AP® Japanese Language and Culture

Instructional Strategies to Increase Interpersonal Communication Competency

Special Focus

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Introduction

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The goal of language instruction is to prepare students who can function and communicate effectively in Japanese in a culturally appropriate manner. The AP® Japanese Language and Culture Exam is designed to assess how well students can demonstrate their language and cultural knowledge. The proficiency level is determined based on an equivalent competence level of students who complete 300 hours of instruction in college, which is intermediate low to mid in accordance with American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) language proficiency scale.

The course and exam are grounded in *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (*Standards*; 1996, 1999). How can we help increasing numbers of students achieve higher levels of language proficiency? Based on the 2007 exam results, the topic of this special focus material is instructional strategies to develop interpersonal communication. This document includes three articles and two sample thematic units that address theories and instructional strategies to develop interpersonal communications.

The first article, written by Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku, is "Developing Listening Skills: Theories and Practical Applications." Listening competency is a fundamental yet critical skill for interpersonal communication; Dr. Tohsaku addresses how language learners develop their listening skills from various theoretical perspectives. This discussion is followed by practical applications that can be used in language classrooms.

The second article, written by Yukiko Abe Hatasa, is "Instructional Strategies to Develop Interpersonal Communication: Theory and Practice." Dr. Hatasa discusses research findings on how learners acquire successful interpersonal communication abilities and factors that affect second language acquisition in the

language classroom. Based on the research findings, she introduces various effective instructional strategies.

Developing overall communicative competence starts from day one of the beginning language class and requires careful curriculum design. What elements do language teachers need to consider to develop an articulated curriculum from level one to AP language and culture courses? Michael Kleinkopf describes ways to develop a standards-based articulated curriculum in his article, "Preparing for the AP® Japanese Exam (and Beyond!): The Articulated Curriculum."

There are two thematic units. The first unit title is "A Japanese House," written by Yo Azama and Yoshiko Saito-Abbott. This unit is being used in both high school AP Japanese classes (fourth level) and in second-year university classes. It includes an overall outline of the unit that shows when and how vocabulary, new grammatical structures, and cultural knowledge are introduced in class with an approximate timeline. It also includes detailed lesson plan displays with assessment tasks, rubrics, and sample activities with teaching materials.

The second thematic unit is "Gift Giving," written by Masumi Reade. This five-day unit plan illustrates in detail how she guides her students day by day with sample activities to achieve the final outcomes of this unit. Teaching materials and evaluation rubrics are also included.

The collection of articles and unit plans in this special focus material is a resource to aid you as you explore and reflect upon effective instructional strategies as you guide your students to higher levels of language proficiency.

Developing Listening Skills: Theories and Practical Applications

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Introduction

In the native language, we naturally comprehend what we listen to with no problem, and we tend to take listening comprehension abilities for granted. Quite often, language teachers' attitudes toward the teaching of listening reflect this, and they consider that learners naturally develop their listening abilities by just receiving a large amount of listening input in the target language. Listening, however, is not such a passive process, but it is instead an active process where listeners make a lot of effort and use a variety of knowledge and skills to comprehend the intent of the speaker. Listening is an interactive process, in that the listeners constantly and actively interact not only with the speaker but also with audible texts to grasp the meaning and interpret what they hear. Depending on the purpose of listening and other factors, listeners use different listening skills and strategies.

Although the process of listening comprehension is not yet fully understood, researchers do know that listening is an interplay among different types of knowledge and skills, the purpose for listening, decision making, and so on. In reality, the process is so complicated that it is difficult for foreign language learners to acquire the same level of listening comprehension abilities as native speakers. Given the complexity of the listening process, it is important for language teachers to help the students develop effective listening abilities and strategies.

In this article, we look at what is involved in listening comprehension from various theoretical points of views, and based on that, we will consider how we can impart listening comprehension skills to language learners effectively in the classroom.

What Is Listening?

Listening Is a Critical Skill

In everyday life, we are engaged in a variety of activities requiring listening skills. While talking with somebody face to face or on the phone, listening skills as well as speaking skills play a critical role. We listen to news, announcements, radio programs, music lyrics, lectures, and the like. We sometimes eavesdrop on others' conversations. Sometimes we listen very intently to what people say, and at other times we listen casually or leisurely while listening to a radio program, for instance. According to Gilman and Moody (1984), in everyday communication situations, 40 percent to 50 percent of the time, adult native speakers are engaged in listening; 25 percent to 30 percent, speaking; 10 percent to 15 percent, reading; and writing, less than 10 percent. Listening also plays a key role for getting new information in our daily life. It is estimated that school children receive 90 percent of new information through listening. It is easy to imagine that language learners receive lots of information through listening, and that listening plays an important role in the language classroom.

In fact, for language learners, listening is a critical skill. When the audiolingual approach was pervasive during the 1960s, speaking was emphasized. The role of listening was secondary: Language learners listened to the target language, mainly, to repeat or replicate. In the late 1970s, the development of listening comprehension was recognized to be important for language learning. Winitz (1981) claimed that early language instruction should focus on the acquisition of listening comprehension, delaying oral production. Richards and Rodgers (1986) proposed the comprehension approach, claiming that comprehension should precede production in language teaching, and the teaching of speaking should be delayed until language learners develop listening comprehension abilities. They also claimed that the development of listening skills is important because the skills acquired through listening can transfer to other skills. For effective language learning, learners should be in low-stress, low-anxiety environments. They claimed that the comprehension approach, which does not force learners to speak until they become confident, reduces learners' stress and creates better learning environments.

Krashen (1981) claimed that comprehensible input is critical for effective language acquisition. This claim led to the natural approach of Krashen and Terrell (1983), who proposed, among others, that listening skills must be acquired before speaking skills; teachers should make every effort to make messages understandable

to language learners; and learners should listen to understand, as well as to learn a language. Krashen and Terrell claimed that listening comprehension exercises should be emphasized, especially, in early language learning. To increase exposure to the input necessary for language acquisition, they recommended that the target language be used as much as possible in the classroom, and the target language should be used to manage the classroom (e.g., making announcements, assigning homework, explaining tasks). The goal of language teaching should be to make the message comprehensible to the learner. To this end, visuals, realia, gestures, videos, and other supportive devices should be effectively used in the classroom. Also, learning materials should be relevant and interesting to students. Such materials are easier for them to comprehend and also raise students' motivation for learning. As discussed later in this article, any activities should be contextualized to better facilitate comprehension.

Listening Is a Complex Process

Because we comprehend what we hear easily in the native language, we tend to take listening comprehension skills for granted. Listening, however, involves a variety of knowledge and micro and macro skills. It is commonly considered by language educators that the development of listening comprehension is easy, and language learners acquire listening skills naturally by listening to a massive amount of target language texts. They often claim that listening skills are a lot easier for language learners to acquire, in comparison with speaking, reading, and writing skills. In actuality, however, listening comprehension may be one of the most difficult skills for language learners to develop because of the complicated processes, discussed next.

Richards (1985), among others, claimed that the following macro skills are involved in listening comprehension:

1. Retaining chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory
2. Discriminating among distinctive sounds in the target language
3. Recognizing stress and rhythmic patterns as well as intonational contours
4. Recognizing reduced forms of words
5. Distinguishing word boundaries
6. Recognizing typical word-order patterns
7. Recognizing vocabulary
8. Detecting keywords, such as those identifying topics and ideas
9. Guessing meaning from context
10. Recognizing grammatical word classes

11. Recognizing basic syntactic patterns
12. Recognizing cohesive devices
13. Detecting sentence components, such as subject, verb, object, and the like
14. Reconstructing and inferring situations, goals, and participants
15. Using knowledge of the world to make the foregoing inferences, predict outcomes, and infer links and connections among the parts of the conversation or discourse
16. Detecting relations, such as main idea, supporting idea, given versus new information, generalizations, and exemplifications
17. Adjusting listening strategies to different kinds of listening purposes

Although listening processes are not yet completely understood, many researchers have proposed a number of models of listening processes. For instance, Richards (1985) proposed the following model of the listening process:

1. The type of interaction or speech event is determined (e.g., a lecture, a conversation).
2. Scripts (schema) relevant to the particular situation are retrieved.
3. The goals of the speaker are inferred through references to the actual situational context as well as to the script(s).
4. A literal meaning is determined for the utterances.
5. An intended meaning is assigned to the message.
6. This information is retained and acted upon, and the actual form of the original message is deleted.

Rivers (1981), based on Neisser (1967), claimed that the process of constructing and comprehending a message in listening involves perception, reception, retention, and storage, and proposed the following four stages as a listening process.

Stage One
- We first learn to perceive that there is a systematic message rather than accidental noise in a continuous stream of sound.
- We pre-form elementary segmentation of what we hear in order to retain it in our memory.

Stage Two
- We identify in what we are hearing segments with distinctive structure— segments that seem to cohere.

- We impose a structure on what we are hearing according to our knowledge of the grammatical system of the language.
- This early segmentation determines what we will remember of the actual sound signal.

Stage Three

- We recirculate material we are hearing through our cognitive system to relate earlier to later segments and make the final selection of what we will retain as the message.

Stage Four

- We store what we hear in long-term memory in a simplified form. We retain the gist of what was said, that is, basic semantic information (a series of simple active affirmative sentences).

Note that it takes a long time to develop listening comprehension in a foreign language, so it is important for the teacher to start activities focused specifically on the development of listening skills as well as integrated skills involving listening.

It is said that native speakers who have a full range of knowledge and skills for listening comprehension in the language usually retain only about 20 percent of broadcast talks due to the limitation of memory and other factors. When they are told that their listening comprehension is being tested, the retention rate goes up to about 40 percent. Thus, language teachers should not expect foreign language learners, who do not have a full range of linguistic and other knowledge and native speakers' listening skills, to comprehend everything in an aural text. Such an expectation overburdens the short-term memory of the learners and prevents them from not only comprehending but also developing effective listening skills. When teachers design and develop listening comprehension activities and listening tests, they should always take the capacity of short-term memory and information processing into consideration.

Listening Has a Purpose and a Consequence

In real-life situations, we listen with a purpose. Depending on purposes, we use different listening strategies and adjust the degree of comprehension accordingly. In addition, we take actions or make decisions as a result of listening, or some

consequence follows after listening to and comprehending a discourse. The speaker may have an expectation, too.

Brown and Yule (1983) classified what we listen to into two types depending on a speaker's intentions: interactional function and transactional function.

The main goal of the interactional function of communication is to establish a harmonious relationship with interlocutors by making social interactions comfortable and smooth and creating nonthreatening environments. In this type of communication, the transmission of accurate information in an orderly manner is not the primary purpose. The participants of this type of communication share common background knowledge and many things are left unsaid. This function of communication includes greetings, small talk, compliments, casual chat, and so forth. In the transactional function, on the other hand, the primary goal is to convey information. The speaker purports to convey contents accurately and coherently. The speaker is interested in the clarity of contents and whether the listener understands him or her.

According to Brown and Yule (1983), the listener first must recognize the speaker's intention, that is, whether the communication is interactional or transactional. There may be several cues for the listener to recognize this: the relationship between the speaker and the listener, the situation, the listener's intention, and others. Once the listener judges the communicative function, he or she will use different abilities to carry out the communication. In the interactional function of communication, the listener must recognize when and how it is appropriate to respond. Also, he or she must recognize what speech register will be used, taking his or her relationship to the speaker into consideration, and what and how gesture and facial expression will be used. In the interactional function of communication, the listener must extract key information, recognize the speaker's intent (e.g., providing information, requesting information, instructing, persuading, complaining, encouraging), understand the organization of the discourse (including a sequence of events), and decide whether he or she must respond, and if he or she must respond, what to say as a response, and how to say it. Many everyday conversations start with the interpersonal function, then change to the transactional function, and end up with the interpersonal function. Or the speaker may insert small talk such as a joke (interactional function) while carrying out the transactional function of communication. The listener must recognize when the function changes and how to react to this change.

Richards (1990) proposed the following classroom exercises for each of these functions.

Exercises for interactional function:

- Distinguish between conversations that have an interactional and a transactional purpose.
- Listen to conversations and select suitable polite comments.
- Listen to utterances containing compliments or praise and choose suitable responses.
- Listen to conversations containing small talk and recognize when the speaker is preparing to introduce a real topic.
- Identify the degree of familiarity between speakers.
- Distinguish between real invitations and invitations being used to close a conversation.

Exercises for transactional function:

- Label the parts of an object from a description of it.
- Identify the key ideas in a discourse.
- Follow instructions to assemble an item.
- Complete a map or picture from an aural description.
- Write a summary of a talk or conversation.
- Write down a message delivered aurally.
- Identify a picture from a description of it.
- Listen to an advertisement for a job and note down the job requirements.

Ur (1984) classified listening tasks in real-life situations into the following six purposes:

1. Identification: The listener tries to recognize or discriminate among such aspects of discourse as words, word categories, phonological and morphological characteristics, and semantic cues. In this case, the listener is not interested in the content.
2. Orientation: The listener tries to identify who the speaker is, the gender and age of the speaker, how many speakers are involved, the relationships among the speakers, the situation in which the exchange takes place, the general topic of the discourse, what speech register is used, what text type is used, what tone the speaker is using (e.g., harsh or soft), and so forth.

3. Main idea comprehension: The listener tries to comprehend the overall ideas that the speaker attempts to convey; for instance, whether or not the speaker is supportive of a certain political position or whether the speaker is trying to advise, scold, sympathize, and so forth.

4. Detail comprehension: The listener tries to extract and comprehend specific information (e.g., date and time, names, specific details of the text).

5. Full comprehension: The listener tries to understand both the main ideas and details.

6. Replication: After listening to a text, the listener tries to reproduce it orally or in a written form. In this case, the text can be produced as it is or in a summary form. In real-life situations, this may happen, for instance, when we take a telephone message or take notes while listening to a lecture.

Teachers should provide students with opportunities to listen for each of these six purposes in the classroom.

Listening Has a Context

When we try to comprehend listening texts, our knowledge about the context (in a broad sense) plays a critical role. Omaggio (1986) claimed that three types of background knowledge are activated in the second language comprehension process: (1) linguistic information or knowledge of linguistic elements, (2) knowledge of the world based on the listener's prior experience, and (3) knowledge of discourse structure or how a variety of types of authentic discourse are organized.

Let's take a weather forecast broadcast in Japan, for example. When native speakers watch it, they activate, among other things, the following knowledge:

1. Linguistic information: Grammatical structures: prediction (*desho*), possibility (*kamoshiremasen*), and the like.

2. Lexicon: area names (Kyushu, Nishinihon, Higashinihon, Kitanihon, etc.), city names (Osaka, Tokyo), days and time (*kyoo, ashita, shuumatsu, gozen, gogo, asa, yoru,* etc.), weather terms (*hare, ame, kaze ga tsuyoi, huuu chuuihoo, koosetsuryoo, koosui kakuritsu,* etc.).

3. Knowledge of the world: Typical weather patterns in Japan according to the four seasons, the effect of high and low pressures, and so on.

4. Knowledge of discourse structure: In Japanese weather forecasts, the general weather status of the entire country is given first. The weather forecast of major cities follows that. The weather forecast is given, in many

cases, from west to east, because the weather usually changes in that direction.

Because these types of background knowledge are activated, native speakers can comprehend well weather forecasts that include a great amount of information or can effectively extract only the information that they would like to know. The knowledge of objects, events, and situations is often called *schema* (i.e., see number 2 in the preceding list), while the knowledge on a typical content and structure of a discourse, interaction, or text is called a *script.*

It must be noted that the acquisition of such background knowledge, as in list items 2, 3, and 4, and its use will help language learners, especially at the novice and intermediate level, to enhance their listening comprehension. Thus, it is important for language teachers to provide students with opportunities to acquire these types of knowledge and use them in listening comprehension in the classroom. The knowledge of cultural products, practices, and perspectives in the target culture also plays a critical role for the learner's listening comprehension, and it is recommended that teachers effectively and appropriately incorporate culture into language instruction. Note that the use of authentic materials and situations is useful for helping students to developing schema and scripts. It also prepares them for the listening experiences they have outside of class.

Penny Ur (1984) suggested that the following authentic materials, among others, should be used for listening activities in the language classroom.

- Radio news broadcasts, weather forecasts, sports reports, announcements, ads, and the like
- Discussion of work or current problems with family or colleagues
- Phone conversations or voice mail
- Interactions that involve making arrangements or exchanging news with acquaintances
- Conversations at a party or other social gathering
- Announcements over the loudspeaker (at a railway station or airport)
- Oral instructions on how to do something or get somewhere
- Recordings of lessons or seminars
- Interviews
- Film, theater production, or television program
- Recorded speeches or lectures
- Songs

    – Recordings of a formal occasion (wedding, prize-giving, or other ceremony)

    – Recorded professional advice (e.g., from a doctor)

    – Oral exams in a subject of study

Language teachers tend to simplify authentic materials by using easier grammatical structures and vocabulary, cutting off difficult items, simplifying the text organization, and deleting redundant materials or visual cues. This manipulation, however, may deprive important opportunities for language learners to develop schema and scripts. Thus, teachers must be very careful when they simplify authentic materials or develop quasi-authentic materials for listening activities.

Note that authentic messages and speeches have the following characteristics (especially, informal speeches), according to Omaggio (1986).

1. High level of redundancy: The same messages may be conveyed repeatedly in different ways.

2. Low density of words: The density of keywords or learned words is very often high in edited or doctored speeches made for listening practices. Natural speech, on the other hand, is usually characterized by the low density of keywords.

