

Classroom Context in Japanese Language Teaching

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Keywords

classroom context, action research, teacher development, learner-initiated interaction, classroom rapport

Summary

Enhancing student teacher awareness through actual classroom research has come to prominence in recent language teacher development. In this paper, I have analyzed various classroom interactions that have taken place during Japanese language teaching practice by student teachers. For this purpose, I have examined the scripts taken as records of classroom interactions between the student teacher and the learners in various classroom contexts. I focused on the 'questioning and eliciting' aspects of teachers' verbal behavior, answering questions by learners, and 'learner-initiated talk and questioning' aspects among the categories of classroom interactions and referred to the problem of classroom rapport.

Introduction

The methods that encourage reflective teaching to improve student teacher practice by enhancing their awareness have been part of a major trend in language teacher development. Among many such methods, action research based on classroom observation has been attracting attention recently. Kemmis and MacTaggard define the concept of action research as follows (1982:5):

The linking of the terms 'action' and 'research' highlights the essential feature of

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the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning. The result is improvement in what happens in the classroom and school, and better articulation and justification of the educational rationale of what goes on. Action research provides a way of working which links theory and practice into the one whole: ideas-in-action.

Nunan (1990)¹, Bartlett (1990)², and Gebherd and Ueda-Motonaga (1992)³ also discuss reflective approaches based on classroom observation.

The Society for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language published a report on 'the practical ability and classroom technique of Japanese language teachers in classroom activities'⁴ with regard to student teacher education. In this report, two approaches, namely, teacher training and teacher development⁵, are initially mentioned, followed by a discussion that states, 'when trying to improve themselves, student teachers must reflect upon themselves in order to comprehend their present situation and establish perspectives for future direction processes. This is an indispensable process for long-term, self-perpetuating development' (1992: 124).

From the discussion quoted above, I would take a 'teacher development' approach so that the student teachers can reflect upon their classroom performance by themselves based on real classroom data and the theories that they have acquired prior to teaching practice. In this paper, I will point out the problems occurring in teacher development through analysis of classroom interactions that have taken place during teaching practice by student teachers⁶.

Framework for Classroom Interaction Analysis and Criteria for Communicativeness

As a framework to analyze the classroom interaction between student teachers and learners during the classroom teaching practice, I will use the notion, 'the classroom context' or 'the situational context' in this paper. Measurement of communicativeness in classroom interaction has been a target of various discussions in language teaching. Cullen comments on the relation between communicative talk and context as follows (1998:180):

...attempts to define communicative talk in the classroom must be based primarily on what is or is not communicative in the context of the classroom itself, rather than on what may or may not be communicative in other contexts...

Cullen also mentions the six categories by Bowers (1980) as the categories of classroom verbal behavior. These six categories are: 1) questioning/eliciting, 2) responding to students' contributions, 3) presenting/explaining, 4) organizing/giving instructions, 5) evaluating/correcting, and 6) establishing and maintaining classroom rapport. Cullen is especially interested in communicative teacher talk in classroom interaction, that is, the category of the teacher's verbal behavior. He concludes by stating, 'the categories of verbal behavior are rooted firmly in the reality of the classroom and on what typically goes on there.'

Kramsch(1993: 48) comments on cultural context in language teaching as follows :

Participants in the foreign language classroom create their own cultural context by shaping the conditions of enunciation/communication and the conditions of reception/interpretation of classroom discourse. With every turn-at-talk, teachers either perpetuate or subvert the traditional social culture of the classroom. On the one hand, together with the students, as we saw in the example above, they enact the traditional culture of the instructional setting in which they were trained ; they echo the native culture of the society in which they were socialized; they act out the behavior of speakers from the target society, which they have studied;...

Based on the opinions quoted above, I will limit the framework of interaction analysis to the range of classroom context. Therefore, when analyzing classroom interaction, the criteria for assessing communicativeness of the interaction are selected from what can be considered communicative behavior within the classroom context,⁷ disregarding those outside the classroom.

