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# Online Japanese Language Resit Assessment: Academic Misconduct and Technology

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**Abstract:** The relevance of this study lies in the growing scale of academic dishonesty in online assessment, which undermines the reliability of language test results and the overall quality of e-learning. This research aims to determine whether online Japanese language resit assessment is easier than primary (sit) assessment and whether its results can be considered reliable. The significance of the study lies in its focus on academic misconduct in online resits, particularly the use of Online Translators (OT) and Input Method Editors (IME), which remain underexplored in the existing literature. The methodology combined quantitative and qualitative approaches, primarily analysing students' written submissions and oral recordings from resit exams. The study was conducted in August 2023 with 32 undergraduate participants enrolled in Ab Initio and Intermediate Japanese modules as elective subjects at a British university. The data included students' resit submissions, 18 task briefs for both sit and resit assessments, and corresponding marking schemes, which served as the analytical framework for evaluating authenticity and academic integrity. The results revealed that most submissions were not students' own work, with widespread reliance on OT and IME. While the online written resit was not easier than the sit exam, the online oral resit proved significantly easier than the in-class oral assessment. Consequently, the findings indicate that the results of online Japanese resit assessments cannot be considered reliable due to the prevalence



of academic misconduct. This study makes a novel contribution by being among the first to empirically document the impact of OT and IME on the validity of online language resits. Beyond Japanese, the findings highlight broader challenges for online language education, stressing the need for robust safeguards to ensure academic integrity. Practical recommendations include streamlining the online resit process and adopting measures such as online proctoring, AI-based detection tools, and pedagogical interventions. These results provide language teaching professionals with indicators for detecting OT and IME usage, while also informing global debates on academic integrity in e-learning.

**Keywords:** resit, academic misconduct, online submission, Japanese language assessment, higher education.

## **Introduction**

In the UK higher education system, it is common practice to offer resits to students who did not achieve the required pass mark at their first attempt ('sit') as an opportunity to take a second resit examination before the start of the next academic year. This is the primary purpose of resit. Some universities may have been using online language sit-and-resit assessments since the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, academic misconduct using online assessments is a globally growing problem and presents a threat to the reputation of higher education worldwide (QAA, 2020), affecting both sit and resit situations. This is because the assessment remained unchanged, using the same process and practices of the assessment mode, despite the advancement of language technologies, especially when combined with language technology tools and online assessment.

### ***Japanese language modules at this university***

Japanese is one of eight languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and British Sign Language) offered to both foundation year and undergraduate students to the non-language major students as an elective module and students study language as their part of their degrees (Pathway programme) in the Sussex Centre for Language Studies (SCLS, now Department of Language Studies) department at the university.

In the 2022/23 academic year, when this study was conducted, Japanese online language assessment offered the following four levels of modules: Ab Initio (for complete beginners), Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced Plus. All consisted of A and B modules. For example, Japanese Ab Initio A's 'A' refers to the Autumn term and Japanese Ab Initio B's 'B' refers to the Spring term. This study investigates only the Ab Initio and Intermediate modules. Students study two-hour Japanese classes twice a week for 11 weeks per semester.



The total number of students (Ab initio, Intermediate and Advanced) who took the Japanese primary (sit) assessment in the 2022/23 academic year was 63.

Three types of sit assessments were administered at SCLS in the 2022/23 academic year for Ab Initio and Intermediate modules: Written assessment, Oral assessment, and Distance Exam (DEX). Oral assessment was an in-class assessment. Students were expected to submit their written assessment and DEX online, using the Virtual Learning Environment, Canvas. These assessments were administered in the assigned week of a semester. Table 1 summarises the online written assessment and in-class oral assessment that were administered:

**Table 1**

*Summary of primary/sit written and oral assessment held in 2022/23*

2022/23 academic year	Ab Initio A	Ab Initio B	Intermediate A	Intermediate B
Written (online)	Week 9	none	Week 9	Week 8
Oral (in-class)	Week 11	Week 11	Week 11	Week 10

Both the written and resit assessment combines to assess the reading and writing tasks. For this task, students are asked to write on a specific topic in Japanese. Task Briefs detail both written and oral assessments in the Virtual Learning Environment, Canvas. No grammar or grammar questions are involved in the written assessment.

The oral sit-and-resit assessment also includes assessing speaking and listening tasks. The oral tasks are either role-play in pairs or an individual presentation on a specific topic.

There are two Distance Exams (DEX), A and B. However, Distance A is an online resit, applicable only to the Ab Initio A module. Ab Initio DEX A resit is for those who failed the Ab Initio A module written assessment. DEX A does not involve language (vocabulary and grammar) questions, and this was a reading and writing test. There is no DEX A for Intermediate modules. Both Ab Initio sit DEX B and Intermediate sit DEX B were administered online in May 2023. DEX consisted of language (vocabulary and grammar), reading and a writing question. The table below summarizes the weight of written, oral, and DEX assessments for Ab Initio and Intermediate modules.

**Table 2**

*The weight of the written, oral and DEX assessment for the Ab Initio and Intermediate modules*

2022/23 academic year	Ab Initio A	Ab Initio B	Intermediate A	Intermediate B
Written (online)	50%	none	50%	25%
Oral (in-class)	50%	40%	50%	25%
DEX (online)	none	60%		50%



## ***Two key technologies related to this study***

Language technologies serve as learning tools to enhance educational quality, as they enable language learners to explore, experiment with, and interact with language, thereby promoting the development of digital literacy (Niño, 2020). It also relates to pedagogies such as ‘autonomy’ and ‘learner-centred’ (Niño, 2020). Language technologies have also been making advances in educational quality for the main users, who are usually native language speakers. Compared to the Japanese language learning era when no technology was involved, technology used in Japanese language education has provided significant support for non-Japanese language learners, enabling them to achieve the same language proficiency as native Japanese.

This section explains two leading technology tools (Online Translator [OT] and Microsoft Japanese Input Method Editor [IME]) that have been used for the online Japanese sit-and-resit assessment. Between OT and IME, IME is unique to the Japanese language and has transformed Japanese language education for language learners.

It is necessary to add a positive section that details how technologies can be adapted to improve educational quality and ensure academic integrity. This will balance the critical analysis of problems with practical recommendations.

### ***Online Translators (OT) and students’ reasons to use OT***

Online Translator (OT) is a web-based platform to perform translations between two or more languages. The most frequent type of resource to aid students’ writing is Google Translate (GT) (Jolley & Maimone, 2015; Valliärvi & Tarsoly, 2019). GT has been freely available since 2006 (Cancino & Panes, 2021), is omnipresent and is an unavoidable part of our everyday lives and ‘popularity amongst students who will continue to use it as a resource to aid comprehension and/or production’ (Niño, 2020). Google Translate translates 37 languages, supports more than 100 languages and is used by more than 500 million users, translating more than 100 billion words every day (Niño, 2020). In 2016, Google developed Google Neural Machine Translation, which is claimed to have the most substantial improvements for machine translation quality (Somers, 2011; Wu et al., 2016). This means that language students have been using the most advanced translation tool in their online language assessment.

According to King (2019), GT consisted of a translation model based on phrase-based algorithms that “analysed word pairs based on frequency of use across massive amounts of digitalised data” (p. 2). This implies that GT uses a direct translation or literal translation, which may sometimes produce unnatural (Niño, 2022), awkward or vague sentences. In other words, students’ unnatural (Niño, 2022), awkward or vague sentences are one of the indicators that language teachers suspect students’ misconduct.

OT’s direct or literal translation sometimes results in producing awkward Japanese sentences. An example of a Japanese word to explain that direct translation may not work between English and



Japanese is the English verb 'like'. 'Like' is a verb in English, whereas it is an adjective in Japanese. The difference in parts of speech may result in OT's different translation between English and Japanese.

As for students' reasons to use OT, it is more likely a combination of the followings: 1) weak language ability (Niño, 2022); 2) time constraints (Eret & Ok, 2014; Sadruddin 2021); 3) laziness/convenience of copying (Foltynek et al., 2014); 4) pressure to perform academically well (Goh, 2013; Niño, 2022; Sadruddin 2021); 5) fear of failure (Devlin & Gray 2007, Goh, 2013); 6) desire for higher grades (Eret & Ok, 2014; Niño, 2022); and 7) academic misconduct perception gaps between students and markers/teaching staff. As for 1) weak language ability (Niño, 2022), some students who retake the exam with weak or limited Japanese language knowledge are more likely to rely heavily on OT. Regarding 2) time constraints, Sadruddin (2021) reports that some students prepare their coursework a day before submission, which suggests that students have poor time management skills. Students may rely on academic misconduct as the easiest route to meet a deadline. It also allows students to bypass the slow, complex, time-consuming, and strenuous language study, enabling them to work on the same linguistic level as their peers who did not use OT. As for 7), academic misconduct perception gaps between students and a marker/teaching staff may be another reason; some students believe that teachers would not detect their own academic misconduct. Some markers are aware that students' online assessment work is not their own, as it may be influenced by their class interactions or students' attendance. Students commit an academic offence, which is pedagogically unacceptable.

### ***Input Method Editor (IME)***

The Input Method Editor (IME) is not an online-based platform, but rather a downloadable software that instantly enables anyone, regardless of their knowledge of the Japanese language, to write like native speakers using the Japanese three writing systems when using Microsoft Word. In addition to IME, students have another writing support, which is Microsoft Word's 'auto-correct' features in the Japanese language, which detects and corrects spelling errors before students have even noticed. Another benefit of using IME is that the native Japanese markers would not usually know that students have relied on this IME function in their written assessment unless they have seen the students' previous writing examples or their oral performance in class.

To explain IME's three functions, the Japanese three writing systems should be introduced and explained. Japanese three writing systems are: a) 46 hiragana characters; b) 46 katakana characters; and c) kanji (Chinese characters). IME automatically converts from typing roma-ji to a) hiragana, b) katakana and c) kanji. Roma-ji is a romanisation of the Latin script used to help you pronounce the Japanese language.

IME's first function is to convert from roma-ji to a) hiragana with 100% accuracy. Hiragana has three special sounds (long vowels, contracted sounds, and double consonants), which the majority of beginner-level students struggle to master and are more likely to make mistakes with. IME can



convert these special sounds instantly without any mistakes, which is significant writing support for absolute beginner Japanese language learners.

IME's second function is to convert from romaji to katakana with 100% accuracy, even though katakana also has special sounds. IME's final function is to convert romaji into kanji, which is the most vital indicator for markers to detect students' academic misconduct. IME offers students various possible choices of kanji to choose from when they type a Japanese word in romaji. This is when students' good understanding and knowledge of kanji is tested as they have to choose the correct kanji so that the sentence makes sense. But if students didn't have kanji knowledge, they make mistakes, which presents a gap in their written text. This gap alerts to and suspects the markers of students' possible academic misconduct.

IME offers valuable writing support to students at all levels of Japanese in the Japanese language assessment. With the absence of IME or when the written assessment takes place in class, some students who rely heavily on IME may find the written assessment without IME very challenging.

### **Research Problem**

The language assessment format, including online or in-class, depends on the decision of the university's assessment policy and its language department. The social and educational policies also influence the language assessment format and do change over time. Some universities decide to use in-class language assessment for each of the language skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking). In contrast, some may employ a mixed approach of in-class and online assessments.

This university adopted a mixed approach of online primary/sit written assessment submission and in-class primary/sit oral assessment in the 2022/23 academic year, when this study was conducted and when the Covid-19 (March 2020 -May 2023) university teaching and learning policy was still in place.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all universities in the UK transitioned to online teaching, and university students and teachers experienced online language assessments. When online teaching and online assessment became the norm, students who studied Japanese language at this university became accustomed to online language assessments, which allowed them to use online resources such as OT and IME. However, online language assessment was not considered problematic during COVID-19.

