



JALT2022

English As L3: Japanese and Portuguese Proficiencies of Brazilian Students in Japan

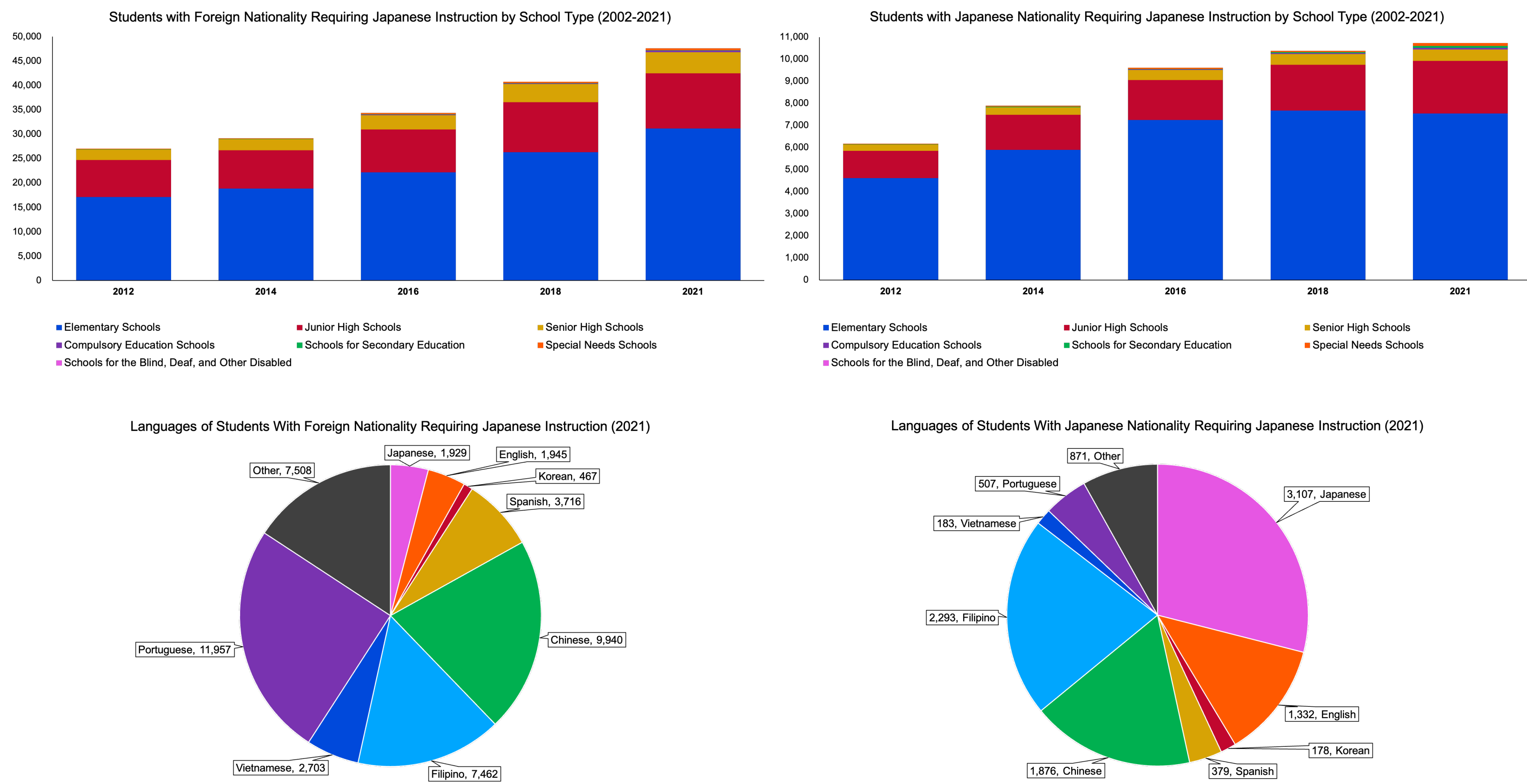