Method of Analysis for Classroom Interaction

Student teachers must make a script of every classroom instruction they issued from cassette and video tapes as part of the report. In this paper, I will use the script as a transcription of classroom interaction in order to analyze the interaction between student teachers and learners. I focused on how questioning/eliciting happened in the teachers' verbal behavior category, the content of learner-initiated talk/questioning, and negotiation of meaning through, for example, clarification requests and confirmation checks⁸. I used the following categories with reference to the list by Bowers as well as that of classroom interaction by

Nunan (1990:81)⁹.

1) Questioning/eliciting by the teacher

(1) Referential question¹⁰

(2) Display question¹⁰

(3) Eliciting response from learners through questions, giving keys, etc

2) Answering questions by learners

3) Learner-initiated talk/questioning

(1) Questions by learners

(2) Negotiating meaning by learners

Analysis of Classroom Interaction

1) Questioning/eliciting by the teacher

The following three short conversations are excerpted from one session of instruction. The first conversation took place during the introductory part of the instruction while reviewing the comparative sentences learned in the previous session. The second conversation took place during sentence pattern practice, and the third took place during free conversation at the end of the class.

Extract 1-1

T (Teacher): Atsui-desu-ne. Mainichi totemo atsui-desu. Moosugu natsu-desu. Nihon-no natsu-wa totemo atsui-desu. *L1-san-wa doko-kara kimashita-ka.*

L (Learner)1: Kankoku-desu.

T: Kankoku-kara kimashita. *Kankoku-to Nihon-to dochira-ga atsui-desu-ka.*

L1: Kankoku-no hoo-ga chotto atsui-desu.

T: Kankoku-no hoo-ga atsui-desu-ka. Kankoku-no hoo-ga chotto atsui-desu. *L2-san-wa doko-no kuni-kara kimashita-ka.*

L2: Chuugoku-desu.

T: Chuugoku-desu-ne. *Chuugoku-to Nihon-to dochira-ga atsui-desu-ka.*

L2: Chuugoku-wa hiroi-node, minami-no hoo-wa Nihon-yori atsui-desu.

These questions can be categorized as referential questions. However, the conversation is conducted as a situational drill. The conversation is characteristic of the IRF (teacher

initiates, student responds, and teacher gives feedback) discourse chains pointed out by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). That is, a student's speech is elicited by the teacher's question while the teacher gives feedback by repeating or restating the student's answer in a full sentence. In general, a referential question is a genuine question and it has been observed that 'the effort involved in answering referential questions prompts a greater effort and depth of processing on the part of the learner' (Nunan 1989: 30).

On the other hand, IRF type activity is a patterned, teacher-initiated activity while the actual conversations that take place outside the classroom are not so simple. Therefore, it is not considered an activity to promote communicativeness. Although the above conversation is an IRF activity, all of the teacher's questions are referential questions and therefore do not seem to be less communicative, at least within the given classroom context. In this case, the classroom context is as follows: learners know that the session begins with a review of the previous session. Learners have attended the previous session and have full understanding of its content. The grammatical point of the previous session was concerning comparative sentences. Therefore, in the classroom context mentioned above, the conversation evidences a certain communicativeness even though it is guided by the teacher. The next conversation is taken from sentence practice in order to solidify the comparison.

Extract 1-2 [The teacher is holding a picture card]

T: E-o mite-kudasai. *Kore-wa nan-desu-ka.*

L1: Uun, wakaranai.

T: *Nan-desu-ka. Joozu-ja nai-desu-ga.*

Ln: Meron.

T: Meron-desu. *Dewa, kore-wa nan-desu-ka.*

Ln: Suika.

T: Soo-desu. Suika-desu. *Ikura-desu-ka. [pointing at the picture of meron]*

Ln: Ichiman-en.

T: Ichiman-en. *Suika-wa ikura-desu-ka.*

Ln: 980-en.

T: 980-en-desu. *Jaa, meron-to suika-to dochira-ga takai-desu-ka.*

Ln: Meron.

