

# **The Beneficial Effects of Manga and Anime on Japanese Teaching and Learning: A Study with Interviews from Thai College Students Analyzed According to the SCAT**

ประโยชน์ของมังงะและอนิเมะต่อการเรียนและการสอนภาษาญี่ปุ่น: ศึกษาจากการ  
สัมภาษณ์ผู้เรียนชาวไทยระดับอุดมศึกษาผ่านการวิเคราะห์ด้วยวิธี SCAT

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this qualitative research was to examine the influence of *Manga* and *Anime* on Thai students. The study examined subjects who were studying Business Japanese as an academic major at a university in Nonthaburi. The objectives of this research were 1) to identify the reasons why students who are interested in *Manga* and *Anime* decide to study Japanese; 2) to reveal the advantages the students will receive from such media; and 3) to provide suggestions for future study. A semi-structured face-to-face individual interview was conducted with 6 Thai college students who demonstrated a high interest in *Manga* and *Anime*. The transcripts were analyzed according to the “Steps for Coding and Theorization” (SCAT) method, which is a qualitative data analysis technique for generative coding and theorization. The survey revealed that *Manga* and *Anime* could be considered one of the prominent reasons behind the students’ choice of learning Japanese language, and continuing studying Japanese. However, the interests of Japanese language learners in higher education are not limited to *Manga* and *Anime*, there are other interests as well. It was also found that *Manga* and *Anime* were most likely beneficial to improve their Japanese language skills and foster their autonomous learning.

**Keywords:** *Manga* and *Anime*, Thai university students, Studying Japanese language, SCAT

## บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพที่จัดทำขึ้นเพื่อสำรวจอิทธิพลของหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่น(มังงะ)และการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่น(อะนิเมะ)ของผู้เรียนชาวไทยระดับอุดมศึกษาที่กำลังศึกษาภาษาญี่ปุ่นธุรกิจเป็นวิชาเอกในจังหวัดคุณทบุรี โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์คือ 1) เพื่อศึกษาเหตุผลที่นักศึกษาผู้สนใจหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่นเลือกเรียนภาษาญี่ปุ่น 2) เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงประโยชน์ที่นักศึกษาได้รับจากหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่น 3) เพื่อนำเสนอข้อเสนอแนะที่เป็นประโยชน์สำหรับการศึกษาต่อไปในอนาคต ผู้วิจัยใช้วิธีสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งมีโครงสร้างตัวต่อตัวกับนักศึกษาที่สนใจในหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่นจำนวน 6 คนและวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพจากการสัมภาษณ์ด้วยข้อต่อในการเข้ารับและ การสร้างทฤษฎี (SCAT) ผลการวิจัยพบว่า หนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่นเป็นปัจจัยหนึ่งที่มีความสำคัญอย่างเด่นชัดต่อการเลือกศึกษาภาษาญี่ปุ่นรวมถึงมีส่วนทำให้ผู้เรียนศึกษาภาษาญี่ปุ่นต่อเนื่อง อย่างไรก็ตามความสนใจของผู้เรียนภาษาญี่ปุ่นในระดับอุดมศึกษาไม่ได้มีเพียงหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่นเท่านั้นแต่ยังมีความสนใจอื่นๆเพิ่มขึ้นอีกด้วย และยังพบว่าประโยชน์ที่มากที่สุดจากหนังสือการ์ตูนญี่ปุ่นและการ์ตูนภาพเคลื่อนไหวญี่ปุ่นทำให้ผู้ที่สนใจสามารถพัฒนาทักษะภาษาญี่ปุ่นและเสริมสร้างการเรียนรู้ด้วยตัวเอง

**คำสำคัญ:** มังงะและอะนิเมะ ผู้เรียนชาวไทยระดับอุดมศึกษา ศึกษาภาษาญี่ปุ่น SCAT

## Introduction

### 1. Background of the study

In Japan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) and the Japan Foundation have been playing core roles in international cultural exchanges as part of Public Diplomacy<sup>1</sup> by making the most use of the nation's Soft Power<sup>2</sup>. One of the activities to promote cultural exchange focuses on the impact of popular culture with two main pillars of activities. One is 'Introducing Japanese Culture / Arts and Cultural Exchange' through the Japan Foundation, and the other is 'Pop-Culture Diplomacy' by MOFA. In particular, in the case of *Manga* and *Anime*, it should be mentioned that 'Pop-Culture Diplomacy' has contributed to the rapid spread of *Manga* and *Anime* culture overseas. The "International MANGA Award" was established in May of 2007 with the aim of awarding *Manga* creators who contribute to the spread of *Manga* culture overseas. Furthermore, from 2008 MOFA began the "Anime Ambassador" project, with the aim of increasing the interest of the people overseas in Japan through *Anime* (MOFA, 2014).

