

An Empirical Study on the Use of NSS-4 Reviewing Strategies by Second-Year Students of Japanese Majors in Mainland China

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Abstract

This paper is undertaken to investigate the status quo of Japanese major sophomores' use of NSS-4 reviewing strategies by adopting a self-designed questionnaire and interviews. The subjects are 126 second-year Japanese majors from three universities in Jiangsu Province. This finding showed that 1) Japanese major sophomores employed a wide variety of reviewing strategies and they reported to use *Direct Reviewing Strategies* a bit more frequently than *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*. 2) There existed some differences between high-score group and low-score group in the use of reviewing strategies. 3) A certain correlation was revealed between reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores and both *Direct Reviewing Strategies* and *Indirect Reviewing Strategies* were highly and positively correlated with NSS-4 scores.

Keywords: Japanese Major Sophomores; NSS-4; Direct Reviewing Strategies; Indirect Reviewing Strategies

1. Introduction

National College Japanese Test Band 4 (hereinafter referred to as **NSS-4**) is a Chinese national standardized test, which tests Japanese majors' language proficiency in the second college year, including listening, reading and writing. Before taking this test, Japanese major students need to make a good preparation by reviewing all the language knowledge they have learned as NSS-4 is a very significant test for all Japanese major students during the learning process of their four years' college life. The reviewing process is mainly controlled and arranged by students themselves and choosing appropriate reviewing strategies can be conducive for Japanese major students to get higher scores in NSS-4 testing and thus achieve better learning results.

This paper first defines *Reviewing* and *Reviewing strategies* and introduces some related studies on language learning strategies both abroad and at home. Then the methodology part including the subjects, the research questions, the instruments, data collection and analysis is described in detail. A questionnaire survey was conducted among 126 second-year Japanese majors from three universities in Jiangsu Province, China. Finally,

results were presented, and discussions were made on Japanese major sophomores' use of NSS-4 reviewing strategies by means of a self-designed questionnaire and interviews.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reviewing and Reviewing strategies

Reviewing is an important step of language learning and a necessity for memory, by reviewing, the knowledge can be better memorized and maintained. Reviewing can be defined as "looking again at something you have read or studied, such as notes, reports etc" (*Oxford Advanced Learner's English Chinese Dictionary* (6th edition) (2005: 1490). Therefore, reviewing strategies just refer to the explicit or implicit actions and thoughts taken by learners when they relearn and memorize what they've learned during the reviewing process.

2.2 Oxford's classification of English language learning strategies

Based on the existing literature, there appear a lot of definitions and classifications of language learning strategies, among which Oxford's classification of English language learning strategies should be mentioned.

According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies can be divided into direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies refer to the language learning strategies that directly involve the target language, all of which "require mental

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processing of the language” (Oxford, 1990: 37), whereas indirect strategies “support and manage language learning without directly involving the target language” (Oxford, 1990: 135). Direct strategies include memory, cognitive and compensation strategies while indirect strategies mainly cover metacognitive, affective and social strategies. Based on Oxford’s theoretical framework (1990: 37), this paper made a self-designed questionnaire of reviewing strategies (See 2.3.1).

2.3 Previous studies abroad and at home

In the west, numerous academic researches have been conducted on language learning strategies. Some researches explored the classification of language learning strategies, the relationship between language learning strategies and individual differences (Oxford, 1990; Oxford, 2011; Oxford, 2017; Oxford & Amerstorfer, 2018; Pawlak, 2019), and others focused on the quality of strategy use and flexible strategy use (Cohen, 2014; Cohen & Wang, 2018). However, empirical studies on learners’ reviewing strategies are rarely reported in literature.

Compared to western researches, studies on language learning strategies in China began in the 1970s. There has been a great deal of empirical researches on English learning strategies in the field of English (Wen Qiufang, 2001; Cheng Xiaotang, & Zheng Min, 2002; Wang Lifei, & Wen Qiufang, 2003; Wen Qiufang, & Wang Lifei, 2004). However, most of the attention is mainly focused on the summary of teaching experience or the design of teaching models for reviewing lessons, as well as application of some teaching methods in the reviewing class. (Ju Meilan, 2018; Duan Liyun, 2018; Xue Jiawei, 2019; Yao Chunyan, 2020). No empirical researches have been found for the survey of use of English reviewing strategies.

