

It's Part of Our Lifestyle: Exploring Young Malaysians' Experiences with Japanese Popular Culture

By Eriko YAMATO, Steven ERIC KRAUSS, Ezhar TAMAM,
Hamisah HASSAN and Mohd NIZAM OSMAN*

Introduction

The development of information communication technology (ICT) has brought tremendous changes to our daily lives. With ICT development, the business of 'content' — via media entertainment products — has increased its circulation worldwide. Undoubtedly, the U.S. is home to the largest content business in the world, especially in the media entertainment market, based in Hollywood. Japan also developed its own 'content business' in the 1980s. In the Japanese content market, 1/3 of book sales are *manga* (Japanese comic books or magazines) while terrestrial television broadcast companies dominate the domestic visual content market (Onouchi, 2007). Local broadcasting companies have produced 95% of television (TV) programs since the 1980s. Now, those TV programs developed in Japan for domestic audiences have acquired recognition outside of Japan as well. Japanese animation (*anime*) programs now lead the global animation market accounting for almost 60% of all animated programs (Nakamura & Onouchi, 2006). Japanese TV drama series (J-drama) flourished in Asian regions in the 1990s and early 2000s before other television drama series from East Asian countries such as South Korea and Taiwan attained popularity. American journalist Douglas McGray (2002) coined the term "Gross National Cool" (GNC) by playing on words GNP (Gross National Products) in the Foreign Policy magazine. He praised GNC as Japan's strength and remarked that "from pop music to consumer electronics, architecture to fashion, animation to cuisine, Japan looks more like a cultural superpower today than it did in the 1980s" (p.44). Since then, media consumption of Japanese popular culture outside of Japan (e.g. Darling-Wolf, 2003;

* Eriko YAMATO is a doctoral student and lecturer at the Faculty Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Ezhar Tamam is an associate professor, Hamisah Hassan and Mohd Nizam Osman are senior lecturers at Communication Department in the same faculty. Steven Eric Krauss is an associate professor at the Faculty of Educational Studies in UPM.

** Author's Note: This paper is based on the first author's part of doctoral thesis.

Hu, 2008; Zanghellini, 2009) and its power associated with the nation (Allison, 2008; Nakano, 2008; Otmazgin, 2008) has been discussed in different academic disciplines.

In Malaysia, the media entertainment industry has relied heavily on imported products. Malaysian people consume a variety of popular cultural products from other countries including those from Japan. According to a survey conducted by the Japanese External Trade Organization (JETRO, 2007), 13 programs (10 animations) from Japan were broadcast on Malaysian terrestrial channels as of May 2006. ASTRO, Malaysian direct-to-home satellite pay television services, includes two Japanese related channels, NHK World (programs from *Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai*: The Japan Broadcasting Corporation) and Animax (*anime* satellite television network).

The influx of Japanese popular culture can thus be seen growing in Malaysia. Despite these trends, empirical research on Japanese popular cultural consumption by Malaysians has yet to be undertaken, particularly among young people as the largest consumers of Japanese cultural products. Accordingly, this study set out to understand the consumption experiences of Japanese popular cultural products among Malaysian young adults, where popular cultural products were limited to those formats disseminated through the media.

Distribution of Japanese Popular Culture

A number of studies related to Japanese popular culture have been conducted centred on the reception of the J-drama. In separate studies on South Korean and Chinese communities, it was reported that Japanese popular culture became popular in the 1980s despite restrictions imposed by their respective governments. In South Korea, even though the government imposed restrictions on Japanese popular culture longer than on any other country, Japanese popular culture were widely consumed especially among younger generation more than other countries. With the rise in the number of Internet users, fan clubs emerged on the Internet and fan subbing groups have been established since early 2000. In addition to video files of the J-dramas or films, music files, digital files of manga and novels have been made available on the Internet. Because Korean popular culture is influenced by Japanese popular culture, it was reported that some young Koreans found interest in Japanese artists and products while engaging with their own domestic popular culture (Kim, 2004; Lee, 2004; Lee: 2006; Lee, 2008; Park, 2004).

Taiwan is another country that has welcomed Japanese popular culture for a long time. The Taiwanese government removed the ban on Japanese popular cultural products in 1993. Taiwanese companies recognized a potential niche market for Japanese television programs and music, and began licensed business with Japan as well as extensive promotion on their own (Iwabuchi, 1998). Three

cable TV channels specializing in Japanese TV programs were established by 1996 (Ishii, Su & Watanabe, 1999). Besides legalized distribution of Japanese popular cultural products, Taiwan became a center for the illegal VCD business in Chinese communities across national borders in the 1990s (Hu, 2005).

Nakano (2002) who observed the distribution of information on the J-drama and VCDs in Hong Kong discovered that Japanese popular culture was not brought by Japanese people. It was reported that there is complicated issue on copyright release procedure and Japanese production companies did not expect much profit to export their products to Asian countries. They were also afraid to face difficulties over Asian people's sentiment concerning past occupation by the Japanese military. Hu (2005) also found the similar distribution process through the observation of two websites managed by Chinese fans of the J-drama. She described how those fans exchanged information on pirated VCDs of the J-drama and how information about new ways of getting the latest J-drama came into the discussion board in 2004. Her study revealed that digital files of the J-drama were circulated by a peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing communication protocol, BitTorrent, designed by an American programmer in 2001. It highlighted the way the fans outside of Japan cooperated and found their own way to obtain their favorite J-dramas. This new technology enabled fans of the J-drama to practice a new type of distribution and consumption.

Similar to those findings on J-drama circulation in Asia, enthusiastic anime fans in the U.S. contributed to the recognition of anime in the U.S. market. Some anime fans established a separate fan club from the science fiction fans' organization in 1977. In the late 1980s, the organization expended its distribution by copying anime products using video tapes. These anime related activities were also held at the beginning of the 1990s. Internet usage dramatically rose among anime fans who exchanged media files with subtitles. Some companies owned by anime fans built legal import and distribution channels in the 1990s (Leonard, 2005).

According to the interviews conducted in 2005 and 2006 in Malaysia, one university student claimed to be a frequent user of a China-based website that provided various J-dramas with Chinese subtitles. This student had an interest in J-dramas and anime, and found the website by chance while surfing on the Internet (Yamato, 2006; 2008). In that study, the author uncovered linkages between language learning and viewing J-drama, however, the findings did not provide insight into Malaysian peoples' consumption experiences of Japanese popular culture. Furthermore, those who viewed the J-drama were found to be also interested in other formats of Japanese popular culture but this finding was not investigated further. Accordingly, this study considered Japanese popular cultural products disseminated through the media as a whole even though it focused on three major formats: anime, manga and J-drama. In this article, the findings of the

study related to the distribution of those Japanese popular cultural products and Malaysian young adults' consumption experiences are presented and discussed.