T: Meron-no hoo-ga takai-desu-ne. *Dewa, 'Meron-wa'-de iemasu-ka.*

Ln: Meron-wa suika-yori takai-desu.

T: Meron-wa suika-yori takai-desu. *Dewa, suika-wa.*

Ln: Suika-wa meron-yori yasui-desu.

T: Suika-wa meron-yori yasui-desu. Hai, moo ichido iimashoo. Suika-wa meron-yori yasui-desu.

Lall: Suika-wa meron-yori yasui-desu.

All of the teacher's questions are all display questions and thus, it is a typical IRF activity. The teacher takes several steps in order to make learners learn the comparative sentence, 'Meron-wa suika-yori takai-desu' (Melon is more expensive than watermelon). First, she prepared a picture card of a watermelon and a melon with prices indicated. Then, after asking the questions, 'What is this?' and 'How much is it?' she directs the learners to the final question, 'Meron-to suika-to dochira-ga takai-desu-ka' (Which is more expensive, melon or watermelon?). Although the learners tend to answer in words instead of a full sentence, the teacher does not require them to answer in full sentences until she comes to the target sentence pattern. After arriving at the target pattern, the teacher frequently uses 'echoing' of students' response and 'modeling'. The classroom context is as follows: first, learners understand that the purpose of the drill is to solidify the sentence pattern. Secondly, visual material is necessary due to the nature of the comparative pattern. Thirdly, possibility of the teacher determining the subject of each sentence may be helpful since the appearance of more than a single sentence in making comparisons may be confusing to learners. As far as the above conversation is concerned, the teacher successfully created interaction appropriate to the classroom context by posing display questions in an effective way. The final exchange is taken from free conversation at the end of the session.

Extract 1-3

T: Dewa, saigo-ni minasan-no kuni-no koto-ni tsuite hanashite-kudasai. S1-san-to S2-san-wa Tai-kara kita-n-desu-yo-ne.

L1, L2: Hai.

T: *Tai-wa atsui-desu-ka.*

L1: Hai.

T: *Ame-wa doo desu-ka. Furimasu-ka.*

L1: Ame, Takusan furu.

T: *Gohan-wa doo desu-ka.*

L1: Oishikute karai.

T: Karai-desu-ne. *Nani-ga ichiban oishii-desu-ka.*

L1: Tomuyamukun.

T: Oishii-desu-ne. Watashi-mo suki-desu. *Mono-no nedan-wa doo desu-ka. Takai-desu-ka, yasui-desu-ka.*

L1: Yasui-desu.

T: *Nihon-yori...*

L1: Nihon-yori takai-desu.

T: Takai-desu-ka. *Tai-no doko-ga suki-desu-ka.*

L1: Bankoku.

T: *Bankoku-wa dooshite ii-desu-ka.*

L1: Uun, nigii, nigiyakana tokoro. Hito-ga ooi. Nigiyaka.

T: Aa, nigiyaka-desu-ne. Hito-ga ooi-desu-ka.

All of the teacher's questions are referential questions. Compared to the first conversation (**Extract 1-1**), the topic is more extended, and there is less 'echoing' or 'modeling' by the teacher. However, when asking about the prices in Thailand, the teacher elicits the learner use of a comparative sentence by saying 'Nihon yori' (more than Japan) because the learner simply answered, 'Yasui-desu' (It is cheap). Although the learner made a contradictory answer to her earlier remark by saying, 'Nihon-yori takai-desu' (It is more expensive than Japan), the teacher merely said 'Takai-desu-ka' (Is it expensive?) and did not touch upon the correctness of the answer. In the classroom context, the learners understand that they are supposed to talk about their own country using the sentence patterns they have learned during the session, and the teacher needs to verify how well the learners have learned the sentence patterns. Although the conversational topic has extended beyond the first conversation of the session, it is still confined within the range of an IRF chain despite the fact that it is concluding activity of the session. There are no interactions among the learners. The learners do not show spontaneity in using the sentence patterns they have learned that day. However, the teacher does not seem to be giving appropriate instructions or eliciting questions or answers using the target pattern. We can suggest two points to make the scene

of extract 1-3 more suitable for the classroom context:

1. Making learners understand the purpose of this activity so they can develop free conversations using the sentence patterns they have learned.
2. Using a method that can promote learners' interactions as the concluding activity of the session.

