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Welcome to the September/October 2019 issue of The Language Teacher. As we prepare for the beginning of the autumn semester in Japan, I hope you all had a chance to recharge your batteries over the summer and get caught up on your various projects.

My name is Nicole Gallagher and from this issue I have officially moved over from My Share to the Coeditor role. As many of you are already aware, Eric Shepherd Martin finished his work with TLT with the July/August issue. We want to thank him very much for his dedication and work as Coeditor! As I have been getting accustomed to my new role, I have been extremely grateful for Eric’s help and advice. I’m also thankful to the other members of the TLT staff for helping me to understand and fulfill my new responsibilities. I would also like to announce that we had to recently say goodbye to Antonija Cavcic who had to step down from the Coeditor position. We thank her very much for her hard work and time with TLT and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors. In addition, we are pleased to welcome back Theron Muller to the role of Coeditor, who previously filled the role about 10 years ago! His willingness to return, and his expertise are deeply appreciated among the TLT staff. Finally, I would also like to warmly welcome Lorraine Kipling who moved over from copyediting to the role of Coeditor of My Share.

It is my pleasure to present two very interesting articles for this issue—one Feature Article and one Readers’ Forum. Our Feature Article presents research into highly motivated high school students’ perceptions of TEAP and university entrance exams. An interview study, Diane Nagatomo and David Allen investigated student perspectives of language entrance examinations through student interviews conducted in Japanese and translated into English.

In Readers’ Forum, Davey Young discusses how language education at the postsecondary education level in Japan can provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities (SWD). He suggests ways that language educators can work to remove the stigma of disability in the classroom. In addition to the Feature Article and Readers’ Forum, do
九月十月号のThe Language Teacherへようこそ。読者の皆様は、秋学期のスタートを準備されていることと思います。夏休みにはしっかり休むことができ、様々なプロジェクトを仕上げる機会を持たれたことと思います。

私は、今月号から共同編集者になったNicole Gallagherです。以前はMy Shareを担当していました。多くの方にご存知だと思いますが、Eric Shepherd Martinは前号でTLTの仕事を終えました。共同編集者としての彼のすばらしい仕事に感謝の意を表したいと思います。私が新しい仕事に慣れてこられたのは、彼の手助けと助言の賜物です。また、私が新しい仕事を理解し、責任を果たすための手助けをしてくれている多くのTLTスタッフにもお礼を申し上げます。さらに、共同編集者の職を辞すことになったAntonija Cavicにお別れを告げます。TLTのために行った彼女の素晴らしい仕事に感謝し、彼女の将来の研鑚に幸運をお祈りします。また、共同編集者として10年ぶりに戻ってきたTheron Mullerを歓迎します。TLTスタッフはそこでてきた彼の意志や高度の専門知識を大変ありがたく思っています。最後に、校閲編集者からMy Shareの共同編集者となったLorraine Kiplingを歓迎します。

今月号の興味深い2つの論文を紹介できることを嬉しく思います。1つはFeature Article、もう1つはReaders’ Forumです。Readers’ Forumでは、Davey Youngが日本の大学教育で、いかに障がいのある学生に語学教育が合理的な学びの場を提供できるかを論議しています。語学教師によって教室にある不便さを取り除くことと提案されています。これに加えて、今月号のTLT InterviewsやMy Shareにある興味深い教材用のアイディアをご覧になってください。

終わっても、いつも懸命にTLTのために尽くされる校閲編集者、校正者、日本語編集スタッフにお礼を申し上げます。読者の皆さまが、今月号を楽しみにどうぞ。11月に名古屋で行われる45回JALT国際大会でお会いできるのを楽しみにしております。

Nicole Gallagher, TLT Coeditor

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The Language Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

A nonprofit organization

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education.

