

【論文】

Pandas and People Too:  
The Reality Unseen in China-Related Topics Appearing in  
Japanese School Textbooks for English Language Learners

GRAHAM, Jim \*

「パンダも人間も」

日本の英語教科書における中国関連のトピックスに見られない現実

グラハム 児夢

The author argues that textbooks introducing a variety of topics in the English language classroom for Japanese schoolchildren need to take into account the stunning rise of the Chinese middle class as not only a major world event of our time, but a transforming achievement for China's neighbors as well. Efforts at passive notice have been made in past lesson material, but the author's examination of 30 textbooks failed to turn up a focused and positive spotlighting of a middle class mainland Chinese personality or family. The first half of the following discussion recognizes the very real potentials for improvement while identifying the problem at hand; in the second half a hypothetical lesson is offered in the spirit of seeking a solution with a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of its content.

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\* グラハム ジム 文教大学文学部英米語英米文学科

I note the obvious differences  
between each sort and type,  
but we are more alike, my friends,  
than we are unlike.

Maya Angelou

### Defining the Problem and Why It Matters

The Japanese government has made a point of using textbooks as vehicles for promoting intercultural understanding under the ambitious banner of globalization. Japan's textbook writers need to start in their own neighborhood by openly acknowledging through English education one of the great world achievements of modern times: the meteoric rise of a Chinese middle class. Recent opinion polling of Chinese citizens reveals a marked change in their image of Japan and the Japanese people despite low points over recent years involving tense geopolitical differences, with negative views falling from 76.7% in 2016 to 66.8% the next year; whereas negative views of China by the Japanese have remained at three points above or below 90% since 2013 (Genron 19). The absence of positive recognition of China's progress where positive recognition is due is an apparent manifestation of Japan's continuing coldness towards its great mainland neighbor. Japan's educators are uniquely positioned to help improve Sino-Japanese relations by calling out stereotypes and willful ignorance. Educational materials approaching the new and powerful China in a more positive light is one possible key to improvement, English textbooks in particular, as English is one of the

three languages in which citizens of either country are likely to engage those of the other in dialog.

Japanese textbooks as books are top quality products printed on high-grade paper with colorful and visually appealing graphics, a pleasure to hold and behold. Where MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) has rededicated itself to attaining for the nation a “top-class English proficiency inside Asia” (Monbukagakushou), these textbooks are not likely to fade into obsolescence anytime soon as teaching tools. To the extent that “inside Asia” suggests a kindling of regional awareness through English studies, it is the opinion of this author that China in its current state of stunning economic maturity needs positive representation within the pages of today’s English textbooks used by Japanese schoolchildren. Japanese are in general aware and appreciative of China for its oldness on a highly informed level, yet not so much for what is ‘new’ there. Textbooks are one means of chipping away at that other ‘great wall’ standing between contemporary reality and long-held stereotypes. It will take time to remove, but it is worth doing (Imaseki).

There is no lack of mention in general where it comes to things Chinese appearing in English language textbooks. Schoolchildren learn (or relearn) how the complex and numerous ideograms they toil to master are Chinese in origin, how noodles, miso and sushi come from there, how “Chinese” (read “Mandarin”) is the language with the most speakers, and somewhere a panda will inevitably emerge to charm and delight. What is generally missing is the highlighted presence of a Chinese boy or girl *remarkably like the Japanese schoolchild*.

One study of MEXT-approved content in fifteen different high school textbooks as it relates to “foreign culture” conducted by Ookawa

exposed “too much focus on Japan and America” (1). The categories of the study examined how the textbooks dealt with manners and customs, daily life, geography, history, natural science, human rights, stories (literature), language, school life, environment, youth culture and war (6-7). That there is little material pertaining to the China of the present was also noted. Considering the high level of exchange and the preponderance of Chinese tourists in Japan, it makes little sense to dwell on countries where the English language is native when people from those countries play a smaller role in the economic life of ordinary Japanese (13). Furthermore, given the Confucian orientation of Japanese society, the efforts by Japanese at understanding today’s China through English education stand to be much more nuanced than they would be when the topics are Anglophone cultures such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States or the United Kingdom.

