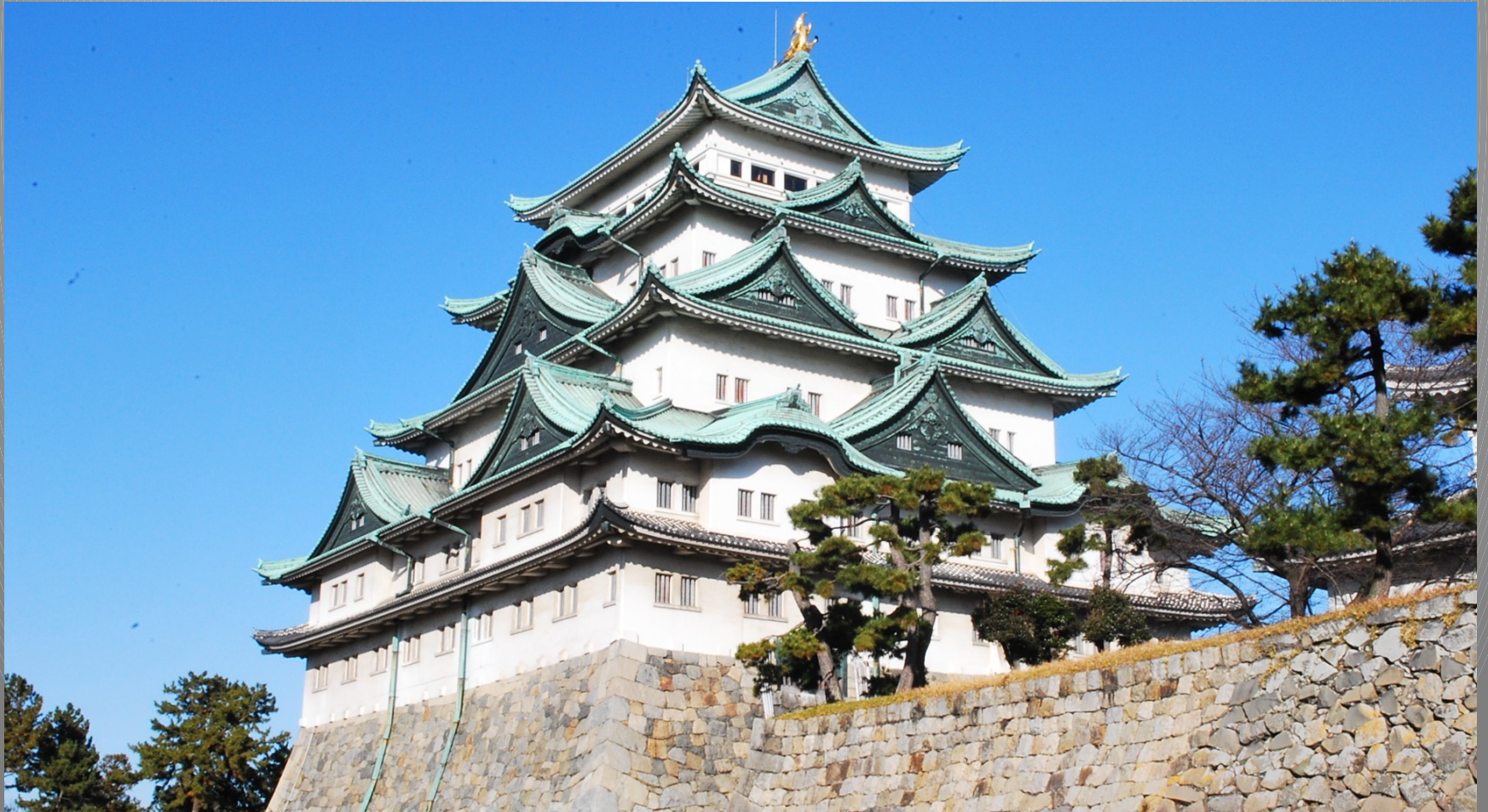


Developing Business English Materials for Japanese Undergraduate Students

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Culturally sensitive approach to BE in Japan



Topics

Part I:

- Nagoya University of Commerce and Business (NUCB)
- Cultural background
- Issues with teaching BE in Japan

Part II:

- NUCB BE Research Project
 - New BE teaching approach
 - Present New NUCB BE Teaching Materials

End:

- Q&A

Nagoya University of Commerce and Business



NUCB Main Location



- Island: Honshu
- Province: Aichi
- City: Nagoya
- Japan's industrial state

Nagoya University of Commerce and Business (NUCB)

- Background information
 - Campus locations:
 - Nagoya, Tokyo and Osaka
 - Undergraduate School
 - Total enrolment: 2800 students
 - Faculty of Communication: **450 students**



Further information NUCB

- <http://www.nucba.ac.jp/en/download/>

For Japanese university students BE materials:

- are mainly Eurocentric in terms of themes;
- the activities are based on Western cultures and values.

1. How are the BE materials Western?
2. What do you know about Japan and Japanese students?
3. What would you anticipate to be culturally challenging?

