ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING NATURAL JAPANESE: COMMUNICATION
STYLES AND SITUATIONAL CONSTRUAL

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Spring 2013

The Japanese language is often described as subtle and vague by non-native Japanese speakers. Even simple Japanese sentences can cause difficulty for non-native Japanese speakers. One reason for this difficulty may be differences in the cognitive process of verbalization. Specifically, there are different roles for speakers and listeners in Japanese and English. Unlike English, native Japanese speakers prefer using monologue type communication that often omits subjects and objects. Thus, non-native Japanese speakers have difficulty decoding native Japanese communication. In addition, non-native Japanese speakers lack knowledge about how native Japanese speakers capture and verbalize certain situations. A textbook analysis reveals that three current Japanese textbooks do not adequately address these two important cognitive linguistic differences between Japanese and English. Without proper explanation and application of these cognitive linguistic concepts, developing natural Japanese is difficult.