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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE  
JAPANESE TEACHING METHODS  
IN THE AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY  
OF BARCELONA, THE UNIVERSITY  
OF LIMERICK AND KANAZAWA  
UNIVERSITY

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Bellaterra, 3 de juny de 2016



Facultat de Traducció i Interpretació  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

## **A Comparative Analysis of the Japanese Teaching Methods in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University**

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### **Resum del TFG/Resumen del TFG**

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La llengua japonesa pren cada vegada més importància al món occidental, per la qual cosa moltes institucions d'educació superior han decidit implementar-ne la docència com a part de diferents graus universitaris. Tanmateix, l'ensenyament del japonès com a llengua estrangera a la universitat és relativament nou, de manera que els mètodes pedagògics que s'utilitzen encara són molt diversos. Per això hem decidit dur a terme una anàlisi comparativa dels mètodes d'ensenyament de la llengua japonesa a través de les opinions dels estudiants de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, la Universitat de Limerick i la Universitat de Kanazawa. En aquest treball exposem breument el mètode d'ensenyament emprats en cadascuna d'aquestes universitats i fem un balanç dels aspectes positius i negatius per a poder-ne millorar, de forma general, el mètode d'ensenyament. D'altra banda, aquesta breu investigació pretén demostrar la importància dels referents culturals a l'hora d'aprendre la llengua, a més de posar de manifest la

rellevància de la traducció pedagògica en l'aprenentatge del japonès. A més, volem incidir en la importància del balanç necessari en l'aprenentatge de competències a l'hora d'estudiar el japonès, independentment de l'objectiu final de la formació. Finalment, els resultats de les enquestes demostren que els estudiants de totes tres universitats consideren que els mètodes pedagògics de l'ensenyament de la llengua japonesa haurien de millorar.

La lengua japonesa está ganando terreno en el mundo occidental. Consecuentemente, hay muchas instituciones de educación superior que han decidido implementar su docencia como parte de distintos grados universitarios. No obstante, la enseñanza del japonés como lengua extranjera en la universidad es relativamente nuevo, de manera que los métodos pedagógicos que se utilizan son muy variados. Es por eso que hemos decidido realizar un análisis comparativo de los métodos de enseñanza de la lengua japonés a través de las opiniones de los estudiantes de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, la Universidad de Limerick y la Universidad de Kanazawa. En este trabajo exponemos brevemente los métodos empleados en cada una de estas universidades y hacemos una reflexión de los aspectos positivos y negativos para poder mejorar, en general, los métodos de enseñanza. Además, esta pequeña investigación pretende demostrar la importancia de los referentes culturales cuando se estudia una lengua. Asimismo, queremos poner de manifiesto la relevancia de la traducción pedagógica en el aprendizaje del japonés. También queremos incidir en la importancia del equilibrio necesario en el aprendizaje de competencias, independientemente del objetivo final de la formación. Finalmente, los resultados de las encuestas demuestran que los estudiantes de las tres universidades consideran que los métodos pedagógicos de la enseñanza del japonés deberían mejorar.

The Japanese language has imposed its presence on the western world. As a result of this, an increasing number of third-level institutions have decided to incorporate the teaching of Japanese as part of a broad variety of degrees. However, learning Japanese as a foreign language is a relatively new phenomenon. As a consequence, the pedagogical methods used to teach the language in question is not extensively homogenous. This piece of research has been carried out using a comparative analysis of the pedagogical methods employed in three universities, namely, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University. Through conducting a quantitative questionnaire, the opinions of current and former students in the three universities were

gathered. This allowed for a comparative analysis to be carried out on the relative strengths and weaknesses of teaching Japanese in each university. Moreover, this investigation demonstrates the importance of cultural referents when learning the language. In addition, this research brings to light the relevance of pedagogical translation in the Japanese language learning process. Furthermore, this study illuminates the significance of the required balance in language learning competences when studying Japanese, regardless of the final objective. In brief, the results demonstrate that overall students in the three universities felt that the teaching of Japanese could be improved.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Studying Japanese for personal motivations such as business, pleasure and academic purposes is very different from studying the language as a translator and interpreter. While the former should only be concerned with the linguistic issues such as syntax, grammar or vocabulary, the latter is aware of its role in the process of not only learning the language but also its future visibility as a cultural and linguistic mediator. In this sense, learning Japanese as a translator and interpreter goes beyond the domain of merely translating from one language to the other, but rather it is representative of broader cultural, societal, intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic knowledge. As Hurtado Albir (2001) contends, these aforementioned aspects, along with other components such as transference, instruments and strategies, comprise what traductologists label ‘translation competence’. This competence is considered the key difference between a student of a foreign language and a student of a foreign language as a translator and interpreter. This is a point which is developed further by Pym (2003), who states that since the 1970s ‘translation competence’ has developed into a form of multicomponent expertise encompassing skills that are linguistic, cultural, technological and professional. Pym names this a *supercompetence*. Additionally, translation and interpreting students learn the abilities and proficiencies that may not be learnt by other foreign language learners.

As is well documented in literature, the process of Japanese language learning could be described as complex, gradual, slow and conceived to be heartbreakingly challenging. Nolla Cabellos *et al.* (2010) notes that due to the lack of objective parameters to quantify how complicated a language is, it is dangerous to affirm whether Japanese language is among one of the most difficult languages to learn. Nevertheless, its complexity for those who are native speakers of occidental languages such as Catalan, French and English is quite evident.

Primarily, the most significant difficulty is the Japanese writing system, which is utterly different from the Latin alphabet which has a predominance in the Western world. It is not only one alphabet learners of Japanese have to deal with, but a triple writing system comprehensively more complex than the Cyrillic alphabet or the Greek graphical symbols.

Secondly, Japanese is a language that has no similarities to Catalan, Spanish or any other European language. Despite the recent introduction of loanwords, especially from English, Japanese does not maintain any etymological likenesses to occidental languages. Hence its comprehension is considered to be more difficult.

Finally, learning and understanding Japanese requires a profound knowledge of its culture. Even though this premise can be applied to all languages, it is of particular relevance to Japanese. Without a detailed study of its culture, society and the frame of mind that is unique to Japan, comprehending the language can be an arduous task.

In relation to the structure of this thesis, it is important to note that it comprises of a total of five chapters. Chapter one presents a brief introduction to the importance of learning the Japanese language as a translator and interpreter. In addition, this chapter includes the motivations, aims and objectives that have brought the researcher to investigate this topic further. Chapter two defines the operational concepts and the theoretical background to the study, namely, two main pedagogical methods, 'communicative competence' and 'grammar competence', which are used in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, in the University of Limerick and in Kanazawa University. An insight to 'pedagogical translation' and 'professional translation' is also provided. Chapter three contextualises the current situation relating to the Japanese language in the western world. Moreover, this chapter details the growth of the language in question in third-level education. In the second part of this chapter, the Japanese language teaching methods in the three universities under study, is individually described. Chapter four documents the methodology that this study employs, illustrating the different stages of the research and presenting information on the participants, the research instrument and data analysis. Chapter five presents the descriptive and quantitative analysis of the data gathered in each university under study. Chapter six illustrates the conclusions reached and suggests improvements for Japanese language teaching methods in third-level education institutions. Finally, the appendix will present the questionnaire administrated and some relevant tables which have been used to support this research.

## **1.1. Research Aims and Objectives**

This study is situated at the interface of pedagogical methods, Translation and Interpreting studies and Japanese as a foreign language. The objective of this study is to explore the views and opinions of current and former third-level students towards the Japanese pedagogical methods as a foreign language currently being employed in three different universities.

In order to meet these aims and objectives, four research questions will be addressed in the project. These are:

- What have the experiences of the students been of Japanese teaching in the three different universities?
- In the student's opinion, how can the pedagogical methods of learning Japanese as a foreign language be improved upon?
- Do students feel that too much time is dedicated towards pure linguistic and reading competences?
- In the opinion of the students, how can Japanese oral and listening competences as well as cultural elements be improved upon?

These issues, the research aims and objectives, will be addressed in order to contribute both empirically and theoretically to the study of pedagogical methods of Japanese as a foreign language. In doing so, this project will aim to fill the lacuna in the relatively unexplored dimension of pedagogical methods of Japanese as a foreign language in third-level education.

This project will also aim to illuminate the pedagogical methods used in Japanese as a foreign language at three third-level institutions around the globe. Therefore, the specific aim of this research will be to compare the pedagogical methods employed in three sociolinguistic contexts. These three sociolinguistic settings will be the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Catalonia), the University of Limerick (Ireland) and the Kanazawa University (Japan). This study will be conducted to determine an overview of the pedagogical structures that exist within each institution and the relative strengths and weaknesses of each method as understood by current and former students of each university mentioned above.

Furthermore, this research will provide an insight into improvement procedures that could be utilised to upgrade the pedagogical methods and, consequently, the learning skills of Translation and Interpreting students of Japanese as a foreign language in the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

## **1.2. Motivations**

This research can be considered unique due to its specificity. However, there is a particular set of circumstances that had motivated this research. These motivations will be detailed in the following section.

Being a student of a BA in Translation and Interpreting Studies (Catalan-English-Japanese) in the Autonomous University of Barcelona has given me the opportunity to, not only experience one pedagogical method, but three. As a result of my participation in two study abroad programmes, one in Ireland and one in Japan, I was able to experience a number of different teaching methods. The fact that I have been exposed to three different methods of teaching Japanese as a foreign language has given rise to my interest in this topic. Through first-hand involvement in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University I have realised that there potentially exists some strengths and weaknesses in the pedagogical methods in Japanese language teaching in all three universities mentioned above. Thus then, improving the pedagogical methods of Japanese as a foreign language in Catalonia and more specifically in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, utilising not only my own personal experience, but also the desire to conduct research has brought me to making this decision. My eagerness and enthusiasm to become a future lecturer of Japanese as a foreign language at third-level education have also greatly influenced my decision. Having been in contact with lecturers all around the world who share the same objective, that is to teach Japanese to foreign students, but who have all employed different pedagogical methods, has enriched my own knowledge and has given me the incentive to explore this field further.

In addition, the lack of research on the pedagogical methods and resources in relation to the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language is disappointing and not up to expectations. Although there exists an increasing interest in pedagogical methods for foreign language acquisition across a broad spectrum and also for pedagogical

translation (e.g. Zabalbeascoa Terrán 1990; Kiraly 1995; Süss 1997; Zurita Sáñez de Navarrete 1997; Malmkjær 1998; Schäffner 1998; Hurtado Albir 2008; Leonardí 2010; Vermes 2010; Galán-Mañas and Hurtado Albir 2015), there still is an obvious research gap that needs to be explored. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical, theoretical and comparative research in this field. There is also a lack of research in pedagogical translation and pedagogical methods in Japanese as a foreign language (Ohta 2001; Montaner Montava 2007, 2012, 2014; Sakamoto 2014), a topic that I am highly interested in.

Last but not least, a willingness to keep expanding both contemporary and traditional Japanese culture as well as Japanese language overseas, especially in Catalonia, has played an important role in my decision making process. Despite the increasing demand for Japanese in Catalonia and, by extension, Spain, there is a lack of educational centres that offer Japanese as a second or third language in Translation and Interpreting Studies (see Table 1, Appendix 1). Despite this, there is a growing number of third-level institutions and other government organisations that offer Japanese as a modern language (see Table 2, Appendix 1). However, the number is still limited. In light of this, there is a need to keep improving the pedagogical methods in Japanese in order to make the language more accessible, manageable and useful to younger generations. Furthermore, the 21st century process of globalisation has led to a growing demand for specialists in the Japanese language and the Japanese culture in order to fulfil cultural, economic and literary links through becoming translators, interpreters, international businesspeople, etc.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

As it will be detailed throughout this research, learning Japanese as a foreign language in the Western world is a rather new phenomenon. As a result of this, there is a lack of standardisation on the pedagogical methods employed in third-level education institutions. Consequently, the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University —the three universities under study— use rather differentiated pedagogical methods. These dissimilarities can be found in two main focuses: the general views on translation in the classroom and the perspective on which competences are more relevant to teach Japanese as foreign language.

These uncertainties give rise to some doubts. How can be pedagogical translation defined? Why is it important in second and third-language acquisition? What are the differences between pedagogical translation and professional translation? What are ‘communicative competence’ and ‘grammatical competence’? The following section will provide an insight to these questions with an aim to exploring possible solutions.

### **2.1. The Importance of Studying Japanese as a Translator and Interpreter**

It is clear that to fully understand a language to the degree that is necessary to become a translator and an interpreter, there needs to be a framework in existence that goes merely beyond just learning the language. Lotman provides further insight when he states that, ‘no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its centre, the structure of natural language’ (Lotman 1978, p. 211). In relation to this, it is essential to mention the term ‘translation competence’. Although a consensus in defining this term has yet to be reached due to the lack of empirical research, Bell (1991) describes translation competence as the knowledge and ability the translator needs to complete a translation. Hurtado Albir (1996) adds that the translation competence is “the ability of knowing how to translate”. In this line of work, the research group PACTE (2000) labelled the translation competence as the “underlying system of knowledge and skills needed to be able to translate”. Given this situation, Hurtado Albir (1996) and PACTE (2000) point out that

there are six subcompetences that translators and interpreters should possess the following:

1. bilingual competence
2. extra-linguistic competences
3. transfer competence
4. instrumental competence
5. strategic competence
6. psycho-physiological competence

In light of this, and as Berenguer 1996; 1997 (cited in Hurtado Albir 2010), points out, it is necessary to create a specific pedagogical model to teach a foreign language applied to traductology. Furthermore, Brehm Cripps (1997) emphasises the need to develop a strong reading competence in the target language.

Continuing on, it is vital to illuminate the fundamental role culture and context play in Japanese language learning. According to Kramersch (1996), culture plays an essential role in the learning of a foreign language. This is in response to the dissatisfaction with teaching a foreign language from a purely functional perspective (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2011d). From this point of view, it is argued that if language learners are not provided with explanations of the underlying meanings, they are likely to face communication problems. On the other hand, culture cannot be framed only as social practices such as cuisine, festivals and traditional dress. Such preoccupation with differences is said to lead to stereotyping the target group and to placing undue emphasis on exotic differences between societies (Byram 1997; Holliday 1999; Kramersch 1993). As Hurtado Albir (2001) argues, it is important to take account of the context and the cultural elements when translating. It is also essential to acquire extra-linguistic knowledge in both the original and target languages in order to effectively translate from one to the other. Moreover, as a student of a foreign language in Translation and Interpreting studies it is essential to understand how and to what degree the translator can interpret and convey not only language content but also language as a cultural medium. In addition, translators and interpreters should be aware of the cultural context problems that arise when translating from language A to language B.

## **2.2. Pedagogical Translation vs Professional Translation**

García Castañón (2014) defines pedagogical translation as an educational activity which seeks to perfect the target language through text manipulations, comparative analysis and active awareness. However, it is important in this research to have a clear understanding of the differences between pedagogical translation and professional translation. Although often used in tandem, as is the case of Japanese language learning at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, pedagogical and professional translation are different in nature. Klaudy (2003) points out that pedagogical translation serves as a tool to improve the language learner's foreign language proficiency. Therefore, pedagogical translation is extensively used in the classroom. Primary schools, high-schools and third-level institutions also use pedagogical translation in first-foreign language learning.

In contrast, the main goal of professional translation is for the students to become professional translators (Hurtado Albir 1988b). In this light, professional translation is the main objective of Japanese language learning in the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting in the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The University of Limerick also gives importance to professional translation. Nonetheless, both third-level institutions use pedagogical translation as part of the pedagogical method employed. Dollerup (2005) adds that pedagogical translation is used to check the student's mastery of specific skills (syntax, lexis, etc.) whereas texts in translation classes are coherent, run-on texts. Furthermore, Seleskovitch and Lederer (1984) define the pedagogy of translation as consisting of four steps. These steps are:

1. Make third parties understand the meaning of a segment in a text.
2. Make students reconstruct an idea within a paragraph in their original language.
3. Go back to the text and reconstruct the paragraph.
4. Compare the original with the translation: refine, rectify, correct and establish an almost perfect equivalence between both the original and the translation.

Stibbard (1998) sights translation as an ability that needs to be taught along with four other skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Traductologists such as Kiraly (1990) and Hurtado Albir (2001) expressed that a translator needs a communicative competence, a linguistic competence and a translation competence. Furthermore, there



are some other aspects that need to be considered in the pedagogy of translation, such as directionality (Newmark 1981), bilingualism (Pokorn 2000) and biculturalism (Snell-Hornby 1999). Gibert (1989) states that many traductologists presume that translation and interpreting students have fully acquired a translation competence or the ability to work with both the original and target languages.

As it is indicated by Pintado Gutiérrez (2012), the integration of pedagogical translation in second and third foreign language learning became relevant due to a large revisionism in both Translation and Interpreting Studies and in Foreign Language Teaching. This sparked a conciliation between both fields, which benefited their development and improvement. Prior to this resolution, as Ballard (2005) states, there was a rejection of pedagogical translation in second and third language learning in third-level education because it was regarded as an unnatural communication method and as a contraposition of the communicate use of the target language. Moreover, Malmkjaer (1998), listed a number of arguments against the use of pedagogical translation. The basic premise is, as Malmkjaer states, that translation as a part of second and third-language learning comprises of the following components. For Malmkjaer (1998), translation:

- is independent of the four skills which define language competence: reading, writing, speaking and listening
- is radically different from the four skills
- takes up valuable time which could be used to teach these four skills
- is unnatural
- misleads students into thinking that expressions in two languages correspond one-to-one
- prevents students from thinking in the foreign language
- is only appropriate for training translators

From this perspective, there are countries in which both pedagogical and professional translation are not fully recognised in second and third-foreign language learning. Naganuma (2008) contents that Japan is one of the countries where translation education in third-level institutions lacks a pedagogical model. However, there is a growing interest in Translation and Interpreting Studies, a degree that has begun to

establish itself in Japanese academia (Wakabayashi and Sato-Rossberg 2012). Incongruently, there is a lack of research on pedagogical translation in the Japanese context. In addition, as is the case with Kanazawa University, Japanese universities that teach Japanese as a foreign language to international students avoid using any language other than Japanese. In opposition to the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the University of Limerick, Kanazawa University solely employs pedagogical translation in lower levels. Therefore, KU is an advocate of an “only Japanese” policy the majority of the time.