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Investing in Their Futures: Highly-motivated Students’ Perceptions of TEAP and University Entrance Exams

Diane Nagatomo
Ochanomizu University
David Allen
Ochanomizu University

This study investigates Japanese high school students’ attitudes toward English proficiency tests, specifically the Test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) and university entrance examinations. Three rounds of interviews with five highly motivated learners at a prestigious high school were held over a period of 1.5 years. The interviews focused on their beliefs about English and their study methods; their impressions of and study methods for TEAP and for other entrance exams; and their post-graduation plans. The interview data reveals students felt studying for TEAP provided an opportunity for authentic language study, which was in line with their high school study and would be useful for their futures. In contrast, they felt other entrance exams often focused on different skills and knowledge, making preparation for them both challenging and frustrating. These academically minded students found studying English merely for university entrance purposes to be demotivating, but a necessary evil to achieving their immediate goals.

English-language entrance exams will undergo huge reforms with the end of the Center Test and the introduction of four-skills tests of English by external test providers (see Saito, 2019). The primary reason for these reforms is the Center Test and in-house university entrance exams are insufficiently aligned with the national course of study, which aims to develop communicative competence in the four skills (Yoshida, 2018). The Center Test primarily assesses reading ability, although listening questions comprise a fifth of the test. Writing and speaking, essential skills for communicative competence, are not directly assessed. In-house developed university entrance exams primarily test reading and writing; few of them test listening skills, and even fewer of them test speaking (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Kikuchi, 2006). This remains the case for mainstream entrance systems for universities in Japan.

This unbalanced study for entrance exams, known as juken eigo (entrance exam English), can lead to skewed language proficiency. For instance, Allen (2017) investigated washback to the learner, which is defined as the effect of tests on learning behavior, attitudes, and outcomes. The study revealed that 190 undergraduates at a prestigious university in Tokyo had markedly higher proficiency in receptive skills compared to productive skills when assessed with the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Utilizing extensive survey and interview data, this level of skill difference was identified as almost certainly a result of preparation for the university’s entrance exam. Thus, entrance exams can have important consequences for learners’ language development.

Although learners are the most important stakeholders (Bailey, 1996), previous washback research in Japan has tended to focus on washback to the teacher. Watanabe (2004), for instance, has shown that exam washback on teaching varies according to teacher beliefs, education and academic background. Watanabe’s research highlights two washback maxims: washback is a complex phenomenon, and simply introducing a test will not necessarily change pedagogical or learning processes. Nevertheless, tests do have important consequences, and it is crucial to both plan for positive impact when designing tests and to evaluate whether the desired impact has been achieved (Saville, 2010).

With this in mind, Allen and Nagatomo (2019) began a project funded by the Eiken Foundation of Japan (henceforth referred to as Eiken) to investigate washback to the learner from the Test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP), which is one of the...
ministry-approved tests universities may select for admission purposes. TEAP is a balanced four-skills test developed by Eiken, Sophia University, and the Centre for Research into English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA) in the U.K., and is administered by Eiken. Importantly, it was designed with the specific aim of creating a positive impact on Japan’s English education system (Green, 2014). For this reason, we investigated whether TEAP generated its intended impact by researching student learning behavior and perceptions. Ours is one of a number of test validation projects conducted by independent researchers with no affiliation to Eiken (see <http://www.eiken.or.jp/teap/group/report.html>).

This article presents a new synthesis of interview data from Allen and Nagatomo (2019). We highlight prominent themes related to language testing, test preparation, and test taking (both regarding TEAP and other entrance exams). Our aim is to give voice to the learners, those with the most to lose or gain, so that they may be heard by language educators in Japan.

Method
Five highly-motivated second-year students from our larger study (N=46) at an academically prestigious all-female high school volunteered to be interviewed three times over an 18-month period. This longitudinal design, which allowed us to gain deeper insight into learners’ beliefs surrounding English language testing, was implemented relatively straightforwardly because the school was affiliated with our university. Once ethical approval was obtained, the interviews were conducted in Japanese by a research assistant. The first interview, which took place prior to two brief study sessions in which the TEAP test was introduced, occurred when students were in their second year. The second interview took place after taking the TEAP test eight months later, during the summer of their third year. A final interview was held around the time of graduation, when students’ post-graduation plans had been finalized. A content analysis was performed immediately after each interview and themes that identified students’ beliefs toward language study and tests were identified. We acknowledge that our interpretation of the interview data may be influenced by our knowledge of the educational context in which the participants study as well as by information obtained by interviewing their teacher as part of our larger study.