There is, to my knowledge, no conclusive evidence that a national policy of the Japanese government, such as described above, is effective in increasing the number of learners of Japanese worldwide. This is because

there is no statistical data which illustrates a correlation between the two. However, based on my experience as a Japanese language instructor in Thailand, I have made some critical observations. A large number of students studying Japanese enjoy reading *Manga* and watching *Anime*. They enjoy talking about story outlines and the characters in *Manga* and *Anime*. I often observe students who have personal items featuring characters from *Manga* and *Anime*. These include stationery items, bags, and other trinkets. Another observation is that many of students are interested in *Cosplay* and like to participate in *Cosplay* events.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, it is apparent that Japanese pop-culture including *Manga* and *Anime* has a significant impact on motivating students to study Japanese, and could lead to a significant increase in number of Japanese language learners worldwide.

A quantitative research in the study by Tajima (2016) investigated the differences in motivation toward studying Japanese comparing college students interested in *Manga* and *Anime* and those who were not. However, none of the values of the four motivational factors toward studying Japanese were significantly different between the two. It could be inferred that the two clusters expressing ‘high interest’ and ‘low interest’ were almost equally motivated in learning Japanese by intrinsic or extrinsic reasons<sup>3</sup>. However, the question now is “Is it true that there are no differences between the two groups?” It can be inferred that some of the question items to survey the motivation of students who were studying Japanese may have been inappropriate or impertinent, thereby affecting results. Also, a quantitative research method is appropriate for macro-perspective observing, however, inappropriate for going into the minutest details.

From such reasoning, I subsequently began to examine the present situation of Japanese teaching and learning in Thailand, particularly the beneficial effects of *Manga* and *Anime* on Thai learners of Japanese with interviews from college students. And, ultimately its effects on Japanese teaching and learning.

## **2. Objectives of the study**

This study aims to investigate the beneficial effects of *Manga* and *Anime* on Japanese teaching and learning with interviews from six Thai learners of Japanese at a university in Nonthaburi.

The following objectives were considered: 1) To identify the reasons for college students interested in *Manga* and *Anime* from high school and continue a tertiary-level study of the Japanese language. 2) To reveal the advantages of studying Japanese for college students interested in *Manga* and *Anime*. 3) To reveal implications, and suggestions for future studies for Japanese teachers and institutes.

## Literature Review

### 1. J-pop Culture Including *Manga* and *Anime* for Japanese Teaching and Learning

In recent years, this field of study has been attracting attention in the motivation for studying Japanese and a policy of spreading Japanese language and pop culture. However, its history is not long and thus there are few previous studies, to my knowledge.

Hagino (2007) conducted a questionnaire survey in terms of the relevance between motivation for studying Japanese and all aspects of Japanese culture including *Manga* and *Anime*. The survey comprised a total of twenty students from Taiwan, China, and other nationals. As a result, a large number of students cited their understanding of *Manga*, *Anime* and Japanese TV dramas as the reason to study Japanese.

Kumano and Hirokaga (2008) reported on previous studies related to Japanese teaching and learning using *Manga* and *Anime* (e.g., Chinami, 2005; Hagino, 2007), and introduced existing Japanese teaching materials and web sites using *Manga* and *Anime*, e.g. “Kanji de Manga”, and “Erin’s Challenge! I can speak Japanese”. Furthermore, Kumano (2010) surveyed the relevance between learners of Japanese and interest in *Manga* and *Anime* in various countries and regions. It revealed that a large number of them were motivated by *Manga* and *Anime*, and it became the reason they decided to study Japanese.

Suzuki (2011) conducted a questionnaire survey asking the question “To what degree are you interested in *Manga* and *Anime*” to 155 college students majoring in Japanese in China. According to the results, 36.8% of respondents stated that they were very interested, and 34.2% of respondents stated a little interested in *Manga* and *Anime*. The result indicated that *Manga* and *Anime* played a significant role in motivating Japanese language learners.

