MANGA MOTIVATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Pablo states in his article *B.C. lags in Asian education* (published May 1, 2008) in Georgia Strait that fewer students are enrolling in Asian language programs. To address this concern of declining enrolment, this paper examines the notion of interest and its significance within a language learning motivational framework. By understanding the interest students have in such Japanese popular media such as *manga* (graphic novels), educators are then able to construct motivating and effective approaches that not only encourage the study of Japanese but may also foster the study of foreign languages in general. The multifaceted constructs of interest as an abstract motivational effect as well as a concrete activity have implications for the language classroom in terms of how instructors might use *manga* to encourage motivation. Therefore, the challenge is how to make *manga* texts curriculum-appropriate. To justify the ‘legitimacy’ of using *manga*, it is important to view it as something that can complement the textbook, which tends to simplify language as a set of discrete and abstract units bound by rules. The pedagogical need to keep language memorable and testable runs the danger of solidifying, decomposing and fragmenting what in real life is often fluid, variable and continuous. It is suggested here that the ‘ebb and flow’ of conversation between formal and informal registers, that is lacking in textbooks, can be compensated for with the complementary use of *manga* texts.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .......................................................................................... ii

Table of Contents.................................................................................. iii

Acknowledgments.................................................................................. v

**INTRODUCTION** ........................................................................ 1

- Background of study ......................................................................... 2
- Questions for study ........................................................................... 5
- Application of study .......................................................................... 6
- Purpose of study ............................................................................... 6

**LITERATURE REVIEW** ................................................................. 9

- Motivation in second language learning ........................................... 9

  - Figure 1: Dörnyei’s (1994) framework of motivation ...................... 13
  
  - Figure 2: Dörnyei’s motivational teaching practice ....................... 16

  - Figure 3: Summary flowcharts ..................................................... 20

- Interest: Aspect of motivation ......................................................... 21

  - Figure 4: A section of hypothetical model of causal relations .......... 24

- Manga ............................................................................................ 26

**CONNECTIONS TO PRACTICE** .................................................. 29

- Formality versus emotionality of language ................................. 30

  - Figure 5: Japanese review sheet ................................................. 31

- Discrepancy between textbook and manga .................................. 33

  - Figure 6: Light’s formal register ................................................. 36
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

"Why do students take Japanese?" was a question asked out of genuine curiosity by a teacher after observing one of my Japanese 11 classes. Given that this conversation took place in a small rural town in the interior of British Columbia that was and is predominantly white and middle class, I had to admit that I was also somewhat surprised to be teaching a Japanese course in this community. Having done my student teacher practicum in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, I was used to seeing primarily Asian students taking Japanese. I was convinced the motivation for these students to take Japanese was due primarily to the grammatical and orthographic similarities between Japanese and the Korean and Chinese languages respectively and which made learning the Japanese language less demanding.

This belief that was shattered when, as a newly graduated and beginning teacher, I walked into a classroom in the Southern Interior of British Columbia to teach my first Introductory Japanese class and discovered I was the only Asian person in the classroom. This classroom setting in which most students had neither previous language training in Japanese nor apparent cultural and linguistic background in Japanese or any Asian languages, was an incredible surprise.

What also caught me by surprise was how knowledgeable some of them were about contemporary Japanese media culture that, I am embarrassed to say, I knew very little about. Pokémon, for instance, which a few years ago was a worldwide phenomenon and very popular especially amongst elementary-aged school children, was for me just another Japanese-animated character amongst a host of other figures. Indeed, I only came to know these animated characters through detailed explanations from my students.
So why do students take Japanese? My initial and spontaneous response was “because of their interest in video games designed in Japan”. Many may regard this as only a form of entertainment and as such unproductive and non-educational within the school context. For example, Schwartz and Rubinstein-Ávila cite Gee (2004) who states that “comics, television, and video games are often perceived as contributing to students’ short attention spans, passivity, and lack of creativity and as providing distractions from educational practices” (2006, p. 40). However, it can also be argued that entertainment in and of itself is not necessarily something that undermines learning in an educational sense. Entertainment is a product of interest and it is this interest that can also drive or motivate a desire in people to learn some language skills. When channeled thoughtfully and appropriately, visual texts in this case manga can be employed as an enjoyable and challenging resource for second language knowledge development. Schwartz and Rubinstein-Ávila refer to Alvermann and Xu (2003) and Gee (2004) in stating “literacy researchers not only validate but also expand upon the ways youths engage with and use popular culture as a tool for literacy development and critical inquiry” (2006, p. 40).

Furthermore, I myself was a manga fan. The recent surge of general popularity in Japanese graphic novels and more importantly amongst some of my own students has re-ignited my childhood enjoyment in manga. I can relate to this interest in manga and can also attest to the fact that pleasure in reading this genre has contributed to my development of Japanese literacy: an interest and sociolinguistic understanding I hope to pass along to my students.

**Background of Study**

Motivation in second language acquisition has been researched extensively (see Gardner & Lambert (1959), Deci & Ryan (1985), Schiefele (1991), and Dörnyei (1994)). Much research on L2 (second language) motivation has been conducted over the past half-century and a
theoretical framework upon which we can build practical teaching and learning strategies in language pedagogy has been developed. Yet much of the research have centered on, as Williams puts it (2006) Commonly-Taught-Languages, such as French and as far as I know, very little attention was paid to Less-Commonly-Taught-Languages (LCTL), such as Japanese.

Motivation itself is not a unitary concept but a multi-faceted construct and therefore, is variable depending on context and motivational orientation (instrumental vs. integrative). For example, one’s motivation to take French may be different from that of Japanese. Insights into finding why students choose Japanese can shed light on other aspects of motivation (i.e., interest) to complement or add a different and more practitioner-oriented perspective to previous existing models on L2 motivation. Since the motivational drive for learning Japanese may be different from that of other Commonly-Taught-Languages, an alternative view of interest and different teaching methods may be required for effective teaching. (Please note that interest as a construct, will henceforth be emphasized in bold font.)

Also, many language classrooms are facing a declining enrolment or high attrition amongst the higher grades. Recently, I asked a Japanese teacher colleague what he thinks is the future of Japanese language programs. He said that sadly, it was pretty bleak and he’s noticing that there are increasingly fewer students in his Japanese classes since Japanese like other languages are electives and more students are enticed to taking minimal requirements for high school graduation.

Williams (2006) points out that in the United States, many language programs are now struggling to attract and retain students, which is a concern for many language teachers. She also notes that findings by Wen (1997) and Kondo (1999) suggest that motivation plays a key role in encouraging students to continue their language studies. Research into the motivations of
Japanese students and incorporating their interests to produce teaching materials is key to reinforce and hopefully sustain their interest or intrinsic motivation to prevent high attrition rates.