### **2.3. Towards a Communicative Pedagogical Method**

Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration, not only with Translation and Interpreting Studies, but also in the pedagogical methods of teaching foreign languages is the intersection between translation and communication. As Zabalbescoa Terrán (1990) points out, it was in the 1980s that traductologists first researched the relationship between communication and translation theories (Delisle 1984; Snell-Hornby 1988). Although, traductologists such as Firth (1957) had already briefly explored this topic and stressed the need to develop a communicative competence beyond the linguistic knowledge. Pintado Gutiérrez (2012) adds that the importance of communication in translation has also been extensively researched in contemporary literature (Campbell 1998; Kiraly 2000; Hurtado Albir 1998, 2015). In fact, Kiraly (2000b) states that translating constitutes an act of communication when working with the concept of translation equivalence based on linguistic material. Moreover, Rabassa (2005) adds “every act of communication is an act of translation”.

In addition to translation competence, communicative competence is vitally important when performing an act of translation. Furthermore, third foreign language teaching should comprise some model of communicative competence (Hymes 1972; Canale and Swain 1980). Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations.

Continuing on, Cenoz Iragui (2004) believes that communicative competence has a direct impact on the objectives of language learning and in the pedagogical strategies. Savignon (1983) considers the concept of communicative competence as dynamic.

From a pedagogical perspective, second and third-foreign language students should acquire abilities and competences in order to transmit and comprehend the intention and function of the text in a communicative manner.

In light of the above, and moving forward to pedagogical methods, Richards (2006) illuminates that the main objective of communicative competence is communicative language teaching. Communicative language teaching is a pedagogical method that was first proposed in the 1970s in opposition to grammatical competence. This approach is used to teach Japanese as a foreign-language in the University of Limerick and in Kanazawa University. In turn, grammatical competence is attributed to the knowledge students have of a language that accounts for the ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of building blocks of sentences (e.g., parts of speech, tenses, phrases, clauses, sentence patterns) and how sentences are formed. In the case of Japanese language learning, grammatical competence also encompasses kanji learning. A pedagogical method based on grammatical competence is broadly used in the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Communicative language teaching holds a significant influence on language teaching practice around the world (Richards 2006). In the 1960s, the importance of syntax as a core component of second-foreign language teaching was severely criticised. It was stated that learning a foreign language involved much more than grammatical competence. For example, as is in the case with Japanese, students can memorise kanji reading and grammar structures but still not have an adequate use of the language in a meaningful communication context. Consequently, the attention shifted from a strict language learning system to an awareness of using syntax and semantics appropriately for different purposes, such as being able to make requests, give advice and make suggestions.

Richards (2006) adds that communicative competence includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions.
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication). In

the case of Japanese, this is very important as formal and informal speech are clearly differentiated and misusing politeness could impact negatively in society.

- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts.
- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge.

Further to the above points, it is often stated in the literature that certain approaches towards language teaching put an emphasis on grammatical competence as a fundamental component of language proficiency. Grammatical competence holds the belief that repetitive practice through direct instruction is the key to learning syntax (drilling). In this sense, the process is deductive in nature, rather than inductive. Whereby an inductive approach stresses the importance of student lead problem solving, a deductive approach focuses on dictating grammatical rules which are then practised by students. The basic premise is that a deductive approach seeks to teach students a large body of sentences and grammatical patterns which students can draw from quickly in a given situation. This is a common practice in Japanese language learning in the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

### **3. CONTEXT**

#### **3.1. Status Quo**

The aim of this chapter is to offer an account of the situation in which the current Japanese pedagogical methods in third-level education in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University find themselves today. In order to explore the current teaching methods employed in each institution, and thus their relative advantages and disadvantages, it is necessary to provide a brief historical account of the respective Japanese language departments and their approaches to teaching Japanese, albeit in different contexts. In light of this, this section briefly reviews the historical background of the Japanese departments in each institution. This is done to contextualise the situation and provide a backdrop to the framework that could potentially condition the views and opinions of the research participants towards how Japanese is taught in their universities. Thus then, the main aim of this chapter is to set the context, before moving onto a discussion relating to informants views on how teaching methods could be improved, an issue that will be presented later in the thesis. However, it is important to acknowledge that an exhaustive analysis of the pedagogical methods adopted by each university (each of which is in a different sociolinguistic context) is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, this chapter will identify the most salient features in all three cases. This will be undertaken with the intention of creating a backdrop against which current views towards Japanese teaching methods can be situated. However, before doing this, a brief overview of the rise of importance of Japanese language and culture in the Western World will be documented below.

Sugimoto (1999) notes that after World War II, Japan took firm control of its modernisation, utilising western cultural and economic elements and incorporating them into a hybridised product as a means of satisfying the demands of its citizens. Therefore, though Japanese culture retained its own identity, the secular nature of its popular culture continues to be accessible to a significant western audience that can find relatable interests. Consequently, as White (2015) notes, in the early 2000s the Japanese Government developed and improved national prestige through the ability to attract countries throughout the world to their culture. Therefore, a merger of contemporary Japanese pop culture and the concept of glorious past became a way to reclaim the

space for cultural uniqueness and, at the same time, allow cultural diversity while exploring and expanding western markets. Allison (2002) contents that just a few decades ago Japan was known worldwide for the high quality of its consumer hard technology (automobiles, electronic devices, televisions, etc.). However, little by little Japanese soft technology (music, animation, idols, etc.) has succeeded in imposing the country as one of the leaders in transmitting culture. Younger generations around the world, who grew up knowing Japan as a world economic power, have been also exposed to cultural aspects from Japan. For instance:

Japanese pop culture such as manga, animation, game[s], music, movies and TV drama, as well as modern art, literature, theatre arts and others are referred to as “Japan cool.” It is gaining popularity among the younger generation around the world. Japanese lifestyle represented in its cuisine and fashion has also widely spread in other countries.

(Abe, Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2007)

Thus then, when Japan realised that America and Western Europe were vividly consuming Japanese pop culture, such as video games, manga, anime and more recently literature, Japanese politicians and bureaucrats began to invest in pop culture industries as a way to encourage and develop Japanese soft power.

With the economic rise to prominence of Japan in the 1980s came an increase in cultural interest in Japan. For example, in Catalonia, a region that broadcasted its first anime on television in 1984, has taken part in the Japanese cultural expansion. Nolla Cabellos (2008) points out that literature has been an important part of this process. During the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century more than twenty Japanese literary works were published in the Catalan language. Nolla Cabellos (2008) adds that this phenomenon is not unique to Catalonia. Rather it is representative of wider Japanese culture in the western world. Reaffirming Allison’s (2002) research, Nolla Cabellos (2008) describes how the views of western countries during the last three decades have shifted from considering Japan as only a technological global power due to its substantial exportation, to a country able to also export prestigious cultural products. In a contemporary setting, western countries do not only turn their sights to Japan for their popular or technological novelties, but also for new gastronomy, architecture, music, cinematographic productions, literature and, as is the focus of this project, an eagerness

to learn the language. Another example of how Japanese culture and language have found its place in Europe can be seen in Ireland. Sheehan (2014) notes that Japanese was first introduced as a language in Irish schools approximately twenty years ago. It was the first Asian language to be taught in Irish schools. The number of students choosing Japanese as a second language in preparation for their final second level exam in Ireland (Leaving Certificate) is successfully increasing year after year (Sheehan 2014).

In light of the above, Bramley and Hanamura (1998) state that learning Japanese as a foreign language and teaching it in third-level education in Europe is nonetheless a relatively new phenomenon. In late 1980s and early 1990s there was an increase in the number of students learning Japanese due to the expanding Japanese economy. Furthermore, as tourism in and out of Japan increased, there was a need to bridge the linguistic gap between Japan and western society. This exposure sparked interest in inward tourism to Japan and interest in learning the Japanese language and culture, creating the need for new language courses in third-level education. As a result of this, Japanese language programs were established in educational institutions around the world. Prior to this, Japanese language education was only relatively strong in the United States and Australia due to the geographic proximity and the historical ties between the countries, ties that did not have the same degree of strength in European countries.

It is important to note that Japanese language learning has continued to boom around the world for different reasons. More recently, the world has witnessed an explosion of interest in anime and manga. This has only further fuelled younger generations desire to learn the Japanese language and go to the country to study and experience the language and culture first-hand (Rose and Carson 2004). Evidence of the continued growth in Japanese language learning can be found by the number of third-level education institutions offering Japanese as a foreign language: 21 in Germany, 13 in the UK, 18 in Spain and 5 in Ireland (see Table 3, 4, 5 and 6, Appendix 1).

### **3.2. The Autonomous University of Barcelona**

There are currently a reasonable number of public institutions that teach Japanese as a foreign language in Spain. These are namely Official Schools of Languages and third-level institutions. Nonetheless, despite the growing number of Japanese departments in Spanish universities, the number of third-level institutions that offer Japanese as part of a degree is still rather limited.

The Autonomous University of Barcelona (henceforth UAB) has two relatively distinct degrees that offer Japanese as a foreign language. These degrees are in Translation and Interpreting Studies and East Asian Studies. Due to the fundamental difference in nature—while the former focuses on creating future translators and interpreters, the latter educate students to become a liaison or consultants between countries—, this paper will solely focus on the Japanese pedagogical methods as part of Translation and Interpreting Studies.

UAB was the first third-level institution in Spain to include Japanese language learning as part of a bachelor's degree. The Faculty of Translation and Interpreting (known formerly as EUTI) first introduced Japanese as a foreign language in Translation and Interpreting Studies in 1988. Therefore, it can be stated that UAB has been a pioneer in this field in Spain. Minoru Shiraishi, the first lecturer of Japanese language in the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting (henceforth FTI), is also considered to be the founder of the pedagogical methods of Japanese language teaching at UAB. Despite not following any established pedagogical method but creating her own, Shiraishi adopted a somewhat grammar based perspective and a methodical linguistic approach. On the one hand, coursework activities are rigidly structured and systematic, predominantly based on a very theoretical perspective rather than practical. In this sense there is a predominance placed on memorised based learning through reading and writing skills. On the other hand, there is no such thing as a Japanese Department in the FTI. As a matter of fact, in spite of the dearth of similarities among some of the languages, all languages C offered at the FTI (Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Chinese) share significantly homogenous objectives, competences and standardised pedagogical methods.



Translation and Interpreting Studies at UAB allow students to combine the study of Japanese language with a language B (English, French or German) and specific Translation and Interpreting classes. Consequently, the number of hours to study Japanese are particularly limited. Students start the first year with six contact hours of Japanese language per week and finish fourth year with merely one contact hour per week. However, during third and fourth year, in addition to partaking in Japanese language classes, it is obligatory to attend three contact hours of Translation (Japanese-Catalan/Spanish) in third year and two contact hours in fourth year. As a result, the volume of work at home throughout the eight Japanese courses is considerably high. This is in addition to the vertiginous speed of the material covered in contact classes.

As previously mentioned, the FTI prepares students to become future translators and interpreters. However, speaking and listening (two essential skills to become a professional interpreter) are practically non-existent. As a consequence, all Japanese language courses are specifically focused on two skills: reading and writing. Japanese language classes place the emphasis on learning grammar, kanji and, to a lesser extent, producing written texts. This is achieved by extensively using pedagogical translations for the grammar examples as well as for kanji learning. Kanji are not usually learnt separately, but rather as part of text units which students should be able to translate. It is the lecturers' intention to develop not only the four traditional basic competences but also the acquisition of general linguistic and communicative abilities. It is essential to guide students into the obtainment of general knowledge so the undergraduates can live in Japan as international exchange students without a major semantic, syntactic and phonetic struggle. Nevertheless, the main objective of Japanese language learning at the FTI includes tasks related to mostly translation. For example, sociocultural elements that influence the language, vocabulary acquisition and writing abilities. Therefore, ongoing semantic, syntactic and kanji assessments are held throughout all eight Japanese language courses.

In addition, in order to avoid literal translations, not only semantic and syntactic pedagogical translations are offered, but students are also made aware of cultural elements included within the lexis and grammatical structures. In light of this, the FTI creates its own photocopy pack with pedagogical material, which enables students to develop reading abilities and writing skills. These didactic exercises, mostly used during

the first two years of the Japanese language course, allow students to individually expand pragmatic, textual and sociocultural competences. The latter include family, festivities, tourism, appointments (at the doctor, at work, etc.), daily life and education system in Japan.

It might be due to the large number of students per class or to facilitate the speed of the course, but the vehicular languages in the classroom are mostly Catalan and Spanish. Japanese is also spoken by lecturers, however less frequently. It is believed that speaking in the student's native language is favourable to understanding theoretical explanations, as well as to facilitate future translating skills from the original language to the target language.

In addition to the skills mentioned above and regardless of the lack of explicit Japanese culture and society learning in class, knowing how to overcome linguistic variations and cultural elements in pedagogical and professional translation play an essential role in Japanese language learning at the FTI. Through pedagogical texts, students are asked to translate in a professional setting. The texts used in class are non-specialised, simple and written in a standard language. Furthermore, these extracts are usually related to Japanese topics in order that the student is not only learning how to translate, but also to make them aware of cultural, historical and social differences. This translations include:

- Readings from *Tobira. Gateway to Advanced Japanese. Learning through Content and Multimedia*, a didactic book.
- Narrative, expositive, instructive and argumentative texts, such as children's tales, an entry in a reference encyclopaedia, an extract from a history manual, a letter to the editor in a newspaper, a film or a book review, a recipe, an advertisement text, etc.
- Descriptive texts, such as touristic brochures; a personal letter describing locations, people or objects; a description of an institution; description of a house or a room in a decoration magazine, etc.

Following this pedagogical approach, translations are done individually at home and then commented in class on a learning-based-on-problems system in which students comment real translation problems and try to reach some potential realistic solutions.

Moreover, combining pedagogical translation, professional translation and language learning in order to create future translators enables students to “soak-up”, either passively or actively, many aspects of Japanese language, culture and society.

### **3.3. The University of Limerick**

There are currently five third-level institutions that teach Japanese language in the Republic of Ireland. The first Japanese degree programme was founded by the National Institute of Higher Education (currently Dublin City University) in 1987 and has since established itself as the main university for Japanese studies in the Republic of Ireland. An increasing interest in the language has brought about the creation of four Japanese departments in third-level institutions. These departments can be found in the University of Limerick, the University College Dublin, the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies (Trinity College Dublin) and the School of Asian Studies (University College Cork).

The University of Limerick (henceforth UL) first established Japanese as an official subject in 1990 as part of its Bachelor of Business Studies. It was founded due to the strength of the Japanese economy and the need to create links between both countries. Later in the 1990s, Japanese became a subject on the BA in Applied Languages and is now a part of the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics, along with French, German and Spanish. In 1992 two postgraduate courses in Japanese were established in UL (a Graduate Diploma in Japanese Studies and an MA in Japanese Studies), but these courses were cut before the turn of the century. It is clear then, that Japanese was predominantly only available in the business courses provided by UL. However, it is now taken in the majority by students in Humanities. Nonetheless, it has still not found its place as an official degree. The UL course in Japanese allows students to combine the study of Japanese language and culture with another major subject. Japanese can currently be chosen as part of the following degrees: BA (Education) in Languages, BA Languages, Literature and Film, Bachelor of Laws (Law Plus), Bachelor of Arts (Joint Honours), BBS with Japanese and BA Applied Languages.

Despite the increase in demand of students who want to take Japanese language and culture courses and the growing UL exchange agreements with Japanese universities, an entire degree dedicated to Japanese Studies has yet to be established. Nevertheless,

combining a Japanese course with a degree is a real advantage for students who want to integrate their learnt language skills into other fields of study as well as broaden their understanding of different cultures.

Following the model from the Japanese Studies degree at University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom —established in 1963 and developed into one of the world’s leading teaching and research centres for the subject— the Japanese Department at UL adopted a communicative approach to teaching Japanese. The Japanese classes are smaller in size. This allows students to use the target language in class to the greatest extent possible. Improving a communicative competence provides not only the acquisition of passive and organisational knowledge of the Japanese language, but also the ability and skills to obtain a familiarity in a realistic communicative and pragmatic domain. Moreover, activities in class aim at getting students to use the target language from the very beginning. This is achieved by putting students in groups or pairs. Throughout the total of eight semesters in which the whole Japanese language and culture course is designed, it is obligatory for the students to participate in different communicative tasks in the target language. Along with an oral examination each semester, which usually includes spontaneous speaking production, there are a number of other activities scheduled throughout the semester. At the end of the fourth year Japanese language course students have to go through a series of scheduled and spontaneous speaking assignments, which are part of the percentage for the total assessment. In the speaking preparation classes students learn idiomatic and genuine expressions from the target language, in addition to using the formal and informal register appropriately. These activities include:

- Role-playing (asking for directions, at a restaurant, at work, at the hospital, on the phone, etc.).
- Themed-presentations (self-introduction, my family, my place, Japanese business, the news, etc.).
- Speeches (gender gap, pros and cons, society issues, giving your opinion, explanation of a certain topic, comparisons, etc.).

In addition to communicative classroom activities, every semester a language exchange program with a Japanese native speaker is offered. These one-to-one and group chat

discussions have become an important part of the Japanese learning process in UL. This is because the students can practice all the skills learnt in class and also be surrounded by native speakers in real communicative situations.

Despite a predominance of a communicative competence, the Japanese Department at UL has achieved a well-balanced pedagogical method. Each course in Japanese language is currently based on six contact hours per week. All courses are skill-based, namely an hour for each competence: speaking, reading, writing and listening, in addition to grammar and kanji, which are covered every week. Even though pedagogical translation is extensively used in class, professional translation learning is not specifically taught until the fourth year. The Japanese Department at UL places the emphasis on all competences because it considers that each of the four skills (not including professional translation) support the others. It is the department's intention to develop all skills equally in order to create a plausible and goal-oriented environment. Since the students are learning Japanese as a foreign language outside Japan, reading and listening are important ways for them to stay in contact with the language.

