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Teaching English to Japanese

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TEACHING ENGLISH TO JAPANESE

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at offering some information on the background of Japanese students to native teachers of English. Japanese students have a unique background in English education, which it is advisable for teachers of English to know about if they are to be as effective as possible when teaching them.

CHAPTER I touches on why the Japanese learn English, and CHAPTER II examines the kind of English education that is taught at Japanese high schools. CHAPTER III covers linguistic differences between Japanese and English, and CHAPTER IV deals with the psychology of Japanese students.

PREFACE

This small article is intended to be a reference for native speakers of English, especially Americans, who are going to teach English to Japanese students.

It is internationally known that the Japanese are poor at English. The writer thinks that two of the greatest obstacles they face in learning English are (1) the old-fashioned way of teaching English at schools in Japan, and (2) that the Japanese language is linguistically very different from English. Other important factors are the cultural attitudes held by Japanese students, e.g., the Japanese do not try to express themselves aggressively, nor do they value speech highly, etc. It would be a great inefficiency, and might cause great dissatisfaction for both the teacher and the student, if the teacher tried to teach in the same manner as to the Europeans and Latin Americans, ignoring the great differences in their background. This thesis is written with the intention of offering some hopefully useful and helpful information to the teachers of English to help them teach English to Japanese more effectively and successfully.

The author of this thesis does not, however, assume that this is a perfect or complete observation of the Japanese learners' background; it is far from it, simply because this thesis is based on the writer's limited experience, knowledge and observation. Especially "The

Present Situation of English Education in Japan" (CHAPTER II, B) examines, primarily, English classes taught as regular courses at regular senior high schools (Grades 10 - 12), which have the principal aim of sending the students to college. What is presented here was taken mainly from the author's own experience as a student at Fukuoka Senior High School, Fukuoka, and as a teacher for three years at Hojo Senior High School, Hyogo. Therefore English as taught at junior high schools, various kinds of vocational senior high schools, part-time high schools and colleges is not covered here. However, it is certain that most of the Japanese learners whom Americans are going to teach have had more or less similar experiences. It is a regrettable fact that the description of linguistic differences between Japanese and English is not very academic but rather empirical since contrastive study is yet to progress very far. The observation of cultural differences between Japan and the United States in this thesis is very poor. It is because the writer stayed in the U.S. for only 15 months, mostly under very special circumstances of the School for International Training, Vermont, and there were not many chances to see other parts of the country and/or other aspects of the American way of living.

The author hopes that this paper will give even the slightest hint or aid on which a teacher of English can make his lessons for Japanese better and more successful.

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CHAPTER I

WHY DO THE JAPANESE STUDY ENGLISH?

A. A Brief Introduction of Japan

Japan is a small country consisting of four major islands and many small islands to the east of the Asian Continent and to the west of the Pacific Ocean, situated in the Temperate Monsoon Zone. The population of Japan is 111,933,818 as of October 1, 1975.[1] Her total area is 372,050 sq. km., and is approximately one-sixtieth of the Soviet Union, one-twentyfifth of the United States, and one-twentysixth of China. While Japan's plain area accounts for only less than 20 per cent of its total land area, most of the population lives in the plains because of the steepness of mountain lands. The population density of Japan in 1971 was 283 per sq. km., not much different from those of Britain and West Germany and lower than Belgium's 319, Netherland's 323 and the Republic of Korea's 324. However, because of the concentration in the lowlands of cities and agricultural areas, Japan's population density in land available for housing and parks and other public facilities is extremely high, about 1,500 per sq. km., while that of the Netherlands is 600.[2]

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1 Japan Almanac 1976, p. 127.

2 Ibid., pp. 26 f.

Japan is quite a homogeneous country with a unique language and culture. It has been a long-time question where the Japanese people came from, as well as how the Japanese language was formed. It is now generally believed that various peoples from the north and the south were mingled to form the Japanese people, influenced by changes in life and surroundings over a long period of time. The recent study of the origin of the Japanese language shows that the language was made up over the base of some South Pacific languages covered by some Asian continental languages in later years.[1] In any case, it should be noted that the Japanese people, language and culture are different from those of China or Korea in spite of their physical appearances.

In the Old Stone Age there were already some inhabitants in the Japanese Archipelago. Prior to the 3rd to 2nd centuries B.C. people lived on nuts, fish, shellfish, and hunting small game. In the 3rd to 2nd centuries B.C. rice growing skill was introduced and people began to settle where they could grow rice. "A history book believed published (in China) in the first century (the Han period) says: 'Yamato (= Japan) was composed of more than 100 countries.'"[2] During the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. these small countries in the Japanese islands were gradually united, and the rule by the ancestors of the present Royal Family was

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1 Shichiro Murayama and Taryo Obayashi, The Origin of the Japanese Language, p. 223.

2 Japan Almanac 1976, p. 13.

established before the 7th century. Roughly speaking, the Age of Aristocracy lasted to the 12th century, the Age of Warriors (samurai) continued from the 13th century to the latter half of the 19th century, and the Modern Age began with the Meiji Restoration in 1868. In Japan's history, Kyoto was the capital for about 1,000 years until the Meiji Restoration, when Tokyo became the national capital.

There has always been a strong country, China, in Japan's neighborhood since ancient times, and Japan was eager to absorb its culture. Buddhism, Chinese characters, confucianism, political systems, the construction of the capital cities, Buddhist arts, and many other things were introduced to and enriched Japanese culture. It should be noted, however, that Japan did not merely accept foreign things or simply imitate them. Our ancestors made two kinds of syllabaries (kana) out of the Chinese characters in order to write our language, and attached to Buddhism the concept of ancestor-worship which had been passed down from ancient times.[1] They did not take in everything, e.g., the Chinese eunuch system was never adopted in Japan.

Western civilization was introduced to Japan when Christianity and guns were brought into Japan in the middle of the 16th century. But the rulers of the Edo Period (1603 - 1867), realizing that the Christian doctrine of equality under God did not correspond with the feudal political system of those days, banned it, and prohibited any Japanese from

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1 John Hall, Twelve Doors to Japan, pp. 60 f.

going abroad (1639). Japan isolated herself from the rest of the world for more than 200 years. Cultural exchange with the West was permitted only with Holland on the little island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor. This 200-year seclusion from the others brought about the insularism common to the Japanese, but at the same time it undoubtedly contributed to the formation of many of the unique qualities of the Japanese culture. Most cultural and living styles seen in Japan today were established during this period.

However, the current of times came at last to Japan in the 19th century. The four black ships commanded by U.S. Commodore Perry suddenly appeared in Tokyo Bay in 1853. The government was compelled to sign the amity treaty with the U.S., and then with other countries the next years. The feudal system had been weakened by this time, and civil wars broke out. In 1867 the last Tokugawa Shogun Yoshinobu returned the political power to Emperor Meiji, thus concluding the 650-year rule of the country by the warriors.

Japan found that she was far behind the West when she reopened the country to the world. She made desperate efforts to catch up with the Western countries under the Meiji Government's slogan "Enrich the country, strengthen the soldiers." It was the Imperial Age; in time the militarists became powerful and controlled the nation. Japan united Korea, invaded China and the Asian Pacific area, declared war with the United States in 1941, and then was defeated four years later. It turned out to be futile for Japan to attack the materially far richer America with only spiritual

strength and without any material basis to wage war. World War II was said to be the war between democracy and fascism; but Americans should remember that one of the factors which drove Japan into the war lay in U.S. racial discrimination against Japanese immigrants in the States, especially along the West Coast.

Japan was defeated by a foreign country for the first time in her history. She had never had the experience of fighting with other people until the late 19th century, except when the Mongolians tried to invade Japan twice in the 12th to 13th centuries. The defeat in the war brought serious mental shock and anguish as well as economic dislocation. By the orders of the Allied Forces many feudal and military institutions were swept away, and the present pacifist Constitution of Japan was enforced in 1947. Japan changed drastically after the war; the generation gap between those who were born and brought up before the war and those after the war is probably bigger than that seen anywhere else in the world. The people worked hard to restore the devastated land. In the 1960's the nation brought about surprising economic growth, and today Japan is regarded as the most highly developed country in Asia. She has "caught up with the West" in only one century since the Meiji Restoration.

B. Why Do the Japanese Study English?

Today Japan is paid much attention by many people and countries in the world. She is a big country economically,

second-rate politically, it is said, and cannot have military power because the Constitution renounces war and armaments.[1] Japan may look like a strange, interesting, or weird country to other people. Her short-time economic growth and modernization may be interesting to some people, but her past record of having caused a war may be threatening to others. Now Japan needs to take a positive attitude to make herself understood and to contribute to world peace.

This is the primary reason why the Japanese should learn English. English is now virtually the common language of the world despite its linguistic difficulties. Japan has been eager only to accept Western civilization, but not to make herself understood accurately by other countries. She has a lot to offer to the world. She should take an aggressive attitude to let them know that Japan is a peace-loving nation. It is a matter of course to understand other peoples in order to maintain good relationships with them. To learn English as a means of communication between different peoples who speak different languages is absolutely necessary in today's world, called a global village.

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1 Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution says: "Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized."

The fact is, however, that the government of the conservative party stretched the law and has the Self Defence Force now.

The importance of learning English is not only as a means of communication; it is also important to learn the various cultures, ways of living and thoughts of each people of the world for peaceful co-existence. To learn English is to touch upon the culture of those whose tongue is English -- the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, etc. The relationship between Japan and the U.S. is now deeper and more important than any other time in Japan's history. There will be more and more cultural exchange on the part of individuals as well as at the governmental or commercial level. For a Japanese to learn American ways of living, behavior, customs, and so forth through the study of English will prevent various kinds of misunderstanding and friction which might be caused otherwise, and enhance a more friendly relationship between the two peoples. (There should be more Japanese to learn other foreign languages in order to understand various cultures of different people; however, knowledge of English as the first foreign language would help them learn second or third foreign languages rather than interfere with them.)

Thirdly, to learn a foreign language brings about in the learner's mind another system of thinking in addition to the perceiving system of his mother tongue. A language was made and developed by the necessities of the society, which speaks that language, but once it is established, it also limits the way of looking at the world of those who use it; they observe things, think, judge and act only within the

framework of that language, and never doubt the validity of the framework in which they are confined. Only when they learn another language do they realize that there is another way of interpreting the world. This enables them to compare the whole system of their mother tongue in which they live with another, and to have more ways of interpreting the same world. That is, they can give objectivity and more possibilities of selection to their own perception and thought.

Fourthly, to learn English, a self-assertive language, helps the Japanese establish their own "self." Their mother tongue is oriented mainly to describing the situation, not the speaker's will to do. Language is a reflection of the society that speaks it, as is generally admitted. Japan is not a society to recognize each individual's independence. The Japanese are brought up to "play the role expected by others," and one is often regarded as "selfish" if one repeatedly insists or behaves differently from society's expectations. Therefore, a large number of Japanese do not have their own opinions but merely follow the general trends.[1] On the other hand, English is a language which requires you to express your own intention. The Japanese will realize how little he has had his own "will" when he has to decide and be responsible for whatever small things he is going to say or do. It is generally easier for a Japanese to refuse in English than in Japanese when he is asked to do something he cannot do. This is because the Japanese language asks you to

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1 See CHAPTER IV.

put the most emphasis on harmony with others; that is why he cannot help doing something another person requests even if he does not like or want to do it. It is also hard to oppose your superior or a senior person's opinions in Japanese, but not very hard in English.

English can give the Japanese psychologically more chances to freely express themselves. It also requires them to form their own opinions. All this will help them establish and develop their own firm "self," which is indispensable if true democracy is to become rooted in Japan.

Thus the learning of English by a Japanese has more significance than is obvious from a superficial view.

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH EDUCATION IN JAPAN

A. A Brief History of English Education in Japan

In 1808 the English warship Faton intruded into Nagasaki Harbor, plundered provisions and fuels and fled away. Alarmed at this incident, the government made some Dutch interpreters in Nagasaki study English. This was the beginning of English studying in Japan.

When they opened the country after the long seclusion, the Meiji Government found that the country was far behind the times, and made up their mind to "modernize" the nation and catch up with the West. They brought in excellent teachers from Europe and the U.S. All the studies at universities were done in English until the mid 1880's. English at this time was a necessary means for education, as it is now in some Asian and African countries. But teaching in English was banned at Tokyo University in 1883, and after that it became a subject to study.

In pre-war English education the phonetic aspect of the language was extremely neglected, and only reading was much emphasized. This was no doubt influenced by the traditional way of studying Kambun, or Chinese classics.[1] Another

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1 It is a subject in which Chinese classical works written in Chinese characters are read in Japanese. These works can be understood in Japanese because of the ideographic quality of the Chinese characters.

influence may be from the fact that Japanese is a visually oriented language.[1]

English was not taught at the compulsory education; it was solely a privilege of the elite. During the period of the Pacific War (1941 - 45) English was generally prohibited because it was a "hostile language." It makes a good contrast with the U.S., which gave intensive training courses in Japanese to train those who could use it, the enemy's language. It was no wonder that Japan lost the war.

