Teaching Language, Culture, and Literature Together to Enhance Trans-Cultural Competence and L2 Proficiency

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Abstract: This article describes a lesson module on the Japanese Folktale, *Momotaro*, to illustrate how authentic literature can be taught in lower level, college language classes to enhance culture and language learning. Suggestions for how to integrate authentic content into a lower level language course curriculum are also discussed.
Keywords: Culture and Language, Learning, Authentic literature, Folktale.

Introduction

The challenges of teaching authentic literature to lower level foreign language students are well known. Such students lack the proficiency to read many authentic texts. The challenges are even greater at the postsecondary level because college students are not likely to find interesting many of the authentic texts that are accessible to lower level foreign language students, e.g., children's books, supermarket ads, restaurant menus, and maps.

Yet, increasingly the language teaching community is calling for authentic content, in particular authentic literature, to be taught in postsecondary, lower level foreign language courses. The MLA's 2007 Ad Hoc Committee report maintains that "language, literature, and culture" should be taught as "a continuous whole" in postsecondary institutions beginning with introductory level courses. The report argues that such an approach will not only promote translingual and transcultural competence, but also bridge the gap between area studies content courses and foreign language courses. Vanisa Weist points out that students are often ill prepared to study sophisticated literary texts in upper level foreign language classes because they lack the analytical skills, sociocultural background knowledge, and knowledge of literary concepts to study such literature (Weist (2004)). Teaching authentic literature at the lower level will better prepare students for reading more sophisticated literary content at the upper level. Moreover, some proponents of content-based instruction argue that cognitively engaging authentic content should be taught in lower level foreign language classes. Terry Ballman, for example, maintains that teaching such content at the lower level enhances language learning as long as the content used is tailored to meet the linguistic, cognitive and affective needs of lower level students (Ballman 1997, Brinton, Snow, & Wesche 1989, Grim 2008, Schwartz, Bevan & Lasche 1982).

How then can authentic content, particularly authentic literature, be taught in lower level classes to enhance language learning, promote translingual and transcultural competence, and prepare students to read more challenging authentic literature in upper level classes. We address these questions by first making some practical suggestions for how to integrate authentic content into a lower level Japanese language course curriculum, and then describing a multi-class lesson module on the Japanese folktale, *Momotaro*.

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Incorporating Authentic Content into a Lower Level Japanese Course Curriculum

Content-based instruction (CBI) is an approach to language instruction that employs content to teach a foreign language. It has been used successfully in many different types of programs; for example, immersion, bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL), Language for Special Purposes (LSP), and K-16 Foreign Language (FL) programs (Grabe & Stoller, 1997; Stryker & Leaver, 1997; Snow & Brinton, 1997; Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989). Proponents of theme-based CBI contend that this approach can be used effectively in lower level courses to integrate language and culture learning. The curriculum of a theme-based CBI course is organized around themes and topics, which all content, activities and tasks address. Brinton et al. maintain that a variety of text types, formats and activities should be used in such courses. A unit on the theme of the family, for example, would consist of lessons in which grammar and vocabulary are taught using a variety of authentic texts that address the topic of the family. According to Brinton, such an approach not only teaches culture while teaching language, but also makes learning grammar and vocabulary more engaging and meaningful, leading to a higher level of "language processing" than usually occurs in courses in which more traditional approaches are used.

Instructors who wish to adopt a theme-based CBI approach in a lower level course face the challenge of finding and integrating a variety of thematically-connected, authentic materials in different formats that are not only linguistically appropriate for lower level students, but also cognitively engaging to college students. When teaching such courses instructors will likely have to employ materials that are either grammatically and lexically too complex for lower level students or too elementary and uninteresting for college students. In the former case, students may have difficulty developing a degree of language accuracy appropriate for their level. In the latter case, instructors would lose one of the benefits of CBI; namely, the facilitation of language-learning through the use of engaging materials.

To avoid sacrificing language accuracy to cognitive engagement or cognitive engagement to language accuracy, a balance must be achieved between lessons centered on authentic content and lessons centered on textbook materials. Both types of lessons should incorporate authentic content; however, in "textbook-centered" lessons, authentic content should be used to supplement the main text. By contrast, lessons organized around authentic content can be taught independently of the main text and do not have to be linked to the main theme of a unit. Establishing such a link, while useful, is not critical to the aims of enhanced language and culture learning and preparing students to read and analyze more challenging literature in upper level courses. More important than establishing such a link is selecting content and designing tasks that are linguistically appropriate for lower level students and intellectually engaging for college students.