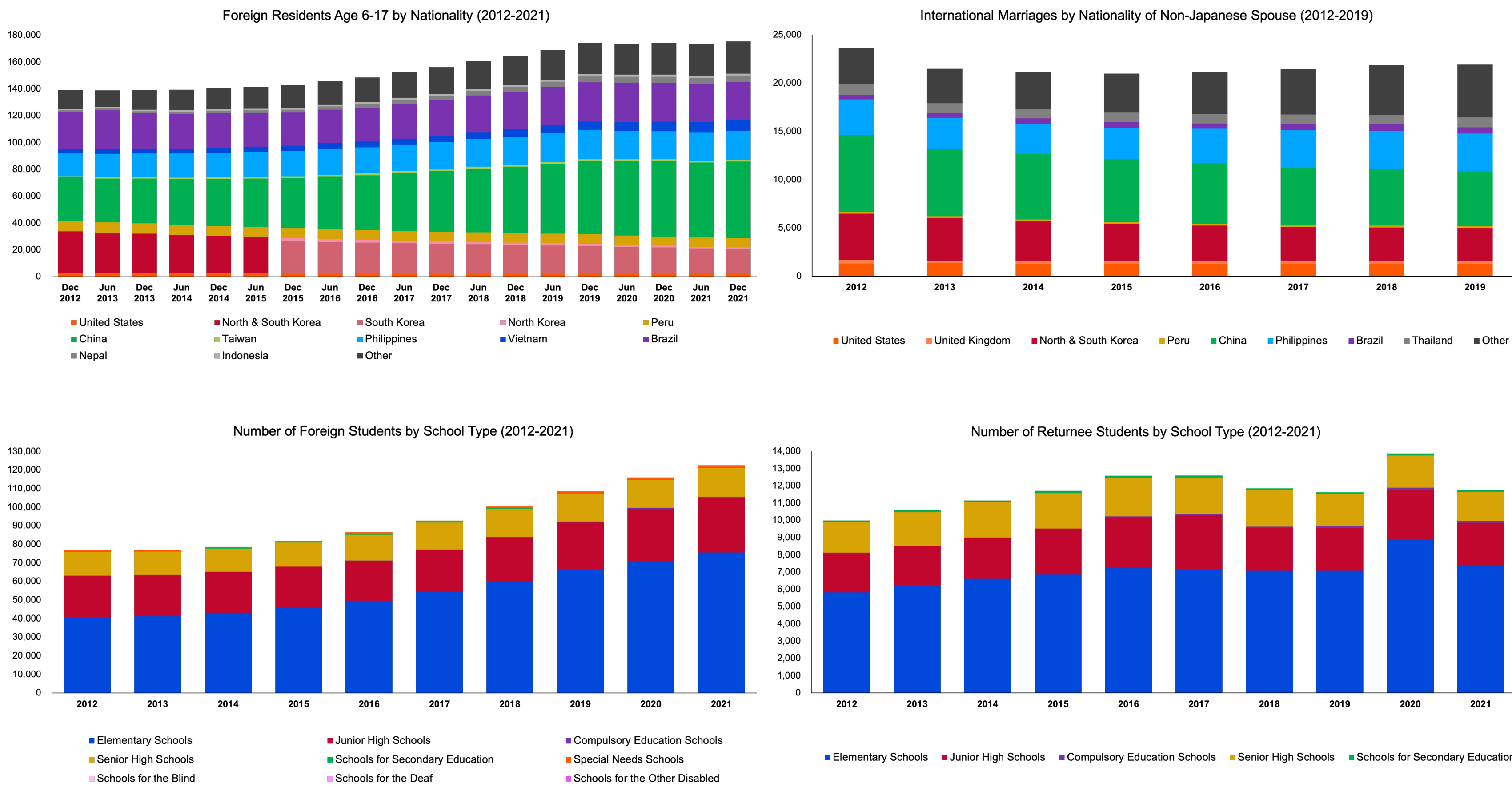
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Introduction

