JPN407B Reading Newspapers and Magazines (3 credits)  
Spring 2015

Meeting Time & Location: 1:30-2:45 (M/W) at Moore Hall 254  
Instructor: Mitsue Tabata-Sandom (Office: Moore Hall 371)  
Office Hours: 11:30-12:30 (Tuesday) and 11:30-12:30 (Friday)

Course Description

In this course, students get exposed to various current themes appearing in Japanese newspapers and magazines. Due to the advancement of information technology, a large part of materials used in this course will be obtained online. Therefore, the course will be an ideal kick-start for students to embark on self-reading online in the future. The course aims to give opportunities for students to learn basic vocabulary used in texts related to current topics in Japanese society. It also provides students with opportunities to review and reinforce already-learnt vocabulary. Finally, the course provides students with skim-reading training.

Student Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will

1. be able to understand the main idea, supporting details and argumentative structures in various authentic Japanese texts in newspapers and magazines.
2. refine their skills of understanding complex sentence structures acquired in regular reading courses
3. reinforce existing vocabulary knowledge acquired in regular reading courses
4. learn advanced vocabulary specific to newspaper and magazine articles
5. become familiar with syntactic, lexical, discourse and pragmatic patterns which can be observed in newspaper and magazine articles
6. obtain some reading strategies to read authentic Japanese texts, specifically skimming ability
7. be able to convey their opinions, and provide an oral and written summary or reaction in Japanese toward articles currently appearing in Japanese newspapers and magazines

The class will be delivered primarily in Japanese and students are expected to express and share their thoughts in Japanese during class discussion. In order to get the most out of class activities, full preparation for class is expected.

Course Materials

Selected texts will be uploaded to the course website. You will be notified via e-mail when a new file is uploaded. Therefore, you will need to check your email on a regular basis. Please bring your own copy of these texts to classes.
Tasks and Activities during class

1. Mini quizzes will be given on the completion of one topic (or one text).
2. Reading in class will be conducted, focusing on grammatically problematic sentences and paragraphs with main messages.
3. Discussion in Japanese will help students to understand the background and significance of a given text in each class.
4. Sentence or short passage writing practice will reinforce newly-learnt vocabulary.
5. Students are required to present their response toward chosen topics (mid-term assignment).
6. Students are required to present their own choice of texts related to topics dealt in the course (end-of-term).
7. In order to make the class content diverse, fun and accessible, some classes are allocated to different activities: skim-reading practice, video-watching session, and extensive reading session.

Course Requirements

1. Regular attendance is required because peer interaction in class is significant in terms of language learning. (Students who miss many classes are bound to have lower grades because their class participation is marked low.)
2. Preparation for class and timely completion of homework assignments are required.
3. A valid documented excuse needs to be presented when students are unable to meet required tasks/assessments/exams presented below in a timely manner.

Grading

Class participation & Homework..............................................................15%
Mid-term Exam..........................................................20%
Final Exam (May, 15, Friday, 2:15 –4:15, at the same classroom)..........25%
Mid-term presentation..........................................................10%
Final presentation..........................................................15%
Mini quizzes..........................................................15%

A+ 100–97(%) A 96–93 A- 92~90
B+ 89~87 B 86~83 B- 82~80
C+ 79~77 C 76~73 C- 72~70
D 69~60 F below 60
CR=at least 73%. NC=below 73%

Classroom Manners

Follow your common sense in a classroom: Use of cell-phones, eating, talking when others present their opinions publicly, and all the other behaviours which are not acceptable in public contexts are of course unacceptable.
Still tentative Course Schedule
I will do my best to find relevant TV programmes which integrate your ability of reading Social Science texts and your ability of listening to relevant discourse will be integrated. However, it is not guaranteed that I will be able to do so always.
01/21/2015  Last day to register
01/21/2015  Last day to receive 100% tuition refund
02/02/2015  Last day to receive 50% tuition refund
01/20/2015  Last day to drop (No "W" on transcript)