After the war the Allied Forces were stationed in Japan, and many Japanese had opportunities to see Americans nearby for the first time. This set the Japanese studying English. Also the new school system established in 1947 adopted foreign language learning as a selective subject for compulsory education, thus opening the opportunity for the whole nation to study a foreign language. As the relationship with the U.S. has deepened and more and more Japanese have gone to every corner of the world, the nation's interest in English has been enhanced. Especially the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 and the World Exposition in Osaka in 1970 brought the English study boom to its highest point.

B. The Present Situation of English Education in Japan

Thus it seems as if the Japanese are trying to make English their second language, and you might think that

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1 There are a large number of homophones in Japanese, but very often we differentiate the meanings by looking at the ideographs, or picturing them in our mind.

they must be good at English considering the amount of time and energy spent on learning English. On the contrary, the Japanese are well known for their deficiency in English. They cannot conduct even an easy conversation. It is said that the representatives of Japan do not take positive attitudes at international conferences on account of their poor English, thus bringing considerable losses to the nation. Why are they so deficient in English although they spend 6 - 10 years studying English at junior and senior high schools and at college?

The greatest reason for this lies in the entrance examinations to universities. College entrance exams retrogressively control English education at the senior high, and junior high levels. Entrance to a top name university in Japan is virtual assurance of success in life. This being the case high school education, and especially English education is extremely test-oriented. So much so that it is commonly called "Examination English."

Today about 90 % of the junior high graduates go to senior high school. About 35 % of the senior high graduates went on to college in 1974,[1] and this figure is becoming larger year by year.

Why do so many people want to go to universities?

It is because only education, not one's birth, opens possibilities for higher status in Japan. You must go to

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1 Japan Almanac 1976, pp. 199 f.

"first-rated" universities in order to improve your social status. Particularly Tokyo University will guarantee you any kind of employment in any governmental office or business firm, offering a rosy future to become a leader of the nation in various fields. The successful candidates to that university are congratulated on their success as though they were heroes, and there are even some nation-wide publications which report the names of those who have passed the test and which high schools they are from. Naturally parents, who cannot be promoted higher in their offices on account of their low education, lay their hopes on their children.

In this way Japanese senior high students (15 - 18 years of age) spend most of their youth studying just for the entrance exams, with very little time spent on club activities or casual talks with classmates. If they fail the exam to the college of their choice, many of them try it again, and again, getting better and better at examination techniques. There are very few colleges that do not test English, so that English is the "most important" subject for the students.

1. How "Examination English" Is Taught

With such a tendency it is natural that English is taught at senior high school to prepare students for such entrance exams, because the number of students who have passed the entrance exams to first-rate universities will decide whether their lessons were good or not, whether that high school is "reliable" or not.

Many high school teachers make up classes according to the students' "ability"; sometimes they do it according to what kind of universities the students would like to go to: national universities, private universities, junior colleges, and those who do not want to go on to college but to get jobs, etc.

There are 5 - 6 hours for normal English lessons per week at regular high schools, but this is certainly not enough; many schools give a supplementary lesson prior to the regular classes in the morning and/or after school to provide students with the skills to pass the exam. Both teachers and students go to school nearly half of the summer vacation (40 days) and sometimes even the winter vacation (two weeks) respectively for this kind of supplementary lessons. If the high school does not give any lesson of this kind, the students go to private schools called Juku after school, or work with a part-time tutor at home voluntarily and spontaneously to acquire the necessary skills.

The following is an example of typical lessons in English at a regular senior high school:

a. Reading (2 - 3 hours/week)

Practice reading with the textbook named "Readers." This is the core of the whole English lesson. Practically no oral drills. The content of the textbook ranges from old to new, from British to American, from essays to poetry, but it is so difficult that even a native speaker would be amazed. Usually the student is required to prepare for the next

lesson: he puts Japanese equivalents to English words and phrases by dint of grammar and a dictionary in a manner more or less similar to solving a puzzling mathematical problem. In class the teacher calls on a student to translate a new lesson or paragraph, and after that he gives "correct or model translation" with some grammatical explanations. He gives a model reading of the text once or twice, then the whole class repeat after him, and that is all the pronouncing of English at the lesson. Sometimes they spare one hour a week to read a "sub-reader," often a thin short novel or story in a similar manner.

b. Grammar (2 - 3 hours/week)

Usually they use a textbook divided into grammatical categories with corresponding explanations and exercises. Almost every kind of item and form is presented, and is taken from old to new, British to American, literary to colloquial, so that the student can be ready for any kind of sentence.

c. Composition

In fact, this is translation from Japanese into English, and not free writing. The student puts short Japanese sentences into English with the help of grammatical knowledge, and usually these short sentences have no connection in content with each other. This is practiced in the exercise at the end of each lesson in the grammar textbook, but sometimes another hour is spared solely for this purpose by the use of an exercise book on the market if the school

judges that that is not enough. In class the students are called on to write their own English sentences on the blackboard, and the teacher corrects them one by one, adding some notes and explanations.

d. Vocabulary

According to the Education Ministry's Course of Study, a junior high student is supposed to learn 610 words, and a senior high student 2,710 words, but that is far from enough for the college entrance test in English. Almost all candidates buy a pocket-sized book of "essential words and phrases" which comprises words and phrases selected from among those which appeared in the entrance examinations all over the country over the past years. This kind of book usually lists 6,000 - 8,000 words and phrases: on the left column of the page are English words with phonetic signs, and on the right column are their equivalents in Japanese with parts of speech, derivative words, synonyms and antonyms, etc. They have very few, if any, sample sentences as to how to use those words. The student takes it wherever he goes and exposes his eyes to it whenever he has time, during a break time or after lunch at school, or on the train. This is done spontaneously by students, but some schools make them buy the same word books so that they can help them conduct this monotonous task by regularly testing the vocabulary.

2. The Result of Such English Learning

What will become of students' English after such

highly exam-oriented English studying?

First of all, the thorough negligence of basic oral drills deprives students of opportunities to get accustomed to English speech. It is no wonder that the Japanese are so poor at both listening to and speaking English.

Reading highly qualified, sophisticated paragraphs without a solid foundation of the language by oral drills brings about a multitude of people who cannot follow the class. English is an extraordinarily difficult and totally uninteresting subject for them, many come to hate English, and some are even possessed by an inferiority complex about their own ability. English is a "necessary evil" to them, and they gladly throw it away once it is not necessary for them any more. This sense of inferiority toward the English language may sometimes lead them to feel that way towards native speakers of English, and even towards some Japanese who can speak English very well.

What is most serious is that the students never develop the "feeling" that English is a living language in which people actually lead their lives as they do in Japanese. They never feel the breath, culture and history of the people who use the language. English taught this way is a dead language like Latin or ancient Greek. This is well revealed in the questionnaire the author gave to the Japanese students who came to study English at the School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont. One of the questions was "How long have you been studying English?" Five out of eleven subjects answered "one month - two years." All the

people who were studying there had finished at least a 6-year high school education, so that the above figure is false; most probably the high school English education they had had was not "English education" to them.

On the other hand, the number of the people who have to go abroad to get direct contact with foreigners on business, study or trips is increasing every year. In addition to those who need English, there are many who like English in spite of the Exam English, or who long for American/European culture. There is a strong demand for oral English. In response to this demand, there are private English conversation schools built all over Japan, large and small, and many kinds of tapes and records in English on the market. They can select from dozens of radio/TV programs in English. It seems that English is now an industry in Japan.

Not a few people criticize the present situation where very few can learn English in spite of spending 10 years studying it. It does not look, however, that this situation is going to improve soon.

3. What the Education Ministry and the Teachers' Union Think

Let's see how the Education Ministry and the Japan Teachers' Union look at English education respectively.

The Course of Study prescribed by the Ministry of Education (for junior high schools, 1969 edition; for senior high schools, 1970 edition) states the goal of foreign language education as follows:

1) To familiarize students with the sound, letters and fundamental usage of a foreign language, and develop their ability to listen to, speak, read and write it.
2) To get the students to understand how foreign people live and look at things through studying the foreign language.

The Course of Study for junior high school is so detailed that it specifies which particular words and phrases should be learned during the three years (610 words and 25 phrases), and which sentence patterns are to be learned in which year. For example, imperative sentences that begin with verbs other than "be" are to be taught in the 7th grade, and those which begin with "be" or "don't" are to be taught in the 8th. These restrict the textbook authors from setting linguistic scenes freely, thus making all the textbooks look alike and uninteresting. Sometimes the sentences given at the senior high entrance exam are modified unnaturally in order to use only the words listed in the Course of Study and to avoid those which are not.

There are many criticisms of this kind of extremely specified instruction program. The present Course of Study was made, the author suspects, in consideration of the degree of complexity of each sentence rather than of actual linguistic activity, and can be a hindrance to learning English through realistic behavior.

There are four basic programs available to senior high schools, as described by the Ministry of Education: Basic English, English A, English B and English Conversation. Theoretically these courses are available for use at any given high school. In practical terms English A is taught

at vocational high schools and at part-time schools, English B is taught at regular schools, Basic English is for students who did not study English in junior high school and English Conversation could be used as an additional course where English A or B is taught.

Most students enrolled in the regular course at regular high schools are preparing for college entrance exams. Thus English B is the "Exam English" mentioned in CHAPTER II in which reading skills are emphasized at the expense of conversational skills.

Of the 102 credits needed for graduation at the end of three years, English A earns 9 credits, English B 15 credits, Basic English 6 credits and English Conversation 3 credits. Credits are determined by the number of hours a subject is taught per week and then multiplied by three. Thus English A is taught 3 hours per week, English B 5, Basic English 2 and English Conversation 1.

Thus the Ministry of Education has tacitly shown, by establishing a separate course of "English Conversation" and by the amount of time allotted to this course, that they do not think that oral language is important but that English can be acquired without conversational skills.

We can get the viewpoint of the Japan Teachers' Union, which is on bad terms with the Ministry of Education, in the book Our Study of Curriculums: Foreign Language Education published in 1971.

The Teachers' Union rejects the Education Ministry's Course of Study as taking a behavioristic and functionalistic

view of language. They also refuse the Oral Approach based on structural linguistics saying that it "never touches on how language is related with human thought and recognition; instead, it just asks the learners to adapt themselves to the linguistic situations."[1]

As for the various teaching methods, which, it seems to the author, will play a central role in revising present English education, the teachers' union mentions them on one page and then rejects them on the grounds that they have been studied by foreigners for the purpose of teaching English to other foreigners, not done by Japanese for the sake of teaching Japanese. In addition, they condemn Fries' Teaching English as a Foreign Language in a rather prejudiced manner: "An American national policy of how to instill their mother tongue English into foreigners effectively (by which we mean only the skills to get the greatest effect with the least labor) is frankly expressed in the phrase 'as a Foreign Language.' ... They regard foreign language education as a mere skill education, without discussing the aim of it."[2]

What, then, are the aims of foreign language education they claim?

They enumerate the following four purposes on page 72:

1) To have students deepen the sense of solidarity with various peoples in other lands for advancement of society through foreign language education.

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1 Japan Teachers' Union, Our Study of Curriculums: Foreign Language Education, 1971, p. 85.

2 Ibid., pp. 155 f.

2) To get them to understand the close relation between thought and language.
3) To get them to deepen the understanding of the Japanese language by realizing the differences between the structural features of the foreign language and those of Japanese.
4) To develop their basic ability to use the foreign language.

To obtain these goals some of the teachers have tried their own curriculums, or new ways of teaching. However, some reports on such experiments show that the teacher used rather stimulating texts such as ones that would appeal to anti-war pacifism or against racial discrimination for reading comprehension instead of the existing uninteresting "Readers" textbooks, and in one case students were asked to write their comments on those texts in Japanese after the lesson. In another report they show the effectiveness of free writing over translation of Japanese sentences into English.

It is commendable that they have made an effort to improve present English education by themselves, but it is hard to believe that such attitudes as mentioned above will lead to any drastic improvement in the Japanese students' ability in English. This is because they are utterly ignorant of the importance of making a solid foundation in a foreign language by oral work; they place too much importance on intellectual aspects of language study. In addition, they should be more open to foreign research of how to teach English as a foreign language.

C. What the Japanese Student Expects of the Native Speaker

The preceding chapter has discussed the present

situation of English education in which the Japanese students are put, and what the concerned parties think of it.

However, the number of people who need or like to study English is increasing. Many of them re-study English on the radio/TV programs or using tapes by themselves, but many others go to private English conversation schools or take private lessons with a tutor wishing for contact with native speakers of English; some who can afford it venture to go to the U.S. or England just to study English. Their primary motive is to learn spoken English; but also they want to make friends with foreign people, to know other cultures, etc.