2) Answering questions by learners

In many cases, learners answer the teacher's referential questions either in a short sentence or with words only as seen in the questioning/eliciting by the teacher in extract 1-1 and 1-3. Even for display question cases, learners tend to answer in a short sentence or with words unless they know that they must use full sentences in order to practice target sentence patterns. However, in this case, the teacher cannot expect much from the learners because they are elementary level learners who have received language instructions for only 50 hours or so. The following case shows some creativity on the part of the learners in using comparative sentences.

Extract 2-1 [The teacher is showing a picture card in which children play in the park and on the street]

T: Dewa, L1-san, koko-wa doko-desu-ka.

L1: Kooen-desu.

T: Soo-desu-ne. Dare-ga imasu-ka.

L1: Hiroshi-kun.

T: Hiroshi-kun-ga imasu. Ja, L2-san, nani-o shite-imasu-ka.

L2: Asobi...

T: Hai, soo-desu. Hiroshi-kun-wa kooen-de asonde-imasu. [The teacher points at the other picture, a picture of a street] L3-san, kore-wa dooro-desu. Kooen-to dooro-to dochira-ga abunai-desu-ka.

L3: *Ano, yoru toki-wa socchi [points at the park] -no hoo-ga abunai-desu-kedo, ohiru-wa dooro-no hoo-ga abunai-desu.*

T: Soo-desu-ne. Yoru-wa kocchi [points at the park] -no hoo-ga abunai-kamoshirenai-kedo, ohiru-wa dooro-no hoo-ga abunai-desu. [The teacher moves on to next topic]

Although the teacher expected the answer, ‘A street is more dangerous than a park’, L3 thought of the difference between day and night, and gave an unexpected answer. Such an answer is an expression of the learner’s personality and unique ideas and results in a quite authentic interaction. An experienced teacher would have tried to give some kind of elicitation in order to link the conversation to an authentic interaction.

3) Learner-initiated talk/questioning

3-1 Questions by learners

Learners sometimes ask questions in order to confirm the meaning of a new word. In the following example, the teacher divided the class into groups and distributed a list of hotels to them. The learners must decide where to stay and explain the reasons. The learners must use the sentence pattern ‘～soo desu’ (it seems ～).

Extract 3-1 [The teacher makes groups and distributes the lists with a glossary of new words]

T: Kore-o minagara, dono hoteru-ni tomaru-ka kimete-kudasai.

L1: [pointing at a hotel room] Mabushiku nasasoo.

L2: Takasoo.

L3: *[looking at the vocabulary list] ‘Kodomo-no kuni’ no ‘kuni’-wa?*

T: ‘Kuni’...Anata-no kuni-wa?

L3: Kanada-deshoo. *Kedo, kono ‘kuni’-wa?*

T: Aa, kore-wa kodomo-tachi-no... Kanada-wa Kanada-jin-no kuni-desu-ne. ‘Kodomo-no kuni’-ni-wa, kodomo-tachi-ga minna asobi-ni ikimasu.

L3: Soo. *Dalara, kono ‘kuni’, chigau-deshoo?*

T: Hai, kodomo-no tame-no kuni-to iu imi-da-to omoimasu.

L3 poses a question about the meaning of ‘Kodomo-no kuni’. L3 thinks that the ‘kuni’ does not mean ‘nation’ or ‘nationality’, but may be a metaphor. Learners who have been exposed to less than 50 hours of Japanese language study would only understand ‘kuni’ as a ‘nationality’ or a ‘nation’ as in sentences such as ‘Okuni-wa dochira-desu-ka’ or ‘Watano-no kuni-wa Kanada-desu’. L3 seemed to have wished to confirm that the ‘kuni’ in ‘Kodomo-no kuni’ is not used in the same manner as the ‘kuni’ he has learned.

