

日本語教育：コミュニカティブ・アプローチの視点から

Japanese Language Teaching: A Communicative Approach

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BENATI, Alessandro G. / 2009 Continuum

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This book encourages the application of communicative language teaching (CLT) to Japanese language classrooms. It addresses the importance of CLT, drawing on studies of second language acquisition (SLA), and exemplifies how CLT can be incorporated in the teaching of Japanese. Benati maintains that Japanese language teaching in the United Kingdom (where he teaches), especially the teaching of grammar, is still traditionally structured (using the translation method, substitution drills, and pattern practices), which impedes the development of the learner's functional use of the language. CLT is defined as a methodology through which learners develop the ability to use the foreign language systematically and appropriately in order to communicate in real-life situations. In Chapter 1, the author provides an overview of SLA research, concluding that "instruction should move from input to output and provide L2 learners with opportunities to reflect on formal properties of the language" (p. 32). In Chapter 2, he discusses how grammar teaching in L2 classrooms can be carried out such that focuses on form and meaning can be included. In Chapters 3 to 5, the author

designs and proposes communicative tasks for the purpose of using them in authentic classroom settings. Chapter 3 demonstrates how grammatical features (e.g. non-past and past tense forms) can be taught communicatively both at input and output stages. Chapter 4 proposes different activities that reflect current methodological techniques such as input flood and consciousness raising. Chapter 5 displays communicative tasks in different modalities (listening, comprehension, reading, and writing). Chapters 6 and 7 flesh out the previous chapters. Chapter 6 is a general introduction to the conduct of research using an experimental methodology that elaborates on topics such as research questions, research designs, collecting data, and analyzing data. Chapter 7 demonstrates the results of a classroom-based experimental study by contrasting Processing Instruction (PI) and Traditional Instruction (TI). By showing that the group who received PI performed better than the group who received TI in the interpretation task (a measurement of a student's ability to interpret affirmative and negative forms), the study confirms that "PI is a better instructional treatment than TI practice" (p. 184). This final

chapter will certainly motivate instructors to test this hypothesis.

This book is a well-written, logically structured, and reader-friendly textbook that can stand as a sound handbook for students of Japanese, Japanese instructors, or researchers interested in Japanese. It has a pedagogical structure. Each chapter begins with an introductory section that provides an overview of what is stated in the main sections. All the sections of the chapters are of appropriate length and there are an adequate number of ‘notice boards’ embedded in the main text that summarize important points or ask questions, both of which remind the readers of key information. There is a summary at the end of each chapter followed by a list of key terms and suggestions for further reading. All of these components form the perfect architecture for a pedagogical book.

Despite all its positive characteristics, there are a number of errors that downgrade the book. The most serious are language errors. In Activity J (p. 118), the expression *Mitsuketenasai* (used to translate the imperative ‘Find’) does not exist in Japanese. A similar word choice error is found in the Cued Dialogue (p. 119): the expression *manzoku o hyōgen suru* (literally: ‘to express one’s satisfaction’) is utterly false. Sentence (12) in Activities A and I (pp. 75, 99) is awkward. The first sentence in Step 6 in Activity L (p. 128) should be in the passive voice and the first person pronoun *watashi* ‘I’ is redundant. An instructional error occurs in this Activity as well as in Activity J (p. 118). The author is not consistent in transliterating the Japanese language in the Roman alphabet: the long vowel ‘oo’ is transliterated as both *kinō* (pp. 50, 172) and *koutei* (pp. 147, 197). There are also technical errors in the fonts (Activity E on p. 113) and line adjustments (Activities F, G, I, K, and L on pp. 113-128).

Benati’s textbook urges us to contemplate how to adopt or design a communicative approach to Japanese language teaching. It presents what past

and current SLA researchers have stipulated and how their statements can be applied to the target language. This book serves as a pedagogical signpost directing us to structure Japanese classroom teaching innovatively and outlines methods of conducting research in second language teaching. In this light, it offers a new perspective on the field of Japanese applied linguistics and undoubtedly complements other publications on the pedagogy of the Japanese language.