Findings and Discussion
The first interview focused on participants’ beliefs and methods regarding English language study. All believed English proficiency would benefit their academic and professional futures. They envisioned themselves as becoming proficient speakers of English and they exposed themselves to authentic English through studying abroad, attending conversation schools, following foreign celebrity websites, messaging friends, listening to music, and reading books. Particularly, they were fully cognizant that English could be socially and financially rewarding. Classes at their high school, at least as second graders, focused on four-skill proficiency. Students learned how to infer meaning from texts and how to express oral and written opinions. Hoping to enter high-level universities, they believed focusing on practical and communicative aspects of English covered in school was insufficient. Therefore, they also attended cram schools where they studied previous entrance exam questions, learned complicated grammatical patterns, memorized vocabulary, translated between English and Japanese, and took practice tests. Cram school was viewed as a necessary evil, as illustrated by Megumi’s1 comment below:

I go to cram school to compensate for my learning. It’s hard, but I often feel studying at cram school is good. To understand the structure of English sentences, Japanese is very important, but I don’t want to do that very much. At school we don’t do Japanese translation very much, but as a normal entrance examinee, I should study like that as study for the entrance exam.

Megumi continued saying how frustrating this was:

I don’t think we can use juken eigo for communication and I sometimes feel it is not very meaningful, translating the sentences into Japanese, for instance . . . and I feel demotivated . . . Even if we remember vocabulary in English and Japanese, when we use it, we don’t think about whether or not ‘to’ or ‘ing’ comes after this verb . . . . We remember a lot of complicated vocabulary with the vocabulary book, and when we look at this English word, we know the Japanese. But when we think in Japanese, this word does not come out when we speak. When I’m in that kind of situation, I feel irritated.

Another student, Kimie, attended cram school to compensate for her lack of knowledge about English, believing her grammar was “really bad” because she “doesn’t know the difference between adjectives and adverbs.” Nonetheless, she was a voracious English reader, reporting she “can read English books as [she reads] Japanese books.”

1 All names are pseudonyms and all comments have been translated from Japanese.
The second interview focused on students’ preparation methods for and impressions of the TEAP and was conducted immediately after the test. In their third year of high school, they were engaged in serious study not only with English but with other academic subjects as well. Unable to devote much time for TEAP study, they still considered it a personal challenge to do well. They purchased self-study books and took practice tests. They felt the TEAP readings and their questions were not overly difficult, so they practiced reading faster in order to complete long passages within the allotted period of time on the test. They also felt confident with TEAP’s writing component because they had practiced writing often in their high school classes. For listening and speaking, they adjusted their study methods. For example, Mari said she practiced interviewing her teacher after realizing she would have to ask questions during the test. Kimie and Megumi reported taking notes while listening in order to increase their comprehension of long texts.

Table 1 shows the students’ scores with their CEFR band equivalents in parentheses (Kaori missed the test due to illness). Despite spending little time preparing specifically for TEAP, the scores indicate very high English proficiency (B1–B2) when compared to typical Japanese high school students (A1–A2) (Negishi, Takada, & Tono, 2012).

The final interview was held after post-graduation plans had been finalized during the spring of their third year. It focused on participants’ impressions of entrance exams, and whether or not studying for TEAP had been beneficial for those examinations. As entrance exams were of extreme importance to the participants and strongly guided their study methods, the test that students took and their future plans are shown in Table 2.

With the exception of Megumi, who had gained early admission into a national university through suisen (special recommendation exam), all interviewees took multiple exams. Mari failed a suisen exam, so she took the same university’s traditional exam and passed. Noriko had gained acceptance into a private university, submitting her TEAP scores with her application, but she continued studying until she passed the examination of a national university.

Kimie and Kaori failed to gain university admission and would study for one more year.