The pandemic phase of COVID-19 ended on 5 May 2023, after the declaration by the WHO (Sarker et al, 2023). After Covid-19, the majority of the assessment format has returned to 'in-class' written, 'in-class' oral and also retained the 'online' written assessment at this university from the 2024/25 academic year. One of the reasons to use 'in-class' assessment may be due to the growing number of students' academic misconduct in online language assessment, as students' academic misconduct was rampant and became a concerning issue after COVID-19. It also affects academic



integrity. Despite 'academic infraction' and 'the use of OT and/or AI' being stated on the online Japanese language resit exam papers, students who did not attend any classes and/or are weak learners with a weak Japanese language ability continued to rely on technology for both online written and oral Japanese language assessment. Some students have also committed more than one of the following forms of academic misconduct: translation, collusion, and plagiarism.

Students' online language assessment misconducts are not only pedagogically unacceptable but also relate to students' choice of progression to the next level of language study, students' motivation, confidence and attendance. Using a Japanese language example, some students, who barely passed the Japanese Ab Initio resit assessment without both Ab Initio knowledge and regular, consistent attendance, decided to continue studying Japanese Intermediate modules the following year. These students struggled to catch up with the rest of the class at the beginning of the course in the Intermediate module, which led to a loss of motivation and confidence, ultimately resulting in absenteeism. Some students continued to take the online Japanese language resit in the Intermediate modules without taking the primary (sit) assessment, using OT, IME, and/or AI in the online Japanese Intermediate assessment.

Before Covid-19, Proud (2014) questions teachers' and markers' workload involved in in-class resits from teachers' perspectives and asserts that resits increase additional workload. In-class teachers/markers' resit language assessment workload before, during and after Covid-19 remains unchanged or perhaps increased due to using the online platform.

Additionally, the university's academic misconduct meeting is one example of teachers' workload and students' academic misconduct related to language assessment. The language academic misconduct meeting at this university asks the markers and the language Convenors to collect and provide the evidence of suspected students' academic misconduct cases. This puts the markers' and the language Convenors' additional workload, which prevents markers and the language Convenors from reporting students' academic misconduct (Niño, 2009). Niño (2022) reports that 75% of respondents, i.e., language teachers, did not report any case of students' OT. The difficulty in identifying students' misconduct and being approved by the University's academic misconduct meeting is one example, but it also affects the reliability of the assessment results.

### **Statement of the problem**

The problem of online academic misconduct may have originated with the advent of the Internet era (Niño, 2009), when a wide range of easily accessible, free resources on all subjects became available. Furthermore, it may be possible to say that Covid-19 also contributed to students' academic misconduct, as the university approved the use of online resources in the online language assessment during Covid-19. After the COVID-19 teaching ended, students still preferred online language assessments, and some chose to take the online Japanese language resit assessment without taking the primary (sit) examination, as all language resit assessments had been conducted online.



The researcher/teacher of this study, who was also the Convenor of Japanese modules and a marker of online Japanese resit assessment, was aware that students' use of OT and IME had increased before Covid-19, but was shocked to find that students' rampant academic misconduct was observed among the majority of students who took the online Japanese language resits assessment in August 2023. The researcher/teacher with over 15 years of Japanese teaching and the accumulated knowledge on students' Japanese written, oral work and students' academic misconduct (Winch, 2018a; Winch, 2018b), and this is how this study was set out to address students' use of OT and IME.

### **Research Focus**

Ricketts (2010) claims that 'literature on resits in education is remarkably scarce (p.352)' and there is 'no theory of resits (p.351)' within the literature, which Proud (2014) also agrees that 'the literature on resit examinations in universities is rather underdeveloped' (p.2). The majority of findings of the 'reasonably developed' (Proud, 2014, 2) literature focus on the fact that students perform better in resit examinations than in the primary examination (Proud, 2014). This study focuses on the academic misconduct of the online Japanese language resit assessment. The aspects of 'online', 'academic misconduct' and 'Japanese language' of resit assessment may be considered original to this study, and it is hoped to contribute to the knowledge building of resit literature.

### **Research Aim and Research Questions**

The Research Questions (RQs) of this study comprise the following three:

RQ1: Comparing the task briefs and students' Japanese resit submissions, are the online Japanese Ab Initio and Intermediate written and oral resit assessments easier than those of the primary (sit) assessment for students?

RQ2: Are the results of the online Japanese language resit assessment suitable to rely on?

RQ3: How could we improve the process of online Japanese language resit assessment to be more efficient at the University?

This study aims to present the data on students' academic misconduct in the online Japanese language resit assessment at a British university and to offer suggestions on the language assessment process.

### **The framework of this study**

This section discusses the theoretical framework used in this study, which comprises the following five key elements: vocabulary, accuracy, structure and coherence, purpose and content, and communication. These five keywords serve as the basis for analysing the data to identify instances of academic misconduct among students.



## Vocabulary

When we translate, the first step is working on the word level, choosing a correct word or what may be called Word Choice (WC). Choosing a word or WC may not require any Japanese grammatical knowledge, but it is critical enough to affect the content of the text, coherence of the text and the understanding of the markers.

It should be noted that WC errors are rare in the Ab Initio level writing. If Ab Initio students' online assessed written work includes WC errors, it implies that students are more likely to use OT. According to Groves and Mundt (2015), students who use OT in their coursework believe that 'it (use of OT) is one of the better options' as they are unable to produce sentences using their own ability.

Two Japanese words/concepts (a) 'my family vs. other family terms' and b) 'anata (you)', are used to explain the importance of choosing the correct word. The first is the Japanese concept of 'my family vs. other family terms,' and the second example is the use of 'you' in Japanese. As for a) 'my family vs. other family term' concept, the Japanese language has two or more words to describe my family and other family. When the Japanese address the interlocutor's father, they say 'otōsan' (father). However, when the Japanese address the speaker's father, they use the term 'chichi' (father). They both mean 'father' in English, but we do not usually refer to the interlocutor's father as 'chichi'. The knowledge to distinguish these terms for my family and other families involves thinking about word choice. In other words, students who use 'chichi' to address the interlocutor's father imply students' lack of understanding of the 'my family vs. other family' term concept, and it is counted as a WC error. This applies to both written and oral assessments.

The second example of 'you' (anata) also applies to both written and oral assessments. Native Japanese speakers commonly address the interlocutor's name when speaking to the interlocutor in the Japanese language, and hardly use 'anata'. If students use 'anata' to address their interlocutor, the marker questions whether the students may not understand the basic Japanese language custom and rule, and it is also counted as a WC error. The above examples alert the markers to either the students' use of OT or their lack of basic understanding of the Japanese language.

Students' Vocabulary level can be described using one the following 7 levels: 'A highly sophisticated range of relevant vocabulary (80+%)'; 'sophisticated range of relevant vocabulary (70-79%)'; 'very good range of relevant vocabulary (60-69%)'; 'Quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occur (50-59%)'; 'Vocabulary is sufficient to task but narrow (40-49%)'; 'limited vocabulary (20-39%)'; and 'insufficient (0-19%)'.

To test the reliability of students' answers, the markers check if students' written work included surprising lexical and native speakers' grammatical range, the markers suspect the use of students' OT, as well as the possibility of academic misconduct.

The students who used OT and IME in the resit may be awarded either 'Quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occur (50-59%)' or 'sophisticated range of relevant vocabulary'. Some students



may feel guilty about submitting their work using OT translation or copying and pasting, so they try to include their own sentences. This is when the native Japanese markers identify the gap in students' writings and find inconsistency of very accurate (native level) and inaccurate sentences with basic errors. The markers question the inconsistency of students' writings and the students' actual language level. This is a suspected case of students using OT or copying and pasting content from other online Japanese language resources. Therefore, it may be reasonable to say that inconsistency in a written text is one of the indicators of OT or academic misconduct in the Japanese language.

The students who demonstrate their own work in the resit may be awarded 'Vocabulary is sufficient to task but narrow (40-49%)'.

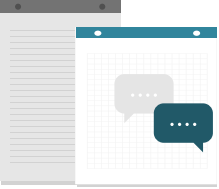
### **Accuracy**

After choosing an appropriate word, the next step is working on the sentence level to construct a well-formed sentence. To work on the sentence level, students require sound grammar knowledge, including verb conjugations, adjective conjugations, particles, consistent use of form, correct counter and suffix/prefix, etc., for both oral and written assessment work.

Accuracy is one of the essential marking criteria in language studies and often relates to the content. Accuracy is more important than 'creativity' in the Japanese language assessment; otherwise, this will put the markers in a challenging position to identify students' academic misconduct.

The consistent use of form means that students write consistently without mixing plain or polite forms. Inconsistency of writing also breaks down the coherence. Japanese language uses three writing styles (plain, polite and expository forms), which are demonstrated at the end of each sentence in Japanese. The most common styles that are used are plain and polite forms. Mixing the plain form and polite form creates inconsistency in the Japanese written text. Native Japanese speakers consistently use the same forms and do not mix them in writing and speaking. In fact, mixing forms is one of the common errors among Intermediate and advanced-level Japanese language. The Ab Initio and Intermediate level students are usually expected only to use polite forms, as students are not usually introduced to the plain form. However, if students use OT and/or copy and paste the translated sentences in the assessment work, mixing polite and plain forms is likely to happen. Not only does mixing two forms indicate incoherence and a lack of attention to detail, but it also indicates that the work is not the students' own. In other words, if beginner students include plain forms in their written assessments, it is an indicator that they used OT and are often suspected cases of academic misconduct, which native Japanese teachers/markers raise questions about.

Students' Accuracy level can be described using one of the following 7 levels: 'high level (80+%)'; 'overall impression of accuracy (70-79%)'; 'occasional errors (60-69%)'; 'frequent minor errors (50-59%)'; 'frequent major and minor errors (40-49%)'; 'major errors which impede



communication 'high level (20-39%); and 'insufficient (0-19%'. The details of the levels of accuracy are explained below:

The level of 'overall impression of accuracy' means that the student's piece of writing may include a few minor errors. A very few students are awarded 'overall impression of accuracy'. Thus, native Japanese markers tend to scrutinise the written assessment work of students who may be awarded 'overall impression of accuracy' for any possibilities that students may either use OT or copying and paste from native language resources. Generally, markers tend to scrutinise students' grammatical accuracy more in written assessment than in the oral assessment.

The students who used OT and IME in the resit may be awarded 'high level' and 'overall impression of accuracy'.

Previous studies maintain that GT allows learners to compose more accurate texts, reducing the number of lexicon-grammatical inaccuracies and improve overall text quality (Cancino & Panes, 2021; Lee, 2020). To determine if the students used GT or to test the reliability of student answer, the markers check if the students' resit submissions include advanced grammar beyond the students' level of study. As the written work which use either OT or copying and paste websites usually include advanced grammar beyond the students' Ab Initio level of study. Students who attend regularly and consistently are informed and are aware that advanced grammar beyond the level of Japanese is unnecessary and not rewarded for inclusion at the University Japanese language department. Therefore, 'overall impression of accuracy' is another warning indicator of possible use OT.

The students who use their own work in the resit may be awarded the following 3 categories: 'occasional errors'; 'frequent minor errors'; and 'frequent major and minor errors'.

'Occasional minor errors' are awarded to students who have occasional minor errors, but their writing generally makes sense. Common minor errors in Ab Initio level Japanese language are: particles; hiragana; katakana; incomplete sentences; punctuation errors (errors of Japanese commas and full stops); and connecting two adjectives.

'Frequent minor errors' are awarded to students who made frequent (nearly every sentence ) errors, but they do not include sentences which do not make sense.

'Frequent major and minor errors' are awarded to students who have included major syntax errors which obscured the meaning of the sentence. Sentences which have major errors do not appear to understand the syntax rule of Japanese grammar. Therefore, it does not make sense to the native Japanese language markers. If students who had low attendance rates and do not possess basic Japanese grammar knowledge attempted to write using their own ability tend to be awarded 'frequent major and minor errors'.



