

Teaching Japanese Body Language Phrases to JFL Students

Hiroko HASHIMOTO*

Introduction

Many of the idiomatic expressions in any language are often derived from their own cultural background. Japanese idioms containing various Body Language phrases also reflect the Japanese people's interpretation of movements, events, and relations. These expressions are so popular and useful that students learning Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) should acquire at least some of those most frequently used when they have reached the intermediate level. But they seem to have difficulty learning them, because students cannot comprehend the foreign culture underlying these idioms.

The purpose of this paper is to show how to overcome these linguistic barriers. In order to do this, first an outline of the categorization of these Body Language phrases based on a study of what roles they are meant to play will be introduced. Since these Body Language phrases have remained little analyzed in terms of what types they are composed of,¹ the following classification is an attempt to grasp the structure and organization of these body idioms. Then a teaching plan of these idiomatic utterances to speakers of a language other than Japanese will be proposed. It might be interesting to show how difficult these phrases are for foreign students to comprehend. It might also be interesting to discuss the teaching plan in a textbook formula that we might use for JFL students.

I. Categorization of Japanese Body Language Phrases

Body Language phrases in Japanese can be categorized into several groups in terms of the reality of body use or body movements described in them, and can be captured as a continuum from real through semi-real or semi-imagined to imaginary body movements. Furthermore, metaphors are deeply involved with expressions describing unreal or imaginary body movements. The following is the five major types to be offered

*外国語系列 (Department of Foreign Languages)

as a general classification.

1. Type I: Expressions describing real body movements

In this type of expression, actual body movements which have the function of emblematic gestures are depicted. However, the performance of body actions is not necessarily required. They are divided into three stages in terms of the simultaneous carrying out of body movements.

I-1: Expressions requiring simultaneous body movements

The body action described is actually performed, and the expression itself conveys a certain psychological or social meaning of its gesture. Example: TE O AWASERU [put one's hands together], meaning "pray," in DOOKA BUJI DE ITEKURERU YOONI TO TE O AWASETA [I put my hands together, praying for his safety]. (Notice that the English translations are mostly literal in this paper.)

Other examples are ATAMA O KAKU [scratch one's head] meaning "feel embarrassed," ME O HOSOMERU [narrow one's eyes] meaning "be pleased to see," KUCHI O HENOJI NI SURU [make one's mouth into the shape of the letter *he*] meaning "unpleasant," MUNE O TATAKU [hit one's chest (with one's fist)] meaning "take all responsibility for," etc.

I-2: Expressions not always requiring simultaneous body movements

Expressions of this group are used in both situations, where the described body action is accompanied and where it is not. The same description of the body action is used not only for the actual physical situation but also for the extended non-physical situation. In this process, we can see the figurative expansion of the usage and meaning of an expression. Example: ME O TSUBURU [close one's eyes], meaning "try not to see," in HISANNA JIKO-GENBA NI OMOWAZU ME O TSUBUTTA [I just closed my eyes when I saw the horrible scene of an accident] (action is accompanied), and IHAN DA KEDO KONKAI DAKE WA ME O TSUBURIMASHOO [You are against the rule, but I will close my eyes to this case] (action is not accompanied).

Other examples are ATAMA O KAKAERU [hold one's head (in one's hands)] meaning "worry," SHITA O DASU [put out one's tongue] meaning (1) "be ashamed" and (2) "make a fool of," MUNE O HARU [stretch one's chest] meaning "be proud of oneself," KUBI O KASHIGERU [incline one's neck] meaning "wonder," etc.

I-3: Expressions free from simultaneous body movements

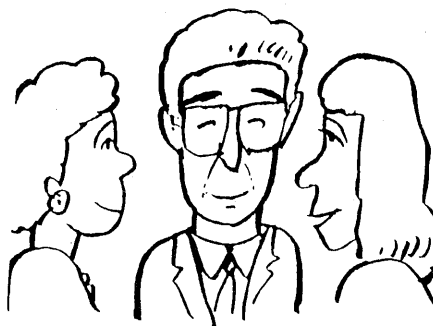
Furthermore, some expressions have come to be used only in non-physical situations, and have gained the status of matured idioms. Example: ATAMA GA SAGARU [one's head lowers], meaning "cannot help respecting," in KARE NO KENSHINTEKINA TAIDO NI WA ATAMA GA SAGARU [My head lowers because of his self-sacrificing attitude]. The gesture of lowering one's head is actually performed when a person shows respect to someone or something. But this expression in which the body movement is described as if the person's head automatically lowers, does not refer to an actual physical situation; it only indicates one's psychological state as shown by the gesture.

Other examples are ATAMA GA AGARANAI [cannot raise one's head] meaning "cannot stand up to (someone)," AGO O DASU [stick out one's chin] meaning "be exhausted," MUNE O NADEOROSU [stroke one's chest downward] meaning "feel greatly relieved," etc.

