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The Use of First Person Pronouns by Non-Native Speakers of Japanese

by

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Abstract

Spoken and written data were analysed to examine the use of first person pronouns (1PP) in Japanese by non-native speakers (NNS), and then compared to 1PP use by native speakers (NS). For English NS who are used to obligatory subjects in their L1, Japanese 1PP poses challenges since Japanese 1PP are used rarely by NS and often brought about by pragmatic motivations. The results indicated that NNS initially overuse 1PP but their frequency of use becomes closer to that of NS over time. When looking at the postpositional particles used, similarities existed between NNS and NS in the written data. However, NNS in the spoken data more closely resembled the written NS data than the spoken data when marking the subject or topic. It was also found that NNS most often used 1PP for emphasis in the written data and for referential reasons in the spoken.

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Abbreviations and Symbols

The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the thesis:

1PP	Singular first person pronoun
L1	First language
L2	Second language
NNS	Non-native speaker
NS	Native speaker
SLA	Second language acquisition
Ø	Omitted item

Gloss abbreviations used in the examples taken from Shibatani (1990) and Ono and Thompson (2003) have the following meanings:

NOM	Nominative
ACC	Accusative
FP	Final particle
COP	Copula

The symbols used in the transcripts of spoken data are the following, taken from Du Bois et al (1993, p. 88-89):

=	Lengthening
…	Medium pause
@	Laughter
[ ]	Speech overlap
<Q … Q>	Quotation quality
(( ))	Researcher's comment

Chapter One

Introduction

Native speakers of English, including myself, seem to use personal pronouns such as *me* or *you* at nearly every opportunity with no thought to any function beyond referring to the person being discussed. This is because in English a subject is required, and therefore pronouns are used to avoid the repetition of proper nouns (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Rubin, 2002). In contrast, personal pronouns in both written and spoken Japanese are frequently omitted to the point where a lack of direct reference, or a *zero pronoun*, is considered to act the same as an overt pronoun would. This leads to a very interesting phenomenon in Japanese where personal pronoun use often has implications beyond stating who or what is being discussed. Learners of the language are actually warned against referring to others with pronouns, such as *anata* 'you,' because its use can come across as rude in many situations.

While Japanese singular first person pronouns (1PP) do not have the capacity to offend that second and third person pronouns do, they still go beyond simply referring to the first person in many cases. The following is adapted from Thompson (1993).

(1) K Iya guuzen oai-site *honto* [Ø] *yokatta to omoimasu ne*.
O *Honto* boku mo *yokatta to omoimasu*.

K Well, [*I*] *think it's really good* I happened to meet you,
O Really *I too think it's really good* (p. 125)

In (1), K refrained from using overt pronominal reference in her utterance, but to a Japanese NS, without 1PP it would be clear that K was referring to herself, and the use of 1PP such as *watashi wa* 'As for me' would actually change the meaning, making her statement a comparison between K and O. This is in contrast to when O used *boku* 'I' followed by the postpositional particle *mo* 'also.' In O's case, the 1PP marked his agreement with K's sentiments more so than indicated he was the subject, and without the overt use of 1PP the meaning would be unclear, or at best change to a more direct statement without the shared feeling that *boku mo* expressed.

The functions that 1PP serve when they do occur in Japanese has been studied extensively (Kurosaki, 2007; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Martin, 1975; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Osumi, 2005; Shibatani, 1990; Suzuki, 1978; Thompson, 1993), showing quite clearly that the use of 1PP is based more on pragmatic or social motivations than on semantic or grammatical. However, the field of Japanese second language acquisition (SLA) is relatively new, and not much is known about how the more pragmatic aspects of Japanese 1PP carry over into non-native speakers' (NNS) use of the language. In particular, no study was found on the use of Japanese 1PP by English speakers.

From a linguistic standpoint, it is interesting to look at how learners of a second language (L2) acquire a feature that acts so differently in their L2 than in their first language (L1). For an English native speaker (NS) it can be difficult to suddenly have to think about when exactly to use 1PP when it was never an issue before. In fact, although it is commonly believed that NNS of Japanese overuse

1PP, little research has been done. As an instructor of Japanese, I have seen first-hand evidence of beginner NNS overusing 1PP both in the written and spoken language. Despite telling my students that 1PP use was unnecessary in many situations, many were slow to change and would continue to start off nearly every sentence with *watashi* 'I.' Being a Japanese NNS myself, the more I thought about 1PP overuse by other NNS the more I began to see it in my own use of the language. This in turn made me want to learn more about how and why 1PP was a complicated concept for NNS to grasp.

A pilot study I ran looked at NS judgements on whether or not 1PP used in spontaneous conversation data collected from NNS were considered necessary. The study did not answer whether or not all the unnecessary uses could really be seen as evidence of overuse, but results suggested that NNS do in fact often include 1PP when they do not need to. Out of all the 1PP examined, 87.5% were rated as unnecessary by at least one of the four judges (Carter, 2007). This potential overuse of 1PP by NNS could stem from the fact that, as mentioned, in Japanese it is not as much an issue of whether or not each use of 1PP is grammatical, but whether or not it is acceptable or appropriate given the context in which it occurs, to support the argument by Shibatani (1990).

Possibly compounding the problem, many Japanese textbooks do not address the issue adequately. *Nakama 1* (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998), the first-year level textbook used by participants in the current study, only briefly mentioned how "[the] topic is often omitted if it is clear from the context" when 1PP was first introduced (p. 39). After that point, however, no explanation was

ever given for why 1PP is used when it does appear. In *Nakama 1* around 36% of the example sentences where the first person is the subject contained 1PP, but without additional information NNS must draw their own conclusions about why it is used. This could be difficult for NNS, for when Japanese 1PP are brought about by pragmatic motivations it is important to know what is going on beyond the sentence level.

Another first year textbook, *Yookoso!* (Tohsaku, 1999), went a bit further in explaining 1PP and stated that "[pronouns] are used mostly for emphasis" (p. 102). It also discussed certain features involved in omitting the subject, saying:

> The first person pronouns (*I*, *we*) are usually omitted, unless there is no other way to make clear what the subject of the sentence is. If a conversation or paragraph starts with a sentence that lacks a subject, you can usually assume that the underlying subject is *I* or *we*. If the first sentence is a question without a stated subject, the underlying subject is probably *you* (*Ibid.*).

Moreover, unlike *Nakama 1*, at a later point in *Yookoso!* there was also a small mention of when not to use 1PP. Still, it was not in regard to a pragmatic issue, but instead a semantic one: the use of 1PP in conjunction to the use of kinship terms that relate to the speaker's family and already carry the sense of relating to the first person (Tohsaku, 1999). So even in *Yookoso!* the issue of 1PP was only touched upon briefly, leaving NNS to again draw their own conclusions.

A brief examination of how 1PP are presented in textbooks reveals that if it is the case that NNS are incorrectly using Japanese 1PP, instructors of the

language may need to supplement the texts. As Schmidt (1990) argued, it is important for a learner to consciously notice features of an L2 when acquiring them, but the issue with Japanese 1PP lies in the fact that they do not frequently occur in native speech and the correct use could be difficult for NNS to notice on their own. To make the matter more complex, the correct use may sometimes be a non-use. As 1PP and the pragmatic issues that surround it are not fully addressed in textbooks, both instructors and learners of Japanese as a second language would benefit from the study of how NNS acquire and use Japanese 1PP. This is supported by Jones and Ono (2005), who had the following to say about the relationship between linguistic research and pedagogy:

> [Discourse] analyses can illuminate the ways in which learners succeed or fail in their attempts to produce appropriate and authentic discourse. Similarly, the analysis of learners' writing can also tell us much about the degree to which they have grasped the appropriate use of the target language. The analysis of nonnative discourse, then, can help pinpoint possible problem areas that can be addressed by teachers (p. 238).

Uncovering specific issues in regard to NNS use of 1PP would then not only help in the understanding of Japanese SLA, but also in the implementation of second language instruction. As pointed out by Rubin (2002), "[speakers] of English are so used to stating their subjects that it takes a lot of practice for them to stop …, but perhaps becoming more aware of what they are actually saying could help break them of the habit" (p. 33).

To that end, this study investigates the use of Japanese 1PP by NNS to see how they are using them as well as whether or not they are truly overused. This is done through the careful examination of both written composition data and spontaneously occurring spoken data as well as through the comparison of NNS data and similar data collected from NS. In doing so this study hopes to answer the following:

1. Are NNS really overusing 1PP? And if so, do they use it with decreasing frequency as their study of the language progresses?
2. How do NNS use 1PP, and how does their use of 1PP differ from NS?

Answers to the two research questions enrich the current field of Japanese SLA by shedding light on problems that learners of Japanese may have in mastering a native-like command of the language, especially when the problem lies outside the morphological or syntactic domain.

Chapter 2 begins by looking at previous studies on the subject of Japanese 1PP, the L1 and L2 acquisition of Japanese 1PP, as well as the acquisition of 1PP or zero-subject by L2 learners of other languages. Chapter 3 addresses both research questions in regard to written Japanese, while Chapter 4 looks at the use of 1PP in spoken data but not at how it changes over time. Chapter 5 looks at both sets of data, both to compare the findings as well as discuss how the results from the written and spoken data can help in the understanding of the other. How the treatment of 1PP in textbooks used by NNS could affect their use of 1PP is also discussed. Lastly, Chapter 6 summarizes all findings and addresses the question of what they might mean for the instruction of Japanese as a second language.

Chapter Two

Previous Studies

Little study has been done on the use of singular first person pronouns (1PP) by Japanese non-native speakers (NNS) (cf. Tseng, 2004), but various studies have examined both the use and acquisition of 1PP by native speakers (NS) (Clancy, 1986; Ide, 1979; Kurokawa, 1972; Kurosaki, 2007; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Martin, 1975; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Osumi, 2005; Shibatani, 1990; Suzuki, 1978; Thompson, 1993). In particular, the scholarship has focused on how they differ from 1PP in European languages and how they serve specific functions in Japanese, which can provide guidance for how to look at the use of 1PP by NNS. Also of importance are the postpositional particles found paired with 1PP, as they also help identify the function of each (Clancy & Downing, 1987; Kurosaki 2007; Osumi, 2005; Thompson, 1993). Previous second language acquisition (SLA) studies on both the acquisition of 1PP as well as the general acquisition of subject and subject ellipsis in other second languages (L2) can also give clues as to how Japanese NNS may behave in terms of 1PP use (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997).

Singular First Person Pronouns in Japanese

Many researchers have discussed how "Japanese 'pronouns' are characterized by being both more numerous and more socioculturally specialized than is the case for many other languages" (Ono & Thompson, 2003, p. 323). That

is to say, in Japanese there are numerous forms 1PP can take, and which form to use depends on both the formality of the given situation as well as the gender of the speaker (Shibatani, 1990). In fact, Kurokawa (1972) judged there to be 14 different 1PP used in the Tokyo dialect alone.

The most common 1PP are *boku* and *ore* – typically used by male speakers, *atashi* – typically used by female speakers, and *watashi* – used by both (Shibatani, 1990). An example of the use of 1PP is shown in (1), where the 1PP *boku* is in the subject position.

(1)	*Boku*	*ga*	*Hanako*	*ni*	*denwa*	*o*	*kaketa*.
	[1PP]	NOM		to	telephone	ACC	call

'I telephoned Hanako.' (Shibatani, 1990, p. 382)

Some linguists prefer not to relate Japanese 1PP to those found in Indo-European languages, such as English *I*, which all have similar origins and are limited in number (Suzuki, 1978). It has even been suggested that Japanese 1PP more appropriately fit under a broader category of "terms of self-reference" (*Ibid.*, p. 93). This is partially due to the fact that Japanese speakers will not just use 1PP to refer to themselves but instead use any number of terms. Suzuki (1978) interviewed a male teacher in his forties, who explained that depending on the situation he could refer to himself as "*watakushi* 'I,' *boku* 'I,' *ore* 'I,' [*ojisan*] 'Uncle,' [*otousan*] 'Father,' [*sensei*] 'Teacher,' and [*niisan*] 'Older Brother'" (p. 103-4); so when talking with his children he could refer to himself as *otousan* and while talking with his students he could refer to himself as *sensei*, avoiding pronominal reference altogether.

Etymologically, 1PP in the Japanese language evolved from other terms of address (Suzuki, 1978). A recent example is that of *boku*, which originally meant 'servant' and then came to "convey one's inferiority to the addressee" (*Ibid.*, p. 99) before eventually becoming a moderately formal first person pronoun used predominantly by males today. Another example is *watakushi,* a more formal form of *watashi*, which used to mean "private or personal" (*Ibid.*, p. 98) and now is a formal term of address for both males and females.

The major difference between 1PP in Indo-European languages such as English and in Japanese that has been agreed upon and documented by many (Ide, 1979; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Martin, 1975; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Shibatani, 1990; Thompson, 1993) is the frequent rate of ellipsis or omission. Martin (1975) stated that Japanese NS "prefer to avoid direct pronominal reference, so that such words as [*watashi*] 'I' and especially [*anata*] 'you' are heard a good deal less often than their counterparts in English" (p. 332). This can be seen in their infrequency in contemporary naturally occurring Japanese conversation, with only about one use of 1PP found per 22 clauses (Ono & Thompson, 2003). Shibatani (1990) went as far as to refer to Japanese as a "zero-pronoun language" (p. 391). In this, he meant that pronouns are so infrequently used in Japanese conversation that perhaps it should not be looked at as 'omission,' but instead that zero is the natural state for pronouns and when they are used it is in fact 'addition' (Shibatani, 1990). Others have also accepted this notion of zero pronouns, indicating that ellipsis serves the same function as 1PP in Japanese (Fry, 2003).

Zero pronoun use can be seen in the following constructed example provided by Shibatanai (1990), where both the first and second person subjects are omitted:

(2) A: *Hanako to eiga e itta no?*
with movie to went that
'Was it the case that (you) went to the movie with Hanako?'

B: *Un,* [Ø] *itta yo.*
yeah [1PP] went FP
'Yeah, (I) went (to the movie) (with Hanako).' (p. 363)

Without the explicit mention of a different subject it can be assumed that a declarative statement, or one with its predicate in the direct form, refers to the first person (Shibatani, 1990; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008). This can be seen in (2) where B's statement is an example of the omission of a first person subject ending with a direct predicate (Shibatani, 1990). In fact, because reference is not needed to clarify the subject, if first and second person reference were included in (2) the meaning may change to A accusing B of being the one to go to the movie, and B strongly declaring that they were in fact the one to go.

In particular, direct forms which indicate a "psychological state" (Shibatani, 1990, p. 383) or feelings, such as *hoshii* 'to want,' indicate that the speaker is referring to themselves. So in a statement such as "*Eiga mitai* '(I) want to watch a movie'" (Lee & Yonezawa, 2008, p. 734) the missing subject could only ever be the first person. A further example can be seen in the following, adapted from Thompson (1993).

(3) [Ø] *kono yo no owari ka to omotta.*

'I thought it was the end of the world.' (p. 65)

In (3) the speaker used *to omou* 'to think,' another direct form that indicates the subject is the first person. Thompson (1993) referred to these forms as "thought or feeling predicates" (p. 72) and found that when they appeared, 1PP were omitted 79% to 97% of the time. In comparison, 1PP were only omitted 50% of the time when used with "non-feeling/thought predicates" (Thompson, 1993, p. 72).