Table 2. Exams taken and immediate future plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exams taken for admission purposes</th>
<th>What they will do after graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Megumi Center Exam</td>
<td>Go to national university to study social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mari</td>
<td>Suisen for pharmacy school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go to private university to study pharmaceutical science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noriko</td>
<td>Center Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National university exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private universities exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go to national university to study Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimie</td>
<td>Center Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National university exam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Private universities exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical school exams (private and national)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study one more year to enter medical school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaori</td>
<td>Center Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National university exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private universities exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical school exams (private and national)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study one more year to enter an information science university</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We asked if studying for and taking TEAP had helped them on other entrance exams. Overall, they noted that because each university’s test differed, they studied accordingly. The perceived usefulness of TEAP depended on if there was overlap with a particular exam. Therefore, no one believed preparing for TEAP’s speaking component was helpful because no university exams assessed English speak-
ing. However, the listening test, which was felt to be quite difficult, was noted as helpful, particularly as they found the Center Exam to be much easier in comparison. Studying for TEAP reading helped them increase their reading speed. It also helped them when entrance exams required them to infer meaning through global understanding. Not all universities had an English essay writing component, but for those that did, TEAP writing as well as their high school English classes gave them confidence.

In contrast, when in-house university exams tested *juken eigo* (entrance exam English), the participants admitted having difficulty. Noriko said some exams she had taken included lengthy readings, required fill-in-the-blank answers, and asked for Japanese explanations of English phrases. Understanding the gist was insufficient; she needed precise understanding of English vocabulary to “change words into natural Japanese.” Reordering words into sentences was tricky, and she understood what was being tested was not her ability to use English, but her knowledge of grammar. Mari reported encountering similar questions involving long passages, multiple-choice questions concerning difficult grammatical points and Japanese–English translation. In other words, when students were asked to demonstrate understanding of a reading, they were confident. However, they struggled when asked to demonstrate knowledge about English.

Kimie, with perfect scores in three out of four of the TEAP components, felt in-house entrance exam questions focused on two aspects: “details” and “overall flow.” While she was confident with those dealing with overall flow, questions focusing on details were challenging. Translation tasks requiring her to “understand the word precisely” were difficult because she was unable to recall words or form new sentences using various grammatical patterns. Thus, she said she selected easier ones, but worried whether this was a good strategy. Unable to enter any of the eight schools she had applied to (including four medical universities) she planned to spend the upcoming year studying at a cram school, where she intended to boost her vocabulary by starting “from the beginning” of an academic vocabulary book.

Several participants wondered if the main purpose of in-house entrance exams was not to determine their English ability, but to test the extent to which they had studied. Some tests seemed to examine content knowledge as well. Kaori, for example, who will study one more year to enter a science university, said, “I had to solve questions about physics which were beyond what we studied in high school and they were written entirely in English.

Some words I didn’t know, but I had to read them anyway.” Likewise, one exam Kimie had taken after being waitlisted at a medical school required her to write a Japanese essay after reading an English article. She said,

I didn’t understand it. Even the first question was about one man’s symptoms. The man’s wife died and he just stayed at home. His symptoms and situation were described and I had to explain the illness. I felt I didn’t know . . . Usually we don’t know the names of illnesses.

While there were mixed feelings considering the TEAP’s usefulness for entrance exams, the participants strongly believed studying for the TEAP raised their actual English abilities, and the skills they had acquired would serve them well in their future academic and professional lives. Importantly, they felt studying for and taking the TEAP during their ‘examination-hell’ year provided the opportunity to return to real English; all participants expressed concerns over losing communicative skills while concentrating on entrance exams. Kimie summed up their feeling: “By doing TEAP . . . I was able to maintain my English proficiency.”

Our participants seemed to agree with the notion of introducing four-skills tests for university entrance exams. Noriko felt emphasis on one aspect of English over others was detrimental: “The best way to measure English proficiency is to do everything: speaking, reading, writing and listening, with a good balance . . . . It is hard [to study everything], but I think it is fine to do all four skills.”

