

Assertive communication in the Japanese language through internationalization experiences for Universidad Tecnológica de León students**La comunicación asertiva en lengua japonesa a través de las experiencias de internacionalización de los alumnos de la Universidad Tecnológica de León**

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Abstract

Every culture represents a long-time historical process result that strengthens each strain and characteristic of individuals. The Mexican culture has typical characteristics such as kindness, funny, and not-so-serious in some other aspects. Nevertheless, the Japanese culture is very different. Influenced by ideas like honor, obligations, and duty. These characteristics are known as “Giri”. Manners are completely different from Western countries' ideas, where you can find more liberal and individualistic cultures. An important element of the Japanese culture is the language. It is because it represents their culture, religion, ethics, and their particular humor sense. This is why it is considered difficult to completely interpret it by other cultures. Currently, the Japanese language is the world's 9th most spoken language with an approximated amount of 127 million speakers, therefore, understanding the language will let us understand Japanese culture in a better way. Considering the context explained above, this document has an objective: Strengthen the student's knowledge and make aware them of the proper use of the Japanese language, Japanese manners, and its traditions. Approaching the students to these scenarios by applying assertive communication through internationalization experiences.

Japanese, Communication, Internationalization**Resumen**

Cada cultura es resultado de un proceso histórico que conlleva años y años de sucesos históricos que fortalecen, idealizan y fomentan cada rasgo y característica de las personas. La cultura mexicana tiene características típicas como amabilidad, bromistas y tal vez un poco relajados en todos los aspectos, sin embargo, la cultura japonesa es muy distinta, esta influenciada por ideas de honor, obligación y deber, características que son conocidas como “giri”, costumbres completamente contrarias a los países occidentales donde se pueden observar culturas individualistas y liberales. Un elemento importante en la cultura japonesa es su idioma, ya que este representa la cultura, religión, ética y su humor intrincado, es por esto por lo que es considerado como bastante difícil de interpretar por cualquier otra cultura. Actualmente el idioma japonés es el noveno idioma más hablado en el mundo con una cifra aproximada de 127 millones de personas, por lo tanto, comprender el idioma permitiría comprender gran parte de su cultura. Debido a esto, el presente documento tiene como objetivo fortalecer y concientizar a los alumnos del idioma japonés sobre costumbres, tradiciones y una buena comunicación asertiva a través de experiencias de internacionalización.

Japonés, Comunicación, Internacionalización

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Introduction

At the Universidad Tecnológica de León (UTL) the educational model is student-centered, that is, the entire process revolves around student learning. This can be carried out through a strategic plan with proposals for methodological innovation, identification and application of good teaching practices, to define an educational model specific to the educational institution [I].

In this context, in order for learning in any student environment to be meaningful, specialized academic content must be considered, for example, including cultural aspects for a healthy coexistence in society and in their work performance, based on knowledge of the customs and language of origin, adding didactic strategies that allow generating competencies that contribute to rescue cultural identities, issues that will allow students to strengthen their personal and professional training [I-II].

The experiences of internationalization between Mexicans - Japanese is of utmost importance, since currently in the state of Guanajuato the investments of Japanese companies are in constant growth, therefore, the coexistence between cultures will also increase and it should be considered to do it with an assertive communication, to avoid cultural clashes due to lack of knowledge.

Students of the Japanese language should consider that, in addition to learning grammatical rules, they should learn idioms, expressions and formal behaviors, since the Japanese language, being considered as an agglutinating language, has a system of grammatical arrangement completely different from the Western systems with which we are familiar. It also has a complex writing system, since it has three types of glyphs: the hiragana syllabary, the katakana syllabary and the Chinese characters, called kanji. Likewise, the language is composed of words autochthonous from Japanese (wago), others adopted from Chinese (kango), and some others that have been adapted from foreign languages (gairaigo), mainly from English, Portuguese, French, Dutch, German and Russian.

The objective of this work was to strengthen and raise the awareness of the language learners about customs, traditions and good about customs, traditions and good assertive communication through internationalization experiences.

Methodology to be developed

The learning activities for the Japanese language university student consisted of four internationalization experiences.

The first experience was with the Japanese Taichi Sugimoto, the coexistence took place at the University facilities, and some of the topics discussed were: cultural places in the city of Leon, typical foods, dangerous places and places to dance bachata.

The second experience consisted of participating in the online event through the zoom platform at the Mini Purezen gathering, organized by Ms. Takako Masada, who is in charge of the Japanese area of the language school of the University of Guanajuato, Campus Guanajuato. Some of the activities were: presentation, descriptive words of the country Mexico / Japan and 3 conversations of 15 minutes each, where Mexican and Japanese people would be included.

In addition to the internationalization experiences, surveys were applied to level the learning obtained, opinions and experiences generated by the students, providing mainly that, despite having knowledge of grammar and phonetics, there are several characteristic features of the Japanese that only from living with them can be understood and learned.