Background



Research Questions

- How do two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan with different linguistic backgrounds and day-to-day language practices respond when asked how to say newly introduced English words **in Japanese**?
- How do two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan with different linguistic backgrounds and day-to-day language practices respond when asked how to say newly introduced English words **in Portuguese**?
- What do the responses of two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan to questions about how to say newly introduced English words in Japanese and Portuguese reveal about the students' language proficiency in terms of **basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)** and **cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)** (Cummins, 2021)?
- What do the responses of two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan to questions about how to say newly introduced English words in Japanese and Portuguese reveal about the students' language proficiency in terms of the **complementarity principle** (Grosjean and Li, 2013)?

Literature Review

BICS and CALP (Cummins, 2021)

	Description	Time needed to develop
Basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)	Highly contextualized conversational skills ("playground language")	2 years
Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)	Language use in context-reduced academic subjects of the classroom, including reading and writing ("classroom language"/"academic language")	5-7 years (or more)

Complementarity Principle (Grosjean and Li, 2013)

	Language A	Proficiency										Language B
Context 1	Monolingual	A _b	A _b	A _b	A _b	AB	BA	B _a	B _a	B _a	B _a	Monolingual
Context 2	Monolingual	A _b	A _b	A _b	A _b	AB	BA	B _a	B _a	B _a	B _a	Monolingual
Context 3	Monolingual	A _b	A _b	A _b	A _b	AB	BA	B _a	B _a	B _a	B _a	Monolingual
Context 4	Monolingual	A _b	A _b	A _b	A _b	AB	BA	B _a	B _a	B _a	B _a	Monolingual
Etc...												

Methodology

Participants

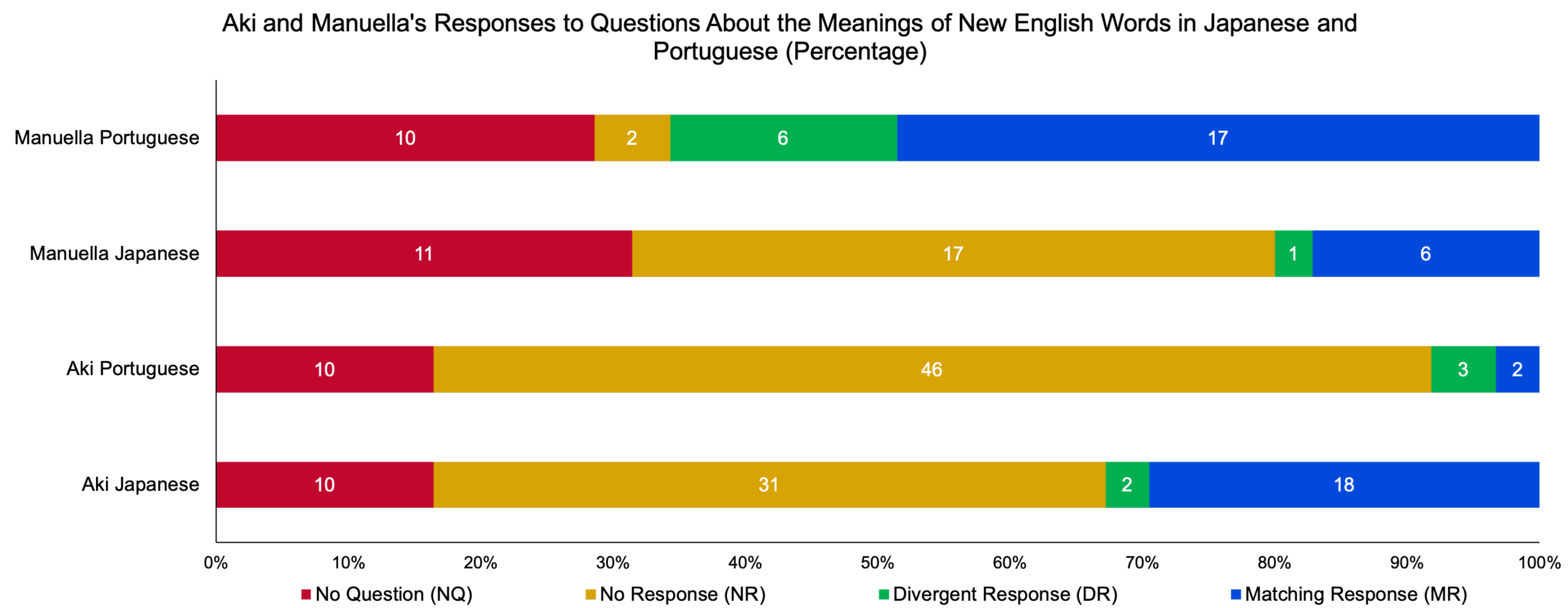
	Aki	Manuella	Niko
Age	14	15	27
Year in school	2 nd -year junior high school student	3 rd -year junior high school student	2 nd -year master's student
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Place of birth	Aichi, Japan	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Ithaca, New York, USA
Place of residence	Aichi, Japan	Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan	Musashino, Tokyo, Japan
Age of immigration to Japan	Born in Japan	13 (didn't know any Japanese at the time)	20 (had studied Japanese before)
Family	Father, mother, younger brother	Stepfather, mother, younger sister, younger brother	Father, mother