However, the participants believed how such skills are tested is important. For instance, Noriko took some private university exams that assessed listening but thought some students might be able to “solve those questions,” even if they did not “have any listening abilities at all.” She said studying only to answer test questions was “meaningless.”

In line with Noriko’s criticism, Kimie questioned the type of English assessed. Her comment below will resonate with those who feel there is too much distance between typical *juken eigo* and the ability to use English:

For me, English for the [in-house] exam and English for actual use are completely different. But in the society, communicating with people, talking about everyday issues in English is important. I feel so because my father works as a doctor in an international context. He told me that although people passed the internal exam because of *juken eigo*, many of them couldn’t speak at all when they visited his workplace.
Conclusion
In this paper, we have investigated how highly motivated secondary school students study English for proficiency and for examination purposes. Several key themes emerged: Firstly, focusing on test-oriented study that does not promise future rewards was demotivating. Nonetheless, participants supplemented authentic English study with juken eigo to deal with the demands of in-house entrance exams, knowing that having knowledge about English (i.e., grammatical manipulations and accurate translations) could determine their success or failure on competitive exams. Secondly, they believed studying four skills, both for exams such as TEAP and in classes, was important for their future and beneficial for their ability to use English. Finally, they identified key differences in how TEAP and in-house entrance exams assessed their English abilities.

We want to emphasize that while there are various expert and public opinions on the current entrance exam reforms, these are learner views of English learning, tests and test taking. In this time when universities must consider adopting one of a range of four-skills tests (see Koizumi, 2018), we felt it was timely to consider how English tests in Japan affect those who have the most to gain and lose: the learners. They are the ones who must prepare for and take exams, and their lives are affected most by them. They, together with their teachers, must negotiate the conflicting demands of the national curriculum and the entrance exams that they take—the outcome of which will have a tremendous impact on their lives. Yet students’ voices are rarely considered in the debate. Therefore, further longitudinal, qualitative research with learners from various academic backgrounds is essential to understand more comprehensively both their learning motivations and perceptions of English exams.

Acknowledgements
The Eiken Foundation of Japan funded the original study on which this article is based. We would also like to thank Takayuki Tsukui at the high school for his support, and our research assistant, Saki Suemori.

References


Diane Nagatomo is Professor at Ochanomizu University, Tokyo. Her research interests include teacher and student beliefs and identity, as well as materials development. Her previous publications include Identity, Gender, and Teaching English in Japan and Exploring Japanese English Teachers’ Professional Identity.

David Allen is currently Associate Professor at Ochanomizu University, Tokyo, where he teaches courses on language teaching methodology, second language acquisition and English language. He gained his PhD from the University of Nottingham, UK, in 2013. His published and ongoing research mainly focuses on language assessment and vocabulary-related issues.
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- State-of-the-art supplemental materials

**Progress from CEFR A1 to C1**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>A1</th>
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<th>A2+</th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>B1+</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>B2+</th>
<th>C1</th>
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Scan to view sample units!
Providing Reasonable Accommodations for EFL Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in Japan

Davey Young
Rikkyo University

As more and more students with disabilities (SWDs) are identified in postsecondary education in Japan, there is an increasing need for English language teachers, program administrators, and curriculum designers to create inclusive learning environments that provide reasonable accommodations for such students. This paper outlines the current landscape for SWDs in institutes of higher education in Japan, reviews approaches to systematizing support for SWDs within language departments, and outlines the challenges tertiary EFL program administrators and teachers are likely to face in providing such support. The paper concludes with a call for language educators to actively destigmatize disabilities in the classroom, as well as to continue bridging the gap between language teaching and special education through research and resource sharing.

The number of students with disabilities (SWDs) enrolled in institutes of higher education (IHEs) in Japan has been rising every year; the figure more than doubled from 14,127 in 2014 (JASSO, 2015) to 31,204 just three years later (JASSO, 2018). As currently classified by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), these disabilities are categorized as health issues/poor health, physical disabilities, mental health disabilities, developmental disabilities, hearing and speech impairments, sight impairments, and other. One cause of the recent rapid increase in the number of SWDs enrolled in Japanese IHEs is the addition of developmental disabilities to JASSO’s list of officially regarded SWDs in 2015, a designation which includes dyslexia, ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Such disabilities might previously have been categorized as other or gone unidentified. As Kondo, Takahashi, and Shirasawa (2015) contend, numerous SWDs have likely long been present in postsecondary education across Japan, and the recent documented rise is perhaps simply reflective of a general increasing social awareness of disabilities. Regardless, as more and more known SWDs are identified, these students are likely to encounter barriers in many classrooms.