Methods

The hermeneutic phenomenological approach, a qualitative research methodology, was employed in this study. Unlike an ethnographic approach which explores cultural practices of groups of people, phenomenological research aims to extract the meaning of experiences and events from the perspective of those directly involved. Hermeneutic phenomenology is one of the branches of the phenomenological tradition. It aims to describe the lived experiences of people who have experienced the phenomenon under study and then attempts to understand and interpret the meaning in the participants' own contexts (van Manen, 1990; Wilkins & Woodgate, 2007). It was considered the most appropriate for investigating the engagement of individuals with media consumption. The main data source of this approach is multiple in-depth interviews with the same individuals who are undergoing 'rich' experiences of the phenomenon under study. This is in contrast to the ethnographic approach, where interviewees are representatives of a particular cultural group and observation of the cultural group is the main data source (Creswell, 2007).

The participants of this study were recruited based on the following criteria: (a) a Malaysian young adult between the ages of 19-40 years old; (b) a regular consumer of Japanese popular cultural products; and (c) a person who is willing to talk about their own experiences. To enable the researcher to arrive at an in-depth understanding of participants' accounts, the participants were required to have a good command of the English language and be able to meet the researcher without constraints. Profile data of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Twelve Malaysians were selected and in-depth interviews that lasted between fifty minutes to three hours were carried out by the researcher. Each interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim. Except for Gadin and Manaf, all participants were interviewed twice. The second interviews were used to confirm descriptions and interpretation from the first interviews. The participants also shared part of their collection of Japanese popular culture with the researcher during the interviews. The information about Japanese products was also obtained through the Internet from time to time to understand the participants' descriptions. Most of the Japanese popular cultural products mentioned by the participants were viewed or read partly. Reflections occurring from data generation were recorded in a research journal which also consisted of daily schedules, field notes of the interviews, and methodological logs.

Table 1: Biographical Profiles of the Participants

Name*	Birth (age)**	Race Gender	Affiliation (field of study/position)	Format of Product Consumed Currently
Ayu	1989, (20yrs)	Malay Female	UPM (English)	Anime, Manga, J-drama, Song, Variety show
Chun	1987, (22yrs)	Chinese Female	UPM (Nutrition & Community Health)	Manga, Anime, J-drama, Game
Farah	1990, (19yrs)	Malay Female	UiTM (Accounting)	Variety show, Song, J-drama, Manga, Anime
Gadin	1985, (24yrs)	Indian Male	MMU (Software Engineering & Game Design)	Anime, Manga, Song, J-drama
Huan	1987, (22yrs)	Chinese Female	UM (Sports Science)	Takarazuka (musical), Anime, Manga, Light- novel
Jun	1987, (22yrs)	Chinese Male	UPM (Petroleum Chemistry)	J-drama, Anime, Manga
Lok	1987, (22yrs)	Chinese Male	UCSI (Management and IT)	Anime, Song, Film
Manaf	1977, (33yrs)	Malay Male	IT company (Security Researcher)	Anime, Manga, Song
Rosila	1985, (24yrs)	Malay Female	Pre-university program (Engineering Lab. Technician)	J-drama, Anime, Manga
Yong	1984, (26yrs)	Chinese Male	Consultant company (Public Relation officer)	Anime, Manga, Song, Game
Wen	1986, (22yrs)	Chinese Female	UPM (Mathematic)	J-drama, Song, Anime
Zaki	1985, (24yrs)	Malay Male	MMU (Digital Media)	Anime, Manga, Light- novel, J-drama, Game

Note: *Pseudonym **At the time of the first interview.

The data was analyzed concurrently with data generation. The qualitative data management software, NVivo was used to sort interview data into main categories and sub-categories after each interview was transcribed. While coding each interview data, thoughts or rising interpretations were recorded in the journal. Categorized data were read through, and prominent parts were extracted and arranged according to emerging themes. The themes were refined by going back to the original transcription, referring to reflective notes in the journal and other information related to Japanese popular culture and the Malaysian context. This procedure is suggested as part of the thematic and reflexive analysis according to the hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009; van Manen, 1990).

Results: Engagement in Consumption of Japanese Popular Culture

The main theme presented in this article is 'engagement in consumption of Japanese popular culture'. 'Engagement in consumption' refers to activities in the participants' ordinary everyday life such as selecting, obtaining, and viewing products. The four sub-themes ascribed to the participants' description of their experiences related to the 'engagement' are 'it is not just a passing fad', 'the broadband Internet creates 'heaven'', 'it's part of everyday life' and 'click, click, click: pleasure and frustration'. The first sub-theme illustrates continuity of their consumption since their childhood. The second refers to a major turning point related to implementation of the broadband Internet in Malaysia. The third and fourth themes explain how their activities are embedded in their everyday lives and how the Internet expanded their engagement in consumption of Japanese popular culture.

It is not Just a Passing Fad

Consumption of Japanese popular cultural products is not a temporary phenomenon in Malaysia. All participants encountered Japanese popular cultural products since their childhoods through the local television networks. The presence of a few specific Japanese products is memorable for some participants. Thus, consumption of some Japanese popular cultural products is not just a passing fad, but rather it had been incorporated in their lives since their childhood.

All participants have memories of watching Japanese TV programs in their childhood on the local TV channels, such as 'Doraemon' (TVanime, 1979-), 'Sailor Moon' (TVanime, 1992-1997), and 'Ultraman series' (live-action television drama which make use of special effect, 1966-). Yong recalled his earlier consumption as follows:

We were watching 'DORAEMON' on TV, BM [Bahasa Melayu: Malay language] version, and before that we were watching stuff like ... super robot show, even on TV 1 and TV 2, there was 'GETTAR ROBO' [TVanime, 1974-1975] and 'GAIKING' [TVanime, 1976-1977] on TV, ... but we didn't know they were Japanese anime (p.3).