## **Structure and Coherence**

This category looks at organisation within the written text or between paragraphs, focusing on logical sequencing, consistency and coherence. This category is only used for the written assessment. Students' 'Structure and coherence' level can be described using one of the following 6 levels: 'Extremely clear, logical line of reasoning (80+%)'; 'Clear, logical line of reasoning (70-79%)'; 'Visible line of reasoning (60-69%)'; 'Line of reasoning may be incomplete or biased (50-59%)'; 'the order lacks logic and/or clarity (40-49%)'; and 'Information is disorganised and/or illogical (0-39%)'.

### **Structure**

After constructing well-formed sentences in the sentence level, the next stage is linking these sentences together into a clear coherent and cohesive paragraph. In forming individual sentences into the paragraph level, there are a few cases when markers find it difficult to read and understand students' written or oral work.

Firstly, when a student introduces a new topic or a new word, then continues to write/speak another sentence on a different topic without any link between the sentences, which results that two sentences do not flow. When this happens, the paragraph do not make sense and markers find it difficult to read and understand students' written or oralwork.

Secondly, when students' written work is a collection of a random sentences to make a paragraph, it does not present meaningful information to the marker. This gives readers/markers to give impression that writer/students do not seem to structure their writings logically to read coherent.

Lastly, readers/markers do not expect to read the same sentences repetitively in the different paragraphs. However, if students copy and pastes the same sentences more than one source in their assessment, this may be likely to happen. This is when the marker gets an impression that appropriate planning is not apparent due to the repetitions.

### **Coherence**

Coherence category is scrutinised by observing consistency in the content. Niño (2022) maintains that incoherent text, inconsistency, unnecessary repetition and incomplete sentences are the indicators of what makes language tutors question students' work. Coherence is broken down by a) repetitive, b) incomplete and c) illogical sentences. When the readers/markers encountered one or a combination of a)-c), this stops the flow of the readers/marker's understanding and the readers/markers get an impression that students' appropriate planning is not apparent as readers/markers do not expect to read a text which include a)-c). Sentences a)-c) most likely occur when students use OT and copy and paste from various websites.



To test the reliability of student answer in their coherence or to test the reliability of student answer, markers examine if students' content of the text flows logically and clearly, linking and developing logical sequence of sentences and paragraphs.

## **Purpose and Content**

### ***Purpose***

Students' 'Purpose' level can be described using one of the following 7 levels: 'content is highly appropriate and informative (80+)'; 'content is very appropriate (70-79%)'; 'Significant points were communicated (60-69%)'; 'Some basic relevant information was communicated (50-59%)'; 'Appropriate planning was not apparent (40-49%)'; 'Insufficient information (20-39%)'; and 'No meaningful information was presented (0-19%)'.

Purpose of Japanese language is evaluated by two standards: a) the expectation of Japanese language's writing norm and b) sit/resit Tasl Brief. As for a) the expectation of Japanese language's writing norm, writing is an activity that occurs within a community which has various expectations and norms (Mundt & Groves, 2016). The expectation depends on the native speakers' culture and its community. A university Japanese language class is one of the community and in the assessemnt, there are also a few expectations from markers' to students, which may not be clearly written.

The first expectation is that students are not expected to use OT translation, or copy and paste the native language souce text and submit it as their own work. Task Brief states not to use OT translation, but the sentence should be stated more specifically as follows: 'students should not use OT translation, copy, paste and submit as their own work'.

The second expectaiotn is that students are not expected to include or do not need to include grammar, vocabulary and kanji beyond their Ab Initio or Intermediate levels in the sit/resit written and oral assessment. Students' including unnecessary grammar, vocabulary and kanji beyond their level are marked cautiously as suspected cases of OT or IME.

Lastly, markers do not expect to read/hear students' incomplete, repetitive or illogical texts/oral presentations. As this does not adhere to the norms and expectations of the Japanese culture and society. In this instance, purpose category is affected if students do not fulfil the required expectation. The expectation for Japanese language assessment may be that the non-native Japanese learners should adhere to the norms and expectations of Japanese assessment readership, who is usually the markers or native Japanese speakers.

With regards to b) sit/resit Tasl Brief, students' irrelevant information in their assessment work may also affect the purpose category. Whether written information is relevant or irrelevant is assessed based on the Task Brief, which is closely related to the purpose category. Task Brief for written assessment details on the 'topics', 'structure', 'character count' and 'task instructions' (e.g. colour highlighting the appropriate sentences in their written text in online assessment) which



students are expected to adhere. Task Brief for oral assessment details on the 'topics', 'structure', 'duration of pre-recorded recording' and 'task instructions'. To test the reliability of student answer, the markers check if relevant information was written and also to check if students' works include incomplete, repetitive or illogical texts or oral presentations.

Some British universities reward student for exceeding the required character count in the written assessment, while some universities penalise for exceeding the required character count. The language department policy at this University does not reward for the exceeding the character count. Falling below or exceeding the character count or duration of recording time is also penalised as a lack of planning.

## **Content**

Content category is assessed on students' written or oral content based on the Task Brief which explains the details of task instruction. Students' Content level can be described using one of the following 7 levels: 'content is highly appropriate and informative (80+)'; 'content is very appropriate (70-79%)'; 'Significant points were communicated(60-69%)'; 'Some basic relevant information was communicated (50-59%)';, appropriate planning was not apparent (40-49%); 'Insufficient information (20-39%)'; and 'No meaningful information was presented (0-19%)'.

Content is also closely linked to Accuracy criterion because if there are key words or key sentences which do not make sense to the readers/markers in the written or oral content, it also affects the readers'/markers' understanding of the content. This also implies that content also relates to Word Choice in Vocabulary criterion. This happens when students chose the wrong word for their key words, their content becomes is unclear and does not make sense.

## **Communication**

This category is only used for oral assessment in addition to the above four key elements. It assesses students' communicative competence, such as hesitations, confidence, pronunciation, mispronunciation and interaction. Students' COmmunication level can be described using one of the following 6 levels: 'Communicates with ease (80+)'; 'Communicates with confidence (70-79%)'; 'Communicates with competence (60-69%)'; 'Communicates with some hesitancy (50-59%)'; 'Communication lacks confidence with frequent hesitations (40-49%)'; 'Communication is poor (0-39%)'.

As the online oral resit is a pre-recorded video on a specific topic, some students read out from their script in their recordings. When students read out from a script, they usually stare at a certain place throughout their recording. In this case, the recording is not spontaneous and look very unnatural. However, the oral assessment is not 'read-out from a script' assessment. This means that this category also relates to 'Purpose' category. It is clearly written in the oral Task Brief that students should not read out from a script. However, some students tend to ignore this and read out from a script in their recorded video. To test the reliability of student answer, the markers check if the



recording is not spontaneous and look very unnatural as well as students' confidence in speaking, mispronunciations, accent and pause errors.

Furthermore, the communication category is assessed whether students communicated with confidence. This could be displayed by the students' frequency of hesitations, silence and mispronunciations. Students' hesitation ranges from occasional to frequent hesitations.

Communication is affected by students' mispronunciation (e.g. particles mispronunciation errors such as 'ha' and 'wa'), simple pronunciation mistakes, accent errors, pause errors, all of which questions the students' basic understanding of the Japanese vocabulary and grammar knowledge, which implies that this category also relates to Vocabulary and Accuracy.

Incorrect pausing, incorrect accents and mispronunciations make it very difficult to understand the Content of students' oral assessment, which implies this category also relates to Content. A pause forms of oral punctuations or commas that help listeners/markers to understand the speaker's communication content. Therefore, it is important to put pauses in the right places in the oral assessment.

It is vital to pronounce words with correct accents as incorrect pause stops the flow of the native speaker's understanding. In addition, a word with the incorrect accents could change the meaning of the word (e.g. A well-known example is 'hashi (chopsticks and bridge)', which changes the meaning from a bridge to chopsticks or vice versa).

## **Materials and Methods**

The method included both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It used qualitative methods to determine whether 32 students' submitted Japanese resit written assessment and oral resit assessment recordings are their own or they used OT or/or IME. This study also included numerical data presentations and analysis.

Materials for RQ1 consisted of 18 Task Briefs for the Japanese written and online sit-and-resit written and oral assessments for two Japanese language levels (Ab Initio and Intermediate). Materials for RQ2 were 32 students' written texts from the online written and DEX assessment, as well as students' oral recordings from the online oral assessment. In addition, the framework of this study played an important role in assessing fairly and consistently whether their submitted work was students' own work.

## **Participants**

The total participants of this study were 32 undergraduate students (9 foundation year students, 15 first-year students and 8 second-year students) who failed or did not take the online Japanese language sit written or in-class sit oral for personal reasons in May 2023. These students took various combinations of online Japanese language resits for written and oral assessment at a university in the Southeast of England in August 2023. One first-year student took four Japanese resit



assessments, while one seco<sup>nd</sup>-year student took five Japanese resit assessments. These participants were convenience samples.

A total of 5 students (4 Ab Initio and 1 Intermediate) were registered with a status of Reasonable Adjustment (RA) in the Disability Advice department. These students were eligible to receive the following reasonable adjustments related to assessment and exams: 1) penalty waiver in assessment; 2) request for extensions to the deadline, 24 hours or 7 days in assessment; 3) 25% extra time in exams.

Table 3 below summarises the resit type and the number of students who took the online resit assessment in this study.

**Table 3**

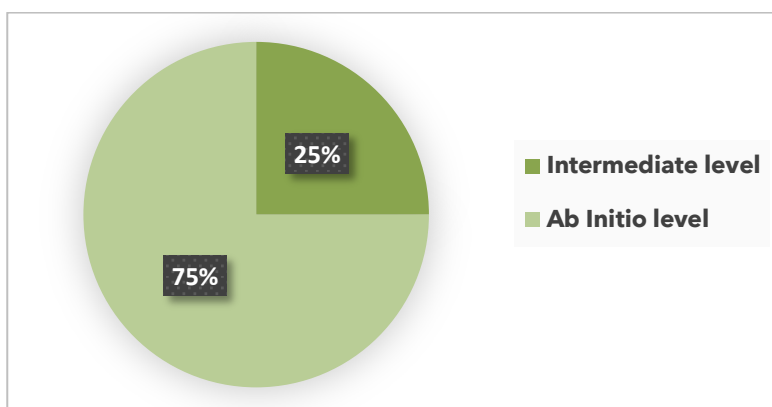
*The resit type and the number of students who took them*

Japanese level/ module name	Resit type	Number of students
Japanese Ab Initio A (Autumn term)	Distance Exam (DEX) (Written)	4
Japanese Ab Initio A (Autumn term)	Oral	7
Japanese Ab Initio B (Spring term)	DEX (Written)	5
Japanese Ab Initio B (Spring term)	Oral	8
Japanese Intermediate A (Autumn term)	Written	1
Japanese Intermediate A (Autumn term)	Oral	1
Japanese Intermediate B (Spring term)	DEX	2
Japanese Intermediate B (Spring term)	Written	2
Japanese Intermediate B (Spring term)	Oral	2
Total		32

Figure 1 summarises the ratio of Ab Initio and Intermediate students who took the Japanese resit assessment. This pie chart shows that 3 out of 4 students were Ab initio students.

**Figure 1**

*Ratio of Ab Initio and Intermediate resit*





### **Resit rate**

The online Japanese language resit assessment rate was 20%. This rate was calculated out of a total of 162 students' primary (sit) online written, in-class oral and online DEX assessment. The total of 162 students was calculated from a sample of 54 students (35 1<sup>st</sup>-year students and 19 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students) who took three assessments (i.e., online written, in-class oral, and online DEX resit assessment). Although this ratio may not be comparable with other disciplines of higher educational institutions' resit rate, Pell et al. (2009) claimed that medical course resit rates are usually less than 10%.

