

Communicating in Japanese

Japanese494RI (3 credits)

Spring 2019

Mon & Fri 2:30-3:45

Herter 546

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*You can walk in during those hours. However, I'd really appreciate if you make an appointment in advance via email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview

Many of the Japanese majors aspire to play a role in promoting healthy, constructive relations between Japan and the U.S. Such relations cannot exist without ample communication that is not only transparent but also positive and effective. This course will help students become competent communicators in Japanese and thus contribute to maintaining solid bridges between the two countries.

In this course, we think that communication constitutes of several layers. On top lays lingual proficiency. Needless to say, one needs to have enough language skills to make oneself understood and grasp what other people are expressing. Since all of the Japanese language courses are dedicated for the enhancement of proficiency, however, we will not spend too much time on this part of communication except for the expansion of vocabulary. Having a wide range of accessible vocabulary is the key to smooth communication and each student will be put in charge of increasing his/her own vocabulary. This course is also designed to benefit students in enhancing their oral proficiency by providing them with a place to use Japanese in discussion. Although we won't focus on grammar and certainly no new grammar will be introduced, I will correct grammatical mistakes explicitly when I hear them in order to develop accuracy in class.

For effective communication, lingual proficiency needs to be accompanied by good understanding of the social worldview. Language as a tool does not work well if its user does not understand what it is made for and how it should be used. For example, *keigo*, or honorific expressions, could be considered rude if the speaker correctly uses them but without showing the respect that should be at the basis of those expressions. Thus, one needs to be receptive of the ideas behind a language in order to communicate in that language. This does not mean that you have to suppress your true self and become a member of the target society. Although it is common to develop different personae when speaking different languages, those personae of a person should not be separate from each other if s/he is to act responsibly. S/he needs to maintain integrity across her/his various personae. Such integrity can only be attainable through positive yet critical involvement in the societies of the languages spoken, including her/his own. In this course, we will first examine the Japanese social values using various cultural expressions as a window. During the second half of the course, we will focus on how Japanese people see *gaijin*, or foreigners, and English.

At the bottom of communication are the principles that are shared by various international communities (although they are in fact based on the western idea of communication at this juncture of history). Students must all have been trained in how to communicate persuasively and effectively orally or in writing in GenEd and other courses. The same technique should be employed when communicating in Japanese as well. Throughout the course, we will pay attention to how we state our opinions.

I.E. Criteria

This course satisfies the General Education requirement of Integrative Experience (IE), which “provides students with a structured opportunity to look back on their early college learning experiences, reflect upon and make connections between those earlier experiences and the more advanced work in their major, and use their integrated learning to prepare for the demands of the world beyond the University.” Such opportunity is very important for Japanese majors because it is easy to lose sight of the connection between Japanese and other classes. As mentioned above, however, bilingual speakers should not develop two separate personae. Learning Japanese should be an integral part of your whole learning process that is taking place here and now at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The course meets the three I.E. criteria in the following way:

- 1) Providing a structured, credited context for students to reflect on and to integrate their learning and experience from the broad exposure in their General Education courses and the focus in their major.

Two reflection essays in which you are to reflect upon how your experience of learning Japanese is related to your experience of learning in general at UMass will be required: one at the beginning of the semester and the other at the end.

- 2) Providing students with the opportunity to practice General Education learning objectives such as oral communication, collaboration, critical thinking and interdisciplinary perspective-taking, at a more advanced level.

Of the GenEd learning objectives, critical thinking will be the most important and frequently addressed one in this course. When it comes to things Japanese, Japanese learners tend either to turn a blind eye to unpleasant features or to completely reject them and just focus on the language. What we want is a happy medium. As mentioned above, you should take advantage of your place between the two (or more) countries and critically examine Japanese culture as well as your mother culture.

Equally important and closely related is the objective of pluralistic perspective-taking. Although it may sound obvious, students should be keenly aware of its significance. Just speaking Japanese does not guarantee one that s/he is taking a different perspective. Last, but not least, oral communication is the main focus of this course.

- 3) Offering students a shared learning experience for applying their prior learning to new situations, challenging questions, and real-world problems.

The course will use the Team Based Learning format, meaning that students will work in teams throughout the semester and do various activities. At the end, each team is to present a feasible plan for fostering good relationship between the U.S. and Japan. More detailed explanation of TBL is provided below.

Format

As mentioned above, this is a content-based language course in the TBL format. Its focus will be on understanding and analyzing the issues presented in Japanese videos and articles,

Commented [A1]: This section underscores the importance of the IE requirement for students, specifically for integrating their learning in Japanese into their overall learning at UMass Amherst.