All participants remembered Japanese TV programs that they viewed in their childhood but found it difficult to recall when they became aware of their origin. Yong said he realized when he found a Malay version of manga, 'Dragon Ball' (1984-1995) at the age of 14. Translated versions of manga were another source of Japanese popular culture besides TV anime at that time. Translated manga of the same titles as the TV anime series could be found at affordable prices 10 years ago in Malaysia. Zaki, Farah, Rosila and Ayu also began to read Malay versions

of manga when they were in primary or secondary school, while Lok rented a Mandarin version of manga from the comic shop near his school in the Kuala Lumpur area. Huan and Chun rented manga and anime video tapes from shops in an East coast Malaysian town. Chun also had been sharing video game consoles and Japanese game software with her elder brother since she was in primary school. Thus, Japanese popular cultural products were available for Malaysian children even though some of them were not aware of their origin at that time.

Besides anime and manga, Wen, Chun, and Rosila clearly remembered one old Japanese drama series, 'GTO' (Great Teacher ONIZUKA, 1998) showed on local TV around 1999. Rosila recalled how she was absorbed in watching 'GTO' on TV when she was a secondary school student:

Because the drama aired in the Ramadan month [month for fasting], ... between six to seven pm, I needed to help my mother to prepare the foods so whenever it showed I stayed in front of the TV, when it came to some break I rushed to the kitchen to help my mother (2, p.8).

The 'GTO' was a school drama centering around one teacher who was a gangster before becoming a secondary school teacher. It seemed to be a special old drama for some participants. Wen was downloading 'GTO' as part of her old drama collection during her first interview. Chun has never been absorbed in watching J-drama before but she could explain the storyline of 'GTO' after nearly 10 years. She also recalled that there were more articles about the J-drama in the Mandarin newspaper at that time. That was the time the 'Japanese wave' came to Malaysia through the Chinese communities outside of Malaysia. The 'Japanese wave' refers to the dissemination of a new format of J-drama, the 'trendy drama', especially in Asian regions in the late 1990s and early 2000.

Ayu liked one actor she saw in the J-drama broadcasted on local TV at the age of ten. She could find information about the actor in the local entertainment magazine at that time. She recalled the magazine article as follows:

On the front page it has entertainment news from Japan, ...at that time it was attributed to, HIDEAKI TAKIZAWA to, ... Tackey TSUBASA [J-pop duo, 2002-] so there was quite many news about them, ... like his birthday party, ... concert, and ... interview (2, p.3).

Ayu did not have Internet access to find updates about the artist at that time, but the Malay magazines targeting teenagers provided news about Japanese idols. Otherwise, Ayu might have forgotten about Japanese actor/singers. Wen was also influenced by this trend of the J-drama. When she was asked whether her consumption of the J-drama was influenced by studying Japanese language, she denied it and said: "no ah-, I love to watch Japanese drama from the secondary school". The reason why she did not watch much J-drama until her second year in

university was that she didn't "*have a way to get the drama*" (2, p.11). The 'Japanese wave' was turned into the 'Korean wave' around 2000 and Malaysian local TV channels began to broadcast more Korean dramas (Azizah & Md Azalanshah, 2009). Some of the participants thus had a period that they did not engage in Japanese popular culture because they didn't have a medium, especially those who preferred the TV drama series.

Japan has had a strong bond with Malaysia, especially after the Malaysian government implemented the 'Look East Policy' in 1981. This policy inspired and supported young Malaysians to learn from Japan in order to contribute to nation-building (The Embassy of Japan in Malaysia, n.d.). As a result, Japanese popular culture for children or teenagers was easily brought into Malaysia by local distributors. Unlike some other Asian countries, Malaysian people do not have negative sentiments toward Japan. Bitter memories of the Japanese occupation of Malaysia in World War Two had been eased when participants encountered with Japanese popular cultural products. Kelts (2006) noted that many American children do not know the origin of popular TV anime series just as many Japanese children are not aware of the origin of 'McDonald's' restaurants. For the case of Japan and the U.S., those TV programs and restaurants were modified to fit in with local culture and everything was translated into local language before entering the market. In Malaysia, however, Japanese TV programs have been aired on local channels having original theme songs in Japanese except those anime imported through the U.S. For the participants, it was difficult to recall the time when they realized that those products were made in Japan, but they remembered titles of TV anime they watched and expressed fond memories towards the products. Lok, who likes 'Ultraman' said, "*I'm not sure but I have feeling that I like Japanese product more than others*" (2, p.5) since his childhood. Thus, they grew up with Japanese popular cultural products along the way.

Natume (2008) highlighted that the U.S. and Japan had the capability to provide domestic programs on multiple TV channels since the 1980s. Other countries, thus, needed imported programs to fulfill time slots along with the development of terrestrial and satellite television. The participants of this study also viewed imported TV programs from other countries such as America, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. During childhood, Japanese TV programs shown on local TV channels were one of the options for them to fulfill their leisure time. When most of the participants were in secondary school, pirated VCD distributors contributed to the dissemination of Japanese popular cultural products throughout the Asian region (e.g. Hu, 2005; Nakano, 2002). As a few of the participants mentioned when they wanted to get more products from Japan, it was not easy to acquire access so they had to rely on pirated copies. Nevertheless, for Huan, Chun and Yong, consumption of Japanese popular cultural products was a major entertainment activity from their childhood to young adulthood. Even for the

others, when they encountered opportunities to obtain more products it was easy to accept them because some Japanese popular cultural products were part of their childhood memories.

The Broadband Internet Creates 'Heaven'

The free-to-air local TV channels played a major role in introducing Japanese popular cultural products to most of the participants from the very beginning. Their consumption style and quantity of the products they viewed changed, however, once they began subscribing to broadband Internet. Broadband Internet empowered the participants to expand their consumption in general. For those who continuously sought Japanese products since their childhood, the Internet was initially a tool to obtain information on Japanese popular culture, which then turned out to be an important tool to obtain Japanese products. Thus, obtaining broadband Internet access was a turning point to expand their consumption of Japanese popular culture. In other words, technological development brought them to access 'heaven' where they could find various media products they like for free. Their leisure activities or media consumption of Japanese popular culture drastically changed when "*direct download provided an alternative*" (Jun, p.5) to access translated media files through the Internet. Jun expressed that "*it's more attractive*" to download media files (p.5) than watching TV and buying VCDs because there are more choices online, and it is convenient and cheaper.

