A Sociocultural Approach to New Language Literacy: Exploring the Japanese Linguaculture Through Collaboration

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Abstract

This study explores a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning Japanese and argues that such an approach offers a framework for change in the way a new language is taught.

As a starting point The National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Dellit 2005) and Teaching and Learning Language: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) are examined as it is these policy documents that direct Australian languages educators to adopt the view that language should be taught, not only as words and rules but as knowledge that ‘enables learners to communicate across cultures’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3). Using these documents I argue that language teachers are experiencing new opportunities, presented by profound social changes, which could change how and what they teach. It is because of this ‘sociocultural turn’ (Johnson 2006) that an opportune time has come to rethink the fundamental philosophies behind languages education, given the potential for further changes to policy and practice. In this thesis, I argue that a sociocultural approach offers a framework for such a change to take place, especially in the field of new language literacy.

In building on prior research I extend an emerging interest in the area of languages education which seeks to find inspiration and new research paradigms from the sociocultural approach. Within the thesis I situate scholarship within a New Literacies Paradigm (Swaffer et al. 1991, Kern 2000) that sees new language literacy in terms of how ‘language is shaped and framed by culture’ (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Agar 2002) or what I term ‘linguaculture’. For the research reported in this thesis I have devised a Social Literacy Model (SLM) which has the potential to act as a guide for students of language to become literate within a New Literacies framework that employs collaboration and discussion (Vygotsky 1986). By adopting the sociocultural approach I argue that, through collaboration with peers a learner’s understanding of language may be transformed through their own participation (Rogoff 1990, Renshaw & Brown 2007) and the integration of ‘schooled’ and ‘everyday’ concepts (Vygotsky 1987) into their discussion around language.

Looking specifically at Japanese literacy, the research reported addresses a key question ‘How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores the cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?’ Through this research I aim to explore evidence of one practical application of theory based on a Social Literacy Model (SLM). This SLM suggests that becoming literate in a new language requires that learners take on the practices of an anthropologist through the use of five keyword questions to construct meaning. After explaining the SLM and its methodological underpinnings, this thesis offers a detailed case study of how young learners of Japanese may be led to interpret and collaborate in the construction of meaning from Japanese texts by using keyword questions designed on the principles of New Literacies and sociocultural theory.
Using a qualitative research design I employ the tools of Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) to analyse primary school aged young learners’ construction of meaning in the course of learning Japanese. The results of the study are discussed in terms of three themes: 1) Learning through collaboration, 2) New Literacies in a new language, and 3) Implications of the sociocultural approach in new language teaching and learning. The analysis reveals that after exposure to and the use of the Social Literacy Model these young learners of Japanese did adopt the Voice and some of the practices of anthropologists when discussing new Japanese texts. The study also found that giving learners opportunities to interpret and analyse texts through collaborative endeavour, allowed for deeper conceptual insights into understanding and using Japanese.

This study’s findings have a number of implications for classroom practice and research. In particular, the findings are relevant to new languages educators through highlighting the need to implement collaborative discussion and interpretation of a text which may lead to an awareness of the linguaculture. In this study, such an approach drew the learners’ attention to the culturally constructed nature of literacy when encountering a Japanese text.

Finally, the research presented in this study suggests that interpretation and collaboration should facilitate becoming literate in a new language and that by adopting a sociocultural approach, interpretation and collaboration would become part of classroom practice. I also suggest that the SLM could be used in professional development to help language teachers put policy recommendations into practice and influence the way teachers perceive and use the language they teach. For example, by adopting terms such as ‘linguaculture’ and distinguishing between an ‘anthropological’ or ‘linguistic’ voice. Furthermore, by facilitating collaboration endeavours and the SLM in their classroom practice, teachers could use results as action research and thus add to the body of research into sociocultural understandings of languages education.
Statement Of Originality

I certify that this thesis is the result of my own research and that any help received in the preparation and inspiration has been acknowledged.

I certify that this thesis in whole or part has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.
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I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Ray Brown and Professor Greer Johnson. They have been encouraging and astutely critical as I explored the research, the data and the theory to express my argument. Their insights have given me focus and sophistication that I would not have known otherwise.

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Glossary of Terms

Collaboration. Explained in Chapter Four Section 4.6.1, in this thesis collaboration refers to joint intellectual exploration undertaken by learners and organised by teachers to create thinking communities (Mercer 2000). In terms of this thesis, collaboration is primarily seen within discussion and is based on the sociocultural assumption that learning is a social process.

Language. In this thesis a sociocultural definition of language will be adopted. Language will be viewed as a culturally bounded, mediational symbolic tool for meaning making. Language is also seen as the primary psychological tool for organising learning. This definition will be fully discussed in Chapter Three.

Linguaculture. Introduced and fully discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.2, linguaculture posits language as part of a complex set of cultural and social factors that construct meaning. Furthermore, this word will be used to suggest that ‘culture is mediated through language and constitutes an interpretive frame work through which the social world is both analysed and created’ (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, p.4).

Literacies. In this thesis I use the term literacies to refer to ‘a goal-directed sequence of activities using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge’ (Cole & Scribner 1981, p.236) such as a particular script, to construct meaning within a given social context. In short, literacy is viewed as being a social activity, as well as a cognitive practice.

New Literacies. To be discussed further in Chapter Three Section 3.3 New Literacies refers to the ability of a literate person to ‘draw on a repertoire of social, cultural and cognitive resources to construct and re-construct meaning’ (Anstey 2002, p.23). This understanding supports the view of an inherently social nature of literacy, learning and pedagogy.

The Sociocultural Approach. Explained in Chapter Four Section 4.3, the sociocultural approach frames learning and teaching as inherently social activities that transform individual cognitive processes. In this thesis, language and literacy are seen as particularly important social tools for thinking.

Voice. Introduced in Chapter Six Section 6.5, in this thesis, the word voice is used as an analytic tool to understand the way students speak to each other. Based on the work of Bakhtin (1981), voice is used to analyse how concepts are both formed and transformed through the use of particular language practices (Wertsch 1991, Renshaw 2004).
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Origins of My Interest

In 1995 I finished my undergraduate studies in Japanese and went to live in Japan. In 1997 I completed a Diploma of Education in Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and then proceeded to teach Japanese language in a suburban school. My teacher training focused on the communicative method (Ellis 1997) which seemed exciting and relevant to me at the time. However, in the classroom I felt that it was difficult to bring my experience as a Japanese language learner into my teaching practice. Giving instruction on how to use words and rules did not seem to engage my students or to convey the complexity of the language in question, especially as new technologies were offering us increasingly stimulating learning opportunities.

I knew there was no single panacea for all these problems but I also felt that the methods and theories of language teaching I’d been exposed to were limited. It was then that I started reading the work of Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) and felt that a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning offered me some vital new ideas (Kozulin 1986, Wink & Putney 2002). It is from this starting point that I explain the focus of my research.

The present world of learning is changing quickly. Writing to the current needs of new languages education, I will be following the lead of a number of researchers who are articulating an emerging theme in the area of languages education; one which seeks to find new inspiration from the sociocultural point of view (Haneda 1997, Lantolf 2000, Ohta 2001, Lantolf & Thorne 2006, Johnston 2006, Zuengler & Miller 2006, Scarion & Liddicoat 2009, Brooks et al. 2010). These researchers are suggesting that ‘Vygotsky’s theory provides a rich source of ideas for future research on the socialisation of the mind. His perspective also supplies an alternative methodology for understanding social relations and cognitive development’ (Forman 1992, p.157). I start my thesis in agreement with this statement. However, as an emerging theme there has been little research or scholarship on how the sociocultural approach can be applied or be useful for languages education. In other words,
how does the sociocultural approach translate to practice? In this preliminary study I will address this question through a number of specialised terms (see Glossary of Terms) and I will use the Japanese language as my focus. Japanese makes an interesting choice because I can observe young learners construct an understanding of a language, literacy and culture very different to their own.

1.2 What is the Problem?

Japanese language teaching has a successful history in Australia and is now part of the ‘mainstream’ (de Kretser & Spencer-Brown 2010, p.70). In 2005 The Australian Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) published the National Statement for Language Education in Australian Schools, including Japanese. This statement set out a ‘national plan for language education in Australian schools’ (MCEETYA 2005) that emphasises and promotes a view of languages teaching that includes but goes beyond teaching skills and proficiency. Instead, the purpose and nature of languages education is viewed as something that emphasised ‘cultural sensitivity in a new world order’, something that encouraged learners to ‘communicate across cultures’ and ‘contribute to social cohesiveness through better communication and understanding’ (MCEETYA 2005, pp. 1-2).

In the same year, The Asian Education Foundation published Getting Started with Intercultural Language Learning: A Resource for Schools (Dellit 2005) which set out to apply new knowledge and understanding concerning languages pedagogy and to help Australian teachers ‘become familiar with recent research developments and resources’ (Dellit 2005, p.6). Like the National Statement, this document assumed that all languages ‘embody cultures and manifest culturally significant attitudes and behaviours’ and that teaching this notion requires ‘a significant pedagogical shift for some languages teachers’ (Dellit 2005, p.6).
In 2009, *Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide* (Scarino & Liddicoat) was published by The Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Training to assist language teachers in applying the ideas outlined by the *National Statement* (MCEETYA 2005). This policy document is framed as an institutional voice asking teachers to change their practice.

In this thesis I argue that the approaches promoted by the above documents reflect a larger ‘shift’ in first language literacy and new ideas about teaching and learning in general in what I refer to generally as the ‘the sociocultural turn’ (Johnson 2006). This shifting terrain could also be seen as an opportunity to reinvent our understanding of what language is and expand our pedagogic imagination on how to teach it. Literacy is an area which invites questions on the nature of language and learning. Moreover, literacy within a new language is a fertile ground for research into the complex nature of culture in language and the opportunities for exploring a pedagogy that emphasises that aspect. With these ideas in the background, the problem I will explore in this thesis is:

*What are the significant pedagogical and theoretical shifts in languages education and how can they be understood and harnessed so as to teach the literacy of a new language?*

The question that drives my research is as follows:

*How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?*

This question will be unpacked and defined in Chapter Three, but for now the simple answer is, by adopting the sociocultural approach (Vygotsky 1986). However, it is the journey to that answer that concerns this thesis, a journey undertaken by myself and my students using The Social Literacies Model (SLM) designed by myself and to be introduced in Chapter Five. Some aspects of this question have already been explored by policy designers and language educators (Crozet & Liddicoat 1999, Lantolf 2000, Ohta 2000, 2001, Dellit 2005, Scarino & Liddicoat 2009, Brooks *et al.* 2010) but these authors have focused on languages teaching in general. In contrast, I focus on learning to be literate in a new language in particular, and on drawing connections between new concepts of literacy as a social practice in first language research while using sociocultural theory as a conceptual framework for my research.
1.3 The Thesis Ahead

Moving beyond the literature review presented in Chapter Two, Chapter Three of this thesis looks at a language teaching problem, not through the lens of linguistic theories but through educational concerns. Stern (1983) states that ‘among the disciplines education is perhaps the closest to language pedagogy yet is probably the least recognised and the most neglected’ (Stern 1983, p.419). With this in mind, I argue that language education can be equally understood, and more beneficial to classroom practice, by consulting theories of teaching and learning rather than only theories of language acquisition or the nature of language (Firth & Wagner 1997, Atkinson 2002). As Johnson states, ‘the cumulative effect of studying what language is and how it is acquired may not translate into effective L2 teaching practice’ (Johnson 2006, p.240). By setting my research within a sociocultural framework I hope to first explore concepts of learning as well as new concepts of literacy from the field of first language education and, as Ohta suggests, studying English speakers learning Japanese ‘provides an excellent opportunity to understand how learners construct new understanding of a language very different from their own’ (Ohta 2001, p.1).

Continuing in Chapter Three, I explain that looking at literacy through sociocultural theory has led me to see the literacy of a new language as culturally bounded. I use the term ‘linguaculture’ (Agar 2002, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Friedrich 1989) to describe this idea to be defined and introduced in Chapter Three. Also in this chapter, by choosing the sociocultural approach I suggest that literacy is more than a code and a set of skills to be mastered by an individual.

In Chapter Four I will elaborate and explain the sociocultural approach. In accordance with this stance, I will present the learner as a social being who is continually being shaped to be a kind of person, a person who is ‘open to autonomous, assisted and collaborative learning’ (Australian Council of Deans of Education 2001, p.62) and who can develop a cultural sensitivity through interpretation of a text and collaboration with class peers. This will be possible by basing my notion of learning on the work of Vygotsky (1986) and notions of Voice as inspired by Bakhtin (1981). The work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin are expressed
through contemporary interpretations found in Renshaw and Brown’s Formats of Talk (2007) that I use to analyse the learning voice adopted by my students. Using the case study of five students presented in this thesis, I will also take key ideas about student participation in the classroom from the work of Nystrand, Gamoran, Kachur and Prendergast (1997), who argue that through monologism and evaluating students’ ideas rather than responding to them, teachers generally exclude students from the meaning-making process. Like Nystrand et al., I explore Bakhtin’s notion of dialogicality as a way of understanding how my students’ collaborative learning departs from the transmission model.

In Chapter Five I will introduce the tool that will be used to probe these issues. The research data collection process will be embedded within the Social Literacies Model (SLM). Grounded in sociocultural theory and influenced by key aspects of intercultural language teaching (Liddicoat 2004, Liddicoat & Crozet 2000, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Kramsch 1993) and New Literacies (New London Group 2000, Luke & Freebody 1999), the SLM has been devised by me especially for the research reported in this thesis. By guiding students through their Japanese reading with the use of the Social Literacy Model I will attempt to focus their attention on noticing the code, on how meaning is made, on how a text can promote values and on how culture can influence the way a text is understood. In this way I will put contemporary New Literacies and sociocultural approaches into practice.

In Chapter Six I will introduce the methodology, terminology and tools for data analysis that will help me demonstrate how learners move from a code-centric, linguistic voice to a linguacultural anthropological voice when reading a Japanese text. Here I will introduce the methodological tools of this thesis based on Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) and Bakhtin’s notion of Voice (1981). Specifically, this chapter explores how the concept of language being organised by culture (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, Wierzbicka 1997, Agar 2002, Kramsch1993) and New Literacies (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Luke & Freebody 1999, New London Group 2000, Anstey 2002) can be combined with a sociocultural approach and distilled in the guiding questions of the Social Literacies Model (SLM), a model that sets out to facilitate collaboration among learners of Japanese in a grade eight classroom of 13 year old boys.
In Chapter Seven I apply the tools described above to the data I have collected from a grade eight Japanese language classroom. Here I explore in detail how linguistic voices (talking about language as a set of words and rules), and anthropological voices (talking about language as social and culturally situated – a linguaculture), can be traced and viewed as a result of collaboration between expert and novices in the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky 1986). This will be done by analysing transcripts of student interaction, examples of the written responses to the SLM questions and lastly, two interviews conducted at the end of my study.

Chapter Eight will discuss the results of the Data Analysis chapter as understood through the conceptual language of the thesis and argue that the beginning of an anthropological voice and an awareness of the Japanese as a linguaculture was realised.

Chapter Nine will explore the implications and conclusions of this study and address some of the shortcomings of using a sociocultural approach to teaching new language literacy. I will also make suggestions for further research within the field of languages education. I will now present a literature review that explores significant studies in the fields of new language literacy, New Literacies and the sociocultural approach to teaching and learning.
Chapter Two: Exploring The Field

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will introduce the broad themes of the thesis by exploring relevant research and leave details and definitions for the next chapter. There is a large amount of research available on languages education and new language literacy. However, only a fraction of that literature concerns itself with re-evaluating teaching methods and approaches through a sociocultural lens, although my own readings have found that interest is growing (Zuengler & Miller 2006).

My research is positioned within such a sociocultural view and within this growing body of researchers who question the dominant cognitivist positivist paradigm within traditional language teaching (Lantolf & Johnson 2007, Zuengler & Miller 2006, Johnson 2006, Firth & Wagner 1997, Liddicoat 1997, Hall 1997). There is an enormous amount of research being done within the sociocultural paradigm and so only some aspects will be looked at closely in this thesis. With this in mind, I now introduce important research that has informed and guided my study while making comparisons with my own exploration of sociocultural theory.

2.2 First Language Literacies

Notions of literacy have changed dramatically in the past decades. I have used some seminal scholarship as a starting point for my understanding of literacy and nothing further.

2.3 Debates in New Language Literacies

At the same time, and complementary to these New Literacy views, researchers within the field of new languages are also re-evaluating their profession. Therefore, a key theme in this thesis concerns itself specifically with literacy in a new language. Throughout my study I ask the question, ‘What does new language literacy look like through a sociocultural lens?’ Here I outline the key texts I have drawn on for my understanding of new languages literacy.

This study seeks to emphasise literacy as ‘literacies’ which create links between language and culture. For this understanding, I base my notion of the new language paradigm on the works of Swaffer and Arens (2005), Kern (2000), Swaffer, Arens and Byrnes (1991) and Kramsch (1993). From Kramsch I take the notion of the language classroom as a site of ‘cross-cultural fieldwork’ (1993 p.29). My idea of the anthropological voice comes from Kramsch’s work that suggests that language should be used as a pedagogy of interpretation (Kramsch 2002, 1995). The work of Kern (1995, 2000, 2003) is important for defining key issues in new languages literacy and will be explored in detail in Chapter Three. Swaffer, Arens and Byrnes (1991) and Swaffer and Arens (2005) provided the idea of a new paradigm in language learning which is fundamental to my argument and will also be introduced and explained in Chapter Three.

Although these scholars do not place their work within a sociocultural framework, they all share a common belief in making literacy in a new language meaningful and contextual through a process of interpretation. These authors argue that literacy should move away from skills and towards elaborating and knowing the language within a cultural context.

Kern (2000) posits literacy in the languages classroom as an organising principle for teaching reading, writing and critical thinking as well as developing a learner’s literary sensibilities (Kern 2000, Kramsch 1993). Although Kern makes reference to Vygotsky and sociocultural theory his work is not set within a sociocultural framework. However, his promotion of literacy as an ever-developing process of using reading and writing as tools for thinking and
learning a new language (Kern 2000, pp.18-19) fits well within my own understanding of literacy in the languages classroom.

I have used Swaffer et al. (1991) and Swaffer and Arens (2005) to understand the separation of form and meaning in languages literacy and to critique the traditional grammar, skills and proficiency approach, suggesting that instead of a focus on ‘comparison, instrumentality and causation’ (Swaffer et al. 1991, p.2), educators should move towards interpretation and critical reflection as a means of fully understanding a text. Like my own study, Swaffer and Arens (2005) suggest a ‘re-mapping’ of languages education which takes into account linking meaning and language and the conceptualising literacy as ‘socially constructed discourse practices’ (Swaffer & Arens 2005, p.8).

Finally, Reder (1994) has written a chapter which places new language literacy in a sociocultural context. This is the only publication I have found that uses the sociocultural approach to access and understand the process of becoming literate in a new language. Reder explains the concept of literacy as a social and cultural practice, which promotes the centrality of collaboration and supports the idea that oracy supports literacy. He then presents his own idea of practice-engagement theory which ‘assumes that the development and organisational properties of an individual’s literacy are shaped by the structure and organisation of the social situations in which literacy is encountered and practiced’ (Reder, 1994, p.48). Reder’s chapter has shaped my own argument; however, his chapter is an explanation and promotion of sociocultural theory to the field of new language literacy while my own study is a research project which puts the theory into practice.

2.4 The Sociocultural Approach to Languages Education

In a response to the three policy documents the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Dellit 2005) and Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) that motivated this study, I am interested in exploring the changing nature of new languages education for the future. Evidence of a growing interest in adopting a
sociocultural approach to this field can be found in the fortieth anniversary edition of TESOL Quarterly (2006). In this issue two articles appeared on the topic of sociocultural influences within language education. Zuengler and Miller suggested that the sociocultural approach has become part of the ‘conflicting ontologies’ (Zuengler & Miller 2006, p.35) that has contributed to the ‘tensions and debates’ stirring up change within language education (Zuengler & Miller 2006, pp.35-36).

In another article from the same issue of TESOL Quarterly (2006), Johnson suggests that ‘over the past forty years there has been dramatic change’ in the way language teachers see their profession. Moreover, the ‘epistemological underpinnings of a more general sociocultural turn in the human sciences have had a major impact on the field’s understanding of how L2 teachers learn to do their work’ (Johnson 2006, p.235).

Building on Vygotsky’s ideas, Lantolf has written extensively on the application of a sociocultural perspective to languages research and education (Lantolf 2000, Lantolf & Thorne 2006, Lantolf 2006, Lantolf & Johnson 2007, Lantolf 2007, Lantolf & Beckett 2009). Unlike my own study, these studies cover a wide range of issues concerning languages education and how a sociocultural perspective can offer a new interpretation of what language is and how it can be taught differently. However, Lantolf’s work remains foundational to my study because the works cited above show that a sociocultural approach is important for new language educators.

Robbins (2001) has written a book length study of a Vygotskian approach to language theory and learning which outlines the key tenets of sociocultural theory and compares and contrasts them with cognitive understandings to language learning. This work is used as background to the ongoing debates stirring languages education and practice and how they contribute to pedagogic change.

Like Robbins, Maryisa Johnson (2004a) has also written a book on Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and Bakhtin’s dialogic approach in second language learning. This study promotes the
sociocultural approach as an alternative to Second Language Acquisition theory for understanding language learning and looks at a range of second language learning problems such as ‘fossilisation’, ‘negative feedback’ and ‘error correction’ and applies sociocultural approaches to create new insights. Overall Johnson takes concerns from Second Language Acquisition theory and looks at them from a sociocultural perspective but does not look at language teaching in the classroom. Like Donato (1998), Johnson provides a detailed explanation as to why the sociocultural approach stands as an alternative to a linguistic focus on languages education as typified by Second Language Acquisition (Krashen 1985, Ellis 1997).

Hall (1997, 2001, 2003) has also contributed important scholarship to applying sociocultural ideas to languages education. Primarily, I will draw on her principles of learning additional languages (2001) which are derived from the theoretical insights of sociocultural theory. The above researchers have adopted sociocultural theory to develop an understanding of languages education in general; however, I am interested in applying this approach specifically to teaching Japanese as a new language.

2.5 The Sociocultural Approach to Japanese Language Education

Among the researchers who have adopted sociocultural theory to understand languages education, only a small number have focused on teaching and learning Japanese. Morimoto (1994) worked with third year university students to research the use of reciprocal peer tutoring (RPT) in which peers of different ability were paired and asked to summarise, question, clarify and predict while reading a Japanese text. This study draws on the work of Palincsar and Brown (1984) and Vygotsky (2000). Although she does not use the term ‘sociocultural’ to frame her work, she does explore how peer tutoring allows students to assist each other with their reading comprehension. As a result of this focus Morimoto’s study has little relevance to my own.
With regard to Japanese language learning, Haneda (1997) adopts sociocultural theory through the concept of ‘community of practice’ as defined by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Toohey (1996) to study Japanese literacy. Based on the view that ‘consciousness and cognition are socially shared or socially distributed rather than being the property of individuals’ (Haneda 1997, p.12), this study looks at adult university learners of Japanese in a fourth year reading and writing course.

Haneda sets out to show that the second language learner could be seen ‘not as internalising a second language but rather, as a newcomer beginning to participate in the practices of a particular community’ (Toohey 1996 quoted in Haneda 1997, p.13). In her conclusion, Haneda states that her research attempted to ‘test what sort of activities are most likely to provide opportunities for helping students learn in the ZPD in a community of practice’ (Haneda 1997, p.25). In this regard, Haneda’s study shares some key themes with my own research in that she is exploring ways of using social activity to learn Japanese as a new language.

Haneda and Wells (2008) continue this research by studying the role that classroom discourse plays in learning an additional language. This study uses Bakhtin’s notion of ‘dialogic inquiry’ (Bakhtin 1981) and Vygotsky’s notion of scientific and everyday concepts, a key theme of my own study, is mentioned in the first page (Haneda & Wells 2008, p.114). The focus of this study is on learning English as an additional language and looks at the nature of dialogic inquiry using English as the language of instruction. This study promotes the importance of ‘dialogue in learning both first and second languages’ (Haneda & Wells 2008, p.114) and the need for an ‘inquiry orientation in the curriculum in order to promote dialogic interaction’ (Haneda & Wells 2008, p.114). For this reason it is related, although different, to my own research because this study looks at English as an additional language and is concerned with learning spoken language rather than literacy. However, Haneda and Wells’ conclusions that dialogic inquiry facilitates curiosity, participation and interaction are similar to my own findings.
Ohta (2001) offers a book length study of the role of ‘private speech’ (Vygotsky 1986) in the internalisation of spoken Japanese for seven university learners. This year-long study is grounded in learner-centred sociocognitive theory and calls for a ‘richer understanding of second language acquisition’ (Ohta 2001, p.3) and a focus on ‘language acquisition as assisted performance’ (Ohta 2001, p.9). It claims to be ‘the first study to examine private speech of adult learners as they participate in a foreign language class’ (Ohta 2001, back cover); however, this study does not concern itself with Japanese literacy or an in-depth exploration of sociocultural theory. Ohta has also published research on the use of interaction in the Japanese classroom (2000). While the concepts of interaction, private speech and the zone of proximal development are used, unlike my own, these studies concern themselves with how individual learners gain from working with peers.

Morimoto and Haneda examine Japanese literacy but only Haneda specifically refers to Vygotsky’s ideas while Morimoto does not claim to be a sociocultural theorist. Her work is more concerned with cooperative learning as conceptualised by Palincsar and Brown’s (1984) idea of reciprocal peer tutoring. Haneda’s study is more closely related to my own because her work clearly places the learner in a social setting and seeks to understand how this influences her teaching practice.

Kobayashi (2003) chose a sociocultural approach to understand how three Japanese undergraduate students collaborated to learn English. While the target language of English is a departure from the studies mentioned above and my own study, the focus of Kobayashi’s work is very similar to my own. The study focused on collaborative dialogue, peer-coaching and rehearsing. The results analysed the students’ contextualisation of their learning, the interdependence of spoken and written learning and the role of the learners’ first language to scaffold the learners’ new language.

The gap in the field that I identify is, that this research project is the only one that combines a clear sociocultural focus with a study of intercultural language teaching (Liddicoat 2004, Liddicoat & Crozet 2000, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Kramsch 1993) and New Literacies and then seeks to explore the process of becoming literate in Japanese.
Furthermore, I specifically employ Vygotsky’s notion of schooled and everyday concepts to devise my own Social Literacy Model that responds to the policy documents leading languages educators in Australian classrooms. In other words, I have set out to follow the guidance of these policy statements by applying sociocultural theory to classroom practice.

2.6 Limiting the Scope

I start my argument from the view that literacy is a cultural and social practice. While I will acknowledge the differences between this and the cognitive approach I will not argue the benefits of one over the other as I see them both as useful for research and teaching purposes. I will not concern my research with the field of language speaking specifically but will view speaking and literacy as interdependent and acknowledge that learning one influences and shapes the other.

I use the term ‘languages education’ or ‘new languages classroom’ to avoid the terms ‘foreign languages’ and the limiting monolingual perspective of the term ‘second language’ learning. If the cited study uses these terms then I will use them in that instance for quotation purposes only.

I will not be exploring New Literacies nor any of the pedagogic tools, such as the Four Roles Model (Luke & Freebody1999, Freebody & Luke 2003), in depth. The aim of my research is to look at how sociocultural theory allows me to devise my own keyword structure to teach language in a way that is guided by the new paradigm of languages education to be introduced in Chapter Three.

The entire sociocultural paradigm is too expansive for a research project of this size so I will focus on only two aspects. I see collaboration as the key to elaborating a cultural and social context for reading and interpreting a Japanese text and Vygotsky’s notion of everyday and schooled concepts will be used for framing and interpreting my findings.
In the following chapter I will set this study within a literacies debate by introducing new ideas within the field of languages literacy and then applying these ideas to the wider argument for a sociocultural approach to teaching new languages.
Chapter Three: Setting the Question Within a New Language Literacy Debate

3.1 Introduction

The central argument of this thesis is driven by the question *How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?*

In order to make cultural and social practices central to language study a redefinition of second language literacy is required. This redefinition involves drawing concepts of literacy from the field of literary theory (Swaffer & Arens 2005) and the new language paradigm as defined in the previous chapter and shaping these ideas into a pedagogic tool inspired by a sociocultural approach. In essence, this thesis asks ‘What happens to teaching and learning as well as student interaction when we redefine Japanese literacy through a sociocultural lens?’ (Lee & Smagorinsky 2000). In this chapter I first explore the changes in concepts which define new languages literacy — what it is and how it should be taught? The key to this redefinition of literacy will centre around ‘meaning’ and the belief that becoming literate allows people not only to record information but interpret it. This chapter will take a broad view of how the pedagogy of languages literacy has developed and how, as in education in general, the broad theme in literacy involves moving from a cognitive emphasis on stand-alone skills to a more contextualised and culturally sensitive ‘interpretation’ of meaning in both spoken language and literacy which I refer to as linguaculture.

3.2 Linguaculture: Uniting Code and Culture

It has been recognised in recent years that one cannot learn a language without learning about the culture that embodies and supports it (Wierzbicka 1997, Kramsch 1998, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Agar 2002). I have adopted the term ‘linguaculture’ (Friedrich 1989, Agar 2002) to recognise that language is always part of a rich set of cultural and social factors that are the guiding force which drives the linguistic code. This understanding
represents a new approach in languages education which ‘represents the first significant shift in language teaching history towards the teaching of culture as an integral part of language’ (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, p.1).

In this thesis I understand ‘culture’ to be a constructed social practice that is ‘dynamic not static’ (Liddicoat 2004), in other words, culture is ‘a framework in which people live their lives and communicate shared meanings’ (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009, p.19). These ‘meanings’ function as cognitive tools that define thinking and express the values of a particular social group marked by a ‘homogeneity of meanings’ (Duveen 1997, p.87). Within this definition, the learner is seen as a ‘cultural apprentice’ (Roggoft 1990, 2003, Cole 1996).

The definition of linguaculture I return to throughout this thesis unites the above definition of culture with language and is as follows. Linguaculture refers to a belief that ‘culture is mediated through language and constitutes an interpretive framework through which the social world is both analysed and created’ (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, p.4).

By making culture central, the learner is reminded that when using a new language in a variety of cultural domains, conventions of use need as much attention as the linguistic code itself. The word linguaculture carries this belief and therefore is appropriate for discussing language which gives centrality to context, use and cultural practices when discussing language and literacy. As such, the key themes of the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) Getting Started (Dellit 2005) and Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) can be represented by linguaculture and the concepts of literacy discussed above. For example, the National Statement promotes ‘communicating within and across cultures’ which would include developing a sense of the cultural aspects of the new language and then applying this knowledge to ‘diverse ways of thinking, solving problems, making new connections and extending literacy skills, (MCEETYA 2005). Overall, the National Statement suggests that:

Inter-cultural language learning helps learners to know and understand the world around them, and to understand the commonality and difference, global connections and patterns. Learners will view the world, not from a single perspective of their own language and culture, but from the multiple perspectives gained through the study of second and subsequent languages and cultures (MCEETYA 2005).
If the aims of the *National Statement* (MCEETYA 2005) are to be implemented, the ideal outcome would be for a learner to transform their knowledge of the linguistic code with an understanding of its cultural influences and mechanisms (Wierzbicka 1997, McLaughlin & Liddicoat 2005, Liddicoat & Crozet 2000, Carr 1999). In other words, for change to occur the learner would need to have a conscious regard for the way culture influences and operates within language and to see communication as a cultural act. In the area of languages literacy, the approach defined by Kern’s research (2000) and the new paradigm of languages literacy (Swaffer *et al.* 1991, Kramsch & Nolden 1994), would be complementary to the aims of the *National Statement* (MCEETYA 2005) and *Getting Started* (Dellit 2005).

Linguaculture will be used throughout my thesis and I now adopt a definition that encapsulates the ideas I wish to draw together with this word. By adopting the concept of linguaculture and drawing on the research cited thus far, I present the aims when teaching Japanese as a linguaculture:

(a) to become familiar with the codes and conventions of Japanese script

(b) to recognise the link between a cultural context and meaning

(c) to recognise a link between language and culture

(d) to recognise a new way of seeing a familiar word or idea

(e) and to recognise implicit messages through pictures, page arrangement and contexts that are made sense of through the prism of culture.

### 3.3 Literacies as a Social Practice

The following definition of literacy outlines the conceptual framework for this thesis:

A goal-directed sequence of activities using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge... it is not only knowing how to read and write a particular script, but knowing how to apply to specific purposes and in specific contexts... so in order to identify the consequences of literacy we need to consider its social practices (Cole and Scribner 1981, p.236).