Kondo and Muranaka (2010) conducted a survey with French students to determine whether the respondents, who were very interested in Japanese pop culture, but had not previously learned Japanese would later study Japanese. It revealed that learners without Japanese language background who were very interested in Japanese pop culture tended to have more interest in studying Japanese than learners without Japanese language background who had limited interest in such media. Presumably the study supported the hypothesis of which non-learner target group very interested in Japanese pop culture would increase motivation to learn the Japanese language.

Nemoto (2012) conducted a questionnaire survey and compared three groups, learners of Japanese and learners without Japanese language background who were interested in Japanese pop culture and learners without Japanese language background who were not interested in such media in Middle East countries. As a result, learners without Japanese language background interested in Japanese pop culture were more interested in all

aspects of Japan than learners of Japanese. However, the results suggested that learners without Japanese language background interested in Japanese pop culture would not always become active learners of Japanese.

## **2. Creating Original Animation Media for Japanese Teaching and Learning**

Previously mentioned Kumano engaged in development of original animation which is called '*Anime, Manga no Nihongo*' as a teaching material (Kumano & Kawashima, 2011). It is contained in the website of the Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Kansai (<http://anime-manga.jp>). The '*Anime, Manga no Nihongo*' website was created with the vision of 'learning Japanese through *Anime* and *Manga*'. The aim was to let students learn Japanese through words, phrases, and dialogues of the characters in the existing *Anime* and *Manga*. Yazaki (2014) also aimed to create original animation which is called '*ANIME de NIHONGO*' attaching greater importance to 'fun' than 'teaching contents'.

## **Methodology**

### **1. Research Design**

In this study, a qualitative research method was conducted with Thai college students who were studying business Japanese courses as part of their majors. A semi-structured face-to-face individual interview was conducted with six participants who expressed a 'very high interest' in *Manga* and *Anime*. All of the six participants had studied Japanese for two or three years at secondary school before they continued to study Japanese at a university.

### **2. Research Instruments**

An interview guide was prepared in accordance with the research questions. The following are the main question contents which were prepared for semi-structured interviews.

- 1) Why did you decide to continue to study Japanese at college? (Why do you continue to study Japanese?)
- 2) What were the key factors in deciding to learn Japanese when you were a high school student?
- 3) Currently, you are a college student. Have your reasons of studying Japanese changed compared to the past?
- 4) Would you have started learning Japanese even if you hadn't been interested in *Manga* and *Anime*?
- 5) How does your interest in *Manga* and *Anime* help you improve your Japanese?
- 6) What are the advantages for you (learners of Japanese who are interested in *Manga* and *Anime*) to study Japanese?

To minimize language barriers the interview was performed in both Japanese and Thai language. The interview was conducted with the cooperation of a Thai Japanese language instructor.

### 3. Participants

Participants for the qualitative research were recruited using purposive sampling to select those who expressed a ‘very high interest’ in *Manga* and *Anime*. The details of selected six participants are as follows.

**Table 1: Data of six participants**

Name	Gender	Age	Year	*JLPT	Learning experience (year)
A	M	19	1st	None	3 1/2
B	F	19	1st	N4	3 1/2
C	M	19	2nd	None	3 1/2
D	F	19	2nd	N4	4 1/2
E	F	19	2nd	N3	4 1/2
F	F	20	2nd	N4	4 1/2

\*JLPT- Japanese Language Proficiency Test<sup>4</sup>

### 4. Steps for Coding and Theorization (SCAT)

In this qualitative research, the transcripts were analyzed according to the “Steps for Coding and Theorization” (SCAT) method, which is a qualitative data analysis technique for generative coding and theorization. SCAT was developed by Otani (2008, 2011) as an easily accessible qualitative data analysis method based on the Grounded Theory Approach<sup>5</sup>.

The following is the procedure of the analysis sited from Otani (2008, p 44).

The analysis method consists of a four-step coding process in which the researcher edits segmented text, putting <1> focused words from within the text, <2> words outside of the text that are replaceable with the words from 1, <3> words which explain the words 1 and 2, and <4> themes and constructs, including a process of writing a story-line and offering theories that weave together the themes and constructs.