Genki 2 is the Japanese language textbook used in the second year Japanese course presented here. The text includes a passage on the *Hiroshima* Peace Memorial Museum and the atomic bombing. Instructors supplement this passage with a Japanese text comprised of poems written by atomic bomb victims and a photography book and essay written in English by Miyako Ishiuchi. Ishiuchi's book consists of photographs of atomic bomb victims' clothing placed on top of light boxes. The reading section in Lesson 16 of the *Genki* 2 textbook describes a *Manga* entitled *Doraemon*. This section is supplemented with a substantial amount of text from the *Manga* issue to which the section refers. Students also read a magazine article written in English about *Manga* and Japanese culture, and a New York Times article about how the *Manga*, *Kaminoshizuku,* triggered the wine industry boom in Japan and several other Asian

countries. These supplemental readings in English help students to understand the significance of *Manga* in Japanese culture and society.

By contrast, instructors teach the Japanese folktale, *Momotaro*, independently of the main text. *Momotaro* is a story that weaves together various elements of Japanese history and culture. Although it is written for children--and so is appropriate for lower level language learners--it can be presented in ways that are interesting and challenging for adults. Thus, it is ideal authentic literary content for lower-level adult Japanese language learners. While numerous *Momotaro* texts are available in Japan and the U.S., we use a text published by *Koodansha* because its illustrations are sophisticated and drawn for an adult audience. In conjunction with the *Momotaro* text, students receive a course packet, which contains vertically typed passages from the *Momotaro* text in *hiragana* and *kanji*, a vocabulary and kanji list, and five 1-2 page homework assignments consisting of writing exercises and reading and cultural questions.

After completing five chapters of the main textbook, students study *Momotaro* in 15 consecutive classes. Lengthy content material should be covered in consecutive classes if possible; however, shorter authentic content that can be easily linked to a topic in the main text (as is the case with the *Hiroshima* and *Manga* material mentioned above) can be taught effectively in conjunction with the main text. Moreover, while it may not be possible to establish thematic connections between certain content material and a textbook, as is the case with *Momotaro* and the *Genki 2* text, grammatical and lexical connections can and should be made to enhance comprehension of linguistic items already covered in the main text. For example, instructors use *Momotaro* to review and illustrate giving and receiving verb sentences, which are covered in lessons 14 and 16 of the main text, because the story offers a number of interesting examples of such sentences.

Over an entire semester, students spend a total of 20% of class time (about three out of 15 weeks) on authentic content in my fourth-semester Japanese course (this does not include homework assignments on such material). Allotting this amount of time to authentic content still leaves more than enough time to complete all or most of the text book material normally covered in third and fourth semester Japanese courses.

An Authentic Content Lesson Module: The *Momotaro* Folktale

The *Momotaro* lessons are divided into five overlapping phases: (1) a preparation phase, (2) a phase in which new linguistic and cultural items relating to the content are introduced, (3) a phase that centers on language comprehension activities, (4) a phase that centers on language production activities that are designed specifically to facilitate comprehension, and (5) a phase that centers on intellectually challenging and creative language production activities.

(1) The kind of preparation that is required for a content lesson varies according to the topic and the nature of the content that is used to explore it. However, preparation always involves at least one of two things. First, a presentation of materials that focus students' attention on the topic and ensure students are familiar with the content that will be covered during the lesson; second, the provision of basic background information about the topic or content. For literary content, preparation may involve discussion of its genre and author or a review of a part of the story line. In the case of a topic that has historical significance instructors may need to begin a lesson by providing some basic factual information about historical events which are relevant to the topic. In the case of a topic that will be addressed strictly from a sociological perspective, e.g., food or the family, Ballman (1997) suggests showing photographs of different types of families or food and then asking questions that

prompt students to identify and describe the topic using vocabulary they already know.

During the preparation phase of a *Momotaro* lesson, students are shown slides of the text to ensure, first, that they recall the portion of the story line that was covered during the previous lesson and, second, that they are familiar with the story line that will be covered during the current lesson. Students are then asked several Yes-No and WH-questions to confirm that they know the story line. The first phase concludes with students summarizing the story.