3. Less organization and less coherence: Informal speech is usually less organized. The messages are disorganized, which makes the comprehensibility lower. This may force the speaker to repeat the same messages several times or require that the listener pay particular attention. Redundancy may help the listener comprehend the message despite this characteristic.

4. Colloquial or informal language: Informal speech is characterized by colloquialism.

5. Many ungrammatical forms: Informal speech is filled with many ungrammatical forms.

6. Many fillers, self-correction, hesitation, backtracking: Informal speech includes many of these.

7. Noise: The interlocutors in informal speech are quite often surrounded by a variety of noises (baby's cry, telephone rings, traffic sounds, sirens, television or radio broadcasts, background music, etc.).

Depending on the purpose of listening activities, language teachers should allow students to listen to aural texts repeatedly until they can better understand the content. It must be noted, however, that in the majority of cases the listener can listen

to authentic speech or messages only once. If language teachers give the students too many chances to listen to the material, they will lose opportunities to listen under conditions similar to real life and develop their own effective listening strategies. The exceptions of repeated messages are voice mail messages and recorded messages over the telephone (e.g., store information, time schedule of movies).

We should also note that we use listening skills in one-way or two-way communication. In one-way communication such as listening to a presentation, radio broadcast, public address announcement, lecture, speech, and voice mail, the listener does not have a chance to ask questions or ask for clarification. In two-way communication, on the other hand, the listener may have a chance to ask the speaker to clarify a point or repeat what the listener doesn't understand or didn't hear. In this type of interactive communication, the listener is also required to respond, or express agreement or disagreement, for example. Because the listener has hardly any control over the source of a text or message in one-way communication, this type of communication may present particular difficulties for novice language learners. In this type of communication, the listener must grasp the purpose of a message, decide what information he or she should obtain, obtain information, determine the extent to which he or she should comprehend it, decide whether to continue listening or ignore the text, and choose whether to take notes for future use or reference. In two-way communication, the listener usually focuses on the speaker's meaning and intent. When the listener does not comprehend them, he or she can decide to request clarification or repetition of the message. Teachers should provide students opportunities to listen in both one-way communication and two-way communication.

Note that one-way and two-way communication correspond to presentational and interpersonal communication in the *Standards* (1996, 1999), whose philosophies and principles form the foundation of the AP Japanese Language and Culture course and exam.

For listening activities, teachers may use video rather than audio CDs and tapes or MP3 players. Many times the same message can be better understood with visual input. It is said that we understand 60 percent of messages through visual information (e.g., facial expressions and gestures) even in a face-to-face conversation.

Listening Is a Linguistic Activity

Listening is also a linguistic activity, and the knowledge of linguistic elements plays an important role. As language learners increase their linguistic knowledge, their listening comprehension improves. Knowing individual syntactic structures as well as

knowing how they are combined to form a larger unit such as sentences, paragraphs, and discourse are both important skills for listening comprehension.

Schlesinger (1977) claimed that in listening comprehension we use lexical strategies first. When the interpretation using lexical strategies does not conform to existing knowledge or contradicts other parts of the discourse, syntactic strategies are needed. For instance, when we hear *doroboo, kajiru,* and *inu,* based on our knowledge of the world, we naturally understand "A dog bit a thief." However, in subsequent parts of the discourse, if we hear that the dog died of being bitten, we may question the original interpretation using lexical strategies and check, for instance, word order, particles *o,* and so forth, to verify meaning. Schlesinger claimed that in our comprehension, we use lexical strategies primarily and syntactic strategies only when they fail. This suggests that vocabulary plays a very important role in listening comprehension. Needless to say, the more vocabulary we comprehend, the better we comprehend what we hear. To enhance students' listening skills, we should teach a large amount of vocabulary from the beginning stages of language learning. This is supported by the lexical approach proposed by Lewis (1993). When we teach vocabulary, we should teach it as a topical group. When native speakers, for example, listen to a weather forecast, they anticipate that a certain group of vocabulary items will be heard and activate their lexical knowledge related to weather. We tend to remember what we learned grouped together. This is an advantage of the use of a topic syllabus, in which a group of topically related vocabulary and background and cultural knowledge are presented as a set. In such a syllabus, it is easy for us to listen to authentic materials, which include, in most cases, a set of related vocabulary.

Listening Is a Cognitive Activity

Listening comprehension is more than a linguistic activity. In addition to the recognition of linguistic elements, the listener uses a variety of cognitive skills and abilities (e.g., thinking, reasoning, remembering, imagining) to comprehend aural messages.

Rivers (1981), based on Cherry (1953), claimed that the listener faces the following types of uncertainties while trying to comprehend a given message.

1. Uncertainties of speech sounds or acoustic patterning: shouting, whispering, etc.
2. Uncertainties of language and syntax: unfamiliar vocabulary, dialect, etc.
3. Environmental uncertainties: background noises and the like.

4. Recognition uncertainties: lack of past experiences, familiarity of the topic, familiarity with the speaker's habit, knowledge of language, etc.

The listener tries to comprehend an incoming message by using linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, etc. Even native speakers, however, may not be able to understand the message fully due to such factors as noise, lack of concentration, lack of sufficient background knowledge, and others. Under these conditions, native speakers use two types of strategies when they try to comprehend a message: bottom-up listening and top-down listening.

According to Ur (1985) and Richards (1990), in bottom-up listening we use incoming messages as a source of information about their meaning. We pay attention to individual components of the discourse. A message is analyzed successively from the lowest level, sounds, words, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and discourse. In other words, this is a process of decoding and sometimes is called micro listening. In this type of listening, the listener's linguistic knowledge, that is, the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, is used. Ur claimed that for this type of listening, the listener must be able to retain incoming data while processing it, recognize sounds and words, recognize keywords in utterances, use knowledge of word-order patterns, recognize grammatical relations, recognize the function of intonation and tone, recognize conjunctions, distinguish declarative sentences and questions, and so forth. Thus, it is easily understandable that this type of listening puts a large burden on short-term memory, and it is difficult for beginning-level students who lack grammatical and lexical knowledge.

On the other hand, in top-down listening, the listener uses background knowledge to understand the meaning of incoming data. Background knowledge includes knowledge about the world, knowledge based on previous experiences, situational or contextual knowledge, schema, and scripts. For this type of listening, the listener uses words and other elements of the discourse to construct the schema of the message, infer the role of the participants in the communicative situation, infer the topic of the discourse, infer the outcome of an event, infer the cause or effect of an event, infer unstated information about a situation, infer the sequence or a series of events, infer comparisons, distinguish between literal and figurative meanings, and distinguish between facts and opinions (Ur 1985). Because the listener pays attention to the macro features of a discourse, this is sometimes called macro listening.

We use these two types of listening strategies flexibly, according to the purpose of listening, type of message, and other factors. Thus, listening is a very active process. Language learners must develop both of these listening strategies. Native

speaker listening strategies hardly transfer to foreign languages. Thus, it is important for the teacher to teach listening strategies explicitly in the classroom.

Ur (1985) suggested that activities such as the following help the learner develop bottom-up listening skills.

- Identifying the antecedents of pronouns
- Recognizing if a sentence is active or passive
- Distinguishing between sentences containing causative and noncausative elements
- Identifying major components of a sentence
- Recognizing the use of intonation
- Recognizing the time reference of a sentence
- Distinguishing between positive and negative sentences
- Identifying particles in rapid speech
- Identifying missing particles in colloquial speech

VanPatten's (1997) structured grammar input activities, which direct students' attention to a specific grammatical structure or usage and help them connect the structure with meaning, are effective classroom activities to develop students' bottom-up listening skills, too.

Ur (1985) suggested that activities such as the following help develop the learner's top-down listening skills.

- Listening to part of a conversation and inferring the topic
- Looking at pictures, then listening to conversations about the pictures and matching them to the pictures
- Listening to conversations and identifying the setting
- Reading a list of key points to be covered in a talk, then numbering them in the sequence heard while listening to the talk
- Reading information about a topic, then listening to talk on the topic and checking whether the information was mentioned or not
- Reading one side of a telephone conversation and guessing the other speaker's responses; then listening to the telephone conversation
- Looking at pictures of people speaking and guessing what they might be saying or doing; then listening to their actual conversations
- Completing a story, then listening to how the story really ended
- Guessing what news headlines might refer to, then listening to news broadcasts about the events referred to in the headlines

In addition to the types of strategies just mentioned, metacognitive strategies are useful. Students should be taught how to plan listening strategies, monitor comprehension and effectiveness of their strategies, and evaluate by determining whether listening goals were achieved.

Listening Is Individual and Ever-Growing

As discussed in the preceding section, we use a wide range of knowledge and skills in listening comprehension. The extent of this knowledge and these skills varies from individual to individual, so needless to say, the interpretation of a message also differs for each individual. Not only these knowledge and skills but also each person's interest and the text's relevancy to him- or herself would yield a different interpretation of the same message. In addition, mental status and physical condition affect attention span. So we should note that the same content is comprehended differently all the time.

The development of listening comprehension abilities differs from student to student. Some students may enjoy listening to texts in the target language, while others may have difficulties comprehending those texts and need a lot of time to develop good listening comprehension abilities. Rivers (1981) mentioned that listening comprehension is best exercised individually outside of class. Individualized activities encourage each student to be conscious of the listening strategies he or she is using, evaluate his or her listening comprehension as well as listening strategies, and explore different listening strategies.

Teachers should decide what type of response the students should use to demonstrate their comprehension in listening activities and assessment. Keep in mind that verbal responses emerge gradually, and verbal responses go from words to phrases to sentences to an even larger unit. Teachers should also note that there is a silent period in the early stages of language learning. Students should never be forced to produce language until they are ready. To create anxiety-free environments, error correction should be minimal. Lund (1990) suggested that students' responses in listening activities should be graduated as their language abilities improve.

1. Doing: Physical response
2. Choosing: Matching, putting pictures or cards in order, checking, etc.
3. Transferring: Drawing, tracing a route, filling in a graph, etc.
4. Answering: Completing a set of questions
5. Condensing: Preparing an outline, taking notes, preparing captions, etc.

6. Extending: Going beyond the text (creating an ending, completing a partial transcript, changing the text, etc.)
7. Duplicating: Providing evidence that the function of replication has been accomplished
8. Modeling: Imitating features of the text or the whole text
9. Conversing: Some kind of interaction with the text

It is advantageous when teachers provide the students with feedback to their comprehension in terms of comprehension check or other means.

The students develop their listening proficiency gradually as their contact with the target language increases and their linguistic and other knowledge expands. It is essential for teachers to assess the current level of the students' listening proficiency level and develop the appropriate level and type of listening activities for them. The ACTFL Listening Proficiency Guidelines (Appendix A) are a useful reference for this purpose. It is also valuable to develop tests to evaluate the students' listening skills. Note that the target level of listening for the AP Japanese Language and Culture Exam is intermediate low to intermediate mid.

Designing and Developing Listening Activities

Effective Listening Activities

To develop effective listening activities for your students, you should first carefully evaluate what skills and abilities you would like them to develop and acquire, giving consideration to the students' current linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, listening skill, cognitive skill, strategic abilities, previous experiences, and so forth. Based on the students' abilities and the purpose of the listening activities, you should select appropriate materials, whether authentic or semiauthentic. When you select texts, you should thoroughly consider the quality, length, density of information, organization of information, amount of redundancy, register, rate of delivery, story line, genre of discourse, visual support, familiarity with the topic, grammar and vocabulary involved, cultural information, and number of speakers involved. Make sure that your materials are interesting to students and capture their interest. Try to use a variety of materials, and include one-way communication and two-way communication.

Note that you don't necessarily need to simplify a text, but you may simplify the listening task. You can prepare students for difficult materials by providing well-designed prelistening tasks. Organize activities from general to specific, from global

to local, from familiar to unfamiliar. Students may need a separate listening for a different set of tasks. For instance, students listen to the text once for understanding its overall purpose, and listen to it a second time to answer specific questions. You should not, however, play the aural text too many times, since students usually don't have many chances to listen to the same thing in real-life situations (e.g., radio and television programs, public announcements) more than once. Contextualize listening tasks so that students are exposed to tasks that they will likely encounter outside of class and can develop an understanding of language use in real-life situations. This way, students also build confidence in handling new situations.

You should make sure that before listening to the text, the students know what they should do as the result of listening by allowing them to read the directions or questions. Without knowing what they should listen for, they may just get lost and fail to complete the listening task.

When you would like students to work purely on listening comprehension, you may give directions in English. Japanese directions may require students to use reading abilities and prevent them from working solely on listening. Make sure that the tasks you design match the goals you have for the students.

The key to developing good listening activities is to have students actively engaged with the aural texts. To this end, you should organize your listening tasks into three stages: prelistening tasks, listening tasks, and postlistening tasks.

The purposes of prelistening tasks include setting a purpose of the listening task and helping students decide what they must listen for and what part of an audio text to pay particular attention to; making sure that the students understand what type of text they will listen to and what their task is; activating students' background knowledge on the topic; making sure the students have sufficient linguistic and background knowledge needed for comprehension; helping students focus on what type of listening strategies they should use (top-down listening or bottom-up listening); and providing cultural information to help students carry out the task effectively.

Prelistening tasks include reading materials and conducting classroom or group discussions related to the topic; recalling or reviewing what is known about the topic; reacting to visual cues such as pictures, photos, maps, graphs, or charts; predicting contents; reviewing grammar or vocabulary; learning new grammar and vocabulary; brainstorming; and reviewing listening tasks.

The purposes of listening tasks are to comprehend what the text is about, identify the type of the information, locate specific information, use the known to

learn the unknown, infer meaning and structure, and stretch students' linguistic and cognitive abilities beyond the current level.

Listening tasks include verifying predictions and checking that guesses are correct; identifying the type of audio text; identifying the main idea; creating or matching a title to the text; creating or matching heading to a paragraph or segment; ordering the sequence of information; completing grids, graphs, charts, pictures, or diagrams; answering comprehension questions; recognizing keywords and sentences; selecting, matching, or identifying specific information; focusing on a specific aspect of the text (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, culture, sociolinguistic feature, text organization); guessing; and answering open-ended questions.

The purposes of postlistening tasks are to relate what students heard to their original purpose, use the listening material to expand the student's linguistic and cognitive abilities, anchor or consolidate linguistic knowledge, use the listening text as a springboard for discussions and for other activities, transfer what the students learned in listening activities to other skills, link listening to other skills, evaluate listening skills, check what listening strategies the student used and assess whether those strategies were effective, self-reflect on what the student did while listening, and give the students feedback on their comprehension or listening skills.

Postlistening activities include restating the content in one's own words; expressing one's opinion about the topic; writing an essay based on the content; responding to the listening content in speaking or writing; discussing or debating issues raised during the listening tasks; analyzing the listening content including point of view, style, and organization.

It is important for teachers to organize tasks and questions that guide students toward comprehension so that they develop effective listening strategies. Write your directions clearly, concisely, and effectively so that students focus their attention on relevant places of the text. This way, the students will learn how to better identify portions relevant for comprehension. It is a good idea for teachers to explicitly teach and discuss the strategies that are best for each listening task and make students aware of the listening process by asking a variety of guided questions. Emphasize that the use of effective listening strategies helps students comprehend even with not-perfect grammatical and lexical knowledge. Unless the purpose of listening is complete comprehension, don't force the students to try to comprehend the text word for word and encourage them to tolerate less-than-complete comprehension.

Sample Listening Activities

Sample Activity 1

Task: Listening to telephone messages

1. Prelistening tasks

Find a partner and discuss the following questions:

a. Do you often leave voice mail messages? On what occasions do you leave messages? How do you feel when you have to leave a message? Do you talk differently when you leave a message?
b. To whom do you often leave messages?
c. What sort of messages do you leave for him or her?
d. Who usually leaves voice mail for you and your family members?
e. Do you return a call immediately? Why or why not?
f. Assume that you would like to see a certain movie this weekend with one of your friends. You call and get his or her voice mail. What information would you include in the message you leave? Make a list.

- Your name
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

2. Listening tasks

2.1. Listen to a voice mail message and answer the following questions:
a. (First listening)—Who left the message? What is the purpose of the message?
b. (Second listening)—Check to see whether the information you listed in item f above is included in this telephone message.
c. (Third listening)—Fill in the following table after listening to the message.

Caller's name	
For whom was the message left?	
Why was the message left?	
What did the caller ask the recipient of the message to do?	
The caller's telephone number	

Listening text

もしもし、良夫、私、愛子。ええと、今は24日の午後5時。まだ、バイトから帰ってきてないのかな。あのね、今週の土曜日、一緒に映画に行かない。えーと、銀座のみゆき座で今「ロスト・パラダイス」やってんの。みんな、とても面白いって言ってるよ。で、土曜日午後2時の切符が二枚あるんだ。一時に私の家に来ない。で、電車で一緒に行こうよ。行くんだったら、今日中に電話してね。私の携帯の番号知っていると思うけど、一応残しておくね。090–5555–1234よ。面白い映画だから、一緒に行こうね。

2.2 Assume that you are John, and you are staying with a host family in Japan. When you return from school, there are several messages on the answering machine. Answer the following questions after listening to them.

a. (First listening)—What is the topic of each message?

Message 1	
Message 2	
Message 3	
Message 4	
Message 5	

b. (Second listening)—Who left each message for whom?

Message 1	Who left the message?	For whom?
Message 2		
Message 3		
Message 4		
Message 5		

How many messages were left for you? Will you return a call to all of them? In what order?

c. (Third listening)—Listen to the messages left for your host family members and take notes for them in Japanese.

3. Postlistening tasks

    a. Work in pairs. One of you received the message (2–1 above) that the other left. Return the call.

    b. Practice leaving voice mail messages that include the information below. Take the time to plan what information your message must include and how it will be organized so that the listener can easily understand the message. You are allowed one minute to leave a message.