As well, certain lexical items that are a part of the Japanese honorific system also carry with them the sense that they refer back to the speaker. Hinds (1982) mentioned how humble verbs such as *mairu* 'to come or go' and *itadaku* 'to receive' indicate that the missing subject is "the speaker, or a member of the speaker's ingroup" (p. 80). Moreover, humble forms of lexical items, such as *haha* 'mother,' can also only be used to refer to the speaker's own mother, etc., making the addition of 1PP to indicate possession, such as *watashi no haha* 'my mother,' unnecessary (Tohsaku, 1999).

These specialized predicates and lexical items then both allow for the omission of direct reference to the first person while still leaving the meaning intact. In fact, 1PP could be considered redundant when used in these instances. However, there are some cases in which 1PP are deemed to be necessary, such as the following:

(4) atashi *wa* *Amerika* *da* *shi*

[1PP] WA America COP and

'I am (in) the United States.' (Ono & Thompson, 2003, p. 327)

Ono and Thompson (2003) argued that without the 1PP *atashi*, (4) "would mean only that 'some entity has some relation with America', as that is the extent of the semantic specification which the predicate *Amerika da* evokes" (p. 327). In other words, if the 1PP were omitted in the above example it would drastically change the meaning of the utterance.

Discourse Functions of Japanese 1PP

Because 1PP in Japanese is not required at all times, it often serves specific discourse functions beyond just referring to the first person (Ono & Thompson, 2003). Various studies have examined the functions that 1PP serve (Kurosaki, 2007; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Osumi, 2005; Thompson, 1993). In regard to spoken Japanese, Ono and Thompson (2003) identified three main functions. The first of these is "referential" (*Ibid.*), which can be seen in (4) where the 1PP is necessary to make the referent clear. Unlike languages such as English where referential pronouns are obligatory, it was found that when used referentially, Japanese 1PP served a specific function, often followed by particles emphasizing that function such as *to* which means 'and' (*Ibid.*). (5) illustrates an example.

(5) atashi *to mizutaki to no dotchi ga suki na no*

[1PP] and MIZUTAKI and of which GA like COP FP

'Which do (you) like between me and *mizutaki* [name of a dish]?' (*Ibid.*, p. 328)

According to Ono and Thompson (2003), the instance of 1PP in the above example is "an oblique postpositional phrase (*atashi to* 'me and' …); without it,

the utterance would not convey the intended meaning" (p. 328). In their data, 50% of all 1PP were found to serve referential functions (Ono & Thompson, 2003). Furthermore, of those, 90% were marked with particles, and they point out that:

> Interestingly, fully half of these [1PP] are clear cases of obliques; they are marked with particles with a clear semantic meaning (*ni* 'to', *to* 'with/and'. *yori* 'than', and *no* 'of'). Further, examples marked with *wa* and *mo*, which account for a quarter of the referentially motivated uses, have a clear contrastive or additive ("also") meaning. The other quarter is marked with *ga*, and, interestingly, they are clear cases of what Kuno (1973) calls "exhaustive listing" (Ono & Thompson, 2003, p. 330)

That is to say, even when used referentially, 1PP in Japanese are still serving specific functions in the conversation beyond simply referring to the first person as the subject (Ono & Thompson, 2003).

The second function identified by Ono and Thompson (2003) was "emotive," as seen in the following example:

(6) *sugoi* *warukute* watashi
terrible bad [1PP]
'I (feel) terrible.' (Ono & Thompson, 2003, p. 330)

In emotive uses, 1PP were not deemed to be necessary for referential reasons but instead expressed "the emotion/feeling of the speaker" (Ono & Thompson, 2003, p. 331). They argued that it may be a "grammaticized use" of 1PP, and therefore acting more like a sentence final particle indicating the speaker's emotion rather

than as a referential 1PP (*Ibid.*). Around 6% of the 1PP examined in their study fell under the emotive use and none of those were followed by particles (*Ibid.*).

The last function identified was "frame setting," and according to Ono and Thompson (2003) around 43% of 1PP that they looked at in their study fell under this category. An example they give is the following:

(7) K: ore *ne* *mukashi* *ne*
[1PP] FP long:ago FP
ano
uh
sugoku *yotte* *ne*
awfully drunk FP
'I long ago, uh, really got awfully drunk and…'
(*Ibid.*, p. 333)

Ono and Thompson (2003) claimed there is "evidence of speaker trouble in the form of a hesitation (*ano* 'uh') and the 'floor-holding' *ne*" (p. 334). They argued that the frame setting function can be associated with floor holding on the part of the speaker, and not necessarily connected with the predicate. Speakers will use these when "she/he has not formulated the morphosyntax (or even the trajectory) of the utterance itself" (*Ibid.*, p. 336). As well, not only were these uses found paired with particles such as *wa*, a topic maker, and *mo* 'also,' they also frequently were found with ones such as the sentence final particle *ne*, *de* 'and,' *dakara* 'so,' and *nanka* 'something,' which are, according to Ono and Thompson (2003), "often associated with 'frame-setting' and 'floor-holding' functions in

Japanese conversation" (p. 337). This use of 1PP also shows that what follows relates to the speaker or to their general viewpoint, and as such could be suggested to indicate subjectivity (Ono & Thompson, 2003).

1PP with Particles and Particle Omission in Japanese

As can be seen from the discussion of the different functions of 1PP in Japanese by Ono and Thompson (2003), it is hard to separate each use from the particles they are paired with. Ono (in press) argued that "when these particles do occur in actual utterances, they are added for pragmatic reasons" (p. 6). Looking at the particles used with 1PP, Thompson (1993) found that in a conversation between two NS they were most often paired with *mo* 'also' and in all her data, both two-person and multi-person conversations, 1PP+*mo* was the second-most frequent that she found after 1PP without any particle (*Ibid.*). According to Thompson (1993), 1PP+*mo* "suggests that the speaker is not unique, she is just one of many people" (p. 79), so its use "gives an impression of harmony in the group" (p. 80). If the speaker were to use *wa*, which has been traditionally viewed to mark not only the topic, 'Speaking of …, talking about …', but also to frequently mark an overt contrast, 'X …, but …, as for X …' (Kuno, 1973, p. 38), it would give the impression that "the speaker is a unique person and [the] speaker would appear to stand out very strongly as an individual" (Thompson, 1993, p. 79-80). Thompson (1993) argued that in Japanese conversation this "would sound stiff or awkward" especially in a large group (p. 79).

In a conversation between more than two NS 1PP occurred most frequently without any particle (1PP+Ø) although 1PP+*mo* was still the second-

most frequent (Thompson, 1993). This high occurrence of 1PP+Ø was attributed to it being used by the participants "for emphasis or to heighten a sense of contrast with others" as well as "[giving] the speaker time to think of what to say next, or … lessen the impact by delaying the utterance which follows" (*Ibid.*, p. 79). Furthermore, by not using the particle *wa,* NS do not have to stand out too strongly from the group (Thompson, 1993).

Although Thompson (1993) was the only study found to look at 1PP+*mo* in detail, others (Kurosaki, 2007; Osumi, 2005) have specifically examined the difference between the functions of 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø. Kurosaki (2007) found that Ø will follow after 1PP when 1PP simply acts as the subject of the sentence, or when the speaker just wants to introduce their self as a new topic. 1PP+*wa*, on the other hand, is used when the reference is of special interest to the listener, particularly in contrastive situations (Kurosaki, 2007). Osumi (2005) found that 1PP was most commonly followed by Ø in informal Japanese conversation, with around 3.5 times as many 1PP+Ø found than 1PP+*wa*. As well, 65.6% of 1PP+*wa* were used for contrastive purposes (Osumi, 2005). Based on these results, she concluded that in the spoken language, 1PP+*wa* is used "when the speaker intends to express comparison" and 1PP+Ø is used when "the speaker does not intend to express comparison" (*Ibid.*, p. 52).

Due to the relationship between 1PP and particles, studies that looked more generally at the use of particles in Japanese can also help to better understand how 1PP is being used. In particular, the particle *wa* has been studied extensively for its uses of either marking topic or contrast (Clancy & Downing,

1987; Osumi, 2005). Clancy and Downing (1987) found that 75% of the time *wa* appeared it was used for contrast, and therefore concluded that "the primary function of *wa* is to serve as a local cohesive device, linking textual elements of varying degrees of contrastivity" (p. 46). However, this only applies to the spoken language, for in written Japanese "there is much greater leeway for planning and editing, and so authors are more likely to use *wa* as a deliberate staging device to indicate perspective and plot centrality" (Clancy & Downing, 1987, p. 47). Osumi (2005) supported this in her study, where she cited findings that in spoken Japanese *wa* is used to mark contrast 62% of the time and topic only 14% of the time, while in written Japanese it is used to mark contrast 34% of the time and topic 55% of the time. It is very possible, then, that the use of particles – *wa* and Ø in particular – with 1PP between written and spoken data will be quite different.

Acquisition of Pronouns and Ellipsis in Other Second Languages

While studies in Japanese SLA have rarely addressed the issue of zero pronouns, numerous studies on similar phenomenon in both other Asian as well as European languages have been carried out. Some studies (Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995) have found that NNS can discriminate to some extent when to use pronouns or when to use zero pronouns in their L2. There is also consensus that NNS are likely to omit elements in the subject position but not in the object position (Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Yuan; 1997). In fact, Jung (2004) concluded that "[object] dropping seems to be more difficult than subject dropping for the English learners of Korean to acquire" (p. 726).

Another common finding is that NNS do show signs of improvement in their use of pronouns or zero pronouns over time, regardless of L1 or L2 (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997). Jung (2004) found that in terms of third-person reference by English L1 learners of Korean, NNS in the beginner-level would often use the subject at all times, while the intermediate-level NNS would use the subject at the very beginning and then omit subsequent subject pronouns when they referred back to the one that was initially mentioned. Those in the third level, on the other hand, would omit all references in the main and subordinate clauses when the context made it clear, a pattern similar to that of Korean NS (*Ibid.*).

However, the findings of a study by Bearden (1998) looking at novice NNS of Spanish deviated from the general trend. In her study, although the lower-novice level NNS used zero pronouns the least, it was the middle-novice level NNS that had the highest rate of zero pronouns while high-novice level NNS had the second highest (Bearden, 1998). Bearden proposed two possible explanations for this phenomenon, the first of which was that "the [highest novice level] is the stage at which the learners … are producing longer strings of words …; thus, they supply more pronouns in an attempt to ensure their meaning is understood" (p. 8). A second possible explanation was that while the low and mid-level novice NNS imitate their interviewers more often, the higher level novice NNS "start to rely less on memorized material and to construct their own sentences, [and] they fall back on their L1 rules and include pronouns in their utterances" (Bearden, 1998, p. 8). Regardless of the reason, her findings suggest that although NNS do improve

over time their acquisition of pronouns in a L2 may not necessarily be a straight progression (Bearden, 1998).

There was also some disagreement in the results of studies when it comes to the influence that a NNS's L1 has on their acquisition of pronouns in their L2. Bearden (1998) found that beginner-level Spanish NNS at the low and mid-novice levels did not appear be influenced by their L1, although at the high-novice level there was evidence they may have started relying on their L1 as they produce more on their own. On the other hand, Jung (2004) attributed the initial overuse of both subjects and objects in the results of her study to the influence of the NNS's native language – English – on their acquisition of Korean. As the findings from various studies are somewhat contradictory, it may suggest that a learner's L1 does not actually have that strong of an influence on their use of pronouns – including 1PP.

Moreover, other studies specifically targeting whether or not L1 transfer is a factor in the acquisition of pronouns (Polio, 1995; Register, 1990) had further results which implied it is not. Register (1990) examined how NNS with various L1s handled the acquisition of English pronouns, specifically targeting NNS whose L1 allows for zero pronouns (Spanish and Chinese) in contrast with those whose L1 does not (German). Contrary to her expectations, she found that although Chinese has a freer use of zero pronouns than Spanish, the Chinese participants performed nearly as well as the Germans at detecting ungrammatical cases of pronoun omission while the results from the Spanish were found to be significantly lower from both that of the German and Chinese at the lower levels

of proficiency (*Ibid.*). Polio (1995) also found no significant difference between the English and Japanese groups in her study on the acquisition of Chinese, although she admitted "the conclusion that there is no difference … may not be very strong" (p. 366). Regardless, because both groups had similar results transfer from the NNS's L1 was not considered to be a cause (Polio, 1995).

Polio (1995) proposed several reasons for the overuse of pronouns aside from the NNS's L1, the first being that "speakers seem to use pronouns to pause while thinking about the rest of the sentence" (p. 370), a phenomenon that is also found in the speech of NS. It could also be the case that NNS use pronouns "because it is clearer … for either themselves or the listener, to keep track of the referents" (Polio, 1995, p. 372) and she pointed out that "second language learners are dealing with a more difficult cognitive task than adult [native speakers]" (*Ibid.*). The last possible explanation she gave is that "the input to the students may contain more pronouns than found in everyday speech" (*Ibid.*), or essentially attributing it to the use of "teacher talk" or "foreigner talk" by NS who alter their own output to try and accommodate the NNS's level.

First and Second Language Acquisition of 1PP in Japanese

Returning to the discussion of Japanese 1PP, there has been some study on the differences in first language acquisition of 1PP between Japanese and English. Clancy (1986) found that in contrast with English NS, Japanese NS start using 1PP at a much later age. In her study of three Japanese children, Clancy (1986) stated that in comparison to American children, who were found to use 1PP by around one and a half to two years of age, "two little [Japanese] boys occasionally

referred to themselves as *boku* 'I', but at 2;2 years-old, the [Japanese] girl still had not spontaneously referred to herself with a pronoun, although her linguistic development was certainly no less advanced" (p. 451). That is not to say they did not refer to themselves at all, but instead preferred to use their own names, a result which is not uncommon in Japanese L1 acquisition studies (Clancy, 1986).

Similarly, Ide (1979) found in her study of nursery school children that "Japanese children at play often do not employ person-designating terms … [and] would go for as much as half an hour without using any such terms" (p. 288). The English NS she studied rarely used zero pronouns, while it was the most frequent among the Japanese NS (Ide, 1979). Although both English NS and Japanese NS start out using their own name to refer to themselves (*Ibid.*), in terms of 1PP acquisition English NS start much earlier, which emphasizes the differences in 1PP use between the two languages (Clancy, 1986; Ide, 1979).

In terms of NNS of Japanese, Shibatani (1990) argued that omission of 1PP in Japanese and the "high degree of contextual dependency" could potentially be problematic (p. 390). That is to say, the difference between 1PP use in Japanese and other languages could make the acquisition of Japanese zero pronouns difficult for NNS. In the case of NNS whose L1 is English, although there are some specialized phrases in which pronouns may be dropped – an example given by Shibatani (1990) was "*Need some help?*" (p. 364) in which 'Do you' is not present at the beginning of the utterance – personal reference is generally always included.

Interestingly enough, although it has been mentioned by some that Japanese NNS have trouble with 1PP and ellipsis in general (Rubin, 2002; Shibatani, 1990; Thompson, 1993), as mentioned previously very little study has actually been done on the topic. Tseng (2004) is one of the few, and she collected written samples from second and third year NNS at a Taiwanese university to examine their use of 1PP. After collecting the compositions, five Japanese NS looked at each use of 1PP and determined whether or not they could be omitted. It was found that 253 (approx. 55%) of the 463 1PP used by the second year NNS could be omitted, and 146 (approx. 46%) of the 315 uses by the third year NNS could be omitted. It could be seen then that there was an overall decrease in the number of 1PP that could be omitted in both number and overall percentage from the lower to higher level of study. For both groups, the vast majority (approx. 99%) of 1PP that could be omitted were in the subject position, with 250 at the second year level and 144 at the third year level. This is not surprising, because others (Fry, 2003) have also found the subject to be the most frequently omitted item in Japanese.