Therefore, I believe it is important to examine closely the motivation behind taking Japanese. Much L2 (second language) motivational research in the past have been focused on such commonly taught languages as, French, English, Spanish, etc. Williams (2006) states, “few studies have examined the specific motivations of foreign language students in the LCTL (less-commonly-taught-languages)” (p. 11).

However, times have changed and there is a greater variety of languages being taught in the British Columbia (B.C.) public schools, most notably Asian languages, such as, Mandarin, Japanese, Punjabi, etc. As a Japanese language teacher, I would like to investigate motivation within a Japanese learning context. This investigation may possibly be extended to other foreign language settings and can contribute to further understanding of language learning and yield valuable information for foreign language educators, in general.

Furthermore, the issue of whether or not, a comic book and any graphic novel can be considered an appropriate text within a classroom setting needs to be addressed. There is strong reluctance amongst parents and educators to acknowledge comic book reading and discussion as an education tool for language learning. In fact, some feel that it can undermine literacy development. A suitable reading text is still considered by many as having one mode of representation, namely a print-only based text.

However, in recent years, there have been several articles promoting the idea of multimodal texts as a viable tool for literacy education (Norton, 2003). The evolving notion of literacy education has expanded into a multi-dimensional enterprise with a growing acceptance and recognition toward having a variety of semiotic modes of expression and communication,
not just among researchers but also some educators. Cleaver (2008) cites James Bucky Carter, PhD, who states that although the institution of traditional education and print-based education is still dominating, there are increasing numbers of teachers asking how they can introduce comics into their classrooms. Schwartz and Rubinstein-Ávila (2006) argue that the popularity and the multimodal nature of manga reading warrant educators’ attention and consideration for manga as an educational tool.

In summary, the lack of research on L2 motivation specific to Japanese, the uncertain future of Japanese language programs, as well as other language programs due to declining enrolments and the lack of acceptance of manga or comic books in general are reasons for my study in exploring the manga phenomenon as an object of interest within a motivational framework and also as an educational tool for second language development.

To address the above stated issues, we must actively seek ways to sustain the initial interest in taking Japanese by looking into the notion of what motivates or prompts students to enroll in Japanese classes. Awareness of such specific and tangible interests as manga, will enable teachers to further motivate their students by implementing their students’ interests as a foundation or starting point to develop engaging as well as educational activities.

Questions for Study

The following questions will be investigated:

1. What does literature reveal about motivational theories dealing with the concept of interest and effective language learning?

2. What particular strategies can teachers use to enhance students’ Japanese languages skills, such as, sociolinguistic knowledge?
Application of Study

I hope to design a manga lesson plan that promotes discourse analysis and analytical skills to acknowledge various sentence patterns. There are a couple of challenges. One is to find resource materials that are age- and content-appropriate for secondary school students. Two, it is vital to carefully employ manga, given the classroom setting, for the purpose of not only engaging students to read leisurely but also analytically to discover speech patterns of appropriate and context-sensitive language use.

Because of its popularity among teenagers and young people, I chose the comic book series Death Note as a manga resource. I think it is an appropriate text to use for secondary school students due to the relatively complex and mature nature of its content. It is a mystery and psychological thriller series created by writer Tsugumi Ohba and illustrator Takeshi Obata. The series is about a high school student named Light Yagami who discovers a supernatural notebook dropped to Earth by Ryuk. Ryuk is a death god who allows Light to kill anyone he wishes by simply writing the victim’s name in the notebook. The story follows Light’s attempt to create and rule a world cleansed of evil (or what Light perceives as ‘evil’) using the notebook, and the complex conflict between him and his opponents.

Purpose of Study

This study will focus on manga as a means or instructional text for linking L2 motivation (and more specifically interest), with the emotionality of language. The purposes of using manga in Japanese language classrooms to fill in certain gaps in literature are two-fold:

a. The input (vs. effect) role of interest in motivational language teaching

b. The emotional (vs. formal) view of language

In the literature review, I will demonstrate the multifaceted role of interest in
language instruction. Most of the emphasis is placed on the notion of *interest* as a *motivational effect* in the learning process (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Dörnyei, 1994). In other words, *interest* is described as being generated (as opposed to being the 'generator') primarily by certain conditions or set of stimuli from the environment. Renniger, Hidi & Krapp (1992) refer to this as 'situational interest' whereby certain structural stimulus characteristics lead to motivational states that result in curiosity and exploratory behavior. Situational *interest* as a motivational state encourages a person to interact with the environment in order to acquire new information and is strongly influenced by environmental factors.

What is less emphasized in literature is the notion of 'individual interest' in the concrete sense of preferences/hobbies that can bring about positive experiences and psychological states that are generally referred to as *interest*. *Interest* in and of itself can then be interpreted as a form of motivational stimulus (input) to reinforce students’ existing interest and ultimately promote learning. The focus is on the influence of *interest* as *motivational input* on the subsequent learning activity (individual *interest*) as opposed to *interest* as *motivational effect* of environmental stimulus (situational *interest*) (see Renniger, Hidi & Krapp, 1992).

The other gap in literature deals with the less predominant *emotional* view of language that is covered in the following section of ‘Connections to Practice.’ Human speech, like *interest*, is multifaceted and Japanese language teaching has emphasized the more or less *formal* aspect of language use. The predominant impersonal view of language as a set of discrete and abstract units bound by rules is rooted in the field of formal linguistics. Language is perceived as a system of propositions and logical relations that can be and is dissected into smaller subsets and broken down into separate modular units in the textbooks. It seems that language teaching of Japanese is more focused on formality and fragmentation of language.
There is somewhat of a void in Japanese language textbooks in that they neglect certain aspects of language use, namely the *emotional* or humanistic factors and fluidity of language that cannot be fully explained in formal linguistics theories (see Maynard, 1993). This is where *manga* comes in to fill in the gap and supplement Japanese textbooks to give a more holistic as well as an *emotional* view on human speech.
SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Canada, being an officially bilingual country, is recognized to be a place where some of the most influential motivational theories have been developed and are still being used today as background information, as well as a foundation upon which one can base and generate new or revised motivational approaches in the L2 field. Therefore, I find it appropriate to begin my literature review with the Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) quantitative study to identify motivational variables in L2 learning that stirred up some interest and academic discussion on an international scale and expanded from the specific domain of social psychology and into such fields as education psychology and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. Given the limited space and scope of this paper, it is important to note that the purpose of the literature review is to give a short summary of competing motivational theories related to L2 education and provide an argument for the use of *manga* as a resource for teaching in Japanese language classrooms.

**Motivation in Second Language Learning**

Motivation in second language learning has been a relative and evolving construct over the past fifty years. Perhaps the most well known definition of motivation dealing with language aptitude goes as far back as the late 1950’s when a dichotomous construct of integrative versus instrumental motivation was introduced by Gardner and Lambert (1959). Since then, several researchers, such Dörnyei (2003; 2001; 1994), Deci and Ryan (985), have developed their own motivational constructs to promote learning amongst students in general.