        1. You cannot keep the appointment, so you would like to change the date and time.

        2. You would like to deliver something, and you need the address and directions from the nearest JR station.

        3. You forgot what homework is due tomorrow. You would like one of your classmates to tell you what it is as soon as possible.

Sample Activity 2

Task: Listening to recorded information

1. Prelistening tasks

Answer the following questions in English:

    a. What kinds of places give recorded information on the phone?

    b. What recorded information do the following places give on the phone?

        • Movie theaters

        • Computer help lines

        • Retail stores

    c. Do you like those recorded messages?

2. Listening tasks

Listen to the recorded information and answer the following questions.

(First listening)—What type of business is this?

(Second listening)—What type of information does the message include?

    •

    •

    •

    •

    •

(Third listening)—Tell if the following is true or false.

( ) This business is closed every Sunday.

( ) This business opens next Monday.

( ) The business hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

( ) The business closes early on Saturdays.

( ) The business gives emergency contact information.

3. Postlistening tasks

You are leaving on vacation next Sunday, and you would like to make an appointment at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. You must attend to this before you leave. Write an e-mail message to this business.

Sample Activity 3

Task: Listening to an announcement about television programming

1. Prelistening Tasks

Answer the following questions:

a. What kind of TV programs do you like to watch?

b. How do you select TV programs you watch? How do you get information about them?

c. How often do TV networks advertise their programs?

d. What kind of information do they include?

e. What words do you expect to hear in the information for the following types of programs? List Japanese words.

    i)   News program

    ii)   Drama

    iii) Cartoon

    iv) Music program

    v)   Documentary

    vi) Health program

    vii) Baseball game

    viii) Comedy show

    ix) Weather report

2. Listening Tasks

a. Listen to the program information.

(First listening)—What programs are included? Write down the order. If not
　included, enter X.

　( ) News

　( ) Drama

　( ) Interview

　( ) Variety show

　( ) Music show

　( ) Weather report

　( ) Baseball game

(Second listening)—Fill in the following table.

Time	Program	Contents

3. Postlistening Tasks

　3–1. Work in pairs. You just heard the information about programming on TV.
　　　Suggest the following people watch a program that interests them.

　　　a. A person who will go to Tokyo tomorrow and would like to know the
　　　　 weather

　　　b. A person who has some free time

　　　c. A person who is interested in environmental issues

　　　d. A person who likes classical music

　　　e. A person who is interested in political issues

　3–2. Work in pairs to read TV programming information in a newspaper or on a
　　　Web site. Based on it, explain what TV programs are broadcast today.

　3–3. Concluding remarks

　　　In this article, we reviewed several major theories related to the listening
　　　process. To help the students enhance their listening skills and strategies to
　　　develop their listening proficiency, it is essential for teachers to design and
　　　develop listening activities based on these theories. This article discussed
　　　several principles for developing effective listening activities for the
　　　language classroom.

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Appendix
ACTFL Listening Proficiency Guidelines Generic Descriptions—Listening (1986)

These guidelines assume that all listening tasks take place in an authentic environment at a normal rate of speech using standard or near-standard norms.

Novice Low

Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high-frequency social conventions. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances. These guidelines assume that all listening tasks take place in an authentic environment at a normal rate of speech using standard or near-standard norms.

Novice Mid

Able to understand some short, learned utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends some words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands, and courtesy formulae about topics that refer to basic personal information or the immediate physical setting. The listener requires long pauses for assimilation and periodically requests repetition and/or a slower rate of speech.

Novice High

Able to understand short, learned utterances and some sentence-length utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae. May require repetition, rephrasing, and/or a slowed rate of speech for comprehension.

Intermediate Low

Able to understand sentence-length utterances that consist of recombinations of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Content refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions, and routine tasks, such as getting meals and receiving simple instructions and directions. Listening tasks pertain primarily to spontaneous face-to-face conversations. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.

Intermediate Mid

Able to understand sentence-length utterances that consist of recombinations of learned utterances on a variety of topics. Content continues to refer primarily to basic personal background and needs, social conventions, and somewhat more complex tasks, such as lodging, transportation, and shopping. Additional content areas include some personal interests and activities, and a greater diversity of instructions and directions. Listening tasks not only pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations but also to short routine telephone conversations and some deliberate speech, such as simple announcements and reports over the media. Understanding continues to be uneven.

Intermediate High

Able to sustain understanding over longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics pertaining to different times and places; however, understanding is inconsistent due to failure to grasp main ideas and/or details. Thus, while topics do not differ significantly from those of an Advanced-level listener, comprehension is less in quantity and poorer in quality.

Advanced

Able to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of topics beyond the immediacy of the situation. Comprehension may be uneven due to a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, among which topic familiarity is very prominent. These texts frequently involve description and narration in different time frames or aspects, such as present, nonpast, habitual, or imperfective. Texts may include interviews, short lectures on familiar topics, and news items and reports primarily dealing with factual information. Listener is aware of cohesive devices but may not be able to use them to follow the sequence of thought in an oral text.

Advanced High

Able to understand the main ideas of most speech in a standard dialect; however, the listener may not be able to sustain comprehension in extended discourse that is propositionally and linguistically complex. Listener shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meanings beyond the surface meanings of the text but may fail to grasp sociocultural nuances of the message.

Superior

Able to understand the main ideas of all speech in a standard dialect, including technical discussion in a field of specialization. Can follow the essentials of extended discourse that is propositionally and linguistically complex, as in academic or professional settings, or in lectures, speeches, and reports. Listener shows some appreciation of aesthetic norms of target language, idioms, colloquialisms, and register shifting. Able to make inferences within the cultural framework of the target language. Understanding is aided by an awareness of the underlying organizational structure of the oral text and includes sensitivity for its social and cultural references and its affective overtones. Rarely misunderstands but may not understand excessively rapid, highly colloquial speech, or speech that has strong cultural references.

Instructional Strategies to Develop Interpersonal Communication: Theory and Practice

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Introduction

One of the major objectives of the AP Japanese Language and Culture course is the development of a wide range of functional oral skills that enable learners of Japanese to engage in various speech acts and express ideas, opinions, and preferences about cultural, social, and personal matters in a socially appropriate manner. More specifically, the *AP Japanese Language and Culture Course Description* lists the following interpersonal skills as an example of specific learning goals.

Interpersonal Mode

- Orally initiate or respond to greetings and formulaic expressions in a culturally appropriate manner, and with pronunciation, intonation, and a level of accuracy comprehensible to native speakers accustomed to dealing with learners of Japanese.
- Orally request information on a variety of topics (e.g., personal information, school subjects, daily activities, people, and products of Japanese culture) or respond to such a request.
- Ask and give preferences orally in a culturally appropriate manner, and with pronunciation, intonation, and a level of accuracy comprehensible to a native speaker accustomed to dealing with learners of Japanese.

- Offer and respond orally to suggestions, requests, or invitations in a culturally appropriate manner, and with pronunciation, intonation, and a level of accuracy comprehensible to a native speaker accustomed to dealing with learners of Japanese. (College Board 2006, p. 5)

Needless to say, the acquisition of communicative competence is essential to achieve interpersonal communications such as these, and communicative language teaching has been the norm in the field of foreign language teaching since the 1970s (Richards and Rodgers 2001). Even in the teaching of Japanese, practitioners moved from grammar-based approaches such as the direct method, which had been practiced in the United States since the late 1930s, to more communicative approaches in the 1990s.

However, the study of how learners acquire second languages did not start until the late 1970s, and the effectiveness of specific tasks and instructional methods was assumed but not investigated until recently. This means that some of the earlier claims about communicative language teaching may need to be modified. For this reason, this article will first revisit the issue of communicative competence to identify the types of abilities learners need to acquire for successful interpersonal communication. Second, recent studies in second language acquisition will be discussed to show factors that affect second language (L2) acquisition in the classroom. Finally, major claims about communicative language teaching will be examined, and the ways in which classroom instructions may be improved will be considered.

Communicative Competence and Communicative Language Teaching

The term *communicative competence* was first introduced by Hymes (1971). He argued that speakers of a language need to have more than grammatical competence, and that they need to know how languages are used by the members of a speech community and how language structures can be used functionally within that community. This concept was redefined by many researchers. Among them, Canale and Swain (1980) offered the most well-known and widely adopted definition. According to them, communicative competence consists of four components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Linguistic competence refers to the knowledge of lexical items and the rules of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of sociocultural rules that describe how to use language

appropriately in a given context. Discourse competence is the knowledge of how to connect sentences to form a cohesive text and a prolonged discourse. Finally, strategic competence refers to "the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence" (Canale and Swain 1980).

This notion of communicative competence has had a profound effect on foreign language teaching and helped bring about the switch to the communicative approach in the United States. Both researchers and practitioners realized that practicing grammatical patterns in isolation or in dialogues did not help learners communicate effectively and appropriately in various conversational contexts. In real-life situations, learners need to select appropriate forms of language by considering the function to be performed based on the context, situation, and themes of the conversation. Therefore, the focus of instruction should be on the acquisition of language functions and use rather than accuracy. Also, classroom activities should be contextualized as authentically as possible to simulate real-life conversation. Furthermore, learners need to learn how to deal with communication breakdowns to make themselves understood.

The communicative approach has been successful in highlighting the importance of sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences, as well as in improving overall quality of instruction by bringing in innovative tasks such as language games, role-plays, simulations, debates, and so on. However, it had the negative effect of dismissing the value of linguistic competence, despite the fact that linguistic competence has always been a major component of communicative competence (Canale and Swain 1980; Bachman 1990; Savignon 1998). That is, a lack of accuracy can be tolerated unless the learner's production causes a communication breakdown. Therefore, accurate pronunciation, which was emphasized in the audiolingual approach, the direct method, and the Jorden approach, was not emphasized in the communicative approach. Similarly, grammatical accuracy was not considered important as long as the learner's utterance was intelligible. In fact, explicit grammar instruction and error correction were discouraged in the natural approach, a version of the communicative approach (Krashen and Terrell 1983).

The lack of emphasis on the linguistic competence was questioned in the 1980s, when problems were found in the performance of students in immersion schools (Swain and Lapkin 1982; Rounds and Kanagy 1998). For example, Swain (1985) and her colleagues conducted a decade-long study that investigated the language development of children in French immersion schools in Canada. The students

in these schools received abundant comprehensible input and engaged in daily communication in French but were not taught French formally. After years of exposure to French, Swain (1985) found that the children in the immersion schools developed fluent but incomplete and inaccurate French, which became stabilized after years of experience. Likewise, Rounds and Kanagy (1998) found that children attending Japanese immersion school in Oregon lost sensitivity to particles as they became older, whereas monolingual Japanese children showed the completely opposite tendency.

These findings indicated that the development of linguistic competence is important for learners to become competent users of the target language. This does not mean, however, that we should go back to the traditional grammar approach, which has a number of limitations in developing the other components of communicative competence. In fact, Savignon (1998) argued that in communicative language teaching the instruction of linguistic features such as lexis, pronunciation, and grammar is just as important as those of pragmatic and discourse aspects of language, because linguistic ability is essential for successful communication.

The next section introduces studies that investigate how essential linguistic, pragmatic, and discourse knowledge is acquired, and how the ability to use that knowledge is developed. The findings of these studies show how classroom instruction may be implemented to improve the current practice in communicative language teaching.

Acquisition of Communicative Language Ability and Knowledge

As already mentioned, learners need to acquire all four components of communicative competence to function. However, all learners do not acquire skills in the same way because they are affected by various combinations of linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociocultural, and biological factors. For that reason, this section examines the characteristics and factors that affect the development of communicative language knowledge and skills.

Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary knowledge is highly complex. Knowing vocabulary does not imply the ability to identify the sound of the word and its meaning in isolation. To know a vocabulary item, learners have to know its part of speech, morphological characteristics, grammatical restrictions, collocations, semantic restrictions, formality

level, cultural implications, and so on. Also, learners have to acquire an enormous number of vocabulary items to be able to use them. For example, native speakers know 20,000 or more vocabulary items (Nation and Waring 1987), which means that knowing only a few thousand vocabulary items is insufficient to communicate in that language. In fact, vocabulary knowledge plays a key role in understanding spoken and written language (Tamaoka et al. 2007). For example, Tamaoka et al. demonstrated that vocabulary knowledge is the single most significant predictor of reading success in Japanese and that grammatical knowledge is not highly correlated to reading comprehension. Nation (2001) stated that learners need to know about 95 percent of vocabulary in the input to have a reasonable comprehension and to guess a meaning from context, and Hu and Nation (2000) reported that the frequency of unknown words should be one in every 50 words or two to three words per minute to have a reasonable level of comprehension. Although not all the studies deal with spoken language, it is reasonable to assume that vocabulary knowledge is critical in listening since it is highly unlikely that human beings use vocabulary and grammar knowledge differently depending on the mode of comprehension.

L2 learners with an undeveloped phonological memory in the target language have a hard time identifying a word if it is presented in isolation. When a word is presented in a string of sounds, isolating the word itself presents a significant problem. In learning cognate languages like Spanish, native speakers of English still have to acquire the phonological system of the target language, but they can transfer their first language (L1) vocabulary knowledge to L2 in mapping sound to meaning or identifying possible usages, because of the 70 percent to 80 percent vocabulary overlap between L1 and L2. However, this is not the case in Japanese. Although the proportion of loan words in Japanese has increased dramatically, the lexical overlaps between English and Japanese are between 8 percent and 30 percent, depending on the genre (Kindaichi 2002). This means that English learners of Japanese cannot take advantage of their L1 vocabulary knowledge in Japanese. Virtually everything including phonology has to be acquired, which creates a huge memory burden. Considering the number of vocabulary items to be learned, and their communicative value, acquiring a large number of vocabulary items at an early stage of language learning should aid communication significantly. Unfortunately, this is not the case in many Japanese language classrooms. Vocabulary tends to be treated as something to be memorized outside of the classroom, and students are not taught effective vocabulary learning strategies.

Phonology

In the communicative approach, poor pronunciation is often tolerated as long as the learner's utterance is understandable, because requiring a high level of accuracy may prevent the learner from trying to communicate or perform the target language function given a learner's limited capacity to handle multiple aspects of a language.

Although not all pronunciation problems affect intelligibility, poor pronunciation affects native speakers' attitudes toward the learner. For example, native speakers of Japanese often find Korean-speaking learners' errors such as o*hayoo gojaimasu* for *ohayoo gozaimasu* (good morning) or *mujukashi* for *muzukashii* (difficult) as childish (Toda 2003). In addition, Ogawara (1997) reported that native speakers of Japanese do not think foreign accents are appropriate in formal or business conversation. Other studies report that native speakers make a judgment about the learner's intelligence, social status, and personality based on pronunciation (Ryan and Bulik 1982; Cargile and Giles 1998). Also, a heavy accent is negatively correlated with comprehensibility, requiring efforts on the part of the listener (Munro and Derwing 1999). Because of this, listeners tend to develop negative attitudes toward learners with poor pronunciation. Considering the fact that those attitudes affect the flow of communication and collaboration during the conversion, poor pronunciation may be problematic for learners to perform language function or use communication strategies. Therefore, the development of L2 phonetic and phonology cannot be taken lightly.

One problem in acquiring L2 phonology is that adult learners are heavily affected by their L1 phonological system. Children start losing the ability to perceive foreign sounds at 6 to 10 months after birth (Jusczyk 1997; Polka and Werker 1994). Within one year a child's perceptual abilities are tuned to their native language, and they lose the sensitivity to perceive sounds that are not in L1. This developmental change enables children to focus on a limited set of sounds and reduce cognitive demand, which in turn helps them acquire L1 in a relatively short time. However, the same development will make the acquisition of L2 sounds significantly difficult. As a result, the L1 phonology has a considerable influence on speech perception and the developing L2 phonology, more than any other linguistic features. For this reason, L1 phonological interference appears from the very beginning of acquisition and tends to last a long time, if not forever. Toda (2003) explained that L2 learners of Japanese have difficulty perceiving sounds that do not exist in their L1. In some cases, learners cannot make a phonological contrast because the contrasting environment does not exist in their L1. Further, even if they can perceive the contrast, they may not know the correct manner or point of articulation to produce it. Moreover, learners may not be

motivated enough to achieve nativelike performance because the target feature rarely affects intelligibility. This may be one reason that prosody is difficult for L2 learners of Japanese (Shibata 2005).

Syntax

L1 effects are also seen in the acquisition of L2 syntax, but its influence depends on the syntactic characteristics of the target feature. For example, Korean and Japanese share many similar syntactic features such as the topic-comment structure and multiple-embedded construction. This allows Korean learners of Japanese to converse on a topic with ease and to create longer utterances and text. On the other hand, English-speaking learners have difficulty in processing or producing multiple embedded sentences in Japanese because English is a subject–predicate language that does not allow extensive embedded clauses. In addition, L1 information processing strategy may be applied to L2 if it aids comprehension. For instance, native Japanese speakers rely heavily on semantic characteristics of nouns such as animacy to identify the subject of the sentence, because word order is too flexible to reliably indicate its location in Japanese. Native English speakers use word order and semantic information, but rely more on word order because the subject usually appears at the beginning of the sentence. Since semantic information can be used in English sentence processing as well, Japanese learners of English transfer their L1 sentence comprehension strategy to English and maintain it for a long time. On the other hand, English learners of Japanese quickly abandon the use of word order because it is not a helpful strategy for processing Japanese sentences.