For New Literacies, the focus is on ‘systems of knowledge’ rather than precise skills such as spelling, the ‘goals of literacy’ rather than the act of writing, and the idea of knowing how to apply a script is as important and the script itself. In order to explain New Literacies, I will add a further definition which focuses on the social context in which ‘systems of knowledge’ are used and draws attention to the socially constructed nature of meaning:

Literacy is a social practice that draws on a repertoire of social, cultural and cognitive resources to construct and reconstruct meanings from various traditional and multimedia texts (Anstey 2002, p.23).

The notion of New Literacies, as introduced above, expands the notion of literacy to include social, cultural and political factors and focuses attention on the notion of literacy as social practice. Literacy as social practice represents a dramatic change in the way literacy can be defined, understood and accessed. An understanding of New Literacies challenges the image of ‘the solitary writer struggling to create meaning…which can be recreated by the solitary reader’ (Baynham 1995, p.5). It is this point that brings the themes of New Literacies closer to the sociocultural approach in that literacy is conceptualised as a repertoire of cultural and cognitive actions that construct meaning within a linguaculture. Moreover, New Literacies encourages the inherently social nature of literacy, learning and pedagogy (Anstey 2002, New London Group 2000, Luke & Freebody 1997, Lankshear 1997, Bull &Anstey 2004).

Using New Literacies as a departure point, I argue that traditional notions of literacy are limited in teaching and learning new language literacies because learning the code of a language does not help a learner understand how to use language embedded in a cultural
context. However, how should this be done? Before I address this key question, I now turn to current debates that inform research within new language literacies.

3.4 Background to Understanding Literacies in a New Language

Due to the increasing number of people who need functional literacy in a new language, there has been an increase in the scholarship devoted to this topic (Barnett 1989, Bernhardt 1991, Ramirez 1994, Gregory 1996, Ohta 2001, Sullivan 2002, Swaffer & Arens 2005, Scarino & Liddicoat 2009). However, I am interested in exploring how the ‘sociocultural turn’ (Johnson 2006) has influenced the way new scholarship approaches literacy in a new language.

Kramsch and Kramsch (2000) offer a history of second language literature teaching which starts in the 1940s and argues that traditionally teaching foreign language literature was synonymous with teaching literacy. Over time language ‘learning’ moved away from literacy as a source of ideas to literacy that focused on the skills of decoding. Kramsch explains:

> With the development of literary criticism beyond philological inquiry, and the growth of linguistics as a field in its own right, the split between the teaching of language and the teaching of literate culture widened. Language acquisition became the acquisition of skills, of automatic verbal behaviours that were perceived as having no cultural value in themselves (Kramsch 1996, p.4).

In Alderson and Urquhart’s (1984) study of reading in a foreign language it was stated that ‘reading undeniably and incontrovertibly involves two necessary elements: a reader and a text’ (Alderson & Urquhart 1984, p.xvi). The description of reading went on to define the various skills and sub-skills used by the reader who would then show their understanding by recalling ideas or messages set out on the page. For this reason the focus of the study was on the individual learner acquiring and reorganising cognitive skills rather than asking questions concerning the nature of language, literature and literacy (Ramirez 1994).
To this end, the grammar-translation method was the most influential approach to teaching foreign language literacy and for this reason the word and the sentence became the unit of analysis and the prime objective became to ‘recode sentences written in the foreign language into one’s mother tongue with heavy emphasis placed on accuracy and completeness’ (Kern 2000, p.18). This is characteristic of the cognitive approach to language learning which saw attention given to how the individual could approach literacy and how the individual was taught to ‘read’. The outcome was a result of cognitive skills, language proficiency and a curriculum that saw reading, writing, speaking and listening as ‘distinct phases of a linear instructional sequence’ (Kern 2003, p.52). With ‘process’ at the centre of a definition of literacy, the kind of questions that became common were: What textual information starts the process? How long does it take? and Why are there mistakes? The analysis was text-driven and reader-centred (Bernhardt 1991).

This view of literacy in a new language encouraged a skills and proficiency approach to languages literacy with a certain focus. For example, there was an emphasis on the correctness and conventions of the code and these skills were used to read functional tasks such as timetables or a short textbook essay. The vocabulary and grammar were then isolated and students were asked to answer comprehension questions. These journalistic pieces were written for the language learner and were defined by chapter themes such as ‘finding a job’ or ‘visiting a doctor’. Because the focus was so often on decoding the script, there was little expectation that learners would ‘interpret’ the meaning. Literacy in a new language was, ‘in essence, a mapping task – that is, replacing one mode of behaviour with another’ (Bernhardt 1991, p.2). It was often assumed that ‘meaning was a property of the text and therefore deemed unproblematic once the reader had mastered the linguistic elements’ (Kern 2003, p.45).

The aim of reading in a new language was usually to recall factual content in order to show mastery and comprehension of the target language. The overarching themes were those of ‘comparison, instrumentality and causation’ (Swaffer et al. 1991, p.2) which appear limited when compared to what was expected outside the classroom. Due to a number of influences, primarily the changing notion of literacy as a social practice so dominant in education, scholars attempted to find a synthesis between literacy as a cognitive and a social process

3.5 A New Paradigm in Languages Literacies

The notion of literacy in a new language that focused on the skills an individual needed to master represents a traditional view which once seemed complete. However, for the changing educational landscape, I adopt a new understanding based on the work of Swaffer and Arens (2005), Kern (2000), Swaffer et al. (1991), Reder (1994) and Kramsch (1993, 1995). These scholars set out to ask educators to ‘re-think the constellation of programmes and pedagogies that characterise the presentation of foreign languages’ (Swaffer & Arens 2005, p.1) so that languages teaching allows students to comprehend the ‘social and linguistic frameworks of spoken and written communication’ (Swaffer & Arens 2005, p.5). This culturally and socially organised notion of literacy in an additional language called for a new approach that gives learners the ability to control the linguistic structures not only in order to comprehend but also to interpret, analyse and manipulate language (Swaffer et al. 1991, Kern 2000, Kramsch & Nolden 1994). The language educators cited in this study called for a move away from drills and information retrieval in reading and a move towards a ‘more thoughtful mode of learning that involved students’ reflection on language and content and included personal responses to the text’ (Kern 2003, p.47). By adopting more socially situated approaches to literacy, educators were beginning to highlight the connection between language and culture and to see literacy as guided and framed by social practices (Reder 1994, Van Lier 2004). If reading involved interpretation and cultural sensitivity, then learning the colloquial everyday language, songs, films and political discourse all represented ‘stories that other cultures told about themselves’ (Kern 2003, p.48).

With an emphasis on interpretation in language learning, it is understood that literacy is made up of culture that produces meaning. From this view, literacy is realised through both social as well as linguistic practices; it is used in a social context as well as in an abstract learning context so that rather than representing a single level of surface language, teaching a new
literacy needed to reference multiple levels of language experience (Swaffer et al. 1991, Kern 2000).

In short, this new paradigm (Swaffer et al. 1991) is best summed up by Kern’s (2000) seven principles which state:

- Literacy involves interpretation
- Literacy involves collaboration
- Literacy involves an understanding of conventions
- Literacy involves cultural knowledge
- Literacy involves problem solving
- Literacy involves reflection and self-reflection and
- Literacy involves knowledge of language in use.

(Kern 2000, pp.16-17).

Within these debates concerning language literacy scholars within the field of languages education are calling for a fundamental change in how language educators perceive and practise the way literacy in a new language is taught.

For example Kramsch and Nolden (1994) suggest that:

As language teaching enters the twenty-first century, voices are making themselves heard for a redefinition of second language literacy and in particular for a reassessment of the twentieth-century split between language study and literary/culture studies (Kramsch & Nolden 1994, p.28).
With this in mind, I seek to ‘make my voice heard’ and contribute to a re-definition by arguing that teaching students to be literate in Japanese requires a shift in focus from code-centric approaches. While all literacy teaching methods agree that there is meaning at the heart of language, ‘there is too seldom any systematic analysis of how particular meanings are created. In other words, little attention is paid to the work of interpretation and even less to the cultural basis of interpretation’ (Kern 2003, p.41).

Kramsch and Nolden (1994) have already offered the concept of ‘oppositional reading’ where a reader interrogates a text by using their cultural difference as a starting point, thus capturing the ‘dialogic nature of reading and meaning-making’ and emphasising the point that ‘meaning and authenticity of a text is not in the text itself, but, rather, that it emerges from a negotiation between the reader and the text’ (Kramsch & Nolden 1994, pp.28-29). I argue that by drawing on the scholarship outlined above which allows us to conceive of literacy in a new language as a cultural exploration, requiring linguistic and interpretative abilities, that a sociocultural approach is warranted because interpretation through collaboration is central to an understanding of language as a social practice.

3.6 Applying Themes to the Argument.

In 2005 The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) published the National Statement which set out to make ‘culture’ a vital aspect of language teaching and to present language as contextualised and culturally connected. Such a view of language is seen within the statement as a guiding principle for languages teachers in Australian schools.

Intercultural language teaching (ILT) is defined as the ‘emerging modern approach to language teaching’ (Crozet & Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, p.113). This approach aims to change the focus of the transmission based classroom by teaching language as something that is more than a code (Kramsch 1993). In this way, language is not seen as a set of linguistic skills but as a means of negotiating within a different cultural framework where both
concepts and words have a new meaning. Language becomes a meaning-seeking activity where the meaning resides within a community of users who shape the performance and use of language. Lo Bianco et al. explain that:

the complexity of language is not recognised by adding more modules, such as pragmatics, discourse, etc., to the code, but rather by recognising that the linguistic code is itself situated in practice as well as artefact (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, p.182).

This thesis focuses particularly on how to be literate in a new language and so therefore, the idea that literacy is a social and cultural practice is central to my argument and is an important guide to my conception of literacy in a new language.

3.7 Summary

In sum, the definition that bests suits a sociocultural view of learning, and is most attuned to a culturally sensitive interpretation of literacy, is one that sees language as the medium through which we learn and seek to understand how we construct meaning from a text in its social settings (Reder 1994, Perez 1998, Kern 2000, Van Lier 2004).

The socially constructed notion of literacy described above fits well with a sociocultural approach to literacy as constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry (Perez 1998, Lee & Smagorinsky 2000). It is these understandings of literacy and learning that I wish to unite and explore in the languages classroom. How pedagogy needs to change if such notions are to be adopted, and how the sociocultural view can offer an alternative approach that can accommodate such change, are the driving questions of this thesis.

Ultimately, New Literacies focuses on the construction of meaning between the individual and the text. While consideration is given to the cultural and social background of the reader,
the process of learning does not explore or give a theoretical framework for the social process of learning through collaboration. For this reason I use New Literacies and linguaculture as starting points for this study to draw attention to the important influences coming from research in first language literacy and how they ‘guide’ a new approach to teaching and learning the literacy of a new language.

In the following chapter I employ a sociocultural approach to explore dialogicality (Bakhtin 1981), collaboration and the social nature of learning with an explicitly Vygotskian understanding to explore learning to be literate in a new language.
Chapter Four: Defining the Thesis

4.1 Introduction: The Social Turn

In this chapter I situate the study within a general ‘social turn’ (Gee 2000) in education and a specific ‘sociocultural turn’ (Johnson 2006) in languages education. This change or ‘turn’ in education defines learning as a ‘dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and distributed across persons, tools and activities’ (Johnson 2006, p.235). Such a ‘turn’ has shifted classroom practice away from teacher-centred transmission of individual skills and behaviours towards learning language and literacy as cultural and social practices. In the field of literacy this sociocultural turn underwrites the New Literacies paradigm (Swaffer & Arens 2005, Kern 2000, Swaffer et al. 1991, Kramsch 1993, 1995, Kramsch & Nolden 1994) and connects to New Literacies (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Freebody & Luke 1990, New London Group 2000, Anstey 2002) and intercultural language teaching (Crozet, Liddicoat & Lo Bianco 1999, Kramsch 1993) defined in the previous chapter. These educational shifts do not stand alone as approaches but are considered to be connected and interrelated ideas that are all part of a similar ‘social turn’ (Gee 2000, pp.181-183). I now place my study very specifically within a Vygotskian sociocultural paradigm where I will emphasise that language and literacy are socially and culturally situated and that language is the medium through which experts and novices collaborate to organise and shape their learning.

4.2 Why The Sociocultural Approach?

As argued previously in Chapter One, if language educators are to teach a new language in the classroom, as suggested by the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Dellit 2005) and Language Learning and Teaching: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) then, a new conceptualisation of instruction needs to be explored.
The contemporary, student-centred, multicultural, knowledge economy is conducive to the sociocultural approach. Furthermore, ‘the nature, contexts and purpose of using languages in our multilingual and multicultural world is increasingly complex and teachers have to work with this complexity’ (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009, p.5). In this thesis I present sociocultural theory as a framework that is fluid enough to work with complexity and to integrate linguaculture into the teaching of Japanese in the classroom as described by the policy documents above. I will follow the points of convergence between a social conception of literacy and a sociocultural conception of instruction that together represent a reaction against linear cognitivist models of learning (Firth & Wagner 1997, Atkinson 2002, Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000).

In particular, I define a concept of learning that reacts against the ‘traditional belief that knowledge is best transmitted from adult to child in a linear fashion’(Damon & Phelps 1989, p.136). Instead I will use the sociocultural approach to understand how thinking can be constructed and guided by an expert through the social activity of collaboration. In this way the concept of learning moves towards foregrounding ‘interaction’ and may be understood to include the ability to appropriate patterns of participation within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991, Toohey 2000, Mercer 2000, Brown 2007). This study employs a sociocultural approach to understand a way language learners may come to be literate in Japanese through awareness of the Japanese linguaculture. Therefore, the literature that informs my argument is drawn from the genetic law of cultural development (Vygotsky 1982, 1986, 1987, Wink & Putney 2002) and the sociocultural approach to teaching and learning. Such an approach is significant to the field of languages education because in Australia Languages Other Than English (LOTE) programs are implemented in isolation from the mainstream curriculum and as a consequence ‘the adoption of sociocultural paradigms have occurred infrequently in second language learning’ (Cumming-Potvin, Renshaw & van Kraayenoord 2003, p.393). I begin by giving a broad definition of ‘a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning’ and explaining how it will guide this study.
4.3 Defining a Sociocultural Approach

The central theme of the sociocultural approach is that the development of the mind can be understood as ‘the transformation of basic, biological processors such as perceptual processors, memory, movement and co-ordination to name but a few, into higher psychological functions such as language and literacy, and that these basic processors are substantially transformed in the context of socialisation and education’ (Vygotsky 1986, Diaz, Neal & Amaya-Williams 1990, p.127). At an individual level the transition from the basic processors to higher forms of thinking requires the internalisation of ‘tools of thinking’ (Renshaw 1992) that are made available to the learner by social agents who initially act as interpreters and guides in the child’s cultural apprenticeship (Rogoff 2003, 1990). It is not only that a student learns from others but also ‘that the very means of social interaction (especially language) are internalised and transformed to form the consciousness and cognitive tools of the individual’ (Renshaw 1992, p.92). Wertsch suggests that the sociocultural psychology is best understood when one looks at the basic goals of its tenets:

The goal of the sociocultural approach to mind is to create an account of human mental processors that recognises the central relationship between those processors and their cultural, historical and institutional settings (Wertsch 1991, p.6).

Renshaw continues to promote this perspective by emphasising that the sociocultural approach defines its ideas against an individual centred psychology. He offers the following definition of sociocultural theory:

To adopt this theory means to view social activities as constitutive of learning not merely supportive or ancillary — over time the social comes to constitute the individual. In contrast with the dominant individual perspective on learning, where learners are constructed as natural subjects who can be observed, measured and compared across cultures and time, sociocultural theory provides a perspective of learners as cultural and historical subjects embedded within a matrix of social relationships’ (Renshaw 2002, p.7).

Such a sociocultural approach to learning begins with the acknowledgment that language is a process that shapes the thinking, the relationships, the identity and the worldview of the people who use it, or as Vygotsky argues ‘thought is not merely expressed by words, it comes
into existence through them’ (Vygotsky 1986, p.251). Moreover, individuals do not develop in isolation, but when a person is engaged with the social and cultural organisation of knowledge. A sociocultural analysis does not see the individual as a bounded, unique subject whose development, learning and awareness are organised wholly within the self, rather, learning is viewed as a cultural apprenticeship into a community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991, Moll 1990, Renshaw & Brown 1997, Renshaw 2002) with an emphasis on the way and extent to which those communities operating within institutions such as schools, provide ‘the tools, techniques and operations which facilitate development’ (Daniels 2001, p.13). Here, development is framed within the sociocultural analysis with regards to ‘how mental functions relate to cultural, institutional and historical contexts’ (Wertsch 1998, p.3). In this study, instead of talking about a student of ‘the Japanese language’, we might talk instead about teaching someone to be a ‘user of Japanese’, thus connecting the learner to the culture and conventions as well as the linguistic aspects of the language. Moreover, a student learning a language needs to be connected to the culture of the classroom through collaboration with their peers in both dialogue and argumentation. In other words, ‘social interaction within institutions and communities give us the tools for making sense of the world’ (Renshaw 2002, p.7).

4.4 Uniting Vygotsky and Bakhtin

In this thesis I draw on the work and concepts of two theorists, Vygotsky (1896-1934) and Bakhtin (1895-1976), because ‘at the intersection of psychology and linguistics these scholars are recognised as key influences in developing our understanding of the social foundations of thinking and learning through language’ (Renshaw 2004, p.1). Vygotsky was a psychologist interested in education who set out to link the mind to the social world. Bakhtin, on the other hand, was a literary critic and linguist who sought a way of hearing ‘the speaking consciousness’ (Wertsch 1991, p.51). By adopting these perspectives I use a ‘critical tool based on two convictions: 1) that learning must be situated in historical institutions and cultures; and 2) that the social community, rather than the individual is the starting point of consciousness’ (Emerson 1983, p.251).
I have followed Wertsch (1991) in accepting that individual consciousness can be identified through Bakhtin’s notion of Voice (1981). However, Wegerif (2008) argues that Vygotsky and Bakhtin have a different ontological foundation. He states that Vygotsky’s genetic law of development (1986) is dialectical – that is, that Vygotsky presents an account of learning ‘that privileges the formal, abstract and universal image of reason over an account of reason as situated in real dialogue’ (Wegerif 2008, p.349). On the other hand, Bakhtin’s fundamental ontology is dialogic and suggests that meaning and learning ‘derives from its location within dialogue’ (Wegerif 2008, p.348). These opposing foundational positions are incompatible and ‘it makes no sense to imagine overcoming this difference’ (Wegerif 2008, p.347). As I employ a sociocultural approach grounded in a combination of both Vygotsky’s and Bakhtin’s ideas (Wertsch 1990,1991, Johnson 2004, Brown 2007). I here address the issue of learning as overcoming contradictions and a process of becoming part of the contradictions by arguing that difference is constitutive of learning (Forman 1992) and so within the zone of proximal development it is possible to achieve an essential tension where the learner is viewed as a cultural apprentice (Winegar 1988, Moll 1990, Haneda 1997) to be guided. In this thesis, this dynamic interplay is understood through the integration of everyday and schooled concepts. When Vygotsky’s account of instruction within development is explicitly supported by a dialogic account (Wertsch 1991, Johnson 2004), it begs the question: How can opposites (disagreements/incongruities) between experts and novices result in synthesis (agreement and learning)?

Central to a Vygotskian view is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD highlights a one-way transfer of expertise from an expert to a novice. Novices are assumed to gain authority of voice by being exposed to and inculcated into new networks of ideas and explanations which promote the authenticity of their practice until it matches those of the expert. This is seen when my novice students start to speak about Japanese as a linguaculture by adopting the voice and practices of an anthropologist.

Wegerif’s interpretation suggests that ‘the dialogic could be read as a radical challenge to the monolithic assumptions of modernism in general and the dialectic in particular’ (Wegerif 2008, p.348) because dialogue implies that meaning cannot be grounded upon any fixed or stable identities but is a product of difference. Focused on my own argument concerning new
language literacy, the difference between the dialogic and dialectic is similar to the
fundamental difference between the authority of the code (fixed) and the interpretation of its
meaning (fluid). When this contradiction is viewed through contemporary formulations of
the ZPD as ‘ever emergent’ (Meira & Lerman 2001, p.6), the dialectic and the dialogic
become complementary because through Bakhtin (1981) shared meaning is intimately
connected with discourse (Forman 1992). The integration of Vygotsky’s and Bakhtin’s ideas
will help me view the integration and interdependence of everyday and schooled concepts as
made conscious through ‘Voice’. However, collaboration, a defining concept within
sociocultural scholarship, assumes an equality of voices that allows reason to be visible
(Mercer 1995) and that the contributions of a learner become valid through dialogue. In other
words, the consciousness of the expert is harmonious to the chain of dialogue being
developed within collaboration. Formulations of the ZPD (Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw
1999) have foregrounded the contributions of the novice alongside the expert so that the ZPD
becomes a truly ‘co-construction space’ where ‘independence and inter-dependence, leading
and following, authority and compliance are negotiated by intellectual partners and learning
outcomes are neither totally predictable or constrained’ (Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw 1999,
p.37).

In this study I use this notion of the ZPD to argue that a reasoned interpretation of the
Japanese linguaculture takes place within a collaborative dialogue, and if interpretation is
truly encouraged, the limits of interpretation are temporarily lifted for all learners. In this
case the outcomes of the study are unexpected and unpredictable and therefore, not always
constrained by the goals of the expert. This position is grounded in Vygotskian dialectic
between the expert and novice, but equally draws on the dynamic interplay of voices in
Bakhtin’s dialogic analysis. I draw on Bakhtin’s notion of ‘Voice’ and accept that it is
compatible with Vygotsky’s dialectical understanding of development. I will employ the
concepts of collaboration and schooled and everyday learning to view the dialectical process
(the linguaculture transcending the language code) and linguistic and anthropological voice to
express varying dialogic voices of understanding Japanese literacy as apprehended though the
learner’s ‘speaking consciousness’ (Wertsch 1991, p.51).
So far I have offered a very broad view of the sociocultural approach. I now turn to more specific aspects of the theory that promote understandings of how a sociocultural framework can organise teaching practice in the languages classroom.

4.5 Sociocultural Turn in the Languages Classroom


An application of sociocultural theory to languages education is succinctly outlined by Hall (1997, 2001) who suggests that Vygotsky’s ideas find form in language teaching through a set of principles for learning additional languages (2001). The first principle states that the process of learning a new language ‘cannot be fully explained as an innate process of acquiring and controlling a system of isolated, context-free linguistic structures’ (Hall 2001, p.38) therefore, behaviour and cognition can only be understood within the framework of ‘significant social practices’ which form an inherently social process (Hall 1997, p.302). These social interactions take place around ‘a wide variety of activities in which the new language is the common code’ (Hall 2001, p.38, Scarino & Liddicoat 2009). Hall’s second principle offered the view that in addition to situated practice and learning through social collaboration, ‘learning requires assistance by more capable peers in the zone of proximal development through scaffolding’ (Hall 2001, p.38). This includes collaborative opportunities in which ‘teachers actively work to help students to accomplish tasks that bring them to new levels of competence’ (Hall 2001, p.38). According to Hall, if we take the sociocultural approach as our starting point, the study of a new language involves ‘the learners’ involvement in their classroom activities’ and how they ‘shape and effect the learners’ social and psychological identities as users and learners of the target language’ (Hall, 2001, p.41).

The principles above reflect sociocultural theory which states that cognition begins in social relationships (Vygotsky 1986). These relationships both form and frame our communicative
practices and proceed from the social to the psychological level. The movement from social to psychological is assisted by more capable peers and participants collaborating in the ZPD (Vygotsky 1986, Newman, Griffith & Cole 1989). Moreover, knowledge of the individual is constructed through the knowledge of the communities of practice within which the individual participates, and the ways in which ‘human consciousness develops depends on the specific social activities in which people engage’ (Johnson 2006, p.237).

To bring these ideas into the classroom, therefore, from a sociocultural perspective ‘a major role of schooling is to create social contexts for mastery of and conscious awareness in the use of cultural tools’ (Moll 1990, p.12). Because these social contexts are collaborative, they are inherently cultural; that is, the cultural dimensions of learning and understanding are taught with the ideas or skills that are the focus of the teaching. Classroom practices such as collective argumentation (Brown & Renshaw 2000), reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown 1984), community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991, Haneda 1997, Brown 2007), cognitive apprenticeships (Brown et al. 1989) and productive disciplinary engagement (Engle & Conant 2002) are examples of sociocultural theory in action. While none of these approaches were designed specifically for the languages classroom they could be used as a guide for teachers of a new language. By responding to The National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Dellit 2005) and Language Learning and Teaching: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009), I argue that with a shift in emphasis from a cognitive to a social focus, a teacher adopting sociocultural principles would be as interested in the students’ awareness of the linguaculture as in the accuracy of the code. For example, are students aware that they are being polite when they use a particular kind of greeting or does the student understand what is expected when they are shown a photograph by a Japanese friend? Should they ask a lot of questions? What sort of questions are expected and acceptable? If communicative practices are viewed in their cultural context as language systems that are dynamic and always contextually dependent, then one should ‘redefine the process of second language development as one of becoming acculturated into socially constituted webs of communicative practice’ (Hall 1997, p.304).

Vygotsky’s writings do not concern themselves with second, but first language learning and the fundamental role of language in psychological development. However, researchers
(Haneda 1997, Lantolf 2000, Lantolf & Thorne 2006, Toohey 2000, Robbins 2001, Hall 2001, Ohta 2000, 2001 Johnson 2004, Brooks et al. 2010) argue that the principles of Vygotskian psycholinguistics can be applied to the second language classroom because this view allows us to see language as something that constructs the social, contextual and cultural aspects of language to become central to the learning process.

Furthermore, such a view distinguishes the sociocultural approach from transmission focused approaches (Damon & Phelps 1989, Nystrand et al. 1997) to learning a new language, thereby restoring context and interaction as key constituents of language, moving away from the individual notion of the mind and placing emphasis on the collaborative construction of knowledge (Palincsar & Brown 1984, Brown et al. 1993, Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw 1999, Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002). A sociocultural view states that dialogic communication has an intra-mental source, then develops into an inter-mental ability so that ‘individual consciousness is constructed from the outside through relationships with others (Kozulin 1986, p.24). Applied to new language learning this translates to, language being acquired across individuals not within them and thus moves learning and development into the framework of situated, social and cultural practices.

4.6.1 Language Learning, Collaboration and Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural paradigm allows educators to think differently about many aspects of teaching and learning. However, I now explore one part of sociocultural theory in particular: the nature of collaboration and the role of everyday and schooled concepts. According to sociocultural theory, collaboration is part of development and a key mechanism through which knowledge is constructed. It is by way of collaborative endeavour, rather than individual pursuits, that cognitive change is constituted (Palincsar & Brown 1984, Forman 1992, Mercer 2000, Ohta 2000).

The Australian Council of Deans, defined new learning as ‘less about imparting defined knowledge and skills and more about shaping a kind of person, in sum, a kind of person who is open to autonomous, assisted and collaborative learning’ (Australian Council of Deans 2001). In this regard, a sociocultural approach aims to build thinking communities (Mercer
in which the joint creation of knowledge allows collaborative learning to be seen as part of the transformative pedagogies of schools to add higher order organisation to everyday perceptions. Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest further that participation in practice is the main activity of learning:

Participation is always based on situated negotiation and re-negotiation of meaning in the world. This implies that understanding and experience are in consistent interaction—indeed, are mutually constitutive (Lave & Wenger 1991, p.49).

By adopting a sociocultural perspective on language and learning I seek to examine how a shared understanding can be accomplished through talk and how learners construct a shared meaning to build concepts through a dialogic process of negotiation and argumentation (Mercer 1995, 2000, Nystrand et al. 1997, Renshaw & Brown 1992). Peer to peer interaction in social learning is not unique to the sociocultural approach, in fact, social learning is also central to the Piagetian understanding of development. The similarities in understandings of what social learning is has led Damon and Phelps (1989) to distinguish between co-operative learning, peer tutoring and peer collaboration, where only collaboration is seen to ‘provide deep conceptual insights and basic developmental shifts on the part of its participants’ (Damon & Phelps 1989, pp.142).

In the language teaching literature collaborative learning is discussed in a number of ways which include co-operative learning and group work (Macaro 1997). Johnson and Johnson (1990) give a broad definition of co-operative learning that is not representative of the sociocultural approach but widespread in research within the cognitive tradition. They describe co-operative learning as ‘working together to accomplish shared goals and the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and others learning’ (Johnson & Johnson 1990, p.69). There are a variety of co-operative learning strategies that can occur without collaboration; however, ‘collaborative learning is generally assumed to include co-operation’ (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002, p.26). According to Goos, Galbraith and Renshaw, collaboration in a sociocultural sense:

Attempts to reform classroom practice by promoting a less hierarchical, more interactional, more networked forms of communication within the classroom … and a more explicate
In the languages classroom, a sociocultural approach would also focus on the way language is harnessed for the exploration of new ideas through argumentation and on reaching a consensus by using the language of incorporation, elaboration and transformation (Brown & Renshaw 2000, Brown 2007). Vygotsky’s understanding of collaboration moves away from assistance, support and encouragement, often the limits of co-operative learning, towards a ‘mastery of symbolic expression’ (Damon & Phelps 1989, p.139) and a ‘shared responsibility for thinking’ (Brown & Palinscar 1989, p.400) where knowledge is ‘jointly owned’ (Ohta 2000, p.53). In other words, a sociocultural understanding of peer collaboration would emphasise and involve not only co-operation and assistance, but also sharing meaning from experience and more sophisticated thinking such as defining the problem, isolating variables, referring to the context, evaluating progress and interpretation (Palinscar & Herrenkohl 2002, Brown & Palinscar 1989).

Vygotskian theorists such as Rogoff (1990, 2003), Goldenberg 1992/3, Goos et al. (1999), Haneda (1997), Mercer (2000) and Palinscar and Brown (1984) structure learning events so as to foreground the social opportunities between learners and move away from the individual whose learning is guided by internal knowledge structures. In the classroom such an approach moves away from teacher-centred transmission towards learner-centred transaction. In the following section I elaborate on how a sociocultural understanding of collaboration can be employed to encourage social dynamics in learning and development and become a source of individual innovation.

4.6.2 Collaboration in Practice

Collaboration may be thought of as ‘jointness’ (Tharp & Gallimore 1990, p.192), a term that allows for the ‘reorganisation of cognitive structures to be affected by the emerging group intersubjectivity’ as well as affording helpfulness of class members, motivating participation
and adding opportunities for co-reasoning and collective argumentation (Brown & Renshaw 2000).

The driving force behind peer to peer collaboration is that ‘collaborative processes seem to lead to a level of understanding unavailable in solitary endeavours or non-collaborative interaction’ (Rogoff 1990, p.178). Important features of collaboration such as interpretation, analysis and critique, require engagement and intervention into other people’s perspective. This engagement in turn generates a response to a particular stance or perspective. Moreover, ‘change is more likely when one is required to explain, elaborate or defend one’s position to others, as well as to one’s self; striving for an explanation often makes a learner integrate and elaborate knowledge in new ways’ (Brown & Palinscar 1989, p.356).

As stated above, collaboration is not simple group work or co-operative learning, because collaborative learning includes negotiation of meaning in heterogeneous groups engaged in a task where everyone has something to learn and something to contribute. It is the inherently social activities of listening, contributing and then negotiating an outcome that takes a concept to the level of a shared understanding (Brown & Palinscar 1989, Forman 1992). Vygotsky argued that ‘the source of development must be located in social relations, that the mind is inherently social, and that the mechanism of development is discourse’ (Forman 1992, p.146). Therefore, it is in a collaborative context that ideas can be interrogated, elaborated and transformed to create a new perspective — this is central to a sociocultural understanding of learning through collaboration.