3)-2 Negotiating meaning by learners

Extract 3-2 [Continued from extract 3-1]

L1: Heya-ga ookii.

T: Hai, ookisso-desu-ne.

L1: Aa, mabushii.

T: 'Mabushii'-demo daijoobu-desu-ka.

L1: Hai, daijoobu.

L2: *[to L1] 'Mabushii' sounds bad. Something like...[L2 shows a 'mabushii (dazzling)' face].*

L1: Aa.

T: Akarui?

L1: Akarui.

T: Akarusoo-desu.

The teacher made sure by asking 'Daijoobu-desu-ka' (Is it all right?). But L1 still does not comprehend that the word 'mabushii' carries a negative image. Therefore, L2 transmits the message using English and showing his facial expression. From L2's helping words, the teacher was able to present an appropriate word, 'akarui'.

The following conversation was conducted in order to introduce and explain new words, 'majime' (serious) and 'fumajime' (not serious). Basic adjective and adjectival nouns have already been introduced. L2 explains what it means to L1 who cannot understand the teacher's intention.

Extract 3-3 [The teacher holds a picture of a serious looking student and an unsteady looking student]

T: Kore-wa Yoshiko-san-to Waruo-kun - desu. Yoshiko-san-wa majime-desu. Majimena hito-desu. Waruo-kun-wa majime-ja arimasen. Fumajimena hito-desu. Yoshiko-san-wa donna hito-desu-ka, L1-san.

L1: Majimena-hito-desu.

T: [writes, 'majime' and 'fumajime' on the board]

L1: *Imi-wa 'wakai' (young)?*

T: 'Majime'-tte yuu-no-wa [shows the picture again], kore-wa tesuto-o shite-imasu. Futari-tomo tesuto-chuu-desu. Yoshiko-san-wa chanto benkyoo-shimashita. Demo, Waruo-kun-wa

benkyoo-shimasen-deshita. Yoshiko-san-wa majimena-node, benkyoo-shimashita. Itsumo chanto benkyoo-shite-imasu. Demo, Waruo-kun-wa majime-ja nai-node, fumajimena-node, itsumo benkyoo-shimasen. Wakarimasu-ka.

L1: *Sumimasen, 'majime'-no imi-wa nan-desu-ka. 'Muzukashii' (difficult)?*

T: [shakes her head sideways in negation] 'Majime'-wa itsumo...

L2: *Benkyoo-shimasu. Mainichi, mai-ban, asa, benkyoo-shimasu.*

L1: Aa...

T: Kesseki-shinai, gakkoo-ni chanto kuru-toka, shukudai-o chanto suru, benkyoo-o chanto suru, sooyuu hito-wa majimena hito-to iimasu. Sooyuu koto-o nani-mo shinai Waruo-san-no yoono hito-wa majime-ja arimasen, Fumajime-desu.

L2: *[to L1] Anata-wa majime-desu-ka.*

L1: Watashi-wa majime-desu. [All: Laugh]

In extract 3-2, L2 explains to L1 using their common language, English. However, in extract 3-3, L2 tries to explain in Japanese. The teacher tries to explain 'majime' using a picture card which depicts people taking a test and says, 'Yoshiko-san-wa majimena-node, benkyoo-shimashita. Itsumo chanto benkyoo-shite-imasu'. However, because the elementary level learners are not familiar with the expressions 'na-node' and 'chanto ~ suru', L1 could not understand the teacher's explanation clearly. Therefore, L2 tried to help L1 using the words they have already learned. Furthermore, L2 even gave L1 some feedback by asking 'Anata-wa majime-desu-ka?' after the teacher gave additional explanation. This kind of contribution by the learners seems to take place within the positive social atmosphere that is gradually formed as the course proceeds. Therefore, it is categorized under establishing and maintaining classroom rapport.

