



Shopping in Japan

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Ages: 16 years old
Level: Intermediate (4th year of Japanese)
Culture: Body language, etiquette related to shopping
Japanese: Shopping-related expressions



Objectives

1. The students will be able to:
 - a. Ask for items from a shopkeeper
 - b. Give prices of food items to a customer
 - c. Use Japanese shopping phrases
 - d. Verbally practice repeating the names of foods in Japan
2. The lesson deals with the following cultural aspects:
 - a. Gain an understanding of Japanese body language, non-facial expressions, gestures and mannerisms
 - b. Develop an understanding of Japanese currency and equivalent in Australian currency
 - c. Gain some understanding of Japanese and Australian relationships
 - d. Gain insight into the different types of food in Japan
 - e. Gain some understanding of Japanese etiquette relating to shopping, eating, giving information and presentation
 - f. Develop an appreciation of the complexity of the different ways Japanese prices can be presented
 - g. Appreciate the difficulties and mistakes made by foreigners
3. The specific goals of the lesson, incorporating all five interrelated goals of the Australian Language Guidelines are:
 - a. Communication Goals
 - Establish and maintain relationships and develop strategies to shop in Japan through the exchange of information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences and plans
 - Participate in social interaction related to making decisions with others
 - Obtain information by searching for specific details in a written text
 - Give information in spoken form
 - b. Sociocultural Goals
 - Encourage children to bring from home one object that is made in Japan
 - Gain some understanding of Japanese etiquette relating to shopping
 - Gain insights into different types of shops and foods in Japan. This lesson could be adapted to different shops in Japan
 - c. Language and Cultural Awareness Goals
 - Increase vocabulary
 - Gain an understanding of some colloquial expressions used when shopping (see shopping vocabulary)
 - Gain an understanding of different levels of language and how to react in different contexts (e.g. when shopping)
 - d. Learning How to Learn Goals
 - Search for information
 - Develop composition and script writing skills in *hiragana*
 - e. General Knowledge Goals
 - Gain an understanding of the difference in prices between imported goods and goods made in the country of sale

Materials

- food packets from Japan
- Japanese clothing
- props
- video and tripod
- list of Japanese phrases

Procedure

1. Shopping Vocabulary

かしこまりました	Yes, certainly.
よくにいます	Looks good.
こちらでございます	This way please.
ちょうどいいです	It's just right.
またおこしください	Please come again.
何にいたしますか	What have you decided on?
何をお探ですか	What are you looking for?
ラッピングいたしますしょうか	Shall I wrap it?
どうもありがとうございます	Thank you very much.
ございました	(Very polite for) please.
おねがいします	Here is your change.
おつりでございます	Excuse me.(said when accepting something)
すみません	A shop.
ばいてん	

2. Method

- a. Pair work asking prices of food items.
- b. Ask for food items in pairs.
- c. Make a dialogue in groups—shopkeeper, customer, swap roles.
- d. Write out *hiragana* for dialogue.
- e. Present dialogue in groups.

3. Evaluation

Listen to dialogues on the video and discuss ways of improving. Collect dialogues to check *hiragana*.

4. Example of One Dialogue Written and Performed by Students (from Video)

「東京駅のばいてん」

Cast: A,B = Australian tourists

S = Station attendant

J = Japanese

K = Kiosk salesperson

- A: すみません、おおさかに行きたいんですが、どちらからですか。
- S: ああ、日本語がうまいですね。
- A: いいえ、そうでもないです。
- S: 4番線からです。
- B: ええと、何時に電車は来ますか。
- S: 9時1分です。
- B: どうもありがとう。
- S: どういたしまして。
- A: すみません、売店はどこですか。
- J: どうぞいっしょに来てください。
(goes with A and B to kiosk)
- S: いらっしゃいませ。
- J: お弁当を2つください。いくらですか。
- K: 100円です。(puts *obentō* in bag and hands to J)
- J: はい、どうぞ。(pays)
- K: おつりでございます。
- J: (to A and B) じゃあね。さようなら。(leaves)
- A, B: (to J) さようなら。ありがとう。
- A: すみません、のどがちょっといたいんです。のどあめはありますか。
- K: はい、ありますよ。
- A: じゃ、これをください。
- K: はい、どうぞ。袋はいりますか。
- A: いいえ、だいじょうぶ。(pays)
- K: ありがとうございます。
- B: ああ、このチョコレートはよくありますね！いくらですか。
- K: 130円です。
- B: おねがいします。(pays for and receives chocolate)
- K: ありがとうございます。
- B: さようなら。
- K: ああ、すみません！ おつりでございます。
- B: ああ、ありがとう。わすれました。(receives change)
- K: また来てください。
- B: ありがとう。