In June 2013, the Japanese Diet passed the Act on the Elimination of Disability Discrimination. In accordance with this Act, all IHEs in Japan were asked to provide reasonable accommodations for their SWDs beginning April 1, 2016. The term reasonable accommodations is broadly defined in the Act, although Boeltzig-Brown (2017) notes that policymakers are currently creating regulations to aid IHEs in developing accommodations for SWDs, as well as establishing appropriate procedures for ensuring the delivery of those accommodations. However, although national and public universities are required to provide such adjustments, private IHEs are only encouraged to. A comprehensive overview of support systems for SWDs across all Japanese IHEs in 2014 revealed that most were woefully underprepared to provide reasonable accommodations by the April 2016 deadline; only 60% of IHEs were providing support for SWDs in some way, 18% had created policies and procedures to guide such support, and 10% provided a dedicated disability services department or center (Boeltzig-Brown, 2017). Acknowledging that systemic change is slow to occur in the broader educational landscape in Japan, individual EFL programs would benefit from establishing specific support services and procedures in order to ensure the needs of all students are met.

Given the interactive nature of language classrooms, language teachers are likely to find themselves at the vanguard as more and more SWDs are identified in Japanese IHEs, especially where developmental disabilities are concerned. The general lack of special education (SPED) training among
language teachers presents challenges to providing reasonable accommodations in language classrooms and curricula. Although individual differences have been widely researched within the field of second language acquisition (SLA), very little inquiry considers disability as an individual learner variable (Kormos & Smith, 2012; Kormos, 2017a). Additionally, most of the available research on accommodating SWDs has been conducted in primary or secondary ESL contexts (Kormos & Smith, 2012; Ortiz & Artiles, 2010). Fortunately, many of the recommendations of the research reviewed here can be adapted to suit tertiary EFL settings.

Providing Reasonable Accommodations in EFL Programs

Extensive faculty training, when possible, on instructional adaptations for various disabilities is a straightforward and simple way to support SWDs. A project funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Scott & Edwards, 2012) found that a combination of intensive faculty training and ongoing collaboration between teachers and administrators in two postsecondary ESL contexts in California led to an increase in the average performance of students with disclosed disabilities in the project as well as a decrease in the number of SWDs withdrawing from their language courses before the conclusion of the semester.

Regarding the K-12 context in the United States, Hamayan, Marler, Sánchez-López, and Damico (2013) proposed that schools create ECOS (ensuring a continuum of services) teams of specialists spanning the SLA and SPED fields, noting that “[t]he more professionally and personally diverse the ECOS team, the more likely it is that the team will be able to generate a variety of interventions and creative solutions” (p. 22). Such an approach requires the availability of special education experts.

Young and Schaefer (2019) described a framework modified from Ortiz and Yates (2001) used in a large-scale EFL program at a private university in Japan. Under this framework, self-identified SWDs received extra support beginning with referral, assessment, and class placement. Next, multidisciplinary teams, which share some features of Hamayan, et al.’s (2013) ECOS teams in their composition monitored each SWD’s progress and intervened as needed. Feedback from instructors suggested this framework had been successful in facilitating collaboration between stakeholders (Young & Schaefer, 2019). Grade and attendance analysis indicated that it was a successful tool for ensuring that both individual student needs and course aims were simultaneously met (Young, Schaefer, & Lesley, in press).