**Gardner and Lambert’s Motivational Orientations: Integrative vs. Instrumental**

In critical response to earlier research that correlated student aptitude with grades received in language courses, Gardner and Lambert (1959) set out to design a better-rounded
survey that consisted of items above and beyond measure of aptitude. Therefore, in order to define, as Gardner and Lambert put it, “the knack for learning a foreign language”, the survey given out to students that comprised items to examine their aptitudes and verbal intelligence for language learning as well as their attitude toward the French community and level of motivation to learn French. The survey results were then used to determine the relation of motivation to L2 achievement.

From their findings, they were able to develop a motivational construct in which various goals or reasons underlying student motivation to learn a second or foreign language, namely French, were classified under two general orientation indices: instrumental and integrative. In order to better understand how Gardner and his associates were interpreting and conceptualizing these terms, it is best to look closely at the test items related to the integrative and instrumental indices presented to the students.

One section of the battery of tests given to the students was the Orientation Index. The students were asked to rank accordingly a list of four reasons for studying French: (1) useful in obtaining a job, (2) helpful in understanding the French-Canadian people and their way of life, (3) helpful in meeting and conversing with more and varied people, and (4) helpful in making one a better-educated person. Those that highly ranked (2) or (3) were considered “integratively oriented” and those that preferred (1) or (4) were classified as “instrumentally oriented”.

Given the above descriptions, someone who learns French or any language for instrumental reasons is someone who uses the French language as a means to raise one’s occupational or academic status. As Gardner and Lambert put it, the reasons “reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement” (1959, p. 267).
As for those who learn the language for integrative reasons, they seem to demonstrate some general interest in or favorable attitude toward the target language community itself, or any linguistic community different from their own. They may be curious about another unfamiliar culture and attracted by its novelty. Their “aim in language study is to learn more about the language group, or to meet more and different people” (1959, p. 267).

As behavioral scientists, Gardner and Lambert (1972) are primarily interested in the matter of learning and developing a sociopsychological theory of second- or foreign-language learning. This theory maintains that the successful learner of a second language must be psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behavior that characterize members of another linguistic cultural group. They assert that one’s attitude affects language learning. In other words, a student’s motivation in learning depends upon his/her attitude toward or perception of foreigners and orientation, i.e., instrumental vs. integrative.

Their dichotomous motivational construct has caught attention from other disciplines of study and provided a foundation upon which we can establish our own viewpoints and build accordingly to suit or accommodate our varied perspectives. However, the point of view reflected in Gardner and Lambert’s (1959) motivational research more or less describes motivation as a static and immovable characteristic of the person. Although this perspective offers diagnosis it does not tackle remediation.

Zoltán Dörnyei’s motivational framework of language learning and teaching on the other hand provides teachers with insight into motivation and teaching practice. As an expert in psycholinguistics, his interests include psychological aspects of second language acquisition. Having previously taught as a language instructor, he is also interested in the educational aspects
of language learning and as a result, wrote a book in 2001 titled *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom.*

**Dörnyei’s 1994 Framework of L2 Motivation**

In response to the dominating sociopsychological perspective on the concept of motivation, several researchers from different disciplines challenged this notion. They expressed their dissatisfaction for the lack of an education dimension to the idea of motivation, resulting in an educational paradigm shift in the 1990’s. Dörnyei (1991) cites Graham Crookes and Richard Schmidt who state:

> [T]he primary emphasis is placed on attitudes and other social psychological aspects of second language learning. This does not do full justice to the way second language teachers have used the term motivation. Their use is more congruent with definition common outside social psychology, specifically in education. (p. 469)

In order to accommodate this educational aspect to motivation, new and revised motivational models have been proposed, for example, Dörnyei’s model of language learning motivation. See figure below:
Figure 1: Dörnyei's (1994) framework of motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE LEVEL</th>
<th>Integrative motivational subsystem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instrumental motivational subsystem</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNER LEVEL</th>
<th>Need for achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Language use anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Perceived L2 competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Causal attributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-efficacy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING SITUATION LEVEL</th>
<th>Interest (in the course)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course-specific</td>
<td>Relevance (of the course to one’s needs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational components</td>
<td>Expectancy (of success)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction (one has in the outcome)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-specific</td>
<td>Affiliative motive (to please the teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational components</td>
<td>Authority type (controlling vs. autonomy-supporting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct socialization of motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Task presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-specific</td>
<td>Goal-orientedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational components</td>
<td>Norm and reward system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group Cohesiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive, or individualistic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above framework is a synthesis of the social psychological, as well as education-oriented components of motivation. L2 motivation constitutes three levels: Language, Learner and Learning Situation. Each level is associated with a list of motivational elements concerned with language learning.

Dörnyei (1994) acknowledges the social psychological roots of the motivational construct, as well as, incorporating an educational perspective to help foster further understanding of L2 motivation. For example, the Language Level encompasses the integrative and instrumental values associated with the traditional social dimension of motivation.

In combination with the language component are characteristics embodied in the learner and the learning situation or context as shown in Dörnyei's Motivational Framework. The idea of interest pertinent to this paper is one of four motivational factors or course-specific motives to describe L2 classroom motivation.

Dörnyei (1994) asserts, "interest is related to intrinsic motivation and is centered around the individual's inherent curiosity and desire to know more about him or herself and his or her environment" (p. 277). It is one of the motivational conditions to be met along with relevance (feeling of connectedness), expectancy (perceived likelihood of success) and satisfaction (relating to extrinsic rewards). When these conditions are met, such course-specific components as the syllabus, teaching materials, teaching method and learning tasks will likely increase students' interest and involvement in the classroom activities. Also, he suggests that to arouse and sustain curiosity and attention, language instructors design or select varied, challenging, meaningful and engaging activities with game-like features and imaginative or suspenseful elements.
This construct developed by investigating young adult learners in a foreign language-learning situation in Hungary, comprises three levels: Language, Learner and Learning Situation. These levels correspond with the social, personal and educational subject matter dimension of L2 motivation. To help minimize the gap between theory and practice, and direct motivational research at practitioners to facilitate teaching, the 1994 framework of motivational components focuses on motivation more from a classroom perspective, thereby giving teachers a better understanding of what components motivate their language students.

