

# 文学作品を用いた異文化コミュニケーション教授法

スティーブン・G・モーガン

## Teaching Intercultural Communication in Japan An Original Source-Readings Approach

Steven G. MORGAN

### Abstract

This article proposes an approach to teaching intercultural communication in Japanese universities based on a process of textual analysis suggested by the theory of cross-cultural empathy. In this process the students are invited to view Japanese culture through the perceptions of non-Japanese who have visited or lived in Japan. The process also includes reflection on how these perceptions compare with students' own perceptions of Japanese culture, as well as what the perceptions offered by non-Japanese observers have to say about *their* culture as well. Original source readings excerpted from journals written by three Americans who visited or lived in Japan during the late nineteenth century are examined for their suitability as materials for this approach to textual analysis.

この論文は、異文化間理解の理論によって提案されたテキスト分析の過程に基づいて、日本の大学の相互文化間コミュニケーション教授法の研究をすることを目的としています。この過程において、日本を訪れているか在住している外国人の洞察を通して、日本人学生が日本文化への視点を持つことに働きかけている。この過程は、またこれらの洞察と日本人学生の日本文化への洞察も含

んでいる。この原資料の資料は、19世紀末に日本に訪れたか在住したことのあ  
る3人のアメリカ人によって書かれたものであり、この研究への適した資料と  
して調べられたものである。

## Introduction

### *What is intercultural communication?*

Sooner or later most foreign lecturers at Japanese universities are asked to teach a course that includes the terms *cross-cultural* or *intercultural* in its title such as *cross-cultural communication*, *intercultural studies* or some other combination of these words. And, when the inevitable question is raised—"So what would you like me to teach?"—the silence is usually, as they say, deafening. Everyone seems to be in agreement that Japanese students' educational experience should include a class of this type, yet no one is quite sure what they should be learning from it, or for that matter, what cross-cultural or intercultural communication is actually about.<sup>1</sup>

Hart (1997) has traced the field's beginnings to the work of the noted cultural anthropologist Edward T. Hall and his colleagues at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute in the early 1950s (para. 1). As defined by Hart, intercultural communication is "the area of study that attempts to

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper I will use the term *intercultural* as an equivalent for *cross-cultural* since in my experience there is no significant difference in the meaning or use of the two terms. My preference is based on the fact that for me, the prefix "cross-" brings to mind words such as *cross-purposes*, *cross talk* and *cross-examination*, whereas "inter-" connects to words such as *international*, *interact*, *interchange*, and the like. *Intercultural* also pairs more naturally with the equally important term *intracultural*.

understand the effects of culture on communication” but does not include the study of “intercultural adaptation” stemming from studies in the 1960s on cultural shock and adjustment (para. 1-4). Although this way of carving up the discipline makes a convenient way of delimiting the topics of empirical research projects, in the classroom and beyond, the division seems a bit artificial, and to my way of thinking, a more holistic approach is in order that includes both of these areas and much more. In this article, I offer one possible solution to this problem based on the following premise: the study of intercultural communication is, in one sense, an exercise in viewing ourselves and our own culture through the eyes of others; and as a result of this experience, we are given the opportunity to learn something about the culture of those individuals through whose eyes we have dared to look.

Before I am accused of having created a postmodern hall of mirrors, let me explain myself a bit more: what I am suggesting is a variation on the usual construction of the concepts of “cultural empathy” and “cross-cultural empathy” as they have traditionally been used in the fields of intercultural communication (Adams, Cleveland & Mangone, 1960; Weidner, 1962) and counseling psychology (Bemak & Chung, 2002; Chin, Ham, Hong & Liem, 1993). In the field of intercultural communication, cultural empathy has been described in terms of “the skill to understand the inner logic and coherence of other ways of life, plus the restraint not to judge them as bad because they are different from one’s own ways” (Adams et al., 1960, p. 136). In this context, cultural empathy is seen as an acquired competence for learning how to get along with people from other cultures, particularly in business and educational settings. In the field of counseling psychology, cultural empathy is generally viewed as a technique employed by a counselor from one culture to perceive “the meaning of the client’s self-

experience from another culture” (Chung & Bemak, 2002, para. 12); to achieve this goal, counselors strive to be “respectful listeners” so that they might learn from the clients “their own interpretations of their cultural experiences” (Chin et al., 1993, p. 55).