Japanese culture and society also plays an important role in Japanese language learning at UL. During the first two-and-a-half years of the Japanese course, it is compulsory for students to discuss, analyse, read and write about aspects of Japanese history, culture, society and literature. This is done mainly in English. In addition, all four skills are complemented at all times with real Japanese situations. For example, the Japanese Department not only uses modified listening passages targeting foreign-language learners such as the former Japanese Language Proficiency Test audios or textbooks listening practices, such as the *Minna no Nihongo* ones, but also real Japanese news and movies. Although most of the materials to learn Japanese as a foreign language are rather old-fashioned and structural, they are useful when learning grammar and kanji. UL compensates for this by providing real literature and audio-visual material. Moreover, all the skills are mostly acquired by reading, listening, writing and speaking about Japanese-related topics in order that the student is not only learning the language in a broader scope but also soaking up all aspects of Japanese society and culture.

### **3.4. Kanazawa University**

For many years, Japan has been characterised globally as being reluctant to accept foreigners into the nation. However, due to the increasing interest in the Japanese language and also Japanese culture among the Western world and other Asian countries such as China and Indonesia, many universities in Japan have felt the need to open up their doors to overseas students. Therefore, Kanazawa University (henceforth KU) established an International Student Center in April 1995 with the objective of strengthening its communication ties and the overall relationship between Japan and a number of other countries. With the creation of especially designed and pedagogical oriented exchange programs, the International Student Center (henceforth ISC) has successfully promoted international exchange programmes at KU. The ISC annually provides education relating to Japanese language, culture and affairs to an average of one hundred international students. There are currently seven programmes in the ISC:

- Program A Kanazawa University Student Exchange Program (KUSEP)
- Program B Kanazawa University Japanese Language and Culture Program
- Program C Kanazawa University Human and Social Sciences Short-term Exchange Program
- Program D Kanazawa University Semester Program
- Program E Kanazawa University Student Exchange Program for Science and Technology (KUEST)
- Intensive Japanese Language Program
- J-K Joint Program for Science & Engineer

However, this paper will only focus on the Japanese pedagogical methods as part of KUSEP, a one-year special education program for international students whose universities are affiliated with KU and students whose native language is not Japanese. It is the ISC's goal to provide classes in English on Japanese language, culture and the state of affairs in Japan. Furthermore, KUSEP provides Japanese language classes exclusively in Japanese, and major-related courses or research in both languages. This is done in order to furnish students with a deep appreciation and understanding of the country.

Furthermore, KUSEP is composed of compulsory Japanese language courses and elective courses including major-related classes and independent research. Students are obliged to take 20 credits for Japanese language classes and a minimum of 5 credits for elective courses. The program allows students to combine the study of Japanese with culture-related classes either in English or Japanese, depending on the student's level of Japanese language.

On the one hand, elective courses (see Table 7 and 8, Appendix 1) are offered to international students in order to obtain a better and broader knowledge of Japanese culture, history, society, philosophy, art, sport and education. Most elective courses can be taken in tandem with Japanese students at KU, giving international students the opportunity to share, discuss and understand different perspectives on a given topic. In light of this, elective courses grant international students the opportunity to experience Japanese culture first hand in a rather practical context and in an actively involved manner. In addition to being exposed daily to Japanese culture and society as part of the international student's own experience, elective courses are cited as being the perfect combination to engage in cultural exchanges, and to exhaustively grasp and comprehensively benefit from ideas, customs, and social behaviour in Japan.

On the other hand, KUSEP offers compulsory Japanese language learning classes to all students (see Table 9, Appendix 1). As a result of the need to create an enhanced goal-oriented pedagogical method, in 1998 the ISC designed the Integrated Japanese Language Program (IJLP). The main objective of this curricular plan is to provide international students with a satisfactory language ability in pursuit of the understanding of lectures and seminars in Japanese. From this perspective, IJLP enables students to improve their Japanese language knowledge in order to better adjust to university and life in Japan. It is also the program's goal to assist students in gaining a certain proficiency to be able to understand Japanese culture and society through the language. In light of the above, all undergraduates and graduates are assigned a suitable Japanese class based on the result of a placement test prior to the beginning of the academic year.

IJLP consists of comprehensive classes, kanji classes and skill-specific classes. The Japanese Language Course is structured in seven distinct levels, from elementary (students who have no previous knowledge of Japanese language) to advanced. Classes

are held daily and for a minimum seven-and-a-half hours and a maximum of ten-and-a-half hours per week. Furthermore, all specific-based classes and kanji courses are exclusively taught in Japanese. However, the vehicular language of comprehensive classes may vary in accordance to the level. In this sense, elementary classes are taught primarily in English and intermediate and advanced classes are taught solely in Japanese.

Moreover, comprehensive classes with lower levels place the emphasis on a communicative approach and higher level classes give priority to reading skills. In addition to learning a broad spectrum of lexis within a context, syntax plays an essential role in the process of language learning. IJLP allows for students to combine a regular Japanese language course with two or three skill-based classes. These classes include oral comprehension, writing skills, reading abilities, oral production and academic and business language. In both comprehensive and skill-specific courses for higher levels, pedagogical and professional translation have no place. It is the lecturer's objective to make students understand the language in all settings through different examples but with Japanese as a vehicular language, never with the equivalent in another language. In this sense, students are engaged in an all-Japanese context, which enables them to create a realistic environment and a highly committed linguistic and cultural framework.

From this perspective, all courses are rather practical, based on real information about current matters in Japan or cultural and social aspects of the country adapted to a pedagogical scope. These activities include:

- Role-plays such as introducing yourself and others, asking for directions, asking permission, enquiring about a lost item, at a bookshop, at a department store, phone calls, complaints and requests, convincing to buy an object etc.
- Oral presentations about your country, gender gap in the world, pros and cons about an item, etc.
- Readings about Japanese convenience stores, geography in Japan, Japanese education, politics in Japan, Japan and the world, religion and the Japanese and pop culture in Japan, amongst others.
- Readings on the status quo of energy in Japan, on gender equality in Japan, the impact of video gaming, evolution of androids, etc.



- Listening to real stories about famous Japanese personalities, documentaries about Japanese businesses, understanding Japanese TV series, etc.
- Writing formal, academic, and informal e-mails and texts suitable to all contexts in Japan.

All three courses (comprehensive classes, skill-based courses and kanji classes) are assessed on ongoing basis. In addition, there is a mid-term test and a final exam, which include all material covered in class. Therefore, each individual course consists of series of continuous evaluations and two cumulative assessments. The ISC argues that students need to be examined in the aforementioned manner in order to ensure a real language learning process.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Quantitative Approach**

This research project has adopted a quantitative methodological approach. The researcher chose to employ a quantitative approach for a number of reasons. Firstly, the strength of employing a quantitative research strategy to pedagogical methods in Japanese classes across three countries lies in its potential for gathering large quantities of data on the research topic. Gathering large quantities of data allows for the researcher to say something meaningful about the phenomenon under investigation. Secondly, the comparative aspect of this research determines why using a quantitative approach is most apt. However, issues of true comparability arise in quantitative projects (Harkness, 2003), especially research that encompasses the translation of instruments from the source language to the target language, as was the case of this research project. The structured manner in which quantitative data is collected increases the researcher's ability to truly compare the data gathered from the three groups. Although qualitative research methods could be used, i.e. structured or semi-structured interviews, practicalities such as distance, funding and accessibility to research participants dictate that a qualitative research paradigm is best used in this study.

### **4.2. Choice of Instrument**

As stated above, the strength of employing quantitative research to investigate pedagogical methods in Japanese as a foreign language lay in its potential for gathering large quantities of data on the research topic. This is especially true of questionnaires, the method that provided the corpus of the data for this project. Employing questionnaires to examine pedagogical methods in Japanese as a foreign language allows for a broader spectrum of respondents to be accessed. Thus, it was possible for findings to be generalised to the wider population outside of the sample surveyed. Another advantage of employing questionnaires was that they permit anonymity, thereby promoting an increased likelihood of receiving genuine or truthful responses. As Oppenheim (1992) notes, one of the main advantages of constructing questionnaires is that they provide an objective means of gathering information about people's knowledge and attitudes towards a phenomenon. Moreover, Nicholas (1994) points out

the strength of adopting quantitative research in the study of language. It is argued here that data gathered through the distribution of questionnaires is considered advantageous insofar as it provides a representative and ‘balanced’ set of results that can be analysed using statistical methods. In conclusion, the researcher chose to employ a quantitative questionnaire because of this research’s comparative nature.

### **4.3. Research Participants**

This research project focuses on collecting data from current third and fourth-year undergraduate students and students who have recently completed their undergraduate studies at three universities. As has been previously stated these three universities are the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Catalonia), the University of Limerick (Ireland) and the Kanazawa University (Japan). However, while best efforts were made to collect data from a homogeneous population sample, this was not always possible. Taking this into consideration, current and former students in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, who are Translation and Interpreting students taking Japanese as a second foreign language, were surveyed. Data was gathered from a wider continuum of students in the University of Limerick who are currently or have formerly attended Japanese language courses in which translation is a component of their degree. Finally, and in line with the previous two examples, data was collected from international students studying Japanese in Kanazawa University. These decisions were made while taking into account fundamental theoretical and practical concerns. Additionally, this research’s population offered a controlled group. This is a key concern when conducting comparative research, as is the case of this project. Moreover, due to the comparative nature of this project it is important to consider the homogeneity of the research population in terms of educational level, age, level of Japanese ability, etc. It is through maintaining this degree of homogeneity that allows the comparability of responses to be maximised (Van de Vijver 2003). From a practical perspective, this research’s population was chosen due to ease of access. In this sense, the researcher had first-hand exposure as a student to the Japanese pedagogical methods of the three universities. And thus, the researcher had personal contacts to draw from.

In light of the above, and as Krueger (1988) demonstrates, it is vital that research participants have experienced the matter of study that is being researched. Given that the

focus of this research is the pedagogical methods employed while teaching Japanese in three different universities and how students have experienced these teaching methods, the focus of this research was the views of current and former university students. Furthermore, the participants were aged between twenty and thirty. Although research on Japanese pedagogical methods is extensive (see e.g. Saito and Samimy 1996, Jones and Ono 2005, Montaner Montava 2007; 2012; 2014), to the best of this author's knowledge there is a limited amount of research that primarily focuses on the current pedagogical methods employed in the Japanese department of the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University and of the Translation Department in the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Moreover, there is a lack of research which contains a comparative aspect of the matter mentioned above. Thus then, this research aims to provide an insight into the possible changes required to improve the methods of teaching Japanese to future translators and interpreters, as detailed by the students themselves.

#### **4.4. Questionnaire and Method of Data Collection**

As has been previously stated, this project has used a quantitative questionnaire (see Appendix 2). This method was chosen because, as Johnson and Van de Vijver (2003) point out, cultural differences and distance that exist between the population under investigation and the interviewers can result in varying response patterns.

The aim of the questionnaire was to illuminate how the Japanese pedagogical methods could be improved from the perspective of current and former third-level students of Japanese language. Additionally, the questionnaire provided comparative data on the teaching methods used in the three universities previously mentioned. Furthermore, this questionnaire provided an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the Japanese pedagogical methods employed in the three different universities and the level of satisfaction of the current and former students. It is important to note that the questionnaire was designed to meet the needs of the different sets of students who completed it, i.e. language diversity.

As with any research project, the method of data collection needs to be considered. This is in addition to the fact that the method of data collection influences the design of the questionnaire itself. In this regard, this project utilised a self-administrated

questionnaire in order to collect the required information. This choice of data collection was influenced by the need to ensure that an efficient and reliable method of data collection was put in place to gather data from populations residing in the three different countries. Additionally, the implementation of a self-administrated questionnaire eliminates issues such as interview bias and also allow for a more efficient method of data collection (Dillman 2002). The questionnaires were distributed to suitable candidates in each institution, primarily to contact with lecturers of relevant classes and also through personal contact that the researcher has made as a student in the three different universities.

#### **4.5. Data Analysis**

All the parts comprising the questionnaire were carefully structured and organized so as to make its completion easy and rapid for respondents. In addition, the questionnaire was designed in order to contain mostly closed questions and pre-coded answers. In this way, it was also easier to compare and analyse the results than it would have been if the survey had been based on open-ended items or interviews. Nonetheless, although the majority of the questions in the survey used were close-ended, one open-ended question (no. 17) was also included. Responses to the open-ended question asked the respondents to give their opinions on the strengths and weakness of Japanese language teaching in there university. The one open-ended question in the survey was used to supplement preceding quantitative questions.

The statistical program, SPSS (Statistical Programme for the Social Sciences, version 22), was used to process the data collected from the participants. The data was entered into a data spreadsheet and a codebook was prepared. Following this, the dataset was uploaded to SPSS. There were only a minor number of missing values for some variables. However, there were no systematic patterns in the missing data. Once entered into SPSS the data was analysed in terms of descriptive data, and when appropriate, also in terms univariate and bivariate analyses

The responses from the one open-ended question was assessed qualitatively and data gathered was used to provide additional insights into the issues at hand. The data obtained from the open-ended responses was analysed using thematic analysis. This process allowed for the researcher to highlight common themes that arose during the

research process (Morse and Field 1995). Through the use of thematic analysis the researcher uncovered a number of new themes and issues that the closed-ended questions did not touch upon. In brief, the open-ended section of the pilot questionnaire was invaluable in eliciting students' more extended comments.

## 5. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

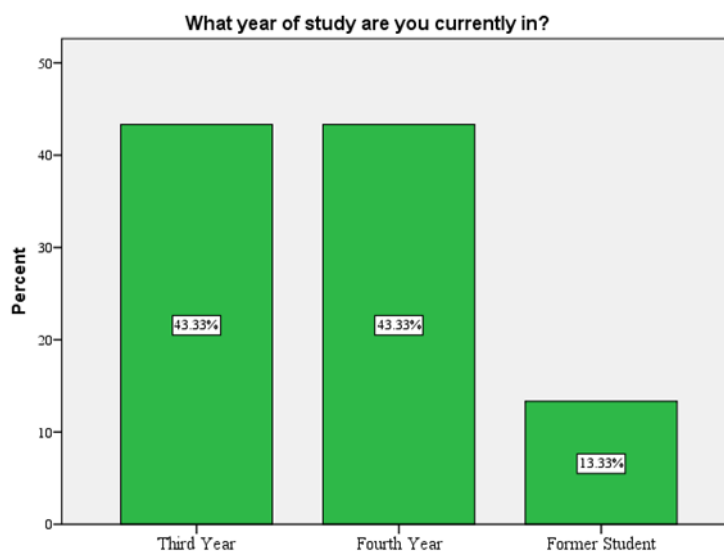
This section will first look at the results generated from the three universities. The first section will explore the results generated from the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The results from UAB students are significantly greater than the other institutions. This was due to ease of access and geographical proximity to the researcher. Thirty UAB students completed and returned the questionnaire. The second section will detail the results generated from the surveys returned from the University of Limerick participants. In total eleven questionnaires were filled out by students of this institution. The final section documents the results from the completed questionnaires gathered from Kanazawa University students. Twenty KU questionnaires were filled. The following section examines these results and provides a univariate analysis of the data gathered.

### 5.1. The Autonomous University of Barcelona

#### 5.1.1. Respondents

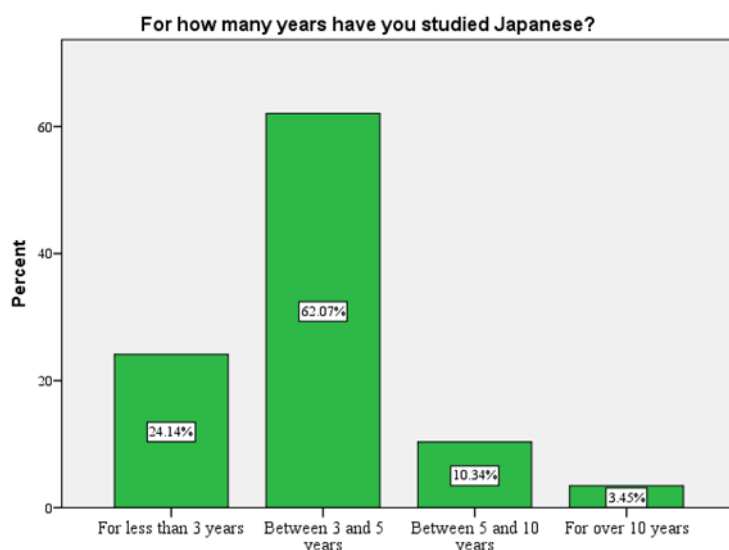
The questionnaire was filled out by thirty current and former students at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. 86.66% of students were either in third year or fourth year of the Translation and Interpreting degree program. This high response rate was due to convenience and ease of access to certain gatekeepers.

**Graph 5.1** Respondents' Year of Study in UAB



Most of respondents had studied Japanese as a second-foreign language for less than three years, for between three and five years or for between five and ten years (see graph 5.2). This indicates that the first group of students are in the third year of the Translation and Interpreting Degree. Therefore, they have only experienced Japanese language learning in the courses provided by the FTI. The second group of participants are most likely fourth year students who are finishing their degree this year and might have experienced not only UAB's pedagogical methods in Japanese language learning, but may have been a student in another university through an international exchange programme. Finally, the last group of students mentioned are most likely former students who have continued on expanding their knowledge and ability of the Japanese language.