This study adopted this approach for its explicit process of analysis and validity of theorization from a relatively small scale data as represented by one case.

**Table 2: An example of generative coding and theorization by using a format of SCAT (Student D)**

No	Speaker	Text	<1> Noteworthy words or phrases from the text	<2> Paraphrases of <1>	<3> Concepts from out of the text that account for <2>	<4> Themes, constructs in considerations of context
1	Interviewer	How does your interest in <i>Manga</i> and <i>Anime</i>				

## A study with interviews from Thai college students analyzed according to the SCAT

No	Speaker	Text	<1> Noteworthy words or phrases from the text	<2> Paraphrases of <1>	<3> Concepts from out of the text that account for <2>	<4> Themes, constructs in considerations of context
help you to improve your Japanese?						
2	Respondent (Student D)	In terms of <i>Anime</i> , it serves to improve listening ability. Repeating interesting lines in <i>Manga</i> and <i>Anime</i> help acquire Japanese pronunciation. I memorize the words and phrases in <i>Manga</i> and <i>Anime</i> which I am interested in and I don't understand, then look up the meaning on my own after reading or watching.	Listening ability, repeating the lines, Japanese pronunciation, look up the meaning of the words and phrases on my own,	improvement in listening comprehension, repeat of lines, efficient Japanese pronunciation, self-determining approach to learning Japanese by using realia,	improvement in both listening and speaking skills, repeat, which is a main element for language acquisition, individual method of learning Japanese, by using realia, fostering autonomous learning,	improvement in listening comprehension, acquisition by repeat the lines, unconscious acquisition of correct pronunciation, fostering autonomous learning,
3	Interviewer	-	-	-	-	-
4	Respondent	-	-	-	-	-

## Results and Finding

### 1. Results of Semi-Structured Interview

The transcripts obtained from interviews with all six participants were analyzed according to the previously mentioned SCAT method. Considering the objectives of the survey, the analyzed data could be divided into two parts. Part one was 'the reasons for college students who were interested in *Manga* and *Anime* from high school and continue a tertiary-level study of the Japanese language', and part two was 'the advantages for learners of Japanese who were interested in *Manga* and *Anime*'.

Described below are the storyline of all six participants dividing into two parts.

### 1.1 Storyline of six participants -Part 1-

#### Student A

At the time of the study, student A was a first-year male student in college. He was 19 years of age. He had an uncertain vision of his future. However, he was taking account of pragmatic utilization of his acquired Japanese skills after graduating from college, which means he was taking instrumental motivation into consideration. He decided to continue to learn Japanese in college by his own volition. When he entered high school, he was planning to major in science. In other words, he prioritized an instrumental orientation. However, he decided on a career path which would satisfy his artistic interest. The reason he started learning Japanese in high school was because it became his hobby. In other words, he made a decision based on intrinsic reasons. He felt his motivation to continue learning Japanese changed due to his encounter with Japanese culture, customs, and lifestyle as a new interest. However, the superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as a motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute. Though he had a more realistic future plan, the plan still lacked concrete details. Even if he had not been interested in *Manga* and *Anime*, he would have chosen Japanese because of the Japanese influence which surrounds his daily life.

#### Student B

At the time of the study, student B was a first-year female student in college. She was 19 years of age. She decided to continue to learn Japanese in college by her own volition with specific prospective careers in mind. She expressed her intension to find employment as a voice actress or work within the animation industry. She had two reasons to start learning Japanese. One was her ambition to communicate with the Japanese most famous *Cosplayer* whom she met at her first *Cosplay* event. The other was the interest in *Manga* and *Anime* since childhood. It could certainly be stated that she made a decision based on intrinsic reasons. The superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was always present, and the survey shows her resolute conviction and view of the world. It is unimaginable in her life to lose interest in *Manga* and *Anime* because the existence of *Manga* and *Anime* was prominent for her. Considering these, the importance of *Manga* and *Anime* could be considered the main reason behind her decision to learn Japanese.

