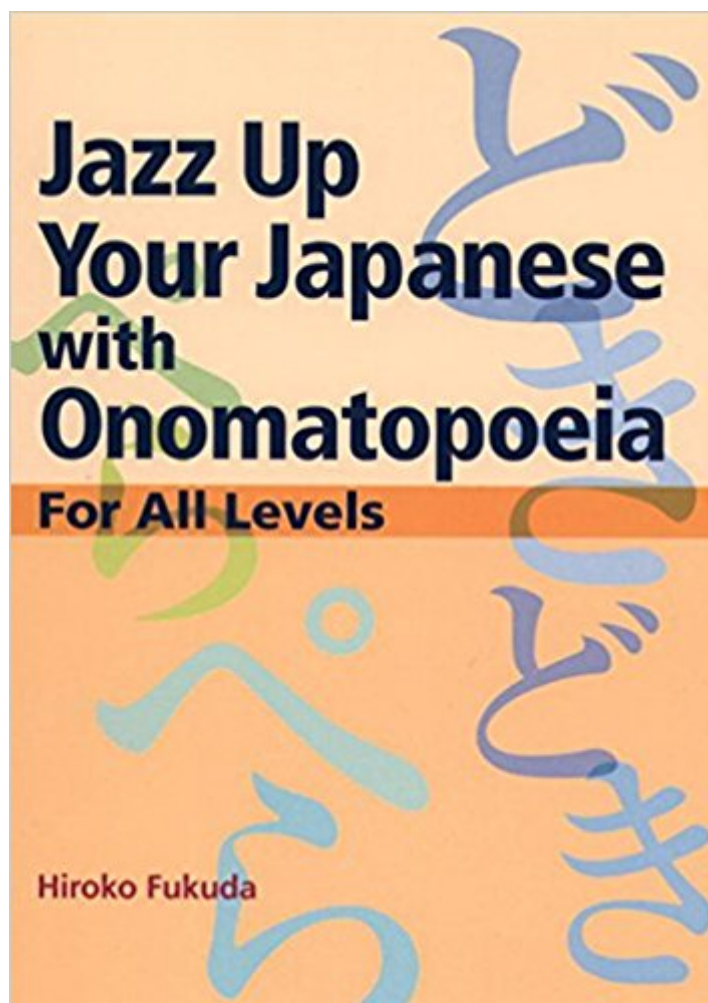




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# Jazz Up Your Japanese With Onomatopoeia: For All Levels



## Synopsis

Onomatopoeia is one of the most outstanding features of the Japanese language. Its acquisition is essential for students who wish to speak (or understand) natural Japanese, read literature or manga, or watch anime in the original. The problem is that Japanese onomatopoeic words are so different from their English equivalents (words such as pop, bang, splat, and squeak) that they are extremely hard to remember and put into practice. The book begins with an introduction that outlines what "onomatopoeia" means in both English and Japanese. It covers sound and meaning in general, onomatopoeia in English, sound symbolism in English and Japanese, Japanese onomatopoeia and mimesis, types of Japanese onomatopoeia, grammatical functions of Japanese onomatopoeia, Japanese written forms, and how new Japanese onomatopoeic words are formed (for example, in manga). This introductory material is all-important, for without the overall picture it presents, students are forced to learn Japanese onomatopoeia by rote, one word at a time, as if each was unique unto itself, as if each had no logical connection with any other word, and as if Japanese onomatopoeia was a huge, ugly hodgepodge instead of the beautiful, well-organized microcosm that it is. However, this introduction alone would not suffice to produce fluency. Onomatopoeia must be seen in action for that to happen. This is done in the second part of the book, which consists of eleven situational dialogues that allow students to eavesdrop on Japanese speaking the way they do in real life. The dialogues are given in Japanese script (with furigana over all kanji), romanization, and English translation. Each example of onomatopoeia that appears in the dialogue has its own commentary, including definitions, usage, and two or more sample sentences. Cultural notes are given when they help to clarify the situation presented in the dialogue. Each dialogue is followed by a quiz. With its edifying introduction and lively dialogues, *Jazz Up Your Japanese with Onomatopoeia: For All Levels* will, without a doubt, help students come to grips with this intriguing aspect of the Japanese language, whether they be intermediate students who can benefit from seeing onomatopoeia used in a variety of situations or beginning students who, as they slowly add new onomatopoeia to their vocabulary, will profit from seeing how these words fit into a larger, fully developed scheme. The book will also, whatever the level, make Japanese much more fun to study. Previously published in Kodansha International's Power Japanese series under the title *Flip, Slither, & Bang: Japanese Sound and Action Words* (1993). Now with a new introduction and quizzes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is an introduction to onomatopoeia and mimesis in Japanese through real-life conversations and examples. While presenting some of the most common sound and action words, I've added several other features to make the book even more useful. The language in the book is natural spoken Japanese. Many people who study outside of Japan get a rude awakening when they first visit: they don't understand what anyone is saying. The reason is that the language they've learned from textbooks is stiff and unnatural, often unlike what is heard in everyday life. As a countermeasure of sorts, the conversations and examples given here are all in an informal spoken style, with a balance between women's and men's language. When you read this book, I hope you will feel as though you're having a nice friendly chat in Japanese, the way it would be done if you were talking to an actual person. The topics show the real Japan. Contrary to popular belief, few Japanese have much to do with geisha, trade negotiations, or Mt. Fuji during their daily lives. The subject matter taken up in this book show what people actually talk about at home, at work, and at play. Each of the main vocabulary items is marked G, N, or B (Good, Neutral, or Bad, to show if its sense is positive, neutral, or negative). After all, nothing is more embarrassing than to use a word that has the right meaning but the wrong connotation. Brief notes provide information on cultural background. Every language is an essential part of the culture of the people who speak it, a window on the country's history and ways of thinking. That's why every language is different and difficult and fascinating. Learning another language is worthwhile because it gives you a link to other people, both as a vehicle for sharing ideas and as a practical tool for everyday life. But to master a language, you need more than grammar and vocabulary, so I've scattered notes throughout this