In the author's view, the following are the kinds of teaching they would like you to do;

1) As is shown so far, the greatest reason for the Japanese' deficiency in English lies in lack of basic ability by oral work.

THEY OUGHT TO PRACTICE SAYING A LOT OF BASIC SENTENCES APPLICABLE TO VARIOUS SITUATIONS WITH CORRECT PRONUNCIATION UNTIL THEY CAN RECITE THEM FLUENTLY.

Since English is not a language spoken in Japanese daily life, the student cannot rely on his surroundings to learn English which Latin American immigrants could in the U.S. For this reason they should be given a lot of correct, basic sentences they can rely on in many occasions.

The teacher should make possible as many opportunities for the student to use the studied expressions in class, since normally he has few chances to speak with foreigners in Japan. The student will be greatly satisfied if he finds

that the English he has struggled to learn is correctly understood and that his ability to express himself expands in proportion to the number of sentences he memorizes. On the other hand, if you allow him to speak freely and incorrectly without providing basic sentences, he will find that his English has not progressed very much as time goes on; he might even develop an inferiority complex, because he could not improve even with an "ideal" teacher.

2) At the same time the student's pronunciation should be corrected thoroughly. As shown before, teachers spare very little time on pronunciation in class; they themselves have not been given an intensive training in it. Besides, the pronunciation of Japanese is very different from that of English, as you will see in the next chapter.

Pronunciation being the very basis for spoken language, correct and intelligible sounds must be produced automatically. The American teacher should give a lot of pronunciation drills at normal speed from the beginning.

3) The Japanese study English grammar intensively at high school, as has been shown above. They have a lot of grammatical knowledge, and they themselves have a tendency to esteem it as one of the few good points of the "Exam English."[1] However, you should not take it for granted that they know grammar. They merely have it in separate pieces in their brains without connecting it together, and they

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1 According to the questionnaire the author conducted, 7 out of 12 subjects mentioned "I understand grammar" as a good point of English education at Japanese high schools.

do not have the ability to make practical use of it. What should be done is to make their grammatical knowledge usable in practical, daily English.

You should take advantage of their grammatical knowledge. It will be more effective when they are informed of what grammatical item they are going to work on before they animate it by a lot of aural-oral practice; an adult learner would be exasperated if he had to "listen and repeat" again and again without understanding the meaning of what he is working on.

4) In other words, "cognitive learning" is generally not suitable for the Japanese student for the same reason, i.e., that Japanese have studied grammar intensively. Many Japanese students of ESL at the School for International Training confessed dissatisfaction to the author when the class was studying grammar. They might have been happier if they had been taught correct usage of misleading words, more sophisticated expressions, etc., instead of grammar.

5) It is not right to make easy compromises as far as your profession is concerned. The following is an example:

One day at an English conversation school, a student came back with some bread and milk in his hands at a break time. The American teacher asked him, "Didn't you have breakfast this morning?" Then he answered, "Yes," but everybody in the room understood he had <u>not</u> had breakfast, since he soon began to eat it. Later the author asked the teacher why she had not corrected his answer to "No." Her insistence was "To understand each other is a very important purpose of

conversation. As long as I understood he meant 'No,' I don't have to correct it."

School is where the teacher helps students to get prepared for perplexing society; they ought to be informed of what is true. What shock and distrust would the above student have if he found afterwards that his teacher had intentionally not taught him the truth? Consideration and recognition of the students is one thing, and truth-distorting compromise is another.

CHAPTER III

LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JAPANESE AND ENGLISH

> We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult.1

The author of this paper also assumes this standpoint and presents here some linguistic differences between Japanese and English to the teachers of English who are not acquainted with Japanese. More description in this chapter, therefore, is given to the former than the latter.

A. In Pronunciation

1. Suprasegmental Phonemes

Suprasegmental phonemes cover rhythm, pitch, juncture, intonation and so forth. The most serious of these to the Japanese students is rhythm.

a. Rhythm

In Japanese each syllable appears regularly with the same length, and vowels are pronounced in their full volume. Japanese has "syllable-timed rhythm" since its rhythm is determined by the syllables. On the other hand, in English, the syllables with primary stresses appear at more or less

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1 Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures, p. 2.

equal intervals, so that the more weak syllables there are between the stressed syllables, the more quickly and ambiguously they are pronounced with sounds modified toward the shwa/ə/. English has "stress-timed rhythm," since its rhythm is determined by the stresses.[1]

Let us see how they are different. For example, the pronunciation of "Okinawa" would sound like this (the required time being indicated by the underlines):

Japanese: O ki na wa

English: O ki na wa

An American would pronounce the next three sentences in the manner as shown in the right columns (a) and (b):

	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)
1)	The mán's	here.	- ———	———
2)	The mánor's	here.	- ——— -	———
3)	The mánager's	here.	- —— --	———

Thus in English, in which stressed syllables appear at more or less equal intervals, "man-" becomes shorter in the order of 1), 2) and 3), and the whole part (a) is pronounced in the same length at the cost of shortening the unstressed syllables. If a Japanese pronounced the above sentences, he would carry over his syllable-timed rhythm, thus prolonging "manor-" to twice the length of "man-," "manager-" to three times that of "man-," with each of the

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1 Akira Ota, "A Comparison of the Sound Systems between Japanese and English," Modern English Education Series 7: Comparison between Japanese and English, Kenkyusha, 1965, p. 6.

vowels pronounced clearly in the same period of time as the others.[1]

Such contrastive rhythm patterns in both languages makes it hard for the Japanese student to comprehend spoken English. It is extremely difficult for him to grasp correctly the weak syllables pronounced rapidly and inarticulately between the stressed ones, and this is the biggest obstacle to his learning English. It is natural that he often says that it is easy to understand English spoken by another Japanese, but hard to understand English spoken by an American.

The Japanese should be taught this English rhythm first. Earl Stevick says as follows:

> These features (pitch, stress, and rhythm) of spoken English form a sort of "envelope" into which we fit vowels and consonants. Once the envelope is right, it is comparatively easy to fit in the vowels and consonants. On the other hand, if a student gets into the habit of concentrating first (or entirely!) on the vowels and consonants, he may never get away from using the envelopes of his own language. And the wrong envelope can keep him from being understood just as surely as the wrong vowel or consonant can. 2

However, there are not many Japanese who realize the importance of rhythm; people are generally far more concerned about the segmental phonemes. Even the Education Ministry's Course of Study for junior high schools (1969 edition) does not refer to sentence rhythm at all, though it touches on intonation and word accent.

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1 Ibid., p. 7.

2 Earl W. Stevick, Helping People Learn English, p. 43, quoted in Sumako Kimizuka, Teaching English to Japanese, 1968, p. 127.

The author observed a phenomenon that would verify the Stevick's above remark at the English conversation class of Kyoto YMCA in January, 1976. There the teacher said the same sentences even faster than at normal speed 5 - 6 times before the students repeated them, and at every stress of each sentence the teacher tapped on the floor. Since the sentences were said very rapidly over and over again, the tapping occurred rhythmically at the same interval, and the drill went on very smoothly. The students could not help following the rhythm by pronouncing the weak syllables weakly, ambiguously and quickly. As a result of this strenuous, uncompromised and hard drill, almost all the students in that class had far more beautiful pronunciation than any other school students the author had ever seen.

b. Intonation

English intonation is not as difficult as its rhythm since Japanese is fundamentally an intonation language. The following are some points the teacher of English should bear in mind:

1) In Japanese the intonation falls at the end of assertive sentences and rises at the end of interrogative sentences. So, the interrogative "A or B?" has rising intonation at the end of both A and B:

Ano hito, Amerikajin↑ soretomo Igirisujin↑

(Is that an American or an Englishman?)

Therefore, the intonation of "A↑ or B↓" is new to the Japanese.

2) In Japanese rising intonation in the interrogative occurs suddenly just before the last syllable; usually the pitch does not change within a single syllable, but when one syllable goes on to the next:

Oishikatta ↑ (Was it delicious?)

So a Japanese might say awkwardly,

Is this a /buqku/?[1]

instead of

Is this a /buk/?

It is valuable for them to practice changing pitch within the same syllable.

3) In relation to 2), the Japanese student will not find it very difficult to make pitch higher before the last syllable at the end of the sentence, but they have to learn a new habit of making pitch high even long before the last syllable:

Will you do me a favor? ↑
Will you do me a favor? ↑
Will you do me a favor? ↑

The author has never seen any book on how these three

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1 /q/ is a Japanese phoneme of stopping the air stream for one syllable beat. See the footnote 1 on p. 32 and pp. 35 ff. As for the occurrence of /u/ after /k/, see pp. 42 f.

differ in nuance. She hopes the native speakers of English will tell us about subtle differences caused by various kinds of intonation.

2. Segmental Phonemes

a. Syllabic Structure

Before discussing the comparison in consonants and vowels of the two languages, we will look at the syllabic structure. This is because it makes a good contrast between the two languages, so that you will see more clearly where difficulties lie for a Japanese to learn English.

There are four kinds of syllables in Japanese as follows:

1) V only
2) CV
3) CSV
4) Those that do not have V, i.e., /q/ and /n̄/ (/q/ appears only medially, and /n̄/ appears in medial and final positions, e.g., /ga-q-ko-o/, /ko-n̄-ba-n̄-wa/, /pa-n̄/, etc.) 1

Therefore, the Japanese syllables have the striking

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1 Tsugiyoshi Torii and Naomichi Kaneko, The Pronunciation of English, p. 163. In fact, /q/ is a syllabic consonant and actually /k/, /t/, /p/, /s/, /c/, /b/, /d/, /g/ or /z/ before another identical consonant, that is, the first consonant of /kk/, /tt/, /pp/, /ss/, /cc/, /bb/, /dd/, /gg/ or /zz/, which are conventionally called "double consonants." The tongue (for those except for /p, b/) or lip (for /p, b/) position for the pronunciation of the first consonant is held for one syllable beat before the tongue or lips start to produce the second consonant. The voiced double consonants usually occur in foreign words. (See Sutesaburo Kohmoto, Phonemic and Sub-phonemic Replacement of English Sounds by Speakers of Japanese, 1959, p. 57 f.) /n̄/ is a syllabic nasal. (See p. 38 of this paper.)

Throughout this thesis, C stands for a consonant, V for a vowel, and S for a semi-vowel.

characteristic of forming open syllables except when words end with /n̄/.

/watasi wa gakusei desu/ (I am a student.)

On the other hand, about 87 % of the English syllables are closed syllables ending with consonants,[1] and we can say that the basic form of English syllables is CVC.

/bæk/, /gad/, /liv/, etc.

Another feature of English syllables is that many consonants can cluster before and after the syllabic vowel. The number of the kinds of such consonant clusters is as follows:

Initial Clusters

CC-	35 kinds	(spin, gray, etc.)
CCC-	8 kinds	(spray, scratch, etc.)
Total	43 kinds	

Final Clusters

-CC	95 kinds	(help, tax, etc.)
-CCC	100 kinds	(tempt, sixth, etc.)
-CCCC	14 kinds	(glimpsed, twelfths, etc.)
Total	209 kinds[2]	

If we agree that C can include O (zero), then theoretically the longest syllable of English is CCCVCCCC, which makes a sharp contrast with CV, the typical Japanese syllabic

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1 Loc. cit.

2 Sutesaburo Kohmoto, ibid., pp. 31 ff.

structure.

Let us compare a sentence of five syllables in English and in Japanese. It would look like this:

Japanese: CV·CV·CV·CV·CV

English: CVC CVC CVC CVC CVC

In English the C at the end of one syllable and the C at the beginning of the next syllable fuse into another consonant cluster, while in Japanese the V and the next C never fuse but each syllable is felt clearly separate.[1] This is why Japanese sounds like a staccato rhythm.

In consequence, we can draw the following conclusion:

1) A Japanese learner is not accustomed to closed syllables ending with consonants. He may be apt to put an additional vowel after the final consonant.

2) He may tend to bring in the Japanese syllabic pattern of CV into the English pattern of CCCVCCCC, putting a vowel after each consonant:

e.g. strike --- E /strayk/ (one syllable)

J /su-to-ra-i-ku/ (five syllables)

This polysyllabication of English by putting vowels between consonant clusters may be the greatest reason why other people find it so hard to understand English spoken by a Japanese. Consonant clusters, not only those within one word but those caused by the fusion of the consonant at the

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1 Minoru Umegaki, An Introduction to the Japanese-English Contrastive Grammar, pp. 164 f.

end of one word and that at the beginning of the next word, must be practiced a lot by Japanese students of English.

3) /q/ in Japanese is a syllabic consonant.[1] Japanese students sometimes bring in this phoneme into English, making more syllables than are necessary:

itta /i-q-ta/ (said) cf. ita /i-ta/ (board)
hit /hi-q-t(o)/, duck /da-q-k(u)/, etc.