Moreover, social learning shares the voice of ‘external authority’ (Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw, 1999, p.37) and builds an acknowledgment for the validation of the emerging intersubjective voice among peers. A reliance on the teacher or text is balanced with an ability to recognise and engage in the collaborative creation of ideas. Central to collaboration is the notion that various interpretations and perspectives are shared within the ZPD and therefore grafted onto the learners’ pre-existing understanding. It is then that collaborative endeavours can transform the individual’s perspective and bring it to a level not previously considered (Brown & Palinscar 1989, Brown et al.1993).
4.6.3 Summary of Collaboration

In conclusion, collaboration in a sociocultural sense moves beyond learning together to leaning and thinking together. This involves learning with peers as intellectual partners and thinking in ways organised by expert guidance (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002). The central belief behind the term collaboration is that learners have an active and extended engagement in using language to construct knowledge and the aim of collaborative learning is to highlight and facilitate intersubjectivity in the classroom (Mercer 2000). By adopting a sociocultural approach in the new language classroom this study sought to explore how collaborative learning can be employed to understand the cultural elements of a new language and improve learning opportunities for students. In order to explain the suitability of sociocultural theory for this study I now elaborate on another key element of Vygotsky’s ideas, the notions of scientific and everyday concepts.

4.7.1 Everyday and Schooled Concepts

Another key theme of my argument is that Vygotsky’s way of understanding everyday and scientific concepts (Vygotsky 1986) can help guide my research into how learners of a new language can integrate the target language with their own lived experience. On the topic of scientific and spontaneous concepts Vygotsky stated, ‘in the thinking of the child one cannot separate the concepts that he acquires in school from those he acquires at home, none the less, they have entirely different histories’ (Vygotsky 1982, p.219). Moreover, while they may have different histories they interact and construct each other (Brooks et al. 2010). Kinginger (1999) asserts that ‘everyone — both within the literature and far removed from it — notes that classroom discourse is particular, that even at the best of times it remains, occasionally absurd, somewhat inauthentic and artificial’ (Kinginger 1999, p.100). One reason for this artificiality is a result of formal instruction which gives the voice of decontextualised rationality special status (Wertsch 1990). For this reason, the language classroom is a place where particular language practices hold sway which, generally speaking, focus on the
relationship between the individual and the linguistic code and does not include a contextual or cultural setting.

In the field of new language literacies a contextualised and culturally situated notion of literacy was argued by Swaffer and Arens (2005), Kern (2000), Swaffer et al. (1991) and Kramsch (1993, 1995) Kramsch and Nolden (1994) and in language education a similar position is expressed by those scholars who promote the sociocultural turn (Lantolf & Appel 1994, Lantolf 2000, Ohta 2000, 2001, Lantolf & Thorne 2006, Lantolf 2006, Zuengler & Miller 2006, Johnson 2006, Lantolf & Johnson 2007, Lantolf & Beckett 2009). By adopting a sociocultural understanding to teaching Japanese I ask: how can educators integrate the ever present knowledge and experience from outside the classroom with what is being taught within the formal education system? This is the question I address by suggesting that schooled and everyday thinking are fused in collaboration.

The terms schooled and everyday define and explicate two ways of thinking, one spontaneous or everyday which is characterised by ‘a lack of conscious awareness’ (Zack 1999, p.132) and manifests itself in unregulated subjective concepts. Everyday thinking develops apart from formal schooling and is fundamental in forming a child’s intuitive theories about the world (Au 1990). On the other hand, schooled concepts are characterised by objective, informed more ‘scientific’ ways of thinking however, they are often understood through the framework of spontaneous or everyday concepts (Brooks et al. 2010). ‘The structure of school learning provides a kind of cultural experience in which the higher psychological processes are formed’ (Panofsky et al. 1990, p.251). This way of thinking gives a systematic structure to the child’s psychological development (Moll 1990) because these concepts are ‘systematically organised bodies of knowledge usually associated with particular school subject areas and they are learned by the child within a system of formal instruction through a school’ (Dixon-Krauss 1996, p.45). In other words, Vygotsky argued ‘that everyday thought is given structure and order in the context of scientific thought’ (Daniels 2007, p.311), or, as Lee suggests everyday concepts ‘are the framework on which scientific concepts are built’ (Lee, 2005, p.255)
The word ‘scientific’ in Russian (*nauchnii*) can be interpreted to mean academic or scholarly. ‘Scientific concepts refer to a school setting, whereas spontaneous concepts refer to learning in everyday life’ (Robbins 2001, p. 60). For this reason I adopt the term ‘schooled concepts’ rather than ‘scientific concepts’ used by Vygotsky (Tharp & Gallimore 1990) because these concepts are taught in a school setting where instruction and assistance are central. As literacy and linguaculture are ubiquitous the term ‘schooled concepts’ will refer to those which are taught in the formal classroom. This interpretation draws attention to the child’s psychological development acquired in an ‘institutional presence’ (Kinginger 1999) by giving them a more rational discourse to forge links between what they know and what they learn (Panofsky *et al* 1990, Wertsch 1990). From the schooled concepts offered through instruction, a child learns to have deliberate and voluntary control over their thinking. This includes an ability to ‘consciously regard and voluntarily manipulate concepts and their relationships’ (Dixon-Krauss 1996, p.45) thus having ‘conscious regard over the object of instruction’ (Panofsky *et al* 1990, p.252).

In short, socially organised instruction in the classroom, allows ‘the teacher to direct children’s attention towards meaning and definitions and the systematic relations among them that constitutes an organised system of knowledge’ (Moll 1990, p.10). Vygotsky argued that ‘progress in thinking’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.3) involves the transformation of everyday concepts by schooled ones. For Vygotsky, learning is the interaction of schooled and everyday ways of seeing things that both transform and embellish each other. Therefore, development is seen as ‘the interaction between spontaneous everyday concepts and the organised systems of schooled concepts’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.3). Vygotsky states:

> The development of spontaneous and scientific concepts are a closely connected process that continually influence each other … These two types of concepts are not separated from one another by an inseparable wall nor do they flow in two isolated channels. They interact continually… we are dealing with a unified process of concept formation … It is not a function of struggle, conflict or antagonism between two mutually exclusive forms of thinking (Vygotsky 1987 cited in Zack 1999, p.131).

The potential for understanding is realised when a child’s everyday experiences become logically defined, consciously accessible and deliberately used (Minick 1987). In other
words, it is the integration of the two that allows us to understand the social development of the mind because this position reminds us that schooled concepts are always mediated by everyday concepts (Panofsky et al. 1990) and so a less formal or less rational way of seeing things is always present.

In this study the terms schooled and everyday need to be specified for languages teaching. Learning to be literate in Japanese would be defined ‘schooled concepts’ because the code-breaking aspects of literacy in Japanese requires so much direct instruction and leaves little room for spontaneous interpretation. However, as I argue in this thesis, code-breaking alone does not allow making meaning because the code requires an understanding of the cultural background in which the text is set. Therefore, I suggest that the cultural aspect of a language relates to everyday concepts because our own language is as culturally bound as any other. In other words, when comparing how things are done in Japan with how they are done in Australia students would draw on everyday concepts of manners, morals and the organisation of everyday events. In other words, comprehending the Japanese linguaculture would always be mediated by the learner’s own experience, their own world view, their own everyday concepts. (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009, Panofsky et al. 1990, Moll 1990, Wertsch 1990). For most students Japanese literacy is taught in a classroom under the formal guidance of a teacher. Such aspects of Japanese relate to schooled concepts because it is abstract, systematic and rule-bound knowledge that has little to do with the students’ everyday experience. In other words, it would be difficult to learn these aspects of Japanese without the support and structures provided by a formal classroom.

One of the aims of my study is to consider how these two ways of thinking can come together when learning to be literate in Japanese. On the one hand, ‘schooled concepts presented to students in abstract terms without connection to their everyday experience remain empty formalisms’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.4), but knowing general things about Japanese culture is of limited value in the Japanese classroom without connection to the complex systems of language and literacy.
The terms ‘schooled’ and ‘everyday’ concepts (Tharp & Gallimore 1990) are central in organising and analysing the data generated in the study and the subsequent arguments made because one of the key concerns of new language teaching is how classroom instruction can bring together the code and the culture of a new language (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Swaffer et al. 1991).

4.7.2 Teaching Japanese Through Everyday and Schooled Concepts

Vygotsky uses the examples of learning a new language to illustrate this point:

In a certain sense, one may call the development of one’s native language a spontaneous process, and the acquisition of the foreign language a non-spontaneous process ... In learning a new language, one does not repeat past linguistic developments, but uses instead the native language as a mediator between the world of objects and the new language. Similarly, the acquisition of scientific concepts is carried out with the mediation provided by already acquired concepts (Vygotsky 1986, p.161).

This quote illustrates the relationship I seek to encourage between the linguistic code and the social practice that informs it, that is, the learner’s first linguaculture (in this case English) acts as a mediator between the learner and the new language of Japanese. Examples of a linguistic challenge for the learner of Japanese would start with what the code looks like and how it is used. For example, Japanese is a multiscripted code but English is not. Japanese uses logographic characters (Kanji) but English does not. Simply looking at a Japanese text for the first time will invite questions and evaluation. However, it is often the simple things that give the greatest opportunity for re-evaluation because most people assume that their writing system is unproblematic.

Another level of involvement with Japanese texts invites questions concerning the social practices and social circumstances in which the script is used. Here the objective is to show that a text itself brings with it a history and culture that mediates a way of interpreting and understanding it. The Japanese script was developed in a very different cultural history and is used today in a myriad of new and traditional ways (Personal observation 2008-2010).
What the learner does with their interpretations and conclusions will determine their response to difference in the new linguaculture, in other words, the way that schooled concepts are mediated by everyday conceptual understandings.

How does a learner integrate their everyday concepts about the world with organised concepts taught in the Japanese language classroom? Within the literature that I have drawn on in Chapter Two a very similar question exists. How do we integrate the self with the other, the new linguaculture with all its differing views and practices with those that are already part of the everyday experience for the learner?

By adopting Vygotsky’s distinction between schooled concepts and everyday concepts, I attempt to show how two aspects of thinking can be integrated into a linguaculture and how instruction in the classroom can be organised to invite and emphasise a more sociocultural view of Japanese literacy. Also, I approach the question: Will learners be able to engage in the unfamiliar language and literacy of Japanese if they bring more of their everyday ‘voice’ (Bakhtin 1981, Wertsch 1991) and understanding of their first language into the classroom (Ballenger 1998)? Vygotsky states:

Scientific (non-spontaneous/schooled) concepts grow downward through spontaneous concepts; spontaneous concepts grow upward through scientific concepts … The strength of scientific concepts lie in their conscious and deliberate character. Spontaneous concepts, on the contrary, are strong on what concerns the situational, empirical and practical (Vygotsky 1986, p.194).

With this explanation in mind, schooled concepts are presented as ‘culturally organised bodies of knowledge’ (Renshaw, 1992, p.92) which guide and reinterpret existing everyday knowledge. Moreover, the objective of instruction is to connect these concepts to encourage ‘progress in thinking’ which is demonstrated when everyday, spontaneous and elementary processors are transformed by cultural, abstract and higher processes (Renshaw & Brown 2007). One aspect of culture, in this case, is ‘the systems of abstract concepts incorporated in the school curriculum’ which are posited as ‘the driving force of development’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007). For my purposes this refers to becoming literate in Japanese as part of the school curriculum. The adoption of the terms schooled and everyday concepts are useful for my argument in that they present a way of understanding not only the dynamic relationship
between language and culture, but also the realisation of linguaculture through classroom instruction. If instruction concerns the appropriation of thinking tools then changing the tools can change what the student thinks.

4.8 Summary

In this chapter I have argued that sociocultural theory provides an alternative way to view language and literacy as socially and culturally constituted and, furthermore, sees everyday knowledges, such as greetings in a new language, as further ‘defined and rationalised through formal instruction’ (Minick 1987, p.13). However, formal instruction is mediated from the start by less formal everyday concepts which have a different history. The key instructional approach that allows integration of the two is collaboration. In the following chapter I will address the question ‘How can instruction and classroom practice facilitate this approach?’

In the following chapter I will introduce the Social Literacies Model and Formats of talk which will be used to generate and analyse data for this study.
Chapter Five: Introducing The Social Literacy Model and Formats of Talk

5.1 Introduction

Thus far, I have argued that a new understanding of literacy for the languages classroom as articulated by Kern (2000), Swaffer et al. (1991), Swaffer and Arens (2005) and notions of intercultural language teaching as described by Kramsch (1993) and Liddicoat & Crozet (2000) has been called for by teaching policy documents such as National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Asian Education Foundation 2005) and Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009). In the previous chapter I argued for a collaborative organisation of learning which could bring together procedural and cultural practices in the instruction of Japanese literacy. This collaborative approach would be understood through Vygotsky’s notion of schooled and everyday concepts and the integration of the Japanese linguaculture. In this chapter I will introduce the Social Literacy Model (SLM) and explain why it is an appropriate way to teach students to be literate in Japanese using the principles of New Literacies and employing the sociocultural approach.

Sociocultural theory suggests that individual reasoning and understanding ‘has part of its origin in dialogue with others’ (Wegerif, Mercer & Dawes 1999, p.493) and that through ‘guided participation’ individuals learn to ‘appropriate’ the voices of others (Rogoff 1990, Bakhtin 1981). The aim of this chapter is to identify the characteristics of classroom talk and participation that engages the learner in co-reasoning and exploration of linguaculture so that these concepts become part of their reasoning about Japanese. I argue that this can be done by connecting the learners’ social world with their classroom learning. By employing a sociocultural approach to understanding how students learn to see language and literacy as intimately connected to culture, I set out to explain how Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) can be usefully deployed to facilitate these pedagogical goals.

In the languages classroom this approach can be interpreted to mean that learners are provided with ways to understand the ‘cultural systems of interpretation’ (Bruner, 1996, p.33) through social activities. However, Palincsar and Herrenkohl suggest that ‘until we
understand more fully how to socialise students into new ways of dealing with peers as intellectual partners, it is unlikely that this research will make much difference in the real-world experience of teachers and students’ (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002, p.32). The SLM is my response to this challenge. In this chapter, I show how the SLM mediates the learners’ discussion of the linguaculture when they are learning to read Japanese. I introduce a way of using collaboration so as to encourage ‘intellectual partnership’ (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002, p.32) through collaboration in the classroom while engaging with the linguaculture of Japanese by offering guidance through dialogue.

5.2 Sociocultural and Social Constructivism – Similar but Different

In the design of my SLM I acknowledge the Four Resources Model (Freebody & Luke 1990, Freebody & Luke 2003, Freebody 1992, Freebody 2004, Luke & Freebody 1999) as a starting point of the keywords intended to bring New Literacies to classroom practice. Moreover, to bring an understanding of literacies as a social practice into my research I draw on the new literacies paradigm as expressed by Swaffer and Arens (2005), Kern (2000), Swaffer et al. (1991) Kramsch (1993) and Kramsch and Nolden (1994). While these works have connections with New Literacies (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Luke & Freebody 1999, New London Group 2000, Anstey 2002) from first language literacy, they do not speak directly from a sociocultural view. The Four Resources keyword structure is aimed at bringing the code, culture and context together as tools for reading one’s own language as it brings with it a way of guiding students towards the ‘supporting belief systems’ (Freebody 1992, p.48) of literacy that are the foundations of meaning making. However, the Four Resources Model is not based not on the sociocultural approach, but on a social constructivist understanding of learning. At this point I will briefly define the sociocultural paradigm against a social constructivist approach to clarify the distinctions in my argument.

Vadeboncoeur (1997) uses the words action and interaction to distinguish the fundamental contrast in points of view. Social constructivism builds knowledge through action on the world while the sociocultural approach emphasises interaction with the world. Social constructivists acknowledge the linguaculture (whether in the first or new language) as a key
tool for learning the contextual and interpretive nature of language. On this point the two approaches are complementary in that the social and contextual nature of literacy are central to meaning making; however, there are critical distinctions which must be considered (Damon & Phelps 1989). The key distinction is that social constructivists see language as a tool for the individual to construct meaning while sociocultural theory emphasises language as a cultural tool used to construct both the individual and their relationship within culturally meaningful practices (Perret-Clermont et al. 1991). For my argument, this connects to a dialogic concept of reasoning which is ‘open to different perspectives’ (Wegerif, Mercer & Dawes 1999, p.494, Mercer 2000). In other words, the main focus of the Four Resources Model is the individual, or more precisely, the cognitive abilities within the individual, while the sociocultural emphasis is on the social relations between individuals, the environment and the cultural and historical aspects of language.

5.3 The Social Literacy Model: Literacy Through a Sociocultural Approach

Using the Four Resources Model (Luke & Freebody 1999, Freebody & Luke 2003) as a reference point only, I sought to develop a literacies learning tool that shows learners how to become aware of the ways language is constructed by culture. This was done by organising keywords and questions that placed dialogue with others as the source of individual reasoning (Rogoff 1990, Wegerif, Mercer & Dawes 1999, Goos, Galbraith & Renshaw 1999). At the same time, this model makes collaboration a central means of integrating everyday and schooled concepts into the learner’s way of thinking about Japanese literacy. I have called this the Social Literacy Model (SLM) because the keyword questions are followed, discussed and answered in a social context. In other words, I attempt to emphasise the collaborative nature of learning by asking students to discuss the Japanese text they are reading guided by the SLM keyword questions (to be introduced below).

Because of the centrality of discussion, the SLM is guided by sociocultural models of teaching and learning (Palincsar & Brown 1984, Rogoff 1990, Renshaw & Brown 2007) where collaboration and discussion are central and the teacher’s role is to ‘keep everyone engaged in a substantive and extended conversation weaving individual participants
comments into a larger tapestry of meaning’ (Goldenberg 1992/3, p.318). In short, the SLM provides a guide to becoming literate within a New Literacies framework via collaboration and discussion within the Zone of Proximal Development as theorised by Vygotsky (1986).

Moreover, the SLM aims to encourage interpretation of the text and thinking about the cultural basis of that interpretation. As my research focuses on student talk around the text, it is the guided and social nature of learning that is being researched, not New Literacies. In other words, this model attempts to combine the insights of the New Literacies paradigm (Swaffer & Arens 2005, Kern 2000, Swaffer et al. 1991, Kramsch 1993, Kramsch & Nolden 1994) and the social nature of learning inherent in the sociocultural approach to ask ‘How should I teach and guide my students in “guided participation” (Rogoff 1990)? The tool I provide is the Social Literacy Model which starts from the premise that shared meaning is intimately connected with collaboration and discussion (Forman 1992) and that such an understanding of learning and literacy can be brought together by the teacher and students using the SLM. The questions posed for discussion provide guidance that reflects a notion of language promoted in the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) and Getting Started (Asian Education Foundation 2005). The SLM is also firmly grounded in sociocultural theory which highlights the linguaculture of all language and literacy. After extensive reading of the new literacies and sociocultural literature (see Chapters Three and Four) and discussion with my supervisors the following keywords and guiding concepts were agreed on to create The Social Literacy Model (SLM).

I now introduce the Social Literacy Model (SLM) which is based around the following keywords and questions:

Discuss & Describe: What do you see?
Discuss & Interpret: What does the text mean?
Discuss & Contextualise: How is the text used?
Discuss & Analyse: What does the text ask you to believe?
Discuss & Respond: What have you all learnt?

The following tables explain the focus and guiding ideas for each question.
### Table 1: Description of Source-Question One

**Discuss and Describe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pedagogic Resources</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multiliteracies</td>
<td>Observing how the code is used in the linguaculture</td>
<td>New London Group 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective Argumentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting Started 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reciprocal Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brown &amp; Renshaw 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guided Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Palincsar &amp; Brown 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rogoff 1990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Description of Source-Question Two

**Discuss and Interpret**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pedagogic Resources</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does the text mean?</td>
<td>Four Resources Model</td>
<td>Interpreting the linguaculture</td>
<td>Luke &amp; Freebody 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural Language Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kern 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective Argumentation</td>
<td></td>
<td>National Statement 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reciprocal Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Swaffer et al. 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Liddicoat &amp; Corzet 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brown &amp; Renshaw 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palincsar &amp; Brown 1984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Description of Source-Question Three

**Discuss and Contextualise**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pedagogic Resources</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is the text used?</td>
<td>Four Resources Model</td>
<td>Contextualising the linguaculture</td>
<td>Luke &amp; Freebody 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural Language Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Palincsar &amp; Brown 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reciprocal Teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scaronio &amp; Liddicoat 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Swaffer et al. 1991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Description of Source- Question Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pedagogic Resources</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 5: Description of Source- Question Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pedagogic Resources</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5.4 Introduction to The Social Literacy Model (SLM)

The SLM was constructed by this author with reference to the above pedagogic resources and references. I suggest that all these pedagogic resources are connected by their focus on literacy as a social practice and learning as a social experience. By citing in detail the source of the model, I wish to explore the question ‘how do I bring these ideas into the classroom?’.

With this in mind, I present the SLM as a practical pedagogic tool that brings together aspects of New Literacies (Chapter Three Section 3.3 and 3.5) that are then distilled into keyword
questions and used to guide learners to see the Japanese code as a linguaculture. A sociocultural emphasis on collaboration expands a social view of language and literacy.

I do not suggest that The SLM mirrors the above mentioned pedagogic resources exactly, but, instead, I present an interpretation of various models that allow ‘meaning to grow’ (Freebody 2004, p.5).

These keyword questions are presented as discrete steps for the purpose of explanation only and should not be seen as a linear process of questioning. In the classroom the above questions are administered on a single piece of paper for the group to refer to. It is emphasised that these keyword questions should be integrated and juxtaposed according to the students’ interest, or as the themes of the text suggest. It should also be stated that, from a sociocultural perspective, the use of language, literacy and culture, as discussed in collaboration, become inherently interconnected. In this way, it would be futile to render any individual keyword question without reference to the collaborative learning context in which they are enacted. The SLM should not be seen as a list of strategies and questions on a piece of paper, but a list of strategies and questions used to guide participation and discussion towards awareness of the linguaculture.

The objective of this keyword structure is to help create a scaffolded intervention that attempts to change the way students talk about and engage with a Japanese text. By using this model the teacher guides the learner towards contextual length and the cultural depth of a text as well as its surface code. By asking and discussing the questions, the teacher provides opportunities to bring together the formal, schooled concepts of Japanese literacy and the everyday concepts the learner uses to interpret the meaning of the Japanese text. These two concepts can be integrated through collaboration from all the questions shown above. Here, discussion is made part of the exploration of the text as learners reflect collaboratively on the questions they have discussed thus far.
The aim of the Social Literacy Model is to explore and define the linguaculture of Japanese, particularly in its written form. It is designed to emphasise the sociocultural notion that ‘word is the tool of pedagogy’ (Emerson 1983, p.257) and that schooled concepts are mediated by everyday concepts (Panofsky et al. 1990, Brooks et al. 2010).

In other words, learners need to be shown how to ‘see’ and appreciate the words they read as part of a Japanese linguaculture which means to:

(a) become familiar with the codes and conventions of Japanese script
(b) recognise the link between a cultural context and meaning
(c) recognise a link between language and culture
(d) recognise a new way of seeing a familiar word or idea
(e) recognise implicit messages through pictures, page arrangement and context
(f) appreciate that texts both construct and reconstruct our understanding of Japanese
(g) work collaboratively to shape and organise learning.

Using the keyword questions and the aims described above, the way the students talk about the Japanese language shows them how to see the linguaculture as well as the code. The keyword questions are now introduced and explained.

Discuss and Describe: What do you see?

With this keyword question students are guided to focus firstly on the codes and conventions of the Japanese script and secondly to put the operation of the script into a cultural context. The keyword ‘describe’ is followed by the question ‘what do you see?’ The objective here is to draw the students’ attention to the connections between symbols, patterns and meaning. The aim is to elicit descriptions and explanations of how the Japanese script is organised in a new way.

The word ‘describe’ asks the students to look at the code and think about the details of its conventions; to ask, ‘How does it work?’ or ‘How is it different to English?’ For example, hiragana is a syllabary not an alphabet. Being able to use and understand the word
‘syllabary’ is an example of using a schooled concept to show an understanding of the new code. Another example is that Japanese has three ways of writing: *hiragana*, *katakana* and *Kanji*. Being able to describe the relationships between the three different ways of writing is a vital part of being able to ‘read’ the Japanese code. With this in mind ‘describe’ aims to elicit explanatory conversations that show and elaborate the various ways Japanese is put together. For example, a student might explain that ‘*Katakana* is used to write the word ‘helicopter’ because it is a non-Japanese word’. Another way to think of it is using the keyword question to help students understand Japanese codes and conventions from a new point of view. In the act of describing, the learner will see differences between Japanese and English in every aspect of the script. In an attempt to understand these differences the learner will be able to see the linguaculture even at the procedural level. However, while this is essential, it is not sufficient to understand the depth of the linguaculture. In other words, cultural code breaking is only one step in becoming literate in Japanese.

*Discuss and Interpret : What does it mean?*

The second keyword ‘interpret’ asks the students to think about what the word means when translated into English. However, the act of translation requires crossing a cultural boundary which is not always straightforward. Asking the question ‘What does this word mean?’ can lead to discussion and debate which foregrounds the social basis of learning as well as the students’ own everyday understandings of a word. Bakhtin argued that words partially belong to others and that individuals ‘appropriate’ them for their own use (Bakhtin 1981). It is my intention that this aspect of a sociocultural view of language be brought out through this keyword question. For example, in the data that I collected for this thesis, hierarchy became a key concept for interpreting linguaculture in the text. The commonly used title ‘*san*’ added to the end of a person’s name was a case in point. Normally translated into English as Mr or Mrs, however, this can be confusing because the Japanese word has different levels and is used within specific relationships. By noticing how and why titles were used the students started to think about hierarchy in the Japanese language. Clearly a definition is needed for all words and students should agree on what the most appropriate or useful definition is. If, in the example of ‘*san*’ they agree on the English translation ‘Mr’ or ‘Mrs’ they need to be aware of why that choice was made and the cultural limits it carries. This is all part of interpreting the linguaculture. For many words dictionary definitions have a limit, understanding that limit; would also be an important first step in understanding the concept of ‘interpreting’ the linguaculture.
Discuss and Contextualise: How is it Used?

The next keyword is ‘contextualise’. This asks the students to put meaning into a social context and, if need be, expand the meaning beyond a dictionary definition. Like the previous question it asks students to think about meaning but focuses more specifically on the close connection between orthography (the writing system), meaning and context, and how form, speaker and word use contribute to meaning. Such a dialogue encourages the students to develop intercultural awareness by recognising the link between language and culture and therefore helps them to ‘communicate, interact and negotiate within and across languages and cultures’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3), a key theme of the National Statement. It also puts language into the cultural practices represented in a given text.

Discuss and Analyse: What Does it Ask you to Believe?

By encouraging a more critical stance, the fourth keyword ‘analyse’ brings with it the question, ‘What does this text ask you to believe?’ This pedagogic step encourages students to recognise implicit messages expressed through pictures, page arrangement and context and leads to thinking about the constructed nature of language and the role the reader can have in re-positioning the text and themselves. While this is also true of ‘contextualise’ and ‘interpret’, this step looks more closely at the persuasive powers of the text and how positioning, silencing and creating a dominant message are achieved within the Japanese linguaculture. For example, when reading the central text for this study, the Japanese folk story *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) the text asked the reader to believe that a boy has certain magical powers. Also, by looking closely at hierarchy in Japanese titles (as mentioned above) a critical assessment could be made. Overall, by ‘analysing’ the text and asking ‘What is this text asking me to believe?’, questions about folk mythology or terms of address may lead to a way of understanding the linguaculture more critically and being able to see the ‘cultural systems of interpretation’ (Bruner, 1996, p.33) in the text more objectively.

Discuss and Respond: What Have You Learnt?

The final keyword and question, ‘What have you learnt?’ is designed to guide students towards building on the previous steps to synthesise through co-reasoning a response to what they have read. This step specifically draws on the sociocultural view that thinking, learning and knowing occur within relations with both experts and peers and are not bounded by a
single perspective (Lave & Wenger 1991, Wegerif, Mercer & Dawes 1999, Mercer 1995, 2000). By connecting New Literacies with languages education and making linguaculture central, as suggested in the intercultural language teaching approach, I am attempting to connect text and interpretation in a dynamic way. Learning is defined here as ‘transformation and change of persons’ (Lave & Wenger 1991, p.51) in that the integration of everyday and schooled concepts transforms the awareness of Japanese.

The following table illustrates the connections between the SLM and three fields of language literacy research. The key difference, not stated by the questions in the SLM, is that these questions would be discussed in a group of three or more students. This group may include the teacher and would always include peers. The aim of the table is to show the inter-connections between these conceptions of literacy.

**Table 6: Source of the Social Literacy Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Literacy Model</th>
<th>The New Paradigm</th>
<th>Intercultural Language Teaching</th>
<th>New Literacies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe: What Do You See?</td>
<td>Literacy in a new language requires learning a new code.</td>
<td>Even the code of a new language has cultural significance.</td>
<td>Code breaking is necessary but not sufficient for a person to be literate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualise: How is the text used? Recognise a link between language and culture.</td>
<td>A text separated from a context loses meaning.</td>
<td>Language in context is at the centre of meaning.</td>
<td>Applications of texts in real-life, context-rich situations generates meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret: What does the text mean? Recognise the link between a code and a cultural context.</td>
<td>Using literacy involves using cultural knowledge.</td>
<td>Using and understanding a new language involves interpretation.</td>
<td>Meaning changes in action and by action according to the context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond: What have you learnt? Learners reflect on what they have discussed and interpreted in collaboration.</td>
<td>Literacy involves problem solving and social learning.</td>
<td>As culture is central to interpreting language shared interpretations are encouraged but not explicitly suggested.</td>
<td>Pedagogical implementations are not central to this position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the above approaches share a common understanding of literacy as a social and cultural practice, only the SLM directly promotes a sociocultural form of instruction which places collaboration into learning a linguacultural view of language and literacy. The theme of this research thesis is to connect these shared understandings of literacy to a social understanding of learning so that the two may reinforce each other. For that reason I now turn to an approach to understanding learning as a process of co-construction and collaboration with a sociocultural foundation in Renshaw and Brown’s 2007 format analysis of student talk.

5.5 Formats for Exploring Learning

Renshaw and Brown’s Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) are grounded in the sociocultural approach and attempt to ‘provide a guide for teachers on how different Formats of Talk can be usefully deployed to facilitate particular pedagogic goals’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.2). Using the formats outlined below, the SLM becomes a way of providing ‘discursive guidance’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.6) for students reading a Japanese text because it allows them to see, recognise and elaborate the Japanese linguaculture facilitated through discussion and co-reasoning.

The formats both allow and highlight ‘pedagogical spaces that invite participation by students in classroom activities and a greater sense of collaborative authorship of the knowledge and skills generated in classrooms’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.22) By adopting the Formats of Talk I will analyse the way my students changed the way they talked about and discussed the Japanese linguaculture, and will explore the way that classroom talk integrated school and everyday concepts though replacement, interweaving and contextual privileging (Renshaw & Brown 2007). The formats will help me ‘explore the relationship between “talking” and “thinking” that was originally proposed by Vygotsky as fundamental to the development of higher mental processors’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.1). It is for this reason that the SLM must be used in a collaborative setting where students are given the opportunity to elaborate and explore the cultural aspects of Japanese in order to understand the schooled notion of linguaculture. In sociocultural terms the linguaculture can be understood as when a schooled
Interweaving

The process of interweaving is a central concept in sociocultural theory because it is a dialectical metaphor and speaks directly to how learners ‘position themselves within the social fabric of the classroom’ (Brown 2007, p.124). A single thread cannot make a cloth (a concept); however, when woven together with other threads (collaboration) a complex pattern can be made (learning). Moreover, interweaving describes the dynamic process by which individuals transform their understandings through ‘appropriation’ (Bakhtin 1981, Rogoff 1990). In the languages classroom the connections made between language and culture, the learner’s first and new language and the combination of these into everyday and schooled concepts, are central to development. Interweaving refers to the chance for students to infuse schooled linguistic discourse with their own voices and opinions, thus weaving together everyday understandings with schooled concepts. In learning to be literate in Japanese this means being able to speculate on various questions concerning the cultural contours of the language such as how to be polite or how to show appreciation. This inevitably means drawing on one’s own linguaculture by asking ‘How would I do this in English?, How is it the same or how is it different? By interweaving these different perspectives from the students’ everyday concepts and their classroom curriculum, this activates ‘reciprocal growth’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.5) as outlined by Vygotsky.

For example, the Japanese word Otsukaresama does not have an exact translation in English although a dictionary definition defines it as meaning ‘thank you for your effort’. However, in my own experience living and working in Japan, I found that this word was often used before I did a job or even when I was simply saying goodbye, which, according to my own interpretation, suggests the centrality of ‘work’ and ‘appreciation’ expressed by this culturally rich and uniquely Japanese word. With this said, for the purpose of classroom learning, I suggest that a culturally sensitive definition of Otsukaresama can be arrived at if students interweave experience from their own understanding of ‘appreciation’ and ‘work’ and how
they are expressed in English. The following transcript taken from a discussion around the reading of the Japanese fairytale *Momotaro* is an example of what has been explained above.