The author has examined thirty English-language textbooks, the bulk of them available in the library at Bunkyo University. They were written for use in standard classrooms on multiple levels of difficulty and lack any kind of *positive* mention of China’s spectacular rise over four short decades to where it is today. In a sense China’s national accomplishment should be as epoch-making as the success of Barack Obama in becoming the first ‘black’ American president, a laudatory conquest of longstanding historical obstacles. The silence on China’s great gains in material prosperity recalls the metaphoric proud elephant filling a narrow room with its massive elephant-ness, noticed quietly by everyone, yet mentioned by no one.

## Shades of Promise: Two Examples

The author acknowledges that China's middle class has not been ignored completely by Japan's textbook writers; rather, a search for it *as the main subject* of an English lesson has thus far turned up nothing. Two noteworthy examples where it assumes a secondary role bear hopes that there are dormant seeds waiting to germinate into full flower as a lesson expressly dedicated to a modern Chinese family living a comfortable and happy life.

One example relates to an old idea rendered anew in the digital age: the international pen pal. A two-page spread entitled "Hello, Friends!" features short self-introductions from six potential correspondents from around the world (Acorn English Course I). Most of them are shown expressing interests, hobbies or aspirations that correspond to the young Japanese learner's vague preconceived notion of the nationality involved: French white girl (art), Rwandan black girl (tour guide), American white boy (sports/judo), Australian white boy (scuba diving), Brazilian white boy (carnival partying) and the Chinese boy declaring he is "studying the computer" and that his favorite hobby is web-surfing. This effort at demonstrating the Internet's potentials for expanding one's connections to the entire world through English is to be applauded nevertheless, even if peppered with stereotypes.

Another example, far the better of the two, is a plot summary presented as an exercise in "rapid reading" of a Chinese language movie. It deals with the problems of educating poor rural children as the urban middle class takes root and begins to flourish (Powwow English Course I). *Not One Less* was directed by the world acclaimed Zhang Yimou and released in 1999; the short promotional pitch on the DVD box

claims a ten-minute standing ovation followed its screening at the 1999 Venice Film Festival. The textbook lesson is illustrated with frames from the movie featuring amateur actors bearing personal connections to the moral lessons of the story and the sterile landscape of its backwards setting.

*Not One Less* is a heartwarming window into a segment of China's society suffering from neglect; the English lesson about it not only bears potential for piquing student awareness of China, but also for appreciating the essence of education itself, especially as a community process. Here the study environment is completely lacking those taken-for-granted teaching aids and electronic devices the classroom of today demands and the typical student cannot imagine learning without.

Having not the slightest professional training at the tender age of 13, Wei Minzhi assumes the role of substitute teacher for a month in a school in the dusty, nearly treeless landscape of hilly Hebei Province. Unbelievably, she is slightly younger than the very Japanese learners reading about her, and her task of running a school without experience or training would be unthinkable in Japan or for that matter any other developed country. The story's title stems from a promise she makes to the elderly teacher she replaces, the fulfillment of which would result in an extra ten *yuan* for her efforts: no pupil should be missing after her month is up. The level of poverty in *Not One Less* is symbolized in part by the nail in the classroom wall that serves as a sundial, and more poignantly by the treatment of chalk as a precious commodity. Real trouble begins when one of Wei's charges, an impish boy named Zhang Huike, goes missing. He has wandered to a nearby "urban" area to find work in order to help pay off a family debt. Wei obsesses over retrieving the wayward Zhang and getting him back into class. Even getting the

bus fare to go into the city for her search involves a chain of hurdles that engage her pupils in a collective arithmetic exercise with real world applications. Once successfully in the city she is told her best chance of finding Zhang is in enlisting the assistance of the local television station. Thanks to a perseverance unbent by discouraging encounters with sometimes surly citizens, and despite having no proper identification papers, Wei manages to secure the attention of the station manager. His kind interest in Wei's dilemma results in her tearful televised plea to Zhang Huike to return to school. The tale ends happily with teacher and pupil not only reuniting but in becoming "poster children" for a flood of donations from the television viewers sympathetic with their plight.