Data Collection

	Aki	Manuella
Site of data collection	After-school English lessons taught by the researcher for one hour a week via Zoom through a private tutoring service for students in Japan with Brazilian roots	
Dates of data collection	Tuesday, September 6, 2022 – Tuesday, October 25, 2022	Friday, September 9, 2022 – Friday, October 28, 2022
Textbook	<i>New Horizon English Course 2</i> (Kasajima et al., 2020)	<i>Here We Go! English Course 3</i> (Ota et al., 2020)
Workbook	<i>Wāku & tesuto nyū horaizun 2 nen</i> [Work and test new horizon year 2] (Sengoku, 2021)	<i>Mitsumura Toshō ban kanzen junkyo hia wi gō! 3 nen</i> [Completely based on Mitsumura Toshō edition here we go! Year 3] (Tsuchiya, 2021)
Number of one-hour lessons	6	7
Number of new words	61	35
Method of analysis	Transcribing and coding	Transcribing and coding

Findings

Preliminary Overview



BICS and CALP

Excerpt 1		
Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	Niko	And do you know breakfast
2	Manuella	Yeah
3	Niko	It's the meal you eat in the morning
4	Niko	So how can we say it in Japanese
5	Manuella	Mmm, ahhh, <i>chotto matte</i> [Japanese: "wait a minute"]
6	Manuella	<i>Asa gohan</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"], <i>asa gohan</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"], <i>sō</i> [Japanese: "that's it"]
7	Niko	Right, <i>asa gohan</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"], or <i>chōshoku</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"]
8	Niko	Maybe <i>asa gohan</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"] is, uh, more common
9	Niko	<i>Chōshoku</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"] in the textbook, but in real life, we say <i>asa gohan</i> [Japanese: "breakfast"], right
10	Niko	How about in Portuguese
11	Manuella	Uh, <i>café da manhã</i> [Portuguese: "breakfast"]
12	Niko	That's right, <i>café da manhã</i> [Portuguese: "breakfast"]
13	Niko	So, for example, I like to eat toast and yogurt for breakfast

Complementarity Principle

Excerpt 2		
Line	Speaker	Utterance
1	Niko	So Mrs. Wilson says, I'll take you there and pick you up
2	Niko	Do you know pick you up
3	Niko	Pick <i>dare-dare</i> [Japanese: "someone"] up
4	Niko	It means to let someone get into your car and take them somewhere
5	Niko	How can we say that in Japanese
6	Niko	(4.0) In Japanese, we can say <i>dare-dare o hiroiageru</i> [Japanese: "pick someone up"]
7	Niko	Or <i>dare-dare o kuruma de mukae ni iku</i> [Japanese: "pick someone up in your car"]
8	Niko	Okay
9	Niko	How can we say it in Portuguese
10	Aki	(4.0) <i>Buscar</i> [Portuguese: "pick up"]
11	Niko	Oh, yes, that's right, <i>buscar</i> [Portuguese: "pick up"]
12	Niko	Or <i>pegar</i> [Portuguese: "pick up"] or <i>apanhar</i> [Portuguese: "pick up"]
13	Niko	For example, I will pick you up from school today
14	Niko	Okay

Discussion

Research Question 1: How do two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan with different linguistic backgrounds and day-to-day language practices respond when asked how to say newly introduced English words in Japanese?