2. Type II: Expressions describing semi-real body movements

There are some expressions in which the reality of body movement described is not so clearly understood as in the former type. There seems to be a little imaginary element in this type of expression. And interestingly enough, there are two types according to the degree of imaginativeness, although the boundary between them is not obvious.

One of those is close to Type I which describes emblematic gestures. Example: HANA NO SHITA O NAGAKU SURU [lengthen the portion below one's nose], meaning "be pleased to be with a desirable woman," in KARE WA WAKAI ONNANOKO NI KAKOMARETE HANA NO SHITA O NAGAKU SHITE IRU [He is lengthening the portion below his nose, surrounded by young gals]. Naturally this expression is used only for men. Although it is uncertain whether the portion below a man's nose can actually lengthen, Japanese men are said to have such an appearance in a situation like this. Perhaps a person's psychological state is mentioned by means of describing such a subtle facial expression.



Other examples are ME O SANKAKU NI SURU [make one's eyes triangular shaped] meaning "give an angry look," ME O TSURIAGERU [slant one's eyes upward] meaning "give a fierce look," MEJIRI O SAGERU [lower the corners of one's eyes] mean-

ing (1) "be all smiles," (2) "make eyes at a woman," etc.

The other of those is close to Type III which has exclusively figurative features. Example: SHITA O MAKU [roll up one's tongue], meaning "be astonished," in SONO KODOMO NO ATAMA NO YOSA NI MINNA GA SHITA O MAITA [Everyone rolled up their tongue, seeing the cleverness of the child]. When people are astonished to see someone achieve an excellent performance, they may become speechless. This phrase indicates such a state of body reaction.

Other examples are MUNE O FUKURAMASERU [inflate one's chest] meaning "be full of hope," MIMI O SOBADATERU [prick up one's ears] meaning "listen carefully for," etc.

3. Type III: Figurative expressions based on real body movements

In this type, the meanings construed from actual body actions are applied to other non-physical situations. In terms of the mechanism that causes a change from description of actual body movements to representation of extended meanings, this type is the same as Type I-3 mentioned above. And although there are in fact some expressions that are extremely difficult to categorize, the difference could be mentioned as follows. Type I-3 is for phrases where meanings still retain the original gestural implications even though the expressions do not refer to the actual body actions, while Type III is for those where the original meanings are fully lost and new meanings referring to non-actual social behavior or psychological states are created. It can be said that such expressions are created by expanding the image through a newly developed association. Example: ASHI O ARAU [wash one's feet], meaning "to quit a vicious engagement," in KARE WA YAKUZA NO SEKAI KARA ASHI O ARATTA [He washed his feet of the world of *yakuza* (gangsters)]. In old days people traveled on foot. The first thing that travelers did as soon as they arrived at an inn or someone's house was to wash their feet in a bucket to remove dust or mud on them. Based on the image of this everyday physical activity, the extended meaning was created.



Other examples are KUBI O TSUKKOMU [stick one's neck into] meaning "take part in," KATA O NARABERU [make one's shoulders parallel (with someone else's)]

meaning “be equal with,” ASHI O HIPPARU [pull someone’s leg] meaning “disturb, disrupt,” AGURA O KAKU [sit (on something) with one’s legs crossed] meaning “laze away, depending on previous attainments,” KUBI O KIRU [cut off someone’s neck] meaning “fire someone,” etc.

4. Type IV: Expressions describing imaginary body movements

Some expressions are based on unreal or imaginary body movements. As imagination increases, meanings are also created from an imaginary body action that a person is unable to perform actually. These expressions have no literal sense, so that only figurative meanings are derived from imaginary body actions. Interestingly, some kind of rhetorical features and effects are witnessed in these expressions, such as exaggeration, vividness or surprise. Example: NODO KARA TE GA DERU [one’s hand comes out of one’s throat], meaning “desire,” in ANO HON GA HOSHIKUTE NODO KARA TE GA DESOO DA [I want that book so much that I feel as if my hand were coming out of my throat]. The image here is that one’s desire is personified and when it becomes extremely strong, a desire-seen-as-a-person’s hand comes out of the throat to grasp what he/she wants.

Other examples are HANA O TAKAKU SURU [hold one’s nose high] meaning “be proud of,” HA NI KINU O KISENAI [not to cover one’s teeth with clothes] meaning “speak plainly and straight,” HESO GA CHA O WAKASU [one’s navel boils tea] meaning “ridiculous,” SUNE O KAJIRU [chew someone’s (usually one’s parent’s) shin] meaning “be dependent on,” TSUME NI HI O TOMOSU [kindle one’s finger nail] meaning “be very frugal,” etc.

