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**Fostering Criticality in a Beginners'
Japanese Language Course
A Case Study in a UK Higher Education
Modern Languages Degree Programme**

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Etsuko YAMADA

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**School of Education
University of Durham**

2008

01 SEP 2008



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Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the participants of this PhD study, the students of two beginners' Japanese language modules of the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005-06. The data they provided became the core of this thesis. I sincerely appreciate their interest and enthusiasm in Japanese language and culture, from which I gained a valuable inspiration in my teaching and criticality research.

I would like to extend my deep gratitude to the following language teaching staff of the UK universities, who generously allowed me opportunities to observe and to film the lessons during the busiest period of the academic year. Their professionalism in language teaching gave me new insights.

Mr Fumitsugu Enokida and Ms Junko Ogawa (Centre for Modern Languages, University of Birmingham)

Ms Harumi Currie and Ms Motoko Takahashi-Wilson (Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh)

Mr Samuel Anaya-Guzmán (School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne)

I am very grateful to Prof Florence Myles (School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne) for sharing an opportunity to discuss the concept of the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton during the process of my research design.

I am indebted to Dr Karen Turner, Institute of Education, University of London, for her continuing supports in many ways since when I followed MA in Modern Language Studies years ago.

My special thanks are expressed to PhD and EdD colleagues in Durham and my friends in the UK and in other countries, who encouraged me with warm friendships.

I also wish to acknowledge Intercultural Studies Group Grant by the School of Education, University of Durham, which allowed me to develop extensive

studies based on this thesis. It is a large encouragement for me.

This thesis is especially dedicated to my parents, the origins of my 'sojournour': to my father, who could not see the completion of this thesis but his illness of years followed by his death made me strong and convinced me that I must not cease challenges in life. And to my mother, who always ensures that I am on the right path with her unconventional and positive view.

Last but not least, my PhD supervisor, Professor Michael Byram, who I deeply admire. He made me recall the excitement of my first 'sojournour' and guided me further to wide and deep intercultural world with his sharp academic insights. This long journey directed by his warm personality is a valuable asset in my life. He certainly provided me an ideal educator model and gave me a great impact on how I should seek for being professional in my future, following suit of his belief, 'being an academic is not a job but just a way of life' (Byram, 2004b: xix).

Newcastle upon Tyne
March 2008

Abstract

Fostering Criticality in a Beginners' Japanese Language Course

A Case Study in a UK Higher Education Modern Languages Degree Programme

Etsuko YAMADA

This thesis examines the development of criticality based on an empirical study in beginners' Japanese language courses within a UK Modern Languages Degree Programme. A starting point for this study is Barnett's (1997) claim concerning the significance of fostering criticality and setting educational aims against the current trend of mass education at the Higher Education. The empirical base is inspired by the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton which, also based on Barnett's model, investigates a whole Modern Languages course. This thesis, however focuses on the phases of Modern Language Studies which have not been explored: beginners' level language courses with the example being a non-European language.

The examination of the current issues of Modern Languages Degree Programmes illustrates the fact that there is a problem of a lack of coordination of the diversity of various components within programmes. The nature of language modules, especially at beginners' level, inclines to the acquisition of practical language skills focusing on grammar rather than on 'content', and widens the gap from academic content modules. In this thesis, the notion of criticality is highlighted as a single 'linkage' connecting each component to others. This issue needs to be examined from two perspectives: the empirical study of criticality development in beginners' level language courses and the theoretical concept of criticality.

Action Research was conducted in beginners' Japanese language courses at a Modern Languages Degree Programme where the researcher was teaching. Lessons with activities which target criticality development in cultural and language dimensions were inserted in the existing grammar based language course framework. The observations of beginners' level language lessons in other institutions ensured the aims and syllabus of the normal lessons of the

target courses have the same standard as them. Various types of qualitative data were collected. Among them, particularly the participants' output data; group interviews and post-lesson questionnaires became the main sources of analysis of this study.

The analysis of empirical data made two important resources for criticality visible: skills and knowledge. Skills appeared as the students' theory building process comprising three stages: inquiry, analysis and conclusion. The concept of inquiry stage corresponds to inquiry and scepticism which was highlighted by a review of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. From these examinations of two perspectives, one from empirical and another one from theoretical, the fundamental concept of 'being critical' is defined as inquiry and scepticism.

During the theory building process, various kinds of knowledge are employed, and the students' theories were presented according to nine thematic categories comprising culture, language, and learning process. The factors contributing to the development of criticality are found to be cultural and linguistic dimensions and also the learning process itself.

The analysis of empirical data also highlights the existence of criticality specifically in the language modules and that criticality could work as a connection among the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme. Barnett's theoretical criticality model of domains and levels is supported by the empirical data, but they also showed that criticality development does not appear in a neat order nor the steady progression from lower to higher levels as in his framework.

It is concluded from this study that both instrumental and educational aims can be and need to be compatible in language modules even at the beginners' level and all the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme need to be connected by a single linkage, criticality, which realizes an educational aim of the Modern Languages Degree Programme. However, it also implies that further research is needed to bring the issues to the level of curriculum development.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origins of this PhD Study

Since a half century ago, the study of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis has had a great impact in the development of theories in the language teaching area. Their contribution draws more attention to the relationship between language and culture. Bredella and Richter (2004) interpret the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis as having particular significance for language learning and studying as follows:

According to the SWH (Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis), learning and studying foreign languages does not only have an *instrumental goal* but also an important *educational one*. It can make us aware of the constraints of our language and world view and allows us to see what we have in common with other forms of speaking and thinking on deeper levels.

(Bredella and Richter, 2004: 523, emphasis added)

The contribution is significant because they highlighted the two dimensions in language teaching; both instrumental and educational goals are important. A question will be raised in this thesis: How are these two dimensions to be realized?



The point of view put by Bredella and Richter appeals to me as a teacher and as a consequence, this PhD study is a kind of challenge to connect the point of view represented by them and by the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis to my teacher's belief that language teaching is not only for practical use and it is the educational goal which characterizes all language education whatever the educational stage (primary, secondary and higher, etc.) it is.

In the last couple of decades, the main stream of the trend in language teaching has been designated as 'Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)', although there have been changes since the appearance of this idea and some developments in diversity according to the various target groups and their needs. Foreign language study in the Modern Languages¹ Degree programmes in Higher Education is not an exception. It has shifted more to practical and skill-based teaching in relation to CLT, in order to attract students who are seeking practical skills in the study of foreign languages. In other words, the focus of language study has become almost exclusively proficiency.

I have been working in the area of teaching Japanese as a foreign language in UK Higher Education level for many years, and the initial impetus for this study has been generated from my own language teaching experience in the UK. After the first few years' of experience, questions occurred to me and constantly made me think about them since then. I started asking myself where foreign language study takes the learners to and what it ultimately aims at. Language teachers, whatever the language they teach, are made to be aware of the aims of the language study every time they are engaged in planning and designing the course even if preparing one classroom activity. Each individual element of the course is embedded in the ultimate aims. Is the ultimate goal of language study at Higher Education level proficiency only?

On the other hand, I have also been constantly made to think in particular about why learners are learning Japanese language and I have wondered if the two different kinds of aims can be integrated in the teaching of Japanese. These questions would have never been raised if I were teaching Japanese as a second language in Japan, where the dominant purpose of the language learning is to acquire the language as survival skills.

Thus, the questions which occurred to me were formed into a single inquiry: should there be goal of language study at Higher Education other than the practical; should there be an educational goal and if so what ought it to be?

These questions have to be considered against the background of change in Higher Education, where a recent shift to mass Higher Education in the UK has influenced the Modern Languages Degree programmes to meet the students' needs of seeking practical skills in the Higher Education study. This also introduces the question of whether there is some separation or contradiction between the philosophical aims and what is in reality going on in the language courses. If the direction of the language teaching at the Higher Education level is determined by the students' needs, then, as is pointed out by Barnett (1997), this is likely to be going in the opposite direction to the development of what he calls 'criticality' and the educational purposes of Higher Education.

1.2 The Criticality Project by the University of Southampton

These questions are crucial to a study of language teaching – and social studies teaching - in Higher Education, the study by the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton (<http://www.critical.soton.ac.uk>). This study proves that intermediate and advanced levels language courses and content based courses have a wide range of possibilities and potential for developing criticality in various ways. Brumfit *et al.* (2005) investigated the following elements of ‘criticality’ based on Barnett’s classification: Skills and Knowledge base, Critical reasoning, Independence, and Intercultural skills. However they also point out that some aspects of criticality in the definition by Barnett (1997) are not found in their research findings.

Much of the language curriculum inclines to mainly skill- and knowledge-oriented teaching and learning, especially at the lower stages. There is no doubt that acquisition of language skills as a communication tool – i.e. fulfilling the practical, instrumental purposes of language teaching – is an important part of the language study as the students progress to the upper stages, including the Year Abroad in a country where the language is spoken. However, the question which occurs to me from my own work as a teacher is whether there is any

capacity for the development of criticality at the beginner's level language course, together with the instrumental purposes?

Brumfit *et al.* (2005) also indicate that the language curriculum and the 'content' curriculum are mutually interconnected at more advanced levels and it is this which ensures that practical and educational purposes can be pursued together but the question remains – where is the beginners' level course located in relation to the intermediate-advanced level language courses and the 'content' based courses?

This PhD study attempts therefore to answer this question and focuses on beginners' level language courses. The research questions posed in this study are:

- (1) Is it possible to develop criticality in beginners' language courses in Higher Education, and if so what kind?
- (2) In what ways can critical thinking be developed through beginners' language courses in Higher Education?

1.3

Overview of the Approach and Methodology

In order to investigate the above questions, the thesis includes consideration of the purposes of languages in Higher Education in the contemporary world, analysis of the traditions of critical pedagogy and teaching critical thinking, and an Action Research project which involves experimentation with the design of materials and methods, and self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by the researcher as teacher in two undergraduate beginners' Japanese language courses taught by the researcher herself.

The above Action Research was conducted within the existing framework of a course whose syllabus is based on grammar structures. The researcher modified some class activities for linguistic skills into more culture and linguistic knowledge conscious activities for this research without cutting the element of practising language skills. As acquisition of the practical language skills is still important and a major part, it is not realistic to attempt to change the whole course towards the development of criticality.

The data through the above Action Research were collected during the 2005-06 academic year at the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle

upon Tyne, where I was working as Teaching Fellow in Japanese (2004-06). There are also data collected through observations of the lessons in the beginners' Spanish language course at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and the beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Birmingham and the University of Edinburgh. These data were collected in order to compare with the researcher's courses and to see if there is a common framework among the Higher Education beginners' language courses, in order to judge to what extent the courses in the Action Research were representative of beginners' courses in general.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This study examines the issue of Modern Language Study from one small part of it: beginners' Japanese language courses at a University in the UK. However, this small field but in-depth study which is investigated from inside the field, provided many indications related to the whole Modern Language Study. From this perspective, the precise role of 'criticality' within the degree programme is also identified.

It is also important that this is a study about a non-European language at the University in English speaking country. Japanese Studies is not one of the major Modern Languages in the UK² but, the impact of studying non-European and non-alphabetical language will also be recognised by the results of this study. From the point of view of non-European and non-alphabetical language learning in the UK university, there were found some specific issues, which do not seem to be the cases in European languages. The empirical data indicated some developments of thinking which are stimulated by the difference between the language and culture groups.

1.5 Overview of the Thesis and its Findings

After this introductory chapter which has set out the origins of the research, its importance for me as a researcher, its significance in the context of language courses in Higher Education, and given a preliminary explanation of the approach and methodology taken, the thesis discusses first of all the educational issues in more depth and then explains the empirical study, before concluding with reflection on the implications of the research for language teaching in Higher Education and what further developments are needed.

Chapter 2 deals with the position of language teaching in Higher Education. Modern Language Studies in Higher Education can be viewed from two points of view: the development of the foreign language teaching theories which are present in university teaching, and the educational framework of Higher Education in the UK. This thesis focuses on the latter because the direction of the language study is decided by the broader concept of education itself. It examines and explores what is important and necessary for Modern Language Studies at Higher Education in the UK in relation to the recent discussion on Higher Education general philosophical policy. Chapter 2 thus starts with the investigation of the Modern Language Studies situation in the UK and highlights its current issues such as Specialists and Non-specialists and employability. The lack of linkage among the components of the Modern Language Studies is pointed out as a problem. Then it focuses on the language modules and the transformation of the teaching methods, by highlighting the influence of Communicative Language Teaching. Then, Beginners' level language study, the research field of this PhD study is focused on separately. The argument is made that the lack of 'linkage' in Modern Language Studies

which leads to the possibility of ‘criticality’ is a problem, and that this study might provide a means of combining the educational – the development of criticality in learners – with the practical, the instrumental needs to gain language and communication skills. This examination provided suggestion of further investigations from two directions: theoretical base of criticality and empirical study in the practice of fostering criticality.

Chapter 3 investigates the concept of ‘criticality’ by examining various literatures in Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. This is a necessary preliminary to a full understanding of the work of Barnett and the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton team which provided the starting point for this project. Barnett (1997) points out that criticality is the crucial characteristic of Higher Education, and there is no sense of criticality in a skills- and knowledge- oriented course. He also warns that Higher Education in general does not have a proper direction nor thinking. Critical Pedagogy and the teaching of Critical Thinking are considered as possible sources of theoretical and practical development in teaching languages in Higher Education. He emphasizes the importance of aims of education, especially

‘action in the world’. In terms of this point, Barnett (1997) shares the ultimate aim with Critical Pedagogy, and Citizenship Education.

Chapter 4 presents the framework of the empirical study. It discusses the nature of Action Research and its usefulness as a means of making small scale experiments in the course of ordinary teaching of beginners’ Japanese language courses at a Modern Languages Degree course in the UK, the kind of opportunity which is open to one researcher. The practical opportunities have to be placed in the context of the strengths and weaknesses of Action Research, and the degree to which the results of this methodology can be generalised. All the details of the empirical research procedures including research field (Japanese language courses), data (group interview, post-lesson questionnaire, teacher’s and researcher’s diaries and audio recordings of the lessons, etc.) and observations are explained.

Chapter 5 presents the analysis of the data. This chapter aims to provide what genuinely appeared from this empirical study. Therefore the analysis was conducted before the examination of literature in Chapter 3, without referring

to the existing concepts of criticality. Group interview became the main source of the qualitative analysis and grounded theory. The most salient features emerged in the following two forms. One is students' thinking appeared in three dimensions of culture, language and learning process. Another one is students' theory building process which comprises three stages: inquiry, analysis and conclusion.

Chapter 6 presents the discussion of the concept of 'criticality' by comparison and contrast of two perspectives: one from the existing criticality concept drawn from the literature and the other one from the empirical data. The fundamental nature of criticality was identified as *inquiry and scepticism*, which emerged as basic concept in both examinations. Upon this fundamental nature, some key concepts of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, appeared in the stages of theory building process of the data. The factors which contributed to the development of criticality are investigated. Then, the model from this empirical study was compared with two other criticality models: the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and Barnett's (1997) concept of criticality in Higher Education.

Chapter 7 sums up the results of this PhD study. After a review of the whole process, seven research findings from the study are presented: (1) Basic concept of criticality is defined as *inquiry and scepticism*. (2) On the basis of it, some variations as sub-concepts of criticality are found. (3) Three dimensions developing criticality: culture, language and learning process, were found and the latter two characterize the specific value of language modules. (4) Resources needed for criticality are identified as skills and knowledge. Skills appeared in the theory building process as analysis stages of investigation, comparison and linking and various knowledge is employed in the process. (5) Teacher's role in taking initiative is important. (6) The importance of setting educational aims, a claim by Barnett is confirmed. Thus, Modern Languages Degree Programmes need to have a single linkage, criticality. (7) Both instrumental and educational aims can be and need to be compatible in Modern Languages Degree Programmes, not either one of them. The three implications were gained from the findings: (1) Language module itself can be educational. (2) Elements for teaching designs involving criticality development were gained. (3) Criticality development needs to be an agenda of responsibilities of

the whole Modern Languages Degree Programme. This research thus found some phases of criticality in the beginners' language course. However, it is true that it also leaves us further questions behind. It needs extra work and there is not any operational way at the moment. The following future research possibilities in relation to the results of this PhD study are needed: (1) Beginners' European language case (2) In-depth studies of other components (intermediate-advance level language modules, content modules, Year Abroad) of Japanese Studies Degree programme (3) Assessment of criticality. Then, my research reflections as a researcher and a teacher round this thesis up.

The next chapter investigates issues of Modern Languages Degree Programme in the UK.

Notes

¹ The term 'Modern Language' as opposed to 'Classical Language (eg. Greek and Latin)' is used in the UK as synonym for 'foreign language' and this thesis refers to this usage.

² Japanese language is the eighth largest modern languages group according to the student acceptances in 2004-2005 academic year (The National Centre for Languages (CILT), 2006).

CHAPTER 2 AIMS OF MODERN LANGUAGE STUDIES IN THE UK HIGHER EDUCATION

The research field of this thesis is beginners' language courses in Modern Language Studies in UK Higher Education. It is therefore important to start with examining the current situation of the Modern Language Studies which is the roof of the language courses before focusing on the language issues. Firstly, the current aims of the Modern Language Studies are discussed and followed by the specific issues such as specialists versus non-specialists and employability. It highlights the current problems of Modern Language Studies in UK Higher Education and makes some suggestions. Then it is narrowed down to the issues of language modules and language teaching method. Finally it discusses the beginners' level language studies in terms of the significance of pursuing criticality in beginners' level with empirical studies. Thus this chapter provides the background of the two research questions about criticality in beginners' level language studies in Higher Education and the grounds for how the research ought to be conducted.

2.1. Modern Language Studies in the UK Higher Education

2.1.1 What do Modern Language Studies Aim for?

In the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) list of undergraduate degree programmes, there are uncountable and various degree titles which include foreign language. This indicates the current diversity and complexity of Modern Language Studies in UK Higher Education. Language degrees are offered 'with' or 'and' various disciplines including science as well as humanities and social sciences.

The generalisation of university education to new kinds of students means that the varied preferences catering for the varied backgrounds and interests of the students are brought into the educational offer. The variety of Modern Language Studies offers a wider range of choices and makes it possible to meet the various requirements of the students.

On the other hand, the diversity hinders the Modern Language Studies from having a clear focus. At a glance, we can hardly see the initial policy of the Modern Language Studies themselves today. What are they ultimately aiming for now? By managing to embrace the complexity of varied disciplines, they

seemed to have difficulty in holding their own initiative. Klapper (2006) describes the current condition as a 'crisis' due to 'the lack of centrality' in accordance with 'demand-led' policies. Lodge (2000) and Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) also point out the lack of own theory and method of Modern Language Studies. Modern Language Studies is dragged either by 'language as instrument' by outsiders or 'language as discipline' by insiders and now the former is becoming dominant (Lodge, 2000: 105-106). It is the time for Modern Language Studies to step back from the external pressures, reflect on themselves both internally and externally in respect of how the current situation has been created.

One of the roots of the current situation can be found in the change of the UK Higher Education area at the end of the 1960s, when the new universities were established in the UK (Lodge, 2000). Universities started to be transformed from 'closed' enclosure to 'open' field. In accordance with the changing needs of the era, new concepts of the UK universities gradually formed, as well. Universities started to consider more practical sides of the studies. Then the restructuring of former polytechnics by 1992 and the growth of the number of

university entrants followed. A value as vocational qualification was added to the roles of Higher Education Degrees (Coleman, 2004). Then Combined degrees (Joint/Combined Honours) started attracting the students and the modular system was introduced in order to make the combinations of different disciplines easier (Coleman, 2005a). The globalisation of the era also asks universities to respond and the ‘internationalization’ including the mobility of the students across the countries has been one of the important issues in recent years (Byram and Dervin, in press; Byram and Feng, 2006). Foreign languages inevitably became a focus in this trend. The UK universities are not the place to seek for only purely academic studies any more.

Another external factor is the fact that growing financial pressure of the universities brings additional difficulties to Modern Language Studies. After the introduction of self-supporting accounting and the tuition fee with the rising amount, Language departments are not allowed to remain ignorant about management strategy. Somehow, being ‘demand-led’ by the customers to some extent is unavoidable for the universities these days.

With regard to Modern Language Studies, what brought further diversification is the policy introduced in 2002, 'Language for All', and the development of Institution Wide Language Programmes (IWLP) which was started in the 1980s (DfES, 2002). Language modules became available for the non-specialists (students taking language modules outside their degree subjects), as well, literally for all the students. AULC (the Association of University Language Centres) (in Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, 2005a) estimates the total number of non-specialists involved in language study as over 22,000 in 2003/4, although it is extremely difficult to have a grasp of the exact figure. While the total figure of specialists (students taking language modules within Modern Languages Degree Programmes) was over 25,000 in the same academic year. Considering the tendency of the decrease of the number of specialists of the last few years (Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, 2005a), the large proportion of non-specialists is an important component of the character of current Modern Language Studies.

The nature of Modern Language Studies themselves needs to be focused on, as well. They manage to enhance various components with different kinds of

offer: practical skills of use of language, different levels of language modules, academic studies drawing on various disciplines from the humanities such as area studies and literature, social sciences such as business studies and economics, and many other disciplines brought in by the non-specialists. This also makes pedagogy as important as academic research. The diverse nature of Modern Language Studies themselves makes it difficult to sustain one solid direction and might have become the cause of being dragged by the demands from many angles. But it was caused not only due to this diverse nature of Modern Language Studies themselves but also enhanced by making language modules detachable and attachable for any student, to allow them 'shop around' and 'pick-'n'-mix' (Lodge, 2000: 110, 115).

Will this diverse nature only cause problems? Viewing it from another point, the diverse nature of language studies can also play a positive roll as it 'builds bridges' rather than 'digs well' to use Evans's (1988) words (in Coleman, 2001; Klapper, 2006), if it is properly handled. And the potential advantage of Modern Language Studies is suggested in the following:

The variety and breadth of provision reflects both the multidisciplinary nature of study in LRS (languages and related studies), and its potential for interdisciplinarity. It is further reflected in the academic affiliations of the membership of the benchmark and reference groups.

(QAA, 2002: 1)

In the view of the QAA, which can be taken as an attempt to represent or create a consensus of the profession of HE languages, the past simple academic discipline which used to exist cannot be a model any more. The society has changed and it keeps changing. The solution to think about is a new discipline, which is suitable to the current society. It is inevitable for the universities to embrace and to be compatible with the new complexity and the new discipline of Modern Language Studies has to be something capable of managing this complexity.

In short, the problem for Modern Language Studies today is not the diverse nature itself but the lack of coordination of the diversity. In order to make it a strong advantage, they need to seek how to handle this diversity without losing their own discipline. In the next section, therefore, one of the diverse elements, the issue of specialists versus non-specialists is discussed in detail.

2.1.2 Specialists versus Non-specialists

As stated in the previous section, the issue of non-specialists is one of the main focuses for Modern Language Studies. But what are the distinctions between specialists and non-specialists apart from the practical issues of the system: whether the language module is a part of the degree or not (in other words, whether the degree title includes language or not) and the contact hours? The frequency of contact hours for non-specialists is perhaps less than that for specialists in most institutions but it is usually reflected in the progress expected. Should the approach to each group be different? The following QAA statement (2002) is the official message that there is no fundamental difference between the two:

...the language learning experience of these non-specialist students has much in common with that of the specialist student, in particular, the balance between receptive and productive skills, the exposure to authentic resources and the role of educational technology. As such, therefore, the Teaching, learning and assessment section of this statement is potentially applicable also to these students.

(QAA, 2002: 4)

It is also true that it is hard to make different approaches, even if we tried to.

How do we design language teaching for specialists? What is suitable for non-specialists? Are we supposed to do a full survey of their needs and adjust to them? Di Napoli *et al.* (2001) also state the doubt of making distinctions as follows;

How did we arrive at such dichotomic approaches to language learning and teaching, often embodied in clear-cut and uncompromising distinctions between what is called language learning/teaching for 'specialists' and vocational language learning, i.e. language learning/teaching for 'non-specialists'? These are terms which present us with both a problem of definition – what exactly do they mean? – and a wider conceptual question – what is 'language learning'?

(Di Napoli *et al.*, 2001: 3)

It is hard to see the difference between the two, according to Di Napoli *et al.* In fact, it will not be realistic for most institutions to have different approaches to each group apart from the different arrangements of the contact hours and the progress. However, a simplified view to distinguish the two does exist:

...language learning for 'specialists' (language as object of study through texts = knowledge) and language learning for 'non-specialists' (language for use = skills) in higher education institutions...

(Di Napoli *et al.*, 2001: 4)

And the latter is leading to 'vocational learning.' If 'non-specialists =

vocational language learning' is true, it will turn out to be unfair to the specialists, who follow deeper language studies, reach a far more advanced linguistic level and find that they end up with one or two disciplines, while non-specialists enjoy multiple disciplines for vocational benefit without putting so much energy as the specialists do in language studies.

Where did the above distinctive 'impressions' of the two groups come from? Do the main reasons for studying language have different tendencies respectively? Comparing the Subject Centre (2005b)'s survey which includes both specialists and non-specialists and Byrne (2004)'s on non-specialists only (in Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, 2005a), 'employability' is placed in the second place for both specialists and non-specialists but there is no obvious difference. The former follow 4-year undergraduate programme including a 'Year Abroad'¹ and complete a higher level than upper intermediate language module by the end of their study, while the majority of the latter seldom continue their study beyond the Year Abroad stage and stay in the beginners to at most lower-intermediate stage. The above separate images of 'specialists' and 'non-specialists' may be caused by this fact.

Then, the distinction between the two will simply be interpreted as, ‘specialists = possibility of proceeding to advanced levels of language study’ and ‘non-specialists = possibility of terminating the study at beginners’ level.’ So the issue will be turned into the linguistic levels of the language modules, rather than the distinction between specialists and non-specialists. The image of ‘skills and vocational learning’ associated with non-specialists is thus linked to beginners’ level language study, and therefore the question raised here is, what is the beginners’ level language study? This will be further discussed later in section 2.4.

2.1.3 **Employability and Language Studies**

‘Employability’ after language studies is a key for many institutions to promote attracting more students. It is officially sustained by QAA (2002) which emphasizes the employability issue as follows:

...the study of languages and related studies affords the opportunity for acquiring and developing competence in one or more foreign languages, and thus provides for its students a vocational training opportunity. The ability to use a foreign language is, by any definition, a useful acquisition and *one which is held in high regard by employers*. Graduates in languages and related studies have *the highest*

employability rates of all humanities graduates; in employability terms, graduates in some modern languages are second only to graduates in more narrowly defined vocational subjects such as dentistry or veterinary medicine.

(QAA, 2002: Letter of Introduction, emphasis added)

...many programmes now recognize the capacity of competence in a foreign language to enhance the career and employment prospects of their graduates and make languages course units available to these students as a minor subject or on an elective basis.

(QAA, 2002: 1)

In the above, it is clear that 'employability' is targeted at any student studying languages, both groups of specialists and non-specialists. There is no doubt that the language skills are a useful qualification in many careers and it is important for Modern Language Studies to take it into consideration to attract more university entrants. But how was this direction initially generated? By what is it underpinned? Will 'employability' be suitable as an official aim of Modern Language Studies in Higher Education?

As previously stated, 'employability' was listed as the second in the reasons for studying language, and it supercedes 'personal interest' in neither surveys by Byrne (2004) in Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, (2005a) nor by Subject Centre (2005b)(the former specifically surveyed

non-specialists only). 'Personal interest' was the top reason in both surveys. In other words, students study languages because they are purely interested in the foreign languages or in a broader sense in culture and other related areas. 'Employability' is perceived as a bonus.

Coleman (2005b) questions the myth of 'language = employability' from another point of view. After a series of research investigations on employability of graduates, he emphatically concludes the result of the survey as below:

In vocational areas, the single most important determinant of graduate employment prospects is subject of study. However, for students of non-vocational subjects such as languages, two other factors may be equally significant: a degree from a 'good' university, and prior educational and sociobiographical background (Brennan *et al.* 2003:7)..... Put bluntly, if you come from a good family, a good school and a good university, *you will get a good job whether or not you choose a language degree.*

(Coleman, 2005b: 20-21, emphasis added)

Another survey by Coleman highlighted the cause and effect of relying on instrumental motivation as follows. Encouraging language study by an 'employment' campaign will lead to irresponsible educational effect.

There is a link between proficiency and type of motivation. For British

students, the virtuous circle motivation and an integrative motivation are associated with above-average success, and an instrumental motivation associated with below-average success.

(Coleman, 1996: 9)

Emphasizing the employability factor is in this view likely to lead to a fall in the success rates and if the official policy keeps emphasizing this instrumental dimension of employability, Modern Language Studies will be driven to produce the expected outcome even though the success rate may fall. Furthermore, and ironically, they may fall into a trap of enhancement of the instant practical skills of the language studies and will end up with losing the academic discipline in the long-term and yet this will not enhance, says, Coleman, employability. Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) also warn of the short-sighted promotion of the instrumental reason as follows:

Do departments of modern languages actually want hordes of students who have nothing but a functional, economic belief in the long slog of language learning? Modern languages professionals in higher education all know, implicitly, that such an understanding of languages is not sufficient motivation. What does motivate is relationships, understanding, integration with others, growth and exchange; becoming critical, intercultural beings who laugh and cry and read and sing and love and learn in other languages.

(Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004: 63)

More generally, Barnett (2001) points out the disadvantage position of

humanities in terms of university economy and research culture in comparison to science and technology disciplines and raises a question about the application of the value developed in the science field to humanities.

The humanities, therefore, understand that theirs is a relatively weak economic position vis-à-vis the science and technological disciplines. They also understand that this situation is not just one of budgets as such, it is reinforced by value judgements, both tacit and explicit. They consider, for instance, that the opportunities available to the humanities to demonstrate their performance in the national Research Assessment Exercise are weak in comparison to those of the science and technology.

(Barnett, 2001: 29)

He also warns about the employability promotion initiated by the state.

Firstly, in the state-driven 'vocationalisation' of higher education (Salter and Tapper, 1994), institutions of higher education are expected to demonstrate a sensitivity towards, if not an alignment with, the labour market. This programme has been driven forward not only by the Department of Education and Enterprise in various of its initiatives, but also by the state agencies, the Funding Councils and (to a lesser extent) the Quality Assurance Agency.

(Barnett, 2001: 28)

It is inferred from the above that Barnett has two grounds for questioning the 'employability' promotion in humanities area: the difficulty to refer to the same standard as science and secondly that it is by the initiative of the state.

Therefore, there are enough warnings against being trapped in the short-sighted view, as in Barnett (2001: 30)'s word, 'producer capture'. However, none of those who warn, suggest to eliminate 'employability'. As summed up in the following, the warning messages are interpreted as 'employability will be a value sought in study but will not be an ultimate goal'. Too much emphasis on this dimension will encourage characterizing language study as having instrumental value. Kelly makes the point that the two are not intrinsically mutually exclusive:

The value of teaching and learning for social reproduction (translatable as the economy and employability) does not abolish the value of research for critical analysis (translatable as citizenship and innovation). On the contrary, each enhances the other...

(Kelly, 2001: 54)

The question which nonetheless remains is how the mutual enhancement can take place in the design, teaching and assessment of Modern Language Studies.

2.1.4 New Dimensions in Modern Language Studies

The current situation of Modern Language Studies was reviewed in the previous sections. What then is needed for the UK Higher Education Modern

Language Studies now? It was highlighted that one important cause of the current situation is the lack of focus of Modern Language Studies. They consist of various components of different natures. The problem is there seems to be nothing to link among them. Especially between the two extreme elements of 'instrument' and 'discipline' (Lodge, 2000). Di Napoli *et al.* agree with this view, as presented by Lodge and at the end of the previous section by Kelly, but focus on the practical question:

'Modern languages' should no longer be conceived as either the study of literature and society or the use of language, but rather a question of how to *integrate both study and use* in the course of language learning.

(Di Napoli *et al.*, 2001: 6, emphasis added)

Hence, the current theme is to search for a single 'linkage,' something which fits into any disciplinary context. But how can it be realised? If it is sought within the notion of 'skills,' it can be generic skills or transferable skills which are fostered through the engagement of academic studies regardless of which disciplines they are. QAA (2002) defines generic skills in three categories: cognitive skills (creativity, relating, critical reflection, reasoning, analysis, evaluation, etc.), practical skills (use of the target language, autonomy,

problem-solving), and interpersonal skills and personal attributes (communication, interaction, team-working, mediating, flexibility, intercultural competence). A slightly different categorization is offered by King and Honeybone (2000: 18-20) in Klapper (2005: 88).

Communication (e.g. speaking, presenting, receiving feedback);
Interpersonal (e.g. teamwork, negotiating, managing people);
Self-management (e.g. self-reflection, time management, organizing);
Intellectual (e.g. critical reasoning, synthesizing, problem-solving);
Practical/applied (e.g. formulating hypotheses/arguments, reporting findings, referencing)

Will these transferable (generic) skills function as a single linkage of the 4 different components of Modern Language Studies defined by QAA (2002): use of the target language, explicit knowledge of language, knowledge of aspects of the cultures, communities and societies where the language is used, and intercultural awareness and understanding? It is doubtful that these skills become a linkage as they themselves are too diverse.

Other views are to review and build up the innovative dimension of 'language studies'. Klapper (2006) seeks for the cause of the current 'crisis' in the lack of unifying 'powerful intellectual rationale', which can only be provided by

building all we do around the language. Brumfit (2004) and Lodge (2000) also assert the importance of 'language' itself. It is inferred that the linkage has to be something which is based in 'languages' and works on other academic disciplines, as well. But how in practice will it be realized? Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) attempt to clarify it in more detail by the concept of 'linguaging.' The message is that what is to be sought is not in the form of 'skills' but something beyond that:

Languages are more than skills; they are the medium through which communities of people engage with, make sense of and shape the world. Through language they become active agents in creating their human environment; this process is what we call linguaging.

(Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004: 2)

Linguaging is transformational. Linguaging is in and of itself embodied knowledge. Linguaging is habitus, it is about skilling people, not adding on detachable skills. Linguaging demonstrates that 'ontology always trumps epistemology' (Barnett, 2003: 56). Through linguaging people come to make sense of and to shape their worlds. Through linguaging they become active agents in creating their human and material environments. Linguaging is, as we have argued throughout, inextricably relational. It is a social way of being.

(ibid.: 167)

The concept of 'skills' is too instrumental and will not be as suitable as a linkage, as Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) point out. Skills are something gained

as a result of training according to a manual. They are a know-how which works in one mechanism but not applicable beyond that. The linkage has to be something which works in various directions and to reach out to other disciplines beyond that particular know-how. Inclination to skills as forming the basis of training as opposed to cognition for education will lead to the controversy of education versus training (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003). Higher Education language people are indeed examining what they are aiming for ultimately in their education. Therefore the selection of this 'linkage' is very important for Higher Education as it characterizes its nature.

Currently and for many years in the past, 'language' was located as prerequisite of studies or identified as a tool. However, these views presented here on the contrary attempt to locate language in the centre and to seek for value in language itself and the appropriate approach to languages.

The point is that modern languages is one route to that critical engagement with the dominant civilisational ideology which is *the core of any meaningful process of educational development*. Indeed, because it asks the learner to be multiple in expression, to move between universes of thought and value, between historical visions, it may be particularly well-suited to that process. The kind of

functionality that we are seeking for modern languages, therefore, rests on a radically different vision of the learning process in higher education in which the learning of languages would play a core and central role.

(Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004: 64, emphasis added)

So it is clear that the keys for the linkage are in languages themselves.

Languaging with critical engagement with the world has the potential needed

and hence in the next section, the focus is moved on to language modules and

they are examined in detail.

2.2 Language Modules in Modern Language Studies

In UK Higher Education, Modern Language Degree Programmes typically consist of language modules and academic 'content' modules. However, the nature of these two are currently contrasted as 'language as instrument' or 'language as discipline' (Lodge, 2000). It has been thought inevitable that language is regarded as a prerequisite for the 'content' study or as a tool, which makes language subordinate to academic studies. The enhancement of practical skills in language modules has also widened their distance from the academic studies. Furthermore, the concept of 'vocational learning for practical skills' easily fits in the language modules rather than in the academic content modules.

The following quotes explain the origin of this rather distorted view:

This, as some scholars argue (Bernini and Pavesi, 1994; Borutti, 1999, along with Balboni and Kelly in this volume), is the result of our Western cultural tradition which, from Plato and Aristotle down to our times, considers the 'practical' as inferior or ancillary to the 'theoretical', and research as more prestigious than teaching. The phenomenon is particularly detrimental because it does not recognize the important interrelationship between pedagogy and research, which is a vital element in any educational enterprise.

...As argued by Balboni in this volume, this, too, is the result of *the split between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge*. Content, both in terms of teaching and research, is thought to embody the former, while language teaching and research are conceived of as both applied and instrumental.

(Di Napoli *et al.*, 2001: 14, emphasis added)

Language (learning and teaching) is demonstrably useful to the individual and to society, and occupies a temporal position within the discipline. This is reflected in its crucial importance within the economy of modern languages, and the very extensive infrastructure of resources managed by staff specialising in language teaching and learning. *In contrast, 'content' (the study of foreign cultures and societies) is perceived to carry more intellectual prestige*, and staff working in these areas find it easier to gain recognition for their research, which has recognisable links to less temporal disciplines.

(Kelly, 2001: 46, emphasis added)

The concern is with the status of theory and practice, with the status of those teaching theory and practice and the question this leads to is: what is specific to language modules within the area of Higher Education? Is it different from

learning language at school level or the same? What about learning language in adult (life-long learning) education and in intensive business language courses?

In other words, language learning in Higher Education does not exist on its own. However, it is not subordinate to any other study, either. Ideally it has to be independent and at the same time to keep being linked with other disciplines within the academic community. It is the linkage with academic content and other modules which makes it distinctive from any other language learning such as in schools and in adult education. It makes language studies in Higher Education unique and special. The problem is, with the current emphasis on skills, it is hard to see this uniqueness in language studies in Higher Education, especially in the beginners' level.

In the next section, therefore, the approach and methods in language teaching are examined in detail in order to pursue the question of whether there is a unique character in language studies in Higher Education which differentiates it from other types of language learning.

2.3 The Development of Language Teaching Methods

With respect to language modules, it was not only the change of the structure of UK Higher Education which influenced the policy of developing language modules. In addition to the trend of the era asking for practical skills in the Higher Education studies, the change of language teaching methods has also played an important role in the policy of language studies. Until the late 1960s, when single honours was the major style of degree programmes, the Grammar Translation Method was in fact suitable and reasonable for the nature of the Higher Education language studies which seeks for 'academic' analysis based on original texts. Then the shortcomings of the Grammar Translation Method were focused on, and in particular the lack of productive and especially oral skills in this method, but the Audio Lingual Method failed to demonstrate fostering the productive skills of the language, either, because it overemphasized oral repetition without intention to mean and the criticism against too much reliance on the behaviourism was led by Rivers and Chomsky, etc. (Byram, 2004a; Chomsky, 1973; Rivers, 1964). However, the development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s quickly and widely attracted the language teaching profession with the existing needs of more

practical use of the language at that time (Savignon, 2004). Soon it started influencing textbooks and supplementary teaching materials. Higher Education language teaching was not an exception and CLT was smoothly accepted here as well. CLT has been constantly modified as new research emerged but its principle has been inherited in any kind of language teaching for more than thirty years.

In addition, the introduction of Year Abroad for specialists which became compulsory in almost all the institutions by the end of the 1980s (Coleman, 1996; Evans, 1988) certainly made a big impact on the further inclination to communicative skills in the language modules. The enhancement of practical language skills in the pre-year abroad stage as a part of the preparation for living in the country where the target language is used and also the maintaining of the skills after the return became important aims of the language modules. Therefore language modules definitely need to take development of practical language skills into consideration.

CLT has certainly brought benefits to the Higher Education language study. Its

learner-centred nature encourages active interaction of learners and promotes learner autonomy (Klapper, 2006; Savignon, 2004). Also the introduction of CLT highlighted the need for foreign language learning to be approached from various angles. The attention to a sociolinguistic competence which is pointed out as one of the important elements in CLT (Canale and Swain, 1980) developed attention to wider range of values such as intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997). The shift of emphasis is as described in Savignon (1997: 41), 'grammatical competence has been the domain of linguistic studies proper, but sociolinguistic competence is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry having to do with the social rules of language use'.

By the introduction of the modular system, the objectives of the language teaching and learning became more transparent. But it is also true that the system made each module's character more evident and the gap between the modules of other disciplines and language modules was widened, because of the emphasis on practical skills of language modules. This inclination was even more accelerated by CLT. Hence, the situation of either 'instrument' or

'discipline' argued by Lodge (2000) was created. CLT's negative impact is the separation from the text, as pointed out in Brown, that opportunities for learning about cultural issues, for extended reading, for talking about the ways in which language works are all being lost (Brown, 2000: 185). Channels for wider interdisciplinary concepts were brought in by CLT, but ironically it did not lead to extension to the valuable opportunity to pursue them further academically by texts. Thus the nature of communication focused on 'how to get things done' (Grenfell, 2000a: 20) was characterized as the 'instrumental' phase of language which accelerated the separation of language learning from academic discipline.

The heart of the concept of CLT is a focus on meanings. But the importance of the teaching of grammar has also been emphasized as one of the core elements in CLT since the beginning of its development (Canale and Swain, 1980; Littlewood, 1981; Wilkins, 1976) and grammatical competence is enforced through its use in communication (Hymes, 1971; Lightbown and Spada, 2006; Savignon, 1997; Widdowson, 1979). Also the importance of considering structural sequence in communicative syllabus was pointed out (Littlewood,

1981; Brumfit, 1980, 1981 in Yalden, 1987). However, under the influence of Krashen's natural approach which argues the redundancy of conscious knowledge of language, the teaching of explicit grammatical knowledge was unfocused. Grammar mainly designated for communication cannot always cope with the study of texts. It does not represent the whole grammatical system of a language, either. Broady refers to this point as follows.

However, language teachers in these post-communicative days also evoke the problem of the over-confident communicator who engages fluently in colloquial routines, but who is restricted by over-simplified grammar and cannot produce accurate written text. Put simplistically, the problem in both cases has to do with the integration of knowledge and skill: the learned professor possessed knowledge but limited skills while the superficially fluent student possesses some skills but little knowledge.

(Broady, 2005: 52)

However, as Broady goes on to say, Modern Language Studies has never abandoned the study of texts. As previously mentioned, Higher Education has been required to have multiple dimensions nowadays. Although the practical use of language as one of the dimensions of the Modern Language Studies is evident, it cannot dominate over the academic studies of texts as another dimension. Both dimensions have to be compatible under the roof of Modern

Language Studies. It is unlike the pre-1960s time when the direction of the Higher Education Language Studies was towards one stream line of academic studies only.

Hence language studies in Higher Education have not walked away from the Grammar Translation Method while absorbing CLT. Nowadays, UK Higher Education foreign language classrooms most commonly employ combinations of teachings of declarative knowledge (e.g. Grammar-Translation) and of procedural knowledge (Communicative Language Teaching) (Klapper, 2006: 62). However, the approach to grammar is different according to the level. In UK Higher Education language courses, the beginners' level (in some cases, intermediate level as well) predominantly employ a structural syllabus with additional functional and communicative elements, while the syllabus of intermediate and advanced levels are based on topics or theme (Klapper, 2006: 131).

In beginners' level, grammar is sequenced from simple to complex in order to master the linguistic system steadily in the syllabus. Thus grammar in

beginners' level courses ensures the consolidation of foundation of the upper stages. While in intermediate-advanced level, the difficulty and complexity are determined by the text and audio-visual materials.

Highlighting on how to deal with grammar, the difference of approach is seen here between beginners' and intermediate-advanced levels. Each structure is introduced and enhanced by communicative activities in the former, while the latter will put more weight on the content brought in by the teaching materials. In other words in exaggeration, beginners' level focuses on 'usage of linguistic form' while the upper levels, on 'content'.

In summary, in the last two sections we have focused on the principles of language teaching – the development of modules, the methods of teaching and this has brought us back to the question raised first in section 2.1.2, where the difficulty of making a distinction between specialists and non-specialists with respect to the purposes of language teaching in Higher Education was discussed. Here the difference between beginners' level and upper levels was highlighted again from another point of view, the question of teaching methods.

The next section therefore needs to discuss issues specific to beginners' level in more details.

2.4 **Beginners' Level Language Study**

There is no common definition of the terms 'beginners' 'intermediate' and 'advanced' in the discourse about courses in Higher education, although these are the terms often used as shared vague concepts. Although there are levels defined in assessment terms – for example in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001), as we shall see below – there is no agreed standard proficiency level which the students of Modern Language Studies ought to attain at the end of each year of the study across the UK Higher Education institutions, either (Coleman, 1996).

As for the common understanding of 'beginners' concept, the term 'threshold' has often been used. This is related to the 'threshold level' developed by van Ek and others at the Council of Europe since the 1970s as essential communicative needs (van Ek, J. and Trim, J., 1991). However, the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*

established in 1996 and published in its final version five years later certainly provides a valid guideline in this area. It is the most widely used standard throughout Europe and perhaps most of universities in the UK refer to it to create their own descriptors of each institution. According to the classification used by the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Level A (lower beginners) and Level B (upper beginners) which are defined as beginners' level correspond to A1 (Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage), B1 (Threshold) and a part of B2 (Vantage) of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* as in Table 4.1 in Chapter 4.

In the case of non-European languages in UK Higher Education context, especially non-alphabetical ones, it is necessary to take into additional consideration the learning of scripts. The mastery of the basic scripts will be completed by the end of the lower beginners' level and additional scripts, 'kanji (Chinese characters)' are continued to be introduced in the upper levels. This element takes up a large part of beginners' level Japanese language learning. There is therefore a need for a specific standard established in Japanese language only, and this exists. 'The Japanese Language Proficiency

Test' administered and held worldwide by the Japan Foundation² established a clear descriptor of the proficiency levels in Japanese as a foreign language. The beginner's range is, Level 3 and 4 (there are 4 levels and Level 1 is the highest). By the end of Level 3, 300 contact hours' study, 1500 words of productive vocabulary and 300 Chinese characters need to be acquired (The Japan Foundation, 1999-2006). Also, there is a list of grammatical structures to be covered by each level, although many for Level 1 and 2 are not grammatical structures but expressions. Most of the beginners' Japanese as a foreign language textbooks are published in Japan and strictly follow this guideline. According to an unofficial survey of the Japan Foundation London Language Centre in 2004, all the initial stages of Japanese degree courses in the UK universities are using textbooks published in Japan³, with one exception of a university which published their original Japanese language textbook in the UK.

Thus, there is no single descriptor to define the level of Japanese language within the UK Higher Education framework. In this thesis, A1, A2, B1 and B2 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and Level 3

and 4 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test are beginners' level as a working definition.

However, what is to be paid attention to is not these kinds of numerical issues of hours of studies and numbers of 'kanji' etc. As pointed out in section 2.3, the most outstanding feature of the beginners' level language study to distinguish it from other upper levels is the steady introduction of new grammatical structures in cumulative progress considering the sequence according to the difficulty and complexity of the structures. It is, in fact, reflected in any textbook for beginners Japanese mentioned previously. In intermediate and advanced levels, the clear cumulative progress of linguistic structures fades away and it is replaced by introduction of more advanced level expressions and vocabulary related to the topic of materials. Therefore, the role of grammar in beginners' level is more crucial than in any other upper levels. It is the core of the language teaching in beginners' level.

