

**THE COGNITIVE PROCESSES  
OF JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS  
IN UNDERSTANDING VIDEOS**

**YOSHIDA MASAHIRO**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**MARCH 2010**

**THE COGNITIVE PROCESSES  
OF JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS  
IN UNDERSTANDING VIDEOS**

**YOSHIDA MASAHIRO**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENT  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LINGUISTICS**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**MARCH 2010**

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

**ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION**

Name of Candidate: **YOSHIDA Masahiro** (I.C/Passport No: **TF7088313**)

Registration/Matric No: **TGC070003**

Name of Degree: **Master of Linguistics**

Title of Project Paper/Research Report/**Dissertation**/Thesis (“this work”)

**THE COGNITIVE PROCESSES OF JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN UNDERSTANDING VIDEOS**

Field of Study: **Learning Strategy**

I do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) I am the sole author/writer of this work;
- (2) This work is original;
- (3) Any use of any work in which copyright exists was done by way of fair dealing and for permitted purposes and any excerpt or extract from, or reference to or reproduction of any copyright work has been disclosed expressly and sufficiently and the title of the work and its authorship have acknowledged in this work;
- (4) I do not have any actual knowledge nor do I ought reasonably to know that the making of this work constitutes an infringement of any copyright work;
- (5) I hereby assign all and every rights in the copyright to this work to the University of Malaya (“UM”), who henceforth shall be owner of the copyright in this work and that any reproduction or use in any form or by any means whatsoever is prohibited without the written consent of UM having been first had and obtained;
- (6) I am fully aware that if in the course of making this work I have infringed any copyright whether intentionally or otherwise, I may be subject to legal action or any other action as may be determined by UM.

Candidate’s Signature

Date:

Subscribed solemnly declared before,

Witness’s Signature

Date:

Name: **Dr. Ng Lee Luan**

Designation: **Lecturer/Supervisor**

## Abstract

### THE COGNITIVE PROCESSES OF JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN UNDERSTANDING VIDEOS

The aim of this study is to explore the differences between the thinking processes of proficient learners and less proficient learners of Japanese language while watching Japanese videos. This study examines facilitating and distracting factors which impact the learners' understanding of the video content. Data of think aloud protocols, verbal summaries and semi-structured interviews were collected from four proficient learners and four less proficient learners while watching two kinds of videos; i.e., a Japanese animation "Doraemon" and a Japanese drama "Nodame Cantabile". Analyses of listening strategies revealed that both proficient and less proficient learners used a lot of visual elements to understand the content of the videos. However, proficient learners used more meta-cognitive strategies to reflect their understanding of the videos. Analyses of distracting factors revealed that there are six factors that distract learners' understanding of videos and they are related to unknown words and phrases, grammatical difficulties, long utterances, fast speech rate, unclear pronunciation and distracting visuals. On the other hand, key words, tone of voice, visual nonlinguistic elements and visual linguistic elements helped learners comprehend the video content.

## Abstrak

### PROSES KOGNITIF PELAJAR-PELAJAR BAHASA JEPUN DALAM MEMAHAMI TAYANGAN VIDEO

Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk memeriksa perbezaan proses pemikiran diantara pelajar-pelajar bahasa Jepun yang mahir dan pelajar-pelajar yang kurang mahir sewaktu menonton tayangan video Jepun. Penyelidikan ini meneliti faktor-faktor yang membantu dan faktor-faktor yang mengganggu perhatian, yang memberi kesan ke atas pemahaman pelajar-pelajar terhadap kandungan video. Data mengenai tatacara menterjemahkan apa yang difikirkan, ringkasan lisan dan temubual berbentuk separa struktur yang dikumpulkan daripada empat orang pelajar-pelajar mahir dan empat orang pelajar-pelajar kurang mahir ketika menonton dua jenis tayangan video iaitu animasi Jepun “Doraemon” dan drama Jepun “Nodame Cantabile”. Analisa strategi pendengaran menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua kumpulan pelajar mahir dan pelajar kurang mahir banyak menggunakan unsur visual untuk memahami isi kandungan kedua-dua video tersebut. Walaubagaimanapun, pelajar-pelajar mahir banyak menggunakan strategi-strategi meta kognitif untuk menunjukkan pemahaman mereka terhadap kandungan video-video tersebut. Analisa faktor-faktor yang mengganggu perhatian mendapati bahawa; terdapat enam faktor yang mengganggu perhatian pelajar-pelajar dalam memahami kandungan video dan faktor-faktor tersebut berhubungkait dengan perkataan dan frasa yang tidak diketahui, kesukaran dalam nahu, ungkapan yang panjang, kadar kelajuan tuturkata, sebutan yang tidak jelas dan pandangan yang mengganggu perhatian. Sebaliknya, kata-kata kunci, lentur suara, unsur-unsur visual yang bukan berbentuk linguistik serta unsur-unsur visual berbentuk linguistik membantu pelajar-pelajar untuk memahami kandungan video.

## Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Dr. Ng Lee Luan for her guidance throughout and valuable comments, advice and support. My sincere gratitude also goes to the subjects involved in this study, for making this study possible.

My gratitude also goes to the Japanese language learners who were the subjects of this research. I would also like to thank my good friends: Hashim Ghany bin Ibrahim, Lena Khaw AMN, Loh Chang Meng, Nor Amriah binti Abdul Rahman, Uma Rani A Rethina Velu, who took effort in reading and providing me with valuable comments, and for being there when I needed support.

## Table of Content

Cover Page.....	i
Original Literary Work Declaration.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Abstrak.....	iv
Acknowledgement.....	v
Table of Content.....	vi
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Figures.....	xii
List of Abbreviation.....	xiii
CHAPTER ONE      INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	2
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.4 Purpose of the study.....	6
1.5 Research questions.....	7
1.6 Significance of the study.....	7
1.7 Limitation of the study.....	8
1.8 Conclusion.....	8
CHAPTER TWO      REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE.....	10
2.1 Individual learner differences.....	10
2.2 Learning strategies.....	13
2.2.1 Learning strategies in language learning and teaching.....	13
2.2.2 Definition and taxonomy of learning strategies.....	15

2.3	Listening strategies.....	22
2.3.1	Taxonomy of Listening Strategies.....	22
2.3.2	Strategy Use between Proficient Learners and Less Proficient Learners..	25
2.4	Factors that Affect Understanding of Videos.....	28
2.4.1	Distracting factors in understanding video.....	29
2.4.1.1	Fast speech rate, unclear pronunciation and long utterance.....	29
2.4.1.2	Vocabulary.....	31
2.4.1.3	Visual factor.....	31
2.4.2	Facilitating factors in understanding videos.....	32
2.4.2.1	Audio factors.....	32
2.4.2.2	Visual factors.....	32
2.5	Summary.....	33
CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY.....		34
3.1	Research design.....	34
3.2	Description of the Subjects.....	35
3.3	Materials.....	36
3.4	Procedure.....	41
3.4.1	Training session.....	41
3.4.1.1	Think aloud while reading an article.....	42
3.4.1.2	Think aloud while watching short advertisements.....	43
3.4.1.3	Think aloud while watching a 10-minute-long video material.....	44
3.4.2	Data Collection.....	45
3.4.2.1	Think aloud protocols.....	45
3.4.2.2	Verbal summaries.....	46
3.4.2.3	Description of scenes.....	46
3.4.2.4	Interview.....	48



3.4.2.5	Languages used by the subjects in data collection session.....	49
3.5	Data Analyses.....	50
3.5.1	Translation.....	50
3.5.2	Transcription.....	51
3.5.3	Coding.....	51
3.5.4	Reliability checks.....	54
3.5.5	Data analyses procedure.....	56
3.5.5.1	Research Question 1.....	57
3.5.5.2	Research Question 2.....	57
3.5.5.3	Research Question 3.....	57
3.6	Triangulation.....	58
3.7	Summary.....	59
CHAPTER FOUR	DATA ANALYSES AND FINDINGS.....	61
4.1	Research Question 1 Differences in strategy use.....	61
4.1.1	Differences in strategies used between proficient learners and less proficient learners.....	65
4.1.2	Differences in strategies used between previous studies and the present study.....	70
4.1.2.1	Metacognitive strategies.....	73
4.1.2.2	Inferencing.....	74
4.1.2.3	Elaboration.....	74
4.1.2.4	Summarization.....	75
4.1.2.5	Others.....	75
4.1.3	Difference in frequency of strategy use among video scenes.....	76
4.2	Research Question 2 Difficulties in understanding videos.....	79
4.2.1	Linguistic knowledge.....	80
4.2.1.1	Unknown word or phrase.....	81