5. Type V: Expressions based on metaphors

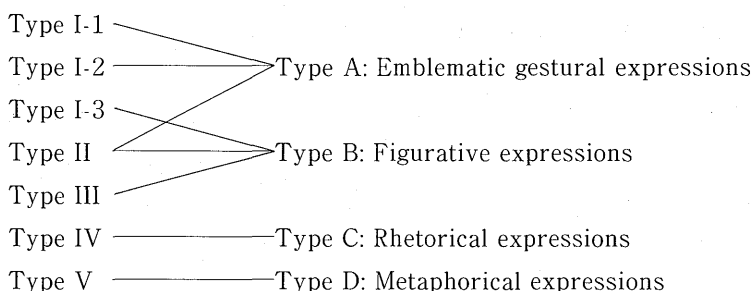
There are many expressions in which the body areas are metaphorically used in various ways. A certain body area is seen as another thing to make a new meaning. Naturally, such kinds of expressions are productions of imagination. Unlike the four types mentioned above, this type of expression contains a lot of examples referring to the state of a body area as well as to the movement of it. Examples: HARA O KIMERU [determine one’s belly], meaning “make up one’s mind,” in KARE WA HARA O KIMETE JISHOKU SUBEKIDA [He should determine his belly and resign his position]. Generally, the belly is seen as a container where one’s mind, thoughts, or ideas are kept. But in this case it is seen as the content of the container.

Other examples are ATAMA GA KIRERU [one’s head cuts well] meaning “be

sharp-witted," ME GA TAKAI [one's eyes are high] meaning "be discerning," MIMI GA TOOI [one's ears are far away] meaning "be hard of hearing," UDE GA AGARU [one's arm rises] meaning "make progress," etc.²

6. Simplified categorization

Japanese Body Language phrases are divided into the five types, which form a continuum concerning the reality of body use, as shown above. Perhaps such classification could also apply to many counterparts in other languages. If necessary, however, they could be simplified to four types as follows.



Although there is a subtle difference between Type I-1, 2 and part of Type II in the degree of the reality of body movements, they can be unified into the same group in view of the fact that they describe emblematic gestural body movements. Moreover, Type I-3, part of Type II and Type III can also be put into the same group, because three of them are figurative expressions based on real and semi-real body movements, although there is a little difference in the degree of figurativeness among them.

II. Difficult Body Language Expressions for English-native Speakers

Middle and advanced level learners of the Japanese language want to understand and use the Body Language expressions in the daily conversation, but it appears that these phrases are difficult for them to master. A conceivable reason would be that many of these phrases are highly culture-bound type and learners tend to understand them in their own ways of perception different from Japanese people's. The following experiment shows how difficult these phrases are for JFL students.³

1. Experiment

1. 1. Subjects

The subjects for this experiment consisted of 30 English-native speakers learning Japanese at Center for Japanese Studies, Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. They were all at the intermediate level.

1. 2. Test sentences

20 Japanese Body Language phrases used for the experiment are as follows.

<i>Phrase</i>	<i>Translation</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1. ATAMA GA KIRERU	one's head cuts well	be smart
2. ATAMA O KAKU	Scratch one's head	feel embarrassed
3. ATAMA NI KURU	come to one's head	get angry
4. KUCHI GA KATAI	one's mouth is hard	be close-mouthed
5. KUCHI O HENOJI NI SURU	make one's mouth into the shape of the letter <i>he</i>	be unpleasant
6. HANA O TAKAKU SURU	hold one's nose high	be proud of
7. HANA NI TSUKU	attach to one's nose	be sick of
8. ME O HOSOMERU	narrow one's eyes	be pleased to see
9. ME GA KOERU	one's eyes get fertile	have the seeing eyes
10. KATA O MOTSU	hold someone's shoulders	support
11. KATA O NARABERU	make one's shoulders parallel (with someone else's)	be equal with
12. TE O KASU	lend one's hands	help
13. TE O NUKU	take one's hands out of (something)	cut corners
14. TE O DASU	reach out one's hand	attempt
15. ASHI O HIPPARU	pull someone's leg	disturb
16. ASHI O ARAU	wash one's feet	quit
17. KAO NI DORO O NURU	spread mud on someone's face	disgrace
18. KAO O DASU	show one's face	appear
19. SUNE O KAJIRU	chew someone's shin	be dependent on
20. NODO KARA TE GA DERU	one's hand comes out of one's throat	desire

20 test sentences in a written form in which each Body Language phrase was placed in an appropriate context were used. The sentence structures and words used in

the test sentences were given careful consideration not to beyond the subjects' level. See Appendix.

1. 3. Method

The subjects were asked to read the sentences containing one Body Language phrase underscored, and to write the meanings of the expression underscored either in Japanese or in English, based on what they imagined. The subjects were permitted to ask the experimenter the meaning of the words when they did not know them. The experiment was made in a Japanese class at Center for Japanese Studies. It took about twenty minutes to complete the experiment.