Table 7: Transcript 1

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Me</td>
<td>We’ve got this word <em>Otsukaresama</em>, do you know that word?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mike &amp; Robert</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Me</td>
<td>It’s what you say when some one has finished doing a job for you. <em>Otsukeresama</em> means you can have a break now. It functions as a way of saying ‘thank you’ and showing your appreciation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mike</td>
<td>So maybe <em>Momotaro</em> is looking after his Grandfather and Grandmother after they have come home from work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Robert</td>
<td>So, then he gives his father a massage after a long day at work to show his appreciation. It’s like a present; he’s giving them something in return.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In turn 5 the student can see that the character *Momotaro* is showing appreciation by using the word *otsukaresama*. This is combined with the action of giving his Grandfather a shoulder massage. In his statement ‘It’s like a present; he’s giving them something in return’ he shows an interweaving of a Japanese way and his own idea of how a person expresses appreciation.

**Replacement**

Replacement allows the learner to ‘extend their vocabulary’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.8) to see the importance of ‘adopting precise terms and acting within the ground rules of a particular discourse genre’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.6). In this way, replacement is particularly useful for the code-breaking aspect of learning the Japanese linguaculture, and therefore applying, the first SLM question ‘What do you see?’ Both focus the students’ learning on the code and how it is used, in other words, what are the ‘precise rules’ of the Japanese code? However, all the questions in the SLM are guiding questions and have ‘precise rules’ for interpretation or, at least, agreed understandings of how context operates. For example, questions like ‘What does the text ask you to believe?’ encourage students to use speech to expand and conceptualise terms in more precise ways thus reflecting on the levels of meaning and interaction between language and culture. To use the same example as
above, the Japanese word *otsukaresama*, in answering the question ‘What does it mean?’ defining it and knowing when to use it, the student needs to use words like ‘contextualise’ or ‘analyse’ from the SLM. If the student approaches this question with a ‘schooled’ concept of ‘contextualise’ they are able to see an unfamiliar Japanese word in a different way — in a more anthropological way. In other words, the student can take on the ‘inquiring disposition’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.10) of an anthropologist that allows interpretive questions to be asked (the term ‘anthropologist’ will be significant in this study and will be introduced in the next chapter). If they have to contextualise the word *otsukaresama* they need to ask questions such as ‘Who is being spoken to?’ or ‘How do people show appreciation in Japan?’.

When using the replacement frame, it is the teacher or expert who guides students by replacing everyday words and concepts with schooled words, thus drawing attention to schooled concepts. In this way the social nature of learning in the zone of proximal development is highlighted by showing how the expert can share particular framing words and therefore dispositions that allow the learner to see things from the expert’s point of view.

In the following example I am working with a student as he writes a short play in Japanese. In turns 10 and 12 the student, Will, shows a new approach to understanding the meaning of a word by contextualising it. His awareness of this is shown by his use of the keyword ‘context’ which allows a more precise understanding of the dynamic nature of linguaculture.

**Table 8: Transcript 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>wa ta shi wa ka na shi de su</em> [I feel sad]</td>
<td>So what does that mean?</td>
<td>umm (2) I feel terr… I feel sad.</td>
<td>It means sad rather than terrible.</td>
<td>It’s like what we were saying before about the same context but different words.</td>
<td>Yeah</td>
<td>Cause if you say ‘I’m terrible’(<em>hi dou ii</em>) it’s like saying ‘I’m sick’</td>
<td>That’s right.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contextual Privileging

Contextual privileging sets out to emphasise the ‘situational and context specific grounds for privileging one type of discourse over another (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.11). It is not suggested that one type of discourse is better, ‘rather certain ways of speaking and thinking are chosen over other possibilities on the grounds of appropriateness to the particular setting with its specific set of ground rules for participation’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.11).

In conventional languages classrooms ‘reading’ can resemble teacher directed deciphering and explaining grammar and dictionary definitions of words. This is maybe an important starting point, however, if the dynamic nature of collaborative learning is to lead to linguaculture, there needs to be an opportunity for discussion and interpretation as suggested by the New Paradigm of languages literacy explained in Chapter Three. Contextual privileging offers opportunities for making this happen because this format makes the process of elaborating, defining and categorising aspects of the linguaculture more possible. At the same time, through the process of negotiation privileging one aspect of the linguaculture over another (for example polite speech over colloquial speech) is made possible. An example is offered here. In this transcript students discuss the English word ‘cool’ that they have seen used in a Japanese television advertisement. I attempt to guide them towards the question ‘How do they know the word kuru refers the English word ‘cool’ and not the Japanese word ‘nut’? This is an example of privileging a way of seeing a familiar word in a new way and thus arriving at a more appropriate understanding through discussion and co-reasoning.
Renshaw and Brown remind us that ‘in conventional classrooms, engagement in most school subjects has explicit ground rules for participation based on the Initiate-Response-Evaluate (Mehan 1979) script where the teacher controls the direction and type of talk’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.12) However, in this example, although I as the teacher/expert do offer advice and guidance, it is the students who elaborate, discuss and even make fun of, the use of the word ‘cool’. Here is an example of how an anthropological understanding of language in context is ‘privileged in a process of discursive negotiation occurring between class participants’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.11).
5.6 Conclusion

I began this chapter, on pages 46-47, with a quote from Palinscar and Herrenkohl (2002) which suggested that students need to be intellectual partners in order to be worked into the social fabric through collaboration. By using the SLM the teacher can act as a ‘discursive guide’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.6), able to show learners how to talk about Japanese as a linguaulture. The SLM not only allows the learners to become aware that culture influences linguistic meaning, but also to be part of the social nature of learning through collaborative discussion. In sum, I suggest that the teacher can introduce a new way of thinking about language in general and Japanese in particular, through a ZPD which allows the learner to ‘appropriate’ (Bakhtin 1981) or ‘interweave’ a notion of language from an anthropological point of view. Moreover, in this study schooled and everyday language is organised around Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) that provide teachers with a guide on how ‘different formats of talk can usefully be deployed to facilitate particular pedagogical goals’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.2).

The SLM and the Formats of Talk come together to show how learners are guided through language to recognise the linguaulture of Japanese literacy through opportunities to ‘participate in classroom activities that generate a greater sense of collaborative authorship’ of the knowledge and abilities discovered in classrooms (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.22). This concludes my introduction and explanation of the Social Literacy Model Formats for Talk. In the following chapter I outline the methodology and tools used to connect the SLM into a methodological framework that seeks to locate and identify the changing discourse of the learners in this study.
Chapter Six: Methodology

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I introduced the Social Literacy Model and the formats of talk which will be used in the Data Analysis chapter. In this chapter, I introduce the methodology and how the tools of ‘Voice’ (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) will be used to show how I will analyse the ‘pedagogical spaces that invite participation by students in classroom activities’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.2). Combinations of these tools of analysis will help me demonstrate how the learners and myself collaborate and discuss interpretations that guide our talk from a code-centric to a linguacultural understanding of Japanese. The aim of this study is to explore how the collaborative use of the Social Literacy Model (SLM) can be used as an intervention designed to help students interpret and understand Japanese as a linguaculture. This chapter describes the methodology and processes that are consistent with my objective to study such a changing understanding through a sociocultural approach. Specifically, my research explores how the concept of linguaculture (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Agar 2002, Kramsch 1993) and New Literacies (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Luke & Freebody 1999, New London Group 2000, Anstey 2002) can be combined within a sociocultural approach and distilled in the keyword questions of the SLM, a model that sets out to facilitate collaboration among learners of Japanese in a grade eight classroom. Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) are used to situate changing attitudes, dispositions and beliefs the learners have about Japanese.

6.2 The Sociocultural Implementation of the Study

Sociocultural theory posits language as a primary psychological and symbolic tool for organising the progress of learning (Moll 1990, Wertch 1991, Vygotsky 1986). With this premise established, both myself and a group of students were guided by the SLM questions on a journey from code-centric individual reading of Japanese to a collaborative and culturally elaborated reading of the Japanese linguaculture. I used
the Social Literacy Model (SLM), introduced in the previous chapter, as a tool for implementing change in the students’ understanding of what another language is and, combined with my role as a participating expert, to create supportive guidance designed to help novice learners to achieve higher levels of literacy in Japanese. At the same time, within collaborative relationships, the students construct their own Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in which their thinking could be assisted by peers (Mercer 2000,1995). The SLM provided a tool to facilitate collaborative learning on how to ‘read’ the text in terms of the linguaculture. It was used by myself to position students as active learners required to interpret, negotiate and collaborate in order to drive their engagement with the text to a higher level of exploration.

An understanding of the features of learning a new language have been taken from The National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), from Getting Started (Asian Education Foundation 2005) and from Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009). These documents give broad guidelines of how and why new languages could be taught in Australian schools. Using these policy documents as my guide, I argue that one aspect of sociocultural theory that encapsulates the intentions of my study is to analyse the students’ collaborative talk through the notion of schooled (formal) and everyday (spontaneous, informal) concepts. It is through these concepts that the integration of procedural thinking (in other words decoding) and conceptual thinking (interpreting) might be explained in ways that allow a social understanding of language to be ‘talked into’ the thinking tools of learning. For example, I suggest that learning a new language should support the learner’s ability to ‘understand themselves and others, and to understand diverse ways of knowing, being and doing’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3) and could be facilitated by the integration of schooled and everyday concepts that allows for the learner’s own experiences to be integrated with the cultural world of the Japanese text. As will be shown in the following Data Analysis chapter, when this is done, aspects of the students’ lived experience are present in the way they talk about and comprehend new words and ideas. In this way I believe the schooled and everyday can be brought together through engagement in collaborative dialogue.
6.3 Case Study

This project is an exploration of a small scale intervention consisting of five students and one teacher (myself). For this reason it is best described as a single case study in language learning (Yin 2003, McKay 2006). A number of other language education research projects have used case studies (Leki 1995, Peirce 1995, Gregory 1997) including Belz & Kinginger (2002) who employed a case study using a sociocultural approach as their theoretical framework.

A case study is ‘a single instance of some bound system’ (McKay 2006, p.71) which sets out to pose how or why questions in a real-world context that can be addressed by a researcher who conducts a small scale preliminary study (Yin 2003). My project asks ‘How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?’ At the same time, this exploration was carried out in one classroom with five students where I did not choose the students’ learning materials or availability. Some data collection sessions lasted only twenty minutes and were often cancelled if the students were absent or had other commitments. Also, my work had little connection with what the students did in their main Japanese classroom. Yin states that some researchers complain about the lack of ‘generalisability’ (Yin 2003, pp.10-11) of case studies, however; within the limits of my circumstances I have designed a case study that seeks to make suggestions rather than predictions presented as statistical frequencies, so for this reason it is best labelled as an ‘exploratory case study’ (Yin 2003, p.3).

The case study presented here is a qualitative ‘detailed observation of the real-world by an investigator’ (Yin 2003, p.14) in which I employ classroom observations, interviews and written responses to be analysed through Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Classroom Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007). I bring all these together to ‘blend narrative with analysis’ (McKay 2006, p.76) to explore my experience with a classroom intervention.
6.4 Analytical Techniques

The underlying framework that guides this research is sociocultural theory. This framework allows the data to be understood as examples of the social integration of learning through interaction with peers and specific pedagogic tools, in this case the SLM. For this reason the focus of the analysis used Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) to systematically describe how the students and I learn to understand the Japanese linguaculture together by engaging with a text collaboratively to construct a shared interpretation of its meaning (see Chapter Four).

I now introduce the tools of analysis I used to locate the ways of talking that facilitated the integration of schooled and everyday concepts. These tools to understanding learning may be combined to show an appreciation of linguaculture or a more sophisticated understanding of Japanese reading from the students. I suggest that formats of talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) offers conceptual categories for analysing the ways students talk about Japanese in a social context. In order to understand these Formats of Talk I employ Voice (Bakhtin 1981) to explore the dispositions, attitudes and understandings adopted by students. When combined, these tools allow me to analyse both what the students say, through their adopted Voice, and how their talk constructs shared interpretations by interweaving, replacing and contextual privileging (see Chapter Five, Section 5.5).

6.5 Voice

I adopted Bakhtin’s notion of Voice as theorised and explained by Wertsch (1990, 1991) and Renshaw (2004) to analyse the way students speak to each other. Using the notion of Voice to analyse students’ talk enables the researcher to ‘understand how identity is formed and transformed through the appropriation of particular language practices and genres’ (Renshaw 2004, p.4). In this way, Voice is used in this study to apprehend the way language is used as a tool for collaboration and interpretation and
the way words are used to ‘position the speaker in relation to the authority framework of the classroom’ (Brown 2007, p.120).

As a part of sociocultural theory, I will employ Voice in this study to highlight a fine-grained analysis of my data. Bakhtin presents voice as a means of understanding the ‘speaking consciousness’ (Bakhtin 1981, Wertsch 1991). In other words, Voice represents the ‘particular perspectives, belief systems, intentions and views of the world’ (Wertsch 1991, p.51) expressed by an individual. Therefore, the intentions and belief systems of the SLM are identified in the way learners become aware of the cultural forces that shape a Japanese text and its meaning. In this way collaboration is posited as the ‘source of individual innovation and change’ (Hall 2003, p.12). The table below contrasts and elucidates a case study and the concept of ‘Voice’ within the research paradigm employed by this study.

With this in mind, the concept of Voice (Bakhtin 1981) will be employed as an analytical tool to discern how learners’ classroom stances change towards Japanese. Based on the dispositions adopted and discourse used, this shift may occur as they adopt positions in expressing ideas about what they are learning, and how these ideas are expressed. For my research I have looked at the aspects of linguaculture and captured them in the SLM which essentially is a tool for guiding the learners’ analysis of a Japanese text towards the constituent parts of linguaculture. Using the concept of Voice I construct categories which foreground and emphasise ways of thinking about Japanese. These categories are artificial labels designed to create distinctions and enable me, as a researcher, to identify changes in the students’ talk about their learning by observing the way the students’ talk changes. I present schooled and everyday concepts (Chapter Four, Section 4.6.1) as guided by the SLM and made conscious through Voice to see different aspects of the Japanese linguaculture.

Everyday concepts allow the students to talk about their lived experience which contrasts with their own linguaculture. Schooled concepts allow the students to adopt defining words such as ‘context’, which bring an anthropological view into focus. As
the word suggests, linguaculture is made up of both a linguistic and a cultural component. For this reason I have framed Voice with the labels linguistic and anthropological so as to gain insights into the blending and changing attitudes and dispositions of the learners. This means looking at how students adopt a certain disposition towards Japanese and acknowledging when they adopt:

A *Linguistic Voice*.

When students adopt a linguistic voice they use schooled concepts such as grammar, syntax, tense, precise dictionary definitions, the correct way to pronounce or write a word or understand a feature of the Japanese code. This includes adopting specialised terms such as ‘*katakana*’ or ‘*hiragana*’ to describe the Japanese text.

An *Anthropological Voice*.

This category represents the notion that language is framed by culture. I have adopted the word ‘anthropological’ to mean an approach to language as a symbolic tool which is shaped and understood through culture, the understanding of which requires interpretation of the context and use of the text in question (Carr 1999, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet, 2000, Kramsch 2002, Agar 2002) as outlined in Chapter Three. Anthropology studies the beliefs, value systems and origins of humankind. Language is an important part of this and therefore the term ‘anthropological voice’ will be used to identify when students privilege the contextual, social and cultural dimensions of Japanese over formal linguistic understandings expressed by a linguistic voice. This includes identifying and engaging with contextual or cultural features, or when students talk in a way that sees language as framed by culture. In the following data analysis chapter I seek to show that it is the combination of these dispositions, or understandings, that brings about the Japanese linguaculture.
6.6 Application of Formats of Talk

I will adopt a format analysis suggested by Renshaw and Brown (2007) based on a sociocultural view of Voice and the way language is used to promote learning. Although explained in the previous chapter the elements of these formats are briefly repeated here. Renshaw and Brown’s model presents four ‘typologies of talk’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.2) for classroom interaction. However due to lack of longitudinal data I will not use the fourth format pastiche. I will use the formats replacement (replacing a learner’s idea with the teachers), interweaving (integrating a schooled concept with a learner’s everyday concept) and contextual privileging (when a learner privileges one expression of an idea over another) to categorise the data. The aim of using Renshaw and Brown’s model of classroom talk in this study is to understand how everyday concepts and schooled concepts may come together in ways that may assist students to understand and learn Japanese. These formats of classroom talk are used to frame the process of how individuals may come to use Japanese as a ‘new’ way of speaking to each other and to link these new ways with larger concerns of the thesis. For example, how a certain disposition connects to social and institutional forces such as attitudes towards Japanese or their own culture, or the aims expressed by The National Statement (MCEETYA 2005), Getting Started (Asian Education Foundation 2005) and Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009).

In summing up the previous points (Sections 6.3 - 6.6), I offer the following comparison table to show the interconnections between the three aspects of my theoretical framework and tools of analysis to show how they extend and support my research question.
Table 10: Interconnections Comparison Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Vygotskian</th>
<th>Voice/Formats of Talk</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
<th>This Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Origin</strong></td>
<td>Vygotskian sociocultural</td>
<td>Bakhtin’s notion of Voice and dialogicality’ as highlighted by Formats of Talk.</td>
<td>The need to explore ‘a single instance of some bound system’ (McKay 2006, p.71).</td>
<td>Exploration of a new theoretical practice in a real-life intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundation question</strong></td>
<td>How does the social world</td>
<td>How does language change and affect thought? What is the social nature of language when used in classroom interaction?</td>
<td>How or Why questions which seek a detailed observation in real-world situations.</td>
<td>How can sociocultural theory be used to teach a new language as ‘linguaculture’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept of language and literacy</strong></td>
<td>Language is a tool of thought that changes according to social, historical and cultural circumstances. Language is equally an individual tool and a social resource.</td>
<td>Language is a layered, contextual and multi-voiced foundation of the self. It is the ‘speaking consciousness’ in which particular perspectives, belief systems, intentions and views of the world’ are expressed (Wertsch 1991, p.51).</td>
<td>I have designed an exploratory case study to suggest how New Literacies can be introduced into the new language classroom.</td>
<td>Language is seen as framed by culture – a linguaculture. Literacy is seen as social practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context of study</strong></td>
<td>How learners become sensitive to the Japanese linguaculture. Collaboration as the source of individual innovation and change.</td>
<td>Voice is used to identify changing dispositions and the co-construction of Japanese as a linguaculture. Formats guide this analysis.</td>
<td>Case studies are ideal for a small project where the researcher has little control over events.</td>
<td>This is a small research project in which I try to identify changing dispositions generated through collaboration and dialogicality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.7 How Do the Tools and Methodology Help Answer the Research Question?

The methodology and tools of analysis have been summarised above in a comparison table. The theoretical framework of a sociocultural approach asks the foundation question: How does the social world develop thought and language? When applied to classroom interaction Bakhtin’s notion of Voice (1981) as guided by Formats of Talk
(Renshaw & Brown 2007) become useful tools that allow me to explore the social development of language through my research question:

*How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?*

This thesis uses a case study to analyse how students change their ‘dispositions’ towards language as a consequence of encountering keywords and leading questions in the SLM used in collaboration with an expert and each other, so that the study of the Japanese language can be reconsidered as an exploration of the Japanese linguaculture.

**6.8 What are the Key Concepts Guiding the Data Analysis?**

I used a ‘format analysis’ based on Renshaw and Brown’s Formats of Talk (2007) to explore how students socially explored and interpreted the concept of linguaculture. The data gathered was represented by two explanatory tools, Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) and Bakhtin’s notion of Voice (1981). I employed Formats of Talk to name and categorise the phenomena of interaction and Voice to enunciate the more specific features of talk and interaction. Together, these tools were used to analyse and identify the integration of schooled and everyday concepts that may initiate change in the nature of interpretation and an approach towards understanding Japanese texts. In other words, I used these analytical tools to focus on the exploration of how change may take place through schooled and everyday concepts and how this change helped students become aware of the Japanese linguaculture.
6.9 Myself as a Participant Expert

Throughout this study I was both a researcher and expert teacher. As a researcher I was constantly evaluating and recognising the linguaculture in the students’ interpretations of the text and, as an expert guide, doing my best to help the students both comprehend the text and the concepts that support the SLM. In this way I was carrying out what I considered to be best practice in language teaching as defined by the policy documents *The National Statement* (MCEETYA 2005) and *Getting Started* (Dellit 2005).

I saw myself as encouraging interpretation by the students rather than teaching them because one of the aims of the sociocultural approach employed in this study was to change the student-teacher relationship so as to allow the students more freedom in the way they interpreted the text. That is, although the translation of a Japanese text into English did have a right or wrong definition, considerable freedom was given to the students to explore beyond a static dictionary meaning so as to incorporate contextual and cultural interpretations. I believe that all the transcripts of teacher-student talk in the classroom that follow show opportunities being provided for the students to interpret a given text within the guidelines set by the SLM and *The National Statement* (MCEETYA 2005), *Getting Started* (Dellit 2005) and *Language Learning and Teaching: A Guide* (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009).

However, my interests and influence were always a factor in the way the students were guided and in the way I interpreted the transcripts. Using Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007), I then used these transcripts in the following chapter to tell a narrative of how I guided students to think about Japanese through the SLM and how the students responded to such guidance.

6.10 Research Procedure: Introduction
The investigation was carried out through an intervention used with a pair of students and a group of three students from an Australian inner-city private boys high school. I acted as a teacher/researcher by guiding students to work collaboratively while reading and interpreting a Japanese text, and at the same time, to employ a social practice notion of literacy (see Chapter Three) through the SLM. This reading model was developed in response to the needs from a more socially contextualised notion of literacy that is called for by the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) and as expressed by the New Literacies in first language learning (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Luke & Freebody 1999, New London Group 2000, Anstey 2002) and Intercultural Language Teaching (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999, Kramsch 1993).

The intervention took place in the course of regular classes and consisted of organised collaborations guided by the keyword questions of the SLM. The aim of my data collection was to discern any change in the way students talked about and approached the notion of Japanese being a linguaculture; in other words, how the focus of collaboration within the group may have changed from a perception of language as a code to a perception of language as socially and culturally situated.

6.11 Selecting a Site for the Study

Finding a Japanese language classroom where I could intervene over an extended period of time was difficult due to teachers’ busy schedules. As time is always limited in an academic schedule, it took a year to find a teacher willing to let me get involved in their class so as to introduce an intervention based on my research aims. Firstly, I approached three friends who were teachers but discovered they were all too busy especially for a project which intervened in their teaching plans. Finally a teacher whom I had worked with in the past allowed me to join their class as an assistant with the lessons she has organised. The school that became the research setting was a private boys’ school in an inner-city suburb of Brisbane. I joined one
grade eight class with 25 students, all of whom had been learning Japanese for three years.

6.12 Selecting the Students

To begin with I joined the class as a teaching assistant and did no formal instruction with the students. This was the situation for two weeks. When I had some idea of the class organisation and how I could make my research needs fit the topics of the curriculum, I distributed consent forms to the entire class. Five students and their parents made a positive response so these five became the students with whom I worked with in the study. I made no further contact with the parents. The students are presented in this study under the pseudonyms Bill, Robert, Mike, Harry and Steve and have an average age of 13 years. All students started learning Japanese in Grade Four so they were familiar with basic linguistic concepts and general aspects of Japanese culture concerning food, dress and sport. All had met Japanese boys their own age who had been exchange students at their school however, none had actually been to Japan. All five students were perceived as academically sound by their teacher and were thus able to work reliably and independently away from their peers. Bill’s mother was a Japanese language teacher so he, in particular, had a positive interest in Japanese.

The study took place over a school year of forty weeks and of these five student participants three, Bill, Robert and Mike, remained under my instruction through the duration of the study. To begin with I worked with these students in the classroom with other students working around us but this arrangement proved too noisy for video recording purposes so I organised to record our discussions in a neighbouring classroom separate from the main class. This change was very effective. The texts and activities used throughout most of the study were chosen by the regular classroom teacher so that this study group would not miss out on any core content while they were working with me. These texts were always written in Japanese at a level appropriate for beginners. In these sessions recorded for the study I would ask the
students to read the text in Japanese, then together we would translate the text into English and then discuss and respond to the text based on the questions from the SLM.

6.13 Ethical Concerns

I started my ethical clearance procedure with the Griffith University Ethics Office. I was given guidance by the ethics department for writing a letter addressed to the school and the students’ carers. The key issues to be address were confidentiality and protection of the rights and identities of the students involved. Each student was provided with a letter (see Appendix Two) for themselves and their carers explaining who I was, the aims of the research, and how their identity would remain confidential and only revealed to myself and my supervisors. The videos of student interaction would not be shown in public and would be kept under my care. Within the thesis, and any subsequent articles published from the study, the students’ identity would be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

Furthermore, the consent letter explained that all data gathered would be kept in a secure place, that students’ participation would be voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without providing an explanation. Lastly, students were invited to discuss the project with me, their classroom teacher or their carers at anytime. These letters were signed by the students’ carers. Only the students who returned these signed permission letters were able to participate in this project.

Throughout my research project, the students working with me were not disadvantaged in their classroom studies because we always did the same work as the other students in the class except that the selected students did the tasks in a way that represents the pedagogic interests of my study (that is, using the SLM in a collaborative discussion rather than working individually using the textbook).
However, throughout the videoed learning sessions the activities and materials were the same for all the members of the class. For example, the book *Momotaro* (Quakenbush 1993), the primary text used to gather data, was read by the whole class during the same period of time.

### 6.14 Trustworthiness of the Design

Lather suggests that ‘validity is the problem not the solution’ (Lather 2001, p.243). I use this quote to draw attention to the idea that establishing trustworthiness between the research community and the research presented is not always straightforward. For example, if we take ‘validity’ in educational research to be ‘the trustworthiness of inferences drawn from the data...and would include what is acceptable and not acceptable in research’ (Freeman *et al.* 2007, p.27), then trustworthiness is best established by presenting a clear and open description of the research design and the steps taken to operationalise this plan including transparency of the data analysis process. However, at the end of the research cycle, if a reader asks the valid question ‘Why should I believe this? The answer would include ‘because I am a fellow researcher concerned with exploring education therefore it is within my best interest to stay within the boundaries of “best practice” that is, within the boundaries of acceptable practice’. I will adopt Erickson’s notion of acceptable practice by agreeing that research materials collected from the field are not data until ‘constructed through some formal means of analysis’ (Erickson 1986, p.149). This view is extended by Bogdan and Biklan (2006) who suggest that ‘data is both the evidence and the clues’ (p.117) or as Lincoln puts it, first the data has to be recognised as such and then ‘an inquirer subjects it to some form of systematic analysis, which turns it into evidence directed toward some question or argument’ (Lincoln 2002, p.2). I claim validity and reliability through the analytical process that began by putting transcripts from learning conversations through the analytical lens of Voice and Formats of Talk described above (Section 6.6). In following these guidelines systematically, I will base my ‘trustworthiness’ on the notion of ‘triangulation’; that is, how has the data been linked to the theoretical framework of sociocultural theory?
I attempted to provide as much as possible an analysis of data that stands up to
detailed scrutiny. By this I refer to providing retrievable data that can be re-accessed
if need be. Moreover, audio and video recordings have been stored in a secure
location and will be accessible to other researchers after my analysis is complete.
Sample data was co-analysed by myself and my supervisors to help with validity.
In this way I, as a researcher, could distance myself from my role as teacher to
provide more objective analysis of the data.

6.15 Teacher’s Role

In the data collected for this study I, the researcher, acted as a teacher. My role was to
be the expert, someone who understood the contextual and cultural nature of Japanese
as well as the linguistic features. In taking a sociocultural stance I saw my role as
someone providing a scaffold, within the zone of proximal development, of temporary
structures of support provided to facilitate the students’ understanding of how
language is used in a cultural context (Cumming-Potvin, Renshaw & van
Kraayenoord 2003). Through this scaffold I was able to guide, clarify, support and
enhance contributions that the students made. Moreover, my task was also to give the
students opportunities to consider and reflect on our collaborative learning.

To begin with I only observed students working without intervening to guide them. I
took notes but did not organise their learning. In the next phase I introduced the SLM
and observed students’ interpretations and uses of the SLM keyword questions. It
was in this role that most of my data was collected. In this intervention I kept the
students on task while challenging students’ ideas, guiding their collaborative learning
and guiding them towards linguistic, cultural and contextual features of the text. I not
only guided the students but also was, in turn, guided by their responses to the
keyword questions. For example, the second keyword question was originally
‘Translate – what does it mean?; however, this elicited a dictionary definition. My
response was to guide the students away from a literal interpretation of the question to
consider multiple meanings or cultural influences that changed the meaning. In
accordance with this objective I changed the keyword question to ‘Interpret- what does it mean?’

In sum, the ‘teacher’s role’ is defined by the question ‘How did the teacher shape the students’ thinking through interaction?’ From my experience I found myself focusing on my own ‘teacher talk’ and finding that my role was best served by guiding, clarifying, supporting and reflecting together while responding to the keyword questions. While my own ‘expert’ voice and guidance was a vital part of our collaboration, it is the students’ talk that is the focus of the following data analysis chapter because it was their changing understanding of language that was the focus of the study.

6.16 The Students’ Participation

Of the nine students who responded to my formal invitation, all had an intermediate level of written and spoken Japanese. However, of those nine, only five students stayed in the class to which I had access, so only those five students participated in this study. These students had a keen interest, not only in the Japanese language, but also in Japan as a country. Such an interest provided personal experiences which enhanced the students’ everyday concepts regarding the Japanese linguaculture.

While analysing the data I asked myself questions such as ‘What did the students do with their learning to show progress from code-centered procedure to privileging culture and context?’ and ‘In what way did they collaborate and learn from each other?’

These questions were asked through the prism provided by Renshaw and Brown’s (2007) formats of talk and the different dispositions of Voice used by the students as outlined above.
6.17 Observation and Data

The data for this study were gathered through video recordings, samples of work written by the students, interviews with the students and observations and reflections taken from a teachers’ diary which I kept through the data collection period. I worked with five students over a six month period recording students and myself engaging in collaborative reading tasks. Then I took a six month break from data collection to type the transcripts. I then returned to the classroom following advice from my supervisors to see how the students responded to the SLM after a long break. Transcriptions from all these sessions became the primary source of data. The aim of the research was to observe the way students were guided to higher order perceptions of Japanese texts by responding to questions that address issues of context, intercultural understanding and collaboratively generated meaning making. A large amount of footage concentrated on the ways the students collaborated when reading the Japanese folk story *Momotaro* (Quakenbush 1993). In all the episodes recorded, I was looking for examples of the way collaboration allowed an awareness of linguaculture to be expressed through the students’ talk. Furthermore, a worksheet, prepared by me, gave the students the chance to write responses to the SLM’s key questions. Examples of these handwritten notes were also a part of my data collection. As a teacher/observer, I kept a diary of my observations and responses. Sections of this diary were used to introduce and describe the scene for each transcript but was not subjected to analysis.

Towards the end of the study I conducted interviews with two students to assess if the SLM questions had become part of the way they approached and understood their Japanese learning. These interviews are presented at the end of the data analysis chapter.
6.18 Generating Data with Interviews

The decision to conduct interviews with my students was based on the assumption that, if I wanted to understand the experience of learning Japanese as a linguaculture, I had to engage with the learners themselves. Thus, through the interview the students had the opportunity to become ‘experiencing and informing subjects’ (Gubrium & Holstein 2002, p.8).

In order to generate data I created categories to identify Voices deployed throughout the interview. Thus I have framed Voice using the following categories so as to identify the students’ ‘speaking consciousness’ (Wertsch 1991, p.51).

6.19 Interviews

Through my research question I was interested to see if the students’ view of language learning had changed after using the SLM for a year. I chose a face to face interview as a means of collecting data on what my students’ conception of language was and ways in which they accepted, adapted and reflected upon an understanding of the Japanese linguaculture.

I did not frame the interviewee student as a pre-determined subject whose learning and opinions occur at a fixed, quantifiable point-in-time. Rather, my questions sought to position the interviewee as a co-constructor and co-participant who talks a notion of Japanese literacy into existence in collaboration with me. I was able to see how ‘identity is formed and transformed through the appropriation of particular language practices and genres’ (Renshaw 2004, p.4). In this way, the interviews are looked upon as providing a means for gauging the Voice adopted by the interviewee.
6.20 Interview Protocol

As I wanted to avoid the highly-controlled interview dominated by the researcher’s questions, I deliberately approached the interview as an open-ended discussion in which the student and I co-constructed key themes. In other words, I started the interview with general aims and themes but allowed these to be changed according to the students’ responses.