*Not One Less* is undeniably touching with a cast of convincing rawness. Unfortunately, the depictions of the prosperous city do not exist on their own terms. Rather, they are employed to spotlight just how out of place the rural poor have become in a new era of unprecedented material comfort. What should not be forgotten is that once the people in the cities, too, were poor. Therefore, as admirable as it is to include this modern Chinese story for its revelations about scarcity, gratitude and the importance of literacy, a textbook scenario where the main characters are complex, demonstrably content and much like the middle class in Japan would be nothing short of 'revolutionary.'

### What Is Needed and Why

An officially authorized English lesson offers the opportunity for introducing an upbeat propaganda counterweight to the negativity associated with mainland China and its people that can be found lurking within Japan's mainstream culture. Frequently the prosperity China

enjoys is framed in doomsday language or at the very least nuanced in the color of suspicion. This is not difficult to detect in a bookstore. Note the following paperback titles collected by the author in recent years. They are listed in no particular order, though the reader should note the first seven were actually written by Chinese authors.

*Why I Abandoned China* (私はなぜ「中国」を捨てたのか) by Shi Ping, Wac Bunko, 2019

*Countdown to China's Collapse* (中国崩壊カウントダウン) by Shi Ping, Takarajimasha, 2014

*China Is Already Finished* (中国はもう終わっている) by Huang Wenxiong and Shi Ping, Tokuma Shoten, 2013

*Why Can't China Give Up Hegemony* (なぜ、中国は覇権主義をやめられないのか) by Shi Ping, PHP Shinsho, 2015

*Why Don't Chinese Even Have One Percent of a Future?* (なぜ中国人にはもう1%も未来がないのか) by Shi Ping, Tokuma Shoten, 2014

*The Truth of China's Current Catastrophe* (いま、中国で起きている大破局の真相) by Qiu Haitao, Tokuma Shoten, 2013

*The Day China Disappears from the Map of the World* (中国が世界地図から消える日) by Huang Wenxiong, Koubunsha, 2014

*Built on Sand: The Great Collapse of the Chinese Empire* (「砂上の中華帝国」大崩壊) by Shibuya Tsukasa, Denpasha, 2017

*The Great Failure of China Diplomacy* (中国外交の大失敗) by Nakanishi Terumasa, PHP Shinsho, 2014

*Ninety-seven Percent of Chinese Television is Lies* (テレビに映る中国の97%は嘘である) by Kobayashi Fuminori, Kodansha, 2014

*The Great China Problem* (中国の大問題) by Niwa Uichiro, PHP Shinsho,

2014

*The Great China Breakdown* (中国大破綻) by Miyazaki Masahiro, PHP  
Kenkyuujo, 2015

*Self-annihilating China, Flourishing Japan* (自滅する中国、繁栄する日本)  
by Hasegawa Keitarou, Jitsugyou no Nihonsha, 2014

*Even without China Trade, Japan Will Not Be Vexed* (中国の貿易をやめ  
ても日本は困らない!) by Mitsubashi Takaaki, Wac Bunko, 2015

*The China Era Is Over* (「中国の時代」は終わった) by Miyazaki Masahiro,  
Kairyuusha, 2014

*The End of China's Emergence* (中国台頭の終焉) by Tsugami Toshiya,  
Nihonkeizai Shimbunsha, 2013

*The Complete Inside Story to the Burst of the China Bubble* (中国バブル  
崩壊の全内幕) by Miyazaki Masahiro, Shi Ping and Fukushima  
Kaori, Takarajimasha, 2016

*Unbridled and Wild: China Hastens the End of the World* (暴走する中国  
が世界を終わらせる) by Miyazaki Masahiro and Fukushima Kaori,  
Bijinesusha, 2014

