

## Conclusion

In my paper, I have tried to show that materials aimed at educating and training good shop vendors differ in many important aspects between Germany and Japan. In particular, the Japanese manuals appear like scores for a full-scale choreography to structure an energetic and efficient performance necessary to achieve the highest possible turnover. I will sum up in four points:

1) An important difference of style and emphasis in German and Japanese material is the Japanese focus on the body, which can be shaped, moves, and both acts and is reacted upon. In the German material, the body is mainly something that talks, argues, and develops and adopts ideas; in other words, it is a much less 'bodily' body.

2) The Japanese material naturally draws on notions of comportment that continue to exist as a structured tradition (called *sahō*) and are deeply rooted in Japan's Daoist-Buddhist view of man. Germany has no comparably structured tradition, and "good manners" with their emphasis on what should *not* be done, cannot be compared to the elaborate performance based on training and rehearsal of Japanese *kata*.<sup>7</sup>

3) The Japanese focus on the body, combined with the awareness of the tradition of *sahō*, leads to very exact observations as well as minute discussions of the human body, including the voice and the emotions. The results of these observations can be tapped and discussed in Japanese manuals.

4) The perspective of the Japanese material is to treat the body as something timeless, which will always react in the same way. Therefore, to achieve a specific reaction (such as buying merchandise), fixed types of action can be defined. The German material, however, while acknowledging universal aspects

7 The concept of *kata* 型 (mould, form, pattern) should not be taken to imply that a person must act blindly following a mould. On the contrary, *kata* is a term referring to a specific teaching and training method aiming to make an individual one with the body in action, which is something totally different from becoming a sort of automaton. The Japanese language also knows the concept of *kata wo yaburu* ("breaking the mould"), but strict rules pertain to who may break the *kata* when, in what way, and especially also around what age. The essential point to understand is that a *kata* can only be broken if it has once been perfected.

of the human body, shows no great interest in these. Rather, the key concept in the German texts tends to be “friendliness,” which is nothing more than a mere *frame* for bodily action.

I would like to conclude by stressing that cultural norms and patterns may be resistant to, but cannot escape, change. Therefore I think we should see the very divergent approaches to increasing turnover in German and in Japanese shops as situated in a discourse that fluctuates between acceptance and rejection. If we observe the actual German discourse we might sense a slight tendency to become a little more “Japanese,” as it were, with more positive emphasis on body, score and performance. However, the books analysed show that there are sharp limits in how far a German employee will subjectively accept that he or she must perform. In particular, no German material goes anywhere near the notion of “commandeering the body” (*karada wo kushi shite*). Also, unlike the Japanese material, German material puts highest stress on language and verbal communication, while at the same time entirely separating this sphere from that of the body.

What about the Japanese discourse? While the requirements of Japanese “service” culture demand a considerable amount of performance, in reality a slight reluctance to “perform” can indeed be noted occasionally. However, printed Japanese materials show not the slightest trace of transforming their scripts in the direction of a greater emphasis on cornerstones and a less prescribed and exactly determined choreography. What stands out as particularly remarkable is the definite Japanese reliance not on argument and discussion, but on the flow of energy created by movement, rhythm, and sensual impact.

## Illustrations

These are taken from MABUCHI Satoshi and NANJŌ Megumi: *Shinpan Hairiya-sui mise – ureru mise* [Shops that are easy to enter, shops that sell – New edition], Part 1: 1993, Part 2: 1997. Note: X in the right or left lower corner of an illustration stands for “wrong,” O for “correct.” Comments in the illustration are given in transcription (in horizontal writing if vertical in the original).

Part 1, pages 18-19:

1. "The movement of the salespersons at work attracts customers."