Results

The internationalization experiences showed students' enthusiasm for understanding the language, thirst for learning the culture and disinhibition when speaking with a native speaker of the language.

University student's first experience with Japanese Taichi Sugimoto

The opinions of the students show that as it was their first experience speaking with a Japanese, they presented a shower of feelings, 77% of the students expressed emotion, interest and a quite amusing conversation, on the other hand, 23% of the students showed nervousness and considered that it was a little bad due to lack of knowledge of the language.

Another aspect that was analyzed in the coexistence was the behavior and language of the young Japanese, where 100% of the students considered that he was respectful, polite, natural behavior, helpful, pleasant, good and his language was colloquial, considering that it was understandable for everyone.

The next aspect to be analyzed was whether his Taichi behavior is the same as the usual behavior of a Mexican, where 100% of the students consider that it is not the same, it has several characteristics that demonstrate a cultural difference.

Some of the aspects that the Japanese students considered most important in this meeting were: listening to the expressions of a Japanese native, practicing and understanding the language, learning and teaching cultural issues, and the exchange of ideas by applying the communication tools of the language.

Mini Purezen Coexistence

The event was held in online mode through the zoom platform, since this was an international coexistence, with participants from different places of residence and time zones. It was held on March 25, 2023 at 17:00 (Central Mexico Standard Time), the event was designed with the intention of encouraging and supporting students to practice, communicate properly, understand and emphasize a conversation in the Japanese language assertively through internationalization experiences, in addition to the Japanese participants had the intention of knowing and learning from the Mexican culture, therefore, it was a cultural exchange, the event was in charge of the organizing committee of PUREZEN MEXICO in collaboration with Lic. Takako Masada in charge of the Japanese area of the language school of the University of Guanajuato, Campus Guanajuato.

The initial topic was the presentation of each of the participants as shown in Fig. 1, followed by a descriptive word of the country and why it represents your culture, continuing with 3 conversations of 15 minutes each, where the topic was free and 3 random participants were included.



Figure 1 Student Omar Escalera introducing himself to the members of the convivio.

First time at Mini Purezen

In the words of the students, 75% of the students consider that their experience of their first time living together was great, I loved it, excellent; while 25% considered it difficult at the beginning while they were adapting.

Regarding the behavior and language of the Japanese participants in the first coexistence, 100% considered that they were very respectful, full of enthusiasm and curious.

The most important thing for the students in the first coexistence was to be able to practice the language, to help them practice Spanish, to meet nice and pleasant people and to meet people interested in languages.

Second Mini Purezen experience

In the second experience, 100% of the students expressed being more relaxed and having an excellent experience when talking with the following participants.

All the students consider that the behavior of the following participants was sociable and with great confidence, in addition to being more fluent in communication.

Considering that for the students, the most important thing in this second coexistence was to relate correctly, to continue practicing and to consider continuing to participate in this type of events constantly.

Third Mini Purezen coexistence

In the third coexistence, 100% of the students felt calm, were able to express their ideas more clearly and even give their own recommendations about their state of residence.

Regarding the behavior of the following participants, all of the students noticed excitement and interest in the coexistence on the part of the Japanese members, as well as curiosity about the Spanish language.

The most important thing for the students in this last coexistence was to put into practice their vocabulary and grammar that they have learned in their Japanese class at UTL.

Aspects of interest about internationalization experiences

- 100% of the students consider the practice meetings with a Japanese native speaker to be of great importance.
- 77% of the students consider that they cannot express themselves correctly in the Japanese language, since, considering the idioms of the Japanese participants, there are several details to be learned.
- Some points that the trainees consider improving are: expanding vocabulary, listening comprehension, way of speaking, fluency, sentence order, application of grammar, and everyday expressions.
- The students' opinion of the Japanese language is: it is a wonderful, good, interesting language, and although it can be a bit tedious to study, they love it.
- Issues that the students reflected on in the discussions and that they consider they should not do when conversing with a Japanese person: speak in an informal manner, using grammar and expressions used only with friends, being overconfident, being direct from the beginning, speaking casually, being disrespectful, making comments and/or asking very direct questions.
- Students consider that assertive communication includes: conversing clearly and concisely, being respectful and

formal, considering the context when engaging in conversation, and based on this, applying colloquial structures such as "masu".

- In addition, all the students would like to continue with this type of experience, at least once a month, committing themselves to develop and study in depth topics such as: intonation when speaking, ideological barriers, manners, traditions and culture.

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Conclusions

The approach of the students to "organic" environments, where the language is applied, without being limited to the margins established by a book, allows them to understand and relate various aspects of the structure of a language. Exposure to these environments implies an important area for improvement, since during the exchange of ideas it is possible to identify elements applied in an adequate manner and those that need to be perfected.

The activities carried out represented an opportunity to hear from a native speaker the "natural" application of all these elements, and by understanding and replicating them allowed the students to approach the "real" Japanese and through it, to understand and share various ideas among the participants.

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