The importance of systematic teaching of grammar in the beginners' level can be paradoxically inferred from the topic-based language teaching in

pre-university education in the UK. Johnson (1982) already pointed out the inadequacy of applying a syllabus without considering grammatical sequence to beginner's level, and Brumfit (1978) also claimed that a semantic syllabus cannot replace the teaching of grammar. The inclination to instant communication in the secondary level seems to have invited problems. There are voices from both theorists and practitioners asserting the needs of explicit teaching of grammar in the beginners' level language teaching at secondary level in relation to the disappointment in the shift to over-emphasis on functions and notions introduced by General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) (Grenfell, 2000a, b; Meiring and Norman, 2001; Pachler, 2000). Klapper (1997, 1998) and Macaro and Masterman (2006) also point out the issue of grammatical deficiencies among undergraduates due to GCSE and General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level (A-level) languages. Klapper (1997, 1998) also argues for the importance of introduction of more grammar teaching in the secondary level and more systematic transition between secondary and Higher Educations in language teaching, while admitting schools have their own mission and aims in their education. Further advanced level language studies can be established on the beginners' level as a

solid foundation, and the implication is grammar in beginner's level needs to be systematically pursued.

Section 2.3 pointed out that beginners' level courses focus on 'usage of linguistic form' while the upper levels focus on 'content'. Focus on content makes the nature of study closer and similar to an academic discipline, while focus on usage drags it towards acquiring of practical and instrumental skills. CLT has captured this nature and further intensified this instrumental nature of beginners' level language study. The cause of either 'instrument' or 'discipline (Lodge, 2000)' is identified here. In communicative activities, grammar underpins the communication for the particular situation or function, and conversely the activities are for the consolidation of the grammatical structures. The roots of the chain of 'communication = practical skills = vocational learning = non-specialists = beginners' can be identified here. 'Vocational' value was additionally associated with the adult learners for immediate communicative needs by Council of Europe in 1970s (Di Napoli *et al.*, 2001: 4).

Paradoxically, the need for a systematic introduction of grammar in beginners' courses, which is also characteristic of the teaching of Japanese, means that there is potential for language teaching at this level to draw attention to the study of language and therefore to the academic 'content', nonetheless the tendency is to present such courses as meeting the communicative needs of beginners and non-specialists. This is not specific to language learning in Higher Education, instead this will be a universal style of beginner's level teaching applicable to any kind. There therefore needs to be something to characterize language study in Higher Education and to work as a linkage of Modern Language Studies.

On the other hand, intermediate and advanced levels language studies deal with the texts of wider range of abstract thoughts and content. In this sense, they are able to retain the identity as 'academic studies' and share common discipline with the academic content modules.

Besides the sequence of grammar, the limitation of dealing with abstract topic is another characteristic of beginner's language study. With basic structures and

vocabulary, its communication range is within the Council of Europe's threshold level. This will be another cause that the beginner's level cannot be based on text. The weighting on instant, practical and instrumental phases in oral communicative activities in beginners' level accelerates its separation from the texts and also from other academic dimensions of Modern Language Studies.

And yet there remains the need to have something to characterize language learning in Higher Education and to work as a linkage of Modern Language Studies. The linkage has to be something to work on beginners' level, as well.

A suggestion is the followings:

The curious thing is that growing numbers of people are devoting some part of their leisure time to language learning in evening classes and the like. And in many senses that is an extremely positive expression of a general and growing interest both in culture as tradition and in culture as modes of living. But eventually the language is being sold as a commodity on a virtual shelf. It is a completely different thing to engage critically with intercultural complexity as a long-term commitment to intercultural being and to languaging. These are dispositions which cannot be bought in off-the shelf packages.

(Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004: 57)

The alternative is to reconstruct the new discipline of modern language studies using its greatest strength – as a means *to become critically engaged* through an awareness of others, to become a languaging actor in the world.

(Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004: 34, emphasis added)

Thus Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) make the distinction between the commodification of language learning and critical engagement, expressing the view that it is the second of these which should be characteristic of Modern Language Studies in Higher Education. The key point of the critical engagement is ‘thinking’:

‘The student shall develop the ability to speak, read, write and understand the language’. That may be why the fifth skill, and the most important, does not characteristically appear – thinking.

(ibid.: 92)

The question raised here is, what is the possibility of critical engagement of ‘thinking’ in beginners’ level? For beginner’s level language study, it is a serious issue whether the beginner’s level can survive as a ‘study’ within Higher Education or in fact be cut off from it.

2.5 Possibility of Criticality in Beginners’ Language Courses

Previously in section 2.1.4, the possibility of critical engagement in language

study proposed by Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) was suggested as a linkage. In order to be qualified as 'linkage' of Modern Language Studies, it has to be something in reality workable with any discipline of language studies. There is therefore a need to examine the existing concepts of criticality and also it needs to be examined with empirical study. In order to seek for the possibility of the 'critical engagement' as a linkage, this PhD study borrows two models of criticality concepts, Barnett (1997) and the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton. The experimental stage of this research is to seek for the indications of the following concepts in the teaching of beginners' level Japanese language.

The Criticality Project by the University of Southampton presented the possibility and reality of finding criticality in Modern Language Studies. The research indicates that their theoretical base of criticality in UK Higher Education, taken from Barnett (1997), has nonetheless limitations with respect to Modern Language Studies and, as we shall see in more detail in later chapters, the categorization of criticality from their empirical study does not match with Barnett's model (Brumfit *et al.*, 2004, 2005). This implies that

Barnett's model exists as an umbrella concept of criticality in UK Higher Education general but does not fit into every individual subject as it is. The concept of criticality needs to be examined for further sub-division and refinement in terms of the realistic application. Furthermore, the Criticality Project demonstrated that intermediate-advanced level language studies can foster criticality and its connection to academic content modules, while the possibility of beginner's level language studies is still unknown.

Besides that, although the concept of 'being critical' and 'critical thinking' have been focused on and discussed in many occasions in the last generation since critical pedagogy emerged in the 1970s, the definition of this term still remains vague and controversial (Bailin *et al.*, 1999a, b). Therefore this research finds it valuable to attempt to make suggestion for particular concept of criticality for beginners' language studies.

Thus this PhD study addresses the importance of investigating if these criticality concepts presented by theories are workable in beginners' language study and its potential role as a linkage in Modern Language Studies.

Therefore the research design includes empirical studies in the field of beginners' language course, as well as the examination of existing criticality concepts. Then, this research attempts to make suggestion to conceptualise criticality based on this PhD study.

Summary of Chapter 2

This chapter examined the current situation of UK Higher Education structure and the aims of Modern Language Studies. It highlighted the fact that the problem of Modern Language Studies is the lack of coordination of diversity of various disciplines, especially, the large split of 'instrument' and 'discipline'. One of the causes of this split is in the modular system which made language modules available for non-specialist language students the majority of whom stay at beginner's level. The emphasis on employment also accelerates the instrumental dimension of language studies and there are many warnings that it cannot be the ultimate goal. Modern Language Studies clearly needs a new dimension which works as one single linkage of the diversity. It has to be something beyond just skills, and critical engagement with 'thinking' is a possibility.

Examining language studies themselves, the gap between beginners' and intermediate-advanced levels is not small in terms of the teaching methods such as CLT and how to deal with grammar. The difference of the nature of study, focus on 'linguistic forms' and on 'content', creates this gap. The Criticality Project by the University of Southampton demonstrated that intermediate-advanced level language studies have the potential of fostering criticality suggested by Barnett (1997), but the case with beginner's level hasn't been focused, yet. In order to consider the linkage, there is a need to investigate and to search for a possibility of applying critical engagement in beginners' level language study more deeply. Therefore this PhD study attempts to investigate it by empirical study of a Japanese language beginner's course.

Besides the empirical study, the existing 'criticality' concept by reviewing literatures is needed to be examined. Therefore the following chapter examines the literatures of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, before moving to the empirical study.

Notes

¹ In this thesis, the term 'Year Abroad' is used throughout, meaning one or a half year exchange study to the partner institutions in the country where the language is spoken. The term is equivalent to Residence Abroad, Period Abroad, Study Abroad, etc.

² The Japan Foundation is Japan's principal agent for cultural exchange between Japan and overseas countries and its work is broadly analogous to that of the British Council in the UK.

³ *Genki* (Japan Times); *Japanese for College Students*, *ICU no Nihongo* (ICU); *Japanese for Busy People* (AJALT); *Japanese for Everyone* (Gakken); *Minna no Nihongo* (3A Corporation); *Situational Functional Japanese* (Tsukuba Language Group)

CHAPTER 3 THE CONCEPT OF 'CRITICALITY'

The previous chapter has highlighted the possibility of critical engagement of languaging as 'linkage' in Modern Language Studies. In order to investigate this properly, two issues need to be pursued: the discussion on the concept of what exactly the term, 'criticality', means and conducting empirical research on 'criticality'. The purpose of this chapter is the former, to highlight the concept of 'criticality' by reviewing various literatures on Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. In fact, the term, 'critical' is used in a wide range of interpretations, and therefore, this chapter focuses on the review of the basic concept of the term 'critical' by examining the use of this term in the areas of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. First, it discusses Critical Pedagogy founded by the studies of Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren and highlights the key concepts in Critical Pedagogy and presents those which are particularly relevant to this study. Then, it also examines Critical Thinking, which is another form of education of thinking critically and the concepts in that work which are relevant to this study. Thirdly, the two approaches are compared in order to highlight what exactly 'being critical' means.

Then, the development of critical cultural awareness in language teaching is examined in relation to Citizenship Education, as its educational goal is to foster citizens with critical cultural awareness in intercultural dimension leading to 'transformative action' which is common to that of Critical Pedagogy. Finally, the concept of criticality in Higher Education is examined mainly focused on criticality developed by Barnett (1997), which is the model of the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton. Then, these three types of education: Citizenship Education, Critical Pedagogy and Criticality by Barnett are compared.

It needs to be mentioned here that this chapter of literature review was created after the data analysis in Chapter 5 of this thesis was completed. Therefore the data gained in the Action Research design of this PhD study is not directly influenced by the theories presented here. The empirical study was developed on the basis of the analysis of the position of Modern Language Studies presented in the previous chapter and in particular took its starting point in the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton where the discussion of

criticality was influenced by the work of Barnett and of Bailin and others. The influence from the work presented in this chapter was therefore indirect.

However, the analysis of the empirical data showed that there are concepts there which are at least similar to many of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking and the purpose of this literature review at this stage is to provide the basis for later locating the results from the Action Research within the broader context of the discussion of criticality in education and especially Higher Education. The more details of this issue will be provided later in Chapter 6.

3.1 Critical Pedagogy

3.1.1 Basic Concepts of Critical Pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy is presented in different expressions by different researchers, but there are common fundamental features seen among them. First of all, Critical Pedagogy is regarded as something larger scale than just teaching in the classroom. Guilherme (2002) provides the following explanation of the distinction between pedagogy and teaching:

First, it is defined as a pedagogy rather than a teaching method. It should not be considered as such because teaching has often been understood as transmission of knowledge, and method, in this case, as mastery of teaching techniques.

(Guilherme, 2002: 17)

Wink, citing McLaren, provides a definition of Critical Pedagogy as 'a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society, and nation state' (McLaren, 1998, Summer: 45 in Wink, 2000: 30). Thus, Critical Pedagogy involves the whole environment and living beyond the classroom, expanding to the outside community. This is made more graphic by the introduction of an action dimension in the following statement presented by Wink as representative of the way in which Critical Pedagogy is not limited to schooling: 'We do not *do* critical pedagogy; we *live* it. Critical pedagogy is not a method; it is a way of life' (Jasso & Jasso, 1995 in Wink, 2000: 119, emphasis in original).

In addition to this stress on the scale and reach, Critical Pedagogy needs

long-term commitment rather than just a ‘snap-shot’ of teaching, and Critical Pedagogy is not completed by just one-sided knowledge transmission; it requires continuing dialogue towards understanding and it might not have an end point. Therefore, it is understood as ‘process’ and ‘duration’ which involves a certain length of time.

These characteristics are emphasised by Freire, the main source of Critical Pedagogy writings, who considers Critical Pedagogy as ‘process’ and ‘duration’ because it requires a certain length of time, and the emphasis is on the process not the outcomes:

Education is “duration,” because it results from the interplay of these two opposites in dialogue. Education shows “duration” in the contradiction of permanence and change. This is why it is possible to say that education is permanent only in the sense of duration. In this case “permanent” does not mean the permanence of values, but the permanence of the *educational process*, which is the interplay between cultural permanence and change.

(Freire, 1973: 155, emphasis in original)

McLaren (1995: 34) also regards pedagogy as ‘the process by which teachers and students negotiate and produce meaning’. Simon’s following statement also indicates the similar point to Wink’s argument that Critical Pedagogy is a

way of life, that pedagogy is something more deeply involved in the way of life.

To me “pedagogy” is a more complex and extensive term than “teaching,” referring to the integration in practice of particular curriculum content and design, classroom strategies and techniques, and evaluation, purpose, and methods. All of these aspects of educational practice come together in the realities of what happens in classrooms. Together they organize a view of how a teacher’s work within an institutional context specifies a particular version of what knowledge is of most worth, what it means to know something, and how we might construct representations of ourselves, others, and our physical and social environment.

(Simon 1987: 30 in McLaren, 1995: 34)

In sum, in terms of both scale and time, the concept of Critical Pedagogy is larger than that of teaching in the classroom and its involvement extends beyond the classroom and over a long time.

The commitment to the ‘world’ outside classroom directs Critical Pedagogy towards cultural and political engagement. This dimension has been led by Giroux’s concept of Cultural Politics. His accomplishment, ‘both politically and pedagogically has been to unmask the structured inequality of competing self-interests within a social order’ (McLaren, 1988: x). This cultural and

political dimension leads to social action as a goal of Critical Pedagogy. Therefore, schools have the important mission of fostering citizens for democratic society.

Thus in terms of the process itself, pedagogy is not simply the teaching and learning of skills occurring inside the school. Schools are not the place for just transmitting receptive knowledge to the learners, either. They are the place for the knowledge to be formulated in relation to the particular society in which learners live. In order to formulate the knowledge, a certain duration is needed, and therefore pedagogy is comprehended above all as 'process', and the nature of the Critical Pedagogy process is represented by notions such as teacher as also learner, dialogue, curiosity of the learners, connection with the world, action (practice) and transformation, experience, reflection and resistance, which are explained in more details later as key concepts.

3.1.2 History of Critical Pedagogy

The historical roots of Critical Pedagogy are to be found in many parts of the world. The South American origin is represented by Paulo Freire, who

provided the foundation of Critical Pedagogy. In Europe, the Italian Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Karl Marx's economic and social ideas, and the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and postmodernism represented by Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas, etc. are important. Vygotsky in Russia, known for his thought and language theory, has also strongly influenced the formation of Critical Pedagogy.

In North America, Henry Giroux who inherited the roots of Critical Pedagogy from Paulo Freire strongly influenced its development. His original theory is represented in the idea known as 'language of critique' and 'language of possibility', the combination of both involving critical review of a society with a view towards its reconstruction. In fact, it is Freire, who originally combines the two concepts (Giroux, 1985: xii; 1988: 108) and McLaren also showed how the theory has been influenced by a concern with political power. Thus the theories of involvement with society and political power have influenced the development of Critical Pedagogy in connection with political and cultural studies in research and scholarship and this has in turn had an effect upon the ways in which it is argued education should be involved in society and social

change. In this respect it is noteworthy that before Freire and Giroux, in North America, Dewey provided the ground for Critical Pedagogy, by his legacy of a philosophy of the significance of reflective thinking in relation to experience, and this will be discussed in more detail in later.

On the other hand, in Russia, Vygotsky's legacy of thinking about critical education influenced the development of critical pedagogy. Wink (2000) lists three main concepts of his legacy which are related to the development of Critical Pedagogy. The first is the concept of sociocultural learning, which points out the significance of the social and cultural context in generating learning and knowledge. The second is the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between the actual developmental level of unaided performance and the level of potential development through adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Gipps, 1994: 27; Vygotsky, 1978: 86 in Wink, 2000: 98). This concept implies that teachers have significant and distinctive roles of giving learners the proper guidance and coordination in Critical Pedagogy although teachers' statuses are basically equal to those of the learners. The third element of the legacy is the theory of

the intimate relationship of thought and language which is summarised by Wink as follows: 'Language develops cognition; words turn into thoughts, and thoughts turn into more words' (Wink, 2000: 100), a formulation which is reminiscent of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis which was introduced at the beginning of this study, and whose educational implications were the starting point for my interest in the ways in which language teaching can have an educational purpose.

Thus, the formation of Critical Pedagogy has been influenced by the intellectual sources from all over the world, and we find that there is much in common with the basic purpose of this study as it was initially conceived, influenced by the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and then carried out in the empirical Action Research of this PhD study. It is therefore important for the later comparison of the criticality which arose in the Japanese lessons taught in the Action Research project with the notions of Critical Pedagogy, to analyze the key concepts in detail.

3.1.3 **Key Concepts of Critical Pedagogy**

In this section, the listed key concepts are selected and related to the criticality concepts which emerged from this PhD study and which are later discussed in Chapter 6. They are such as teacher as also learner, dialogue, curiosity of the learners, connection with the world, action (practice) and transformation, experience, reflection and resistance. 'Incompleteness' is also explained here as it is the ground for curiosity and other concepts and in fact in many cases, it is difficult to separate the concepts completely, because they are interrelated and overlap each other. The separation is made simply for the convenience and clarity of presentation and later reference.

Teacher as also learner

'Teacher as also learner' as a fundamental key concept in Critical Pedagogy. This principle is the basis of dialogue, in which both teachers and learners cooperate to form the process of education and generate new knowledge together. It appears in Freire's legacy as his strong belief and he emphasizes that teacher is also a learner and learning in the process of education and teachers are learning together with the learners (Freire, 1998a, b). In this sense, teachers and learners are equal and the learning process is mutually shared.

This humble philosophy leads to the negation of one-sided transmissions of 'completed' knowledge from teachers to the learners, and Freire (1998a) denies that the teacher's role is merely to transmit or transfer knowledge to the learners. Indeed, there is not any completed knowledge to transmit from teachers in a one-sided way. Freire (1972, 1998a) names the type of education which attempts to transmit knowledge as 'banking education' and describes it as the opposite to Critical Pedagogy.

The significant point of Critical Pedagogy is for both teachers and learners to be involved equally in the process and to work together to generate knowledge; in Giroux's words, 'Knowledge is not the end of thinking, as Paulo Freire claims, but rather the mediating link between students and teachers' (Giroux, 1988: 63).

As we shall see later, the theory of practice of Action Research also emphasizes that teachers can and should be the learners in the classroom and this was my experience as will become evident in later chapters.

Dialogue

The origin of the concept of dialogue dates back to Socrates' period. In Critical Pedagogy, teachers and learners are equal as discussed previously. It is not only the students who learn. Teachers also participate in the learning during the process of teaching. Dialogue is one of the types of communication 'that creates and recreates multiple understandings' (Wink, 2000: 48). Giroux (1988) also suggests group interaction as an important occasion for the students to learn from each other. Because in Critical Pedagogy, the one-sided transmission of the 'completed' knowledge to the learners, which Freire (1972, 1998a) calls 'banking education' is strongly denied, knowledge itself is something to be formed through the mutual dialogue among the teachers and the learners as expressed in Freire's words 'To study is not to consume ideas, but to create and re-create them' (Freire, 1985: 4). Therefore, as a consequence, there is no distinct role of 'teaching' in the concept of dialogue. And the product of the dialogue is shared by teacher and learner.

Then, what is exactly meant by 'dialogue'? How does it differ from

communication, talk, discussion, conversation, etc.? Guilherme (2002: 47) points out the 'danger of transforming classroom dialogue into a chat or informal conversation'. In order to avoid turning the dialogue into such 'chat', she suggests that 'it is necessary to provide pupils with the conditions which will enable them to actively discuss the complexities of producing meaning and take advantage of the possibilities available to link knowledge and experience'. This implies that dialogue ought to have an indication of connection with the world outside the classroom. Freire (1972) also discusses this in relation to critical thinking.

Finally, true dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking - thinking which discerns *an indivisible solidarity between the world and men* and admits of no dichotomy between them - thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity - *thinking which does not separate itself from action*, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved (...). Only dialogue which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking. Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education.

(Freire, 1972: 80-81, emphasis added)

This emphasis on dialogue and connection with the world outside the classroom means that the concept of teacher and learner as equal needs to be

analyzed. It is understandable that teachers are equal to learners in terms of authority and human rights, and this is a basic position in Critical Pedagogy. However, the importance of the quality of discussion pointed out previously means that the teachers' role is important. Teachers need to stimulate learners' curiosity in order to continue the dialogue and therefore, 'teachers as also learner' does not necessarily mean that both are the same in everything. For example, there is a question about who is responsible for criticality in the classroom, who is responsible for taking initiatives in society and this is perhaps especially important when the students are in Higher Education and adults. These are questions which are significant but not properly discussed in the literature, perhaps because it tends to focus on schooling and young people, but it is also a not properly considered in work on Higher Education as we shall see in the work of Barnett discussed. These are also issues which arose in the Action Research of this PhD study discussed later, and will re-appear in later chapters.

Curiosity of the learners

Freire's pedagogy points out that 'curiosity' as an important driving force of

inquiry and stimulates teachers to learn together with students in the process of teaching.

As discussed in 'teacher as also learner' previously, Critical Pedagogy negates the teacher's role as transmitter of knowledge and there is no clear distinction between who teaches and who learns, rather it is mutual and equal. As a consequence, in the process of dialogue, the teacher's role is 'to stimulate questions and critical reflection about the questions, asking what is meant by this or that question' (Freire, 1998a: 80) and it will lead to continuing inquiry and dialogue. However, curiosity can be triggered by interrogation. Although teachers and learners are considered as equal in Critical Pedagogy, raising questions can be specific role for teachers:

Only an education of question can trigger, motivate, and reinforce curiosity.

(Freire, 1997: 31)

When we come to the analysis of data from the Action Research of this PhD study, we shall see that the concept of 'inquiry' arises from the data, and will be compared with the Critical Pedagogy's concept of 'curiosity of the learners'. Similarly, the significance of the teacher's role with respect to stimulating

questioning and reflection is reviewed again in Chapter 6.

Connection with the world

In Critical Pedagogy, the place for study is not limited to the classroom only and the involvement beyond the classroom and in the outside world is characteristic. What is important here is that the connection with the world finally leads to action.

This is made explicit in the discussion of reading which is not just understanding literally what is in the texts. It requires understanding of the context in deeper sense which is behind the script: 'Reading the world always precedes reading the word' (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 35).

Freire also points out the close and inseparable relationship between men (sic) and the world. So being involved with men is almost equal to the involvement with the world:

...since men do not exist apart from the world, apart from reality, the movement must begin with the men-world relationship.

(Freire, 1972: 72)

And how men's involvement is deeply rooted in the world is expressed as 'Men, unlike animals, are not only *in* the world but *with* the world (Freire, 1973: 3, emphasis in original).

The involvement with the world and social context is also recognized in other key concepts. As previously explained, the 'critical' involvement of dialogue needs understanding of 'world'. Other key concepts such as reflection and resistance are also grounded in this engagement with the world.

As we shall see later, in the data of the Action Research of this study, there were found various ways to show the connection of the language study with the world outside classroom, and this will be discussed in more details later in Chapter 6.

Action (Practice)

The critical involvement with the world is a distinguishing characteristic of Critical Pedagogy, and it is encapsulated in the notion of 'action'. The learning is not just inside the classroom. It is not enough to critically reflect. The person

needs to take action to change the world. Critical Pedagogy seeks for the connection between theory and practice, between thought and action, and the final step of critical engagement with the outside community of the classroom is action. Theory cannot become real theory without practice and vice versa.

Giroux quotes the following:

...knowledge becomes fertilized by practice and practice is guided by knowledge; theory and practice both change their nature once they cease to be separate.

(Fromm,1968: 173 in Giroux, 1988: 50)

This idea is fundamental to Critical Pedagogy and inspired not only by Giroux and Freire but also by Dewey who established the connection between reflective thinking and experience. His legacy is explained in more detail in the section on 'experience' below.

When action is interpreted as a more social and cultural involvement of action with the world, then the concept of transformation of the world is introduced. Transformation also includes the concepts of liberation and emancipation for freedom. As Freire (1972: 31) states, 'freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift'; so people have to fight for freedom. The final goal of Critical Pedagogy

is implied here, which is to foster citizens to be able to serve for movements towards real democracy.

It is important to note here a distinction between action as the point which characterizes Critical Pedagogy – in Wink’s phrase (2000) Critical Pedagogy is ‘way of life’ – and which differentiates it from Critical Thinking which as we shall see below, remains as skills in the classroom.

Some conceptualizations of action, such as ‘liberation’ and ‘emancipation’, are developed in the work of Freire and others from the collective and specific social class-based movements based in schools. This therefore raises a question of how this concept is applied to the Higher Education with the current situation of mass production with variety of the students’ backgrounds and this is another point which will be discussed later in Chapter 6.

Incompletedness

The sense of ‘incompletedness’ encourages human beings to seek for and to know more. In Critical Pedagogy, there is nothing like completed and absolute

knowledge since it is an ongoing and permanent process of searching activity by trying to know more. This 'incompletedness' also leads to 'hope' which is another important concept of Critical Pedagogy. This 'hope' makes room and opens the door for dialogue:

Nor yet can dialogue exist without hope. Hope is rooted in men's incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search—a search which can be carried out only in communion with other men.

(Freire, 1972: 80)

'Incompletedness' thus overlaps with other concepts of Critical Pedagogy such as 'curiosity' and 'dialogue', which are pushed by the sense of 'incompletedness', a kind of driving force.

Experience

John Dewey's influence on the development of Critical Pedagogy is well recognized by many researchers also in the area of Experiential Learning. The connection between theory and practice which he established provided the basis of learning from and through experience. People have various experiences either consciously or unconsciously. 'Experience is the primary form of knowing' (Gregory, 2002: 100). However, people cannot automatically

learn through having experience, for it is not the experience itself which makes them learn but it is the reflection upon the experience which plays an important role to make them learn and to formulate new knowledge. Past experience is analyzed by reflection and leads to new experience. In this sense, the significance of reflection is that it is the basis for better future action. This idea is also seen in Freire (1985: 50) as 'The act of knowing involves a dialectical movement that goes from action to reflection and from reflection upon action to a new action'.

In this way, learning is a continuous process based on experience. However, not any experience will do. Dewey (1938) emphasizes that not all experience will be able to provide this kind of learning, and the quality of experience is very important. He sets two criteria of experience for this purpose. The first is the importance of continuity with future experience. He pays attention to the implication for the future which the experience has, rather than the immediate experience itself. The experience needs to have potentiality for the improvement and suggestion for future experience to be deeper and expansive. Thus, past experience decides the quality of future experience. Reflective

thinking is based on the experience, investigates the problem and searches for the solution. In this sense, reflective thinking involves both past and future.

The second criterion is interaction. This phase is another important aspect of experience and is to bridge connection with the world outside the classroom.

Knowledge is generated from practice and the two principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other and provide the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience (Dewey, 1938).

The link between reflective thinking and experience is reflection, as well as it is the connection between theory and practice. Thus, as mentioned before, the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy interrelate with each other and are inseparable.

Reflection

It is worth thinking about what reflection is for and why it is needed.

Previously, it was suggested that reflection plays an important role to generate knowledge from experience. The first criterion of experience set by Dewey, is

experience connecting to the future. This is in order to embrace the capacity for reflection within the experience and the reflective thinking which leads to the future in the end. A similar thought by Freire is found as the following. The ultimate goal of reflection of the past is to improve the future:

Thinking critically about practice, of today or yesterday, makes possible the improvement of tomorrow's practice. Even theoretical discourse itself, necessary as it is to critical reflection, must be concrete enough to be clearly identifiable with practice.

(Freire, 1998a: 44)

Therefore, reflection is not an action to just step backwards and indulge in the past, but rather it provides the link between the past experience and the future action and better future. This will also lead towards 'hope', which, as we saw previously in 'incompletedness', one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy.

Past experience is recognized in a more objective way because there is a certain distance between now and the past. Thus, in a sense, it is possible 'to reflect' because there is a distance from the target or the object. It is difficult to reflect on the current situation when a person is standing in the middle of it, and therefore, having a certain distance is necessary for reflection. Freire

(1973) points this out as follows:

Human beings are active beings, capable of reflection on themselves and on the activity in which they are engaged. They are able to *detach themselves from the world* in order to find their place in it and with it. Only people are capable of this act of “separation” in order to find their place in the world and enter in a critical way into their own reality. “To enter into” reality means *to look at it objectively*, and apprehend it as one’s field of action and reflection.

(Freire, 1973: 105, emphasis added)

As mentioned before, ‘reflection’ also plays an important role in dialogue. In the process of dialogue, what a person knows is re-examined and recognized as new knowledge. As Freire points out in Shor and Freire (1987: 98), ‘Dialogue is a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make and remake it’. In Wink’s words as mentioned before, ‘Critical pedagogy is a process of learning and relearning’ (Wink, 2000: 71).

Reflection is also a matter of criticality, and ‘critical reflection’ involves being critical by questioning the experience. Critical Pedagogy ‘would have to stimulate students to reflect. Since this reflection by its very nature should be critical’ (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 51).

Resistance

Resistance is the concept which arose mainly in the work of Giroux, as 'Resistance is a valuable theoretical and ideological construct that provides an important focus for analyzing the relationship between school and the wider society' (Giroux, 1983: 107). The fundamental nature of Critical Pedagogy, which is the involvement with the world is seen in this concept, as in dialogue and action (practice), which as previously explained, also need the involvement with the world.

Resistance is a concept which embodies the involvement of Critical Pedagogy in wider society beyond just the teaching in a classroom. It is a movement that 'Resistance to such domination means deconstructing the social by means of a reflexive intersubjective consciousness - what Freire terms *conscientização*' (McLaren, 1995: 137, emphasis in original). It is not just 'dissent' nor 'opposition' towards the given dominant philosophies but it entails the whole process of critical examination of the current dominant situations and the consequent move towards emancipation from the contradictions such as social injustice and unfairness. These social contradictions as backgrounds are kinds

of prerequisites for the initial critical analysis to be based on, and therefore the action of resistance would be caused by the particular classes which are related to these backgrounds rather than by just any social groups.

Giroux and McLaren also describe the concept of resistance as 'space'.

...resistance refers to a type of autonomous "gap" between the ineluctable widespread forces of domination and the condition of being dominated. Moreover, resistance has been defined as a personal "space", in which the logic and force of domination is contested by the power of subjective agency to subvert the process of socialization.

(Giroux and McLaren, P., 1988: 162)

Resistance is not just a one-sided rejection of the dominant values. The 'space' gives room for continuing negotiation. Guilherme (2002) points out its nature of dialogue and process are fundamental in Critical Pedagogy.

...processes of 'resistance' and 'counterhegemony' are understood as having a dialogic nature since they depend on negotiation, can be looked at from different perspectives, and rely on transitory stages.

(Guilherme, 2002: 42)

And resistance constructs a link between school and the society.

Resistance is a valuable theoretical and ideological construct that provides an important focus for analyzing the relationship between school and the wider society.

(Giroux, 1983: 107)

Here the reference is to school and schooling, and as we have seen before it is important to consider if and how the ideas of, in this case 'resistance' apply to Higher Education. What is the link between Higher Education and society? How is the notion of resistance be dealt with in the current framework of mass Higher Education where the backgrounds of the students and the purposes and the interests of the studies vary? This then leads to the further question of what exactly the roles of Higher Education in current society are, and how are they realized. This will be examined later in Chapter 6.

In sum, although Critical Pedagogy developed under the influence of various streams in philosophy and education and is a complex set of writings, this section focused mainly on the key concepts which are related to what appeared in the data of this PhD study: teacher as also learner, dialogue, curiosity of the learners, connection with the world, action (practice), incompleteness, experience, reflection and resistance. Some of these concepts overlap each

other and inseparable. For example, 'dialogue' is a process stimulated by 'curiosity' and teachers have important roles to stimulate the curiosity. Connection with the world leads to 'action'.

Critical Pedagogy is as we have seen a complex philosophy of education with an emphasis on educational purposes and processes. It shares with another set of ideas in the term 'critical' but as we shall see in the next section, where the key concepts of 'critical thinking' are examined, there are substantial differences which need to be identified. After that it will be possible to discuss what 'being critical' is.

3.2 Critical Thinking

As Bailin *et al.* (1999a, b), Fasko (2003) and McPeck (1981) point out, the definitions of 'Critical Thinking' are vague and vary depending on the person who uses this term. The vagueness and the small differences in comprehensions of the concept according to these researchers will remain. However, it is worth reviewing and selecting common fundamental characteristic concepts of critical thinking from the representative theories of

critical thinking.

The fundamental characteristic of Critical Thinking is that it is regarded as a 'skill'. 'To the extent that critical thinking is a skill, it is teachable in much the same way that other skills are teachable, namely through drills, exercises or problem solving in an area' (McPeck, 1981:18). However as later discussed, the dominant view is that it is not a kind of 'generic' skill which is applicable for any area.

The origin of Critical Thinking, it is argued, dates back to 2,500 years ago, to Socrates, for he established the fact that one cannot depend upon those in 'authority' to have sound knowledge and insight, and he emphasized the importance of asking 'questions' that probe profoundly into thinking before we accept ideas as worthy of belief. He also emphasized the importance of seeking evidence and highlighted the need in thinking for clarity and logical consistency. The philosophy has been developed and been woven throughout the Western tradition of education to today (Burbules and Berk, 1999; Fasko, 2003; Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2007). The influential writer in the 20th

century was, as with Critical Pedagogy, Dewey:

The essence of critical thinking is suspended judgment; and the essence of this suspense is inquiry to determine the nature of the problem before proceeding to attempts at its solution.

(Dewey, 1997: 74)

More recently the theory was developed by Robert Ennis, John McPeck, Richard Paul, and Harvey Siegel, etc. who will be cited later.

3.2.1 **Key Concepts of Critical Thinking**

Scepticism towards inquiry

One of the distinct natures of Critical Thinking is scepticism, the attitude not to swallow the presented theories as they are. It will be a driving force of raising inquiry. However, the scepticism does not necessarily lead to rejecting the existing theory. The point is to think about it and not to swallow presented theories without question. McPeck (1981) points out 'scepticism' as an important concept of Critical Thinking:

On the surface at least, perhaps the most notable characteristic of critical thought is that it involves a certain scepticism, or suspension of assent, towards a given statement, established norm or mode of doing things. This scepticism might ultimately give way to acceptance, but it

does not take truth for granted.

(McPeck, 1981: 4)

Peter Jarvis also defines reflective learning as the process of 'being critical'

below:

Non-reflective learning is just the process of accepting what is being presented and memorizing or repeating it, or accepting a situation within which an experience occurs and learning from it. In contrast, reflective learning is *the process of being critical*. This can mean thinking about the situation (and / or what is presented) and then *deciding to accept or seek to change the situation*. It can also involve accepting or seeking to change the information which has been presented.

(Jarvis *et al.*, 2003: 70, emphasis added)

Thus, Critical Thinking is thinking about other thoughts and not swallowing as they are presented. However, the results of questioning by the thinking 'does not necessarily entail disagreement with, rejection of or deviation from accepted norms (McPeck, 1981: 13)', as the above Jarvis *et al.* presents the same view. And there is an element of wanting to change things which is not a long way from Critical Pedagogy but perhaps not made as explicit that the change should be in the world and therefore political

Furthermore, Critical Thinking is not just to raise 'question' towards everything.

McPeck (1981: 7) emphasizes 'not just any question will do' and the need for 'reflective scepticism':

..., it is the appropriate use of *reflective scepticism* within the problem area under consideration. And knowing how and when to apply this reflective scepticism effectively requires, among other things, knowing something about the field in question.

(McPeck, 1981: 7, emphasis in original)

It is inferred from the above that the questions raised need to be based in the knowledge of that corresponding area. Therefore, this point leads to the following key concepts of the skills connected with specific knowledge and reasoning with evidence and so this is perhaps a more detailed and refined way of thinking about challenging things than is present in Critical Pedagogy.

Skills embedded in the knowledge of a specific field

The point discussed in the previous section highlighted the need of relevant knowledge for raising questions leading towards Critical Thinking. In fact, it is controversial whether Critical Thinking is a matter of skills based on the specific knowledge or generic one.

Initially, there was a view presented by Ennis and Paul that Critical Thinking is a generalized skill or ability applicable in any area. However, it was McPeck who presented a strong opposition to this view that 'critical thinking is not, in fact, a generalized ability' (McPeck, 1981: 56) and it is embedded in specific areas as '...thinking is always thinking *about* something' (ibid.: 3, emphasis in original). While Siegel, who developed the opposition to McPeck's claim presents his view on the ground that there are common features of thinking (Siegel, 1988).

Bailin *et al.* (1999a: 271) strongly disagree with the view that 'critical thinking is to be seen to involve generic operations that can be learned in themselves, apart from any particular knowledge domains, and then transferred to or applied in different contexts.' They provide a description of the crucial characteristics of such 'thinking about':

...critical thinking, as it is typically understood by educators, has at least these three features:

- it is done for the purpose of making up one's mind about what to believe or do;
- the person engaging in the thinking is trying to fulfill standards of adequacy and accuracy appropriate to the thinking; and

- the thinking fulfils the relevant standards to some threshold level.

(Bailin *et al.*, 1999b: 287)

Thus it leads to their view that the background knowledge in the particular area is an important prerequisite for critical thinking to take place as the background knowledge and the critical thinking are closely related (Bailin *et al.*, 1999a, b).

This knowledge is what they list as the first of the resources necessary for critical thinking as below.

They therefore list five important 'intellectual resources necessary for critical thinking':

- Background knowledge (what someone knows or can find out about an issue)
- Knowledge of critical thinking standards in a particular field (knowledge of relevant standards and principles (e.g. the credibility of statements made by authorities), including ability to use in a non-mechanical way)
- Possession of critical concepts (being able to identify and work with e.g. assumptions, arguments, implications of arguments, statements, definitions)
- Knowledge of a wide range of strategies or heuristics useful in thinking critically (e.g. trying to think of counter-examples, discussing a problem or issue with another person)
- Certain habits of mind (commitments such as respect for reasons and truth, an inquiring attitude)

(Bailin *et al.* (1999b) in Johnston *et al.* (2003: 6)

With particular reference to background knowledge, they explain as follows:

..., the quality of thinking persons are able to do about a particular problem, issue or question is determined by what they know, or are able to find out, about it and about the context in which it must be resolved. Moreover, critical thinking always takes place *in the context* of (and against the backdrop of) already existing concepts, beliefs, values, and ways of acting. *This context plays a very significant role* in determining what will count as sensible or reasonable application of standards and principles of good thinking. Thus, the *depth of knowledge, understanding and experience* persons have in a particular area of study or practice is a significant determinant of the degree to which they are capable of thinking critically in that area.

(Bailin *et al.*, 1999b : 290, emphasis added)

The emphasized phrases make it clear how strongly they take the significance of context to be and once this is established, attention can turn to the issue of how the knowledge is made use of and what is needed for the knowledge to be utilized properly in Critical Thinking. Although whether it is embedded in certain areas or not is a controversial issue, this is one of the points which is specific to Critical Thinking and not found in Critical Pedagogy. Whatever the conclusion of this discussion is, it is worth investigating what kind of knowledge is employed in the course of Critical Thinking in a real context. The

data of the Action Research of this PhD study indicated that various kinds of background knowledge are employed in the students' thinking process and the data will also reveal how knowledge is utilized in the criticality which evolves, and this will be discussed in more detail later.

Reasoning with evidence

Critical Thinking is built upon other thoughts or theories presented. Barnett takes the view: 'critical thinking' needs to have objects, it needs to be 'about' something:

Critical thinking is thinking about thought already formed.

(Barnett, 1994: 121)

Whether one decides to accept the thoughts or theories or not in the end, the critical thinker starts seeking for reasons and evidence to support his/her claim in the process of thinking, as 'when assessing claims, making judgements, evaluating procedures, or contemplating alternative actions, the critical thinker seeks reasons on which to base her assessments, judgements, and actions' (Siegel, 1988: 33).

In order to establish a justification in one's claim, the person needs to make use of the knowledge in the relevant field (McPeck, 1981). The literature presents this issue as one of the important elements of the definition of Critical Thinking as in the following:

A well cultivated thinker (...) *gathers and assesses relevant information*, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards

(Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2007: 2, emphasis added)

In order to conduct reasoning successfully, certain knowledge in the field is required together with the skills how to make use of it. Thus, in Critical Thinking, knowledge plays an important role. As we shall see later, in the data of Action Research, the theory building process includes this kind of reasoning and the use of evidence.

Learnable or inherent?

Since Critical Thinking is defined as skills, it is natural to regard it as something which can be acquired by learning. However, some literatures raise the point that the tendency of seeking reasons and evidence is regarded as

inherent personal quality. Burbles and Berk (1999) develop the discussion on this issue and point out that the critical person is someone who has the drive (disposition) to seek for reasons and evidence. There is therefore a potential contradiction here. Skills can be acquired by training, but if Critical Thinking is to do with innate personal quality, an attempt to foster such skills will be a contradictory position to take.

McPeck also seems to take the view that there is an innate element in good critical thinking when he strongly disagrees with the logical dimensions of Ennis's three-dimensional analysis. Ennis argues that there are three elements to Critical Thinking: the Logical, the Criterial, and the Pragmatic and it is in discussing this that McPeck argues that 'logic can help a student to justify some thesis or argument, but it cannot help him discover one' (McPeck, 1981: 16). Furthermore, a similar perspective is apparent in the following statement from Bailin *et al.*: 'It is the quality of the thinking, not the processes of thinking, which distinguishes critical from uncritical thinking' (Bailin *et al.*, 1999b: 288). It is clear that the question of innateness is a controversial issue in Critical Thinking and one which cannot be settled easily.

In sum, what is inferred from the above key concepts is that Critical Thinking has a common nature with Critical Pedagogy in terms that it is based on scepticism. There are traces of the idea that Critical Thinking could and perhaps should lead to action and change within an area of study, but this potential for change is not spelled out in detail, and the change that is referred to seems to be within education and educational institutions not extended to change in society as in Critical Pedagogy. Secondly, it can have connection with the particular context; in other words, Critical Thinking which works in one field might not necessarily do so in another area. Thirdly, Critical Thinking is developed from evidence and reasoning.

Thus although there are some differences of comprehension of the term depending on the researcher, the essential common elements of Critical Thinking can be summarized as that critical thinking is regarded as skills, but they are not generic kind which is separable from the context but embedded in the knowledge of corresponding field. Questioning and reflective scepticism are the basis but they require the proper knowledge of the field because being

critical needs to have objects, 'other thoughts' or theories and ideas. Therefore, the development of the background knowledge as resource is very important.

3.3 Critical Pedagogy Compared Critical Thinking

As discussed in sections 3.1 and 3.2, previously, the distinct difference between Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking stems from the difference of the concepts of 'pedagogy' and 'skills'. Pedagogy is regarded as a process, a way of life, and a view on how to live, which is comprehensive of life, while the concept of Critical Thinking is limited in the learning and not so large scale. However, not all the differences between the two stem from the term 'pedagogy' and 'skills' themselves. Besides sharing common concerns, there are fundamental differences in comprehensions of 'being critical' itself between the two. Basically the two have different formations. The starting point, how they developed and the ultimate goals.

The domain of Critical Pedagogy is not only in the classroom but extends towards the outside world, leading to cultural and political engagement for emancipation. On the other hand, that of Critical Thinking is usually built upon

existing other thoughts and ideas in an area of study in the classroom. Burbules and Berk (1999) point out that the literatures of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking hardly discuss one another, and therefore, the two disciplines have been developed separately and towards different directions. The ultimate goal of Critical Pedagogy is action and resistance for democratic society, and its education is to foster criticality which is able to realize this purpose. Its practice in the classroom leads towards this ultimate goal. On the other hand, the goal of Critical Thinking is to foster criticality within what is dealt in the teaching and learning. It aims to foster critical thinking skills for persuasion and justification of one's claim. It does not have an ultimate goal beyond the school or university. Thus, Critical Pedagogy is collective process based on institutions such as schools and universities and it extends to the outside world, while Critical Thinking is more focused on the individual and their development as thinking beings.

Furthermore, Critical Pedagogy enters into continuing dialogue stimulated by curiosities and, being involved at a social level, it is a continuing process without an end. Critical Thinking, in contrast, aims to support assertion with

reasoning skills, and so assertion is a kind of end point.

Thirdly, the concepts of knowledge are different. Critical Pedagogy forms knowledge in the process of dialogue and inquiry and there is no completed knowledge, while Critical Thinking builds on the completed knowledge and it attempts to make use of existing knowledge in the process of reasoning.

What both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking share is to 'be critical' which is to be sceptical towards commonly accepted truisms (Burbles and Berk, 1999). They simply have in common the ideas of an inquiring and questioning mind *with curiosity and scepticism* and this common concepts between Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking are to be found in the term 'critical'. The basic concept of 'being critical' is as defined in Jarvis *et al.* as mentioned before, 'thinking about the situation (and / or what is presented) and then deciding to accept or seek to change the situation' (Jarvis *et al.*, 2003: 70). In Critical Pedagogy, the change is to be in society, whereas is Critical Thinking the change is in the body of knowledge.

In sum, Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking share the fundamental concept of 'scepticism' which characterizes 'being critical', but there found many differences in the formations, the ultimate goals, and the comprehension of knowledge.

3.4 Criticality in Language Learning for Citizenship Education

In this section, the relationship of criticality development in social and political dimension is examined in relationship with Citizenship Education.

The education leading towards social action can be associated with Citizenship Education which has been developed in accordance with the change of the global world and multicultural contexts. Citizenship is defined as follows:

Citizenship is essentially about belongings, about feeling secure and being in a position to exercise one's rights and responsibilities. Education for democratic citizenship therefore needs to address learners' identities and to promote and develop skills for *communication and participation*.

(Osler, 2005: 4, emphasis added)

The term can be replaced by 'Political Education'. But 'Citizenship Education'

is widely recognized these days and in fact preferred in certain countries since the word 'Political Education' is associated with indoctrination (Byram 1997; Guilherme, 2002; Wringe, 1984, 1996). Therefore, in this thesis 'Citizenship Education' is used throughout in the meaning of the above definition, although the word 'political' is used as an adjective to express this citizenship direction.

The focus of foreign language education since the last century has shifted from pure linguistic competence to communicative competence and then, to the third stage, intercultural dimension (Doyé, 1996). In a sense, foreign language education has responded to the demands made by the changes of global situation and era such as the increased mobility of people and advanced technologies for communication. It is natural course that the issue of Citizenship Education has been highlighted in relation to foreign language education, in which good communication and understanding of various values are essential in the interaction and contacts among the people.

Actually, it is difficult for an education to be 'political dimension-free'. Any education is to some extent rooted in certain social contexts. Wringe (1984: 34)

points out that 'to educate in a way favourable to democracy is necessarily to indoctrinate' and teachers cannot pursue their teaching 'without reference to the wider social and political context (ibid.: 5)'. In addition, one cannot recognize 'others', without recognizing one's own stand point and the belonging of 'self'. Hence, sense of 'belonging' is important as Osler (2005) points out. In fact, the essential elements of citizenship are 'participation' and 'decision-making' of the individual member of the particular society for his/her sake are essential in democratic society. The task of Citizenship Education is to foster citizens who can take the actions with independent critical thought.

Returning to Critical Pedagogy, the ultimate goal of the pedagogy is to foster critical citizens who can actively engage in transformative action for democratic societies. Therefore, Critical Pedagogy originally has a political mission. In this sense, the application of Critical Pedagogy to foster criticality in foreign language education has common direction with the political dimension of foreign language education, as Guilherme (2002) points out 'The concept of citizenship coincides with the development of critical cultural awareness in foreign language / culture class'. Doyé provides the following

explanation:

Political education should in the new theoreticians' view lead students to make political judgements via reflection on social norms. This aim corresponds with the objective of foreign language teaching of enabling the students to respect the norms of other societies and in comparison with those of their own society reach a non-prejudicial evaluation. Also in the field of *action orientation*, there is agreement of aims: political education and foreign language education pursue the aim of leading students to behavioural dispositions,

(Doyé, 1996: 107, emphasis added)

The intercultural dimension provides the learners opportunities to encounter with 'otherness' presented by other diverse cultures and also to reflect on themselves. It is, in a sense, rather for knowing 'self' better in the relationship with 'others' by the interaction with the various complex values, as 'FLT should lead to cognitive and evaluative orientation towards learners' own society, a relativisation of the taken-for-granted, and consequently to an action orientation' (Byram, 1997: 44).