Among the participants, only Yong who was growing up in an urban area claimed, "*I spent like ten hours a day looking for stories, for comics, for manga and for anime, everything I could find I just took.*" He managed to download some media files with a dial-up modem before 2000 but it was time consuming. Jun also had Internet access at his home before 2005. He was introduced to anime by his friend in 2004. His friend's sister was downloading various kinds of anime using the broadband Internet service in her university and kept a collection of DVDs at home. When he was absorbed in viewing anime, he asked his parents to switch to broadband service. He then began to search and download anime by himself. He described his consumption at that time as "*everyday spontaneously followed four to five episodes*" and "*last time, whatever anime I also watched, even those I don't like I also watched*" (2, p.19). Around the same time, Chun also got access to broadband Internet in her family's house. She found that the way her brother spent money on pirated DVDs was not worth it, because the quality of the media files in pirated DVDs was similar to the ones found online. Chun and her brother were obsessed with Japanese popular culture before the Internet era, but she expressed that the development of the Internet escalated their consumption:

I think without Internet I won't be so obsessed, because with the Internet, I can get all the latest products released in Japan, so you keep on chasing on new products and after finish, new product is released. It's hard to stop also because maybe the new one released is very nice, then you go and watch again, ... after the episode finish already then another new one is released, then you have to start again (2, p.8).

Chun mentioned the amount of time and money they had to spend looking for and buying pirated VCDs or DVDs, while downloading media files from the Internet was free, or nearly free because they only had to pay for the monthly access charges, not for each product they viewed or obtained online. Thus, if the products were interesting enough they would not stop their consumption.

Rosila, Lok, Wen and Ayu were able to use broadband Internet after entering the university and it became their main medium to access Japanese popular culture. Rosila acquired a kind of 'skill' to obtain media files online while she was studying at the university. Her university had an Internet server that enables students to upload and download all kinds of media files including J-dramas and anime. She expressed the situation in her university as, *"I really enjoyed, its heaven there. You can download anything"* (p.3). She was at the campus for five years since 2003. During that period, she developed more interest in Japanese products and became familiar with the Torrent software program. Similarly, Zaki and Gadin found more interest in anime after entering the university because there were anime databases that were created by their seniors. Wen's interest towards the J-drama revived after viewing drama series' from different countries including Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan through the Internet.

Huan expressed her views about the popularity of anime in Malaysia, *"nowadays everyone is watching anime you know, it's very easy to get"* (p. 4). And, *"I think after Internet became common, Internet is really the main source"* (2, p.10). The Internet became the best source for Japanese popular culture especially among technology savvy young adults. Huan commented:

Animax and only few channels they bring Japanese one, like one week once, who want to watch? You wait in front of TV? ... ten years ago you can do it but now I don't think we do it. I search YouTube and can watch, faster than wait for local one (2, p.9).

Animax is one of the sources for anime on Malaysian TV, but it requires a subscription with an additional monthly payment. Among the participants, Yong and Jun's family subscribed to Animax but they were not viewing it at the time of the interviews. It is not only the cost that attracts young Malaysians to use the Internet to obtain Japanese popular cultural products but also its flexibility in terms of selection and viewing time. For those young adults who use a computer and the

Internet daily, a television set is not the main medium for viewing Japanese popular cultural products. Farah and Lok explained:

Farah: *Like almost 24 hours I'm in front of my laptop accessing the Internet, if there is no update about the boy band then I watch my video on the laptop so I don't really watch the TV right now (p.8).*

Lok: *It's convenient for me because, ... I don't need to switch on the TV outside of my bed room, I just directly click the button in the window, just ... I open the websites (2, p.6).*

It is convenient for them to enjoy private leisure time in their room as they do not need to concern themselves with the other people in their homes. They can choose what they want to watch in their rooms at their own convenience. As they use computers and the Internet for their study, they make use of these tools for their leisure time as well. They can get a lot of information, as well as visual and audio files online related to their favorite format of Japanese popular culture. Those who have their own Internet access have more freedom in the choice of products. They do not need to follow the fixed schedules of programs shown on TV.

Their consumption of Japanese popular cultural products was expanded when broadband service began in Malaysia. This phenomenon was similar to what was reported in South Korea even though overall development of broadband service in Malaysia was a few years behind. According to Park's report (2004), broadband service was introduced in South Korea in 1998. In 2004, an episode of J-drama with Korean subtitles was circulated on the Internet one or two days after the original broadcast in Japan.

In Malaysia, the 'Streamyx' broadband service was launched in 2001 by TMNet (Telecom Malaysian Berhad). Some participants began downloading animes and J-dramas after subscribing to 'Streamyx'. If there were no developments in penetration of broadband Internet service, those participants would not have had much chance to expand their consumption of Japanese popular cultural products. Hu (2005) reported that Chinese-Malaysians were involved in online J-drama discussion boards operated in Mandarin. Some participants of the present study began their downloading activities before or around 2004. Moreover, Rosila's experiences indicated there were not only Mandarin fan-sub (short form of fan-subtitled — films or TV programs translated by fans and subtitled into non-original languages) for the J-dramas circulated online at that time. Rosila's university server had J-dramas with English subtitles around the same time. Older participants such as Yong and Manaf said that English fan-subtitled animes existed online before the broadband service began in Malaysia.

Television broadcasting is the best medium of entertainment for young people as it is free and convenient because they can access it from their house. However,

when local broadcasting companies did not bring enough Japanese popular cultural products to satisfy their consumers, the young people found their own ways to obtain the products. Thus, television probably created a type of 'heaven' for people when only cinemas and radios were available as sources of entertainment. Now, broadband Internet created a new type of 'heaven' of entertainment that is more convenient than TV if young people know what websites to look for and how to handle software or tools on the computer.

It's Part of Everyday Life

Similar to how TV viewing became a part of everyday life, media entertainment consumption through the Internet is becoming a part of everyday activity for young Malaysians. Some participants noted that Japanese popular cultural products are limited in the Malaysian market in terms of products selling in the local shops and airing on TV channels. Despite this, all participants indicated that media consumption of Japanese popular culture was one of their daily activities. Chun commented:

For me, that's one of major things I do when I'm free, ... maybe I feel so down, need something to release, then watching anime and manga is one of my choice rather than just sit there or keep on scolding someone that not really responsible for that, ... one type of ... stress release also, so can say that manga and anime as well as drama, it's part of my life also ah, because I so get used to it already, if ask me to stop completely I can't, it's hard for me to do that (p.14).