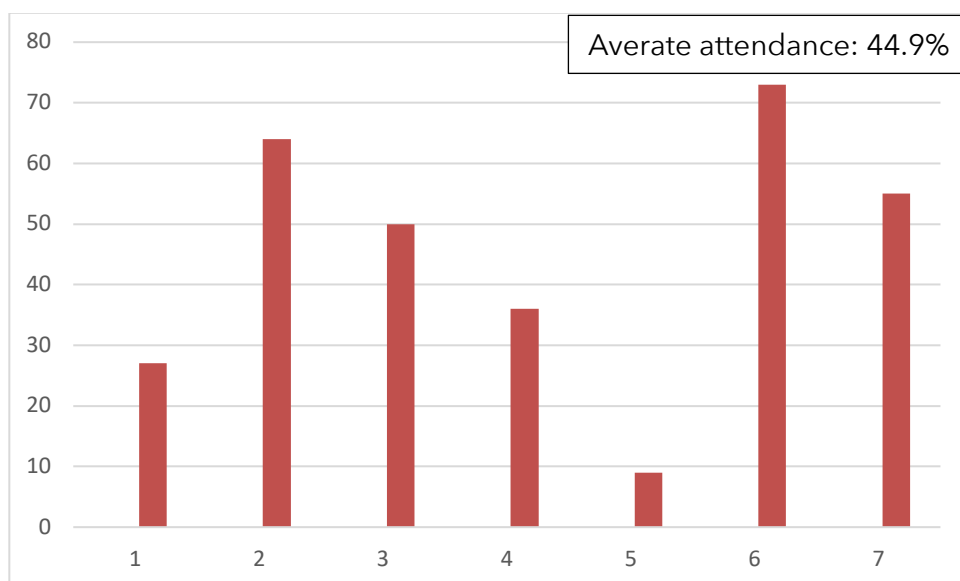
### **Attendance rate**

The participants' attendance rate was also recorded and calculated to supplement participants' information for two reasons: Firstly, the researcher believes that regular and consistent attendance plays an important part of successful Japanese language study; Secondly, the researcher has been observing that the Japanese language resit numbers and an increasing the number of students who were unable to attend classes due to their mental health conditions and also observing that those who academically weak were aiming to take the resit as their first attempt without attempting to take the first online sit assessment.

Figure 2 below shows the attendance rate of 7 first-year students who took Ab Initio A resit assessment. The highest attendance is 73% and the lowest is 9%. The average attendance rate of students who took Ab Initio A resit (both oral and written) was 44.9%.

### **Figure 2**

*Attendance rate of Ab Initio A*



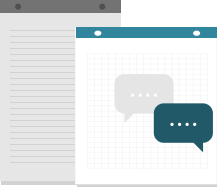
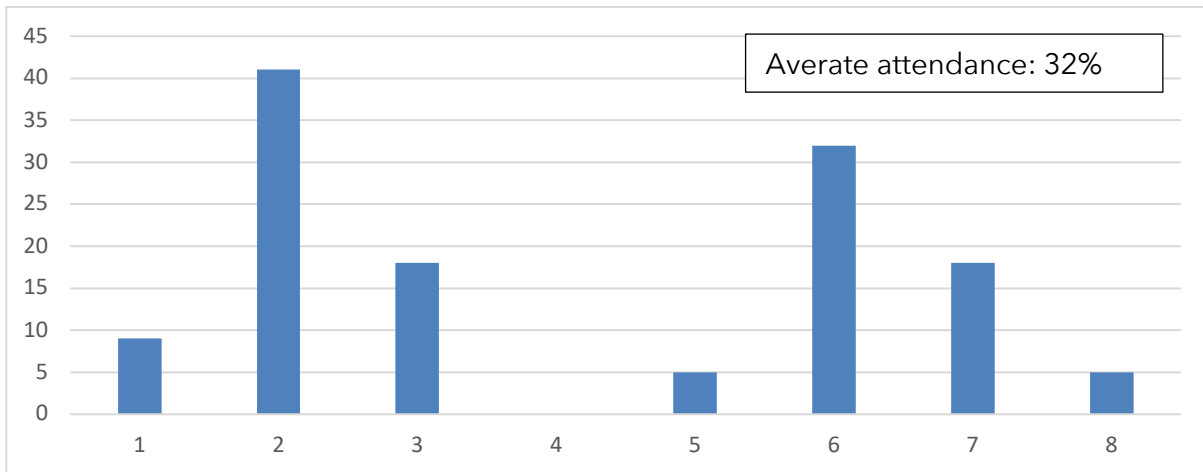


Figure 3 below shows that the highest attendance rate among the first 8 first-year students who took the Ab Initio B resit assessment was 41%. In contrast, the lowest attendance rate was 0% (student 4 did not attend any classes). The average attendance rate for 1<sup>st</sup>-year students who took Ab Initio B resit (both oral and written) was 16%.

**Figure 3**

*Attendance rate of Ab Initio B*

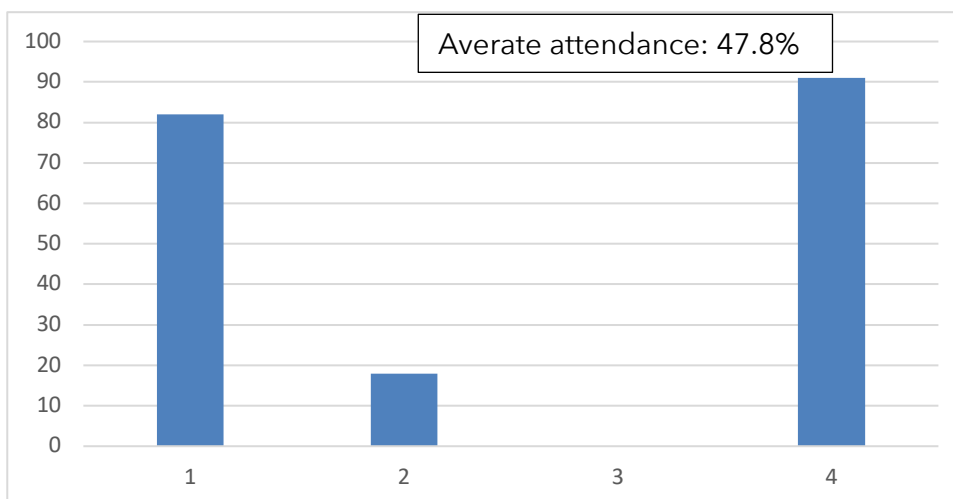


Only one second-year student took the Intermediate A resit assessment (both oral and written), with an average attendance of 32%.

Figure 4 below shows that the attendance rate of 4 second-year students who took the Intermediate B resit assessment was 91%, with the lowest attendance rate being 0%. The average attendance rate for 2<sup>nd</sup>-year students who took the Intermediate B resit (both oral and written) was 47.8%. Two students had high attendance (82% and 91%), but these two students forgot to take the Intermediate sit DEX.

**Figure 4**

*The attendance rate of Intermediate B*





## ***Instruments and Procedures***

Data collection was necessary for only RQs 1 and 2, as RQ3 (How could we improve the process of resit to be more efficient at the University language department?) will be discussed in the Discussion section.

As for RQ1 (Are online written and oral resit assessments easier than those of sit?), the data was a total of 18 resit Task Briefs for the Japanese written and oral primary (sit) and resit online assessment for two Japanese language levels (Ab Initio and Intermediate), which were collected, compared and analysed in August 2023.

With regards to RQ2 (Are the results of online Japanese language resit assessment suitable to rely on?), the qualitative data was 32 students' written texts from the online Japanese resit written and DEX resit assessment as well as students' oral recordings from online oral resit assessment, which was collected in August 2023 and analysed based on the framework of this study and determined whether their submitted work were students' own work.

## ***Procedures***

The procedure for the Japanese language resit involved the researcher/marker and the administrative staff in the SCLS. After the researcher/marker marked using 'Canvas Turnitin' and 'SpeedGrader', provided feedback comment to students on 'Canvas Turnitin' or 'SpeedGrader', awarded the rubric for five categories using the framework of this study (i.e. vocabulary, accuracy, structure & coherence, purpose & content and communication) on 'Canvas Turnitin' or 'SpeedGrader', awarded students' final marks between 0 and 100% on 'Canvas Turnitin' or 'SpeedGrader', and finally recorded students' marks onto the University's records and information system. After that, the administrative staff in the language department made changes to the students' awarded marks in the University records and information system to either a 'pass (above 40%) or fail' format.

## ***Data Analysis***

With regards to data analysis of RQ1 (Are online written and oral resits easier than those of sit?), a) task Instruction and b) submission mode (i.e. online or in-class) of 18 Task Brief for Ab Initio and Intermediate assessment (8 Ab Initio Task Briefs and 10 Intermediate Task Briefs) for both sit, and resit were collected, compared and analysed whether sit and resit were identical or not. If they were identical, it means that resits were not easier. If not (e.g. sit is in-class and resit is online), resits may be easier than the sit assessment.

Data analysis involved comparing a) the task instruction and b) submission mode of 8 Ab Initio Task Brief and 10 Intermediate Task Brief in four stages, looking at the Written and DEX assessment first, which is followed by Oral assessment as follows:



Firstly, working on the Ab Initio 8 Task Brief and a) the task instruction and b) submission mode of the Written Task Brief of Ab Initio A and B modules, as well as Ab Initio DEX A and Ab Initio DEX B for sit and resits assessment were compared and analysed.

Secondly, a) the task instruction and b) submission mode of the Oral assessment Task Brief Task Brief in Ab Initio A and B modules for sit and resits assessment are compared and analysed.

Thirdly, working on the total of 18 assessment Task Briefs for Intermediate modules. In similar manners, firstly, a) the task instruction and b) submission mode of the Written Task Brief of Intermediate A and B modules, as well as Intermediate DEX B for sit and resits assessment, are compared and analysed.

Lastly, a) the task instruction and b) submission mode of the oral assessment Task Brief for Intermediate A and B modules for sit and resits assessment are compared and analysed.

To investigate RQ2 (Are the results of online Japanese language resit assessment suitable to rely on?), the analysis was conducted based on the hypothesis that the more students used OT and IME in the resit assessment, the less reliable the resits are. Thirty-two students' Japanese resit written, oral and DEX assessment exams were analysed using the framework of this study (i.e. vocabulary, accuracy, structure & coherence, purpose & content and communication) as marking criteria against each of five categories, and awarded marks. After going through this process, the percentage of students who used OT was determined.

## Results

### ***RQ1. Are online written and oral resits (including DEX) easier than those in a face-to-face setting?***

To investigate RQ1, a total of 18 Task Briefs (8 Ab initio task briefs and 10 Intermediate Task Briefs) were collected, compared, and analysed. Table 5 below summarises a) the task instructions and b) the submission mode of 8 Task Briefs for Ab Initio modules A and B.

**Table 5**

*Summary of Task Briefs and the modes of submission (Ab Initio)*

<b>Ab Initio</b>	<b>Sit Task Brief instruction (submission mode)</b>	<b>Resit Task Brief instruction (submission mode)</b>
Japanese Ab Initio Written sit assessment and resit DEX A assessment	Read a message and respond in 200 character using hiragana and katakana (online submission)	<u>Identical to sit A written assessment:</u> This is DEX A (resit). Read an email and respond in 200 character using hiragana and katakana (online submission)



Japanese Ab Initio A sit Oral assessment and resit Oral assessment	A 3-minutes in-class pair conversation on a assigned topic (in-class assessment)	<u>Identical to sit oral A assessment but submission mode is different:</u> A 3-minutes pre-recorded self-introduction video (online submission)
Japanese Ab Initio Written DEX B assessment for sit and resit	Sit DEX B comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %) (online submission)	<u>Identical weights, but the questions are different, the similar difficulty of resit questions:</u> Resit DEX B comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %) However, the questions are totally different from sit DEX B (online submission)
Japanese Ab Initio B sit Oral assessment and resit Oral assessment	In-class 4-minutes oral presentation on your party plan which includes Q&A (in-class assessment)	<u>Identical sit oral A assessment but submission mode is different:</u> A 4-minutes pre-recorded event planning video for 4 minutes (online submission)

There were total of 8 assessment Task Briefs for Ab Initio modules: 1 sit assessment written task for Ab Initio A; 1 resit assessment written task for Ab Initio A which is called DEX A; 1 sit assessment oral task for Ab Initio A; 1 resit assessment oral task for Ab Initio A; 1 sit assessment written task for Ab Initio B; 1 resit assessment written task for Ab Initio B; 1 sit assessment oral task for Ab Initio B; and 1 resit assessment oral task for Intermediate B.