For example, I wanted the interviewee to talk around general themes such as,

Learning Japanese ‘culture’ in the context of learning a language.

I also wanted the student to reflect on how the SLM assisted learning and to give examples from his own learning.

I was also interested to know the students’ perception of how learning with peers is different to learning by one’s self.

Such interview goals encouraged discussion in which the student could consider and respond to questions and I, in turn, could be open to spontaneous answers.

This turned out to be appropriate because in the actual interview some questions and themes were generated by immediate circumstances which I did not predict. That is, on the day the interviews took place a Japanese exchange student had just arrived at the school and I witnessed his classroom introduction. This authentic learning situation prompted me to ask questions linked to the general themes and reflections above but specifically related to the introduction that had just taken place. For this reason, the actual interview questions are framed below:
You’ve just heard a Japanese exchange student introduce himself. In his introduction was there an example of how understanding culture helped you understand the words?

How is your politeness different (from Japanese people’s)?

How is formality different from courtesy?

What’s an example of a pattern of words that shows formality?

6.21 Transcripts

Most of the data used in this study comes from transcripts of discussions videoed by me as the students and I used the SLM as described above. When transcribing these discussions I used a strict orthographic standard in spelling; however, I did choose to transcribe the students’ natural style of conversation. For example, I kept words such as ‘yeah’, ‘yep’, ‘ummm’ and ‘well’.

I also inserted a literal dictionary English translation of every Japanese word used and where ever necessary explained the technicalities of the Japanese language relevant to the task described. For example, in some sections of the text the students talk about the use of the various Japanese syllabaries hiragana and katakana. These terms are explained in the introduction of the example. Japanese words and titles were placed in italics to make them easy to identify. I have transcribed the talk as a conversation; however, I recognise that transcription is an ‘interpretation’ of those discussions (Ochs 1979) influenced by the analytical tools of Voice and the Four Formats of classroom talk.

6.22 Decisions Concerning how the Transcription Processes are Linked to the Philosophical Assumptions of the Research

The interview transcriptions did not set out to offer a verbatim copy of what was said in the interview, but through the interpretive notion of Voice (Bakhtin 1981, Wertsch 1991) and formats of talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) to appreciate the ‘inherently
representational and interpretive nature of transcription’ (Poland 2002, p.629). In other words, the transcription allowed me to interpret and document evidence of the students’ understanding of Japanese linguaculture. In this chapter I present the interview as a socially constructed and co-authored conversation in context.

For this reason, I have made explicit my belief that written conventions do not always translate well from the spoken word. As Poland points out, ‘verbal interactions follow a logic that is different from written prose, and therefore, tend to look remarkably disjointed, inarticulate and even incoherent when committed to the written page’ (Poland 2002, p.633).

6.23 Translation and Extra-linguistic Information

During the interviews the students used some Japanese words such as sensei and hashiru which I put into italics and translated in brackets; for example, sensei (teacher) or shitsureishimasu (polite form of excuse me). For extra-linguistic information such as a person’s name or what happened during our interaction, I explain in brackets immediately following the word or action; for example, when a person’s name is used ‘Sensei Ryder’ (Bill’s Japanese language teacher) or when I interrupt. In sum, as far as possible, the transcription process tried to capture the dynamic, co-constructed nature of the interview in which students attempt to express their understanding of the Japanese linguaculture and the ways it is accessed and expressed in their learning.
6.24 Phases of the Study

The study consisted of three phases as set out in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase of Study</th>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Data Presented</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Japanese Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase One</td>
<td>One month</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Bill, Mike, Robert, Steve &amp; Harry</td>
<td>Classroom materials authored by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oct 15th – Nov 15th 2006</td>
<td>Examples 1.a – 5.a, Pages 91-107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Two</td>
<td>Two weeks</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Bill, Mike &amp; Robert</td>
<td>Momotaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 2nd - 17th 2007</td>
<td>Examples 6.a-9.a, Pages 111-131</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Three</td>
<td>Two weeks</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Bill, Mike &amp; Robert</td>
<td>Momotaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>July 7th-13th 2008</td>
<td>Examples 10.a – 11.a, Pages 132-134, Two interviews Pages 135-142</td>
<td></td>
<td>Speech given by Japanese exchange student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phase One**

This phase shows my initial observations. The aim was to show observations of how the students’ learned to be literate in Japanese.
**Phase Two**

This phase shows the implementation of the SLM and contains the bulk of the data gathered. This is also the phase when *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) was used as the text. This is important because the resources used before were original tasks and worksheets authored by the classroom teacher, while *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) is an original text written by Japanese educators. The story of *Momotaro* also is an authentic Japanese fairytale, a cultural text which is submerged in linguaculture.

**Phase Three**

Due to a lack of data and the busy school life of the student, this phase took place a year after the phase described above. This phase used only three students, Bill, Mike and Robert, from the initial five used in phase two. These three were chosen by me because they had returned their consent forms signed by their carers, and were the only students who had continued learning Japanese into grade nine. This showed their ability and interest in the language.

**6.25 Summary**

In this chapter I have described the methodological framework of sociocultural theory and the analytical tools of Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007). I have also explained how students were selected, the teacher’s and students’ role in the data collection and details of the interview process and phases of the study. In the next chapter I will present the data with accompanying analysis.
Chapter Seven: Data Analysis and Findings

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I outlined the methodological framework and tools of analysis of Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) and Voice (Bakhtin 1981). In this chapter I apply these tools to data collected from a grade eight Japanese classroom in order to explore how the sociocultural approach can be used to teach Japanese literacy and how students became aware of the Japanese linguaculture through the Social Literacy Model’s (SLM) keyword questions. The examples presented from Phase One of the study to Phase Three were chosen to show a gradual transition from a linguistic focus of the students’ talk to a more interpretive anthropological awareness of Japanese. The data presented in this chapter starts with examples from Phase One of the study that suggests there was little difference to the way the students approach their Japanese learning and that they were still coming to an understanding of collaboration. In Phase Two of the study minor steps towards using and interpreting the keyword questions of the SLM are used to highlight the gradual transition from linguistic to anthropological understanding of language. Phase Three shows examples of a fuller and sophisticated understanding of an anthropological voice and collaboration.

My data analysis will introduce extracts from field notes which explain the circumstances of the data collection, transcripts from videoed discussions and an analysis of the themes as interpreted through the chosen tools of analysis. Also, two examples of written feedback from the SLM worksheet will be used in order to include examples of written contributions from the students. Finally, two interviews will be analysed to assist in the exploration of whether the students did internalise the themes of the SLM and become aware of the Japanese linguaculture.
I have chosen short examples of student interaction from over eight hours of video recordings. The bulk of these recordings show the students slowly reading the Japanese script word by word and then decoding each word into English. However, the decoding process is not the focus of my study so these examples of data will not be included in the following analysis. Here, I am more interested in exploring how the students change their approach and understanding of what reading Japanese means, so the examples of interaction were chosen over examples of translating and code-breaking for close analysis. In order to assist in my exploration of how the sociocultural approach can be applied to learning Japanese literacy, the transcripts focus on discussions about the text and how collaboration may promote an understanding of linguaculture.

The data analysis can be categorised into three phases. Phase One interrogates interactions among peers when a collaborative learning style was made possible with the introduction of the SLM. This phase looks at interactions and insights made through collaboration when my research was first implemented and the sociocultural approach to teaching was unfamiliar to the students.

Phase Two scrutinises data collected at the end of that six month period and will attempt to illustrate the changes in the students’ ways of seeing the Japanese language through the lens of linguaculture. This phase will also attempt to describe and capture examples of the students integrating schooled and everyday concepts through Voice (Bakhtin 1981) and Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007).

Phase Three examines data collected a year after the completion of the second phase of data collection. This time gap was not planned at the beginning of the study but after such time interviews were considered necessary by myself and my supervisors in order to assess the extent to which the students had internalised an anthropological view of language. I was also interested to see if, after a year without using the SLM, these students had started to co-construct a higher order analysis of the text as a social and contextualised practice and to what extent this change might have resulted from
the integration of schooled and everyday concepts. Thus the interviews become an important addition to my exploration of the research question ‘How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?’

For example, during my initial observations I found that the students collaborated in their classroom interactions with little help from me. Elements of peer to peer cooperation such as asking questions, assisting and sharing insights happened whenever students worked together but this was not collaboration in a sociocultural sense (Brown & Palincsar 1989, Brown et al 1993, Hawkins 2004, Moll 1990, Mercer 2000). However, after reading and reflecting on the transcripts I found that when the students ‘collaborated’ on their own they reinforced a code-centric, de-coding approach to reading Japanese.

Based on this understanding, I could see that the quality of the students’ collaboration needed guidance from me, as their teacher, in order to develop more sophisticated ‘epistemic operations’ such as ‘defining the problem, isolating important contributing variables, referring to context, past knowledge, data or general principles, and evaluating progress’ (Brown & Palincsar 1989, p.409), or those of ‘collective argumentation’ such as explaining, justifying, agreeing and presenting (Brown & Renshaw 2000) designed to encourage the students to ‘think together’ (Mercer 2000). The aim of the SLM intervention used in this research was to show the students how to approach Japanese through an anthropological disposition; that is, to be sensitive to the linguaculture and understand that literacy can be seen as a social practice. This approach did not include supporting each other’s code breaking strategies or an intent to keep their learning within a code-centric, linguistic notion of language.

7.2 Coding Procedure

The selected video segments were transcribed in a script format which showed the students’ and my discussions. Each time I or one of the students spoke uninterrupted, it was coded as one conversational turn, labelled and numbered sequentially. Because
the sociocultural approach is concerned with the social nature of learning, the focus of
the coding was the interaction between myself and the students as well as the
students’ interactions among themselves. For this reason, each conversational turn
was described according to how the students responded to my guidance or interacted
with each other.

7.3 Field Notes

Field notes appear at the beginning of each example and are composed of a paragraph
that puts the examples into a broader context. They act as coherent introductions
based on notes made by me at the time of data collection. The field notes are based
on observations and explanations from the time the data was collected and, also, the
commentary is mostly from my teaching point of view.

For example, the field notes contain reflective contextual information such as ‘I
thought the questions were very straightforward but they do not seem to understand
them at all’. They also contain practical explanations such as introducing students,
defining the phase of the study and precise content information such as ‘I am
introducing the notion of ‘formality’ and ‘informal’ which can change the use and
meaning of words’. The field notes also introduce important explanations of new
aspects of the Japanese linguaculture that are being discussed. For example, ‘Here I
guide the students through a discussion where we focus on the influence of English in
the Japanese language commonly referred to as Japlish’.

7.4 Data and Analysis

In this section I present the data to be used in this study. These examples of data
consist largely of transcripts from videoed classroom discussion except where
otherwise stated. This data collection included five students: Steve, Harry, Bill, Mike
and Robert. However, only Phase Two included examples of data from Steve and
Harry due to the fact that they moved to another class during the other phases. Bill, Mike and Robert appear throughout the data. Each example will begin with details concerning the text used, the students involved, the date and an introduction to the setting through the field notes. Detailed definitions of all terms found in the description of interaction column of the data are found in Appendix One.

7.5 Phase One: Beginning of Data Collection

Example 1.a: Focus on collaborative code-breaking

This example came from a text about animals and was recorded on October 10th 2006 involving Bill, Robert and Mike.

Field Notes

*This is the first Japanese class. I haven’t introduced the SLM yet. This grade 8 class is working on a unit called Environment and Japan. In this session we were reading from an animal characteristics chart in Japanese which outlined details about a Siberian Tiger such as country of origin, numbers in the wild and in captivity, weight, size and environmental status. I videoed the three students who worked together in the classroom with other students around them. Everyone in the class was reading the same text. My group started translating the first section which outlined the names and places the animals lived. They then looked at the next column under the heading ‘previous numbers’. Together two students point directly to the written page and slowly sound out the Japanese syllabary hiragana. I have not introduced the SLM yet so we translate the words into English as we go (October).*
Table 12: Transcript 1.a – Description of endangered animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bill</td>
<td>500 tou no yasei no tora ga imashita! (There were 500 tigers in the wild).</td>
<td>Reading text verbatim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Me</td>
<td>What does that mean?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bill</td>
<td>There were 500 tigers in the wild in 1997.</td>
<td>Student answers a question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Me</td>
<td>Yeah, it’s in the past tense, how do we know it’s in the past tense?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Mike</td>
<td>Because it’s in 1997 (laughs).</td>
<td>Student answers a question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Me</td>
<td>If it said <em>imasu</em> it would mean now but it says <em>imashita</em> so it means then. Continue.</td>
<td>Explicit instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mike</td>
<td>1997 nen yaku...500 tora...tsukama...e...</td>
<td>Reading text verbatim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Bill</td>
<td><em>Mashita</em> (past tense form)</td>
<td>Assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Mike</td>
<td><em>Mashita</em> (past tense form)</td>
<td>Repeats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Me</td>
<td>Can you explain the past tense?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Mike</td>
<td>Now is <em>masu</em> and the past is <em>mashita</em></td>
<td>Student answers question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Me</td>
<td>Is it like English?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Bill</td>
<td>It’s like ‘ed’ on the end.</td>
<td>Responding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mike</td>
<td>Like walk and walked</td>
<td>Assists teaching with an example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Bill</td>
<td>Ran is the past but it doesn’t have ‘ed’</td>
<td>Draws on school concept of first language structures to engage further reasoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Mike</td>
<td>But Japanese is not English.</td>
<td>Responding.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

In this episode of talk there were no examples of interactive statements or putting language into a cultural context. Throughout the segment the linguistic voice was
privileged as can be seen from the questions and topics discussed which all focus on the linguistic code. The collaboration between the students and me was co-operative but stayed with the direct responses from the teacher-led questions. This also applied to the engagement with the text which in the example shown above did not include interpretation. Moreover, there is a lot of assistance from me as the expert teacher concerning an explanation of the past tense in the form of *masu* and *mashita*. Until I attempted to guide the students towards a comparison of Japanese and English, there is little thought about how the past tense works. Also, there is no collaboration or co-construction between the students; however, there are examples of the students asking me questions. For example, in turn 6 I say ‘if it said imasu it would mean now but it says imashita so it means then’ thus, giving an example of the past tense. This is a good example of replacement or setting the ground rules of how the Japanese past tense works through explicit instruction; however, there is no contribution from the students as co-constructors of learning. Later in turn 7, 8 and 9 we see Bill helping Mike remember the past-tense form of the verb possibly having noticed his failure in turn 5 and consolidating what I have just told them in turn 6. This shows Bill assisting Mike to show Mike’s correct understanding and thus the beginning of collaboration.

In turn 12 I guide the discussion to focus on linguistic constructions when I ask ‘Is it like English?’ The students stay within the linguistic voice and describe the Japanese use of the past tense and a similar example in English with ‘ed’ thus answering the question they avoided in turn 5. I suggest this instance of classroom interaction shows a small step towards integrating the schooled concept of what they have learnt in the classroom with their own use of the past tense in English. However, they also go on to realise that some verbs are irregular unlike Japanese which consistently uses *masu/mashita* in the *masu* form. This shows a linguistic awareness being brought into the discussion facilitated by co-operation and assistance. Finally, in turn 15, Bill challenges Mike’s idea that the comparison is helpful by suggesting that unlike English, Japanese does not have irregular verbs and thus brings them both closer to a more complex understanding of language.
However limited, the students did extend examples and engage in concept building suggesting that peer to peer collaboration has started. This example can be seen as the beginning of statements that lead to the replacement of ‘precise terms and acting within the ground rules of a particular discourse genre’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.8) in schooled notions of Japanese grammar and is therefore a good example of a transition taking place from a linguistic focus with little interpretation, to a more considered understanding through discussion and sharing insights.

In this episode of talk the students allowed me to speak as an authoritative expert and did not engage in co-reasoning. As an expert I guided the students towards comparisons with English in order to draw on their everyday knowledge of English grammar to understand tense in their own language and to see it as useful in understanding past tense in Japanese. However, in turns 2 and 10 I ask leading questions which allow the students to share their reasoning, especially in turns 13-16 where the students show a good example of developing a ‘richer understanding of a student’s first language’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3) and thus developing best practice. While these examples only show students using a linguistic voice they are beginning to explore the new language collaboratively.

*Example 1.b Intervention through SLM response sheet*

This example was taken from a text about animals on October 10th 2006 and involved Bill, Mike and Robert.

I now turn to the SLM worksheet completed collaboratively after the talking episode referred to above (example 1.a), in order to assist in an exploration of whether the students did or did not understand the concepts or words required to see the Japanese text as a linguaculture.
Field Notes

I have started using the SLM worksheets. I thought the questions were very straightforward but the students did not seem to understand them at all. I did my best to make a few suggestions and to allow the boys to collaborate freely but I think this backfired because they hardly wrote anything. They talked a lot but they wrote very little. It’s clear they do not understand the concept of linguaculture or the process of collaboration yet. They need more guidance from me.

Table 13: Worsheet 1.b – Intervention through SLM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLM Questions</th>
<th>Collective Student Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Describe: What do you see?</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Interpret: What does the text mean?</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Contextualise: How is the text used?</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Analyse: What does the text ask you to believe?</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Respond: What have you learnt?</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis

As is suggested by Table 1, the students wrote nothing despite not being graded for their answers and having plenty of time to fill in the responses. This brevity of response could show that the students did not understand the questions because the concepts were new to them. The following data provides insights into the students developing an understanding of the keywords and how they might be used. These students have not been assisted to develop an anthropological voice, so they seem not to know how to answer the keyword questions.
Making comparisons with a student’s own language marks the beginning of seeing Japanese through their own lived experience, although this is only the beginning. The above example has been chosen for analysis because it provides insights into how the students saw learning a new language as primarily the act of code-breaking, not contextualising or interpreting. In the following examples, this changes after more assistance from me and the students start the gradual transition to replace their everyday concepts of language with a more contextualised and interpreted linguaculture.

**Example 1.c Second Example of Intervention Through SLM Worksheet**

The following text was about wildlife and was recorded on October 21st 2009 one week after the above example and involved Bill, Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

*The following section took place a week after the above example and is based on the written response by the students to the SLM questions regarding the Japanese text Momotaro. This written response shows an improvement on example 1.a because here they have given more detailed answers after considering the questions during the week. The students’ code-breaking focus remains, but their answers and ideas have improved from the blank sheet shown in example 1.b. However, my attempts to ‘replace’ this linguistic voice with the more interpretive approach embodied in the SLM has yet to be effective.*

**Table 14: Worksheet 1.c – Second example of intervention through SLM worksheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLM Question</th>
<th>Collective Written Student Response</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpret – What Does It Mean?</td>
<td>The aim of the WWF is to protect endangered habitats and the wildlife within them.</td>
<td>A good translation worked out collaboratively but it is not closely connected to what is written in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe: What do you see?</td>
<td>To protect endangered animals such as tigers, pandas and rhinos.</td>
<td>Japanese, for example, no mention of specific words and what they mean or how the language generates this meaning. In other words, it is more closely connected to the students’ everyday understanding of the WWF which lacks an anthropological voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualise: How is it used?</td>
<td>The first main aim of the WWF and the second main aim of WWF.</td>
<td>Here the students are referring to the heading they have read that outlines the objectives of the World Wildlife Fund. No mention of Japanese language or script. Without any interpretation or analysis, this could be seen as an everyday response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse: What does it ask you to believe?</td>
<td>A WWF pamphlet. What they do to protect animals.</td>
<td>Very general and incomplete as there is no interpretation and no detailed understanding of the context and how it contributes to meaning. This answer is a surface description of the pamphlet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They ask us to believe that they protect the environment and endangered animals and to help the environmental problems by lowering pollution and protect the forests. | Shows a good understanding of the dictionary definition of the text but not a cultural or contextual analysis. |
Respond: What have you learnt?

Mokuteki – aim, sai- rhino, mamoru – look after, mondai- problem, tatoeba example, hogoshimasu to protect.

Ways to help animals and the environment.

This shows the students engaging with the text and learning new vocabulary. However, the new words and their English meanings are presented like a dictionary with no explanation of how or why these words are used.

**General Analysis**

Here I offer a brief analysis of the overall result of the above worksheet. In contrast to the example of 1.b the above example is an improvement, because the students have worked together to provide detailed responses. However, this example illustrates that the students’ response contains no interpretation or awareness of the linguaculture and that the SLM does not bring the students from a linguistic focus to an anthropological focus without guidance. This example is offered to show that the discussion about the text needs to show an anthropological stance. However, the students did work together to answer the keyword questions and with more time and guidance from me these observations act as a starting point for more culturally sensitive insights. The next example looks at classroom talk and interaction which provides the guidance lacking in the previous findings; the start of understanding the text as contextualised and connected to culture.

**Example 2.a: Illustrating polite language. Second use of the SLM**

The following example was recorded on October 17th 2006 and involved Bill, Robert and Mike. This example returns to before example 1.c as this is an example of discussion above a keyword concept ‘context’ which may contribute to understanding the SLM worksheet.
Field Notes

The students are working on ideas and vocabulary for a unit of work that looks at Japan and the environment. This includes activities that introduce animal names and characteristics and the situation with endangered species. Here I help Bill, Robert and Mike work out a sentence which they only know in English but want to translate into Japanese. They are still code-breaking but I think this is a good example of how I try to connect new vocabulary to a cultural context. This is done by providing a scaffold through translating words they did not know into Japanese. This way I introduce the notion of ‘formality’ and ‘informal’ and emphasise the way this can change the use and meaning of words.

Table 15: Transcript 2.a – Illustrating polite language. Second use of the SLM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bill</td>
<td>Do you know how to say ‘that’s terrible’?</td>
<td>Direct question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Me</td>
<td>Hidoi ne or taihen desu ne.</td>
<td>Explicit instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mike</td>
<td>ta he…(looks at Bill) yeah</td>
<td>Seeks assistance from peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Bill</td>
<td>Taihen … yeah</td>
<td>To himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Mike</td>
<td>taihe … he?</td>
<td>Mispronounces word, looks at others for assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Robert</td>
<td>(Mike seems to forget how to write the hiragana letter he) he, this one</td>
<td>Assisting Mike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mike</td>
<td>yeah?</td>
<td>Writes down the hiragana ‘he’ and looks to Bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Bill</td>
<td>taihen desu ni(error) … ne.</td>
<td>Assistance from peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Me</td>
<td>taihen desu ne, yes that’s it. I think you should say taihen not hidoi desu ne. Taihen puts emphasis on the other person’s effort so its more polite, it shows you’re concerned. It’s the difference between ‘too bad’ and</td>
<td>Explicit instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'oh that’s awful’.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Bill</td>
<td>So you say that with your friends?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Me</td>
<td>yeah.</td>
<td>Agrees with point made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Me</td>
<td>You don’t need the ni just ta i he n de su ne.</td>
<td>Makes correction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

This segment of the transcript was chosen for analysis because it shows one of the first examples of interweaving talk necessary for the construction of an anthropological voice. That is, I put the words taihen (shows sympathy for effort made) and hidoii (awful) into a social context, suggesting that, while the two words have a similar meaning, the context and way the word is used makes one word more appropriate than the other. In line 9 I assist the students by introducing the word ‘polite’ as a way of categorising elements of linguaculture, that is, that ‘polite’ words are different to ‘ordinary’ words and this difference affects the meaning. Categorising words in this way is the start of constructing an anthropological voice and shows how schooled concepts may be taught through formal instruction.

In turn 10 Bill says ‘so we say that with friends’ thus drawing on an everyday understanding of ‘how we speak to friends’. In this way Bill is integrating school knowledge (the new Japanese word) and an everyday concept from his lived experience ‘how we talk with friends’. I try to extend this understanding in turn 9 by giving an example in English between ‘too bad’ and ‘that’s awful’ to illustrate the difference between a more colloquial and more polite way of saying the same thing. These categories themselves become part of an anthropological voice and are examples of replacement because these categories are replacing aspects of a linguistic voice. My aim is to encourage an anthropological voice; that is, a way of speaking which can help the students’ reconceptualise the linguistic code as something dynamic and culturally situated. The students collaborated on minor coding skills such as Robert helping Mike remember the hiragana ‘he’ in line 6. Throughout the transcript the coding shows the dominance of transmission statements through explicit
instruction, direct responses and requests for clarification. No extension of ideas or interpretation through sharing observations with each other is evident.

Example 3.a: Use of script

The following example is from a text about the environment and was recorded on October 24th 2006 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

The students are starting to make a transition by noticing small details that change the way they see Japanese as a linguaculture. The first keyword question ‘Describe: What do you see?’ asks the boys to look more closely at the way the Japanese script is constructed. Combined with the other questions, this question is intended to help them see the script more as a cultural practice with meaning rather than as neutral code. The following example shows the concept of ‘the code as neutral script’ being replaced with the concept of ‘the code as cultural practice’ so that the students come to understand that the katakana syllabary is more than just a phonic symbol.

In this extract I am working with three students in a separate room to the other boys in the class but doing the same written activities. We are using the same text about the environment and talking about the various World Wildlife Fund projects taking place around the world. However, this example does not show the students collaborating with each but instead it shows me replacing one concept of how the Japanese script is used with another through explicit instruction.
Table 16: Transcript 3.a – Use of script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bill</td>
<td><em>Doubutsu wa koko ... ni ...... Su n....... de..... I masu ka.</em></td>
<td>Reading text verbatim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Do the animals live here?).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Me</td>
<td>What are they talking about?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bill</td>
<td>Do you live in this place.</td>
<td>Answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Me</td>
<td>Yes, that’s right so where do the animals live?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Bill</td>
<td>In Africa.</td>
<td>Answers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Me</td>
<td>That’s right. How do you know that?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Bill</td>
<td>Because that’s what’s written.</td>
<td>Answers question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Me</td>
<td>But how is the word written.</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Bill</td>
<td>What do you mean?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Me</td>
<td>Is the word ‘Africa’ in <em>hiragana</em> or <em>katakana</em>?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Bill</td>
<td><em>Katakana.</em></td>
<td>Answers correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Me</td>
<td>What do we know about <em>katakana</em>?</td>
<td>Asks question to extend answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Bill</td>
<td>Katakana is for foreign words.</td>
<td>Answers correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Me</td>
<td>Where do you think the word ‘Africa’ came from?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Bill</td>
<td>English.</td>
<td>Answers correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Me</td>
<td>Yes. <em>Katakana</em> tells you it’s a foreign word and the sound of it tells you it’s the same as the English word. These things can help you understand the meaning.</td>
<td>Explicit instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Analysis**

This example shows no elaboration, sharing of observations or interaction between the students. However, it does show teacher-centred explicit instruction that uses an initiation-response-evaluation Format of Talk (Mehan 1979) and guiding questions to help make the students aware of the Japanese linguaculture. In other words, it is an example of guiding the students towards contextualising the use of *katakana* and seeing that there is a cultural use for this script to identify ‘foreign’ words and that this is one aspect of linguaculture. For this reason this data has been chosen as an example of gradual transition towards understanding the Japanese linguaculture.

In turns 8 and 13, I am attempting to engage the student, Bill, with the schooled concept that ‘*the way something is written itself has meaning*’, or as suggested by sociocultural theory, that the mediating tool of writing conveys the meaning. This idea can be used to contextualise the way words are written. In turn 6, I ask ‘*how do you know that?*’ as a way to encourage Bill to reflect on how he arrived at the given answer. In turn 13, Bill shows he understands the idea that *katakana* is for ‘*foreign words*’. From this stance it is possible to explain that the *katakana* syllabary has a meaning separate from the phonic sounds they represent, that is, it identifies all non-Japanese words.

With this idea in mind Bill draws on his everyday knowledge of English to recognise that the English word ‘Africa’ has been borrowed by the Japanese and is shown to be a ‘foreign word’ because it is written in *katakana*. This is a fundamental aspect of the Japanese code and understanding this distinction not only helps the reader understand the meaning of a word but connects the script to a history and therefore an understanding of one fragment of linguaculture.

*Example 4.a: Early use of the SLM*

The following example was taken from a text about animals and was recorded on October 31st 2006 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.
Field Notes

So far the SLM has been used in two lessons. In this example the three students Bill, Mike and Robert are reading a World Wild Life Fund Pamphlet written by the classroom teacher to be used in the unit on the environment. The students show they do not fully understand the SLM in their talk by asking me questions about how to use it. Here they assist each other in understanding the new concepts introduced through the SLM such as putting words in context and observing the page architecture to help find meaning. This example shows how these ideas are introduced in a collaborative setting where the students can engage in discussion and ask myself and each other questions, a sign of collaboration because the students are directing their own learning through their own contributions. We read the text in Japanese first and translate it into English as we read. Because we have just started referring to the SLM questions, we are using them to guide our translation of the Japanese text.

Table 17: Transcript 4.a – Early use of the SLM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Robert</td>
<td>(looking at SLM sheet) Respond: What did you learn? That can mean all these new words?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bill</td>
<td>How do you interpret the meaning? What does it mean to you?</td>
<td>Takes role of teacher and answers Mike’s question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Mike</td>
<td>Contextualise?</td>
<td>Asks for extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bill</td>
<td>How is it used in that context?</td>
<td>Answers question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Me</td>
<td>Yes, so what’s the most important context for this?</td>
<td>Prompt for further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mike</td>
<td>The World Wildlife Fund and their three different aims (as stated in the text).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Me</td>
<td>Yes, it’s promoting the WWF, that’s the context, to explain what they do. So let’s read on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Robert</td>
<td><em>Tatoeba, panda ya tora ya sai no youna doubutsu o momoruno o tetsudaimasu</em> (for example pandas, tigers and rhinos to help protect) what’s <em>tatoeba</em>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Bill</td>
<td>Don’t sweat the small stuff; we can work it out at the end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Robert</td>
<td>It’s not small I don’t understand it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Me</td>
<td>It means ‘for example’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Bill</td>
<td>WWF helps the environment and the animals that live in it for example pandas, tigers and rhinos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

This transcript indicates a transition and change in the way the students are learning to be aware of the Japanese linguaculture. We are still learning how to use and understand the SLM so there is no anthropological voice or interpretation. The students guide each other in their learning by giving advice on how to use and understand the SLM keyword questions showing more interaction and increased interactive statements. For example, in turn 1 Robert says ‘**Respond - What did you learn? That can mean all these new words**’ To him learning a language equals learning words. In turn 2 Mike says ‘**Interpret: What does it mean? What’s that?**’ showing he doesn’t comprehend the concept ‘interpret’. Throughout the linguistic voice is used exclusively which privileges a code-centric view of language. However, it is a good example of how the affordance of a collaborative approach is starting to be accepted and how it allows the students to work together on a common understanding of how *katakana* is used. For example, in turns 1-5 the discussion becomes more student-directed as the students ask and answer their own questions without waiting for me to assist them. This happens again in turns 10 and 11 when Bill assists Robert. By asking each other questions for clarification they are helping
each other develop their own ideas and therefore show early signs of collaboration. This style of collaboration is very different from the transmission approach seen through explicit instruction and the replacement format encountered in previous examples. For this reason, this example has been chosen to show a movement forward towards awareness of the Japanese linguaculture through increased interactive statements and the beginning of collaboration.

\textit{Example 5.a: Understanding Japlish}

The following example was taken from a text about the environment and was recorded on November 15th 2006 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.

\textbf{Field Notes}

\textit{We are continuing with the theme of the environment. Again I am working with Bill, Robert and Mike in a separate room from the rest of the class but studying the same text as the other students in the class. In this example I guide the three students through a discussion where we focus on the influence of English in the Japanese language commonly referred to as Japlish. The aim is to get them thinking about the relationships between their own language and the target language. This speaks directly to one of the aims of the National Statement ‘to cultivate a richer understanding of the student’s first language’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3). Furthermore, reflecting on the vocabulary encourages the students to consider some historical circumstances that may help explain why Japanese people would use English words. This is an important aspect of the linguaculture in that it helps the students understand one of the main sources of contemporary Japanese vocabulary. The students are reading a text about protecting the environment and come across the English word ‘project’ used in a Japanese text.}
Table 18: Transcript 5.a – Understanding Japlish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Bill</td>
<td>Up to 2000, umm, helped with, umm, <em>po je ku to</em>, umm</td>
<td>Direct answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Me</td>
<td>What script is it written in?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Bill</td>
<td>Katakana.</td>
<td>Direct answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Me</td>
<td>So?</td>
<td>Prompt to think about the answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Bill</td>
<td>So it’s a loaned word</td>
<td>Direct answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Me</td>
<td>Yes, probably from English</td>
<td>Confirms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Mike</td>
<td>Is it ‘project’?</td>
<td>Direct answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Bill</td>
<td>Yes but why is it English?</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Me</td>
<td>Well English is the world language and after World War 2 the English-speaking allies had a huge influence on the way things were organised in Japan and Japan wanted to be part of the global economy and so English became very prestigious, everybody had to learn it at school.</td>
<td>Elaborated answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Bill</td>
<td>But don’t they have a word for ‘project’?</td>
<td>Student engages topic with further questioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Me</td>
<td>Not exactly. So tell me what do you call that Japanese food, it’s rice wrapped in seaweed?</td>
<td>Explains through comparison with English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Me</td>
<td>Yes, we didn’t invent our own word we just</td>
<td>Elaborates example from turn 13.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
borrowed theirs.