As you see in "itta," /q/ is spelled by doubling the following consonant in Romanized Japanese, so that the English spelling of double consonants in medial positions may lead to an insertion of /q/ when pronounced:

hitting /hi-q-tiŋ, hi-q-ti-n-gu/
hippopotamus /hi-q-pə-po-ta-mu-s(u)/[2]

4) /n̄/ is a syllabic consonant. It is written m before "m, b, p" and n before the others in Romanized Japanese; ' is put after n before a vowel:[3]

kammuri /ka-n̄-mu-ri/ (crown), imbo /i-n̄-bo-o/ (plot)
kenka /ke-n̄-ka/ (fight), shin'an /si-n̄-a-n̄/ (new idea)

Hence your Japanese student may have the tendency to double /m, n/ in the medial positions "-mm-" and "-nn-" of English words, inserting another syllable:

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1 See Footnote 1 on page 32.

2 Kohmoto, op. cit., pp. 85 ff.

3 This is according to the Hepburn System.

runner /ra-n̄-na-a/, commune /ko-n̄-myu-u-n̄/[1]

Also /n̄/ being syllabic and not blending with a following vowel in Japanese (e.g. kan'i /ka-n̄-i/, cf. kani /ka-ni/), a Japanese student tends not to blend the nasal at the end of a word with the vowel at the beginning of the next word:

an hour /ən̄-aur/, in it /in̄-it/

The phenomenon of liaison, or blending of sounds, should be taught to the Japanese.

b. Consonants

(1) The inventory and the distinctive features of American English consonants are as follows:

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Palatal
Stops	p b			t d		k g
Affricates					č ǰ	
Fricatives		f v	θ ð	s z	š ž	
Nasals	m			n		ŋ
Others	l		y	r	w	h

/l/ = lateral /y, r, w/ = semi-vowels [2]

(2) The inventory and the distinctive features of Japanese are as follows:

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1 Ibid., pp. 91 f.

2 Akira Ota, op. cit., p. 22. However, /č, ǰ/ are changed from stops to affricates by the author of this paper.

	Bilabial	Dental~Alveolar ~Alveopalatal	Palatal
Stops	p b	t d	k g
Affricates		c z	
Fricatives		s	
Nasals	m	n	ŋ
Others	r y w h		

/n̄/ and /q/ will be treated here.
~ indicates free variation. [1]

The following are some explanations of the above figures:[2]

1) /p, t, k/ are scarcely aspirated.

2) As for /z/, some people pronounce [dz] in #___V and /n̄/___V, and [z] in V___V, thus making complementary distribution, and some others make them free variants. In any case, [dz] and [z] do not contrast each other.

The same thing can be said about the palatalized [ǰ] and [ž]. See 3).

3) All the consonants are palatalized before /i, y/. In addition, since CyV is explained in the same length as CV and V on account of the characteristics of the Japanese syllable, Cy is pronounced short as one unit, and becomes palatalized like Č. This phenomenon is conspicuous in the following:

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1 Ibid., p. 24.

2 This is mainly due to Ota, op. cit., pp. 25 ff.

/si, sya, syo, syu/ = [ši, ša, šo, šu]

/ci, cya, cyo, cyu/ = [či, ča, čo, ču]

/ni, nya, nyo, nyu/ = [ɲi, ɲa, ɲo, ɲu]

/hi, hya, hyo, hyu/ = [çi, ça, ço, çu]

/zi, zya, zyo, zyu/ = [ži, ža, žo, žu～ǰi, ǰa, ǰo, ǰu]

However, Japanese [š, č, ǰ, ž] are not as rounded as the English equivalents.

4) /c/ = [ts] before /u/.

5) /h/ = [ɸ] before /u/ (bilabial fricative).

6) /r/ = [ɾ] (alveolar flap). This sound is made when the tongue flaps once at the alveolar ridge. The tip of the tongue sometimes touches the ridge and sometimes not.[1]

7) /n̄/ = [m] before [m, p, b]. /sin̄pai/ = [simpai]

[n] before [n, t, d, ɾ]. /in̄do/ = [indo]

[ŋ] before [k, g, ŋ]. /tan̄ka/ = [taŋka]

[ɲ] before [ɲ]. /sin̄nyu:/ = [siɲɲɯ:]

[ɾ] before others and the terminal juncture (#).

/hon̄ya/ = [hoɾya]

[ɲ] is the sound represented by "-gn-" in "compagne" in French. [ɾ] is a nasal made by a slight rise of the back tongue without any touching by the tip of the tongue; it is close to [ŋ], but is different from it in that the stoppage by the back tongue at the soft palate is not complete.[2]

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1 Kohmoto says that when the tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge, /r/ becomes voiced alveolar lateral flap [l]. See Kohmoto, op. cit., p. 46.

2 Torii and Kaneko, op. cit., p. 123.

8) /g/ = [g] in #___V

[ŋ] in V___V and /n̄/___V

(3) Comparison of Consonants in Japanese and English[1]

According to Ota's way of illustration, Japanese replacement of English sounds are shown as follows. The ( ) on p. 40 show the position where replacement occurs.

(a) Phonemic Comparison

1) $\frac{\text{E /f, h/}}{\text{J /h/}}$

E /f/ is usually replaced by [ɸ]. e.g. fan [ɸar] So "few" [ɸyɯ:] sounds like whistling.

2) $\frac{\text{E /v, b/}}{\text{J /b/}}$

E /v/ is not very difficult to produce, but to recognize /v/ and /b/ distinctly is extremely difficult for the Japanese. They pronounce the alphabet V as /bui/.

3) $\frac{\text{E /θ, s/}}{\text{J /s/}}$

Production of /θ/ and distinctive recognition of /θ/ and /s/ are difficult.

4) $\frac{\text{E /ð, z/}}{\text{J /z/}}$

Hard to recognize /ð/ and /z/ and to produce /ð/.

5) $\frac{\text{E /r, l/}}{\text{J /r/}}$

Difficult to produce and recognize. With /l/ it

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1 This is mainly from Ota, op. cit., pp. 27 - 32.

should be emphasized that the tongue is pressed against the alveolar ridge strongly, since most Japanese students are taught merely to place it against the ridge.

6) $\frac{\text{E } /dz,\ z/}{\text{J } /z/ [dz \sim z]}$

7) $\frac{\text{E } /g,\ ŋ/}{\text{J } /g/ [ŋ]}$ (in medial and final positions)

e.g. bigger [biŋə], dog [doŋ]

However, there are many who have no [ŋ] for /g/; they have to be taught to make [ŋ] for "singer" /siŋə/ instead.

8) $\frac{\text{E } /s,\ š/}{\text{J } /s/ [š]}$, $\frac{/z,\ ǰ/}{/z/ [j \sim ž]}$ (in ___/i/)

This is why Japanese have difficulty in producing "sea" and "she," "zip" and "gyp" distinctly. However, recognition is not very difficult.

(b) Phonetic Comparison

$\frac{\text{E } [p^h,\ t^h,\ č^h,\ k^h]}{\text{J } [p,\ t,\ č,\ k]}$ (in #___V, V___V)

This is one of the reasons why Japanese English sounds gentle. Japanese /p, t, č, k/ are not aspirated, so that the student has to practice aspiration.

(c) Distributional Comparison

1) As is shown in 2. a. (pp. 32 ff.), the Japanese tend to put additional vowels after C in terms of the syllabic character of Japanese. Those additional vowels are as follows:

/o/ after /t, d/
/i/ after /č, ǰ, š, ž/

/u/ after other consonants[1]

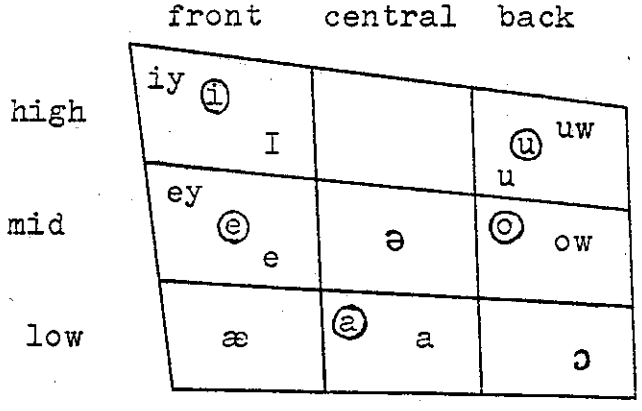
e.g. hit /hiqto/, third /saado/, catch /kyaqci/, cup /kaqpu/, peace /pi:su/, safe /seehu/, Jim /zimu/, Bill /biru/, play /puree/, try /torai/

2) Japanese /w/ appears only before /a/, and /y/ before /a, u, o/. Its consonantality is very weak, and the actual pronunciation is [ŭa, ĭa, ĭu, ĭo]. Therefore, the pronunciation of English /wi, wu, we, wo; yi, ye/ is difficult for a Japanese. Particularly /wu/ and /yi/ are extremely difficult, and they are usually replaced by /u, uu/ and /i/ respectively.

woman /uuman/, wood /uqdo/, yield /iirudo/, etc.

c. Vowels

(1) The place of articulation for the English simple vowels and complex vowels is as illustrated here:[2]



(Those circled are the Japanese vowels.)

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1 Kohmoto, op. cit., p. 112. These intruded vowels often become voiceless. See pp. 42 f.

2 Ota, op. cit., p. 32. However, /i/ and /ɔw/ are changed to /I/ and /ow/ respectively by the author of this paper.

(2) Japanese Vowels

(a) Simple Vowels

Japanese has five vowels. Their distinctive features are as follows:

/i/ = high front. It is closer to E /i/ than /I/.

/e/ = mid front.

/a/ = low central.

/o/ = mid back.

/u/ = high back, unrounded. Phonetically, this is [ɯ].

(b) V + V

When the two V's are the same in a row and there is no /+/ (internal open juncture) /aa, ii, uu, ee, oo/ become long vowels [a:, i:, u:, e:, o:]. The length of a vowel is phonemic in Japanese.

e.g. /ozisan/ (uncle), /oziisan/ (grandfather)

When the following V is different from the preceding V, they become a two-syllable vowel combination, not a one-syllable diphthong. But since a Japanese syllable is very short in terms of time, you can get a similar phonetic value like an English diphthong by weakening the following vowel. Most people, however, pronounce /ei/ as /ee/, and /ou/ as /oo/.

e.g. eigo /eego/ (English), tou /too/ (tower)

(c) Voiceless Vowels

/i, u/ become voiceless vowels /i̥, u̥/ in unaccented

syllables[1] between voiceless consonants and in ___# after voiceless consonants.

/kisya/ = [kiśá] (train)

/isu/ = [ísu̥] (chair)

/a, o/ become voiceless [ḁ, o̥] in unaccented syllables between voiceless consonants; they make free variation with voiced [a, o].

/kakeru/ = [kḁkéru] (to hang)

/kokoro/ = [ko̥kóro] (heart)

(3) Comparison of English and Japanese Vowels

(a) Phonemic Comparison

1) $\frac{\text{E /iy, I/}}{\text{J /i/}}$

Production of /I/ and recognition of the two are both difficult. The Japanese tend to regard /I/ as /i/ and /iy/ as /ii/, i.e., to believe that the distinction of /iy/ and /I/ is due to the length, not to the quality of the vowels.

2) $\frac{\text{E /æ/}}{\text{J /a, ya/}}$

e.g. ran /ran/, cat /kyaqt(o)/, shallow /šaroo/

Difficult to both produce and recognize.

3) $\frac{\text{E /a, ə/}}{\text{J /a/}}$

e.g. cut, cot /kat/, color, collar /karaa/

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1 In Japanese "some syllables are given more prominence, (but) this has more to do with pitch than stress. Therefore, Japanese accent is called pitch accent." (John Young and Kimiko Nakajima, "Learn Japanese: College Text," Vol. 1, 1967, p. 18.)

Very difficult to both produce and recognize these distinctly.

4) $\frac{\text{E } /ɔ/}{\text{J } /o/}$, $\frac{/ow/}{/oo/}$

e.g. low, law, row, raw /roo/; coat, caught /koot/

5) $\frac{\text{E } /ey/}{\text{J } /ee/}$

e.g. O.K. /ookee/

The Japanese have to be taught that there is no /ee/ in English.

6) $\frac{\text{E } /r/ \text{ after } /i, e, a, ə, ɔ, u/}{\text{J } /a/}$

e.g. door /doa/, third /saado/

7) E /e/ and /æ/ are not confused in production, but are very hard to recognize.

e.g. bed - bad, letter - latter, etc.

(b) Phonetic Comparison

1) $\frac{\text{E } /u/}{\text{J } /u/ [ɯ]}$

The Japanese should be taught to round the lips in pronouncing E /u/.

2) The English vowels are short and inarticulate in weak syllables, while the Japanese vowels are of full quality in any syllable, as was shown in terms of rhythm in A. 1. a. in CHAPTER III. The Japanese student ought to be taught to make inarticulate the vowels in weak syllables.

3) The habit to make /i, u/ voiceless in a certain position[1] in Japanese is brought into English.