Foreign language teaching in intercultural dimension does not simply mean presenting information about the target culture. The research suggests that this way rather promotes more stereotypes towards the target culture (Byram and

Risager, 1999). Critical reflections play important roles in fostering sensitivity and awareness towards cultures in the learning of a language. This engagement will not give straightforward answers to the learners but they are involved in continuous interrogations and negotiations. This is what Guilherme (2002) calls 'open space'. Similar to 'dialogue' of Critical Pedagogy, it is a process of certain duration and space. For this reflection, criticality, which works as 'critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager)' plays an important role in intercultural communication. It is defined as follows:

an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

(Byram, 1997: 53, 63, 101)

Osler and Starkey (2005) presents some practical ideas of how to develop critical cultural awareness through teaching of English language, by presenting various values of different cultures from all over the world, for example world names and world money (Cates, 2005). As the relationship between language and culture is not one to one nor static, either, dealing with culture in language teaching is complex and invites further discussions of the relationship between language teaching and culture as Risager (2006) states.

The development of criticality in language learning is considered as that of critical cultural awareness in the intercultural dimension. One of the attempts of the Action Research of this PhD study is to seek if there are other types of criticality in language learning developed other than by the intercultural dimension. It will be explained in more detail in Chapter 5 and 6.

In the promotion of political dimension, the teachers' role is significant. Guilherme (2002: 159) suggests that teachers share the intercultural events with learners and 'commit themselves to the responsibility of building this intercultural world', as one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy mentioned previously, 'teacher as also learner'. On the other hand, the teachers' role can be regarded as a kind of facilitator because stimulating curiosity by learners by interrogations is their role. Both Critical Pedagogy and Citizenship Education are based on the school education, where the official educational policies and teacher training can be widely influential. Brady (2006) examines civic education in English language teaching at the University level in Japan clearly states the teacher's role as following:

If young adults are to be or become critically reflective and contribute to the development of democratic society, teachers will have to impress upon selves and their students the benefits of a cooperative and negotiated study.

(Brady, 2006: 242)

However, its extension to Higher Education is more complicated than the school level. If the teachers are to be loaded with the initiative of this political dimension, the question raised here is, in the case of Higher Education, who is responsible for it? Who takes initiative? Besides that, if we consider 'transformative action' as an ultimate goal of education for criticality, there is a *need for consistency at all levels of education, leading through from school education to Higher Education*. In the next section, the development of criticality and Higher Education is examined in more detail.

3.5 'Criticality' and Higher Education

As pointed out earlier, only Giroux among those who write about Critical Pedagogy has discussed the question of Higher Education in any depth (Giroux, 1992, 1996, 2000), and no Critical Thinking researchers have. Perhaps this is because their focus is 'low-level' skills and practical applications of Critical

Theory for young learners. They see Critical Thinking as basic skills which need to be developed as early as possible.

Freire on the other hand is concerned with developing countries where schools are, for him, the location of social change for the masses; universities are only for the elite. In fact, Giroux points out the lack of connection between Higher Education and society as below.

Unfortunately, questions concerning higher education in general and liberal arts in particular are often discussed as if they have no relation to existing arrangements of social, economic, and political power. Central to this chapter are the arguments that *as a social, political, and pedagogical site, the university is a terrain of contestation* and that one can neither understand the nature of the struggle itself nor the nature of the liberal arts unless one raises the question of what the purpose of the university actually is or might be.

(Giroux, 1992: 90, emphasis added)

And his suggestions to the roles of the universities are as follows:

As an active site for the production of critical thinking, collective work, and social struggle, higher education must be defended as a public resource vital to the moral life of the nation and open to working people and communities that are often viewed as marginal to such institutions with their resources, knowledge, and skills. At issue here is redefining the knowledge, skills, research, and social relations constructed in the university as a part of a broader reconstruction of a

tradition that *links critical thought to collective action, knowledge and power to a profound impatience with the status quo, and human agency to diverse and multiple ethics of social responsibility*. In part, this suggests inserting the concept of the political and a defining principle of university life.

(Giroux, 1996: 124-125, emphasis added)

There are certain similarities between Giroux's claim and Barnett's in terms of critical thought leading to social action. What is important however is the initial concern of Barnett (1997): the change of universities towards mass education. Higher Education is not for the elites only, and this changes the context and the purpose.

3.5.1 **Barnett's (1997) Criticality Model**

We turn now to Barnett's work because of its importance in Higher Education in general and in the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton in particular.

Barnett (1997) established his model of criticality and established the need for criticality in Higher Education from an original stand point which is different from either Critical Pedagogy or Critical Thinking, as ' in suggesting that we

need a new concept of critical thinking, I am also suggesting that we need a new conception of higher education itself' (Barnett, 1997: 2).

In fact, he does not claim a legacy as Critical Pedagogy nor Critical Thinking clearly. As seen in Table 3.1, he locates critical thinking as prerequisite of the upper stages of criticalities which involve action. In a sense, his definition of criticality is a kind of combination of Critical Pedagogy as final goal of education and Critical Thinking as an initial stage of criticality skill training. Although he does not refer to Freire's Critical Pedagogy, he does mention the issue of specific knowledge in the arguments about Critical Thinking by McPeck and Siegel. However, for him, the more important issue is not whether Critical Thinking is subject related or not, but what purpose it has, and so, he shifts the focus to the purpose of critical thinking.

The key issue in getting clear about critical thinking is: *what is it for?* This simple question eludes those in the context-dependent /context-independent debate because they take it for granted that critical thinking is conducted by individuals and that it has a necessary relationship with disciplines: their dispute is over the character of that relationship.

(Barnett, 1997: 64, emphasis added)

According to the literature review of Critical Thinking, it does not necessarily involve action in the world, but the involvement in the domain of the world is included from the 'skills' stage of critical thinking in Barnett's theory. This is the point of Barnett' theory which is different from other types of Critical Thinking.

Critical thinking is more than thinking. It involves action, if only in the sense that the expression of a critical thought is a definite intervention in the world. And it involves the self.

(ibid.: 48)

Therefore, his claim is, whether criticality or critical thinking, both of them have a collective goal, social action and it is the suggested mission of the Higher Education.

Barnett sets up two axes of domains and levels as summarized Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Levels, domains and forms of critical being

<i>Levels of criticality</i>	<i>Domains</i>		
	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>World</i>
4. Transformatory critique	Knowledge critique	Reconstruction of self	Critique-in-action (collective reconstruction of world)
3. Refashioning of traditions	Critical thought (malleable traditions)	Development of self within traditions	Mutual understanding and development of

	of thought)		traditions
2. Reflexivity	Critical thinking (reflection on one's understanding)	Self-reflection (reflection on one's own projects)	Reflective practice (‘metacompetence’, ‘adaptability’, ‘flexibility’)
1. Critical skills	Discipline-specific critical thinking skills	Self-monitoring to given standards and norms	Problem-solving (means-end instrumentalism)
<i>Forms of criticality</i>	<i>Critical reason</i>	<i>Critical self-reflection</i>	<i>Critical action</i>

(Barnett, 1997: 103)

First, there are three domains of criticality: knowledge, self and world. The details of each domain are:

- propositions, ideas and theories, especially as they are proffered in the world of systemic knowledge (CT1);
- the internal world, that is oneself (CT2), a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical self-reflection;
- the external world (CT3), a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical action

(Barnett, 1997: 65)

Then, the levels of criticality are defined. In his forms and levels of critical thinking, he locates ‘critical thinking’ in the lower level skills of ‘criticality’ and action in the world at higher levels, where we find the use of the term ‘transformatory critique which is perhaps comparable with the aims of ‘transformation’ in Critical Pedagogy.

If we now look at the three approaches presented here, we find that Barnett combines both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking and in particular brings into lower level critical thinking which thus has ‘an action in the world’ potential. In this sense, Barnett and Freire and other Critical Pedagogy writers have much in common, and Barnett shares an interest in the aims of Critical Thinking as a practical, applied approach to teaching and learning. In fact, Barnett’s claim also has common features with Citizenship Education in terms that ‘the development of criticality’ in order to foster critical citizens for social action. Although Critical Pedagogy, foreign language learning in Citizenship Education, and Barnett’s criticality are all developed separately, it is interesting that they share the same concern of fostering criticality for democratic social action as the ultimate goal. Although the focus is school education, language learning in Citizenship Education is particularly worth paying attention to, as it provides a realistic reference of how criticality development is connected to language teaching. It leads ultimately to engagement with the world, often in the form of ‘resistance’ in Critical Pedagogy – but also in the form of ‘reconstructing together’ in Barnett’s phrase.

If the difference and difficulty specific to Higher Education is found, it is assumed to do with the initiative: who will be responsible for the criticality development ? Teachers ? Barnett does not mention this issue nor offer the kind of practical advice for Higher Education teachers such as the ones regarding how to teach Critical Thinking provided by Foundation of Critical Thinking (<http://www.criticalthinking.org>), apart from the following:

Questions then arise about whether there is a single set of critical thinking skills that can be developed by educators, or whether they are so specific to the different disciplines and educational activities that their inculcation has to permeate the whole curriculum. Questions also arise over the mode of their transmission: if critical thinking skills are context-specific, then their acquisition is the responsibility of all teachers. If, on the other hand, they are generic to all subjects, then a cadre of 'experts' on critical thinking can take charge – problem solved.

(Barnett, 1997: 64).

So what is needed, I would argue, is empirical work which shows how critical thinking and the action it can lead to, can be stimulated in the reality of the classroom. The Criticality Project by the University of Southampton is a good example of empirical research and shows through an observational study how language teaching in universities at an advanced level involves at least some

characteristics of criticality. The empirical study by Action Research of this PhD study is an attempt to fill the gap in beginners' language study by empirical work, and to do so through Action Research rather than the observational research of the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton. The next chapter will therefore present the research methodology.

Summary of Chapter 3

In this chapter, first, the historical background and key concepts of Critical Pedagogy: teacher as also learner, dialogue, curiosity of the learners, connection with the world, action (practice), incompleteness, experience, reflection, and resistance were examined. Then, the key concepts of Critical Thinking: scepticism towards inquiry, skills embedded in the knowledge of a specific field, and reasoning with evidence were also examined. Thirdly, Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking were compared and the differences were contrasted especially in terms of involvement of action in the society. The common features between them found are *inquiry and scepticism*

Then, language learning with political dimension was examined in relation to Citizenship Education whose goal is to foster critical citizen for social action. Then, we turned to the Higher Education issue and Barnett's theory is examined in detail. Although, he established his theory from an original point of view, his claim is a kind of combination of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking and he emphasizes the importance of setting clear purpose of criticality development. His legacy has common feature as Citizenship Education as well, in terms that 'action in the world' is the ultimate goal. The significance of this political dimension of developing critical cultural awareness in foreign language education is focused on but the question also raised is, how it can be realized on the practical level and who will take initiative in the case of Higher Education?

Therefore, this PhD study attempts to investigate the development of criticality by the empirical study of beginner's Japanese language study at Higher Education level. Next chapter presents the details of its research design and methods.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2 discussed the current situations of Modern Language Studies in UK Higher Education and pointed out the possibility of criticality in beginners' language course. Then Chapter 3 investigated the concept of criticality from several points of view including the concepts developed in Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. However, what is highlighted from these studies is the need of an empirical research to investigate the criticality based on the real context of the beginners' language course. As the criticality in the beginners' language course has been hardly investigated, this PhD study sets relatively open research questions and aims to investigate any related phenomenon in the research field. Therefore and due to the practical circumstances, Action Research was chosen as the research method and I played the two roles of teacher and researcher. This chapter aims to explain all the details of the research design of this Action Research. The various kinds of data were collected for one academic year in two beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, where I was teaching Japanese

language. The special design for this research is to insert 'focused lessons' into the standard grammar-based course with communicative activities.

The issues of the research design such as validity and reliability, ethical issues, and process of data analysis are explained. The details of observations of lessons in other Higher Education institutions are also presented.

This chapter starts with two research questions and states how their answers were sought employing Action Research methodology.

4.1 Research Questions

The aims of Modern Language Studies in Higher Education were discussed in Chapter 2 and the current major direction of beginners' language courses in Higher Education was also outlined. Then, the question was raised, if the development of criticality is to be encouraged in every stage of language studies, what is the feasibility in the reality of the beginners' level? There is a need for the study which examines the possible criticality in beginners' level

language studies in Higher Education and how they are developed. Therefore the following two research questions for this study were formulated.

Research Question 1: 'IF AND WHAT'

Is it possible to develop criticality in beginners' language courses in Higher Education, and if so what kind?

Research Question 2: 'HOW'

In what ways can critical thinking be developed through beginners' language courses in Higher Education?

We have used here the concepts of 'criticality' and 'critical thinking' which have been the subject of discussion in earlier chapters. We have seen that 'criticality' has been discussed with respect to Higher Education and both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking have been related to teaching in schools, Critical Pedagogy also being related to teaching in Higher Education. However the research field of criticality in beginners' language study is unexplored, and therefore there are no previous studies which might help to define the research questions in detail, to operationalise the concepts of criticality and critical thinking for the kind of education and educational institution in question. It seems therefore to be suitable not to fix any detailed framework but to leave the questions as open as possible so that any significant

phenomenon in the research field can not be missed out. The terms 'criticality' and 'critical thinking' are thus used in an open way, not limited to the definitions and contexts discussed in the previous chapter.

As explained in the next section of Action Research design, open questions seem to be more suitable for Action Research as new theories can be generated from the practice.

4.2 Action Research Design

4.2.1 Discussion on Action Research

Action Research is employed for this study. There are several grounds for having chosen this research method, grounds of practicality and of principle

There were first limitations of the practical conditions of the research field. The arrangement of the experimental type of research design such as having one control group besides an experimental one (Cohen, *et al.*, 2000) was difficult to arrange in reality. As explained later in Table 4.3, there were two groups for lower beginners' level (JPN 103), but they run only for semester 1 and the two

groups were integrated into one group for semester 2. And the upper beginners' level has only one group throughout the academic year.

All the beginners' courses were to be taught by myself only. The arrangement of other teachers to participate in the research which might have allowed me to be an observer, was difficult due to the staffing circumstances and timetables. Therefore, it was considered as the best that I become the sole teacher and a researcher based in the field of these beginners' courses.

I recognised that I had to consider the disadvantages which arose of conducting the research by myself, as well. I could anticipate it difficult to avoid subjective views on the research field. On the other hand, a big advantage assumed was that I am the one who knows the research field and the research design fully. I would be able to have control and flexibility to meet any circumstance that is required to change any condition rather than fixing the original arrangements. This advantage seems to be very important because teaching sometimes needs sudden adjustments.

Part of the solution of reducing the subjective and biased views was to arrange several observations of other beginners' language courses and to compare their standards and methods to the courses I teach. Therefore eight observations were arranged. They were compared with the beginners' courses which I was teaching with the focus on two points: course aims and teaching methods. It was very important to make sure that the research field of this PhD study itself is not peculiar nor unique and the opportunity to compare standards and methods allowed me to establish a degree of generalisability and external validity for the empirical work I undertook (Cohen, *et al.*, 2000; Miles and Huberman, 1994) . Therefore these observations are significant. Further details of the observations are explained in section 4.2.2.3.5.

In addition to these limitations of the circumstances, there were so many unknown factors in the research field determined by the topic of criticality of beginners' level language courses. The theoretical concepts of criticality exist as discussed in Chapter 3, but there is hardly any empirical base literature about the criticality of beginners' language course. Therefore it was impossible to design research which is developed on the basis of existing theories.

It was also unknown before conducting the empirical research whether the special teaching design to develop criticality is effective or teaching without such designs can also contribute to the development of criticality. It would have been possible in principle to conduct an observational study as in the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton focused on beginners' lessons to see whether criticality is already present in such courses, but a personal communication from one of the researchers suggested this would be unlikely to lead to observable and valid results.

Moreover, what kind of criticality can develop in the beginners' language course was also unknown, which was the reason as pointed out earlier for not operationalising the concepts too narrowly. The possibility was that new and original theories are developed from the practice of the teaching the course.

Therefore Action Research was thought to be the best suited research method in this case. As mentioned previously, considering the practical condition, it is also suited to this research that I became a sole teacher and a researcher at the

same time. The choice of conducting Action Research and being a teacher as a researcher is supported by the theories of Action Research as follows.

Action Research is often discussed in contrast to the traditional mode of research methods. It aims to generate a new theory or knowledge in relation to practice (action), while the traditional one tests previously established theories and develops and modifies them in the light of new data (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Heron and Reason, 2001; Levin and Greenwood, 2001; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002, 2005; Park, 2001; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Wadsworth, 1998). As seen below, the difference of Action Research with traditional one is emphasized:

...we see action research as a practice for the systematic development of knowing and knowledge, but based in a rather different form from traditional academic research – it has different purposes, is based in different relationships, and has different ways of conceiving knowledge and its relation to practice.

...A primary purpose of action research is to produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the every conduct of their lives.

(Reason and Bradbury, 2001: 1-2)

With regard to the criticality of beginners' level language teaching, there is little theory at the moment and the answers for the two research questions of this study are to be sought in the practice by the researcher's self-inquiry.

Furthermore, an important ground for employing Action Research is that theory and knowledge generated by Action Research are highly valued by the practitioners, unlike the ones produced by the traditional research which are often considered as abstract and not meaningful because they are not related with practice (action) (Heron and Reason, 2001; Levin and Greenwood, 2001; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002, 2005; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Wadsworth, 1998). Heron and Reason points it as follows:

A second problem with traditional research is that the kind of thinking done by researchers is often theoretical rather than practical.

(Heron and Reason, 2001: 179)

The starting point of Action Research is originally rooted in the practice (action) itself and the inquiry is raised by self-reflection (Wadsworth, 1998). In fact, it is the case with this study that the above two research questions were from the actual teaching itself by the researcher, and as explained in Chapter 1

the original stimulus for the project arose from my own concerns as a teacher of Japanese as a foreign language.

Therefore, 'participation' is a key component of Action Research, in order to generate meaningful theory and knowledge (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Hall, 2001; Heron and Reason, 2001; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Wadsworth, 1998). As stated below, 'participation' means the whole members in the research field involve in the research.

It involves the full and active participation of the community in the entire research process.

(Hall and Kidd, 1978:5 in Reason and Bradbury, 2001: 173)

Everyone is involved in the design and management of the inquiry; everyone gets into the experience and action that is being explored; everyone is involved in making sense and drawing conclusions; thus everyone involved can take initiative and exert influence on the process.

(Heron and Reason, 2001: 179)

This is also the point emphasised as a difference from the traditional style research which locates the researcher outside the research field to observe 'the researched' inside. In this study, I participate as a researcher and also as a teacher at the same time. Both are my roles equally in this study. In this Action

Research framework, my existence interrelates and connects the three important elements of 'action', 'research' and 'participation'. In fact, this principle influenced and decided many phases of this study.

The research was planned so that it fits into the existing teaching framework and not vice versa. Teaching was never required to make any alternation nor adjustment for the purpose of this research. Much of the condition of data collection was also decided by this principle. Doing research in natural and realistic settings of the teaching is strongly respected in this study. In this way, the outcomes of this study are believed to be meaningful theory and knowledge in practice. This 'natural setting' is an important factor to take into consideration when designing this Action Research as it is an advantage of qualitative data (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Thus, following the nature of Action Research, there is no distinction between researcher and practitioner as stated in McNiff and Whitehead (2002), 'No distinction is made between who is a researcher and who is a practitioner' (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002: 15) in this study. Any phenomenon in the

teaching counts for the study. As for the types of data, Greenwood and Levin states, 'Surveys, statistical analyses, interviews, focus groups, ethnographies, and life histories are all acceptable, if the reason for deploying them has been agreed on by the AR collaborators and if they are used in a way that does not oppress the participants'(1998: 7). So various types and formats of data as listed later were collected (Table 4.6). This also includes data from the students but they are just participants. 'Participants are participants, not objects of study' as McNiff and Whitehead (2005: 10) states, but the data from the participants is one form of the sources to investigate the researcher's inquiry through what is reflected in their feedbacks.

What is provided by these data in the end? Action Research itself is regarded as a process (Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Kemmis, 2001; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002). Process is not described as a single static point. Therefore, Action Research does not reach to a clear-cut and fixed 'terminal point'. It requires flexibility, mobility, and fuzziness. This nature is described in various expressions such as 'it is a verb rather than a noun'(Reason and Bradbury, 2001: 2), 'treats diversity of experience and capacities'(Levin and Greenwood,

2001:105), 'transformative'(Heron and Reason, 2001: 179), 'willingness to live with uncertainty'(Greenwood and Levin, 1998: 149), 'A final outcome does not exist. We are always on the move'(McNiff and Whitehead, 2002: 13) and 'change does not happen at 'the end' – it happens throughout' (Wadsworth, 1998: 7). The result also indicates something leading to the next step as the answers generate new questions (McNiff and Whitehead, 2005).

Thus, this PhD study attempts to set up a proposition for the development of criticality in beginners' language study and also the discovery of potential inhibiting factors. The results are expected to be presented as a moving image with further research questions.

4.2.2 Action Research as a Teacher

4.2.2.1 About the Course

4.2.2.1.1 About the Degree Courses

The empirical data were collected at the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne in the UK during the 2005-06 academic year (September, 2005 – August, 2006). This institution employs a two-

semester system. The school offers Single and Joint Honours degrees in French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Chinese and Japanese Language Studies. In order to obtain a degree, students must take language modules from the School of Modern Languages and content modules from the School or from other departments. Alongside the language modules, a wide range of academic content based modules in humanity subjects such as Linguistics, History, Literature, Sociology are offered. In this respect then the degree courses are representative of the diverse courses and the developments described in Chapter 2. They have to spend their third year at a host university or a work placement in the country where the specialized language is spoken. As mentioned in section 2.3 that most other Modern Languages Degree courses in the UK, the 'Year Abroad' programme is compulsory for the Modern Languages Degree students. Therefore they have to follow four years' study plan towards the first degree.

The foreign language modules on these degree courses are also open to the undergraduate students of other schools and departments either as combined degrees or elective subjects. And it is these modules which are the focus of the

Action Research since Japanese language modules are also taken by both specialist and non-specialist students from a range of other degree courses and departments in the same group.

4.2.2.1.2 Japanese Language Modules

Japanese language modules are offered in three levels: Level A, B and C. There are Year Abroad modules usually for the 3rd year students between level B and C. These are the lower intermediate level intensive language programme they follow in the partner universities in Japan. Table 4.1 below shows the levels of language modules set by the School of Modern Languages, the University of Newcastle upon Tyne referring to the levels set by Council of Europe and UK national qualifications in order to indicate the correspondence with common language level descriptors.

As indicated in section 2.4, many universities - including Newcastle upon Tyne – use textbooks published in Japan which are designated according to the Japanese language teaching in Japan.

Table 4.1: Levels of language modules

Council of Europe	UK National Qualifications	Univ. of Newcastle Modern Languages System	
		Level	Details
A1(Breakthrough)	N/A	Level A	<i>Lower beginners' level</i>
A2(Waystage)	GCSE (D-G)		Divided into first (JPN 103) and second semester (JPN 104) modules
B1(Threshold)	GCSE (A-C)		
B2(Vantage)	A-level	Level B	<i>Upper beginners' level / Pre-Year Abroad stage</i> One year module (JPN 201)
B2(Vantage)	A-level + 1 year	Level C	Upper intermediate level / Post-Year Abroad stage One year module (JPN 401)
C1(Effective Operational Proficiency)	Honours Degree Level	Level D	Not offered in East Asian languages

(School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005d)

In this PhD study, the research fields are the two beginners' levels: Level A and Level B of the Table 4.1. But throughout this thesis, '*lower beginner's level*' for Level A and '*upper beginners' level*' for Level B are used as working terms because it is easier to instantly recognise which one of the two courses is meant.

4.2.2.1.3 Course Aims

Aims of the courses are available for the students, and stated as follows. The aims of lower beginners-first semester, lower beginners -second semester and

upper beginners are listed in the Module Outline Forms of the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne are as follows:

Lower beginners (Level A) - first semester (JPN103)

- (1) To establish the most basic foundation in the language systems, upon which students can build language competence with a view to further study;
- (2) To allow students to begin to develop receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills;
- (3) To begin to provide students with the self-study skills necessary to become better language learners.

Lower beginners (Level A) - second semester (JPN104)

- (1) To build upon the basic foundation in the language systems provided in JPN103 with a view to further study;
- (2) To allow students to continue to develop receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills;
- (3) To continue to provide students with the independent study skills necessary to become better language learners.

Upper beginners (Level B) (JPN201)

- (1) To consolidate the linguistic foundation provided in JPN103 and JPN104 with a view to further study;
- (2) To provide students with sufficient target language competence and inter-cultural sensitivity for communicative interaction with native speakers and to enable them to cope with typical situations met during a potential period of study abroad;
- (3) To continue to provide students with skills necessary to become better language learners.

(School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005b)

The development of linguistic skills which will become the basis of the next upper stage is emphasised in each stage. There is more focus on the communicative competence at the Year Abroad situation in the upper beginners' stage. Apart from the linguistic skills, only (2) of the upper beginners' level's aims mentions 'inter-cultural sensitivity'. But in this case, it can be understood as one of the practical survival skills for the Year Abroad and to be separated from the intercultural perspective in the development of criticality which I mention in section 4.2.2.2.

These aims are examined again in comparison with the aims of other beginners' courses that I observed, in order to make sure that the beginners' Japanese courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne share certain standard with other beginners' courses at Higher Education. The details are explained in section 4.2.2.3.5.

4.2.2.1.4 Course Details

One contact teaching hour is fifty minutes and there are four teaching hours per week for each stage. There are eleven teaching weeks for each semester.

Therefore the total contact hours for each stage per academic year is eighty-eight hours. In the academic year 2005-06, all the beginners stages were solely taught by the researcher, myself, who is a native speaker of Japanese language. The course textbooks used are, Banno *et al.* (1999a, b) *Genki. An integrated course in elementary Japanese*. Textbook 1 and 2. Textbook 1 was used for lower beginners' level (both semester 1 and 2) and textbook 2, for upper beginners' level. The course syllabus was planned by the researcher based on the sequence of the grammar structures in this textbook series. This series is structured through the cumulative progress of grammar in the beginners' level, as was mentioned in sections 2.3 and 2.4. A couple of new structures were introduced every week. The lessons consist of class activities for four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing based on the corresponding new structures in order to consolidate the use of the structures. A Communicative Approach including pair work, group work, role plays was employed for the speaking activities. A sample syllabus is as Appendix 1.

In short, the teaching of these courses is based on a grammatically structured syllabus which involves four skills and communicative activities. These course

design and teaching methods are examined in comparison with the ones of other beginners' courses that I observed, in order to make sure that the beginners' Japanese courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne share certain characteristics and standards with other beginners' courses. In other words, what I consider as syllabus based on grammar plus communicative activities is the same as other institutions. More details are explained in section 4.2.2.3.5.

4.2.2.1.5 Assessment

The course assessments consist of four continuous assessments (CA) and two formal examinations. The details are as follows.

Table 4.2: Assessment structure of beginners' level Japanese language modules

	CA1 (G/R/W)	CA2 (G/R/W)	CA3 (W)	CA4 (L)	Written Exam (G/R/W)	Oral Exam (S)
Lower beginners (Sem. 1) (Level A/JPN103)	40%	60%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lower beginners (Sem. 2) (Level A/JPN104)	N/A	N/A	20%	20%	45%	15%
Upper beginners (Level B/JPN201)	10%	10%	15%	10%	40%	15%

G: Grammar / R: Reading / W: Writing / L: Listening / S: Speaking

(School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005a)

They are designed to assess proficiency in the language exclusively. However, writing assignments, oral examinations and writing task components of CA and formal written examination are assessed according to the following five descriptors with equal weighting respectively.

- Range and Accuracy of Grammatical Structures
- Range and Accuracy of Vocabulary
- Accuracy of Script and Punctuation
- Discourse Organisation
- Variety of Topics Introduced

(School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005a: 9)

The first three elements clearly assess the linguistic competence of the language, while the remaining two: 'Discourse Organisation' and 'Variety of Topics Introduced' are not simply related to the linguistic competence but assess other kinds of skills. For the tasks of writing and speaking, students are assigned the topic of what their output work should be about. The topics of two writing assignments were 'Rules in the UK' and 'Student life in the UK university,' which were also dealt with in the lessons for the development of criticality. Therefore this 'Variety of Topics Introduced' element could include

the evidence of development of criticality and I decided to take into account the writing assignments of upper beginners' level for the research, although it is not the major part of the data. The 'Variety of Topics Introduced' component of the writing assignment counts 3 % (20 % of writing assignment mark) of total mark of upper beginners' level. Since it is only here that there is obvious opportunity for criticality to appear and be in some sense assessed, it is evident that it plays a very minor role in the thinking about assessment which lies behind the assessment system.

The standard of the marking of all these assessment works is examined twice by a second internal examiner (a part-time teacher of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne) and an external examiner (a full-time teacher of the University of Birmingham).

4.2.2.1.6 Participants and their Background

The number of students attending the courses are as follows. Out of all the students, I have considered only the students who agreed to the participation in

this research and submitted written consensus as participants in this research (section 4.2.2.3.4 and see Appendix 5).

Table 4.3: Numbers of the participants

		Registered student number	Participants in the research
Lower beginners (Sem. 1)	Group A	22	22
	Group B	19	17
Lower beginners (Sem. 2)		19 (17 are continuing from Group A or B of sem. 1)	18 (16 are continuing from either Group A or B of sem. 1)
Upper beginners		10	10

General questionnaire with the questions about gender, nationality, course, reasons for taking Japanese language course, and which aspects of Japanese language learning they were interested in was conducted with the participants at the beginning of the academic year (Appendix 2). Although the foreign language modules are offered for the Modern Languages Degree students as top priority in their system and they therefore have priority over other students allowed onto the modules, other degree students were allowed to take these modules as 'outside modules' up to their maximum credit limit set by their own degree programme. There was no separate elective language course for the

'outside degree' students. There is usually a high rate of discontinuation from lower beginner's level semester 1 to semester 2 and two groups are integrated into one only in semester 2. The discontinuation of other degree students is due to the maximum credit regulation for outside modules.

The General questionnaire illustrated the background of the participants. Each group had an almost balanced number of male and female students. In each one except for group B of lower beginner's level sem. 1, two thirds of the students were characterised as British, home, and Modern Languages Degree students. Group B was dominated by the international students from mainland China of non-Modern Languages Degrees (over 80 % of the students) and many of them did not continue Japanese language after semester 1 due to the reason mentioned previously. Regarding the reasons for studying Japanese language, each group except for group B lower beginners level sem. 1, 'plan to travel' and 'interest in culture' were listed as the highest, while group B's top reasons were 'plan to travel' and 'gain skills'. Approximately 30 % of students of each group except for group B (none) listed the experience of having visited Japan. The answer choice of 'interest in culture' was asked to specify further.

Interestingly, the typical pattern of answers listed both contemporary and traditional cultures in contrast. The contemporary one includes so called 'pop culture' and 'sub-culture' such as manga, animation and games, etc. High technology was also listed many times. And the traditional culture interest included history, tea ceremony, samurai, etc. In all the groups, 'listening' and 'speaking' skills were listed as the most important and the rate for 'culture' was especially low in group B (35 %) compared with other groups (over 70 %). Group B demonstrated distinctive features from other groups in all the items.

4.2.2.2 Focused Lessons and Non-focused Lessons

The key feature of the research design of this PhD study is the arrangement of 'focused' lessons and 'non-focused' lessons. The definitions of these terms are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Focused Lessons: | Lessons which include activities to encourage 'thinking' within the grammatical course syllabus. |
| Non-focused Lessons: | Normal lessons within the grammatical course syllabus. |

How this arrangement had been originally developed needs to be explained first.

I had been working in the Japanese language teaching area for seven years in the UK before I started this PhD study and it was continuing during my part-time PhD study periods. In the current beginners' language teaching scenes in the UK, it is common to see cumulative grammar-based syllabus as dominant for the language teaching of adult learners of older than eighteen years, whether in universities or in adult education. It is also practical and realistic as the textbooks usually used for beginners' Japanese language teaching are all published in Japan and most of the major ones are grammar-based with communicative activities added as discussed in section 2.4.

Before I started this PhD study, I had' when I prepared for the lessons at my previous places of work (Japanese Language Instructor at the School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield, 1995-98; Language Adviser for Higher Education at the Japan Foundation London Language Centre, 1998-2004) and

for a session at the workshops for the teachers of adult education (held in December, 2003 at the Japan Foundation London Language Centre). In this work, I already tried to produce activities which can be used for the practice for a couple of basic grammatical structures per lesson and also have stimulating intercultural view and cause 'thinking' in the learners' minds. As I pursued it more, I realised that not only the intercultural dimension but also the linguistic dimension which the language originally has is linked to the 'thinking', and as mentioned at the very beginning of this thesis with respect to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and its educational implications. However at that point, although I believed that 'thinking' is something good for the learners and makes the lesson interesting, I did not have any particular policy on this. I just wanted to include 'thinking' in the lessons, because the linguistic skills do not necessarily remain active for a long time, while the thinking the learners developed through the learning might be expected to have more impact on them than the skills.

My interest had grown to making these kinds of activities with a 'thinking' dimension fit into the existing grammar-based syllabus. It seemed to be

reasonable and important not to distract off the track of the existing grammar-based approach with communicative activities. This is also the case with the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, where I conducted the data collection for this PhD study. There is a common standard framework for all the language modules taught there. In fact, this empirical study did not cause any change of the existing framework of the course at all. This ‘natural setting’ was an important factor to take into consideration when designing this research as it is an advantage of qualitative data (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994) as mentioned before in section 4.2.1. Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) state it as one of the strength of qualitative data:

What is important about well-collected qualitative data? One major feature is that they focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, so that we have a strong handle on what “real life” is like.

Therefore, I considered this realistic aspect as very important for the success of the research and tried to avoid attempting something too ambitious or radical. As presented in Appendix 1, the course syllabus was planned by the researcher based on the sequence of the grammar structures in the textbook, which

focuses on a cumulative progress of grammar structures in the beginners' level. A couple of new structures were introduced every week and the class activities were to consolidate the use of these structures. The plan for the research was to insert the activities with a 'thinking' dimension into this existing grammar-based framework. For data collection purpose, these lessons with 'thinking' activities and the normal lessons needed to be distinguished. I named them 'focused' lessons and 'non- focused' lessons respectively as explained at the beginning of this section.

Non-focused lessons were assumed to have the same standards as other beginners' courses of Higher Education. The standards of aims, syllabus and teaching methods were assured by the observations of other beginners' courses, as mentioned in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2.1.3 and 4.2.2.1.4. The details of the observations are explained in section 4.2.2.3.5.

However, focused lesson does not mean that the full fifty minutes for one lesson contact hour is exclusively spent for these kinds of activities with a 'thinking' dimension. Focused lesson means it just includes these activities in

some parts of the lesson and typically the remaining time is the same nature as non-focused lesson. I tried to state the time spent for these activity parts in the tables of lesson plans (Appendix 3) as it is easy to trace back to the digital audio recording. However, I found that it is impossible in some cases as it is difficult to decide at which point the activity started. For example, the warming up exercise of drilling of verb conjugations anticipates the 'thinking' activity which follows afterwards. Therefore I decided not to state the time exclusively spent for these activities. Furthermore, students were not informed of this distinction between the lessons, because it was assumed that it could affect the students' responses in the questionnaire and the interview if they were conscious of the difference as artificial settings.

Each individual lesson usually had its own lesson objectives. I have been setting one element for the ordinary lessons, the non-focused lesson, while focused lesson have three elements. The difference of focused lesson from non-focused lesson is whether there are two additional elements (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Lesson objectives' pattern

	Focused lesson	Non-focused lesson
Can do (language competence)	Yes	Yes
Know (knowledge of language and culture)	Yes	No
Why (thinking: intercultural and linguistic dimensions)	Yes	No

Table 4.5 is a sample of lesson plan of a focused lesson. All the rest are placed as Appendix 3.

Table 4.5: Sample lesson plan of a focused lesson

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Breakfast	<i>Date:</i> 1 Nov. 05 (Group B) / 3 Nov. 05 (Group A)	Lower beginners sem. 1-1
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To ask in pair, what he/she eats and drinks for breakfast. ● Statistics on breakfast style in Japan nowadays are shown. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To learn basic Q&A grammatical structures with verbs. ● To learn basic vocabulary for the basic verbs. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think over what kind of pattern of breakfast each country has. ● To know about Japanese people's breakfast patterns these days (50% take Japanese traditional style breakfast and the rest 50%, western style) . 		
<u><i>Why (thinking: intercultural and linguistic dimensions)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about if the existing image of breakfast for each country is correct. 		

The approach taken to planning focused lessons was, as indicated previously, drawn from a long-standing interest in the cultural dimension of language teaching. In addition to this, the lessons were planned to take into consideration

the theory of intercultural communicative competence as presented in Byram's (1997) model and was also inspired by a range of books on teaching culture such as Corbett (2003) and Byram *et al.* (2001). It was evident however that I had to develop my own approach because the lessons had to fit into the existing course and most importantly, to stimulate critical thinking. It was not the purpose of the lessons to develop full intercultural competence in the way that Byram and Corbett and others describe this.

The contact teaching hours for foreign language modules tend to be reduced recently, while the attainment goal at the end of each level remains the same as self-study such as tandem learning is encouraged to replace the reduced contact hours. The target before the Year Abroad stage is to complete beginners' level. However, two stages of four hours per week (total one hundred and seventy-eight hours) is certainly demanding to cover all the beginners' content. In Japan, it is said that three hundreds hours are needed for completing beginners' stage (Japan Foundation, 1999-2006). It is a dilemma for course coordinators how to allocate the time to each component when making a course syllabus. Due to this reality, there was a limitation in creating more lessons and

spending a longer time for the activities for 'thinking'. Also, another factor which decided the numbers of focused lesson was the frequency of involving students in filling in post-lesson questionnaires immediately after the lessons. There were thirteen focused lessons and additional thirteen non-focused lessons, as well. Therefore the lessons that involved these questionnaires were twelve for lower beginners' level and fourteen for upper beginners' level in total for the academic year. Furthermore, the first couple of weeks, the week just before entering into vacation periods and the week before the assessments and exams take place were not best time for the data collection. Out of twenty-two teaching weeks per year, this frequency seemed to be reasonable and realistic.

4.2.2.3 Action Research as a Researcher and Participants

4.2.2.3.1 About the Nature of the Data

Although the data used in Action Research is not limited to qualitative as 'we reject the notion that AR is qualitative research only' (Greenwood and Levin, 1998: 7), nor in case studies 'case studies can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence' (Yin, 2003:15), all the data collected for

this study except for general questionnaire are qualitative, since it is a single case study of a classroom teaching as research field. The strength of qualitative data is that they focus on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings as mentioned in section 4.2.2.2 and in addition, its richness and holism in a real context and the embrace of the process (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10).

...their richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity; such data provide “thick descriptions” that are vivid, nested in a real context, and have a ring of truth that has strong impact on the reader.

...the fact that such data are typically collected over a sustained period

Hence, its analysis is more complicated than that of quantitative data and more sensitive consideration is needed for the validity and reliability issues, a matter to which we shall return later.

4.2.2.3.2 Data Collection Instruments

The following data were collected for this research. The various kinds of data were collected in order to ensure the objectivity of the research. This point is explained again later in section 4.2.2.3.3.

Table 4.6: List of data collected

Data Type	Name of Data	When	Who	How	How many
(1)	General questionnaire	4 th teaching week	All the participants	Filling in written questionnaire form	39 (Lower beginners), 10 (Upper beginners)
(2)	Post-lesson questionnaire	After 13 focused lessons and randomly selected 13 non-focused lessons	5 volunteering participants on average for each lesson	Filling in written questionnaire form immediately after each lesson.	130 in total
	Group interview	21st. 22nd teaching weeks	2-5 volunteering participants from each group	Oral group discussion chaired by the researcher / Audio recorded and transcribed later	6 groups, the length range from 18 to 60 minutes
	Writing assignments	Assessment period of semester 2	Participants of Upper Beginners' level	Works submitted as a part of the assessment	Works of 10 participants for 2 topics; 20 in total
	Module content questionnaire	22 nd teaching week	All the participants	Filling in form	19 (Lower Beginners), 9 (Upper Beginners)
(3)	Lesson plans	Before each lesson	Teacher	Set up objectives and lesson stream	26 lessons in total
	Teacher's diary	Immediately after each lesson	Teacher	Write down what is	26 lessons in total

				perceived in the lesson	
(4)	Researcher's diary	Throughout the data collection and analysis	Researcher	Write down what is perceived in the process	N/A
(5)	Audio recording	All the focused lessons	Lessons in the classroom	Audio recorded by digital voice recorder / Activities for 'thinking' only were transcribed later.	13 lessons in total

The purpose and format of each type of data is as follows.

(1) Participants' factual information type data: General questionnaire

The general questionnaire was conducted to gain background information about the participants. It asks gender, student status (home, international or exchange), nationality, Degree programme, reasons for taking Japanese language, and aspects of Japanese language learning they are interested in by multiple choices and open-ended questions (Appendix 2). Certain tendencies in the participants' background were identified as described in section 4.2.2.1.6.

(2) Participants' output type data: Post-lesson questionnaire, Group interview, Writing assignment, Module content questionnaire

As discussed in section 4.2.1, the purpose of this type of data is not to monitor the participants' action but to investigate the researcher's inquiry through what is reflected in their feedback. These data by the participants' outputs particularly provide the source of answers to the first research question; seeking the evidence of criticality development and its categories. The post-lesson questionnaire was conducted after all the focused and non-focused lessons. This questionnaire was to investigate immediate reactions of the participants towards each lesson. The frequency of the focused lesson was as explained previously in section 4.2.2.2, while non-focused lessons were randomly selected for the post-lesson questionnaire, taking the frequency and timing into consideration. The same standard questionnaire form was used throughout twenty-six lessons (Appendix 4). The questions of the questionnaire were carefully studied before the data collection started. The questions are open-ended to gain participants' spontaneous and expressive response as 'Disadvantages of closed questions are the loss of spontaneity and expressiveness' (Oppenheim, 1992: 114), and try to give opportunity for and to

elicit any indication of the development of criticality occurring in the participants.

The questions start as open as possible, referring neither to the specific planned lesson content nor to language or cultural matters. The second question pursues the request in a slightly more specific way by focussing on any 'new' learning. The third question then introduces the specific issue of whether there has been learning of any kind about Japan whereas the fourth lesson introduces the comparative dimension as recommended by Corbett for example in his chapter on the use of ethnographic approaches (2003: 105-113), asking if the lesson has also stimulated thinking about learners' own country. The fifth and sixth questions again become general and ask if there has been any difficulty, which it was hoped might stimulate an analytical reflection. Question 7 asks for response to my comment on the lesson I provided on the white board of the classroom as soon as the lessons finished.

On each occasion, five volunteering participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire. I sometimes directly asked the participants who had fewer turns so that most participants have equal numbers of commitments.

The group interviews were conducted at the end of the teaching period of the academic year and all the focused lessons had been completed by then. The purpose of this interview is to gain valid information on whether the participants developed criticality and how the development is related to the teaching design. Oppenheim suggests the spontaneous responses in the respondents' own words are very important, as 'In depth interviewing, every effort is made to get respondents to express their own ideas spontaneously in their own words'(1992: 74). Hence the type of the interview employed in this research is semi-structured to respect the spontaneity of the participants in the interviews. It is introduced as 'interview guide approach' in Cohen *et al.* (2000: 271) cited from Patton (1980: 206) and its characteristic is that the topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance and the interviewer decides sequence and wording of questions in the course of the interview, following the direction taken spontaneously by the participants. Because each group has

different characteristics, I tried to allow the stream of conversation to develop spontaneously and to draw their thoughts from it. Inevitably, what was talked about in each group interview was different. I did not use fixed probes and question patterns of same wordings but tried to direct the stream intentionally towards the following issues when they did not naturally appear in their discussion.

- (1) What they recognise about Japanese language (grammatical system / scripts)
- (2) What they recognise about Japanese culture
- (3) What they particularly gained from the lessons

The participants' number ranged from two to five. The number of participants was sometimes decided according to the availability of the students only, as it is often important to prioritise efficiency and practicality. Most of the group interviews were arranged at the time right after the lesson hour. Separate arrangements would sometimes make them feel it as an obligation and less motivated to participate in or forget about it completely. As described in section 4.2.2.1.6, group B indicated it had in general a distinct background from other groups. However, this group disappeared in semester 2 when the

interviews were conducted. So no adjustment to the combination of backgrounds was needed and each interview group consists of cohorts of similar backgrounds.

In all interviewing there is a question of the power relations between interviewer and interviewee, and in this case there was a danger that because the interviewer was also the interviewees' teacher they might feel a power differential, especially if they were in a one-to-one situation. An advantage of the group interview in this research was to reduce the teacher's power over the students in the interview unlike one-to one setting. The situation also created an atmosphere similar to that in the classroom and in that respect was a development from the classroom. In this way it can be argued that the evidence from the interviews was a direct reflection of the kind of thinking which was happening in the classroom.

All these factors contributed to make the natural setting and to draw spontaneous and honest responses, which leads to the discussion about validity and reliability in section 4.2.2.3.3.

Writing assignments of the upper beginner's level were taken into consideration as mentioned previously. They were assigned twice and the topics were 'Rules in the UK' and 'Student life in the UK university', which were also covered in focused lessons. The length of each assignment was two sheets of A4 paper (a sheet includes four hundreds Japanese scripts). After having marked them for assessment, I thoroughly studied them. However, there appeared no clear indications of criticality development for the assumed reason that the level of Japanese language is still limited to simple expressions and not enough to express abstract thinking.

Module content questionnaire which was conducted in each module by the School was also taken into account. The form contains thirteen questions for multiple choice answers of five rating and two open questions for overall comments. Although this data was a minor part, the answers for comment part were cited in research reflection in section 7.6.2.

(3) Teacher's record type data: Lesson plan, Teacher's diary

The style of these records is not different from ordinary teaching occasions. In focused lesson plans, there are three kinds of lesson objectives: can do (linguistic competence), to know (knowledge of language and culture) and why (thinking: intercultural and linguistic dimensions), while non-focused lessons have only one: can do (linguistic competence) (Table 4.4 and 4.5). What was perceived in the lesson from the teacher's point of view was kept in teacher's diary right after the lesson, where I wrote about my immediate reactions, my thoughts on whether the lesson had been a success, my critique of the way I had taught and the students had responded. They were used for reflection in section 7.6.

(4) Researcher's record type data: Researcher's diary

After every focused and non-focused lesson, comments from researcher's point of view was kept in researcher's diary. I tried in this process to think and act as the researcher and to observe the teaching separately from teacher's point of view above. Besides that, when anything was noticed after any process of the research (e.g. interviews, transcribing recorded lessons and

interviews, different stages of data analysis, etc.), it was recorded. They were used for reflection in section 7.6.

In Appendix 6, the notes from the teacher and from the researcher are presented together with a lesson transcript to provide some insight into the whole process of the two roles of researcher and teacher.