16 Robert: We could call it seaweed wrap. Extends example by providing an interpretation based on English.

17 Mike: Maybe people would be turned off by the word seaweed. Extends understanding though with reason.

18 Robert: I love seaweed. Responds.

19 Me: Whatever the reason, we didn’t use our own word, we borrowed theirs, just as they borrow ours, you’ll find it in every language. Guides discussion back to the Japanese script.

Analysis

This example has been chosen to show how the talk can help the students make a transition towards seeing Japanese as a linguaculture. It also shows how the keyword question ‘Describe: What do you see?’ can be elaborated and initiate a discussion that highlights a cultural feature of the code. This is the sort of guidance that was not evident in the student’s understanding examined in examples 1.a, 1.b and 1.c, and suggests the students are making a transition towards being aware of the linguaculture. The objective of this session was to instruct the students on how to see the vocabulary of the Japanese code as an historically and socially organised symbolic system — to look at words as part of a linguaculture. The abundance of English loaned words is recognised by any student of Japanese but understanding why this situation exists needs a formal explanation. At the same time I am trying to encourage the students to collaborate and interpret the loaned words through their own everyday experience.

In turn 5 Bill gives a good example of the replacement format of classroom talk, that is ‘the importance of adopting precise terms and acting within the ground rules of a particular discourse genre’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.6). He shows he understands that in a Japanese text a word written in katakana is a loaned word. He uses the technical term ‘katakana’ (a Japanese syllabary for writing non-Japanese words) to show he understands this concept. Through collaboration, in turn 9 Mike correctly
translates the words as ‘project’. Many Japanese language classes would stop here but in turn 10 Bill takes up the opportunity afforded to him through the SLM format to ask a question not of the code but of the cultural aspect of the text. This active approach is shown in the transcripts through an increase in collaborative turns, use of direct questions from the students (turns 7 and 10) and through students engaging the topic by asking further questions (turn 12). This collaborative interaction leads to the students connecting the use of loaned words to their own lived experience in turns 14–18.

In the above transcripts the students are given the opportunity to take up an ‘inquiring disposition’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.10) that privileges the anthropological voice by asking the question ‘why is it in English?’. This prompts me to take up an anthropological voice which puts the practice of using loaned words into a historical context by saying ‘after World War 2 the English-speaking allies had a huge influence on the way things were organised in Japan’ and this influenced the use of English in Japan.

Turns 12 and 16 see more interaction between the students with Bill and Robert taking up the opportunity afforded to them by the SLM format to ask another leading questions which I answer. By comparing an example of an English loaned-word, that of sushi, I connect the students’ everyday lived experience of using borrowed words in English to a co-construction of the schooled understanding of ‘loaned words’ as they connect the idea of re-naming sushi. In turns 16 and 17 Mike answers Robert when they say ‘we could call it seaweed wrap - Maybe people would be turned off by the word seaweed’. This sequence of talk shows an appreciation of the cultural aspects of using or translating words from another language.

It is through such exchanges that the students replace the idea of the teacher asking all the guiding questions, with the idea of themselves using the opportunity to do so. Also, these types of exchanges have the potential to integrate schooled understandings of ‘loaned words’ with the lived experience of students by assisting them to draw on everyday events to evaluate the use of loaned words. In this way the format of
contextual privileging is taking place because they have a new category of ‘loaned words’ through which to perceive English words in Japanese. Furthermore, the students are starting to interweave this notion into understanding how linguaculture is formed. As illustrated in the above analysis, this can be done by privileging an anthropological voice in the learning interaction which acknowledges the linguaculture of the text. This suggests that meaning is framed and organised around culture and that even English-speakers borrow words rather than replace them as in the case of sushi.

As illustrated above, when given the opportunity to create their own words when interpreting the text, as in the example of ‘seaweed wrap’, the students show they understand that words can be borrowed and that such borrowings can have both advantages and disadvantages. This example shows the students inventing and evaluating their own term and therefore showing higher order thinking about language as defined in the National Statement (2005). Here the students are ‘thinking and negotiating across languages’ as well as gaining a richer understanding of their first language by understanding ‘diverse ways of knowing and doing’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3) and also starting to explore the Japanese linguaculture by slowly producing evidence of constructing an anthropological voice.

Summary of Phase One

Thus far I have suggested that the students are making a gradual transition from a code-centric, linguistic focus to a more contextualised linguacultural awareness of Japanese. I suggest this is a result of using the SLM and engaging with me as I show them how to interpret the text through the keyword questions. The first phase was an introduction to using the SLM and engaging in discussion and interaction which allowed interpretation. The second phase shows examples of a more considered and sophisticated use of an anthropological understanding of language as a social construct and the insights which result from collaboration with myself and each other.
7.6 Phase Two Use of SLM and Linguaculture: Increased Collaboration and Awareness of the Linguaculture.

Introduction

Since the last data collection lesson on November 15th 2006, I had not worked with the students for three months due to their scheduled school holidays and other commitments. The following examples will constitute Phase Two of the study. This phase has two defining features. Firstly, the students and I started working on one text and, secondly, there were increased examples of the students becoming aware of the linguaculture in the texts they were reading. For the previous examples we had been using texts provided by their regular classroom teacher. Although they are all in the Japanese script, they were written about general topics not specific to Japan. In this phase of the study the classroom teacher started reading a Japanese fairy tale called Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993) with the class. The class started reading and analysing this text by first watching a video of the entire story and then reading through the book page by page in class. I saw this story as an excellent opportunity to use a more authentic and culturally rich text for my study. So, it was agreed between the classroom teacher and myself that I would start using the same text for my own study as it would give the students a chance to experience reading in a more authentic way through the SLM. Therefore, all the examples that follow used the text Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993), a story book designed for Japanese as second language learners.

Example 6.a: Hiragana

The following example was taken from the text Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on March 2nd 2007 involving Harry and Steve.

Field Notes

The first example from this phase of the study shows two students, Harry and Steve, who have joined the class after an absence and so appear in the study for the first
time. In this example they are reading the first page from Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993). The students have already seen a video and know the story in detail but this is the first time they have read the book in Japanese with me. The book they are reading is designed for Japanese as Second Language learners but in this example they use grammatical observations to see it as a children’s book. They read one sentence each which was then decoded before we used the SLM to discuss its meaning. A note of explanation for the reader is in order. In this example we talk about ‘hiragana’. This refers to one of three scripts used in Japanese and it is the first script that Japanese school children learn from grade one.

Table 19: Transcript 6.a – Hiragana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Harry</td>
<td>Describe: What do you see?</td>
<td>Reading text verbatim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Me</td>
<td>This is where we look at the practical things, the images, is it hiragana or kanji, is it a play or a story.</td>
<td>Guided instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Harry</td>
<td>It’s a play format with a narrator.</td>
<td>Sharing observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Steve</td>
<td>If it wasn’t we wouldn’t know who was saying each line.</td>
<td>Extending observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Me</td>
<td>Who is the audience?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Steve</td>
<td>The audience is little children because next to the picture of the peach is the word momo (peach) and next to the river is the word kawa (river). (In fact the book is designed for students of Japanese).</td>
<td>Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Me</td>
<td>Why is it all in hiragana?</td>
<td>Direct question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Steve</td>
<td>Because it’s all for young children. They are keeping it simple.</td>
<td>Sharing observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Harry</td>
<td>Yeah, it’s all basic language and everything ends in the masu form.</td>
<td>Extends observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Me</td>
<td>Do you think we do that with our children’s books?</td>
<td>Direct question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Harry</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Direct answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Steve | I think they do with some words. | Extends answer

13. Me | Well it’s clear they do here. This is very polite Japanese. Nobody speaks like this in everyday conversation. | Explicit instruction

**Analysis**

In turn 1 Harry asks the first question from the SLM, *‘Describe: What do you see?’* on the worksheet before I take on the role of the expert through guided instruction. This is an example of replacement because understanding the role and use of hiragana and kanji is part of the ‘ground rules of a particular discourse genre’ (Renshaw & Brown, 2007, p.6) and forms the basis of reading and writing in Japanese. In this case, the discourse of Japanese literacy requires a replacement of English-speakers’ concepts of ‘alphabet and ‘writing systems’ because Japanese uses a very different script. However, in this example, rather than talking about how to de-code the script they make observations about the fundamental reason for using hiragana which they interpret as ‘simple’ and ‘designed for children’. This is an accurate observation because all Japanese children’s books are written in hiragana.

Turn 6 shows an example of interweaving in which ‘students are encouraged to see everyday experiences as relevant to classroom discourse’ (Renshaw & Brown, 2007, p.8). Here Steve brings observations from outside the classroom, observations of children’s books in his own culture, to enhance his understanding of how hiragana and labelling of pictures with words, are part of teaching children to read in Japan. By observing that the audience is little children because next to the picture of the peach is the word momo (peach) and next to the river is the word kawa (river).

Furthermore, in turn 8, Steve observes that something written purely in hiragana is for children and that hiragana is more than just a separate syllabary, it is the first syllabary that Japanese children learn and has a specific purpose in this context. This is an important observation of the Japanese linguaculture.

In turn 9 Harry also recognises that the narrator used only the masu form which is a more formal type of speech. These are good examples of the students integrating anthropological and linguistic voices by contextualising the style of the text with the
purpose of the text and how it is expressed through language. What they do not articulate is that the book is actually designed for Japanese language learners’ which suggests that the author positions Japanese language students as children who need everything to be simplified. By guiding the students with a leading question in turn 7, I was attempting to focus on the connection between the form of language used and the intention of the authors. This was picked up by Steve who made the connection in turn 9 by stating it was written in the masu form ‘because it’s all for young children’. Here the students use an anthropological stance by identifying ‘signs and symbols that have their own logic and sets of meaning’ (Renshaw & Brown, 2007, p.7) within the Japanese linguaculture; that is, why the polite forms of the verb are used in children’s texts. In turn 10, I attempt to connect this to the language used in Australian children’s books but there is little response, possibly because they have not read a children’s book recently.

These responses are a result of co-construction of ideas generated between the three of us by more interactive dialogue through collaboration rather than students repeating what a teacher has told them. There are examples of ‘elaborated response’ (Steve, turn 6), ‘sharing observations (Steve, turn 8) and ‘further engagement through extending observations’ (Harry, turn 9) as well as ‘direct questions’ and ‘guided instruction’ from me.

Overall, the level of understanding the Japanese linguaculture has been developed by connecting polite speech with the masu form of the verb identified by Steve in turn 9. This presents a good example of how the students’ individual approach to learning Japanese literacy is changing because it has been interwoven with an ‘inquiring disposition’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.10). By interweaving the voice of the classroom linguist with the classroom anthropologist, the students are beginning to comprehend the Japanese linguaculture. This, I argue, has resulted from the SLM questions and the collaborative nature of discussions shown. I now turn to the written response to the above example to show how the questions from the SLM were comprehended and used by the students.
Example 6.b: Use of Hiragana. Written response using the SLM worksheet.

The following example was taken from the text *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) and recorded on March 2nd 2007 involving Harry and Steve.

Field Notes

*In the previous example I showed a detailed account of how our collaborative discussion helped the students integrate the code with the linguaculture in the cultural practice of using hiragana for a children’s story. Here I show a general summary written by the students with the guidance of the SLM keyword questions. Following the discussions from which the above examples were taken, Harry and Steve completed a written response that took a broader view of how they interpreted the text.*

Table 20: Worksheet 6.b – Use of Hiragana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLM Question</th>
<th>Collective Student Response</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe: What do you see?</td>
<td>Play format. Images that support the text and narration. Hiragana for young children or JSL learners so they don’t have any Kanji. Large colourful pictures with Japanese word labels. Language is very basic.</td>
<td>Here the students have appreciated my observation that the text is for Japanese language learners who are at a child’s level of literacy. Describing the ‘use’ of hiragana shows an anthropological stance as the students see the cultural use of hiragana as a form of writing that is ‘simple’ and used for children or Japanese language learners. These observations build on the intention behind the Describe keyword, which is to become aware of the various ways the script is used to elaborate meaning and context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The last line ‘language is basic’ also shows an example of the replacement format as they are now using a linguistic stance to replace their understanding of how the alphabet is used in English with how hiragana is used in Japanese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpret: What does it mean?</th>
<th>Everyday greetings such as <em>konnichiwa</em> for hello. Words support the characters movements.</th>
<th>Classifying greetings and understanding that words reflect character’s actions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextualise: How is it used?</td>
<td>Everyday conversation used in the polite form. Basic sentence structures that all end in <em>masu</em> form.</td>
<td>Understanding that the context can be elaborated by terms such as ‘everyday conversation’ and ‘polite forms’ shows an anthropological disposition while seeing the connection between the masu form of the verb and ‘basic sentence structures’ shows a linguistic voice being adopted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse: What does it ask you to believe?</td>
<td>Asking us to believe that a great big peach was floating down the stream and a boy popped out. This is what Japan was like.</td>
<td>The students adopt an anthropological voice that allows them to objectify the genre as ‘fantasy’ and be able to see the text as story not fact. They also realise that the story is asking them to believe that ‘this is what Japan was like’. Although not discussed here, this could be the starting point for a discussion of stereotypes and the way Japanese are...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary Analysis

Linguistic and anthropological voices are used to connect language to context. Overall, these learning sessions show a greater emphasis on the linguistic and anthropological aspects of the text. This suggests that the students are moving from language study to a study of the code in context with linguaculture. For example, Steve and Harry use the term ‘informal greetings’ rather than simple ‘greeting’ which is a more contextual sensitive understanding. Also, the students are participating more effectively by collaborating to generate a number of observations that highlight the contextual use of the masu form and contextual use of this text as being for children or Japanese language learners.

Example 7.a: Obaasan (Grandmother)

The following example is taken from the text Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on March 9th 2007 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

Today the three boys Robert, Mike and Bill were sitting at a desk with me in a separate room. Here I videoed the boys as they discussed a page they have just read from Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993). We are still reading a page at a time and then talking about it using the SLM keyword questions. By now we have used the SLM key questions three times. I have been impressed with the way the boys are willing to interpret the story. They often talk about the meaning of the characters’ actions. I
can see they are more engaged and willing to express their opinions and I only interrupt to ask leading questions while focusing on the language from the text.

Introduction of Transcript

The above field notes show that as a teacher I was recognising some progress with the students’ understanding and use of the SLM. The research question asks: Can Japanese literacy be taught in such a way that it highlights cultural and social practices? The following transcript supports the observations made in the above diary entry to suggest that such an awareness is developing through the deployment of the SLM.

Table 21: Transcript 7.a – Obaasan (Grandmother)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Description of Transaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bill</td>
<td>Interpret: What does it mean? Well, there is the basic story, Momotaro grows up and has super human strength and all that, but also there is a moral that is part of the interpretation. Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Robert</td>
<td>What is the moral? Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bill</td>
<td>I don’t know, I think it’s a good over evil sort of thing. It’s like the Boy Who Cried Wolf. Elaborates with example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Me</td>
<td>Let’s look at the page we’ve just read. Guiding statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Mike</td>
<td>It’s setting the scene, introducing the characters. Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Me</td>
<td>Yes, what do we know about them? Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Robert</td>
<td>They’re a married couple. Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Me</td>
<td>How do we know? Leading question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Robert</td>
<td>If they weren’t married they’d be called just by their names but they call each other Obaasan and Ojiisan. Elaborated response with reference to the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Me</td>
<td>Yes, that’s often the case. An old married couple refer to each other as Obaasan and Ojiisan. I think we can assume they are married by the way they talk to each other. Confirms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

This example shows the students drawing on everyday concepts from their own lived experience to interpret the story of *Momotaro* as well as increased co-construction and interpretation with five examples of interactive statements such as ‘shared observations’ and interpretation of language (turns 1, 3, 5 and 7) and an example of ‘elaborated response with linguistic evidence’ (Robert, turn 9). As I will discuss below, the boys are taking more opportunities to express their ideas and answer questions for themselves instead of waiting for me to answer or guide them. The above transcript also shows how the collaborative relationship within the peer group is developing. The students give the right answer and show a willingness to listen to each other’s observations and build interpretations on linguistic evidence. They are developing agency as co-constructors of their interpretations as afforded by the teacher’s use of the SLM. For example, they are given the opportunity to expand the meaning of the words *Obaasan* and *Ojisan* to interpret their social and cultural meaning which signifies an intimate relationship.

The above transcript offers one of the first examples of unsolicited interpretation of the text offered in this study. From turn 1 Bill responds to the keyword question ‘Interpret: What does it mean?’ by talking about the ‘morals’ of the story. In this way he shows comfort with an interpretive anthropological voice, the chance to ‘privilege culture’ over code through interpretation. In turn 2 Robert initiates discussion by asking Bill ‘What is the moral?’ In turn 3 Bill answers the question instead of me the ‘teacher’. He uses the idea of ‘good over evil’ and then makes a comparison with an example from his own lived experience by attempting to make sense of *Momotaro* by comparing it with an already familiar story of *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*. This example shows he is integrating the new ‘schooled’ story from Japan (*Momotaro*) which is introduced to him in a classroom, with a story from his own cultural background.
In turn 5 Mike sees the text has a variety of levels when he says ‘*It’s setting the scene and introducing the characters*’. This suggests he has internalised an interpretive stance of seeing a text as more than just words on a page but realises that the text has a purpose to introduce characters and set the scene of the story.

From turn 7 Robert starts privileging culture over code by talking about the relationships between the characters. He discovers a cultural dimension by noticing the way the characters refer to each other as *Obaasan* and *Ojiisan*. Although it is not explicitly stated that the elderly couple in the story are married, Robert acknowledges their intimacy through the language they use to address each other by saying ‘*they’re a married couple*’. This is an example of contextual privileging because it suggests ‘certain ways of speaking and thinking are chosen over other possibilities on the grounds of appropriateness’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.11). In this example, Robert identifies part of the Japanese linguaculture in the way people address each other. If he were to privilege code over culture he might suggest that *Obaasan* means ‘Grandmother’. But why is the husband calling his wife ‘?’ To make sense of this the student needs to privilege culture over code and address the question through an anthropological stance.

In turn 9, Robert suggests ‘*If they weren’t married they’d be called just by their names but they call each other Obaasan and Ojiisan.*’ This shows that Robert understands that words change their meaning in context and that he is capable of changing his interpretation of the text according to a particular relationship within the story. This also suggests a subtle appreciation of naming in Japanese culture which is possibly removed from the lived experience of a young boy living in Brisbane, yet his everyday experience allows him to interpret this aspect of the linguaculture. For example, in my own Japanese family nobody calls me by my first name, I am called *Otoosan* (Father). I am named after my position within the family. Robert’s insight ‘reveals’ this aspect of the Japanese linguaculture.

The terms of address used between a husband and wife is a good example of integrating an anthropological stance with a linguistic one because the dictionary
definition of *Obaasan* is, but this does not explain why the husband addresses his own wife with this word instead of using her given name. I have chosen this example because it shows how the collaborative approach supports a higher order conceptual development and an increased awareness of the linguaculture (Mercer 2000, Vygotsky 1986, Rogoff 1990, Scarino & Liddicoat 2009).

Also, the students are drawing on everyday concepts to comprehend the way people in their own speech community use terms of address in order to give these new Japanese words some deeper meaning. The above transcript provides a good example of appreciating the linguaculture in a Japanese text because the students have started to interweave concepts from their own lived experience (such as children’s stories and terms of address) from outside the classroom and connected them with the language and culture they find in a Japanese fairytale. This is done through formal school instruction using the SLM as a guide to connect talking and thinking.

*Example 7.b: Obaasan (Grandmother) With the SLM Worksheet*

The following example is taken from the text *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on March 19th 2007 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.

*Introduction*

The following SLM worksheet was used after the reading session shown above. As this is a result of interaction shown in the previous example, the description of the students’ interaction will not be mentioned as it was in the previous transcript.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLM Worksheet</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Describe: What do you see?</td>
<td>A story set in the format of a play. Teaching JSL students to learn Japanese. Labelling of pictures on the page. Language is very basic and it is in hiragana.</td>
<td>Shows an analytical approach to understanding the various ways the Japanese writing system has meaning. When the observation is made that ‘All very simple hiragana only’, the students show they understand why only hiragana is used, that is, when something is written only in hiragana that it is ‘simple’ language usually for children. This observation is a step beyond code-breaking and shows awareness of the script as a ‘social practice’ (Luke &amp; Freebody 1990, New London Group 2000). Here the students make that practice ‘visible’ which shows a sophisticated insight into the use of hiragana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Interpret: What does the text mean?</td>
<td>The general story of Momotaro, setting the scene, greetings in everyday language, basic knowledge of the first page.</td>
<td>This answer is referring to the way the text is organised and structured. It shows the students using simple words to interpret meaning such as how and where words are used, how the scene is set and characters introduced. Such observations will help the students continue to read through the SLM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Contextualise: How is the text used?</td>
<td>The pictures and the story are very Japanese and set in a</td>
<td>Like step one, the students see the cultural selection of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese environment. They don’t have any <em>kanji</em> because it’s a JSL learning book.</td>
<td>script and the inherent meaning of this choice by saying ‘They don’t have any <em>kanji</em> because it’s a JSL learning book’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Analyse: What does the text ask you to believe?</td>
<td>Boys come out of peaches. To believe what Japan was like in the olden days.</td>
<td>Students can see that the text is constructing a fairytale narrative and historical images of Japan’s past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss &amp; Respond: What have you learnt?</td>
<td>How to write a simple sentence structure in the <em>masu</em> form. That old men and women are called <em>Ojiisan</em> and <em>Obaasan</em> in Japanese. Some greetings in Japanese.</td>
<td>Here, ‘how to write a simple sentence in the <em>masu</em> form’ and understanding ‘what old men and women are called’. The anthropological voice is signalled by the observation that titles change according to social position and age. As a Japanese language teacher I have found that this is often one of the first domains in which the Japanese linguaculture is encountered as is the case here. Also, a connection is made between the style of speech, a polite form, and its grammatical representation in the <em>masu</em> form, a simple but important first step.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Summary Analysis*

This written example of responses to the SLM questions shows the beginning of a connection between how the students think and talk about Japanese. In the early stages, the students are beginning to integrate an anthropological voice with details.
from the text so as to become aware of the linguaculture. This is particularly evident in the last example ‘What have you learnt?’ when the students connect a grammatical feature (the masu form) with a social context of ‘being polite’.

Example 8.a: Showing appreciation

The following example is taken from the text *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on March 17th 2007 involving Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

*Bill was absent on the day this data was collected. Mike and Robert have been working together with the SLM after reading two pages from Momotaro (Quackenbush 1993). They are starting to make more connections between the new vocabulary they are learning and the keyword questions from the SLM. In this example that have just read the text in Japanese and start to analyse it using the keyword question ‘What do you see?’.*

Table 23: Transcript 8.a – Showing appreciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.Me</td>
<td>Remember we talked about that fact that the picture tells us a great deal about what the words are saying.</td>
<td>Guiding Statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Robert</td>
<td>In this picture it looks like the little kid (<em>Momotaro</em>) is giving his Grandfather a massage and he is enjoying it.</td>
<td>Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Me</td>
<td>That’s essentially what’s happening. We’ve got this word <em>Otsukaresama</em>, do you know that word?</td>
<td>Confirms then adds a question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Explanation through explicit instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Me</td>
<td>It’s what you say when someone has finished doing a job for you. <em>Otsukaresama</em> means ‘you can have a break now’. It functions as a way of saying ‘thank you’ and showing your appreciation. It’s very polite.</td>
<td>Shares observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mike</td>
<td>So maybe <em>Momotaro</em> is looking after his Grandfather and Grandmother after they have come home from work.</td>
<td>Response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Robert</td>
<td>So, then he gives his Grandfather a massage after a long day at work to show his appreciation. It’s like a present; he’s giving them something in return.</td>
<td>Guiding statement and question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Me</td>
<td>Remember the book has established that <em>Momotaro</em> is friendly <em>yasashi</em>, healthy <em>jyoubu</em>, outgoing <em>genki</em>, so now we are getting more of this ‘he’s a wonder boy’ kind of image. So what’s this text asking you to believe about <em>Momotaro</em>?</td>
<td>Elaborates example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Robert</td>
<td>That he’s a kind strong boy who helps his family.</td>
<td>Elaborates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Robert</td>
<td>I can think of children being grateful like on Mother’s Day giving presents but a shoulder massage is a new one.</td>
<td>Guiding question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Me</td>
<td>And if it were set here in Brisbane?</td>
<td>Shares response incorporating an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Mike</td>
<td>It would be odd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

This example shows the beginning of how the SLM ‘allows a pedagogic space that invites participation’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.22). This can be seen in turns 5, 6 and 7 where Robert and Mike start to interpret the meaning of a new word Otsukaresamadeshita by connecting it to an instance of cultural practice ‘showing appreciation with a shoulder massage’. This also occurs in turn 11 where Robert continues to make comparisons between what we encounter in the text and his own lived experience. In other words, while in some parts of the discussion the students do respond to my teacher questions in an Initiate, Respond, Evaluate pattern (Mehan 1979), there are also examples in the transcript of collaboration emerging. These shared interpretations draw attention to the cultural difference of the shoulder massage, as a way of showing appreciation, and connect this action to the word Otsukaresama.

In turn 5, I use an instructional linguistic voice to define and analyse the word Otsukaresamadeshita. Recognising the word as ‘polite’ allows the students to put the meaning of the word into a social context and highlight the word’s contextual nature. In turn 14, Mike identifies the action of a shoulder massage as ‘odd’ and by making comparisons to a more familiar context outside the classroom seeks an understanding of how Japanese culture expresses appreciation differently. The students interweave their lived experience, such as referring to ways in which they would show appreciation on Mother’s day (turn 11) with the situation presented in the Japanese text to make sense of an unfamiliar action. This seems possible due to the interactive nature of the discussion which allows the students to draw on their lived experience and interpret the Japanese linguaculture.
These shared insights help contextualise the new word Otsukeresama which does not translate directly into English and is an example of a word where a dictionary definition would be incomplete and needs discussion and interpretation to elaborate the meaning.

In turn 8, I guide the students back to the Japanese words they are learning and put them into a more general context by saying ‘remember the book has established that *Momotaro* is friendly- *yasashi*, healthy- *jyoubu*, outgoing- *genki*, so now we are getting more of this ‘he’s a wonder boy’ kind of image. These three words *yasashii*, *genki* and *jyoubu*, are very common in conversational Japanese and occur frequently throughout the book. I am attempting to help the students understand the meaning of these words by connecting them directly with *Momotaro*’s character. I then re-phrase a question from the SLM based on the keyword question four (What does it ask you to believe?) ‘So what’s this text asking you to believe about *Momotaro*?’

Robert responds in turn 9 when he uses the adjectives ‘kind’ and ‘strong’ in his answer; both are the English equivalents of *yasashii* and *jyoubu*. This shows a development from a linguistic voice, that is being able to pronounce and define these words, to an anthropological voice, of putting the word into a context, because he sets the meaning within a cultural expectation of being a kind and strong person, attributes embodied in the character of *Momotaro*. I suggest Robert is interweaving his own everyday concepts of what it means to be ‘kind and strong’ with more abstract words or the ‘schooled concept’ of *yasashii, jyoubu* and *otsukaresama*, all new Japanese words to the students. These ideas are consolidated by Robert in turn 15 when he replaces the Japanese way of showing appreciation with his own way by saying ‘He could just clean up the house or wash the dishes’. Here Robert is interweaving the meaning of a Japanese word learnt in the classroom with an experience from outside of school. Thus, this transcript provides an example of how the students interweave the code and culture through the lens of linguaculture by privileging an anthropological voice over a linguistic voice and that this way of talking is increasingly connected to the students’ way of thinking about Japanese.
Furthermore, they are engaged in constructing meaning by integrating schooled and everyday concepts as explained in Chapter Four (Section 4.7.1) in turns 10-15. These examples of elaborations build on each previous insight and allow them to draw on everyday experiences rather than only listening to my linguistic schooled explanations. For example, in turns 7 and 8 Mike says ‘So maybe Momotaro is looking after his Grandfather and after they have come home from work’ to which Robert replies ‘It’s like a present; he’s giving them something in return’. This is an example of how Mike and Robert help each other construct the meaning of a shoulder massage and its connection to the word *Otsukaresamadeshita* in the Japanese context. Mike elaborates the meaning of the action and Robert interweaves it with his everyday understandings of ‘showing appreciation’.

This is the final example from Phase Two and provides some evidence of an increase of collaborative learning and an integration of schooled and everyday concepts which allows an anthropological voice to integrate with a linguistic voice. I argue from the evidence outlined above that this change was generated by using the SLM. The next phase of the analysis looks at examples collected one year after the examples shown thus far.

7.7 Phase Three: One Year Later. *Transcripts and Interviews*

*Introduction*

The following interviews were conducted a year after the previous examples of data were collected. After consultation with my supervisors it was agreed that I should return to the same students from whom I had collected data a year before. Although they have not used the SLM for a year, I was interested to see if they had changed their view of Japanese literacy and internalised aspects of an anthropological stance when constructing meaning through a text. I decided to continue with the same *Momotaro* fairytale in order to maintain continuity.
Example 9.a: Polite Words

The following example is taken from the text *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on July 7th 2008 (the second year of the study) and involved Bill, Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

*I have chosen the following transcript because it shows how the students think about politeness and its connection with grammar and vocabulary. As with the other transcripts using *Momotaro*, we have collectively read and translated one page of the book from Japanese to English. This transcript is taken from one part of dialogue that shows an exploration of the theme of politeness and how it is expressed. In this section we are talking about ‘titles’ as we fill out the SLM worksheet.*

**Table 24:** Transcript 9.a – Polite words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Me</td>
<td>What part of the name tells you it’s polite?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mike</td>
<td>The ending of the word.</td>
<td>Response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bill</td>
<td><em>Go or Sama.</em></td>
<td>Response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Me</td>
<td>Yes, they tell us it’s polite.</td>
<td>Agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bill</td>
<td>Usually the basic word stays the same, like <em>kaeru</em> – ‘return’. Then you add things on to them.</td>
<td>Elaborated response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Me</td>
<td>Are the villagers polite?</td>
<td>Question based on discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Me</td>
<td>How would you describe the relationship between <em>Momotaro</em>, his grandparents and the villagers?</td>
<td>Direct questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How are they different?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Bill</td>
<td>The Grandpa still treats him like a child but the villagers look up to him. So the status within the family is the same but outside among the villagers it’s different.</td>
<td>Elaborated response with examples from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Me</td>
<td>How does the language tell you that?</td>
<td>Response with examples from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Mike</td>
<td>The use of nasai from his Grandparents and kudasai from the villagers, or sama or san for the name.</td>
<td>Shared observation with examples from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Me</td>
<td>The Grandparents are intimate but the villagers are not but still have to show appreciation. How does the language tell us Mike?</td>
<td>Direct question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Mike</td>
<td>The villagers say bansai (a way to agree with the group) to agree with him. They say Momotaro-san (a polite form of Momotaro’s name) to show their politeness and they say hontoni nihon ichiban (the best in Japan) to praise him.</td>
<td>Elaborated response with examples from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Me</td>
<td>Yes, they think he’s a hero and it’s expressed in the language. Now question 5: What have you learnt?</td>
<td>Confirms with guiding summary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Bill</td>
<td>That cultural context can help us understand the story as much as the text. The context is it’s a play and the pictures and all that sort of thing is just as important as the script.</td>
<td>Response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

This example indicates clear progress of the students’ thinking because they are situating the meaning of the code into a cultural context, by privileging an anthropological voice, by interpreting the meaning with observations and insights and providing examples as supportive evidence. Overall, there are more examples of interactive statements and collaboration.
In this transcript I am attempting to integrate the students’ anthropological stance with their linguistic understanding of the Japanese text we have just read. I start with a leading question: What part of the word tells you it’s polite? This question focuses directly on the form and structure of the language but was designed to interweave the students’ linguistic knowledge with cultural understandings of politeness, in particular the relationships among the text’s characters.