book to provide some basic information about Japanese life and customs. Typical Japanese names are used in the examples. It's hard to remember unfamiliar names in a foreign language. To help you out in this regard, I've made a point of using the ten most common surnames and a variety of common given names. Illustrations show the settings of each conversation. If you've never visited Japan, these drawings should help you visualize the speakers and their surroundings. You can read the book in any order. Some people always start on the first page of a book and read straight through to the last. If you prefer to skip around, though, go right ahead. Read the dialogues first or save them for later. Or use the index to look up particular words of interest. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to Kodansha International editors Michael Brase and Shigeyoshi Suzuki, who encouraged me to write this unwritable book, and to Tom Gally, who not only translated the book but also wrote the Introduction. I would also like to thank Joe D. Betts and Robert J. Betts for their timely advice. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

HIROKO FUKUDA, born in Tokyo, graduated from Keio University with a major in Japanese literature, after which she studied the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language in the International Division of Aoyama Gakuin University. After working as an editor, Japanese teacher, translation coordinator, and program director of language courses, she undertook the study of Applied Linguistics and Communication at the Graduate School of Aoyama Gakuin University. She is a frequent contributor to magazines and journals and has published several books on language, culture, and communication, including *T-Shirt Japanese Versus Necktie Japanese: Two Levels of Politeness*. She is currently Associate Professor at the College of Humanities of Ibaraki University and also teaches at Aoyama Gakuin University.

Since onomatopoeia don't often show up in dictionaries since they can be made up on the spot, this book is perfect for grading the most commonly used ones. In the first couple of pages, the rules of how to use different sounds are explained. So far, I think Tobias has anything close to this book but that's only one chapter. I do have some gripes about this book. Instead of hiragana, entire Japanese dialogues will be in romaji followed by the English translation thus flipping back and forth multiple pages. The example sentences are in plain form but also include many words and grammar points not used in textbooks. It creates this weird disconnect that will have you wondering what level exactly is this book for. Lastly, there are so many points for each chapter that when you take the quiz (fill in the blank, not multiple choice) you'll often get them confused since some are either extremely similar or more emphatic versions of other points. I'd buy it but prepare for extra work.

This book is very informative and written in a style that is a pleasant cross between academic and conversational. Following a highly-informative introduction to the use of onomatopoeia in Japanese, the author uses a series of realistic conversations to indicate the appropriate usage of the vocabulary. The presentation is top-notch, as is the quality of the book itself. This may seem an odd thing to note, but I absolutely love the size of this book. It's large enough to provide a clear and easy read, and yet small enough that it fits in the pocket of my jeans after removing the dust jacket (I'm 6'1" and 180lbs, for reference). The result is that this book comes with me dang near everywhere, and I pull it out of my work bag to continue learning when I have a few minutes of free time. In terms of the content itself, I firmly believe that a rigorous study of onomatopoeia is part of the key to really grasping modern Japanese, and this book is, as far as I'm aware, basically THE book on the topic. It came highly recommended to me from a good friend in the know, and I share that recommendation now based on my own experience -- if you are learning Japanese, this book ought to be on your shelf (or in your pockets).

When I lived in Japan, the one thing that irked me most was not knowing any onomatopoeia. That is one thing I didn't learn while taking classes, and it turns out that most everyday Japanese conversations are FILLED with them. This book covers pretty much everything you need to know, and then some, and is formatted for easy learning. After reading only one chapter I was able to learn some words that I found uses for right away, and was able to surprise my colleagues. The book claims to be for all levels, but I would have found the sentence patterns and grammar daunting as a beginner student. The sentences are definitely formatted with everyday, natural-sounding Japanese. However, if you're feeling up for a challenge, all the dialogue in this book is also written in romanji, so anyone could pick it up and learn something. This book also contains many interesting cultural notes, which I love!

Great way to learn or review many if not all of the Japanese alphabet. By definition Onomatopoeia are words that repeat to convey a condition in so doing the Japanese characters are repeated, it is a fun and interesting way to study Japanese language and culture.

Easy to use book, a good supplement to any Japanese study course!

I have only skimmed the book so far, but it looks to be quite helpful; the introduction is quite

interesting because it talks about English and Japanese onomatopoeias, and it definitely changed/helped my understanding of their functions and differences in the languages.

It is good book for Japanese language learners. It shows you the rules for Onomatopoeia and gives you real life examples which is something most language learning books fail to do.

Great book. It is a small book, but done in a manner that you can very quickly retrieve any information you might need as for all sorts of onomatopoeia and reduplications in modern day Japanese. A must have for linguists and students of Japanese. The introduction of the book is also superb: straightforward, empirical, with easy to understand and retain explanations.

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