(5) Other type of data: Audio recording

I audio-recorded all the focused lessons with a digital voice recorder. This is to record all the interactions in the classroom and the parts related to activities for 'thinking' only were transcribed later. I also tried video-recording of the first couple of lessons and gave it up for the following reasons. It was sometimes difficult to set up camcorder and tripod within the ten minutes' break especially when I had to move from one building to another with these equipments and teaching materials. I realised that a recording assistant is needed for properly focused filming. But it would have been difficult to meet any change if I arranged an assistant in advance. As mentioned in section 4.2.1, the nature of Action Research always guided and indicated to me what to do and I finally

reached the decision that taking good quality audio sound recording which does not affect my work as a teacher is the best method to follow up what was going on in the classroom after the teaching.

4.2.2.3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Data

Validity and reliability are not concerned with the data only, but throughout the whole process of research design, data collection, and data analysis. In this section, validity and reliability issues related to the research design and the data collection only are discussed. The next chapter includes the validity and reliability issues of data analysis.

There are various kinds of validity and reliability according to the different types of research. Also different literatures suggest different terms and definitions. Therefore, it is important to select and apply suitable concepts to the corresponding research.

Validity in qualitative data is defined in contrast to that of quantitative data by Cohen *et al.* (2000) as follows:

...in qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher.

(Cohen *et al.*, 2000: 105)

In order to secure the validity of this research in the spirit of this quotation, the following points were considered.

First of all, the data have to be authentic and to describe the phenomena in the research field accurately. This is the concept of internal validity in Cohen *et al.* (2000) and Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that it coincides with credibility and authenticity. In this research, the factors which are likely to threaten internal validity are the standpoint as researcher (the teacher's role is likely to be distorted) and the power as teacher over the students as discussed above with respect to interviewing; this also applies more generally to the whole research process. To ensure validity in the former case, the emphasis is placed on respecting natural settings of the teaching as explained previously in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2.2, and 4.2.2.3.1. Regarding the teacher-student relationship, as explained in section 4.2.2.3.2, the participants' spontaneous

motivation to participate in the research was respected as it contributes to the quality of data (Oppenheim, 1992); there was no obligation to participate and in fact a few students chose not to participate in the data collection procedures.

There must also be trust between the researcher and participants for valid data as Park states, ‘...in order to obtain valid information from people there must be trust between the researcher and the researched, which can only come from human closeness, not separation (Oakley, 1981 in Park, 2001: 83). The first couple of weeks of the academic year were spent to build up ‘rapport’ between teacher and students without introducing the research. The modest frequency and interval of the lessons involving post-lesson questionnaire are also a factor here. Questionnaires that they were asked to fill in are all anonymous. Group interview discussion was led by the participants rather than the teacher’s initiative, because in the setting of this research, the teacher’s power as a fixed interviewer role of asking question in the structured interview was to be avoided as it would spoil the participants’ honesty and freedom of expressing opinions.

It is a weakness of Action Research that teacher as researcher cannot have enough objectivity as researcher standing in the middle of the research field. Therefore, I attempted to increase the objectivity by setting a certain time and space distance from the research field. Especially the data processing was the proper occasion to be away from the classroom teaching and to have the distance and create the objectivity. In practice this meant that I started analysing the data six months after the end of the course.

Secondly, care was taken to 'triangulate' and various kinds of data were collected as listed in Table 4.6 in this research. Triangulation is 'defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour' (Cohen *et al.*, 2000: 112). Its advantage is the objectivity by investigating the research field from various angles (Cohen *et al.*, 2000; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) as 'Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality she is investigating' (Lin, 1976 quoted in Cohen *et al.*, 2000:112).

In this case it was a matter of triangulation of data and data sources. This is also supported in case study theory which argues that collecting data from multiple sources is a way to assure the quality of research (Bassegy, 1999; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Yin, 2003). Yin states as follows:

The use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies allows an investigator to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioural issue. However, the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry, ...

(Yin, 2003: 98)

Apart from the above, external validity is often discussed in contrast to internal validity. The concept is what is described as generalization in experimental research (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). But generalization itself is a concept which does not fit into certain kinds of research such as naturalistic research, case studies and Action Research (Gomm *et al.*, 2000; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Yin, 2003). In these cases therefore, it is interpreted as transferability, fittingness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 124; Miles and Huberman, 1994: 279) and comparability (Cohen *et al.*, 2000: 109). Although this study is a single case and Japanese language is taken as a case, the product of this research illustrates common

features of criticality development in beginners' language study more generally. Observations of beginners Japanese language courses in other UK universities and other language course explained in section 4.2.2.3.5 contributed to confirm the common standard of the aims, methods and syllabus of current beginners' language study in Higher Education. Focused lessons cannot exist by themselves without this context. They are embraced and underpinned by this assured standard framework of language study at the Higher Education.

Validity and reliability are related to each other (Oppenheim, 1992: 162). Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that reliability coincides with dependability and auditability. Cohen *et al.* (2000) define it as follows:

In qualitative research reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, ...In qualitative methodologies reliability includes fidelity to real life, context- and situation – specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth of response and meaningfulness to the respondents.

(Cohen *et al.*, 2000: 119-120)

Therefore, this reliability concept is especially important in addressing the second research question about 'cause and effect', i.e. whether it is possible to

trace a causal relationship between the teaching process and evidence of learners' critical thinking.

Furthermore, it is worth discussing the concept of trustworthiness, which is a comprehensive term including all the concepts discussed so far. It is suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a concept for the naturalistic paradigm to replace more conventional concepts of validity and reliability. It is pursued by identifying four criterion areas: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. They suggest that a reflexive research journal will cover all the four criteria. In this view credibility can be seen as the equivalent of internal validity, transferability as the equivalent of external validity and dependability as the equivalent of reliability. Confirmability is equated with objectivity by Miles and Huberman (1994) and it is pursued by the availability of an 'audit trail'(Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 328). In other words, it is interpreted as the explicitness and understandableness of the methodology and procedures employed for this research to a third party or a reader / examiner of the research. This methodology chapter of the thesis plays an important role in this

and in addition, having occasions to expose the research to a third party to get critical review is useful in this initiative.

What therefore becomes evident from the discussions of validity and reliability and trustworthiness in the methodology literature is that, in the opinion of some writers, the concepts of validity and reliability should be replaced by trustworthiness when the focus of data collection is on qualitative data and when the research is a case study. It is still a controversial area regarding which term to be used and how to define each concept. However, in this PhD study I will continue to use the terms validity and reliability but interpreted in ways which are appropriate for a case study using qualitative data.

As validity and reliability issue concerns the whole process of research, they are discussed in the following data analysis chapter again.

4.2.2.3.4 Ethical Issues

Prior to the start of the data collection, the researcher applied for ethics approval set by the ethics advisory committee of the University of Durham and

approval had been given. As there was no ethical procedure in the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne where the data collection was to take place, the researcher informed the authorities about the completed ethical form of the University of Durham and a copy was given to the Head of School of Modern Languages and Head of East Asian languages. The approvals were given from both as well.

The researcher included only the students who had given consent with their signature to agree to participate in this research at the beginning of the course. Audio recording data was also carefully checked to ensure it does not record any remarks from the two students who did not give consent to participate in this research. The students were given a letter with the researcher's signature which explained the purpose and the nature of the research, how long and how often data collection would take place, what kind of works and cooperation the researcher would ask of the participants and stated that the data would only be used for this research, treated as confidential and be destroyed after the thesis is completed. Also it was promised that it would have no influence on the assessments of the module and students would have the right to withdraw from

this research any time without giving a reason (Appendix 5). They were also recommended to keep the letter for future reference. This explanation was orally repeated before every group interview. As explained in section 4.2.2.3.3, the researcher had not introduced nor commenced any part of this data collection before the first three teaching weeks finished, because it was considered as important that the researcher develops good teacher-student relationship before the research is conducted and gains trust from the students. The students are in the classroom for their language study and it has to be respected as their first priority. By assuring these aspects, 'teacher as researcher' of Action Research would be effective and good quality participation would be achieved.

The anonymity of all the answers given by participants was considered. In group interview transcripts, initials were used instead of the names of the participants and they cannot be traced easily.

The researcher also visited and observed other teachers' lessons: two beginners' Spanish lessons at the School of Modern Languages, University of

Newcastle upon Tyne, four beginners' Japanese lessons at the Centre for Modern Languages, University of Birmingham, and two beginners Japanese lessons at the Institute for Applied Linguistics, University of Edinburgh. For the Spanish lessons, I gained approval from the teacher in advance and he also announced to the students in advance that there would be an observation. Approval for video recording was not gained. As for the two other institutions, I discussed the possibility of visiting the lessons with the teachers informally. Then, I wrote to the heads of the sections asking for permission for observation and video recording of the lessons and explained the purpose of them. Both institutions had given me permission including video recording. I prepared letters with my signature explaining the purpose of observation and saying the video recording would not focus on each individual student but to record the stream of the lesson and asked the teachers to give this to the students in advance. I asked the teachers to arrange separate time after the lessons to explain about my research, the purpose of these observations and to ask questions. I did not explain these details prior to the observations as I was afraid of it making the teachers unnecessarily conscious about it.

4.2.2.3.5 Observations of Other Beginners' Courses

The observations of other beginners' courses comprise an important part of the data collection in this PhD study. Teacher as Researcher is an advantage of Action Research to generate a new practical theory from the practice as discussed previously in section 4.2.1. On the other hand, how to reduce the subjective biased views which might be caused by myself as a teacher and a researcher needs to be considered. Therefore, the purpose of these observations was to investigate whether the beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne had the same standard with other institutions in terms of aims and teaching of the beginners' language courses at the Higher Education. In other words, what I consider as grammatical base with communicative activities and call non-focused lessons needs to have the same nature as the courses at other institutions. In order to highlight focused lessons as special teaching design for this Action Research, non-focused lessons have to be confirmed as 'standard' beginners' lessons in Higher Education. The observations of other beginners' Japanese language courses took place at the Centre for Modern Languages, University of Birmingham, and Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh. I decided

to arrange two observations of the beginner's Spanish language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, as there is no other beginners' Japanese language courses taught by other teachers there. Ethical consideration was taken in any case as stated in section 4.2.2.3.4.

There were certain limitations of the choices of the lessons due to the availabilities on both my side and the institutions'. But all the lessons I observed fall in beginners' level as discussed in section 2.4. As the definitions of the sub-categories of the beginners' level also vary in each institution, I made judgement of the levels of those courses I observed and referred them to the levels of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne (Table 4.1). Therefore, whether 'lower' and 'upper' beginners below correspond to the levels of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne indicated in the Table 4.1.

All the lessons I observed had different groups of students. As indicated in Table 4.7, there are reasonable varieties of the lesson contents, teachers and students, which provide the objectivity of these observations.

Table 4.7: List of lessons observed

Institution/	Date	Duration	Teacher	Student Number	Methods of recording besides note taking
Birmingham (1) Upper beginners	7 Nov. 05	50 min.	Japanese native speaker A	14	Video-recording, audio-recording
Birmingham (2) Lower beginners	7 Nov. 05	50 min.	Japanese native speaker B	8	Video-recording, audio-recording
Birmingham (3) Lower beginners	8 Nov. 05	50 min.	Japanese native speaker A	8	Video-recording, audio-recording
Birmingham (4) Lower beginners	8 Nov. 05	50 min.	Japanese native speaker B	7	Video-recording, audio-recording
Edinburgh (1) Lower beginners	25 Jan. 06	60 min.	Japanese native speaker C	5	Video-recording, audio-recording
Edinburgh (2) Lower beginners	26 Jan. 06	60 min.	Japanese native speaker D	14	Video-recording, audio-recording
Newcastle (1) Lower beginners	20 Feb. 06	50 min.	Spanish native speaker A	11	Audio-recording
Newcastle (2) Lower beginners	24 Feb. 06	50 min.	Spanish native speaker A	14	Audio-recording

The aims of the courses I observed are as follows:

University of Birmingham

Lower beginners 1

The course aims to develop *basic* listening, speaking, reading and writing *skills*, which will lay the foundation for further study. The course will also aim to develop *strategies for coping with daily situations*.

Lower beginners 2

The emphasis is on the progressive acquisition of a sound grammatical knowledge of Japanese and further Kanji learning. Students develop

the receptive skills (listening and reading) as well as the productive skills (*speaking in daily situations* and writing short compositions). The course will also aim to equip students with new structures in depth while revising and consolidating past knowledge.

Upper beginners

The emphasis is on the progressive acquisition of a sound grammatical knowledge including various registers of Japanese and the further learning of Kanji. Students will develop receptive skills (listening and reading) as well as productive skills (*speaking in daily situations* and writing short compositions).

(Centre for Modern Languages, University of Birmingham, 2005, emphasis added)

University of Edinburgh

Lower beginners

The aims of the course is;

- to provide the local public an opportunity for continuous language and cultural study of an ethnic nature
- to provide learners with an opportunity to increase language and socio-cultural awareness
- to enable learners *to achieve "minimal survival" competence in a range of basic everyday situations*

(Institute for Applied Language Studies, University of Edinburgh, 2005, emphasis added)

Spanish Language, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Lower beginners (Spanish Language Level A)

In consonance with the overall aims of the degrees offered in the School of Modern Languages, this module will:

- focus on *developing the students' communicative competence* in the foreign language (including fluency, grammatical and lexical accuracy and range)
- develop independent language learning strategies

- prepare students for the future study of the language
- facilitate students' ability to establish and maintain effective social and working relations with speakers of the foreign language

(School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2005c, emphasis added)

Having reviewed the above and compared the above aims of three institutions and the beginners' Japanese language courses of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in section 4.2.2.1.3, there are some slight differences recognised according to the institutions. In the aims of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 'communication' has less emphasis in the lower stages but it is most emphasised in the pre-Year Abroad stage. However, what are most commonly included in these aims of beginners' level language courses at the UK Higher Education can be summarised as below.

- (1) firstly to foster the competence of basic communication of daily situations
- (2) to develop basic linguistic skills for the communication

Having examined these aims, it is assumed that the beginners' language courses at the UK Higher Education in different institutions are not so much

different each other as long as the courses are designed according to their aims.

Table 4.8 below is a summary of the points of each observation.

Table 4.8: Contents of lessons observed

Institution	Lesson Contents	Class Activities
Birmingham (1) Upper beginners	-by ~ -potential	Oral Q & A by the teacher's cue Listening practice introducing topic (marriage) Oral communicative activities (Q & A / Pair work)
Birmingham (2) Lower beginners	-how much ~ -please give me ~	Oral Q & A by the teacher's cue Pair role play work of shopping scene
Birmingham (3) Lower beginners	Kanji (scripts)	Warming-up oral Q & A about the weekend by the teacher's cue Kanji histories are explained followed by guessing the origins Stroke orders are explained
Birmingham (4) Lower beginners	Kanji (scripts)	Warming-up oral Q & A about the weekend by the teacher's cue Kanji origins and kanji compounds words are explained followed by guessing activities.
Edinburgh (1) Lower beginners	~ te kudasai (asking favour) Nationalities Kore,sore, are	Revision of the last lesson Activities led by the teacher to practice the above structures / self-introduction Pair work to explain tourist attraction of Edinburgh
Edinburgh (2) Lower beginners	~ te kudasai (asking favour) Nationalities Kore,sore, are	Revision of the last lesson Activities led by the teacher to practice the above structures / self-introduction Pair work to explain tourist attraction of Edinburgh
Newcastle (1) (Spanish)	~ likes (to do) and dislikes (to do)	Warming-up oral Q & A / oral Q&A introducing the structure

Lower beginners		Role-play
Newcastle (2) (Spanish)	Past participles	Oral Q & A led by the teacher to practice the structure
Lower beginners		Pair-work

Like comparison of aims, there are some differences among these eight classes recognised, of course. However, what was gained from these eight observations are as the following points:

- (1) Many oral communicative activities are included in each lesson.
- (2) Each lesson is based on grammatical structures. In the case of Japanese, one whole lesson can be spent on Kanji (script) learning depending on the syllabus.
- (3) In some lessons, cultural knowledge is unintentionally brought in as topics by the content of the teaching materials.

The important point to be reviewed here is all the lessons that I observed included the above (1) and (2) points which are originally considered in the course design. Even when 'kanji (scripts)' was mainly taught, the teachers started the lesson with a brief warming up of oral communication such as asking what the students did on weekends. In terms of these points, the beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne explained in section 4.2.2.1.4 share the same standards with these

lessons. In other words what I arranged as non-focused lessons fall into this kind of lessons, grammar-based with communicative activities. This is a crucial point in order to make the focused lessons which are for criticality development recognised as a special design.

The above point (3), cultural dimension needs to be discussed separately from the above two points, as it is brought into the lesson even if it is not intended to do so. The topics in the teaching materials, communication patterns and linguistic knowledge which need understanding of cultural background, etc. introduce cultural dimension in the lessons even when it is not intended. For example in the lesson of Birmingham (1) Upper beginners, the topic dealt in the listening practice was about the suitable age for marriage. When it is followed by the discussion, it was assumed that the ideas of the students are influenced by their cultural backgrounds. In the lesson of Birmingham (2) Lower beginners, there was a role-play activity at a shop. The teacher explained about how to deal with the customers in Japanese way. Like the above two points, whether the cultural dimension is included in the lesson or not is not always purposeful. This point was also

present in the beginners' Japanese non-focused lessons of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. The cultural dimension is naturally included in the language learning to some extent. This issue of the relationship between language and culture is discussed in more detail in section 6.3.

However, what is unique to this PhD study is an experiment of inserting focused lessons which are intentionally designed for 'thinking' based on intercultural and linguistic dimensions into what can be called the standard grammar based syllabus. As assumed in advance, none of the courses that I observed had a similar design. Therefore, the results of this PhD study is assumed to clearly reveal the role of focused lessons.

4.2.2.3.6 Process of Data Analysis

Before the start of data analysis, some basic ground works for organising raw data were done.

Hand written answers of the general questionnaire and post-lesson questionnaire were put into electronic form using Microsoft Word software.

For some tables, Excel was used. Hand written records such as lesson plans, teacher's diary and researcher's diary were put together and into electronic form. These electronic files were stored in three different drives of computers for back up.

As for the audio-recording data, what was transcribed was put into Microsoft Word file. All the group interviews were transcribed by the researcher. As for the video-recordings of focused lessons, only the parts which are related to the activities for 'thinking' were transcribed.

In order to make it easy to analyse the data, different kinds of data were put together. Teacher's record type data, researcher's record type data and the transcript of audio recording of the teaching were put together in one form (Appendix 6).

I did not use any software for qualitative data analysis such as NVivo. The reason was that I recognised the amount of data which I gained is manually

manageable and the analysis has to be done by the researcher in any case even if the software helps the process of data.

First of all, the participants' output type data were studied carefully in relation to the first research question, 'If and What'. I decided to focus on analyzing the group interview scripts first because the whole interview transcripts themselves without further processing do not tell any meaningful characteristics.

Therefore, the group interview scripts were carefully studied in search of any characteristic patterns following the theory of LeCompte & Preissle, 'The first categories to emerge from the data generally are those that occur most frequently' (1993: 242). As it was difficult to find outstanding characteristics from the amount of the scripts as they are, I divided the conversations into small chunks according to the stream of the topics. Then, I classified the small chunks into two groups and labelled according to the topics of either 'language' or 'culture'. Each group was further divided into sub-categories according to more detailed topics. Then, the participants' thoughts expressed in the form of 'original theory building' – explained in more detail in the next

chapter – started to appear within these chunks. The sample of this process of interview scripts is provided as Appendix 8. The structure of section 5.1 is based on the topic groups of these theories.

Then, each chunk was further studied in search of how these theories were developed. Most of the theories appeared with the analysis stage leading to the theories' conclusions. This means that the theory building process was discovered and two of the three stages posited in theory building process - analysis and conclusion (explained in detail in the next chapter) – were revealed. The third of the three stages was discovered in post-lesson questionnaire answers later.

Secondly, another participants' output type data, post-lesson questionnaire answers were studied. Basically these answers were studied in relation to the stages identified in the group interview data. In a sense, the data analysis of the group interview data made it easy to process these post-lesson questionnaire answers. The group interview data did not indicate the first stage of theory building process, the inquiry stage, but the post-lesson questionnaire answers

were carefully studied and the first stage of the theory building process, the inquiry stage, was discovered in the answers. The numbers of criticality-related responses for focused lessons and non-focused lessons were compared in order to investigate whether the special teaching design for focused lessons was effective as will be shown in the next chapter (Table 5.1).

As for the observation, video and audio recordings were used for checking my observation notes. I watched and listened to them through twice and added the points that I failed to take notes of in the classrooms but did not transcribe them word by word.

Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter, the research design of the empirical study was explained. Two research questions were set up to investigate the issue of criticality development of beginners' language study by the questions 'If and What' and 'How'. Action Research was employed, because the criticality issue in beginners' language study is still unexplored and the knowledge deprived from the practice was thought to be valuable. The principles of Action Research

decided many phases of the design of this study: nature of data, data collection, and data analysis. The course details such as aims, assessments and the participants of the Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, where the data collection was conducted, were explained in detail. Then, the teaching design of focused lessons which were structured with intercultural and linguistic dimensions for criticality development was explained. These lessons were inserted in the existing grammar based language course framework.

Next, data collected for this research were explained in detail. They consist of (1) participants' factual information type data, (2) participants' output type data (post-lesson questionnaire, group interview, etc.), (3) teacher's record type data (lesson plan, diary), (4) researcher's record type data (diary) and (5) other types of data (audio recording). Validity and reliability issues were discussed in relation to the literature. The emphasis is on the importance of selecting and applying the concepts suitable for this research paradigm.

Then, ethical procedures taken for this research was explained. The details of observation of beginners' Japanese language courses in other institutions and other language lessons were provided. These observations ensured that the beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne have the same standard as other Higher Education Institutions in terms of the aims and teaching. Lastly how the data were processed for data analysis was explained.

In the next chapter, the result of analysis of all the data collected for this PhD study is presented according to the categories.

CHAPTER 5 DATA ANALYSIS

At the end of the previous chapter I explained the process of data management and analysis. I referred there to LeCompte and Preissle (1993) as the basis for the procedure used and to the analysis of the ways in which students engaged in 'theory building'. The first part of this chapter will explain what lies behind that phrase and how it relates to the concept of criticality. In essence, the approach taken here is to analyse the ways of thinking and reasoning which the students demonstrated in the different kinds of data as they talk and write about their experience of learning Japanese. The approach taken to analysis is based on 'grounded theory' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) and the outcomes are therefore presented as the students' 'theories' about the various objects of their thinking during and after learning Japanese.

In other words, this chapter examines what emerged from the data as indications of the participants' engagement in original thinking, so the focus of analysis is purely on the empirical data without referring to any literature of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. First, the theories generated by the

participants are listed according to thematic categories from sections 5.1.1 to 5.1.9. Then, the stages and process of theory building identified, and here there appear three stages – inquiry stage, analysis stage and conclusion stage – which are explained and the data are listed according to these stages in section 5.2. The analysis stage is further sub-categorized into three groups based on the methods of analysis and each case consisting of the comprehensive data of both analysis stage and theory is labeled as [investigation case], [comparison case] and [linking case]. Finally in section 5.5, the knowledge the participants were working on during the process of theory building is focused on. These areas of knowledge were grouped into general knowledge, experience, academic content subjects and other learning, discussions with other students, and Japanese language lessons.

5.1 Theories Appearing in the Data as Indicators of Criticality

The data analysis particularly focused on students' output type data: post-lesson questionnaire, group interview, writing assignment and module content questionnaire to seek for the indications of development of their thinking. The audio recordings of the classroom teaching and teacher's records

were also thoroughly checked to see if they include related data in the students' remarks and responses in the classroom. Eight months were spent on the data analysis, although it was done on and off while doing something else. It was helpful to leave the analysis for a while when I was not confident in the analysis. By leaving this distance rather than trying to produce the analysis quickly, 'to step back and critically analyze situations' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) was realized, and the internal validity of the analysis was secured. Following a qualitative data analysis method (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994) and grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), the patterns derived most noticeably from the data were carefully examined at first. What was most salient in the group interview scripts was that the participants' thoughts appeared in the form of theories about various topics related to Japanese language learning. Their thoughts are often expressed in an assertive way. What are common to these theories are the following points:

- (1) Theories generated from the study of Japanese language or developed in conjunction with the study.
- (2) Theories as original products of participants' autonomous engagement in thinking.

It needs to be addressed here again that the data analysis presented in this chapter was created before the criticality literature review in Chapter 3 was done. I was novice about the literatures of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking at the time of this data analysis. Therefore, the result of this data analysis is purely based on the empirical data gained from this Action Research. The focus of the data analysis of this chapter is to search for any indication of criticality which is not directly influenced by the existing theories. Then, in Chapter 6, the result of this data analysis is examined in relation to the theories and the nature of 'criticality' is discussed.

The detailed levels of criticality will be discussed later in Chapter 6. At this stage of the data analysis of selecting original theories by the participants in this research, the above points (1) and (2) are taken as criteria of being critical in as broad a sense as possible in order to not to eliminate any slightest indication of any kind of 'critical nature'.

The 'theories' meant in this study were differentiated from personal feelings expressed in terms such as 'interesting' and 'exciting' and from simplified

inferences without a rationale. These kinds of feelings and simplified inferences do not demonstrate the process of thinking, in other words, how the participants reached the theories. Therefore theories which did not appear with the process were not included in this study.

As an example, here is data from an interview, [Linking Case 5], which leads to theory 7-1, 'Keeping high standards to perfection and working hard are national characteristics of Japan'. The theory the participants reached is the underlined part in the data below. The italic part indicates the process of the theory building. [] means that there are inaudible words and 'P-' stands for Participant and his or her initial follows and 'R', for Researcher, myself.

(see Appendix 7):

P-H2: *because he worked a lot - he is - when he started dance - he is very dedicated - so learning how to dance good - which is very Japanese - I think*

P-R: *definitely - I think once a Japanese person has learned to play the piano [] from in child - they were learning it to a perfection - which I think it shows really learning the languages as well - learning 'kanji'- even if you just do [] one stroke [] [it's] got - such a great nation for making everything to the highest standard that even shows in the country itself - like with the train system - every train is always on time - compared to our system - it's brilliant - they are so proud of their country*

P-H2 & P-J2: yeah – yeah

(Interview 4: 60-69)

In this case, every point the participants picked up from their Japanese language learning is connected with the image of Japanese people which they already had in their mind. Based on the pattern of the analysis they went through to reach the theory, this case is categorized into 'linking' with knowledge or existing theories, explained in more detail in section 5.4.2.3. Even if the underlined part is present, unless the italic part is found in the data, it is hard to regard it as the participants' original theory building and it is not counted as a valid case in this study. In group interview data, the analysis stage often appeared in the form of the reason for the theory. In the case of post-lesson questionnaire, the answers are relatively short but the connection with the particular lesson was easily traced and there are a few data which indicate both process and theories.

Students' theories are listed in the following according to nine thematic categories, with one case of illustrative data. These all are the indicators of students' thinking. The numbering of theories does not imply a specific order

of any kind. The parts of the data which show the theories are listed underneath each theory. The detailed analysis of the process of theory building follows in section 5.2, where the concepts of 'investigation case', 'comparison case' and 'linking case' will be introduced.

5.1.1 Theories about Languages 1: Functions of the Scripts

Theory 1-1: 'Katakana' representation of non-Japanese words has limitations due to the difference of phonetic systems of the languages.

P-D: that's possibly why the perfect Japanese probably find the most difficult is 'katakana' representing

(Interview 5: 293-294)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case I]

'Katakana' is phonetic script and each script represents only one Japanese sound. It is used to express any non-Japanese words and phrases. However, the foreign sounds which do not exist in Japanese are expressed in modified Japanese-like sounds because 'katakana' is simply based on the sounds which exist in Japanese language. For example, there are only five vowels in Japanese and the more various kinds of vowels in English are not correctly expressed in 'katakana'. English native speaker learners of Japanese language find it

difficult to identify English-origin words written in 'katakana' because of the simplification of the vowel system which is necessary in 'katakana'.

Theory 1-2: 'Kanji' has an important function in Japanese written text.

P-S: - the 'kanji' - they make things a lot clearer - a lot more quickly than see English does-

(Interview 3: 25-26)

5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 1]

Mastery of 'kanji', Chinese characters, requires a lot of effort of many years' commitment not only for the learners of Japanese but also for Japanese native speakers. But the participants' analysis of the function of 'kanji' in terms of its functions in Japanese text became a theory, the discovery of its advantage. They realized that 'kanji' helps the readers to have a grasp of the meaning of the written text quickly as the words in 'kanji' are usually used for the key words of the passage such as nouns, verbs and adjectives.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 2], 5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 3], 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 2] and 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 3]. The participants developed this theory by different methods: through

investigation and comparison with other languages. Each case is explained in more detail in sections 5.4.2.1 and 5.4.2.2.

Theory 1-3: European languages are based on sound and speaking but East Asian languages are based on written text, because 'kanji', ideographs have a specific function with picture image.

P-S: - ours are relating in how we speak - but Asian languages are relating in how they write - and the ideas on the page - so does that connection with Asian languages - you know - the writing connection

(Interview 3: 153-155)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 4]

The above theory was developed based on the categorization of alphabets as phonetic symbols in European languages, as opposed to 'kanji' as ideographs in Chinese and Japanese language.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 5] and [Comparison Case 6].

Theory 1-4: Kanji plays an important role in literature.

Culture in literature. The meaning given to words and ideas in

literature is compounded by Kanji.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-3/5-Q1)

5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 9]

The theory was generated in relation to a focused lesson of Japanese poetry, 'haiku (Appendix 3)'. The role of 'kanji' in Japanese written text is paid attention to.

5.1.2 Theories about Languages 2: Politeness

Theory 2-1: Japanese language has more obvious systematic code-switching in politeness than European languages.

P-D: - whereas in Japanese if I use 'keigo' - it's clear to me and you that I've been polite and you can't accidentally think that I've not been polite if I'm using 'keigo' - whereas in English - I might think I've been polite and you might interpret it in a different way...

(Interview 5: 525-528)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 7]

The theory was developed in relation to the learning of various polite expressions of Japanese language, including three different levels of verb conjugation. The highest level of polite expressions is called 'keigo' and it is introduced in the upper beginners' level. More details are given in section 5.4.2.2.

5.1.3 Theories about Languages 3: The Difference of Languages

Theory 3-1: It is very difficult to translate poems into other languages to high standard

P-T2: ...I don't think that there is something more difficult to translate than poems - from a language to another -

(Interview 5: 389-390)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 1]

The theory appeared in the discussion of poems. The participants pointed out that it is not enough to understand the literal meaning of the words in both languages but also the deep understanding of cultural connotation and background information in the languages are needed for producing high standard translation.

Theory 3-2: The difference of the languages will affect how people express themselves.

Noticed the grammar is very different to English. This might change how they express opinion.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-9-Thr-14-1-N-3/5-Q3)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 16]

The above theory was generated in relation to a lesson dealing with the

structure, 'I think...' and 'I said...'. In Japanese, these are placed at the end of the sentence and which tense to be used in the clause is different from English. Therefore in Japanese sometimes you don't know whether it is an opinion or statement until you hear the end of the sentence.

5.1.4 Theories about Learning Japanese 1: Common Image of Japanese Language

Theory 4-1: Except for the scripts, Japanese language is not especially difficult to learn compared with other European languages.

P-D: - I think once we'd learned like 'hiragana' - and once that was assumed normal - it wasn't much more difficult any more than learning French or Italian - it was just like another language and once you get passed it - the symbols

(Interview 5: 12-15)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 8]

There are many data indicating the above theory all of which are from British students and this implies that the script learning at the beginning which requires extra effort is the point which makes Japanese language learning different for English speakers from learning other European languages. There is an opposite theory generated by other data from Chinese speakers (theory 4-4).

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 9].

Theory 4-2: The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct.

P-R: I think there is a perception that as soon as you tell [] you are studying Japanese - they just think that it's impossible thing to do - but I think we are learning that it's not that hard...

(Interview 4: 137-139)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 13]

The theory was generated by questioning the existing view of Japanese as a difficult language which is common in the UK. The participants are building up their own opinion about the difficulty of Japanese language based on their experience of having learnt it.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 12].

Theory 4-3: Japanese language is easier to learn for Chinese language speakers than for English speakers.

P-B2: ...it'll be easier to learn for a Chinese speaker because they already know all the 'kanji' -

(Interview 2: 120-122)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 10]

This theory was provided by a British student, and is contrasted implicitly to the theory about the difficulties of learning Japanese for British learners. It was developed by linguistic comparative analysis among English, Japanese, and Chinese languages. However, this theory was soon turned over by an objection (theory 4-4) by a Mandarin native speaker student during the group discussion. The analysis of the process of theory 4-3 and 4-4 is explained in details in section 5.5.4.

Theory 4-4: Japanese language is not necessarily easy for Chinese speakers as the pronunciation of 'kanji' is different in Chinese language.'

P-B3: ...I cannot agree with P-B2 said - he said Chinese people learn Japanese just for 'kanji' we know the meanings - but the pronunciation is difficult - it's different - and also for us - remembering pronunciation is difficult -

(Interview 2: 137-140)

5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 4]

In contrast to theory 4-3, this theory comes from a Chinese speaker and the difference of pronunciation is raised as a reason why Japanese is difficult for them.

5.1.5 Theories about Learning Japanese 2: Learning Strategies

Theory 5-1: Repetition and more importantly using the language repeatedly when immersed in the context is an effective way to learn.

P-B4: - it's the fact that we used it every single day in the lessons - in a book - and you have to read it - you have to know it

(Interview 6: 89-90)

5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 6]

Students found this theory through their own learning experience. They discovered that not only studying hard but also using the language in the real context is a good way to learn.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 5] and [Investigation Case 7].

5.1.6 Theories about Learning Japanese 3: Impact of Language Learning

Theory 6-1: Learning Japanese language makes you reflect on your own language. The fact that it is a non-European language which was developed in a different way from English is an

important factor.

P-T1: I think you develop your understanding of certain words better as a result of having learnt Japanese

(Interview 3: 77-78)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 12]

and

P-T1: I've done Latin and French before at school - and I think maybe it's [] the 'kanji' as well - that it does definitely bring a whole new level of meaning for words - things you don't get in French

(Interview 3: 111-113)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 13]

Learning Japanese language has an impact on the participants' views and they start to have a different approach to the concepts of the words. They point out that it is because it is a non-European language. How in fact their view has changed is explained in more detail in section 5.4.2.2.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 11].

Theory 6-2: It is difficult for Japanese people to learn English.

I realised how difficult it is for Japanese people to learn English as some of the sounds are specific to the Japanese or English language.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-24-Thr-14-1A-F-3/5-Q3)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 17]

Theories raised in section 5.1.4 are all related to the difficulty of Japanese language. While the above theory indicates that the thought went beyond their current learning of Japanese and became the reflective view of the difficulty of English language for Japanese people to learn.

5.1.7 Theories about Culture 1: Image of Japan and Japanese People

Theory 7-1: Keeping high standards to perfection and working hard are national characteristics of Japan

P-R: - such a great nation for making everything to the highest standard...

(Interview 4: 65-66)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 5]

This theory was generated by linking their existing image of Japanese people as hard-working with the content of reading text and film and by further intensifying the image.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 2], [Linking Case 3] and [Linking Case 4].

Theory 7-2: Japanese people are intelligent

P-H1: I have more of the respect for the people because they have three different ways of writing systems making [] using [] very present []

P-B2: intelligent people - high literacy rate - all the people in Japan 99.5% of all people can read and write Japanese

(Interview 2: 151-154)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 6]

Having experienced learning three different kinds of Japanese scripts themselves, the participants develop more respect for Japanese people and link this with the image of Japanese people as intelligent.

Theory 7-3: Japanese people are polite.

They have a very detailed concept of level (importance, position etc.)
The Japanese language reflects the attitude of the people.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-4/5-Q3)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 9]

Having learnt about the polite expressions in Japanese language, it was linked to the question of social status and grew image of Japanese people as polite.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 7] and [Linking Case 8].

5.1.8 Theories about Culture 2: How Stereotypes are Formed

Theory 8-1: People cannot help developing preconceptions before direct contact.

P-K2: - so even I'm trying how very open-mind - you can't help have a picture in your head before you go which is [] shattered me when you get there

(Interview 6: 209-210)

5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 8]

This theory was developed in relation to the discussion of stereotypes. The theory suggests that it is impossible to get rid of building up preconceptions before the real contact, and that this is a factor of human nature.

Theory 8-2: Stereotypes are not the truth.

Stereotypical image of Japanese people-they are not always true.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-10-Fri-10-1-F-5/5-Q3)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 15]

The above case is a questionnaire response after a focused lesson dealt with stereotypical images of British and Japanese people (Appendix 3: Leisure Time). The lesson was an occasion to question each widely accepted view and made them realize that not everything is true.

This theory is also found in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 14] and 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 10].

Theory 8-3: Preconceptions are formed under the influence of mass media information and they keep changing according to the change of the period.

P-B4: ...a lot of culture does come from you know – media - a mass media - and that is the mass media today

(Interview 6: 260-261)

and

P-B4: advances in technology in the last ten years – it's been immense – so that's obviously gonna affect the way that the people live - because it's just been - I mean like - not going to the details but we all know there's been a lot of changes –

(Interview 6: 273-276)

5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 11]

The theory was developed in relation to the discussion of stereotypes. It shows that the students had general knowledge, linked it with the topic dealt with in the lesson, and developed their own theory about 'stereotypes'.

5.1.9 Theories about Culture 3: Customs and Idioms

Theory 9-1: There is no particular reason for customs.

Yes-how we do things differently-often there doesn't seem to be any logical reason why-it's just tradition.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-7-Tu-10-2-F-3/6-Q4)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 18]

The theory was generated in relation to a focused lesson dealing with comparison of customs mainly between in England and in Japan (Appendix 3: Public Manner). There were some differences of customs found in the lesson and the participant's thought on the issue generated the above theory.

Theory 9-2: The use of idioms is universal.

Sense of idiom is universal.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 4-28-Fri-9-2-F-1/3-Q3)

5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 19]

This theory was developed in relation to a focused lesson dealing with metaphors in Japanese (Appendix 3: Metaphors). The participants discovered many differences in metaphorical expressions between Japanese and English but what the above means is the fundamental use of metaphors is common.

5.2 Stages of Theory Building

As the next step, these theories were individually studied. During the selection of the theories, the process how students reached the theories was taken into consideration as well as the theories themselves, and therefore, the process is interpreted as two stages of theory building: analysis and conclusion stages.

The conclusion stage means that one form of thinking is to draw conclusions. Unless the theories appear with the analysis stage, it is difficult to judge if the theory is a product of participants' original thinking, instead it might be just an existing theory brought in from somewhere else. In that case it does not mean that the participants are able to draw conclusions by themselves.

It was therefore important to pay attention to how the participants reached the conclusion stage and prior to finalising their theories, the data show that the participants are engaged in the activities of analyzing knowledge in various ways such as 'investigating', 'comparing' and 'linking', as we shall see in later sections.

This analysis stage is the heart of the thinking and the evidence of participants'

engagement in thinking. As mentioned before, it was decided that theories need to appear with analysis stages if they are to count as examples of original, autonomous thinking. But on the other hand, the analysis does not necessarily have to appear with the conclusion stages. Analyses are the evidence that the participants are engaged in the process of thinking by various approaches. However, it sometimes happens that they cannot reach any concluding theory. This is nonetheless valuable evidence of autonomous thinking and therefore the data with analysis stage, and no conclusion, are also examined in the later sections 5.4.2.1, 5.4.2.2, and 5.4.2.3.

In the process of data analysis, how the participants enter into the analysis stage, in other words, how the participants are motivated to engage in the thinking was not identified for a while. However, after repeated investigations of the data, I noticed that some independent pieces of data have patterns such as 'I wonder why...' and 'How....?' They are irrelevant to the theory building and to analysis and conclusion stages, but these data indicate that the participants have spotted something. Students raise questions but they have not entered into the action of searching for the answer for the question; this is

therefore called the 'inquiry stage'. On the other hand, it makes sense that this inquiry stage did not emerge either with analysis or conclusion stages. Once students get into analysis and conclusion stages, they are not conscious of the inquiry stage and do not have to mention it any more. In other words, unless they are in the middle of the inquiry stage, the stage is not conscious. However the important point is, it is assumed that any theory building case start with 'inquiry stage' even if it does not appear in the data.

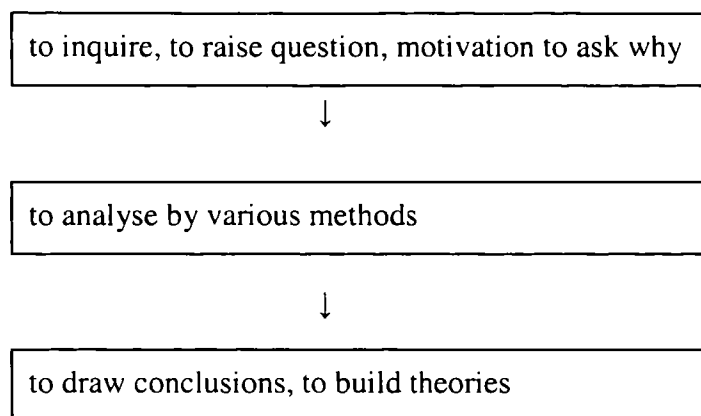
What was found from the data is these three stages of the theory building process; in the order in which they were found, they are: conclusion, analysis and inquiry stages.

5.3 Process of Theory Building

Although the existence of theory was the starting point in the discovery of the theory building process followed by analysis, and inquiry stages, how in fact the process happens is the reverse order: inquiry, analysis and then conclusion stages. The motivation to ask questions occurs in the participants' mind and makes them enter into the approaches to the analysis stage in search of the

answer for the question.

Figure 5.1: Theory building process



In the next section 5.4, the details of individual stages are examined.

5.4 Categories of Thinking Actions

Bailin *et al.* (1999a, 1999b) argue there are misconceptions caused by using particular terms to express critical thinking such as skills, ability, process, etc.

They also point out that the concept of critical thinking is vague and there are misunderstandings of this term, as we saw in Chapter 3. Considering that at this stage the definition of criticality is not yet established, this chapter attempts to list the categories of actions related to theory building emerging from the data. All these patterns are formed using the method of grounded

theory in qualitative data analysis, by comparison and categorization of data. In Chapter 6, the definition of criticality will be discussed in relation to the results of these data analyses.

5.4.1 To Inquire

As explained in the previous section 5.2, the first stage of the three steps of theory building is to inquire from a motivation to raise questions.

There are pieces of data which indicate that the students are in the middle of this inquiry stage. These data show that they have not stepped into the stage of the activities of analysis but are not ignorant of certain phenomena, either. The data show that they have spotted something and started inquiring.

The following data are from post-lesson questionnaires. They are the responses to Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson'.

The first two are examples of students wondering about the relationship to actual communication:

How this relates to communicating with a Japanese person.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-24-Thr-14-1A-F-5/5-Q3)

How could this be used in general conversations.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 4-25-Tu-9-1-N-1/5-Q3)

The second pair shows other students beginning to wonder about the language itself:

I wondered why Japanese language developed in this way, if that was any particularly cultural reasons for it.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-25-Fri-13-1A-N-4/5-Q3)

Wondered why some modern words use Katakana rather than hiragana and why they need to distinguish.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-25-Fri-13-1A-N-5/5-Q3)

And the followings are responses to Question 4, 'Did today's lesson make you think about your own country ? How ?'

Yes, about why we have the customs we do.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-22-Tu-11-2-F-3/8-Q4)

Consider why we use the metaphors we use.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 4-28-Fri-9-2-F-2/3-Q4)

And there is one datum from a group interview, which shows this inquiry stage.

P-T1: I wonder whether it makes a difference with sometimes when people start learning Japanese to use 'romaji' first - [whereas] compared to 'hiragana' I don't know whether it effects - how long it

takes you to change the image of the sound

(Interview 3: 228-231)

'Romaji' is the use of alphabets to express Japanese sounds. In the UK university context, 'romaji' is seldom introduced even at the beginning of the study. Students are expected to start using Japanese scripts immediately and usually the textbooks for beginners use Japanese scripts as well. Outside university or school context in short-term courses or survival conversation courses, there may be situations to use alphabets, 'romaji' as aids. About the impact of having studied Japanese scripts, there are more detailed cases in section 5.4.2.2.

The next stage, the engagement of analysis, does not start all of a sudden without any sign. As studied in the above, the participants demonstrated that the starting point is to inquire and it is assumed as an important step for theory building.

5.4.2 To Analyze by Various Methods

After the inquiry stage, the actual engagement in analysis by various methods

will start. In the following cases, the group interview data sets quoted include both the theories the participants built up (the underlined parts) and how they reached the theories (italic parts).

Many of the group interview data are long and tend to be comprehensive including both analysis and theories, while the answers in post-lesson questionnaire data are relatively short and most of them indicated either theory or analysis, if they include indications related to thinking.

The engagement in analysis does not necessarily lead to theories. Some data show that students are in the middle of analysis stage but have not drawn any conclusion, yet. These analysis-only data are also listed here as they are the important indications of the participants' engagement in thinking.

In the following sections, the different types of analysis are explained in detail.

They focus not on the theories but on the process of theory building, analysis stage which includes various methods.

5.4.2.1 To Analyze by Investigating, Reasoning, and Studying the Details

This method of analysis by investigating, reasoning, and studying the details, is simply to observe and to investigate the details of the phenomenon they have spotted in search of the answer to the question which has occurred to them.

[Investigation Case 1] → Theory 1-2: 'Kanji' has an important function in Japanese written text.

P-S: - the 'kanji' - they make things a lot clearer - a lot more quickly than see English does - like *when I read Japanese now without the 'kanji' - it's actually harder - I find it easier to read with the 'kanji'* because you gave me the book for proficiency level 4 - and I actually found it difficult to read - not because it was difficult but because there was no 'kanji' - you know when I see the 'kanji' - it creates an image in my mind immediately - [] the 'kanji' for 8 - I just think either 8 in Japanese or in English or think of the situation of 8 something - instead of just reading the word – eight - so that makes me say things differently - the 'kanji' is picture - is meaning on the page

(Interview 3: 25-33)

[Investigation Case 2] → Theory 1-2

P-D: - and [certainly] last year when we first started 'kanji' - and everyone sort of seen them - [] why don't we just continue using 'hiragana'? why doesn't? but now some [] is easier to - you know - because it's sort of often it shortens the sentence and it's a lot easier to just see the sentence *because with '[hiragana]' - everything is the same -but when you've got 'kanji' in there - you're sort of what the words means are* – 'hiragana is just – well - verb-endings and particles and mainly things like that - so I think once you know the 'kanji' - it

makes it much easier to read

P-T2: what is very good that it's really quick - [] in French to read also phrase to understand what it means - but Japanese you can [] of the meaning *just by [watching] the 'kanji'* - [] [*here is*] *the verb - here is the subject* - then objects then you can just think about it -

(Interview 5: 115-126)

[Investigation Case 3] → Theory 1-2

P-P: found it hard to sort of speak fluently when there is a lot of - when there is a big - long sentence for the 'hiragana' - 'cos if it's 'kanji' - I guess the sentence be more compact - you can get almost ahead self a bit - but for 'hiragana' - stumbled with the sentences - so I found it difficult to make sentences - when []

P-B4: yeah - what I'm saying is - if just imagine one of the passages that we read now - *imagine that it was all written in 'hiragana'* - *how confused we could get straight away*

(Interview 6: 138-145)

The above three cases indicate how the participants reached the theory by investigation and by the analysis of their own experience of having learnt the scripts. They paid attention to the ideographic functions of 'kanji' and 'kanji' compound words in Japanese texts, in contrast to 'hiragana' which are phonetic symbols. As they proceed to a more advanced level and need to learn more complicated new 'kanji', 'hiragana' seems to them to become relatively easier as each 'hiragana' has only one sound. Whereas learning of 'kanji' requires more effort and involves acquiring meanings and several different ways of

reading and writing properly. 'Kanji' is mainly used for nouns, adjectives and verbs, which are essential words to convey the main point of the text. By following 'kanji' in the text, the reader can skim the rest. They discovered this advantage of 'kanji' in terms of its function in the Japanese text.