2. Results

The results of the answers are given in Table 1. The answers where an expected or a similar meaning was written are judged to be "correct," the answers completely different from the meaning in Japanese to be "incorrect," and the answers where "I don't know" or nothing was written to be "no answer." Following the types shown in Chapter I, let's see the results.

Type	Phrase	Correct	Incorrect	No answer
A	2. ATAMA O KAKU	20.0	60.0	20.0
	5. KUCHI O HENOJI NI SURU	56.7	23.3	20.0
	8. ME O HOSOMERU	36.7	43.3	20.0
B	15. ASHI O HIPPARU	3.3	76.7	20.0
	16. ASHI O ARAU	60.0	26.7	13.3
	3. ATAMA NI KURU	53.3	16.7	30.0
	7. HANA NI TSUKU	46.7	36.7	16.7
	18. KAO O DASU	96.7	0.0	3.3
	10. KATA O MOTSU	56.7	33.3	10.0
	11. KATA O NARABERU	20.0	46.7	33.3
	13. TE O NUKU	40.0	50.0	10.0
	14. TE O DASU	30.0	50.0	20.0
C	6. HANA O TAKAKU SURU	83.3	16.7	0.0
	17. KAO NI DORO O NURU	66.7	23.3	10.0
	20. NODO KARA TE GA DERU	46.7	26.7	26.7
	19. SUNE O KAJIRU	83.3	10.0	6.7

D	1. ATAMA GA KIRERU	36.7	33.3	30.0
	4. KUCHI GA KATAI	26.7	43.3	30.0
	9. ME GA KOERU	46.7	26.7	26.7
	12. TE O KASU	96.7	0.0	3.3

Table 1 Results (%)

The phrases in Type A describe the real body movements and these body movements function as certain nonverbal communication movements. ATAMA O KAKU [scratch one's head], meaning "feel embarrassed," refers to what a person does when he feels embarrassed. The correct rate of this phrase is very low (20 %). Among the incorrect answers, conspicuously 9 subjects interpreted it as "think." The other incorrect answers were "feel sorry" (2), "be worried" (2), etc. It is interesting that 2 subjects wrote "scratch one's head." This response indicates that they were not able to read the meaning of this phrase in terms of a nonverbal communication movement.

KUCHI O HENOJI NI SURU [make one's mouth into the shape of the letter *he*], meaning "be unpleasant," describes the facial expression of a person who is very hurt. The not too low correct rate (56.7 %) tells that such facial expression could be rather understandable to English speaking people as well. Among the incorrect answers, "worry" is the highest (5).

ME O HOSOMERU [narrow one's eye], meaning "be pleased to see," also describes the facial expression when a person is pleased to see something. It must be noticed that in English, "narrow one's eyes" usually refers to one's suspicious facial expression. This culturally different interpretation of the same phrase might produce the results that the correct rate is somewhat low (36.7 %) and some subjects interpreted it as "pay attention to" (5), "disapproved" (1), or "angry" (1). These are good examples to show that similar body movements are interpreted differently in different cultures.

The phrases in Type B are figurative expressions derived from the real body movements. ASHI O HIPPARU [pull someone's leg], meaning "disturb," gains the lowest correct rate (3.3 %) of all the items. It is very interesting that many subjects took this phrase as the completely opposite meaning such as "help," "support," (11). In addition, here too, as there is the same phrase in English which means "tease," some subjects wrongly gave this answer as their interpretation (7).

As to ASHI O ARAU [wash one's feet], meaning "quit," it scores a not too low correct rate (60.0 %). This might be because that there is a similar English phrase "wash

one's hands of," meaning the same. Among the various incorrect responses were "clean out" (2), "wash out his feet" (1), "sneaky" (1), etc.

ATAMA NI KURU [come to one's head], meaning "get angry," also gains a not too low correct rate (53.3 %), but 30 % gave no answer. Some incorrect answers were "headache" (3), and "kill" (2).

HANA NI TSUKU [attach to one's nose], meaning "be sick of," scores somewhat low a correct rate (46.7 %). Many of the wrong answers took this phrase as positive meanings like "get used to" (5), "become delicious" (2), or "have a good appetite" (2).

KAO O DASU [show one's face], meaning "appear," gains an outstandingly high correct rate (96.7 %). This might be because the same expression exists in English and the usage or the meaning is also the same both in Japanese and in English.

As to KATA O MOTSU [hold someone's shoulders], meaning "support," the correct rate is not so low (56.7 %). Among the incorrect answers were "try to stop it" (2), "keep an eye on" (2), "be responsible for" (2), etc.

