read this time, but I'm sure that's because it's showing up in highly controlled contexts versus authentic texts. I still wish we could grapple with those from time to time, if nothing else for the mental exercise. I still too am able to count strokes in a character and then look it up. Not very effective but it's one way of helping me remember. I wish too that we got more writing practice, although I could do more of that on my own than I'm doing. I've gotten very lazy about writing in Japanese. Even though I know the characters, I now choose *romaji* over *hiragana* or *kanji*. One of these days I'm just going to have to tell myself "no more" and go back to Japanese. We have a reading/writing exercise we have to have ready by next week--we were supposed to do it in class, but it's impossible to try and guess where the *kanji* should go. The exercise has a list of eight-nine *kanji* at the top, then eight-nine sentences at the bottom where you fill in the *kanji*. Only problem is that the *kanji* will work in several sentences, so it's like a giant puzzle getting them all in the right slots. One of my classmates told us that her Japanese husband couldn't figure it out! Where does that leave us, and how effective is the exercise really. I'm going to work on it later, but hope it turns out to be more than an exercise in frustration.

I like doing *kanji* work, though. I think learning and reading *kanji* is my favorite part of Japanese. It's the "code" I've always wanted to crack, although as I move on with spoken Japanese I do want to become more proficient as well. I have been feeling like I need to go back to Japan, though; that I will only be able to go so far in this classroom situation. I'm not counting on it, though.

R was his usual peppy self. His facial expressions, body language, etc. remind me of a comedian on Japanese TV that we used to watch. He can make the dullest drills fun. I also like it that when one of us says something one way, he asks for alternatives, giving us a chance to think if there are other ways, equally good, of saying something. I still need to talk a lot, and this gives a way of saying things out loud.

4/29

Yesterday I actually was aware of a big change in my attitude. I've been seeing lots of changes, but this one sort of stopped me in my tracks. I have been quite sick the past few days, miserable actually, and was not feeling at all well yesterday. I sort of toyed with the idea of going and staying home and resting, but was surprised--SHOCKED--when I realized that I wanted to make my Japanese classes, that I didn't want to miss them! This just blew

me away as last term I always used the slightest excuse as a reason to miss class, to stay away. So something really has changed. I am committed to this, to moving on. Got an email from a friend over the weekend in which he called me a "traitor" for "liking" the Jorden method now. I wrote back that "like" isn't the word I'd choose; rather, I've adapted/adjusted to it and am beginning to see where it's coming from. But "like?" I don't think so. We had an eavesdropping quiz last night. I will never "like" those. The are far too decontextualized, and I have very difficult time putting all the pieces together. For example, last night one of the conversations was about a *fusuma* being stuck for over a year. Well, I heard *fusumaya* in the opening which of course affected how I listened to the rest of the conversation. I thought they were discussing the fact that a *fusuma* shop (for repairs) had been closed for over a year. It's frustrating because in a real-life listening situation you would see the people standing in front of the *fusuma*, one of them trying to open it, the other one telling them is hasn't opened for a year, and this way you could understand or contextualize what they're saying. Even a photograph would have helped contextualize things. As it is, it's very hard to listen for details at the rate they're speaking, at least all the details thy want you to answer, and it ends up being extremely frustrating. I'm getting better at listening, but I think if the listening were contextualized I would do much better and be improving more.

Last night's regular lessons were difficult. Lots of new vocabulary to integrate which always takes time. I'm wondering why I still have trouble doing the CCs in class. Not anything like I did before, but not as smoothly as when I practice them on my own. I find, however, that I'm able to relate the Japanese, or what I want to say in Japanese, to an English translation, and this helps me construct or remember the Japanese. One of the CCs, for example, asks someone to take a table upstairs to the *tatami* room. If I can think that first, quickly in English, then it goes quickly into Japanese, and the Japanese make more sense. Still, there's a frustration that I'm not getting this more quickly than I am. One is that I don't practice enough, or get enough chances to use Japanese, but there's still that nagging feeling that if I can understand Jorden's convoluted explanations I should be a whiz at picking up and speaking Japanese!

Got midterm grades as well: 97.92% on class performance so far!!! 92.96% on written homework, and 100% on quizzes. Not too bad if I do say so!!!