**Graph 5.2** UAB Respondents' Number of Years Studying Japanese



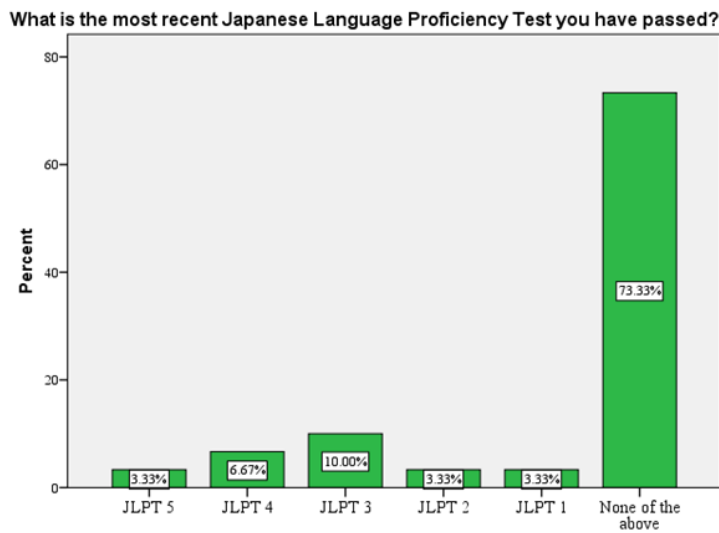
Despite UAB being a Japanese Language Proficiency Test exam centre, only 26.66% of respondents had sat JLPT exams (see graph 5.3). Alternatively, as illustrated in graph 5.4, most participants who have not certified their Japanese level through sitting the official exam mentioned above, feel that they have acquired an intermediate level of language proficiency (73.91%). However, it is surprising to note that most of participants (60%) did not believe that the Japanese language knowledge acquired in UAB would enable them to work with the language in question in any possible future job. It is even more remarkable than only a 26.67% of respondents think they would be



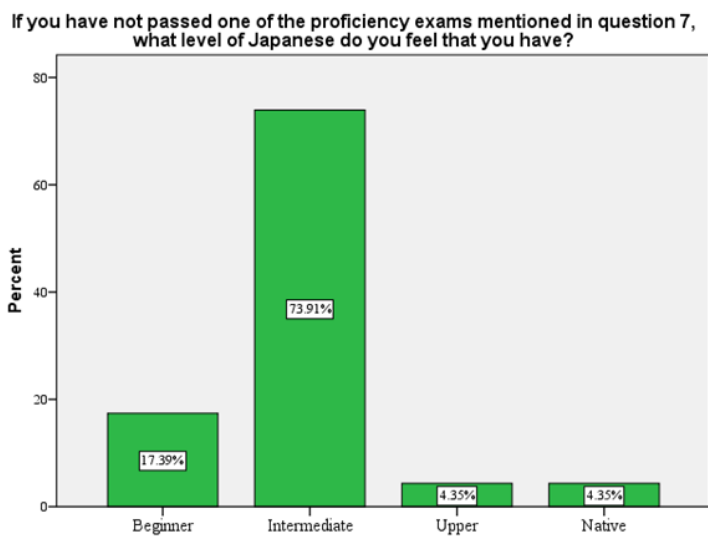
able to work as translators with Japanese as the original language. It is also unexpected to the researcher that none of the participants think the language skills in UAB would enable them to work as interpreters (see graph 5.5) The following quotation summarizes the general feeling from a number of respondents in UAB:

*‘After four years studying Japanese in UAB I do not think that my level of the language is high enough to allow me to work as a translator or interpreter. If next year I did not go to Kyoto as an international exchange student, I would feel that the Japanese level at UAB is not sufficient’*

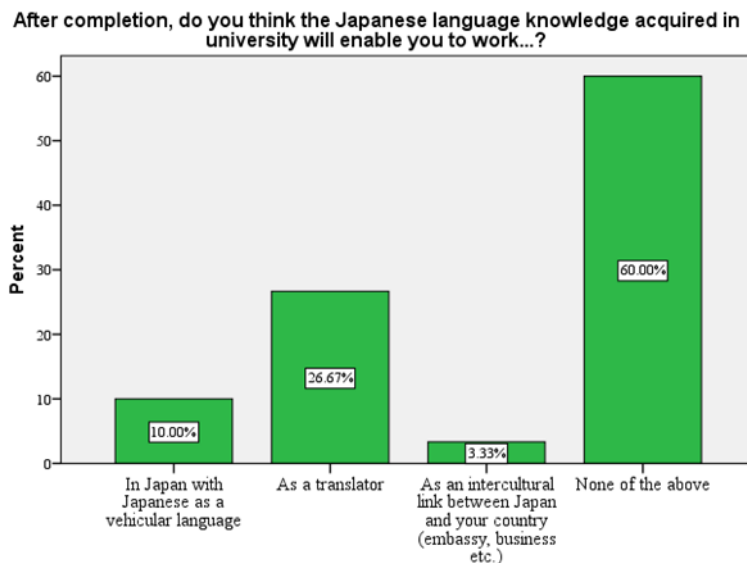
**Graph 5.3** Respondents’ JLPT in UAB



**Graph 5.4** Respondents’ Level Acquired in UAB



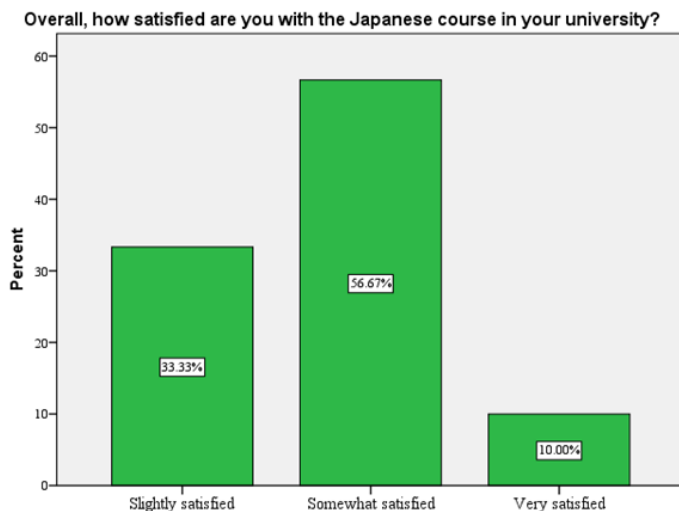
**Graph 5.5** UAB Respondents' Job Prospects



**5.1.2 Analysis and Results**

As it can be seen in graph 5.6, overall respondents were more or less satisfied with the Japanese course at the FTI. It emerged from the data gathered in the open-ended item in the questionnaire that this level of satisfaction was due to the good team of Japanese lecturers that UAB possesses. It is broadly stated that non-native Japanese speakers are excellent when explaining syntax because they can put themselves in the students' shoes, providing a better understanding in the interlingual challenged presented.

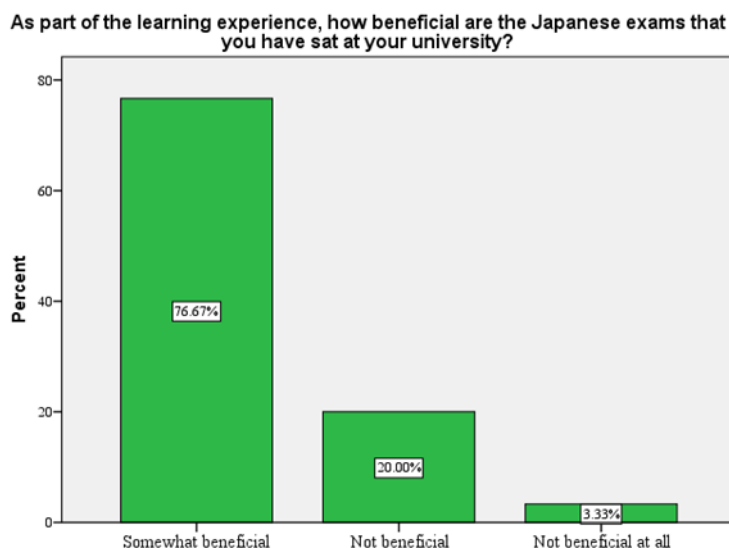
**Graph 5.6** Respondents' Level of Satisfaction in UAB



As it is illustrated in graph 5.7, respondents felt that the Japanese exams sat at UAB as part of the learning experience were somewhat beneficial. However, 20% stated that the exams were not beneficial and 3.33% consider them not beneficial at all. The following quotation summarises the overall feeling among students attending UAB:

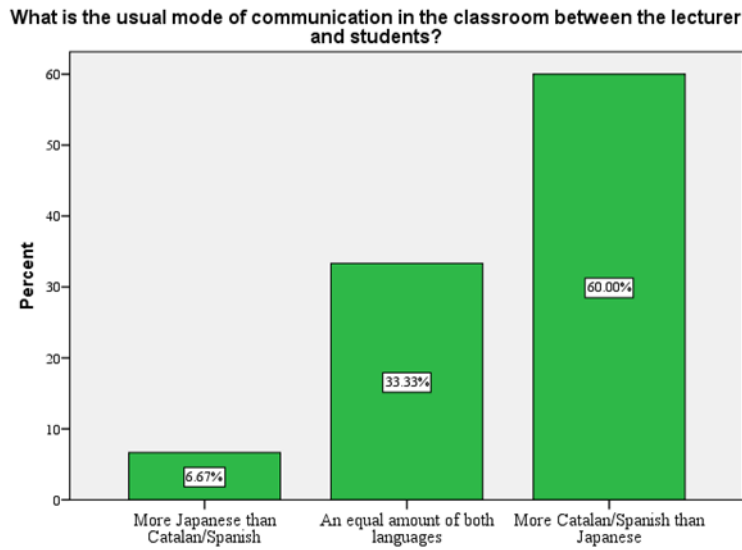
*‘Ongoing assessments are a good method to ensure that students are obliged to keep studying the language. This method is not effective in the long term. Students memorise the grammar, the vocabulary and the kanji for the exam and then forget everything because it is not practiced anymore. There should be a cumulative assessment system to guarantee a real feeling of learning from students’.*

**Graph 5.7** Japanese Exams in UAB



Despite the efforts FTI lecturers make to speak only in Japanese in the classroom, the usual mode of communication between the lecturer and the students was more Catalan or Spanish than Japanese (see graph 5.8). It has been pointed out by the respondents that non-native Japanese speakers tended to use the Japanese language less than native speakers of Japanese. Another factor that influenced the vehicular language in the classroom was the fact that translation classes were held entirely in the target language (Catalan or Spanish). Additionally, as it will be stated later, the lack of communicative activities in the classroom does enhance the students to speak Japanese in the classroom.

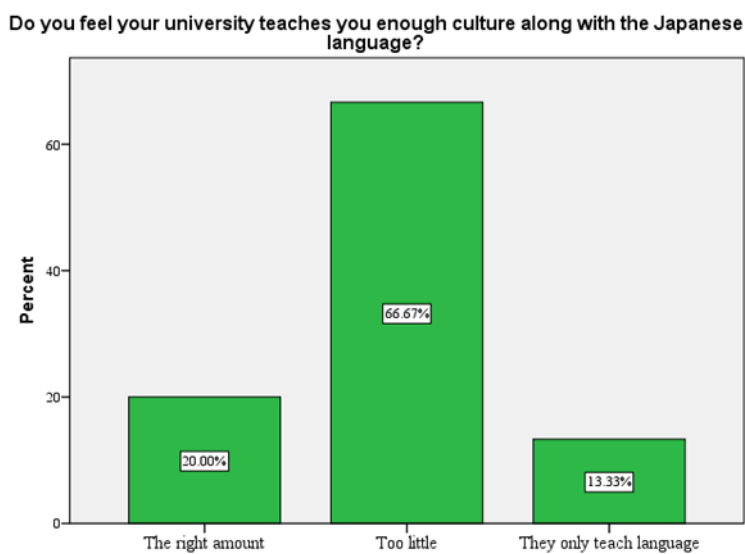
**Graph 5.8** UAB’s Vehicular Language in the Classroom



According to the respondents, one of the weaknesses that the FTI pedagogical methods in Japanese present was the lack of culture teaching, as is evident in graph 5.9. The following quotation summarizes the general feeling about the lack of Japanese culture teaching at UAB:

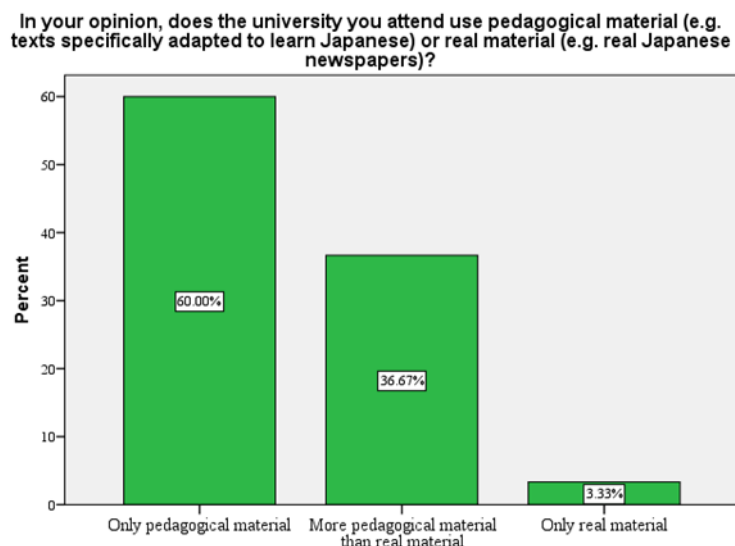
*‘We should read more texts related to Japanese culture and societal elements. This practice would enable us to know how to translate more concepts in the future’.*

**Graph 5.9** Japanese Culture in UAB



This is strongly associated to the use of only pedagogical material, as 60% of participants stated. Additionally, 36.67% of respondents believe that the material used in the classroom is more pedagogical than real (see graph 5.10). Although most of participants expressed that the textbooks used in the classroom were very beneficial to learn grammar and vocabulary, students felt that there was a lack of real material, which would embed cultural situations within a Japanese context. Moreover, the absence of real material in both language learning and professional translation practice made learners struggle when in possession of authentic texts. As a consequence, respondents felt that lecturers should work more with newspaper articles, novel extracts and news broadcasts.

**Graph 5.10** UAB's Material used in the Classroom

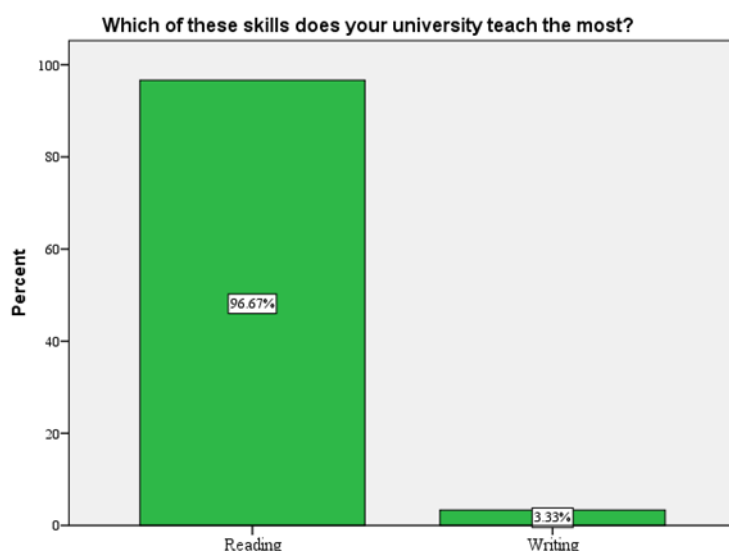


To become translators, reading comprehension is the skill that UAB teaches the most, as illustrated in graph 5.11. In addition, lecturers prepare students to learn as much lexis, syntax and kanji as possible. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a focus on kanji and grammar in the classroom. Although grammar teaching is one of the main strengths at the FTI, kanji teaching is one of the major weaknesses, as it has been stated by the respondents. The method to learn kanji is outdated, as lecturers use the book *Kanji no Michi*, which was last published in 1990. Kanji learnt in the classroom through grammar and texts does not coincide with kanji learnt in the book. Therefore, this creates confusion and it makes learning and memorising vocabulary more difficult than it

should be. According to the respondents, another factor that negatively influences the Japanese pedagogical methods at UAB is the amount of hours dedicated to the language course. Lecturers try to cover as much material as possible in a very short period of time. This results in students not being able to assimilate and memorise all the contents, vocabulary and kanji studied in the classroom. The following statement perfectly summarizes the thoughts of most of the respondents:

*‘It would be better not to reach such a high level of grammar and make sure that students have achieved a solid language basis. They are teaching high level material to most of us when the level we actually have is quite low’.*

**Graph 5.11** Japanese Language Skills in UAB



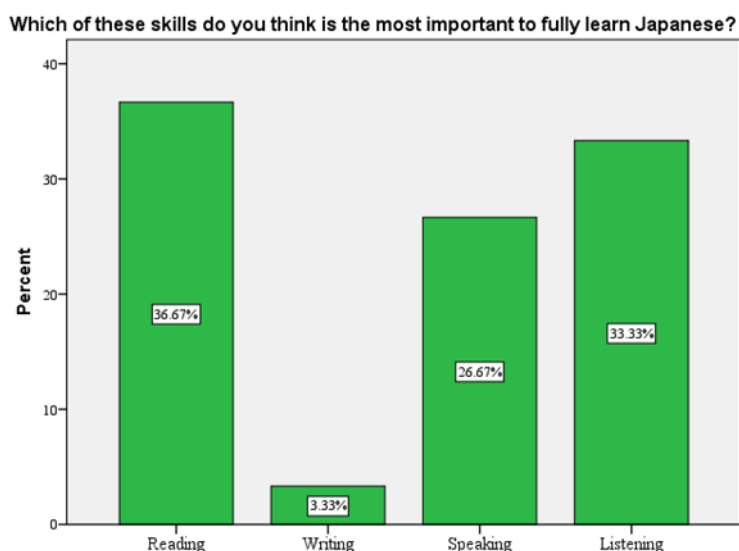
It is believed that the FTI teaches Japanese at high speed because at third year the course requires the students to be able to understand a certain level of the language in order to start translating. Consequently, the rest of skills are non-existent in the Japanese teaching system. Although reading is the most important skill to become a translator (and the most important skill to most of the respondents, as it can be seen in graph 5.12), students feel that oral comprehension and speaking should be taken in consideration as a part of the learning process. This situation is well-summarized by one of the respondents in the following statement:

*‘When students do not achieve all skills that a language has, namely speaking, reading, listening and writing, in a balanced manner, in the long term this brings more problems’*

*than benefits. It is necessary to study grammar and reading in the Translation and Interpreting degree. However, doing that, lecturers sacrifice listening and speaking practices. It is extremely difficult to overcome an intermediate level of a language if there is not the same level of oral language fluency. One thing is learning and the other is acquiring. If students at UAB do not acquire a high level of speaking competence, all the grammar and vocabulary taught is not truly learnt. In this light, there are many people who have passed high levels of JLPT exams but who are incapable of maintaining a fluent conversation in Japanese’.*

Although oral production and oral comprehension are practically disregarded, efforts are being made to slowly change the system, as students feel that the non-existent acquisition of these skills negatively effects their future career (see graph 5.5). Therefore, lecturers are encouraging students to speak the language more in order to become fluent at the same grammar level they have achieved. For example, one oral presentation per semester has been included in the curriculum. Moreover, oral comprehension is non-existent in the Translation and Interpreting degree. Although this skill is vital for future interpreters. Nonetheless, writing skills are enforced on the syllabus, although later substituted for translation classes. Written Japanese production is particularly strong during the first two years of the degree and kept as a minor element during the last two years.