Dörnyei’s subsequent motivational construct provides further practical guidelines for teachers to use to motivate students in language learning. His Motivational Teaching Practice model includes four motivational facets: Creating the basic motivational conditions, Generating initial motivation, Maintaining and protecting motivation, and Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation. These phases are further broken down into concrete motivational strategies and techniques:
**Figure 2: Dörnyei’s Motivational Teaching Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creating the basic motivational conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate teacher behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generating initial motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Enhancing the learners’ L2-related values and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing the learners’ expectancy of success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making the teaching materials relevant for the learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating realistic learner beliefs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintaining and protecting motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Making learning stimulating and enjoyable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presenting tasks in a motivating way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Setting specific learner goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protecting the learners’ self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating learner autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting self-motivating strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting cooperation among the learners</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting motivational attributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Providing motivation feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing learner satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the above figure, great emphasis is placed on, as Deci and Ryan (1991) put it, “the direction behavior” or processes that direct behavior toward desired outcomes. The above construct focuses on the instrumentality or means to make something educational (or curriculum-
appropriate) engaging, rather than the other way around, that is, to take something that is already interesting for the students and making it educational or suitable for the curriculum. Rather than using the educational material as the source for the motivational process, why not start with the actual student interests or students’ interested activities themselves?

It is important to mention that since Gardner and Lambert’s 1959 influential motivational study on second language learning, much L2 motivational research have been focused on such commonly taught languages as French, English, etc. Williams (2006) states, “few studies have examined the specific motivation of foreign language students in the LCTL (Less Commonly Taught Languages)” (p. 11). Since the late 1980’s, times have changed and there are several more language classes being taught in the B.C. public schools. This includes Japanese.

**Oxford and Shearin’s Study on Japanese Motivation**

Oxford and Shearin’s (1994) article *Language Learning Motivation: Expanding the Theoretical Framework* reported a study done in a Japanese language-learning context. The authors found that learners had other reasons for learning Japanese that were not included in the integrative and instrumental orientations. These include the “elitism of taking a difficult language and learning a private code that parents would not know” (p. 12).

**Deci and Ryan’s Intrinsic Motivation**

Deci and Ryan (1985) introduced the self-determination theory as an elaboration of the intrinsic/extrinsic motivational construct. Extrinsic motivation deals with behaviors prompted by receiving rewards or avoiding punishment. In contrast, intrinsic motivation involves such inherent characteristics as curiosity and interest to promote learning. As far as intrinsically motivated behaviors are concerned, the rewards are internal, for example, the enjoyment of doing a particular activity.
The self-determination theory asserts, "humans have an innate need to feel autonomous, competent and a sense of belongingness" (Bonney, Cortina, Smith-Darden, & Fiori, 2008, p. 1). It suggests that an optimal learning (i.e., autonomy-supportive) environment or school context needs to be provided in order to produce an activity for students that is enjoyable and rewarding in and of itself. Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991) state that "this theory when applied to the realm of education, is concerned primarily with promoting in students an interest in learning, a valuing of education and a confidence in their own capacities and attributes" (p. 325). Dörnyei (1994) describes Deci and Ryan’s idea of self-determination as a “prerequisite for any behavior to be intrinsically rewarding” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 276). Deci et al. (1991) define self-determination as a “greater sense of choice, more self-initiation of behavior and greater personal responsibility” (p. 342). These qualities are used as supports to prompt or promote self-determined behavior.

Deci et al. (1991) describe interest as a “genuine enthusiasm for learning and accomplishment and a sense of volitional involvement in the educational enterprise” (p. 325). It seems as though interest as a form of intrinsic motivation is a general and external goal to be obtained and intrinsic motivation is a desire for a feeling of competence and self-determination. Their proposal to promote learning does provide a general and principled guideline from which we as practitioners/teachers can take and appropriate to our individual and particular classroom needs. It should be noted that there is some debate about the gap between theory and practice, as well as transferability of experimental results and research findings into actual classroom setting (Gass & Mackey, 2005). It can be argued that a researcher’s primary role is to observe the effects of a given experiment or natural setting and validate/revise a given theory or construct a
new one. His/her main interest is in the means or process of language acquisition and uses that as a starting point to developing tasks.

On the other hand, some teachers have a different perspective. Given my work experience as a Japanese language teacher, my main interest is not in conceptualizing a general formula to motivational teaching but lies in finding or developing resources specific to my teaching context. Through regular observation of and contact with my students, and discussion with my teacher colleagues, I noticed that some students had a strong interest and considerable knowledge in Japanese manga. The question I ask myself is not a general inquiry but rather a specific and activity-based one. I do not usually ask why there is interest in manga or how does interest in manga or in general relate to overall learning and autonomy, but how can I use manga (an object of interest) as an educational tool to promote Japanese learning. Naturally I tend to take an inductive approach to developing a motivational model in which a particular activity (manga) initiates interest in students. (See Figure 3: Summary Flowcharts)

Having said that, however, I do not see a researcher and practitioner's paths toward language proficiency running along parallel tracks. There is a point of convergence and I believe we both have the same goal, which is to ultimately discover ways to motivate students to learn. I see us as two converging vectors originating from different sources or points-of-view. Yes, we have differing roles but they are complementary and mutually supportive. We also in our own ways contribute to the overall picture of effective motivation in language education.

Below is a set of flowcharts briefly summarizing and comparing various ways to motivate students to learn a foreign language:
## Figure 3: Summary Flowcharts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Model</th>
<th>Motivational Input →</th>
<th>Motivational Effect →</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dörnyei’s Motivational Teaching</strong></td>
<td>4 motivational aspects</td>
<td>Promote/enhance</td>
<td>Desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• creating basic motivational conditions</td>
<td>student’s intrinsic pleasure of and</td>
<td>Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• generating initial motivation</td>
<td>natural interest/curiosity in L2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• maintaining/protecting motivation</td>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• encouraging positive &amp; retrospective self-evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deci et al.’s Self-Determination Perspective</strong></td>
<td>4 autonomy supports</td>
<td>Promote self-determined behavior &amp; intrinsic motivation in students</td>
<td>Desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• offering choice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• minimizing control</td>
<td></td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• acknowledging student feelings</td>
<td>Promote interest in learning, valuing of education, confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• making info. accessible for decision making &amp; performing tasks</td>
<td>in their own capacities/attributes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ohori’s Manga Motivation</strong></td>
<td>1 actual object of <strong>interest</strong></td>
<td>Reinforce students’ <strong>interest</strong> in manga &amp; discover educational value in manga</td>
<td>Desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>manga</strong> as an educational tool</td>
<td></td>
<td>Educational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note how the word **interest** has been placed within each of the researcher’s and my model of motivational teaching. For Dörnyei and Deci et al., **interest** as an affective state is something that needs to be stimulated/promoted by external means or influences, and therefore, regarded as an effect due to provision of motivational (autonomy-supportive) input/stimulus.