Conclusion

As elements that characterize genuine communication, Nunan includes (1987: 137), 'uneven distribution of information, the negotiation of meaning (through, for example, clarification requests and confirmation checks), topic nomination and negotiation of more than one speaker, and the right of interlocutors to decide whether to contribute to an interaction or not.' In fact, the three types of conversation I have quoted in extracts 3-1, 3-2, 3-3 can likely take place outside of the classroom. For example, if the learner is an English teacher,

he/she may confirm or correct the meaning of certain words as he/she discusses the travel schedule he/she plans to take during the summer break with the colleagues. However, even if a learner has an opportunity to discuss or negotiate in the Japanese language itself, it is unlikely that he/she can do so at any time with anyone. Such opportunities are rather limited outside the classroom context. In that sense, communication regarding the language is possible in the classroom context, and in fact, it is the purpose of classroom instruction. Nonetheless, reviewing the real classroom data recorded by the student teachers, learner-initiated interaction does not seem to take place so easily. For teacher development programs with a focus on classroom context, teaching how to form and maintain classroom rapport is an important subject.

Notes

1. Nunan (1990), 62-81.
2. Bartlett (1990), 202-214.
3. Gebhard and Ueda-Motonaga (1992), 179-191.
4. Refer to *Kyōju katsudō ni okeru Nihongo kyōshi no jissenteki nōryoku to jugyō gijutsu ni kansuru chōsa kenkyū* (1992) edited by The Society for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language.
5. Freeman (1990: 103) comments on the 'training' strategy and 'development' strategy as follows:
A 'training' strategy, when it is used exclusively, can lead to an overemphasis on teaching skills and the behaviors at the expense of developing the student teacher's independent resources and capacity to take charge of what he or she is doing ... The 'development' strategy, in contrast, emphasizes the processes of reasoning that underlie what the student teacher does in the classroom; the teachers' relation to what they know and how they know it is the central focus.
6. Until 2008, student teachers were divided into groups of two or three people and each was responsible for 90 minutes of classroom instruction. Each group taught once a week for two weeks.
7. Breen and Candlin (1980: 98) claims, 'the classroom is a unique social environment with its own human activities and its own conventions governing these activities.' Thus, Breen and Candlin defines a classroom as a type of social environment for students.
8. Refer to Nunan (1987: 137).
9. For the details of the classroom interaction list, refer to Nunan (1990: 81).
10. According to a general definition, 'referential question' is 'a question of which answer the teacher

does not have' while 'display question' is 'a question of which answer the teacher has, but asks in order to provide an opportunity for the class to display their understanding or knowledge.' In the field of teacher talk research, it is generally thought that referential questions are more genuine than display questions. However, in view of classroom context, such a definition may not necessarily be applicable. For more details, refer to Cullen (1998: 179-187).

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Appendix: Translation of Extracts

Extract 1-1

T: It is hot. It is hot everyday. It will be summer soon. Summer in Japan is very hot. ***Where are you from, L1-san?***

L1: I'm from Korea.

T: You are from Korea. ***Which is hotter, Korea or Japan?***

L1: It is little hotter in Korea.

T: Is it a little hotter in Korea? It is a little hotter in Korea. ***Which country are you from L2-san?***

L2: I'm from China.

T: You are from China, is that right? ***Which is hotter, China or Japan?***

L2: China is big. Southern China is hotter than Japan.

Extract 1-2 [Teacher is holding a picture card]

T: Look at the picture. ***What is this?***

L1: Well, I don't know.

T: ***What is this? It is not a good picture.***

L: It's a melon.

T: It is a melon. ***What is this, then?***

L: It's a watermelon.

T: Yes, it is. It is a watermelon. ***How much is it [pointing at the picture of a melon]?***

L: 10,000 yen.

T: 10,000 yen. ***How much is the watermelon?***

L: 980 yen.

T: It is 980 yen. ***Which is more expensive, melon or watermelon?***

L: A melon.

T: Melon is more expensive. ***Then can you say a full sentence beginning with 'Meron-wa'?***

L: Melon is more expensive than watermelon.

T: Melon is more expensive than watermelon. *What about watermelon?*

L: Watermelon is cheaper than melon.