Recently, some Japanese teachers in China focused on the researches of Japanese learners’ learning strategies, such as Yu Yan (2010), who investigated the use of language learning strategies for advanced Japanese learners. Shi Minjie and Wang Jun (2012) explored the relationship between gender differences in language learning strategies and oral Japanese scores and found that there existed some gender differences in the relationship between learning strategy use and oral Japanese scores. Shi Minjie (2013) also analyzed the relationship between the use of Japanese learning strategies and the NSS-4 scores. However, based on the existing literature retrieval of CNKI, it is found that few researches have been conducted on Japanese language learning strategies, and no

empirical studies on Japanese undergraduate reviewing strategies have been reported. Therefore, this paper is undertaken to investigate the status quo of Japanese major sophomores’ use of NSS-4 reviewing strategies, and to explore the differences in the use of reviewing strategies between high-score group and low-score group and to analyze the relationship between Japanese major sophomores’ use of reviewing strategies and their NSS-4 scores, hoping to provide positive guidance for Japanese language teaching.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

A total of 126 Japanese major sophomore students (female:89; male:37) from three universities in Jiangsu Province, China, participated in the survey. The selection of second-year students as the subjects of investigation is mainly based on the following reasons: firstly, the second-year students must take part in NSS-4 in June of that year, and secondly, each student is strongly-motivated to make good preparation by using some proper reviewing strategies in order to get a high score in the examination, which is significant for their graduation.

3.2 Research questions

The research questions are as follows: 1) What are the general patterns of reviewing strategies employed by Japanese major sophomores? 2) Are there any differences in the use of reviewing strategies between high-score achievers and low-score achievers? If yes, what are the differences? 3) What is the correlation between Japanese major sophomores’ reviewing strategies and their NSS-4 scores?

3.3 Instruments

The instruments used include a self-designed questionnaire and interviews.

3.3.1 Questionnaire on Reviewing Strategies of NSS-4 for Japanese Majors

Since there is no authoritative questionnaire for reference in the empirical research on reviewing strategies, the questionnaire is a self-designed one based on Oxford’s (1990) theoretical framework. A questionnaire in Chinese is adopted in the quantitative research of this study in order to avoid misunderstanding. The questionnaire consists of two parts. Part one is the basic personal information of the students, such as *name, school, major, grade and gender*. Part two presents the self-assessment inventory of “Reviewing Strategies of

NSS-4 for Japanese Majors”, in which reviewing strategies (altogether 32 items) are made up of two broad categories, namely *Direct Strategies* (17 items) and *Indirect Strategies* (15 items), with each being further divided into three sub-categories of reviewing strategies. Its internal consistency meets the statistical requirements. Categories, number of items and reliability coefficients (Alpha values) of the above strategies are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability analysis of the questionnaire

	Categories	Items	Alpha
Direct Strategies	Memory Reviewing Strategies	1-6	.603
	Cognitive Reviewing Strategies	7-15	.526
	Compensation Reviewing Strategies	16-17	.708
Indirect Strategies	Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies	18-24	.613
	Affective Reviewing Strategies	25-27	.652
	Social Reviewing Strategies	28-32	.721

A five-point Likert scale ranging from one to five is adopted to evaluate each item of the reviewing strategies. The different number indicates how often Japanese major sophomores use a specific reviewing strategy. Among the five points, “1” to “5” represents “never or almost never true of me, usually not true of me, somewhat true of me, usually true of me to almost always true of me”. (see **Appendix I**).

3.3.2 Interviews

As a supplement to the questionnaire, ten students whose questionnaires are considered valid are purposefully selected for interviews, 5 from high-score achievers and 5 from low-score achievers. The interview questions are closely related to reviewing strategies for further understanding the reviewing strategies employed by Japanese majors and the differences of the use of strategies between high-score achievers and low-score achievers. In order to guarantee the accuracy of the answers and avoid misunderstanding, the interview is also carried out in Chinese. The whole process is tape-recorded. After the interview, the answers are translated into English by the researchers.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