5/6

Last night was so hard! I don't know what was up with me, but it seemed I could remember nothing! Lots of memory lapses. Stuff just dumped out, flew out of my brain. We are getting so much stuff right now, though--tons of new grammar patterns, new vocabulary. Last night we began more ritualized greetings, and it seemed like it was just too much. Last week, and the week before, I felt comfortable with *ageru* and *kureru*, but now I can't remember now or when to use them; likewise, *morau*. I am waiting for that moment when it all clicks, but am wondering if that ever happens with Japanese.

Still . . . I want to go on, I want to learn. A few months ago I would be feeling angry, hating and railing against the method, but now I'm not and am instead trying to think of ways I could be learning it better or more efficiently. I wish I had more time to study. That's my biggest problem now. I just have so much going on with my other classes that I don't have the time to devote to Japanese that I would like. I've learned that next year during winter term I'll be doing both reading and writing along with speaking and listening. A called it "hell-term," but in a way I'm looking forward to my academic focus being Japanese, that without having to think about and do so many other things, I can concentrate more and comprehend and improve.

I got back the last two quizzes last night. I did so-so on the eavesdropping quiz, as I expected. Only 14 out of 20, but their decontextualization make them so difficult for me. I think this type of exercise at a more advanced level might work better, but where I'm at now I need to have the listening contextualized. On the grammar quiz from two weeks ago I got a 17.5 out of 20! And a little "*yoku de kimashita*" stamp! So what does this mean? That I'm still doing intake on the grammar, focusing there, I guess. Production and receptive skills are lagging way behind. I feel like I'm still in a "silent period." I have hardly any confidence in speaking or writing Japanese. How am I going to teach it? J told us last night that she never go an A from Jorden, and she told me the other day that she was nervous about teaching Japanese. Knowing how difficult, having a better understanding of how difficult Japanese is to learn has really helped me to put it all in perspective and not be so hard on myself over my slow progression. I just thought I needed to be, had to be so much better than I am now, when I'm doing fine. I am getting better, too, and things are falling into place.

It's interesting to me as well that we are studying many of the same patterns as I did before in second year, but that now I understand so much more about them, the why and the when. My knowledge before seemed so superficial, that I just skimmed the surface of the language whereas now I can look at some of the different layers, think about the different layers and how and why they're used. Like *ageru*, *kureru*, and *morau*--I learned those before, briefly, but at one level. Now I've learned to apply those to the concepts of *uchi/soto* and have begun to develop this awareness of how the language functions within Japanese culture, and while it gives me a ton to think about when I need to use them, I appreciate having the level of understanding where I do think about them, and where I belong or place myself in relation to the other. It's stepping out of that *gaigin* boundary. I don't want to be told any more I don't need to know that much, that as a foreigner I only need to know certain things at a certain level.

New grader on our written stuff. Tons of red marks. This guy is a perfectionist! Writing is only 10% of our grade though, so I'm not going to sweat it. As long as it's over a "9." I'm happy with it.

5/8

Last night class was flipped around. A led off, then we had R. One student left as he HATES A. He just got up and walked out. When someone commented that he was getting a zero he said he didn't care, that it didn't matter, that he wasn't going on to third year. Interestingly, this was the same guy who praised the Jorden method so highly earlier in the year, thought that it was so great, the BEST way to learn Japanese. He has also railed against A in the past, mostly about his sometimes caustic teaching style. A can be harsh, that's for sure, but as with most everything else, I've mellowed in my attitudes towards his teaching style. I think a great deal of it is due to the fact that I've had him as an instructor before and enjoyed him, and also find him very approachable outside of class. Part of last night's assignment was a reading exercise. They're getting easier to read, the *kanji*, that is, but but the grammar is still very difficult at times. Literal translations are almost impossible, but I feel like I'm doing fairly well on getting the meaning of the passages, better able to do a more general translation. My reading is still slow and jerky, even with practice. This is when I really wish I were back in Japan, in order to have print available to just wash over me. But, I need to be writing more in Japanese as well. I've come to rely too heavily on *romaji* when writing anything outside of homework for class.