**Graph 5.12** Japanese Skills Important to UAB Respondents

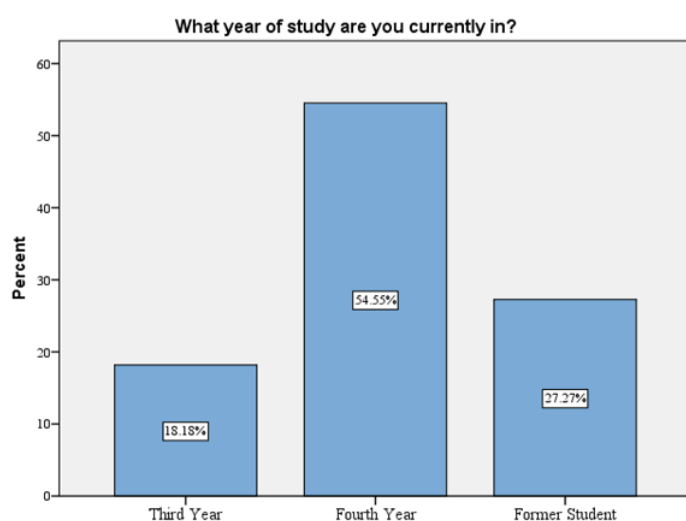


## 5.2. The University of Limerick

### 5.2.1. Respondents

The questionnaire was filled out by eleven current and former students at the University of Limerick. It was the researcher's intention to gather a broader number of participants. However, due to ethical restrictions in the institution, a reduced number of respondents were surveyed.

**Graph 5.13** Respondents' Year of Study in UL



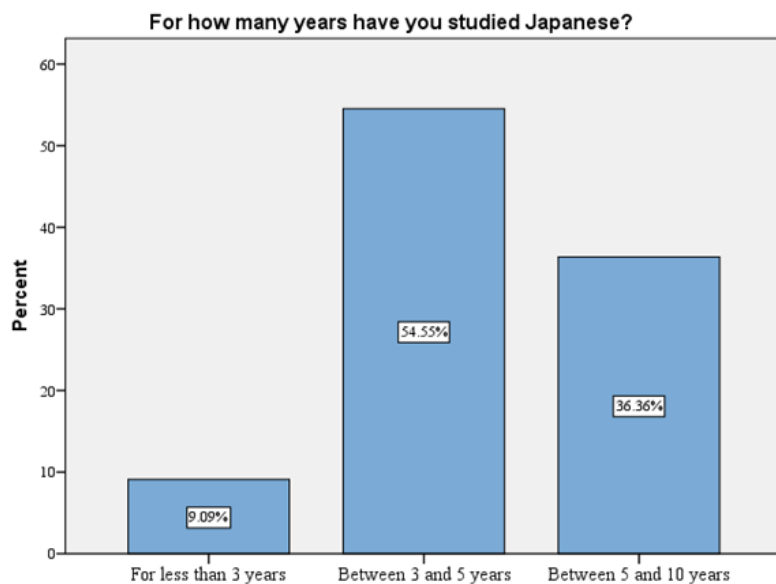
Most participants have studied Japanese as a second-foreign language for between three and five years. This indicates that this group of students have probably only experienced Japanese language learning in the courses provided by UL. The participants who have studied Japanese for between five and ten years are most likely former students who have continued on expanding their knowledge and ability of the language in question (see graph 5.14).

According to The Japan Foundation, December 2009 was the first time that the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) could be taken in Ireland. As we can see in graph 5.15, none of the respondents have sat any JLPT exams. This may be due to the fact that the JLPT is a recent phenomenon in Ireland, and also due to geographical concerns. For example, the JLPT exam centre is located in Dublin (Dublin City

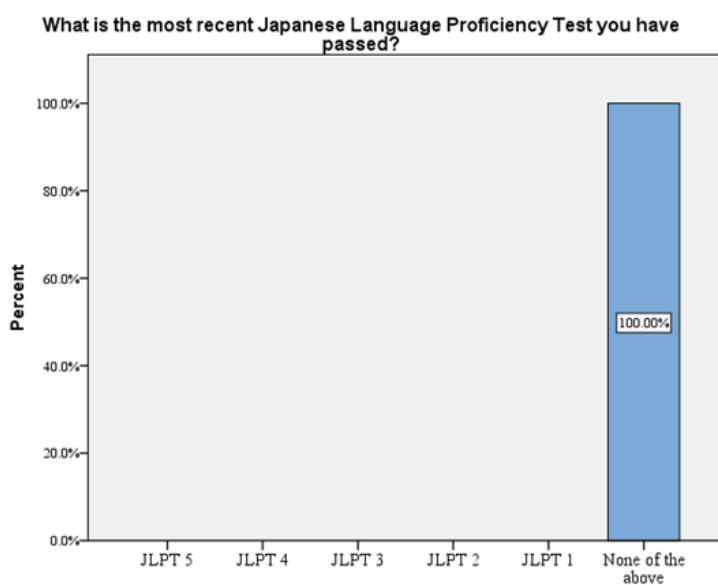


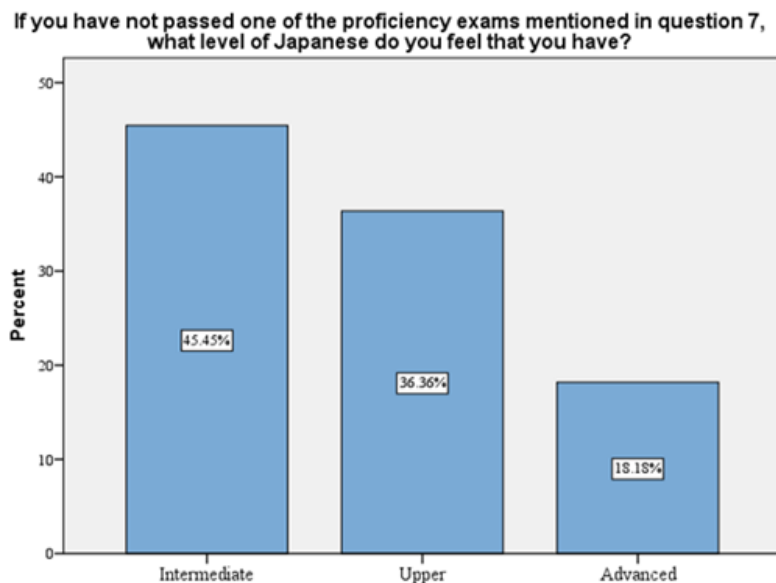
University), and not UL. Nonetheless, as illustrated in graph 5.16, all participants feel they had acquired a relatively high level of proficiency in the Japanese language.

**Graph 5.14** UL Respondents' Number of Years Studying Japanese



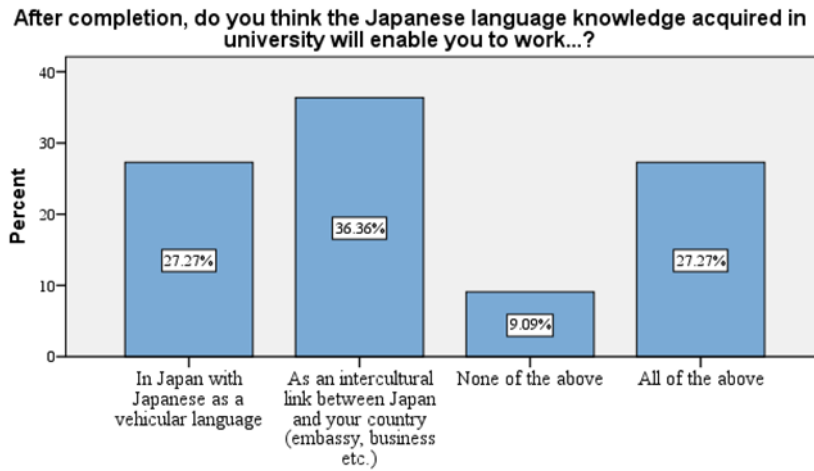
**Graph 5.15** Respondents' JLPT in UL



**Graph 5.16** Respondents' Level Acquired in UL

As a result of the rather effective pedagogical method in Japanese language learning employed in UL, most of respondents are confident in their ability to work with Japanese as a vehicular language or as liaison between Japan and Ireland once their studies have concluded. This is due to the combination of studying the Japanese language and culture with another major subject, particularly Business Studies. In addition, there is quite a high percentage of participants who would feel comfortable employing the Japanese language in all possible future job opportunities related to Japanese language, including translators and interpreters. As previously stated, some of the Japanese courses offered at UL include professional translation with English as the target language and Japanese as the original language. Furthermore, students acquire and develop, to some extent, translation competence. This includes linguistic, cultural, technological and professional skills. Therefore, many students feel prepared to perform the arduous job of becoming professional translators. Moreover, communicative competence can result in students becoming professional interpreters. Through many spontaneous and planned classroom activities based on communication, students at UL learn how to express themselves using the Japanese language. This includes all possible situations and contexts, including polite speech and a rather professional framework, as is the case of interpreting from Japanese to English.

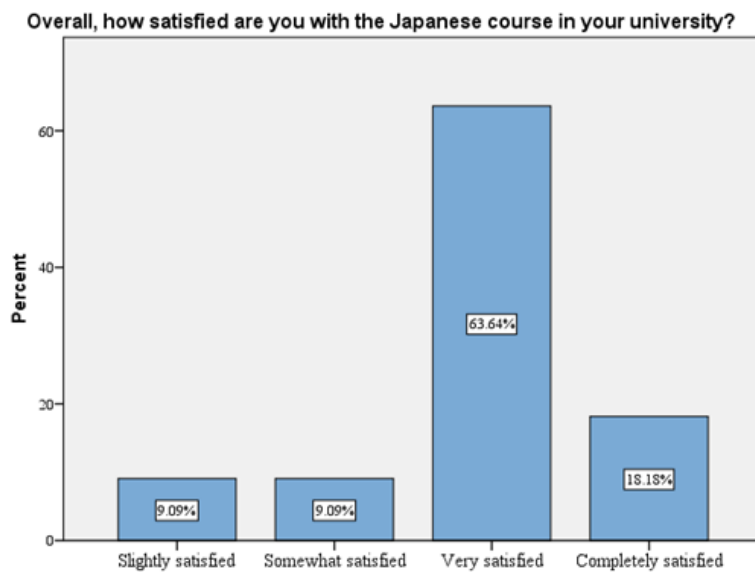
**Graph 5.17** UL Respondents' Job Prospect



### 5.2.2 Analysis and Results

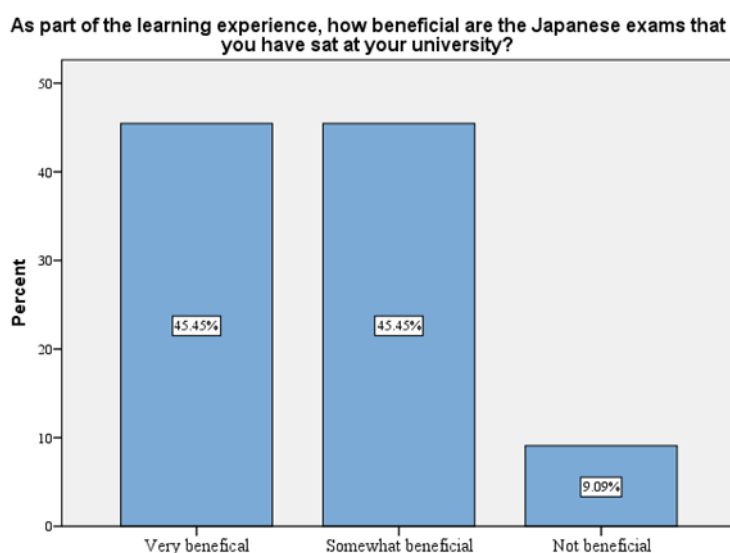
As represented in graph 5.18, overall UL respondents were very satisfied with the Japanese courses in this institution. This could be related to the fact that the classes and exams participants sat had proven to be beneficial in the learning process (see graph 5.19).

**Graph 5.18** Respondents' Level of Satisfaction in UL



The same percentage of respondents (45.45%) consider the exams taken at UL to be somewhat or very helpful to consolidate knowledge learnt in class. However, there is a small percentage (9.09%) that regard the exams to be not beneficial as part of the learning experience.

**Graph 5.19** Japanese Exams in UL

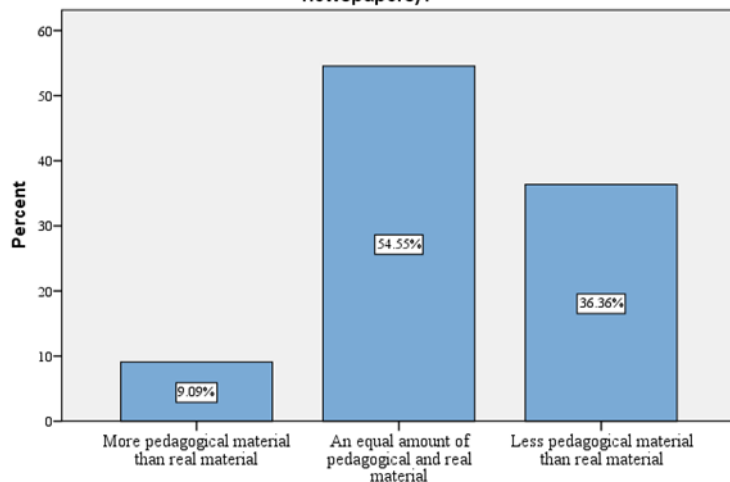


The eleven respondents have expressed their opinion on the pedagogical methods used in Japanese language learning in UL. Most participants agree that reading and writing is one of the strengths in the Japanese courses at UL. A high-competence in these two aspects is achieved through the production and understanding of real everyday Japanese texts, such as newspapers articles, novel extracts, biographies, etc. In other words, using both pedagogical material and real material allows students to soak up the language in an authentic linguistic context (see graph 5.20).

Furthermore, as illuminated in graph 5.21, most respondents acknowledge that Japanese courses allow students to be broadly in contact with the target language. The vehicular language in UL Japanese courses is generally Japanese, and English is often used solely for pedagogical translation and professional translation. That is done to enhance

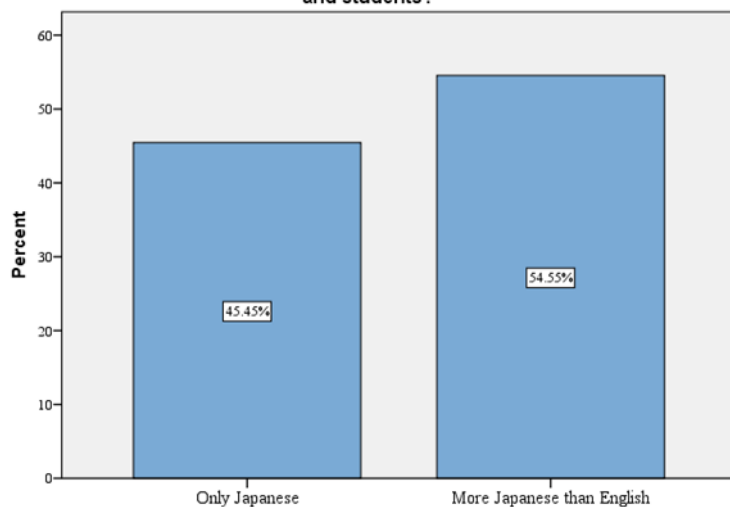
**Graph 5.20** UL’s Material Used in the Classroom

In your opinion, does the university you attend use pedagogical material (e.g. texts specifically adapted to learn Japanese) or real material (e.g. real Japanese newspapers)?

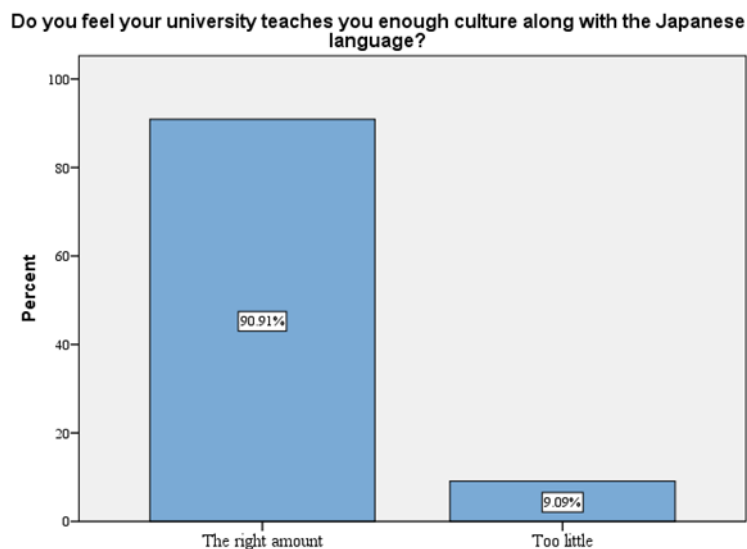


**Graph 5.21** UL’s Vehicular Language in the Classroom

What is the usual mode of communication in the classroom between the lecturer and students?