[Investigation Case 4] → Theory 4-4: Japanese language is not necessarily easy for Chinese speakers as the pronunciation of 'kanji' is different in Chinese language.

P-B3: just - a little bit Cantonese - a little bit – Cantonese - a little bit – and – my main language is Mandarin - the language and also actually I cannot agree with P-B2 said - he said Chinese people learn Japanese just for 'kanji' we know the meanings - but the pronunciation is difficult - it's different - and also for us - remembering pronunciation is difficult - the reason is [] - because [] is difficult - because even though we know this word – because of the pronunciation - we can't understand which one – [] no idea - so maybe just pronunciation and listening is big problem for the Chinese people I think

(Interview 2: 136-143)

The theory was presented as an objection to an English speaker's view, theory 4-3, during a discussion in a group interview. Sharing some 'kanji' in Chinese and Japanese is not so helpful in learning because of the difference of the pronunciation. Like the above, this theory too is developed from reflection on personal experience.

[Investigation Case 5] and [Investigation Case 6] → Theory 5-1: Repetition and more importantly using the language repeatedly when immersed in the context is an effective way to learn.

P-K2: it's just repetition [] 'kanji' really - you really just need to go over it - and *the ones that I remember most are the ones that I use most from* [] [our] passages

P-B4: yeah - yeah I see - [] here

P-K2: *to eat - drink - all that's sort of thing*

P-F: *yeah - to see*

P-K2: to study [a lot] probably stick to my head - because we then tend to use that a lot of my writing - the rest of them are sort of - saw them again (laughs)

P-B4: (all laugh) that's how - that's how - I think that's how - I think that's how the 'hiragana' go in - because we learnt - well - we learnt little by little we learnt like five to ten at a time every few lessons - but then also it's not just a fact that we learnt like that - it's the fact that we used it every single day in the lessons - in a book - and you have to read it - you have to know it

P-several: yeah

P-P: [] use 'kanji' all the time

P-B4: you got to know it - you still - once again - I said it before and *you just got no excuse - because you can't read it - you can't read the passages in lesson - you've got to know the 'hiragana' - that's*

P-K2: [It'll bring] the similar issue with 'katakana' - because I have to keep actually revising that - *you only used certain ones once and the rest of them you've got - I did know this but you can't actually remember this*

(Interview 6: 78-98)

P-B4: [] same like - there is a couple of 'hiragana' - we don't - well I suppose now we do use [] - you definitely learnt 'katakana' - *there is the ones you just never see - really*

(Interview 6: 100-102)

[Investigation Case 7] → Theory 5-1

P-S: so I guess the point really is that we have been totally immersed in the writing - and that's why I can read it naturally - whereas next year I will be totally immersed in the speaking and listening - everywhere I go -

(Interview 3: 283-285)

The above three cases indicate how the participants set up a learning strategy by reviewing their own experience of learning Japanese. The analysis is of how they learnt successfully and gained the theory of the importance of repetition and the use in real needs. But the second datum also leads to a support for this theory. They paid attention to certain scripts of 'katakana' which they had difficulty in learning and recognized how seldom they see these particular scripts in real texts.

[Investigation Case 8] → Theory 8-1: People cannot help developing preconceptions before direct contact.

P-K2: [] I mean so - going back preconceptions - [] I did a bit of Japanese study before I came here - but at the same time - I have never been to Japan - so even I'm trying how very open-mind - you can't help have a picture in your head before you go which is [] shattered me when you get there

P-P: you do question - 'cos yeah - you know there's going to be shattered - []

P-K2: you know it but you still can't help [] - you try to be

very open-minded but you still think - are you supposed to that? - you get really strange looks probably – so – but - *it's something human nature you can't help but thinks this is what is [going to be] like*

(Interview 6: 207-215)

In relation to the discussion of stereotypes, the participants are aware of how stereotypes are formed as seen in the above case. P-K2 had drawn a theory from her own experience of having grown up with an image of Japan which she has never visited. P-P, who has visited Japan before implies that the image is very different from the reality.

[Investigation Case 9]→ Theory 1-4: Kanji plays an important role in literature.

Culture in literature. The meaning given to words and ideas in literature is compounded by Kanji.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-3/5-Q1)

A post-lesson questionnaire answer also shows participants' engagement in investigation in the above case. It emerged related to a focused lesson dealing with 'haiku', Japanese poetry (Appendix 3: Haiku). What is specific to 'haiku' is the use of one 'seasonal word' in a poem and usually these words are written in 'kanji'. The answer was for Question 1, 'What do you think you have learnt especially from today's lesson?'

The following analysis stage seen in a datum is the one which did not emerge with any particular theory. But it could have led to a conclusion similar to 'theory 4-1: Except for the scripts, Japanese language is not especially difficult to learn compared with other European languages.' Detailed analysis of the characteristics of Japanese grammar is seen here. Students point out that Japanese grammar is not difficult to follow as they are systematic.

[Investigation Case 10]

P-R: I think *a lot of the Japanese language seems to be based on patterns* and obviously there are some exceptions - but once you've learned certain patterns - grammar actually isn't that difficult to follow - perhaps [] patterns and it's just learning all the vocabulary and 'kanji'

P-H2: *very systematic* - because you know there is the 'te-form' - so if you learn a new verb - then you can transfer that to 'te-form' - without having to re-learn how to do it - [] so - []

(Interview 4: 125-131)

The following also could have led to a conclusion regarding the difficulty of Japanese language for Chinese language speakers, something similar to 'theory 4-4: Japanese language is not necessarily easy for Chinese speakers as the pronunciation of 'kanji' is different in Chinese language.' It implies that the

similarity of Chinese and Japanese languages is not necessarily an advantage for learners.

[Investigation Case 11]

P-A: I think 'kanji' is quite difficult for us because *we see once we see [the thing] as Chinese words [] we think reading Chinese [] not Japanese now we have to learn to see the words in Japanese - how to pronounce it in Japanese is quite hard*

(Interview 1: 77-80)

The following investigation did not emerge with any conclusion, either, but it indicates that the recognition of difficulty of Japanese for Chinese speakers is opposite to the difficulties experienced by English native speakers.

[Investigation Case 12]

P-B1: *I think for me at the beginning was quite easy - but for the [further] Japanese -getting difficult - difficult*

P-J1: *I agree*

(Interview 1: 24-26)

5.4.2.2 To Analyze by Categorizing, Comparing, Contrasting Similarities and Differences, Reflecting Own Culture and Language

Many of the data show this type of analysis by the participants. They categorize the language groups, analyze the characteristics of languages by

linguistic comparative analysis, and also reflect on their own language and culture by comparing with the target ones. The participants often get into investigation of the individual phenomenon before they move on to comparison or during the comparison, so there is an overlap of methods with analysis by investigation to some extent.

[Comparison Case 1] → Theory 1-1: 'Katakana' representation of non-Japanese words has limitations due to the difference of phonetic systems of the languages.

P-D: I think English does have an advantage learning most of the languages because *we've got so many sounds in English* that when we learn Japanese - Japanese has got less sounds than English - so we don't need to learn them - we forget some [of them] - I mean French has got one or two different to English - like ri and li

P-T2: we have got different u and ve

P-D: yeah – yeah [] then Spanish have got some [extra] nasal sounds and Italian's got a couple of - very small differences really so it doesn't make so much difference but the other way Japanese people - Chinese people because both languages don't have so many sounds as in English

P-T2: Chinese is really [] - a lot of sounds really [] for us - Japanese are less sounds []

P-D: because - I don't know - difference [] between l and r - *lake and rake are essentially the same in Japanese - for Japanese speakers*

P-T2: 'laurent' and 'rollnz' to the French [] - *Japanese can't make the difference* - 'laurent' which is - l - a - u - r - e - n - t - and - r - o - l - l - n - z - the French never make mistake - 'laurent' or 'rollnz'

P-D: that's possibly why the perfect Japanese probably find the most difficult is 'katakana' representing

(Interview 5: 276-294)

P-D: I've noticed as well - that *sometimes this [seemed] to have translated to English words into 'katakana' from the spelling not from the pronunciation* like 'airon' is – a – i – ro – n - but we don't say [] [] just ['ai'] as [] amount

(Interview 5: 304-307)

The comparative linguistic analysis of phonetic systems is seen in the first case. They compare the phonetic systems of several different languages and the lack of distinction between 'l' and 'r' sounds in Japanese is focused on. The second datum also indicates the assumption of how modification of sounds happened through the comparative analysis between spelling and phonetic systems of the two languages. The word 'iron [áɪɒn]', a hand-held implement, typically an electrical one, with a heated flat steel base, used to smooth clothes, sheets, etc.(Oxford English Dictionary, 2003), is an English loan word imported with its concept into Japanese. If this word is spelled based on the English sound, it will be 'アイアン [aIan]'. Instead, the correct 'katakana' spelling for this word in Japanese is 'アイロン[aIron]'. Most of the non-Japanese native speakers cannot identify this word as 'iron' in English. In 'romaji' system in Japanese, each Japanese script is represented by one particular element of the

alphabet only; ie. ア → a イ → i ロ → ro ン → n . Perhaps the person created this ‘アIRON[aIron]’ read ‘iron’ as [aIron] instead of [aIan], exactly as P-D points out.

[Comparison Case 2] → Theory 1-2: ‘Kanji’ has an important function in Japanese written text.

P-D: - *I think another thing is that in English – well - in most of the languages - you have spaces between everywhere - so when you used to be being divided it up for us - just to make it easy like this - and it’s the [whole thing] that along the [] ‘hiragana’ [] - but if there’s ‘kanjis’ in there - even sort of see where the words are - because we tend to think in terms of where the spaces are in sentence = ’cos if we are looking for a word - if it’s [] a page of English or French - then if we were looking for a word just for [] across - we are looking just after each space for the first letter really - but Japanese if it was all ‘hiragana’ - you just (phew) -*

(Interview 5: 140-148)

The above case indicates that the participant investigates the role of spaces in the texts in European languages and compares it with the function of ‘kanji’ in Japanese text. In Japanese text, spaces are not used. Previously in section 5.4.2.1, other participants reached this same theory but by investigating their own experience.

[Comparison Case 3] → Theory 1-2

P-D: um - and I mean you know some 'kanji' are pictographs - pictograms - in English - and French and other European languages - and *we actually see each word as a picture almost* - because I've seen this done where you can take a whole paragraph of a text and as long as every word there the first [] and last [] there stay the same - you can mix up all [the letters] in between - and you can just it's not difficult to read it - it's the same as just reading anything else

P-T2: so you've said I've read something []

P-D: so like I don't know - like - at university today [whatever] - *as long as had university - you would start u and y in the end and all the letters could be anywhere within the word - you can just read it along - because we do just see this every word as a picture - so having 'kanji' does make everything sort of similar like that picture*

(Interview 5: 156-168)

Another analysis by referring 'kanji' to a picture reached the same theory 1-2.

Linguistic analysis is seen here. The analysis is based on the participant's experience of learning that readers see English words as chunks.

[Comparison Case 4] → Theory 1-3: European languages are based on sound and speaking but East Asian languages are based on written text, because 'kanji', ideographs have a specific function with picture image.

P-S: [] like *Japanese originally got the 'kanji' from Chinese* - so you can't say that - ours are relating in how we speak - but Asian languages are relating in how they write - and the ideas on the page - so does that connection with Asian languages - you know - the writing connection -

(Interview 3: 152-155)

The above case shows how the participants make categories of languages.

European languages have a speaking connection, while Asian languages have a writing connection. The analysis is based on the historical knowledge of how 'kanji' was originally developed as pictographs in ancient China and work as ideographs in Japanese text. It is interesting to see the different approaches to refer to 'kanji' as picture image in comparison to the previous [Comparison Case 3] by linguistic analysis.

[Comparison Case 5] → Theory 1-3

P-S: it's almost like - English poetry is based on a [] present - you know - sound and nice [] - a kind of nice [] wave and curve - but I think some Japanese poetry is obviously based on that - but it's also based on what you put on the pages as well - because the word for heart is heart - it's actually drawing heart - so you don't just listen to the poetry you read and see the poetry and feel it as well - do you know what I mean ? so if someone said - last week - I had a heartache and then I went out and the sun was shining and I saw a beautiful lady - or something - *to say that in English - you would just hear it - it would be to put to see on the page all the 'kanji' that mean - lady - somewhere - so that makes it interesting* - [] the 'haiku' part was really interesting - I learned it [] as a culture thing but that was a part of the lesson as well - *the 'kanji' gives more meaning* [] the language for sure -

(Interview 3: 46-57)

and

P-S: yeah - there is a rhythm there that you got to use like seven and five syllables [] - you know - you got to use like a

somewhere [] word - so there is a structure that help to do it - you know - and so there is obviously a linguistic rhythm - a structure there - but the thing that makes it interesting I was trying to say [] you get a dual interest in it - like English poetry you just get really what you hear - but with Japanese it's the rhythm - what you hear - what it means in that sense but also what you see - you know

(Interview 3: 63-69)

The function of 'kanji' in Japanese text is associated with poetry. P-S has a strong belief that Japanese language is based on both what is written and heard because of the ideographic function of 'kanji' but European languages are based on what is heard only.

[Comparison Case 6] → Theory 1-3

P-S: I just found - when I did French and German at school – because you got there as compulsory - I just found that was much and [] - like French sounds very poetic - you can see - I am going to the toilet - sounds very poetic because French is very poet language - but German is more sort of a strict - you get like a mechanical feeling - when you are listening to German - but even so - even though these characteristics [] as a whole - learning them just seems learning English I think - it's still a bit like alphabets - alphabet-based thing - and they've got like the same kinds of personal pronouns and I know that French has got a lot of verbs and Italian has got verb conjugations - but with Japanese - it's different - you don't learn it - that way you learn it with the pictures with the 'kanji' and stuff like that - and *because it's an Asian language - it's not evolved in the same way* - like it's actually a language called Esperanto - which you can speak –

P-T1: artificial one

P-S: it - you can apparently - you can go anywhere in Europe and speak it - and people would be understood - [] - that's true - that what it say - but it's always neglected and it never got [] took on its idea - and *I don't suppose you could have incorporated Japanese in Esperanto - because it's too Asian* - it's - do you know what I mean? before the continents ever [] related each other - the languages grouped themselves separately - so if you speak English -there'll be lots of words that allows also French - like [] vegetables and fruits words in French - things like that - and like - we use like - in metaphors speaking French a lot of time - I don't know - that's the same [] - vice versa - means like this - it's [a] French thing originally - we use a lot of French words in that way - but not with Japanese because until [] like 17th century - we weren't in contact with the Japanese - *so you couldn't really incorporated that in Esperanto - it wouldn't work - you know - but you can in the European languages because they are all relevant*

(Interview 3: 115-142)

P-S: I think it's quite difficult - *when we took the 'kanji' from China and try to add it to our own language - it made it really difficult - the language became a little bit awkward* - you know -

(Interview 3: 166-168)

In the above case, the analysis is also related to the participant's knowledge of 'Esperanto', an artificial language based on European languages (Fettes, 2004). The student pays attention to the history of development of the languages and to the fact that there is something common connecting the languages to each other within the same language group. And in the second quote the participant mentions that if 'kanji' was introduced into English, it would not have fit in,

but it did so easily in Japanese language.

[Comparison Case 7] → Theory 2-1: Japanese language has more obvious systematic code-switching in politeness than European languages.

P-D: it's even just the levels of language - like plain form - 'masu-form' - honorific and polite forms and so on - I mean that's obviously that exists in French and English - but it's not like [whole new] verb ending - it's a sort of like if I'm talking so important - I'll - I don't know - I'll speak a certain way and [] talk with my friends - I'll be more casual - and *but it doesn't really change the language structure or anything* - the - the - even the verbs or anything - wouldn't change those - whereas in Japanese - it's such a clear difference - it's such a - like if we are using 'keigo' - then it's so clear that wanting to be very very polite - and speaking up to someone - in English or French - it's much more individual thing - how - how you'd be polite to someone is - whether you choose to - I don't know - just speak in more standard English - even though you're supposed to dialect or whatever - or just - I don't know you know - it's more - you decide for yourself how to be polite almost - whereas in Japanese - it's

(Interview 5: 475-488)

P-D: yeah - I think in English - it's even if - I thought I was speaking English [backful] to you - you might actually think - that wasn't very respectful - *it's much more er - er - open to interpretation* - because I might - in my mind - my definition of a certain word - I might sort of thing - you know - that's a polite way of saying something else - but for you - it might not be any more polite in another word - it might not seem polite at all - so you might think -why did he say that? [that wasn't] - so you - whereas in Japanese if I use 'keigo' - it's clear to me and you that I've been polite and you can't accidentally think that I've not been polite if I'm using 'keigo' - whereas in English - I might think I've been polite and you might interpreted in a different way because how vary everything can be - [I] think

(Interview 5: 519-529)

The linguistic comparative analysis seen above is regarding the difference of systems of expressing politeness. The data show that the contrastive difference between English and Japanese language in terms of the politeness made students engage in comparative analysis. The highest grade of politeness to refer to honorable people, 'keigo (honorific and humble forms)', is introduced in the upper beginners' course and the participant in the above case is from this group.

[Comparison Case 8] → Theory 4-1: Except for the scripts, Japanese language is not especially difficult to learn compared with other European languages.

P-D: well - before I started studying it - definitely that was going to be extremely different from English - because I've done French before and I've done Italian before - and I mean they are both essentially same structure as English - and use same alphabet - as well - so - but once I started with Japanese - *I think once we'd learned like 'hiragana' - and once that was assumed normal - it wasn't much more difficult any more than learning French or Italian - it was just like another language and once you get passed it - the symbols*

(Interview 5: 9-15)

[Comparison Case 9] → Theory 4-1

P-B2: it was easier than in some Western [] like French and German you've got that three different ways of saying that different genres of nouns [] - at the moment [] same []

genres of nouns - so it's easy to make sense without you know []

P-L: I think it's simpler than [] - *it follows strict grammar pattern - and once you understand the grammar pattern and have basic vocabulary - you can start forming your own sentences*

P-B2: *mathematic*

P-L: and it's much more simple than learning English

(Interview 2: 78-86)

The difficulty of Japanese language is analyzed in comparison with European languages. The first student compares his own experience of learning languages and the second one investigates the system of the languages.

[Comparison Case 10] → Theory 4-3: Japanese language is easier to learn for Chinese language speakers than for English speakers.

P-B2: that was easier to speak [] to write obviously - especially for - I think it'll be easier to learn for a Chinese speaker because they already know all the 'kanji' - so when they learn the meaning - the Japanese [] they already know how to draw it - so it's easy for them - so even if you are a Chinese person and you don't know Japanese whatsoever you can still go to Japan and just walk around Japan - they can understand what the 'kanji' meanings on the street - so for an English person - you have to learn each 'kanji' and understand what each one means - so it's more difficult

(Interview 2: 120-127)

The above analysis is from an English speaker's point of view. He engaged in the comparative linguistic analysis among English, Japanese and Chinese. He assumed that it is easy to learn Japanese for Chinese because of the similarities

between the two languages. But it is not so simple. The theory is soon turned over by theory 4-4 by a Chinese speaker.

[Comparison Case 11] → Theory 6-1: Learning Japanese language makes you reflect on your own language. The fact that it is a non-European language which was developed in a different way from English is an important factor.

P-S: it sounds pretentious but it's true that you do actually see the world differently when you learn a new language - *because you've only been stocking your language - and then you learn to see the world through somebody else's language - you do actually see the things differently - that's may does happen - []*

P-T1: maybe your perspective changes - *so you learn to be in your own culture from a different life than what you were before*

(Interview 3: 14-20)

[Comparison Case 12] → Theory 6-1

P-T1: I think you develop your understanding of certain words better as a result of having learnt Japanese

P-S: yeah - yeah

R: you mean - English word

P-T1: um

(Interview 3: 77-81)

The participants say that they started to have a different view on English language, their own mother tongue, by learning Japanese and think that it is because Japanese is a non-European language, which was developed in a different way from English. It can be considered as a comparative analysis with

reflection between before and after learning Japanese. Evidence of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is seen here, as well, and the same insight is found in Humboldt (1907(1836): 30) cited in Risager (2006:60) 'The learning of a foreign language ought (...) to entail the gaining of a new standpoint in the previous world view', although the students are assumed not to be aware of these theories.

In the following two parts the participant explains further how in fact his attitude towards English language changed.

P-S: - because you like know [] we look at something and it means heart and [] the thing will be heart as well and the drawing will be heart - I start looking at English words and realise that all the conjugations of other words that exist in English - [] that's how you get that and *I have never used to do that before - I just speak it because I was English - but now I look it up and add it and from more my mechanical point of view - I've never did that before I start learning a language -*

(Interview 3: 84-90)

P-S: - *because of learning Japanese - it made me look at my language and see - aah - OK - I see I've done it - I see I've built that language up - because I am learning - I think for Japanese person - you might not make that recognition - unless they themselves are learning another language - because it's natural to them - so [] even though the Japanese are fortunate because they speak it naturally - we*

can get something from it - because we are not speaking it naturally - something that they might not get - we will get a chance to look at it mechanically and build it up as an adult - so it gives you that - it does give you that

(Interview 3: 99-107)

[Comparison Case 13] → Theory 6-1

P-T1: *I've done Latin and French before at school - and I think maybe it's [] the 'kanji' as well - that it does definitely bring a whole new level of meaning for words - thing you don't get that in French*

(Interview 3: 111-113)

And the participants clearly recognize that the crucial point of this theory is the fact that Japanese is not European language. The above [Comparison Case 13] makes the point clear.

[Comparison Case 14] → Theory 8-2: Stereotypes are not the truth.

P-K2: I think every country has that though - they project the solution - this is what we are like - then you go []

P-P: I think people like to keep it up - they like to have their own identities we're almost like

P-several: []

P-K2: oh - we do the same though - it's keeping you slightly separate - I think every nation does that

P-P: yeah - absolutely

P-B4: you're not looking at the peoples individual - you [just] [] [] generalisations entire place

P-K2: yeah

P-B4: you're not when you get there obviously - you meet

individual people - and you - they've obviously got their own identities and things they like to do and you know - so - so - so - you gonna - *like obviously - not everybody is gonna - you know - not everybody sings gonna karaoke - or not everybody drinks afternoon tea - [but] some people do drink afternoon tea - so maybe that's why - they just they think that we do drink a lot afternoon tea - personally I don't drink any afternoon tea - not really - (laughs) - but they think just as their just as their idea is a [] generalisation is - everybody drinks afternoon tea - probably when they come to England - should be [a] trouble to England - they probably get at all different idea when they get here*

(Interview 6: 183-204)

[Comparison Case 15] → Theory 8-2

Stereotypical image of Japanese people-they are not always true.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-10-Fri-10-1-F-5/5-Q3)

In the above data in [Comparison Case 14] and [Comparison Case 15], it is seen that the reflection on their own culture guided students to the theory as they think about whether they drink afternoon tea as the stereotype says. In fact, [Comparison Case 15] is an answer for Question 3 of the post-lesson questionnaire, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson'.

The lesson was designed as a focused lesson and dealt with the stereotypical images of England and Japan, especially how Japanese people perceive English people (Appendix 3: Leisure Time). Actually the discussion in [Comparison

Case 14] was developed in connection with this topic. There was also found a post-lesson questionnaire answer showing the development of this theory. The first remark of the group interview by P-K2, 'I think every country has that though – they project the solution – this is what we are like-', could be understood as a theory but it is not included here as an original theory since it is hard to identify how she developed this idea.

[Comparison Case 16] → Theory 3-2: The difference of the languages will affect how people express themselves.

Noticed the grammar is very different to English. This might change how they express opinion.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-9-Thr-14-1-N-3/5-Q3)

It is also an answer for Question 3, in relation to one lesson dealing with the structure 'I think...' and 'I said...' in Japanese. It indicates that having learnt the grammatical structure which is very different from English made a participant develop the theory.

[Comparison Case 17] → Theory 6-2: It is difficult for Japanese people to learn English.

I realised how difficult it is for Japanese people to learn English as some of the sounds are specific to the Japanese or English language.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 11-24-Thr-14-1A-F-3/5-Q3)

This is also an answer for Question 3. The comparative analysis of the difference between the languages sometimes leads to reflection which generates above theory from different angles. After the lesson dealing with 'katakana' representation of foreign words which made this participant recognize the difficulty of learning different concept from the mother tongue, this reflection extended to the opposite side of the Japanese people learning English language.

[Comparison Case 18] → Theory 9-1: There is no particular reason for the customs.

Yes-how we do things differently-often there doesn't seem to be any logical reason why-it's just tradition.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-7-Tu-10-2-F-3/6-Q4)

[Comparison Case 19] → Theory 9-2: The use of idioms is universal.

Sense of idiom is universal.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 4-28-Fri-9-2-F-1/3-Q3)

There are reflections found in the above cases, as well. The first one is an answer for Question 4, 'Did today's lesson make you think about your own country? How?', about the lesson dealing with comparison of customs among England, Japan and other countries of origin of the students. The second one is

an answer for Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson.' about the lesson dealing with the metaphors. Actually many different expressions between English and Japanese were presented in the lesson, for example, a 'cold person' is compared to 'ice' in Japanese, while 'cucumber' in English. However, it is assumed that what this participant means it is the fundamental idea of how to express coldness, and the comparison and contrast has led to a more general insight beyond noting differences.

There are some data which show this analysis stage of comparison but did not reach any theory.

Although it is different in nature and degree from 'keigo', the two variations and usages of verb forms; masu-form (formal) and infinitive (informal, casual), are already introduced in the lower beginners' stage. In the Japanese language, infinitive (informal, casual) verbs are only used between friends and within family, while masu-form (formal) is used on all other occasions. Especially for strangers or people who are older, it is appropriate to use the masu-form or 'keigo'. The following comparative analysis stages including reflection were

found in the data from the lower beginners' course. The participants are paying attention to the difference of the languages and the cultures behind the language systems.

[Comparison Case 20] and [Comparison Case 21]

P-J2: [] *a lot more respect for all the people [] – whereas - here we tend to be independent – whereas - I get a feeling that they have to have a proof of older people have to [] wiser - but it's not the same here - so you can just learn it from the way we studies we can see the differences between the two culture*

(Interview 4: 109-112)

P-H2: there is like you can see that *there is respect for the older people and [] - they use the language differently as well - they use honorific language to talk to older people - here we don't have that – so*

(Interview 4: 113-115)

The following data could lead to a theory about the function of 'kanji' in Japanese text. The analysis by the participants implies that 'romaji (use of Latin alphabets in Japanese text)' does not really work in Japanese text at a more advanced level. In the first case, P-S mentions that there used to be a short period in the past he had to depend on the Latin alphabet as he did not have an alternative. While now at the upper beginners' stage, he finds it difficult to read Japanese texts written in the Latin alphabet and he much

prefers to read Japanese texts in Japanese scripts. In the second datum, P-T1 is explaining that she can follow the sounds expressed in Latin alphabets in Japanese texts easily but does not really digest the semantic meaning of the written text. While she can understand the content of the Japanese texts written in Japanese scripts better than the ones in Latin alphabets, it takes more time to read them.

[Comparison Case 22]

P-S: yeah – you know – I’ve actually - I’m pleased you said that - something [] come [up in] my mind - *because I can’t actually write ‘romaji’ well any more - I have to write it in Japanese - I can’t read ‘romaji’- I’ve got to read Japanese now - when I first came here - I knew [] little bit of Japanese - and it was all ‘romaji’- I’ve learned them from beginner’s book because I knew I was [coming on] the degree - and you know ‘romaji’ made sense and now when I see ‘romaji’- I can’t read it at all - I’ve got to read it like - [] ‘hiragana’ and ‘katakana’ at least [] can read that - I can read Japanese much easier - like that than [] in alphabet*

(Interview 3: 232-240)

[Comparison Case 23]

P-T1: I don’t think this [] something related to our sound [] - it was like a passage of writing - I had to read it out and it was in - I think in Japanese and it was written in ‘romaji’- as well - and *I found I could read a lot quicker in ‘romaji’ but not [] actually reading about - but if I read in Japanese - it would be slower coming up - but I do understand it a lot more - when I was reading it - because it*

didn't make any sense in 'romaji' - *I mean the sounds are coming up and I could keep up with everyone but I wouldn't know what I read [] - whereas if I read in Japanese [] I might not be able to keep up with all the thing but at least I understand more*

(Interview 3: 256-264)

The following points out a similar case to the above based on experience but it is about the comparison between the use of 'hiragana' and 'kanji'. The student points out the advantage of reading Japanese texts all written in phonetic script, 'hiragana', in comparison to the Japanese texts written both in 'hiragana' and 'kanji'. In this case she says 'hiragana', phonetic script, is good for speedy reading to follow the pronunciation only, without bothering about the meaning of the text.

[Comparison Case 24]

P-K2: [] somewhere I think that sometimes even though we are learning 'kanji' - 'kanji' is huge [involvement] - I agree with you 'kanji' is very important focus - sometimes [] read in 'hiragana' is very good to forget - to remember just what you read - you're not just going to read and moving on - I'm not really registering how to say - do we do - what [the word is] in Japanese - *you are actually having to go through this - this is how I say this - this is what the pronunciation is*

(Interview 6: 147-153)

The student below engages in the comparative analysis of poetry.

[Comparison Case 25]

P-D: *we have a lot of different rules and sounds*

P-T2: rules and sounds

P-D: aah - what's it's called - I'm a bit [pentameter] - which is what Shakespeare written - it's like I think it's short syllables - long syllables - short syllables - long syllables and I don't know but it's most poetry seem finds sort of way like - every second rhymes - line is []

P-T2: yeah - [rhymes] - [rhyme] A - [rhyme] B - [rhyme] A B and then []

P-D: It's like ABAB - CDCD - so A and A [rhyme] - B and B [rhyme] - that's []

P-T2: the way they are using a numbers of syllables of songs - for example - classic [alexandrine] in French one will be twelve - and if you are using for example ten or nine - you will have a different meaning - a different emotional scene inside - the words you are using []

P-D: *but with [that] 'haiku' - it's more - it's very sort of structure - and it must be certain things in it - like a well - the seasons - one of the seasons - well I know people do [know] other things traditionally the seasons*

(Interview 5: 362-377)

And the comparative investigation of the sentence structure is seen here. In Japanese language, the subject can come anywhere in a sentence except for the end and sometimes is omitted. Verbs are always placed at the end.

[Comparison Case 26]

P-D: yeah - I think I said that it's no more difficult than another language - but the structure is completely different in [any] European languages - so when like *if I were speaking now in Italian - I could sort*

*of - I could just think [it] through English as I go along - whereas in Japanese - I need to think the whole sentence through before I can say it - because I need to know what goes where - in Italian just start where a word in English and I can stop off [] the sentence to think about how to finish it - but in Japanese - if I got half through a sentence - I might have to start again - because I forgot one piece that - it should be at the beginning – [but] if it's English [] but elsewhere
P-T2: for Japanese - you have to think before making the [level] to think about - the end of the sentence - the verb - and then go back - you have to make it in upside-down - if I can say*

(Interview 5: 31-42)

In the post-lesson questionnaires, especially from focused lessons, there are many data which indicate that the participants are in the comparative analysis or reflection on their own culture and language.

[Comparison Case 27]

I thought, while watching the film, that perhaps in Britain people are not so inclined to work so hard, that we do not feel as much a part of the company which is employing us, as in Japan.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-16-Thr-14-1-F-1/5-Q4)

The above datum shows comparison of work culture between England and Japan. It is an answer for Question 4, 'Did today's lesson make you think about your own country? How?'

There are a few data which point out the similarity of Japanese language and

culture to their own ones, but the majority of the data derive from learning something different from their language and culture. The engagement in comparative analysis and reflection was in fact as I intended initially, because the focused lessons were designed taking this point into consideration. The connection between the lesson and the engagement of analysis is explained again later in section 5.5.5.

5.4.2.3 To Analyze by Linking, Relating, Referring, Establishing Relationships

This type of analysis is a pattern in which the participants are developing their thoughts through making links with their knowledge from sources other than the learning of Japanese language and with already existing theories. In the case of the analysis by comparison, the targets such as languages and cultures stand individually and they are compared within the same notional category group, while in the type of analysis in this section, the separate phenomenon or existing theories are linked or connected and relationships are established. Also at the beginning of this type of analysis, the participants often get into the investigation of the phenomenon, so there found an overlap of methods with

analysis by investigation to some extent before the linking starts.

[Linking Case 1] → Theory 3-1: It is very difficult to translate poems into other languages to high standard.

P-D: I mean there is a few things that are sort of similar to English

P-T2: the fact that I don't think that there is something more difficult to translate than poems - from a language to another - because
[]

P-D: yeah

R: do you think it's difficult or not difficult?

P-T2: really difficult

R: difficult

P-T2: I think it's nearly impossible - *because you have a meaning which is given by the culture - culture of the people himself - which is inside for person - which is inside the people - which is inside the nation - which is inside the country - which is really different from the background of the even the [] you - it's so different - for example - French and English poems will be so different because we have so different background - even if [] something like a stupid [] between the [two countries]*

P-D: I mean – even - even just translating a book into another language - I'm sure that's maybe in Japan - there are some books - that in the UK we think really good and then get translated into Japanese - and people don't like it - it seems a rubbish - *it's not because the translation is bad - it's not because it's been written in the UK - it's just because it can't translate from another language – well - cultural context as well as [] supposed*

(Interview 5: 388-407)

The above discussion indicates that the participants linked the theory with their experience of translation. They say that the difficulty of translation derives

from the difficulty of deep understanding of background information of two languages and cultures and link this with the knowledge of the books they know which are translated from English into other languages. The discussion started with the study of poetry, 'haiku', which was dealt with in one of the focused lesson and then expanded to translation issues linking with their existing knowledge and experience.

In the focused lesson on 'haiku', the difference between the sense of seasons and the use of seasonal words in Japanese and other languages were highlighted. While I was analyzing the above interview data, I remembered P-T2's response in the lesson and was able to see the connection with his comment in the above theory he provided. He is an exchange student from France. According to the teaching record of this lesson, he was extremely shocked to know that orange (satsuma) is a word representing winter in 'haiku'. Satsuma is a typical food to eat while sitting at 'kotatsu (low table with a heat source underneath)' in winter in Japan, although this custom is less common now than in my childhood. He insisted that oranges are harvested in summer in southern France and any citrus fruit has an image of summer for him.

Furthermore, he raised this issue in the post-lesson questionnaire three times as below, so it must have been a great culture shock for him. None of the other students, consisting of one Korean and all the rest British, showed this kind of reaction to this issue. But having this occasion to think about the sense of season had a certain impact on their thinking. The first three responses are from this French student:

To Question 2, 'Have you gained any view which you have not had before? Or is there any new discovery?'

Hum, never forgetting again that there are some differences between European and Japanese seasons.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-5/5-Q2)

To Question 4, 'Did today's lesson make you think about your own country? How?'

Thinking about fruits (summer ones, the best season to eat in France.)

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-5/5-Q4)

To Question 5, 'In today's lesson, have you had any point which you had difficulty with? If yes, what were they?'

Just thinking that if みかん are harvested in summer in south of

France doesn't mean it's the same in Japan (冬)

(Notes: みかん(mikan): satsuma orange, 冬(fuyu): winter)

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-5/5-Q5)

There are also responses from other participants.

About the significance of particular things to seasons/seasonal words.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-2/5-Q2)

Our seasons don't seem to be as defined as Japan - less emphasis on nature.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-2/5-Q4)

and to Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson.'

How strongly nature plays a part in Japanese life/culture.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-2/5-Q3)

Wierzbicka (1997: 21) suggest that 'Language - and in particular, vocabulary - is the best evidence of the reality of "culture" in the sense of a historically transmitted system of "conceptions" and "attitudes"', and these data show that even at the beginners' level, the learners started gaining similar insights.

The following three responses to a focused lesson are answers for Question 3.

[Linking Case 2] → Theory 7-1: Keeping high standards to perfection and

working hard are national characteristics of Japan.

Work ethic + how important it is to their culture.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-15-Wed-9-1-F-4/4-Q3)

[Linking Case 3] → Theory 7-1

The fact that people are very serious and work hard at something when they decide to do it.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-15-Wed-9-1-F-1/4-Q3)

[Linking Case 4] → Theory 7-1

A respectful country. Workers are committed to work (maybe too stressful for them).

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-15-Wed-9-1-F-2/4-Q3)

and an interview datum related to the content of this lesson.

[Linking Case 5] → Theory 7-1

P-H2: *because he worked a lot - he is - when he started dance - he is very dedicated - so learning how to dance good - which is very Japanese - I think*

P-R: *definitely - I think once a Japanese person has learned to play the piano [] from in child - they were learning it to a perfection - which I think it shows really learning the languages as well - learning 'kanji' - even if you just do [] one stroke [] [it's] got - such a great nation for making everything to the highest standard that even shows in the country itself - like with the train system - every train is always on time - compared to our system - it's brilliant - they are so proud of their country*

P-H2 & P-J2: *yeah - yeah*

(Interview 4: 60-69)

What we see here is that students do keep the general stereotypical image of Japanese people in their mind and all of the above four cases are related to one of the focused lessons which dealt with a Japanese businessman's story (Appendix 3: 'Shall We Dance?: Reading and Film'). In the classroom, most students listed such as 'working hard', 'practice seriously' and 'busy' as images of Japanese people when I asked them to raise any 'Japanese people's' image from the reading text. Thus, they already had such images of Japanese people in their minds and they were intensified by this story about a businessman who was dedicated to ballroom dancing in the reading text and the film used in the lesson.

Then, as is evident in the above [Linking Case 5], these general images that the participants already have are interrelated with their experience of studying of 'kanji' and further emphasized the image of Japan as aiming to achieve the highest standard. The learning of 'kanji' was related to my way of teaching.

I set a strict 'all or nothing' policy on 'kanji' marking at the assessments and kept reminding them of this on every occasion. The 'kanji' have to be perfect to

get full marks. There is no partial mark given. Even slightly incomplete 'kanji' such as missing one tiny dot, or what should be straight line is slanting, and what should be a round curve becomes squarish, etc. result in no mark. This derives from the way many Japanese people are educated to master 'kanji' at school, and I believe that this is effective for learners of Japanese language, as well. In fact, students get into the habit of paying attention to learning the accurate forms of 'kanji' from the beginning and furthermore the teachers they will have in the Japanese universities in their Year Abroad will surely have more or less similar policy to this and therefore it isn't bad to get used to it from the earlier stage. However, it was beyond my imagination that they would develop the image of Japan linking with this approach to 'kanji'. In a sense, the participants' insight finding national character in the way they were taught 'kanji' is very sharp. My way of teaching derives from how I learnt 'kanji' at school education in Japan. I had also had a discussion of marking policy on 'kanji' with English native speaker teachers of Japanese language previously, and recognized that they are more generous about the marking.

There are more examples of how the participants link their learning experience

of Japanese language to the image of Japan and Japanese people.

[Linking Case 6] → Theory 7-2: Japanese people are intelligent.

P-H1: I have more of the respect for the people *because they have three different ways of writing systems* making [] using [] very present []

P-B2: intelligent people - *high literacy rate - all the people in Japan 99.5% of all people can read and write Japanese*

R: literate

P-B2: intelligent - [] and we were saying the economy is well

P-L: recession [] - business first

P-B2: [] again

P-L: *I think I understand the amount of work that Japanese students go through* – when you started [] marking - [] ‘hiragana’ to Japanese standards you got to look [] careful how strict Japanese []

P-B2: high level

P-L: but it helps it [] you work harder to get you that level

(Interview 2: 151-163)

The fact that they had to go through the mastery of different scripts and to have worked hard themselves led to their imagination of how hard the students in Japan work and then the above theory of Japanese people as intelligent was developed. So their own study experience is connected to the image of Japanese people as intelligent quoting the literacy rate and economy.

[Linking Case 7] → Theory 7-3: Japanese people are polite.

Japanese people are very very polite.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-1/5-Q3)

[Linking Case 8] → Theory 7-3

Japan is a place where being polite is very important.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-2/5-Q3)

[Linking Case 9] → Theory 7-3

They have a very detailed concept of level (importance, position etc.) The Japanese language reflects the attitude of the people.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-4/5-Q3)

The above three answers from questionnaires appeared in relation to the non-focused lesson of 'keigo (honorific and humble language)'. Interestingly, having learnt 'keigo', polite expressions, it was instantly linked to an existing image of the Japanese people as polite. All answers are for Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson'.

[Linking Case 10] → Theory 8-2: Stereotypes are not the truth.

P-B4: the thing is - *we don't even really drink like the proper English teas - stuffs like Earl Grey* - just for go into it - and we don't even drink that kind of thing - we []

P-K2: [] really welcome - such a nice thing to do but we were also - you really think that we do stop at 5 o'clock and drink tea [don't you]?

P-B4: we used to [] same as in Spain - you think that everybody stops at as a 'siesta' in - I was brought up went to a holiday and [] into a holiday - and 2 o'clock every body goes to 'siesta' and all the shops shuts - bars shuts and you can't get anything - and *I believed that for the longest as I was a kid that 'siesta' happened and everything stops in Spain* - everybody went for that - it's obviously not true - it's just a generalization

(Interview 6: 232-242)

[Linking Case 2] to [Linking Case 9] have shown that students keep stereotypes to some extent. However, do the students simply swallow the stereotypes? The above case indicates that the participants demonstrated the ability to critically examine the stereotypical image. It is clear that one of the focused lesson which used stereotypical images of how British and Japanese people respectively spend free time is related to the development of the above discussion (Appendix 3: 'Leisure Time'). So the students are aware of how they are looked at by other people. The various stereotypes presented in the lesson became the reference for their theory building. A part of the discussion was explained previously in [Comparison Case 14] and [Comparison Case 15] in 5.4.2.2 as reflection. In this part, the participant's previous experience of travel to Spain is connected with the reflection and contributes to the development of the theory.

[Linking Case 11] → Theory 8-3: Preconceptions are formed under the

influence of mass media information and they keep changing according to the change of the period.

P-K2: [] language and culture seemed to be so close - they are linked as well

P-B4: 'cos culture now - nowadays is from television - from news - from pop - from fashion and a lot of that stuff we already - I mean - a lot of us listen to Japanese music - a lot of us watch Japanese films or anime - and things like that - I suppose that a lot of culture does come from you know – media - a mass media - and that is the mass media today

P-K2: and also – like - I had a quite interesting conversation with my great auntie the other day - she might be slight deviating and she is about eighty - and she's trying to understand what I'm doing at the university and she still had a quite fixed image in her head which was quite dated - and it wasn't offensive [] a kind of - *it's not quite like that now – that - that might be slightly - [we] [] westernised - she set a very traditional picture in her head and rather than the technology things that we see now when we get the picture of Tokyo [] - it was quite interesting just to see how two generations are apart - even preconceptions placed can be very different - so that [interested] to me*

P-P: I think people are changing as well now - young people in Japan now are so different from young people – well - old [] differently

P-B4: advances in technology in the last ten years – eleven's been immense – so that's obviously gonna affect the way that the people live - because it's just been - I mean like - not going to the details but we all know there's been a lot of changes - a lot of things that we just take for absolute granted - you know that's technology [I mean] - and kids could've been brought up - everything like that's been around for ever like i-pod things like

P-K2: it is even the things though - I mean - taught now in class - the cultural things just the facts that are deviated so much - and I find it quite interesting - just the generalization

(Interview 6: 256-281)

The discussion about stereotypes is further developed by adding a new link to the participant's experience of having discovered different images which the older generation has.

Below is another set of data which shows that the participants are not trapped by the stereotypes although they recognize their existence well:

[Linking Case 12] → Theory 4-2: The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct.

P-L: I thought it's much harder than this

P-H1: yes – me too

P-B2: yeah

P-L: *because you get a lot people who say it is and so they kind of create that image that it's a very difficult language to learn - and then you actually realize [] that people [] it's not difficult [] today*

(Interview 2: 114-119)

[Linking Case 13] → Theory 4-2

P-R: *I think there is a perception that as soon as you tell [] you are studying Japanese - they just think that it's impossible thing to do - but I think we are learning that it's not that hard and I think that speaking and listening parts are a lot easier than reading and writing*

(Interview 4: 137-140)

The image is obviously created by the people who have never studied Japanese and the participants also used to share this view before to some extent. One form of critical examination of general belief is seen here and most importantly they raised a question and tested it by their own action.

The following part emerged in relation to [Comparison Case 4] leading to 'Theory 1-3: European languages are based on sound and speaking but East Asian languages are based on written text, because 'kanji', ideographs have a specific function with picture image'. The main theory building process was identified as analysis by categorizing language groups in the previous section 5.4.2.2. But the analysis was not only of that kind. The following datum implies that P-S gained a lot of East Asian history knowledge and links it with his experience of learning Japanese language.

[Linking Case 14]

P-S: but [] - *we are doing Japanese history* - things a lot of stuff in the books that you know historians when they were writing about the Japanese incorporating Chinese ideas in their culture - that they got more meaning from the 'kanji' - they give more meaning to what they were writing - and that's what I got myself as individual - you know - I got more meaning from the language because of the

pictures - and that's how the Japanese - centuries ago when they originally used the 'kanji' also thought that [] they decided to keep it or not to [] and not to keep 'hiragana' - they decided to keep it because for them it would give more meaning - if you read a poem or if you read an ancient text - because of the 'kanji' you'll get more meaning to [] what that text actually meant - you'll get more nuance - you know - so I've also found that does help - as well

(Interview 3: 198-209)

Again it is the existence of previous knowledge which is important here and then the student forms a link with that previous knowledge – knowledge from a source other than the Japanese lessons – in order to gain further insight.

5.4.3 To Conclude

The theories which emerged in the data indicated that the participants are able to draw conclusions from their thinking. But it is not enough to prove it. The various analysis stages reviewed in the previous section underpin the argument that the theories which appeared are not just what the participants borrowed from somewhere and are reproducing.

The product of their thinking has the form of a theory and it means that students are able to draw conclusions from their analysis to build up their

original theory by themselves.

In short, to inquire, to analyse and to conclude can be defined as basic categories of thinking in this study.

5.5 What do Students Analyze ?

As seen in the previous sections of this chapter, participants employ the knowledge they have gained from various sources. In this section, the details of the sources of knowledge are explained. The knowledge which appeared in their analysis stages is categorized into five groups: general knowledge, experience, other studies, discussions with other students and Japanese language lessons. The details of knowledge in each analysis case are summarized in 'Knowledge Table (Appendix 9).'

5.5.1 General Knowledge

It appears many times in the analysis by comparison and linking that participants make use of their extensive general knowledge in their analysis. Much of the information comes from the mass media and the participants are

aware of that.

P-B4: ...a lot of culture does come from you know – media - a mass media - and that is the mass media today

(Interview 6: 260-261)

As explained from 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 2] to [Linking Case 5], one of the focused lessons dealt with a Japanese businessman's story (Appendix 3: 'Shall We Dance?: Reading and Film'). In the classroom, most students listed phrases such as 'working hard', 'practice seriously' and 'busy' as images of Japanese people when I asked them to note any 'Japanese people's' image from the reading text.

In another focused lesson, how to spend free time was the topic (Appendix 3: 'Leisure Time'). I asked them to mention any typical activity for free time for Japanese people and British people, respectively. For Japanese people, they mentioned such things as karaoke and reading 'manga (cartoon)' and for British people, things such as drinking beer, going to clubs, shopping, having tea and playing football. Then, I also asked the students to guess what Japanese people think British people like to do in their free time. They listed activities

such as 'afternoon tea', 'gardening' and 'walking the hills'. These are exactly the same as the information on the survey result on the website used as material in the lesson (Appendix 3: Leisure Time). In a sense, students know well how British people are perceived by other people. However, the truth is, there is no remarkable difference in how to spend leisure time between Japanese and British people. Conventional ones like meeting with people and eating out were the result according to the survey on the website.