*The Lying Chinese Communist Party Comic Reader* (マンガで読む嘘つ  
き中国共産党) by La Jiao, Shinchousha, 2017

*The Day China Takes Over Okinawa* (中国が沖縄を奪う日) by Megumi  
Ryuunosuke, Gentousha Shinso, 2013

Even if the schoolchild is not in the physical space of an actual bookstore and sees no shelves, an online search for any kind of book about China from a more motivated and curious student could potentially unleash the cascade of gloom and doom presented above. The uncritical Japanese schoolchild would not be led to think of China

positively with messages like these. Books are not typically written to lose money. As marketing tools these titles reflect the state of the culture as perceived by the publishers. English textbooks, therefore, are one means of offering some balance to stem the tide of implicit negativity and facilitate fulfillment of the MEXT guidelines for realizing a more globally aware and thus more critical citizenry. In a sense, English study provides neutral ground for a Japanese student to fathom in a new and challenging way just what today's China is and how it got that way.

Given this downbeat situation, the author proposes a hypothetical English lesson of eight paragraphs for stimulating a balanced dialog about today's China. It encourages an acknowledgement of shared experience, a recognition of how the Roman alphabet adapts to the Chinese language, an affirmation with statistics of China's progress, and a note of guarded optimism for the future.

### **A Single Narrow Strip of Water**

1. When we rank the most significant world events of living memory, we often consider them for their instant dramatic impact. The release from prison of Nelson Mandela in 1990 comes to mind, or the election of Barack Obama in 2008 as the first African American President of the United States. For disasters there were the 9.11 terrorist attacks of 2001 and the widespread losses of life and property related to the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake. Then there are those events without emotional color that begin quietly and take time to notice.

2. One of those events took place in the People's Republic of China two years after the death of Chairman Mao Zedong, the Great Helmsman. The

occurrence was bloodless and boring, taking place one cold December day in 1978 in the luxurious Jingxi Hotel in western Beijing. There a committee of China's most important Communist Party leaders, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, resolved to reform their country's economy by placing a radically new kind of focus on the development of agriculture, industry, technology and defense, what was referred to in slogan as the "Four Modernizations." In other words, contrary to its founding philosophy of communism, China's government would actively promote a free market economy, but keep its political structure of one-party rule and public ownership of land and media.

3. The average Chinese youth living in or near a mainland metropolis may not personally care much about what took place that day four decades ago. He or she would surely have read the details about it in a textbook, perhaps to memorize them for a university entrance examination. He or she may have heard from a family member who remembers that a simple television set cost half a year's salary in 1978. Today China has the third largest population of American-dollar millionaires in the world. More importantly, the number of middle class individuals, where "middle class" is defined as a person spending between US\$10 and US\$50 a day, is four hundred million and counting, being a third of China's people. In addition, the volume of retail sales in China will soon equal or surpass that of the United States. Needless to say, the surprise element of this rise is its unbelievable speed. At present China is unquestionably a major player on the world stage in international politics and trade.

4. Japan is front and center as a country feeling this impact. China ranks No.1 as importer of Japanese goods. In 2018 the annual total for Chinese tourists coming to Japan passed the 8 million mark. Japan is even more popular now than the United States as a travel destination for Chinese who have the money to go abroad. A little over half of the 184,000 foreign

students studying in Japan are Chinese.

5. During China's long years of isolation in the 20th century, Western scholars of Chinese history and society heavily relied on Japanese language sources to learn about China. Japanese Sinologists (scholars of Chinese ways) are generally regarded as being the world's best, particularly when it comes to China's classical literature. This closeness between Japan and China, especially in cultural matters, is captured in the four-character idiom (一衣帶水) : *ichiitaisui* in Japanese, or in Mandarin *yiyidaishui*. The expression translates literally as the "single narrow strip of water" separating two great countries geographically, but so thin it has made possible a close relationship with a long history.