Culture: Western-centric materials

General Cultural Views

- Individualistic
- Equality focus
- Low context
- Risk oriented

BE Material include:

- Discussion
 - Can disagree with superiors
 - Change is good
 - Critical thinking
- Individual views
 - Improvements through critique

Culture: Japan and Japanese Students

Cultural values

- Collectivistic
- Vertical relationships (e.g., *senpai-kohai*=*mentor-protégé*)
- High context communicators
- High risk avoidance

Resulting Behaviors

- Consensus building
 - No disagreeing
 - Group opinions
 - Sameness, uniformity
 - Change is threatening
- Respect to higher social status
- Keigo (honorific, respectful language)
- No disagreeing
- Vague communication

Cultural challenges when teaching BE to Japanese students:

- Case study topics
- Problem solving topics
- Discussions
- Pair work

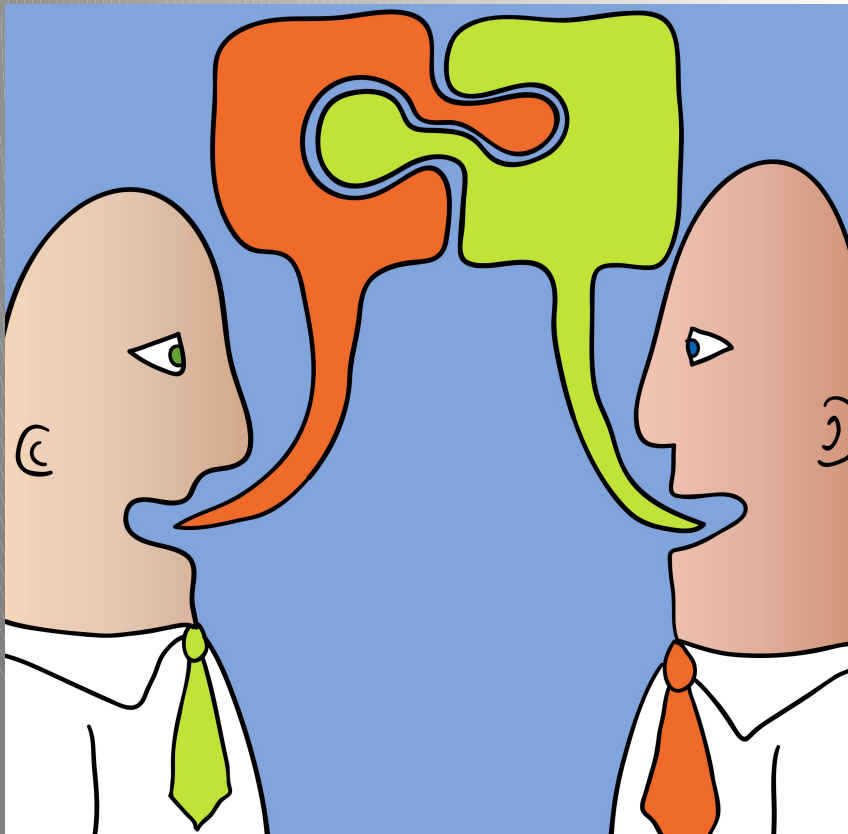
Example: Case Study



- New American boss – manager of sales wants:
 - Salesman to entertain less
 - Introduce him to customers
 - Explain activities
- French salesman wants:
 - Autonomy
 - Entertaining budget

Cultural differences

Western perception



Japanese perception



Challenging points when teaching BE to Japanese students:

- Grammar
 - Too easy (cloze, mix-match, tense forms)
 - But, need work on syntax
- Vocabulary
 - BE vocab = Latin, French, Greek
 - But can't even use basic English
- Attitudes:
 - Just another topic
 - Don't really need English

Summary

- Students tend to think:
 - Business English is
 - unnecessary but mandatory
 - too difficult
 - boring
 - confusing
 - tiring
 - not useful

Bored students!



Part II

NUCB Research Project

- How can we engage students?
- How can we help students understand the need to learn English?
- How can we help students build self-confidence when speaking English?

Curriculum design

- Japanese-centric materials
 - Approach western culture from Japanese view
- Allow students to be linguistically creative
 - Use basic English vocabulary
 - Add vocabulary as needed for project
- Topics students can relate to
 - Beginners in work world

Teaching Approach

- Simulated work
- Project style learning
- Students play employees
- Teacher plays “boss”
- Group work

Topics:

- English speaking companies in Japan
- Writing a Western CV
- Applying for a job at Kirin Beer
- Team Building Event
- Company Structures
- Marketing Survey
- Describing Processes: how to make beer
- Planning the boss' business trip

Learning Materials

- Projects: 3-4 weeks
- Presentations, role plays, emails or reports
 - Week 1: introduce topic
 - Week 2: research topic and project
 - Week 3: present results

Involvement



Continued involvement



Student views

- Useful
- I like the group work
- Last year was boring
- Last year was too easy
- Last year was too difficult
- I like the presentations
- It is so active!
- Can learn about work
- I liked the vocabulary work from last year
- ML was good, but boring
- I don't have opportunity to get more vocabulary for business

Arigato gozaimasu!