**Interest** is an abstract or intangible state of enjoyment to be aroused and somewhat manipulated.
Although it is important to have general guidelines to justify our rationale behind our teaching ideas/activities, these guidelines or objectives are not very practical in the sense that they are not ‘ready-made’ activities to be immediately implemented, nor are they ‘utility-friendly’. As a teacher, I find it more useful and helpful to have concrete activities (or at least a fairly detailed description of these activities) ready to be implemented in class and perhaps that is why I tend to focus on, as Schiefele puts it, the ‘content-specific’ aspect of interest (for example, the actual activity itself) rather than its general emotive dimension. For me, interest is not only something that is generated or promoted but can also be a source of inspiring, reinforcing and maintaining a certain level of enjoyment and enthusiasm in learning. Next, I would like to discuss in detail the interest aspect of motivation.

**Interest: Aspect of Motivation**

*Interest*, like motivation, has a long history as a research topic by researchers from various psychology-related departments. It is an immense enterprise and is of interest by several psychologists and researchers studying emotion, cognition, motivation, education, etc. Theories have been developed to examine and explain the nature of interest and how it fits within a motivation framework. Educators, as well are very interested in what makes things/activities interesting and the effective and motivational role interest can play in educational settings.

As mentioned earlier, the predominant view is that interest is seen as a positive affective state resulting from certain environmental stimuli or set of preconditions that can be put in place. In short, it is regarded more or less as a motivational effect. However, not all researchers have this view of interest. There are those who believe that interest can be seen as a content-specific activity that in and of itself acts as a stimulus, i.e., motivational input, as will be discussed further.
Over the past few decades, the various definitions or perspectives in evaluating interest brought forth different motivational models and general guidelines upon which educators can develop “interest-stimulating” classroom conditions and/or activities. In my literature review, the researchers that I have selected are representative in each of their own respective domain of interest thereby providing a multidimensional view of the role of interest in language learning.

**Izard’s Characteristics of Interest-Excitement**

I would like to start the discussion of interest with Izard’s definition of interest as an emotion:

*I*nterest is the most frequently positive emotion. It is an extremely important motivation in the development of skills, competencies, and intelligence. *Interest* is the only motivation that can sustain day-to-day work in a healthy fashion (1977, p. 212).

Psychologists are primarily interested in why people do things or why they behave the way they do. Thus, they are interested in identifying what motivates or drives certain human behavior. One of the many motivations or drives deals with interest that is closely linked to excitement, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation which ultimately leads to desired behavioral outcome. Furthermore, Izard (1977) talks about interest as an emotion that can be activated through perceptual-cognitive processes, person-environment interactions, or both. In other words, interest as a motivation and emotion according to Izard is not the original cause of certain behavioral outcomes but this process of an intrinsically motivated behavior involves a physiological cue that “redintegrates a positive affective state (like interest) and leads to behavior for which there is no extrinsic reward” (p. 190).

Similarly, in the summary of motivational models/flowcharts shown previously in Figure 3, such motivational researchers as Dörnyei (1994), Deci et al. (1991) have included in their
constructs an external prompt or cue to stimulate or arouse interest in the learners. These cues as listed under “motivational input” prompt the emotion of interest that in turn leads to a desired behavioral outcome. It is no wonder that some motivational researchers conceptualize interest as a relatively abstract emotion or psychological state that can be instigated, a logical extension of Izard’s notion of interest.

**Schiefele’s Content-Specific Interest**

This emotional aspect of interest as motivational effect is perhaps the dominant view amongst several motivation researchers as shown in Dörnyei’s 1994 Motivational Teaching Practice and Deci et al.’s (1991) Self-Determination Perspective on Motivation. Interest, as a responsive state of emotion, is prevalent in current constructs of motivation, however, this interpretation is, although very crucial, only a partial aspect of interest. Schiefele (1991) argues that “intrinsic motivation research does not capture all of the essential aspects of interest. Contemporary motivational research has clearly neglected some aspects of interest that are highly significant from theoretical and educational points-of-view” (p. 299).

Schiefele (1991) believes that interest is a content-specific concept. In other words, interest can be specified as a given topic, task or activity. Not only can interest be regarded as an abstract emotion but can also be reified/materialized or be made tangible, and viewed as a specific activity (such as, manga reading). Although he admits that this view is not shared by most contemporary motivational theories, it also should not be casually dismissed.

Schiefele’s (1991) paper focuses on individual interest as an “enduring preference for certain topics, subject areas, or activities” (p. 302). He interprets this form of interest as an “individual’s orientation toward a type of object, an activity, or an area of knowledge” (p. 302).
Part of his hypothetical model of causal relations consisting of three stages, namely pre-actional, actional, post-actional, is drawn below (p. 315):

**Figure 4: A Section of the Hypothetical Model of Causal Relations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Actional</th>
<th>Actional</th>
<th>Post-Actional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest</strong></td>
<td>Task-Specific Motivational</td>
<td>Emotional Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation (Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic)</td>
<td>(Enjoyment, Activation, Involvement, Flow)</td>
<td>Depth of Comprehension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that interest in a specific activity is what motivates/provokes a certain positive emotional effect that in turn prompts a positive learning outcome. In fact, Schiefele boldly points out that one of the features of interest is that “subject-matter-specific interest is probably more amenable to instructional influence than are general motives or motivational orientations” (p. 302). Similarly, my *Manga* Motivational model (as shown in Figure 3) also starts with interest in the form of an activity and this interest or enthusiasm is reinforced and carried through the motivational learning process. Interest does not necessarily have to be an effect or emotion to be produced. It can also be the original cue or source to strengthen/reinforce a high level of interest in the educational process.

**Csikszentmihályi: Intrinsically Rewarding Activities**

Schiefele’s (1991) paper on “Interest, Learning and Motivation” has been influenced by Csikszentmihályi’s (1975) work on interest. Mihály Csikszentmihályi was born in what is known as Croatia and emigrated to the U.S. in 1956. He is a Hungarian psychology professor at Claremont Graduate University in California. He is best known for his work in the notion of
**flow** – a state of concentration or complete absorption with the activity at hand and the situation. It is an optimal state of intrinsic motivation, where the person is fully engaged in what he/she is doing.

Csikszentmihályi (1975) writes:

> While psychology is developing means for controlling behavior through electronic implants, drugs, behavior-modification programs and a whole armory of other intrusive techniques, it is vital to preserve an understanding of the active, creative, self-motivated dimensions of behavior. (p. xi)

External means of manipulating behavior to promote a productive setting is not just restricted to psychology-related matters but also educational ones. I am not discouraging the idea of manipulating or ‘encouraging’ certain behaviors or learning outcomes. Sometimes it is appropriate and even effective in certain circumstances, as I have found in my own past teaching experiences. I want to stress, however, that modifying behavior or level of motivation by implementing a specific activity of student interest (or viewing interest as motivational input) is something that is not usually addressed in motivational research studies and should be revisited.