In order to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research, the subjects are required to finish the questionnaire independently. Then the collected data is processed with SPSS 22.0 for

statistical analysis. The analysis involves three steps: 1) use descriptive statistics to get the mean and standard deviation of Japanese sophomores’ use of reviewing strategies. 2) get the differences in the use of reviewing strategies between high-score achievers and low-score achievers through independent-samples T-test. The division of high achievers and low achievers is made according to the students’ NSS-4 scores in the following semester when the scores are finally announced. The 25 percent students whose scores are at the top of all the students are considered as high-score group and the other 25 percent whose scores are at the bottom are regarded as low-score group. 3) use Pearson correlation to examine the relationship between Japanese major sophomores’ NSS-4 scores and their reviewing strategies.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 General pattern of Japanese major sophomores’ use of reviewing strategies

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistical results of reviewing strategies used by Japanese major sophomores, containing two broad categories of reviewing strategies and six sub-categories. According to Table 2, the mean scores for both *Direct Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.49) and *Indirect Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.37) are all above 3.00, which indicates that the two broad categories of reviewing strategies are frequently employed by Japanese major second-year students. Moreover, *Direct Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.49,) are a bit more frequently used than *Indirect Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.37). Besides, in terms of the six sub-categories, *Memory Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.57) ranks first in the category of *Direct Reviewing Strategies* while *Affective Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.99) occupies the first place in the category of *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*. It is worth mentioning that *Social Reviewing Strategies* is not so frequently adopted by Japanese major sophomores as its mean score is only 2.97.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the use of reviewing strategies

Categories of Strategies	Mean	SD
Direct Reviewing Strategies	3.49	.63
Memory Reviewing Strategies	3.57	.45
Cognitive Reviewing Strategies	3.39	.83
Compensation Reviewing Strategies	3.52	.53
Indirect Reviewing Strategies	3.37	.72
Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies	3.14	.89
Affective Reviewing Strategies	3.99	.75
Social Reviewing Strategies	2.97	.72

1) Direct Reviewing Strategies

Among all *Direct Reviewing Strategies*, based on the mean scores, *Memory Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.57) ranks first, followed by *Compensation Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.52) and *Cognitive Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.39). Within the category of *Memory Reviewing Strategies*, the most frequently used strategy is "Grouping" (Item 2: Mean=3.92, "I memorize the words or phrases of the similar meaning together".) The frequent use of this strategy may be attributed to the following reasons. First, there are too many words and phrases that need to be memorized in the reviewing process, which requires students to sort them out and classify them. Putting words and phrases of similar meanings together can help students memorize them better. Besides, words or phrases of similar meanings can be used in different ways. Memorizing them together makes it convenient for students to distinguish the different usage of them, thus avoiding some mistakes. Such an explanation can be proved reasonable in the interview with the students. When they were asked, "Do you often relate one word or phrase with another similar one?", most students give positive answers and explain that it is helpful for them to relate similar words and phrases as they can memorize them more easily. Moreover, in this way, they may have a deep understanding of those words and phrases after they distinguish them.

Moreover, the mean scores for Item 4 "Applying images and sounds 1" (Mean=3.75), Item 6 "Frequent reviewing" (Mean=3.63), Item 1 "Association" (Mean=3.56) all exceed 3.50, which indicates that Japanese major sophomores have already learned to use various methods to memorize words instead of just rote learning.

Followed *Memory Reviewing Strategies* comes *Compensation Reviewing Strategies*, with the mean score of 3.52. Within the category of *Compensation Reviewing Strategies*, the most frequently adopted reviewing strategy is Item 17 "Overcoming limitations in writing" (Mean=3.56, "I will use the synonym when I can't come up with a certain word in writing exercises"). This demonstrates that the second-year Japanese majors are good at using different words or phrases to replace them in their writing in order to overcome the shortcomings and limitations of vocabulary in writing. In addition, Item 16 "Guessing intelligently" (Mean=3.49) is also much preferred by students, indicating that Japanese sophomore students have learned to use the context to guess the meaning of new words. Just as one student mentioned in the interview, "I often guess the meaning of words especially when

doing NSS-4 simulated exercises within the limited time. Because of the limitation of the testing time, we must learn to guess the meaning of unknown words. Sometimes, we can also guess the meaning of words and sentences according to the context." (From a high-score group)

The mean score for *Cognitive Reviewing Strategies* is the lowest (Mean=3.39), however, for Item 11 "Quick skimming" (Mean=3.93, In doing reading comprehension simulation exercises, I will quickly skim the article for the main idea of the article.), and Item 13 "Noting down key information" (Mean=3.92, While doing listening comprehension exercises in Japanese, I will take down the key information in time), the mean scores exceed 3.90, which suggests that the two cognitive strategies are much favored by most students, who tend to "quickly skim the whole passage to get the main idea of the article" and "write down key information while listening". However, for Item 9 "Watching animation" (Mean=2.72, I will often watch Japanese original animation, film and television drama to improve my listening ability), Item 10 "Writing practice" (Mean=2.59, I will keep Japanese weekly notes or short compositions to improve my writing ability.), their mean scores are below 3.00, which means that the second-year Japanese major students have not yet developed the habit of keeping practicing listening and writing in their daily life.