L1 is not the only factor affecting acquisition. Previous studies have shown that some linguistic features follow the same developmental pattern regardless of learner characteristics or learning environments. For example, the thematic marker *wa* is known to be acquired more easily than the subject marker *ga* (Doi and Yoshioka 1988; Ishida 1991; Sakamoto 1992). Kanagy (1994) compared her L2 learners' pattern of the acquisition of negation patterns with Clancy's (1985) data on Japanese children. She found that both Japanese L1 and L2 learners follow a similar developmental pattern in the acquisition of the negative form. For example, *ja nai* is acquired before *ku nai,* although some of her learners learned both at the same time. Also, the negative formation develops in three stages in L1 and L2. In the first stage, learners start with a simple combination of a verb + *nai* or *nai desu,* such as **taberu nai* (*no eat) and **yasui nai desu* (*no cheap). In the second stage, multiple unanalyzed negative forms such as **tabeta ja nai* (*not ate), **akai ja arimasen* (not red) and *tabemashita masen*

(not ate), appears. In the third stage, negative forms and verbal forms are combined appropriately.

Although not all the linguistic features are developmentally constrained, those that follow the fixed sequence of acquisition cannot be changed by instruction. This means that learners may not be able to acquire the target form if they are not proficient enough to acquire it. In such cases, formal practice may have a temporary effect but does not guarantee the acquisition of the form. For this reason, the instructor should be aware of the fact that errors produced by the students may be just transitional and do not reflect the lack of work or understanding.

Another significant factor affecting syntactic acquisition is input and interaction. Krashen (1982) argued that L1 and L2 acquisition are essentially similar, and language acquisition occurs naturally by receiving a lot of comprehensible input, including pieces of language that are slightly difficult for the learners. Although his theory has been criticized for its vagueness and other problems, researchers generally agree that comprehensible input is necessary for acquisition. That is, learners do not gain much if an input is too difficult to comprehend.

However, Krashen's theory that comprehensible input is not only a necessary but a sufficient condition for language acquisition is inadequate in explaining how such input is used for acquisition. Subsequent research has demonstrated that not all comprehensible input is used for acquisition. Only the input that is noticed by the learner can become an intake, a type of input that undergoes an internal analysis to be acquired. Long (1996) stated that input can be more comprehensible through interaction (the interaction hypothesis). That is, in an attempt to communicate with his or her interlocutor, the learner must use such communication strategies as comprehension check, confirmation check, and clarification request. This prompts the interlocutor to modify the input to make it more comprehensible to learners, which provides learners with more comprehensible input and an opportunity to notice the target form. Other researchers argue that input can be made noticeable deliberately by highlighting the target form, increasing its frequency or its value in communication, providing explanation, and corrective feedback.

Once the input is noticed, the target form must be tested in production and fully internalized to become a part of the learner's tacit implicit knowledge. Ellis (2005) stated that this process requires a lot of time and practice before the learner can use it with ease. In addition, Swain (1985) claimed that learners need to produce comprehensible output—output that is more accurate, socially appropriate and cohesive—to acquire the language (the comprehensible output hypothesis). In an

attempt to produce comprehensible output, the learner needs to notice the gap between his or her production and the target form, analyze the grammar, and make a hypothesis about possible output. The learner can then test out his or her hypothesis by producing it and receiving feedback from his or her interlocutors. Through the process of attempting to produce comprehensible output, the target form is incorporated into the learner's interlanguage system.

Studies in input and interaction have demonstrated that learners notice the target form in the input. To notice the form, the learners must receive a lot of comprehensible input though meaningful interaction with the interlocutor. Moreover, the learners must be pushed to produce comprehensible output during the interaction. These findings have a significant implication in classroom instruction, which will be discussed in section 4 of this article.

Pragmatic Competence

Regardless of L1 or L2, learners have a natural tendency to prefer one-to-one correspondence between form and meaning initially, and gradually acquire other meanings of the same form or other form for the same meaning. For example, Japanese children have a tendency to choose one form of the giving and receiving verbs and overgeneralize it to constructions where a different verb is required (Clancy 1986). Also, L2 learners of Japanese tend to acquire either the progressive or resultant state interpretation of ~*teiru* (Shirai and Kurono 1998; Ishida 2004). In other words, a form that does not have one meaning, or a meaning that can be represented by multiple forms, will be difficult. In fact, based on extensive reviews of previous literature, DeKeyser (2005) claimed that a form with a novel or abstract meaning (e.g., verbal aspect, articles), a concept represented by multiple forms, a form with multiple inflectional possibilities, and a lack of the form–function correspondence contribute to learning difficulty.

Although a mismatch in the form–meaning correspondence occurs at any level of language such as vocabulary and grammar, it occurs frequently in pragmatics. A learner may be able to produce a grammatical item accurately in isolation, but this does not guarantee that he or she can use it appropriately as it may be used in multiple conversational situations, and multiple usages may be possible in one conversational situation. Even a seemingly simple expression like *sumimasen* can be used for apologizing, thanking, and approaching someone. Likewise, advanced learners fail to use ~*masu* versus ~ *ndesu,* though the misuse may give a wrong impression to the listener. This may be the reason that pragmatic transfer tends to

occur at a later stage (Kasper and Rose 2002). That is, learners need to develop some level of control over their speech to have the capacity to transfer pragmatic features.

Studies in interlanguage pragmatics show that L2 learners typically start using a basic or formulaic expression and overgeneralize it to many functions. Gradually they become aware that different forms are used for different functions, and increase their repertoire of expressions (Kasper and Rose 2002). Beginning level learners can handle some simple forms with simple pragmatic functions such as *irasshaimase* and *aa soo desu ka* (Ohta 2001). However, learners may fail to use even simple forms if their function and use are obscure. For example, Sawyer (1992) reported that despite the fact that the sentence final particle *ne* is very pervasive in Japanese conversation, it takes time for L2 learners to start using it, and they don't use it as much as native speakers do. When they do use it, it is used as a tag–question but not as a meaning of sustaining interaction. Similarly, Cook (2001) demonstrated that her intermediate learners were unable to perceive the violation of formality level in the job interview task, although polite and casual forms had been practiced extensively in the classroom for over a year.

Needless to say, the classroom is a highly limited environment for providing pragmatic input. Also, many pragmatic functions are difficult to perceive from simple exposure, so even if the learners immerse themselves in the target culture, there is no guarantee that they will acquire appropriate pragmatic features. Therefore, researchers have attempted to teach pragmatics explicitly. In general, explicit teaching of pragmatics is found to be effective (Billmyer 1990; Liddicort and Crozet 2001; Wishnoff 2000). However, most of these studies only measure the immediate effects. Considering the fact that the effects of explicit instruction of grammar do not last long (Doughty 1991; Moroishi 1998), it is not clear whether explicit instruction has a lasting effect. In addition, previous studies have also shown that the learners may not be able to acquire the target pragmatic feature if it is too complex or abstract or if the learners lack a sufficient level of proficiency to control the forms (Yoshimi 2001).

Discourse Competence and Strategic Competence

Discourse competence is often defined as conversational or interactional competence (Schmidt 1983), as conversation is a product of cooperative efforts by all the participants. The importance of such competence is discussed in the studies of L1 discourse analysis, specifically fillers and discourse markers such as *dakara* (Hasunuma 1991; Tanizaki 1994) and *datte* (Matsui, McCagg, and Yamamoto 2002). How this competence develops in the second language is not known, perhaps

because it is extremely difficult for learners with a limited linguistic competence to process or produce subtle nuances with these markers or to sustain a conversation without support from their interlocutors on how to use these devices.

Learners are known to use a variety of communication strategies in conversation (Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford 2005; Iino 1996; Siegal 1996), and in general the ability to use communication strategies helps learners sustain conversation. In particular, as noted in the previous section, negotiation strategies such as confirmation checks, comprehension checks, and clarifications are critical to obtain comprehensible input and produce comprehended output.

In addition, many studies have reported that the discourse organization is limited to the IRF (initiation, response, feedback) structure, which consists of the teacher's initiation (questioning), a student's response, and the teacher's feedback, whereas natural conversation consists of far more complex patterns (Ohta 2001). On the other hand, pair work in which students are required to negotiate meanings and forms tend to have more complex discourse patterns and resemble natural conversation (Mori 2002; Ellis 2003).

Application to Pedagogy: Strategy for Teaching

In this section, we will examine the way in which classroom instruction could be improved to help learners to acquire functional ability to communicate effectively in light of the recent findings about the development of the different components of communicative competence. In so doing, it is important to strike a balance between linguistic competence and other competencies. In this sense, it is important to maintain the benefits of the current practice, namely contextualization, emphasis on language function, and comprehensibility. Also, since instructional hours are limited, an approach that integrates different skills is necessary. At the same time, task difficulty should be controlled so that learners will not be overwhelmed. The following example illustrates a specific recommendation to achieve these objectives.

First, students should be taught an ample set of useful formulaic expressions that they can use in class every day from the beginning (R. Ellis 2005). Learners have a strong tendency to rely on formulaic expressions when their proficiency is limited, so providing them with useful expressions will help them function in Japanese immediately and give them a sense of achievement and enjoyment about handling something difficult. Formulaic expressions should include basic greeting phrases, classroom expressions, and phrases that promote negotiation such as comprehension checks (e.g., *wakarimashita ka*), clarification requests (e.g., *moo ichido onegai shimasu.*

*~tte nan desu k*a), and confirmation checks (e.g., '*~tte ~no koto desu n*e.). These expressions help the learners deal with comprehension or production difficulty, which might be pervasive in language classroom. In addition, some vocabulary items may be presented as formulaic expressions as well. For example, daily activities such as going to school, taking a shower, and having lunch can be introduced as unanalyzed phrases, such as *gakkoo he ikimasu, shawaa o abimasu,* and *hirugohan o tabemasu,* respectively. Combining multiple items into short phrases reduces the memory burden of learning separate vocabulary items. Also, learning grammatical items such as particles will be easy if the learners are already familiar with these expressions. An abstract concept would be easy to understand if familiar and concrete examples are available. In fact, L1 learners and users utilize this kind of exemplar to acquire and make a formal analysis of L1.

Second, when presenting vocabulary items, they should present semantically related groups (e.g., school, classroom, desk, chair, blackboard, teacher, student), instead of a random set of unrelated vocabulary (e.g., kettle, chair, forest, travel, baby). Some textbooks provide a list of vocabulary items that are totally unrelated. This may have been done because they are useful in practicing the target grammar items. However, human memory consists of a set of semantically related networks (McClelland, Rumelhart, and the PDP Research Group, 1986), so it is much easier to remember and retrieve vocabulary items that are related to each other.

Third, it is very important for the instructor to provide as much comprehensible input as possible and have students use comprehensible output in the foreign language classroom. This means that the use of native language should be avoided as much as possible in teacher-fronted, pair-, and group-work activities. Instead of relying on the learner's L1, students should be encouraged to use phrases to negotiate meanings and forms. Negotiations are found to help learners to acquire the target linguistic feature through meaningful communication because it forces students to test their linguistic competence. By receiving feedback about their utterances, they can revise their utterances again. This process of trial and testing helps learners to internalize correct and appropriate forms to their interlanguage system. For such negotiation to take place, tasks must be carefully designed so that they are sufficiently difficult to require negotiation but still easy enough to be achievable. Instructors should be aware of the fact that not all pair-work activities are designed to have students negotiate for meaning. For example, a formation gap activity where students repeatedly have to use the target grammar point to fill their task sheet is a way to

practice a pattern but is not necessarily designed to have students use negotiation strategies to understand each other.

In presenting a grammatical item, it should be presented in a simple, clear context. Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun (1993) stated that the desirable context should be the one in which the use of the target grammatical item is essential, useful, and effective to achieve the communicative goal. Such a context will make the target feature more noticeable to the students. Explicit grammar instruction is another way to direct students' attention to the target form. However, the effects of the instruction are found to be short-lived (Doughty 1991; Moroishi 1998), because its primary function is to get the students to notice the target feature, but not to have them internalize it. This means that grammar explanation should be short and concise enough to attract the learner's attention, and more classroom time should be spent having students use the target feature in context. Another important consideration is to avoid introducing the multiple meaning or function of the same form simultaneously. For example, some textbooks introduce both the resultant state and progressive interpretation of ~*teiru* simultaneously. This type of presentation results in overgeneralization of the progressive interpretation and delays the acquisition of the resultant state interpretation (Sugaya and Shirai 2007). However, Ishida (2004) found that teaching the resultant state interpretation initially does not cause any learning problem when the progressive interpretation is introduced later. Similarly, presenting multiple forms that share similar meaning should be avoided because such a practice will increase the chance of confusing the learner. For example, many textbooks teach the nominal and adjectival forms of demonstratives (*kore, sore, are, dore,* and *kono, sono, ano, dono*) at the same time, which increases confusion and misuse.

To show the language in context, dialogues are often used. However, the dialogues in many textbooks are designed to teach grammar in context and include many grammar items in a short exchange. This kind of dialogue, however, tends to be unnatural, and the context provided is unrealistic or inauthentic. For example, Mori (2005) pointed out that the interrogative word *dooshite* (why) often conveys an accusatory nuance, but asking someone why he or she likes a certain food item would be strange unless the item in question was very strange or distasteful. Therefore, the realistic situation and context of conversation must be considered before trying to fit all the grammatical items in a single dialogue. This kind of consideration is also important when creating pair work, role-plays, and other task-oriented activities. Students should not be forced to use the target grammar unless it is essential, useful, and effective in achieving the communicative goal.

As was discussed earlier, the discourse pattern in the teacher-fronted activities tends to be inauthentic, and not enough pragmatic input is available. To help students develop the ability to form a longer discourse, the instructors should encourage students to take a third and fourth turn even during formal practice. For example, in a situation where the instructor asks a student what kind of sport he or she plays, and the student responds to the question, the teacher should then have the rest of the students make a comment about the response (e.g., *ii desu ne* [great], *omoshiroi desu ne* [sounds interesting], or *watashi mo soo desu* [me, too]). Gradually this third turn can be developed into a fourth turn so that students can collaboratively create a longer discourse. Another way to help students work on a longer discourse is to have them work in pairs. As mentioned earlier, negotiated conversation necessarily results in a more complex discourse pattern that resembles a conversation outside of the classroom (Mori 2002).

Pragmatic features are difficult to notice or understand by mere exposure to the context, and the context the classroom can provide is still limited, so explicit instruction of pragmatics can be helpful. However, difficulty level must be carefully controlled so that students can achieve the goal. In other words, the authenticity of the task and students' ability should be matched carefully. This kind of care also applies to authentic materials, which provide a link between the classroom and real-life situations. However, students are unable to learn from authentic materials if they are not comprehensible. When using authentic materials, it is always important to consider what tasks the student will be able to achieve based on proficiency level and effort.

Moreover, pronunciation cannot be neglected just because the utterance is intelligible. No one would want his or her personality to be misunderstood based on his or her poor pronunciation, but the negative effect of L1 can easily be stabilized and is hard to correct if pronunciation is not dealt with from the beginning. This phonology is heavily dependent on the perceptual strategy built on L1 and the physiology of muscle control. Therefore sustained practice that is designed to train students to develop perceptual sensitivity to L2 phonological forms is very important. This can be achieved by explicit instruction of articulation, and also through teaching self-monitoring strategies using the checklist or reflection of their recording and having students pay attention to pronunciation in vocabulary practice, reading aloud, scenario play with a dialogue, and role-play activities.

Finally, keep in mind that some language features are developmentally constrained, and instruction cannot alter the developmental pattern. What this means

is that students may not be able to acquire the teaching points perfectly at the time of instruction if they are not developmentally prepared. Therefore, the instructor should carefully monitor students' progress and production to assess whether students are on the right track or are internalizing errors.

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Preparing for the AP®Japanese Exam (and Beyond!): The Articulated Curriculum

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Start with the final exam and work backwards! This is a most helpful piece of advice when creating a curriculum. Prior to May 2007, when the first AP Japanese Exam was offered, Japanese language education had no widely used summative exam that evaluated students' skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and cultural knowledge. Now, with the AP Exam in place, teachers can use it to develop an articulated curriculum from AP Japanese to level 1 Japanese.

The most obvious, trustworthy friend of the teacher is the textbook. There are many quality Japanese standards-based textbooks available today, that represent an integral part of learning Japanese. Most if not all textbooks teach the four basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, all within a cultural context. With each thematic chapter in the textbook, a teacher can create assessments to evaluate students' learning. In this way, students can progress through each level of Japanese. At the end of each level, a summative evaluation is given, usually in the form of a final exam at the end of the year. Then, when students finish the sequence of Japanese courses offered, they have developed some proficiency in Japanese.

The problem has been, however, in determining exactly what that proficiency means. Although most textbooks are useful in helping students learn Japanese, it has been difficult in the past to gauge Japanese programs and their students' relative abilities in Japanese with others in America and abroad, and the placement of students as they move from secondary to postsecondary levels has been difficult as well. An assessment tool using agreed-upon standards that informs teachers, students, parents, administrators, and the community was needed.

The AP Exam

After several years of design and development, the AP Japanese Exam was offered for the first time in May 2007. The exam is unique in that it is the first AP Exam that is taken entirely on the computer. The AP Japanese Exam is designed to test students' language skills based on the communication standards of the *Standards for Language Learning in the 21st Century.* Defined in the communication standards are the Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational modes. The tasks on the AP Exam test students' ability to communicate in Japanese using interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication.