#### Student C

At the time of the study, student C was a second-year male student in college. He was 19 years of age. When he entered high school, he decided to choose a science course at the wish of his parents. It was a passive decision. However, he started to learn Japanese at a language school when he was in the second-year of high

school because of his interest in *Manga* and *Anime*. Considering his personal choice to continue to learn Japanese in college, it could be concluded that it was altering his study choices from passivity to activity. This gave priority to his desire. Although his future vision was uncertain, he hoped to work by utilizing his acquired Japanese skills. The superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute. It was uncertain whether he would have chosen Japanese or not if he was not interested in *Manga* and *Anime*. However, he expressed that he would avoid subjects that he dislikes.

### Student D

At the time of the study, student D was a second-year female student in college. She was 19 years of age. She decided to continue to learn Japanese in college because of the beneficial experiences of learning Japanese that she gained in high school. At that time her encounter with Japanese culture resulted in a new interest. Another consideration was for the practical use of her acquired Japanese skills after graduation. The reason she started learning Japanese in high school was because it became her hobby. In other words, she made a decision based on intrinsic reasons. Although the superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was resolute, the rise of her instrumental motivation to learn Japanese to get a well-paid job in the future was also clearly evident. She thought that if she was not interested in *Manga* and *Anime*, she would not have started to learn Japanese. In addition, she was only slightly interested in the foreign language itself. Thus, *Manga* and *Anime* were direct motivational factors for her decision to learn Japanese and the survey indicates the importance of *Manga* and *Anime* could be considered the prominent reason behind her choice of learning Japanese.

### Student E

At the time of the study, student E was a second-year female student in college. She was 19 years of age. She majored in Chinese because it was the only language choice available when she started high school. However, she started to learn Japanese at a language school under the synergistic effect of both internal factors (interest in Japanese) and external factors (her mother, living environment). She decided to continue to learn Japanese in college by her own volition due to her growing interest in Japanese. The reasons she started to learn Japanese at the language school were because of her encounter with Japanese pop culture when she was in high school and the desire to acquire a foreign language. In other words, it could be concluded that she made a decision based on intrinsic reasons. The superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivation for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute, and the survey indicates beneficial interaction between hobby and learning. It could be stated that *Manga* and *Anime* were direct motivational factors for her decision to learn

Japanese because she thought if she was not interested in *Manga* and *Anime*, she would not have started to learn Japanese. Considering these particulars, it could be concluded that the importance of *Manga* and *Anime* could be considered the prominent reason behind her choice of learning Japanese.

### Student F

At the time of the study, student F was a second-year female student in college. She was 19 years of age. She decided to continue to learn Japanese in college of her own volition due to the beneficial experience of learning Japanese in high school. She chose a science course in junior high school. However, an accidental encounter with an elderly woman who was a *Cosplayer* on the internet changed her life. After that she obtained genuine curiosity about the woman's hobby and she found one clue to understanding it in her *Cosplay* pictures. What she found in the pictures was the Japanese language. She became interested in Japanese and gained the desire to acquire this foreign language. The reason she started learning Japanese in high school was because of her hobby and her desire to acquire a foreign language. Her decision was influenced by intrinsic reasons. The superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute. Moreover, the survey reveals her growing enthusiasm in her hobby due to the improvement in her Japanese skills. On the other hand, the survey reveals the extension of her interests because of the emergence of new attractions as a consequence to continue Japanese learning. This includes Japanese culture, society, and lifestyle. It could be concluded that *Manga* and *Anime* were direct motivational factors for her decision to learn Japanese because she thought if she was not interested in *Manga* and *Anime*, she would not have started to learn Japanese. Accordingly, it could be mentioned that the encounter with her hobby (*Cosplay*) determined her future study choices.

### 1.2 Storyline of six participants -Part 2-

#### Student A

Acquisition of words and phrases from *Manga* and *Anime* would be beneficial for the improvement in his Japanese skills. It could be inferred that *Manga* and *Anime* foster autonomous learning due to the discovery of his self-determined approach to learning Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime* as realia, for example, taking notes of the lines. He thought that deepening of knowledge with the profound insight into Japanese culture would be an advantage for learners of Japanese interested in *Manga* and *Anime*. He had confidence in his listening ability as the best out of the four skills because of the improvements in listening comprehension he developed by watching *Anime* frequently.