Chun downloaded manga and anime at her house, saved them in her hard disk drive and brought them to campus because she rarely downloaded on campus at the time of the interviews. She said "*usually ... I watch it when I'm eating my lunch or dinner*" (p.1). When the researcher tried to view sample media files obtained from the participants it was difficult to do other things while reading subtitles (Journal, October 2009, p.5). Chun "*got used to*" not only viewing contents from foreign countries like Japan but also in terms of the different ways she views them, such as reading subtitles even though she does not have a very high level of proficiency skill with the Japanese language.

Each participant has their own way to select, obtain, and view Japanese popular cultural products they like. For instance, Rosila had a systematic routine to handle a lot of media files: "*I read synopsis first, and ... see the rating of the drama from the website, then if I think drama is good enough ... I download it*" (p.5). She was using the Internet at her rented house on working weekdays: "*usually I download it at night then I leave it, just leave it my personal computer on*" (p.2). The next morning, she ensured the file was downloaded and saved it in folders

which were sorted according to type of product such as anime, movie (film) and drama series. She also used folder/file names to indicate the title of the product and the status of her routine: 'ongoing' 'complete' and 'burned'. The files with 'ongoing' labels were supposed to be viewed sooner or later. Those with 'complete' status in her external hard disk drive were supposed to be burned into DVD (2, Notes, p.15). In the case of Lok, he used to buy VCDs and DVDs at the local CD shops in the major shopping complexes. When he was busy with his studies in the university, his private study room was set up with broadband Internet to assist his study. The Internet also enabled him to take a few hours break in the same room:

While I'm doing homework, when I'm so boring, I will just click the TV [on computer monitor], just in front of me, I watch it for one or two hours then I stop. I continue my homework, very convenience for me, using the Internet nowadays (p.5).

Since using computers and the Internet became a part of his everyday life, media consumption of Japanese popular culture also became one of the options of his daily activities.

Nevertheless the participants were not blindly addicted to Japanese popular culture at the time of the interviews. They balanced their viewing with other activities. Wen, who was in the final year of her study during the interviews stated, "*I sometimes can watch ten episodes, then sometimes just one. Not everyday, because I got exam and other things to do ... if I'm free then I will choose Japanese drama*" (p.1). Some participants also emphasized that consuming Japanese popular culture is not the first priority in their life:

Chun: *I will try to balance, between my activities like going out with friends, ... I also have joined the club inside university, ... so even though reading manga and animation is very relaxing, is not so burden, I consider all my things need to do first before I consider the free time for that (2, p.12-13).*

The participants are engaging with Japanese popular culture through the Internet and use it as best entertainment for them to relax in between their study or fulfill their free time. Even though Japanese popular culture products are created for Japanese consumers, it seems to be fitted in their everyday lives so well.

Media entertainment on the Internet is not only made up of products from Japan. There are a lot of choices in cyberspace. If we know where to go in cyberspace and what to do with the resources, online consumption can be part of anyone's daily routine similar to how people consume TV programs. Similar to other popular media like VCD/DVDs, we can also view downloaded products at our convenience. Moreover, viewing locations are not limited as long as there is access to a computer. The participants' engagement thus illustrated that their consumption style of media entertainments have changed since they first

encountered with Japanese popular cultural products more than ten years ago.

The analysis of the data also revealed that these young Malaysians are not too far behind in relation to ICT development. The participants of this study, although limited in number, shared that with their elder siblings and seniors in their university who were also pioneers of online consumption of Japanese products. Napier (2007) pointed out that early anime fans in the U.S. came predominantly from the science and technology field and were early users of the Internet. She also highlighted that the fortuitous timing of technological development such as VCR, DVD, and the Internet coincided with the growing popularity of anime and manga in the U.S. Japanese popular culture, therefore, which mostly targets domestic audiences, became available outside of Japan by those fans with technological knowledge and skills.

Click, Click, Click: Pleasure and Frustration

Major sources of Japanese popular culture are Mandarin and English websites that provide the latest information from Japan, and original or translated video clips. Participants had broad options online. They can choose how far they expand their consumption of Japanese popular culture by clicking motion. However, the consequence of this online media consumption was not only pleasure for them. The bursting online information brought them both pleasure and frustration. The frustration was related to economic differences between Japan and Malaysia, and copyright issues.

Jun and Huan were using both English and Mandarin websites. Those who have high proficiency in both English and Mandarin can make use of more websites but either language websites provide enough information and resources for locating Japanese popular culture. According to Jun there are online databases for J-drama, J-pop and anime:

I went to the J-drama website then after that, link over to some websites. Because they have database for all the actors, actresses, singers, ... then I can look around for some of the song there (p.1).

For anime, it's like I go to anime database. It's very comprehensive because it shows that, ..., this month, they have the list of anime they will be started, production from the first episode, you click it then you know that which fan-sub group is currently serving the raw [media file without subtitle], so you can find out whether you can download it (p.3).

Some participants made use of certain websites to look for information or find a title suited to their criteria, and would then click the links to go to other websites to download media files. Lok and Wen were frequent users of one China-based

website which provides a variety of torrent files including J-dramas, films, anime and J-pop for downloading. Besides this well-established website, Lok used P2P streaming video network software. He explained that “*when you just click on the [China web] TV, you have link to the menu, just choose which movie you want ..., and which episode you want,...*” (p.1). After installing the software, the media files are accessible without downloading them. There are various websites and ways to obtain media files online.

Both a source of information and technological knowledge can be expanded while clicking in cyberspace. The participants were transferred basic knowledge from their elder siblings or friends, and then extended their knowledge on their own while surfing online. For example, Chun explained:

Last time I don't know about BitTorrent ... one of my friends also quite obsess ... not just animation but games and others so she taught me how to download files, BitTorrent, all that and then, after so many years I also know other sources as well, just like you can straight away download from [Free file hosting service], so it's very, very convenient now (2, p.6).

Japanese popular cultural products have been available since the penetration of the broadband Internet and development of the P2P file sharing protocol. Another important fact is the existence of a growing number of English or Mandarin fan sub groups online. The ‘fan-sub’ groups are formed by fans who are dedicated to translation work for subtitles, and upload media files online (Hatcher, 2005). None of the participants could understand Japanese popular cultural products without fan-subbing works because none of them had a high level of proficiency in Japanese language to fully understand original products without subtitles. Nevertheless, since they began to consume Japanese popular cultural products online in early 2000 or the middle of 2000 in Malaysia, a number of websites and online communities have emerged. As fans-subbing is voluntary work, all websites were probably developed by fans so that they share information and help each other to provide media files as well as technological tips.