The above two cases indicate that the participants possess certain stereotypical images in their mind. They described Japanese people as hard working and polite as seen from 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 2] to [Linking Case 9]. These existing images are sometimes linked with elements which they picked up from the learning of Japanese language.

However, they are not always trapped by the stereotypical images. As seen from 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 10] to [Linking Case 13], they also demonstrated that they are able to critically examine the trustworthiness of the stereotypical images of each country and general beliefs such as 'Japanese language is

difficult to learn for English speakers’.

My comment after the lesson about a Japanese business man (Appendix 3: Shall We Dance?: Reading) written on the white board was, ‘Some ‘common’ images of Japan are already built up.’ and a response to this comment was as follows.

True, some images are formed through media etc. but these are also changing from images held by older members of society. We showed these images in our responses.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-15-Wed-9-1-F-4/4-Q7)

However, despite these references to the media, it is often difficult to identify where knowledge comes from as it is sometimes a kind of common sense knowledge. For example, in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 2], the participants demonstrated comparative linguistic analysis about the spaces in European languages and ‘kanji’ in Japanese. Knowledge of spaces can be interpreted as academic but it is also obvious general knowledge for European language users.

5.5.2 Experience

The data showed that the participants are able to analyze the knowledge they gained from their own experience by various methods. For example, almost all the [Investigation Cases], half of [Comparison Cases] and also half of [Linking Cases] are related to their own experience of various stages of learning Japanese language (Appendix 9).

In addition, the following seven pieces of data do not lead towards any theory but show the participants' analysis has started. All are about their observations of their own learning experience. They could have developed into similar theories to theory 4-2, 'The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct.' or to theory 5-1, 'Repetition and more importantly using the language repeatedly when immersed in the context is an effective way to learn'. They might have become theories but it is difficult to know from these dialogues only.

The first three data show that the participants have no difficulty in reading Japanese scripts now and are very confident.

P-S: yeah - I thought that you know - I thought because like [] we all spoke English - I thought the symbols I'll never get used to them - I thought that we got to study really hard and we would just have to use memory - I didn't think that it [gets] ever natural - I honestly didn't think that it'll happen - because all sounds and tunes brings [] become flexible when they are younger - *but when I read 'hiragana' now - it's really natural - I don't get any problems with 'hiragana' whatsoever - I can read it just so easily - I can read it like I can read in English - in some sense it's easier - if it's Japanese - and I've never thought that I would get to that level in such a short time - as well - because we've got just a year and a half studying*

(Interview 3: 265-274)

P-D: *now when I see 'hiragana' - it's just it's like reading that is just like reading English for me now - 'cos I remember my mum asking what does that mean trying to read 'kanji' - and I said it says something to me [] 'hiragana' - oh - sorry it was so natural for me just to read the 'hiragana' underneath - but forgot that other people can't -*

(Interview 5: 111-115)

P-B4: yeah - the scripts - the way I reacted the scripts - and now I've done this year of Japanese [and] *I find it easy to pick up the scripts and recognise the ['hiragana'] and the ['katakana'] and 'kanji' - so - that makes that - I've really responded to that this year - my previous - I only did an optional module before - but even after a year - it didn't seem to [capable] this year - it really got in and I really I can just pick it up - I can read straight off the 'hiragana' and the 'katakana'*

(Interview 6: 18-24)

There is here clear indication of analysis of experience and a level of self-awareness, even if no theory developed from it.

The following two data are about the learning of verb conjugation. The students struggled with the new systems of a language at the earlier stage of the learning, but once they got over certain boundary of mastering them, they gained confidence from the experience:

P-P: yeah - I feel the same way - I found it difficult at first - [I've never been able to] learn it beforehand - for some reason - and it's the same with the way the verbs change - the conjugations of the verbs change all the time - at first it was a nightmare - *but now suddenly - started thinking a bit you know it's almost like an instinct you know - in which way the verbs are going to changing* before - []

(Interview 6: 25-30)

P-B4: [when] we start verbs - I've never really thought like that - oh - I've never thought - oh - that's how it's going to conjugate - [as like] how [even] it works - *it was totally alien and now it seems to like a second nature - only a few mistakes* -

(Interview 6: 43-46)

We see here an awareness of a threshold in learning, a point as if being unblocked suddenly, an identification of something important in the learning process, without this developing into a theory of learning on the part of the students.

The following two data are about adopting new rules which are different from

the languages they know. Both students point out that they get used to the new rules after a while. The first one speaks about the word order in a sentence. In Japanese, verbs are always placed at the end of the sentence and subjects are sometimes omitted. The second one is about the stroke orders of scripts.

P-D: I think - eventually I mean now if it is a lot easier to just to start a Japanese sentence because we've been doing it for a couple of years or a sort of - we are doing no exactly but we've got better idea of where things are going to go in a sentence - so it's much easier than when we started suddenly - it's almost like - you'd just think - OK - I am in Japanese - *you'll switch your mind from English to Japanese structure and it's eventually you get used to the order* - it's still difficult but you'll get more used to do it - remember where bits should go

(Interview 5: 59-65)

P-H2: and *once you get the strokes right - it's a sort of comes out when you write you know - your hands likes to go []*

P-J2: you have to start with a book they say how you should draw it - because if you just try it on your own way - you have to get it [to] the right pattern -

(Interview 4: 152-155)

Here again there are the beginnings of a theory of learning which are not crystallised into a full theory on the part of the students.

The participants also mentioned other kind of experience. 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 12] and [Linking Case 13] imply that the participants had heard

comments about learning Japanese by someone who has never learned Japanese language and do not have any idea of what it is like.

The following pieces of data also show that the participants gain some knowledge from travel experience. The third one of the three cases below shows that the experience does not necessarily relate to Japanese language and people but they gained a view of how they are perceived through the travel experience.

P-P: - *when I started travelling to Japan - met Japanese people - I went to Japan myself - just sort of shattered all my preconceptions -*
(Interview 6: 171-173)

P-R: well - for me because *I spent time in Japan* - when I met Japanese people - I remember one day we were sat talking to [sat] Japanese ladies - *they asked us what the correct way to make a cup of tea was and whether they have afternoon tea* - me and my friend sat there - we didn't know that if there was a proper way to afternoon tea - but again it goes back to the Japanese having so many traditions there is a right order - but [] you - just learned that we are ordering tea
(Interview 4: 88-94)

P-K2: yeah - [same] [] *I went to America* - [] - it was very similar for me - because - er - the host family I was staying with [for me and the other] [] so - two of us had a host family - and *they brought in tea - English tea - especially for us* - (laughs) - and it was lovely - but frankly - I [] do drink tea - [we were kind of]

[]

(Interview 6: 227-231)

5.5.3 Other Studies

Among the data, there is found knowledge which the participants gained from other academic content subjects such as history and linguistics. Interestingly, there were two different approaches to compare 'kanji' to picture images. The following case is previously explained in 5.4.2.3 [Linking Case 14]. In the following analysis by the participant, there is a clear linkage with knowledge gained in history studies:

P-S: but [] - *we are doing Japanese history* - things a lot of stuff in the books that you know historians when they were writing about the Japanese incorporating Chinese ideas in their culture - that they got more meaning from the 'kanji' - they give more meaning to what they were writing - and that's what I got myself as individual - you know - *I got more meaning from the language because of the pictures* - and that's how the Japanese - centuries ago when they originally used the 'kanji' also thought that [] they decided to keep it or not to [] and not to keep 'hiragana' - they decided to keep it because for them it would give more meaning - if you read a poem or if you read an ancient text - because of the 'kanji' you'll get more meaning to [] what that text actually meant - you'll get more nuance - you know - so I've also found that does help - as well

(Interview 3: 198-209)

And the analysis by linking with linguistic experience explained in

[Comparison Case 3] is as follows.

P-D: so like I don't know – like – at university today [whatever] - *as long as had university - you would start u and y in the end and all the letters could be anywhere within the word - you can just read it along - because we do just see this every word as a picture - so having 'kanji' does make everything sort of similar like that picture*

(Interview 5: 164-168)

Among the participants, P-S and P-D especially provided many interesting analyses and theories in the data. The characteristic of data from P-S is the link with history and that of P-D was with linguistics, exactly reflecting on what they are especially interested in and studying besides the Japanese language. Thus it can be inferred that introducing academic modules as well as language modules from an early stage of the degree programme will contribute to developing students' engagement in academic thinking.

The following data also show the link between academic content study and the language module from other points of view. The language learning can be a motive for the further study of an academic discipline. This is from the lesson dealing with 'haiku' (Appendix 3), and it was the answer for Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson'.

Excitement – I feel I can relate to the poetry and I want to discover more.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-3/5-Q3)

I enjoyed getting an insight at the haiku and think that they will be good to study when I'm in Japan.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-2-Thr-11-2-F-4/5-Q3)

5.5.4 Discussions with Other Students

The group interviews were arranged for the purpose of data collection for this study, but there were also some development of theories and analysis seen during the interviews. An example is below. P-B2 is a British student who has never studied Chinese language. He built theory 4-3, 'Japanese language is easier to learn for Chinese language speakers than for English speakers.' as explained in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 10].

P-B2: that was easier to speak [] to write obviously - especially for - I think it'll be easier to learn for a Chinese speaker because they already know all the 'kanji' - so when they learn the meaning - the Japanese [] they already know how to draw it - so it's easy for them - so even if you are a Chinese person and you don't know Japanese whatsoever you can still go to Japan and just walk around Japan - they can understand what the 'kanji' meanings on the street - so for an English person - you have to learn each 'kanji' and understand what each one means - so it's more difficult

(Interview 2: 120-127)

However, the theory was soon turned over by a Chinese native speaker, P-B3, who built theory 4-4, 'Japanese language is not necessarily easy for Chinese speakers as the pronunciation of 'kanji' is different in Chinese language.' as explained in 5.4.2.1 [Investigation Case 4].

P-B3: just - a little bit Cantonese - a little bit – Cantonese - a little bit – and – my main language is Mandarin - the language and also actually I cannot agree with P-B2 said - he said Chinese people learn Japanese just for 'kanji' we know the meanings - but the pronunciation is difficult - it's different - and also for us - remembering pronunciation is difficult - the reason is [] - because [] is difficult - *because even though we know this word – because of the pronunciation - we can't understand which one* – [] no idea - so maybe just pronunciation and listening is big problem for the Chinese people I think

(Interview 2: 136-143)

As in the above case, theories once established can be modified by the encounter with different points of view. It is assumed that P-B2's theory would be changed after this as P-B3's point is persuasive as a native speaker of Mandarin.

Another set of data (some parts overlap with the data in [Investigation Case 5] and [Investigation Case 6]) shows the important role of interaction in

discussion with other students. In the following, they started the discussion with the focus on the difficulty of learning 'kanji' words, but P-K2's insertion of a positive view suddenly changed the stream of discussion and reminded them of the way they tackled 'kanji' and got over the difficulty:

P-P: well - I [thought was] relatively easy to work to learn 'hiragana' and 'katakana' - 'cos [] there is not a lot of them - 'kanji' - *I know there are very very difficult - I do find that tricky - especially the most recent one - they were very complex - meet them we were talking about this morning - it's so hard to remember all the different pronunciations*

P-B4: so many compounds now - there is ten individual 'kanji' and there is about seven ways that you can compound them together - and all got different - the majority of them got slightly different readings - because you've got the Chinese reading - and you've got the Japanese reading - and it changes depending which whether you've got a compound - whether it's on its own - *so that's really difficult*

P-K2: it's just repetition [] 'kanji' really - you really just need to go over it - and the ones that I remember most are the ones that I use most from [] [our] passages

P-B4: yeah - yeah I see - [] here

P-K2: *to eat - drink - that's all sort of thing*

P-F: *yeah - to see*

P-K2: to study [a lot] probably stick to my head - because we then tend to use that a lot of my writing - the rest of them are sort of - saw them again (laughs)

P-B4: (all laugh) that's how - that's how - I think that's how - I think that's how the 'hiragana' go in - because we learnt - well - we learnt little by little we learnt like five to ten at a time every few lessons - but then also it's not just a fact that we learnt like that - it's the fact that we used it every single day in the lessons - in a book - and you have to read

it - you have to know it

P-several: yeah

P-P: [] use 'kanji' all the time

(Interview 6: 67-92)

It is possible to see here how the conversation gradually brings them to the insight, articulated in the shared laughter and the last two underlined statements.

In another case of the development in discussion, participants' belief, 'it is unavoidable to build up certain kind of preconceptions before you actually see it' is inferred from the discussion. P-P says that he traveled to Japan and was shocked by the difference from his preconceptions before the travel and P-K2 who has never been to Japan takes this point into consideration but describes human nature which never gets rid of having preconceptions. This can be supported by Allport's (1954: 281) theory about contact, 'Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals'.

P-P: - when I started travelling to Japan - met Japanese people - I

went to Japan myself - *just sort of shattered all my preconceptions* -

(Interview 6: 171-173)

P-K2: [] I mean so - going back preconceptions - [] I did a bit of Japanese study before I came here - but at the same time – I have never been to Japan - so even I'm trying how very open-mind - you can't help have a picture in your head before you go which is [] *shattered me* when you get there

P-P: you do question – 'cos yeah - *you know there's going to be shattered* - []

P-K2: you know it but you still can't help [] - you try to be very t but you still think - are you supposed to that? - you get really strange looks probably – so – but - *it's something human nature you can't help but thinks this is what is [going to be] like*

(Interview 6: 207-215)

Thus, interactions with other points of view have an important role in the process of theory building. The theory once built can be modified by the influence of other theory. It is implied that the opportunities to have one's own thoughts exposed and to meet with similar or different views help theory building continuing.

5.5.5 Japanese Language Lessons

As quoted in the analysis previously, theories and analyses emerged in conjunction with particular lessons, both focused and non-focused lessons. In terms of the numbers of the answers related to the stages of theory building

which appeared in post-lesson questionnaire data, it can be said that focused lessons contributed to the development of thoughts more than non-focused lessons. The prominent difference is seen in analysis by comparison. In a sense, this is exactly an intended result as the teaching ideas of focused lessons were designed to make the students think through comparison of the target culture and language and their own.

However, as the Table 5.1 shows, it is not only the focused lessons which contributed to the participants' theory building.

Table 5.1: Post-lesson questionnaires answers related to theory building stages

		Focused-lesson	Non-focused lesson
Inquiry		3	3
Analysis	by investigation	1	3
	by comparison	76	22
	by linking	2	0
Theories		26	16
Total		108	44

What the data imply is, there are quite a few elements which contributed to the development of thinking in the beginners' Japanese language learning, even

though the syllabus is grammar-based with communicative activities.

One of these elements is the issue of 'keigo' as stated previously in 5.4.2.2 [Comparison Case 7]. It was dealt both in focused (Appendix 3: 'Origins of Greetings Phrases') and non-focused lessons, and there are many responses indicating comparative analysis of this element, even though it was taught as a part of the grammar in the non-focused lesson. This is perhaps not surprising since the learning of 'keigo' requires not only mastering the variation of the forms of the verbs, but also a deep understanding of Japanese social system in relation to who the speaker has to be humble to or whom he or she has to make honorific.

The post-lesson questionnaire after the lesson dealing 'keigo' as a part of grammar showed that all the five participants who completed the questionnaire engaged in comparative analysis between Japanese language and their own, even though this lesson was a grammar based non-focused lesson. After this lesson, in answer to the Question 4 'Did today's lesson make you think about your own country? How?', the following responses were recorded:

There is no specific grammar form to show respect.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-1/5-Q4)

I understand if I would talk differently to people older than me.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-2/5-Q4)

It's implicate to understand all the polite ways of speaking, or the different level of meanings in French.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-3/5-Q4)

Yes-tried to think if we had and used a different kind of language for people we had respect for.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-5/5-Q4)

and to Question 6 'Please tell me your general thought about today's lesson',

Interesting to learn about language politeness levels - it is represented in a very different way to English.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 3-3-Fri-9-2-N-4/5-Q6)

It is thus evident from these responses that 'keigo' makes students engage in thinking. The essence of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis quoted at the beginning of this study, 'It can make us aware of the constraints of our language and world view and allows us to see what we have in common with other forms of speaking and thinking on deeper levels' (Bredella and Richter, 2004: 523), is seen in the learning of politeness. It is also interesting to see from the post-lesson questionnaire that the impact of the lessons which dealt with

politeness was immediate.

Furthermore, one of the focused lessons for the upper beginners' course dealt with the origin of greeting phrases (Appendix 3). Some of the greeting set phrases in Japanese originated in polite expressions. All the four participants who completed the post-lesson questionnaire on this occasion indicated some analysis relating to the difference of expressing politeness between the languages. To Question 4, they responded as follow:

The different levels of language in France, genders in language, the multiple meaning phrases.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 12-15-Thr-9-2-F-1/4-Q4)

If we used special language for describing people, such as Queen.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 12-15-Thr-9-2-F-2/4-Q4)

Yes, about how we show gratitude.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 12-15-Thr-9-2-F-3/4-Q4)

The relative simplicity of our greetings system/honorific language.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 12-15-Thr-9-2-F-4/4-Q4)

and to Question 3, 'Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson', one replied:

Interesting difference about honorific/polite forms.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 12-15-Thr-9-2-F-4/4-Q3)

'Keigo' will be a very new and stimulating concept for the participants depending on whether their mother tongue has a similar system. It is inferred that a key to stimulate their thinking is meeting values which are very different from what they have taken for granted. The following answer for a non-focused lesson's post-lesson questionnaire also implies this. It is for Question 4:

Yes, The difference between the grammatical structuring and it is very new in the Japanese forms.

(Post-lesson Questionnaire: 2-21-Tu-9-1-N-1/5-Q4)

In terms of encounter with difference, Japanese language is a rich source for thinking in the UK university context where English is a medium of education. Many of the theories which are listed in sections 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 4.1.3 are related to the difference of the languages.

Another point also needs to be made clear here. Reviewing the theories developed by the participants, it is not only particular lessons which contribute to develop their thinking. As is clearly seen in theory 1-1, "katakana" representation of non-Japanese words has limitations due to the difference of

phonetic systems of the languages', participants get into the process and take time to draw conclusions. It is also the case with theories about learning strategies and with gaining knowledge from their experience. There could be a long process before reaching a conclusion. Therefore what is inferred from this study is that lessons can influence the students' development of thoughts but they are one of the various elements.

Summary of Chapter 5

In this chapter, the students' output type data, especially group interview script and post-lesson questionnaire were examined carefully together with other type of data such as teaching records. What was found is that the students build up original theories and the theory building process comprises three steps: inquiry stage, analysis stage and conclusion stage. The analysis stage is also sub-divided into three types according to the approaches: investigation, comparison and linking. The analysis stages which do not present conclusion were also taken into consideration as indications of thinking. The theories were presented according to nine thematic categories of language and culture and each stage of theory building process was also presented with the

corresponding data.

It was also found that the students are working from various sources of knowledge. They are categorized into general knowledge, experience, other studies, discussions with other students and Japanese language lessons. They raise questions, and try to search for answers for them, making use of these different types and sources of knowledge by investigating, by comparing and by linking. When they reach conclusions, it means that they have developed theories, but the theories can be questioned and modified by encounter with different view points in occasions such as discussions.

The analysis of post-lesson questionnaire shows that non-focused lessons also encouraged students thinking, but focused lessons did more.

In the next chapter, the implications of these results are discussed in relation to theories of criticality noted in Chapter 3 and in particular the model provided by Barnett (1997) and its application in the empirical study by the Criticality Project of the University of Southampton. Thereafter, how the findings of this

study can be taken into consideration in the UK Higher Education Modern

Language Studies context is suggested.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION ON 'CRITICALITY'

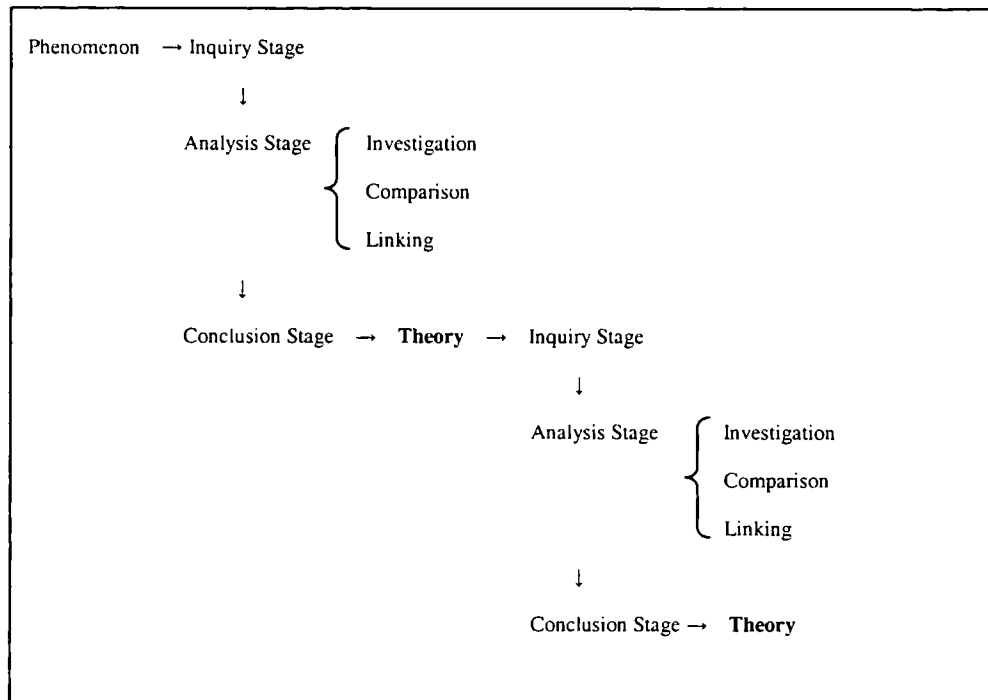
In this chapter, the theory building process which emerged as indicators of critical thinking / criticality in the previous chapter, Data Analysis, is examined. The discussion leads to a definition of criticality based on this empirical study. Having built this definition based on the empirical data, it is compared with other criticality concept models for the first time. First, it is referred to the concepts of criticality from the literature of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. Then, it is compared with two other criticality models: that of the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton which is also based on an empirical study but of larger scale, and with the theoretical model suggested by Barnett (1997). Criticality and its function within the Modern Languages Degree Programme are highlighted in conjunction with these comparisons and its significance in the Degree programme is discussed.

6.1 Criticality as it Emerged from this Empirical Study

As examined in Chapter 5, the data of this Action Research demonstrated the theories and the process of theory building by the participants. According to the

data analysis, the framework of the students' engagement in thinking can be represented in the following iterative model.

Figure 6.1: Theory building model



As seen in the participants' discussion in section 5.5.4, the theories once built up can be modified by the encounter with different points of view, other opinions and theories or phenomena. Therefore the theories once built up are not an absolute terminal point of the theory building. The flow starting with inquiry stage and ending with conclusion stage can be repeated as cycles.

As seen in section 5.4.1, the inquiry stage is a crucial point for the flow of the theory building by students. If the inquiry or the question did not occur to them, they are not able to perceive certain phenomena in the field and there is nothing to urge them to start the analysis, let alone the generation of theories. The inquiry stage is like the first piece in a series of dominos toppling or it can be also visualized as the first stepping stone.

As explained in section 5.4.2, whether they appear together with conclusion stages or not, the analysis stages indicate proofs of the students' engagement with the thinking which is a response to their initial inquiry.

In order to differentiate theories as they appeared, from feelings and simplified inferences without rationales, it was regarded as important that the theories which appeared had the character of what was called the analysis stage. In other words, how the participants reached the theories, was regarded as important. Therefore only those conclusion stages derived from analysis stages were considered.

Reviewing the criteria for these theories explained in section 5.1, the following points were considered as guidelines for selecting theories.

- (1) Theories generated from the study of Japanese language or developed in conjunction with this study.
- (2) Theories as original products of participants' autonomous engagement in thinking.

As mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, these guidelines, (1) and (2) were set without referring to the existing theories of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking. The intention was to first establish the concept of criticality solely based on the empirical data of this PhD study. Despite that, it is interesting and surprising, as well, that many of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking discussed in Chapter 3 were found in the data of this empirical study.

All the data in this study fulfill the above (1) and (2) of the criteria. And the model in Table 6.1 was formed based on these validated data. But not all the data show a set of three stages: inquiry, analysis and conclusion. Some data show inquiry stage only, others show analysis stage only. But most of the data

from group interviews show two stages: analysis and conclusion. However, considering of the flow of theory building, all the cases have at least 'inquiry stage', even if it does not appear in the data as explained in section 5.2. What can be inferred from the empirical data is, that '*inquiry stage*' is a kind of minimum qualification for 'being critical'.

In the next section, I will attempt to establish the definition of criticality based on the result of the empirical research of this PhD study in relation to the examination of existing concepts of criticality.

6.2 Discussion on Criticality

In the following sections, the concepts emerged from the empirical data of this PhD study are discussed in comparison with the existing concepts from the literature of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking in Chapter 3.

6.2.1 Fundamental Concept of Criticality

As stated in section 6.1, what can be genuinely inferred from the empirical data is, that '*inquiry stage*' is a kind of minimum qualification for 'being critical'.

To describe the inquiry stage metaphorically, the students do not just swallow whatever knowledge or phenomena presented before chewing them over by themselves. The theories generated are the results that they stopped to raise questions about and sought answers for, when they encountered new knowledge. As for the analysis cases which did not reach any conclusion, even if they are incomplete, they have surely stepped into the action of examining something and in the process of forming theory, as well. At the initial point that they stopped for questions, the process of 'being critical' has already started. In a sense, *'inquiry stage'* is the fundamental nature of criticality

Returning to Chapter 3, as presented in section 3.3, a significant difference between Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking is that the former focuses on the generation of knowledge and on 'resistance' as part of action in the world, whereas Critical Thinking focuses on the application of scepticism to specific bodies of knowledge and 'resistance' means not to accept without question but to change accepted views within a body of knowledge or a discipline, in other words, the basic difference between the two is that Critical Pedagogy seeks the change in society, while Critical Thinking, in the body of knowledge. But they

share the common feature of 'being critical' as *inquiry and scepticism*, according to this examination.

For convenience the quotation from Jarvis *et al.* who define 'reflective learning' is repeated as follows:

Non-reflective learning is just the process of accepting what is being presented and memorizing or repeating it, or accepting a situation within which an experience occurs and learning from it. In contrast, *reflective learning is the process of being critical. This can mean thinking about the situation (and / or what is presented) and then deciding to accept or seek to change the situation.* It can also involve accepting or seeking to change the information which has been presented.

(Jarvis *et al.*, 2003: 70, emphasis added)

We shall see the above does correspond with 'criticality' when this is defined as high level cognition of being critical and covers a broad conceptualisation of the nature of what it is to be critical. The point of the above definition of reflective learning is that the student develops thoughts independently, or when he or she encounters theories and ideas, he or she decides whether to accept them or not by himself or herself. Even if he or she decides to accept it in the end, it is a different action from simply swallowing the presented theories

without thinking. This independent action is regarded as the indication of criticality meant here and set as criteria of selecting the theories by the participants.

The importance of this 'inquiry' is also pointed out by the following statement by Barnett.

Rather than imagine afresh a process that we call teaching and learning, the first requirement is that academics reveal themselves to their students as the hard-pressed inquirers that they are. *In a genuine process of inquiry*, they have to engage in a struggle to formulate their thoughts, to labour to develop their thoughts (whether in the laboratory, the clinical situation or in the library), to expose their thoughts to others, to encounter critical evaluations of that thinking, to engage in risky undertakings and to move on in the light of those critical comments.

(Barnett, 1997: 109, emphasis added)

As analysed in section 6.1 and also in the above, inquiry stage showed the fundamental nature of criticality which is common in both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking.

In sum, what is found from these investigations from both the empirical study and the literature review is that the fundamental nature of 'criticality' is *inquiry*

and scepticism. Upon this basic nature, there found some variations of criticality as a second stage of criticality such as 'reflection' and 'resistance' which are specific to Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking concepts and which appeared in the stage of theory building process of the data. They are examined in the following sections.

6.2.2 Inquiry Stage

As mentioned in the previous section, inquiry stage is the starting point of theory building. What appears in this stage is *inquiry and scepticism*. As explained in section 5.2 and in previous section, as well, it is assumed that every case of theory building goes through this inquiry stage even if it does not appear in the data. In fact, this is a common concept found in both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking and defined as 'being critical' in section 3.3.

The result of the 'answers related to theory building stages appearing in post-lesson questionnaires (Table 5.1)' in section 5.5.5 implies that focused lessons were successful in navigating the participants towards criticality as the number of the cases indicating any part of the theory building was more than

double of that of non-focused lessons. This will also be supported by one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy discussed in section 3.1.3, that 'curiosity of the learners' is triggered by interrogation by the teacher as 'Only an education of question can trigger, motivate, and reinforce curiosity' (Freire, 1997: 31). Considering this, the teacher's role in the education for the development of criticality is significant. However, it is also a fact that the criticality development was found in non-focused lessons, as well, which indicates that students are able to be engaged in critical thinking independently. But the criticality development can be more reinforced by the teacher's guidance.

What is also important here is not only the description of the inquiring researcher but also the implication that teachers should demonstrate that inquiry is part of their own nature and in this way encourage students in their own curiosity, a point made in Critical Pedagogy – and by Barnett in previous section – where the teacher is also a learner and the stimulation of inquiry is part of the responsibility of the teacher.

6.2.3 Analysis Stage

6.2.3.1 Analysis by Investigation Stage

There were found twelve cases of this type of analysis in the data. Nine cases out of twelve resulted in the theories listed below. What is common to all these theories is 'discovery' as a result of independent investigations by the students. The remaining three cases of [Investigation Case 10] [Investigation Case 11] [Investigation Case 12] analysis did not result in any theory, but they show investigation and observation of the characteristics of the grammar of the Japanese language and the participants' own experience of learning Japanese language.

[Investigation Case 1] [Investigation Case 2] [Investigation Case 3] → Theory 1-2: 'Kanji' has an important function in Japanese written text.

[Investigation Case 4] → Theory 4-4: Japanese language is not necessarily easy for Chinese speakers as the pronunciation of 'kanji' is different in Chinese language.

[Investigation Case 5] [Investigation Case 6] [Investigation Case 7] → Theory 5-1: Repetition and more importantly using the language repeatedly when immersed in the context is an effective way to learn.

[Investigation Case 8] → Theory 8-1: People cannot help developing preconceptions before direct contact.

[Investigation Case 9] → Theory 1-4: Kanji plays an important role in literature.

[Investigation Case 10] [Investigation Case 11] [Investigation Case 12] → Only analyses are presented. They do not reach any theory.

The first above nine cases with theories show that the participants built up the theories inductively from their own experience. As discussed in 'experience' in section 3.1.3, one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy, 'reflection' plays an important role in linking between theory and practice. The above theories by participants indicate that they observed their own learning experience first, and then reached the theories. In fact, reflection worked as a tool to generate theories from their experience. As explained in section 3.1.3, these experiences also meet the criteria for experience set by Dewey, continuity for future and interaction with the world (Dewey, 1938).

Although, Critical Thinking is interpreted as the thoughts built on other thoughts as discussed in Chapter 3, these [Investigation Cases] indicate that the participants' thoughts are not necessarily based on other thoughts. Most of the 'original discoveries' found in this type of the data are the theories generated by the participants out of where there are no theories. It can also be argued that this process of original formation of theories is an aspect of 'criticality'. For, it

can be inferred from Bailin *et al.* that 'creativity' is also related to being critical:

...one may think critically while engaged in creative thinking. Similarly, one may need to be creative in thinking critically about problems and issues. Critical thinking often requires imagining possible consequences, generating original approaches and identifying alternative perspectives. Thus, *creativity plays an important role in thinking critically.*

(Bailin *et al.*, 1999b: 288, emphasis added)

Returning to Jarvis *et al.*'s 'reflective learning' in sections 3.2 and 6.2.1, it is further divided into three categories: contemplation, reflective cognitive learning, and action learning. Contemplation is defined as follows:

Contemplation is the process of thinking about an experience and reaching a conclusion about it without necessarily referring to a wider social reality. (...) What distinguishes contemplative learning from the process of thinking itself is the fact that in the former case a conclusion is reached.

(Jarvis *et al.*, 2003: 64)

The 'original discoveries' type of the data in these [Investigation] examples correspond to this concept of 'contemplation'. Following this, they are aspects of 'being critical' which do not need targets nor objects of thought.

6.2.3.2 Analysis by Comparison Stage

There were found twenty-seven cases of this type of analysis in the data.

Nineteen cases out of twenty-seven have reached theories listed below.

All the theories can be again categorised as products in the form of discovery by independent analysis by the students, but there were found to be more variations as additional characteristics than the cases of analysis by investigation. [Comparison Case 20] to [Comparison Case 27], do not lead to any theories, but just indicate that the participants are in the middle of the process of comparing. The comparisons include both languages and cultures.

[Comparison Case 1] → Theory 1-1: 'Katakana' representation of non-Japanese words has limitations due to the difference of phonetic systems of the languages.

[Comparison Case 2] [Comparison Case 3] → Theory 1-2: 'Kanji' has an important function in Japanese written text.

[Comparison Case 4] [Comparison Case 5] [Comparison Case 6] → Theory 1-3: European languages are based on sound and speaking but East Asian languages are based on written text, because 'kanji', ideographs have a specific function with picture image.

[Comparison Case 7] → Theory 2-1: Japanese language has more obvious systematic code-switching in politeness than European

languages.

[Comparison Case 8] [Comparison Case 9] → Theory 4-1: Except for the scripts, Japanese language is not especially difficult to learn compared with other European languages.

[Comparison Case 10] → Theory 4-3: Japanese language is easier to learn for Chinese language speakers than for English speakers.

[Comparison Case 11] [Comparison Case 12] [Comparison Case 13] → Theory 6-1: Learning Japanese language makes you reflect on your own language. The fact that it is a non-European language which was developed in a different way from English is an important factor.

[Comparison Case 14] [Comparison Case 15] → Theory 8-2: Stereotypes are not the truth.

[Comparison Case 16] → Theory 3-2: The difference of the languages will affect how people express themselves.

[Comparison Case 17] → Theory 6-2: It is difficult for Japanese people to learn English.

[Comparison Case 18] → Theory 9-1: There is no particular reason for the customs.

[Comparison Case 19] → Theory 9-2: The use of idioms is universal.

[Comparison Case 20] to [Comparison Case 27] → Only analyses are presented. They do not reach any theory.

As a part of the characteristic of comparison, 'reflection' is seen in all the cases from [Comparison Case 11] to [Comparison Case 19]. These students reached

original discoveries about their own culture and language by reflection on their own culture and language through the encounter with 'otherness'. In the reflection process, they needed to re-assess the views which they have taken for granted from a different point of view. Reflection is as discussed in section 3.1.3, one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy. It works as a tool to be critical on one's own languages and cultures. As seen in [Comparison Case 14] [Comparison Case 15] [Comparison Case 16] [Comparison Case 18] [Comparison Case 19], the theories extended beyond the comparison just between Japanese and English but reached the general rules which apply more widely.

6.2.3.3 Analysis by Linking Stage

There were found to be fourteen cases of this type of analysis in the data. Thirteen cases out of fourteen resulted in the theories listed below. The remaining one case shows that the participant is connecting another academic subject to the issue of Japanese language learning but did not reach to a theory. All these cases show original discoveries by the students but the difference from the previous two types, by investigation and by comparison, is that

existing theories or values are consulted in the process of generating their own theories.

[Linking Case 1] → Theory 3-1: It is very difficult to translate poems into other languages to high standard.

[Linking Case 2] [Linking Case 3] [Linking Case 4] [Linking Case 5] → Theory 7-1: Keeping high standards to perfection and working hard are national characters of Japan.

[Linking Case 6] → Theory 7-2: Japanese people are intelligent

[Linking Case 7] [Linking Case 8] [Linking Case 9] → Theory 7-3: Japanese people are polite.

[Linking Case 10] → Theory 8-2: Stereotypes are not the truth.

[Linking Case 11] → Theory 8-3: Preconceptions are formed under the influence of mass media information and they keep changing according to the change of the period.

[Linking Case 12] [Linking Case 13] → Theory 4-2: The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct.

[Linking Case 14] → Only analyses are presented. They do not reach any theory.

As shown in Knowledge Table (Appendix 9), most of the cases above have links with general knowledge outside the learning of Japanese language. This indicates that ‘connection with the world’ discussed in section 3.1.3, one of the

key concepts of Critical Pedagogy, is happening in the process of learning.

The type of analysis specifically found in the linking cases is 'resistance', as we saw in section 3.1.3 in Critical Pedagogy – against the existing theories or views. [Linking Case 10] [Linking Case 12] [Linking Case 13] clearly demonstrate their objections towards the general views, on the ground of their own original analysis. It is not the radical level of, for example, deconstructing the contradictions of the society, yet, but it surely demonstrates their independent critical way of thinking.

In the course of examination of the analysis stages, the data revealed that the participants are making use of various types of knowledge (Appendix 9). This issue is examined in more detail in section 6.2.5.

6.2.4 Conclusion Stage

All the theories introduced as data show conclusion stage, end point of the analysis. As explained in sections 5.2 and 6.1, conclusion stage needs to appear together with analysis stage in order to differentiate from feelings and

simplified inferences without rationales. Analysis stage shows the reasoning, that the participants are seeking for reasons and evidence to support their claim in the process of thinking. Therefore, in the theory building process, participants use one of the skills of Critical Thinking, reasoning with evidence, in order to make the theory persuasive.

The end point is just a provisional one because the conclusions might keep being modified later. The conclusions will be interrogated by the new inquiries and another theory building process can start and this cycle can continue for ever. The concept of ongoing 'dialogue' of Critical Pedagogy is recognized in this process.

6.2.5 Knowledge

The data demonstrated that the participants employ knowledge from various sources and in various formats during the process of the analysis stage (see Appendix 9). As explained in section 5.5, there are largely five types of knowledge recognized in the data: general knowledge, experience, other studies, discussions with other students and Japanese language lessons.

'Experience' includes self-study and learning, travels to Japan and other countries, meeting with people and individual subjective experiences. Other studies include history, linguistics and the experience of other foreign language learning. Discussions provide the participants other points of views as explained in section 5.5.4. Discussion can provide the benefit of 'dialogue' which is one of the key concepts of Critical Pedagogy explained in section 3.1.3. As pointed out there, teachers need to have a control of the quality and to make connection with the world. As for Japanese language lessons, there were particular lessons both focused and non-focused which are mentioned in the data repeatedly such as 'haiku (Japanese poetry)', 'keigo (polite expressions)' and 'stereotypes'. The details of the content are as Appendices 3 and 9.

There are relations found between the method of analysis and the types of knowledge employed. For analysis by investigation, most of the cases employ knowledge gained by observing individual study experience. For the cases of analysis by comparison, many of the cases employ several different types of knowledge including the knowledge gained in particular lessons, and for analysis by linking, many of the cases employ either general knowledge or

knowledge gained from experience, and more than half the cases are related to particular lessons (see Appendix 9).

The thinking actions were impossible without these types of knowledge. In a sense, thinking is an issue of how to make use of the various kinds of knowledge, as would be argued by those who promote 'critical thinking' (see section 3.2), and going back to the issue of criteria discussed in section 6.1, the significance of knowledge is related to criticality. If, in other words, the knowledge is not spotted or is swallowed by the students with an uncritical mind – or if, to use critical thinking terminology, students are not 'sceptical' – theories were not generated. 'Criticality' is related to the competence to make full use of some item of knowledge, being independently engaged in the process of raising and answering questions in a process going towards original theory building. Therefore, how to deal with the knowledge is an essential point. Knowledge is 'ingredients' but the students need to have competence 'to cook' them by inquiring and analyzing.

Returning to the controversial discussion on whether Critical Thinking is

embedded in the knowledge of specific field or not in section 3.2, it can be inferred from these empirical data that knowledge provides significant resource for criticality. Therefore Bailin *et al.*'s (1999a, b) claim, to emphasize the importance of knowledge in the field as a resource is convincing.

To summarise the argument so far, upon the fundamental nature of 'criticality' which was presented in section 6.2.1, *inquiry and scepticism*, some variations of criticality as second stage were found in each stage of theory building process. They are related to the key concepts of either Critical Pedagogy or Critical Thinking. Analysis by investigation stage (section 6.2.3.1) showed 'experience' and 'reflection' from Critical Pedagogy, analysis by comparison stage (section 6.2.3.2), 'reflection' from Critical Pedagogy, analysis by linking stage (section 6.2.3.3), 'connection with the world', and 'resistance' from Critical Pedagogy, and conclusion stage (section 6.2.4), 'reasoning' from Critical Thinking and 'dialogue' from Critical Pedagogy. Various types of knowledge are employed in the analysis stage but especially 'discussion' has a similar function as 'dialogue' of Critical Pedagogy.

To refer these to Barnett's model, as we pointed out in section 3.5.1, there are different kinds and levels of criticality, and although he does not refer to the work on Critical Thinking as represented by Bailin *et al.* nor Jarvis *et al.*, the 'original theories' in the data of this PhD study can be located at the lower levels of his model, but we shall return to this in more detail below.

Having now compared some of the characteristics of the iterative model of criticality derived from the data with some of the characterizations of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking in the literature introduced in Chapter 3, the dimensions contributing to the criticality development are examined in more detail in the next sections.

6.3 Factors Contributing to the Development of Criticality

Having reviewed the themes of theories generated by the participants listed from 5.1.1 to 5.1.9, it can be inferred that the dimensions appearing in the criticality development are ranged in the dimensions of culture, language and learning process. The dimensions of culture and language were as expected to some extent but that of learning process was a discovery for me.

In section 3.4, it was discussed that fostering 'critical cultural awareness' is the key for political dimension in foreign language learning. Criticality plays an important role in this dimension. It is impossible not to touch upon cultural factors which a language originally has in language teaching, as 'Teaching for linguistic competence cannot be separated from teaching for intercultural competence' (Byram, 1997: 22). However, this raises another question of what kind of, which part of, and what level of culture? Risager (2006) points out the vagueness of the claim of 'language and culture are inseparable' and the need of taking into consideration of viewing language teaching at the specific level and transnational mobility. This claim is related to the point that language and culture do not mutually fit but 'languages spread across cultures, and cultures spread across languages (Risager, 2006: 2).

This issue is associated with whether certain cultural knowledge is necessary for the learning or not. For example in this PhD study as mentioned in section 5.5.5, some elements in non-focused lessons such as 'keigo' inevitably require understanding of cultural background. In this sense, it is impossible to

eliminate culture in the language teaching. On the other hand, as for the culture included in the content of the focused-lessons for example, the lesson of 'leisure time' which dealt with the comparison of how people spend their free time, the necessity of including it in the lesson in this way is weak, if the purpose of the language teaching is exclusively for linguistic proficiency only. But in this Action Research, the purpose of including this content was to develop criticality as well as proficiency. Therefore, Risager's claim is interpreted as the importance of clarifying the clear aims of foreign language education.

However, it would be worth taking into account that, contrary to Risager's argument about languages and cultures 'spreading' across each other, in the case of Japanese language, one nation, one language can still be applied at present. It will be different in other language cases. Risager (2006) points out that Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is based on the first-language bias.

The important point of dealing with culture is that culture is not static. The view that learning of 'keigo' requires understanding of cultural background

might be changed fifty years later, if Japanese language starts to be used in the societies outside Japan or Japanese society itself keeps changing. Corbett (2003) presents another view of the position of culture in foreign language learning:

Foreign language learners are in the position of someone who is *outside* the target language group, *looking in*. Learners *may not wish to adopt the practices or beliefs of the target culture, but they should be in a position to understand these practices and beliefs if they wish fully to comprehend the language* that members of the target culture produce. It is this recognition that language is more than the transfer of information – it is the assertion, negotiation, construction and maintenance of individual and group identities – that has led to the development of an intercultural approach to language education.

(Corbett, 2003: 20, emphasis added)

Furthermore, criticality development by the encounter with ‘otherness’ can happen not only in the cultural dimension but also in linguistic dimension as the data of this PhD study indicated theories from linguistic comparative analysis such as [Comparison Cases] in sections 5.4.2.2, which show the participants’ linguistic comparative analysis between the languages.

Regarding cultural or linguistic difference, how the ‘difference’ is related to ‘otherness’? Citing Doyé(1993), Byram suggests that one of the main

educational purposes of language teaching is an action orientation and that it is

above all the experience of otherness which is important:

action orientation: both political education and FLT aim to instil in learners a disposition for engagement and interaction with others; in the case of FLT the 'others' are usually from another culture and society and the interaction is, psychologically if not sociologically, of a different kind, but is an extension of engagement with people in one's own society

(Byram, 1997: 44)

The question then arises as to how 'different' or 'distant' that otherness shall be, and whether Japanese has something special to offer. I do not intend to promote non-European language learning because of its exoticism as opposed to European languages, but as far as the criticality development is concerned, it is evident in many data of this PhD study that 'Japanese language' as opposed to European languages played an important role in the development of criticality of the participants. All the theories listed in '5.1.1 Theories about languages 1: Functions of the scripts', '5.1.2 Theories about languages 2: Politeness', '5.1.3 Theories about languages 3: The difference of language', '5.1.4 Theories about learning Japanese 1: Common image of Japanese language', and '5.1.6 Theories about learning Japanese 3: Impact of language learning', are clearly

originated in the difference of Japanese from European languages and could not have been generated if it was the learning of European languages. It is inferred that the difference between the language and culture stimulated the participants to be engaged in the analysis especially by comparing and contrasting. Again it is worth emphasizing that it is the linguistic dimension, which is not based on the 'content', which caused the comparing and contrasting of difference.

The participants are also aware of this point clearly in the [Comparison Case 6] which leads to 'theory 1-3: European languages are based on sound and speaking but East Asian languages are based on written text, because 'kanji', ideographs have a specific function with picture image.' and [Comparison Case 13] which leads to 'theory 6-1: Learning Japanese language makes you reflect on your own language. The fact that it is a non-European language which was developed in a different way from English is an important factor.' But it will also be worth paying attention to the fact that their experience of having learnt European languages previously is included in the comparison and gives them a standpoint outside both native language and the target foreign language in the

process of comparison, rather than binary opposition between English and Japanese only.

[Comparison Case 6]

P-S: I just found - when I did French and German at school - because you got there as compulsory - I just found that was much and [] - like French sounds very poetic - you can see - I am going to the toilet - sounds very poetic because French is very poet language - but German is more sort of a strict - you get like a mechanical feeling - when you are listening to German - but even so - even though these characteristics [] as a whole - learning them just seems learning English I think - it's still a bit like alphabets - alphabet-based thing - and they've got like the same kinds of personal pronouns and I know that French has got a lot of verbs and Italian has got verb conjugations - but with Japanese - it's different - you don't learn it - that way you learn it with the pictures with the 'kanji' and stuff like that - and *because it's an Asian language - it's not evolved in the same way* -

(Interview 3: 115-126)

[Comparison Case 13]

P-T1: I've done Latin and French before at school - and I think maybe it's [] the 'kanji' as well - that it does definitely bring a whole new level of meaning for words - thing you don't get that in French

(Interview 3: 111-113)

Thus it is the difference of Japanese language system as opposed to European languages, through which the participants recognize clearly contrasting 'otherness' contributing to the development of criticality. The difference also

became an attraction and a motive for the participants to decide to study Japanese language.

P-S: yeah – definitely – yeah - it's difficult to try [to] teach indigenous traits of a [] - do you know what I mean? you have to [come up to against it] [] really - but that's what makes it exciting - you know - that's what makes going to other country is so different - so exciting - because it is different - if it was France - even though it's a different culture - still a little bit to see for me – it's a much and muchness [] - as we say here [] - it's not different for me []

P-T1: *sharp contrast*

P-S: *more sharp contrast - something really different way - you know - wow this is not how I grew up - something you know*

(Interview 3: 448-455, emphasis added)

P-H1: in the beginning I wanted to visit Japan - I didn't want to go there without any knowledge of Japanese - because I wanted to experience the culture fully []

R: right – so - then why Japan?