Tseng (2004) also looked more specifically at the functions of the 1PP that could *not* be omitted, and her results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Number of 1PP That Cannot be Omitted Grouped by Function (Adapted from Tseng, 2004, p. 36)

	Topic	Emphasis	Demonstrative	Contrast
Second Year	59 (28.1%)	40 (19.0%)	41 (19.5%)	70 (33.3%)
Third Year	53 (31.3%)	39 (23.1%)	28 (16.6%)	48 (28.4%)

For the second year group, contrast was the function used most often, and it was a close second for the third year group. She then looked at Japanese language textbooks used by NNS at that level, and found that in textbooks it was actually the topic function that was used the most often, with it making up 48% of the occurrences at the beginner level and 37% at the intermediate, although she did not discuss whether or not they could be omitted (Tseng, 2004).

NNS used 1PP five times more often than the textbooks, and Tseng (2004) concluded that L2 learners of Japanese in Taiwan are, in fact, overusing 1PP. It was also found that the third year NNS did perform better than the second year NNS, showing that use of 1PP may improve over time. One possible explanation proposed was the influence of the NNS's L1, but she also suggested it could be the influence of the textbooks, because similarly to the NNS the lower level textbooks use 1PP more frequently and the higher the level of the textbook the more native-like it became (Tseng, 2004). However, Tseng only looked at the functions of those 1PP that could *not* be omitted, and compared them to 1PP found in textbooks to determine if they were being used correctly. Japanese language textbooks have been criticized for not accurately reflecting what actually occurs in speech (Jones & Ono, 2005), so it would be beneficial to look also at how the use of 1PP by NNS compares directly to the use by NS. Moreover, only written data was examined, and the present study examines how 1PP are used in the spoken language as well as in the written and compares the two.

Summary

Japanese 1PP are characterized by their frequent rate of ellipsis, or omission, which leads to their being used for specific functions in discourse (Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Martin, 1985; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Shibatani, 1990; Thompson, 1993). Some of these functions can be referential, emotive, or frame setting (Ono & Thompson, 2003). 1PP can also help to create a sense of harmony in a group or, conversely, help the speaker to stand apart from others depending on the post-positional particles that follow (Thompson, 1993). It must be noted that this is only in regards to NS, as that is where the majority of study on the use of Japanese 1PP has focused, leaving a sizeable gap in the field of Japanese SLA.

The one study on 1PP use by Japanese NNS found that when acquiring Japanese as an L2, NNS have been found to have trouble with overusing 1PP, but there is evidence that their use may become more native-like over time (Tseng, 2004). This is comparable to results of studies done on the acquisition of other languages, which found that NNS of any language may incorrectly use pronouns or zero pronouns, or overuse subjects when ellipsis is allowed, but all studies showed NNS improved as they progressed in their study of the language (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997). There is still disagreement on whether or not the NNS's L1 is a factor, for while some thought it to be (Bearden, 1998; Jung; 2004), others did not (Polio, 1995; Register, 1990).

However, the previous study on Japanese NNS only looked at written data from NNS whose L1 was Chinese, and only in comparison to the way 1PP

appeared in Japanese textbooks (Tseng, 2004). My study will further the body of work on Japanese 1PP and SLA by looking at written as well as spoken data collected from English L1 speakers. Furthermore, instead of comparing NNS data to textbooks, it will look more specifically at how their use of 1PP differs from that of NS of Japanese, both in terms of frequency as well as the functions which 1PP are used for as well as looking at how their use changes over time.

Chapter Three

Present Study I: Use of 1PP in the Written Data

As seen in Chapter 2, although there are many studies on the acquisition of zero pronouns and subject ellipsis in a second language (L2) (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997), very few specifically targeted singular first person pronouns (1PP) and, to my knowledge, aside from Tseng (2004) very little has been done on Japanese. Due to the many differences between Japanese 1PP and those found in other languages, including the frequency of zero pronouns and often pragmatic motivations behind the use of 1PP, the acquisition and use of Japanese 1PP by non-native speakers (NNS) is particularly interesting. English native speakers (NS) are a group that has been said to overuse 1PP when learning Japanese (Rubin, 2002), and the current study hopes to add to the pre-existing body of research by examining the use of Japanese 1PP by English NS as well as looking at how that compares to the use of 1PP by Japanese NS. To that end, the current study addresses the following two questions:

1. Are NNS really overusing 1PP? And if so, do they use it with decreasing frequency as their study of the language progresses?
2. How do NNS use 1PP, and how does their use of 1PP differ from NS?

Research Design

Both written composition data and spontaneously occurring spoken data were examined, as the two forms of the Japanese language can behave differently

and require different processing times. The differences between written and spoken Japanese have been discussed by those such as Shibatani (1990), who stated how "in most languages, the colloquial language and the written language show different characteristics, and perhaps even more so in Japanese than in English" (p. 357). These differences are seen not only in the degree of formality used in written and spoken Japanese, but also in the rate of ellipsis – including the use of zero pronouns (Shibatani, 1990). Therefore, by examining both types a more rounded picture of the use of 1PP by NNS could be seen.

The corpus of spoken data used consisted only of data collected from NNS at the third year level, so to determine whether or not NNS use 1PP with decreasing frequency as their study of the language progresses the written data was collected from NNS studying at all four class-levels of university Japanese. For the purposes of this study, each level was considered a separate group or proficiency level as is. Although that would not guarantee the members within each group have the same ability and there are different ways to define a NNS's proficiency, this was expected to help ensure that members of each group had a similar background in what they had learned about the Japanese language.

Due to the fact that the two forms of the Japanese language can be considered different (Shibatani, 1990), the ways in which NNS used 1PP in written and spoken data were first examined separately, and then afterwards were compared to see if and how the use in the two sets of data related to each other. Lastly, to answer the question of if and how the use of 1PP by NNS differs from

that of NS, similar written and spoken data from NS control groups were used as a baseline to which the NNS data could also be compared.

Collection of Written Data and Participants

The written composition data was collected at the beginning of the winter term of 2009 at the University of Alberta. L1 speakers of English from all four levels of study were selected as the NNS participants in this study on a volunteer basis (from now on referred to as 100, 200, 300, and 400-level, with 100-level being the lowest and 400-level being the highest level). Only L1 speakers of English were included. Participation was elicited during class time on a voluntary basis, but all who took part did so in their own free time. General background information of the NNS participants is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
NNS Participants Who Took Part in the Written Data

	Age (years)		Length of Study (years, months)		Time in Japan	
Group	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
100 (n=13)	20	18 – 26	7m	6m – 8m	0.2m	0 – 2m
200 (n=11)	21	19 – 27	2y,11m	1y,5m – 5yr	1.6m	0 – 10m
300 (n=12)	21	19 – 24	3y,10m	2y,2m – 10yr	4.2m	0 – 2y,1m
400 (n=7)	22	21 – 24	5y,2m	2y,6m – 7y	4.5m	0 – 1y,2m

Participants for the NS control group were drawn from the population of Japanese exchange students at the university, with an average age of 21 years and 6 months. In total there were 51 compositions collected, including 13 collected from 100-level NNS, 11 from 200-level NNS, 12 from 300-level NNS, 7 from 400-level NNS, and 8 from NS.

All participants were asked to write a composition in Japanese about an exciting or memorable event that had happened to them recently as if they were

writing an entry in an online journal that their friends would read. It was expected that this format would encourage the subject to be the first person while allowing for participants to pick a topic they could write about without difficulty. Compositions were written on 400-character *genkouyoushi* (vertical formatted 'Japanese writing paper') as students were accustomed to using it for their in-class writing assignments and it was hoped that it would help control for length. Participants were encouraged to fill the entire page but were allowed to stop whenever they wanted.

There was no specific time limit but most spent 20 to 30 minutes working on the task and the length of each composition varied. No instruction was given on whether to use polite or plain forms so both were present in the data; however, it should be noted that some participants commented that the use of *genkouyoushi* encouraged a more formal writing style. Prior to wide-spread data collection, the task was pilot tested to ensure that the instructions were clear and elicited an appropriate response; no changes were found to be needed prior to the actual data collection. The full instructions can be seen in the appendix.

Overall Frequency of 1PP Use in the Written Data

Once collected, the compositions were analyzed to determine how and where 1PP were used, as well as the general length of each individual composition. This was done not only to see the raw number of 1PP used, but also the overall frequency, because if an individual wrote more it was likely that they had more opportunities to use 1PP. Doing so also allowed for a better comparison

between the different levels because the higher levels tended to have longer compositions.

The length of each composition was determined by the number of clauses following Ono and Thompson (2003); in particular, those separated by coordinative conjunctions such as *ga* 'but,' items conjugated into the *te*-form 'and,' or those separated by subordinate conjunctions such as *kara* 'because' or *noni* 'although' (Makino & Tsutsui, 1997). Lists of adjectives connected by the *te*-form referring back to the same subject, certain noun modifying clauses, and nominalized forms using *no* and *koto* were considered to be part of a complex clause because the length and simplicity of the statement was similar to that of a single clause. Lastly, exclamations such as *ehe* 'ha ha' or greetings such as *ja mata!* 'See you!' were excluded from the count.

The results of determining the length of participants' compositions are shown in Table 3, where it can be seen that as the level or ability of the participants increased, so did the length of their compositions. The overall length also became more consistent and at the earlier levels there was far more variation in composition size.

Table 3
Length of Written Compositions Measured in Number of Clauses

Group	Mean	SD	Total
100 (n=13)	15	4.5	197
200 (n=11)	18	4.1	206
300 (n=12)	19	4.4	230
400 (n=7)	22	2.7	154
NS (n=8)	25	2.9	200

Overall, the 100-level NNS had the lowest average number of clauses per person (15) and as the class-level went up the number of clauses increased, with the NS having the highest average number of clauses per person (25). One of the main goals was to determine whether or not NNS are overusing 1PP, so using the lengths of the compositions and the raw number of 1PP found in each the overall frequency of 1PP use was calculated, summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Summary of Overall 1PP Use in the Written Data

	Average 1PP Use/Person		Range of	Total Number
Group	Mean	SD	1PP/Person	of 1PP/Group
100 (n=13)	4.7	2.6	1 – 8	61
200 (n=11)	3.0	2.6	0 – 9	33
300 (n=12)	1.7	1.4	0 – 4	20
400 (n=7)	3.6	3.7	0 – 12	25
NS (n=8)	2.0	1.7	0 – 5	16

Although the 100-level NNS had on average shorter compositions than the other four groups, they produced 61 1PP in total, which was the highest number out of all groups and almost four times as many as the NS. The 200-level NNS produced 33 1PP, which was half the amount of the 100-level NNS but still twice as many as the NS. As for the 300 and 400-level NNS, they were much closer to the NS, with 20 and 25 total 1PP respectively. More telling of the difference in 1PP use over time was the average number of 1PP per person for each group. When looking at the average number of 1PP used by NNS at each level, it became even more apparent that at the earlier stages of acquisition, L2 learners of Japanese as a whole did seem to overuse 1PP. However, the higher levels had more clauses – and therefore more potential 1PP than the lower levels – so the

average frequency (the number of 1PP divided by the number of clauses) was also calculated and a similar pattern was found, as shown in Figure 1.

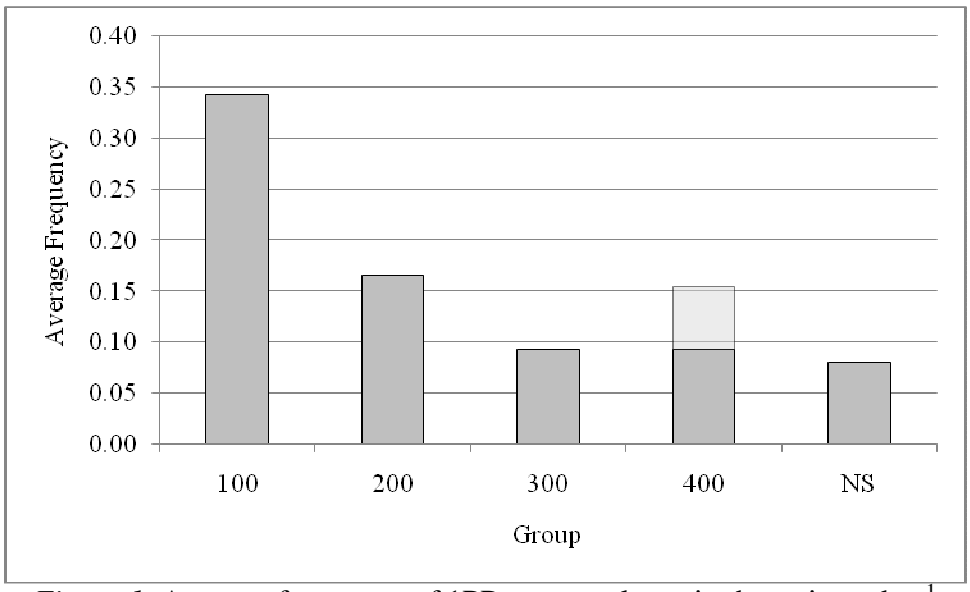

Figure 1. Average frequency of 1PP use per clause in the written data[1]

NNS in higher levels of study increasingly used fewer 1PP. This trend of decreasing 1PP use reversed at the 400-level where the frequency of 1PP use was closer to that of the 200-level NNS than it was the 300-level NNS or NS. However, as can be seen in Table 4 the standard deviation of the 400-level data in terms of 1PP use per person (3.7) was by far the largest of all five groups. This could be attributed to a single NNS who used 1PP 12 times, on average slightly over once every two clauses (at a frequency of 0.52 1PP per clause). If her data were excluded, the average frequency for the 400-level group dropped from 0.15 to 0.09 while the average total number of 1PP per person dropped from 3.6 1PP to 2.2 – numbers only slightly above those of the 300-level NNS.

[1] The two colour bar for the 400-group in Figure 1 indicates the difference between the average frequency both with and without the one outlying NNS participant.

In any case, findings in regard to a more native-like frequency of use of 1PP over time by NNS of Japanese were still relatively consistent with studies looking at both learners of Japanese (Tseng, 2004) as well as those looking at other languages (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997).

Particles Paired with 1PP in the Written Data

As mentioned in Chapter 2, there is a relation between the use of 1PP and the postpositional particles that accompany each, as the particles "are added for pragmatic reasons" (Ono, in press, p. 6), and help identify the function that each 1PP serves. To get a general picture of the ways in which NNS and NS were using 1PP in their compositions and answer the question of how the use differs between the two groups, the particles found alongside each use of 1PP were counted for each group. The percentage of the different particles used with 1PP in the written data from the five groups is presented in Figure 2.