2) Indirect Reviewing Strategies

The mean score for *Indirect Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.37) is slightly lower than that of *Direct Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.49). Of all *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*, the mean score of *Affective Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.99) is the highest, followed by *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.14) and *Social Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=2.97).

Within the category of *Affective Reviewing Strategies*, the most frequently used strategy is Item 25 "Controlling emotion" (Mean=4.33), which indicates that Japanese majors are good at adjusting their emotions in time and actively preparing for the exam. At the same time, they can also be well self-motivated (Item 27 "Encouraging yourselves", Mean=3.95).

The mean score for *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies* is relatively low (Mean=3.14), however, the mean score for Item 19 "Making plans" is higher than 3.50 (Mean=3.71, I will arrange my review time and make a special reviewing plan.), which indicates that the majority of students can make plans to review Japanese.

The category of *Social Reviewing Strategies* is the only one whose mean score is below 3.00 (Mean=2.97), which demonstrates that students do not prefer to cooperate with their classmates during the reviewing process, which is much corroborated in the interview. When asked the question, "Do you have any cooperation with your classmates or partners when you are reviewing? In what kind of exercises will you cooperate with others?", some students said that they seldom cooperate with their classmates because they regard NSS-4 reviewing as a relatively independent process. They usually memorize words and do exercises individually and check the answers themselves, instead of discussing with their classmates. This phenomenon may be attributed to the test form and the social environment. As NSS-4 is a very formal examination for the students, they regard it serious and do exercises independently.

Besides, the current social environment makes students have less communication with each other.

4.2 Differences in the use of NSS-4 reviewing strategies between low-score group and high-score group

In order to show the general differences in the use of reviewing strategies between low-score group and high-score group, an independent-sample T-test is made with the subjects being divided into two groups according to their NSS-4 scores. The 25 percent of Japanese majors whose NSS-4 scores are at the top of all the students are regarded as high-score group and the other 25 percent of Japanese majors whose scores are at the bottom are considered as low-score group. Therefore, the high-score group consists of 31 students while the low-score group is also made up of 31 students. (See Table 3).

Table 3. Independent-samples t-test of reviewing strategies between high and low achievers

Categories of Strategies	High Achievers		Low Achievers		T	P
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Direct Reviewing Strategies	3.72	.42	3.23	.34	2.873	.005
Memory Reviewing Strategies	3.82	.60	3.20	.48	2.659	.008
Cognitive Reviewing Strategies	3.58	.50	3.07	.46	2.147	.029
Compensation Reviewing Strategies	3.79	.57	3.26	.48	1.742	.061
Indirect Reviewing Strategies	3.48	.45	3.02	.57	2.520	.013
Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies	3.57	.55	3.10	.68	2.715	.009
Affective Reviewing Strategies	3.90	.59	3.63	.81	1.297	.201
Social Reviewing Strategies	3.03	.55	2.78	.74	1.412	.164

Table 3 presents the statistical results of the reviewing strategies that show much difference between high and low achievers. The statistics reveal that both of the two broad categories of reviewing strategies (*Direct Reviewing Strategies* and *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*) are more frequently adopted by high achievers than low achievers, with p value below .05, indicating that the differences are significant between the two groups in the use of reviewing strategies.