P-H1: the culture is *very different* and interesting

(Interview 2: 12-16, emphasis added)

In addition to the issue of 'difference', confidence and independence are particularly recognized in the data as the participants' qualities. The students are not afraid to tackle the difference, but rather they seem to be enjoying this challenge because of their curiosity, and here there are echoes of the argument in Critical Pedagogy that it is 'curiosity' which has to be the starting point for

learning which ultimately leads to 'resistance'. What is important here at the university level is that at the beginning of the study of Japanese language, the individual student is required to be responsible for much of the learning of scripts by him or herself as the contact teaching hours are limited. After they mastered them, they gain huge sense of confidence. This process is as explained in section 5.5.2, and is a characteristic of language learning when the language such as Japanese has major differences of script from that of the learners' other languages, native or foreign. Thus, independence, confidence and curiosity are connected as a consequence of this particular aspect of learning Japanese.

Confidence and independence are related to one of the three resources necessary for developing criticality that Brumfit *et al.* (2004) and Johnston and Ford (2004) describe as personal qualities (the other two resources are knowledge and skills). Confidence is listed in the study related to the Year Abroad (Johnston and Ford, 2004) and the importance of independence is emphasized in the Westford University's curriculum. The following statement also points out the importance of independence in criticality engagement.

The role of the educator is to provide the educational space in which those developments are likely to occur. Compiling an agenda of issues that draw upon multiple frameworks, structuring tasks, getting students to collaborate on projects, positing imagination and intellectual range as criteria, and drawing students' attention to a range of relevant literature (not just in one's immediate field): strategies of this kind rather than teaching per se are necessary elements in producing critical persons. *But they are not sufficient: for that, students have to take on their own responsibilities for their own continuing explorations.*

(Barnett, 1997: 112, emphasis added)

As the result of comparison between focused and non-focused lessons indicate in Table 5.1 in section 5.5.5, the criticality development is also found in the lessons based on grammatical structures. Therefore, as also mentioned in sections 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.2.3.5, lessons in other institutions will be assumed to have the same result as the non-focused lessons of this PhD study. Moreover, some grammatical items naturally include cultural content, and learning a different language itself develops criticality in linguistics dimension as mentioned above. Criticality is also found from the learning process itself. In short, what is found from the result of this Action Research is that it is impossible criticality development to be entirely absent from foreign language learning, but the development can be more intensified by the conscious

teaching designs. Teachers' role is again emphasized.

As was obvious in the analysis stages explained in section 5.5 and Knowledge Table (Appendix 9), it is not only particular lessons which influence the development of criticality, and here we have emphasized the general characteristics of learning Japanese which contribute to this. However, it also is worth bearing in mind the importance of the specific lessons which are related to the criticality development in the data in order to keep an overview of all the factors involved.

Now, the criticality concept discussed in this section is compared with other models of criticality, in particular the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and the model suggested by Barnett (1997), on which the Criticality Project was at least initially based.

6.4 Comparison with Other Criticality Models

Before we begin however, it must be made clear that there is a limitation to the comparison, due to the different scales of research fields. The research field of

this study is limited to language modules at beginners' stage as one part of a Modern Languages Degree Programme, while the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton researched the whole Modern Languages Degree Programme including the Year Abroad stage and Barnett (1997) provided a theoretical framework of criticality bearing in mind the whole Humanities Degree programmes of Higher Education.

The question nonetheless remains here: Does every component of a degree programme share the same concept of criticality or is the presence of criticality different according to the component? Is the criticality appearing in the beginners' language modules specific to the field and different from the types of criticality in other fields? If not, how are they interrelated to each other to move towards a unified central concept of criticality? These questions are taken into consideration during the following comparisons.

6.4.1 The Criticality Project by the University of Southampton

6.4.1.1 The Models of the Criticality Project

The Criticality Project examined empirical data in relation to the possibilities

of developing 'criticality' in the UK Higher Education suggested by Barnett (1997) and the theorization of resources for critical thinking suggested by Bailin *et al.* (1999b). The project aims to fill in the gap between these theory based frameworks and the real practice of universities, and to provide implications for teaching and learning of criticality. It focused on two disciplines: Modern Languages Degree and Social Work courses, and collected data by observations and interviews.

The definition of criticality produced by the Criticality Project which derived from their data from these two disciplines is thus a definition derived from practice rather than conceptualized theoretically in the way that Barnett does, and runs as follows:

Criticality is,

- the motivation to persuade, engage and act on the world and self
- through the operation of the mindful, analytical, evaluative, interpretive, reflective understanding of a body of relevant knowledge
- mediated by assimilated experience of how the social and physical environment is structured
- combined with a willingness and capacity to question and problematize shared perceptions of relevance and experience.

(Brumfit, *et al.*, 2005: 149)

Among the above, the second and the fourth points include elements which were found in this PhD study. The second one corresponds to the analysis stage by investigation, by comparison and by linking, and the fourth one, to the inquiry stage.

As for the first point, the concept of 'the world and self' stemmed from one of the two axes which Barnett (1997) used: domain (see section 3.5.1). In this PhD study, the concept of domain itself did not appear so clearly. The third one cannot be identified, either, as this type of criticality is more related to the Year Abroad programme and the Social Work programme which involve experience 'outside the university community'. This dimension is a particular result of the fact that the above definition of criticality derives from an empirical study of the two disciplines including Social Work courses, and it cannot be expected from the data of this PhD study from courses which are entirely classroom-based. Thus, what can be inferred from this comparison is that beginners' language modules can partly conform to the above definition but have limitations, as we shall see.

The Criticality Project identifies three broad levels of criticality: Pre-criticality, Criticality in use (others' agenda) and Criticality and world knowledge (own agenda) as follows:

Pre-criticality

- Agreeing to participate in discussion/analysis, etc.
- Identifying data and evidence, etc.
- Recognizing theory
- Principles of evidence
- Rational argument
- Testing propositions

Criticality in use (others' agenda)

- Defining pertinent questions
- Using evidence with data, examples, etc
- Arguing with data, exemplification, etc
- Probing, testing data, etc
- Locating a central focus from a mass of information

Criticality and world knowledge (own agenda)

- Linking strategies of argument to world knowledge/evidence and /or to personal knowledge/experience
- Linking examples to each other
- Contrasting theories and ideas
- Building an argument by defining pertinent questions, by using evidence with data, examples etc, by arguing with data, exemplification etc, by probing, testing data, etc.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2004: 16-17)

By 'pre-criticality', the authors mean the stage in which the resources

necessary for doing criticality (see section 6.4.1.2 below), especially background knowledge is selected and prepared. Then, the next stage, 'criticality in use' refers to using the selected knowledge in pre-criticality stage for evidence and where reasoning skills are employed. And the important dimension to note is the meaning of 'others' agenda' by which the authors mean making use of the existing theories although they are the objects for thinking; original theories are not developed at this stage. What separates 'criticality and world knowledge' is in part the operations of linking and contrasting but above all the focus on 'own agenda' by which the authors mean to extend beyond examining the existing theories to construct one's original theories.

Although the Criticality Project set up the above levels as a consequence of their empirical study, they also point out the following;

...undergraduates do not make a steady progression through these stages one by one; rather, they show signs of all three levels (depending on their technical or world knowledge and experience, their personal motivation, and their level of skilled performance in relation to these) operating simultaneously (...) but they become increasingly effective as the degree programmes progress.

((Brumfit *et al.*, 2004: 16)

How are the results of the empirical data of this PhD study to be interpreted in relation to these three stages? Theory building itself means that the participants have skills corresponding to pre-criticality stage above. The theories students developed in the data of this PhD study have many of the characteristics in the first and second lists above, for example agreeing to participate in discussion, recognising theory and others from the first list, or in the second list, using and arguing with data. Furthermore, many of the theories and analyses which the participants produced demonstrated that they are able to use evidence to support their claims and to probe and to test the data (knowledge), the characteristics of the third list; they use linking and contrasting in particular. Thus, 'criticality and world knowledge (own agenda)' appeared in the data of this PhD study, as well. It appears for example in reflection in comparison cases and resistance type theories. For example, 4-2, 'the existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct', appeared in the analysis by linking as listed in section 6.2.3.3.

However, as Brumfit *et al.* point out in the above, the steady progression of

development of criticality was not found in their data and did not appear in the data of this PhD study, either. This issue is related to Barnett's (1997) model in terms of the levels he posits, too, as will be discussed again in section 6.4.2.2.

6.4.1.2 Resources

The Criticality Project also developed through their empirical study the concept of resources necessary for doing criticality as theorized by Bailin *et al.* (1999b).

Bailin *et al.* (1999b) list the following five kinds of intellectual resources.

- Background knowledge (what someone knows or can find out about an issue)
- Knowledge of critical thinking standards in a particular field (knowledge of relevant standards and principles (e.g. the credibility of statements made by authorities), including ability to use in a non-mechanical way)
- Possession of critical concepts (being able to identify and work with e.g. assumptions, arguments, implications of arguments, statements, definitions)
- Knowledge of a wide range of strategies or heuristics useful in thinking critically (e.g. trying to think of counter-examples, discussing a problem or issue with another person)
- Certain habits of mind (commitments such as respect for reasons and truth, an inquiring attitude)

(Bailin *et al.*, 1999b in Johnston *et al.*, 2003: 6)

Brumfit *et al.* (2004) summarize the above resources into three categories:

knowledge, skills (behaviour) and the personal qualities. Knowledge is divided into three categories of knowledge 'of', 'how to', and 'what it is to be'. Skills (behaviour) corresponds with 'pre-criticality' stage explained in section 6.4.1.1. Personal qualities mean the role of 'self' in criticality, as 'in order to be critical, an individual has to have a well-developed, robust and aware self, able where necessary to challenge and reconstruct existing understandings and modes of operation'. (Brumfit *et al.*, 2004: 9-10)

As explained in sections 5.5 and 6.2.5, there were found five kinds of knowledge employed for the analysis in the data of this PhD study, and to inquire, to analyze by investigating, comparing and linking and to conclude are the skills to use the knowledge. So from the evidence of this PhD study, and in the model derived from the data, knowledge and skills are essential for criticality. The third category from Brumfit *et al.* above, personal qualities, was difficult to be identified from the data of this PhD study, and as Brumfit *et al.* (2004) mention, it is more related to Year Abroad stage.

Having now looked at the similarities and differences, the relationship among

the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme needs to be examined in more detail in the next section.

6.4.1.3 The Components of the Modern Languages Degree Programmes

As we pointed out in Chapter 2, Modern Languages Degree Programmes in UK universities as they have developed in recent years usually have three strands: language modules, academic content modules and Year Abroad.

Clearly this PhD study focused solely on what was nominally a language course and by doing so highlighted what was not evident in the Criticality Project. What can be inferred from Brumfit *et al.* (2005) is that the Criticality Project clearly acknowledges the importance of the language element, but the language element is located as an essential tool for dealing with 'content' in the studies and for surviving during Year Abroad:

The language skill base forms an important part of the language curriculum, and students throughout their course are expected to invest a lot of effort to develop these skills to a high standard. This is seen in all the data as *a necessary precursor* to being able to carry out target language tasks which increasingly require an analytical and critical

element (.....) As they move up the stages, the *language skill base is increasingly taken as given*, and what students are able to 'achieve' with language is increasingly rewarded, as the marks awarded for content in the written composition mark scheme show (....) Generally the language tutors' most central concern is the development of language skills (as one would expect from the course descriptions). But they are certainly concerned to set up *the conditions for criticality* (e.g. appropriate knowledge, the ability to develop an argument, self awareness), though the illustration of these processes centres on the appropriate linguistic skills for acquiring the knowledge, on aspiring to native-speaker norms in argumentation or on self-correction of style of form.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 152-153, emphasis added)

What is striking here is the emphasis on language skills as the pre-condition for the presence of criticality, rather than as a contributing factor. Academic content modules clearly contribute to the development of criticality because of the 'content'. It is also inferred from the above description that 'content' is what contributes to the development of criticality also in language modules, and we must bear in mind here that the language skills in question include all the levels and do not focus on particular one. In language modules from intermediate to advanced levels, lessons are inevitably based on the 'content' in any linguistic medium and a high level of linguistic competence is required to deal with the 'content'. On the other hand, this interpretation would mean that the lower stages of language modules have little contribution to the

development of criticality because of the relatively lower proportion of content and abstract topics dealt with than in upper stages. Especially at the beginners' level, topics are limited to daily life due to the structures and vocabularies being taught, and much of the time is spent to enhance linguistic competence. It is not easy to bring abstract topics into the beginners' language teaching although I managed to do for some focused lessons, and this is an important dimension of the course I taught with implications for ensuring that criticality is developed in beginners' courses. However, it is important to remember, as we have seen throughout the analysis, the other normal lessons were also locations of criticality development.

The authors of the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton then further question, 'the precise role of the language element itself'. (Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 160) The Criticality Project has seen the following indications of criticality which are specific to language learning only, although these points are not strongly emphasized:

One tutor defined criticality in language work specifically as the ability to criticize your own accepted and rejected linguistic choices as

you translate, and elsewhere referred to the critical value of specific exercises on looking up and comparing several words in the dictionary.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 153)

and they quote one tutor as follows:

...how they're thinking about how best to express their arguments, how best to illustrate their argument, but I would say that things like style, range of expression, register and vocabulary they do as well, it's the choosing the style which is appropriate to the argument for using a register....

(*ibid.*: 153)

However, in contrast to this view, this PhD study demonstrated that the students are engaged in many linguistic analyses. Among the three dimensions of culture, language and learning process, especially the latter two are specific to language learning as discussed in section 6.3. In other words, the beginners' language modules alone provided rich resources for the development of criticality, the linguistic analyses such as the ones appearing in theories 1-1 to 3-2. These analyses focus on the Japanese language itself such as the functions of the scripts, grammatical structures. The analyses of the real difficulty of the language and language learning strategies, such as appearing in theories 4-1 to 6-2, are derived from the learning process of Japanese language. Savignon (1997)'s following statement also offers support for this point.

There have always been those who applaud L2 study for its purported value in developing critical thinking. It is no coincidence that as the communicative value of Greek and Latin began to wane after the Renaissance, supporters of these languages heralded them as the best subject matter for mental discipline. Today there are those who seek to preserve L2 programmes with a similar appeal. They promote L2 study as an exercise in linguistic analysis.

(Savignon, 1997: 121)

Furthermore what this PhD study indicates is that there are direct links from language study to academic content modules like history, linguistics and literature, made through the presence of criticality in the beginners' language modules as previously explained in section 5.4.2.2. [Comparison Case 3] shows that the participant's comparative linguistic view is consolidated by knowing the function of 'kanji'. [Linking Case 14] also shows that the participant's background knowledge gained from the study of East Asian history is linked and further enhanced by the formation and the use of 'kanji'. The link works in both directions; language modules enhance academic content modules – which are not necessarily part of the Modern Languages Degree – and vice versa. Therefore, the result of this PhD study fully supports the following statement from Brumfit *et al* .(2005), and shows that it is also relevant in beginners' courses:

...critical capacity is sometimes most noticeable among those ML students who are also studying (e.g.) History or English...

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 161)

This was evident in the above two participants' cases of history and linguistics in the data of this PhD study who provided many interesting analyses.

As for the link with the Year Abroad, the instrumental dimension of language learning which as we saw in Chapter 2 has come to dominate much thinking about language learning in Higher Education, is particularly obvious as it is a necessary tool for survival in the target language situation. However, the value of language learning in relation to the Year Abroad is not only instrumental.

Some of the analysis cases in the data of this PhD study indicate that the participants develop intercultural views through the language learning regardless of focused lessons or not. Among the theories generated by the participants, theory 7-1 to 9-2 are all related to culture issues ranging from stereotypes to customs and idioms. Some of these were brought in the focused lessons as topics deliberately, but others appeared spontaneously. These theories are on the one hand evidence of the success of an educational purpose

for language learning and on the other hand it may be assumed they will be further developed and modified in the experience of immersion in the target culture during the Year Abroad period. The presence of criticality in the language modules at the beginners' level thus also serves as a preparation for Year Abroad stage study and the link with the Year Abroad programme during (usually) the third year of a four year course. The link between educational and instrumental purposes thus works in both directions from language modules, including the upper stages of post-Year Abroad modules, to Year Abroad and vice versa.

In other words, on the basis of the results of this PhD study, there are developments of criticality specific to language modules only and they have links to the other two components of the Modern Languages Degree Programme: academic content modules and the Year Abroad programme. The criticalities are not necessarily based on 'content' brought into the language learning. This means that 'instrumental' and 'critical' (or as we described it in earlier chapters the 'educational') elements of language learning can be compatible within language modules, even at the beginners' level. What can

also be inferred from this is that the beginners' language modules are not necessarily simply the prerequisite tool of more advanced level language modules, the content modules or Year Abroad. They have a purpose in themselves with respect to criticality.

6.4.1.4 Fostering and Guiding Criticality in the Course

The Criticality Project chose Westford University as their data collection place, because their Modern Languages Degree course and Social Work course are explicitly designed with the intention of fostering criticality. Among the three strands of the Modern Languages Degree course: language modules, academic content modules and Year Abroad, the contribution of language modules towards the development of criticality are highlighted as following four dimensions; Skill and knowledge base, Critical reasoning, Independence and Intercultural skills. There are clearly 'devices' for the development of criticality in the course design and proven results appeared in the data of the Criticality Project.

- Learners are increasingly assessed for the *content* of what they are saying/writing, along a number of different dimensions such as (a)

level of abstractness, (b) argumentation, and (c) originality of ideas.

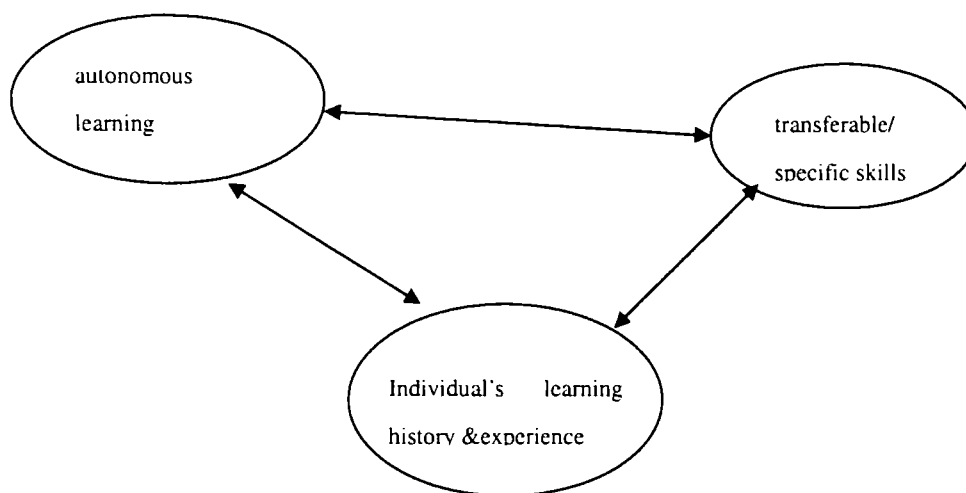
- Learners are required to become more *reflective* and more critical of themselves, both linguistically and in relation to their approach to the content of work.
- Learners are required to become more *independent* and to take charge of their own learning, both in terms of the language and of the (non-linguistic) research they need to carry out in order to produce language work.
- Learners are expected to use an increasingly wider range of registers and genres appropriately and to become more *interculturally* aware.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 151, emphasis added)

The language curriculum of Westford University is designed so that learners are expected increasingly to behave as critical thinkers in the L2 as they move up the language module stages. For example, the marking criteria for assignments from stage 4 to 6 are changed from ‘present facts and ideas’, ‘present and defend ideas and opinions’ to ‘give coherent and detailed arguments and explanations’ accordingly (ibid.:155). The concern for the development of criticality is planned in the curriculum, guided in the course and included in the assessments. They have systems of fostering criticality in sequential procedure and the research results show that their system is effective.

The two diagrams below indicate the models developed by the Criticality Project based on their examination of the curriculum for fostering criticality of Westford University. Figure 6.2 below shows the role of the purely language element. Although the fact that self-study experience provides knowledge is similar to the result of this PhD study i.e. where students' different kinds of knowledge they take note of, rather than just accepting them, are crucial to initiating critical thinking, none of the cases in this PhD study indicated the use of transferable skills such as communicative competence in the process of theory building.

Figure 6.2: Language (and other skill-oriented) work model by the Criticality Project

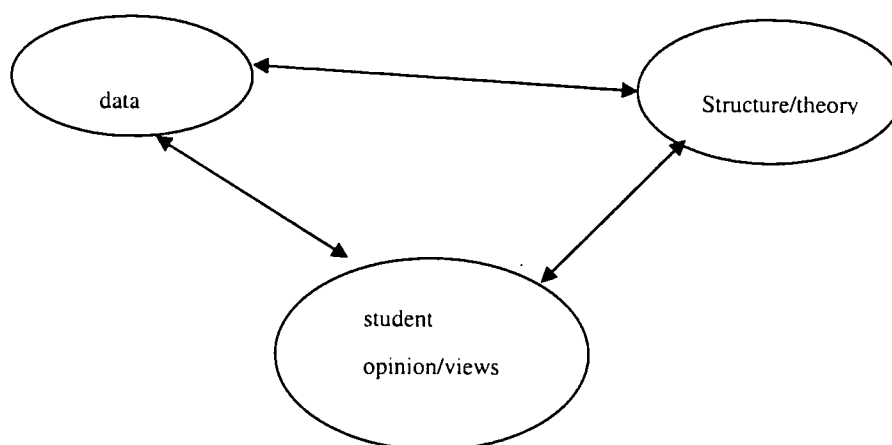


Students' experience of individual learning is the starting point, but on their course they are guided towards increasing autonomy and independence, while being provided with the information and activities necessary for the development of transferable skills (such as communicative competence in target languages), or of skills specific to the discipline, such as those of descriptive linguistics. The expectation is that the three are merged into one single process of autonomous skill-acquisition. This capacity is not the same as, but facilitates, critical awareness.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 159, 'Figure 3. Language (and other skill-oriented) work' in original)

Figure 6.3 represents the whole language degree programme including content modules and Year Abroad. Data as knowledge is made use of in the process of theory building by the skills. However, in this PhD study, it is not clear how students' opinions and views are distinguished from structuring theories.

Figure 6.3: Criticality development model by the Criticality Project



Curriculum activity with an explicit focus on criticality may be seen as an attempt to shift students from holders of opinions to users of appropriate, theoretically interpreted and structured data to informed considered views of cultural, social and linguistic phenomena. The three elements above are increasingly brought together into one single experience of incorporating (1) knowledge as data and (2) interpretation as structural process into students' formation of their own understandings.

(Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 150, 'Figure 1. Criticality Development', in original)

The important point here is that the authors say there are activities with an explicit focus on criticality and shifting students from holders of opinions to users of theory. So they seem to have three categories of lesson or parts of lesson: language skills, content, criticality as explicit purposes or aims, and this is made explicit in another statement, where the phrase 'guided criticality' is used:

Guided criticality is central to the teaching and learning process, i.e. students learning to undertake increasingly ambitious investigations with lecturer-posed questions. *Independent criticality* is the target end point, with students able to form their own questions and problems, and develop substantial reasoned responses which connect up opinion, data and theory.

(Mitchell and Johnston, 2004: 21-22, emphasis in original)

While the beginners' Japanese language courses that I taught incorporated deliberate teaching designs with the intention to foster criticality development which are named focused lessons, the promotion of criticality was not formally and explicitly in the system of the course. In this PhD study, there was however no deliberate attempt to encourage the 'shift from opinion holders to theory users'.

To be precise, the assessment schemes of the modules, writing assignments, oral exams and some written exam paper questions included the assessment of 'content' called 'topics' for 3 % in total of final mark of the module, as explained in section 4.2.2.1.5. It is difficult to say there is an explicit focus on criticality development in the case of my course, because this percentage remains the same in upper stages, and the rationale for this emphasis on 'topics'

is based on the idea that the language competence such as the use of structures and vocabularies is related to the content of what the student wants to express. As also explained in section 4.2.2.2, I followed the point that the course has to be grammatically based and the special teaching plans are integrated into it. Focused lessons were only introduced when there were grammatical items for which I had suitable teaching ideas and could integrate them into the grammar base syllabus.

As seen in Appendix 3, each focused lesson was designed to stimulate the participants' thinking in either intercultural dimension, linguistic dimension or both. As explained in section 4.2.2.2, nine out of thirteen lessons have 'content' with intercultural dimension integrated into the practice of linguistic competence. The remaining four lessons (name order, origins of greeting phrases, haiku, metaphors) deal with both intercultural and linguistic dimensions which are already in the language but were given extra emphasis. These teaching plans were made to encourage comparing between the target language and culture and the students' own ones. To sum up the key points for fostering criticality in my course were *intercultural and linguistic dimensions*

and comparison.

As a consequence, even though I did not explicitly attempt to change them from 'being opinion holders to theory users' the data do show students critiquing commonly held opinions (e.g. about Japanese being difficult) and using their own existing knowledge, or theories of language, language types etc. What is important here is that there were also criticality developments found in the data of this PhD study which are not based on the 'content'. The four lessons mentioned above (name order, origins of greeting phrases, haiku, metaphors) were not based on the 'content' but they provided data which indicate criticality development of the participants. Furthermore, some of the non-focused lessons also indicated the development of criticality, although focused lessons indicating criticality development outnumber them by far. Because some of the language structures such as 'keigo (polite expressions)' inevitably require the learners to understand the socio-cultural background of the target language, even the most strictly skill-based course can develop criticality to some extent as discussed in sections 5.5.5 and 6.3.

Moreover, many of the analysis cases by investigation, comparison and linking listed in section 5.4.2 are the products of the period when the participants are involved in the process of Japanese learning and the analysis. For example, 'Theory 4-2: The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct' is a result of engagement in the learning and analysis over a certain duration of time.

Since this was happening in my course, it can be assumed that the Japanese lessons of other universities which are without focused lessons can also yield similar criticality development as that seen in the data of this PhD study regarding the non-focused lessons and the process of Japanese learning. 'Content' is not the only factor to contribute to the criticality development in language modules, although its contribution is significant.

The examination implies two issues: curriculum development and assessment. Westford University's curriculum is organized based on the 'content'. The later in the course and the 'higher' the stage of study, the more the proportion of the 'content' also increases and is reflected in their assessment system as well. If

the criticality development is limited to 'content', the curriculum design is not complicated.

However, this PhD study revealed that this is not a simple matter in the case of language modules. First of all, with respect to the notion of steady progression, it is clearly the case that criticality developing a beginner's language study is not necessarily at the lower level of criticality. Both the Criticality Project and this PhD study suggest that the development of criticality is not organized as steady progression nor does it happen according to the order of lower to higher levels as defined by Barnett (1997). The thinking process itself does not appear in neat order, either. In the case of intercultural dimension in language learning, Byram (1997: 75) points out that the learning cannot be expected as step-by-step progression but refers to completing a jigsaw puzzle, and this kind of pattern will be the case with criticality development, as well.

What this means is that criticality development in language modules needs to be examined more holistically by considering the whole Modern Languages Degree Programme and what is likely to be happening at different points in all

the languages, not expecting lower level criticality to coincide with lower level language modules.

In Westford University's essay marking system for language modules, the higher the level of the module, the more the weighting of the content increases and that of language decreases. This is based on the idea that 'content' contributes to criticality development, but there also appears to be the assumption that there is simply an adjustment and shift of the emphasis of the academic content modules into the language modules. This raises a significant question. Since other additional evidence of criticality which is not based on the 'content' is found in the data of this PhD study, what should the marking system be? Is it also possible to have steady progression of criticality according to the stages or levels of the language modules? As far as the results of this PhD study indicate, the criticality which is not based on 'content' does not show any sequence nor is it related to the levels of language modules.

To sum up, what is revealed by the comparison between the results of this PhD study and the Criticality Project is that the criticality present in the language

element of a degree course was here more highlighted and considered important than in the Criticality Project. Second, the criticality present in the language element is not always related to the content but also created by the linguistic dimension and the learning process. Third, criticality plays an important role in making connections between the language element and other components of Modern Language Studies. But the issues of curriculum development and assessment need further investigation.

6.4.2 Comparison with Barnett's (1997) Criticality Concept

We turn now to comparison of the model developed from the data of this PhD study with the model suggested by Barnett (1997). As we argued in Chapter 3, this is an important model both because it is widely recognised in the field and because it was at the basis of the Criticality Project of the University of Southampton itself.

Barnett's model has two axes as explained in Chapter 3: levels and domains of criticality. He also makes clear the difference between critical thinking and criticality: critical thinking is located in the lower level of criticality of his

theoretical model.

6.4.2.1 Domains of Criticality

Barnett (1997) suggests three domains of criticality: knowledge, self and world,

repeated here for convenience:

- propositions, ideas and theories, especially as they are proffered in the world of systemic knowledge (CT1);
- the internal world, that is oneself (CT2), a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical self-reflection;
- the external world (CT3), a form of critical thought that is demonstrated in critical action

(Barnett, 1997: 65)

Looking at each of [Investigation Cases] and the theories generated in sections 5.4.2.1 and 6.2.3.1, the investigations are done about language, students' own language learning experience, and their own observation of people's behaviour.

So they are taking place within Barnett's 'knowledge' domain (CT1).

In the case of [Comparison Cases] and the theories generated in sections 5.4.2.2 and 6.2.3.2, the comparisons are done about languages, academic subjects and their own learning experience including languages and other

subjects. However, the comparison between the target language and culture and their own leads them to self-reflection and new discoveries. [Comparison Case 11] to [Comparison Case 19] generated theories about the change of their attitude towards their own language, stereotypes, customs and idioms and [Comparison Case 20], [Comparison Case 21] and [Comparison Case 27] showed that their thought is over their own culture and social system and [Comparison Case 25], on the verse system in their own language although these cases did not reach any theory. Therefore, in [Comparison Cases] there are cases demonstrate that some thinking is taking place within Barnett's domain of self, the internal world (CT2).

Furthermore, [Linking Cases] and the theories generated in sections 5.4.2.3 and 6.2.3.3 show that various ideas are brought in from outside the learning community, such as general images of Japanese people, stereotypes, preconceptions, etc. The participants also bring in the knowledge gained outside such as travel experience and meeting with people. Although they showed these connections to the external world (Barnett's CT3), they were not involved in taking any action within the domain of world, and their knowledge

still stays within the knowledge domain, but it is knowledge about the world although not necessarily disciplinary and this it does not fit entirely comfortably within (CT1). This may mean there is a need for modification of Barnett's model if it is to describe what happens in practice rather than only what ought to happen.

The relationship between the domains and the types of self-reflection are defined in more detail by Barnett (1997). He suggests eight forms of self-reflection, which work in the above three domains.

Table 6.1: Eight forms of reflection in the three domains of critical being

Knowledge	Self	World
1. Disciplinary	2. Educational 3. Critical reflection 6. Self-realization	4. Metacompetence 5. Reflective practitioner 7. Social formation 8. Societal reflection

(Barnett, 1997: 100)

Johnston and Ford (2004) point out that 6 and 7 above are particularly relevant to their data on the criticality development of Year Abroad. While 5, 7, and 8 might also be expected to be particularly related to the area of Year Abroad and therefore irrelevant to the data of this PhD study, there were nonetheless found

some cases showing reflections as a result of analysis by comparison in the data of this PhD study.

The details of each concept of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, which appear to have a possibility of being related to the data of this PhD study, are as follows (Barnett, 1997: 95-98, emphasis added):

1. *Self-reflection on the student's own disciplinary competence*
The student embarks on a continuing interrogation and critique of her own understandings.

All the theories generated from [Comparison Case 11] to [Comparison Case 19] contain reflection and fit in this category. For example, theory 6-1, 'Learning Japanese language makes you reflect on your own language. The fact that it is a non-European language which was developed in a different way from English is an important factor', derived from [Comparison Case 11] to [Comparison Case 13]. Although not reaching theories, [Comparison Case 20] [Comparison Case 21] and [Comparison Case 27] include reflection on their own culture and [Comparison Case 25] is reflection on the verse system in their own language.

2. Educational reflection

The encouragement of this form of reflection in higher education would be evident in efforts to *promote cross-disciplinary educational aims*. A concern for truth, a precision in communication, a scrupulousness in analysis, a willingness to search for synoptic overviews, a determination always to go on searching deeper and a disinclination to be satisfied with a particular understanding, and a preparedness to step outside one's immediate viewpoint to see things from another perspective: these are *dispositions of a non-specific character*.

(Barnett, 1997:, emphasis added)

Theory 8-2, 'Stereotypes are not the truth', derived from [Comparison Case 14] [Comparison Case 15] and [Linking Case 10]. Reviewing how the participants reach this theory 8-2 in the lesson (Appendix 3: Leisure Time), they did not question the stereotypical views about Japanese people at the beginning. But when they were presented with Japanese people's view about British people which are constrained by stereotypical images, they realized the deviation and reached the above 8-2 theory, which applies in general. There is an attitude to seek for the truth from a different point of view. Also theory 6-2, 'It is difficult for Japanese people to learn English.' produced by [Comparison Case 17], fits in this category. It indicates that they are able to analyze the phenomenon from a different point of view from their own standing point in search of the truth.

These two theories fit in the above '2. Educational reflection'.

3. Critical reflection

Through self-reflection, we can *free ourselves from ideological delusion*.

(Barnett, 1997:, emphasis added)

Theory 8-3, 'Preconceptions are formed under the influence of mass media information and they keep changing according to the change of the period', derived from [Linking Case 11] and theory 4-2, 'The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct', from [Linking Case 12] and [Linking Case 13] fit in this category, as they are sceptical about and resist the common taken-for-granted notions in the 'so-called' general views and the mass media. In this case their scepticism is not focused on a body of disciplinary knowledge but nonetheless there is a pre-existing 'object' towards which their scepticism is directed. Examples of ideological imposition of ideas appeared here.

4. Reflection as metacompetence

As higher education becomes drawn into the state's projects, so it is asked to *respond to instrumental agendas* marked out by such terms as competence, skills and value-added. In a sense, this role amounts to an abandonment of reflection. Sheer technique, getting things done and with increasing efficiency, is what matters.

6. Reflection as self-realization

We become ourselves by *becoming more aware of our own projects, and being secure about ourselves as pursuers of those projects*. We define ourselves through our personal projects. More than that, projects hitherto classified as attempts to understand the world are re-constituted as projects of self-discovery. Action research and qualitative research in the social sciences sometimes take on this form.

Higher education becomes a form of personal action research in which the student's hopes and ideas are tested. Self-reflection, understanding and action are integrated.

(Barnett, 1997:, emphasis added)

'4 . Reflection as meta competence' could not be found in the data of this PhD study as the territory is clearly in the world, and the data from the classroom did not include this. Similarly evidence of '6. Reflection as self-realization' could not be found either as it involves action in the world.

However, as Barnett (1997) admits, the borders of the domains are fuzzy. The Criticality Project also suggests that the capacity to make connections between the domains would benefit criticality development (Johnston *et al.*, 2003). In the data of this PhD study, the participants sometimes bring in their experience from outside the study situation, knowledge in the world domain, during the analysis of the knowledge or self domains. For example, in [Linking Case 10],

the participant's observation of 'siesta' in his past travel experience to Spain was brought in during the analysis. [Linking Case 11] shows that the participant's experience of having met an old generation which still keeps the old image of Japan is included in her analysis. [Linking Case 12] and [Linking Case 13] imply that the participants have experience of some people reacting to them with astonishment about their studying such a difficult language as Japanese. These cases indicate that there are connections between the study and the real world which are bridged by students, even if the critical development is working within the domains of knowledge or self.

What can be inferred from the above is that the criticality development found in beginners' language course in this PhD study worked mainly in two domains, knowledge and self, however there are connections open to the domain of the world.

6.4.2.2 Levels of Criticality

The suggestion by Barnett (1997) is that it is desirable that students should attain the highest level of criticality in Table 6.2 (citing Table 3.1 again) below

in all of the domains through higher education, although the authors of papers from the Criticality Project doubt if 'higher education alone can enable them', regarding the highest level of criticality (Brumfit *et al.*, 2004: 8).

Table 6.2 (Table 3.1): Levels, domains and forms of critical being

	<i>Domains</i>		
<i>Levels of criticality</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>World</i>
4. Transformatory critique	Knowledge critique	Reconstruction of self	Critique-in-action (collective reconstruction of world)
3. Refashioning of traditions	Critical thought (malleable traditions of thought)	Development of self within traditions	Mutual understanding and development of traditions
2. Reflexivity	Critical thinking (reflection on one's understanding)	Self-reflection (reflection on one's own projects)	Reflective practice (‘metacompetence’, ‘adaptability’, ‘flexibility’)
1. Critical skills	Discipline-specific critical thinking skills	Self-monitoring to given standards and norms	Problem-solving (means-end instrumentalism)
<i>Forms of criticality</i>	<i>Critical reason</i>	<i>Critical self-reflection</i>	<i>Critical action</i>

(Barnett, 1997: 103)

As previously seen in section 6.4.2.1, cases such as [Comparison Case 14] [Comparison Case 15] and [Linking Case 10] in which the participants' self-reflection on preconceptions leads them to produce theory 8-2, 'Stereotypes are not the truth', can be described as attaining level 3 of the

above 'refashioning of traditions'. This development happens on the basis of level 2, reflexivity within the domain of self. [Linking Case 12] and [Linking Case 13] produced theory 4-2, 'The existing common image of Japanese as a difficult language is not correct' by deducing the theory from their own analysis of the Japanese language learning experience. This can be described as also attaining level 3 within the domain of knowledge. However the limitations of the beginners' language modules are already visible and it is unlikely that such modules pertain to the domain of world, and data which fit in the level 4 could not be found in the data of this PhD study.

In short, what can be inferred from the above comparison is that beginners' language modules can contribute to the criticality development partly and it happens mainly in the domains of knowledge and self but it can also step into the world domain. The level reached at least in some cases is up to 'the level 3, refashioning of traditions'.

One final point is important. In Table 6.2, there is an impression that all twelve slots made by three domains and four levels are independent and that the table

explains the progressive developmental stages of criticality development. Although the indicators of these criticalities suggested by Barnett (1997) were recognised in the data of this PhD study, the reality emerging from the data indicates that criticality can exist simultaneously in more than two domains as pointed out in section 6.4.2.1 and the steady progression according to the levels was not found, as the Criticality Project also points out ‘...our cross-sectional studies suggest that undergraduates do not make a steady progression through these stages one by one; rather, they show signs of all three levels (...) operating simultaneously’, although the levels they refer to here are the three levels they set; pre-criticality, criticality in use and criticality and world knowledge. What is inferred from the empirical studies of the Criticality Project and this PhD study is that criticality development is unlikely to happen in steady progression. Therefore, the borders of each slot of the levels and domains of Table 6.2 are fuzzy and the indications of criticality can be scattered randomly on the table across the border lines.

6.5 The Significance of Criticality in Modern Languages Degree Programmes

So far, there have been three models of criticality in UK Higher Education context reviewed and compared: the results of this PhD study, the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and Barnett (1997).

Borrowing Barnett's words, it is more important to think about 'What is critical thinking for?' instead of asking 'what is critical thinking?' (Barnett, 1997: 65).

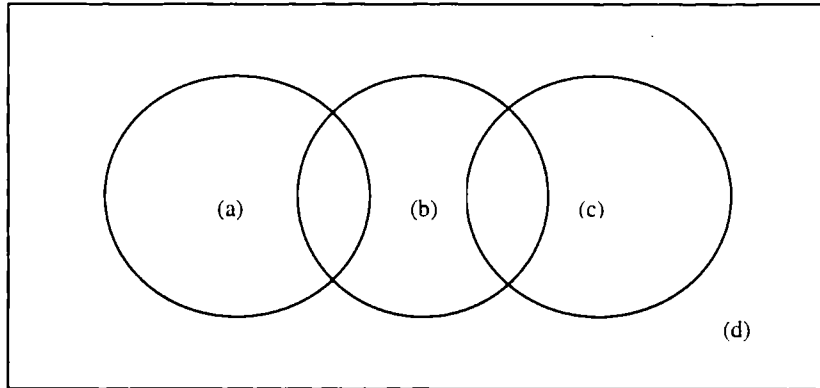
As proposed in Chapter 2, there is an important role for criticality within the Modern Languages Degree Programme. The problem identified there is that the different parts of a Modern Languages Degree tend to be separate, serving different purposes and having different characteristics. The introduction of modular courses tends to reinforce this. There is a lack of a holistic approach and a risk that the degree is experienced by students as lacking in cohesion.

As indicated at the end of Chapter 2, my argument here is that criticality can work as a 'linkage' between the three components of Modern Languages Degree Programme: language modules of all levels including beginners' level, academic content modules and Year Abroad. Without criticality, language modules are envisaged as 'tools' supporting academic content modules and

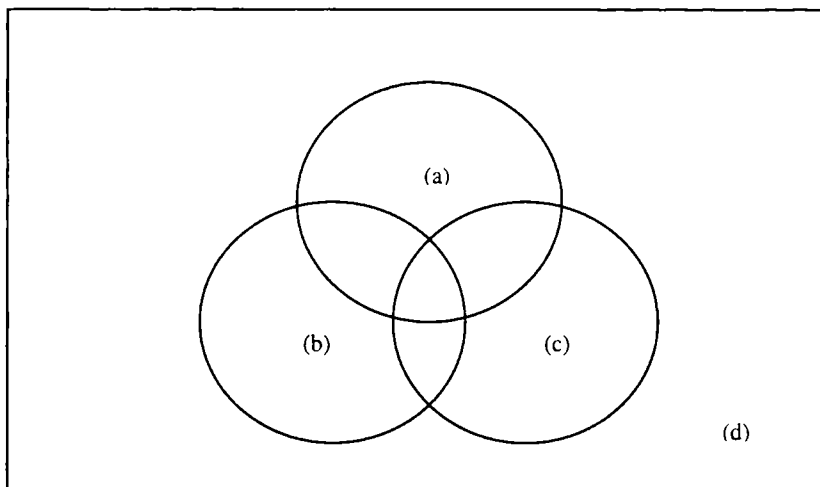
clearly separated from them. However, with criticality, there will be a direct connection between language modules and academic content modules as explained previously in section 6.4.1.3. In order to play this important role as 'linkage', it has to be 'criticality' rather than 'critical thinking'. For, as we saw in Chapter 3, and again in this chapter, 'criticality' – with or without a direct association with Critical Pedagogy – involves action not only in the academy, in disciplinary thinking as Barnett calls it and which is the focus of 'critical thinking'; it also involves action in the world – political action in Critical Pedagogy, and 'collective reconstruction of the world' to use Barnett's phrase – which is potentially present throughout the Modern Languages Degree but especially in the Year Abroad. Figure 6.4 presents this relationship.

Figure 6.4: The relationship of the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme

Without criticality



With criticality



- (a): Beginners' level language modules
- (b): Intermediate-advanced level language modules
- (c): Content modules
- (d): Year Abroad

In the first representation, although intermediate-advanced language modules have connections with content modules, beginners' language modules have no

connection with them but are related to intermediate-advanced language modules only. Language should rather be the centre of Modern Languages Degree Programme as discussed in Chapter 2. In the second, the presentation shows that all levels of language modules and content modules are connected by criticality and beginners language modules have direct link with content modules. These academic connections among the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme made by criticality will characterize language study at Higher Education level and also differentiate the language learning from those of other educational stages.

Here, echoing Freire's pedagogy discussed previously in Chapter 3, the significance of Year Abroad in Modern Language Studies is smoothly connected with the importance of connection with the real world in his claim.

Thus, I represent Year Abroad as a surrounding element, the 'environment' for all other components of the Modern Languages Degree Programme.

Knowledge gained by the studies within the university needs to have connection with the real world in order to become living knowledge.

Summary of Chapter 6

In this chapter, first, the model which had emerged in the data of this PhD study was presented, which showed theory building consisting of three stages of process: to inquire, to analyze, and to conclude. The crucial characteristic of criticality is identified as inquiry stage from the data. It is examined in relation to the literature review in Chapter 3 and it is inferred that the fundamental nature of criticality is *inquiry and scepticism*. Upon this nature, the pieces of key concepts of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, such as 'reflection' and 'resistance' appeared in the stages of theory building process. The factors contributing to the development of criticality are identified as cultural and linguistic dimensions and also the learning process itself. Then, the model from this empirical study was compared with two other criticality models: the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and Barnett's (1997) concept of criticality in Higher Education. The comparison with the former highlighted the criticality specific in language element and the connection with other components of Modern Languages Degree Programme provided by the recognition of criticality as a common characteristic. The comparison with the latter showed that Barnett's theoretical model is supported by empirical data,

but also showed that criticality development does not appear in so neat an order as in Barnett's framework, which is also pointed by the Criticality Project of the University of Southampton.. The borders of each slot are fuzzy and there probably cannot be steady progress by students from lower to higher level; there is no 'development' of criticality in this sense. The examination suggests that criticality has a possibility to work as a linkage of various components of Modern Languages Degree Programme.

This examination already highlights the complexity in systematizing the development of criticality in curriculum and assessment where applicable. But the extensive discussion on this issue is provided in the next chapter, on conclusions and implications.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, the whole research process: background of Modern Languages Degree Programme, Criticality literature review, research design, data analysis and discussion, is reviewed, first. Second, the findings of the research are focused. Then implications and future research possibilities are presented. Lastly, research reflections are presented in two perspectives: from researcher's point of view and from teacher's.

7.1 Review of the Study

This PhD Study initially originated in the ideas which occurred to me as a language teacher while teaching in the classroom. They were associated with the issue of the educational aims of language teaching at the Higher Education level and also with instrumental and educational purposes of language study drawn out of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. The encounter with the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and Barnett's criticality by the suggestion of my PhD supervisor developed this research interest to criticality in Modern Languages Degree Programme in the UK Higher Education.

This study examines the Modern Languages Degree Programme which is a large framework, the top of the roof, from a part of the ground level under the roof through the issue of criticality. The examination is not only through the theories but also through the practical level issues based in the actual teaching.

Therefore this study starts with the examination of the backgrounds of language study. Chapter 2 examines the current situation of UK Higher Education and the aims of Modern Language Studies. It highlighted the fact that the current problem of Modern Language Studies is the lack of coordination of the diversity of various disciplines, especially, the large split represented in 'instrument or discipline' (Lodge, 2000). The nature of language modules, especially at beginners' level, inclines to the acquisition of practical language skills focusing on grammar rather than on 'content', and widens the gap from other academic content modules. Modern Language Studies clearly needs a new dimension and the possibility of criticality is highlighted which works as a single 'linkage' connecting each component to others. In order to consider this linkage, two issues need to be investigated: the examination of

existing criticality concepts and the empirical study of criticality development in beginners' level language courses.

Chapter 3 focuses on the literature review of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, in order to illustrate what the basic meaning of 'being critical' is. Although their formations, backgrounds and ultimate aims are different, it was found that they share the common fundamental feature of defining 'being critical' as *inquiry and scepticism*. Next, language learning with a political dimension was examined in relation to Citizenship Education whose goal is to foster critical citizens for social action. The next step is to look at this issue in Higher Education issue and Barnett's theory is examined in detail. It was found that the three disciplines: Critical Pedagogy, language learning for Citizenship Education and Barnett's criticality have common ultimate aims: 'action in the world'. The significance of this political dimension of developing critical cultural awareness in foreign language education is highlighted.

Chapter 4 explains the research design of the Action Research in the beginners' Japanese language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Two

research questions were set up to investigate the issue of criticality development through beginners' language study. The approach taken in the research method is to focus on generating theories from the practice because the criticality issue in beginners' language study is still unexplored and the knowledge derived from this practice was thought to be valuable. I played two roles of researcher and teacher. All the details of the practical issues of the research field were explained in detail in this chapter. 'Focused' lessons comprising activities which target criticality development in cultural and language dimensions were inserted in the existing grammar based language course framework. Various types of qualitative data were collected. Among them, particularly the participants' output data: group interviews and post-lesson questionnaires became the main sources of analysis of this study. The observations of beginners' level language lessons in other institutions ensured that the language courses at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne has the same standard as other Higher Education Institutions in terms of the aims and syllabus.