> Firmly rooted in the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Standards)*,* the course articulates its goals in terms of the Standards' three modes of communication: Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational. Employing these communication modes as a framework upon which to weave its content, the course also addresses the Standards' other important goals: cultural competence, connections to other school disciplines, comparisons between the target language and culture and those of the learners, and the use of the language within a broader community beyond the traditional school environment. Students therefore develop an expanded ability to communicate in a culturally appropriate manner and in increasingly widening contexts.[1]

The development of these skills has become the focus of Japanese programs where AP classes are taught. For students to succeed on the AP Exam, they need to be proficient in written and oral conversation (Interpersonal mode), making written and oral presentations (Presentational mode), and reading and listening for comprehension (Interpretive mode), as well as have an understanding of Japanese culture. To develop these skills, teachers and students will need to begin in Japanese 1 and progress through an articulated curriculum that will, after four or five years, culminate in the completion of the AP Japanese Course and the AP Exam.

Teachers should plan on taking three or four years to incorporate revisions designed to give students the skills to succeed on the AP Exam. Making changes incrementally will decrease stress for both teachers and students and will allow teachers the time to carefully evaluate how changes will affect their programs. In addition, more resources will become available as the AP Exam is given and materials are released in subsequent years.

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1. *Japanese Language and Culture Course Description.* College Board (2006), 3.

The level of proficiency that is targeted in the AP Exam is described in the course description booklet:

> The AP Japanese Language and Culture Course is designed to be comparable to college/university Japanese courses that represent the point at which students complete approximately 300 hours of college-level classroom instruction…. Students' proficiency levels at the end of the course are expected to reach the Intermediate Low to Intermediate Mid range, as described in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) *Proficiency Guidelines.*[2]

High school students who demonstrate the proficiency levels described earlier in the three modes of communication will do well on the AP Exam, which could earn them college credit, admission to advanced level, or both. They will have a clear understanding of what level of Japanese to take at the postsecondary level, and they will have sufficient linguistic and cultural knowledge to use Japanese in real-life situations.

The AP Exam is taken on the computer. Students need to practice often using headsets to listen and record, and to type using Japanese. During the grading of the first exam, there were a significant number of Japanese input-related mistakes as well as other technical issues that negatively affected students' scores. With practice, many of these mistakes are easily avoided. Coordination between Japanese teachers and technology support personnel to provide access to Japanese Input Method Editor (IME)-enabled computers is critical so that students can adequately prepare. It would be beneficial as well if teachers would also teach students how to enable the Japanese IME on both PCs and Macs so that they can configure their home computers. Being able to use the computer is an important skill in today's world. Students will gain these skills as they prepare for the AP Exam.

Using the AP Exam as a starting point (and also as the ending goal), this article will focus on the important considerations for creating an articulated curriculum.

Developing Interpretive Communication Skills

The AP Exam tests students' listening and reading comprehension in the form of multiple-choice questions. Some questions are designed to test students' literal comprehension, and some are designed to test students' ability to infer the correct answers.

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2. *Japanese Language and Culture Course Description.* College Board (2006), 3.

Characteristics of the Reading Passages

In the reading section, students read several passages, then answer multiple-choice questions in English after each passage. The exam contains the following types of passages: articles, brochures, e-mails, instructions, letters, and stories. The passages vary in length as do the number of questions for each passage. There are between three and seven questions after each passage. Kanji from the AP kanji list that appear in a passage have no *furigana*. This is the case even for kanji that appear in compounds. For example, the kanji in 行きます and the kanji 事 are both commonly used kanji that students likely learn in their first two years of study, but the meaning of the compound 行事 is probably less widely understood. Nevertheless, it would appear without *furigana* on the AP Exam.

Interpretive Mode: Developing Reading Skills in Levels 1 to AP—Level 1

It is essential in level 1 to learn katakana and hiragana and to begin learning kanji. Students and teachers can then begin working on reading different kinds of passages for literal comprehension and for inferential meaning (getting the gist). Early on, teachers can use magazines, Internet, TV, and similar tools to develop students' reading skills. If katakana is taught first, students can begin reading all sorts of interesting, challenging words from magazines, billboards, Internet pages, and the like, and develop critical reading skills after only a very short time. Students can begin learning kanji very early in level 1. Numbers and basic words like 私 are obvious choices for kanji for level 1 students to learn.

As teachers think about creating an articulated curriculum in reading from level 1 to AP, it is useful to recall the reading skills, the AP list kanji, and types of tasks that are tested on the AP Exam: different types of passages, comprehension questions in English that ask for literal comprehension and inference, and computer skills. Teachers should then develop basic reading tasks in the same format as those on the AP Exam. For example: short letters followed by comprehension questions in English or a travel brochure on the Internet with level 1–appropriate inference questions in English. As for kanji, since students are expected to know all the AP list kanji and their *on-yomi* and *kun-yomi* by the end of the AP class, an effective approach would be to start students with the most common readings in first year, then spiral back on them while teaching secondary readings and compounds in higher levels.

Interpretive Mode: Developing Listening Skills in Levels 1 to AP—Level 1

On the AP Exam, students listen to the following types of passages spoken by native speakers at normal speed: announcements, conversations, debates, instructions, messages, presentations, and reports. Some of the passages are played only once and some are played twice. It is therefore important to develop similar listening activities for the classroom. Like the reading tasks already described, activities with comprehension (literal and inference) questions in English will be most useful in preparing students for the AP Exam three or four years down the road. The earlier students can do listening activities using headsets to listen to recordings using digital technology such as computers, iPods, or language labs, the better. While it is difficult at times to allow the students to listen only once, or even twice, to a passage, it is important to do so from level 1. In level 1, listening tasks such as announcements of upcoming events or conversations about weekend plans, for example, which have questions that ask about basic information such as times, dates, days of the week, weather, etc., are useful. As students progress into levels 2, 3, 4, and AP, it is important to keep in mind the skill requirements and task types on the AP Exam as well as what skills and task types students practiced in the previous year(s). For example, the AP Exam will have an announcement followed by questions in English. In level 1, students listened to simple announcements and answered comprehension questions related to time, dates, and the like. Now, in levels 2 and beyond, teachers create practice announcements that have appropriate levels of grammar with more vocabulary and comprehension questions that may ask about time, dates, etc., but also ask for inferential understanding and/or literal comprehension of level-appropriate subject matter. In addition, have the students begin to practice other types of tasks that appear on the AP Exam. In this way, an articulated listening program can be easily developed from level 1 to AP.

Based on the results of the first AP Exam and the opinions of students and teachers, the listening parts of the exam were very difficult. Two commonly stated reasons were that the Japanese was too fast and that there was not enough time to answer the questions. Addressing this area of concern and improving students' proficiencies in listening will be a primary focus of upcoming professional development seminars and workshops.

Developing Presentational Skills

Presentational communication skills are evaluated through speaking and writing tasks. Unlike the multiple-choice format used for the Interpretive mode of reading and listening, the Presentational mode tasks are evaluated using scoring rubrics. In addition, there is one speaking task (cultural perspective) and one written task (cultural topic posting) that specifically tests students' cultural knowledge.

The following types of speaking tasks are tested on the AP Exam: school announcement, story narration, and cultural perspective presentation. During the exam, students are given a prompt and time to prepare. Then, they have a specified amount of time in which to record their responses. Students should practice often using the headsets to record. It takes time to get used to talking into a microphone instead of talking to classmates or a teacher.

Teachers should design classroom activities similar to the tasks on the AP Exam. Students are given either one minute (school announcements) or four minutes (story narrations, cultural perspective presentations) to prepare for the speaking tasks, and they have either one or two minutes to record. Practicing speaking activities that require students to prepare for one or four minutes what they are going to say is important. Also, instructions should be given on how to best use the preparation time. Students should be encouraged to jot down notes (they will be given paper and pencil on which to take notes during the exam). They should pay close attention to the instructions. The story narration task, for example, requires students to have a beginning and an ending to the story. The cultural perspective task asks students to discuss at least five aspects about the topic on which they are writing. Having students create brief outlines to help them give an organized presentation including the requirements described in the instructions is one effective way to use the preparation time.

The scoring rubrics emphasize the importance of completing the given task and the ability to make a presentation in the allotted time. Students' presentations do not need to be perfect to receive high marks. Even a presentation with mistakes in grammar or syntax, with occasional hesitations, or with occasional pronunciation problems can receive high marks. Teachers, therefore, should stress to their students the importance of addressing all areas of the task as described in the task directions and communicating their ideas in an organized manner that uses the allotted time well.

Activities in which students practice speaking on a topic for a specific length of time can be difficult because many students run out of things to say well before the

allotted time is reached. Even very talented students find themselves in this situation. Although students who give a brief but appropriate answer to a task can receive a solid score, those who include elaboration and detail in their responses can earn the highest scores. It is therefore important for students to be creative and imaginative when performing the speaking tasks. One way to show students how to do this would be to provide them an example that addresses the prompt but does not contain detail or elaboration. Students can then add details and elaboration to the example that would make the response better. Next, students can look at pictures (story narration practice) or contents of an announcement (school announcement), prepare what they will say, then record their presentations. Students will then review their presentations, looking for ways to make improvements. Students will likely discover that providing elaboration and detail often involves answering who, what, when, where, how, and why questions, which require creativity and imagination.

Presentational Writing Tasks

On the AP Exam, students have 20 minutes to write on each of the following tasks: cultural topic, and compare and contrast. Students must type their responses on the computer, and so it is essential that students are confident and comfortable typing Japanese on the computer. Part of the computer training should include practicing the kanji from the AP list. Students will quickly learn that if hiragana is incorrectly entered, then the desired kanji cannot be selected. Students are expected to use kanji from the AP kanji list in the presentational writing tasks.

Like the presentational speaking tasks, the writing tasks are evaluated using scoring rubrics. It is very important for students to pay close attention to the instructions for each task, because omitting required information will affect the student's score in the Task Completion section of the scoring rubric. When designing classroom activities, teachers should include instructions similar to those on the AP tasks. For example, the instructions for the compare and contrast article on learning Japanese and learning another language include the following instructions: "Based on your personal experience, describe at least three aspects of each and highlight the similarities and differences between learning Japanese and learning another subject. Also, state your preference and give reasons for it."[3] If a student were to mention only two aspects instead of the required three, not highlight similarities and differences, not state a preference, or not give reasons, then that student's score on the task would be negatively affected. Also, students are instructed to produce 300–400 characters in

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3. Course Description Booklet, 22.

20 minutes for two of the writing tasks. In addition to typing Japanese effortlessly on the computer, students will need to practice providing elaboration and detail to meet these requirements.

Developing Interpersonal Communication Skills

The Interpersonal mode tasks on the AP Exam are the Text Chat (reading and then typing responses), and the Conversation and Return Telephone Call (listening and then recording spoken responses).

In the Text Chat, the students read six prompts, one at a time, and respond to each. Students cannot go back or forward to view other prompts. Students have 90 seconds to respond to each prompt. This task is similar to a text chat exchange or an e-mail exchange between the student and another person. Depending on the status of the person (teacher, boss, classmate, etc.), students may need to use different registers (*desu/masu,* honorifics, plain forms, etc.) The register used, however, needs to be appropriate to the situation. A good way to practice the Text Chat is to have students conduct e-mail exchanges with each other and/or with their teachers. Limit response times to 90 seconds. This is particularly effective if there are heritage speakers in the class with whom the teacher can organize or control the content of the e-mail exchanges. In other words, the teacher and the heritage speakers would provide the prompts to which the other students would have to respond in 90 seconds.

For the two listening tasks there are four prompts, to which students have 20 seconds to respond. Since the first prompt in both the Conversation and the Return Telephone Call often starts with a greeting or introduction of some sort, students should be well versed in giving appropriate greetings in response. In addition, the instructions read: "You should respond as fully and appropriately as possible." This means that in response to the prompts, students should not limit themselves to short responses. Rather, they should attempt to use the 20 seconds allotted for the response. Since students will be recording responses on the computer during the test, finding a similar way to practice with students is important. For courageous and trusting teachers, having students practice for these tasks using cellphones can be useful, because talking into a phone simulates recording on the computer using a headset. Otherwise, face-to-face exchanges with four prompts can be done in class to prepare.

Since communicating effectively with speed and accuracy is important in these tasks, activities from level 1 through AP should be created to develop these skills. Starting in level 1 students can begin practicing simple written and oral exchanges.

As students progress through higher levels, time constraints along with more sophisticated prompts will need to be included in the activities.

Results from the first AP test indicate that the two spoken interpersonal tasks were quite difficult for many students. Some reasons were obvious from the scoring: Students did not understand the prompt due to vocabulary or speed, and unlike real-life, person-to-person encounters, students could not ask the speaker (the prompt) to repeat what was said. Students who did not respond at all to a prompt or gave a response that was unrelated to the prompt received zeros, which lowered their overall score for the task. Based on these results, teachers and students will need to focus on preparing for these kinds of tasks.

Conclusion

During the four or five years that students learn Japanese in preparation for the AP Exam, they gain cultural competence and learn to communicate in Japanese using the three modes of communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational. In other words, students learn to read, write, listen, and speak Japanese, along with learning Japanese culture. Students also learn to write in Japanese using a computer, a skill that is very important in today's world.

As the scoring rubrics for the AP Exam stress, if students can effectively communicate in Japanese, even without perfect grammar, pronunciation, and so forth, they will be successful on the AP Exam and have a strong grounding in Japanese, which will serve them in their future studies and careers.

For teachers, the AP Exam is a valuable tool to gauge their students' proficiencies and to evaluate how well their own programs are based on the standards. Successful completion of the exam is an attainable goal. Now that the types of tasks and the grading criteria are known, teachers can build their curriculum backward from the AP Exam: Activities and skill development in level 4 or 5 are designed to practice the tasks on the AP Exam; the activities and skill development in the lower levels are designed to prepare students for the next higher level. In this way, an articulated curriculum is created using the AP Exam as the cornerstone of the articulated curriculum's construction. Students who complete such a course of study will be ready to succeed on the AP Exam, enter a postsecondary Japanese course at the appropriate level, know their proficiency level relative to their peers in other programs, and have a solid grounding for future studies and careers.

Thematic Unit: The Japanese House

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The following unit is being used in both high school AP Japanese class (fourth level) and second-year Japanese at the university. Contact hours to complete this unit—high school: 25 hours, and university: 14 hours. The timeline shown in this unit is for AP Japanese (fourth level of high school). The textbook used is *Yookoso: Continuing with Contemporary Japanese*, 3rd ed., by Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku (McGraw-Hill, 2006). This unit is based on the materials in Chapter 2, "At Home."

Unit Title: 日本の家	Level: AP	Estimated Time: 53 minutes × 25 days (4 weeks)
Unit Outcomes		**Evidence to Evaluate**
Students will create and present attractive dream house plans, in order to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan, based on their research (communication with a client and readings on Japanese houses).		PPT Slides Presentation Brochure

Summative Assessment Tasks: Modes of Communication		
Interpretive: Students will examine various 賃貸情報誌 and select the best apartment/house in Japan for a chosen client based on their needs. (Lesson 1)	**Interpersonal:** Students will exchange dialogues with a real estate agent while s/he searches for the best apartment through both oral communication and e-mail exchange. (Lesson 1) Students will engage in a telephone conversation with a friend regarding a housewarming party. (Lesson 3)	**Presentational:** Students will create and present attractive dream house plans in order to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan. (Final Unit Assessment)

Cultures	
Practices and Perspectives	**Products and Perspectives**
Cultural Practices in the House 靴をぬぐ、洗濯物を干す、 布団のたたみ方、布団を押し入れに入れる、お風呂の入り方、 仏壇の拝み方	**Cultural Products in the House** 玄関、表札、和室、押し入れ、床の間、縁側、庭、ウォシュレット、お風呂場 、炊飯器、箸立て、瞬間湯沸かし器、
Cultural Practices Around the House 回覧板をまわす、リサイクルの分別	**Cultural Products Around the House** 回覧板、リサイクル
Cultural Practices When Renting a Place 家探し 、 敷金／礼金を払う	**Cultural Products When Renting a Place** 賃貸広告、アパートの申込書、見取り図、 不動産の広告の看板
Cultural Practices When Visiting a House お客を招待する、お土産を持って行く、 礼儀、尊敬、謙遜、上下関係	**Cultural Products Associated With Visiting a House** お土産、招待状、お礼状

Comparisons	Connections	Communities
• Students compare various cultural practices in and around Japanese and American houses. • Students compare the language structures that demonstrate various degrees of politeness in both languages. (Language Comparison)	• Students apply math skills by using the metric system to calculate the size of a traditional Japanese room and compare with their own. (Mathematics) • Students gain awareness of the construction of the Japanese house and its relation to weather and climate. (Social Studies) • Students gain background knowledge on the function of 交番 (Police box). (Sociology)	• Students will create a dream house to inspire a family in Japan who is looking for a suitable new home design.