R was great again, as usual. He has such a great, open personality. Many would/might say it's not very "Japanese," but I knew a few sparklers like him in Japan. His personality blends well with our American expectations though, of how a language teacher

should ideally be, I think. We are continuing with ritual expression for going to someone's home, how to present a gift, etc. I knew none of this stuff while I was there before, and got just a taste of it when I took second year before, so it's interesting because I know all this was going on, but I just didn't know what anyone was saying. We were a pretty inept group though. R kept having to show us how to present a gift properly (with two hands, not casually handed over with one hand like we do here), when to bow, etc. The bowing stuff I feel like I've got somewhat down. After living in Japan, it seems I can't say "*arigatô*" without bowing or at least nodding my head. R also asks us to think of alternative responses. I like the fact that he helps us know there's more than one way to say something, that he goes beyond what's in the book.

One more comment. I am also really liking the evening group. There's more cohesiveness, more of a "group" feeling which did not exist in the morning class. There I felt like it was everyone for themselves. With the evening group I feel like everyone's there to help each other out. It sure has made a difference in how I feel about going to class.
5/13

Everyone showed up last night but D, who was so pro-Jorden before. He left after the first hour. He's kind of a confrontational sort of guy, and he's not getting it as well as he wants or expects to, so doesn't hang around much. J saw him leaving, too--hmmmmm.

We are still working on ritual greeting expressions for when you go to someone's home. They're hard for me to remember because they're pure memory. I have nothing to link them to because I only use them in class. P-san asked an interesting question last night after we watched two women perform the CCs in the video. He wanted to know if two college-aged women would actually ever use these expressions that we're learning. They're VERY formal. J said it would be like comparing Wellesly with a community college. The community college student could probably pull it off, but it was definitely a class thing. Rich people's Japanese. It really struck me again last night, this whole way we're learning, what we're learning, but when I thought about it and rationalized it, I know that when we teach greeting in ESL/EFL we tend to teach the more polite first, the more casual later (although I don't think they're as far apart in English as they are in Japanese). I also realized that a few months ago J's answer would have just ticked me off, but it doesn't any more. I've been reading an article about pragmatics in Japanese, and people DO use these forms, but I wonder if I ever will get the chance. Still, I want to continue, I'm motivated to continue because I might get the chance (in the article I read, 40+ year-old women were in Japan studying Japanese).

We also got our first draft back on our writing homework. Boy, I'd sure like to know who the grader is and what he is trying to do/say. I got a 9.6, but there is red ink everywhere! I think it was pretty much the same with everyone else. I was really ticked. One student's husband is Japanese and proof-reads her stuff at least three times, and she had red marks everywhere, too. This happened last time, and even when the changes were made, the final draft had a ton of red ink! So who knows what they want--it's very frustrating.

Got 14 out of 20 on last week's quiz. Highest score was 16 out of 20. This is such a difficult language!!!! I like what we're learning, but just don't feel I'm learning it well. I keep waiting for it to click into place, but I'm not sure it ever will.

Y did drills and the CC. My brain, as usual, just dumps the stuff, and it's even worse when like last night I don't get the chance to study right before class. K's class was was as usual, great. We practiced the CC, the joined the four we've learned together. Then he divided us into two groups, and my group "had the other group over to our apartment" and did the ritual stuff and then had a conversation. It went well and was fun. Both Y and

K make sure we practice doing this ritual stuff in plain form, friends talking with friends. It's actually harder, though.

One last thing. Had eavesdropping exercises due yesterday. THEY ARE THE WORST!!!! They talk so fast, the tapes are crummy, and they're so decontextualized. They make me want to scream. Nothing else in the program has the power to make me so angry and feel so stupid.

5/15

Didn't go to class last night. Felt miserable, lots of personal stuff going on that's extremely distracting, and it was my birthday! I ran into K on my way out of N Hall though, and asked him if he'd turn in my writing homework for me, which he agreed to do. Then he gave me the nicest birthday present: I had told him it was my birthday (*omedetô gozaimasu!*) and why I wasn't staying for class, and he said not to worry, I was doing so well, one of the best in class! I need that boost. I still don't feel like I'm doing well, though. He and I talked about that for a moment. I told him that it's easy for me to participate in class, but I have no confidence to speak Japanese outside of the classroom environment.

I wonder why this is? I was able to converse in Japanese before, was even eager to try it before but I don't know if it's because I'm so aware of language choices now and what it means or could mean socioculturally in Japanese, or if I'm not presented with the opportunities to speak, or at least ones where I feel I could speak Japanese and not look like a fool. A couple of months ago when I did that interview session, I was able to go back and forth a little bit, so it may be that I'm just not finding the opportunities to speak. I've had a couple of chances to email in Japanese, but again no confidence. I feel like it's in me, but just haven't been able to break out of this shell, and too busy to find a tutor or go to the tutoring sessions. Maybe next year I will be able to get to do some of this.