During the preparation phase of the first or second class on *Momotaro*, rhetorical devices relevant to the folktale are discussed (e.g., motif, onomatopoeia, symbolism, propaganda) and three types of Japanese folk narratives are distinguished--folktales, fables, legends. Students are taught some of the defining characteristics of these types of narratives and are asked to think of Western folk narratives from the canon or popular culture that are analogous to *Momotaro*. This question helps them to identify the story's central elements and motifs, knowledge of which is necessary for the final phase of the lesson in which students will have to think more deeply about and creatively use these elements. Students usually identify four or five elements as central to the story, for example, that *Momotaro* is born with superhuman abilities from something nonhuman (i.e., a peach), that he is adopted by a childless older couple, that he is connected with the divine or the supernatural, that he journeys to battle evil supernatural beings to protect his community, and that he assembles a team of loyal animal followers during his journey. Examples of stories compared to *Momotaro,* none of which contain all of *Momotaro's* central elements, include Hercules (especially the Disney version), Exodus, Thumbelina, Jack and the Bean Stalk, Star Wars, and Superman.

(2) During the second phase, instructors introduce new vocabulary, grammar, and cultural information. New vocabulary and grammar are presented verbally with the aid of written examples, definitions, and vocabulary lists. For *Momotaro*, after disseminating a vocabulary and kanji list and articulating new vocabulary, instructors review old grammar and teach new grammar. Visual aids, such as photographs, illustrations, and slides, are used to help students learn new linguistic items.

Important to underscore is that the content and, more generally, socio-cultural information are also employed to teach vocabulary and grammar. For instance, *Momotaro* is used as a launch pad for discussing Japanese cultural conventions regarding obligations that are incurred as a result of receiving gifts. Instructors draw on this discussion to explain the terms *otomo* (attendant), *kureru* (to give to an in-group member), and *ageru* (to give to an out-group member).

New cultural items are also introduced through visual aids, discussions and lectures. Among the cultural and historical topics that are discussed in relation to *Momotaro* are the Japanese view of the supernatural world, water as the conduit to and from the supernatural world, unlucky direction; *Oni* (ogre), the Japanese zodiac, attendant, obligation, and debt; in-group/out-group membership; *Ohaguro* (blacken teeth); commoners, Aristocrats, and their relationship; the Edo period; and the use of *oni* as propaganda during World War I and II. Student surveys indicate that students tend to be most interested in the Japanese view of the supernatural world and with how *Momotaro* was utilized as anti-American propaganda during World War I and II. Surveys also show that students enjoy learning the lexical items that are introduced in connection with these topics.

During this phase, instructors make an effort not only to teach language through culture, but also to teach culture through language and to highlight the role that language plays in constituting culture. Highlighting, for example, that Japanese

(but not English) contains separate terms for giving to in-group members and giving to out-group members helps students to appreciate the significance of in-group and out-group social structures in Japanese culture. It also allows students to see how such structures are partially constituted through language. A comprehensive understanding of the term *otomo* necessarily involves understanding the features of Japanese culture to which the term refers; there is no lexical equivalent to *otomo* in, for example, American English because there is no American cultural equivalent to the cultural features to which *otomo* refers. Indeed, many American college students are surprised by strength of the obligation that the term denotes once they learn how such an obligation can be acquired. The characters in the folktale that become *Momotaro*'s *otomo* feel obligated to risk their lives for him. Yet, they believe that they have this obligation because he gave them some food. The story conveys, by means of exaggeration, the strong sense of obligation denoted by the term *otomo* and felt by many Japanese people toward others who have treated them kindly.

Illustrating how language constitutes culture allows lower level students to gain some understanding of how learning a language will enable them not only to communicate with people of a different culture, but also to move more deeply into a different cultural horizon. Such an understanding generates interest in language and culture learning (as well as their intersection), and promotes the knowledge and attitude needed for the development of transcultural and translinguistic competence.

(3) During the third phase of the lesson instructors employ activities that require minimal use of the target language to confirm that students comprehend new grammar and vocabulary. For *Momotaro*, the instructor reads the text aloud with students and has them do mechanical drills to ensure that they understand the grammar and vocabulary introduced in the previous phase. Reading the folktale aloud with students also allows them to hear and practice the patterns of intonation used to tell folk narratives.