KATA O NARABERU [make one's shoulders parallel (with someone else's)], meaning "be equal with," gains a very low correct rate (20.0 %). Among the various wrong answers, 2 subjects interpreted it as "shoulder to shoulder." The other incorrect answers were "compliment each other" (1), "not as good as" (1), "show off" (1), "practice to be good" (1), and so on.

The correct rate of TE O NUKU [take one's hands out of (something)], meaning "cut corners," is somewhat low (40.0 %). 4 subjects wrongly interpreted it as "get out of helping," and another 4 subjects gave the incorrect answer, "help" or "help out." The other incorrect answers were "I am doing" (2), "need another hand" (1), "recruit help" (1), "take care" (1), etc.

TE O DASU [reach out one's hand], meaning "attempt" seems less comprehensible to English-native speakers; the correct rate is 30 %. The context used in the test sentence might have affected the subjects' understandnnnability a lot, because among a variety of incorrect answers there were "sell out" (2), "the stock dropped" (2), "put up for sale" (1), and so on. An interesting observation is that there were the answers, "interfere" (1) and "play around" (1), which are the other different meanings of this phrase used in the different contexts.

The phrases in Type C describe imaginary body actions. HANA O TAKAKU SURU [hold one's nose high], meaning "be proud of," gains a very high correct rate (83.3 %). This may result from the fact that there is a gesture of "pushing one's nose-tip with one's forefinger" which implies "proud" or "snobbish" in English culture. Similar

expressions in different languages are likely to be interpreted in similar ways.

KAO NI DORO O NURU [spread mud on someone's face], meaning "disgrace," also scores somewhat of a high correct rate (66.7%). This may be because the body action of spreading mud on someone's face could be easily imagined as disgraceful. Among the incorrect answers, 4 subjects interpreted it as "speak poorly" or "spread ruins."

NODO KARA TE GA DERU [one's hand comes out of one's throat], meaning "desire," is usually used with the verb "HOSHII" ("want"), so the meaning might relatively be easily imagined. 46.7 % gave the correct answers. Among the various wrong answers were "really don't know" (2), "want one that can do everything" (1), "want to grab it by the throat" (1), etc.

SUNE O KAJIRU [chew someone's (usually one's parent's) shin], meaning "be dependent on," gains quite a high correct rate (83.3 %). The context of the test sentence might have helped the subjects interpret the right meaning easily.

The phrases in Type D are metaphorical ones. Metaphors in any language reflect the ways of perception in the culture or society where the language is spoken. In this sense, metaphorical phrases are highly culture-oriented. The results show us that it is not easy to understand them. ATAMA GA KIRERU [one's head cuts well], meaning "be smart," scores a low correct rate (36.7 %). Among the incorrect answers were "be fired" (2), "forget"(2), "be stupid" (2), etc.

KUCHI GA KATAI [one's mouth is hard], meaning "be close-mouthed," has even a worse correct rate (26.7 %). Outstandingly, 8 subjects wrongly interpreted it as "talk well," and 3 subjects as "rude."

As to ME GA KOERU [one's eyes get fertile], meaning "have the seeing eyes," the correct rate is not so low (46.7 %). Among the wrong answers, "accustomed to" (3), and "have bad eyes" (2) were included.

The correct rate for TE O KASU [lend one's hands], meaning "help" is one of the highest (96.7 %), as well as the other phrase, KAO O DASU [show one's face]. This must come from the same reason that there is a similar phrase, "lend a hand," in English too.

In summary, the results indicate the following: 1) Gesturally originated or culturally oriented Body Language phrases are difficult for JFL students to understand and students attempt to interpret them the way they are interpreted in their culture. 2) These Body Language phrases should be taught correctly to JFL students in order for them not only to master these useful expressions but also to understand Japanese ways of thinking behind the language.

III. Suggestions for JFL Teaching

When teaching Japanese Body Language phrases to JFL students, we should pay attention to the fact that expressions reflecting the unique cultural background of Japanese people tend to be particularly difficult for them to comprehend. The major reason the students are not able to understand such expressions would be that they do not have enough knowledge about the foreign culture underlying these expressions and they tend to interpret them in their own ways of thinking. Hence, it will be required that teachers show learners how Japanese interpret body actions represented in these expressions. Moreover, it is needless to say that the lessons should be attractive enough to draw the students' interest and make them understand the content clearly.

Here are the basic points to be considered important and necessary in teaching Japanese Body Language phrases to JFL students.

- 1) Although the knowledge that Japanese body language phrases can be classified into several categories which form a continuum in view of the reality of body movement or use may not be necessary for learners, teachers had better have this perception in conducting classwork because teachers could offer explanation of each item more clearly and systematically. With regard to the order of presentation of the content, it will better to begin with Type A which describes typical gestures of Japanese people, then move to Type B, C and D.
- 2) In order to help learners understand the content as clearly as possible, adding drawings or illustrations will be a great help.
- 3) Explanations have to be given not only for the semantic aspects including cultural backgrounds, but also for syntactic and pragmatic aspects of the expressions if needed.