5/20

I barely made it through two hours of class last night. I am so sick! Spent the two hours there blowing my nose constantly, coughing, etc., plus I was filling out an observational report for my research design course. Anyway, it was miserable, and after the second hour I decided to head for home. I missed K's portion, which was too bad because his is the best lesson all week. He is really, really challenging, but the patterns we work on with him really stick with me. He was carrying a bag last night with a gift box, so I'm sure everyone else got to practice ritual greetings, etc.

The observational report I did on Y was difficult to do because I was also trying to participate in class. But the patterns on the chart I kept showed almost three-four times as many display questions and teacher comments than content-type questions asking us to use the Japanese to communicate. Basically, all he was doing was asking us drill patterns right out of the book, and then commenting on our answers. It was so boring! I like Y, but I wish he would pep up the lessons like K or R do. I never feel like I'm doing drills with K, although I recognize the patterns from time t time. R also goes to straight drill from time to time, but usually does something more interesting with them. All three of them really have distinct styles, and we have all kind of learned how to prepare for each of them. It is K I hope I have learned the most from, how to prepare a lesson, that is. I don't want to be like Y (as a teacher, that is—otherwise I like him) and just run through drills, or the CC without variation. At least none of them is going around the room having us repeat something if the pronunciation's not perfect. I'm glad they've stopped, but I wonder why they did?

We also had an eavesdropping quiz last evening, which I was sure I was going to do poorly on as I hadn't been able to follow the exercise well on the tape, and because I felt so miserable. But, I actually did pretty well, and understood more than I didn't. Go figure.

K and N were the readers, and were easy to understand, although K speaks very fast. So that was a nice place to end, even though I still DON'T LIKE the eavesdropping.
5/27

Just a two-hour class last night because of the Memorial Day holiday. K did the first hour instead of Y. He really runs us through our paces, but everyone seems to like it. I do, that's for sure. I like having to work with the new patterns we're getting, to use them and figure out how to use them rather than just spitting them back (or in my case trying to spit them back) from memory. We are working on indirect speech right now, and learning a new form. I knew the *to iu* form, but now we're learning the *tte itte itta* and humble and polite variations. Of course it's hard, and other than in the classroom I can't remember what to say until minutes after I should have said something. K is really going to be missed--he is such a dynamic teacher, and really the only one of the Japanese instructors who understands us as American students and how we're comfortable learning. He maintains his cultural distance (I said *itta* to him last night, he shot me a very surprised look and I immediately realized that I shouldn't have been so casual, and changed to iimashita), but his techniques seem to show that American students like to think about what we're doing, and be challenged, not just repeat something out of a book. K's grammar points are the ones I remember, that's for sure.

I asked K last night after class if he just wanted to pull his hair and go crazy after teaching us because we're so bad, we make so many mistakes (I have a vision of him walking out of the classroom an banging his head on he wall out of sheer frustration). He told us, rather politely, I thought, that he was inspired by our motivation. A very Japanese answer, but it still made me feel good. The evening group is down to eight. I wonder if all the teaching practices used at the beginning of the year are to weed out those who aren't motivated. Even if not, it works! I'm almost glad that I couldn't drop, that I've stuck it out to see the changes.

We also had a writing quiz last night that I though was easy (although I may not do so well--usually that's what happens when I think I've done well). J remarked I was the only one doing it in pen! I don't think it had anything to do with confidence, though. I just don't like writing in pencil.

Oh yes--I gave an ESL lesson yesterday morning to several middle-aged Japanese women. I listened carefully to them speaking before the class. Honorifics were flying everywhere! It was amazing to me to be able to "tune in" and catch those words, even if I couldn't understand much else of what was being said.
5/29

I guess I should start with the wonderful surprise we got last night: THE FINAL IS OPTIONAL!!!! J came in between the sessions (I think because she was going to teach A's section, but R did it) and announced that if we are happy with our grades (which I am!) then we don't have to do the final on the ninth. What a relief! The relief for me is that I have so much else going on. I just wasn't sure when I was going to find time to prepare. I really wasn't feeling nervous about it at all though, which is quite a change from the first term's exam. I feel so much more confident about it now. I know how to prepare, and I know I can do it! But still, a lot of pressure has been lifted! What a neat surprise!