6. It is well known that one of the outstanding contributions of China to Japan has been the writing system. Chinese characters called *kanji* in Japanese were employed actively with the arrival of Buddhism in the 6th century. What isn't widely known is that ambitious Chinese eager to modernize their country based on Japan's Meiji era reforms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries adopted terms that, while in the Chinese language in essence, were combined for the purpose of Japanese modernization inside Japan. Terms include those as basic as *shakai* (society), *rekishi* (history), *keizai* (economics), *bunka* (culture) and *denwa* (telephone). An ordinary Chinese person today would not be able to communicate effectively without making heavy use of these *waseikango* (Chinese words made in Japan). It is remarkable to think of two different language systems having such a richness of common vocabulary and mutual influence.

7. A person in another country who knows nothing about Japan or China might ask a Japanese person if he or she can read or even speak Chinese. How would you answer? While it may be strange to find intelligent people being ignorant about how Japan and China are not alike, the reasons

for their confusion are understandable. In countries like the United States the Chinese and the Japanese as immigrants have suffered the same racial discrimination and have lived in the same areas as neighbors, just as their native lands neighbor each other on the world map. Immigrants and Americans of Chinese or Japanese ancestry who continue to follow the food ways of their ancestral homelands will shop in the same “Asian” supermarkets. In fact, the term “Asian” is a name by which they bond as a minority community.

8. China’s rise is worthy of celebrating for Japan not only as an economic opportunity for the present and future, but as recognition that not all of the past century has been unhappy, and that Japan has been a major player in the great China story in good ways as well.

### **The Eight Paragraphs Explained with Citations**

**Paragraph 1.** The introduction is intended as a warm-up asking students to consider other great world events of recent history and how to express them in English. Based on personal observations in classes the author has taught at Bunkyo University, there is a strong possibility that entire classes in the near future will not know who Nelson Mandela was.

Among those students whose English level is relatively high, there can be a conversely low awareness of significant world events underscoring a serious imbalance in general knowledge. This is a problem being addressed currently by Japanese educators who, like myself, may be guilty of reading the current pulse of youth against a measuring stick honed in turbulent decades past when philosophy, namely Marxism, was fashionable, and traditional values were seriously questioned (Kato). For point of comparison, the exact same situation exists in the United States where college graduates, who in many cases

may excel in their acquired specialty, nevertheless demonstrate a surprising ignorance of World War II, the American Civil War or the Constitution. This is a systemic fault, not one of the individual students themselves, but it is the reality; and there are those in education who would prefer it not be (Brownfeld).

**Paragraph 2.** Many Japanese students, among them English majors, do not know how to say the full official name of China in English. This is due no doubt to the convenient ingenuity inherent in the Chinese elements of their native language and not necessarily a lack of interest.

This paragraph also includes three examples of Chinese proper nouns rendered in pinyin, the official and thus most widely employed means of romanizing words in Mandarin Chinese. Sorely lacking in a large number of college students is a foundational awareness of this system and understanding of the hard fact that Japanese language pronunciations of Chinese proper nouns are generally inappropriate in English prose. There are, nevertheless, those who do get it and do not need to have it explained to them. The question is why are there so many who don't.

Anyone with a smartphone can instantly convert Japanese *kanji* into their equivalent pinyin readings using such online software as Shochuu (Bookworm) Pinyin Saabisu ([www.frelax.com/sc/service/pinyin/](http://www.frelax.com/sc/service/pinyin/)); with this technology. Virtually all Chinese character dictionaries for Japanese speakers (*kanwajiten*) give the readings with tones included (though tones are not required in the majority of instances when the language is English and the subject is not specifically related to Chinese language).

Finally, exercises could accompany the lesson in simple English reinforcing students' understanding and vocabulary as they apply to the

workings of communism, socialism, capitalism and the impact economics has on culture.

**Paragraph 3.** This paragraph begins by shedding light on a commonality that is basic to growing up for a Japanese or Chinese child: entrance exams.