Should a textbook be written based on these points, a format of presentation could be this (Originally everything is to be written in plain Japanese, because these lessons are supposed to be for intermediate students.):

ME O HOSOMERU / HOSOKU SURU [narrow one's eyes]

Quiz

What feeling of the grandmother does the following sentence refer to ?

The grandmother narrowed her eyes, seeing her grandson playing in the yard.

1. She is angry.
2. She is glad.
3. She is sad.
4. She is making fun of him.
5. She is suspicious of him.

Illustration to be added.

★ Notes

1. This phrase is used in the form “(subject) GA (object) NI ME O HOSOMERU,” or “(subject) GA (object) O MITE ME O HOSOMERU [someone narrows his/her eyes, seeing someone or something].

2. What facial expression do you make when you feel glad or look at something lovely. You will smile and your eyes will naturally become narrower like the illustration. This phrase refers to such a facial expression.

3. This phrase is not used when you describe yourself, but when you describe another person, who is over middle age.

★ Examples

1. ROO-FUJIN WA YOOCHIENJI-TACHI NO ODORI NI ME O HOSOMETA [The old lady narrowed her eyes, seeing the kindergartners dance]

2. HAHA WA TANJOوبي-PUREZENTO NO NINGYOO O MITE ME O HOSOMETA [My mother narrowed her eyes, seeing the doll for her birthday present.

[Answer: 2]

Table 2 A format of presentation

Explanatory passages attached to each phrase have to capture the characteristics of each type. Following the classification simplified in Chapter I, let me consider some examples for each type. Here, only the semantic and pragmatic aspects are given.

1. Type A

Since expressions of this type refer to the actual gestures Japanese often perform, it is necessary to illustrate exactly what these gestures are like and for. Hence, illustrations or drawings will be greatly helpful for learners' comprehension. In addition to that, the explanation of the specific meaning of a gesture should be given. When giving an explanation, we should pay attention to the fact that among this type there are two sub-groups. It will be required to describe whether the expression is always used with or without the gesture from which it is derived.

Firstly, for example, ATAMA O KAKU [scratch one's head], meaning "feel embarrassed," as is used in "MATA CHIKOU KA NE" TO SENSEI NI IWARETE, BOKU WA ATAMA O KAITA [When the teacher said to me "You are late for class again !," I scratched my head], ought to have the following description.

- 1) This gesture is used mostly by men who are embarrassed. Japanese men (especially the young ones) often feel embarrassed when they are scolded or even when praised, and perform this gesture to show this feeling. From this expression we can recognize the person as being in this psychological state.
- 2) A young person performing this gesture in an informal situation is not considered impolite, but a businessman would be evaluated immature or uneducated if he should display this body action when he is praised or reprimanded by his boss.
- 3) You cannot use this expression if the gesture does not actually occur.

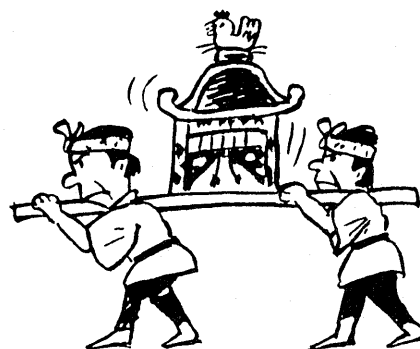
Secondly, on ATAMA O KAKAERU [hold one's head (in one's hands)], meaning "worry," which is used both in the gesture-accompanied context and gesture-not-accompanied context, the following explanation will have to be given. Namely, this expression describes the gesture that is so performed when a person is worried about something very much. But the expression can also be used when the person does not actually perform this body action. It refers to what a describer of the act-event sees when the person is in a psychologically hard-pressed condition.

2. Type B

An important point of the explanation for this type is to make learners understand the origin of expressions. It is necessary for them to learn Japanese way of thinking in which the original body movements are applied to other non-physical situations to create the new meanings. A drawing or an illustration gives a good help for them to understand the image from which the new meaning is created.

For example, KATA O IRERU [insert one's shoulder], meaning "patronize" or

“support,” as is used in SHACHOO WA SONO DOOKYOO NO RIKISHI NI KATA O IRETE IRU [The president of our company has been inserting his shoulder under the Sumo wrestler who comes from his same province], should be given the following explanation.



1) This is not an expression referring to the actual body movement. This body movement is actually witnessed when a person joins in carrying something very heavy, such as a *omikoshi* (miniature shrine) in a festival. On the basis of this image, the new meaning, “patronize someone” or “support something,” was created.