Our current perception of *empathy* in the West owes much to the work of Carl Rogers, one of the founders of humanistic psychology and client-centered therapy in the middle of the past century. Rogers saw empathy as “a way of being in relationship with the other” by “perceiving the other’s internal frame of reference accurately, understanding another life from the other’s perspective, while not relinquishing one’s own identity...for Rogers, empathy provided the basis for all genuine interpersonal understanding” (Anderson & Cissna, 1998, p. 92). A way of envisioning cultural empathy that closely parallels Rogers’s use of the term has been developed in Ivey, Ivey & Simek-Morgan (1993) where they define it as “seeing the world through another’s eyes, hearing as they might hear, and feeling and experiencing their internal world” without “mixing your own thoughts and actions with those of the client” (as cited in Chung & Bemak, 2002, para. 7). The empathic process that I am proposing as a tool for the study of intercultural communication takes the definition of Ivey et al. (1993) as its model, but with one critical alteration: the “world” that is to be seen, heard and felt is the world of our own culture. The preliminary step in this process is to employ the techniques and mindset of empathy from the tradition of humanistic psychology as a framework for viewing reflections of our culture in the perceptions of others. Based on those perceptions, we may then consider (1) how the perceptions we hold of our culture compare to those of the other person (2) which aspects of the other person’s culture that may have caused him or her to view our culture in that particular way and finally (3) what new insights we have gained about our culture and

another culture as a result of this process.

## Source Readings for Teaching Intercultural Communication

### *Where to Begin*

The next challenge that presents itself is finding printed sources of cultural observations that are suitable for such an approach. Both Hall (1976) and Benedict (1954) suggest the viability of literature as a resource of information for intercultural study, and for the purpose of discussion, I have chosen a brief era of Japanese history that is particularly rich in writings by non-Japanese about Japan. With the opening of the treaty ports in the wake of the U.S. Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Japan in 1858, and the departure two years later of the first Japanese embassy to the U.S., a lucrative market was created in for books, newspaper columns and magazine articles in English about Japan. As a result, the last four decades of the nineteenth century offers a wealth of original sources from which to draw materials for Japanese students to view one period in the development of their own culture through what people outside that culture had to say about it.

Two of the first important books to appear in the U.S. about Japan were Baynard Taylor's *A visit to India, China and Japan* (1855) and Matthew Perry's three-volume *Narrative of the expedition of an American squadron to the China Seas and Japan* (Hawkes, 1857).<sup>2</sup> In the years that followed,

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<sup>2</sup> Taylor, a professional travel writer had been aboard the Perry expedition, though by prior agreement he was required to surrender all of his journals and notes at the conclusion of the journey. His popular volume that beat Perry's official account to the bookstands was written from memory (Notehelfer, 2001, p. 29).

travel writers and journalists, from America, Canada and England continued to pour out accounts of their visits to Japan (Baxter, 1896/2002; Bird, 1880/2004; Hildreth, 1855/2004; Watson, 1904/2005). Even artistic figures such as the noted American painter John La Farge (1897/2002) were caught up in the frenzy to supply readers at home with first-hand descriptions of the land and its people. In terms of the range of topics and depth of coverage, quite a different type of literature was eventually to be written by Japan's foreign residents such as Lafcadio Hearn (1894/1976), Basil Hall Chamberlain (1890/2005), Alice Mabel Bacon (1905/2002) and Edward S. Morse (1886/2003).<sup>3</sup>

### *Two Journals and a Diary*

#### *Rationale*

One genre of literature that I believe holds an even greater potential for the study of intercultural communication is the private diaries and journals of Americans that visited or lived in Japan during this era. In contrast to commercially conceived articles written for public consumption, these writings contain the personal thoughts and reflections of the authors about their daily life in Japan, particularly their observations of intercultural aspects of their own lives and those around them. I have chosen three examples of this type of literature that are available in modern editions to describe in greater detail, the journals of Lt. John M. Brooke (1826-1906) and Francis Hall (1822-1902) and the diary of Clara Whitney (1861-1936). After a brief description of each author and his or her work, I will offer one

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<sup>3</sup> Thanks to the efforts of the London publishing house of Kegan Paul, many of the books on Japan written at this time are currently being reissued in reprint or new critical editions.

or two excerpts that could be used as source readings for analysis through the process of cultural empathy as outlined above, along with some comments on the cultural content of the excerpt.