1) Differences in Direct Reviewing Strategies

Firstly, in terms of *Direct Reviewing Strategies*, there exists a significant difference ($P=.008<.05$) in *Memory Reviewing Strategies* between high-score and low-score group students. The mean value of high-score group students (Mean=3.82) is higher than that of low-score group students (Mean=3.20). Within the category of *Memory Reviewing Strategies*, the two groups show significant differences in the strategies of Item 1 "Association" ($P=.025<.05$), Item 3 "Context" ($P=.010<.05$), Item 4 "Applying images and sounds 1" ($P=.010<.05$),

with high achievers getting higher mean scores than low achievers, which indicates that high-score group adopting these reviewing strategies more often than low-score group. Compared with low-score group students, high-score group students are better at memorizing Japanese new words "by associating the same word affix" (Item 1: "Association") and "by combining the sounds, shapes and meanings of Japanese words together" (Item 4: "Applying images and sounds 1"). Moreover, high-score students prefer to "memorize words through the context" (Item 3: "Context"). This result is much corresponding to the conclusion reached by Cohen and Aphek (1980), who conclude that the recall of words in context is positively related to the proficiency level of the learners. Thus "the more advanced the learner, the more likely they are to benefit from learning words in context" (Carter & McCarthy, 1988:15; Cohen, 1990:137). "Word lists prove better for beginning students, but more advanced students benefit more from contextualized words" (Cohen & Aphek, 1981).

Secondly, in terms of *Cognitive Reviewing*

Strategies, the two groups also show significant differences ($P = .029 < .05$) with high-score group (Mean=3.58) getting a higher mean score than low-score group (Mean=3.07). When concerning the specific micro-strategies, high-score group learners report to use (Item 11) "Quick skimming" and "Noting down key information" (Item 13) more frequently than low-score group. Compared with low-score group students, high-score group students tend to "quickly skim the article for the main idea in doing reading comprehension exercises" (Item 11, High: Mean=4.01, low: Mean=3.42), or "note down the key information while doing listening comprehension exercises." (Item 13, High: Mean=4.05, low: Mean=3.32).

Thirdly, there is no significant difference between the two groups in *Compensation Reviewing Strategies* and their two micro-strategies. However, the mean scores of high-score groups are all higher than that of the low-score group, which suggests that high-score group students are better at using these strategies.

2) Differences in Indirect Reviewing Strategies

In terms of *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*, firstly, with the category of *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies*, there appears a significant difference between high and low-score group students. Moreover, among seven specific micro-strategies, significant differences are also discerned in five specific *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies* between the two groups (Item 19: "Making plans" (High: Mean=3.92, Low: Mean=3.41), Item 20: "Planning time" (High: Mean=3.75, Low: Mean=2.81), Item 21: "Planning vocabulary reviewing" (High: Mean=3.65, Low: Mean=2.96), Item 22: "Planning reading and grammar reviewing" (High: Mean=3.77, Low: Mean=3.04), Item 24: "Making reviewing focus" (High: Mean=3.58, Low: Mean=2.85), with high-score learners getting much higher mean scores than low-score learners. This finding indicates that Japanese major second-year students can generally well plan, organize and evaluate their reviewing process before taking NSS-4.

The relatively high frequency of using metacognitive reviewing strategies by high-score learners can be attributed to the following reasons: First of all, NSS-4 reviewing is a relatively self-autonomous learning process without much help from the teachers. Students need to arrange their own time after class and make their own reviewing plans. Besides, NSS-4 is an important examination for Japanese majors in the university, who have to set up their own goals and strictly control their own reviewing process, which is also a decisive factor for high-group students to get a better score in national NSS-4 exam.

Secondly, significant differences are also discerned in *Affective Reviewing Strategies* and three specific micro-strategies between high and low-score students, with high-score group getting higher mean score than that of low-score group. Generally speaking, the high-score students are good at "Controlling their emotions in the reviewing process" (Item 25: "Controlling emotions", High: Mean=4.31, low: Mean=3.72), "Overcoming anxiety in the learning process" (Item 25: "Overcoming anxiety", High: Mean=4.19, Low: Mean=3.57). Compared with the low-score students, they tend to reward themselves in good time when they get satisfactory results (Item 27: "Encouraging themselves", High: Mean=3.63, Low: Mean=3.18).

Thirdly, within the category of *Social Reviewing Strategies*, no significant difference is found between the two groups. However, in terms of three specific micro-strategies (Item 28: "Seeking help", Item 31: "Discussing with others 1", Item 32: "Developing culture understanding", the two groups show significant differences, with high-score group students getting higher mean scores than that of low group students.

4.3 Correlation between reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores

In order to explore the correlation between reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores, this paper takes reviewing strategies as independent variables and NSS-4 scores as dependent variables. Table 4 provides the results of correlation analysis between the use of reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores.