2) A noun phrase, KATA-IRE [insertion of one's shoulder], meaning “patronage,” is also used as in WATASHI WA ATARASHII-SEITOO NI KATA-IRE SURU TSUMORI DA [I will do insertion of my shoulder under the new political party].

3. Type C

As to this type, it is important to inform learners of the original image of imaginary body actions from which the specific meanings are derived. If they know the root of the imaginary body action of which Japanese make use to convey certain meanings in a rhetorical way, their understandability will be raised. Drawings or illustrations are helpful to clarify the explanation.

For example, HANA O TAKAKU SURU [hold one's nose high], meaning “be proud of,” as is used in MUSUKO GA ICHIRYUU-DAIGAKU NI HAITTE, RYOOSHIN WA HANA O TAKAKU SHITE IRU [As their son entered one of the top-ranking colleges, the parents are holding their noses high], should have the following explanation.



1) This expression is based on Japanese folklore, in which an imaginary monster monk, called “*tengu*,” having a prominent nose on his reddish face and living on a mountain is described as a character who can use supernatural power. The connection of his appearance and his ability may give the meaning “be proud of.”

2) The similar phrase HANA GA TAKAI [one's nose is high], meaning the same, is also

used. Moreover, another expression TENEGU NI NARU [become a *tengu*], meaning “brag,” is also used in a rather negative nuance.

4. Type D

The distinctive feature of this type is that all these expressions contain metaphorical applications. As Japanese metaphors, more or less, reflect Japanese ways of perception, it is important that learners notice the metaphors hidden in the expressions. By realizing the metaphors, they will surely improve their understandability.

As to the example KUCHI GA MAWARU [one's mouth turns], meaning “can speak well,” the following explanation will be needed.

- 1) In this expression, the mouth is seen as a machine that rotates to produce a product.
- 2) The other expressions in which the mouth is seen as a rotary machine are KUCHI GA OMOI [one's mouth is heavy] meaning “be slow of speech,” and KUCHI GA KARUI [one's mouth is light] meaning “cannot keep a secret.” If the oil to turn the machine smoothly has dried up, it becomes heavy and difficult to turn, whereas if the oil is enough, it turns lightly.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to show a way of teaching Japanese Body Language phrases to JFL students. In order to do this, first, an outline of categorization of these phrases was indicated. Second, it was shown in a survey how difficult these phrases are for JFL students to understand because they do not have much knowledge about Japanese deep culture related to language. And finally, a teaching plan of these phrases to overcome the linguistic barriers was shown.

In any language idioms are based on deep cultural experiences which usually have to be lived in a long time to be familiar with and comprehend the basis of the true meanings. Most intermediate level students are considered to have a good knowledge of basic culture because they are interested in Japan, but not the understanding of deep culture that is connected to the linguistically based idioms. A teaching plan of Japanese Body Language phrases proposed here would certainly be a good help for JFL students to comprehend the meaning of them and understand the deep culture underlying them.

Acknowledgment

This is a revised version of a paper, "Teaching Japanese Body-Part Phrase to JFL students," by Hiroko Hashimoto, Yoko Otsuka, Mihoko Kato and Nobuyuki Honna, presented at the 4th International Cross-Cultural Communication Conference, The Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas, March 24-28, 1993. The author wishes to express great thanks to the other three members of this group study for their contribution. The Japanese version of the original paper by Mihoko Kato, and another Japanese translation and other aspects which deal with Chapter II (the experimental study) by Yoko Otsuka, will be published in the near future. The author would also like to thank both J5 class students and teachers, Center for Japanese Studies, Nanzan University for their cooperation in the experiment reported in the paper.

Notes

1. Yamanashi (1989) gives a certain classification to such Japanese Body Language phrases from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics, which is somewhat different from ours based on the reality of body movement or body action.
2. For further information, see Nobuyuki Honna, Mihoko Kato, Yoko Otsuka and Hiroko Hashimoto, "A functional Analysis of Body-Part Phrases and Expressions in Japanese," a paper presented at the 3rd International Cross-Cultural Communication Conference in 1991; mimeographed.
3. This experiment was conducted by Yoko Otsuka, one of the contributors to this study.

References

- Garrison, J.G. (1990) *"Body" Language*, Kodansha International.
- Hashimoto, Hiroko. (1991) "Idiomatic Gestural Expressions in Japanese," *The Bulletin of Nihon Fukushi University*, No. 86-2, 201-220.
- Honna, Nobuyuki, Mihoko Kato, Yoko Otsuka and Hiroko Hashimoto. (1991) "A Functional Analysis of Body-Part Phrases and Expressions in Japanese", Paper read at a Nonverbal Communication Panel of the 3rd International Communication Conference, National Cheng Chung University, Tainan, Taiwan, R.C.O.
- Honna, Nobuyuki. (1992) "Miburi to Shintai Kotoba," *Gengo*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 81-86, Taishukan Shoten.
- Kanayama, Noboru. (1983) *Nonbaabaru-Jiten*, Kenkyuusha.
- Ymanashi, Masaaki. (1988) *Hiyu to Rikai*, Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai.