(4) The activities that comprise the fourth phase have a dual purpose: first, to improve and deepen students' understanding of new linguistic items and, second, to enable them to begin to produce such items. Toward these ends, the activities in question require a moderate amount language production; however, they do not call for students to employ new linguistic items in challenging or inventive ways. Communicative exercises are the primary type of activity used during this phase. The following section discusses the fifth phase of the *Momotaro* unit.

Creative and Challenging Language Production Activities: The Fifth Phase of the Content Lesson

The main objective of the last phase of the authentic content module is to improve students' ability to produce the target language. A secondary objective is to enhance students' understanding of Japanese culture and ability to read and analyze authentic literary content. The means to these ends are intellectually engaging activities that encourage students, first, to think critically about the content and, second, to use new and old linguistic items to express their ideas in written and verbal form.

The activities employed are intellectually engaging in at least three senses. First, they are interesting and motivate students to think deeply and creatively about the content and related issues. Second, they challenge students to use the target language in sophisticated and inventive ways. Third, they show students that they can now and will increasingly be able to use the target language in ways that are practically useful and intellectually enriching. The third sense of engagement is particularly relevant for lower level college students insofar as they often feel that they

cannot and may not for some time be able to use the language in intellectually enriching ways.

Before giving any assignments, students are provided a handout written in English that briefly explains several influential theories of myth and folktale. Instructors also introduce new vocabulary relating to the theory so that students will be able to draw more easily from it when working on assignments. The handout together with the design of the assignments, the phase one discussion comparing *Momotaro* to other folk narratives, and the lecture on Japanese culture in phase two is usually more than enough to convince students to approach *Momotaro* as a story that can provide insight into Japanese culture. Three different types of activities are employed during this phase: discussion questions, debates, and skits. All assignments are completed in Japanese.

Students are assigned discussion questions as homework and instructed to answer each question in approximately 5-6 sentences. After submitting the homework, they are taught how to respond critically to another's opinion in Japanese. Following this, students discuss the questions in pairs and then, finally, have a class-wide discussion.

Discussion questions encourage students to reflect not only on the story's structure and relationship to Japanese culture and history, but also on the symbolic significance of its central motifs, characters and objects. Examples of discussion questions include: why was *Momotaro* born from a peach, and not a human being? Why is there a dog, a monkey and a pheasant in the story? (Students answer this question after reading a handout on the Japanese zodiac). How are Japanese *oni* and Western demons/devils similar? How are they different? (Students do a visual comparison). Does the story address any dualities? If so, what are they, and what is *Momotaro*'s relationship to them? How and why has the portrayal of the characters in the story changed throughout history? Students initially have difficulty answering such questions; for example, in response to the question, "Why was *Momotaro* born from a peach?" a student once said without any further explanation that "the story wouldn't work well if he were born from a banana." However, student responses soon become more sophisticated and interesting, and have led to some lively classroom discussions.

Momotaro journeys to an island called "*Onigashima*" to battle *oni* who have been attacking his and other communities. With the help of his animal cohorts, *Momotaro* not only defeats the *oni*, but forces them to submit to him. In light of the resolution to the conflict, I present the following question for debate: if you had the power to eliminate evil, would you?

The debate takes place after five or six classes on *Momotaro*. Students are placed into one of two groups based on which side of the issue they wish to support. One class session is devoted entirely to preparation for the debate. The debate itself consists of three stages: a stage in which each group presents arguments in support of its position, a stage in which each group raises criticisms against the other group's arguments, and a stage in which each group responds to criticisms.

The following are English translations of student opinions that were recorded during the first stage of one of the debates. Each opinion listed was expressed by a different student. Views expressed by students who argued for the elimination of evil include: "if evil is eliminated, bad people will no longer commit bad acts," "if you eliminate bad people, the world will become a better place," "If you don't do anything, the situation will become worse."

Opinions articulated against the elimination of evil include: "No one really knows what evil is," "While something may look evil, there is always something good in it," "If you do not experience "badness" you cannot appreciate "goodness" in the world," "If you eliminate evil, you too will become an evil person," "What is

"good"?", "You can reform bad people without eliminating "badness", " "Just because one person says something is "good," does not mean that it is good for all of us?", "If you eliminate "bad" you will create more "bad things" by your own act," and "Who decides what is meant by "evil"?"