Information on the price of a television comes from an archival American ABC News report dating to 1978 by veteran reporter and China expert Jim Laurie, made available by Laurie himself on *YouTube*.

Another *YouTube* source on China's economy, particularly as an arguing point for prosperity through socialism, is Dr. Richard Wolff. An ubiquitous presence on the Internet, Wolff praises the soaring level of retail sales in several online clips.

As a forum for the exchange of ideas and debate, *YouTube* offers a wealth of contending opinions from informed sources, though it behooves the student to cultivate a discriminating eye for those with the most credibility. Students seeking supplemental information in English on *YouTube* would necessarily require a working level of media literacy to come up with the key words required for accomplishing learning tasks (Higgin).

*ChinaPower*, a website dedicated to tracking China's progress ("How well off"), supplied the statistics on the middle class. The tone of discussion here also opens up possibilities for making comparisons with Japan's own economic success story.

**Paragraph 4.** Here numbers are employed to illustrate how China's prosperity has influenced Japan's economy and academic community. China is the number one recipient of Japan's exports, with the United States trailing not far behind (Workman). Students may already be

familiar with the expression *bakugai*, (“explosive shopping”) used by the Japanese media to characterize the frenetic spending behavior of Chinese tourists in Japan. Of the 8 million of them visiting in 2018, seventy percent were under the age of 35 (“Number”). Statistics on the number of Chinese students in Japan date to 2015 (Clavel).

**Paragraph 5.** In this paragraph the reason for the reading’s title is given. The idiom is often encountered when Sino-Japanese relations are described in a friendly tone and thus is appropriate for this discussion. In recent years the harmony between the two countries has soured over the Senkaku-or Diaoyu Islands–territorial dispute, and an on-again-off-again outrage by China’s government pertaining to Japan’s perceived lack of remorse for its wartime killing of nearly five times more Chinese (Todd) than the approximately 3 million Japanese who perished (“Research Starters”).

**Paragraph 6.** Here a positive cultural exchange is highlighted and stressed. The notion of *waseikango* for Chinese of a nationalistic temperament can be unsettling (“Gendai”), due in part to a fixation on cultural purity, but curiously many Japanese may also not realize the full extent of this remarkable coined-in-Japan vocabulary and its role in modern East Asian history. The discussion of *Waseikango* here also introduces students to the realm of counterclaim and critical analysis, tools of academic method. *YouTube*, *Wikipedia*, the blogosphere and elsewhere (e.g. Hatena) feature challenges to assertions that certain terms used in China were originally coined in Japan. The student will learn that the vast body of knowledge called the humanities is always open to questioning, including what is written in the textbooks.

The reverence appropriate to China's status as cultural mentor has at times been undermined by Japan's narcissism and territorial ambition. One of the most brazen demonstrations of this was observed in the wildly popular woodblock prints celebrating Japanese successes in its first modern war, the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95. Qing soldiers in garishly colored uniforms were depicted as clownish, inept and easy kills (Keene 270). Schoolchildren learning English at the time had China written up in their textbooks as a "large empire" in order to magnify the glory of island nation Japan's unexpected victories there (Erikawa 45).

And yet it should also be noted that despite the seething hostility Japanese held for their great neighbor during the First Sino-Japanese War and thereafter, Chinese revolutionaries recognized the Japan experiment in modernization presented crucial lessons for planning the future of their own country. As the great American Sinologist John King Fairbank noted in the landmark *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*, Japan's role in enabling China's Revolution of 1911 "has been unpalatable and rather disregarded" by scholars worldwide, when the reality was that Japan had at this time much more influence on China's destiny than any other country. In the early part of the 20th century "China was most eager to learn and Japan most eager to teach, as yet without serious conflicts of national interest (740)."

The good news is that propagandistic tones where they exist today are far subtler. The speed-of-light digital media offer a bright promise for promoting understanding where woodblock prints only fanned flames of hostility and contempt. The fact that misinformation or worse can spread instantaneously is countered by the equal speed of correction. A critical mind is the only safeguard for minimizing the damage that information technology enables.