Firstly, the Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode of the Written Assessment Task Brief for Ab Initio DEX A for Sit and Resit assessments are compared in Table 6.

**Table 6**

Japanese Ab Initio Written sit assessment and resit DEX A assessment

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit Written</b>	Read a message and respond in 200 character using hiragana and katakana	online submission	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Brief.
<b>Resit DEX A</b>	Read an email and respond in 200 character using hiragana and katakana	online submission	-Both submission mode are identical. -There is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit assessment

With regards to the Task Brief Instruction for Ab Initio A Written and Resit DEX A, both Sit Written and Resit DEX A assessments are identical. As for the submission mode for the Ab Initio A



Sit written assessment and Ab Initio Resit DEX A, both submissions are online, which is identical. It is concluded that there are no differences in ease between Sit and Resit assessments.

Table 7 compares the Ab Initio A Oral Task Brief and the submission mode for Sit and Resit assessment. While an Ab Initio A Oral Task Brief for Sit assessment is 3-minute pair conversation on an assigned topic, that of Resit assessment is a 3-minute pre-recorded self-introduction Panopto recording video. Resit does not involve pair work, which requires students' spontaneous oral interaction. The submission mode of the oral task for Ab Initio A for Sit and Resit assessment is also different. While the submission mode for the Sit assessment is in-class, that of the Resit assessment is online. As the Resit Oral is a recorded video, students could read out their entire prepared scripts, allowing them to use OT. It is concluded that the resit Ab Initio a Oral Resit assessment is easier than that of the Sit assessment.

**Table 7**

Japanese Ab Initio A sit Oral assessment and resit Oral assessment

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit</b>	A 3-minutes in-class pair conversation on a assigned topic	in-class assessment	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Breif - There is a difference in the submission mode.
<b>Resit</b>	A 3-minutes pre-recorded self-introduction video	online submission	-Resit assessment is easier than Sit assessment

Table 8 compares the Ab Initio DEX B Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode of the Written assessment for the Sit and Resit assessment. Regarding the Task Brief Instruction, the structure and weight of the Ab Initio Sit and Resit are identical, however, the resit questions are entirely different from the Sit. The level of Resit questions is similar to that of Sit. It is concluded that there are no differences in ease between Sit and Resit assessments.

**Table 8**

Japanese Ab Initio Written DEX B assessment for Sit and Resit

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit</b>	Sit DEX B comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %)	online submission	-There is no difference in the structure and weight between Sit and Resit Task Breif. However , the resit questions are totally different
<b>Resit</b>	Resit DEX B comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %) However, the questions are totally different from sit DEX B	online submission	-Both submission mode are identical.




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-There is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit assessment

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Table 9 compares the Ab Initio B Oral Task Brief and the submission mode for Sit and Resit assessment. While the Ab Initio B oral Task Brief for the Sit assessment is a 4-minute oral presentation on a party plan, which includes Q&A, the Resit assessment is a Panopto recording video of a 4-minute presentation on event planning. The resit assessment does not include Q&A, which requires students' spontaneous oral interaction. The submission mode of the Ab Initio B Oral task for Sit and Resit assessment is also different between Sit and Resit. While the submission mode of the Ab Initio B Oral Task Brief for the Sit assessment is in-class, the submission mode of the Intermediate B oral resit assessment is online. As the Resit Oral is a recorded video, students could read out their prepared scripts, allowing the use of OT. It was concluded that the Resit Ab Initio B Oral assessment is easier than that of the Sit assessment.

**Table 9**

Japanese Ab Initio B Oral assessment for Sit and Resit

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit</b>	In-class 4-minutes oral presentation on your party plan which includes Q&A	in-class assessment	-There is a difference between Sit and Resit Task Brief - There is a difference in the submission mode.
<b>Resit</b>	A 4-minutes pre-recorded event planning video for 4 minutes	online submission	-Resit assessment is easier than Sit assessment

Table 10 summarises the Task Brief Instructions and the submission mode of 10 Task Briefs for Intermediate modules A and B.

**Table 10**

*Summary of Task Brief and the modes of submission (Intermediate)*

<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Sit Task Brief (submission mode)</b>	<b>Resit Task Brief (submission mode)</b>
Japanese Intermediate A Written sit assessment and Written	Visitor guid to students' hometown in 700-800 characters in Japanese (online submission)	<u>Identical to sit A written assessment:</u> (online submission)



resit assessment		
Japanese Intermediate A sit Oral assessment and resit Oral assessment	In-class 5-minutes oral presentation on your visitor guide which includes Q&A (in-class assessment)	<u>Identical to sit oral A assessment, but submission mode is different:</u> A 5-minutes pre-recorded 'visitor guide to students' hometown video' (online submission)
Japanese Intermediate B DEX	DEX comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %) (online submission)	<u>Identical weights, but the questions are different, the similar difficulty of resit questions:</u> DEX comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %). However, the questions are all different to the Main DEX (online submission)
Japanese Intermediate B Written sit and resit assessment	Write CVs in 300-350 characters in Japanese (identical to main coursework written) (online submission)	<u>Identical to sit written B assessment:</u> (online submission)
Japanese Intermediate B sit Oral assessment and resit assessment	In-class 5-minutes job interview with your partner (in-class assessment)	<u>Identical to sit oral B assessment but submission mode is different:</u> A 5-minutes pre-recorded job application video, students answer provided interview questions in their recordings. (online submission)

There are total of 10 assessment Task Briefs for Intermediate modules: 1 sit assessment written task for Intermediate A; 1 resit assessment written task for Intermediate A; 1 sit assessment oral task for Intermediate A; 1 resit assessment oral task for Intermediate A; 1 sit assessment written task for Intermediate DEX B; 1 resit assessment written task for Intermediate DEX B; 1 sit assessment written task for Intermediate B; 1 resit assessment written task for Intermediate B; 1 sit assessment oral task for Intermediate B; and 1 resit assessment oral task for Intermediate B.

Firstly, Table 11 compares the Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode of an Intermediate Written assessment. With regards to the Task Brief Instruction, both Task Brief Instruction for Sit and Resit assessment are identical. As for the submission mode for the Intermediate A Written for Sit and Resit assessment, both submissions are online, which is identical. It is considered that there are no differences in easiness between Sit and Resit Written assessment for Intermediate A.

**Table 11**

Japanese Intermediate A Written sit assessment and Written resit assessment.

Task Brief instruction	Submission mode	Difference/easiness
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<b>Sit Task Brief instruction</b>	Visitor guid to student's hometown in 700-800 characters in Japanese	online submission	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Breif Instrucion.
<b>Resit Task Brief instruction</b>	Visitor guid to student's hometown in 700-800 characters in Japanese	online submission	-Both submission mode are identical. -There is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit assessment

Table 12 compares the Intermediate A Oral assessment Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode for Sit and Resit. While the Intermediate A Oral Task Brief Instruction for Sit assessment is a 5-minutes oral presentation on the visitor guide of the student's hometown and includes Q&A, that of Resit assessment is a 5-minute pre-recorded Panopto video of the student's hometown. Resit does not include Q&A, which requires students' spontaneous oral interaction. The submission mode for Sit and Resit assessment is also different. While the submission mode of Intermediate A Oral Task Brief for Sit assessment is in-class, that of Resit assessment is online. As the Resit oral is a recorded video, students can read out their prepared scripts, allowing them to use OT. It is concluded that Intermediate A Resit Oral assessment is easier than that of Sit assessment.

**Table12**

Japanese Intermediate A Oral assessment for Sit and Resit

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit Task Brief instruction</b>	In-class 5-minutes oral presentation on your visitor guide which includes Q&A	in-class assessment	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Breif
<b>Resit Task Brief instruction</b>	A 5-minutes pre-recorded 'visitor guide to students' hometown video'	online submission	- There is a difference in the submission mode. -Resit assessment is easier than Sit assessment

Table 13 compares the Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode for Intermediate DEX B for Sit and Resits assessment. Regarding the Task Brief Instruction, the structure and weight of the Intermediate for both Sit and Resit DEX B Task Briefs are identical, but the resit questions are totally different. The level of Resit questions is similar to those of Sit. It is considered that there is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit Written assessment for Intermediate A.



**Table 13**

Japanese Ab Initio Written DEX B assessment for Sit and Resit

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit Task Brief instruction</b>	DEX comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %)	online submission	-There is no difference in the structure and weight between Sit and Resit Task Brief. However , the resit questions are totally different.
<b>Resit Task Brief instruction</b>	DEX comprise of grammar (30%), reading (20%) and writing (50 %). However, the questions are all different to the Main DEX	online submission	-Both submission mode are identical. -There is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit assessment

Table 14 compares the Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode of Written B assessment. With regards to the Task Brief Instruction, both Task Brief Instruction for Sit and Resit are identical. Regarding the submission mode for the Sit and Resit Written B assessment, both submissions are online, which is identical. It is considered that there is no differences in ease between Sit and Resit assessments.

**Table 14**

Japanese Intermediate B Written Sit and Resit assessment

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit Task Brief instruction</b>	Write CVs in 300-350 characters in Japanese	online submission	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Brief.
<b>Resit Task Brief instruction</b>	Write CVs in 300-350 characters in Japanese	online submission	-Both submission mode are identical. -There is no differences of easiness between Sit and Resit assessment

Table 15 compares the Oral Task Brief Instruction and the submission mode for Intermediate B for Sit and Resit assessment. While Oral B Task Brief for Sit assessment is 5-minutes job interview with a partner, that of Resit assessment is a 5-minutes pre-recorded Panopto job application video. The submission mode of Oral task for Sit and Resit assessment is also different. While the submission mode of Oral B Sit assessment is in-class, that of Resit assessment is online. As Resit is a 5-minutes pre-recorded job application video, students could read out the whole prepared answers to the



given questions, which does not require students' spontaneous oral interaction, allowing the use of OT. It is concluded that the Intermediate B Oral Resit assessment is easier than the of Sit assessment.

**Table15**

Japanese Intermediate B sit Oral Sit and Resit assessment

	<b>Task Brief instruction</b>	<b>Submission mode</b>	<b>Difference/easiness</b>
<b>Sit Task Brief instruction</b>	In-class 5-minutes job interview with your partner	in-class assessment	-There is no difference between Sit and Resit Task Brief
<b>Resit Task Brief instruction</b>	A 5-minutes pre-recorded job application video, students answer interview questions in their recordings	online submission	- There is a difference in the submission mode. -Resit assessment is easier than Sit assessment

**RQ2. Are the results of online Japanese language resit assessment suitable to rely on?**

To answer the RQ2, how reliable is examined whether how many students committed academic misconducts in their written and oral submitted work.