4.2.1.2 Grammatical difficulty.....	84
4.2.2 Audio factor.....	87
4.2.2.1 Long utterance.....	87
4.2.2.2 Unclear pronunciation.....	90
4.2.2.3 Fast speech rate.....	92
4.2.3 Distracting visual.....	93
4.3 Research Question 3 Factors that facilitate understanding videos.....	96
4.3.1 Key word or phrase.....	97
4.3.2 Tone of voice.....	100
4.3.3 Visual factor.....	101
4.3.3.1 Visual nonlinguistic element.....	101
4.3.3.2 Visual linguistic element.....	105
4.4 Conclusion.....	106
<b>CHAPTER FIVE IMPLICATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>108</b>
5.1 Implications of this study.....	110
5.1.1 Theoretical implications.....	110
5.1.2 Methodological implications.....	111
5.1.3 Research implications.....	112
5.1.4 Pedagogical implications.....	113
5.2 Suggestions for further research.....	117
5.3 Conclusion.....	118
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>APPENDIX A TAXONOMY OF STRATEGIES DEVELOPED FOR THIS STUDY.....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>APPENDIX B READING MATERIAL USED IN TRAINING SESSION OF THINK ALOUD PROTOCOL.....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>APPENDIX C OBSERVATION FORM.....</b>	<b>128</b>

APPENDIX D	QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW .....	129
APPENDIX E	COMPLETE LIST OF SUB-SCENES.....	131
APPENDIX F	SAMPLES OF THINK ALOUD PROTOCOL 1 (PROFICIENT LEARNER).....	133
APPENDIX G	SAMPLES OF THINK ALOUD PROTOCOL 2 (LESS PROFICIENT LEARNER).....	147
APPENDIX H	CONSENT FORM.....	160

## List of Tables

Table 2.1	Taxonomy of learning strategies by O'Malley and Chamot.....	16
Table 2.2	Oxford's taxonomy of learning strategies.....	19
Table 2.3	Listening Comprehension Strategies and their Definitions by Vandergrift.....	24
Table 3.1	Subjects of this study.....	36
Table 3.2	Vocabulary in the 1 <sup>st</sup> scene of 'Doraemon'(D1).....	39
Table 3.3	Vocabulary in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> scene of 'Doraemon' (D2).....	39
Table 3.4	Vocabulary in the 1 <sup>st</sup> scene of 'Nodame Cantabile' (N1).....	40
Table 3.5	Vocabulary in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> scene of 'Nodame Cantabile' (N2).....	40
Table 3.6	Language used in data collection.....	49
Table 3.7	Differences in inferencing strategy used between Vandergrift's study and the present study.....	53
Table 3.8	First coding of the data randomly assigned for reliability check.....	55
Table 3.9	Second coding of the data randomly assigned for reliability check....	56
Table 4.1	Example of coding.....	62
Table 4.2	Types and frequency of strategies used by the subjects.....	64
Table 4.3	Strategies used and their frequency of use by the subjects.....	66
Table 4.4	Frequency and percentage of strategies used by proficient learners and less proficient learners.....	67
Table 4.5	Frequency of strategies used by the subjects in this study.....	71
Table 4.6	Frequency and percentage of 5 strategies used by proficient learners and less proficient learners in this study.....	72
Table 4.7	Comparison with previous studies.....	72
Table 4.8	Other strategies used in Seo's study and the present study.....	75
Table 4.9	Difference of strategies used by learners among scenes of the videos.....	77

## List of Figures

Figure 3.1	Research design.....	34
Figure 3.2	Triangulation in this study.....	58
Figure 4.1	Basic sentence structure of Japanese language.....	86
Figure 5.1	Findings of this study.....	108

## List of Abbreviation

BALLI	Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory
EFL	English as a foreign language
GLL	Good language learners
JFL	Japanese as a foreign language
JLPT	Japanese language proficiency test
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LPL	Less proficient learner
PL	Proficient learner
SILL	Strategy Inventory for Language Learning
TAP	Think aloud protocol