Vocabulary	Grammar
Japanese Housing	To Do Things Like Such and Such: 〜たり、、〜たり (p. 80)
住宅、マンション、団地、二階建て、住む、庭、戸、ド	Expressing a Purpose: 、、、ために (p.89)
ア、玄関廊下、部屋、居間、茶の間、リビングルーム、	Expressing Permission: 〜てもいい (p.100)
ダイニング、キッチン、客間、応接間、寝室、浴室、洗	Negative Request: 〜ないでください (p.104)
面所、お手洗い、トイレ、和室、日本間、洋室、洋間、	Offering Advice: 、、、ほうがいい (p.108)
天井、床、屋根、階段、門、塀	Expressing Different States of Action: 、ところ (p.112)
Japanese House Items	Describing a Preparatory Action: 〜ておく (p.117)
表札、ベル、インターフォン、鍵、郵便受け、書斎、勝	To Give (to a second or third person): あげる (p. 92)
手口、流し、車庫、物置、柱、乾燥機、電球、目覚まし	To Receive (from a superior): いただく (p.92)
時計、ガスレンジ、押し入れ、座布団、畳、障子、ふす	To Give (to speaker or in-group member): くれる (p.92)
ま、床の間、こたつ、屑入れ、ごみ箱、引き出し、棚	To give (to a superior or outsider): さしあげる (p.92)
House Activities	Only; not except for: しか、、、ない (p.113)
家事、掃除、磨く、拭く、洗濯、洗濯物、干す、片付	Each.., per...: 、、、ずつ (p.93)
ける、縫い物、アイロンかける、庭いじり、直す、手伝	For the purpose of; for the sake of: 、、ため（に） (p.89)
う、居間、お手洗い	**Kanji**
Renting a Place	新 開 公 園 住 階 広 直 戸 古 門 室 伝
不動産屋、探す、住宅地、郊外、住所、部屋、間、引	洗 建 友 貸 借 置 静 庭 便 利 不
っ越す、土地、家主、大家、借家、貸す、借りる、家	
賃、中古、お隣	

At Home Unit Plan

This thematic unit plan is an overall outline of this unit to display when and how vocabulary, new structures/grammar, and cultural knowledge are introduced in class with an approximate timeline.

Textbook: *Yookoso 2*	**Estimated Time:** 53 minutes X 25 days (5 weeks)
Level: AP	**Topic:** At Home (Chapter 2)

Unit Outcome Task:

At the end of this unit, students will create and present attractive dream house plans to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan – Summative Assessment

Evidence: PowerPoint slides, presentation, and brochure
Throughout this unit students will perform the following tasks:

- **Interpretive:** Students will examine various 賃貸情報誌 and select the best apartment/house in Japan for a chosen client based on their needs.
- **Interpersonal:** Students will engage in dialogues with a real estate agent while s/he searches the best apartment through both oral communication and e-mail exchange.
- **Presentational:** Students will create and present attractive dream house plans in order to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan.

Lesson: Setting Stage
10 minutes
日本の家へようこそ
(Welcome to Japanese House)

TS	Outcome Tasks	Structure/Phrases	Culture

Lesson 1
10 days
家探し
(Apartment Hunting)

TS	Outcome Tasks	Structure/Phrases	Culture
1.1S 1.2R 1.3S	**Interpersonal:** Students converse with their clients (audience) about their presentation. **Interpretive:** Students will find the best apartment/house in Japan for a chosen client. **Presentational:** Students present the best house for the chosen client using PPT in a video letter format.	**Grammar** 〜たり、たり To do things like such and such (p.80) てもいいですか。 (p.100) 〜ないでください (p. 104) **Vocabulary** 2階建て、部屋 居間、茶の間 、リビング・ルーム ダイニング・ルーム、寝室、浴室、洗面所 、お手洗い、和室、 洋室、床、屋根、階段 管理費、 駐車場、敷金、礼金、賃貸、マンション、一戸建て、団地、飼う、吸う、南向き、日当り良好	**Products** げんかん、表札、和室、押し入れ、床の間、縁側、庭、トイレ、お風呂場 賃貸広告、アパートの申込書、見取り図、 **Practices** 靴をぬぐ、洗濯物を干す、ふとんをたたんで押し入れに入れる、お風呂の入り方、 敷金／礼金を払う、家探し、

Lesson 2
4 days
日本の物クイズショー
(Japanese Home Items Quiz Show)

TS	Outcome Tasks	Structure/Phrases	Culture
1.1 1.2 1.3 SP WR	Students will create and conduct a quiz show on unique usages of Japanese house items.	**Grammar** 〜ため （に） (for the purpose of ---, I'll ---)(p.90) **Vocabulary** 留守番電話、電子レンジ、冷蔵庫、洗濯機、クーラー、掃除機、炊飯器、扇風機、ガスレンジ、目覚まし時計、布団、座布団、こたつ、仏壇、神棚、床の間、ふすま、障子、押し入れ、畳、	**Products** 表札、炊飯器、お箸立て、食器乾燥機、瞬間湯沸かし器、回覧板、リサイクルの箱 **Practices** お箸の使い方、回覧板をまわす、リサイクルの分別、仏壇への拝み方、布団のたたみ方

Lesson 3 8 days 私の家へようこそ (Open House)			
TS	**Outcome Tasks**	**Structure/Phrases**	**Culture**
1.3 WR	Students will write an invitation card with the directions to a new apartment, and list what to bring. Also, they will call and leave a message inviting someone, leaving directions.	**Grammar** と conditional (pg. 35) しか＿＿ない (only) (p.114) 〜ておく (to do for future use) (p.118) **Vocabulary** まっすぐ、曲がる、降りる、尋ねる、連れてくる、乗り換える、渡る、地図、左側、右側、交差点、予定、	**Products** お土産、 招待状、 **Practices** お客を招待する、お土産を持って行く、
1.3 SP WR	Students will write a thank-you card to different guests. (Students will leave messages for various guests thanking them for coming to the party.)	**Grammar** Giving and receiving (pg. 93) あげる、いただく、くれる、さしあげる、もらう、やる、 **Vocabulary** お土産、先日、 お久しぶり、失礼します、	**Products** お礼状 **Practices** 礼儀、尊敬、謙遜、上下関係

Application and Assessment 3 days 私の夢の家 (My Dream House)			
TS	**Outcome Tasks**	**Structure/Phrases**	**Culture**
1.3 WR	Students make a real estate brochure for a house with Japanese features.	**Grammar** 〜中 (during: in the middle) (p.101)	**Products** 不動産の広告の看板
1.3 SP WR	Students will create and present attractive dream house plans in order to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan.	**Vocabulary** 独身、最適	

At Home Lesson Plan

This detailed lesson plan displays how Lesson 1 of the thematic unit is introduced in greater detail along with assessment tasks, rubrics, and some materials following this section. Due to space limitations, only selected activities are shown.

Unit 2: At Home	**Lesson 1:** 家探し
Level: AP	**Estimated Time of Lesson 1:** 10 days

Unit Outcome Task:

Students will create and present attractive dream house plans based on their research (communication with a client and readings on Japanese houses) in order to inspire prospective homeowners in Japan.

Lesson Outcome Task:

Students will find the best apartment/house in Japan for a chosen client(s) (1.1S, 1.2R) and present it in a video letter. (1.3SW)

Evidence:

PPT, Oral Presentation (see attached rubrics)

Setting Stage 10 minutes	
Activities	**Materials**
1. **Tapping into Students' Prior Knowledge** Teacher shares several pictures of Japanese houses and poses a question: "What do you know about the Japanese house? Are they similar to or different from your house? What do Japanese people do in and around the house?" Teacher engages students in conversation and brainstorming various features of Japanese houses and cultural products and practices in and around the house. Teacher and students create a KWL chart together. (KWL Chart: K stands for what students think they KNOW, W stands for what students WANT to know, and L stands for what they have LEARNED.)	KWL チャート 写真
2. **Set the Stage with a Culturally Enriched Video Clip** Teacher shows a short video clip introducing the Japanese house. Teacher points out various cultural products and practices as s/he is showing the video. (Interpretive Listening)	日本の家のビデオ

Input Stage 3 days	
Activities	**Materials**
3. **Input Activity with Picture Panels** Teacher introduces new vocabulary and information using picture panels. As teacher inputs new vocabulary, s/he conducts several comprehension checks.	写真
4. **"Which One is my House?"** Teacher shows various floor plans of Japanese houses and describes one particular floor plan. Students guess the appropriate floor plan based on the information provided orally. (Interpretive Listening and Reading)	家の見取り図
5. **"Where Am I?" Activity** Teacher describes cultural practices in various rooms of the house. Students guess in which rooms the actions most likely take place. (Interpretive Listening)	家の見取り図
6. **Yes/No Culture Activity** Teacher describes common cultural practices in a Japanese house. Students respond True or False. (Interpretive Listening)	写真

Guided Practice Stage 5 days	
Activities	**Materials**
7. "Read and Run" Students form groups of four. Each group designates one member as a recorder. There will be cultural articles "玄関" posted on the walls in classroom, which describe the cultural practice as well as perspectives. (Interpretive Reading and listening)	サザエさんの家の説明 (see material 1)
8. "Drawing a Floor Plan" Students in the groups draw floor plans based on the reading they did in the previous activity. (Interpretive Reading)	サザエさんの家の見取り図 (see material 1)
9. Floor Plan A/B Gap Activity Students work in pairs. One student describes floor plan A and the other describes floor plan B. Students compare their floor plans at the end. (Interpretive Listening and Interpersonal Speaking)	日本の家の見取り図
10. Culture Perspectives Teacher highlights the differences and similarities of Japanese houses and American houses and shares the perspectives of various cultural practices in and around a Japanese house. (Interpretive Listening)	日本の家の見取り図
11. お風呂の入り方 Sentence Strips Puzzle Students work in pairs. They are given sentence strips that describe the steps of taking a bath in the Japanese way. Students read the sentence strips and place them in the most culturally appropriate order. (Interpretive Reading and Interpersonal Speaking)	お風呂の入り方の説明 (see material 2)
12. 玄関について Recall Protocol Students read the article about the cultural products and practices that are seen in the 玄関. After students have read the article, they will write down the information they obtained from the article on the back of the paper in their native language. They are asked NOT to refer back to the article while they are writing. Teacher identifies what students were able to understand and the areas that need to be improved. (Interpretive Reading)	玄関についての読み物
13. 賃貸広告 Reading Task Students fill out a rental application for imaginary customers based on the 賃貸広告 given. (Interpretive Reading)	賃貸広告 (see material 3)
14. 物件探し House Hunting Students work in groups of four. Each student draws and reads a card with rental information in English. S/he is given 30 seconds to interpret the information and announce it to the group. The other members choose the appropriate 賃貸広告 based on the information they just heard. Note: This is similar to the "School Announcement" task in the AP Exam. (Interpretive Reading and Presentational Speaking)	間取り図
15. 不動産屋とのメールの交換 E-mail Exchange Students obtain and clarify information about a chosen apartment through online chat exchange with a real estate agent. (Interpretive Reading and Interpersonal Writing)	電子メール (see material 4)
16. 留守番電話 Listening Task Teacher plays a recorded phone message from a real estate agent. Students take notes as they listen, then answer the multiple-choice questions. (Interpretive Listening)	PPT 留守番電話のメッセージ (see sample 5)

Activities	Materials
17. 不動産屋 **A/B Info Gap Activity** Students work in pairs. One person obtains information from his/her partner by asking questions and fills out the request form. The partner provides and clarifies information based on the rental flyer. (Interpretive Reading, Interpretive Listening, and Interpersonal Speaking)	A/B ギャップハンドアウト (see material 6)
18. 家探し **(Interpersonal Chat with Friends)** Students engage in a simulated online chat with their friends. They exchange dialogues regarding the upcoming move. (Interpretive Reading and Interpersonal Writing.)	ブロガー

Independent Practice 1 day	
Activities	**Materials**
19. Letter Writing Students type a letter to Japanese exchange students to inform them about American cultural products, practices, and perspectives. (Presentational Writing.)	ワードプロセッサー

Application/Assessment 1 day	
Activities	**Materials**
20. 物件紹介 **Client Presentation** Students find the best apartment/house for a chosen client. They present their findings in a video letter format. (Interpretive Reading, Presentational Speaking, and Presentational Writing.)	PPT インターネット Task sheet and rubrics (see material 6)
21. 日本の家 **Cultural Perspectives** Present your own view or perspective on cultural practices in a Japanese house. Discuss at least five aspects or examples of Japanese house customs. (Presentational Writing)	Client sheet (see material 8)

Sample Student Handouts

Material 1: Activity 7 and 8

Read and Run サザエさんの家の説明

Drawing a Floor Plan サザエさんの家の見取り図

磯野家

私の家へようこそ。私の家は5Kの大きい家です。駅から徒歩で5分なのでとても便利です。5つの和室と小さい台所、それから、広い庭などがあります。

　　最初に玄関を入ると、まっすぐの廊下があります。廊下の右には4帖半の和室と左には6帖の和室があります。4帖半の和室はカツオとワカメの部屋で6帖の和室はサザエさんとマスオさん、それからタラちゃんの部屋です。

　　　玄関からの廊下をまっすぐ行くと居間があります。居間は6帖でテレビや座卓などがあります。居間の南側には6帖の和室があり、その和室の西側にもう一つの8　帖　の和室があります。その和室と居間のとなりには台所があります。浴室は台所の西側にあります。

Material 2: Activity 11

Sentence Strips Puzzle お風呂の入り方

<ruby>腰掛<rt>こしか</rt></ruby>けに座ってシャワーか<ruby>浴槽<rt>よくそう</rt></ruby>のお<ruby>湯<rt>ゆ</rt></ruby>でかんたんに体を洗います。
‒浴槽に入ってリラックスします。
‒体を石けんとタオルで洗います。
‒浴槽に入ってリラックスします。
‒お湯で体をながして、よくしぼったタオルで体をふきます。
‒バスタオルで体をふいてゆかたを着ます。

お風呂の入り方

①	
②	
③	
④	
⑤	
⑥	

Material 3: Activity 13

Reading Task 賃貸広告

希望条件チェックリスト

フリガナ 氏名	
家	一戸建て　　アパート　　マンション　　その他
家賃	円
礼金	［　］有（　　　　　　円)　　［　]無
敷金	［　］有（　　　　　　円)　　［　]無
ま　ど 間取り	**1ルーム 1K/1DK 1LDK 2K/2DK 2LDK** **3K/3DK 3LDK 4K〜**
駅／徒歩	**( )** 駅からバス　　分　徒歩　　分
こだわり検索	［　]フローリング　　　　　　［　]エアコン付き ［　]オートロック　　　　　　［　]室内洗濯機置き場 ［　]ロフト　　　　　　　　　　［　]エレベーター ［　]バス・トイレ別　　　　　　［　]南向き ［　]専用庭　　　　　　　　　　［　]バルコニー ［　]駐車場あり　　　　　　　　［　]ペット相談可 ［　]楽器相談可　　　　　　　　［　]即入居可 ［　]女性限定

Materials 4: Activity 15

E-mail Exchange 不動産屋とのメールの交換　　電子メール

Directions: You are an exchange student in Japan looking for an apartment. You will participate in exchange of text-chat messages with your Japanese friend. Each time it is your turn to write, you will have 90 seconds. You should respond as fully and as appropriately as possible.

Text Chat

You will have a conversation with your Japanese friend, who wants to know how your apartment hunting is going.

1. Describe the specific information:
   この間のメールを読んだよ。どんなアパートが見つかったの？

2. Explain the reason:
   どうしてそのアパートをかりることにしたの？　もっといいのがあったんじゃないの？

3. Respond to a specific question:
   よさそうじゃない。ところで引っ越しはいつごろにないそう？引っ越しに必要な物がある？

4. Compare and state your opinion:
   日本でアパートを借りるのははじめてだから大変でしょう。ところで私も来月からアメリカの大学に行くんだけど、日本でアパートを借りるのとアメリカで借りるのとどんなことが違うのか教えてくれる?

5. どうもありがとう。引っ越しの日が決まったら教えてね。友達と手伝いにいくから。

Materials 5: Activity 16

Listening Task: PowerPoint Script 留守番電話

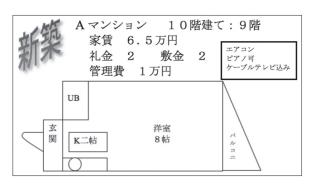にこにこ不動産の青木です。お世話になっています。先日の桜木町のアパートの件でお電話をしています。あいにく2LDKのアパートはもう空いていないんですが、

　　3LDKのアパートならまだ空いています。家賃は9万円で、敷金は一ヶ月分で礼金はなしです。来月の1日には入居出来ます。そこは洋室が2つで和室が一つ、リビングは13帖でフロ

ーリングです。ペットが飼えるアパートはあまりないので、とてもいいと思うんですがどうでしょうか。お電話をお待ちしています。

    Q1. The prospective renter is looking for an …

        2LDK apartment

        2LDK apartment with ability to have pets

        3LDK apartment

        3LDK apartment with ability to have pets

    Q2. To rent, the prospective renter will initially have to pay…

1.   ２７万円
2.   ９万円
3.   １８万円
4.   １３万円

Material 6：Activity 17
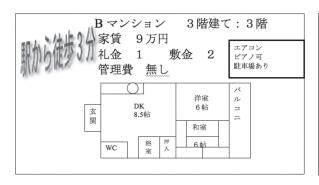
A/B Info Gap Activity 不動産屋

Material 7: Activity 20

Task Sheet 物件紹介

日本で家を探そう!

House/apartment hunting has never been easy. As you are an expert in selecting the perfect property in Japan now, why don't you help your Japanese client find one? Please choose one client from the list and help him or her find a perfect home to meet his or her requests! Your presentation has to meet the following requirements to be considered successful. Good luck and have fun.