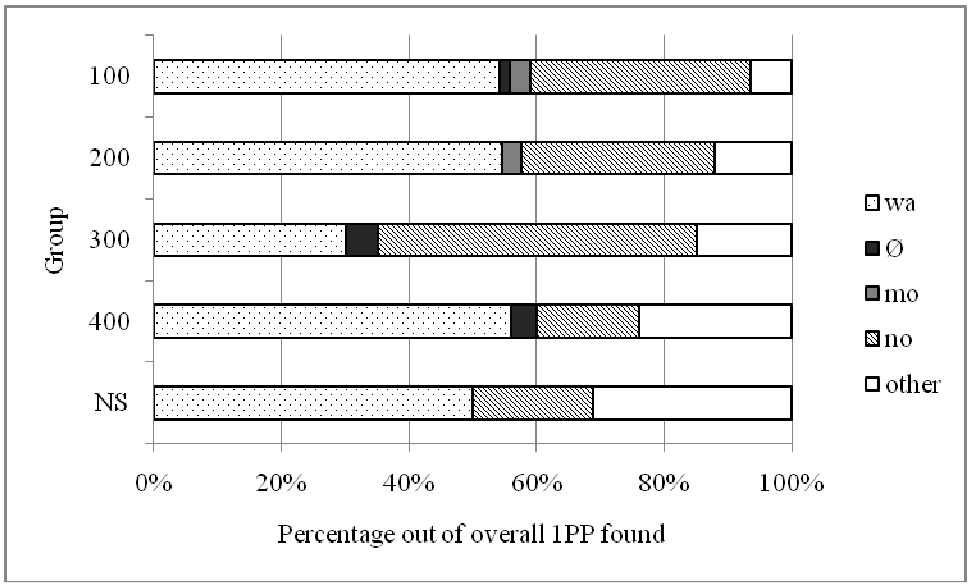

Figure 2. Average frequency of particles paired with 1PP in the written data

For all groups except for the 300-level NNS, 1PP was most often paired with the topic/contrast marker *wa*. The 300-level NNS used *wa* the second-most behind the possession marker *no*, while for all other NNS groups *no* came in second. This was also true for the NS group, but although not explicitly listed in Figure 2, NS also used *ga*, a subject marker, the same amount of times as *no*. The final two particles listed, zero particle (Ø), which indicates topic, and *mo* 'also,' were used infrequently by NNS, and neither was found in the NS data.

A very clear increase in "other" particles can also be seen in Figure 2. This trend was expected, considering that NNS would learn how to use more and more different particles as they continue in their studies while the beginner NNS, especially those at the 100-level, would have been limited to the few that they knew. The other particles found included *to* 'with/and,' indirect object marker *ni*, *shika* 'only,' direct object marker *o*, and *ga*.

Use of wa *with 1PP in the Written Data*

As mentioned previously, 1PP was marked the most frequently with *wa* by all groups, aside from the 300-level NNS who used it the second-most. Moreover, when looking at all the different particles used by NNS and NS without taking into account how many times each individual participant used each, 1PP+*wa* was the most widely used by most of the groups; again, the 300-level NNS favoured 1PP+*no*. The percentage of participants who used 1PP in their compositions from each group who also used 1PP+*wa* at least once is presented in Figure 3.

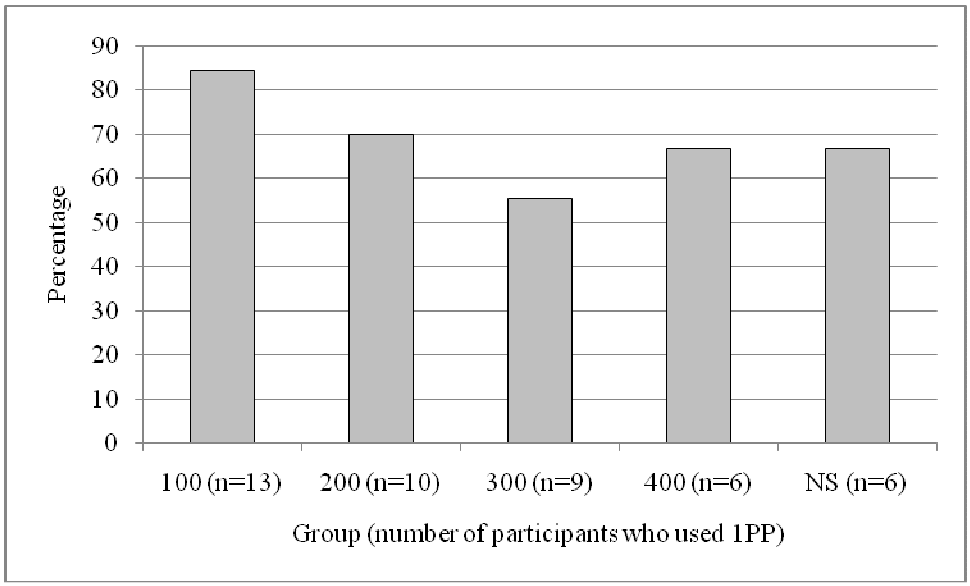

Figure 3. Percentage of participants with 1PP in their data who used 1PP+*wa*

When looking at Figure 3 it can be seen that the majority of participants who used 1PP in their compositions used 1PP+*wa* at least once. Nearly all of the 100-level NNS (around 85%) used 1PP+*wa* in their compositions, and although the numbers decreased in the higher level groups 66% of the NS who used 1PP also used 1PP+*wa* (50% of the NS group overall). This suggests that it is not necessarily that NNS were incorrect in which particles they used to mark 1PP, but for some of the groups – in particular the 100 and 200-level NNS – it did come down to more an issue of frequency as previously seen in Table 4.

This can be seen further in the more specific functions of *wa*, for as mentioned in Chapter 2 it is more often found to mark topic in written Japanese than it is contrast (Clancy & Downing, 1987; Osumi, 2005). Each use of 1PP+*wa* in the current written data was examined to determine whether it was being used to mark topic or contrast, which as mentioned in Chapter 2 are the two functions which it can serve (Kuno, 1973), and Table 5 shows the result.

Table 5
Functional Distribution of wa *Paired with 1PP in the Written Data*

Group	Topic	Contrast	Total
100	31	2	33
200	17	1	18
300	5	1	6
400	12	2	14
NS	8	0	8

The results were consistent with the findings by Clancy and Downing (1987) and Osumi (2005). In all groups there were very few instances of 1PP marked by contrastive *wa*; in fact, all NS used it to only mark 1PP as the topic. It is probably unsurprising that contrastive 1PP+*wa* occurred at such a low frequency due to the contextual dependency of its use; unless participants chose to contrast themselves with others, or something with others in their writing, there was no reason for contrastive *wa*. The contrastive uses of 1PP+*wa* by NNS were all straightforward, as seen in the following taken from a 200-level composition where a NNS was talking about spending time with her family and their dog.

(1) *momo to kazoku wa kanmoa ni sundeiru.*
demo, watashi wa *edomonton ni sundeiru.*

'Momo and (my) family live in Canmore.
But *I* live in Edmonton.'

As can be seen, the use of 1PP in (1) was to contrast the subjects of the two sentences, *kazoku* 'family' and *watashi* 'I,' as both are marked with the particle *wa* and the contrastive conjunction *demo* 'but' was used at the beginning of the second sentence. (1) can be considered a representative example of the contrast 1PP+*wa* found at all levels.

The topic function of 1PP+*wa* was the more frequent of the two amongst all the groups, and as there are various pragmatic functions it can serve (Ono & Thompson, 2003; Thompson, 1993) a more in depth discussion of topic 1PP+*wa* follows. Firstly, all instances of topic 1PP+*wa* were examined to see whether or not the sentences prior had the NNS or NS as the main referent, or if the 1PP in question marked a switch in subject. Instances of 1PP+*wa* found in the first sentence of a composition were excluded for they would have no prior referent. A frequent occurrence of 1PP+*wa* to mark a switch in subject would indicate that the main function of 1PP+*wa* was for participants to clarify the subject in instances where there was more than one. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6
1PP+wa *That Mark Either the Same Subject or a Subject Switch*

Group	Same Subject	Subject Switch	Total 1PP
100	21 (78%)	6 (22%)	27
200	12 (80%)	3 (20%)	15
300	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5
400	10 (91%)	1 (9%)	11
NS	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	7

Relatively few of the uses of 1PP+*wa* signalled a change in subject; only around 20% of the total 1PP+*wa* used by NNS and 14% used by NS came after a sentence with a different subject, implying that it is not the main function of topic 1PP+*wa* in written Japanese for either NNS or NS. It occurred the most frequently as a subject switch at the 100-level, but even then it was only 6 out of 27 topic 1PP+*wa* (22%).

When 1PP did occur at a subject switch it was used in one of two ways: either when the previous subject was a separate person or group not including the

participant, or when the previous subject was a large group in which the participant was included and with their next sentence they focused in on their own actions as an individual. The former can be seen the following example taken from a 100-level NNS composition about events that occurred on her birthday.

(2) *watashi no tanjoubi deshita kara, biiru o nomi ni ikimashita.*
ano tokoro ni, hen na hito ga takusan imashita!
watashi wa *biiru o ippon o nomimashita.*

'Because it was my birthday, we went drinking.
At that place, there were many strange people!
I drank one bottle of beer.'

In (2), the 100-level NNS wrote about how there were strange people at the bar she went to with her friend, switching the focus from a more general discussion of what she and her friend did. She then used 1PP+*wa* when she resumed talking about her own actions on line 3, *watashi wa biiru o ippon o nomimashita* 'I drank one bottle of beer.' Of all the 1PP that occurred at a subject switch in the NNS data, 6 out of 11 (55%) instances fell into this category.

The latter type of subject-switch was to shift the focus to the actions of the participant from a group activity, found in both the NNS and NS data. An example is (3), where a NNS wrote about going surfing with friends.

(3) *mokuyoubi ni go nin wa saafuboudo o karite, saafuin shite mita.*
watashi *wa saafuin wa hajimete kedo totemo tanoshi katta.*

'On Thursday five of us rented surfboards, and tried surfing.
It was *my* first time but it was really fun.'

In (3) the NNS discussed a general group activity that she took part in: going surfing. In the following sentence, *watashi wa saafuin wa hajimete kedo totemo*

tanoshi katta 'It was my first time but it was really fun,' she then focused in on herself and commented on her personal experiences during the activity. Of all the instances in the NNS data, 5 out of 11 (45%) fell into this category, but both types of 1PP+*wa* occurring at a subject switch were uncommon and did not seem to be the main function of topic 1PP+*wa* in the written data for both NNS and NS.

Although 1PP+*wa* was found infrequently in contrastive situations and at a subject switch, where 1PP+*wa* did occur more frequently in the NNS data was with "emotional" predicates. In Chapter 2 it was mentioned that when direct forms indicating one's own feelings are used it is understood that the subject is the first person and 1PP is unnecessary (Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Shibatani, 1990). This includes items such as *tai* 'want to [do something],' *to omou* 'think,' as well as statements including adjectives expressing feelings, such as *kanashii* 'sad,' *ureshii* 'happy,' *suki* 'like,' or *kirai* 'hate.' The use of topic 1PP+*wa* by all participants was examined to see how many times it was found alongside emotional predicates, and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
*Number of Topic 1PP+*wa *Paired with Emotional Predicates*

Group	Number	Total Topic 1PP+*wa*
100	7 (23%)	31
200	12 (72%)	17
300	2 (40%)	5
400	7 (58%)	12
NS	3 (38%)	8

The 100-level NNS had the lowest percentage of 1PP+*wa* being used with emotional predicates, and all instances in that group involved adjectives discussing the NNS's feelings or those expressing their likes or dislikes; this was

unsurprising as those are the only types of emotional predicates learned at their level. This can be seen in the following example of a 100-level NNS using 1PP+*wa* when she wrote about going to the zoo with her family.

(4) watashi wa *doubutsuen ga suki desu.*

'*I* love the zoo.'

She used 1PP+*wa* twice in her composition and both times it was when mentioning things that she liked. All cases of emotional predicates paired with 1PP+*wa* at the 100-level were quite similar. At the 200-level the number of cases almost doubled, and nearly three-quarters of the topic 1PP+*wa* were found with emotional predicates. Of those, seven were similar to the 100-level NNS, expressing feelings or likes and dislikes, while four expressed thoughts or desires.

The following is an example of 1PP+*wa* used when expressing desire, taken from a 200-level composition where the NNS discussed her recent experience of going to San Diego, America and visiting the zoo there.

(5) *amerika mou ichido ittara,* watashi wa *doubutsuen ni ikitai desu.*

'If (I) go to America again, *I* want to go to the zoo.'

Instead of occurring at the beginning of the sentence in the subordinate clause, 1PP+*wa* was used in the main clause where the NNS talked about her desire, *watashi wa doubutsuen ni ikitai desu* 'I want to go to the zoo.' That is to say, 1PP+*wa* in (5) was intentionally paired with the emotional predicate. As for the 300-level NNS, only two cases were found, though the numbers at the 400-level (as seen in Table 7) continued the trend started at the 100 and 200-levels and it

could be inferred that if more 1PP+*wa* were present in the 300-level NNS data they would follow a similar pattern.

Like the 100 and 200-level NNS, four of the seven cases, or over half of the total 1PP+*wa* found at the 400-level, were paired with expressions of feelings. Another two cases of topic 1PP+*wa* preceded expressions of desire, and one came with an expression of the NNS's thoughts. Furthermore, if the one NNS whose frequency of 1PP use was much higher than the other 400-level NNS's data is excluded, the number goes from seven out of twelve 1PP to four out of five or 80% of the total instances of topic 1PP+*wa*. Looking then at all four groups, a pattern of increasingly using 1PP+*wa* with emotional predicates can be seen. As NNS learn to use zero pronouns in their writing, they appear to favour using 1PP as the topic when they want to emphasize their emotional involvement in what they are saying, suggesting it may be a common feature in the written Japanese of NNS. On the other hand, NS only had three uses of 1PP+*wa* with emotional predicates out of eight total 1PP+*wa*, so it is difficult to say if it is a common feature of the written Japanese of NS.

Use of no *with 1PP in the Written Data*

As can be seen previously in Figure 2, aside from the 300-level NNS who used it the most frequently, 1PP+*no* was used the second most by all other NNS groups. In the case of the NS, it was tied with 1PP+*ga* (included in the "other" category of Figure 2) for the second most frequently used. 1PP+*no* was used in a wide variety of contexts in the written data, but it was expected that when 1PP+*no* was used with kinship terms that already carry with them a sense of 'my' that it

could be seen whether or not the NNS groups were having difficulty with the use of 1PP+*no*. All kinship terms that refer back to the speaker's own family used in the compositions, both those with 1PP+*no* and those without, were counted. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
*Use of Kinship Terms With and Without 1PP+*no *in the Written Data*

Group	With 1PP+*no*	Without 1PP+*no*	Total Kinship Terms
100	0 (0%)	16 (100%)	16
200	2 (17%)	10 (83%)	12
300	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
400	1 (14%)	6 (86%)	7
NS	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2

The 100-level NNS that had the lowest rate of 1PP+*no* before kinship terms, as not a single participant at that level included it in their composition despite the fact they had the highest overall number of kinship terms. Moreover, while it might be expected that NNS would show an improvement in the use of 1PP+*no* over time, if the use of 1PP+*no* with kinship terms is redundant as Tohsaku (1999) stated, NNS at higher levels of study were actually using 1PP+*no* less accurately than the 100-level NNS. At the 200-level, four NNS used kinship terms, two of whom used the same kinship terms both with and without 1PP+*no*; at the 300-level two NNS used kinship terms, one with 1PP+*no* and one without; at the 400-level one NNS whose composition focused heavily on events featuring her brother and grandparents used seven kinship terms, one of which was preceded by 1PP+*no*.