Csikszentmihályi (1975) states, “if we can learn more about activities which are enjoyable in themselves, we will find clues to a form of motivation that could become an extremely important human resource” (p. 2). Such motivational activities are what some teachers are searching for. Not only are they convenient and ‘ready-to-use’, but they also add a more practical, well-detailed, content-specific (as Schiefele 1991 puts it) dimension to the notion of motivation. The word interest is not just viewed as an emotional effect to be produced but also as something as tangible as a hobby or leisure activity that acts as a source to reinforce and sustain a level of positive feelings and enjoyment.
Manga

Several years ago, a student came up to me and out-of-the-blue asked, “What does Pokémon stand for?” At that time I did not know but it was reasonable for the student to ask me since I was the only Japanese language teacher in the school and Pokémon was a fictional character that originated in Japan. I found out later that Pokémon was a truncated combination of the words “pocket” and “monster”.

I discovered as well that Pokémon was not a fictional character only known by a small handful of students taking my Japanese classes but there was quite a worldwide following among young teenagers, especially boys. It was quite a phenomenon back in the late 1990’s. What originally started out as a Nintendo video game in Japan greatly expanded to many parts of the world and later merchandised in anime (Japanese TV animation) and manga (Japanese graphic novels). This prompted me to at least consider and eventually allow anime and manga as motivational tools in my Japanese classrooms.

**Manga’s History and Popularity**

Schwartz and Rubinstein-Ávila (2006) wrote a concise summary of the history of manga citing other scholars and their input on how manga was used to disperse information throughout Japanese history. Manga in Japan has been around for many years. It is estimated that Japanese narrative comic art may extend as far back as the seventh century.

Adult manga has been used not only for entertainment but also for social and political reasons, such as, political editorializing, social change and pro-establishment rhetoric. More recently, it reflects to some degree the various political interests of the Japanese state such as Japan’s post-industrialist Westernization in the 1920’s and 1930’s, as well as the leftist interests
in the 1960's. It is interesting to note that by reading through certain texts of *manga*, one can have an overall glimpse of the Japanese political and social landscape over the past century.

*Manga*, as we know it today as graphic novels has, in the past few decades, risen in popularity in North America, especially in the U.S. Japanese media entertainment caught global attention among youths in the 1980's. It started with video games and as Nintendo’s mascot, *Mario* is one of the most famous characters in video game history. Also in the 1980's, a Japanese animated film called *Akira* (the protagonist’s name in the film) was adapted from a *manga* epic and was released in Japan in 1988. The movie led the way for the growing popularity of *anime* in the West. Notable motifs in the film include youth culture, delinquency, psychic awareness, social unrest, the world’s reaction towards a nuclear holocaust and Japan’s post-war economic revival.

Popularity in video games and *anime* expanded into *manga*. *Manga* has gained favorable attention amongst youths in the U.S. Schwartz and Rubinstein-Ávila (2006) write that *manga* sales in the U.S. reached $100 million in 2003 and it is anticipated that the gross sales will increase further in the coming years. Bound *manga* books are found in public libraries and even regular bookstores like Coles that indicate a high level of *manga* interest.

This *manga* hype has not gone unnoticed by educators. Although there are still those that believe that comic books or graphic novels are not legitimate texts in classroom settings, there is an increasing awareness and interest in *manga* as educational tools and are increasingly regarded as a multimodal form of new media literacy. Norton (2003) states, “comic books can be seen as innovative in seeking to convey meaning through multimodality. In such a theory, the notion of ‘text’ is not confined to the written word, and readers are encouraged to construct meaning with reference to a wide range of representations” (p. 143).
There are some scholars that have the view that “visual modalities are a distraction to the process of making meaning” (Norton, 2003, p. 143) and that this idea of literacy needs to be reviewed and challenged for comic books to be better received in the educational community. However, I do want to caution that not all manga are appropriate in classroom settings. Teachers should review the materials for the level of appropriateness of content and language structure as well as adaptability to prescribed learning outcomes by the Ministry of Education. Even though some of the criticisms against using comic books or manga are justified, I do believe there are some comic books that do fulfill these criteria of appropriateness and adaptability.

Manga has, in general, been used with high school students to develop critical literacy, that is, developing the ability to assess texts in order to understand the relationships between power and domination that inform those texts (see Morrell, 2002; Street 1995). McLaughlin & DeVoogd (2004) write, “students reading from a critical stance raise questions about whose voices are represented, whose voices are missing, and who gains and who loses by the reading of a text” (p. 53). I, however, prefer to emphasize the fact that manga can be used for other means; such as a resource to study interesting sociolinguistic patterns of spoken speech that is befitting the students' advanced/sophisticated level of thinking and language analysis. In the educational community where comic books are often dismissed, would it not be wonderful if a teacher can take a sincere and positive interest in the students' manga world. Schiefele (1991) cites Csíkszentmihályi and McCormack who state “students are most impressed and influenced by teachers showing interest and enjoyment in what they teach” (p. 318).
SECTION 3: CONNECTIONS TO PRACTICE

In the literature review, research related to the concept of interest has been discussed. Much educational and motivational research tend to view interest as a motivational effect, i.e., something that needs to be triggered and shaped by a certain set of environmental conditions conducive to motivated learning. As a result, many teaching strategies and suggestions offered by educators and researchers alike deal with how to garner/instill interest in school materials, so as to motivate language learning. In other words, how do we make something educational interesting?

What has been less emphasized in much of the motivational or interest-based research, however, is the idea of interest as a motivational input as opposed to effect. Therefore, rather than just asking how we can make something educational interesting, why not also ask how we can make something interesting educational? I would like to suggest how manga, as a concrete object or content-specific activity of students’ existing interest can be used as a starting point or condition to re-stimulate/reinforce and sustain that level of interest for the ultimate purpose of engaged learning. This is by no means intended to replace the well-established notion of interest as a motivational effect and teaching strategies to promote interest in/and learning but to supplement the dominant view of interest-as-effect with an alternative conception of interest-as-input by describing a manga activity that can easily lend itself to modifications to better suit or customize each individual context. Rather than giving vague and general statements or description, by giving specific details about a particular manga activity will hopefully leave little room for misinterpretation and lead to a more precise and less ambiguous outlook on manga use in the classroom.
Manga can be viewed as a variety of Japanese authentic texts to complement classroom Japanese and give a broader perspective on Japanese language. Textbooks by themselves give a limited and somewhat skewed outlook on Japanese language use. Polite communication styles in particular are often overemphasized and simplified in texts (see Williams, 2006), and as a result, do not adequately address the amorphous nature and complexity of human speech with respect to the constant switching of sociolinguistic registers (polite vs. casual) in Japanese. The objective of the following manga lesson is to help foster awareness and further understanding of the fluid and variable speech patterns from an emotional perspective, an aspect of language use often neglected in language textbooks.