**Student B**

*Manga* and *Anime* could facilitate the acquisition of fluent Japanese, as well as vocabulary and phrases commonly spoken in daily life. Additionally, it would help in the improvement of listening comprehension and pronunciation. It could be stated that *Manga* and *Anime* foster students' autonomous learning according to the observation on her self-determined approach to learning Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime* as realia, for example, keeping a dictionary close at hand whenever she watches *Anime*. She mentioned that her interest in *Manga* and *Anime* contributed to the acquisition and better comprehension of correct pronunciation and colloquial language. She thought that she passed the JLPT exam by virtue of her high level of listening skills. It could be concluded that the result gave her confidence in taking listening comprehension tests.

**Student C**

Acquisition of words and phrases from *Manga* and *Anime* would be beneficial for improving Japanese skills. It could be stated that *Manga* and *Anime* foster autonomous learning because of his self-determined approach to learning Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime* as realia, for example, loop up the meaning of KANJI in *Manga* on his own. He had self-confidence in his listening skills as the best out of all four skills. Facilitating language input resulting from a lowered affective filter while watching *Anime* could be considered one of the reasons.

**Student D**

*Manga* and *Anime* would be beneficial for improvement in listening comprehension and pronunciation. Language acquisition by repeating the lines and unconscious acquisition of correct pronunciation might be positive examples of learning Japanese with *Manga* and *Anime* as realia. It could be stated that *Manga* and *Anime* foster autonomous learning because of her self-determined approach to learning Japanese described above. She mentioned that the habit of watching *Anime*, before actually starting to learn Japanese, would be an advantageous condition for language acquisition, mainly improvement in listening comprehension.

**Student E**

*Manga* and *Anime* would be useful for the acquisition of Japanese vocabulary and phrases commonly spoken in daily life, as well as improvement in listening comprehension and pronunciation by repeating the lines. She thought her listening ability was a major factor for passing the JLPT exam. It could be inferred that the result gave her confidence in taking listening comprehension tests. It could be inferred that *Manga* and *Anime* foster autonomous learning because of her self-determined approach to learning Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime*.

as *realia*. She mentioned that learners of Japanese who are interested in *Manga* and *Anime* enjoy studying Japanese. A positive aspect for her was lowered affective filters which facilitated input and output. Furthermore, she believes that it is an advantage for students interested in *Manga* and *Anime* to obtain deep knowledge through profound insight into Japanese culture.

### Student F

*Manga* and *Anime* would be useful for improvement in listening comprehension, as well as skimming and scanning skills. She scored high on the listening comprehension part of the JLPT exam. It could be inferred that the result gave her confidence in taking a listening comprehension test. Inductive Japanese learning by using *Manga* and *Anime* as *realia* indicates fostering autonomous learning.

## 2. Results of the Analysis

Described below are the results of the analysis divided into two parts.

### 2.1 Reasons for Beginning and Continuing the Study of Japanese Language

All the participants commented that the main factor in their decision to learn Japanese when they were high school students was their interest in *Manga* and *Anime* including other J-pop culture, such as Japanese songs, movies, and TV dramas. Two of the six (Student B and F) mentioned their encounter with a Cosplayer, which played an important role in their decision to learn Japanese. Four respondents (Student B, D, E and F) mentioned that if they were not interested in *Manga* and *Anime*, they would not have started to learn Japanese. From these statements, it could be stated that *Manga* and *Anime* were a direct motivational factor for their decision to learn Japanese.

Additionally, “*motivated by hobby*”, “*desire to acquire a foreign language*”, “*interest in Japanese language*” were revealed as the reasons they decided to learn Japanese. These are the decisions motivated by intrinsic reasons. They decided to learn Japanese to satisfy their desire arising from within the individual.

All the participants commented that the superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as a motivational factor for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute. Moreover, three participants (Student B, E and F) mentioned that the improvement in their Japanese skills enhanced their growing enthusiasm in their hobby; in other words, they enjoyed the benefits of learning Japanese for their hobby. On the other hand, the survey revealed the rise of instrumental motivational factors<sup>6</sup> among the respondents, such as getting a well-paid job in the future. Moreover, the survey indicated the extension of their interests because of the emergence of new attractions as a consequence of continuous Japanese learning, such as Japanese culture, society, and lifestyle. It would be

possible that those beneficial experiences of learning Japanese in secondary school were one of the reasons to enhance their motivation for the continuation of learning Japanese in college.