*Vocabulary (used for written and oral resit assessment and DEX)*

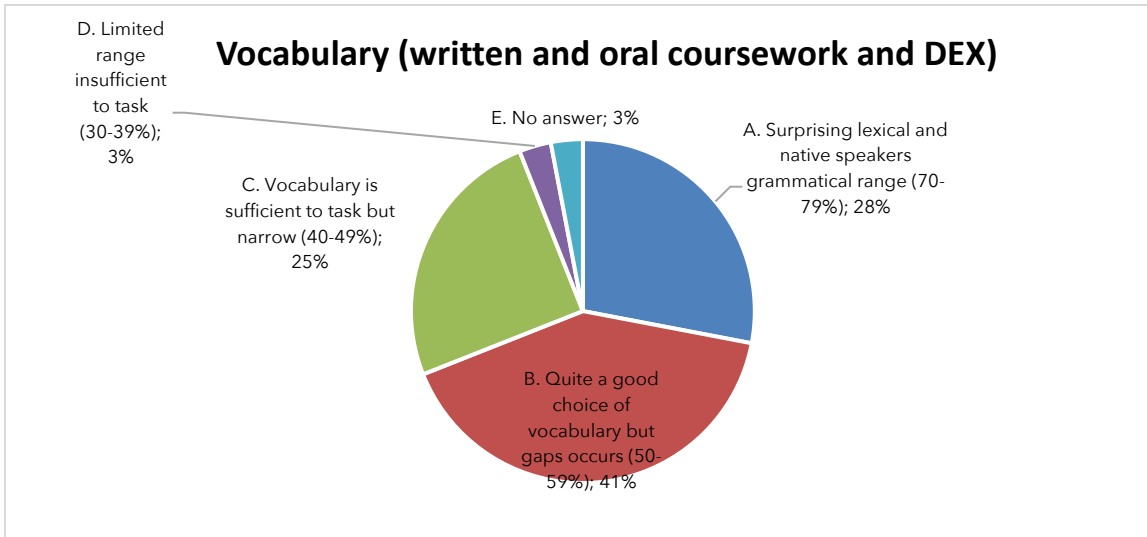
Vocabulary category looks at students' lexical range of vocabulary and phrases. In Japanese language assessment at the University, not only students' vocabulary and phrases but also choice of kanji (which implies use of IME) is also included in this category.

Figure 5 summarises the students' awarded vocabulary level for written and online oral resit assessment.



**Figure 5**

*Students' awarded vocabulary level.*



**Overall (both *Ab Initio* and *Intermediate*)**

Two (6%) out of 32 students used 'surprising lexical and had a ' native speakers' grammatical range' (70-79%), which is normally very rare to be awarded and suspected of the use of OT. Seventeen (53%) out of 32 students' writing used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary but gaps occurred' (50-59%). These students used OT partially, and their use of OT was observed in their kanji and grammar, which was beyond their level. There are several reasons why gaps occurred in students' writing. The most common reason is that students mix their own sentences with those using OT. This mixture of sentences creates gaps in the lexical range as well as incoherence in the text, which affected the 'Coherent' category. Some students may feel guilty about relying too heavily on OT and IME, and they may mix their own work. From these, nearly 70% of students, i.e. two out of three students, used OT and/or IME.

Twelve (38%) out of 32 students used 'vocabulary is sufficient to the task but narrow' (40-49%) or 'limited range, insufficient to the task' (20-39%). The majority of these students did not use OT. This level is what is expected for these students, considering their low or no attendance rate (below 20%). The label of 'No answer' refers to the student who took *Ab Initio* resit DEX B and only answered grammar and vocabulary questions, but did not attempt the writing part at all.

***Ab Initio* A & B**

In all *Ab Initio* A & B written, oral and DEX A & B resit assessment, 16/24 (67%) students used both/either IME and/or OT.

The *Ab Initio* level A DEX written assessment demonstrates students' use of IME, as they have not yet learned/introduced to kanji, and therefore did not need to include them. This means that



students who included kanji used IME. Two out of 4 (50%) students who took the Ab Initio resit DEX A included kanji; in other words, half of the students used IME. One student used 'used', a surprising lexical item for this Ab Initio A level, which implies that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected the Purpose category. Another student used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occurred'. This student mixed his own sentences and OT produced sentences, which affected his Purpose category. The remaining two students used 'vocabulary is sufficient to the task but narrow', which is expected for these students, and did not use OT and IME.

In the Ab Initio resit DEX B, 4 out of 5 students used kanji beyond Ab Initio A, which indicated that they used IME and also affected their Purpose criteria. One student used 'surprising lexical for this Ab Initio A level, which implies that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected the Purpose category. Two students used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occurred'. These students created their own sentences and OT-produced sentences, which also impacted their Purpose category. The rest of the two students used 'vocabulary is sufficient to the task but narrow,' which is expected for these students, and did not use OT and IME.

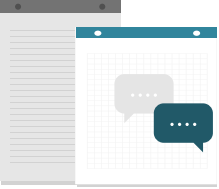
In the Ab Initio A oral resit, 5 out of 7 used OT, which also affected their Purpose criteria. Four students used a mixture of their own sentences and OT-produced sentences. One student relied on OT and submitted it as their own work, which included surprising lexical items for this level.

In the Ab Initio B oral resit, 5 out of 8 used OT, which also affected their Purpose criteria. Four students relied on OT and submitted it as their own work, which included surprising lexical items for this level. One student took Ab Initio resit DEX B but only answered grammar and vocabulary questions and did not attempt the writing part at all.

### **Intermediate A & B**

In all Intermediate A & B written, oral and DEX resit assessments, 8/8 (100%) students used either IME and/or OT. In the Intermediate A written resit assessment, there was only one student, and this student used kanji beyond those covered in Intermediate A, which indicated that the student had used an IME. This student also used surprising lexical items and demonstrated a native speaker's grammatical range for this Intermediate level A. This implied that this student also relied totally on OT, which also affected his Purpose criteria.

In the Intermediate B resit written assessment, all students (2 out of 2) used kanji beyond Intermediate B's 200 kanji, which indicated that the students used IME. One student used 'surprising lexical' for the Intermediate B level. This implied that this student also relied totally on OT, which affected their Purpose criteria. The other student used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary but gaps occurred', which implies that this student may have felt guilty for relying too heavily on OT and IME and mixing his own work, which also affected their Purpose criteria.



In the Intermediate resit DEX B, 2 out of 2 used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occurred'. This implied that these two students combined their own sentences and OT-produced sentences. This also affected their Purpose criteria.

In the Intermediate A resit oral assessment, there was only one student, and this student used 'surprising lexical' for the Intermediate A level. This implied that the student relied totally on OT, which also affected his Purpose criteria.

In the Intermediate B oral resit assessment, all students (2 out of 2) used 'quite a good choice of vocabulary, but gaps occurred.' This implied that they mixed their own sentences and OT-produced sentences. They also used 'surprising lexical' for this Intermediate level. This implied that this student also relied totally on OT, which affected their Purpose criteria.

#### *Accuracy (used for written and oral resit assessment and DEX)*

This category looks at the grammatical precision or control and their grammatical accuracy, ranging from 'native accuracy' to 'occasional errors', 'frequent minor errors' or 'a combination of major and minor errors'.

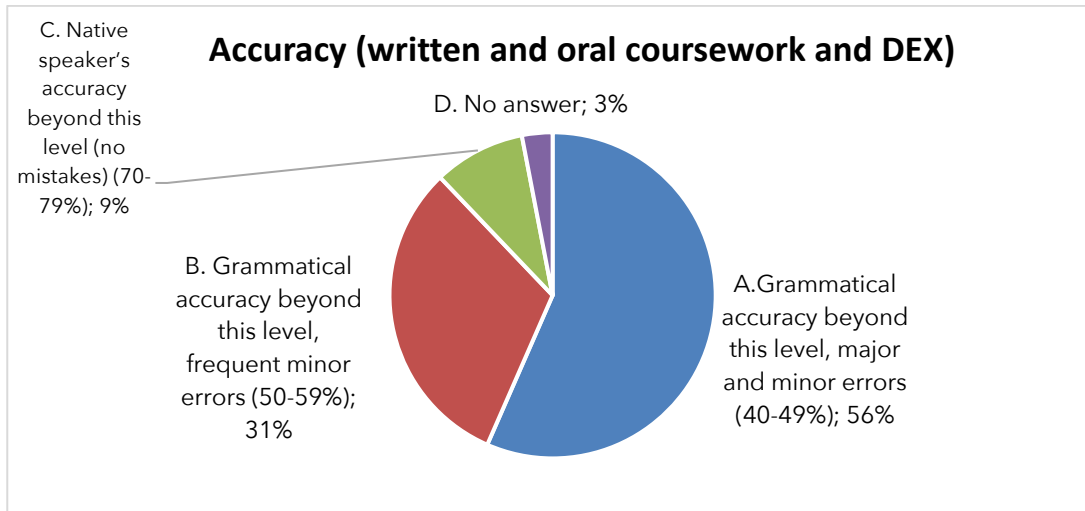
#### **Overall (both *Ab Initio* and *Intermediate*)**

Figure 6 summarises the students' awarded accuracy content level for the written and online oral resit assessment. Six (19%) out of 32 students' writing demonstrated native speaker accuracy (no mistakes) beyond this level (70-79%), despite their low attendance rate. This implies the use of OT. Four (13%) out of 32 students' writing had frequent minor errors, while those that included grammatical accuracy beyond this level (50-59%) presented gaps in students' writings. This implies a mixture of OT and their own work. From these, a total of 32% (19/32) of students are suspected of using OT. Twenty-one (66%) out of 32 students' writing included frequent major and minor errors (40-49%). Significant errors refer to sentences that do not make sense, implying that either the students used OT or translated themselves. One student did not attempt the writing part of the DEX B resit.



**Figure 6**

*Students' awarded accuracy level.*



**Ab Initio A & B**

In all Ab Initio A & B written, oral and DEX resit assessment, 7/24 (67%) students had 'native speakers' accuracy beyond this Ab Initio A level, which implied that these students relied totally on OT or IME.

In an Ab Initio A DEX resit written assessment, 1 out of 4 students had 'native speaker' accuracy beyond the Ab Initio A level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected his Purpose category. Three out of 4 students had 'frequent major and minor errors', which was expected for these students.

In the Ab Initio resit DEX B, 1 out of 5 had 'native speakers' accuracy beyond the Ab Initio B level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected his Purpose category. Three out of 5 students had 'frequent major and minor errors', which was expected for these students. One student did not attempt the writing part of the DEX B resit.

In the Ab Initio A oral resit assessment, 2 out of 7 had 'native speakers' accuracy beyond the Ab Initio A level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category. Three out of 7 students had 'frequent minor errors'. Two out of 7 students had 'frequent major and minor errors', which was expected for these students.

In the Ab Initio B oral resit assessment, 3 out of 8 had 'native speakers' accuracy beyond the Ab Initio B level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category. One out of 8 students had 'occasional errors'. Four out of 8 students had 'frequent major and minor errors', which was expected for these students.



## **Intermediate A & B**

In all Intermediate A & B written, oral and DEX resit assessments, 5/8 (63%) students used either IME and/or OT.

In the Intermediate A written resit assessment, there was only one student, and this student also had 'native speaker' accuracy beyond the Intermediate A level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category.

In the Intermediate B written resit assessment, 2 out of 2 students had 'native speaker' accuracy beyond the Intermediate A level. This implied that these students relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category.

In the Intermediate resit DEX B, there were two students: one with 'frequent minor errors' and the other with 'frequent major and minor errors'.

In the Intermediate A oral resit assessment, there was only one student, and this student used 'native speakers' accuracy beyond the Intermediate A level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category.

In the Intermediate B oral resit assessment, there were two students, one of whom had 'native speaker' accuracy beyond the Intermediate B level. This implied that this student relied totally on OT, which also affected their Purpose category. The other student had 'frequent major and minor errors'.