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1 See p. 42 f.

Chicago [ši̥ká:go], office [ó fi̥s]
took off [tu̥kó f], pussy [pu̥si]

3. Other Matters to Note

a. Breathing

English is a language of stress accent, and the stress is made by breathing out more air than at other places. The aspiration and a lot of consonant clusters require the speaker to freely control the amount of breathing air; he has to control the air with his diaphragm. Therefore, abdominal breathing is required for speaking English. This was first discovered by Ryoko Nakatsu.[1]

On the other hand, Japanese is a language of pitch accent, whose strength of exhaled air is more or less constant from the beginning to the end of a sentence without modification of the amount of air in the middle. Also perhaps because the Japanese are reserved and not explicit when speaking, and because they have lived relatively happily with each other in a small land for many generations, they usually speak in a comparatively soft voice. (They rarely shout at each other except when they are fighting.) The volume of air needed to speak Japanese seems to be much smaller than that of any other people. Thoracic breathing is enough to speak Japanese.

A lot of Japanese speak English without making stress but only making pitch, like in Japanese. According to Nakatsu,

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1 Ryoko Nakatsu, Why Do You Study English? (Tokyo: Gomukan, 1974).

they have to learn how to breathe abdominally before even beginning to learn English pronunciation. It would be very recommendable, in any case, to accustom the Japanese student to using a loud voice.

When the author was at the School for International training in 1975, she had a chance to observe some ESL lessons broadcast on TV. She heard only Latin American students speaking up in class, and the very small voice that could be heard coming from the Japanese students was far too soft to be understood. She was very impressed, on the other hand, by the fact that she could clearly hear an American woman's voice from the back of the S.I.T. Auditorium when she was sitting in the front.

b. Jaw-movement Areas

Look at the chart of the distances between the corners of the mouth, between the edges of the teeth, and between the upper and lower lips:[1]

	Distance between teeth		Dist. between lips		Dist. between corners of mo.	
	American	Japanese	A.	J.	A.	J.
/a/	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{16}$	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	2	2
/i/	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{1}{32}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$2\frac{1}{4}$	2
/u/	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{32}$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$
/e/	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{16}$	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	2	$1\frac{3}{4}$
/o/	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{4}$	2

(inches)

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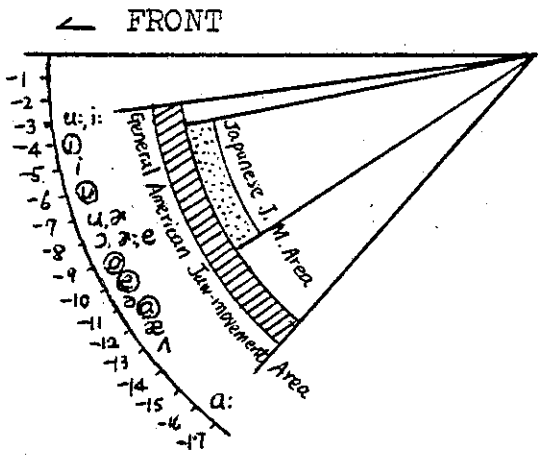
1 Basil Hall Chamberlain, A Handbook of Colloquial Japanese, p. 19, quoted in Kimizuka, op. cit., p. 49.

The next chart shows the jaw-movement areas of an American and a Japanese:[1]



(Circled phonetic symbols are Japanese phonemes.)

$$\frac{\text{General American Jaw-movement Area}}{\text{Japanese J. M. Area}} = \frac{\text{English Sound Area}}{\text{Japanese Sound Area}} = \frac{7}{4}$$

These data show vividly that the Japanese do not open their mouth very widely when they speak. Naturally, the muscles used in speech are different. An old Japanese person has a lot of small wrinkles around the lips, while his American counterpart has a deep vertical furrow down each cheek:

A Japanese

An American

It may be advisable that you tell your Japanese students to move their mouths more widely when they are speaking English than when speaking Japanese.

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1 Torii and Kaneko, op. cit., p. 21.

B. In Grammar

Contrastive grammar between Japanese and English is a field yet to be cultivated except for philology. Only recently has some scientific contrastive studies between the two been begun. Some main reasons for such a delay in this field lie in that Japanese is so different in structure from Western languages that even a descriptive grammar of Japanese has not been established yet; and the differences are rather deep-structural so that objective description is not easy. For these reasons the following discussion may be somewhat subjective.

First of all, characteristics of the Japanese language are given here briefly.

Language has two aspects: one is the aspect which corresponds to the substance, or what is expressed objectively by the sentence, and the other is that which corresponds to the attitude of the speaker of the sentence. The former is called dictum, and the latter is modus.[1]

For example, in the sentences "I think you will succeed" and "It might rain tomorrow," the dictum is "you will succeed" and "it ___ rain tomorrow," and the modus is "I think" and "might." In this way, it is relatively easy to separate dictum from modus in English, and there is a low degree of modus modifying dictum.

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[1] Fujio Minami, The Structure of Present Japanese, pp. 108 - 110.

On the other hand, a Japanese sentence

"Itō-san wa kyō koko e kuru darō ne" (Mr. Ito is coming here today, isn't he?)

can be divided into

a) Itō-san ga kyō koko e kuru (koto) = (that) Mr. Ito comes here today

b) darō (= I guess) ne (= do you agree?),

and a) is the dictum, and b) is the modus. Note that "wa" in the original sentence changes into "ga" in a). "Ga" is a postponed particle indicating the nominative case, but "wa" means "as for ...," which itself can subtly express modus.[1]

Take another instance:

"Ii desu ka?" (literally) = Good?

This sentence is used with various meanings. If the teacher says it pointing at the answer to a mathematical question written down by a student on the blackboard, he means, "Is the answer correct?"; if he says it after explaining something to the students, he means, "Do you understand?"; and if he says it before proceeding to the next teaching matter after checking the homework, he means, "Are you ready to proceed?" After all, this sentence can mean something broad like "Is the situation you are in all right?" It is easy to see that this sentence reflects the modus strongly.

One of the characteristics of Japanese is that the modus aspect of the sentence is very strong, influencing and modifying the expression of the dictum to a great degree.

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1 "Wa" is one of the most controversial items in Japanese. See pp. 53 ff.

It is not always easy to separate the modus from the dictum, as shown in the latter example.

This is because the Japanese language reflects a lot of the speaker's psychology peculiar to the Japanese and their society. In this sense, we can say that Japanese is a psychological, emotional, sensuous language, while English is a reasonable, logical one. So you see how distant these two languages are from each other; things are conceived differently in English from the way they are in Japanese. The Japanese have to learn this different way of conceptualization as well as learning the different grammar.

1. In Sentence Structure

a. Word Order

The word order of a language reflects the stream of consciousness of those who speak it, and the stream of consciousness reflects the culture pattern of the society of the language.[1] The difference of word order in languages can include serious problems which we should not treat merely as a superficial grammatical difference.

The Japanese have always thought of "human beings" as part of a whole "Nature," not as a being in equal position to it. (Perhaps this was a philosophy our ancestors acquired after they had to suffer such frequent natural disasters.) Therefore the human being as an "actor" has been felt to be

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1 Minoru Umegaki, op. cit., p. 175.

a part of the various phenomena in Nature.[1]

This leads to the "situational" presentation characteristic to the Japanese language. Its center falls on the predicate at the end of the sentence.[2] In Japanese its constituent elements are described one by one according to the speaker's feelings, and then get their whole structure clear at the very end of the sentence.[3] The predicate, the central part of the sentence, is loaded with such important elements as whether the sentence is affirmative or negative, declarative or interrogative, or honorific, imperative or exclamatory, etc. In contrast to that, the other parts of the sentence are "light," and the so-called subject or object is something like a subjective/objective complement, paratactic with other modifiers. The structure of Japanese can be illustrated as

Subjective Complement
Objective Complement } ⟶ Predicate
Other Complements

or, more generally,

Complements ⟶ Predicate.

Note that the function of the so-called subject or object is as light as other components in terms of situation description in Japanese.

Hence, the word order of complements is relatively

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1 Ibid., p. 178.

2 This includes nouns + particles equivalent to the English 'be,' verbs, adjectives, etc.

3 Minoru Umegaki, op. cit., pp. 181 - 183.

interchangeable, because the speaker can describe the situation in the way he likes. (In Japanese, case is indicated by the particle following a noun.[1])

Kinō	Yamada-san wa	depaato de	Satō-san o	watashi ni
yesterday		at the depart. store		to me

shōkai shita. (Yesterday Mr. Yamada introduced Mr. Sato to me at the department store.)
introduced

Kinō depaato de Yamada-san wa Satō-san o watashi ni shōkai shita.

Yamada-san wa kinō depaato de Satō-san o watashi ni shōkai shita.

Yamada-san wa kinō depaato de watashi ni Satō-san o shōkai shita, etc.

In English, on the other hand, the word order of a general sentence can be briefly shown like

Subject → Predicate (Verb) → Object

and both the subject and object comprise the essential parts of the sentence.

This is a very big difference. When the Japanese are going to speak English, they have to go through the steps:

1) To picture all that they want to say in their mind, and then

2) To decide on the subject of the sentence,

3) To choose a verb,

4) To decide which sentence pattern the verb belongs to, and

5) To arrange nouns, adjectives and adverbs in accordance with the sentence pattern.

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1 Ga shows subjective, o is objective, ni is dative. De is euivalent to 'at.' As for wa, see p. 47 and pp. 53 ff.

This whole procedure has to be done instantly. It is a big task to reverse the Japanese' stream of consciousness. At the same time, the Japanese student must try to speak in terms of human activity instead of situational description.

It will be of great help for them to have the inflexible word order of English established.

It would be worth noting here, also, that one of the most difficult things for a Japanese to master orally is the English interrogative sentence. Almost any Japanese sentence can be converted into a question by merely attaching "ka" to the end of the sentence. However, English interrogative sentences are formed by the predicate verbs (do, auxiliary verbs, be, etc.) put or inserted before the subject, and you have to be conscious of the tense and person. The Japanese have to form an assertive sentence in their mind first, and then to change its word order to make the question. A great deal of practice is necessary to make this process automatic and spontaneous.

b. The Misleading Particle "Wa"

In the school grammar of colloquial Japanese, the parts corresponding to "____ wa" or "____ ga" are taught as the subject of the sentence.

Watashi wa gakusei da. (I am a student.)
Asu, chichi ga kimasu. (Father will come tomorrow.)

This interpretation, however, has been adopted directly from Western linguistics for Japanese, so that very often it fails to account for reality.

"Ga" actually indicates the nominative complement, so it is not too bad to interpret the NP followed by "ga" as the subject, whereas "wa" serves as implier of the topic of the sentence which is going to be stated, and the NP followed by "wa" is frequently placed at the top of the sentence replacing the NP's + "ni," "o," "ga," etc., which show the dictum. (In the following examples, every sentence is converted into a noun phrase with "koto" at the end to show the original dictum.)[1]

a) Watashi wa gakusei da. -- Watashi ga gakusei de aru koto
(I am a student.) (that I am a student)

b) Kono hon wa chichi ga katte kureta. --- Kono hon o chichi ga katte kureta koto
(This book my father bought for me.)

c) Zō wa hana ga nagai. -- Zō no hana ga nagai koto
(The elephant's trunk is long.)

d) Nihon wa onsen ga ooi. -- Nihon ni onsen ga ooi koto
(In Japan there are many hot springs.)

e) Mukashi wa Kyōto ga miyako deshita. -- Mukashi Kyōto ga miyako datta koto
(In olden times Kyoto was the capital city.)

As you have just seen, the function of the particle "wa" is varied.

Thus such complicated functions of "wa," too difficult even for native speakers of Japanese to perceive its correct usage, and also the present teaching in Japanese grammar at school as mentioned at the beginning, mislead a Japanese into believing that all NP's preceding "wa" are the subject of a sentence. The above examples, except for a), which presents

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1 Akira Mikami, Zō wa Hana ga Nagai, p. 12.

no problem, might tend to be expressed as follows in English by a Japanese student:

b)' *This book is my father bought
c)' *The elephant is trunk is long
d)' *Japan is hot springs are many
e)' *Old time was Kyoto capital

To correct this bad tendency, it would be helpful to teach them that an English sentence usually has only one subject, and to give them natural English expressions to eliminate direct translations from Japanese. It is not very difficult to change c) into "The elephant's trunk is long," d) into "In Japan there are many hot springs," and e) into "In old times Kyoto was the capital city," if they know similar expressions in English. However, with b), "this book" is so strong in the consciousness of the speaker, that it is very difficult to put it <u>after</u> the other words, which are not so strong, because it contradicts the speaker's stream of consciousness. Only a long-time, constant effort to speak correct English would overcome this difficulty.

c. Prepositional Phrases

As we have seen already, Japanese has no prepositions; their function is served by particles attached at the end of NP's.