Huan, who was absorbed in *Takarazuka* [all female musical stage performance] at the time of the interviews after consuming Japanese popular cultural products for a long time said:

I searched YouTube, I saw the video clip in YouTube and after that all into it, after that other people's blog, Taiwanese and America, Europe, I think, a lot of fans ah-, for TAKARAZUKA and get information from ... the Internet (p.1).

Takarazuka adopts stories from mangas and video games that are familiar to Huan, so the titles of the shows caught her attention while surfing online. She used

to watch anime and read manga, and even read DOUJINSHI, i.e. amateur manga magazines from Japan. When the researcher asked how she found DOUJINSHI, she replied “*forgot ah, ..., click, click, click, and get it*” (2. P.7). Recently, she searched for more information on *Takarazuka*, even from Japanese websites and bought original DVDs, magazines, stage programs and the like despite language obstacles and financial difficulties.

Huan: *If they really like TAKARAZUKA, they shared clip also, if I really like, I also go and buy even though like ha-, I need starvation for, [laugh] during the break [of the university] also, I save the money and go and buy the DVD, ... because we really like it, but not every show I go and buy right? It depends, show is good, then I start saving the money (p.9).*

This globalised space continues to provide more information and resources. However, for Malaysian young adults, original Japanese popular cultural products are not highly affordable because of the economic disparity between the location of production and their place of residence. Huan commented on the distribution of entertainment products based on her experiences in consuming Japanese popular cultural products: “*now because of globalization, you can get everything very easily as long as you have money*” (2, p.3). The participants were thus aware that the Internet won’t provide everything they want for free.

Farah, who is a fan of a Japanese boy band found a way to purchase music CDs and other items through their fan community network. The fan community does not operate for business purposes but idols and other formats of Japanese popular culture are part of the entertainment business. Farah explained, “*without controlling my spending, I just try to buy stuff when I see new update, ... but recently I learn to control my spending*” (2, p.2). Huan and Farah wanted to purchase rare items that could not be found in the Malaysian market, but even for manga and anime DVDs, if someone looks for licensed quality items it is not affordable for a student. There are licensed English versions of manga selling in Malaysia. KINOKUNIYA, a book store from Japan and Borders bookstore from the U.S. import a number of translated mangas that can be found in Kuala Lumpur (Journal, May, p.6). However, as Gadin described as “*I’m going to spend a serious amount of money to buy all the volumes*” (p.3), to possess a complete set of one English translated manga series is relatively expensive. Moreover, those who love anime know that an original DVD or Blu-ray disk is very expensive as it often contains only four episodes and costs around 100-200 Ringgit, when purchased online (Manaf, p.15; Zaki, 2, p.15). Those participants who are more absorbed in Japanese popular culture have to face the negative side of the economic disparity between the nation of consumption and the nation of production.

There are many Japanese popular cultural products that can be obtained online for free. However, free distribution does not provide complete satisfaction for some

participants. Chun has been engaging with Japanese popular culture for almost 15 years. She commented that recently, she enjoys reading manga more than other formats. Even though she has some sources to obtain manga online such as the forum and the e-book website, she still wants to buy an originally translated book published by proper companies for her collection. When the researcher raised the point that with the current online situation people outside of Japan can access the latest titles, she disagreed and expressed her frustration:

You see, you see, ... kind of hard to get most recent from Japan, because for me, I bought translation manga so I have to wait for long time, for example like 'Seven Ghost' [2005-] in Japan, already released volume 8 but in Mandarin translation, they manage to get it until volume 3 only, that's quite long time to wait, have to be patient to just wait (p.10).

She has the latest information from Japan through websites, but translated manga available online for her is not the latest comparing to the original Japanese manga published in Japan. There are some translated manga available online or even in the Malaysian market but the ones she wanted, specifically, were not easily obtained. There are a lot of updates on various websites including blogs and forums as well but they cannot easily access the specific products when they have developed their own taste in Japanese popular culture.

The Internet plays a “central role” (Zaki, p.11) in the distribution of Japanese popular culture in Malaysia. Because of the endless information circulated online and the difficulties faced in accessing the products outside of Japan, fans in other parts of the world have established channels to distribute products for free. The study participants also rely on this ‘unauthorized distribution in Japan’ to obtain Japanese popular cultural products, even though all of them were aware of the copyright issue. Zaki commented:

I'm keeping the personal copy, but things is ah-, what make it illegal is profiting from it, that's how I relate, you profit from illegal copy, then for me, that I feel that's criminal ah-, but if you keep a copy just for yourself, purely only for your own, distributed for friends for free, then I view that as free promotion, publicity (p.12).

It is perhaps not exaggerated to say that without free distribution on the Internet, all formats of Japanese popular cultural products would not be recognized and acquired popularity. In fact, Gadin, Manaf, Zaki, and Yong who are fans of anime care much about developments around the anime industry in Japan. Yong said, “if the consumer doesn't support industry, industry doesn't produce anime, then you won't get anime in the end, so it starts from us ah, basically” (2, p.5). After viewing animes since the 1990s, Yong knows that the amount of anime produced in Japan has declined. He continued: “simply because people

are consuming less, bank don't dare to risk that kind of money that they're used to so, that's why we have to find way to start back up this flow, income for anime producers" (2, p.5). Now, as a working adult Yong has gone beyond being an ordinary consumer in his efforts to support the Japanese anime industry by becoming a retailer of anime merchandise.

Discussion

The Internet created a global sphere that provided huge amounts of information or contents without an 'all rights reserved' (Lessig, 2004) assumption and also not prescribed by international law. The participants' knowledge and skills in information technology also reflect how Japanese popular culture is embedded in their everyday practices. Their everyday consumption practices appeared to be controlled by their own desires and choices. In this sense, the findings of this study were in line with Nakano (2002), Hu (2005) and Leonard (2005). The distribution of Japanese popular culture has been initiated by fans outside of Japan, thus Japanese popular culture was not brought to Malaysians via the efforts of production companies in Japan. Technology savvy young Malaysians are the ones discovering the ways to access the products. Furthermore, the basis for engagement with Japanese popular culture is the fans' enthusiasm and technological developments.