Appendix

Test sentences

1. MIFUNE-BUCHOO WA ATAMA GA KIRERU KARA, TAISETSUNA SHIGOTO WA SUBETE MAKASERARERTE IRU.

- "Director Mifune has full responsibility for important business, because *he is sharp* [he is smart]."
2. JUGYOO NI OKURETE KITA HAJIME-KUN WA, SENSEI NI "KYO MO OSOI DESU NE" TO IWARETE *ATAMA O KAITA*.
 "The teacher said to Hajime, "You are late today again," when he was late for class, so he *scratched his head* [he felt embarrassed]."
3. TONARI NO INU GA MAIBAN URUSAI NODE, *ATAMA NI KURU*.
 "The dog my next-door neighbor keeps barks every night, and it *comes to my head* [makes me angry]."
4. TANAKA-SAN WA *KUCHI GA KATAI* NODE, KONO HANASHI O SHITEMO DAIJOODU DA.
 "Mr. Tanaka *has a hard mouth* [can keep a secret]. He will never tell anyone if I let him know this story."
5. YORU NO 12-JI NI NATTEMU MUSUME GA KAETTE KONAI. CHICHI-OYA WA *KUCHI O HENOJI NI SHITE* MUSUME O MATTE ITA.
 "The daughter had not yet come at midnight. The father waited for his daughter *with his mouth 'he'-shaped* [in anger]."
6. MUSUKO GA TOOKYOO-DAIGAKU NI HAITTA NODE, RYOOSHIN WA *HANA O TAKA-KUSHITE* IRU.
 "Because their son entered Tokyo University, the parents *are holding their noses high* [are proud of him]."
7. SUKINA MONO DEMO MAINICHI TABETE IRU TO *HANA NI TSUKU*.
 "I like this, but if I eat it every day, it will *attach to my nose* [make me sick and tired of it]."
8. OBAACHAN WA MAGO GA ASONDE IRU NO O MITE *ME O HOSOMETA*.
 "The grandmother saw her grandchild playing, and *narrowed her eyes* [was pleased]."
9. TANAKA-SHACHOO WA *ME GA KOETE* IRU NODE, E GA HONMONO DEWA NAI KOTO GA SUGU WAKATTA.
 "President Tanaka instantly recognized this picture was not real, because he *has fertile eyes* [has the seeing eyes]."
10. IMOOTO TO KENKA O SURU TO, HAHHA WA ITSUMO IMOOTO NO *KATA O MOTSU*.
 "When I quarrel with my younger sister, my mother always *holds her shoulders* [takes her side]."
11. YUKIKO-SAN TO HAJIME-KUN WA UTA NO UMASA DE *KATA O NARABETE* IRU.
 "Yukiko is *making her shoulders parallel with* [is as good as] Hajime in singing songs."
12. KONO NIMOTSU O HAKOBU NODE, *TE O KASHITE* ITADAKEMASEN KA.
 "Could you please *lend your hands* [help me] to carry this baggage?"
13. ISOGASHII NODE KAJI NO *TE O NUITE* IRU.
 "I am very busy now, so I *am taking my hands out of* [cut corners in] my housework."
14. KABU NI *TE O DASHITE*, SHIPPAI SHITA.
 "I *reached out my hand* for the stocks [attempted to make money on the stock market], but I lost money."
15. HAJIME-KUN WA ITSUMO WATASHI-TACHI NO CHIIMU NO *ASHI O HIPPATTE* IRU.
 "Hajime is always *pulling the leg* of our team [is disturbing our team by causing trouble]."

16. KARE WA DOROBBOO NO SHIGOTO KARA *ASHI O ARATTA*.

"He *washed his feet* of stealing [quit stealing on his job]."

17. OYA NO *KAO NI DORO O NURU* YOONA KOTO WA SHINAIDE KUDASAI.

"Don't do anything that *spreads mud on your parents' faces* [makes your parents lose face]."

18. ASHITA NO PAATII NI WA *KAO O DASHITE* KUDASAI.

"Please *show your face* at the party [come to the party] tomorrow."

19. KUROKAWA-SAN WA 30-SAI NI NATTEMO, MADA OYA NO *SUNE O KAJITTE* IRU.

"Mr. Kurokawa *is* still *chewing his parent's shin* [is dependent on his father], though he is thirty years old."

20. WATASHI WA 'WAADO TANKU' GA *NODO KARA TE GA DERU* GURAI HOSHII.

"I want 'Word Tank' so much that I feel as if *my hand were coming out of my throat* to grasp it [desire]." ('Word Tank': the name of an electronic dictionary).