All the participants mentioned that they were still motivated by *Manga* and *Anime* towards learning Japanese even after they became college students. However, they were studying Japanese not only because of their interest in *Manga* and *Anime*, Other considerations included career options after graduation, an interest in Japanese culture, society, and lifestyle.

## **2.2 Advantages for Learners of Japanese Who Were Interested in *Manga* and *Anime***

All the respondents mentioned that *Anime* would be useful for improvement in listening comprehension. Three out of six respondents (Student B, D and E) added improvement in pronunciation. After long term exposure to *Anime* it is apparent that students' listening comprehension improved. Moreover, three participants (Student B, E and F) considered their listening ability to be a major factor for passing the JLPT exam. Favorable test results gave them more confidence in attempting more listening comprehension tests. From these statements, it could be inferred that 'listening comprehension improved' is one of the most beneficial advantages for learners of Japanese interested in *Manga* and *Anime*.

The following are sample excerpts of the advantages for learners of Japanese interested in *Manga* and *Anime* obtained from the questionnaires of all six respondents.

*"Learners of Japanese who are interested in Manga and Anime enjoy studying Japanese"* (Student E)

*"Manga and Anime would be useful for acquisition of Japanese vocabulary and phrases commonly spoken in daily life"* (Student B, C and E)

*"The profound insight into Japanese culture could lead to deepen the knowledge"* (Student A and E)

It could be inferred that the enjoyment of studying Japanese would increase the motivation for learning because it would lower affective filters and facilitate language input and output as the result. Moreover, they were able to acquire vocabulary and phrases not in Japanese textbooks but commonly spoken in daily life. And so, they were able to acquire practical Japanese from *Manga* and *Anime*. Finally, they were able to obtain real information regarding Japanese culture and lifestyle from *Manga* and *Anime*. From the above results, their self-determined approach to learning Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime* as realia was evident.

The following are exact excerpts from the respondents.

*"Note interesting lines in Manga and Anime and memorize them"* (Student A)

*"Repeat interesting lines in Manga and Anime"* (Student D and E)

*"Whenever she watches Anime, she keeps a dictionary close at hand"* (Student B)

*"He looks up the meaning of KANJI in Manga on his own"* (Student C)

*"Understanding the differences between spoken and written language from Manga and Anime"* (Student F)

All the respondents were studying Japanese by their own accord by using *Manga* and *Anime* as realia. It could be inferred that *Manga* and *Anime* could foster their autonomous learning.

## Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

### 1. Discussion and Conclusion

The study found that all participants at each high school level were motivated by intrinsic reasons. Moreover, *Manga* and *Anime* were direct motivational factors for their decision to learn Japanese. It could be postulated that the importance of *Manga* and *Anime* could be considered one of the prominent reasons behind their choosing to learn Japanese. For those engaged in teaching Japanese, the study suggests great opportunities for increasing numbers of learners of Japanese. Nemoto (2012) mentioned that learners without Japanese language background interested in Japanese pop culture would not always become active learners of Japanese. However, based on the findings of this study, the probability of those that did not study Japanese being influenced by Japanese cultural phenomena and later begin to study Japanese is high. Therefore, educators should elaborate on the strategy for recruiting new learners of Japanese by using *Manga* and *Anime*, and consider how to encourage learners without Japanese language background interested in *Manga* and *Anime*. This could be accomplished in cooperation with other affiliated Japanese language educational institutions. Activities may include studying Japanese at *Anime*, *Manga* or *Cosplay* events, or by using *Manga* and *Anime* to promote studying Japanese. Perhaps Japanese language study promotion can be implemented through marketing campaigns organized by companies involved in animation media, for example.

All the research participants indicated that the superiority of *Manga* and *Anime* as the motivation for the continuation of learning Japanese was still resolute. In contrast, the survey revealed the rise of instrumental motivation to learn Japanese. Furthermore, the extension of their interests because of the emergence of new attractions as a consequence of continuous Japanese learning, such as Japanese culture, society, and lifestyle were evident. Their original interests which motivated them to study Japanese became diversified and differed from what they used to be. The same results can be achieved with learners who have a high interest in Japanese cinema, traditional music, J-pop, novels and other aspects of Japanese high culture (Gentner, 2015).