However, unlike those fans in the U.S. (Hatcher, 2005), South Korea (Park, 2004) and Hong Kong (Hu, 2005) who translate Japanese popular cultural texts into their own languages, extensive fan-subbing activities were not found among Malaysians in this study. In other words, the participants cannot consume Japanese popular cultural products without translation works provided by English or Mandarin speakers outside of Japan. Thus, if Japanese popular culture was not popular among those English and Mandarin speakers, the participants' consumption might not be expanded. The participants seem to be driven by a consumerism that is lead by more developed countries than Malaysia. Iwabuchi (2002) also pointed out that Japan's rise as the country which produces high-tech machines or cool popular cultural products is always under a Western gaze. The study of an online fan community of a J-idol (Darling-Wolf, 2004) highlighted that English-speaking fans from different countries anticipated their favourite Japanese idol would succeed in the Western market. Malaysian consumers of Japanese popular culture also appear to be under this Western gaze, since English seems to be the lingua franca for both information and understanding of Japanese products across different ethnic groups in Malaysia. Those Malaysians who do not have English proficiency may not engage much in Japanese popular culture.

Conclusion

Lessig, a legal scholar, pointed out (2004) that free online distribution of Japanese popular cultural products does not totally harm growth in the industry. If there was not any free circulation of Japanese products through the Internet, the participants of this study at least would not be expanding their consumption as they do now. Those who consume more appreciate the production process and are aware of buying high quality copyrighted products if those products are affordable.

In Japan, all terrestrial television channels will replace analog transmission with digital transmission by July 2011 (Sumikura, 2009). The digitalized broadcasting contents may lead more people to upload media files for free on the Internet. One Japanese broadcasting company has been using software to detect illegal media files of their products online and has requested hosts of websites such as Youtube to delete the files (Tanichi, 2008). In January 2010, copyright laws were revised in Japan and it was reported that a few individuals who uploaded TV animes or dramas received a suspended sentence (Yoshida, 2010). However, as some participants indicated, if people prefer to consume Japanese popular cultural products in Malaysia or outside of Japan, cutting off the established distribution channels will cause Japanese production companies to lose potential ground in new markets. Distribution through the Internet can generate profits in many different ways (Lessig, 2004).

Kadokawa Tsuguhiko (1943-), chairman and CEO of one well-known publishing company, pointed out that in Japan there were fifty thousand rental video shops in the 1980s. Those shops were renting Hollywood films by duplicating copies from original videos. He emphasized that there was no awareness about copyright issues among either the lenders or the renters at that time in Japan. Today, Japan has become one of the biggest markets for authorized Hollywood movies (Kadokawa, 2008), and Kadokawa's company is one of only a few Japanese companies that attempts to make use of online distribution channels to generate profits including outside of Japan. If Japanese production companies do not change their ideas about online distribution sooner or later, other countries may acquire the skills to create better products thus causing consumers to shift to those contents that are easier for them to access.

This article set out to describe the ways that Japanese popular culture has been consumed among young Malaysians. Research has shown that there are young people from other countries who share similar experiences according to a variety of articles and reports (e.g. Hao & Teh, 2004; Li, 2008; Otmazgin, 2008; Yamada, 2009). Despite the differences that exist between young media consumers in Japan, Malaysia and other parts of the world, Japanese popular culture is being consumed in ways similar to those of many Japanese people. Japanese popular culture, although foreign, is a major part of some Malaysian young people's everyday lives.

Through it they laugh; feel empathy; are inspired, moved and disappointed; and share the same feelings that others feel when consuming Japanese popular culture. Those similar experiences should be publicly shared, examined and discussed further for the purpose of understanding young people who live in both borderless cyberspace and the social world with boundaries.

REFERENCES

- ALLISON Anne. (2008). "The Attraction of the J-wave for American Youth". In WATANABE Yasushi & David L. McCONNELL. (Eds.). (2008). *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* (pp.99-110). Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- Azizah Hamzah & Md Azalanshah Md Syed. (2009). "Negotiating Foreignness: Malay Women's Television Consumption and the Formation of Alternative Modernities". *Proceedings of 7th Biennial Conference of the Pacific and Asian Communication*, Selangor, Malaysia, January 10-12, 2008, 54-76.
- CRESWELL John W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- DARLING-WOLF Fabienne. (2003). "Male Bonding and Female Pleasure: Refining Masculinity in Japanese Popular Culture Texts". *Popular Communication*, 1(2), 73-88.
- DARLING-WOLF Fabienne. (2004). "Virtually Multicultural: Trans-Asian Identity and Gender in an International Fan Community of a Japanese Star". *New Media & Society*, 6, 507-528.
- EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN MALAYSIA (n.d.) *The Malaysian Look East Policy*. Retrieved February 23, 2010 from <http://www.my.emb-japan.go.jp/English/JIS/LEP.htm>
- HATCHER Jordan S. (2005). "Of Otakus and Fansubs: a Critical Look at Anime Online in Light of Current Issues in Copyright Law". *SCRIPT-ed*, 2, 544-569.
- HAO Xiaoming & TEH Leng Leng. (2004). "The Impact of Japanese Popular Culture on the Singaporean Youth". *Keio Communication Review*, 26, 17-36.
- HU Kelly. (2005). "The Power of Circulation: Digital Technologies and the Online Chinese Fans of Japanese TV Drama". *Inter-Asian Cultural Studies*, 6, 171-186.
- HU Kelly. (2008). "Discovering Japanese TV drama through Online Chinese Fans: Narrative Reflexivity, Implicit Therapy and the Question of the Social Imaginary". In Youna KIM (Ed.), *Media Consumption and everyday life in Asia* (pp.188-202). NewYork: Routledge.
- ISHII Kenichi, SU Heng & WATANABE Satoshi. (1999). "Japanese and U.S. Programs in Taiwan: New Pattern in Taiwanese Television". *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 43, 416-431.
- IWABUCHI Koichi. (1998). "Marketing Japan: Japanese Cultural Presence under a Global Gaze". *Japanese Studies*, 28, 165-180.