In many Japanese IHEs, language teachers are left to make uninformed interventions without specialized support. In such contexts, Lowe (2016a, 2016b) proposed a continuing professional development framework that designates and trains English language teaching professionals to be equivalent to a special needs coordinator – a position ubiquitous in UK schools. Under this proposed framework, consultation with students precedes internal coaching and mentoring led by the special needs coordinator equivalent, opportunities for outside support and training, and a cascading system of training and knowledge transmission. Adopting such a practice in an EFL context can circumvent the need for separate SPED experts and afford individual departments a greater degree of agency in meeting individual student needs. Short of designating and training a special needs coordinator equivalent, thoughtful teacher collaboration through an iterative cycle of inquiry can be employed by language teachers untrained in special education (Turner, Kasparek, & McLaughlin, 2018).

A final approach to note here involves relying on other students under a peer tutor model to support SWDs. Boeltzig-Brown (2017) found that roughly 10% of Japanese IHEs implemented a peer tutor system in 2010, and about 90% of these included a training program for peer tutors. Boeltzig-Brown notes, “[p]eer tutors assist in many different ways: preparing teaching materials in alternative formats; providing reading and note-taking assistance, speech-to-text transcription, and sign language interpretation; and serving as walking guides” (p. 70). One well-known example is the University of Tsukuba, which employs a robust peer tutor system that includes extensive training as regular, credit-earning classes provided by the university’s Office for Students with Disabilities (Boeltzig-Brown, 2017). With careful organization and oversight, such a system can be established and operated within individual language programs at other IHEs.

Additional Considerations

The methods provided above are by no means exhaustive, nor are they mutually exclusive. Practitioners in IHEs in Japan should adapt and create policies and procedures that best suit their own teaching context and student needs. Whatever model an IHE or department therein utilizes, the delivery of support should be systematized and subject to ongoing review. Each model or system for accommodation might work in its own context but should not be assumed effective in others.

Additionally, it is important for practitioners to educate themselves on the variety of SWDs they
might encounter in their educational setting. To this end, the World Health Organization offers a beginner’s guide to its International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, which subdivides disabilities into six general categories: physical and mobility impairments, visual disability, hearing disability, cognitive and learning disabilities (including ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder), psychological (affective) disorders, and invisible disabilities (World Health Organization, 2002).

Depending on their specific roles and responsibilities, administrators in a postsecondary EFL context can borrow from Boscadin & Lashley’s (2009) education administration leadership domains to help establish standards and ensure SWDs' needs are reasonably met. These domains describe sets of specific responsibilities with foci such as creating an effective learning environment, engaging in strategic planning, and ensuring professional values and ethics. Another set of standards by Boscardin (2009) may prove more useful for those administrators and teacher-leaders new to SPED, as each standard is sectioned into subsets of knowledge realms and discrete skills that read like a how-to guide for establishing, systematizing, and reviewing support systems for SWDs in a curriculum.

Good course design views disabilities in an interactional way that allows teachers to focus on how SWDs’ learning and class participation might be hindered by environmental or context-dependent barriers; such a view is preferable to a deficit model, which views the disability itself as the barrier (Kormos, 2017b). Curriculum designers, program administrators, and classroom teachers can ask themselves how they can remove learning barriers for all students before asking how they can meet students’ individual learning needs. Viewing curricula, lesson plans, and materials design in such a way is more preventative than corrective and reduces the need for ad hoc accommodations by providing more holistic, premeditated standards.

Persistent Challenges
Perhaps the biggest challenge regarding SWDs is identification and differentiation of invisible needs such as ADHD or dyslexia from more general language learning difficulties. Burr, et al. (2015) argued that the most effective policies and practices for identifying students with learning disabilities “should be comprehensive, systematic, and ongoing” (p. 16). However, a range of factors such as a lack of knowledge on the intersection of SLA and SPED, procedural uncertainties, and institutional inadequacies complicate the identification of SWDs in language classes (Hamayan, et al., 2013; Ortiz & Artiles, 2010). Unfortunately, there is little possibility of support for students with disabilities in IHEs in Japan unless they self-identify themselves as having a disability once enrolled, and the number of SWDs who do not self-identify remains unknown. Thus, there is significant need to have mechanisms in place to encourage self-identification and to accommodate SWDs as early as possible. Department heads should be proactive in contacting their university’s support centers to ensure that they can receive adequate information regarding specific student needs to pass on to teachers. If not provided by a designated support office or center, individual departments and programs can still put systems of identification and accommodation in place.