The reason they decided to learn Japanese when they were in secondary school was mainly due to the influence *Manga* and *Anime*. However, in college, they may have become more aware of being a member of society, or realized the beneficial experiences of learning Japanese in secondary school. This finding supported the result of the quantitative research in the study by Tajima (2016).

Enjoyment gained from the study of Japanese language would lower their affective filters and consequently facilitate language input and output. Vocabulary, common daily phrases, and pronunciation should equally improve,

along with a profound insight into Japanese culture. This in turn helps students to form a rapport with Japan and its people. In that sense, it could be mentioned that learners may have a deeper relationship with Japanese people because of their understanding of practical Japanese and having a more profound understanding of Japan. As *Manga* and *Anime* foster autonomous learning it appears to be one of the prominent advantages for learners of Japanese.

In recent years, there have been a number of Japanese teaching materials created that apply *Manga* and *Anime*. Original animation media (e.g., Kumano & Kawashima, 2011; Yazaki, 2014) is also becoming more available. Moreover, such materials facilitate opportunities to study Japanese for those not interested in the media itself.

In conclusion, this study revealed the beneficial effects of *Manga* and *Anime* on both Japanese teaching and Japanese learning. Teachers of Japanese should be grateful for *Manga* and *Anime*, and accept the media positively. This form of media provides excellent teaching materials or concepts for teaching and learning Japanese. Teachers should take into consideration that there are numerous students interested in *Manga* and *Anime* within Japanese language classroom. Finally, it needs to be emphasized that teachers should encourage students interested in *Manga* and *Anime* to be aware of the advantages of that media.

## 2. Suggestions

Based on the results of this study it is suggested that teachers engaged in instructing Japanese should consider the beneficial effects of *Manga* and *Anime*. This knowledge is crucial because it would most likely help the teacher in preparing lessons to meet the students' learning purposes and styles. The findings would be useful for the institution's courses and course design.

Another feasible study may be to address issues of any disadvantage regarding *Manga* and *Anime* in education. Despite the advantages of *Manga* and *Anime* listed here, there are some disadvantages as well. To my knowledge, there have been no studies aimed at any disadvantages of *Manga* and *Anime* usage for educational purposes. Disadvantages may include slang, foul language, incorrect grammar or impolite forms of speech. The purpose of such a study would ultimately be to address those issues and devise ways of correcting the language.

Furthermore, it would be worth examining reasons for students highly interested in *Manga* and *Anime* to demonstrate their advantages from the findings in this study, such as 'the ability of their listening skill' by using a dictation test.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>According to Henrikson (2005), Public diplomacy may be defined, simply, as the conduct of international relations by governments through public communications media and through dealings with a wide

range of nongovernmental entities (political parties, corporations, trade associations, labor unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on, including influential individuals) for the purpose of influencing the politics and actions of other governments.

<sup>2</sup>According to Nye (2004), “Soft Power” is defined as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than payments or coercion.” It arises from: 1) Culture (making other countries feel the attraction of your country), 2) Political ideas (engaging in actions at home and abroad that are not in contradiction to those ideas), and 3) Foreign policy (being viewed as fair and paying due respect).

<sup>3</sup>Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence. When intrinsically motivated a person is moved to act for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external prods, pressures, or rewards (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 56). Extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcomes. Extrinsic motivation thus contrasts with intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing an activity simply for the enjoyment of the activity itself, rather than its instrumental value (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 60).

<sup>4</sup>The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) under joint organization of the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services started in 1984 as a test to evaluate and classify the Japanese-language proficiency of those whose native language is not Japanese. Today the JLPT is actively used in every corner of the world and is the largest Japanese-language test in the world, with approximately 610,000 examinees in 62 countries worldwide in 2011. This success is due entirely to the support and cooperation of all involved. The JLPT has five levels: N1, N2, N3, N4 and N5. The easiest level is N5 and the most difficult level is N1 (The Japan Foundation & Japan Educational Exchanges and Services, 2012)

<sup>5</sup>The Grounded Theory Approach is a qualitative research approach that was first articulated by Glaser and Strauss in their 1967 book titled *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. The aim of grounded theory is to generate or discover a theory, and the grounded theory may be defined as the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

<sup>6</sup>Instrumental motivation refers to a desire to learn a language because it would fulfill certain utilitarian goals, such as getting a job, passing an examination, etc (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

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