Requirements:
Your presentation must be…

- More than one minute and less than two minutes long
- Visually authentic and informative
- Done entirely in Japanese

Your PowerPoint must include the following information:

- Picture of the property
- Floor plan with size of each room
- Rent, deposit, thank-you money, and other fees
- Rules and regulations of the property
- How long it takes to get to the property from the nearest train station or bus stop
- Any attractive features

Grammar Requirements:

- 〜たり、たり(p.80)
- 〜てもいいですか。(p.100)
- 〜ないでください。(p.104)
- 〜を希望しています。
- 〜なので〜です。

Due date:_____

日本で家を探そう！

	ぜったい借ります (20)	たぶん借ります (15)	まよっています (10)	ほかの家を探して下さい (5)
Requirements	All requirements present; additional information added to enhance presentation	All requirements present	One requirement missing	More than one requirement missing
Language	All grammar points utilized accurately; grammar and syntax with no errors	All grammar points present with sporadic errors	One grammar point missing; limited vocabulary	More than one grammar point missing; grammatical errors interfere with comprehensibility
Culture	Demonstrates deep cultural knowledge in various occasions	Demonstrates cultural knowledge a few times	Demonstrates cultural knowledge once	Attempts to demonstrate cultural knowledge
Delivery	Very easy to understand; natural pace with minimal hesitation or repetition; very confident	Smooth pace with occasional hesitation or repetition	Strained or unnatural flow of expression; sometimes interferes with comprehensibility	Frequent hesitation and repetition; difficult to understand
PPT Slides	Very effective, informative, and well organized	Somewhat informative, and attractive	Minimal information presented in a plain format; somewhat difficult to understand	Lacks critical information; not well organized

Name:_____   Total:_____

Comment:

Material 8: Activity 20_2

Client List 物件紹介

お客様リスト

(To the Instructor: Insert a picture of a Japanese college student here before copying.) 氏名：大月　まもる（２２才） インフォメーション： 大学生、新宿駅の近く希望、アパート／マンションOK 家賃9万円以下、今必要！	(To the Instructor: Insert a picture of a Japanese family of four before copying.) 氏名：田中　まさとし　（５３才） インフォメーション： 　四人家族、庭付き一戸建て希望、京都駅の近くを希望、広い居間を希望、 ２LDK、家賃１５万円以下
(To the Instructor: Insert a picture of a Japanese family of five with a pet before copying.) 氏名：鈴木　かずお　（５０才） インフォメーション： 　5人家族、マンション希望、横浜駅から２０分以内OK、小さい犬がいる、フロアーリング希望、3LDK希望	(To the Instructor: Insert a picture of a Japanese family of three before copying.) 氏名：高橋　ひろし　（４５才） インフォメーション： 　3人家族、札幌駅の近く希望、一戸建てを希望、古い家でもOK，　家賃１５万円以下

Thematic Unit: Gift Giving

Masumi Reade

Woodlands High School
Woodlands, Texas

Unit Title: Gift Giving

Focus: On interpersonal communication: Speaking and writing	**Level:** AP (fifth semester of Japanese)	**Estimated Time:** 90-minute class × 5 days (7.5 hours) including final assessment
Situation: Home stay—before departure, during the home stay, after returning		
Final Outcome: Students will be able to understand the cultural background and importance of gift giving and returning favors in Japan by behaving appropriately in the situation of visiting or home staying with a Japanese family. Students will be able to demonstrate giving suitable gifts with appropriate actions and expressions.		
Assessment tasks		
1. Two-minute speech on gift giving/return favor customs in Japan, based on two examples, including the student's opinion/perspectives. (Presentational Speaking) Evidence: Oral speech	Task Completion: 60% Language Use: 25% Delivery: 15%	
2. Simulated chat with a "host sibling" where students ask appropriate questions in order to find out suitable gifts for each member of the family. (Interpersonal Writing) Evidence: Simulated text chat	Task Completion: 70% Language Use: 20% Delivery: 10%	
3. Simulated conversation of gift-giving occasions, using the model family. Students will have a list of gifts and will be given two members of the family who will receive gifts. Students will demonstrate appropriate words, expressing their appreciation to these members of the host family. (Interpersonal Speaking) Evidence: Oral conversation	Task Completion: 60% Language Use: 25% Delivery: 15%	
4. E-mail message to the whole family "after returning to the United States," thanking them for what they have done and gifts they have given the student (based on the model situation given to them regarding "what they did" and "what was given"). (Presentational Writing) Evidence: e-mail message	Task Completion: 70% Language Use: 20% Delivery: 10%	

Summative Assessment:

1. Two-minute speech

Task Completion (60%)	Language Use (25%)	Delivery (15%)
60–48: Directly addresses prompt (including two examples) well-organized, coherent, accurate, and detailed cultural information, including student's perspectives on gift giving customs.	25: Accurate vocabulary for giving, receiving, and variety of gift giving customs. Variety of sentence structures with minimal errors.	15: Natural flow; minimal errors in pronunciation; consistent use of register.
47–36: Addresses almost all aspects of the prompt and includes student's perspectives, but lacks details and cultural accuracy. Cohesiveness inconsistent.	15: Some lack of accuracy in vocabulary; makes some errors and does not use variety of sentence structures.	10: Some errors in pronunciation; some unnatural flow and hesitation; use of register is inconsistent.
35–0: Addresses only some aspects of prompt. Lack of organization and cohesiveness. Inaccurate cultural information. Does not include perspectives.	10: Due to lack of accuracy in vocabulary and sentences, part of the speech is not comprehensible.	5: Labored expression frequently interferes with comprehensibility. Significant errors in pronunciation. Inconsistent use of register.

2. Text Chat

Task Completion (70%)	Language Use (20%)	Delivery (10%)
70–60: Directly addresses prompt thoroughly and appropriately with detail.	20–16: Rich variety of vocabulary. Minimal to sporadic errors in grammar and syntax.	10–8: Natural, easy flowing expression. Minimal errors in spelling, register, and style.
50–40: Directly addresses prompt, providing basic but appropriate answer.	15–11: Appropriate but limited vocabulary. Errors in grammar and syntax may occasionally interfere with comprehension.	7–6: Some unnatural flow; errors in spelling, register, and style, but they do not interfere with readability.
30–0: Addressing prompt minimally.	10–0: Insufficient, inappropriate vocabulary; limited control in grammar and syntax interfere with comprehension.	5–0: Labored, strained, or unnatural flow of expression often interferes with readability.

3. Simulated Conversation

Task Completion (60%)	Language Use (25%)	Delivery (15%)
60–48: Directly addresses prompt and provides a thorough and appropriate response, including detail.	25–20: Rich variety of vocabulary and idioms. Good use of grammar and syntax with minimal errors.	15–13: Natural flow, minimal errors in pronunciation, consistent use of register.
47–36: Addresses prompt and provides basic but appropriate response.	19–15: Appropriate but limited vocabulary and idioms with some errors in grammar and syntax; occasionally interferes with comprehension.	12–9: Some errors in pronunciation; some unnatural flow and hesitation; use of register is inconsistent.
35–0: Addresses prompt but provides incomplete answer.	14–0: Insufficient and inappropriate vocabulary and idioms; errors in grammar and syntax often impedes comprehension.	8–0: Labored expression frequently interferes with comprehensibility. Significant errors in pronunciation. Inconsistent use of register.

4. E-mail Message

Task Completion (70%)	Language Use (20%)	Delivery (10%)
70–60: Directly addresses prompt thoroughly and appropriately with detail.	20–16: Rich variety of vocabulary. Minimal to sporadic errors in grammar and syntax.	10–8: Natural, easy flowing expression. Minimal errors in spelling, register, and style.
50–40: Directly addresses prompt, providing basic but appropriate answer.	15–11: Appropriate but limited vocabulary. Errors in grammar and syntax may occasionally interfere with comprehension.	7–6: Some unnatural flow; errors in spelling, register, and style; but they do not interfere with readability.
30–0: Addressing prompt minimally.	10–0: Insufficient, inappropriate vocabulary; limited control in grammar and syntax interfere with comprehension.	5–0: Labored, strained, or unnatural flow of expression often interferes with readability.

Vocabulary	Grammar	Kanji
Communication with the Host Family: 自己紹介、準備、趣味、特技、クラブ活動、習い事、町の様子、気候、気温、世話になる、滞在、土産、気に入る、役に立つ、珍しい		味(趣味)、特(特技)、習(習い事)、活(活動、部活)、温(気温)、世(世話)
Cultural Practice "Gift Giving": お中元、お歳暮、贈答品、お見舞、お礼、年始、土産、手みやげ、祝い事、お祝い、贈り物、結婚式、葬式、還暦	• Expression of customs: 〜ことにしている、〜ことになっている	元(中元)、歳(歳暮)、始(年始)、末(年末)、贈(贈り物、贈答品)、産(土産)、祝(祝い事、祝日)
U.S.–Japan Comparison on Gift Giving (Reading): 合理性、習慣、違い、交換、結婚祝い、出産祝い、お返し、感謝、包装、新婚、妊婦、親戚、商品、仕組み、むだ Welcomed Gifts (Reading): 何気ない、別れを惜しむ、絆、イメージ、好み、喜ぶ、喜ばれる、ピッタリ、相手 Valentine's Day (Reading): 親愛の情、女性、男性、期待、事情、義理、調査、上司、お菓子、都合、工夫、−を問わず	• Expression of opinion: 〜ことだと思う • Expression of observation: 〜ようだ • 〜ながら • 名詞節：何気なく • 贈ってくれたプレゼント • Even though: 〜ても • 〜において • 〜そうだ • 〜ようになる	合(合理性)、違(違い)、結、婚(結婚)、商、品(商品)、仕、組(仕組み)、包(包装) 好(好み)、相、手(相手) 義(義理)、都(都合)、工(工夫)、夫
Conversation with host family members (giving/presenting gifts):	• Honorifics • Expressions of giving and receiving	
E-mail message of appreciation:	• Honorifics • Expression of gratitude and appreciation: 　〜てくださって、有難うございました 　〜ていただいたことに心から感謝しています	

Unit Plan Overview

Students will "experience" what they are expected to do before, during, and after a home stay with a Japanese family. In this process, they will learn what to do in gift-giving situations and think about the importance of gift giving and returning favors in Japanese society.

Day 1:

Objectives

Students will have a basic understanding of the importance and background of gift giving. They will have basic idea as to how to find out about their possible gifts to bring to their host families in Japan.

Expected Outcome

Students will be able to express their ideas about home stay preparation and ask appropriate questions to the host family.

Activities	Assessment	Time	Next Activity
1. Home stay preparation discussion/ brainstorming (whole class)	Participation checked	15–20 min.	Day #2 Chat, e-mail
2–3. Gifts and questions (for host) discussion Make list of questions	Small group discussion Participation checked List checked	20–25 min. 10 min.	Day #2 Chat, e-mail
4. Reading on gift giving in Japan and the United States Discussion and Q&A on the reading (whole class)	Check students' understanding (quiz) Participation checked	20–25 min. 10 min.	Assignment on Gift Giving Practice
5. Assignment to be explained	Gift giving occasions in Japan—research and questionnaire	10 min.	

Lesson Activities

1. (In Japanese) The teacher will introduce the upcoming home stay (early to mid June for two weeks) and ask students to brainstorm and list several important elements in their preparation.
   [Possible questions for the students]
   a. ホームステイをするに当たって、どんな準備をしなければならないか。（買い物、ホストファミリーとの連絡、その他）
   b. 出発前に何を調べた方がいいか。（2週間過ごす町について、気候や気温について、その他）

Formative Assessment

Student's participation in Japanese is checked throughout the brainstorming.

2. (In Japanese) For the following "model family," students will discuss (brainstorm) in small groups (groups of four) what kind of gifts would be welcomed:

   両親 (山本建次、友子)、姉 (さやか、２０歳、大学生)、弟 (健、１４歳、中二)、ホストシスター (はるか、１７歳、高二)

   Students will express their ideas by saying, "We should bring—for the host father because—" in Japanese.

Teacher will sit in the discussion for two to three minutes each to check the student's participation in Japanese.

3. (In Japanese) Students will also discuss in small groups what kind of questions they could ask this host family to find out their preference, likes, and hobbies, so that they can determine appropriate gifts. As a group, they will make a written list of questions in Japanese and submit it at the end of the discussion.

4. Students will read the following essay and answer comprehension questions. A discussion in Japanese on the author's views will be done afterwards.

ブログより

Let's read a comment about gift giving written by a Japanese mother whose daughter lives in the United States.

アメリカ人の合理性　−贈り物について by　吉田友美

(http://www.japanese-nihongo.com/experiences/16morishita.html)

娘がアメリカのシカゴに住むようになって 10 年になります。アメリカの大学に行きたいと言って、高校を出てすぐシカゴに行きましたが、数年前、香港育ちの方と結婚して、1歳になる男の子がいます。私は1年に1回、娘のところへ遊びに行きますが、娘一家はアメリカ・中国・日本の良さを取り入れて生活しており、ほほえましいかぎりです。

アメリカは広いので、地域によって色々な生活習慣があるようですが、娘一家を見ていて気づいたこと日本との違い、特に贈り物について書いてみます。日本とアメリカの大きな違いは、物事を合理的にとらえていることでしょう。

アメリカで贈り物というと、クリスマスや誕生日に、家族や親しい友人などに少し高い物を贈ることはあるようですが、日本のお中元・お歳暮のようなギフト交換の習慣はありません。

また、日本では結婚祝いや出産祝いをいただくと、お返しをする習慣になっていますが、アメリカでは、贈り物をもらっても、お返しをしなくてもいいのです。次にその人の順番が回ってきたときに、ギフトをわたせばいいという考えです。

ただし、贈り物をいただいたときは、「サンキューカード」をすぐ送って、感謝の気持ちを相手に伝えます。お店では色々な種類のカードを売っていて、「義理の娘 (嫁) へ」とか、「孫からおじいちゃんへ」などというカードも見ました。

ギフトの包装ですが、日本ではお店できれいにしてくれますよね。でも、アメリカでは、気に入った包装紙やリボンを買ってきて、自分でギフトを包みます。クリスマスのシーズンなど、モールや店先にラッピング専用カウンターが置かれることもありますが。

それから、娘がシカゴで出産した時に分かりましたが、結婚祝い・出産祝いなどに、「レジストリー」というサービスがよく使われます。まず新婚さんや妊婦さんが、デパートや専門店で、お祝いにもらいたい商品をいくつも選んでおきます。それから手紙 (カード) やEメールなどで、「〇〇デパートでレジストリーしました」と友人・親戚に知らせます。その知らせを受けた人は、そのお店に行ったり、ウェブサイトを見て、リストにのっている商品の中から、お祝いの品として買う仕組みなのです。こうすることによって、何を贈ろうかと悩むこともなくなり、むだな物のやり取りを少なくできます。大変合理的なシステムだと思います。

What are the differences in gift giving that the writer points out?

Give two examples of each (Japan and the United States).

Point out one positive aspect that the writer says about the American way of gift giving.

5. (Homework Assignment) Students will research Japanese cultural background of gift giving, return of favors, etc., by looking up on various gift-giving occasions. They may look at Web sites in English.

Student A: バレンタインデーについて

Student B: お歳暮、お中元について

Student C: 結婚などの特別な機会について

Student D: 旅行の土産について

Student E: 訪問時の手土産について　その他

General questions to be answered by their Internet research:

    a. Brief explanation of the "uniqueness" of the gift-giving occasion and how it is different if there is an equivalent occasion in the United States.

    b. When the occasion is observed

    c. How the occasion was originated (if applicable)

    d. Who was involved?

    e. How significant it is—if it is a traditional custom, how widely is it still followed?

Assessment

Students will submit their answers to the above questions (in English). Students will also present the summary of their Internet research in Japanese, based on the above answers on Day 2.

Day 2

Objectives

Students will have more concrete, specific ideas on their possible gifts for their host families by asking them (host families) questions.

Expected Outcome

Students will be able to ask specific written questions to their host family to get to know hobbies, activities, preferences, etc., through interpersonal communication using IM (chat) with a host sibling and e-mails with the host family.

Lesson Activities

Activities	Assessment	Time	Next Activity
1. Reading about the gifts that were appreciated	Quiz (comprehension of the main points)	15–20 min.	Day#2 Discussion on gifts
Discussion on the reading	Participation checked	10 min.	
2. Write e-mail message to the host family	Presentational writing	10 min.	Discussion on gifts
3. Simulated chat	Interpersonal writing	15 min.	Discussion on gifts
4. Discussion on gifts (small groups)	Participation checked	10–15 min.	
5. Phone conversation	Interpersonal speaking	10 min.	Simulated phone conversation

    1. Students will read the following blog from the gift-giving-related Web sites and answer comprehension questions. A short discussion in Japanese on the content will be added afterwards.

贈って「喜ばれた」ギフト、贈られて「嬉しかった」ギフト
贈られたもの： カーネーションの花束

わが家にホームステイしていた、ニュージーランドの留学生のイザベルが、贈ってくれたプレゼントは、かわいらしい花束でした。実は、その日は母の日だったんです。ブーケには、一生けんめい日本語で書いたメッセージもそえられていました。

贈ったもの： 箸と箸箱

ホームステイが終わって帰国する前日のことです。別れを惜しみながらイザベルに贈ったのが、彼女がいつも使っていた、お気に入りの箸と箸箱でした。国に帰ってからもずっと、使うたびに私たち家族を思い出します、と言って喜んでくれました。

What made the recipients appreciate the gifts?

贈ったもの：花びん
私は、贈り物をする時、相手のしゅみや部屋のインテリアを考えながらギフトを選びます。ある時、お花が大好きなおばあちゃんに、青いガラスの花びんをプレゼントしました。花を育てるのが大好きな夫の祖母。家の中にも小さな庭にも、一年中花があふれているのです。花びんはそんな彼女にピッタリのプレゼントでした。青は彼女の好きな色。花びんの形やデザインも好みに合うもので、とても喜ばれました。

What is the relationship between the giver and the recipient?

Why did the giver choose a flower vase as a gift?

贈られたもの：あじさいの花

結婚したころは、せっかく贈ってくれても、私の好みと合わないプレゼントが多かった夫。そんな夫が、今年の誕生日に、花好きの私が特に好きな、あじさいをくれました。知らないうちに私の好みを覚えてくれたのでしょうか。いつか、あじさいの花を街で見かけたときに「あじさいを見ると日本を思い出すんだよね」という、私の何気ない一言を覚えていてくれたのかもしれません。私の好みを学んでくれた夫の気持ちに感謝しています。

Does the recipient live in Japan now? How can you tell?