T: Watermelon is cheaper than melon. Let's say it again. Watermelon is cheaper than melon.

L: Watermelon is cheaper than melon.

Extract 1-3

T: Before we end the class, please talk about your own country. L1-san and L2-san, You are from Thailand, aren't you?

L1,L2: Yes.

T: *It is hot in Thailand?*

L1: Yes.

T: *How about rain? Does it rain?*

L1: It rains a lot.

T: *How about the food?*

L1: It is delicious and spicy.

T: It is spicy. *What is the most delicious food?*

L1: Tomyumkun.

T: It is delicious. I like it, too. *How about prices of things? Are they expensive or cheap?*

L1: Things are cheap.

T: *Than Japan?*

L1: More expensive than Japan.

T: More expensive? *What is your favorite place in Thailand?*

L1: Bangkok.

T: *Why do you like Bangkok?*

L1: Well, it is..., it is bustling. There are many people and it is bustling.

T: It is bustling, isn't it? There are many people, is that right?

Extract 2-1 [The teacher is showing a picture card in which children play in the park and on the street]

T: L1-san, Where is this?

L1: It is a park.

T: that is right. Who is in the park?

L1: Hiroshi-kun.

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T: Hiroshi-kun is in the park. L2-san, what is he doing?

L2: Playing.

T: That's right. Hiroshi-kun is playing in the park.

[pointing at the other picture, a picture of a street] L3-san, this is a street. Which is more dangerous, a park or a street?

L3: *Well, nighttime, that one [pointing at the park] is more dangerous. But in the daytime, a street is more dangerous.*

T: That's right. At night, this [pointing at the park] may be more dangerous, but in the daytime, a street is more dangerous.

[The teacher moves on to the next topic]

Extract 3-1 [The teacher makes groups and distributes the lists with a glossary of new words and pictures]

T: Please refer to the list and decide which hotel to stay at.

L1: [pointing at a hotel room] It does not seem bright.

L2: It seems expensive.

L3: *[looking at the lists] What is 'kuni' in 'Kodomo-no kuni'?*

T: 'Kuni'? What is your 'kuni (a country)'?

L3: It is Canada. *But what is this 'kuni'?*

T: I see, this is for children. Canada is a country for Canadian people. Children go to play to 'Kodomo-no kuni'.

L3: Yes, *so, this 'kuni' is different, isn't it?*

T: Yes, I think it means 'kuni' for children.

Extract 3-2 [Continued from **Extract 3-1**]

L1: The room is big.

T: Yes, it looks big.

L1: Oh, it is dazzling.

T: 'dazzling'. Is it all right?

L1: Yes, it is dazzling.

L2: *[To L1] 'Mabushii (dazzling)' sounds bad. Something like...[L2 shows a 'dazzling' face]*

L1: I see...

T: Light?

L1: Light.

T: It looks light.

Extract 3-3 [The teacher holds a picture of a serious looking student and an unsteady looking student]

T: This is a picture of Yoshiko and Waruo. Yoshiko is a serious person. Waruo is not serious. He is not a serious person. What kind of person is Yoshiko, L1-san?

L1: she is a serious person.

T: [The teacher writes, 'majime' and 'fumajime' on the board]

L1: *Does it mean 'wakai' (young)?*

T: 'Majime' means [shows the picture again]... They are taking a test. Both of them are taking a test. Yoshiko studied well, but Waruo did not study. Yoshiko studied because she is a serious person. She always studies hard. But Waruo does not study hard because he is not a serious person. Do you understand?

L1: *I'm sorry. What does 'majime' mean? Does it mean 'muzukashii' (difficult)?*

T: [The teacher shakes her head sideways in negation] 'Majime' means, always...

L2: *To study. Everyday, every night and morning, study.*

L1: I see.

T: A person who will not be absent from class, a person who comes to school every day and studies hard. Such person is called a serious person. A person like Waruo who does not do so is not serious. Such a person is not serious.

L2: *[To L1] Are you serious?*

L1: I am serious. [All: Laugh]