*The Journal of Lt. John M. Brooke: 1859-1860*

In September 1858 Lt. John Mercer Brooke set sail for the Far East as commanding officer of the American schooner *Fenimore Cooper* on a mission to survey the shipping lanes between San Francisco and Hong Kong, and to chart the waters between Formosa (Taiwan), the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) and southern coast of Japan (Brooke, 1986, p. 1-5). Unfortunately, while anchored near Yokohama, the ship ran aground during a severe storm and was rendered unseaworthy leaving Brooke and his crew temporarily stranded in Japan (pp. 149-150). Their return voyage to America six months later coincided with the departure of Japan's first embassy to the United States, hence some of the men were transported on the USS *Powhatan*<sup>4</sup> that carried the Japanese diplomats, while Brooke and the others sailed on the Japanese escort ship *Kanrin Maru* (p. 156-157). Brooke's journal entries during his stay in Japan as well as the passage back to the U.S. is a remarkably rich source of personal observations about Japan and its people at this important time in its history.

Some of Brooke's more colorful descriptions are of the time spent in Naha in the Ryukyu Islands (pp. 99-110), in Shimoda (pp. 139-143) as well as the trip from Yokohama to Edo along the Tokaido Road (pp. 157-161). However, the portion of the book that presents the greatest interest for our purpose is his account of his return voyage to San Francisco aboard the *Kanrin Maru*

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<sup>4</sup> The *Powhatan*, flagship of Commodore Perry's fleet, had been in Hong Kong since the completion of its earlier mission to Japan.

(pp. 218-235). The one aspect of interest lies in his explanation of the complex chain of command among the Japanese officers and crewmembers, as well as the interaction of this hierarchy with that of the Americans aboard (p. 225). He also notes the difficulties that resulted from the inexperience of the Japanese sailors, and the complications that arose from all of the orders being given in Dutch which they only half understood:

16 February [1860]...There does not appear to be any such thing as order or discipline onboard. In fact the habits of the [Japanese] do not admit of such discipline and order as we have on our men of war. The Japanese sailors must have their little charcoal fires below, their hot tea and pipes of tobacco. The Saki is not very carefully kept from them. Add to this that the orders are all given in Dutch and that very few of the seamen understand that language and one may form some idea of the manner in which duty is carried on. The Capt. [Katsu] is still confined to his bed, the Commo. [Kimura], also. The officers leave the doors open which slam about, leave their cups, dishes & kettles on the deck to roll and slide about so that there is nothing but confusion. We must remember however that this is their first sailing cruise, that the weather is heavy and that they were taught by the Dutch.  
(Brooke, 1986, p.222)

From this particular journal entry, we can see the problems that arose from the sailors being unaware of the need to put aside potentially dangerous behaviors that have strong cultural roots (i.e. keeping charcoal fires, leaving doors unlatched, having their tea cups and kettles nearby) that might have been appropriate on land, but were inappropriate onboard a ship. To his credit, Brooke attributes the general lack of discipline to the fact that the two Japanese commanding officers remained in their quarters



for most of the voyage due to seasickness, and the language problem that he underscores again at the end the reading.

In addition to the intercultural issues arising from this passage, Brooke's account of this voyage is also useful as a parallel text to Yukichi Fukuzawa's account of the voyage contained in his autobiography written some thirty-seven years later (Fukuzawa, 1981, pp. 104-111).<sup>5</sup> The point of such a comparison would not be to establish which is the "correct" version of what "really" happened, but rather to highlight the different purposes and intended audiences of the two narratives, and the differing cultural contexts of their authors. Whereas Brooke was simply a U.S. naval officer keeping an account of the trip for his own records, by the time Fukuzawa got around to writing his autobiography, he was a living cultural icon retelling the story of a great moment in the his history of Japan.

*The Journal of Francis Hall: 1859-1866*

Francis Hall arrived in Japan three months after Brooke to serve as a foreign correspondent for his friend Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* (Notehelfer, 2001, p. 12). His decision to come to Japan appears to have been motivated partially by his connections with the Dutch Reformed Church which was keen on establishing missionary work in the Kanagawa area, as well as his acquaintance with Bayard Taylor (p. 11).<sup>6</sup> As a result of the seventy installments he made to the *Tribune* over the next six years,

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<sup>5</sup> Fukuzawa, who was later to found Keio University, had secured his presence aboard the *Kanrin Maru* by convincing Captain Kimura to allow him to serve as his personal steward (see Fukuzawa, 1981, p. 106).

<sup>6</sup> Taylor's 1855 account of his voyage with Perry is mentioned above.