Niwa <u>ni</u> (iru)	(to be) <u>in</u> the garden
Iriguchi <u>de</u> (matsu)	(to wait) <u>at</u> the entrance
Pen <u>de</u> (kaku)	(to write) <u>with</u> a pen
Oto <u>no</u> nagare	the flow <u>of</u> sound

Sometimes "particle + NP + particle" wholly corresponds to a single English preposition:

Tsukue no naka ni (aru) (to be) in the desk
(in)

Tana no ue ni (oku) (to put) on the shelf
(on)

These Japanese particles are actually "post" positions; the Japanese students must learn the concept of prepositions itself, as well as their perplexing usages.

As may be guessed from the nature of the particles, the Japanese language describes the whole framework of a sentence first, and then the smaller details, whereas English does the opposite:

Watashi wa 1947-nen 10-gatsu 9-ka ni Fukuoka-ken de umaremashita.
(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

(I) I was born in Fukuoka Prefecture on October 9 in 1947.
(5) (4) (3) (2)

d. Noun Modifications

The word order for modification in Japanese is fixed without any exception:

Modifier → Modified

Compare the following:

a)	NP -- NP	watashi no hon	my book
		heya no doa	the door of the room
b)	Adj -- NP	akai hana	a red flower
		omoshiroi koto	something interesting
c)	V -- NP	odoru shojo	a dancing girl
		okiru jikan	time to get up
d)	Phr -- NP	yoku kunren sareta uma	a well-trained horse
		yama no ue no yuki	snow on the mountain
		kino atta hito	the man whom I saw yesterday

Thus from a Japanese learner's viewpoint, the word

order for noun modification in English seems arbitrary or unsettled. To learn which pattern takes which word order is one of his trouble-spots.

There are three other major trouble-spots concerning this matter:

(1) As is shown in a), an NP modifying another NP is connected by the particle "no," which generally corresponds to "of" in English. Therefore "of" is apt to be used too often even in cases where it is not appropriate in English; also "--'s" (possessive case) is misused in accordance with their stream of consciousness:

*the key of the door (--to)
*the pine-tree of my garden (--in)
*attendance of the meeting (--at)
*medicine of cold (--for)
*the message of President (--from)
*faith of Christianity (--in)
*investigation of the matter (--into)
*an adviser of club activities (--on)
*the bridge of the Tone River (--over)
*the relation of the two countries (--between)
*a belt of my waist (--round)
*our house's living room's wall

(2) In modifying NP's with verbs, the simple "V + NP" construction in Japanese is expressed more concretely in English:

mamoru mono	the person to protect (something) the person to be protected the thing to protect (something) with
kaku empitsu	the pencil to write with
kaku kami	the paper to write on
kaku naiyō	the content to be written

The Japanese student has to learn to subdivide the rough concept which he is used to. Generally speaking, he is not good at the construction of NP's modified by following

to-infinitives ending with prepositions, such as "a house to live in," "a knife to cut with," etc., and he needs to practice these a lot.

(3) There are no relative pronouns or relative adverbs in Japanese. Compare the following:

a) Ano hito ga kinō okanashi shita gaka desu.

a)' That is the artist whom I spoke about yesterday.

b) Kagi o ireta hako ga tana kara ochita.

b)' The box in which I had put the key dropped from the shelf.
where

In English antecedents come first, relative clauses following them, whereas in Japanese the order is just reverse. What is most important, there is no relative in Japanese; the fixed word order of "Modifier→Modified" serves that function.

When a Japanese wants to make a sentence with a relative clause in it, he must go through such complex steps as follows:

1) Think of the main clause and the relative clause.

2) Decide on the antecedent and its appropriate relative.

3) Arrange the word order in accordance with the relation between the verb in the relative clause and the case of the relative.

4) Not fail to supplement the items often omitted in Japanese.

5) Attend to the agreement of tense and person.

6) Pay special attention in case the relative clause ends with a preposition.

If you have studied some of Indo-European languages

only, you have no idea how awfully difficult it is to take these steps in a moment. Many Japanese avoid using relative clauses when they speak English, and if you meet with a Japanese who makes correct use of relative clauses, you can be sure that he is very proficient in English.

e. Subordinate Clauses

In English the subordinate conjunction precedes the clause, while in Japanese the equivalent follows the clause:

a) Hon o yonde iru toki kare ga kita.
a)' When I was reading a book, he came.
He came when I was reading a book.
b) Ame ga yamu made koko de machimashō.
b)' Let's wait here until it stops raining.

A Japanese has to first of all picture clearly the whole structure of what he wants to say in his mind, thereafter to select a proper conjunction, and to instantly put it before the clause. Note that every subordinate clause is put before the main clause in Japanese; this is in accordance with the rule that the modifier precedes the modified.[1] There is no such rule in English, as you can see in a)'. The Japanese are not, therefore, very good at producing a sentence with its adverb clause postposed.

2. In Parts of Speech

a. Nouns

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1 See p. 56.

What is most significant is that Japanese nouns do not have plurality:

tomodachi { a friend / friends ie { a house / houses

A number of nouns, however, have plural forms:

{ hito -- a person / hitobito -- persons { ki -- a tree / kigi -- trees

{ kodomo -- a child / kodomotachi -- children

These are rather exceptional (many of them occur with personal nouns), and most nouns are of the same form both in singular and plural. When it is necessary quantity is expressed adverbially:

Koko ni hon ga aru.	Here is a book (are books).
Koko ni hon ga issatsu aru.	Here is one book.
Koko ni hon ga takusan aru.	Here are many books.
Koko ni hon ga sukoshi aru.	Here are a few books.

Thus when a Japanese thinks of an object, he thinks of its concept only, without any reference to its number, and then expresses the number secondarily, by way of an adverb, only when it is necessary. On the other hand, all the countable nouns in English have singular and plural forms.

a boy / boys a woman / women

That a noun itself has both singular and plural forms means that the concept of number is as primary as the concept of the object, i.e., that the speaker of English has the habit that when he thinks of a "boy," he never fails to think of the number as well as the concept of the "boy."

This is a very important matter. It is not a mere difference in grammar between the two languages, but the Japanese have a deep-rooted habit in mind to treat nouns with

their numbers undifferentiated. It is to implant a new habit for a Japanese to be able to differentiate the singularity and plurality of nouns correctly.

What confuses him very much is the inconsistency in English noun plurality. Not every noun has its plural form; the abstract nouns such as "happiness, love, etc." or the mass nouns, such as "money, sugar, water, etc." do not usually take up plural forms but need a special way of measuring:

an item of news / a glass of water, etc.

It is puzzling for him why he cannot say *a chalk or *a news. He is often confused about "many" and "much," "few" and "little."

Among the common nouns, also, nouns of multitude take up verbs of plurality in some cases and those of singular in others, despite their singular forms:

All my family are well.
My family consists of five people.
All my class study hard for the exam.
My class is a good one.

A teacher of English should take every opportunity to help students develop a habit of differentiating the concept of objects in number.

Japanese does not essentially have a problem of gender. Of course, there are some words which indicate women themselves, such as "onna (woman), musume (daughter), oba (aunt), kisaki (queen)." Such English (and most Indo-European language) words as "actor -- actress, lion -- lioness, steward -- stewardess" which form pairs are generally expressed by single nouns in Japanese. (It is beyond an average Japanese'

imagination that nouns of objects and concepts, like "desk, book, love, etc." can be all pigeonholed into one of the genders, masculine, feminine, or sometimes, neuter, in some languages.) The Japanese language is fundamentally indifferent in gender, or sex. There is no distinction between "Mr., Miss, Mrs.," and everybody calls each other by attaching "-san" at the end of family names or first names ("-chan" in the case of little children) regardless of sex. The third person singular pronouns are "ano hito, kono hito (that person, this person)" and they are omitted unless necessary, so that they are not accustomed to being conscious of the gender of the person they are talking about. It is natural that they often make mistakes in using "he" and "she." They are apt to make more mistakes in the case of "his sister/ mother, her brother/father, etc.," since they have to think of the gender twice.

b. Articles

There is no article in Japanese. There is no plurality in the language, so one Japanese noun can mean five equivalents in English:

zō { an elephant / some elephants[1] / elephants / the elephant / the elephants }

You can easily imagine what a task it is to divide one

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1 Although "some" is not an article, it serves as an indefinite article in some cases:
I have a bird. / I have some birds.

concept into five, and that with a large number of nouns. Lack of articles shows that the Japanese have no habit of attaching the idea of "definiteness" to objects, as in the case of plurality.[1]

It takes a long time for them to master the usage of articles, and it may be an eternal problem for them.

c. Verbs

English verbs have infinitives, and inflect as follows:

(infinitive)	to go
(root)	go
(present)	go, goes
(past)	went
(past participle)	gone
(present participle)	going

And tense, aspect, mood, voice, etc. are expressed by the inflected verb itself or by the combination with auxiliary verbs.

On the other hand, Japanese verbs not only inflect themselves but get various auxiliary verbs agglutinated to them thereby expressing tense, aspect, voice, etc.; in other words, Japanese auxiliary verbs are not words (free morphemes) but suffixes (bound morphemes):

iku (= to go) (= dictionary form)
ika-nai
(negative)
iki-masu
(polite assertion)
iku (= root form, or the form which modifies a noun)

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1 When a Japanese wants to express the concept of definiteness, he uses words equivalent to "that" or "the very," a rather strong way of expression. This is a secondary means of expression, used only when necessary.

ike-ba
(if)
ike! (= imperative)
iko-u
(will; let's)
iki-tai = (I) want to go.
ika-nakere-ba nara-nai = (I) must go.
it-tem yoi = (You) may go.
iku koto ga dekiru = (I) can go.

It is completely new, therefore, for a Japanese to combine verbs and auxiliary verbs to express tense, mood, voice, etc. in English, but these two languages are so different that there is usually no transference or interference on this matter.

We are going to discuss some of the trouble-spots for a Japanese to learn English verbals.

(1) Tense

Japanese has fundamentally only two tenses, present and past. It does not have present perfect tense, so it is not easy for a Japanese to understand it, which is, so to speak, between past and present.

Among a number of usages of present perfect, that of "experience" is relatively easy to master, since there is an equivalent expression in Japanese ("...ta koto ga aru"):

Pari e itta koto ga arimasu ka? = Have you ever been to Paris?

But other usages are hard to master, especially, many people are not sure how it is different from simple past tense.

(2) Sequence of Tenses

In Japanese the so-called "sequence of tenses" does

not occur:

a) Kare wa koko e kuru to itte imasu.[1]
He says that he will come here.
b) Kare wa koko e kuru to iimashita.
He said that he would come here.
c) Kare wa koko e kita to itte imasu.
He says that he came here.
d) Kare wa koko e kita to iimashita.
He said that he had come here.

In Japanese, the predicate verb at the end of the sentence determines the tense in the total, and the verb in the that-clause simply shows whether the action is "at the same time with" or "before" the action indicated by the predicate verb. The Japanese student is busy following the rule of sequence of tenses, and is likely to make mistakes.

(3) Aspects

Both English and Japanese can show progressive expression, and they are mostly parallel:

Ima tegami o kaite imasu. I am writing a letter now.
Mainichi tegami o kakimasu. I write a letter every day.

But most Japanese verbs have only the momentous aspect in themselves, while a number of English verbs have also the durative aspect, which are used in simple tenses, not in progressive:

a) Onore-jishin o shire! (momentous) Know yourself!
a)' Ano hito o shitte imasu. (durative) *I am knowing him.
b) Mainichi 100-go oboemasu. (m.) I remember 100 words every day.

---

1 The true simple present "iimasu" would mean his habitual statement here. "Itte imasu" is grammatically present progressive.

b)' Ano hi o oboete imasu. (d.) *I am remembering that day.

This is true of other verbs such as "live, feel, like, etc.," which he is apt to use in progressive.

Another important problem of aspects is that of participles. There is no participle in Japanese. But they accept them as part of progressive tense (as for present participles) and perfect tense (as for past participles):

He was beating the drum with sticks.
He has beaten the drum with sticks.

Namely, present participles have the progressive aspect, and past participles have the perfect aspect (e.g. a dancing girl; a fallen star).

In addition to these the former has the active aspect, and the latter the passive.

c) This book is interesting.
c)' I am interested in her.
d) The noise is disturbing to everyone.
d)' I was disturbed in my work by the noise outside.

Generally speaking, the difference in c) and c)', d) and d)' is quite confusing to us. It is important to show the four different aspects of the two participles.

present participles { progressive aspect / active aspect
past participles { perfect aspect / passive aspect

You need to remind them that participles alone can never make predicate verbs, nor indicate any tense.

Also such expressions as "be disappointed, surprised, excited, pleased, etc.," i.e., the passive voice of emotional expression is mostly equivalent to single intransitive verbs in Japanese, so that you should pay attention to whether they are using them correctly.

(4) Pro-verbs

"I don't like apples."
"I do. He does, too."