Student Response

- "You can relate it to real life situations." (Kelly)
- "It is a break from sentence structure and grammar lessons." (Sally)
- "It helps you to put into practice what you learn in a fun way." (Catherine)
- "Different ways of learning. It was fun!" (Geetha)

From the above comments it is true that my students enjoyed the "real" experience of shopping as though they were in Japan. They used gestures, mannerisms, and scenarios that I taught them from my experiences. Also, seven of my students have been lucky enough to travel to Japan so they can teach the other students cultural aspects from what they have experienced. It is all very well to see scenarios in movies, but having performed these plays themselves gives them deeper cultural understanding.

What stimulated student interest were the followings:

- Shopping is a favorite pastime in Japan and all tourists have a need to shop
- On arrival at the airport a tourist is surrounded by shops
- Genuine materials collected on my last trip to Japan (i.e. money and food packets)

Culture and the Foreign Language Class

A project centered around shopping includes the following benefits:

- Practical hands-on experience
- Presentation of goods
- Handling authentic materials
- Excitement of tasting some of the different foods
- The challenge of using numerals and polite phrases
- Acting out shopping scenes with classmates
- A change from textbook work
- Knowledge and handling of Japanese money
- Awareness of customs
- Good communication skills
- Increase language competence and social development of students of Japanese
- Develop group participation
- To integrate the four language skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking through an activity oriented approach

Comments from the Feedback Committee

Educating for Cross-cultural Understanding

One way to understand a different culture is to put yourself in the place of someone living in that other culture. This lesson plan encourages such an effort, as it is clear from the video that Ms. Douglass' students are enjoying the activities. For this kind of lesson to be successful, the class atmosphere must be supportive of such participation.

Having students act out in Japanese their parts as Australians and Japanese in Japan is an effective way of getting students to reflect on their view of Japan. When students construct their own dialogue, they probably first think of the words and behavior they would use when shopping in their own country, then brainstorm from what they know about Japanese behavior, and finally construct a conversation. In other words, at this stage the students differentiate Japanese language and behavior from that in their own country.

In the videotape, I didn't see any images of Japanese that Japanese people would think were strange, although I was a little concerned about students using the cliché "Your Japanese is so good. (*Nihongo ga ojōzu desu ne.*)" Ms. Douglass explains that she videotaped the role-play for subsequent discussion for intercultural understanding. This discussion is crucial. Making a conversation may not always lead to reflection, especially if the students or their guide, the teacher, have stereotyped notions about culture. What happens, for instance, if the teacher thinks that a particular role-play stereotypes the Japanese? Will the teacher point it out? Will the student discussion progress so that they come to that realization on their own? We should look into how teachers should be involved in this discussion and what basic guidelines are used to guide the discussion.

One interesting tangent might be a discussion

of how stereotypes develop from limited experiences which are then generalized. Japanese used in these situations tends to follow limited patterns (an advantage when you are learning it) and to be somewhat more formal than the English is in similar situations. What stereotypes, remembering that stereotypes can be positive or negative, regarding Japanese might develop from the limited tourist experience of shopping? What stereotypes might Japanese develop from limited experience with foreigners? This would be one way to address the cliché of "*Nihongo ga ojōzu desu ne,*" or the opposite response communicated through body language, "*Eigo wakarimasen,*" even when the person is using Japanese. I find this kind of metacognitive discussion helpful in building an awareness of one's own behavior and cultural blinders as well as an awareness and understanding of the target culture, especially with students of this age.

Language Learning

The best thing about this lesson is that the students will learn about differences in language use depending on the way the conversation proceeds, according to the age and status of the other person. In the videotape, roles included store customers and clerks, foreigners, and Japanese adults and children. I was surprised at how thoroughly language, behavior, and interaction had been thought out. The students in the video were very proficient in Japanese. For students at this level or close to it, this is an excellent activity because it provides such overall practice.