Turns 2, 3 and 5 see the students using linguistic elements of the text to analyse the way words change to make them more polite. To begin with they adopt a linguistic voice and privilege a linguistic analysis by talking about decontextualised words; for example, by telling me that the ‘ending of the word’ makes it polite (Mike turn 2). This continues in turn 5 when Bill says ‘Usually the basic word stays the same, like kaeru – ‘return” referring to the verb kaeru/return. He then draws on his everyday knowledge of how words are changed and says ‘Then you add things on to them’, thus interweaving similar concepts from English with linguistic concepts from Japanese. In short, Bill is interweaving his developing linguistic concepts of Japanese with developed concepts in his own language.

However, this changes from turn 7 when the students start to adopt an anthropological voice by using the word ‘humble’ as a way of talking about why certain words were used and the cultural significance they carry. Here they talk about the ‘status’ differences among the characters and how this changes the language used, thus providing an example of privileging anthropological voice. Also, from this point the students start to share their observations as well as presenting evidence or examples. For example in turn 9 Bill says ‘The Grandpa still treats him like a child but the villagers look up to him’. This is given as evidence to support his next statement ‘So the status within the family is the same but outside among the villagers it’s different’. This suggests Bill’s developing appreciation of the link between the status of the characters, the social context and the way language is used.
Here Bill is answering the SLM keyword question ‘Contextualise: How is it used?’ Although we are not answering that question directly, Bill seems to have internalised that stance as a way of interpreting why the language changes according to the cultural context, in this case the ‘status’ between the characters. In turn 11, Mike gives specific linguistic examples that show his understanding of how word endings change according to who uses them. He says ‘The use of nasai from his Grandparents and kudasai from the villagers, or sama or san for the names’. This is a sophisticated analysis of the Japanese linguaculture and shows elements of linguistic interpretation and cultural sensitivity because he identifies the relationships that determine certain word forms; in other words, how the culture shapes the code.

In turn 14, I consolidate this interpretation and then ask a question from the SLM ‘What have you learnt?’ In response, in turn 15, Bill uses an anthropological voice to say ‘that cultural context can help us understand the story as much as the text’, which again shows he has internalised the notion of how ‘context’ changes the way language is used.

All these observations are the result of interactive statements between myself and the students that seek insights about how politeness is created by language. The linguistic voice is elaborated by an anthropological voice with ideas such as ‘they feel humble’ (Bill turn 7), ‘The Grandpa still treats him like a child but the villagers look up to him’ (Bill turn 9), ‘They say Momotaro-san to show their politeness’ (Mike turn 13). This suggests that the text is made meaningful through an anthropological disposition and that the integration of the linguistic and anthropological are privileged throughout the co-construction of meaning within this learning episode.
Example 10.a: Orks

The following example is taken from the text *Momotaro* (Quackenbush 1993) and was recorded on July 14th 2008 involving Bill, Mike and Robert.

Field Notes

*This example took place a week after the above example (9.a). The three students seemed very comfortable with the collaboration that encouraged interpretation and anthropological thinking. Here we are reading through *Momotaro* when we come across a word that is difficult to translate into English. The discussion focuses on the way the students interpret the word - oni.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 25: Transcript 10.a – Orks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Bill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Me  
So is *oni* a cultural word? Because we don’t really have *oni* in our tradition. ‘Evil’ is not right. Look at the picture – what would you call them?  
Leading question followed by an evaluation.

10. Robert  
They look like Orks.  
Response.

11. Me  
Is that how you’d translate the word *oni* – as ‘ork’?  
Question inviting further consideration of response.

12. Robert  
Yes they look just like orks from Lord of the Rings and they’re mean like Orks are.  
Elaborates interpretation with evidence.

13. Me  
Okay, let’s call them ‘orks, or ‘devils’ or ‘goblins’ – anyway we know they are troublemakers and here the head ‘ork’ is literally called the ‘boss ork’.  
Adopts interpretation of student and confirms with examples.

14. Mike  
I guess that’s to do with the hierarchy.  
Provides justification.

15. Me  
Yes, hierarchy. That says something important about Japanese, titles instead of names. We saw that with *Momotaro*’s Grandparents they didn’t call each other by their names.  
Confirms justification.

**Analysis**

As the last example used in this chapter I present an example of interweaving of everyday concepts with schooled concepts that displays the incorporation of cultural awareness. An *oni* is a sort of goblin that represents a threat in Japanese fairytales. I classify this example of language use as a schooled concept because the word and its use in the fairytale *Momotaro* are introduced to the students through formal instruction. The everyday concept of an ork is drawn from the student’s popular culture accessed outside of school. By referring to the film *Lord of the Rings* (Jackson 2001), the students bring a personal understanding to the word *oni*. Here I attempt to highlight the process of interweaving that takes place between them. The discussion starts with guiding questions and explicit instruction then almost immediately moves
into interactive statements and interpretation which start on turn 4. In turn 1 I ask a leading question ‘Do you know the meaning of this word Oyabun?’ In turn 3 I replace the word Onioyabun with the English word ‘boss’. Bill then connects the two Japanese words Oni + Oyabun to create his spontaneous interpretation with ‘monster boss’. In turn 5, I use this as an opportunity to ask leading questions that challenge their definition.

Questions such as ‘If you looked it up in the dictionary what would it say?’ and ‘Is the dictionary always exactly right?’ These questions directly challenge the schooled concept of the linguistic voice and lead the students to interpret through their anthropological stance. In other words, I am encouraging the students to see words as floating in context rather than in a linguistic code which would fix meaning within a word. This interpretation takes the abstract schooled concept ‘oni’ and interweaves it with a meaningful word from their everyday popular culture ‘ork’, a character from the film Lord of the Rings (Jackson 2001). In turn 11, I ask ‘Is that how you’d translate the word ‘oni’ – as ‘ork’? to which Robert replies ‘Yes they look just like orks from Lord of the Rings and they’re mean like orks’. I frame the word ‘oni’ as a ‘cultural word’; that is a word that relies on cultural information in order to be defined and immediately privileges the anthropological voice. The students’ interpretation of the word is made possible by drawing on cultural knowledge of Western narratives from outside the classroom which I encourage through this discussion. Such a comparison allows the students to interweave a meaningful everyday concept (Ork) with the new, as yet undefined schooled concept in Japanese of oni.

The schooled concept is brought to life from everyday understandings through a process of interweaving a linguistic and anthropological voice. In order to support this definition, in turn 13, I replace the word ‘oni’ with the students’ spontaneous definition, ‘ork’ by saying ‘the boss ork is literally called the head ork’. In turn 14, Mike repeats the same interpretation he used a week earlier when he suggests ‘I guess that’s to do with hierarchy’. This usage suggests that Mike has internalised a view of the Japanese linguaculture where the meaning of words is framed through social positions. I support this answer again by saying ‘Yes, hierarchy, that says something
important about Japanese titles instead of names’. Here I consolidate this idea as a recognition of an important feature of the Japanese linguaculture (Wierzbicka 1997, Gottlieb 2005) which has now become part of our discussion through the students’ interpretation.

This interpretation gives a very full definition of the word Oni. Throughout the discussion the students draw on each other’s views, observations and interpretations by using both an integration of a linguistic and anthropological disposition. This has created an interweaving of concepts or ‘a format that values multi-vocality within individual utterances and across speakers’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.15). The end result is that the students are showing that they are starting to think like anthropologists as well as linguists when discussing the text. Through collaboration they are sharing observations and interpretations as well as offering examples of their views based on their own lived experience.

7.8 Interviews

After consultations with my supervisors, we decided to do some interviews at the end of the study to see if the students still used the anthropological voice seen in Phases Two and Three. As already stated in Chapter Six, Methodology,

I wanted to avoid the highly-controlled interview dominated by the researcher’s questions, and so deliberately approached the interview as an open-ended discussion in which the student and I co-constructed key themes of discussion as the talk developed (Gubrium & Holstein 2002). In other words, I started the interview with general aims and themes but allowed these to be changed according to the students’ responses. Accordingly, what follows are transcripts from spontaneous conversations based around an unexpected visit from a Japanese exchange student.

Interview 1: Bill July 14th 2008

Field Notes

I am now at the last stage of my data collection. It has been a year since I last worked with these students. Today a Japanese exchange student has arrived. I sat in the
class as he introduced himself in Japanese. The following interview took place half an hour later. This section of transcript is offered to illustrate how an individual student’s way of thinking about Japanese may be influenced by the SLM and their awareness of linguaculture. For this reason, there is no coding of the interaction, only analysis.

Table 26: Interview 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>You’ve just heard a Japanese student introduce himself. In his speech was there an example of how understanding the culture helped you understand the words?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>I didn’t know the word ‘run’ (hashiru) but when it was explained I contextualised it into an activity. Then it became clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Over the last week of study can you think of instances where linguaculture has helped you understand Japanese?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>I’ve become a lot more aware of how the context and the culture are used. I’m also more aware of how titles are important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Can you apply that to today’s introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Yeah, in Australia we are polite but we are friendly. Friendly is different to polite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>In what way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>When speaking Japanese politeness is more formal. Yeah it’s a formality. That changed the way he (Japanese exchange student) introduced himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Would you (Bill) talk about the same things if you were giving the introduction in Japanese?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Yeah, but I’d be less formal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>But then it wouldn’t be correct Japanese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Yes, that’s right, the words make it formal. That’s the Japanese way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

I present this transcript as an example of an individual student who has learnt the view of language represented by the SLM and defined by the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005). As a research tool, the interview offers data which can be interpreted through a sociocultural lens to suggest a ‘speaking consciousness’ (Wertsch 1991, p.51) which, in the transcript shown above, suggests that Bill has adopted an ‘anthropological voice’ and is able to weave together a linguistic and anthropological perspective. This allows him to see one aspect of the Japanese linguaculture – the theme of formality. In other words, Bill did not speak about learning Japanese using metaphors of transmission or ‘a language’ as a code. Instead he integrated ideas that were evidenced in our collaboration guided by the SLM such as everyday concepts and examples of an anthropological voice which supported Japanese as a linguaculture. Examples follow to support these claims.

In turn 2 Bill freely used the word ‘contextualise’, a key theme taken directly from the SLM and used frequently through our many discussions. In turn 3 I use the uncontested term ‘linguaculture’ which Bill appears to understand. In turn 4 he says ‘I’ve become a lot more aware of how the context and the culture are used’, showing confidence in his understanding of how titles are important in Japanese. In other words, he is interweaving linguistic and cultural elements together to create meaning. In turn 6 he interweaves and contrasts notions of friendliness and politeness between his lived experience and his interpretation of Japanese by saying ‘Yeah, in Australia we are polite but we are friendly. Friendly is different to polite’. This shows he is ‘interpreting across languages’ as suggested by the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005). It is also an example of interweaving because this statement shows an ability to contrast and compare Japan’s linguaculture with his own. This continues in turn 8 when Bill identifies formality by saying ‘Japanese politeness is more formal’. This comment suggests that Bill’s thinking has become more rigorous because he is relating his observation to both linguistic and cultural evidence rather than simply expressing an opinion. In the final statement Bill concludes by saying ‘Yes, that’s right, the words make it formal. That’s the Japanese way’. This is a good definition of linguaculture because he shows how language is organised by culture and suggests
that Bill is drawing on the conceptual tools offered by his collaboration with me and his peers when thinking through the SLM.

*Interview 2: Robert July 14th 2008*

*Field Notes*

*Like Bill, Robert has just heard the same Japanese exchange student introduce himself. This interview used similar themes to generate questions (Chapter Six, Section 6.20) and was conducted about fifteen minutes after the interview shown above and thirty minutes after the introduction referred to.*

**Table 27: Interview 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Me</td>
<td>When you were listening to the introductions did you reflect on the ideas we discussed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Robert</td>
<td>Definitely, it’s essential to understand what he (the Japanese exchange student) is trying to tell you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Me</td>
<td>If you were going to give an introduction here in Brisbane so there were no linguistic or cultural barriers would it be the same as the Japanese exchange student’s?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Robert</td>
<td>That’s what I’d use! I’d use that, what would I say? I heard him talk about sports and his interests. But one difference is we are interested in where he comes from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Me</td>
<td>Yes, another country. But let’s imagine you’re talking to some boys who have arrived from Charleville, would your introduction be much different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Robert</td>
<td>No, probably not, it would be very similar cause I’d be introducing my personality and everything, where I live, how close I live to the city or something, so definitely, I think it would be very similar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Me</td>
<td>When you listened to the exchange student did you think about what kind of language was used, was it polite, fast, words you didn’t know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Robert</td>
<td>Yes, lots of words I didn’t know and he spoke a lot faster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>And his name, he gave his family name first, that’s different isn’t it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Is that something you understand because you understand the cultural influence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Definitely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Anything else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>I can’t think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Was it very polite?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Yes, later he said hajimemashita. A polite ‘hello’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>What’s your understanding of culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Culture refers to beliefs of a country or a way of life in a country. It changes for each country but countries that tend to speak the same language it tends to be similar. It’s beliefs and attitudes and maybe religion as well. All those things make up culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Thinking back on the week. Do you ever ask yourself the SLM questions when you learn Japanese?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Definitely, but more in speech than in writing. I don’t need to ask myself those questions in writing but in speaking I have to do it quickly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis**

Here I explain why this interview offers interesting data for the end of my analysis chapter. As it stands, the interview suggests that the SLM has had little impact on the way Robert sees or relates to the Japanese language. The interview acts more as a didactic lesson in which I lead Robert towards seeing aspects of the Japanese linguaculture rather than him showing me what he can see through his own interpretation. It should be remembered that this interview took place a year after I’d worked with Robert and was organised without warning, so Robert had no time to gather his thoughts. It should also be remembered that this was the only interview,
and we talked about spoken, not written Japanese as was the case in all previous examples. Also, in all previous examples he had more time to consider the text and interpret it collectively with his peers rather than on his own. Lastly, it should also be considered that Robert’s ‘ideas’ were brought into speech through the act of ‘being interviewed’ by me, both an interviewer and an expert (Gubrium & Holstein 2002). I do not wish to view Robert as a mechanical learner whose consciousness is sealed off from his social environment, but as an interactive thinker whose understanding of the Japanese linguaculture is multi-voiced and multi-layered (Bakhtin 1981). In other words, this interview should not be analysed in isolation but integrated with Robert’s previous statements. Instead, I prefer to view this as an example of Robert’s thoughts moving towards linguaculture, rather than a moment that is a separate process from his previous learning.

With this said, in this interview at least, Robert shows very limited use of either a linguistic or an anthropological voice; he does not refer to any SLM questions nor does he use examples, evidence or elaborate his answers. The only response which could be interpreted as an internalised influence of my work with him, is that he reflects on his learning. For example, he considers what he might say if he were going to give an introduction ‘without linguistic or cultural barriers’, and he does describe the ‘ideas we’ve discussed’ (the SLM) as ‘essential to understanding’ what the Japanese exchange student has said. We are in an I.R.E format of talk (Mehan 1979), so willing answers come as no surprise because the student is repeating the teacher’s ideas rather than offering his own. From this point of view, Robert’s enthusiasm may be just to co-operate with me as he does not explain why the SLM is essential to understanding.

In turn 3, I intended to encourage Robert to talk about the similarities and differences when giving an introduction in Japanese or English. I asked the question ‘If you were going to give an introduction here in Brisbane so there were no linguistic or cultural barriers would it be the same as the Japanese exchange student’s?’ He replies ‘I’d use that, what would I say?’ In this way he shows that he is ‘thinking across languages’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3) and putting himself in the place of the Japanese exchange
student. In other words, he is integrating his own linguistic identity with the position of the linguistic and cultural other. In turn 6 he agrees that, culture and language aside, if he were to give an introduction in English, the content would be essentially the same.

In turn 11, he agrees that knowing about culture helps him understand the name order but does not cite other examples from the introduction. After a leading question from me, in turn 15, Robert agrees that the introduction used polite language and offers the word ‘hajimemashita’ as an example of this. Here he is starting to use an anthropological voice but does not elaborate. However, Robert shows that he can use his own language in an analytical way to help understand how culture is present even in a simple introduction, when he says ‘Yes, later he said hajimemashita. A polite hello’. He recognises that an introduction in Japanese is different to an introduction in English and the difference lies in contextualising the words used. The phrase ‘hajimemashita’ (literally ‘we have met for the first time) appears at the beginning of an introduction but that does not literally mean the same thing as ‘hello’. This suggests the beginning of seeing the Japanese linguaculture, but Robert does not extend this insight, nor does he arrive at this understanding through any SLM questions, but rather, through my prompting. Robert’s lack of insight is made clear in the answer to the next question in turn 12, when I ask ‘anything else?’ meaning other examples of understanding the language through the culture and Robert replies ‘I can’t think’. In other words, he can not see Japanese as a linguaculture.

In turn 17, Robert gives his understanding of culture describing it as ‘a way of life in a country’ that ‘countries that speak the same language tend to be similar’ and that culture is made up of ‘beliefs and attitudes and maybe religion as well’. Connecting language to culture shows he has learnt the essential idea from our many discussions, that of language and culture being intimately connected. However, he doesn’t give any examples from his Japanese learning or any of the various examples we have discovered together in our discussions.
Finally, in turn 18, I ask him if he ever asks himself the SLM questions when he learns Japanese to which he replies ‘definitely, but more in speech than in writing I do not need to ask myself those questions in writing but in speaking I have to do it quickly’. I thought this was an interesting response as the SLM was designed for reading, not speaking Japanese. Robert has constructed his own meaning for the SLM to be used in a situation which was more useful to him. However, I see this as a positive thing, because it showed he ‘definitely’ thought the SLM was useful and helped him reflect on the Japanese linguaculture he is learning. In this way, our previous discussions, as shown in the data analysis examples, has had an influence on his understanding of Japanese, albeit on his own terms.

7.9 Conclusion of Data Analysis

In conclusion, I will consider how the insights from these interviews and classroom transcripts support my research question. I have argued that a sociocultural approach sees human learning as a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts and distributed across persons, tools and actions (Rogoff 1990, Wertsch 1991, Vygotsky 2000, Renshaw & Brown 2007, Johnson 2006). Such an approach allows a student’s lived experiences to be central to learning rather than learning being defined by the accumulation of facts presented through formal instruction. Thus, the knowledge of the individual is a result of dialogic encounters and social activities in which they participate as will be shown in the following chapter. Therefore, the social activities in which the learner engages and contributes forms their disposition towards learning.

This project has been guided by the question, ‘How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?’ The above interviews and classroom transcripts suggest that the students have accepted and internalised an anthropological stance to their language learning. This has become possible through guided participation with me and the use of the SLM and forms of collaboration between the students themselves. At times we were engaged in the I.R.E (Mehan 1979), where I was offering explicit instruction encouraging the students to replace everyday concepts about Japanese with more
formal concepts. At other times the students initiated and directed the discussion through interactive statements, especially towards the end of the study. I started the study hoping to guide the students towards a more independent collaboration, but ended up collaborating with the students to bring about a linguacultural understanding of Japanese.

Overall, I suggest the student discourse has changed from emphasising Japanese as a code to emphasising Japanese as a contextualised linguaculture. Moreover, by organising instruction around guided discussion, the students were given opportunities to bring their lived experience into their formal learning. I have drawn on the sociocultural approach to suggest that the use of the tool of the SLM in collaboration with others has generated a shared meaning concerning Japanese literacy as a socially and culturally embodied practice. Thus, collaboration in the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky 1986) has led to the development of higher order thinking such as negotiating across languages, understanding their own and others’ languages, understanding diverse ways of thinking and making new connections (MCEETYA 2005). As Haneda and Wells suggest ‘classroom discourse has played an important social role as a semiotic mediator of knowledge construction’ (Haneda & Wells 2008, p.114). With the SLM acting as a semiotic mediator, it has also encouraged dialogic interaction and participation from the students (Nystand et al. 1997, Bahktin 1981). Furthermore, by interpreting an authentic Japanese text, the students became aware of its social and cultural dimensions. In the next chapter I use examples from the transcripts to discuss the data analysis examined above.
Chapter Eight: Discussion

8.1 Introduction

In this penultimate chapter I will discuss the findings outlined in the data analysis chapter. The data presented in this study sought to demonstrate the active implementation of a sociocultural approach to teaching Japanese literacy in a year 8 classroom context. Collaboration and interaction as guided by the SLM supported the students’ literacy learning by giving them an active way to construct meaning. Based on the evidence presented I argue that by drawing on everyday concepts which allowed the students to use their own language and culture the students became more aware of the Japanese linguaculture. Collaboration was guided by using the Social Literacy Model as explained in Chapter Five (Section 5.3) which generated data illustrating how learners might transform their understanding of language and thinking within the New Literacies paradigm introduced in Chapter Three.

8.2 What are the research questions this study set out to answer?

This discussion chapter draws together the major findings and themes of this thesis and builds evidence in response to the question: ‘How can the literacy of Japanese be taught in a way that explores cultural and social practices within a linguaculture?’

The research intervention has demonstrated that a sociocultural approach represents a significant theoretical shift in languages education particularly by making collaboration part of classroom practice (Chapter Four). Furthermore, the SLM has been shown to harness this approach in order to teach literacy differently from the traditional code focused approaches (Alderson & Urquhart 1984, Bernhardt 1991) as explained in Chapter Three.
In Chapter Three I introduced the notion of the ‘new paradigm’ in languages literacy (Swaffer, Arens & Byrnes 1991, Kramsch 1993, Kern 2000) and the New Literacies movement within first language study (Cole & Scribner 1981, Street 1984, Luke & Freebody 1999, New London Group 2000). Reacting against a time when reading and writing were the key aims of literacy, the new paradigm of languages literacy challenged this assumption and proposed that meaning was not the sole province of the text itself, which existed unconstrained and unaffected regardless of the reader’s linguistic mastery; instead, as explained in Chapter Three (Section 3.5), ‘interpretation’, contextual sensitivity, cultural knowledge, reflection, problem solving and collaboration with peers were put forward as vital extensions of code breaking skills (Tharp & Gallimore 1990, Reder 1994, Kern 2000).

However, to teach the above notion of literacy, the overall conceptual language of the thesis has come from sociocultural theory (Lee & Smagorinsky 2000); in particular, the notion of collaboration which allows the integration of schooled and everyday concepts (Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1). The sociocultural approach is committed to the idea that the human mind changes from undeveloped biological processors to higher forms of psychological development which are transformed within social and educational contexts (Vygotsky 1986, Moll 1990, Wertsch 1991, Rogoff 1990, Renshaw & Brown 2007, Wink & Putney 2002). In this study of Japanese language teaching, a sociocultural lens allowed me to focus on the dialogic nature of learning (Nystrand et al. 1997, Bakhtin 1981). Here I will discuss how this approach encouraged my students to participate through interaction and dialogue and thus transform their understanding of Japanese from a ‘language’ to a ‘linguaculture’. The dialogic approach was the pedagogy which allowed the students to ‘become’ anthropological in their approach to learning to be literate as explained in Chapter Four (Section 4.4.1). I have adopted the word ‘anthropological’ to mean ‘an approach to language as a symbolic tool which is shaped and understood through culture and the understanding of which requires interpretation of the context and use of the text in question’ (Agar 2002, Liddicoat & Crozet, 2000, Carr 1999, Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet 1999). Using examples from the previous chapter I now discuss how findings in this study suggest that interaction and collaboration can support
literacy in a new language in such a way that language learning becomes a social and anthropological practice.

8.3 Discussion of Findings

I now discuss my findings in more detail so as to address their relationship to the research question summarised above. The aim of the SLM was to make a contribution to the field of languages education by responding to the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) with a practical tool for guiding learners from a linguistic voice to an anthropological voice. The use of the SLM in a collaborative context was enacted over an extended period of classroom time.

From October 2006 in Phase One of my research the students made gradual transitions in the way they talked about Japanese with me and each other. To begin with they used only a linguistic voice to talk about and express grammatical concepts such as past tense. This showed the students were learning important features of being literate in Japanese, but to begin with, more through co-operation rather than collaboration as we were not discussing or interpreting (Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1). Learning co-operatively was already supported by the school in which these students were situated, but they only supported each other’s code breaking skills in a way that did not need interpretation or sharing of cultural knowledge. For example, in example 1.a I reacted to the theme the students introduced by asking ‘Can you explain the past tense?’ I then explained that ‘masu is the present and the past is mashita’. I then elicited a comparison by asking ‘Is it like English?’ After explaining this the students responded with statements such as ‘It’s like “ed” on the end’ (Bill, turn 13) and their own comparison such as ‘it’s like walk and walked’ (Mike, turn 14). Such an approach to Japanese suggests the students have encoded skills which can be responded to in a test or linguistic analysis. This example is representative of a transmission style of teaching because it shows a great deal of explicit instruction, direct questions and answers without interpretation or discussion. The students’ linguistic disposition continued in the first SLM worksheet, example 1.b, where the
students had no idea how to respond to the questions and left blank spaces. This suggested they could only understand language in terms of a code without guidance to explain how to apply and comprehend the SLM questions through discussion. However, a week later in example 1.c, after guidance and discussion the students were able to fill out the worksheet with answers but still only described the text in a linguistic voice.

I argue that my data suggests a link between sociocultural theory and the practice of guiding talk through social interaction, because gradually the students’ understanding of Japanese changed with small but helpful insights that supported their linguistic understanding by drawing attention to contextual and cultural details through the view of an anthropologist. For example, in example 2.a we discuss the word *hidoi* (awful or terrible) which Bill translates by putting the word into a social context in turn 10 when he asks ‘So you say that when you are with friends?’’. This question comes after a discussion in which I suggest that words can be ‘formal’ or ‘colloquial’ and therefore more or less appropriate in the context. By interweaving notions of politeness the students saw that word meaning was related to context. Again in example 3.a questions from the students and discussion about the text helped the students understand that Japanese has a certain way of writing loaned words called *katakana* and that seeing a word written in *katakana* tells us this word is borrowed from another language. This connects with an insight made in example 5.a where we again discuss the loaned word ‘project’ which Bill understands is a loaned word from the way the word is written. This leads to a discussion about why Japanese uses English words and why the English language also borrows words from Japanese. I suggest this is a small but helpful insight into how we make meaning from Japanese by understanding a feature of literacy as a cultural practice (Chapter Three).

However, these insights did not always support the students to interpret the text. In example 4.b, a collective response taken from a SLM worksheet, the second question ‘Interpret: What does it mean?’ was responded to in the following way: ‘*The aim of the WWF is to protect endangered habitats and the wildlife within them. To protect endangered animals such as tigers, pandas and rhinos*’. In my analysis I suggested
this was a good translation worked out collaboratively but without interpretation; for example, no mention of specific words and what they mean or how the language generates this meaning. I argue that this shows that the students were gradually learning to articulate an anthropological voice and understand how to frame language as a cultural practice.

Phase Two changes started when I returned to the classroom in March 2007. By that time the students had used the SLM five times and so started to explore the Japanese texts in more depth through the SLM keyword questions. The students started asking questions independently such as in example 7.a, when reading from the SLM, Mike asks ‘Interpret: What does it mean? What’s that?’ (turn 3) and the other student, Bill, responds ‘How do you interpret it? What does it mean to you?’ (turn 9). This response suggests the beginning of an ‘inquiring disposition’ (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.10) concerning linguaculture because the student took it upon himself to be an expert and did not rely on me, the ‘teacher’.

Collaborative discussion and the use of the SLM continued to help the students see important cultural features of Japanese literacy that connect the code to the culture. For example, in example 6.b, Harry and Steve ‘observe’ the text and come to understand that the Japanese syllabary Hiragana is used for children. By interpreting this textual feature as anthropologists, the students understand that there is a formal and less formal way of writing in Japanese. They also see this in the way verbs are constructed in the polite masu form in certain contexts. This demonstration of understanding continues in example 7.b when students collectively write on the SLM worksheet that ‘simple sentences are written in the masu form’ and there are different greetings used for different people in different contexts. These insights about greetings and politeness are still referred to in Bill’s interview at the end of the study (interview 1 July 14th 2008) when he talks about politeness, formality and greetings in Japanese, suggesting his depth of understanding the linguaculture.
In example 9 the students were making insightful connections between new words and the context in which they are used. When discussing the meaning of the new word Otsukaresama, I explained ‘It’s what you say when someone has finished doing a job for you. Otsukeresama means “you can have a break now”. It functions as a way of saying “thank you” and showing your appreciation.’ In this way I set the word within a context of meaning. Mike’s answer shows he understands the importance of this particular use of language in this context when he says ‘So maybe Momotaro is looking after his Grandfather and Grandmother after they have come home from work’. In this example, through discussion, Mike is given the opportunity to integrate the context and the code and interweaves them in a way that gives the word a fuller meaning.

Another case of contextualising language appropriately is found in example 8. In this example I was recording observations such as ‘If they weren’t married they’d be called just by their names but they call each other Obaasan and Ojiisan’ (Robert turn 9), to which I responded ‘Yes, that’s often the case. An old married couple refer to each other as Obaasan and Ojiisan’. Here the student is seeing the meaning of the new words through their context and using an anthropological observation to understand how these words are used and with whom. My reply confirms that his observation is an important aspect of everyday Japanese language usage, and therefore this is a small but useful insight into the Japanese linguaculture.

Also in example 9.a, turns 9, 10 and 11 Bill sees the social context when he says ‘The Grand pa still treats him like a child but the villagers look up to him. So the status within the family is the same but outside among the villagers it’s different’. Mike interweaves this observation with the language directly when he elaborates ‘The use of nasai from the Grand Parents and kudasi from the villagers, or sama or san for the name’. I argue from the evidence cited thus far that these examples show that reading a text, for these students, is becoming more than simply a matter of decoding letters on the page with an aim to pronouncing them correctly. After working with me and the SLM, the students showed that becoming literate in Japanese meant moving away from static details concerning pronunciation and reproducing the code and moving
toward becoming more focused on interpreting the text through an anthropological voice which sees language as a symbolic tool which shapes culture. The SLM keyword questions emphasised observing various levels of the text (this includes looking at how pictures, positions and even syllabary selection contribute to meaning), putting forward various interpretations which are shared and exploring the context and purpose of the text. I argue that these examples show that a new way of constructing meaning through the concept of linguaculture and New Literacies was facilitated through collaboration (Chapter Four).

From the outset of this study the aims of the SLM were to explore and define the linguaculture of Japanese, particularly in its written form (Chapter Five, Section 5.4). The linguaculture was defined as having an awareness of language that shows an ability to:

(a) become familiar with the codes and conventions of Japanese script, for example when the students could see that the use of Hiragana or Katakana were used in certain cultural contexts

(b) recognise the link between a cultural context and meaning, for example the way greetings were used differently with different people

(c) recognise a link between language and culture, for example, polite language was written in the masu form

(d) recognise a new way of seeing a familiar word or idea, for example the use of English words in Japanese but written in Katakana

(e) recognise implicit messages through pictures, page arrangement and context, for example, when the students recognise Momotaro as a children’s story because it asks the reader to believe in magic and is written in Hiragana.

These examples show that for these students, learning to be literate in Japanese no longer took the more familiar processes of listening to the teacher so as to repeat and memorise new abstract concepts which were often explained without discussion. Nor was reading a text simply decoding letters on the page with an aim to pronounce and interpret them correctly. Vygotsky used the metaphor of a photograph to explain that
in learning new ideas learners ‘do not imprint themselves on the child as upon a photographic plate’ (Vygotsky 1986, p.19). After working with me and the SLM, the students were understanding a form of Japanese which moved away from static ‘photographic memory’ of details related to pronunciation and reproducing the code. The alternative was as much focused on interpreting and framing the language through culture, or through an anthropological disposition. I now discuss the secondary level of data interpretation, the role that Vygotsky’s notion of everyday and schooled concepts played in my analysis.

8.4 Further Discussion: The role of Schooled and Everyday Concepts in Negotiating a Linguaculture.

One of the aims of a sociocultural analysis is to explore a way to relate the development of psychological functions to the individual within the setting of formal instruction (Moll 1990, Wertsch 1990, Wink & Putney 2002). Part of the conceptual language of this thesis has been to use Vygotsky’s notion of schooled and everyday concepts. I argue from this perspective that the opportunity for the students to be aware of their own linguaculture plays an important part in understanding a new Japanese linguaculture. I also employed the conceptual tools of Voice and Format of Talk to ‘read’ the data so as to identify the forms of speech or discourse characteristic of new language learning among my students, and to examine the impact the SLM had on their awareness of the Japanese linguaculture. Moreover, I suggest that these examples show the data has been ‘constructed through a formal means of analysis’ (Erickson 1986, p.49): that of the combination of Voice and Formats of Talk which originate from a sociocultural approach to understanding learning.