Aki, who was born and raised in Japan, answered in Japanese more often than Manuella, a recent immigrant. However, it was common for both participants to remain silent when asked how to say newly introduced words in Japanese.

Research Question 2: How do two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan with different linguistic backgrounds and day-to-day language practices respond when asked how to say newly introduced English words in Portuguese?

Aki, who was born and raised in Japan, rarely responded when asked how to say newly introduced words in Portuguese. On the other hand, Manuella, a recent immigrant, frequently answered in Portuguese, and her answers usually matched those on the researcher's slides.

Research Question 3: What do the responses of two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan to questions about how to say newly introduced English words in Japanese and Portuguese reveal about the students' language proficiency in terms of BICS and CALP?

Manuella, a recent immigrant, seemed to be in the process of acquiring BICS in Japanese, whereas she had not yet been able to acquire CALP. Aki, who was born and raised in Japan, had command of both BICS and CALP in Japanese, but seemed to lack opportunities to develop the same proficiency in Portuguese.

Research Question 4: What do the responses of two students with Brazilian roots learning English in Japan to questions about how to say newly introduced English words in Japanese and Portuguese reveal about the students' language proficiency in terms of the complementarity principle?

When Aki did attempt to answer in Portuguese, the words she responded to were often related to topics that could be expected to come up in parent-child interactions, such as "pick ... up [in a car]."

Conclusion

Access to opportunities to develop heritage language proficiency
Students like Aki, who are born and raised in Japan, often lack opportunities to develop proficiency in their heritage languages outside of speaking with family members at home. Literacy and CALP in a heritage language, however, can be beneficial for additional language acquisition. This is especially true in the case of a Portuguese-speaker acquiring English, which shares a writing system and numerous cognates with Portuguese.

Access to native language learning materials for immigrant students
Students like Manuella, who have received education in their native languages prior to immigrating to Japan, can benefit greatly from learning materials that make use of their native languages. Manuella's Portuguese literacy and CALP are valuable resources for her as she acquires English. It is much more useful for her to connect new English words to familiar words in Portuguese than unfamiliar words in Japanese.

Access to "easy Japanese" learning materials for language minority students

The Japanese translations provided in the textbook for new English words tend to be CALP rather than BICS, such as the use of *chōshoku* rather than *asa gohan* for "breakfast" in the textbook glossary. These words are likely to be unfamiliar or difficult to understand for language minority students. Translations would be more useful if they were provided in the form of BICS, or as it is popularly referred to in the Japanese context, *yasashii nihongo* ["easy Japanese"].

Fostering of teachers and staff who have knowledge of language minority students' native and heritage languages

The participants in this study were aware that the researcher was not a proficient Portuguese speaker. Perhaps because of this, they refrained from using Portuguese unless directly asked a question by the researcher that required a Portuguese answer. When interacting with teachers and staff who are proficient in Portuguese, on the other hand, a student like Manuella might be expected to translanguague, or make full use of her linguistic repertoire (Garcia and Li, 2014). This might facilitate her English learning in ways that could not be explored in this study.

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the participants and their parents for agreeing to be part of my research and to the coordinator of the private tutoring service for providing me with an opportunity to conduct research and for assisting me in communicating with the participants' parents.

In addition, as the findings presented in this poster are preliminary findings from my master's research, I would like to thank my thesis committee: Professor Mitsuyo Sakamoto of Sophia University, Professor Yoshinori Watanabe of Sophia University, and Professor Seiji Fukushima of Waseda University.