Commented [A2]: This section articulates *how* students will practice and achieve each of the 3 IE criteria. Using the IE template language as a framing device, the syllabus goes on to make connections with different class activities and assignments.

applying and evaluating the validity of what we have understood, and producing and presenting creative solutions in Japanese. Mechanical exercises to acquire specific skills such as grammar practices do not take place except for vocabulary quizzes. The class is conducted basically in Japanese.

Students will be divided into teams which will remain unchanged for the entire semester. Studying of the materials should be done individually prior to class. In class, students are to take tests to check the readiness for learning individually first and then as a team. Once we are sure that we have the basic understanding of the materials, the teams will tackle more complicated problems. Each of the four units of the course ends with a project that involves team effort.

TBL is "an instructional strategy that is based on procedures for developing high performance learning teams that can dramatically enhance the quality of student learning." It has been developed mainly for science courses. However, I believe that language courses can benefit from this format because 1) teams can provide students with a stimulating environment in which they can comfortably practice using the language; and 2) the validity of interpretation increases when multiple possibilities from diverse positions are considered.

Commented [A3]: This course offers an example of a Team-Based Learning IE course. The TBL structure of the course is particularly conducive to criterion 3 of the IE, which offers students a "shared learning experience."

Objectives

At the end of the semester, students will be able to communicate effectively in Japanese. In other words...

- Students will gain enough linguistic competence for effective communication and have feasible strategies whenever the competence falls short.
- Students will have the ability to acquire productive understanding through the combination of critical analysis of the locution and behavior of Japanese people and equally critical reflection on their own thinking when they find themselves in unfamiliar, awkward, or uncomfortable situations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course requirements include timely completion of reading/watching, regular class attendance and positive participation, online assignments, discussion notes and summaries, vocabulary quizzes, individual and team Readiness Awareness Tests, two project reports, two oral proficiency interviews, two reflection papers in English, and constructive team maintenance.

READING/WATCHING ASSIGNMENTS

- All the materials are posted on Moodle. You are to read or watch them thoroughly by the dates specified below, so that you will be well prepared to participate in the discussion in class.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION, DISCUSSION NOTES AND SUMMARIES

- Although attendance will not be taken, your regular participation will be crucial not only for your own grasping of the issues but also for your team's performance. If you must miss classes for unavoidable reasons, let your teammates, as well as the instructor, know of the situation beforehand and make necessary arrangements with them.
- Arrive to class on time is also important for the sake of your own and your teammates.
- You are to use Japanese only when instructed to do so.

ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS

- There is usually an online quiz about new vocabulary for every class.

- You can take each of the quizzes up to three times.

DISCUSSION NOTES AND SUMMARIES

- To ensure productive discussion, you are to prepare discussion notes beforehand and write down your teammates' points during the discussion on the provided form. At the end of each unit, you will be asked to submit the notes and a summary. 80% of the grade is for the effort and 20% for the quality of the content.

VOCABULARY QUIZZES

- In general, you are to memorize ten words each week: Four labeled as [WV] and six as [読み]. You must be able to produce the [WV] words in ひらがな while you only have to memorize the reading and meaning of the [読み] words.
- There will be vocabulary quizzes on most Mondays and review quizzes periodically. Missed quizzes can be made up if the reasons are legitimate.

READINESS AWARENESS TESTS

- These are short, usually multiple choice, quizzes conducted in class to check the students' readiness for learning. You are to do them individually first and then with your teammates.
- These tests CANNOT be made up, because they are meaningless to do belatedly. However, the lowest two scores will be dropped.

PROJECT REPORTS

- Each unit culminates in a project. You and your teammates will work on it together as a team. However, each of you must produce a video report individually. More detailed instruction and grading rubric will be posted on Moodle.

ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEWS

- You are to take two Oral Proficiency Interviews—one at the beginning and the other at the end of the course. The interview at the beginning is to provide you with tips about what to work on to improve your oral proficiency and will not be graded. The one at the end is to check how much you have improved and this one will be graded.

REFLECTION ESSAYS

- You are to reflect upon and write essays about how your experience of learning Japanese is related to your experience of learning in general at UMass. You will do this at the beginning of the semester and again at the end.

TEAM CONTRIBUTION

- In order to ensure the productivity of the team, you will be asked to do peer reviews at the end of each unit.
- Half of the grade for team contribution is based on your teammates' reviews of you and the other half is based on the quality of your reviews of your teammates.

GRADING

Online Assignments	5%
Readiness Awareness Test-Individual	4%
Readiness Awareness Test-Team	6%
Vocabulary Quizzes	10%
Discussion Notes and Summaries	20%
Project Reports	40%

Commented [A4]: There are two reflection essays that bookend students' experience in the course. These essays develop from a more detailed mapping exercise that students produce.