When looking at the one individual who used kinship terms in the NS group, the question arose of whether or not the use of 1PP+*no* with kinship terms

really must be avoided by NNS. It was present even in the NS data, as seen in the following where a NS wrote about her experience going to a restaurant to eat chicken wings with her friends.

(6) *moshi,* watashi no *chichi ga soko ni itara*
totemo yorokonde ita to omoimasu.
chichi wa biiru ga daisuki na node,
chikin to biiru wa takusan tabete, nonde ita to omoimasu.

'If *my* dad had gone there
he would have been really happy (I) think.
because dad loves chicken and beer
he would have eaten and drank a lot of chicken and beer (I) think.'

Even though Tohsaku (1999) called the use of 1PP+*no* with *chichi* 'dad' "redundant" (p. 339), the NS still chose to use it, explicitly stating that it was *her* dad when she first mentioned him. That raises the question of whether or not it actually non-native-like for NNS to use 1PP with these terms; however, as there was a small data size and only one token in the NS data, further study is required before a solid judgement could be made either way.

One factor that may be important in the use of 1PP+*no* with kinship terms, as evidenced in (6), is the order in which the kinship term both with and without 1PP+*no* occurs. One individual from the 200-level NNS group and the individuals in the 400-level NNS group and NS groups who used the same term, both with and without, first mentioned the kinship term *with* 1PP+*no*, and the subsequent mention was without. In the case of the 400-level NNS, the very first sentence of her composition was the following:

(7) *senshuu no kinyoubi ni,* watashi no *otouto wa*
atarashii kuruma o kau tame ni edomonton ni kita.

'Friday of last week, *my* younger brother
came to Edmonton to buy a car.'

For her first mention of her younger brother, she used 1PP+*no*, but all three of the subsequent mentions of her brother are not marked with 1PP+*no*. One of the two 200-level students who used the same term both with and without 1PP+*no* did the same.

The other use by a 200-level NNS was different from the others, found in a composition that started off with the following:

(8) *kyou wa gakkou ni hayaku ikita katta node,*
haha ni 'kuruma o kashite mo ii ka' to kiita.

'Because today (I) wanted to get to school quickly,
(I) asked (my) mom 'can I borrow your car?''

In (8) there was no 1PP+*no* at the beginning when she introduced her mother as one of the participants in the story, and then went on to explain how she, the NNS, had gotten into an accident on her way to school in her mother's car. The second mention of her mother in the next example came halfway through the composition, with a gap of six clauses between the two.[2]

(9) watashi no *haha ga sugoi okoshite* ((*OKOTTE*)) *iru.*

'*My* mom is really angry.'

Of the four uses of *haha* by the NNS in her composition, (9) was the only one preceded by 1PP+*no*. When compared with the data from NS, this was the only instance of 1PP+*no* when used with a kinship term that does not match with the

[2] The double brackets (( )) are used to show corrections made to examples taken from NNS's compositions to allow for a clearer understanding of what was said.

pattern in the NS use and therefore could possibly be a clearer case of overuse than the other instances in the NNS data.

What might then have been a problem for some beginner NNS in the use of 1PP+*no* was continuous usage over subsequent mentions of any term. This was only considered a problem for beginner NNS for the phenomenon was only present in the data of two participants from the 100-level NNS group. The first NNS used *watashi no tomodachi* 'my friend' twice in her composition: once near the beginning and once near the end. Because of the infrequent use as well as the spacing, it may not necessarily be as problematic as the other 100-level NNS. She used *watashi no tomodachi* seven times in her composition; in fact, she only mentioned her friend without 1PP+*no* twice, meaning that over 77% of the time she chose to use 1PP. She also included 1PP+*no* alongside other instances of 1PP, as seen in the following example, something which has been suggested to be less acceptable in NS judgement tests (Carter, 2007).

(10) *afutawaazu,* watashi *to* watashi *no tomodachi wa nomimono ga ni torimashita.*

'Afterwards, *my* friend and *I* got drinks.'

In (10), not only was it the fourth time the NNS uses 1PP+*no* with *tomodachi* 'friend,' she started off the sentence with 1PP+*to* 'I and,' which already made it clear that it was a friend of the NNS. Furthermore, in the NS data there were no instances where more than one 1PP was used in any sentence, implying that this may be a non-native-like usage of 1PP.

Use of Multiple 1PP in One Sentence in the Written Data

Individuals in the NS group never used 1PP more than once in a sentence as in (10), which goes back to the other issue addressed by this study: the potential overuse of 1PP by NNS. All cases of multiple 1PP found in either a single sentence or clause in the NNS data were then counted. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9
Total Sentences or Clauses with 1 or 2 1PP in NNS Data

	Sentences		Clauses	
Group	1 1PP	2 1PP	1 1PP	2 1PP
100	53	4	57	2
200	29	2	29	2
300	12	4	16	2
400	19	3	25	0

In the data collected from the 100-level NNS, four different participants each had one sentence that contained two separate 1PP. Of those, one is seen in (10), and another follows a similar pattern. The other two cases were when the NNS used 1PP twice in the subject position in one sentence, seen in (11) when a 100-level NNS discussed her experience writing an exam.

(11) watashi *wa enpitsu o rosuto desu kara,*
watashi *wa chotto kanashi katta desu.*

'Because *I* lost a pencil,
I was a little sad.'

In (11) there was no need for the second 1PP as it was already clear that the NNS was referring to herself and even if it were added for emphasis one 1PP would be sufficient to serve that function. Both NNS in question used 1PP quite frequently, with one using it on average once every three clauses (at a frequency of 0.33) and

the other using it on average once a clause (at a frequency of 1.00). That is to say, regardless of potential pragmatic motivations behind the use of 1PP, the overall frequency suggests that the NNS were not thinking of a specific function when they used 1PP but instead it was just a case of overuse.

As for the 200-level, two NNS used 1PP twice in one sentence, and in both cases one was 1PP+*no* while the other was marked with a different particle, as in (10). The 300-level was quite similar, with three cases being 1PP+*no* with 1PP marked by a different particle, and one case being two 1PP+*no* in the same sentence. Of those found at the 300-level, three of the sentences were quite straightforward, including the following example where a 300-level NNS wrote about how she was teasing one of her co-workers.

(12) *sorede,* watashi *to* watashi *no tomodachi ga warai dashita.*

'Then, *my* friend and *I* burst out laughing.'

Similarly to (10), because the NNS already started off with 1PP it would be clear without the use of 1PP+*no* that she was referring to her own friend, making the second use of 1PP in (12) unnecessary.

Conversely, there were also three cases at the 200 and 300-level that were different from those found at the 100-level due to their level of complexity, and should be looked at separately from (10), (11), and (12). The first was found at the 200-level, in a composition where the NNS discussed a ski trip with her family.

(13) *kodomo no toki kara,*
watashi *no ryoushin wa* watashi *ni sukii o saserareta* ((*SASETA*)).

'From childhood,
I made *my* parents go skiing.'

Although the first use of 1PP in the above, *watashi no ryoushin* 'my parents,' could be considered an unnecessary use of 1PP+*no* like many of the above examples, this could also be an instance of a NNS overusing 1PP for clarity in a sentence featuring the more complex causative-passive grammatical structure (Bearden, 1998; Polio, 1995). That the NNS in (13) and may have needed to add 1PP to help clarify the referents can be seen in the fact that they used *saserareta* instead of the correct form *saseta* 'made to do.'

The other 200-level instance with two 1PP in one sentence, shown in (14), was not as grammatically complex, and came from a NNS' discussion of his daily activities. A similar example in (15) was found at the 300-level, where a NNS wrote about how much schoolwork he had to do.

(14) *Actually* watashi *wa*
watashi *no inoji* ((*SEIKATSU*)) *ga daisuki desu.*

'ACTUALLY *I*
love *my* life.'

(15) *ima made nan demo shinai kara,*
watashi *wa* watashi *no mondai o iwanai beki to omou kedo,*
shou ga nai ne.

'Because (I) haven't done anything up to now,
I shouldn't talk about *my* problems I think,
but it can't he helped.'

It could be argued that in both (14) and (15) the use of 1PP+*no* was reflexive, a role that is usually filled in Japanese by the reflexive pronoun *jibun* 'self;' in (14) the author referred to his own life, and in (15) the author referred to his own problems. Therefore, in the above two examples it was not necessarily just an

issue of overuse of 1PP, but also the NNS trying to say something using structures that would not necessarily be used by NS.

Lastly, in terms of the use of multiple 1PP in the same clause and not just the same sentence, all cases where 1PP were used twice in the same clause were instances of 1PP+*no* with another 1PP. This phenomenon was only found at the 100, 200, and 300-levels.

Improvement was seen in the 400-level NNS group, where the function of 1PP could be more clearly seen in some cases. The following is taken from a composition where a NNS wrote about time spent with her brother.

(16) *otouto wa 'wachimen' to iu eigo o mitakatta kedo,*
watashi *wa mitaku nakatta kara,*
sono ban ni watashi *no apaato de geimu shita.*

'(My) younger brother wanted to see a movie called 'Watchmen',
but *I* didn't want to see (it),
so that night (we) played games in *my* apartment.'

The first 1PP in (16), *watashi wa mitaku nakatta* 'I didn't want to see [it],' was one of the few cases of the particle *wa* being used for contrast found in the data. In this case, 1PP was serving a specific purpose – to highlight the difference between the brother and the NNS's desire to see the movie, and removing it would alter the contrastive meaning of the sentence. As for the second use of 1PP, *watashi no apaato de geimu shita* '[we] played games in my apartment,' because it was the first mention of the NNS's apartment in her composition the motivation behind including 1PP was most likely clarifying whose apartment it was.

However, the other 400-level NNS who used 1PP more than once in a sentence behaved more like the lower-level NNS. In fact, this was the same

previously mentioned NNS whose data significantly raised the average frequency of 1PP use at the 400-level, and her use of more than one 1PP in a sentence was taken more as evidence that her composition was a lower level than the other 400-level NNS than it was seen as typical 400-level behaviour. For example, in one of the two instances this particular NNS used two 1PP in one sentence, both were in the subject position, as can be seen in the following.

(17) watashi *ga kurabu o yameru riyuu wa raigakki,*
watashi *wa kyouiku gakubu no renshuu o shinakereba narimasen.*

'The reason *I* am quitting the club is next semester,
I have to do my Education practice ((student teaching)).'

Similarly to (11), (17) does not need both uses of 1PP as both were the subject and neither were necessary to make it clear that the author was talking about herself or contrasting herself with others. This NNS used 1PP on average slightly over once every two clauses (at a frequency of 0.52), which was over twice as much as the next highest 400-level student and in fact only lower than one NNS at the 100 and one NNS at the 200-level. For that reason, her data could be considered different from the other NNS at the 400-level and it should be noted that even within the same group there could be great variation in 1PP use.

Summary

To determine the change in 1PP use by NNS over time as well as compared to the use by NS, this chapter examined written data in the form of a diary-like narrative from NNS studying in four different levels of university classes. When looking at the overall frequency of use, it was found that at least at

the earlier levels NNS were in fact overusing 1PP in their written compositions. The frequency decreased in the 200-level, and by the 300-level the frequency of 1PP use was more like that of NS. On the contrary, there was an increase in use at the 400-level, possibly brought about by individual differences in the participants. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, by separating NNS into class levels it divided them by what they had learned and not necessarily what they knew, so this could be a symptom of the way this study defined the levels and should be taken into consideration in future study.

In regard to the way in which NNS used 1PP as seen by the particles it was paired with, most groups favoured the use of topic 1PP+*wa*, although the 300-level group used it the second most after 1PP+*no*. A close examination of the more specific functions served by 1PP+*wa* revealed that as NNS progress in their studies they seem to prefer to use topic 1PP+*wa* alongside emotional predicates more so than just for clarifying the referent. This differed from NS, who rarely used 1PP with emotional predicates.

When looking at the NNS use of 1PP+*no* in the written data, they would on occasion use it with kinship terms that already carry a sense of belonging to the speaker. Although Japanese textbooks say it is redundant (Tohsaku, 1999), the same use of 1PP+*no* was also found once in the NS data, raising the question of whether or not it can be considered non-native-like. The small number of tokens found, however, makes it hard to answer without more NS data. What was found to be problematic in the NNS data was the overuse of 1PP+*no* with the same term, or using them when it had already been established previously in the composition.

Lastly, instances of more than one 1PP used in a single sentence were examined. NS never chose to include 1PP more than once, suggesting that it is less native-like to do so, but all levels of NNS did have instances of the phenomenon. At the 100-level, NNS would use two 1PP where neither was needed, then at the 200 and 300-level it could be seen that the 1PP were likely being used to ensure that their meaning was understood while attempting more complex grammatical structures. As for the 400-level, one NNS displayed patterns similar to the lower levels, but another used 1PP not just for clarity but also to serve a specific function in which the use of 1PP was necessary. The 400-level NNS also never used 1PP more than once per clause, unlike the other NNS groups but similarly to the NS group.

The next chapter will continue the examination of the specific ways in which NNS use 1PP including which particles it is found paired with, and how it compares to the use of 1PP by NS, through the examination of spontaneous conversation data.

Chapter Four

Present Study II: The Use of 1PP in the Spoken Data

The examination of written data in Chapter 3 found that although the non-native speakers (NNS) initially did overuse singular first person pronouns (1PP), the frequency dropped over time to levels closer to native speakers (NS). It was also found that functions of 1PP as evidenced through postpositional particles were generally similar between the NNS and NS groups, but NNS showed a stronger preference for using topic 1PP+*wa* alongside emotional predicates.

Not only do the written and spoken forms of Japanese differ from each other (Shibantai, 1990), recorded conversation data gives an idea of how NNS are using 1PP in a more unplanned, natural setting than allowed by a written task, so this chapter will similarly examine spoken data collected from NNS. The written data addressed how the use of 1PP in written Japanese by NNS changed over time as well as how they used 1PP both as a group and in relation to NS. The spoken data, however, was only collected from NNS at one level of study, so its focus will be on only one of the two research questions: how do NNS use 1PP and how does that differ from NS?

Collection of Spoken Data and Participants

The spoken data used in this study was taken from a small corpus of spontaneously occurring conversation data featuring both NS/NNS as well as NS/NS pairs. It was recorded in the fall of 2006 at the same university where the written data was collected. Although it was a spontaneous conversation, one

participant was considered an “interviewer” and one an “interviewee.” In all cases neither had met prior to the recording. Ten NNS took part, all who were at the time enrolled in a third-year Japanese class at the university and had spent on average approximately one month in Japan. Six of the NS participants were interviewees, similarly to the NNS participants, and were considered the control group for the current study. The other three NS participants were the interviewers who took part in multiple conversations and because of that were not included in the control group.

The conversations were approximately 30 minutes in length, but for this study 5 minutes of each were selected and then transcribed based on the conventions laid out by Du Bois et al (1993). Six of the NS/NS and five of the NS/NNS conversations had previously been transcribed and an additional 5 minutes from five more NS/NNS conversations were transcribed specifically for the current study. The original transcriber had selected which portions they wanted to transcribe from each based on their own criteria, and those transcribed for this study were the 5 minute section starting 15 minutes into each conversation to ensure the sample was random. In total, the spoken data examined by this study consisted of 50 minutes of NNS data and 30 minutes of NS data.

Overall Frequency of 1PP use in the Spoken Data

The overall number of 1PP presented in Table 10 indicates that in the third year of study it was not necessarily the case that all NNS were over-using 1PP in conversation. This is evidenced by the wide range of 1PP use for both groups.