In Chapter Two, I suggested that a number of scholars and researchers in the field of languages education are calling for a reconceptualisation of ‘language learning’ drawn from the Vygotskian inspired sociocultural approach (Lantolf 2000, 2006, Ohta 2001, Hall 2001, Johnson 2006, Zuengler & Miller 2006, Haneda & Wells 2008, Lantolf & Beckett 2009). This study has made an original contribution to languages education...
by exploring Vygotsky’s idea of schooled and everyday concepts (Vygotsky 1934/1994, Wertsch 1991, Tharp & Gallimore 1988, Zack 1999, Mahn & John-Steiner 1998, Brooks 2010) with regards to new languages learning by connecting interpretation of texts through both schooled and everyday concepts as explored through collaboration (Chapter Four, Section 4.6.1). Understanding how everyday lived experience can be transformed by systematic schooled knowledge is an important theme in sociocultural research and in understanding the social and historical nature of learning. Suggesting that there is a link between what we live and what we learn, and that instruction can define or strengthen that link, is a vital area of research for any educator, especially in light of the ideas promoted by the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) (See Chapter One 1.2, Chapter Three 3.2).

Vygotsky’s notion of everyday and schooled concepts allowed me to connect the learning of the classroom with the social and cultural influences that students bring to formal learning from their everyday lives. A finer grain analysis to understanding collaboration, voice and the integration of schooled and everyday concepts is provided by Renshaw and Brown’s Formats of Talk (2007). These analytic tools were used to systematically read the data through a sociocultural lens and provide a way of understanding schooled and everyday concepts in student discourse.

I have also found that the integration of schooled and everyday concepts is an aspect of Vygotsky’s work which is not well represented in the sociocultural literature. Zack (1999) suggests that Vygotsky’s notion of spontaneous and everyday concepts, or what I have called schooled and everyday concepts (Tharp & Gallimore 1988), has been hardened into a dichotomy which obscures their dynamic nature (Mahn & John-Steiner 1998, Zack 1999). However, I have argued that just as the learner integrates themselves with their Japanese speaking self, their own culture, with the Japanese linguaculture and their everyday understanding of Japanese with their schooled understanding (Mackerras 2007(a)), they are dynamic aspects of unified processes of concept formation which are continuously interacting (Mahn & John-Steiner 1998, Zack 1999, Brooks 2010). To date, I have found no other study which explores this issue in the language classroom and feel the outcomes of this research produces new
insights into the process of learning a new linguaculture. The following examples suggest a discernable pattern of integration between everyday and schooled concepts.

In example 10.a Phase Three, Robert comes to understand what an oni is (a Japanese devil) by saying ‘they look like orks’. Such an approach helped make important theoretical advances to understanding the dynamic relationship between schooled and everyday concepts concerning Japanese language learning because I have argued that by allowing the learners to ask their own questions they were able to engage in ‘everyday ways of talking and exploring ideas’ (Ballenger 1997, p.1). The new idea in this study was the Japanese linguaculture.

Understanding the Japanese word and concept oyabun oni in example 10.a required Robert to draw on the word ‘ork’ from the popular film Lord of the Rings (Jackson 2001). Adopting an idea from outside the formal setting of the classroom allowed the students to both interpret and elaborate on the concept of the Oyabun oni and give it a more contextualised meaning. While an oni is a symbol of evil, trouble and harm, orks come from a very different cultural tradition and context. Robert used the comparison because the film Lord of the Rings was popular at the time and orks would have entered his daily discourse. It was in the act of collaboration between an expert (me) and novices (the students) that the concept of an oni was elaborated and confirmed. This suggests that a new word or concept like oni, learnt in a formal school setting, grew downwards into the domain of personal experience to gain more concrete meaning (Vygotsky 1987, Renshaw & Brown 2007). In this way an integration took place between one concept of what an oni embodied and what an ork represented. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the word oni is often used by Japanese children to refer to anything with a negative connotation, for example when playing a card game, the card (such as a joker) that will detract points or lead to the player losing, is referred to as an oni. When playing chasing games, the person who gives chase is called the oni. Through Robert’s everyday experience of ‘negative symbols’ of danger he did come to understand the ‘sense’ and the social context in which the word oni is used (Vygotsky 1986, Bakhtin 1981).
Another example that shows how the data was generated through the conceptual language of the thesis can be found in example 5.a Phase One. Here I am discussing with the students how and why Japanese has so many English loaned words. To highlight the commonality of this I remind the students that English also borrows words from Japanese and I give the example of ‘sushi’ by saying ‘we didn’t make up our own word, we borrowed theirs’ to which Robert replies ‘We could call it seaweed wrap’ to which Mike adds ‘many people would be turned off by the word seaweed’. From that exchange we can build on the concept of loaned words which in turn helps the students understand the Japanese linguaculture because Japanese has so many English loaned words. Importantly, my response doesn’t ignore or devalue Robert’s spontaneously coined term ‘seaweed wrap’. In this example, the students’ lack of awareness concerning loaned words is made concrete but at the same time Robert’s understanding of the concept is made possible through his own everyday example of ‘seaweed wrap’. Through schooled and everyday concepts I am suggesting that Robert can build on the academic concept of ‘loaned words’ to contribute to a more complete and systematic understanding of contemporary Japanese. In other words, what the learner already knows (sushi is a loaned word from Japanese) through their lived experience becomes a mediating tool for how they understand a new and unfamiliar linguaculture (Japanese also uses loaned words). Understanding that Japanese has many English loaned words will help all of the students with their future Japanese studies. I argue that the spontaneous concept of ‘seaweed wrap’ was drawn into a systematic relationship (Zack 1999, Mahn & John-Steiner 1998) with important features of the Japanese linguaculture and my encouragement and acceptance allowed this connection between the spontaneous and the formal to take place. Moreover, this allows students to ‘communicate, interact and negotiate within and across languages and cultures’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3).

Finally, examples of integration between the students’ everyday experience and the Japanese linguaculture can be seen in the interviews at the end of the Chapter 7, Data Analysis. For example, as discussed in Interview 1 (July 14th 2008, pp.31-32) Bill freely used the word ‘contextualise’ in turn 2, a key theme taken directly from the SLM and used frequently through our many discussions. In turn 4 he says ‘I’ve become a lot more aware of how the context and the culture are used’. This theme
has already been discussed in relation to everyday experiences such as greetings (7.b), the contextual nature of word meaning (*hidoii*) (2.a) and titles (9.a). In turn 6, Bill interweaves and contrasts notions of friendliness and politeness between his lived experience and his interpretation of Japanese by saying ‘*Yeah, in Australia we are polite but we are friendly. Friendly is different to polite*. ’

I have argued in this chapter that the students who participated in this study learnt to read and understand Japanese through the linguaculture and a New Literacies interpretation of literacy as described above (Chapter Three). This conception of literacy represented by the new paradigm of language literacy (*Swaffer et al.* 1991) is consistent with the sociocultural approach to learning and that ‘discovering the Japanese linguaculture’ is best served by becoming aware of the interpretation of cultural knowledge within a collaborative dialogue. I suggest that the examples taken from the data above suggest that voices of the classroom linguist and the classroom anthropologist have come together through an integration of schooled and everyday concepts and that this integration has led to a more sophisticated, high order conception of Japanese literacy.

### 8.5 Conclusion of Findings

The Asian Education Foundation’s *Intercultural Language Learning* (2005) states that a ‘significant pedagogical shift is required’ (p.6) by language educators because, as it suggests:

> The ultimate goal of language teaching and learning is to be able to communicate in another language. Cultures shape the way language is structured and the ways in which language is used’ (Asian Education Foundation, 2005, p.6).

*Getting Started* (2005) suggests that the language teacher’s job is not to make their students like native speakers – this is both ‘unrealistic and hardly ever achieved’ (p.7). It is suggested that ‘when someone speaks in their second language, they do not abandon their own thoughts, feelings and values and assimilate themselves into the
other culture’ (p.7). In other words, learners interweave and appropriate ideas and use them in their own way. At the same time, the students I worked with were learning that integration of new ideas and concepts is not always straightforward and can often be challenging. For these reasons I believe the combination of Formats of Talk (Renshaw & Brown 2007) and Voice (Bakhtin 1981) as tools for data analysis and demonstrating the connection between schooled and everyday concepts through collaboration are aspects of my research that could make a contribution to understanding how the sociocultural approach can be applied to the language classroom.

Overall, I suggest that this integration has led to a more culturally aware, higher order conception of Japanese literacy consistent with the National Statement’s (MCEETYA 2005) encouragement for teachers to develop a new understanding of their task. This is defined as teaching practice which encourages language educators to cultivate a richer understanding of the students’ first language, to ‘understand diverse ways of knowing and doing and to be able to communicate and negotiate within and across languages’ (MCEETYA 2005, p.3). These understandings of learning a language offer many possibilities for learners to integrate their everyday understanding with those developed and represented by the new language.

At the centre of this inquiry is the freedom and opportunity to interpret the text by drawing on one’s everyday lived experience (Nystrand et al. 1997, Ballenger 1997, Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) All of these ideas are united through the sociocultural approach to teaching and learning (Wink & Putney 2002). In sum, it is not possible to stand outside one’s own linguaculture. It is, however, the act of moving between and juxtaposing a new linguaculture which exposes limitations and opportunities for learning about language and literacy. The data, analysis and discussion I have presented in the previous chapters suggests that through collaborative endeavour, students were able to adopt an anthropological stance which supported their participation in learning to see insights into the Japanese linguaculture and to solve interpretive problems together.
These collaborative experiences helped the students to make a transition from being classroom linguists to classroom anthropologists and thus transformed their understanding of language learning. I now turn to the final chapter of this thesis to discuss implications and conclusions of the research for theory and practice.
Chapter Nine: Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

The major theme of this thesis has been to explore the implications of applying a sociocultural approach to Japanese literacy learning. In this final chapter I will outline the implications and limitations of this preliminary study and make suggestions for further research in the three main themes of the thesis:

1) Collaboration and learning through schooled and everyday concepts

2) New Literacies in a new language

3) The overall implications for employing a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning a new language.

This study has shown an example of Japanese language students learning to talk about language in a way that has changed their literacy awareness to see literacy as a cultural and social practice, or to view literacy in a new language as ‘more interested in fault lines than in smooth landscapes, in the recognition of complexity and in the tolerance of ambiguity’ (Kramsch 1993, p.2).

Interaction and collaboration supported the students’ Japanese literacy to the point where talking about and building an interpretation through collaborative endeavour was part of becoming literate in a new language. This was especially true if discussion and interpretation referred to the learners’ everyday experience by integrating everyday concepts with schooled concepts. As literacy and linguaculture were the content of learning in this study and a sociocultural notion of collaboration was the means, I now focus on the implications and limitations of introducing dialogic and collaborative notions of learning into the Japanese language classroom.
9.2 Implications for the Use of Collaboration in the Languages Classroom

My study suggests clearly that collaboration should be a part of becoming literate in a new language. Accordingly I have set out to bring about a collaborative approach to teaching and learning about the Japanese linguaculture based on sociocultural principles of dialogic instruction (Bahktin 1981, Vygotsky 1986, Nystrand et al. 1997). The main implication of this exploration would be for language teachers to allow students to take an active position in their literacy learning by providing authentic texts which bring a more complete literacy experience into the classroom. The SLM motivated the students in this study because it allowed them to scaffold each other’s interpretations by drawing on their own lived experiences by integrating schooled and everyday concepts. I suggest this approach would motivate any interested learner who wants to discover more about the language they are learning (Chapter Four, Section 4.7.1).

Throughout the data I can be seen working within the students’ Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky 2000/1986). The SLM structured these interactions so that Japanese could be understood as a linguaculture. To begin with this meant more explicit instruction through Initiate Respond Evaluate (Mehan 1979) and replacement (Renshaw & Brown 2007) of linguistic terms in order to explain the Japanese code. As time passed and I directed the talk through the different elements of the SLM, there was more opportunity for elaboration and discussion which facilitated interpretation of the text. This teaching and learning practice involved more guided participation (Rogoff 1990) and detailed feedback to the students’ contributions. For example, I gave the students a lot of time to think about questions, I also responded respectfully to their contributions and, finally, I encouraged them to think for themselves and give their own interpretations, not simply give someone else’s answers (Nystrand & Gamoran 1990). This pedagogy allowed the students to make insightful interpretations based on their own everyday experience which, I argue, led to a more meaningful understanding of the Japanese linguaculture for these students.

However, a limitation of the study is that the data shows that I reached the point where sustained collaboration occurred between the students and me, but not between the students
themselves. While sustained peer to peer collaboration did not grow within the discussions, I did introduce the students to the Japanese linguaculture through the SLM which, I have shown, prepared them for an anthropological approach to language in the future. This is suggested in the interviews at the end of the research process. For examples of this, see Bill’s understanding of formality and greetings in the first interview (Section 7.5.1), and Robert’s statement that the SLM ‘definitely’ helped him when learning Japanese (Interview 2). I also argue that this use of various formats of talk would prepare the students for more sustained forms of collaboration if we had more time to learn together. How these positive findings could be taken further is a question for future research and more opportunities to test this approach in a larger more realistic classroom setting.

9.3 Limitations of the Study Regarding New Literacies in the Languages Classroom: Striking a Balance Between Code and Culture.

Throughout this study I have used the term ‘linguaculture’ to reconcile the notion that, while language is made up of a code, the meaning of that code is shaped and organised around cultural and social practices. Moreover, I argue that in the data collected for this study, my students displayed discernable patterns of talk that integrated everyday concepts and schooled concepts to generate an anthropological voice. However, regarding the implementation of New Literacies into the classroom, a limitation of this study concerns the balance between the anthropological and the linguistic voice. Language teachers may ask ‘did the SLM actually improve the students’ Japanese literacy awareness or only give them a deeper understanding of culture? In other words, did adopting an anthropological approach distract from their necessary linguistic development and take away opportunities to improve their mastery of the Japanese code? This provides an important question for further research which could include more ‘products of literacy learning’; that is, examples of how the SLM improved a learner’s mastery of the Japanese code which is renowned for its complexity and is deservedly the focus of much explicit instruction.
Based on my own data, I suggest that I have shown a number of examples of how an understanding of the social practice of reading and the cultural nature of language have helped the students see the connection between the code, the context, the culture and how the language is used. An anthropological approach does not ignore the code but, as I suggest, encourages learners to look more closely and appreciate how details of the code are used to create and change meaning (Haneda 1997, Carr 1999). Interpretation is part of ‘the richly layered talk with multiple strands of meaning and intention, of remark and response, which is of central importance to the process of entry into a new discourse’ (Ballenger 1997, p.12). This is why, based on the SLM, I have made interpretation a central aspect of discussion to suggest that learning doesn’t only aim to record information but, equally, to interpret it. (Chapter Three, Section 3.1, 3.5).

For example, in example 9.a, turn 11, Mike gives specific linguistic evidence that shows his understanding of how word endings change according to who uses them. He says ‘The use of nasai from the Grand Parents and kudasai from the villagers, or sama or san for the names’. This is a sophisticated analysis of the Japanese linguaculture because it shows an understanding of hierarchy and politeness, two key features of Japanese culture which are reflected in language (Wierzbicka 1997, Goddard 2005, Gottlieb 2005). It also shows elements of linguistic interpretation because he identifies the relationship between the social hierarchy and the word forms.

Examples such as this suggest that being able to articulate and understand the social relationships and the context of the language leads to a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of the linguistic code. However, further research needs to be done to understand the connection and mutual support of both in terms of how everyday concepts support schooled concepts as, for example, Brown (2007) and (Brown & Renshaw 2004) have done in the field of mathematics.

Unlike the field of first language literacy, from which this study has taken much of its inspiration, learning the linguaculture of Japanese first requires an enormous amount of effort to master the basic de-coding skills of a new script. For this reason, using the SLM would
only be meaningful and useful after students had a sound knowledge of the Japanese code and a confident linguistic voice for understanding the language. With this in mind, do teachers in an already crowded curriculum have the motivation necessary to spend time developing an anthropological understanding by giving students opportunities to collaborate and interpret the Japanese texts they are reading? Furthermore, are students convinced that learning the linguaculture is part of learning the language code? While discussing the status and relationships of characters in a Japanese folk tale they may not feel they are learning to speak or read Japanese. To address these questions a more in-depth study involving a full class would be required, rather than taking five students out of a class and working with them in ideal conditions.

Other concerns raised in the data were the limits and accuracy of the students’ interpretation. The collaborative approach to learning analysed in this study invited interpretation and gave many opportunities for the students to elaborate on the observations they made, but did not focus on challenging the dominant readings of the text. However, the question remains — Were their interpretations accurate? One of the key ideas behind Renshaw and Brown’s Formats of Talk is as follows:

Too great a focus on ‘replacement’ may mask the need for students to actively participate in socially constituted practices, such as ‘invention’ and ‘justification’. Too greater focus on ‘interweaving’ may reduce student inquiry to a process that lacks mathematical substance and clarity (Renshaw & Brown 2007, p.3).

The same could be said of interpreting the Japanese linguaculture. Given that few things in our cultural practices are clear cut and that the very nature of culture is dynamic, it may be a mistake to expect novices to make informed interpretations of a new, different and complex culture. For example, in example 7.a, turn 9 Robert suggests that a married couple refer to each other as Ojisisan (Grandfather) and Obaasansan (Grandmother). While this is generally the case it is not uniform and there will be many couples who do not use these terms. This is a very subtle cultural practice which not every teacher will have the depth of experience in the linguaculture to recognise. Finally, there is a danger that if the students are able to interpret without due consideration to the linguistic and textual evidence, or the quality of the guidance they receive, they could create and draw on superficial stereotypes. As the expert guide in
this project, I was able to use my extensive experience of living in Japan to help the students understand the cultural context of various aspects of language. However, what if this was not the case? How many qualified teachers have the opportunity to become deeply familiar with the many levels of the Japanese linguaculture?

I believe the answer lies in the fact that everything that this thesis has suggested is aimed at creating an anthropological disposition which sees literacy as a symbolic tool shaped by culture and thus promotes inquiry and investigation rather than spontaneous unsupported interpretation (Kramsch 1993, Lo Bianco et al. 1999). The keyword questions of the SLM ask students to discuss, explore and explain features of any given text and, I trust, this would always be done with the guidance of a teacher who has considerable experience and curiosity. Furthermore, we live in a time when it is much easier for students themselves to consult authentic sources as well as Japanese friends and acquaintances (or in many cases, the teacher may be a Japanese national) and with an anthropological voice, ask questions which will enable the linguaculture to become more visible.

9.4 Further Research and Implications for Change: Applying The Sociocultural Approach to the Languages Classroom

Change is always difficult to implement, especially when many classrooms have a code-focused approach which works and is easy to teach and test. Swaffer et al. devoted an entire chapter to the theme that new paradigms are hard to implement (Swaffer et al. 1991, Chapter 2). In conclusion of my own research, I feel this will be the biggest impediment to the widespread implementation of a sociocultural approach in the language classroom. Palincsar and Herrenkohl have described collaborative learning through reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown 1984) as ‘cultivating a new pattern of instructional discourse in the classroom’ which in many ways raises ‘a host of complex issues that address the culture of the classroom’ (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002, pp.28 & 32). Encouraging an anthropological view of language through free-ranging dialogue and discussion of linguaculture is very different to the linguistic focus of most languages pedagogies. Even if the SLM were introduced, would teachers use the keyword questions as intended? Would they use all or
only some of the questions? Would teachers allow students to have a wide ranging discussion? And most importantly, would these discussions in English help students understand and use Japanese? All these questions require a longer term more in-depth study that involves a whole class over a school year rather than one small group for a limited period of time as this study has presented.

While writing this thesis I worked as an English Language Teacher in Japan. There I witnessed first-hand the pedagogy produced by teachers who believed that language was a code and nothing more. I witnessed transmission teaching in its purest form where teaching was viewed as the ‘controlled distribution, demonstration and assessment of knowledge’ and learning was seen as the ‘accumulation and display of information and skills’ (Brown 2007, p.117). The Japanese teacher’s approach to literacy was the opposite to that described by the new paradigm in languages literacy — it was an approach based on rote learning, drills, memorisation and teacher-fronted I.R.E patterns of talk with no opportunity for students to interpret or ask questions. It was from this experience that I was confronted with many difficult questions regarding the realistic possibility of introducing sociocultural practice into a traditional language teaching system. The ideas expressed in this thesis would seem alien not only to teachers and administrators in my Japanese school, but also to the students who may not see an anthropological understanding of language as useful if they were only memorising the formalities of a code (Mackerras 2010).

The educational culture is different in Australia, but there are many teachers and students who cannot conceive of language as anything but a system of words and rules. Transmitting the code is certainly the easiest way to teach and assess language learning. With these experiences and impressions in mind I feel the most difficult part of implementing sociocultural practice in the classroom will be convincing language teachers that encouraging an anthropological inquiry into a linguaculture is worthwhile, and that it will complement and enhance their students’ mastery of the code. In other words, teachers will need time and resources support to make a sociocultural approach work. While both Teaching and Learning Languages: A Guide (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) and Getting Started (2005) both offer many helpful ideas, the fact remains that there are no textbooks which facilitate a sociocultural collaborative approach to language teaching, so adopting this understanding
would mean an increased workload for most already busy teachers. While the SLM is flexible enough to be used with any Japanese text, it is finding time to focus on the anthropological voice and inquiring disposition which will require both a new attitude from teachers and students and a great deal of sustained effort. I suggest a start can be made through professional development in which the SLM could be used to facilitate discussion.

The policy documents cited in this study all suggest the need for change in the way languages are taught in Australia. New ways of teaching are best brought about through the professional development of language teachers. From September to December 2010, the Queensland Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Centre offered professional development activities aimed at enhancing ‘teacher understanding of interculturality and pedagogy’ in the delivery of a number of different languages and which ‘celebrated new directions in Asian languages’ (Queensland LOTE Centre 2010).

My study shows an example of theory in practice – the SLM is shown in action and the data analysed in this study suggests that the SLM did help the students take on the practices of anthropologists as well as those of linguists. I believe the findings and suggestions of this study could be used in professional development to help language teachers put the policy recommendations into practice and influence the way teachers talk about the language they teach by adopting terms such as ‘linguaculture’ or ‘anthropological and linguistic voice’. By facilitating collaborative endeavours or the use of the SLM in their classroom practice, teachers could use their experiences as action research and thus add to the body of research into new approaches to languages education (McLaughlin & Liddicoat 2005, Mackerras 2007(a), 2007 (b), also see Appendix Four). For example, the SLM could be added to the LOTE Curriculum Framework Blackboard Community which is designed to share resources and materials for LOTE teachers. The presentation of the SLM in professional development programs would help promote a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning and contribute to the New Literacies concept of linguaculture in the languages classroom.
I believe my case study following five students has provided some evidence to support the sociocultural claim that social activity promotes individual development (Vygotsky 1986). Within a small group with time for discussion, collaborative learning has been realised and guided by the use of the SLM. Moreover, the teaching practices that developed a Zone of Proximal Development in the language classroom developed both linguistic and anthropological understandings of Japanese that gave opportunities to negotiate meaning through interpretation and discussion (Moll 1990, Zack 1999, Daniels 2001).

For example, teaching using the SLM is more student-centred and knowledge is constructed through social exchange. I also argue that the SLM facilitated a New Literacies paradigm approach (Swaffer et al. 1991, Kramsch 1993, Kern 2000) to understanding a Japanese text. The SLM was designed to guide the students not only to understand and use the code of Japanese, but took them a step further by showing them how to interpret the text as well as read it. Indeed, the SLM and its application supported the cultural and linguistic complexity within the Japanese language by providing a much broader view of literacy than that taught in traditional classrooms.

9.5 Conclusion of Thesis

In conclusion, I offer this preliminary, ‘exploratory case study’ (Yin 2003, p.3, Chapter Six Section 6.3) to suggest that I have made a contribution to research in the field of languages education by connecting the recommendations of the National Statement (MCEETYA 2005) and Getting Started (Dellit 2005) with an original pedagogic tool (the SLM) that allows a sociocultural approach to language teaching to be realised in the classroom. While the many examples of research cited in this study show an interest in sociocultural theory, literacy and new language teaching, my study has brought those three themes together in a unique way because I have shown research done in the classroom that makes clear recommendations that collaboration and a New Literacies approach can enhance the study of Japanese.
I set out to respond to the policy documents cited above with the SLM which changed the way Japanese was seen and, I argue, allowed the students to add an anthropological voice to their way of learning (Chapter Eight). This was achieved because the SLM acted as a pedagogic tool for an understanding of literacy which moved away from recall, factual content, mastery of the code and comprehension (Chapter Three, Section 3.4) and moved towards seeing literacy as a social practice that draws ‘on a repertoire of social, cultural and cognitive resources to construct and reconstruct meaning’ (Anstey 2002, p.23). At the same time, the application of the model also gave learners opportunities to observe and consider the various features of the Japanese code and how the use of *Katakana*, for example, influenced the meaning of a word (Chapter Seven, example 5.a). In this way, I suggest, I have extended the theory of the New Literacies paradigm (Swaffer et al. 1991, Kern 2000, Kramsch 1993) and offered teachers a way to be part of the ‘sociocultural turn’ (Johnson 2006) in the classroom. In short, I have connected theory with practice.

It is my hope that language teachers will adopt and adapt aspects of the SLM to suit their needs. However, I would agree that in order for the SLM and the sociocultural approach to reach its full potential, a firm belief and understanding of a dialogic, student-centred approach to teaching is needed, and a sympathy for the target language as a linguaculture is vital. Only with this belief can a language teacher allow students to see each other as ‘intellectual partners’ (Palincsar & Herrenkohl 2002, p.32) in their discovery of the Japanese linguaculture.

Teaching languages is taken seriously in Australian schools. From 2008 to 2012 the Australian Government has committed 62.4 million dollars to the study of Asian languages in Australian schools (National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program 2010). However, what approach should inform language teaching? The following is taken from *Getting Started* and quotes a practising Japanese language teacher in Tasmania:

> One of the most important responsibilities of a Japanese teacher is to enable her students to have opportunities for real experience and exchange with people from Japan. This is important for improving essential language learning skills. But what is more important is that it enhances the students’ motivation to engage in intercultural activities by forming shared personal experiences with Japanese people (Dellit 2005, p.24).
'A shared personal experience with Japanese people’– this is a very clear articulation of what I am trying to promote in this research – the importance of integrating a learner’s everyday concepts, or a student’s ‘life worlds’ (Scarino & Liddicoat 2009) with those that are taught in the Japanese language classroom. The policy documents quoted throughout this thesis describe a new concept of language teaching, one that I have attempted to realise through a sociocultural lens and one which, I argue, is both necessary and important for language learners in our changing times.

Sociocultural theory asks us to understand learning in a very different way to the transmission approach that informs many language classrooms. One key difference is that learners and teachers change the way they participate so that everyone has ‘shared responsibilities for learning’ with ‘guidance in joint endeavours from both experts and peers’ (Rogoff et al. 1996, p.409). This is what I have attempted to create with the SLM used in a collaborative dialogue. I have participated with my students, who started with the practices of classroom linguists, but then incorporated the practices of classroom anthropologists to become aware of the linguaculture through collaborative endeavours.

I suggest that by adopting the SLM and implementing it together with collaborative endeavours would not only make Japanese learning more enjoyable, but would allow students to increase their language literacy. By drawing on Vygotsky’s ideas of schooled and everyday concepts, collaborative leaning and Bakhtin’s notion of Voice, language educators could benefit from a ‘powerful vision of how individuals come to be inhabited by, and yet co-construct, the social and cultural worlds in which they exist’ (Daniels et al. 2007, p.5). This preliminary study has suggested a way to construct Japanese language literacy by offering an example of theory realised in practice. As ‘word is the tool of pedagogy’ (Emerson 1983, p.257) the keywords from the SLM can be used to represent literacy as a way of giving voice to culture and recognising how culture shapes and is shaped by social dynamics. I have argued that this is one way to engage students in a thoughtful and creative way of talking about Japanese.
The sociocultural approach is based on the premise that culturally produced symbols of thought and language are transmitted through social interaction. It is at the point of interaction, through discussion, disputation or collaboration, that the individual has a chance to act upon and transform the natural and social world (Mercer 2000, 2005, Renshaw & Brown 2007). The students in this research project have had the chance to learn about the Japanese linguaculture through the SLM which allows for interpretation and discussion, and so allows for a transformation of the students’ understanding of Japanese and the way they learn it. I believe this is a vital lesson because the continuing globalisation of the world and the advancing technology it brings gives educators ever-increasing opportunities to share experiences across cultural and linguistic boundaries; however, this situation also brings increasing opportunities for the transformation of those boundaries (Kramsch 1995).

I believe that language teaching will always include a recognition and respect for cultural diversity built on a genuine curiosity about new linguacultures. Moreover, intellectual sensitivity and curiosity are necessary for successful collaboration when resolving global conflicts and the importance of effective communication across diversity is an increasingly valuable skill. However, it is becoming apparent that there is a need to enhance the cultural connectedness of language (Lo Bianco et al. 1999), so the study of Japanese can have an impact on the ‘readiness of young Australians to thrive in a globalised world’ (de Kretser & Spencer-Brown 2010, p.72).

The successful understanding of a new language and culture has been the theme of this research, and finding an improved tool to do this has been the aim of this study. As the world in which we live, learn and work changes, the new language learner is uniquely placed to make a contribution to an increased enrichment of learning, from which opportunities for intercultural collaboration and further exploration of new linguacultures will result. In this thesis, I have argued that an entire approach to language and learning are reflected in the words used to organise and understand the Japanese linguaculture, or as Vygotsky put it in the closing paragraph of Thought and Language, ‘consciousness is reflected in a word as the sun in a drop of water’ (Vygotsky, 1986, p.256).
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Appendix One: Detailed Description of Interaction

Guiding question = Asking a question that prompts a direct answer.

Explicit instruction = Student is told exactly how to achieve a goal.

Direct question = A question which is prompted by previous discussion or text.

Further reasoning = A suggestion that adds an insight to previous points made by peers.

Prompt for further clarification = To ask a question which extends the answer given.

Supportive statement = A statement that shows support for someone’s effort but doesn’t comment on their learning.

Prompt for further engagement = A prompt that asks a student to think about their answer further.

Elaborated answer = A long detailed answer to a question.

Shared observation = When learners share an insight into their collective learning.
Appendix Two: Consent Letter

Sociocultural Approaches to Japanese Literacy

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Dear Students, Parents and Caregivers,

I am writing a PhD thesis on how students become literate in Japanese while learning through the Intercultural Language Learning approach. The title of the thesis is written above.

I am seeking to gain a more detailed understanding of how students collaborate to improve their understanding of Japanese as a second language and to what extent understanding Japanese culture impacts of their literacy skills.

As part of my data collection, I will be asking students to be video and audio taped in class and for selected students to be interviewed and have some work samples copied. Those students will be selected in consultation with Ms Dodd and will not be asked to do anything they wouldn’t normally do under Ms Dodd’s supervision.

All data will be stored at Griffith University in my supervisor’s office and will be coded under pseudonyms to ensure the privacy of all students and teachers involved. No student will be identifiable from resulting publications or public lectures associated with my research. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without consent.

Participation in this project is voluntary and students can withdraw at any time without penalty.

If you have further questions please contact me on the above number.

I agree to take part in the study outlined above:

Parents/Caregivers __________________________

Student __________________________
Appendix Four: Conferences and Publications Where This Research Has Been Presented

*Peer Reviewed Book Chapter*


*Peer Reviewed Article*


*Non-Peer Reviewed Article*


*Conference Presentations*

2010

Presented a paper on *Linguaculture in new language literacy* at the Japanese association of language teachers’ conference Osaka Japan.

Presented a round table discussion on *Collaboration in language teaching* at the IASCE Cooperative learning conference Brisbane Australia.

2007

Presented a paper on *Sociocultural approaches to literacy in a second language* at the International conference of social & cognitive learning, Auckland New Zealand.


2006

Presented a workshop on *New literacies* at The Queensland language teachers’ conference, Brisbane Australia.

Presented a paper on *Second language literacy* at the Australian language educators conference, Sydney Australia.

2005

Presented a workshop on *Multiliteracies in second language education* at Hanoi University of Foreign Studies University Hanoi Vietnam.