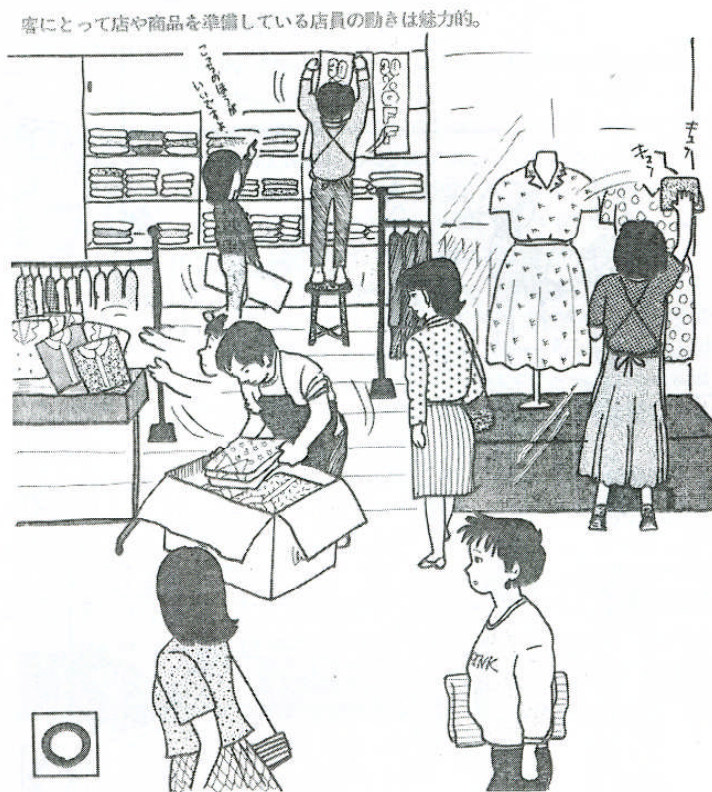
サッサッ (*sassa*) – sound and feeling produced by quick movement that does not hesitate

バサバサ (*basabasa*) – sound produced by dry objects such as cloth, paper, leaves etc.

スタスタ (*sutasuta*) – feeling produced when something moves briskly

キビキビ (*kibikibi*) – feeling of brisk and lively actions performed with high precision

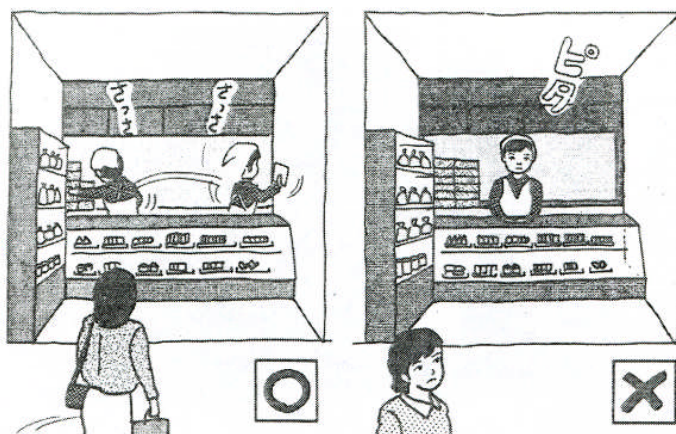
2. "For customers the movements of salespersons arranging things in the shop and preparing the goods for sale are fascinating."



キユツ キユツ (*kyu'kyu'*) – sound or action of squeezing or pressing strongly  
 こっちのほうが いいですよ (*kotchi no hō ga ii desu yo*) – "here/this side is better"

Part 1, page 40:

3. "The art of action where there is only little space for the salesperson."



ピタ (*pita*) – the feeling that something has come to a dead stop

さっさ (*sassa*) – sound and feeling produced by quick movement that does not hesitate

Part 1, page 96:

4. "If the salespersons are moving, then the customers feel free to approach the goods."



Part 1, page 208:

5. "Alert service with fast movements."



在庫があつたはず (zaiko ga atta hazu) – "I'm sure what you wish for is in stock."

こちらはいかがですか? (kotchira wa ikaga desu ka?) – "How about these?"

サッ (sa) – feeling of something done extremely quickly and adroitly

すみませんね 何足も 出してもらつて (sumimasen ne nansoku mo dashite moratte) – "I'm really sorry! You-in-lower-position have taken the trouble to get so many shoes out for me."

Part 2, page 62:

6. "If the salespersons make movements that suggest 'Here is my territory!', this will chase away customers."