{For the full assignment, including the mapping exercise and prompts, see the assignments resource section.}

Oral Proficiency Interview	5%
Reflection Essays	5%
Team Contribution	5%

Final letter grades will be calculated on the following scale: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (60-66), and F (0-59).

ACCOMMODATION

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/)

MATERIAL LIST (all available on Moodle)

JAPANESE

Videos

「大学生活の日米比較」 Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research, PennState

helpmefindparents “But we’re speaking Japanese! 日本語喋ってるんだけど”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLt5qSm9U80>

読売テレビ 『日本人の知らない日本語』

NHK 『メディアタイムズ』

Songs

樺坂 46 「サイレント・マジョリティー」

星野源 「恋」

Articles

土居健郎 『「甘え」の構造』 弘文堂、1991 年
 中根千恵 『タテ社会の人間関係』 講談社、1967 年
 牧野成一 『ウチとソトの言語文化学—文法を文化で切る』 アルク、1996 年

ENGLISH

Videos

“Edward Said on Orientalism” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVC8EYd_Z_g
Breakfast at Tiffany's
 Styx “Mr. Roboto” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uc6f_2nPSX8
 “Tidying up with Marie Kondo Trailor”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvyeapVBLWY>
 “Marie Kondo Tidies up Stephen’s ‘Late Show’ Desk”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1aBqpF6mwQ>

Articles

Hendry, Joy. *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation, and Power in Japan and Other Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
 Nitobe, Inazo. *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*. Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1994.

COURSE PLAN AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Wk	Date	Content	Materials	Assignments
1	1/25	Introduction	Syllabus	Discussion Note; Reflection Essay 1
2	1/28	Oral Proficiency Interview I		
	2/1	Learning Attitudes	CALPER 大学生活の 日米比較	Discussion Note
3	2/4	Social Values Expressed in Sayings • Vocab Quiz 1 <i>Starts at 3:05!</i>	ことわざ	Discussion Note
	2/8	Social Values Expressed in Pop Music	樺坂 46「サイレント・マジョリティー」他	Discussion Note
4	2/11	Social Values Expressed in Commercials • Vocab Quiz 2	NHK『メディアタイムズ』	Discussion Note
	2/15	The Ideal Family as Seen in Japanese Commercials	Japanese Commercials	Discussion Summary
5	2/19	Project 1: Interpreting Japanese Commercials • Vocab Review Quiz 1		Project Report; Peer Review
	2/22	Unit II: Japanese Social <i>Uchi and soto</i> <i>Starts at 3:05!</i>	???	Discussion Note
6	2/25	Unit II: Japanese Social <i>Uchi and soto</i> • Vocab Quiz 3	牧野『ウチとソト』	Discussion Note

	3/1		<i>Uchi and soto</i>	Hendry, <i>Wrapping Culture</i>	Discussion Note
7	3/4		Hierarchy • Vocab Quiz 4	中根 『タテ社会』	Discussion Note
	3/8		Hierarchy	中根 『タテ社会』	Discussion Note
8	3/18		<i>Amae</i> • Vocab Quiz 5	土井 『甘えの構造』	Discussion Note
	3/22		<i>Amae</i>	土井 『甘えの構造』	Discussion Summary
9	3/25		Project 2: Interpreting Japanese Commercials 2 • Vocab Review Quiz 2		Project Report; Peer Review
	3/29		“Languagism” in Japan <i>Starts at 3:05!</i>	??? (secret for now)	Discussion Note
10	4/1		Orientalism • Vocab Quiz 6	“Edward Said on Orientalism”	Discussion Note
	4/5		Orientalism 2	<i>Breakfast at Tiffany’s</i> , Styx “Mr. Roboto”	Discussion Note
11	4/8		Reverse Orientalism • Vocab Quiz 7	Nitobe, <i>Bushido</i>	Discussion Note
	4/12		Reverse Orientalism 2	『日本人の知らない日本語』	Discussion Note
12	4/17		Japan in Contemporary America • Vocab Quiz 8	“Tidying up with Marie Kondo”; “Marie Kondo Tidies up Stephen’s ‘Late Show’ Desk”	Discussion Note
	4/19		Overcoming Orientalism	Kimono Protest	Discussion Note
13	4/22		Project 3: Planning a Cultural Event • Vocab Review Quiz 3		Discussion Summary
	4/26		Project 3: Planning a Cultural Event		
14	4/29		Project 3: Planning a Cultural Event <i>Starts at 3:05!</i>		Project Report; Peer Review
Exam Week			Oral Proficiency Interview II		

Unit III: Intercultural Communication