R covered/taught both sessions last night. The CC was easy, and he had us practice both distal and more direct styles of the CC, which I really appreciate. Actually, the direct style is the more difficult--less words, less conjugation, but it's hard to know which words to leave out which one not to conjugate. It's easier to be polite. Who would have thought? He then took the drills and attempted to make them more relevant. We're working on reported or indirect speech, or "how do you say" or "what does ( ) mean?" so, he tried to relate the

exercise to things going on in Portland. One student got quite upset! He couldn't understand why we weren't doing the exact drills in the book, which he had memorized. For example, he asked me "what political TV program did I watch" but I came back with "what does the word *bangumi* mean?" He got really flustered which got R flustered, and I couldn't tell if I'd said something wrong or not. We eventually got things straightened out, but I think R was a bit exasperated with this guy. In direct speech is hard (it's hard in English, too) but I felt by the end of the evening I was "getting it."

For the reading/writing section we did a reading passage and answered questions. I was not prepared and it was pretty embarrassing. I can read OK, but my head was not focused on even trying to translate and get stuff in the right place. The homework we had had was difficult, and instead of preparing for the reading and writing lesson, I spent way more time than planned on the writing homework. The writing's a lot like speaking for me right now. I don't have a lot of confidence.

I asked R the same question I asked K the other day: did he feel like pulling his hair out and screaming after he finished with us? He was a bit more honest and he said sometimes (and I think last night was one of those nights).

Only one more week to go!!!! I have not had time to think about how I'll keep up with Japanese over the summer. I hope to be able to sit in on a few of the second year classes, but will need more than that.

6/2

I actually have a chance to write tonight! I feeling sort of "wired" which is unusual because usually after class I'm so drained. I don't know if it's because tonight was a bit of closure on second year, or what. I haven't decided whether or not I'm going to class Thursday evening or not. I've been so stressed out by the work for other classes. I know I passed, but still . . . .

I was so not there tonight. I did not have any time to prepare, so couldn't respond to anything, couldn't do the drill, didn't know the CCs, etc. I was awful. I spent a couple of hours yesterday doing the eavesdropping exercises that was due tonight. I only let myself listen five times to each conversation, or tried to unless I thought I sort of understood what they were saying. My listening skill remain so poor, and I just don't hear all the particles, verb forms, etc. on the first to fifth go around. I'm so busy trying to understand one part that the rest just goes by and I lose it.

We took a quiz tonight. I think I did OK, but missed a couple of things. Oh well. Again, I didn't have much time to prepare. I know now why I didn't major in Japanese. It requires too much work, too much concentration. I just can't be doing anything else and learn Japanese. I knew that four years ago, and it's the same now. I just feel as if I'm barely keeping my head above water, while the others go effortlessly swimming by. They're students as well, with heavy course loads, but they don't have a toddler. Still, I want to learn. I do want to get better. I want to be able to use it as well, and not have this have been merely some academic exercise.

We talked briefly tonight in class about how difficult it is for the adult learner. Our egos aren't "permeable" any more. It's been both a blessing and a curse, I think, to be learning more about the difficulties in being an adult language learner. It's so hard to be in such a dependent, child-like position, to feel like such an idiot when I know I'm capable of so much more.

Tonight was K's last class. He told us he will be going to [another university] for a second MA in Japanese linguistics. He has been the best teacher this year, and I was really hoping he'd relax this evening and just chat with us, in English, but he didn't crack. It was sort of annoying, actually. Very "Japanese-teacher" until the end. Y seemed uninspired, but

I know he's busy as well with his course work. I've liked most of the teachers, and I've seen ideas of what I would/should do and not do, but I sure wanted to to kick back just once, identify with us just once, and stop out of that teacher role, but it didn't happen.

There were only seven of us there to take the quiz, and only five hung around for the other sessions. I see a grand total of maybe seven of us in third year, from both the evening and morning sections. But it will be a committed group . . . .

We got to evaluate the course. I gave mid-level marks to the teaching, but commented that there was too much dependence on rote memorization, and the lessons were too teacher-centered. There needs to be more student-student interaction. I gave high marks to the pragmatic foundation and to the grammar explanations.

I am already worrying about next year, even as I write this! It's got to be me--I wish I could relax about this.