The substance of most of the opinions, criticisms, and responses to criticisms as well as the survey results presented in the next section show that many of the students found the debate to be intellectually engaging and challenging. The debate question interested students, and motivated them to think deeply about the issue it addressed, which, together with the framework of the debate, motivated them to find ways of expressing and defending their ideas. The latter posed a significant challenge for many of them because of the sophistication of their ideas. Yet, as the opinions listed above illustrate, especially the ones against the elimination of evil, most students rose to the challenge; a number of them used vocabulary and grammatical expressions that we had not yet covered just so they could clearly and persuasively articulate their views. In short, interest in the issue and the challenge of expressing and defending sophisticated ideas motivated students to produce the language in sophisticated and challenging ways.

For the skit project, students write and perform a skit that creatively tells the story of *Momotaro*. Students are encouraged to be as inventive as they wish as long as they follow the order of events and use most of the central elements of the original narrative. For example, while students are instructed to include events such as an abnormal birth, a journey to battle evil, an actual battle, etc., they are also encouraged to be as creative as they want with the contexts in which and means through which these events takes place. To insure that students have ample time to prepare, instructions for writing and performing the skit are provided during the first class on *Momotaro*. Students write a total of three drafts of the skit, all of which they revise in light of their instructors comments. Skits are performed during the last class session on *Momotaro*.

Both the survey results reported in the next section and the imaginative and clever skits students consistently write and perform indicate that they are more than just grade-motivated. Many students creatively use old and new vocabulary and grammar in their skits. Even when skits significantly alter the storyline--in one skit *Momotaro* travels to outer space to battle space *oni*, in another, entitled "*Discotaro*," *Momotaro* and the *oni* have a dance contest instead of a battle--they still often contain rhetorical devices and linguistic items , such as onomatopoeia and the verbs *ageru* and *kureru*, that are prevalent in the original narrative.

Student Evaluations

Table 1 and Table 2 show the results of student evaluations of the *Momotaro* classes taught in 2009 and 2010. The 2009 survey consisted of nine questions three of which were yes/no questions that addressed students' general feelings about the *Momotaro* materials and activities. The remaining six questions were five scale questions about the materials and activities. The 2010 survey consisted of 10 five scale questions that addressed the materials and activities. The tables below show the five scale question results. The numbers in the five scale questions were defined in the following manner: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= undecided, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

The results of the three Yes/No questions in the 2009 survey were as follows: 83.95% of the students surveyed answered yes to the question, "Did you enjoy the *Momotaro* materials?" 79.01% answered yes to the question "Did you enjoy the skit

project?" Many of the students found the debate project to be particularly challenging, which may account for why only 34.18% responded favorably to the question "Did you enjoy the debate?" However, 46.15% answered either that they agreed or that they strongly agreed with the statement, "The debate was intellectually engaging and challenging." Also noteworthy is that 58.22% of the students thought that the *Momotaro* homework assignments were interesting.

76.07% of the students surveyed believed that the *Momotaro* text helped them to learn the Japanese language and to learn about Japanese culture, and 80.25% thought that the *Momotaro* lecture helped them to learn Japanese and to learn about Japanese culture. Moreover, nearly 50% believed that the discussions helped them to improve their Japanese, while 53.84% thought that the skit project helped them to improve their Japanese.

Table 1. Results from spring 2009 - 5 scale questions

	5	4	3	2	1	Ave
The *Momotaro* text helped me to learn the Japanese language and to learn about Japanese culture.	20 (26.69%)	40 (49.38%)	16 (19.75%)	5 (6.17%)	0 (0%)	3.93
The *Momotaro* lecture helped me to learn the Japanese language and to learn about Japanese culture.	26 (32.10%)	39 (48.15%)	12 (14.81%)	4 (4.94%)	0 (0%)	4.07
The discussions in the drill class helped me to improve my Japanese	18 (22.50%)	21 (26.25%)	27 (33.75%)	9 (11.25%)	5 (6.25%)	3.47
The skit presentation helped me to improve my Japanese.	17 (21.79%)	25 (32.05%)	18 (23.08%)	12 (15.38%)	6 (7.69%)	3.41
The debate was intellectually engaging and challenging.	15 (19.23%)	21 (26.92%)	18 (23.08%)	14 (17.95%)	10 (12.82%)	3.18
The homework assignments in the *Momotaro* packet were interesting	18 (22.78%)	28 (35.44%)	17 (21.52%)	11 (13.92%)	5 (6.33%)	3.54