なわばり主張の店員のアクションが客を追い払う。

Part 1, page 112:

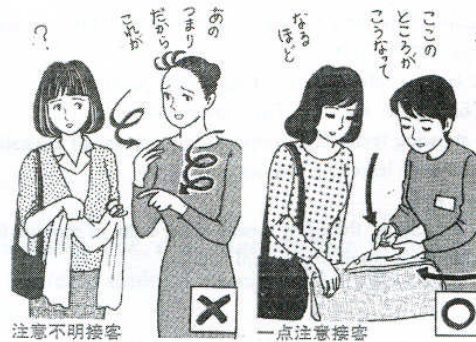
7. “If the salespersons move around, this will dissolve the atmosphere of ‘This is my territory!’”



セツセ (*sesse*) – feeling of something being done in an earnest and hurried fashion without resting  
 サツ (*sa'*) – feeling of something done extremely quickly and adroitly

Part 1, page 200:

8. O = Serving customers concentrating on 1 point; X = Serving customers with no identifiable point upon which the salesperson is concentrating.



ここのところがこうなつて (*kokono tokoroga kōnatte*) – “This here goes/functions like this.”  
 なるほど (*naruhodo*) – “I see.”  
 あのつまりだからこれが (*ano tsumari dakara korega*) – “Eh, I mean, so, this.”

Part 2, pages 50–51:

9. “Becoming an expert salesperson is all a matter of how you move.”



販売の達人の動き (*hanbai no tatsujin no ugoki*) – the movements of an expert salesperson

機敏癖 (*kibinkuse*) – habit of moving promptly and quickly

すぐに 見て参ります (*sugu ni mite mairimasu*) – “I-in-lower-position will immediately go and see.”

さっ (*sa*) – feeling of something done extremely quickly and adroitly

接近癖 (*sekkin kuse*) – habit of moving the upper body forward while approaching someone

こちらです (*kochiradesu*) – “This is it.”

一点注意癖 (*itten chūi kuse*) – habit of concentrating on 1 point

ここが こうなつて (*koko ga kō natte*) – “This here is like this.”

協調癖 (*kyōchōkuse*) – showing feelings of cooperation by means of the habit of moving from down upwards, at the same time lessening physical energy

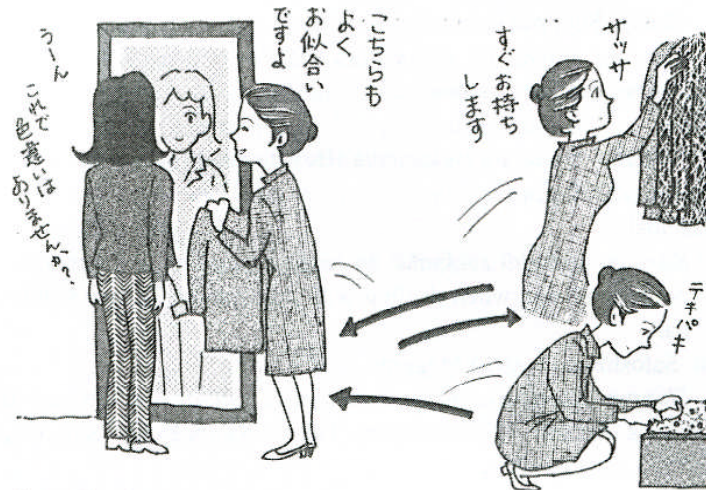
えーえー (*e-e-*) – “Yes, yes.”

攻撃癖 (*kōgekikuse*) – “Attacking” things by means of the habit of moving from up downwards, at the same time increasing the amount of physical energy

はい (*hai*) – “Yes!!”



## 10. "It is extremely difficult to acquire the movements of an expert."



達人の動きを習得することは大変むずかしい。

テキパキ (*tekipaki*) – conveys the feeling of disposing of a matter promptly and effectively  
 サッサ (*sassa*) – sound and feeling produced by quick movement that does not hesitate  
 すぐお持ち します (*sugu omochi shimasu*) – "I-in-lower-position will immediately bring it to you."  
 こちらも よく お似合いですよ (*kochiramo yoku oniai desu yo*) – "This too fits-you-as-something-presented-from-lower-position, I can assure you!"  
 うーん これで 色違いは ありますか? (*uun, korede irochigai wa arimasenka?*) – "Mhm, you don't have it in a different colour, do you?"

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