Table 10
Summary of Overall 1PP Use in the Spoken Data

Group	Average 1PP Use/Person Mean	SD	Range of 1PP/Person	Total Number of 1PP/Group
NNS (n=10)	3.9	3.1	0 – 9	39
NS (n=6)	4.3	2.3	0 – 7	26

Although the raw numbers are misleading due to the different amounts of data (50 minutes of NNS data versus 30 minutes of NS data) the average use of 1PP per person shows that in the 5 minute span the NNS were producing fewer 1PP than the NS. However, considering that when two NS were speaking together they were observed to produce more utterances than NNS in the same amount of time, the fact that on average fewer 1PP were found in the NNS data is not surprising.

For a more accurate assessment of how often the two groups used 1PP the approximate number of predicates was counted for each participant.[3] Similarly to the written data's exclusion of set phrases such as *ja mata!* 'See you!' and fillers or backchannels such as *ano* 'um' or *sou desu ka* 'Is that so?' were excluded from the count. On average, NNS were found to have 36.6 predicates in the five minutes of conversation, while NS did in fact produce more than twice as many with an average of 78.7 predicates. The number of 1PP was then divided by the number of predicates to find the approximate frequency of 1PP use, and the results are summarized in Figure 4.

[3] Although the length of the written data was counted by the number of clauses, the fragmented nature of NNS speech made counting the number of clauses problematic. Therefore, it was decided to go with a more manageable unit and count by predicates.

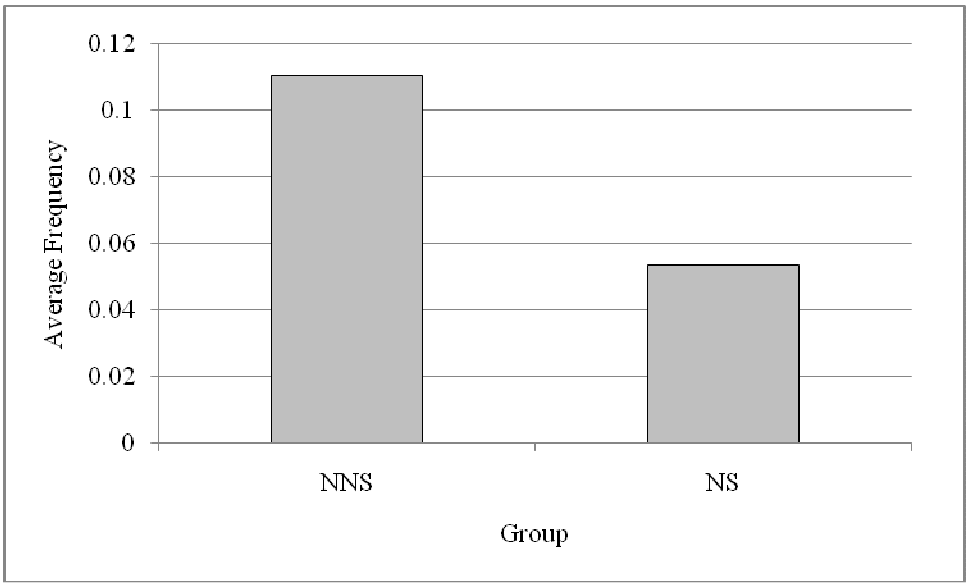

Figure 4. Average frequency of 1PP use per predicate in the spoken data

Even though in Table 10 it appeared that NNS were using 1PP less than the NS, when the amount of speech that occurred in the five minute span was taken into account, the NNS rate of use was approximately double that of the NS. NNS used 1PP around once every 10 predicates (at a frequency of 0.11) while NS used 1PP only around once every 20 predicates (at a frequency of 0.05). Regardless of the variation within the group, it could be said then that NNS as a whole were in fact using 1PP at a higher rate than NS.

Particles Paired with 1PP in the Spoken Data

The question then turned to how the NNS were using 1PP. Similarly to the written data, each postpositional particle paired with 1PP was counted. In terms of spoken data, this also went along with Thompson (1993), who examined the use of 1PP in her naturally occurring Japanese conversation data in conjunction with their accompanying particles. The results are shown in Figure 5.

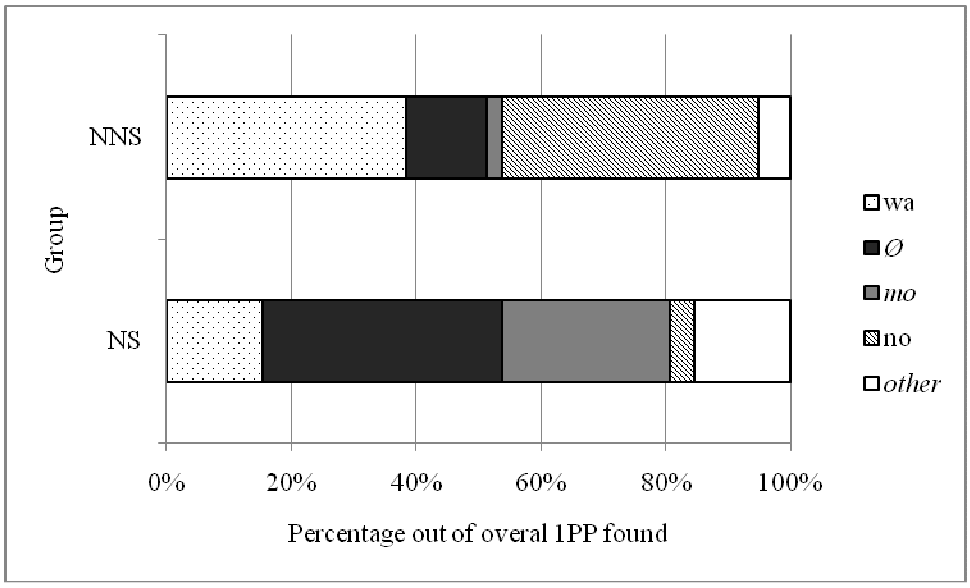

Figure 5. Average frequency of particles paired with 1PP in spoken the data

For both groups, the majority of 1PP were found in the subject or topic position, with approximately 59% of the NNS uses and 92% of the NS uses being marked by particles such as the topic/contrast marker *wa*, *mo* 'also,' and zero particle (Ø) which indicates topic. NNS, however, used the possession marker *no* the most often, with it marking 41% of the total 1PP uses found in their data. Even in terms of which particles were used to mark the subject there were large differences between the two groups, with NS favouring Ø and *mo* while NNS favoured *wa*. In fact, when looking at Figure 5 it is apparent that the percentage of 1PP paired with *wa* and Ø were almost completely reversed between the two groups. It is the use of those two particles, *wa* and Ø, that will first be examined in more depth.

Use of wa *and Ø with 1PP in the Spoken Data*

As discussed in Chapter 2, *wa* and Ø serve similar functions, but in informal Japanese conversation between two NS 1PP+*wa* is most often used for

contrast while 1PP+Ø is most often used simply when the subject is the speaker or for floor-holding purposes (Kurosaki, 2007; Osumi, 2005; Thompson, 1993). To see if this held true for NNS as well as NS within the current data, each use of 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø by both the NNS and NS was classified as either marking topic or contrast. Results are shown in Table 11.

Table 11
Functional Distribution of wa *and Ø with 1PP in the Spoken Data*[4]

	1PP+*wa*		1PP+Ø	
Group	Topic	Contrast	Topic	Contrast
NNS	13 (87%)	1 (7%)	4 (80%)	1 (20%)
NS	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	10 (100%)	0 (0%)

While the small number of tokens in the NS data makes it hard to draw generalizations based on those alone, the NS results were consistent with previous studies on Japanese conversation showing a preference for using *wa* to mark contrast and Ø to mark topic in spoken Japanese conversation (Kurosaki, 2007; Osumi, 2005; Thompson, 1993). On the other hand, the results from the NNS group differed from results found for NS by both the current data as well as previous studies, with both 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø being used to mark the topic the majority of the time.

Two typical examples of a NNS use of 1PP+*wa* can be seen in the following, where a NNS discussed her experiences studying Japanese.

(1) NNS: watashi wa=
..koukou de=
ninensei no
..kurasu
o=
NS: *..ha=*

[4] One NNS use of 1PP+*wa* was cut off making it impossible to determine its function. It was therefore excluded from the examination of 1PP+*wa* in the current study.

NNS: *a*=
torukoto
a=
torimasen deshita
NS: *torimasen deshita*
NNS: *hai*
watashi wa=
a=
.. [*nihongo*=]
NS: [*ninensei*]
NNS: *ichinensei no kurasu ni*=
NS: *un un*
NNS: *torimashita*

NNS: *I*=
..in high school=
a second year
..class
oh=
NS: ..huh=
NNS: ah=
(I) took
a=
didn't take
NS: didn't take
NNS: yes
I=
uh=
.. [(it was a) Japanese=]
NS: [second year]
NNS: first year class=
NS: uh huh
NNS: (I) took

In (1) the NNS started off her utterance on line 1 with *watashi wa* 'I.' There was no previous discussion of anything that would be in contrast with her; therefore, the use of 1PP was merely showing that the NNS was speaking about herself. The conversation up until this point had already been about the NNS, so there was no need to re-establish herself as the topic in such a direct manner as using 1PP+*wa*.

The same could be said about her second use of 1PP+*wa* on line 13, starting off her utterance that goes on until line 19, where she said *watashi wa= a= nihongo= ichinensei no kurasu ni= torimashita* 'I= uh= [it was a] Japanese= first year class= [I] took.' The fact that this particular NNS also marked all instances of 1PP as a topic with *wa*, five in total, also gave evidence to the non-contrastive nature of the examples found in (1), as she demonstrated a general use of 1PP+*wa* in her speech.

No similar use of 1PP was found in the NS data. The following example (2) represents a typical use of this kind, though it was in the data from a NS acting as the interviewer in a NS/NS conversation and not included in the analysis.

(2) NS1: atashi Ø
n
saisho wakannakute
watashi Ø
kyonen no=
kotoshi janakute
kyonen n natsu ni=
etto daigaku no puroguramu de=
NS2: *un un*
NS1: *ikkagetsu dake koko ni*
kiteta n desu yo=
NS2: *a=*
NS1: *tte iu n de*
mata modottekita mitaina kanji na n desu kedo=

NS1: *I*
um
didn't understand at first
I
last year=
not this year
last summer=
um through a university program=
NS2: uh huh
NS1: for only a month

(I) came here=
NS2: ah=
NS1: that is to say
it feels like (I) came back again=

Both (1) and (2) featured similar topics, but it could be seen then that where a NNS used *wa* in (1) a NS choose to use Ø in (2). Although grammatically 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø have the same meaning, in terms of pragmatics the NNS use puts much more emphasis on the self and would potentially distance the speaker from the listener more than a NS would choose to.

A different use of 1PP by a NNS in (3) adds more to the picture, where she discussed a mutual acquaintance with the NS interviewer; specifically, how their mutual acquaintance had nothing but free time, but the NNS was busy with school and work.

(3) NS: *…risa wa itsumo hima na n da yo*
NNS: *e*
NS: *hima de=*
nanka itsumo heya ni iru kara=
NNS: *un*
NS: *sasotte tte*
NNS: @
NS: *asobi ni sasotte tte*
[@@@@]
NNS: [@@@@]
n=
NS: *itsumo ne= nanka*
hi-
hitori de iru rashii yo
[@@]
NNS: [*he=*]
…urayamashii
NS: @@@
urayamashii
NNS: watashi Ø
tottemo isogashii

NS: …Risa always has free time
NNS: huh
NS: so free=
like (she's) always in her dorm=
NNS: yeah
NS: saying invite (me) out
NNS: @
NS: saying invite (me) out to play
[@@@@]
NNS: [@@@@]
hm=
NS: always= like
by-
(she's) always by herself apparently
[@@]
NNS: [huh=]
…(I'm) jealous
NS: @@@
jealous
NNS: *I'm*
really busy

The use of 1PP+Ø on line 20 was arguably contrastive; the NNS explained her jealousy towards Risa and how much free time she had by saying *watashi tottemo isogashii* 'I'm really busy.' In other words, the NNS contrasted herself and her lack of free time with Risa and her abundance of it. On the other hand, as the NNS frequently seemed to use 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø without regard for the function of the particles in spoken Japanese, it was hard to tell if she had consciously contrasted herself with Risa. Moreover, this particular NNS used 1PP+Ø three times and 1PP+*wa* once, so it could even be an issue of generalization or personal preference. That is not to say that the use of 1PP+Ø on line 20 was incorrect, but in contrastive situations, as seen in Table 11, NS did prefer to use 1PP+*wa*, while NNS seemed to use 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø interchangeably without regard for more social or pragmatic functions.

Use of no *with 1PP in the Spoken Data*

In the NS data there was only one instance where 1PP was followed by *no*, but as mentioned it was the particle used most frequently with 1PP by the NNS group with a total of 16 1PP+*no* found. When looking at the individual numbers it was still used infrequently, with NNS participants using it on average only 1.6 times and six of the speakers used it 1 time or less. Exactly half of the NNS uses of 1PP+*no* were found in relation to people; either friends such as *watashi no nihonjin no tomodachi* 'my Japanese friend,' members of host families the NNS stayed with in Japan such as *watashi no hosuto famirii no imouto* 'my younger host sister' or members of their own family such as *watashi no haha* 'my mom.' Of those, two were kinship terms implying belonging to the speaker's family, and an example is shown in (4), where the NNS discussed with the NS interviewer what she planned to get her family for Christmas.

(4) NNS: wa-
a=
watashi no
NS: *un*
NNS: *a=*
haha
NS: *n*
NNS: *e=*
hn
haha wa n=
sara
osara
kirei osara ga suki

NNS: *m-*
ah=
my
NS: yeah
NNS: ah=

mom
NS: hm
NNS: uh=
um
mom um=
plates
plates
likes beautiful plates

In (4) the NNS used 1PP+*no* on line 3 before she said *haha* 'mom' on line 6, a use of 1PP which was arguably unnecessary (Tohsaku, 1999). However, in total, there were only six such kinship terms that implied belonging to the speaker, and only two of those were preceded by 1PP+*no*. The implication is that in terms of the particle *no*, 1PP was not necessarily being overused in situations where it could be considered redundant; however, it was still being used at times when it was recoverable from the context.

Use of mo *with 1PP in the Spoken Data*

The last particle found with 1PP in the spoken data which warrants examination is *mo* 'also.' 1PP was used the most frequently with *mo* by the NS control group, with 7 out of 26 1PP (27%) found paired with it, but only 1 was found in the 39 1PP (3%) from the NNS data. The one 1PP+*mo* used by a NNS was very straightforward; the NNS and NS talked about where someone they both knew lived, an international student dorm called "HUB," which happened to be where the NNS lived as well.

(5) NS: *habu ni iru kara*
risa
NNS: *un*
NS: *un un*
NNS: watashi mo *habu ni*

NS: *a habu na n da*

NS: because (she's) in HUB
Risa
NNS: yeah
NS: uh-huh
NNS: *I'm also* in HUB
NS: oh HUB

The NS in (5) mentioned where Risa lived, and then on line 5 the NNS stated *watashi mo habu ni* 'I'm also in HUB,' making a direct comparison between herself and Risa. This is the way the use of *mo* was taught when it first appeared in the textbook used by the NNS (Makino, Hatasa & Hatasa, 1998) and the majority of the NS uses could be explained as such.