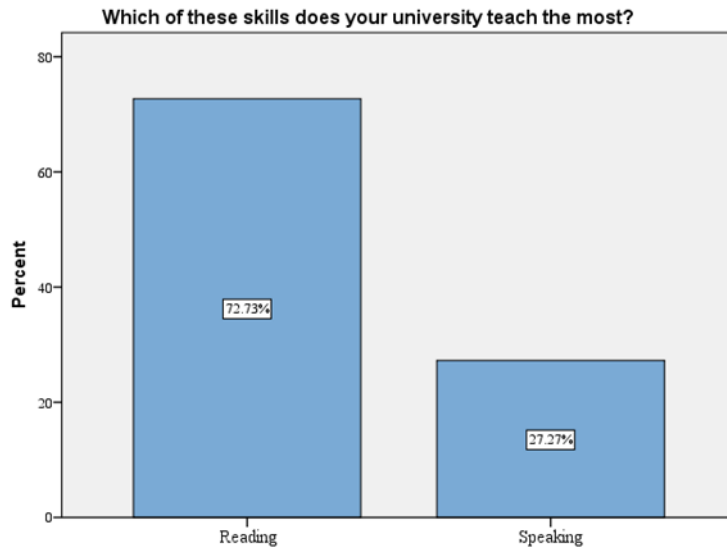
Another factor that is considered to be a strength is Japanese culture teaching. Most of the participants agree that the right amount of culture is included in the curriculum. This is mostly done through real material, culture based pedagogical material and writing cultural essays. Although it is beneficial to put the language in context and understand Japanese in a broader spectrum, some of the respondents ‘*consider that too much time is spent writing cultural essays*’. In addition, respondents believe that some of this time could be used to strengthen other skills, such as oral comprehension.

**Graph 5.22** Japanese Culture in UL

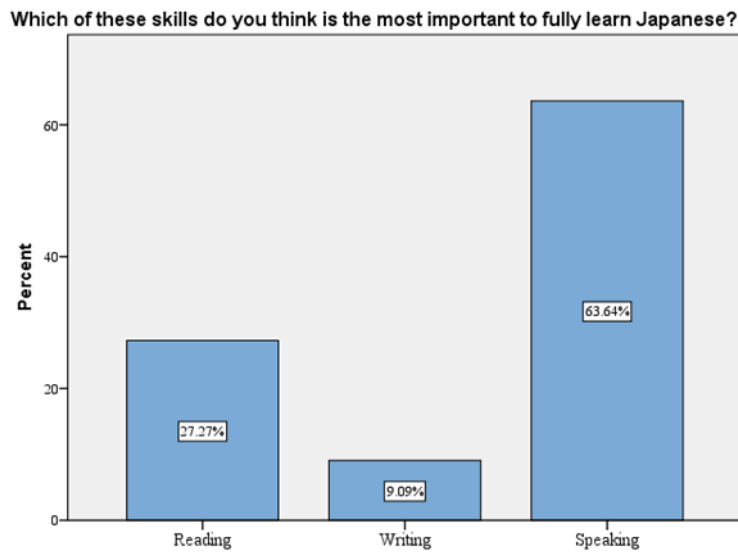
In light of the above, and as it can be seen in graph 5.23, listening practice is practically non-existent in UL. Although the classes are skill-based and there is an effort from the lecturers for these skills to be taught in balance, the lack of oral comprehension exercises are one of the weaknesses in the Japanese course curriculum, as stated by the respondents. It is certain that there are some classroom tasks which enhance listening practice, such as watching Japanese movies. Nonetheless, participants are in unison when saying that more time should be spent practicing listening skills. For example, listening to news broadcasts or pedagogical material based on general topics from everyday situations.

Moreover, even though students consider reading the most practised skill and one of the strengths of Japanese language learning in UL, speaking activities also play an important role (see graph 5.23). Using communicative competence to teach students enhances the ability for the students to express themselves through the Japanese language in a truly communicative setting. Speaking activities allow for students to appropriately use the language in a broad variety of social situations. That is because knowledge of rules and conventions and the use of the language in different sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts are extensively learnt in class. Speaking is the most important skill to learn a language, according to UL participants, as illuminates graph 5.24.

**Graph 4.23** Japanese Language Skills in UL



**Graph 5.24** Japanese Skills Important to UL Respondents'



According to the participants, grammar teaching and linguistic competence are one of the weaknesses of the pedagogical methods in Japanese language learning at UL. Firstly, some of the respondents believe that one of the issues lies with the actual lecturers and/or tutors. The following quotation summarizes the general feeling from a number of respondents in UL: *'an Irish teacher would be more suitable to teach syntax, as they would be likely to understand the challenges this poses from a non-native perspective'*. Moreover, utilising Japanese as a vehicular language when teaching grammar can

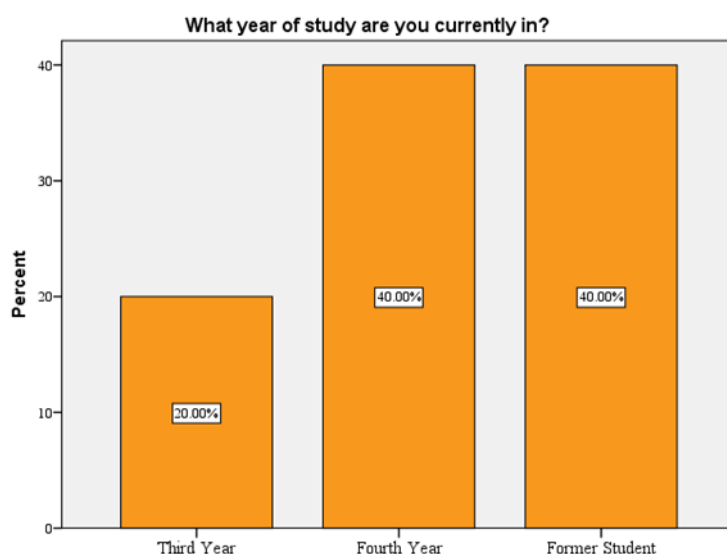
sometimes be difficult. Secondly, it is stated among the participants that syntax is learnt too rapidly. Lecturers skim through the lesson without ensuring that students have grasped the topic before taking an exam or moving to the following grammar point. Finally, most participants consider that syntax is not put in context. Thus then, it is hard to memorise the large quantity of grammar structures without being able to know how use them in a particular situation.

### 5.3. Kanazawa University

#### 5.3.1. Respondents

The questionnaire was filled out by a total of twenty current and former international exchange students at Kanazawa University. The same percentage both fourth year and former students (40%) answered this questionnaire, as it can be seen in graph 5.25. Only 20% of students surveyed were third year students. This is due to the fact that it is most common to participate in an exchange programme on your last year of college.

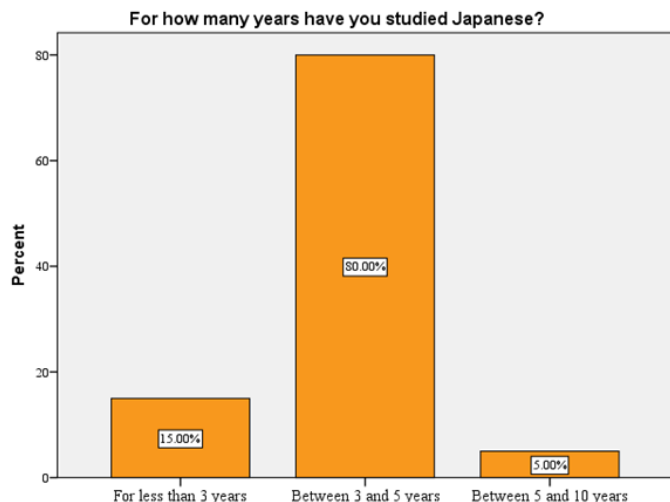
**Graph 5.25** Respondents' Year of Studying KU



Most participants have studied Japanese a foreign language for between three and five years, as graph 5.26 illuminates. This indicates that this group of students have probably studied the Japanese language in their respective universities for a number of years before taking Japanese language courses in KU.

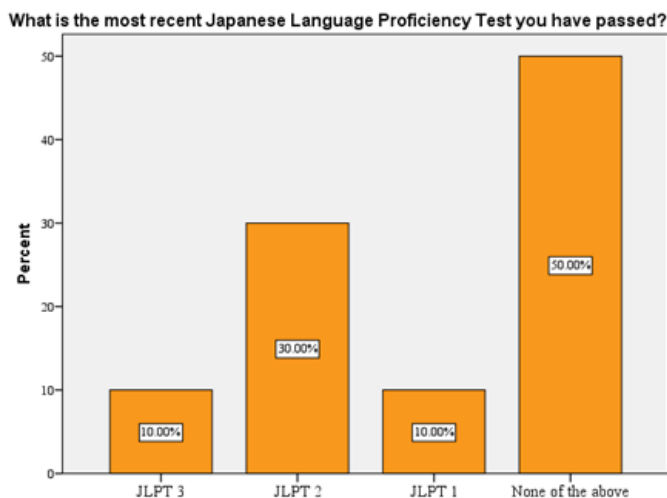


**Graph 5.26** KU Respondents' Number of Years Studying Japanese

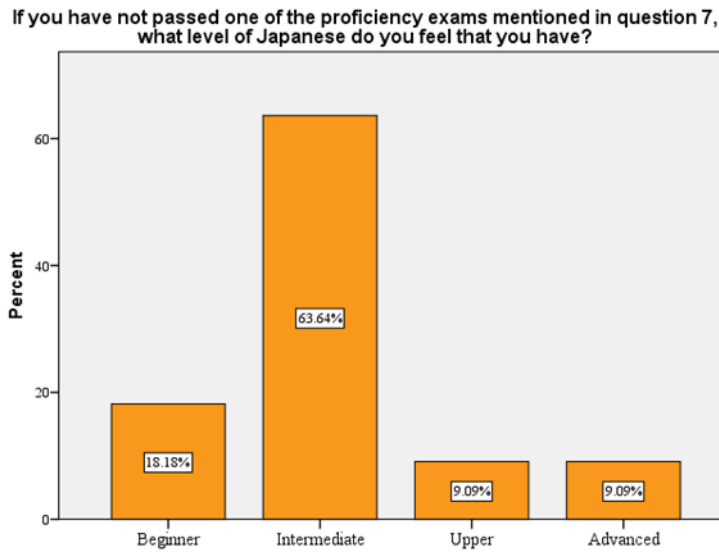


As it can be seen in graph 5.27, 50% of participants had sat JLPT exams. The most recent exams these respondents have passed are of high-level (10% JLPT3, 30% JLPT2 and 10% JLPT1). This indicates that the respondents who have sat these JLPT exams have been exposed to the Japanese language for a long period of time and have found the opportunity to certify their level during or after the student's exchange program at KU. Alternatively, as illustrated in graph 5.28, 63.64% of participants who have not passed a JLPT exam feel they have acquired an intermediate Japanese language level. In addition, 18.18% of the respondents feel they have acquired a high level of proficiency in the Japanese language.

**Graph 5.27** Respondents' JLPT in KU

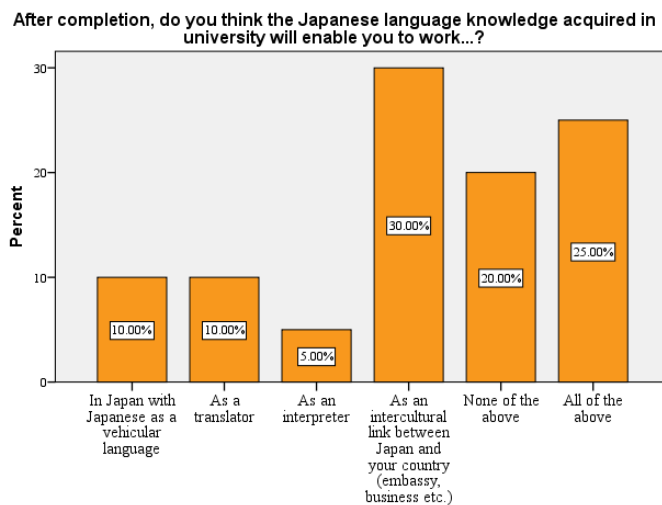


**Graph 5.28** Respondents' Level Acquired in KU



International exchange students at KU are given the opportunity to learn, improve or perfect their level of Japanese. However, each international student at KU major in a specific field of study in their home universities. Therefore, as is demonstrated in graph 5.29, 80% of respondents agree that the Japanese language knowledge acquired would enable them to work with the language in question as part of their professional career. In addition, there is a close relation between the percentages of respondents who would not work in a context in which Japanese would be required (20%). Furthermore, the number of KU who stated that they have a beginner level of Japanese is 18.80%.

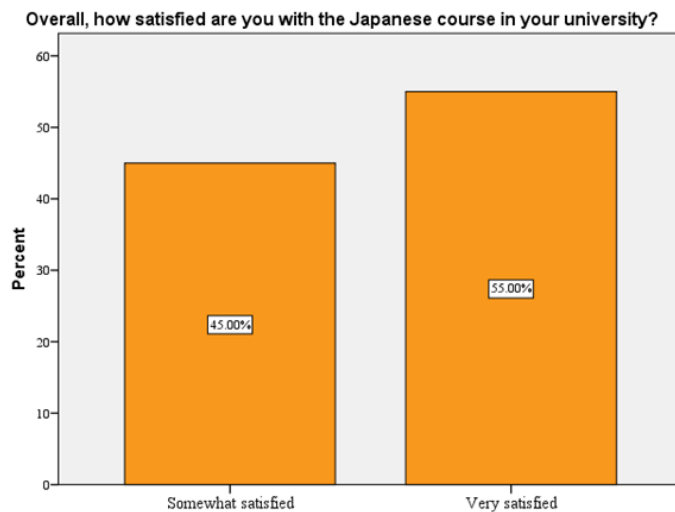
**Graph 5.29** KU Respondents' Job Prospect



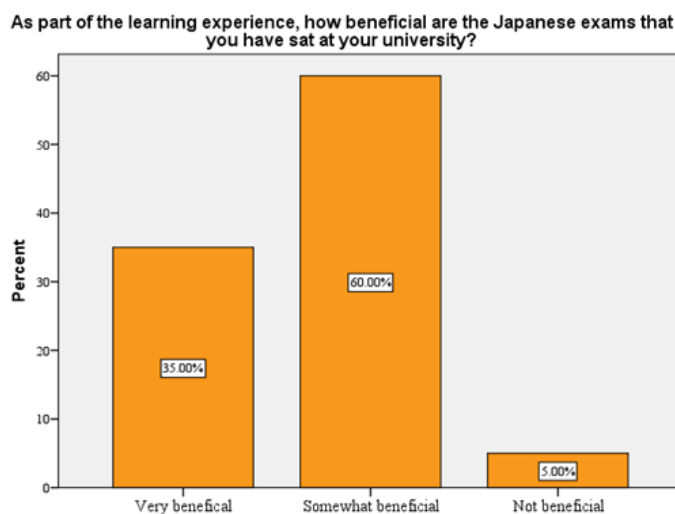
### 5.3.2 Analysis and Results

As a result of a ‘*well thought-out, well-structured and high-quality Japanese teaching system*’, overall respondents were satisfied with the Japanese courses at KU (see graph 5.30). This level of satisfaction could be attributed to the Japanese exams that students had sat at KU, as it is illustrated in graph 5.31. Most of the participants (95%) felt that the system of ongoing assessments were useful to evaluate the students’ own abilities and progress. Moreover, mid-terms and final exams were a good way to ensure that students did not forget all vocabulary, grammar and kanji learnt throughout the course.

**Graph 5.30** Respondents’ Level of Satisfaction in KU

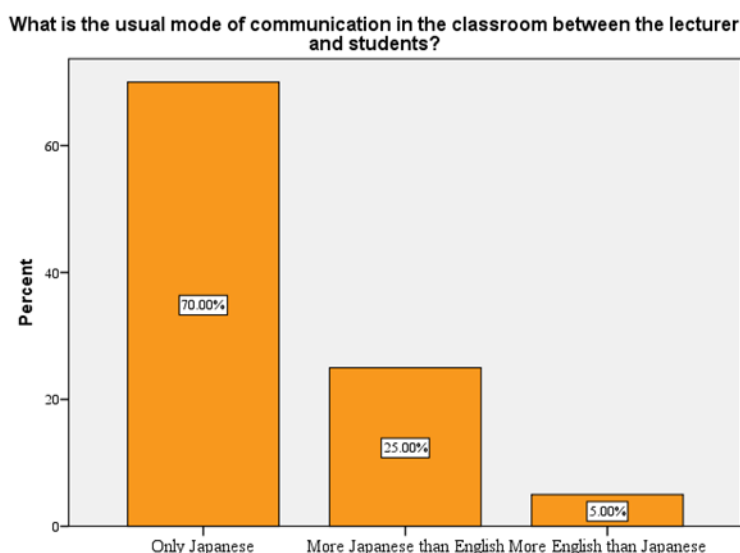


**Graph 5.31** Japanese Exams in KU



Another factor that is considered to be a strength is the choice of vehicular language in the classroom (see graph 5.32). The twenty respondents acknowledged that Japanese being the only vehicular language in higher level classes allow students to be immersed in a Japanese language context. The amount of Japanese the professors spoke to the students in advanced levels was ‘*very helpful for listening and to get used to the Japanese intonation*’. English at KU was mainly used for pedagogical translation (clarifications, brief explanations and contrast in grammar).