- IWABUCHI Koichi. (2002). "Soft Nationalism and Narcissism: Japanese Popular Culture Goes Global". *Asian Studies Review*, 26, 447-469.
- JAPAN EXTERNAL TRADE ORGANIZATION [JETRO]. (2007). *Tounan Asia sankakoku ni okeru contentsu shijō no jittai* [The Actual Condition of Content Market in Three South East Asian Countries]. Retrieved May 12, 2008, from <http://www.jetro.go.jp>
- KADOKAWA Tsuguhiko. (2008). "Kontentsu rikkoku toshite hitsuyō na koto" [What Needed to be the Nation of Content Business]. *ZAIKAI*, 64-67.
- KELTS Roland. (2006). *Japanamerica: How Japanese Pop Culture Has Invaded the U.S.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- KIM Hyun-Mee. (2004). "Kankoku niokeru nihon taishū bunka no juyō to fan ishiki no keisē" [Acceptance of Japanese Popular Culture and Construction of Fan Consciousness in Korea, HIRATA Yukie Trans.]. In MOURI Yoshitaka. (Ed.), *Nisshiki hanryū: 'Winter Sonata' to nikkon taishū bunka no genzai* (pp.162-202). Tokyo: Serika Shobō.
- LEE Dong-Hoo. (2004). "Cultural strategy of Remakes: the Case of 'Yojolady'". *13th JAMCO Website International Symposium Report, Japanese TV Dramas that Go Beyond 'Japan': Their Transnational Significance and Influence*, 36-54.
- LEE Dong-Hoo. (2008). "Popular Cultural Capital and Cultural Identity: Young Korean Woman's Cultural Appropriation of Japanese TV Dramas". In CHUA Beng-Huat. & IWABUCHI Koichi. (Eds.), *East Asian Pop Culture: Analysing the Korean Wave* (pp.157-172). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- LEE Yi-Yi. (2006). "Taiwan niokeru nihon renai dorama to nihon imēji no kankei nitsuite" [The Japanese image made by the Japanese Drama in Taiwan]. *Mass Communication Kenkyu*, 69, 108-125.
- LEONARD Sean. (2005). "Progress against the Law: Anime and Fandom, with the Key to the Globalization of Culture". *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8, 281-305.
- LESSIG Lawrence. (2004). *Free Culture: the Nature and Future of Creativity*. New York: Penguin Book.
- LI Fang Jin. (2008). "Otaku, the Post-80s and Japanese Animation: the Acceptance of Japanese Animation in China". *Research Journal of Graduate Students of Letters*, 8, 17-39.
- McGRAY Douglas. (2002, May/June). "Japan's Gross National Cool". *Foreign Policy*, 130, 44-54.

- NAKAMURA Ichiya & ONOUCHI Megumi. (2006). *Ninon no pop power [Japanese Pop Power]*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shibunsha.
- NAKANO Yoshiko. (2002). "Who Initiates a Global Flow? Japanese Popular Culture in Asia". *Visual Communication*, 1, 229-253.
- NAKANO Yoshiko. (2008). "Shared Memories: Japanese Pop Culture in China". In WATANABE Yasushi & David, L. McCONNELL. (Eds.). (2008). *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* (pp.111-127). Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- NAPIER Susan J. (2007). *From Impressionism to Anime: Japanese as Fantasy and Fan Cult in the Mind of the West*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- NATSUME Fusanosuke. (2008). "Manga, Manga, Comic". *Nigen Bunka*, 6, 9-19.
- ONOUCHI Megumi. (2007). "Nihon no kontentsu shijō" [Content market in Japan]. In HASEGAWA Fumio & FUKUTOMI Tadakazu. (Eds.). (2007). *Kontentsu gaku* (pp.143-154). Kyoto: Sekaishisousha.
- OTMAZGIN Nissim Kadosh. (2008). "Contesting Soft Power: Japanese Popular Culture in East and Southeast Asia". *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 8, 73-101.
- PARK Seoyoung. (2004). "Internet niokeru nihon dorama ryūtsū to fan no bunka jissen" [Circulation of Japanese Drama on the Internet and Cultural Practice of the Fans, HIRATA Yukie, Trans.]. In MOURI Yoshitaka. (Ed.), *Nisshiki Hanryū: 'Winter Sonata' to Nikkan Taishū Bunka no Genzai* (pp.162-202). Tokyo: Serika Shobō.
- SMITH Jonathan A., FLOWERS Paul & LARKIN Micheal. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- SUMIKURA Masataka. (2009, June 15). "2010 nen ni jigyōsha kettei, maruchi media hōsō" [Undertakers for Multimedia Broadcast are Decided in 2010]. *Nikkei Communications*, 33.
- TANICHI Norihide. (2008). "Yomiuri terebi, internet jō no ihō dōga taisaku tsūru o kaihatu" [Yomiuri Developed Countermeasure Tool Against Illegal Online Media Files]. *Housou Journal*, 409, 56-60.
- YAMADA Akira. (2009, June). "Pop culture gaikō no jissen to riron: otaku gaikōkan to yobarete" [Theory and Practice of Pop Culture Diplomacy: Called as Otaku Diplomat], *Gaiko Forum*, 251, 66-71.
- YAMATO Eriko. (2006). "Watching Japanese Drama, Learning Japanese Language: a Case Study in Malaysia". *Nihongaku Kan*, 10, 52-62.

- YAMATO Eriko. (2008). "Nihon no drama shichō kara hirogatta sekai: Malaysia ni okeru Internet jidai no nihongo gakushū" [Broadened Malaysian Students World by Watching Japanese Drama: the Way of Learning Japanese Language]. In MITO Takamichi, HO Chi-Ming & WONG Yoko Miyazoe. (Eds.), *Japanese Language Education in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 2 (pp.439-446). Hong Kong: Society of Japanese Language Education.
- YOSHIDA Daisuke. (2010, April). "Net jidai no chosakuken" [Copyright in the Internet Era]. *Japanese Publications News and Reviews*, 2206, 22-23.
- WILKINS Krista L. & WOODGATE Roberta L. (2007). "An Interruption in Family Life: Siblings' Lived Experience as They Transition through the Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant Trajectory". *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 34(2), 322-330.
- VAN MANEN Max. (1990). *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*. Alnany, N. Y.: State University of New York Press.
- ZANGHELLINI Aleardo. (2009). "Boys love' in Anime and Manga: Japanese Subcultural Production and Its End Users". *Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 23, 279-294.

Notation

For Quoted Extracts from Original Transcriptions	
Example	Explanation
...	Material omitted
<i>[TVanime, 1974]</i>	Explanatory material added by the researcher
'DORAEMON'	Title of Japanese popular cultural products in Japanese
<i>HIDEAKI TAKIZAWA</i>	Name of Japanese singer, group or Japanese word
(p.3)	Page number in the original transcription of the first interview
(2, p.8)	Page number in the original transcription of the second interview
For Supporting Data	
(Journal, October 2009, p.5)	Extract or cited from reflexive journal
(2, Note, p.15)	Cited from the note in the original transcription
'Dragon Ball' (1984-1995)	Title and broadcast or publication year in Japan