**Paragraph 7.** Japanese traveling abroad will on occasion be mistaken for Chinese tourists. Another inevitability is somebody asking what the difference is between the two peoples. An objective and cool-headed means of explaining this is an admirable goal for any student of English who takes “globalization” seriously while venturing outside Asia. A supplement to the lesson briefly describing the common immigrant experience in countries such as the United States and Canada would illuminate for the student just how different Japanese and Chinese are not.

Japanese schoolchildren of all ages would feel comfortable with the subject of Chinese food, much of it essentially ‘naturalized.’ Ramen (Chinese wheat noodles) gyoza (meat dumplings) and harumaki (spring rolls) are just a few of the standard items that have become regular features of Japanese food life. Indeed, Japanese living abroad will find themselves mingling and bonding with fellow Asians in “Asian supermarkets” such as Uwajimaya or 99 Ranch Market.

**Paragraph 8.** The concluding paragraph attempts to place a forward spin on the state of Sino-Japanese relations. History textbooks in Japan have been notoriously newsworthy for their alleged omissions and sanitizing of Japan’s modern era wartime behavior on the continent. Generally, the textbooks receiving the most media attention have the least influence on the ground due to their unambiguous nationalistic bent, achieving their excessive notoriety by having officially passed scrutiny on the crucial MEXT level, a process interpreted in turn as a foreign policy statement by indignant Chinese and Korean governments. Positive attention to China’s vast internal improvements and raised living standard on the pages of Japan’s school textbooks for English language learning could lend a welcome sparkle of good will.

## Conclusion

Classroom level exploration of the intriguing differences that The Other has with one's own culture should also involve embracing the shared humanity that is necessarily apparent. To uninformed outsiders China and Japan do seem similar, appearing side by side in the popular imagination of the West, much to the chagrin of those in either country who obsess over the perceived uniqueness of their national identity. Yet in this vexing ignorance there are seeds of truth. The lunar calendar, religion, traditional architecture, literature, classical bureaucracy, Confucian ethics, urban planning, court music and clothing all testify to the radiance of China's cultural sunlight beaming down on the budding traditions of an evolving Japanese civilization. China and Japan may not be the same country, but in the modern age of fast-growing economies they continue to share a great deal, for better and for worse.

Napoleon, we will remember, called it "a sleeping giant." China the "giant" is now much more than merely awake. It may remain a point of controversy as to whether this century truly 'belongs' to the planet's most populous country, but even as China's high-powered economy has begun to cool, it remains a vital engine for driving a myriad of Japan's industries. If only in the most modest way English language education can contribute to maintaining harmonious Sino-Japanese relations, it would be well worth it. A purposeful move in this direction is generating textbook material portraying today's China as it is through taking into account, at long last, just how great China's latest 'great leap' has been.

**List of Textbooks Examined by Author Where China is Highlighted or Mentioned (not comprehensive)**

Acorn English Course I (Shinkou Shuppansha)  
Acorn English Course II (Shinkou Shuppansha)  
Big Dipper English Course I (Suken Shuppan)  
Big Dipper English Course II (Suken Shuppan)  
Captain English Course II (Taishuukan Shoten)  
Compass English Communication I (Taishuukan Shoten)  
Departure English Expression I (Taishuukan Shoten)  
Element English Reading (Shinkou Shuppansha)  
Element English Writing (Shinkou Shuppansha)  
Genius English Communication I (Taishuukan Shoten)  
Genius English Course II (Taishuukan Shoten)  
Genius English Readings (Taishuukan Shoten)  
LovEng. English Course I (Shinkou Shuppansha)  
Monument English Expression (Kaitakusha)  
New Horizon 1 (Tokyo Shoseki)  
Polestar Reading Course (Suken Shuppan)  
Powwow English Course I (Bun-eidou)  
Powwow English Course II (Bun-eidou)  
Sunshine English Course II (Kairyuudou Shuppan)  
Voyager English Course II (Daïichi Gakushusha)

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