Chapter 5 presented the result of analysis of the empirical data according to

categorizations arising from the data. This analysis was conducted without referring to the existing theories of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, so the result represents what emerged purely from the empirical study. The students' theory building process comprising three stages: inquiry, analysis and conclusion, was found. The analysis stage is also sub-divided into three types according to the approaches: investigation, comparison and linking. The students' theories were presented according to nine thematic categories comprising culture, language, and learning process. It was also found that during the theory building process, students are working on five categories of knowledge: general knowledge, experience, other studies, discussions with other students and Japanese language lessons. They start an inquiry and search for answers, making use of these different sources of knowledge by using skills such as investigating, comparing and linking. They complete the theories by conclusions, but the theories can be further questioned and modified by encounter with different viewpoints in occasions as discussions. Thus, two important resources for criticality were identified: knowledge and skills.

Chapter 6 discussed and established the concept of criticality by comparing and

contrasting two perspectives: the existing criticality concepts examined in the review of literature (Chapter 3) and the criticality concepts which emerged from the empirical data of this study (Chapter 5). From this examination, the fundamental nature of criticality was identified as *inquiry and scepticism*. Upon this fundamental nature, aspects of key concepts of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking, such as 'reflection' and 'resistance' appeared in some stages of the theory building process of the data. The factors contributing to the development of criticality are identified as cultural and linguistic dimensions and also the learning process itself. Then, the model from this empirical study was compared with two other criticality models: the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton and Barnett's (1997) concept of criticality in Higher Education. The comparison with the former highlighted the existence of criticality specifically in the language element of programmes and that criticality can work as a connection among the components of Modern Languages Degree Programme. The comparison with the latter showed that Barnett's theoretical model is supported by empirical data but also showed that criticality development does not appear in so neat an order nor the steady progression from lower to higher levels as in Barnett's framework, as pointed

by the Criticality Project by the University of Southampton. In this PhD study, the higher levels of criticality – in particular engagement with the world – are not likely to happen in language courses such as the one analysed here because there is no immediate experience of the world. It is assumed to be the domain for other components of the Modern Languages Degree Programmes.

These analyses led to findings discussed in the next section.

7.2 Research Findings

In this section, seven research findings of this PhD study are presented. The first three findings are related to the initial research questions of this PhD study: two are the answers for Research Question 1, and one, for Research Question 2. Then four other findings gained from the study follow.

Initially, the following two research questions were set up at the first stage of the research design as explained in 4.1.

Research Question 1: 'IF AND WHAT'

Is it possible to develop criticality in beginners' language courses in

Higher Education, and if so what kind?

Research Question 2: 'HOW'

In what ways can critical thinking be developed through beginners' language courses in Higher Education?

Finding (1): Basic concept of criticality

The fundamental nature of criticality was identified as *inquiry and scepticism*.

It was defined by examining and refining two different perspectives: one from the existing theories of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking and the other one from the empirical data of this PhD study. Although the largest difference between Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking is whether they have social action as an ultimate aim, the common feature of 'being critical' is identified as *inquiry and scepticism*. On the other hand, as the data analysis of this PhD study revealed, the 'inquiry stage', the first of the three stages of a course of theory building of the students : inquiry, analysis and conclusion, is found as the most fundamental and important step of thinking. This inquiry stage corresponds with *inquiry and scepticism* identified from the examination of the literatures. Therefore, in this PhD study it can be concluded that *inquiry and scepticism* is the fundamental nature of criticality, and this empirical study thus supports the theories.

Finding (2): Sub-concepts of criticality

Being based on *inquiry and scepticism* of finding (1), there were found fractions of the nature of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking as variations of criticality in the empirical data. From Critical Pedagogy, 'curiosity of the learner (and teacher's stimulation)', 'experience', 'reflection', 'connection with the world', 'resistance', and 'dialogue' appeared, and from Critical Thinking, 'reasoning with evidence' did. This can be interpreted as showing that beginners' language study indicated the elements of education, 'pedagogy'.

The above findings (1) and (2) are the answers for Research Question 1, 'IF AND WHAT', 'is it possible to develop criticality in beginners' language courses in Higher Education, and if so what kind?' It is possible. Inquiry and scepticism is the basic nature of criticality. Upon this basis, some aspects of Critical Pedagogy and Critical Thinking can be developed.

Finding (3): How criticality can be developed

From the analysis of the empirical data, the thematic categories of theories

represent three dimensions developing criticality: culture, language and learning process. In designing focused lessons, culture and language dimensions were already anticipated but learning process dimension was a new discovery for me. For intercultural dimension, developing 'critical cultural awareness' by encounter with 'otherness' is the key element. But this is not specific to intercultural dimension only. Students encounter the 'otherness' of languages by comparative linguistic analysis, as well. Thus language learning makes learners critically reflect on their own culture and language. The dimension of learning process appeared in the theories related to the language learning process and strategies by students being engaged in critical reflection on their own language learning experience. Thus, it is inferred that the language learning at the beginners' level itself, even if it is in the grammatical structure based course, can develop criticality. However, as the results of Action Research indicates that focused lessons contributed to criticality development more than non-focused lessons, conscious teaching designs including these three dimensions can intensify more criticality development. Intercultural dimension can also be found in other subjects but the two dimensions of language and learning process are specific to language study.

Therefore, it can be said that the specific value of language modules is owed to these two dimensions. This can be an answer for 'the precise role of the language element itself' (Brumfit *et al.*, 2005: 160), which is questioned by the Criticality Project.

The above finding (3) is the answer for Research Question 2, 'HOW', 'in what ways can critical thinking be developed through beginners' language courses in Higher Education?' Including the three dimensions of culture, language and learning process in the language teaching is the key for criticality development.

The four findings which are not related to the initial Research Questions follow.

Finding (4): Knowledge and skills as resources

During the process of theory building, various types of knowledge are employed. In the empirical data of this study, there were found general knowledge, experience, other studies, discussions with other students and Japanese language lessons. Making use of these types of knowledge by

inquiring, analyzing through investigation, comparison and linking, and concluding are important skills for generating criticality. These implications also indicate that knowledge and skills for using it are important resources for criticality as Bailin *et al.*(1999a, b) suggest.

Finding (5): The teacher's role is important

As mentioned in finding (3), conscious teaching designs including the three dimensions of culture, language and learning process in the language teaching can intensify more criticality development. In addition, interrogations stimulating curiosity of the students in lessons and dialogues are also important. This phase is suggested by Freire in Critical Pedagogy. These two factors were included in focused lessons of this PhD study, as well. Therefore, teacher's role is very important in criticality development.

Finding (6): The importance of educational aims: criticality as a linkage of Modern Languages Degree Programmes of Higher Education

The importance of establishing ultimate educational aims was indicated from the study. The components of the degree programme ought to be conducted

under the roof of educational aims and each of them needs to be connected by a single linkage. Criticality can work as this linkage and 'language' is located in centre. Barnett's contribution is significant in terms that he highlighted the importance of criticality as an aim which leads to action connected with the world.

Finding (7): Both instrumental and educational aims can and need to be compatible in language modules in Modern Languages Degree Programme.

The practical aspect of language study to develop language proficiency cannot be ignored. But the educational aspect exists in language study as well, and this educational direction is the one which works as a linkage with other components of the degree programme in its current diverse nature. Returning to Lodge's (2000) 'instrument or discipline', the ideal situation is 'instrument AND discipline'.

In the next section, how these findings can contribute in the field is stated.

7.3 Significance of the Study

The research field of this study is a small part of a Modern Languages Degree programme: Beginners' Japanese Language Study. However, by examining this small part, this PhD study made it possible to consider, the whole larger dimension of the degree programme and its relation to criticality. It is important for Modern Language Studies to set aims which take down-to-earth practical issues into consideration, rather than the nominal and philosophical ones which just sound beautiful but may not meet the reality of mass Higher Education. This study provides suggestions from the point of view of teaching practice. On the other hand this small scale study also gives us answers to how even very practical courses at beginners' level can have educational purposes and therefore are worthy of a place in a university.

In addition, Japanese Studies is not one of the major Modern Languages in the UK. However, the impact of studying a non-alphabetical and non-European Language is also an important issue in this PhD study, raising as it does both practical and educational questions, how students can gain practical skills and also become critical in at least some of the ways that Barnett (1997) expects of Higher Education.

It is now clear that fostering criticality is important for Higher Education but how in fact it is reflected at a practical teaching level needs further consideration. They are considered in the following sections, implications and further research possibilities.

7.4 Implications from the Study

Implication (1): Language modules are educational.

Beginners' language modules are assumed to be educational as they are, although they tend to be grammar structure and skills focused. Non-focused lessons in this PhD study itself indicated criticality development of the students to some extent. As ensured by the observations of beginners' language lessons of other institutions, their purpose, syllabus and teaching method are similar to the course I was teaching. So the similar kinds of result are expected if the same research is conducted in their fields.

Implication (2): Teaching designs concerned for criticality development

From this study, particularly from the Action Research, implications for

teaching designs to criticality development were gained. Including three dimensions of culture, language and learning process in the teaching ideas and curriculum design is the key point. Encouragement of using various knowledge and skills which appeared in the theory building stages is also an important point.

To make use of knowledge as a resource, a possibility is content of the materials. Intercultural dimension can be introduced as topics such as one of the focused lessons of 'leisure time' dealing with stereotype issues. Academic related contents such as history and literature will be useful topics, as well. Activities to make use of general knowledge and individual experience can encourage the thinking by linking. To develop skills for thinking, activities to encourage comparison can be useful such as introducing more socio-linguistic aspects of language by comparative analysis. Comparison was found in many analysis stage cases and it is an important path to lead the students to 'reflection'. Discussion can be occasionally included in the lesson as it has a function similar to 'dialogue' of Critical Pedagogy. During the lesson, interrogation by the teacher stimulates students' curiosities as Freire suggests in

Critical Pedagogy.

However, when the issue comes to curriculum development level, it can be expected to be difficult to make a systematic course curriculum. As the empirical studies of both the Criticality Project and this PhD study indicated, the criticality did not appear in neat order nor in steady progression of levels. Maybe this issue needs to be examined in relation to assessment.

Implication (3): Who is responsible for criticality in the case of Higher Education?

The initiative in teaching designs and conducting lessons is largely owed to teachers and the responsibility in this initiative is heavy, especially the role leading to action in the world. Now turning to the current situation of the language teaching at Higher Education level, in consideration of its structure and staffing system, more complication and difficulty can be expected than in school education. Many of the language teaching positions are part-time and limited contract basis (Klapper, 2006). Who is responsible in the criticality development in the case of Higher Education? Who is leading it?

Paradoxically, that is why a linkage is needed. It is not an issue to be dealt within language modules alone - the risks of a modular system are evident. The criticality issue needs to be considered as a team responsibility for the whole Modern Languages Degree Programme. In order to consider this issue, further large scale and in-depth research of other components are needed. The next section presents these research possibilities.

7.5 Further Research Possibilities

Further Research (1): Beginners' European language case

Beginners' level alphabetical and European language course needs to be research in the same way as this PhD study for comparison with the results. It will also highlight the specific issues of non-European language.

Further Research (2): In-depth studies of other components (intermediate-advance level language modules, content modules, Year Abroad) of Japanese Studies Degree Programme.

One single degree programme needs to be examined more deeply. So regarding other components, Japanese Studies would be suitable for comparison and

relating to this PhD study. Then, the connections between the components also need to be examined to illustrate how each element is related.

Further Research (3): Assessment of criticality

This issue maybe does not have to be Japanese language related, but needs to focus on criticality itself.

7.6 Research Reflections

This section was produced based on the teacher's record type data (lesson plan, teacher's diary) and researcher's record type data (researcher's diary) listed in section 4.2.2.3.2.

7.6.1 Research Design

I realize that the foundation for the topic of this PhD thesis has existed since the beginning of my teaching career, although I had never recognized it in this form before I actually wrote a proposal for application. I have been interested in beginners' level, particularly adult learners, because I thought it is challenging to connect language teaching with the stimulation of learners'

thinking. I was given an occasion to work at the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne in good timing, as the two beginners' courses were to be taught entirely by myself. Hence, it was decided that the data collection was to be conducted at the beginners' language course in the Higher Education level.

Before the data collection, I did not have a firm idea of what kind of findings this research would produce. I knew little about the theories of Critical Pedagogy as I started reading the literature only after the data analysis finished. However, it was surprising that the data corresponded with some important notions of Critical Pedagogy, and this has significance not only for the educational purposes of foreign language teaching but also for potential links with Citizenship, with, as Barnett calls it, 'reconstructing the world together'.

It is interesting that the following expresses exactly how I came to my teacher's beliefs and how I was not aware of the direction of my interest before I started writing the proposal for this PhD study.

Throughout our time as foreign language (FL) learners and our career as FL tutors we steadily build a system of personal beliefs relating to learning, teaching, students and teachers. There are two key points about these beliefs. *First, we are not always conscious of them* – we may not even know that we are acting in certain ways when teaching and may be even less likely to be aware of the reasons why we do what we do. *Second, they are individual to each of us* – just as all students adopt different approaches to learning, so we as tutors have different conceptions of the teaching process.

(Klapper, 2006: 15, emphasis added)

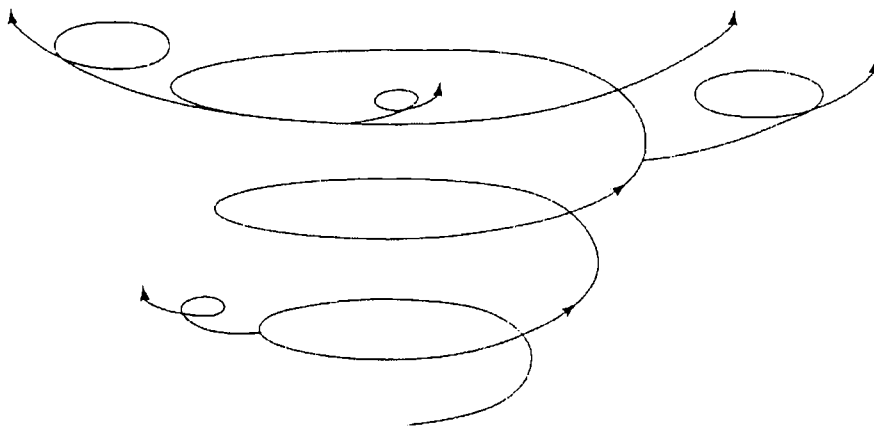
It is also interesting that I was able to connect this PhD study with Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and the implications for education only after the data analysis finished. It is an interesting coincidence that what I was seeking for was found to have connection with this famous theory, although I had known of its existence for a long time.

7.6.2 Action Research

Turning now to implications for research, we note that Action Research theories suggest the continuing cycle of research generated by research (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002; Wadsworth, 1998). As exactly expressed in the image of Figure 7.1, this PhD study implies the possibility of further research. It is not simply a matter of improving on the teaching of beginners' course, but also of

future research on other language modules and the 'linkage' among the different strands of a Modern Languages degree.

Figure 7.1: A generative transformational evolutionary process



(McNiff and Whitehead, 2002: 57, 'Figure 3.5' in original)

On designing this research, I decided to use the teaching ideas which I had occasionally developed on past teaching occasions – what are called focused lessons in this PhD study – because I already had a kind of hunch that the ideas would be stimulating and enjoyable for the learners. But the benefit of this Action Research is that what has been recognized as the random hunches and anecdotes of a teacher's experience was transformed into the solid form of research and generated a theory because the research process requires me to analyze what is in the research field more deeply and objectively.

In the teacher's journal which I kept after all the lessons, both focused and non-focused, I often noted down my critical reflective comment on how I conducted the lessons. If the lesson was lively and the students were interactive, I felt relief. I felt I was teaching well. Conversely, if there were few responses in the lesson and I felt like giving them a traditional lecture to try to draw their attention, I felt anxiety and noted down that the improvement is needed. However, I found that it is not so simple and not always visible. Some of the theories that the participants produced suggested that theory building needs a long period. Students need time to mature their ideas and to make connection with other knowledge such as their past experience and other studies, etc. So they are not always ready to give immediate responses to what was dealt with in the lesson. During some of the lessons, I could not get any immediate response from the students at all. Sometimes they did not really know what to say because the content of the lesson was unfamiliar to them and they were just overwhelmed by the new knowledge presented. For example, few students knew about the anthropological backgrounds of the order of surname and given name. However, despite their silence in the lesson, I found out that they gave

their comments about this issue in the post-lesson questionnaire and in the group interviews; they were interested and thoughtful, and building their theories, even if they were quiet – or because they were quiet perhaps – in the lessons.

My expectations of students' constant liveliness seem to stem from the ideas of CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) that it is necessary to 'keep students talking' in a lively way, as associated with the title of Klippel (1984), *Keep Talking*, which has been well-known for practical ideas of communicative activities. Although there is no doubt that lively lessons have values, this experience warned me against assuming that only lively lessons are good lessons. Even if the students were not talkative, sometimes I could feel that they are quietly participating and their intellectual curiosity was stimulated. So obviously the liveliness does not necessary reflect on the deepness of study.

Furthermore, although I did not announce before the lessons whether they were focused lessons or not, but after a while, some students began to notice it quickly, and as soon as the lesson starts they sometimes say, "Sensei (Mr/Ms

specific to teachers in Japanese), we're gonna have culture lesson today, right ?" They tended to call focused lesson as 'culture lesson'. This indicates that the cultural dimension of focused lesson seemed to be especially impressive to them. I got to know that focused lessons were appreciated from their answers for the module content questionnaire required by the School particularly in the upper beginner's group, and they are mentioned as 'cultural content' there, too.

However, the difficulty of dealing with intercultural dimension in the language learning was that I occasionally ended up with emphasizing 'peculiarity' of certain cultural phenomena, although I did not intend to do that. In the lesson about food (see Appendix 3: Special Foods), I could not make the participants properly understand whale meat as a natural part of Japanese cuisine.

Turning to my experience as a researcher, as stated before in section 4.2.2.3.2, I think I particularly learnt to be realistic and practical during the process of collecting data. I often felt like my ability to find a balance between teaching and research was tested (Li, 2006). In order to pursue two roles of researcher

and teacher at the same time, the research design needs to be flexible in order to meet the constant change of reality. I needed to give up filming the lessons and sometimes to change the lesson plans at the last minute because of the number of attendance. Throughout the data collection process, I paid particular attention to how to collect data at a fast rate, and therefore I tried to arrange group interviews right after the lessons, avoiding separate arrangements and asking them to fill in the questionnaire right away rather than letting them take them home.

After the first group interview, my impression was that the students were thinking much more than I imagined and I was surprised with that. I have never had such an occasion to talk about the issues of Japanese learning with students before, and I became conscious that I might have underestimated their development of thought.

The whole process of data analysis took a long time (eight months, but whilst also having other work to do). I was surprised that the group interview provided so many valuable data to this PhD study. It was the group interview

scripts in which I noticed the existence of original theory building by the participants and from there sought for the whole process.

I was also made to recognize my teaching style by the following data. The data were quoted once in section 5.4.2.3 in [Linking Case 5].

P-R: definitely - I think once a Japanese person has learned to play the piano [] from in child - they were learning it to a perfection - which I think it shows really learning the languages as well - *learning 'kanji' - even if you just do [] one stroke [] [it's] got - such a great nation for making [] everything [] to the highest standard that even shows in the country itself* - like with the train system - every train is always on time - compared to our system - it's brilliant - they are so proud of their country

P-H & P-J: yeah - yeah

(Interview 4: 62-69)

P-H: that's why [] [we have] [] Japanese native speakers - because we do have to appreciate what [] they are *learning 'kanji'* - as well - and we try the hardest - learning properly - instead of []

(Interview 4: 77-79)

When I heard the above, I was embarrassed as I immediately noticed that they meant the way I teach and mark 'kanji'. I had never been aware that students try to form an image of Japanese people through the teacher's action. What they mention is about a strict 'all or nothing' policy on 'kanji' (Chinese

characters)' marking at the assessments I set. The 'kanji' has to be perfect to get full marks. There is no partial mark given. In a sense, the participants' insight finding national character in the way how they were taught 'kanji' is very sharp. This derives from the way many Japanese people are educated to master 'kanji' at school, and it clearly had an effect on me.

I had once discussed marking policy on 'kanji' with English speaking teachers at my previous work. I recognized that there is a difference in the concept between Japanese native speaker and non-native speaker teachers. Non-native speaker teacher tend to be more generous about incomplete 'kanji' and give half or at least partial marks to incomplete 'kanji'. However, in the case of the course I was teaching, the course was taught by one native speaker teacher, the teacher would become a representative of the culture of the language and have a huge impact on the students. The qualities of the participants of this PhD study which prefer the challenges appear in the following.

P-L: that's been better - it's better that it's taught by a native speaker because do get the different way of teaching - you do from the Western kind of consolidated the things I didn't but introduced a lot of things that I didn't as well - like [] 'kanji' [] like that

(Interview 2: 48-51)

Finally turning to the observations I conducted in other classes in my own and other universities, the purposes of these were to see if my non-focused lessons have the same standard as other institutions' beginner's lessons as stated in section 4.2.2.3.5, but in addition they were good chance to see the development of Japanese language teaching methods. In the mid 1990s when I started teaching Japanese language in UK Higher Education, teachers' skills varied. Most experienced teachers' teaching style was typically almost direct method with communicative activities. On the other hand, there were still many teachers relying on Grammar Translation Methods at that time. However, beginners' textbooks published in Japan mentioned in section 2.4 have been revised many times in recent years and teachers have many occasions to exchange information at workshops (provided in the UK by BATJ (British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language) established in 1998). The teaching skills of the teachers I observed were very high standard and similar, as well.

Towards the completion of this PhD study, I started realizing gradually the

impact of doing a PhD on my thought. Now I clearly recognize why language teachers at universities have difficulty in being involved in research although they are aware of the importance of research and also wish to do it. I can offer the following three reasons as these are the hurdles that I myself had to get over.

First, it is difficult to see the instant impact of the research during the routines of daily work which are already saturated by many teaching hours and administration tasks. Second, language teachers do not know how to construct research although they have many research interests. It is a pity because the classroom is abundant in resource for research and there are particular kinds of research which can only be done by language teachers (practical ones). Third, they tend to regard research as a 'burden' of studying. It is not. It is an enjoyable business if they can turn their professional interest into research.

These are the paths I myself followed in the last several years. It took me so many years to step on this first stepping stone of the research world, this PhD study. My next realistic aim is to continue searching for criticality from many different angles. One research generates another research. I believe that I am already in the cycle.

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Syllabus of the beginners' Japanese language courses at the School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle upon Tyne

Lower beginners: JPN 103 (2005-06) Semester 1

Semester/Week	Grammar-based lesson contents	Textbook: <i>Genki</i>
Sem1 W1	Greetings Self introduction Introduction of Japanese scripts system Hiragana Numbers	Lesson 1 (vol.1)
Sem1 W2	Hiragana Numbers Asking time	Lesson 1 (vol.1)
Sem1 W3	Numbers Asking price this/that/which	Lesson 2 (vol.1)
Sem1 W4	Nationalities/age here/there/where	Lesson 1/2 (vol.1)
Sem1 W5	Basic verbs Q&A Frequency words	Lesson 3 (vol.1)
Sem1 W6	Reading week	
Sem1 W7	Let's do - / Particles revision There is/are ~	Lesson 3 (vol.1)
Sem1 W8	Katakana There is/are ~ Location words	Lesson 4 (vol.1)
Sem1 W9	Verb past tense Introduction of Kanji Verb tense	Lesson 4 (vol.1)
Sem1 W10	Adjectives	Lesson 5 (vol.1)
Sem1 W11	Adjectives past tense Likes/Dislikes Let's ~	Lesson 5 (vol.1)
Sem1 W12	Revision	

Lower beginners: JPN 104 (2005-06) Semester 2

Semester/Week	Grammar-based lesson contents	Textbook: <i>Genki</i>
Sem2 W13	Revision Verb te-form / ~te kudasai / ~te ~te masu	Lesson 6 (vol.1)
Sem2 W14	You may~ / You must not~ Verb dictionary-form	Lesson 6 (vol.1)
Sem2 W15	Explaining body features	Lesson 6/7 (vol.1)
Sem2 W16	~te imasu Adjectives connection Counters	Lesson 7 (vol.1)
Sem2 W17	~to go (come) to ~ ~to know Verb nai-form	Lesson 8 (vol.1)
Sem2 W18	~to think~ / ~to say~ ~to like/dislike to do ~te masu ~to be good/bad at ~	Lesson 8 (vol.1)
Sem2 W19	Verb forms revision Casual speech	Lesson 9 (vol.1)
Sem2 W20	Relative clause Stating reasons Comparison	Lesson 9 (vol.1)
Sem2 W21	Comparison ~ to intend to ~ ~ to become ~	Lesson 10 (vol.1)
Sem2 W22	somewhere / nowhere ~ to want to ~ ~ to have done ~	Lesson 10 /11 (vol.1)
Sem2 W23	Revision	
Sem2 W24	Reading week	

Upper beginners: JPN 201 (2005-06)

Semester/Week	Grammar-based lesson contents	Textbook: <i>Genki</i>
Sem1 W1	~ to want to ~ ~ to have done ~	Lesson 11 (vol.1)
Sem1 W2	~ to exceed to ~	Lesson 11 (vol.1)
Sem1 W3	~ n desu it is better to be ~ must ~	Lesson 12 (vol.2)
Sem1 W4	~ looks like Potential verbs	Lesson 13 (vol.2)
Sem1 W5	Potential verbs ~ te miru ~ shi ~ shi ~ nara	Lesson 13 (vol.2)
Sem1 W6	Reading week	
Sem1 W7	Counters ~ may (might) ~ to give/receive	Lesson 14 (vol.2)
Sem1 W8	to want to ~ Why don't you ~ ?	Lesson 14 (vol.2)
Sem1 W9	Volitional form	Lesson 15 (vol.2)
Sem1 W10	Relative clause ~ te ageru / ~ te morau / ~ te kureru	Lesson 15 (vol.2)
Sem1 W11	When ~	Lesson 16 (vol.2)
Sem1 W12	Revision	
Sem2 W13	Reported speech If ~ looks like ~	Lesson 17 (vol.2)
Sem2 W14	It seems ~ Before ~ / After ~ You don't need to ~	Lesson 17 (vol.2)
Sem2 W15	Transitivity pairs If / When ~ While ~	Lesson 18 (vol.2)
Sem2 W16	I should have done ~	Lesson 18/19 (vol.2)

	Honorific verbs	
Sem2 W17	ought to ~ Humble expressions	Lesson 19 (vol.2)
Sem2 W18	without ~ questions within larger sentences ~ called ~ easy / difficult to ~ Passive	Lesson 20 (vol.2)
Sem2 W19	Passive ~ tearu / ~ teoku	Lesson 21 (vol.2)
Sem2 W20	While ~ Adjectives + suru ~ te hoshii Causative form	Lesson 21 (vol.2)
Sem2 W21	Causative sentences Causative passive sentences Imperative form Although ~ such as ~	Lesson 22 (vol.2)
Sem2 W22	even if ~ to decide to do ~	Lesson 23 (vol.2)
Sem2 W23	until ~ how to ~ Revision	Lesson 23 (vol.2)
Sem2 W24	Reading week	

Questionnaire: General Questions

Stage 1 / 2

Date:

This questionnaire is part of my PhD research project designed to investigate cultural dimension in the beginner's Japanese language course.

Your answers are not only useful for my research but also help people in the academic and educational fields in intercultural studies. All the information you give is **ABSOLUTELY ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL** and available for the purpose of research only. The information you give do not affect your position in the University, either.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Etsuko YAMADA

Questions:

Q1: Your personal details (circle one or fill in the blanks). :

- (1) Gender: Male / Female
- (2) Student Status: Home Student / International Student
- (3) Your Nationality: ()
- (4) Your Degree Programme Code: ()

Q2: What are your main reasons to start (or to have started) to learn Japanese language? Tick as many as you like.

- () (a) I am planning to travel to Japan.
- () (b) Japanese language helps me to get a good job.
- () (c) I wish to make it useful skills.
- () (d) I am interested in Japanese culture (please answer Q3)
- () (e) I have Japanese friends.
- () (f) I have Japanese family background.
- () (g) I wanted to learn non-European language.

(h) I have visited (lived in) Japan before.

When ?:

How long?:

Purpose?:

(i) Others (please specify)

()

Q3: (For those who have ticked Q2-(d))
What kind of Japanese culture influenced your decision to start learning Japanese language? Please list all you can think of.

Q4: What kind of skills and knowledge are important for you in the long-term?

Tick as many as you like.

(a) Reading Skills

(b) Writing Skills

(c) Listening Skills

(d) Speaking Skills

(e) Understanding of Japanese culture

(f) Linguistic knowledge about Japanese language (eg. use of polite forms, etc.)

(g) Others

Please specify: ()

Many thanks for your help.

Lesson plans (Focused lessons)

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Breakfast	<i>Date:</i> 1 Nov. 05 (Group B) / 3 Nov. 05 (Group A)	Lower beginners sem. 1-1
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To ask in pair, what he/she eats and drinks for breakfast. ● Statistics on breakfast style in Japan nowadays are shown. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To learn basic Q&A grammatical structures with verbs. ● To learn basic vocabulary for the basic verbs. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think over what kind of pattern of breakfast each country has. ● To know about Japanese people's breakfast patterns these days (50% take Japanese traditional style breakfast and the rest 50%, western style). 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about if the existing image of breakfast for each country is correct. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Name Order	<i>Date:</i> 22 Nov. 05 (Group B) / 24 Nov. 05 (Group A)	Lower beginners sem. 1-2
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● *Katakana reading practice(world map, survival English conversation book published in Japan) ● Business card exchange using handwritten business cards of the students' names. ● Different name patterns in the world are introduced. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To learn how to say names in Japanese. ● To learn how to read and write non-Japanese words in Katakana. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To learn the name order patterns are not the same all over the world. In Japanese, surnames always come first and are used more often in daily situations than in the UK. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about how the difference of the name patterns were created in each culture. (Eg first-sur name order, having surname, middle name, etc.) 		

*Katakana: Scripts used for foreign and loan words only.

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Shall We Dance?: Reading	<i>Date:</i> 15 Feb. 06	Lower beginners sem. 2-1
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading practice using text written in simplified Japanese (<i>Shall We Dance?</i> (©1996 Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc.). Then, to outline and to discuss the image of Japanese people. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To read and understand short story in Japanese making use of basic grammar and vocabulary. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To find about what is 'Japanese' in the story. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the image of Japan and Japanese people's life. 		

* I wrote down the story by myself carefully choosing the structures and vocabulary suitable for the course. The teaching technique of using well-known films and rewriting the story in basic Japanese was learned from Ms Miwa Moriwaki, my colleague at the Japan Foundation London Language Centre from 2001 to 2004. I wish to acknowledge it as a remark of gratitude.

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Shall We Dance?: Film	<i>Date:</i> 16 Feb. 06	Lower beginners sem. 2-2
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Watching the authentic Japanese film, '<i>Shall We Dance?</i> (©1996 Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc.)' 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To consolidate the reading comprehension of the story in the last lesson through watching the film. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have a visual image of the story in the last lesson and to get to know the daily life of a typical middle aged man in Japan. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the image of Japan and Japanese people's life. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Leisure Time	<i>Date:</i> 10 Mar. 06	Lower beginners sem. 2-3
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To guess the results of the following survey* on free time. To form sentences in Japanese as practice. After that, the survey result is shown. <p>(a) What Japanese people like to do. (b) What British people like to do. (c) What Japanese people think that British people like to do.</p>		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use 'Himanatoki, ~noga sukidesu' form (When I have free time, I like to do~.) 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To go over the images of English people for Japanese people and vice versa. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about stereotypical images developed on both sides(England and Japan). 		

*The survey result was taken from a Japanese website (<http://www.eikokutabi.com/> accessed 9th March 2006). (a) to eat out / to drive / to travel / to do karaoke / to watch video (b) to meet friends / to watch TV and video / to listen to music / to go to cinema / to take a walk (c) to go mountain hiking / to do gardening / to have afternoon tea / to do DIY / to take a walk

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Comparing Prices	<i>Date:</i> 24 Mar. 06	Lower beginners sem. 2-4
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To practice comparison sentence structure using the price list of daily items such as milk, coffee, beer, etc in Japan and the UK and the advantage/disadvantage list of urban/country life. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use grammatical structure of comparison. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To get to know and to recognise the prices of Japan and the UK. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think over the stereotype image of Japan as a high price country. ● To think about why particular good is expensive/cheap in the country. ● To think about which life style(urban/country) is preferred. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Special Foods	<i>Date:</i> 1 Nov. 05	Upper beginners sem. 1-1
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Asking in pairs about experience and trial of specific Japanese foods using the grammatical structures. ● Listing up what we are able to buy or to do at convenience stores in Japan. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use ~kotogaaru (to have done), potential, ~to omou (to think), ~temiru (to try), ~temitai (to like to try), in Q&A patterns in conversation. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To get to know about specific foods in Japan (some real foods were shown). ● What we can do at convenience stores in Japan. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the perception and prejudice on foods. ● Think about the convenience stores in Japan. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Gifts	<i>Date:</i> 22 Nov. 05	Upper beginners sem. 1-2
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guessing and forming Japanese sentences using giving and receiving verbs what people usually do at Valentine's day in Japan. ● Talking about gift customs of different countries using the structures. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use giving and receiving verbs and the structures. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To get to know about different Valentine's day and gift customs in different countries. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about gift customs in each country. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Origins of Greetings phrases	<i>Date:</i> 15 Dec. 05	Upper beginners sem. 1-3
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finding out origins of the set phrases after checking when the phrases are used. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use '~toki (when~)' with different tense. ● To use various greeting phrases in appropriate situations. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To know how the greeting set phrases were developed. ● To know the usage of greeting phrases especially the ones which do not exist the equivalents in their own language(eg. Honorific language concept). 		
<u><i>Why (criticality): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about how the greeting phrases were developed and how certain set phrases were created in each language. ● To think about how honorific language concepts are included in the set phrases. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Public Manner	<i>Date:</i> 7 Feb. 06	Upper beginners sem. 2-1
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To talk about what is allowed and not in public places or at meals using the structures. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use 'temoii (may)', 'tewaikenai (must not)', 'nakutewaikenai (must)', 'nakutemoii (do not have to)' 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compare the public and meal manners in Japan and their own countries. 		
<u><i>Why (criticality): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the way of thinking expressed in manners. ● To think about why people have developed manners. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Haiku (Japanese Poetry)	<i>Date:</i> 2 Mar. 06	Upper beginners sem. 2-2
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading comprehension of simple text about haiku. ● To guess seasons of the list of seasonal words. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To make full use of kanji (Chinese scripts) knowledge in guessing words. ● To recognise syllables and rhythms in Japanese language. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To know basic syllables pattern of haiku. ● To recognise the seasons in Japan through the seasonal words. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about why Haiku exists in Japan especially in relation to seasonal words. ● To compare the poetry in each country. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Kachi Kachi Yama (Folk Tales)	<i>Date:</i> 14 Mar. 06	Upper beginners sem. 2-3
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading comprehension of a folk tale. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To be able to read and understand short reading text using passive forms. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To know Japanese folk tales story. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the story patterns and fixed roles of the familiar animals. ● To compare it with the folk tales in each country. 		

<i>Lesson Title:</i> Metaphors	<i>Date:</i> 28 Apr. 06	Upper beginners sem. 2-5
<u><i>Main Activities</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To guess what is used as metaphors in Japanese and to compare them with other language. 		
<u><i>Can do (language competence)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To use '-noyona (like~)', '-noyoni (as if~)'. 		
<u><i>Know (knowledge of language and culture)</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To get to know Japanese metaphors. 		
<u><i>Why (thinking): intercultural and linguistic dimensions</i></u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To think about the differences and similarities of the metaphors in each language. 		

Questionnaire: Post-Lesson

Stage 1 / 2

Date:

This questionnaire is part of my PhD research project designed to investigate cultural dimension in the beginner's Japanese language course.

Your opinions are not only useful for my research but also help people in the academic and educational fields in intercultural studies. All the information you give is **ABSOLUTELY ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL** and available for the purpose of research only. The information you give do not affect your position in the University, either.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Etsuko YAMADA

Questions:

Q1: What do you think you have learnt especially from today's lesson?

Q2: Have you gained any view which you have not had before? Or is there any new discovery?

Q3: Please tell me about your thought on Japan during the lesson.

Q4: Did today's lesson make you think about your own country? How?

Q5: In today's lesson, have you had any point which you had difficulty with?
If yes, what were they?

Q6: Please tell me your general thought about today's lesson.

Q7: What do you think of my comment on today's lesson?

Many thanks for your help.

Consent Form
(Approved by Durham University's Ethics Advisory Committee)

*Please cross out as necessary.

- (1) Have you read the Participant Information Sheet? Yes / No
- (2) Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study?
Yes / No
- (3) Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions?
Yes / No
- (4) Have you received enough information about the study?
Yes / No
- (5) Have you been informed that all the information you give is absolutely
anonymous and confidential?
Yes / No
- (6) Do you consent to participate in the study? Yes / No
- (7) Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study: at any
time and without having to give a reason for withdrawing and without
affecting your position in the University? Yes / No

Signature _____ Date _____

October 2005

Dear Students,

Re: Participant Information Sheet on data collection

As you are aware that I am currently a part-time PhD research student at School of Education, University of Durham, as well as teaching fellow in Japanese at School of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle.

I need to ask for your help in data collection for my PhD research in cultural dimension in beginners Japanese course. I am planning to finish this data collection at the end of 2005-06 academic year. I have designed 5-7 cultural dimension focused lessons per semester. What I am going to ask you is the following.

- (1) To allow me video recording of these focused lessons

The purpose of this video recording is to make record of the teaching so that it is possible to review it afterwards. It is sometimes difficult to concentrate on taking notes of the teaching while I myself am engaged in teaching.

- (2) To fill in questionnaires after some lessons including these focused lessons

The purpose of this questionnaire is to study what kind of implication can be gained from each lesson, regardless of focused ones or not. I will need 5-6 participants for this per lesson.

- (3) To join in a follow-up interview session on the questionnaire above.

The purpose of this is to draw your opinions which did not appear on the questionnaire and to have an opportunity to exchange your view with other participants. For me, it will lead to observe my data from a different angle.

Your answers are not only useful for my research but also help people in the academic and educational fields in intercultural studies. All the information you give is **ABSOLUTELY ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL** and available for the purpose of research only. The recording will be destroyed after the end of the project. The information you give do not affect your position in the University, either.

If you agree to participate in this, I would be grateful if you could fill in the separate 'consent form'.

Thank you very much for your help and time.

Regards,

Etsuko YAMADA

Sample of lesson record (Shall We Dance?: Reading)

Can do (language competence):

To read and understand short story in Japanese making use of basic grammar and vocabulary.

Know (cultural knowledge):

To find about what is 'Japanese' in the story.

Why (thinking):

To think about the image of Japan and Japanese people's life.

Attendance:

13

Researcher's Note:

It looks like that the so called 'stereo type' image' occurs to them first.

Teacher's Note:

Forgot to give them time to read the parts they did not read after the information gap activity.

Written Information:

Reading text in Japanese 'Shall We Dance?' about a busy business man who came to be interested in learning ballroom dancing.

Shall We Dance ? (©1996 Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc.)

Lesson Stream:

L6 Listening Practice	
00'00"00	Reading of the text 'Shall we Dance' The half of the class will read Text 1 and the rest will read Text 2.
00'06"04	Asking what the students read for comprehension.
00'11"30	Teacher checks the comprehension of the whole story.
00'17"00	To talk with the neighbours, what part they feel 'Japan'.
00'19"52	Round up-what the students picked up as 'Japanese'
00'23"44	Post-lesson questionnaire
00'34"24	

Actions: T (Teacher), S (Student)

00'06"50(T): Salary man is a typical word for Japanese company employees working really hard.

00'17"00(T): Have you recognised any part which you feel especially Japanese, or Japan?

00'17"20(T): Any part you felt Japanese in your image....

00'19"54(T): Fiona-san, Mark-san, what have you picked up as the Japanese image for you, sort of typical ones?

(S): [inaudible] practice seriously

(T):practice seriously.... Phil-san to Kirsty-san.....

(S): Ya, we said the same thing

(T): seriously, practice seriously.....Lindsey-san tachi.....

(S): We said that because he works very hard, and his wife[inaudible]

(T): ...work very hard, and the wife didn't ask anything. Perhaps she noticed that, she doesn't say anything. Because every Wednesday night, he comes back late, and also he goes out on Sunday as well. Nowadays, it's not like that. But you know, if your husband is working for Japanese company, it was

sometimes quite normal that you have to work on Sundays, you know, not in the office but sometimes you need to do some business lunch or business golf or those things are going on Sundays. So it's not necessary his own pleasure.

Nicole-san tachi.....

(S): He comes home very late at night

(T): Late at night.....sorekara, kokowa? Heidi-san tachi,,,

(S): We said that he was a very busy salary man...

(T): Busy, work very hard...overlaps a bit...Hai, Makoto-san....Bohan-san

(S): He doesn't have any spare time...

(T): No spare time....Maa iideshou. Maybe some images are exaggerated.

So perhaps it's not only his wife, but he didn't say anything like this andthen do you think that this happens here, this could be....., I think that people working in city are like that, they work really really hard, city in London.....No spare time.....wife didn't ask anything ? It's a bit different here, I think. He comes home late at night. It's a bit slightly old image of Japan. These days people are changing a bit. When the economy there was better, then they tended to work more, but these days they started doubting the value of it, working too hard.

Group interview transcription devices

Meaning	Symbol
(1) period / comma	-
(Because periods and comma are not always suitable for spoken discourse, I decided not to use them.)	
(2) silence more than three seconds	...
(3) special terms, Japanese words	' '
(4) inaudible words	[]
(5) non-verbal communications	()

R: Researcher

P-A: Participant - Initial

Process of group interview scripts: Categories of discourse according to topics
(Culture / Language (Ling))

- Culture*
- 472 P-T: it's a - you have a - it seems that Japanese people have a huge sense of order -
473 the order - the order between the people - the order between [] - the order
474 []
- Ling*
- 475 P-D: it's even just the levels of language - like plain form - 'masu-form' - honorific
476 and polite forms and so on - I mean that's obviously that exists in French and
477 English - but it's not like [whole new] verb ending - it's a sort of like if I'm
478 talking so important - I'll - I don't know - I'll speak a certain way and []
479 talk with my friends - I'll be more casual - and but it doesn't really change the
480 language structure or anything - the - the - even the verbs or anything -
481 ✓ wouldn't change those - whereas in Japanese - it's such a clear difference -
482 it's such a - like ^{we} are using 'keigo' - then it's so clear that wanting to be very
483 very polite - and speaking up to someone - in English or French - it's much
484 ✓ more individual thing - how - how you'd be polite to someone is - whether
485 you choose to - I don't know - just speak in more standard English - even
486 though you're supposed to dialect or whatever - or just - I don't know you
487 know - it's more - you decide for yourself how to be polite almost - whereas
488 ✓ in Japanese - it's
- 489 R: aah - you decide - um
- 490 P-D: yeah - whereas in Japanese - if you're gonna to be polite - use 'keigo' - you
491 can't
- 492 P-T: [] polite - you don't have to be polite - you don't [really sure] if you have
493 to - yeah - you can but you can but it's you have more rules to follow - in
494 French or English - in French - it's even worse because you have 2 different -
495 what to say [interism]?
- 496 P-D: [] what is it?
- 497 P-T: you have 'tu' and 'vous' - but in fact that 'tu' means er - [he's] a person -
498 [he's] a student of my age - we have [the same class] we are talking [] -
499 [] 'tu' because it is for any
- 500 P-D: to the teacher - 'tu'
- 501 P-T: and we'll say to you with respect - talk to you with some respect - so we have
502 to use - [you] - aah - 'vous' - but 'vous' means as well - [] 'tu'
- 503 P-D: you plural
- 504 P-T: yeah
- 505 P-D: it's plural - [] that in Italian

- 167 recognise if you get the new idea about it or not but - you know - just roughly
 168 - what have we talked last year - no - no - no - last week?
 169 P-B: preconceptions about Japanese
 170 P-P: yeah - I said last week is - when I was [keidaide] preconceptions of Japanese
 171 ↓ ↓ people and which not so much when I came where I started studying - when
 172 ↓ ↓ I started travelling to Japan - met Japanese people - I went to Japan myself -
 173 ↓ ↓ just sort of shattered all my preconceptions - and yeah - I think that's what I
 174 said last week
 175 P-B: yeah - just unusual [things] I want to say that - they probably got
 176 preconceptions about us
 177 P-F: walking in the mountains
 178 P-B: yeah - like afternoon tea - I think that was a big talking point
 179 P-K: [the meaningful point in fact] was we guessed all the preconceptions there
 180 were
 181 P-several: yeah - yeah
 182 P-B: [we gonna] guess what it was []
 183 P-K: I think every country has that though - they project the solution - this is
 184 what we are like - then you go []
 185 P-P: I think people like to keep it up - they like to have their own identities
 186 we're almost like
 187 P-several: []
 188 P-K: oh - we do the same though - it's keeping you slightly separate - I think
 189 every nation does that
 190 P-P: yeah - absolutely
 191 P-B: you're not looking at the peoples individual - you [just] [] []
 192 generalisation's entire place
 193 P-K: yeah
 194 P-B: you're not when you get there obviously - you meet individual people - and
 195 you - they've obviously got their own identities and things they like to do
 196 and you know - so - so - so - you gonna - like obviously - not everybody is
 197 gonna - you know - not everybody sings gonna karaoke -or not everybody
 198 drinks afternoon tea - [but] some people do drink afternoon tea - so maybe
 199 that's why - they just they think that we do drink a lot afternoon tea -
 200 personally I don't drink any afternoon tea - not really - (laughs) - but they

Knowledge Table

Analysis Stage		General knowledge	Experience		Other studies	Discussions	Japanese language lessons	
			Self-study, learning	Others			Focused	Non-focused
Investigation	Case 1		√					
	Case 2		√					
	Case 3		√					
	Case 4		√			√		
	Case 5		√					
	Case 6		√					
	Case 7		√					
	Case 8		√	√				
	Case 9						√	
	Case 10		√					
	Case 11		√					
	Case 12		√					
Comparison	Case 1				√			
	Case 2				√			
	Case 3				√			
	Case 4				√			
	Case 5		√		√		√	
	Case 6		√		√			
	Case 7		√		√			√
	Case 8		√		√			
	Case 9		√		√			
	Case 10				√			
	Case 11		√		√			
	Case 12		√		√			
	Case 13		√		√			
	Case 14	√				√	√	
	Case 15	√					√	
	Case 16				√			√
	Case 17				√		√	
	Case 18	√					√	
	Case 19						√	
	Case 20	√	√					
	Case 21	√	√					
	Case 22		√			√		
	Case 23		√					
	Case 24		√			√		
	Case 25				√		√	
	Case 26		√		√			
	Case 27	√					√	
Linking	Case 1	√		√	√		√	
	Case 2	√					√	
	Case 3	√					√	
	Case 4	√					√	
	Case 5	√					√	√
	Case 6	√	√					
	Case 7							√
	Case 8							√
	Case 9	√						√
	Case 10	√		√		√	√	
	Case 11	√		√		√	√	
	Case 12	√	√					
	Case 13	√	√	√				
	Case 14		√		√			

- Notes: (1) 'Experience (Others)' includes travels to Japan and other countries and meeting with people, etc..
(2) 'Other Studies' include other language learning, history, linguistics and literatures, etc..
(3) The only occasions of discussions for the participants are group interview settings for the data collection.