These pro-verbs are totally new to the Japanese. Besides, they change according to the person, the tense, the kind of verbs, etc.

It's not sake, is it? It is.
I can speak English as well as she can.

Generally they are quite poor at using them accurately, and need a lot of practice.

d. Adjectives

Japanese adjectives have distinctive features compared with other adjectives in that they can make a predicate by themselves without the help of "be," and that they inflect as in the case of verbs:

Sakura wa utsukushii.	Cherry blossoms are beautiful.
Sakura wa utsukushikatta.	The cherry blossoms were beautiful.

It does not happen often, however, that the Japanese drop "be" in the case of predicate adjectives.

Japanese adjectives do inflect, but they do not inflect to make comparative and superlative degrees; they remain root forms, and need a particle and an adverb to make those degrees respectively:

a) Kore wa are-yori ookii.
(than) (big)
This is bigger than that.

b) Kore wa mittsu no uchi de ichiban ookii.
(of the three) (No. 1) (big)
This is the biggest of the three.

There is only one fixed way of expressing comparison in Japanese. On the other hand, English has two ways of making comparative and superlative degrees: one is to attach suffixes "-er" and "-est," the other to put the words "more" and "most" respectively before the root adjective. This is annoying to Japanese students, and sometimes they make mistakes out of over-consciousness:

*She was more kind than he.
*This box was more smaller than that.

Especially the comparative degree by "less" is totally lacking in Japanese, and is difficult to grasp:

The new edition was less expensive than the old edition.

Another difficult matter with English adjectives is their position in noun modifying. As for this see pp. 56 f.

e. Negatives

In Japanese negation is signified by attaching "-nai, -n," suffixes corresponding to "not," to the predicate at the end of the sentence.

a) Watashi wa Mekishiko e ikimasen.
I will not go to Mexico.
b) Kono hana wa shiroku nai.
This flower is not white.

In other words, Japanese has only "not" to negate sentences. English, however, has a lot more: no, none, nothing, nowhere, nobody, never, etc. These words need to be practiced a lot.

There is a tendency in English to put a word of negation toward the beginning of sentences, while there is not such a tendency in Japanese.

c) Kono hon wa omoshiroi to omowanai.
not think
I don't think this book is interesting.

c)' Kono hon wa omoshiroku nai to omou.
not interesting
*I think this book isn't interesting.

A Japanese student is apt to say c)', because c)' is more often used. (Perhaps it is because "... to omou" is so often used in conversation to soften the tone of the statement that it is kind of a fixed expression in Japanese.) Putting the word of negation toward the head of the sentence needs to be practiced.

C. Vocabulary and Usage

1. A Synopsis

a. In Terms of English Learning in Japan

As has been mentioned in CHAPTER II, Japanese high school students are taught English mainly for reading purpose. They strongly believe that "with the knowledge of words it is possible to guess the meaning of any sentence, while without this knowledge, even a short sentence is beyond one's reach," and almost all college entrance exam candidates get pocket-sized word books and spend every spare moment memorizing as many words as possible.

This naturally leads to the following results:

(1) First of all, they memorize words new and old, literary and colloquial, without any distinction, nor do they even worry about it. What they are concerned about is which words listed in the word book are most likely to appear on their target examinations. The words in the word book are selected from words which were used in actual past examinations, and they tend to be rather literary. This accounts for the fact that Japanese know a multitude of literary words, while being unfamiliar with the easy, colloquial expressions used in daily life.

(2) Many students memorize English vocabulary by directly associating the words with their Japanese equivalents, while failing to grasp just what concepts the foreign word entails. As in any foreign language, cultural idiosyncracies will cause

differences in concepts, and thus in word usage, and Japanese students tend to have trouble understanding and picturing these differences. Also, they cannot respond to the words shown or spoken to them without the process of writing down and translating them into Japanese.

(3) The English teaching centered on translation and the above way of learning vocabulary may increase their passive vocabulary, but their active vocabulary remains considerably small in comparison. This is one of the reasons for their being poor speakers of English.

(4) On the other hand, they have a fair knowledge of derivative words, antonyms or synonyms. This is because this kind of knowledge is tested on entrance examinations. But they are generally unable to put the knowledge into practical use, as they do not learn them in context.

(5) People's belief in "grammar + dictionary (vocabulary)" as a master-key to any kind of understanding conversely make them interested in proverbs and sayings which cannot be "solved" by the above formula; and a lot of them are on actual examinations. Therefore the students have to memorize them, and are likely to use them more frequently than a native speaker would.[1] Those who do learn to speak are overly interested in slang and idioms, which are also hard to find in their ordinary dictionaries. This interest may be a reaction to present English education methods, which

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1 Donald Harrington, English: A National Disaster, pp. 31 ff.

scarcely teach this.

With this background in mind, part of your job will be to make their passive vocabulary an active one, to let them know which word to use in which situation and to let them practice idioms and easy, useful expressions for daily life, so as to change their "dead" symbols into live, human words of their own.

b. In Terms of Language Difference

The Japanese language does not belong to the Indo-European language family of which English is a member, so that it is generally difficult for the Japanese to learn English vocabulary. Also it has very little to do with Greek mythology or Christianity both of which form the keynote of Western culture, so that they do not understand the expressions and idioms that come from these which a speaker of Western languages would understand immediately. The Japanese way of life still is mostly different from that of Europe, which makes it hard for an average student to even guess what a particular word stands for. Also, most Japanese students of English study only English and not any other languages, so they do not have the advantage of expanding their vocabulary with the help of knowledge of Spanish, French, Latin, German, Greek, etc.

The following are some suggestions which might be useful for them:

(1) It will be advisable to present the spellings of words in terms of phonics. For example, you explain to the

say "lover" meaning a boy/girl friend.)

bed cover .. A bed spread.

feminist ... A man who is kind to women. Does not mean a person who believes in feminism.

handle (for cars) ... A steering wheel.

back mirror ... A rearview mirror.

front glass ... A windshield.

gasoline stand ... A gas station.

dump car ... A dump truck.

salary man ... A salaried worker; a white-collar worker.

gas range .. A hot plate.

stove ..... A heater.

motel ..... A love hotel. (In some region, means a restaurant for car drivers.)

mansion .... An apartment; a condominium.

ball pen ... A ball-point pen.

trump ..... Playing cards.

decoration cake ... A fancy cake.

hostess .... A barmaid.

electric stand ... A desk lamp.

b. Some Words Difficult to Learn

(1) "Yes" and "No"

In English you say "yes" when the answer is in the affirmative and "no" in the negative. But in Japanese, we say yes when we agree with the questioner, and no when we do not. This causes trouble very often between a Japanese and

a speaker of English:

A: Have you ever been to the U.S.?
B: No.
A: (Surprisingly) No?
B: Yes.

Or,

A: It's not too surprising that a man like him won first prize.
B: Yes. (= meaning to agree)

This kind of mistake is very common and even advanced students cannot express themselves adequately at all times. You should point this out each time the student makes this mistake.

(2) "When" and "If"[1]

a) When she comes please let me know.
a)' If she comes please let me know.
a)'' Ano hito ga kitara shirasete kudasai.

b) When the sun sets the farmers go home.
b)' *If the sun sets the farmers go home.
b)'' Hi ga shizumu to nōfutachi wa ie e kaeru.

In a) the speaker knows that she is going to come, but in a)' he does not know, or at least he speaks as if he does not know, whether she is going to come or not. When implies a certain amount of knowledge and sureness about a fact on the part of the speaker, and if implies a lack of knowledge and sureness about a fact. This explains why b)' is ungrammatical, because the sun is sure to set.

However, this distinction is not of interest to the speaker of Japanese. Implications as to whether a speaker

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1 This is mainly from Anthony Alfonso, Japanese Language Patterns, Vol. 2, pp. 650 - 652.

students that "a" is pronounced as /ə, æ, a, ɔ/, "b" as /b/, "c" as /s, k/, etc., and "ow" as /ow, aw/, "oo" as /uw, u/, "-mb" as /m/, etc. This will make it easy to associate the sound with the spellings. You can just enumerate principal spellings, and do not have to list every combination as in the color chart of "The Silent Way." If the student knows that "u" is pronounced as /u/ in "pull, push," /yuw/ in "use, excuse," and /ə/ in "cut, sun," that would be enough: he would easily see that /e/ in "bury" is an exception. This method is quite contrary to the idea of the color chart of "The Silent Way," in which all the spellings for various sounds are listed in columns in different colors, the idea being sound-orientation. However, the author believes in the letter-oriented teaching of spelling for the Japanese.

This is because the Japanese language is a visually oriented language. They have two syllabary systems of writing, hiragana and katakana, which correspond to each syllable, and hence, each pronunciation, quite faithfully and with which they can freely write out almost anything if the pronunciation is that of Japanese. Also they use Chinese characters to a great degree, most of which have two ways of reading, and many have even more. For example, "生" has eight ways of reading. Which reading to choose in which case is already decided, and we have to learn them one by one. "下," meaning "under, lower part," is usually read as "kuda-, o-, sa-, shita, etc." and "手," meaning "hand," is usually read as "te, shu," but together "下手" is exceptionally read "heta," meaning "unskillful." There are quite a few cases of this

kind, and the Japanese are well accustomed to the fact -- and even take it for granted -- that a single letter can be pronounced in more than one way.

You can make a chart of phonics, like that of "The Silent Way," pretty easily. You can let students make their own charts, too, as they go on with their lessons. It will be helpful to them when learning spelling.

(2) It is desirable that you refer to etymology when you teach them new words. Remember: the Japanese do not have the advantages in learning vocabulary which the speakers of the Western languages have. (Of course this is true of everybody whose native tongue does not belong to the Indo-European language family.) In particular, they are totally ignorant of bound morphemes derived from Latin or Greek. For example, the author, who has been studying English about 15 years, had never imagined that "cap<u>a</u>ble," "de<u>ce</u>ption," "re<u>ceip</u>t," are all derived from Latin "<u>capere</u> (to take)" until she was told it at S.I.T. last year. Native speakers of English should tell their students backgrounds of words as much as possible in order to lessen the students' burden.

2. Some Words to Note

There are many words which are difficult for Japanese to understand or which they use in different meanings from their original ones. The following examples are only a few which the author has experienced herself. This sort of study should be done further by many people for the benefit of both English teachers and Japanese students.

a. Some Examples of Misuse

There are a great number of foreign words in Japanese. Words of English origin have become prevalent since the war, and many of them are used differently from their original meanings. Students carry that meaning in Japanese over into English, believing that the meaning must be the same.

(1) Food

The Japanese used to eat only fish, and no meat, because of Buddhist influence. They began to eat meat after the modernization of the country in the last century. Naturally there are many English words taken to indicate meat and Western food. Some of them are modified to adjust to the Japanese way of eating and cooking.

steak .... In English, it refers to a cut of meat, but in Japanese it is the way of cooking, i.e., meat heated on an iron griddle.

salad .... In Japanese, it is vegetables with something else, topped with mayonnaise or dressing. "Egg salad" means vegetables plus eggs with dressing.

cider .... A kind of soda pop. It does not mean a drink made from apples.

juice .... Soft drink. Does not mean the fluid part of cooked meat.

"shū kurīmu" ... Cream puff; chou à la crème in French. Sounds like "shoe cream." You may be surprised

if someone says, "Let's eat shoe cream."

homo milk ... Homogenized milk.

pine juice ... Pineapple juice.

(2) Clothes

The Japanese used to wear only kimono, so Western clothes names are mostly derived from foreign words.

(Japanese)	(English)
pants	briefs, shorts
jumper	windbreaker
one-piece	dress
training pants	sweat pants

(3) Miscellaneous

naïve .... In Japanese, "simple, innocent, pure-hearted, delicate, sensitive, etc.," in any case, it has a good connotation. A Japanese boy might say, "I like a naïve girl."

local .... "Not in or of the capital city."
e.g. local news = news not from Tokyo
local trains = trains in the country

cunning .. Cheating in the exam. (This is used as a noun.)

consent .. Electric outlet on the wall.

hire ..... A hired car; a reserved taxi. (Used as a noun.)

highway .. An expressway. (Does not refer to a paved street.)

boyfriend, girlfriend ... Good friend of opposite sex. Does not mean a person one loves. (They may

knows or is merely conjecturing about a possibility are not his concern. a)'' can mean either a) or a)'. Therefore, the Japanese subordinate clause ending with "to" or "tara" may be the "when ..." clause in some cases, and the "if ..." clause in others (the subtle difference between "to" and "tara" being neglected at present).

Naturally Japanese students are not sure when to use "when," and when to use "if."

(3) "So-so"

Japanese do not like to make an assertive statement but prefer to make it vague. Even if the speaker was good in an examination, he would say "So-so" to the question "How was the test?" So, even the fixed greeting "How are you?" may be answered by this:

A: How are you?
B: Oh, just so-so.
A: Why?
B: ? (Why does he ask me?)