## **Purpose (used for written and oral resit assessment and DEX)**

This category examines the focus of the task, specifically whether students followed the Task Brief or ignored it and wrote what they wished to write. Some students ignore the character count or the specified recording duration of oral assessments, which they are expected to write or speak, either exceeding it significantly or falling below it significantly. This category ranges from: 'Task is completed in depth'(80+%); 'Task is fully completed' (70-79%); 'Task is mostly completed'(60-69%); 'Task may be completed but lacks planning'(50-59%); 'Task may be incomplete or completed in a very restricted way'(40-49%); and 'Task is incomplete' (0-39%)

## **Overall (both Ab Initio and Intermediate)**

Table 16 indicates that the majority of resit students did not pay attention to follow the Task Brief for both oral and written assessments. As for both DEX A and B, which were written, all students ignored the purpose. As for the oral Ab Initio A written resit assessment, more than half of the candidates ignored the Task Brief. A total of 22 out of 32 (69%) ignored the character count in the written assessment or the duration of the oral assessment. Nineteen out of 24 Ab Initio resit students (79%) and 3 out of 8 Intermediate resit students (38%) ignored the character count in the written assessment or the duration of the oral assessment. The Ab Initio resit students had a higher



percentage of not paying attention to the Task Brief. In contrast, the Intermediate students had accumulated more experience with the Japanese language assessment Task Brief rules and expectations. Purpose criteria were also affected by students' academic misconduct (i.e. the use of OT and IME) in the Vocabulary and Accuracy categories.

**Table 16**

*Number of students who did not follow the character count or recording time*

Number of students who did not follow character count or recording time		
Japanese Ab Initio A DEX resit	4 out of 4 students	All students ignored the character count
Japanese Ab Initio A Oral coursework	3 out of 7 students	Nearly half of students ignored recording time
Japanese Ab Initio B DEX resit	5 out of 5 students	All students ignored character count
Japanese Ab Initio B Oral coursework	7 out of 8 students	The majority of students ignored recording time
Japanese Intermediate A Report	1 out of 1 student	One student ignored the character count
Japanese Intermediate A Oral coursework	0 out of 1 student	
Japanese Intermediate B DEX resit	1 out of 2 students	One student ignored the character count
Japanese Intermediate B Written coursework	1 out of 2 students	One student ignored the character count of one student
Japanese Intermediate B Oral coursework	1 out of 2 students	The presentation time of one student is significantly below

**Content (used for written and oral resit assessment and DEX)**

This category examines the relevance of information whether students wrote and if the students wrote following the Task Brief, ranging from 'content is highly appropriate and informative(80+)'; 'content is very appropriate(70-79%)'; 'Significant points were communicated(60-69%)'; 'Some basic relevant information was communicated(50-59%)'; 'appropriate planning was not apparent (40-49%)'; 'Insufficient information(20-39%)'; and 'No meaningful information was presented (0-19%)'.

**Overall (both Ab Initio and Intermediate)**

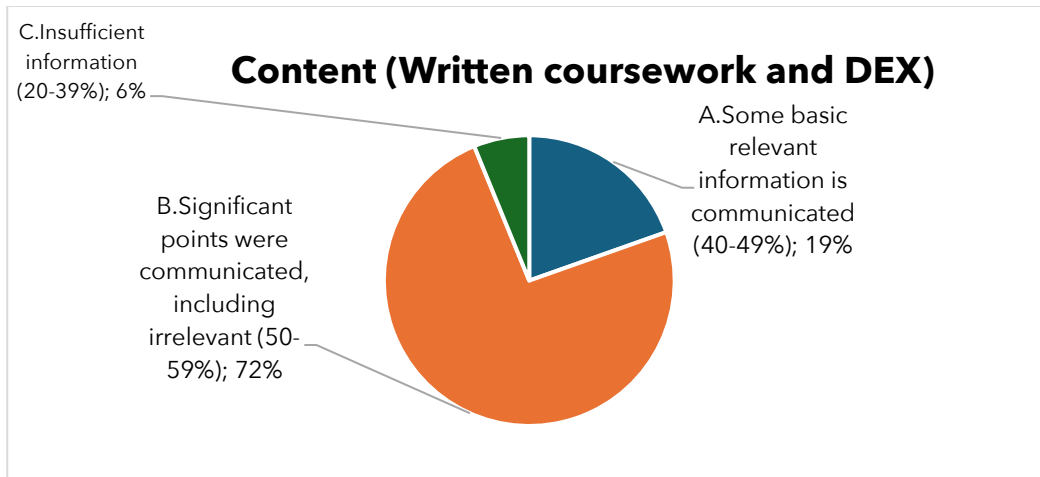
Figure 7 summarises students' descriptions of content for the written and online oral resit assessment. 'Significant points were communicated' was awarded for 6 out of 32 (19%) students' writing. Some basic, relevant information was communicated to 23 out of 32 (72%) of the students'



writing. Two out of 32 students provided insufficient information (20-39%). This description refers to the shortage of required information (for example, the duration of one student’s oral recording was 0:47 out of a 4-minute recording, while one student’s character count was 334 characters out of 700-800 characters). One student did not attempt the writing part of the DEX resit.

**Figure 7**

*Students’ awarded content level.*



**Ab Initio A & B**

In Ab Initio A & B written, oral and DEX resit assessment, all students did not pay attention to the Task Brief and fell into the categories either ‘significant points were communicated’ or ‘some basic relevant information was communicated’. In the Ab Initio level A DEX written assessment, 4 out of 4 students communicated ‘some basic relevant information was communicated’. In the Ab Initio resit DEX B, 2 out of 5 students communicated ‘some basic relevant information’. Two out of 4 students communicated ‘significant points’. One student did not attempt the writing part of the DEX B resit. In the Ab Initio A oral resit, 5 out of 7 students communicated ‘some basic relevant information’. Two students communicated ‘significant points’. In the Ab Initio B oral resit, 7 out of 8 had ‘some basic relevant information’. One student provided ‘insufficient information’.

**Intermediate A & B**

In Intermediate A & B written, oral and DEX resit assessment, all students did not pay attention to the Task Brief and were awarded either ‘significant points were communicated’ or ‘some basic relevant information was communicated’. In the Intermediate A resit written assessment, there was only one student, and this student provided ‘insufficient information’. In the Intermediate B resit written assessment, there were 2 students, both of whom communicated ‘some basic relevant information’. In the Intermediate resit DEX B, there were 2 students, both of whom communicated ‘significant points’. In the Intermediate A resit oral assessment, there was only one student, and this



student communicated 'some basic relevant information'. In the Intermediate B resit oral assessment, there were 2 students, both of whom communicated 'significant points'.

### **Structure and Coherence (used for written resit assessment and DEX)**

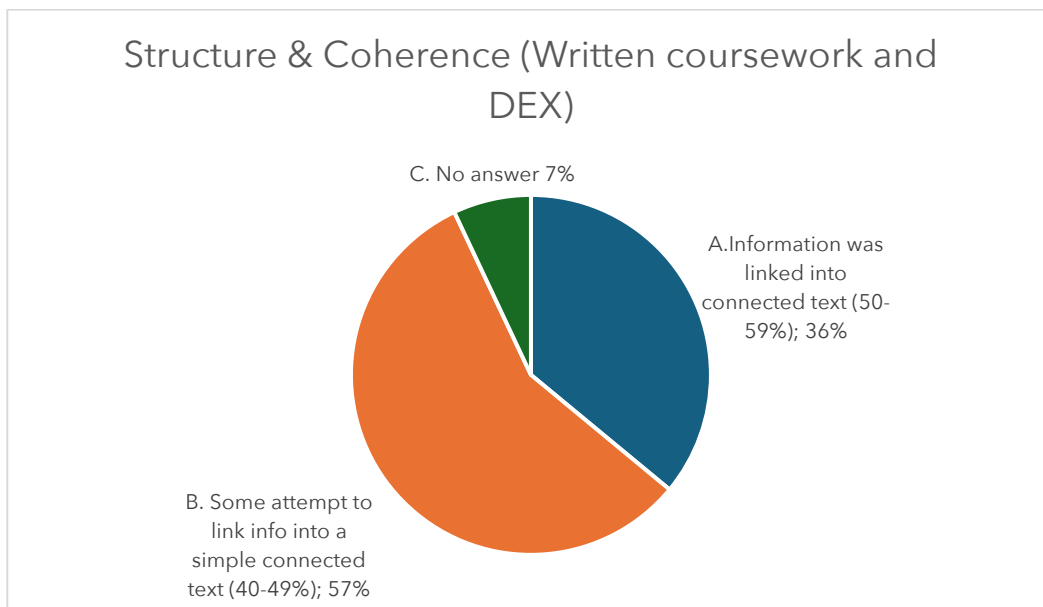
This category examines organisation within the written text and between paragraphs, focusing on logical sequencing, consistency, and coherence. This category only applies to the written assessment and does not apply to the oral assessment. It ranges from: 'Obvious, logical line of reasoning (80+)'; 'Clear, logical line of reasoning (70-79%)'; 'Information is clearly presented (60-69%)'; 'Order is inconsistent and biased' (50-59%); 'The order lacks logic and/or clarity'(40-49%); 'Information is disorganised and/or illogical (0-39%)'.

### **Overall (both *Ab Initio* and *Intermediate*)**

Figure 8 below summarises the students' awarded Structure & Coherence level for the online written and online oral resit assessments. The information of 5 out of 14 (36%) students was linked into connected text, but 'order was inconsistent and biased'. The sentence sequence of 8 (57%) out of 14 students lacked logic and/or clarity. One student did not attempt the writing part of the resit.

### **Figure 8**

*Students' awarded Structure & Coherence level*



### **Ab Initio A & B**

In Ab Initio A & B written and DEX resit assessment, all students did not provide clear and logical text and were awarded either 'Order is inconsistent and biased'; 'The order lacks logic and/or clarity'. In the Ab Initio level A DEX resit written assessment, 4 out of 4 students lacked 'logic and/or clarity'. In the Ab Initio resit DEX B, 2 out of 5 students' order of structure and coherence were



'inconsistent and biased'. Two out of 4 students lacked 'logic and/or clarity'. One student did not attempt the writing part of the DEX B resit. This category only applies to the written assessment and does not apply to the Ab Initio A oral resit and Ab Initio B oral resit.

### ***Intermediate A & B***

In Intermediate A & B written and DEX resit assessment, all students did not provide clear and logical text and were awarded either 'Order is inconsistent and biased' or 'The order lacks logic and/or clarity'. In the Intermediate A written resit assessment, there was only one student, and this student lacked logic and/or clarity. In the Intermediate B written resit assessment, there were 2 students. One student's order of structure and coherence was 'inconsistent and biased' while the other student lacked 'logic and/or clarity'. In the Intermediate resit DEX B, there were 2 students; both students' order of structure and coherence was 'inconsistent and biased'. This category only applies to the written and does not apply to the oral assessment, including the Ab Initio A oral resit and Ab Initio B oral resit.

### ***Communication (Oral assessment resit)***

This category is only used for oral assessment, which assesses students' communicative competence, including hesitations, confidence, pronunciation, mispronunciation and interaction. It ranges from: 'Communicates with ease (80+)'; 'Communicates with confidence (70-79%)'; 'Communicates with competence (60-69%)'; 'Communicates with some hesitancy (50-59%)'; 'Communication lacks confidence with frequent hesitations (40-49%)'; 'Communication is poor (0-39%)'.