**Formality versus Emotionality of Language**

Much of my Japanese language teaching has been greatly influenced by my formal linguistics (syntax) education at University of British Columbia back in the late 1980's, that is, the Chomskyan paradigm within which language is reduced to an abstract body of linguistic units. The review sheet I gave to my students in class consisted of a set or list of English sentence formulas along with their corresponding Japanese translations. See figure below:
SENTENCE STRUCTURES

Verb (V): an expression indicating motion or state of being. The ‘verb’ also includes modals and other auxiliary verbs.
Topic: an expression that is normally located at the beginning before the verb in a regular English statement.
Verb Complement (VC): an expression usually located after the verb in a regular English statement.

**ENGLISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VC1</th>
<th>VC2</th>
<th>VC3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QW is Topic?</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Topic VC?</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's V VC</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shall we V VC</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic has ADJ Body Parts</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JAPANESE (日本語)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic は</th>
<th>VC3</th>
<th>VC2</th>
<th>VC1</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic は QW ですか</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic は VC ですか</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC V+ましょう</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic は BP が ADJ です</td>
<td>VC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: 2 types of ADJ: い/non い or 〜ei

| Topic は ADJ1 で/〜くて ADJ2 | VC |
| Topic は ADJ な/ NOUN | VC |
| Topic は VCplace name に います/ あります | VC |

By focusing primarily on the formal nature of language, syntactic patterns were extracted, generalized and re-written as a closed system of abstract rules. It gives students an essentialized impression of language as being impersonal, static, discrete and emotion-neutral. Maynard (1993) states that “according to this view, language can be analyzed by appealing to the
logician's formal semantics and it exists apart from the speaking subject and his or her partner, not to mention the emotional involvement of the speech participants (p. 4).

However, it is evidenced in practice, real-life and even in manga that language is beyond a bound system of linguistic rules. Certainly, there is a systematic and somewhat formulaic side to language but that is only a partial view of something as complex and multidimensional as human language. There has been an increasing interest in the emotional aspect of language and discourse analysis is one method that offers some insight in exploring the various sociolinguistic aspects of language (formal vs. informal registers) beyond formal linguistics.

**Manga Lesson: Emotionality**

Given what I read about interest and emotional aspect of language, I can see ways in which manga can be used to support both elements and to produce a lesson that takes into account an education that is based on existing student interests and that addresses the 'emotionality' of language. A more integrated approach to language education is recommended where both the formal and emotional dimensions of human speech are recognized. Many textbooks organize conversational speech in fragmented, modular units and as a result, speech is absorbed in a compartmentalized fashion. Although this module-based approach is appropriate for beginner level students, it still neglects the complex, dynamic and continuous flow of language portrayed in manga. Therefore, I suggest that at more advanced levels of Japanese, we introduce students to the idea of discourse analysis in manga texts. We can get students to focus on one grammatical feature of language, such as verb endings that are indicators of polite and casual forms of speech, and to notice pivotal moments in which language changes (from polite to casual or vice versa). Hopefully, they will discover the complex and emotion
Discrepancy between Textbook and Manga

Barbieri and Eckhardt (2007) argue for the use of corpus linguistics in language teaching materials to narrow the gap between ESL (English as a Second Language) grammar textbook descriptions and real language use. Based on their research findings, they illustrate how structure-based tasks can be implemented in a form-focused model of instruction.

Although I am not specifically writing to promote the idea of corpus-based instruction, the article did provide some valuable information that can be used to some degree support the notion of manga text analysis for the purpose of enhancing functional knowledge of certain grammatical patterns in human speech. Barbieri and Eckhardt (2007) state that “a growing number of researchers have compared the textbook and grammar descriptions of a target language with the language used in real life by real language users. These studies show a great divide, a lack of fit, between grammar and textbook descriptions of the target language and real language use (pp. 320, 321). And the Japanese language is no exception.

Textbook Language

“Textbooks usually present grammatical and lexical patterns as equally generalizable and equally important communicatively, thus neglecting information about register-specific or discourse-context-specific use” (Barbieri & Eckhardt, 2007, p. 321). As well, textbooks tend to generalize and thus simplify real language use for pedagogical purposes.

Generally, according to some Japanese language textbooks, the polite form as indicated in the verb ending ‘masu’, is used when speaking to one’s superiors or to strangers toward whom the Japanese show great respect. The polite form is appropriate in most situations and therefore,
best for general usage. Polite speech is generally used in formal situations such as classrooms, business settings, lecture halls, etc. This formal speech may be used between unfamiliar people to maintain politeness and distance.

On the other hand, the plain form where verbs are in the dictionary form (and not conjugated in the ‘masu’ form) is used when the person speaking is on the ‘same level’ as the person spoken to, with respect to age and social status. Also, the casual form can be used for interlocutors that are younger or familiar and subordinate to the speaker. This form of casual speech is used in everyday situations and among those who are familiar with each other, such as colleagues, friends, family members and children.

**Manga Language: Deathnote**

*Manga,* on the one hand, can be viewed as a graphic and textual (i.e., multimodal) form of one continuous drama. Textbooks, on the other hand, tend to have the sociolinguistic (formal/informal) functions compartmentalized in modular units while *manga* has these two forms strategically alternating in a more fluid and often emotion-embedded interaction over changing contexts.

It is noted by Fukunaga (2006) that there is increasing interest in Japanese popular culture such as *manga.* One student explained to me that *manga* can be categorized into age-appropriate levels. One *manga* series that stood out is called ‘Deathnote’ and its storyline seems to engage students at adolescent levels, namely senior high or college level students. It is important to note that not all *manga* are suitable for classroom materials and teachers should spend some time reviewing the *manga* materials and discerning whether or not, they are classroom-appropriate.
Although the *manga* title ‘Deathnote’ is initially shocking overall, I found the series to be entertaining and thought-provoking. *Light Yagami*, a high school genius incidentally picks up the ‘deathnote’ notebook dropped into the human world by *Ryuk*, a death god. It is revealed in the notebook that the human whose name is written here shall die. Initially horrified by the notebook’s powers, *Light* eventually decides to use the ‘deathnote’ notebook to purge the world of violent criminals and create an ideal society. An opposing character named *Near* appears and works alongside the Japanese police force to find the ‘killer’ behind the ‘deathnote’ notebook (namely, *Light Yagami*). Without going too much in detail, at the end of the comic book series, there is a standoff between *Light Yagami* who claims to be god of the new world order and *Near* who deems *Light* to be too arrogant and devilishly threatening to the rest of humanity.