Hall is credited as having been "America's leading 'opinion maker' on Japan" during this decisive stage in Japanese-American relations (p. 12). Although the *Tribune* articles are a valuable source in their own right, Hall's private journals reflect his unguarded observations and opinions on many of the same events, and Notehelfer and speculates they may have been intended as the basis of a book that never came to fruition (p. x).

The following excerpt is from early in Hall's stay in Japan, and tells of the first time he attended a sumo match in Yokohama:

Tuesday, February 21, 1860...I first came to the ticket sellers who were seated on a raised platform protected from the weather. The tickets were oblong bits of wood, between a quarter and a half inch thick and [an] inch and a half wide and five inches long, inscribed with Japanese characters. The price of a ticket was two *tempos*, but they were not intended for foreigners, and I was wave in by a gesture of the ticket seller's hand till I came to the entrance. One *ichibu* was the price of a foreigner's admission. I mildly suggested to the three or four men that guided the door that this was making a good deal of distinction. No, they said, it was *Nippon hoshiki*, Nippon custom, and I might come [in] or stay out as I pleased. So I paid the money and walked in...Each set [of wrestlers] that came in was larger and larger, till finally with much ostentation came in a score of giants. Each of them who were old and renowned wrestlers wore an apron in front extending from his waist to his feet. Their aprons were made of silk and satin nobly embroidered. They bore their names and the coat of arms of their prince. Except this and the loin cloth they were bare. The efforts put forth by these men were tremendous exhibitions of strength. The largest of all the wrestlers, and I think I saw sixty different ones perform,

was a man six and a half feet high on his bare feet. Full a dozen or more of the wrestlers were over six feet in height. During the whole exhibition there was nothing of the glaring looks and malignant expressions mentioned in Perry's book. On the contrary they all had the usual Japanese kind nature. The vanquished bore his defeat with the utmost good humor, the victor seldom showed any exultant feeling. (Notehelfer, 2001, p. 78).

This excerpt from a long and detailed journal entry offers two main points for intercultural reflection, the first being the two-tiered pricing structure of the tickets—one for Japanese and another for foreigners at a substantially higher price.<sup>7</sup> The other point of interest is Hall's contradiction of Perry's 1857 description of sumo:

As the spectator looked on these over-fed monsters, whose animal natures had been so carefully and successfully developed, and as he watched them, glaring with brutal ferocity at each other, ready to exhibit the cruel instincts of a savage nature, it was easy for him to lose all sense of their being human creatures, and to persuade himself that eh was beholding a couple of brute beasts thirsting for one another's blood. They were, in fact, like a pair of fierce bulls, whose nature they had not only acquired but even their look and movements. (as cited in Notehelfer, 2001, p. 183)

A comparison of these two passages draws attention to the importance of journals such as Hall's when selecting source readings for the study of intercultural communication. Whereas Perry (or perhaps his publicist) was keen to play on popular racist notions of the times that characterized all

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<sup>7</sup> See Notehelfer (2001), p. 58 for information on currency in use at the time.

non-white races as barbarians, Hall paints a picture that is more familiar to anyone—Japanese or non-Japanese—that has attended a sumo match. By his drawing attention to this discrepancy, we also learn something of the character of Hall himself.

*The Diary of Clara Whitney: 1875-1879; 1882-1884*

Clara Whitney's experience was quite different than that of either Brooke or Hall in a number of ways. She was only a girl of fourteen when her family moved from New Jersey to Japan where her father had come to help establish the country's first commercial college (Whitney, 1979, p. 9). Although the diaries cover only the first nine years of her life in Japan, Clara was eventually to marry the son of an distinguished Japanese statesman and remain in the country until the age of forty (p. 9).<sup>8</sup> With the fearless ambition of youth on her side, a quickness for learning the Japanese language and culture and her family connections, she made the acquaintance of such prominent individuals as Yukichi Fukuzawa, the founder of Keio University, the Tsuda family who founded the influential Gakunosha School of Agriculture and Tsuda Women's College, as well as many other important personages of the time including Kamenosuke Tokugawa (pp. 337-346).