Although no problems were found with the use of 1PP+*mo* in (5), the fact remained that NS used 1PP+*mo* at a rate nine times that of NNS. This raised the question of whether or not it was actually a case of underuse by NNS, and as such the NS's uses of 1PP+*mo* were looked at more carefully. Interestingly, a slightly different use was also found in the NS data, illustrated in the following where two NS discussed how Canadian students always ate in the library, an act which was not as common in Japan.

(6) NS1: *ii no toshokan tte*
NS2: *..a= atashi*
metcha tabeteru yo=
NS1: *e=*
tabete ii n desu ka=
e= watashi nihon dewa kinshi sareteru
tte zutto omotteta
NS2: *he*
demo dare mo chuui shinakunai @@
NS1: @@@
NS2: *shikamo*
minna [*tabeteru shi*]

NS1: [*tabun*]
watashi mo *kotchi ni kitara*
a gou ni shitagae ba
[*gou ni haire ba goo ni shitagae*]
NS2: [*sou sou sou*]
NS1: *tte kanji de*

NS1: is it ok in the library
NS2: ..ah= I
eat a lot=
NS1: huh=
it's ok to eat=
huh= I wouldn't be allowed to in Japan
(I) always though
NS2: huh
but no one warns (you) @@
NS1: @@@
NS2: besides
everyone's [eating]
NS1: [probably]
since coming here *I'm also*
ah if (I) do as the Romans do
[while in Rome do as the Romans do]
NS2: [yeah yeah yeah]
NS1: or something like that

In lines 14 and 15 of (6), NS1 was not directly agreeing with anything by her statement *watashi mo kotchi ni kitara a gou ni shitagae ba* 'since coming here I'm also ah if [I] do as the Romans do,' but more indirectly agreeing with the sense of acting more like a Canadian that NS2 exhibited.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Thompson (1993) proposed that 1PP+*mo* "suggests that the speaker is not unique, she is just one of many people" (p. 79). Even though NS1 could have used 1PP+Ø or even a zero pronoun, using 1PP+*mo* created a sense of harmony between herself and the other participant in the conversation. That is to say, her use of 1PP+*mo* was more to exhibit that NS1

belonged to a group than it was a surface-level agreement with a direct statement from NS2. Of the uses of 1PP+*mo* found in the NS data, two out of seven (29%) were serving such a function. As no such examples turned up in the NNS data, and no instruction on this less direct usage of 1PP+*mo* was found when *mo* was introduced in the textbook (Makino, Hatasa & Hatasa, 1998), it is possible that NNS were unaware of this other function of 1PP+*mo*.

Summary

This chapter focused on the use of 1PP in spoken Japanese by NNS by examining spontaneous conversation data. In regard to the frequency of 1PP use, it was found that when the amount of 1PP was looked at in relation to the approximate amount of speech produced, NNS were found to be using 1PP around twice as often as the NS. There was, however, more variation within the NNS, with both a higher range and standard deviation when it came to the number of 1PP used by each participant.

When looking at the postpositional particles paired with 1PP, differences were found between how the two groups expressed the functions of 1PP through the use of particles. This was most notable in the use of 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø; the NS favoured using *wa* to mark contrast and Ø to mark topic, but the NNS seemed to use both particles interchangeably with a general preference towards 1PP+*wa*. The other two particles of interest were *no* and *mo*. Although NNS used the particle *no* the most frequently as a whole, they still used it infrequently as individuals and there were only two redundant instances found with kinship terms, suggesting that the NNS were not necessarily overusing 1PP+*no*. The particle

used the most often by NS was *mo*, and some examples displayed certain properties beyond simply indicating direct agreement. No such examples were found in the NNS data, which could imply not an overuse but in fact a potential *under*use.

The patterns of 1PP usage in both the spoken and the written data will be further discussed in the following chapter, including comparison of the two sets of data.

Chapter Five

Discussion

The previous two chapters examined the use of singular first person pronouns (1PP) by non-native speakers (NNS) with two main questions in mind: do NNS overuse 1PP and if and how the use of 1PP by NNS differs from that of native speakers (NS). This was done through looking at written and spoken data separately. In Chapter 3 it was found that in written data NNS initially overuse 1PP when they first start learning Japanese, but over time the frequency of their 1PP use decreases to a rate closer to that of NS. At all levels of written NNS data, however, instances of using 1PP more than once in a sentence were found; something which was never present in the NS data. In terms of the functions served by 1PP in the written data, the NNS use of postpositional particles with 1PP was similar to that of NS. In the spoken data examined in Chapter 4, NNS in their third year of study were found to still use 1PP at around twice the frequency of NS. Furthermore, unlike the written data, although 1PP were being used in similar circumstances by the NNS and NS groups, the use of particles alongside 1PP by the two groups was quite different. This was seen particularly when 1PP was being used as the subject or topic.

The research questions have been looked at separately in regard to written and spoken data, but the current chapter aims to bring the two sets of data together to not only look more generally at how 1PP are used by NNS, but also to try and find possible answers why. The frequency of 1PP use between the two sets of data will also be briefly touched on, but the main focus of the discussion will be the

functions 1PP serves. Although written and spoken Japanese can be quite different in the case of NS (Shibatani, 1990), it may not always hold true for NNS, especially in terms of particles found paired with 1PP. This includes the aforementioned use of particles with 1PP in the subject position – in particular the topic/contrast marker *wa*, and zero particle (Ø) indicating topic – which can cause the 1PP being used by NNS to have different pragmatic meanings than those used by NS (Thompson, 1993). Differences may also be found in more general functions 1PP serves, both related to and separate from the particles it is paired with.

Overall Frequency of 1PP Use in the Written Data vs. Spoken Data

In the written data, the 300-level NNS were found to use 1PP the least frequently at 0.09 times per clause, which was quite close to the NS who used 1PP at a frequency of 0.08 times per clause. Conversely, the NNS in the spoken data, who were also at the 300-level, were found to use 1PP over twice as much as NS, with NNS using it at a frequency of 0.11 times per predicate versus NS who only used it 0.05 times per predicate. Even when compared to the 200-level NNS, who used 1PP at a frequency of around 0.17 times per clause, NNS in the spoken data used 1PP more frequently in comparison to the NS control group. While it is difficult to compare the two types of data directly due to the difference in the units, it can be seen that the frequencies could be compared in relation to the rate at which NS used 1PP.

The data indicate that NNS had a slight tendency to overuse 1PP in spoken Japanese more than they did in written. One of the functions Thompson (1993)

found 1PP used for in her study of naturally occurring Japanese conversation was floor-holding, or "[giving] the speaker time to think of what to say next" (*Ibid.*, p. 79). Without knowing what the NNS was thinking it is difficult to determine whether 1PP was serving as a filler or being used for some other function, but as NNS may need time to formulate their utterances, it could be that 1PP are being used to some extent by NNS alongside other common floor-holding devices such as *ano* 'um' or *etto* 'well.'

Use of Particles with 1PP in the Written Data vs. Spoken Data

Another goal of the study was to look at in what ways 1PP were used by NNS and how it compared not only between the NNS and NS groups, but also between the written and spoken data. One of the more interesting results in terms of particle use with 1PP in the data examined was when 1PP occurred in the topic or subject position. In the written data the use of 1PP+*wa* by NNS was found to be similar to that of NS at least in terms of overall frequency of use. The same could not be said for the spoken NNS data where the use of 1PP+*wa* was almost the reverse of the NS, who favoured using 1PP+Ø. When the use of 1PP+*wa* versus 1PP+Ø by the NNS and NS groups in the two sets of data were examined together, as seen in Figure 6, a possible explanation for the spoken NNS data emerged.

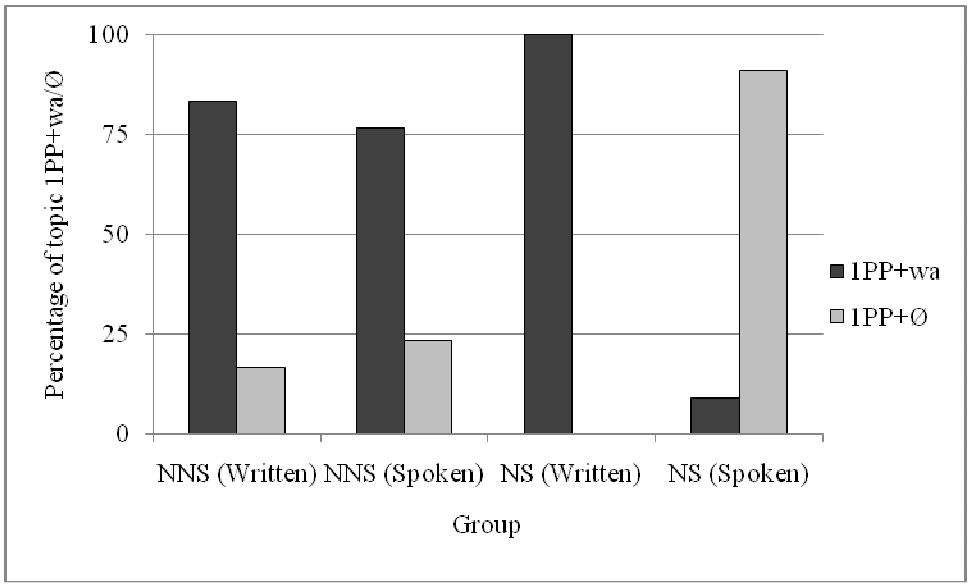

Figure 6. 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø serving the topic function in the written and spoken data for 300-level NNS and NS

As it could be seen, when the spoken NNS data was compared only to the spoken NS data they were using 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø at frequencies opposite to that of NS, but when the spoken NNS data was compared to the written NNS and NS data the frequency of use of the 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø was actually quite similar. NNS did not seem to differentiate between the written and spoken language as both more closely resembled a NS's written language. That is to say, regardless of genre, the NNS groups were using 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø in a way that was more like written Japanese, and it could be argued that they were in fact actually speaking in *written* Japanese.

This favouring of 1PP+*wa* regardless of situation by NNS could be problematic when the more pragmatic functions of the two particles are taken into account. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Thompson (1993) pointed out that when 1PP is marked with *wa* in conversation, it shows "that the speaker is a unique person and [the] speaker would appear to stand out very strongly as an individual" (p. 79-

80). By always using 1PP+*wa*, NNS could have been – perhaps unknowingly – creating a divide between themselves and the other participant in the conversation. NS, on the other hand, favoured using particles with 1PP that helped bring them closer with the other participant. This included dropping *wa* and using 1PP+Ø, which can serve the same topic or even contrast marking functions but does not emphasize as strongly the speaker's separateness (Thompson, 1993). NS also frequently used *mo* 'also,' which like *wa* and Ø marks the subject or topic. While 1PP+*wa* makes the speaker stand out, 1PP+*mo* "suggests that the speaker is not unique, she is just one of many people" (Thompson, 1993, p. 79). In the case of 1PP+*wa*, it was used in the NS data to mark contrast three out of four times. The one time it was not, seen in (1) where NS1 discussed how her roommate was forcing her to move out, it was used when the speaker wanted to strongly emphasize herself.

(1)
NS1: *nanka imouto ga kita kara to itte*
dete itte toka sou iu koto wa shinai kedo=
dochira ni shite mo detette
tte yuu koto ni nari=
..de nanka
sono imouto ga kuru no ga
juuni gatsu ka ichi gatsu darou na
tte itteta kara=
NS2: *ja sore made ni sagashite=*
mitai na
NS1: *ma*
betsu ni sore=
yori ato ni natte mo betsu ni ii kedo=
nan te yuu no
moshi mitsukan nakattara ne
NS2: *a=*
NS1: *dakedo=*
NS2: [*demo toriaezu detete*]
NS1: [*maa tomokaku deteke*] *mitai na*
@@@

iwarete=
watashi wa *ne*=

NS1: like because her sister is coming (she) said
(she) won't kick me out or something like that but=
however it goes it'll become an (I'm) kicked out
sort of situation
..and like
the sister will come
in December or January probably
(she) said, so=
NS2: so by then find (a new place)
like
NS1: well
not really that=
more even if it's later it's still alright=
how to say it
if (I) can't find (a place)
NS2: ah=
NS1: but=
NS2: [but for now leave]
NS1: it's like [well for the time being get out]
@@@
(she) said=
as for me=

When NS1 used 1PP+*wa* on line 22, *watashi wa ne*= 'as for me=,' it came after her main statement on lines 19-21, *maa tomokaku deteke mitai na* @@@ *iwarete*= 'it's like well for the time being get out @@@ [she] said=,' making it more of an addition to emphasize her personal involvement in her story. In (1), the use of 1PP was not actually required to understand who the main referent was, and was quite similar to the "emotive function" identified by Ono and Thompson (2003) which often follows after the predicate and involves "the emotion/feeling of the speaker" (p. 331). Conversely, the examples of 1PP+*wa* found in the NNS data presented in Chapter 4 had no such emphasis on the part of the speaker. If the

use of 1PP+*wa* is meant for statements that feature contrast or more impact such as in (1), again, NNS's frequent use of it in many situations as opposed to 1PP+Ø or even 1PP+*mo* could have been unintentionally distancing themselves from the listener.

There were many factors which could have contributed to this overuse of 1PP+*wa* by NNS, and this included how the issue is handled in textbooks. To get an idea of what sort of input NNS may have received in terms of 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø the dialogues found in textbooks used by the participants, meant to be examples of spoken Japanese, were examined. In *Nakama 1* (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998) there were 6 uses of 1PP+*wa*, and an additional 5 cases were found in *Nakama 2* (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2000). On the other hand, there was only one example of 1PP+Ø – found in a telephone conversation dialogue in *Nakama 1* (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998).

(2) *ishida: moshi moshi, suzuki-san no otaku desu ka.*
arisu: hai, sou desu.
ishida: boku ishida desu ga, arisu san wa irasshaimasu ka.
(*Ibid.*, p. 283)

Ishida: Hello, is this the Suzuki residence?
Alice: Yes, it is.
Ishida: This is Ishida. Is Alice there?
(*Ibid.*, p. 431)

In (2), Ishida used 1PP+Ø to introduce himself over the phone, but due to the high formality of the situation it was not necessarily a good example of the use of 1PP in everyday conversation. The fact that (2) was the only example of 1PP+Ø indicates that in the textbooks used by NNS that were examined (Hatasa,

Hatasa, & Makino, 2000; Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998), whenever 1PP occurred as the topic it was almost always marked with *wa*, regardless of the formality level. It could then be a factor in the different way NNS used particles with 1PP in comparison to NS. This goes along with the criticism of textbooks by Jones and Ono (2005) in regard to their failure to "accurately reflect naturally occurring conversation" (p. 239).

One of the questions posed by the current study was how NNS use 1PP and how their use differs from NS. Looking at how NNS treat the subject in terms of particles in the spoken data, it may not necessarily be the case that NNS always overuse 1PP in comparison to NS, but instead that their uses of 1PP are more explicitly marked than those of the NS. By doing so, even if NNS did not use 1PP in the subject or topic position more frequently, their uses of topic 1PP+*wa* in spontaneously occurring conversation would stand out more than the uses by NS and potentially help to create the impression of overuse.