As I was reading the *manga* texts in Japanese and doing some discourse analysis regarding the occurrence and switches between the polite and casual verb endings, I noticed that at one level the emotion of fear and uncontrollable anger in particular played a significant role in the practice of moving between formal and informal registers. For example, at the standoff between *Light* and *Near*, *Light* initially seems confident that he will win this match and speaks in his usual polite register. Figure 5 illustrates *Light*’s usage of the polite/formal register, his usual style of speech. Figure 6 demonstrates *Light*’s sudden upsurge of intense emotion of surprise, fear and anger toward the same addressee, also one of his supposedly loyal followers, *Matsuda*, who ultimately betrays him and attempts to kill him. (see figures below)
Figure 6: Light's Formal Register

English Version

Light: What a hassle. I don't care who his accuser is, he's going to be his aide. But that doesn't mean I'm going to protect only myself.

Makio: No way! I'm not going to let him take the mask off. It means that he's not going along with the plan. I assumed he was a part of it, but it's impossible. He will definitely remove the mask.

Light: He's just insurance.

Japanese Version

Light: いすれ。

Makio: だめだ。

Light: なんだ？これ。

Makio: もう。
Figure 7: Light's Informal Register

English Version

YOU IDIOT! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SHOOTING, MAYBUDA? DAMN YOU!!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

IF YOU'RE GOING TO SHOOT SOMEONE, SHOOT THE OTHERS!!

Japanese Version

松田野郎！！

何をやっている！？

鎌田篤るからと、人間を愛ぐ！

松田野郎を奪って来る！
However, when he (*Light*) discovers that he has been trapped and surprisingly betrayed and shot by one of his associates, *Matsuda*, this upsurge of strong infuriating emotion provokes a sudden switch from formal to casual register indicated in the change in verb endings from ‘masu’ (polite) to ‘da’ (casual). (see figure 6 above)

Maynard (1993) also mentions that Japanese speakers use the plain/casual form when expressing sudden emotion. This intensity of drama and emotions that students find appealing is common in *manga* but is not regularly found in language textbooks, and thus in classroom Japanese, the emotional dimension of language is suppressed/repressed.

Having said that, I do not deny the benefits and significance of the more predominant formal aspect of language. It seems that in Japanese language teaching, our emphasis is to observe patterns and formulate rules in order to gain and develop our understanding of the fragmented and formal portrayal of the language in Japanese textbooks. Thus, to dismiss the formality and rationality of language is to remove an equally essential aspect of language. I agree with Maynard (1993) who states “language can be meaningfully analyzed from a variety of perspectives including purely formal analysis” (p. 8).

It is no surprise that many textbooks tend to emphasize the above-mentioned formality of human language. This, however, gives an unbalanced view of language. According to Williams (2006), communication styles, particularly politeness, tend to be overemphasized and simplified in texts and do not adequately address the vast ‘situation appropriateness’ of these sociolinguistic registers. Therefore, less emphasis is placed on analysis of internal humanistic factors, namely emotional, affecting speech style appropriation and as a result, relevant motivational components that emotionally trigger certain language patterns are largely unexploited in L2 teaching.
Reading and analyzing *manga* may actually balance the emphasis placed on politer registers in class as well as add an emotional dimension to language. By noticing the fluid movements between style of speech characterized by the ‘masu’ (polite form) and ‘da’ (plain form) verb endings, students can recognize this constant switching between the two forms is not arbitrary but in fact, is systematic in its own right. This implementation of *manga* in the classroom setting will hopefully not only make language learning engaging but also educational for the students. Through discourse analysis of the *manga* text, they can be made aware of the constantly ever-transitional motion of human speech. Language is not just passive and unilaterally responsive to contextual surroundings and guided by a system of rules but is also proactive and sometimes directed by intense and internal feelings of strong emotions.

**Limitations of Paper**

Although many of the points discussed in this section is supported by literature, the *manga* lesson itself and its educational effect on language learning are speculative and hypothetical. Classroom research is necessary to test the approaches recommended above and the assumptions underlying those recommendations. Quantitative research would be necessary to determine the prevalence of students’ views or to test the generalizability to other non-Japanese student population. While acknowledging this group of Japanese students to be ‘special’, examining ways in which they may become motivated has implications for how to encourage motivation in other language classroom settings.
SECTION 4: CONCLUSION

*Manga* as an authentic text under careful discretion and guidance of the teacher could be a valuable learning experience. Using *manga* to promote a more guided, exploratory-oriented and student interest-based approaches to teaching language may both validate students' current knowledge and interests, while enabling teachers to guide learning in directions that encourage discourse analysis and tools for developing a more comprehensive (formal & emotional) and balanced view of language.

*Why Manga should be used*

In the literature review, motivational research related to the concept of *interest* has been discussed. Stemming from different psychological backgrounds, various conceptions of *interest* flourish, namely *interest* as motivational input and as motivational effect. Based on these interpretations, different theoretical models of motivational teaching/learning involving the idea of *interest* have evolved and developed accordingly. It is argued that some well-established notions of motivation fail to include certain aspects of the meaning of *interest* thereby giving a skewed perspective of *interest* as a motivational and psychological/emotional effect as opposed to a precondition/stimulus/input in the language learning process.

In order to counteract and balance the view of *interest*, Schiefele's (1991) 'content-specific' idea of *interest* as a motivational input has been re-introduced and used to support my argument for implementing *manga* as a teaching resource. There has been insufficient emphasis placed on how to motivate students through existing and tangible objects of *interest* instead of other external and conditional means (Dörnyei, 1994) or self-autonomy supports (Deci et al., 1991) to garner interest in learning.
**How Manga can be used**

The following section 'Connections to Practice' has focused on the multifaceted nature and role of language as an integral part of the speaker's emotional state as well as the formal linguistic knowledge of language use in appropriate and constantly changing contexts. L2 learning requires more than mastering a set of rules and conditions. In addition to the isolated contextual and grammatical factors normally associated with language learning, it also involves identifying emotional traits and continuously alternating and appropriating components of language use embedded in human speech. Language as a construct is bound to be eclectic bringing together factors from both formal linguistic and emotional perspectives. A sample of *manga* study has been illustrated to provide a broader basis for new directions of JFL (Japanese as a Foreign Language) teaching.

To counter the tendency to essentialize and simplify language as a formal system governed by rules and to facilitate comprehension of the dynamic and continuous flow of language, I would like to see students have a broader (including emotional and fluid) outlook on language rather than only taking a prescriptive, rule-based approach. The results of the ‘Connections-to-Practice’ discussion have implications for the classroom in terms of how instructors might use *manga* to enhance motivation and in terms of teaching sociolinguistic register.

Therefore, I encourage instructors to capitalize on students' interests by incorporating into the classroom popular culture texts that have meaning and appeal to students, not to replace already existing language textbooks but to supplement/complement them. This will hopefully enhance and expand students' somewhat formulaic and emotionally-detached view of language as a verbal reflection of not only the speaker's grammatical and content knowledge or linguistic aptitude but also his/her varying emotional expressivity toward participants involved in discourse.
REFERENCES