This confusion occurs once in a while. In Japanese "so-so (mā-mā)" has a positive connotation, while in English it has a negative connotation.

(4) "Maybe," etc.

Japanese "tabun" is equivalent to "maybe, perhaps, probably, possibly, I think, I guess, I believe, it seems, etc." They do not know the difference between them, and they tend to say "maybe" in every case. Especially, they mix up "maybe" and "probably," and the author has often seen an

American confused by a Japanese answering "maybe" on many occasions.

A: How many brothers do you have?
B: Maybe two.

A: Can you come here next Monday?
B: Maybe not, because I'll go to Tokyo that day.

It is necessary to tell them that "maybe" does not make sense in every case.

(5) "Mind"

A: Do you mind if I smoke?
B: Yes, please.

Japanese equivalent expression of "Do you mind ...?" is "... kamaimasen ka?" which is similar to "May I ...?" so they tend to answer "yes."

(6) Words Whose Object Are Not Found in Japan

There are many words the objects of which are not usually seen in Japan, or at least by the average Japanese, so that they are hard to learn. The following are only a few of them:

cellar, attic, olive, laundromat, flea market, toboggan, waffle, cereal, mantlepiece, blueberry pies, avacado, electric toothbrush, water pick, shoehorn, etc.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE U.S.

Though Japan seems now to be quite Westernized, it still is, and will remain, an Eastern country in essence, with quite a different background from Western countries. Westerners' interest in Japan and her culture have been greatly increasing lately, and there are quite a few books on cultural differences between Japan and the United States. It is quite advisable, or rather necessary, for you to know what Japanese are like, if you are to teach them English. However, it does not seem that there are very many books written for Westerners to successfully teach Japanese students. This chapter intends to give you only a few hints for that purpose.

A. Japanese' "Shyness"

The Japanese people have lived in a small land for thousands of years speaking the same language in a more or less uniform culture. The geographical limitation of being surrounded by the sea has kept them from getting acquainted with foreign peoples, and has developed their unique habit of understanding each other's minds without uttering words directly. A Confucian idea of despising talkative people has raised the individual to respect the silent and despise the verbal or noisy. Japan is a country where people regard

it as one of the best virtues "for everybody to be in harmony and to play the expected role." They have talked only to those who they could understand, so oratory or the art of convincing others has never developed in Japan. We Japanese have no courses for self-expression even in our mother tongue at school. Japanese composition is taught unsystematically at elementary schools, and very rarely after that. There is no university which has a course in "speech."[1] In addition, at middle schools and higher schools most of the classes are just lectures, where the teacher alone speaks and writes down important points on the blackboard, while the students listen and take note silently. They are expected to gather correct information, comprehend and memorize it; they are passive, and not expected to speak out. Another Japanese virtue is "Do it without words," and they will despise those who make excuses; if you admit you are to blame, just accept punishment without trying to make an excuse.

Quite a few English teachers complain that the Japanese are "shy" and silent, and they have a hard time getting them to speak English at all. Now you have an idea why they are so; how can they speak out suddenly in an English class without having had any such experience or practice of speaking out in public?

Another reason for Japanese being "shy" in speaking English is that Japanese culture is self-oppressive. The Japanese are brought up to oppress themselves to fit the

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1 Keisetsu Jidai, April Extra Edition, 1976.

"molds" passed on from earlier generations and are expected to observe complicated manners, so as to fulfil the role given them to play. Therefore they naturally come to efface themselves in order to protect their security. It follows that they are kept from establishing strong selves, become obedient to the majority, and are very afraid of "sticking out." (There is even a Japanese proverb which says, "The nail that sticks out gets pounded.") One illustrative example of this psychology is that at a meeting, people in Japan take their seats in the back of the room, avoiding sitting near the front. Few Japanese speak out, therefore, even if they have something on their mind. Many of them are passive enough to merely repeat the general opinion when they are called on. One reason for this is that they are safe if they follow the majority's opinions; another is that the Japanese, whose "self" is so weak, rarely have their own opinions since they have not been educated to think and act on each issue themselves.

Some Suggested Measures

As a result, American ESL instructors never fail to meet the problem of "silence" on the students' part in class. However hard they may try to have them speak out, they will say only a few words in a soft voice.

The Japanese are the people who "understand each other by feeling," so they are extraordinarily sensitive to the atmosphere of the situation. In a formal situation, they get

tensed up and cautious, but in an informal situation they get relaxed and tell jokes to each other, even to their teacher. Therefore it is very important for a teacher to try to make the class informal in some way, or to make and maintain an atmosphere where the instructor is not a "great teacher who is inaccessible" but a "friendly senior who is easily accessible." It might be helpful to have active contact with your students outside the class as well.

However, most Japanese do not like "too easy teachers" in class. They like strict teachers to train them. They are so accustomed to the well-disciplined Japanese school and they are such serious people that they will never enjoy "too loose" a class. What they like best is a teacher who is strict in teaching but kind in heart, and who is easily accessible outside the class.

What often happens to a worried teacher is that he speaks too much to rescue the embarrassing silence trying to make them speak out. This does not make the class atmosphere informal at all. In many cases the students may be thinking what to say, or how to answer to the teacher's question. (They never speak until they make up a complete sentence in their mind.) Sometimes they may be waiting for somebody to break the ice before they can express what is on their mind. Or sometimes they may be just waiting for others to speak up because the Japanese decide on their own position in comparison with others.

It is not necessarily true that the Japanese are "shy." They enjoy talking spontaneously even in class if they feel

they are secure and comfortable, and the teacher is understanding.

The following are some suggestions from the author.

First, you should ease the tense atmosphere caused by your own existence -- the existence of a person who looks quite different from them -- by, for instance, smiling at them, telling jokes, and making them laugh. Then if one person dares to speak out, you should acknowledge his courage to speak out. It may be irritating for you to wait for them to spontaneously speak out, but be patient. Gradually they will speak out, if they understand that whatever they say will be acknowledged, encouraged, and even praised by the teacher. You should not imitate a student's bad response, nor should you bring shame on him, when he makes a mistake or gives a wrong answer. (It is internationally known that the Japanese are very sensitive to shame.) Even in such a case you should not directly say, "No! You're wrong!"[1] but rather say something like "Do you think so?" pointing at where and why their answer is funny, while smiling at the same time. This smile is important to show that you are happy to have his answer, even if he is mistaken. And of course it is important to praise him the next time his response is correct. All this will deepen their self-confidence and encourage them to express themselves. They will be glad to speak English when they know that English can be a means to release them from "self-restriction." The sensei, or teacher,

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1 See p. 89.

in Japan, as well as in many Asian countries, is considered to be such a great, super being that it can give unimaginable pleaure and encouragement to students to be accepted and praised by the teacher.

However, it does not make conversation if you take a long time to think about what to say to your partner before you open your mouth. It is necessary to do something to make the Japanese students speak actively in class.

Toneko Kimura recommends a "Bean-bag Talk" in Cross Currents, Autumn 1973, pp. 109 - 116.[1] It goes as follows.

First, the teacher and the student silently throws back and forth a bean-bag (otedama) (a small bag made of colorful material and filled with beans; slightly larger than a ping-pong ball, which is juggled with by Japanese children). Then the teacher asks a question while throwing a bag to the student. The student catches it, but he cannot throw it back until he answers the question plus asks a new question to the teacher. This question → answer + question pattern lasts for some time.

Teacher: What's your favorite sport? (throws bag)
Student: Baseball. Can you play baseball? (returns bag)
Teacher: Not very well. But I can play football. Have you ever seen a football match? (throws bag)
Student: Only on television. I don't understand the rules. Is it difficult? (returns bag) [2]

This exercise makes the student aware that he is half responsible for continuing conversation. It also makes him feel that he will do whatever he can to throw it back to the

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1 MRA House, Tokyo.

2 Ibid., p. 112.

other as soon as possible. There are some variations of this, like the question → answer + statement pattern, or the question → recognition + statement pattern.[1]

Another suggestion is to make the best of the student's psychology to be better than others. He likes games very much. There is no reason why you should not set a competition to make them form a habit of engaging in a spontaneous conversation. The following is an example:

You give the students a homework assignment to get at least five questions ready on a given topic. In the next class you call on two students to come up to the front and have them start a conversation on that topic. You give them a rule: one must answer the question of the other properly, and ask a question related to the response; there should be no time loss between each answer and question, so if more than 5 or 10 seconds elapse before the next answer/question comes out, that person loses a point. In this way the conversation goes, and you stop it in 5 minutes or so. You tell who is the winner, judging from the points each of them has lost, and from acceptability of the responses/questions/statements they have made.

You might not like to create competition among your students, but you will soon see how silent and passive Japanese students are and realize that something has to be done to get them to speak out.

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1 Ibid., pp. 113 - 115.

B. Instinct for Harmony

The Japanese regard "harmony" as the best of all things, and they make utmost effort not to destroy the harmonious situation in conversation. One of the typical examples of this is the usage of "yes" and "no."[1]

A Japanese often nods up and down while his partner is talking. This either reveals his unconscious search for harmony with the other, or simply shows his sincerity that he is listening to the other, understanding verbally what he is saying; it does not necessarily mean that he agrees. Very often they say "yes" with this nodding, and this often confuses foreigners.

When the author was at S.I.T., there was a rumor that two Japanese girls in the ESL Course were playing around with some South American boy students at night, and there appeared even people who witnessed the "scene." One of the American dorm counselors came to ask for cooperation. Meeting with these two Japanese girls, that American began to explain the rumor and the situation they were placed in. To the author's great surprise, they repeatedly nodded and said "Yes," so that in a few minutes the dorm counselor went so far as to say, "If you want to do it, go to your own private rooms." The author of the paper could not believe this rumor at all, because it was quite beyond Japanese common sense, so she stopped their conversation and asked them in Japanese if they

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1 See pp. 77 f.

had really done such a thing. As soon as they listened to the question in Japanese, both of them strongly denied it. The author asked them why they had said "Yes" to the dorm counselor if they did not intend to agree with her, and then they said, "It simply meant that we understood her, but we never meant that we agreed with her, never!"

If a Japanese wants to oppose another, he says, "I understand your point, but I can't agree," thus admitting the other's standpoint first. If you say from the beginning, "No! You're wrong!" then he will regard it as a denial to his whole personality, and get offended. Once you offend him, the relationship between you and him will be cracked and need a lot of time and energy to restore it.

Therefore the Japanese tend not to directly oppose you in order to save the situation even if he is somewhat displeased. This is the reason why a Japanese tends to laugh when he slips on the street, or when he is scolded by a teacher in class -- all to save the situation. Also that is why he hesitates to ask what the other said when he could not quite catch it, for fear of displeasing him. And when he cannot stand any more, he bursts into anger. (Before this happens, you are expected to "feel" that something is wrong with him, and to make a private situation where you and he can "open your hearts" to express honestly what each of you has to say.) This national character is very hard to change.

The Japanese regard it as most sophisticated to calmly sip green tea while looking at a beautiful Japanese garden. It would be no wonder that they have a hard time with noisy

Latin Americans in the same ESL class. When they see Americans shouting at each other in a loud voice or laughing hysterically, many of them naturally feel disgusted, "What indecent Americans!"

C. "Do Not Trouble Others"

One of the virtues the Japanese are taught by their parents is "Do not trouble others (meiwaku o kakeru na)." "Meiwaku" in Japanese has a broad meaning, and can mean to trouble, annoy, bother, inconvenience, worry, etc.

There is a tacit understanding that you could trouble your very close friends or your family. But in other situations you should try to the best of your ability to do everything yourself and not receive kindnesses from others. If you have to ask a favor of somebody because you cannot help it, you become sorry about it, feeling more burden than thanks. In Japanese "Sumimasen" means "Thank you" as well as "I'm sorry. I apologize." So, even with other people Japanese may say "I'm sorry" in English when they are expected to say "Thank you." Few Japanese can ask a favor of an American without feeling guilty in their minds. When the author went to the United States, in the first few months she had a hard time, not knowing how to ask a favor.

For the same reason, a Japanese student hesitates a lot to ask questions in class. This is because he is afraid that his question may be only his, and not the other students'; he worries that his "stupid" question might cause a delay of the flow of the class and trouble everybody.

He would rather solve the problem by asking a friend after class or at home than disgrace himself. It is really a courage-taking matter for a Japanese to ask a teacher a question.

Even if he has something to say in class, he may be frustrated this time because he fails to find the proper time to express it. In Japan he is supposed to raise his hand if he wants to express his opinion or question, and asks the teacher or the chairman of the discussion for permission to talk; then he is guaranteed a chance to express himself without being interrupted.

It is therefore astonishing for a Japanese student to sit in an American discussion, where various opinions go back and forth spontaneously without stopping, without asking for permission to speak. He just does not know when to speak, and in the meantime the topic easily changes from one to another and he misses his chance for ever. As a result he is much discouraged from speaking and may be unwilling to take an active part in a discussion the next time.

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