**Graph 5.32** KU’s Vehicular Language in the Classroom



According to the participants, another strength of KU approach was the use of real material and pedagogical material based on Japanese societal and cultural elements. One of the respondents described as the following:

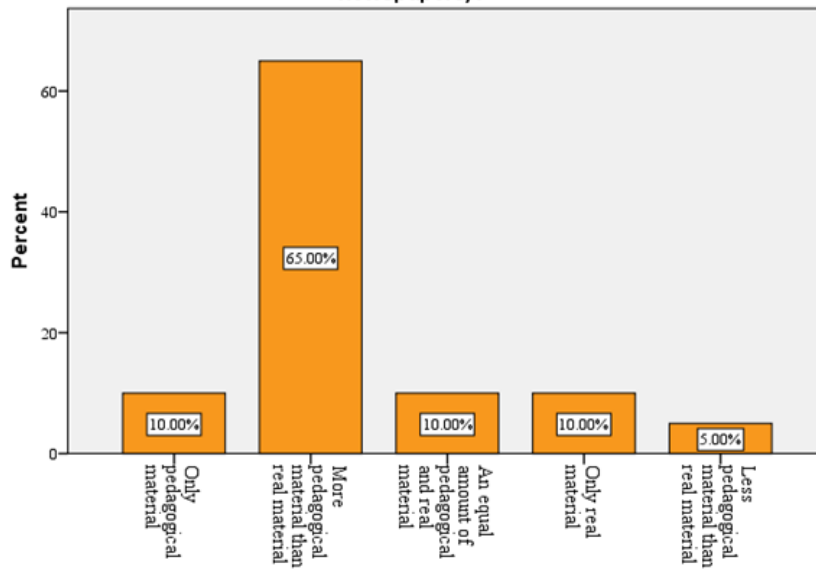
*‘The use of real material in classes, particularly in order to spark discussions between students, was enabling us to naturally express our opinions regarding various everyday matters as opposed to artificial prompts’.*

Additionally, most respondents indicated that KU generally focused on how the lessons and pedagogical method are applicable in the real world, outside the classroom. This respondents commend this approach. Moreover, participants are in unison when stating that teaching materials were generally good and, although textbooks used in class varied quite a bit in quality, didactic texts were mostly beneficial for learning the Japanese

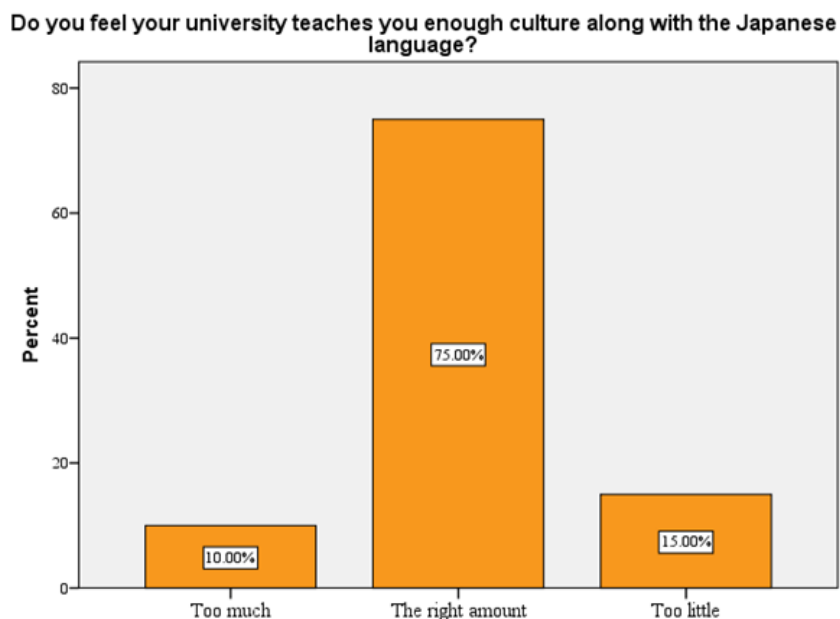
language. Another factor that contributed to the level of satisfaction is that in higher levels the material used in the classroom was produced by KU. In other words, lecturers chose texts published in real life and slightly modified them to adapt the grammar to the students' needs and abilities.

**Graph 5.33** KU's Material used in the Classroom

**In your opinion, does the university you attend use pedagogical material (e.g. texts specifically adapted to learn Japanese) or real material (e.g. real Japanese newspapers)?**



In light of the above, both pedagogical and real material were strongly related to Japanese culture and society, as it can be seen in graph 5.34. According to the data, the right amount of cultural knowledge was embedded in texts. This enabled students to not only learn Japanese, but also to understand the language in a realistic setting. Being able to learn the Japanese language through well picked reading materials and essay topics related to current issues in the country, influential Japanese personalities and other culture-related passages is considered to be one of the strengths of the teaching methods in KU. Specific elective courses are also cited as being one of the strengths of the approach adopted in KU, as allowed for the students to be in contact with native Japanese speakers.

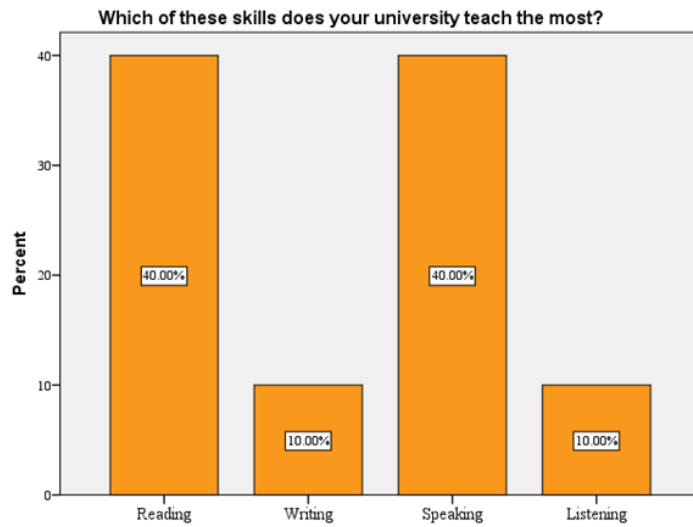
**Graph 5.34** Japanese Culture in KU

As graph 5.35 illustrates, reading comprehension (40%) and oral production (40%) are the most practiced skills in KU according to the research participants. Oral comprehension (10%) is almost completely disregarded from comprehensive Japanese language classes. Moreover, writing skills (10%) are not taught in class either. Nevertheless, the lack of listening and writing practice in class can be compensated at higher levels by choosing skilled-specific courses. However, specific language skill classes are not available at lower levels than intermediate. Nevertheless, skill-specific classes which involved writing were very well structured and the lecturers taught a broad number of text varieties and registers. In light of the above, most of participants agree that KU does not offer enough hours to learn the Japanese language. If the number of hours were increased, more time could be spent developing all skills. Moreover, it is believed that there were problems in the balance and engagement of all skills.

According to the participants, even though oral production is strong, lecturers and/or tutors did not encourage the students to answer questions in Japanese. The following statement summarizes the feelings of the respondents:

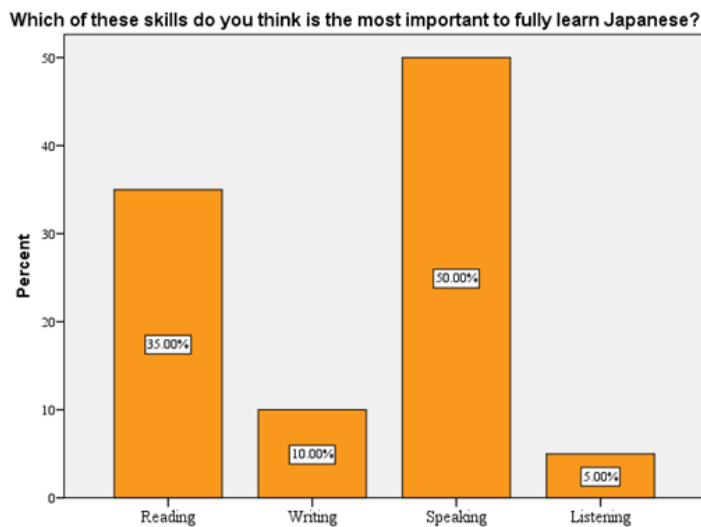
*‘Unfortunately, not that much importance was placed on actually speaking Japanese during class, except when answering questions to the lecturers’.*

**Graph 5.35** Japanese Language Skills in KU



A solution would be to draw from KU’s large native Japanese student body, increasing the occasions in which students could put in practice all material learnt in the classroom. Another good aspect on comprehensive courses is that students could use Japanese at their own skill level and practice getting the message across rather than using “correct” language. However, at advanced levels lecturers were sometimes too focused on the right answers. Some respondents felt that the classrooms content was perfectly understood and output, but the lecturers were unsatisfied with the answers because it was not ‘by the book’.

**Graph 5.28** Japanese Skills Important to KU Students



Along with a slightly unbalanced skill-based teaching system, all respondents agree that the syntax teaching method is rather poor. Through a deductive approach, characteristic of grammatical competence, the learning pace is high, providing brief explanations and not enough feedback. There is a lack of adequate grammatical constructions in upper level classes, unusable in a modern context. Moreover, Japanese language courses need a more diverse set of exercises and tasks to accommodate different kinds of learners. Through the drilling technique, typical of grammatical competence, classes were often too repetitive and the syntax structures learnt in class were often not put in practice. This situation is well-summarized by one of the respondents in the following statement:

*‘Language acquisition requires an environment that productively engages the students with the material and exercises’.*

In conclusion, most respondents indicated in the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire that teachers were generally helpful, engaging and positive. In addition, it was remarked that even though all lecturers and tutors were Japanese native speakers, this was not a problem. On the contrary, lecturers and tutors at KU definitely demonstrated a high level of competence when teaching the Japanese language to all type of learners, from beginner to advanced levels. Furthermore, according to the respondents, lecturers and tutors at KU had a very professional attitude and their teaching system was well organized (learning outcomes were clear, good and up-to-date materials were used, easy to read timetables were provided, etc.).



## 6. CONCLUSION

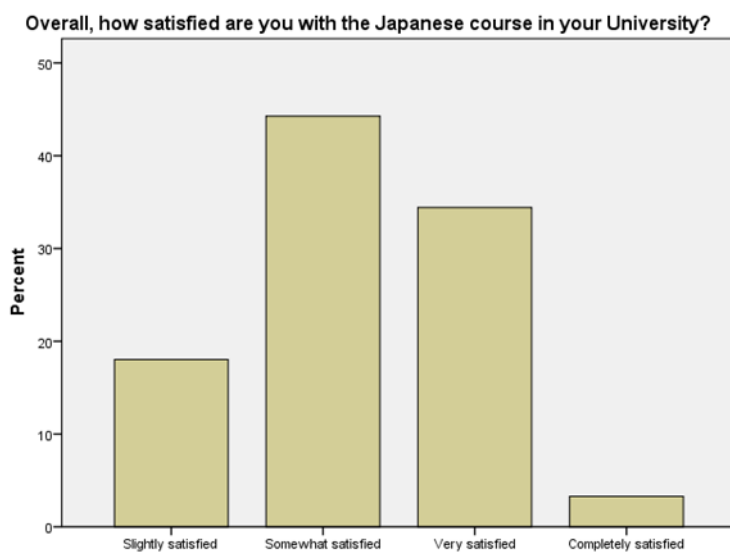
Through conducting a comparative analysis, this study has explored the strengths and weaknesses of the pedagogical methods employed when teaching Japanese in the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University. On the first hand, it is clear that there has been a steady growth in the number of students taking Japanese courses. This is exemplified through first-year classes in UAB and in UL (see Table 10 and 11, Appendix 1).

On the other hand, as predicted, the results show that the Japanese language teaching methods are generally out-dated. Although students are quite satisfied with the teaching systems in the three institutions under study (see graph 6.1), they feel that pedagogical methods of learning Japanese as a foreign language could be improved upon. For example, grammatical competence is still broadly used when teaching Japanese. However, this competence is often cited as being obsolete .As Richards (2006) summarizes:

Earlier views of language learning focused primarily on the mastery of grammatical competence. Language learning was viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are formed by having students produce correct sentences and not through making mistakes.

(Richards 2006, p.4)

**Graph 6.1** Level of Satisfaction of All Respondents



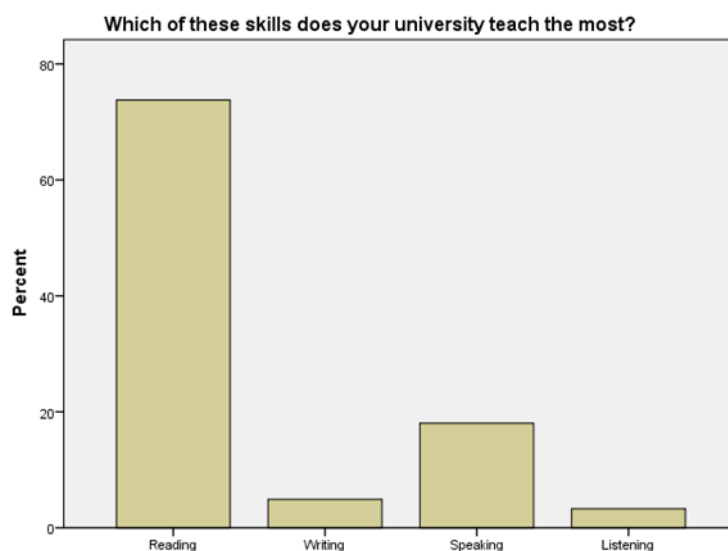
Even though grammatical competence is considered to be old-fashioned, UAB continues on using this method when teaching the Japanese language in the FTI. This results in students stating that they do not really feel that they are learning the language in question. Richards (2006) illuminates that:

*Although grammatical competence is an important dimension of language learning, it is clearly not all that is involved in learning a language since one can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at being able to use the language for meaningful communication.*

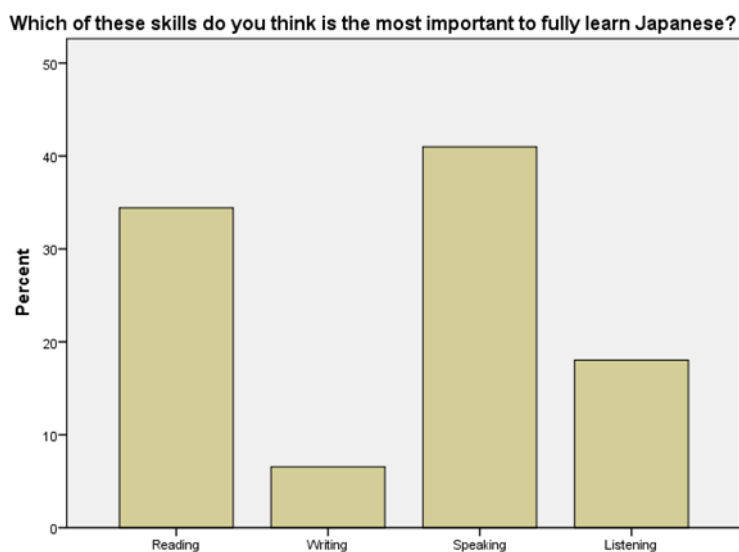
(Richards 2006, p.3)

It is clear then that students feel that too much time is dedicated towards pure linguistic and reading competences (see graph 6.2) and that there should be a more balanced pedagogical method based on skills (see graph 6.3). Therefore, students would feel more comfortable learning Japanese with a pedagogical method based on communicative competence, which not only comprises linguistic components but also sociolinguistic and pragmatic elements. UL and KU should focus more on the former element and UAB should adopt equally all three elements from communicative competence.

**Graph 6.2** Japanese Language Skills in UAB, UL and KU



**Graph 6.3** Japanese Skills Important to All Respondents



Additionally, students from UAB, UL and KU, state that more in-classroom practice is needed. In other words, lecturers should encourage students to communicate more and stimulate a bidirectional learning process. The learner's communicative language, both spoken and written, can only be activated in the performance of various language activities, involving reception, production, interaction and mediation. This last component is particularly true in Translation and Interpreting Studies. Moreover, respondents feel that a fast learning process eventually results in lecturers prioritising quantity rather than quality. Lecturers should ensure that a good choice of textbooks are available to help the students' learning process, rather than providing a vast amount of grammar structures, kanji and vocabulary from a large number of books. In addition, this should be reinforced with on-going cumulative assessments, as is the case of KU, as this method guarantees that students have acquired all contents learnt in class.

Another aspect that needs to be improved upon is the material used in class. KU and UL use both real material and pedagogical material. However, UAB needs to implement more real material in the curriculum. Overall, students from the three universities felt that real material made the learning process more authentic as it comprised a broad variety of sociolinguistic elements, embedding cultural concepts and thus providing genuine vocabulary and grammar structures. The use of pedagogical material is also needed. However, the practices based on real material should ingrain cultural and societal elements more.

Utilising pedagogical translation in Japanese language learning allows for the students to understand explanations better, as this type of translation is natural for foreign-language learners, especially in lower levels. KU is clearly opposed to pedagogical translation in class, as it is considered that it might prevent the student from communicating or thinking in the target language. One of the results of this disapproval is the use of Japanese in the classroom. UL and KU utilise almost entirely the Japanese language as a vehicular language between the lecturers and the students. Incongruently, more Japanese needs to be spoken in UAB, as the vehicular language used in the classroom is not often the target language. What students from all universities also agree on is that non-native Japanese speakers are better to teach grammar because they know how to transmit across the syntax equivalences —through the use of pedagogical translation— between Japanese and the language A.

The responses obtained are not representative of all pedagogical methods used to teach the Japanese language, it can be considered that the aims have been objectively addressed. Therefore, through facts, examples, graphs and students' opinions it can be stated that overall the pedagogical methods of the Japanese language in third-level institutions needs to be improved, reaching a balance between all skills, and improvement on the material used and the in-classroom vehicular language. In summary, this research has shown that a new approach to competences needs to be formulated, regardless of the objective of the Japanese language learning.

Briefly, as with any piece of empirical research, it is important to address the limitations of the project. From a practical point of view, this research was carried out by a sole individual and thus lack the financial support that is often needed to conduct large-scale cross-cultural research. Furthermore, due to the international aspect of this thesis, there was a degree of difficulty with participant's responses and completion rates of the questionnaire. In conclusion, this project adopted a quantitative approach to data collection. Future research might find it beneficial to employ a qualitative or mixed-method approach in order to gather a more subjective and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

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## **APPENDIX**

This section will provide two appendices to consult data important to the research. The first appendix will provide tables that contain relevant information that supports the status quo on the Japanese language teaching in third-level education institutions. The second appendix will provide a Catalan version of the questionnaire administrated in the Autonomous University of Barcelona and an English version of the questionnaire administrated in the University of Limerick and in Kanazawa University.

## **APPENDIX 1. TABLES**

UNIVERSITIES OFFERING JAPANESE AS A SECOND OR THIRD LANGUAGE IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING STUDIES IN SPAIN
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (as a second foreign language)
Universidad de Salamanca (as a second foreign language)
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (as a third foreign language)

Table 1. Universities Offering Japanese as a Second or Third Language in Translation and Interpreting Studies in Spain.

Data courtesy of The Japan Foundation, Madrid on 11 April 2016.



GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS THAT OFFER JAPANESE AS A MODERN LANGUAGE IN SPAIN
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela: Centro de Lenguas Modernas Facultad de Filología
Universidad del País Vasco: Facultad de Filología y Geografía e Historia
Universidad de Alicante: Centro de Estudios Orientales
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona: Facultat de Traducció i Interpretació
Universitat de Barcelona: Escola d'Idiomes Moderns
Universitat Pompeu Fabra: Escola Superior de Comerç Internacional
Universitat Pompeu Fabra: Facultat d'Humanitats
Universidad de Granada: Centro de Lenguas Modernas. Sección de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de León: Centro de Idiomas. Departamento de Japonés
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid: Centro de Estudios de Asia Oriental
Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales
Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Centro Superior de Idiomas Modernos
Universidad Pontificia Comillas: Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales Sección de Traducción e Interpretación
Universidad de Alcalá de Henares: Centro de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de Salamanca: Departamento de Filología Moderna Facultad de Filología
Universidad de Sevilla: Instituto de Idiomas
Universidad de La Laguna: Servicio de Idiomas
Universitat Politècnica de València: Departament de Japonès
Universitat de València: Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació
Universidad de Valladolid: Centro de Idiomas E.U.E. Empresariales
Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Barcelona: Departamento de Japonés
Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Madrid
Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Málaga
Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Murcia
Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Navarra
Centro Cultural Hispano-Japonés de Salamanca
Centro de Estudios Superiores Felipe II de Madrid
Centro-Casa Asia de Madrid
Cetro-Casa Asia de Barcelona

Table 2. Government Organisations Offering Japanese as a Modern Language in Spain. Embajada de Japón en España 2012: <http://www.es.emb-japan.go.jp/estudios/estudiarjap.html> [accessed 15 Feb 2016]

Data courtesy of Casa Asia on 15 February 2016.

UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS OFFERING JAPANESE COURSES IN GERMANY
Heinrich Heine University at Duesseldorf: East Asian Studies Institute/Modern Japan
J.W. Goethe University, Frankfurt: Japanese Studies Department, Institute for Oriental & East Asian Philology
University of Cologne: Japanese Studies, Oriental Studies Institute
University of Erfurt: Sprachenzentrum
University of Erlangen-Nuremberg: Seminar for Japanese Studies, Department of Middle-Eastern and Far-Eastern Languages and Studies
Free University of Berlin: Japanese Studies, East Asian Seminar
University of Goettingen: Course of Japan Studies, Institute for East Asian Studies
Tuebingen University: Institute for Japanese Studies
University of Duisburg: Institute for East Asian Studies
University of Trier: Japan Studies, Center for East Asia-Pacific Studies
University of Heidelberg: Institute for Japan Studies, Center for East Asia Studies
University of Hamburg: Department for Language and Culture of Japan, Asian-Africa-Institute
University of Bielefeld: Japanese course
Philipps-University of Marburg: Center for Japanese Studies
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg: Japanologie, Orientalisches Seminar
Humboldt University of Berlin: Institute for Japanology, Center for Japanese Language and Culture
Bonn University: Japanese Department, Center for Oriental Studies
Martin Luther University: Institute of Japan Studies, Specialty of History, Philosophy and Sociology
University of Munich: Japanese Studies, Institute of East Asia Studies
Ruhr University Bochum: Japanese Language and Literature Section, Faculty of East Asian Studies
Erlangen University: Chair of Japanese Studies, Department of Cultural Studies (East and South Asia)
Regensburg University: Lehrgebiet Studienbegleitende Fremdsprachenausbildung (SFA)

Table 3. University Departments Offering Japanese Courses in Germany. Database of Overseas Institutions for Japanese Studies, 2000 (International Research Center for Japanese Studies). <http://db.nichibun.ac.jp/en/category/kikan.html> [accessed 3 Mar 2016]

UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS OFFERING JAPANESE COURSES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
Birkbeck, University of London: Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies
University of Cambridge: Department of East Asian Studies
Cardiff University: School of Modern Languages
Durham University: School of Modern Languages and Cultures
University of East Anglia: Centre for Japanese Studies
University of Edinburgh: School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures
University of Leeds: Department of East Asian Studies
University of Manchester: School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
University of Newcastle: School of Modern Languages
University of Oxford: Faculty of Oriental Studies
University of Oxford: Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies
Oxford Brookes University: Department of English and Modern Languages
University of Sheffield: School of East Asian Studies
SOAS, University of London: Department of the Languages and Cultures of Japan and Korea

Table 4. University Departments Offering Japanese Studies in the United Kingdom.  
 The Japan Foundation, London, 2014: <http://www.jpf.org.uk/japanesestudies/links.php>  
 [accessed 8 Feb 2016]

UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS OFFERING JAPANESE COURSES IN SPAIN
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela: Centro de Lenguas Modernas Facultad de Filología
Universidad del País Vasco: Facultad de Filología y Geografía e Historia
Universidad de Alicante: Centro de Estudios Orientales
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona: Facultat de Traducció i Interpretació
Universitat de Barcelona: Escola d'Idiomes Moderns
Universitat Pompeu Fabra: Escola Superior de Comerç Internacional
Universitat Pompeu Fabra: Facultat d'Humanitats
Universidad de Granada: Centro de Lenguas Modernas. Sección de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de León: Centro de Idiomas. Departamento de Japonés
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid: Centro de Estudios de Asia Oriental
Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Estudios Internacionales
Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Centro Superior de Idiomas Modernos
Universidad Pontificia Comillas: Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales Sección de Traducción e Interpretación
Universidad de Alcalá de Henares: Centro de Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad de Salamanca: Departamento de Filología Moderna Facultad de Filología
Universidad de Sevilla: Instituto de Idiomas
Universidad de La Laguna: Servicio de Idiomas
Universitat Politècnica de València: Departament de Japonès
Universitat de València: Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació
Universidad de Valladolid: Centro de Idiomas E.U.E. Empresariales

Table 5. University Departments Offering Japanese Courses in Spain. Embajada de Japón en España, 2012: <http://www.es.emb-japan.go.jp/estudios/estudiarjap.html> [accessed 15 Feb 2016]

UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS OFFERING JAPANESE COURSES IN IRELAND
Dublin City University: School of Applied Language & Intercultural Studies
University of Limerick: School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics
University College Dublin: Applied Language Centre
Trinity College Dublin: Trinity Centre for Asian Studies
University College Cork: School of Asian Studies

Table 6. University Departments Offering Japanese Courses in Ireland. Data courtesy of Embassy of Japan in Ireland on 8 February 2016.

KUSEP ELECTIVE COURSES AUTUMN 2015
Comparative Politics
Japanese Politics and Diplomacy
Anthropology in Japan
Japanese History
Global Environment and Its Dynamics
Seminar in International Society Studies (International Security Issues)
Learning French
British Regional Studies
Japanese Culture through the Way of Tea
Ōhi Pottery: Clay and Fire
Japanese Society and Traditional Culture
Education in Japan
Budō – Karatedō I
Budō – Shōrinji-Kenpō
Budō – Jōdō I
Japanese Religions
Zen and Japanese Culture
Japanese Calendar and Time Culture
Natural and Cultural Diversity of Ishikawa and International Initiatives
Communication Business
Nurse Care to Elderly People in Japan
Gender and Society
Japanese Language and Society

Table 7. KUSEP elective courses in autumn 2015 at Kanazawa University.  
Data courtesy of Kanazawa University on 28 April 2016

KUSEP ELECTIVE COURSES SPRING 2016
An Introduction to the Japanese Modern Culture and Society
Anthropology in Japan
A History of International Politics (Oriental)
Seminar in International Society Studies (International Security Issues)
Japanese History
International Relations
Introduction to European Life
Population Geography in Japan
American/British Media Studies E
Language Ideology in Japan
Japanese Art Performance and Music
Traditional Arts & Crafts and their Techniques
Contemporary Art and Design
Japanese Society and Traditional Culture II
Family in Japan
Budō – Karatedō I
Budō – Shōrinji-Kenpō
Budō – Jōdō I
Budō – Karatedō II
Budō – Jōdō II
Zen and Japanese Culture
Japanese Calendar and Time Culture
Natural and Cultural Diversity of Ishikawa and International Initiatives
Nurse Care to Elderly People in Japan
Japanese Language and Society
Sociology of Food and Eating

Table 8. KUSEP elective courses in spring 2016 at Kanazawa University.  
Data courtesy of Kanazawa University on 28 April 2016

KUSEP COMPULSORY JAPANESE LANGUAGE CLASSES
Japanese A
Japanese B
Japanese C
Japanese D
Japanese E
Japanese Intensive Course for Beginners
Japanese Intensive Course for Pre-Intermediate
Kanji & Vocabulary 1
Kanji & Vocabulary 2
Kanji & Vocabulary 3
Kanji & Vocabulary 4
Kanji & Vocabulary 5
Kanji & Vocabulary 6
Kanji & Vocabulary 7
Writing 1 (Specific Skills for Level C)
Writing 2 (Specific Skills for Level D)
Academic Writing I (Specific Skills for Level E)
Academic Writing II (Specific Skills for Level F)
Intermediate Listening 1 (Specific Skills for Level D)
Intermediate Listening 2 (Specific Skills for Level D)
Academic Listening I (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Academic Listening II, III (Specific Skills for Level F)
Advanced Japanese Grammar I, II (Specific Skills for Level F)
Oral Presentation I (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Oral Presentation II (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Japanese Affairs: Introductory I, II (Specific Skills for Level C)
Intermediate Reading (Specific Skills for Level D)
Rapid Reading (Specific Skills for Level C, D)
Japanese Literature for International Students (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Advanced Reading I, II (Specific Skills for Level F)
Academic Japanese I (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Academic Japanese II (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Japanese Affairs I (Specific Skills for Level E, F)
Japanese Affairs II (Specific Skills for Level E, F)

Table 9. KUSEP compulsory Japanese Language Classes (2015-2016) at Kanazawa University.  
Data courtesy of Kanazawa University on 28 April 2016

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Idioma C per a traductors i intèrprets 1 (japonès)	26	25	24	39	37	32	40
Idioma C per a traductors i intèrprets 2 (japonès)	26	25	27	42	37	36	40

Table 10. Number of Students Enrolled in First Year Translation and Interpreting Studies with Japanese as a Second Foreign Language in the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Data courtesy of The Autonomous University of Barcelona on 13 April 2016.

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Japanese, Language, Culture And Society 1	27	30	19	31	25	31	N/A
Japanese for Business 1	2	4	9	10	N/A	4	7

Table 11. Number of Students Enrolled in Japanese, Language, Culture and Society 1 and Japanese for Business 1 in the University of Limerick. Data courtesy of The University of Limerick on 12 April 2016.



## APPENDIX 2. QUESTIONNAIRES

### QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

Reference Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Japanese teaching methods in third-level education in The  
Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and  
Kanazawa University**

*I would like to ask you to help me with my final year research project at The Autonomous University of Barcelona by answering the following questions concerning your views on how Japanese is taught in your University. It is not a test so there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. I am only interested in your personal opinion in order to improve the teaching of Japanese in your institution. Please give your answers sincerely as only this will guarantee the success of the investigation. The contents of this form are absolutely confidential. Information identifying the respondent will not be disclosed under any circumstances. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.*

Please complete the following questions by **ticking the answer** which corresponds to you.

**1. Sex:**

(Tick only one box)

Male <sub>1</sub>

Female <sub>2</sub>

Other <sub>3</sub>

**2. Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Nationality:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What University have you, or are you, currently attending?**

(Tick only one box)

Kanazawa University <sub>1</sub>

The Autonomous University of Barcelona <sub>2</sub>

The University of Limerick <sub>3</sub>

**5. What year of study are you currently in?**

(Tick only one box)

Third year <sub>1</sub>

Fourth year <sub>2</sub>

Former Student <sub>3</sub>

**6. For how many years have you studied Japanese?**

**(Tick only one box)**

For less than three years

Between 3 and 5 years

Between 5 and 10 years

For over 10 years

**7. Taking only in account what you have been taught in your university, which level of Japanese proficiency have you reached?**

**(Tick only one box)**

JLPT 5

JLPT 4

JLPT 3

JLPT 2

JLPT 1

None of the above  (Go to question 8)

**8. If you have not passed one of the proficiency levels mentioned in question 7, what level of Japanese do you feel that you have?**

Beginner

Intermediate

Upper

Advanced

Native

Other (Please Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Japanese course in your University?**  
**(Tick only one box)**

Not satisfied at all

Slightly satisfied

Somewhat satisfied

Very satisfied

Completely satisfied

**10. After completion, do you think the Japanese language knowledge acquired in university will enable you to work...?**

**(Tick only one box)**

In Japan with Japanese as a vehicular language

As a translator

As an interpreter

As an intercultural link between Japan and your country (embassy, business etc.)

None of the above

All of the above

**11. Which of these skills do you think is most important to fully learn Japanese?**

**(Tick only one box)**

Reading

Writing

Speaking

Listening

**12. Which of these skills does your university teach the most?**

**(Tick only one box)**

Reading

Writing

Speaking

Listening

**13. As part of the learning experience, how beneficial are the Japanese that you have sat at your university?**

**(Tick only one box)**

Very beneficial

Somewhat beneficial

Not beneficial

Not beneficial at all

**14. What is the usual mode of communication in the Japanese classroom between the lecturer and student?**

**(Tick only one box)**

- Only Japanese
- More Japanese than Catalan/Spanish/English
- An equal amount of both languages
- More English/Spanish/Catalan than Japanese
- Only Catalan/Spanish/English

**15. Do you feel your university teaches you enough Japanese culture along with the Japanese language?**

**(Tick only one box)**

- Too much
- The right amount
- Too little
- They only teach language

**16. In your opinion, does the university you attend use pedagogical material (e.g. texts specifically adapted to learn Japanese) or real material (e.g. real Japanese newspapers)**

**(Tick only one box)**

- Only pedagogical material
- More pedagogical material than real material
- An equal amount of pedagogical and real material
- Only real material
- Less pedagogical material than real material

**17. Please write your opinion on the Japanese teaching strengths and weaknesses in your university in the space below.**

**QUESTIONNAIRE IN CATALAN**

Número de referència: \_\_\_\_\_

**Japanese Teaching Methods in Third-level Education in The Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Limerick and Kanazawa University**

*Com a part del Treball de Final de Grau m'agradaria que responguéssiu unes preguntes on se us demana la opinió sobre el mètode pedagògic de la llengua japonesa a la vostra universitat, és a dir, com s'ensenya japonès a la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. No hi ha respostes correctes ni incorrectes. Aquesta enquesta és simplement una manera de conèixer el vostre punt de vista per tal de millorar el mètode d'ensenyament de la llengua japonesa a la vostra institució. Us prego que respongueu el qüestionari de forma sincera perquè només així es podrà garantir l'èxit de la investigació. El contingut d'aquest qüestionari és confidencial i la informació personal de l'enquestat no es publicarà sota cap circumstància. MOLTES GRÀCIES PER LA VOSTRA COOPERACIÓ.*

Completeu el formulari **fent una creu** a la resposta que creieu més convenient segons el vostre criteri.

**1. Sexe:**

(Marca només una casella)

Home Dona Altres **2. Edat:** \_\_\_\_\_**3. Nacionalitat:** \_\_\_\_\_**4. Quina universitat estàs anant o has anat?**

(Marca només una casella)

Universitat de Kanazawa Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona Universitat de Limerick **5. A quin curs estàs?**

(Marca només una casella)

3r

4t

Ex-alumne/a

**6. Durant quant de temps has estudiat japonès?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Menys de 3 anys

Entre 3 i 5 anys

Entre 5 i 10 anys

Més de 10 anys

**7. Quin és el nivell més alt de la prova oficial de japonès JLPT que has obtingut?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

JLPT 5

JLPT 4

JLPT 3

JLPT 2

JLPT 1

Cap dels anteriors  (aneu a la pregunta 8)

**8. Si no has aprovat cap dels exàmens mencionats anteriorment (pregunta 7), quin nivell de japonès creus que has assolit tenint en compte només el que t'han ensenyat a la universitat?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Nivell bàsic

Nivell intermedi baix

Nivell intermedi alt

Nivell avançat

Nadiu

Altres (especifica): \_\_\_\_\_

**9. En general, com de satisfet/a estàs amb els cursos de japonès a la teva universitat?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Gens satisfet/a

Una mica satisfet/a

Satisfet/a

Molt satisfet/a

Completament satisfet/a

**10. Després d'acabar la carrera, creus que el nivell de japonès que hauràs adquirit a la universitat et permetrà treballar...?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Al Japó amb el japonès com a llengua vehicular

De traductor/a

D'intèrpret

Com a enllaç intercultural entre el Japó i el teu país  
(en una ambaixada, en una empresa privada, etc.)

Cap de les anteriors

Totes les anteriors

**11. Quina d'aquestes habilitats creus que és més important per aprendre japonès?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Comprensió lectora

Expressió escrita

Expressió oral

Comprensió oral

**12. Quina habilitat creus que s'ensenya més a les classes de japonès de la teva universitat?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Comprensió lectora

Expressió escrita

Expressió oral

Comprensió oral

**13. Com a part del procés d'aprenentatge, com de beneficioses són els exàmens de japonès a la teva universitat?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Molt beneficiosos

Beneficiosos

No gaire beneficiosos

Gens beneficiosos

**14. A l'aula, quina és la llengua vehicular entre els professors de japonès i els alumnes?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Només japonès

Més japonès que català/castellà

Japonès i català/castellà a parts iguals

Més català/castellà que japonès

Només català/castellà

**15. Creus que la teva universitat ensenya prou cultura japonesa a les classes de llengua?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Massa

La quantitat suficient

Massa poca

Només ensenya llengua

**16. Creus que la teva universitat fa servir material pedagògic (p. ex. textos específicament adaptats per a aprendre japonès) o material real (p. ex. articles periodístics reals)?**

**(Marca només una casella)**

Només material pedagògic

Més material pedagògic que material real

La mateixa quantitat de material pedagògic que de material real

Menys material pedagògic que material real

Només material real

**17. Escriu la teva opinió sobre els punts forts i febles dels mètodes pedagògics que s'apliquen a la teva universitat a l'espai que hi ha continuació.**