What is the change that occurred in the giver's choice of gifts?

Discussion Questions (example):

a. What made the recipients appreciate the gifts (in the reading passages above)?
b. Have you had similar experiences? What made you appreciate the gifts? What were the occasions?
c. What do you do when you think of special gifts for your close friends or family members? Have your gifts been appreciated and why?

2. Based on the brainstorming and discussions they had the day before, students will write the initial e-mail message to their host families, introducing themselves and asking questions about members of the family. They will use the model family whose names have been given. Students will write their message within 15 minutes. Their message must include the following:

a. Introduction of themselves that gives sufficient and appropriate information about themselves and brief information on their families. Their information consists of their personal information (hobbies, likes and dislikes, etc.), school background (subjects they study and

extracurricular activities that they are involved with), and activities they enjoy with friends outside school (on weekends), etc.

b. Questions that will elicit some information about their host families so that they will be able to decide on gifts.

c. Appropriate beginning, body, and ending of the message.

Assessment: Presentational Communication—Writing

3. Simulated Chat:

The teacher will project on the screen or show on the computer desktop the message from the host sister Haruka (in response to their e-mail message). There should be a total of 10 turns. Students will respond to each of her messages either by handwriting (120 seconds) or typing on the screen (90 seconds). The student's responses will be evaluated.

Assessment: Interpersonal Communication—Writing

Possible message from Haruka using IM in response to the e-mail message.

a. Greetings (1 turn)—Haruka sending thanks for the message received.

b. Haruka asking specific questions about the student's school, hobbies, etc. (2–3 turns)

c. Question: 何か私のことについて、聞きたいことがありますか?

d. Question: 私の両親のことはどうでしょう?どんな質問がありますか?

e. Question: 姉がいますが、どんなことが知りたいですか?

f. Question: 中二の弟のことは、どうでしょうか?

g. Question: 私たちが住んでいる千葉市について、何か聞きたいことがありますか?

4. The teacher will project the model content of the host family on the screen:

山本家の情報:

両親: 　父–電気会社で開発の仕事をする会社員、趣味はテニス。母–中学の教師、映画をよく見る。

姉: 　　千葉大学2年生、英語専攻、歌が好きで、特にアメリカの映画音楽に興味がある。

はるか:千葉高校2年生、大学で美術を専攻したい。絵が好き。

弟: 　　千葉中学3年生。来年受験なので忙しい。アメリカのフットボールが好き。ラグビー部で活躍している。野球を見るのも好き。

Based on the above information, students will discuss in small groups what kind of souvenirs/gifts they should consider.

5. Simulated conversation with a Japanese exchange student: Students will have a simulated phone conversation with a Japanese exchange student in an effort to seek his/her advice on a gift for the whole family. Students will listen to "Misaki's" part and record their response.

Student: (You called on the exchange student Misaki's cell phone. Greet, identify yourself.)

Misaki: もしもし、どうしたの？

Student: (Explain the reason why you called.)

Misaki: ふうん、大変ね。いくらぐらいのプレゼントを買うつもり？

Student: (Respond.)

Misaki: 何かアメリカらしいもの、日本に無いものがいいと思うけど。家族の趣味とか、知ってる？

Student: (Respond, based on the simulated chat with the host sibling.)

Misaki: じゃあ、家族に使ってもらえるものがいいわね。日本の家は狭いから、あまり大きいものはよくないと思う。小さくて、使ってもらえるものが喜ばれるよ、きっと。

Student: (Respond, thank her for her advice, and conclude the conversation.)

Misaki: お役に立てなくてごめんね。じゃね、また明日、学校で。

Student: (Last turn)

Day 3

Objectives

Students will have a better and more precise idea about traditional and modern gift-giving occasions in Japan that people practice by sharing basic information on various gift-giving occasions based on their findings. They will know what to say when they give gifts to their host family members. They will review honorifics to be used for gift-giving situations.

Expected Outcome

Students will be able to talk about two Japanese gift-giving occasions (traditional and modern) in Japanese. They will be able to use appropriate expressions when giving gifts to Japanese people using necessary honorific expressions.

Activities	Assessment	Time	Next Activity
1. Questionnaire	Presentational writing	10 min.	Presentation on gift-giving practice
2.Reading on Valentine's Day in Japan Discussion on Valentine's Day in Japan (small group)	Quiz (comprehension) Check participation	15–20 min. 10–15 min.	Presentation on gift-giving practice
3. Two-minute speech on Japanese gift-giving practice	Presentational Speaking (Recorded)	10–15 min.— preparation 5–10 min.	Final assessment on gift-giving practice in Japan
4.Expressions associated with gift giving and receiving (skit) (pair work)	Skit script and presentation	15–20 min.	Simulated gift-giving conversation

Activities

1. (This activity may be done prior to this thematic unit so that the students may be able to use the response as the resource for their discussion and presentation.) Students will make a short questionnaire in Japanese on their gift-giving research topic and send it to at least three students in their sister school in Japan. Example questions are:

   a. Do you (or your parents) value and follow [gift-giving occasion]?

   b. What are the usual (typical) gift item(s)?

   c. To whom do you (or your parents) give gifts and why?

   After the teacher checks the questions <formative assessment>, the students will e-mail it to Japanese students in their sister school(s). (This activity could be done as a preliminary activity prior to the unit so that they can obtain the Japanese students' response before the unit begins.)

2. Reading on Japanese Valentine's Day

   Let's read the following about Valentine's Day in Japan:

海外から見る日本のバレンタインデー

今日、2月14日はバレンタインデー。ギフトを贈る相手に、愛情を表わすこの日、多くの女性が、男性からの花や贈り物、チョコレートなどのプレゼントを期待している。

いや、ちょっと事情が違う国がある。日本だ。日本では、この日、女性がボーイフレンドだけでなく、会社の仲間や上司にもチョコレートをあげることになっている。日本語ではこれを「義理チョコ」、つまり義理であげるチョコレートと言う。バレンタインデーの日、女性職員から食べきれないほどのチョコレートをもらった会社の上司は、家へ持ち帰って、子供たちに与えているそうだ。

日本のバレンタインは歴史が新しい。40年ほど前、大手チョコレート会社が始めたものだ。スムーズな人間関係に贈り物が利用される日本の文化において、このイベントは一大行事になったのだ。

しかし、最近行われたアンケートによると、女性会社員の70%がこの習慣をやめたいと思っているそうだ。一方、男性のほとんどはバレンタインを好ましい習慣だと思っている。日本ではまだまだ少ないが、女性の上司がいる会社では、バレンタインデーが来ると「義理チョコ」をめぐって頭をかかえる男性部下が出てくる。

そこで、バレンタインデーの1ヶ月後である3月14日、ホワイトデーが登場した。ホワイトデーは、男性が白いお菓子、例えばマシュマロなどを女性にプレゼントする日だ。贈り物が社会的に大切な習慣である日本にふさわしく、お菓子の会社が作り出したイベントである。少なくとも女性の上司を持つ男性社員にとっては、都合がいいイベントだ。

だが、「義理」で贈り物をしなければならない毎年のイベントに、あまりお金をかけない方法を工夫している人たちもいるようだ。例えば、安いお菓子をたくさん買って会社へ持って行き、男女を問わず、皆でいっしょにお菓子を楽しむ、という人も多い。だれに「義理チョコ」、「義理マシュマロ」を贈ろうかと悩むより、合理的なギフトのやりとりが、今後、ふえていくのだろうか。

What is different about Valentine's Day in Japan?

How was Valentine's Day in Japan originally promoted?

What is one of the issues associated with Valentine's Day among company employees in Japan?

What is one of the solutions for this "costly" event?

Discussion (small group):

Raise several points that are different between Valentine's Day in Japan and in the United States.

Talk about what you do and what many people do on Valentine's Day in the United States.

Express your perspectives on Valentine's Day in the United States.

Express your perspectives on Valentine's Day in Japan. Discuss why they have Giri Chocolate and why they feel they need to bring gifts to the workplace.

3. Students will share their findings by giving each other handouts. Then they will each prepare and make a two-minute speech in Japanese on two gift-giving occasions (one traditional and one modern). One is based on their findings and the other is based on the information given to them. Depending on the number of students, several speeches, covering major gift-giving occasions, will be made during the class in front of others and the rest may be recorded.

Assessment: Presentational Speaking

Their speech should contain:

a. When the occasion is, in the opening remarks

b. Who is involved; who gives gifts to whom?

c. Why gifts are given

d. Cultural background, difference from equivalent or similar gift-giving occasions in the United States.

e. Their view/opinion in the concluding remarks

4. Honorific expressions when giving and receiving gifts: Students will work in pairs and produce a skit, either for giving gifts to a host family or when visiting a Japanese family/friends. The skit will consist of three to four turns between a student and a Japanese person either giving or receiving a gift. They will include the following expressions:

a. つまらないものですが。。。

b. お世話になりました。

c. お世話になったお礼です。

d. ――さんは＝＝が好きだと聞きましたので。気に入って頂けるとうれしいです。

e. わざわざ、どうもありがとうございました。

f. 気をつかってくださって、ありがとうございます。

After producing and practicing the skit, each pair will present their skit to the class.

Day 4: During the Home Stay

Activities	Assessment	Time	Next Activity
1. Role Play (short conversation)	Interpersonal Communication	25–30 min.	Simulated gift-giving conversation
2.Simulated Conversation #1 Simulated Conversation #2	Interpersonal Speaking	25 min. (prep time included)	Final assessment
3. Reflection—class discussion and diary writing		20 min.	

Objectives

Students will practice and learn what to say when they give gifts by being engaged in the simulated conversation situations. They will also learn the appropriate expressions to use when giving gifts (手みやげ) when they visit a Japanese family.

Expected Outcome

Students will be able to say appropriate expressions when giving gifts in various situations, such as home stay and visiting. They will also be able to say suitable words of appreciation when receiving gifts.

Activities

1. Short Conversation (Role Play) (Pair Work)

   Students will see the list of gifts for each family and decide on what they would take to whom. In pair work, one student will decide "who (a member of the host family)" and tell the other. The student will act out the simulated situations.

List of Gifts

家族のメンバー	趣味	
お父さん	テニス	テニス用シャツ
お母さん	映画	DVD
お姉さん	歌、映画音楽	映画音楽のCD
弟さん	スポーツ	フットボール
ホストシスター	美術、絵	ポスター (絵)

Example

Student A: Older sister

Student B: お姉さん、お姉さんはアメリカの映画が好きだと聞いていたので、映画音楽のCDを買ってきました。ぜひ聞いて (お聞き) 下さい。

Student A: どうもありがとう。早く聞きたいです！

2. Simulated Conversation #1: Students will be engaged in the simulated conversation with a host mother when presenting a family gift. The gift is a picture frame decorated with various American sports items such as football, basketball, and baseball. Your family photo is in it. The student's response will be recorded:

You are about to give a family gift to the host mother.

Student: (Initiate the conversation)

Host mother: まあ、何かしら。

Student: (You are giving a gift. Use appropriate gift giving expression here.)

Host mother: そんなに気をつかわなくてもよかったのに。じゃ、開けさせてもらうわね。――あら、すてきな写真立て。あなたの家族の写真も入っているのね。

Student: (Make comments about the photo frame and the photo in it.)

Host mother: 本当に有り難う。ずっと大切にするわ。これを見れば、いつもあなたのことを思い出せるし！

Student: (Thank the host mother for taking care of you.)

---

3. Simulated Conversation #2

> Students will have a simulated conversation with one more member of the family.
>
> Example: With younger brother Ken. The gift is a football.
>
> You are about to give your host brother, Ken, a football as a personal gift.
>
> Student: (Initiate the conversation.)
>
> Ken: うん、何?
>
> Student: (You are giving a gift. Use an appropriate gift-giving expression here.)
>
> Ken: へえ、開けてもいい?わあ、フットボールだ!僕、前からほしかったんだ!どうもありがとう!さっそく使うよ。
>
> Student: (Make comments about the football.)
>
> Ken: 大切にするね。本当に有り難う!
>
> Student: (Conclude the conversation.)

4. Reflection

    Students will discuss what they learned in this unit, what was easy and difficult, and what they thought about various gift-giving occasions in Japan. Then they will write a self-reflection diary in Japanese focusing on what they learned in this unit so far and make comments as to the actual application to the home stay experience, particularly if they are planning on spending some time in Japan during the summer, home staying.

Day 5: After Returning Home

Objectives

Students will learn the cultural background of returning favors (gifts) and how to express their appreciation to their host families in their e-mail message for letting them home stay and giving thoughtful gifts.

Expected Outcome

Students will be able to write a thank you e-mail message to the host family with appropriate expression of appreciation and will be able to include memorable events in the message.

Activities	Assessment	Time	Next Activity
1. Reading e-mail message	Quiz (comprehension)	10 min.	E-mail message
2. Reading host sister's blog	Quiz (comprehension)	15 min.	E-mail message
3. Discussion on returning favor (whole class)	Check participation	10 min.	
4. Discuss and prepare for the e-mail message	Check participation	20–25 min.	E-mail message
5. Write e-mail message to the host family, expressing appreciation	Presentational Writing	20 min	Final assessment

Activities

1. Students will read the e-mail message written by a host mother recalling several incidents during the home stay. They will answer comprehension questions.

ホストマザーからのメール：

ジョニーさん、お元気ですか。

あなたが帰ってしまってから、家にぽっかりあなが空いたようで、とてもさびしく思っています。あなたがいらした1週間、本当に短かったけれど、私たち山本家では、楽しい思い出がたくさんできて、お礼を言わなければならないのは私たちの方ではないかと思っていますよ。

お好み焼きを作った日のこと、覚えてる？僕の方が上手です、と言って、全部焼いてくれたわよね。うちのお父さんも健も感心して、今でも話題になります。

デパートに買い物に行ったときも本当に面白かったわ。店員にどんどん日本語で話そうとしていたこと、思い出します。あの時は笑ってしまったけど、あなたはいつも一生けんめい日本語を使おうとしていました。これからも日本語の勉強、本当にがんばってほしい。いつか日本で仕事をしてほしいわ。

色々なプレゼントもありがとう。フットボールや野球のバットがついた写真立ては、居間の棚の上にかざってあります。毎日ご家族の写真を見ながら、あなたのことを考えていますよ。健にくださったフットボールですが、さっそく学校へ持って行って、ラグビー部の仲間たちとフットボールのまねごとをしたようよ。ジョニーさんといっしょにフットボールしたかったのに、と残念がっています。来年の夏休みも、ぜひ我が家に遊びに来てね。

時間ができたらメール下さい。楽しみに待っています。

友子より

Questions:

a. What impressed the host father and brother while Johnny was there?
b. What did the host brother do with the gift Johnny gave him?
c. What was the host mother's comment about the incident at the department store?

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2. Students will read the blog written by host sister Haruka about the family gift and how the last day was, etc. They will answer comprehension questions.

はるなのブログページ

７月５日

短期留学生としてうちに泊まっていたジョニー君が、今日帰国した。とってもさびしい！たったの一週間だったのに、彼はしっかり家族の一員になった。明るくて、おもしろくて、口を開けば冗談ばかり言ってみんなを笑わせていた。まるでコメディアンだ。クラスでもあっという間に人気者になったし、みんな、ホストの私をうらやましがっていた。ははは！うちに来る前からメールやチャットをしていたが、ちゃんとみんなの趣味が分かっていて、私にくれたプレゼントは、大好きなアメリカの画家、トマス・エイキンズのポスターだった。部屋に飾ってあるけれど、いつ見てもいい。母には"In Her Shoes"　という映画のDVD. 男の子なのに、ちゃんと女性が好きそうな映画を選んでくれた。この映画、母と二人で見て大感激。すごくよかった。彼は本当に人の気持ちがわかる若者なんだと思う。これからもずっと仲良くしたいものだ！

ところで、最後の日に彼からプレゼントをもらった後、我が家からのお土産として、ジョニーにじんべいをプレゼント、ついでに彼の家にかざってもらおうと、浮世絵のプリントをあげたら、彼はとっても困ったような顔をして、「僕は山本家にお世話になりました。だから僕からプレゼントをあげました。なぜ僕にプレゼントをくれるんですか」と言っていた。日本ではこういう時、ホストからも気持ちを込めてプレゼントをあげるのがふつうよ、と説明し、プレゼントをもらったら「お返し」をする習慣があることなども話したら、少し分かってくれたようだったが、アメリカではあまり「お返し」をしないんだ、と思った。文化の違いはおもしろい。

Questions:

a. How does Haruka describe Johnny?
b. What impressed her about Johnny with the gifts he gave her?
c. What had to be explained to Johnny on the last day? Why?

---

3. Students will discuss why the host family wanted to give gifts even though they took care of them. They will discuss, in a real home stay situation, how they may feel. They will also bring up their research on Japanese gift-giving practice, to see if they can point out "returning the favor" in their gift-giving practices.

4. Students will discuss what to include in their thank-you letter to the host family based on the two reading materials. They will also discuss the formal language they may use for this letter.

5. As a final assessment, they will write a thank-you letter to their host family.

Assessment: Presentational Writing

Task:

a. Refer to at least two incidents mentioned in the host mother's e-mail message and host sister's blog, and make comments about them.

b. Express appreciation for hosting you and including you as a member of their family.

c. Invite the family (members) to visit you in the United States in the future. Write 300–400 characters, with a clear beginning, body, and ending. Write cohesive sentences.

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