Table 4. Correlations between reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores

NSS-4 Scores	Direct Reviewing Strategies $r = .301^{**}$	Indirect Reviewing Strategies $r = .210^{**}$
NSS-4 Scores	Memory Reviewing Strategies $r = .352^{**}$	Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies $r = .303^{**}$
NSS-4 Scores	Cognitive Reviewing Strategies $r = .254^*$	Affective Reviewing Strategies $r = .201$
NSS-4 Scores	Compensation Reviewing Strategies $r = .202$	Social Reviewing Strategies $r = .169$

* $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$

Table 4 shows that both *Direct Reviewing Strategies* and *Indirect Review Strategies* are highly positively correlated with NSS-4 scores. Within the

category of *Direct Reviewing Strategies*, except *Compensation Reviewing Strategies*, *Memory Reviewing Strategies*, *Cognitive Reviewing*

Strategies are all correlated with NSS-4 scores, among which *Memory Reviewing Strategies* has the highest correlation ($r=.352^{**}$) with NSS-4 scores. In terms of memory category, some micro specific strategies are positively related to NSS-4 scores (such as Item 1 "Association", Item 3 "Context", etc.). This finding is understandable. When the students are preparing for NSS-4, apart from doing some simulation exercises, they will have to memorize a large number of words and phrases and using various memory strategies will surely benefit them a lot.

In terms of *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*, only *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies* are highly positively correlated with NSS-4/Japanese CET-4 scores, while the other two strategies (*Affective and Social Reviewing Strategies*) have no significant correlation with NSS-4 scores. This further verifies the importance of metacognitive learning strategies in the reviewing process and also in the whole language learning, which conforms to O'Malley and Chamot's research finding, "students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction or opportunity to plan their learning, monitor their progress, or review their accomplishment and future learning directions" (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990:8)

5. Conclusion

Based on both quantitative and qualitative research methods, this paper yields the following findings as follows: 1) Firstly, descriptive analysis reveals that the second-year Japanese major students use a wide range of reviewing strategies in preparing for NSS-4 exam. Generally speaking, *Direct Reviewing Strategies* are a bit more frequently adopted than *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*. In the category of *Direct Reviewing Strategies*, *Memory Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.57) has the highest mean score, then followed by *Compensation Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.52) and *Cognitive Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.39). In terms of *Indirect Reviewing Strategies*, *Affective Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.99) has the highest mean value, and then *Metacognitive Reviewing Strategies* (Mean=3.14), and the mean score for *Social Reviewing Strategies* is the lowest (Mean=2.97). 2) Secondly, there do exist some differences between high-score group and low-score group in the use of reviewing strategies. Generally speaking, high-score learners adopt the two broad categories of reviewing strategies more frequently than low-score learners. 3) There exists a certain correlation between the use of reviewing strategies and NSS-4 scores and

both *Direct Reviewing Strategies* and *Indirect Reviewing Strategies* are highly and positively correlated with NSS-4 scores.

The above research findings provide some significant implications for future language teaching and learning: 1) Teachers should take some measures to cultivate Japanese learners' strategic awareness, including developing students' understanding of the effectiveness of systematic strategy use as well as the understanding of their strategy application. 2) Teachers must guide students to realize the importance and practical value of reviewing strategies through systematically introducing them some positive learning strategies in their daily teaching. 3) In view of the differences in the use of reviewing strategies by high and low-score group students, teachers should properly choose different teaching methods for students at different levels, and encourage low achievers students to use reviewing strategies in their language learning.

Although this study adopts the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, there are still some limitations. First, because of the limited number of respondents, it is difficult to draw general conclusions from this study. Secondly, although the effectiveness of the questionnaire has been tested, there may still be some defects.

Therefore, based on the limitations, the future research should expand the scope of investigation, which means the survey of reviewing strategies can be extended to other subject areas and not just be confined to the use of reviewing strategies in preparing the examinations but also to students' daily learning in their use of reviewing strategies. Moreover, the sample size can be enlarged, and further adjustment and improvement in the micro-strategy design of the research questionnaire can be made.

In sum, this survey study on the use of Japanese major sophomores' NSS-4 reviewing strategies has important guiding significance for Japanese language learners in colleges and universities in China.

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