The 2010 survey yielded similar results. 84.21% of the students surveyed thought that the *Momotaro* classes helped them to learn the language and to learn about Japanese culture. 66.67% believed that the discussion questions helped them to improve their Japanese (a 16 percentage point increase from the 2009 survey), while only 12.28% felt that it did not help them to improve their Japanese. Slightly more than 50% thought that the skit project helped them to improve their Japanese, while 15.79% believed that it did not help them to improve their Japanese. 56.14% of students responded that they wanted "to continue to learn Japanese through this type of teaching approach," while 15.79% said that they did not want to. Nearly 86% of the students responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I gained a lot of content knowledge (e.g., knowledge about the *Momotaro* folktale, the Japanese view of the supernatural world, Japanese history, etc.) from the *Momotaro* classes," and 94.74% responded that they agreed or strongly agree with the statement "Japanese was used as a communication tool in class." The latter is noteworthy because it is often claimed that Japanese is not used (or not used enough) as a communication tool in lower level Japanese classrooms in which a substantial amount of authentic content is covered.

Table 2. Results from spring 2010 - 5 scale questions

	5	4	3	2	1	Ave
The *Momotaro* classes helped me to learn the Japanese language and to learn about Japanese culture.	14 (24.56%)	34 (59.65%)	7 (12.28%)	1 (1.75%)	1 (1.75%)	4.03
The discussions in the drill class helped me to improve my Japanese.	15 (26.32%)	23 (40.35%)	12 (21.05%)	6 (10.53%)	1 (1.75%)	3.78
The debate helped me to improve my Japanese	10 (17.54%)	15 (26.32%)	19 (33.33%)	11 (19.30%)	2 (3.51%)	3.35
The skit presentation helped me to improve my Japanese.	6 (10.53%)	23 (40.35%)	19 (33.33%)	7 (12.28%)	2 (3.51%)	3.42
The homework assignments in the packet were interesting.	13 (22.81%)	27 (47.37%)	11 (19.30%)	4 (7.02%)	2 (3.51%)	3.78
Japanese was used as a communication tool in class.	29 (50.88%)	25 (43.86%)	3 (5.26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.45
I gained a lot of knowledge about the *Momotaro* folktale, the Japanese view of the supernatural, Japanese history, etc. from the *Momotaro* classes.	25 (43.86%)	24 (42.11%)	5 (8.77%)	3 (5.26%)	0 (0%)	4.24
The *Momotaro* materials were intellectually appropriate for college students.	22 (38.60%)	24 (42.11%)	8 (14.04%)	3 (5.26%)	0 (0%)	4.14
The *Momotaro* materials made me want to learn more about Japanese culture	13 (22.81%)	22 (38.605)	15 (26.32%)	5 (8.77%)	2 (3.51%)	3.68
I would like to continue to learn Japanese through this type of teaching approach.	11 (19.30%)	21 (36.84%)	16 (28.07%)	5 (8.77%)	4 (7.02%)	3.52

Conclusion

As the survey results in the previous section show, authentic literature can be taught in lower level foreign language classes in ways which are accessible and engaging to college students. While this interest is partly the result of the material itself, it is also the result of the excitement students feel at being able to use the Japanese language to analyze and express ideas about Japanese history, art, poetry and other aspects of Japanese culture. In other words, reading, discussing, debating about and creating and performing skits based on authentic materials shows lower level students they can already and will increasingly be able to use the language in practical and intellectually enriching ways.

The survey results also indicate that authentic literature can be used in lower level language courses to enhance culture and language learning. While the surveys did not ask students to reflect on whether the *Momotaro* lessons enhanced their ability to read and analyze literature, the module is structured to teach students how to examine the folktale's literary and cultural elements. Being able to read literary texts from multiple perspectives, e.g., cultural, literary, and stylistic, are analytical skills students need to develop to read more sophisticated authentic literature in upper level classes (Barrette, Paesani & Vinall, 2010). Moreover, Barrett et al. argue that teaching such skills to language students at all levels of instruction promotes translingual and transcultural competence.

Teaching authentic literature in lower level, postsecondary language classes is challenging. Yet, as the *Momotaro* lesson module shows, if the text and tasks employed are linguistically appropriate for lower level students, cognitively engaging

to college-aged students, and designed to promote culture learning and analytical abilities needed for reading literary texts, such literature can be taught in ways which enhance language learning, promote transcultural competence, and prepare students to read more sophisticated authentic literature.

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