Functions of 1PP in the Written Data vs. Spoken Data

Beyond simply looking at whether or not they marked the topic, there were various functions that 1PP+*wa* served in the NNS data. As previously mentioned, around 43% of all topic 1PP+*wa* found in the NNS's compositions were used in conjunction with emotional predicates. One of the examples given was the following, from a NNS's discussion of her vacation in San Diego where the NNS paired 1PP with the suffix *tai* 'want to do.'

(3) *amerika mou ichido ittara,* watashi *wa doubutsuen ni* <u>*ikitai*</u> *desu.*

'If (I) go to America again, *I* <u>want to go</u> to the zoo.'

The use of 1PP+*wa* in (3) marked the zoo and not America as the important information in the sentence, and by doing so emphasized the emotional predicate involving the NNS's desire.

When looking at the spoken NNS data there were four cases found, including the following where a NNS mentioned wanting to go to Japan.

(4) NNS: watashi *wa m*=
rainen nihon ni ikitai
NS: *n*=
NNS: *e-*
senshuu jetto puroguramu ni moshiko[*mi*]*mashita*
NS: [*a*=]
a soo nan da
NNS: *un*

NNS: *I* m=
want to go to Japan next year
NS: hm=
NNS: e-
last week I a[pp]lied for the JET Programme
((to teach English in Japan))
NS: [oh=]
oh is that so
NNS: uh huh

In (4) the NNS paired 1PP with an expression of desire, "*rainen nihon ni ikitai*" ("want to go to Japan next year"), but it was only around 10% of the 1PP+*wa* in the spoken NNS data. As for NS, while around 38% of the 1PP+*wa* uses in the written data were paired with emotional predicates, none of those the spoken data fell into this category. That any 1PP+*wa* were found with emotional predicates in the written NS data was actually more unexpected than the fact that none were found in the spoken, as predicates such as *tai* have been said to render 1PP unnecessary (Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Shibatani, 1990).

Possible explanations of the use of 1PP with emotional predicates are found in some studies, including Clancy and Downing (1987). Clancy and Downing (1987) argued that *wa* in written data may be used "as a deliberate staging device to indicate perspective" (p. 47), and in the case of 1PP+*wa* with emotional predicates it was arguably the perspective of the NNS that is being emphasized. Thompson (1993) focused on naturally occurring conversation, and found that "predicates which relate to the speakers condition tend to be used with overt first person subjects" (p. 73). She argued that "although the subject is clear from the context … [1PP] is used for emphasis or to heighten a sense of contrast with others" (Thompson, 1993, p. 77).

The textbooks used by NNS could also be a contributing factor, for in the first-year level textbook *Nakama 1* (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998) there were cases of 1PP+*wa* used with *suki* 'like' and *tai* 'want to do.' Two examples are the following:

(5) *watashi wa wain ga suki desu.*

I like wine. (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998, p. 206)

(6) *watashi wa rainen nihon ni itikai desu.*

I want to go to Japan next year (*Ibid.* p. 408)

Further examples of 1PP+*wa* with *tai* could be found in the second-year textbook used by the same students, *Nakama 2* (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2000), as well as with the explanation for the use of *hoshii* 'want' (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2000). In fact, the textbook explains that "[words] such as [*hoshii*] and [*tai*],

which express emotive states, are thus reserved for the speaker" (*Ibid.*, p. 350), but makes no mention of how their use renders 1PP unnecessary. Therefore even if the textbooks may not have had as noticeable an effect on the NNS's language as it did in the case of 1PP+*wa* versus 1PP+Ø, there is still a possibility that the input received from their textbooks contributed to their use of 1PP+*wa* with emotional predicates.

Although this study mainly focused on the postpositional particles found with 1PP when examining how NNS used them, there were also more general functions 1PP were found to serve. This included those discussed by Ono and Thompson (2003), who separated 1PP into three types: referential, frame setting, and emotive as discussed in Chapter 2. No emotive 1PP were found in the current spoken NNS data, but there were instances of both the referential and frame setting functions. The majority of 1PP – approximately 59% – served referential functions; that is to say, they were those which "are either obliques or have marked pragmatic functions" (*Ibid.*, p. 330). This was not far off from the numbers found by Ono and Thompson (2003), who also saw the majority of the 1PP used referentially at around 50% of all instances.

A use of the referential function by a NNS in the spoken data could be seen in (7), taken from a conversation where a NNS explained her experiences in Japan from a foreigner's perspective.

(7) NS: *ippai=*
gaikoku kara kita=
hito
NNS: *un un un un*
NS: *mo iru*
kyooto wa

NNS: …*demo*
hanamatsu
hamamatsu=
wa=
NS: *inai*
NNS: *inai*
NS: @@@ *darou ne*
NNS: *hito*
<Q *a*
gaijin da Q>
NS: @@@
NNS: watashi
NS: *un un*@
NNS: *shashin o totte*
NS: @@@@

NS: lots=
of foreign=
people
NNS: yeah yeah yeah yeah
NS: are also in
Kyoto
NNS: …but
Hanamatsu
Hamamatsu=
is=
NS: none
NNS: none
NS: @@@ you would think
NNS: people (would say)
<Q ah
a foreigner Q>
NS: @@@
NNS: *my*
NS: yeah yeah@
NNS: picture (they'd) take
NS: @@@@

On line 18 of (7) where the NNS used 1PP, saying "*watashi shashin o totte*" ("my picture [they'd] take"), even though it was not marked with *no* to indicate that it was a picture of the NNS that the people were taking, it could be assumed that

was her intended meaning. In (7), the NNS explained that because she was a foreigner people would take pictures of *her*, and the 1PP here served a referential function (Ono & Thompson, 2003).

In the written NNS data, only around 17% of the 1PP found were used with similar referential motivations. This included a previously discussed example of 1PP+*wa*, taken from the composition of a 400-level NNS who discussed spending time with her brother.

(8) *otouto wa 'wachimen' to iu eigo o mitakatta kedo,*
watashi *wa mitaku nakatta kara,*
sono ban ni watashi *no apaato de geemu shita.*

'(My) younger brother wanted to see a movie called 'Watchmen',
but *I* didn't want to see (it),
so that night (we) played games in *my* apartment.

The use of 1PP+*wa* in (8) was contrastive and was therefore being used for referential purposes. While the differences between spoken and written Japanese make it hard to draw direct comparisons between the functions 1PP serves in the two, it can be seen that NNS more frequently used 1PP with a clear pragmatic function in the spoken data than they did in the written. A comparable trend was also found in the NS data, where around 50% of 1PP in the spoken data could be seen as referential while only around 25% of 1PP in the written data were serving similar functions.

Summary

This chapter looked at how the use of 1PP by NNS in spoken and written Japanese may relate to each other, as well as the functions that 1PP served in the

two separate sets of data. When examining the frequency at which NNS used 1PP, there was evidence they used 1PP more in spoken than in written Japanese, with the 300-level NNS in the spoken data using 1PP at a rate closer to the 200-level NNS in the written data. This could be brought about by many factors, including the general differences between the genres of spoken and written language, or even different functions of 1PP such as floor-holding.

In terms of the functions 1PP served, it was found that at least for the use of 1PP+*wa* and 1PP+Ø, problems evident in NNS's spoken language may not have been unique to spoken Japanese but in fact transfer from their use of 1PP in written Japanese. By using 1PP+*wa* the same way in both forms of the language, NNS may have unintentionally been distancing themselves from the other participant in conversation. The textbooks used at the 100 and 200-levels were also examined, and it was found that 1PP+*wa* was consistently used instead of 1PP+Ø to mark the topic, suggesting that textbook input could be one of the factors in the difference between the use of 1PP+*wa* in spoken Japanese between the NNS and NS groups.

While it was the most common function in the written data, 1PP+*wa* was not found to be used frequently with emotional predicates in the spoken data – even though results from other studies show that it can be used that way by NS. Instead, it was found that in spoken Japanese NNS most often used the referential function of 1PP to help their intended meaning be understood (Ono & Thompson, 2003). Conversely, in the written data 1PP were used for similar referential functions only around 17% of the time. The implication is that in spoken Japanese

1PP was used by NNS more frequently for referential reasons while in written Japanese it was used more for emphasis.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This thesis has looked in depth at how Japanese first person pronouns (1PP) are used by non-native speakers (NNS) of the language. The interesting properties of Japanese 1PP have been well documented by numerous studies (Clancy, 1986; Ide, 1979; Kurokawa, 1972; Kurosaki, 2007; Lee & Yonezawa, 2008; Martin, 1975; Ono & Thompson, 2003; Osumi, 2005; Shibatani, 1990; Suzuki, 1978; Thompson, 1993). This includes, but is not limited to, the high rate of omission or zero pronoun use which leads to a phenomenon where 1PP are generally used with a specific function in mind.

It was expected that this would be problematic for NNS whose first language was English, because not only to 1PP behave quite differently between Japanese and their native language, the issue is not fully addressed by Japanese language textbooks (Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998; Tohsaku, 1999). Previous studies had also found evidence of an overuse of subjects by NNS where they could be omitted, both in Japanese (Tseng, 2004) as well as other languages (Bearden, 1998; Jung, 2004; Perez-Léroux & Glass, 1999; Polio, 1995; Register, 1990; Yuan, 1997); however, all studies showed an improvement over time. In regards to studies of Japanese 1PP in the field of SLA, no study was found that had yet addressed how NNS whose L1 is English use 1PP, including how 1PP are used in both written and spoken Japanese and how that use might compare directly to the use of 1PP by NS. Therefore, to enrich the understanding of the

acquisition of Japanese 1PP by NNS it was these areas that the current study chose to focus on.

The first question this study answered was whether or not NNS overused 1PP, and how the frequency of 1PP use changed over time. In the written data there were clear signs of overuse by NNS at the 100 and 200-level. The 300-level NNS used 1PP at nearly the same rate as NS in their written compositions, with both groups using it around once every ten clauses. On the other hand, in spontaneous Japanese conversation the 300-level NNS used 1PP twice as frequently as NS, with NNS using it around once every ten predicates while NS used it only around once every twenty. Therefore, while NNS do use 1PP less as they progress in their studies, at the same level they used 1PP more frequently in spoken Japanese than in written, potentially brought about by differences between the two forms of the language and the functions 1PP can serve in each.

One area where 1PP could be considered an overuse was use of possession marking 1PP+*no* 'my' with kinship terms (Tohsaku, 1999), which was present in both the written and spoken NNS data. It was, however, also found in the written NS data, suggesting that it is not necessarily a non-native-like use, and for all groups the use of 1PP+*no* with kinship terms was found at a relatively low frequency. Conversely, what was considered an overuse was the use of 1PP more than once in a single sentence, something found at all levels of the written NNS data but never in the NS data.

The second question this study attempted to answer was how did NNS use 1PP and if it differed from NS. In terms of the general functions served by 1PP,

the majority of 1PP in the spoken NNS data served referential functions, which was similar to numbers found by other studies of NS data (Ono & Thompson, 2003). In the written NNS data one of the main functions found was emphasis, particularly in the use of 1PP+*wa* with emotional predicates. This was not seen in the NS data, but some support was found in previous studies (Clancy & Downing, 1987; Thompson, 1993), and could be influenced by how 1PP are presented in textbooks (Hatasa, Hatasa, & Makino, 2000; Makino, Hatasa, & Hatasa, 1998).

To gain an understanding of more specific functions 1PP served in the data, the use of the particles paired with 1PP was examined. When marking the subject, all groups in the written data – including the NS – favoured using 1PP with the topic marker *wa*. In the spoken data, however, NNS favoured the use of 1PP+*wa* while NS favoured 1PP+*mo* 'also' and 1PP+Ø which indicates topic, and the NNS's use of *wa* and Ø was actually more similar to how the two were used by both the NNS and NS in the written data. This suggests that NNS may not be differentiating between the two forms of the language at least in terms of what particles they use with 1PP in the subject position. An additional and unexpected finding from examining the particles used to mark 1PP as the subject was that NNS may be unaware of a more indirect use of 1PP with *mo*. The NS were found on occasion to use 1PP+*mo* not to make a direct comparison but instead to promote a sense of unity in the conversation.

As seen in the written data, NNS were found to initially overuse 1PP and did not start to produce 1PP at a frequency closer to that of the NS participants until they reached their third year of study. Moreover, although the issue of

overuse could be said to correct itself by the third year in the written data, there were still problems at the same level in the spoken data. For both written and spoken Japanese the overuse and incorrect use of 1PP could be an issue related to the idea of noticing (Schmidt, 1990), for the lack of 1PP in NS data means that there is a lack of positive evidence for NNS to determine on their own how 1PP should be used. Therefore, it may be beneficial to ensure that students are corrected from the very beginning whenever there are signs of overuse. Instructors should also ensure to supplement textbooks with more explicit instruction on when or when not to use 1PP and point out the various factors that render it unnecessary. Discussion on the pragmatic roles it can play in discourse, including morphological features that render 1PP unnecessary – such as the direct form of predicates – and how certain uses of 1PP can create a sense of distance between the speaker and listener – such as the use of 1PP with the topic marker *wa* in spoken conversation – could also be beneficial to help students better understand 1PP use.

One additional implication for teaching that is not entirely related to 1PP is the use of the particles *wa* and Ø. The NNS in the current study were found to have trouble differentiating between the uses of the two with 1PP in spoken and written data, and it could very well be the case that it carries over into the marking of other subjects beyond the first person. It may be that more careful instruction on the differences between spoken and written Japanese is needed.

Probably the biggest limitation was that despite the fact that this study examined both written and spoken data, only the written data looked at how 1PP

use changed over time. Given the time and resources it would have been beneficial to gather spoken data from NNS at all levels of study. This would allow for a more rounded picture of the spoken data to be seen as well as more comparisons to be drawn between spoken and written data. The small corpus used in the current study also made it hard to say if uses of 1PP were "native-like" or "non-native-like," for if there was only one token it was insufficient evidence to make such a strong judgement – such as in the case of the one 1PP+*no* used with a kinship term in the written NS data.

A further limitation that was apparent in the course of the study was how the NNS were divided into groups based on the class they were currently enrolled in. While it allowed for some assurance that the NNS at each level had a similar background, it was found that Japanese proficiency could vary greatly within the group. However, other methods of grouping have their own sets of limitations, and this was taken into account when it was decided to group participants by class level.

Lastly, although 1PP use was looked at in terms of function and frequency, it would have been beneficial to add to the study by seeing whether or not each use was deemed necessary or not by Japanese NS. This would have added another dimension to the discussion, but, similarly to collecting additional spoken data, would have been difficult given the time and resources.

Building upon the limitations of the current study, proper examination of both changes in 1PP use in spoken NNS data over time as well as looking at how NS perceive NNS' use of 1PP would both be extremely beneficial in furthering

the general understanding of how NNS use 1PP. Future research should also look more at how NNS with different backgrounds in acquiring the language handle 1PP, including those who learned Japanese in natural settings or who received formal instruction while living in Japan. I also believe that it would be interesting to see how NNS handle more socially motivated aspects of 1PP, such as the different forms meant to be used by different genders (for example, *ore* for males and *atashi* for females).

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Appendix

Full Instructions Given for the Written Composition

Imagine that you are writing in an online journal/blog that your friends will read.

In approximately 400 characters (one sheet) write an 'entry' in Japanese about a memorable / exciting event that happened to *you* recently. (For example, it could be something that happened over reading week, winter vacation, or even just during the past school year.)

You will <u>not</u> need your textbook or a dictionary. This will not be graded so please just write freely using what you know.

Please <u>do not</u> include a title or your name in your composition. Remember, it is not an essay but a 'journal entry.'