One of the most interesting aspects about Clara's writings is the change in her attitude and understanding of cultural matters over the period of the nine years that are recorded, as can be seen in the following two excerpts. In the first written only two months after her arrival in Japan, Clara had gone with her friend Mrs. Tomita to visit a sick friend. As they were

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<sup>8</sup> Clara's husband, Kaji Umetaro, was the son of Katsu Kaishu (Rintaro), captain of the *Kanrin Maru* on its voyage to San Francisco in 1859 (Whitney, 1979, p. 340).

preparing to leave, Clara was upset by the Japanese manner of bowing which had a very different meaning for her than her companion:

Friday, October 15 [1875]...These people are naturally polished and are "guides to etiquette" in themselves. They know how to entertain people and make them feel at ease. But the low bows are too much for me. Mrs. Tomita kneeled down on the floor touching the matting with her forehead when she bade them good-bye. But how could a free-born daughter of America practice such slavish, humiliating customs? So, I merely bowed an American bow, and with no more than American politeness cheerfully said my "Sayonara," and, while they were all lying prostrate in the dust, I stepped into my jinrikisha and let them lie. (Whitney, 1979, p. 44).

The second entry written four years later shows how she has come to understand and participate in Japanese social customs that had previously annoyed and baffled her. On this occasion, she has gone to the Kaitakushi, the experimental farm attached to the Tsuda's agricultural school, to buy some fruit and vegetables for dinner:

Saturday, August 16 [1879]...I was doubtful of success, for of late we have not been able to get anything for love or money, so I tried "wheedling," a technique not to be despised by any means...I began by waiting respectfully until one of the officers chose to look up, which was hard to do, but Mama's watermelon and corn being a stake, I submitted to be humbled. Then after bowing to each of the proud-looking officers and remarking on the heat, I entered into conversation with Mr. Yoshizawa upon canning and preserving fruit, which is a hobby of his. Finally he asked me the name of the cookbook we used and begged me to write down the name. This I did with seeming willingness, and afterwards began to converse

with a nice-looking man, who said he understood English. Presently Mr. Yoshizawa said, "*Anata ga kyō wa nani mo irimasen ka?* [Don't you need anything today?], to which I answered indifferently, "*Sayō rubarubu araba sukoshi kaimashō*" [If you have rhubarb, I'll buy a little], thus beginning on the easiest thing, and modestly deferring my real request. (p. 263)

The outcome of Clara's "wheedling" was to leave not only with rhubarb, sweet corn and the largest watermelon in the farm (p. 264). Her conscious use of decorous flattery at the beginning of the exchange with Mr. Yoshizawa, then as she said, "beginning on the easiest thing, and modestly deferring my real request" is a typically Japanese pattern of social interaction even today. Moreover, to the contrast of her behavior and inner thoughts with the incident four years earlier when she said, "I stepped into my jinrikisha and let them lie" is a superb example of how such writings can be used for the study of intercultural awareness.

## Conclusion

### *A Brief Summary and a Work in Progress*

In this article I have sought to present a single answer to the question of how to go about teaching intercultural communication in Japanese universities. It is by no means the only viable method of going about this task, and it is also not an approach that would work equally well for all types of learners or all types of teachers. However, I do hope that it is of interest to more than a few of my colleagues who find themselves teaching similar types of classes. To summarize briefly, what I have suggested is basically a process of textual analysis that is grounded in the psychological theory of cross-cultural empathy. In this process the students are invited to view Japanese culture through the perceptions of individuals who are *not*

Japanese. The process also includes possibilities for reflection on how these perceptions “square up” with their own perceptions of Japanese culture, as well as what the perceptions offered by the non-Japanese observers have to say about *their* culture as well.

The materials I have suggested for such an approach—excerpts of three private journals written by three Americans who visited or lived in Japan during the late nineteenth century—were selected on the basis of their readability, the interest level and familiarity of their topics as well as their utility in introducing this style of textual analysis to Japanese students. Similar examples can be found in a wide variety of published and unpublished sources throughout the twentieth century as well, and I am currently preparing an article that does just that, starting with the travel diaries of Dr. John Dewey and his wife while he was teaching at the University of Tokyo in 1919.

The work presented here is currently being pilot tested in my own classes in intercultural communication at Daito Bunka University in Tokyo, and will eventually form part of an anthology of original source readings for intercultural communication classes in Japan. About half of this volume will include various types of published literary sources such as those mentioned at the beginning of this article, as well as excerpts from short stories and poetry about Japan by non-Japanese. The second half of the anthology will cover the other side of the cultural equation by surveying writings by Japanese individuals about their travels and lives abroad.

I look forward to receiving any comments or suggestions on the content and method of this project at the following address e-mail address: smorgan@ic.daito.ac.jp

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