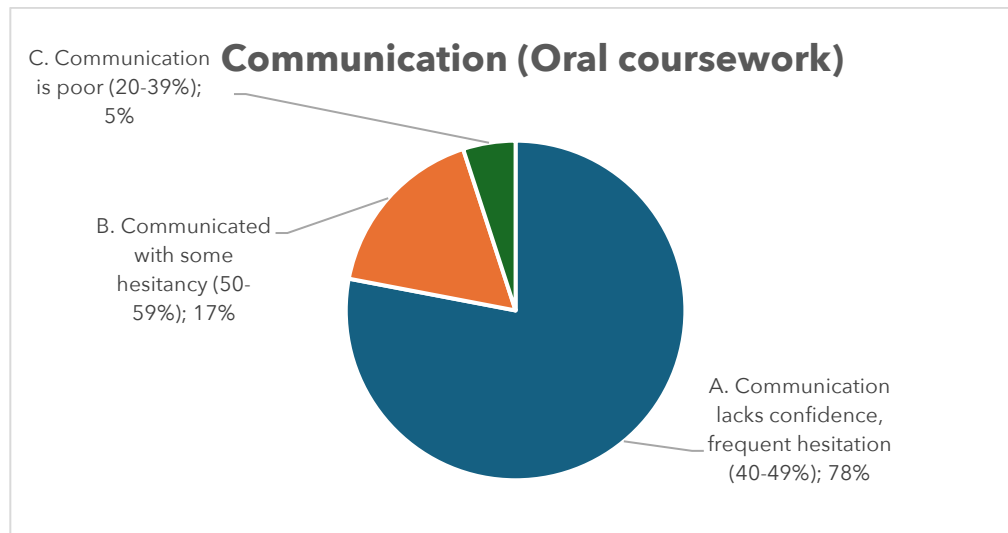
### ***Overall (both Ab Initio and Intermediate)***

Figure 9 below summarises the students' awarded communication level for the online oral resit assessment. Fourteen out of 18 (78%) students lacked confidence with hesitations in their communication category. This was the expected outcome as students missed opportunities to practise communication with their peers in class due to low attendance. Three out of 18 (17%) students communicated with some hesitancy. One student's communication was poor. The majority of students' communication was low and lacked confidence in speaking Japanese.



**Figure 9**

*Students' awarded communication level.*



### **Ab Initio A & B**

In Ab Initio A & B oral resit assessments, 11 out of 15 students (73%) were not very familiar with speaking Japanese and lacked confidence in their Japanese speaking abilities. They were awarded one of the following: 'Communicates with some hesitancy'; 'Communication lacks confidence', 'frequent hesitations'; and 'Communication is poor'. In the Ab Initio A oral resit assessment, 5 out of 7 students demonstrated a lack of confidence in their communication, marked by frequent hesitations. Two out of 7 students communicated with some hesitancy. In the Ab Initio B oral resit assessment, 6 out of 8 students demonstrated a lack of confidence in their communication, marked by frequent hesitations. One student communicated with some hesitancy. One student's communication was poor.

### **Intermediate A & B**

In the Intermediate A & B oral resit assessment, a total of three students were not very familiar with speaking Japanese and lacked confidence in their ability to do so. In the Intermediate A oral resit assessment, there was only one student, and this student's communication lacked confidence with frequent hesitations. In the Intermediate B oral resit assessment, there were two students, and both students' communication lacked confidence with frequent hesitations.

### **Discussion**

Revisiting the 3 RQs of this study, RQ1 asks if online written and oral Japanese language resit assessments are easier than those of primary (sit). The answer differs depending on whether the assessment is written or oral. The online oral resit assessment was easier than the primary/sit-in-class oral assessment. However, a) the task instruction Task Brief of online resit written and DEX



assessment (written) was identical, therefore, they were not easier than the sit assessment. It is concluded that taking an online oral Japanese language resit assessment was an easier assessment than a written assessment or DEX assessment.

RQ2 asks if the results of the online Japanese language resit assessment are suitable to rely on. It was hypothesised that the more students used OT and IME in the resit assessment, the less reliable the resits are. Students' writings and oral recordings were examined using the framework of this study. It was concluded that online Japanese resit results may not be reliable, as a higher number of students used OT and IME.

RQ3 asks how we could improve the process of online Japanese language resits to be more efficient at the University's language department. It was suggested that the marker mark and record the results in either a 'pass' or 'fail' format without involving the language administration staff. It is also suggested to consider the covert purpose of resit and review this process, and streamline it.

Resit assessment has overt and covert purposes. An example of overt purpose of resit assessment is QAA's (2006) 'enabling the public (including employers), and higher education providers, to know that an individual has attained an appropriate level of achievement' (para. 12). On the other hand, a covert purpose of resit is summarised by 'hitting the ground running for the next year' (Proud, 2014).

The covert purpose may not be pedagogically sound, but it has been practised by students and university staff, i.e., the main university stakeholders. For example, students submitted their assessment partly or wholly using IME and OT in the Japanese language resit, passed the Japanese module, and were considered to have attained an appropriate level of achievement despite not attending the classes.

Another example is an example practised by a university staff member. In 2023, a staff of the foundation year department at the University sent a foundation year student the following e-mail regarding his resit assessment to:

"Since passing your semester 1 Japanese Ab Initio module is not a requirement for your chosen year 1 course, and you have passed 90 credits in your Foundation Year overall (and have an average mark for the year of more than 40%), it will be possible for you to progress into year 1 without passing your language module.

It is not, however, possible for you to progress without engaging with the module in some way. Since you did not submit either assessment in semester 1, you have a mark of 0% for the module, which the exam board cannot condone. *If you were to attempt your resits and achieve a mark of 1% or more for the module overall, the resit exam board would be able to condone the credit for this module and allow you to progress into year one of your chosen course.*



If you do not attempt the resits for this module, it may not be possible for you to progress into year 1.”

The point of the above e-mail is that the university staff advised the student that he would pass the Japanese Ab Initio module if he attempted to retake the resit and obtained more than 1%. This e-mail explains why one student in this study did not attempt the writing question, as he already knew that he would pass or receive more than a mark of 1% anyway by attempting the grammar and vocabulary questions.

We need to consider RQ3 (How can we improve the process of resit workload to be more efficient at the University language department?), taking into consideration that these university stakeholders may have covert and overt purposes for resit assessment.

In addition, we must remind ourselves that primary (sit) and resit assessments differ in two key points. Firstly, the resit assessment mark is capped at the pass mark, which is 40% at the language department of universities. Given that students are given the full credit for what they demonstrated is somehow inappropriate, a ceiling is placed on the resit mark (Ricketts, 2010).

Secondly, either a pass or a fail is awarded instead of a 0-100 percentage mark. The sit assessment result is discarded, and a pass or fail decision is made based solely on the resit result. Any students who are awarded above 40% or ‘pass’ can progress to the next language level.

The online language resit marking process has been using the same process as the sit assessment process, despite the two differences mentioned above at this University. In other words, the online language resit process is quite labour-intensive for both teaching staff and administrative staff, even though resit assessment is capped and is awarded either pass or fail. To give a labour-intensive process example of this university, the Japanese Convenor sets the DEX resit assessment, marks using either ‘Canvas Turnitin’ or ‘SpeedGrader’, writes students feedback comment on ‘Canvas Turnitin’ or ‘SpeedGrader’, awards the rubric for five categories on ‘Canvas Turnitin’ and ‘SpeedGrader’, awards students’ final marks between 0 and 100% on ‘Canvas Turnitin’ and ‘SpeedGrader’, and finally records students’ marks onto the University’s records and information system. After that, the administrative staff in the language department makes changes to the University records and information system to record in a ‘pass or fail’ format. It is suggested that these processes be reviewed and the resit process streamlined so that the marker marks and records it in a ‘fail or pass’ format without involving the language office’s administrative staff. This system reduces both the marker and the language office’s workload. This approach may also be relevant for countries with similar technological conditions. Proud (2014) asserts that:

“Resistance alone does not have any significant effect on students’ outcomes. This raises the question of whether it is efficient to require students to experience a further examination, which would need to be marked and the cost of person-hours related to this; why not merely allow the



students to demonstrate that they have achieved the level of attainment required through a less labour-intensive method?"

Furthermore, if online Japanese language resit results were not reliable due to students' rampant use of OT and IME, it would make more sense to streamline the process without correcting students' incorrect answers, as Somer et al's (2006) imply that "a translation produced with no students' intellectual input is a waste of the teacher's time to correct it" (p. 2

## **Conclusions and Implications**

This study aimed to examine whether online Japanese language resit assessment is easier than primary (sit) assessment and if those results are reliable. The results showed that taking the online oral Japanese language resit assessment was easier than the written assessment or the DEX assessment. Regarding the reliability of the resit result, online Japanese resit results may not be entirely reliable, as a higher number of students used OT and IME.

Limitations of this study are the number of participants. The total number of participants in this study was 32, which is a relatively small sample size. It was not feasible to increase the size of the sample in the empirical study, as this was the maximum number of students. The total number of participants in the study limits the generalisability of the conclusions drawn from the results. Nonetheless, it may be possible to draw some conclusions about the specific sample population.

As implications of this study, we compare the strengths and weaknesses of the old traditional method of process and practices of language assessment (i.e. use of physical dictionary and pen-and-paper writing exam in class) and current online language assessment (use of technology). The strength of the traditional method of language assessment is that students' resit work is their own work. The resit assessment result is also reliable. The weakness of the traditional method of language assessment may be the flexibility of the process and practices of assessment to cope with students' increasing diversity and requirements, which is demonstrated by the increasing number of reasonable request arrangements that students request. On the other hand, the strength of online language resit assessment becomes the weakness of the traditional method of language assessment, that is, the flexibility of the process and practices of online language resit assessment. The weakness of online language assessment is that it does not require independent work and allows students to commit academic misconduct, and it has lower reliability in resit assessments. That may be why some higher educational institutions prefer to conduct all language assessments in-class.

Technology and online assessments may be considered one of the factors contributing to the recent breach of academic integrity among students. If we compare the number of students' breach of academic integrity between the old traditional method of process and practices of language assessment (i.e. use of physical dictionary and pen-and-paper writing exam in class) and current online language assessment (use of technology), the number of students' breach of academic



integrity of the the online language assessment has outweighed than that of the old traditional method of process and practices of language assessment.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

This section discusses academic misconduct indicators of OT and IME for Japanese language teachers that may be displayed in the Japanese online language assessment.

#### ***Academic misconduct indicators related to OT in online language assessment***

The first indicator is the gap between students' performance in class and the submitted assessment work, which the majority of language teachers/markers can easily identify. According to Niño (2022), one in three language teachers finds it easy to spot students' plagiarised work if they know the student's average performance in class, or when the style of writing differs significantly from that of the rest of the text and what is expected from them.

The second indicator is apparent in the lower language level. Previous studies suggest a link between OT and lower language learners. Somers et al. (2006) argue that the excessive reliance on OT by lower proficiency learners. Niño (2022) expresses a similar view that lower-level students are more likely to use unauthorised OT in online assessments. Cancino and Panes (2021) claim that lower language proficiency learners do not adequately tackle the ambiguous language by OT.

The third and final indicator is the use of students' grammar structure and vocabulary, which is beyond their level of study. Niño (2022) maintains that "spotting usage of advanced structures or register outside their remit" (p. 125) and warns that it is suspicious if lower-level students' texts are too accurate generally. Previous studies indicate that the overall grammar and lexical quality of L2 writing were increased when an OT was used to assist the process of writing (Cancino & Pane, 2021; Garcia & Peña, 2011).

#### ***Academic misconduct indicators related to IME in online language assessment.***

IME may be one of the forms of academic misconduct in the Japanese language. Kanji beyond students' level is an excellent indicator of the use of IME. If students include kanji beyond their level in their online written resit assessment, they may rely heavily on the IME function. To identify students' use of IME, it is advised to provide a list of kanji for the students to master and also expect students to include in their written work to demonstrate their kanji knowledge. For this reason, providing the list of kanji and setting at each level of Japanese study becomes evidence of students' use of IME. If students use kanji beyond the expected list, it is considered that they have relied on IME. Spotting students' use of IME is also easier in the lower level of Japanese. For example, if students are not introduced to kanji, it is clear that students who use kanji rely on IME in their online written assessments.

It is also important to inform students that they do not need to demonstrate their kanji ability beyond their kanji level. As students from a kanji background often tend to include them. In addition,



students' incorrect choice of kanji also indicates that students have heavily relied on IME. Choosing the wrong kanji obscures the meaning of a sentence or even changes the meaning of a sentence.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

None.

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