In postsecondary EFL programs in Japan, the need to equip language teachers with basic SPED tools is complicated by contract limits, which are common at Japanese IHEs. These limits guarantee regular staff turnover, which encumbers the accumulation of expertise and may require continual familiarization and training. This challenge can be mitigated by a cascading model of teacher-training in which senior instructors with experience teaching SWDs pass knowledge to junior instructors teaching SWDs with similar needs in their own classes. In this way, expertise is handed down rather than concentrated among a smaller group of teachers who will inevitably leave the institution.

In international workplaces, communication across stakeholders can be further problematized by intercultural differences in communicating expectations and responsibilities. These problems can be minimized through a systematized standard operating procedure with clear roles and safeguards for when communication breaks down. A particularly frustrating challenge can be gatekeeping as a result of traditional university chains of command which slows the responsiveness of service providers. It is important to be both proactive and reactive when it comes to meeting student needs; therefore, stakeholders closest to the students must draw on all available resources and never stop advocating for SWDs.

Conclusion
Much work is needed to address the myriad of known and unknown challenges in providing reasonable accommodations for SWDs in English language classes across Japanese IHEs. All tertiary EFL teachers and administrators in Japan must work together to continue dispelling the stigma surrounding disabilities as well as conduct further research and share best practices to meet the wide variety of needs present in classrooms. Teachers can educate themselves and learn how to accommodate a variety
of classroom needs as well as anticipate the presence of hidden or invisible disabilities and plan lessons accordingly. It is a virtual guarantee that every EFL teacher in Japan will have at least one SWD in their classroom at one time or another, and each is just as deserving of the best possible instruction as the next.

References


Davey Young is a Program Manager at Rikkyo University’s Center for English Discussion Class. Davey holds an MA in TESOL and has worked in various ESL and EFL contexts in the United States, China, and Japan. His current research interests include quality assurance in curriculum delivery and special education needs.
Welcome to the September/October edition of TLT Interviews! For this edition, we are happy to bring you two interviews that discuss language learning through the learners’ social constructs and personal histories. Our first interview is with Diane Larsen-Freeman, who will discuss the role that Complex Dynamic Systems Theory has in Second Language Acquisition. The second interview is with Judith O’Loughlin, who shares her knowledge on education for students who have experienced interruptions in formal education. So, without further ado, to our first interview!

Diane Larsen-Freeman is Professor Emerita and former Director of the University of Michigan’s English Language Institute. She is also Professor Emerita at the Graduate SIT Institute in Vermont and a Visiting Senior Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. Her most recent books are Complex Systems and Applied Linguistics (2008, with L. Cameron), the third edition of Techniques and Principles (2011, with M. Anderson), and the third edition of The Grammar Book: Form, Meaning, and Use for English Language Teachers (2015, with M. Celce-Murcia). She was interviewed by Bob Ashcroft.

Mr. Ashcroft has lived and worked in Poland, Germany, and Cambodia, and currently teaches International Communication at Tokai University in Sapporo. He has a master’s degree in Applied Linguistics from Birmingham University, and the Cambridge Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults. His research interests include CALL, vocabulary acquisition and corpus linguistics. You can find out more at http://www.bobashcroft.com.

An Interview with Diane Larsen-Freeman
Bob Ashcroft
Tokai University

Bob Ashcroft: How did your time teaching English in Malaysia influence your subsequent career?

Diane Larsen-Freeman: I went to Borneo to teach English to school children with the US Peace Corps in the 1960s. When I flew to Malaysia, it was only the second time I had been on an airplane! Earlier, as an undergraduate, I had majored in Psychology because I was fascinated with how people learn. But it was my time teaching in Malaysia which aroused my interest in the learning of languages, in particular. I had a great two years in Malaysia, then headed back home with a clear idea that I wanted to study language learning. Other scholars interested in second language learning at that time began a coalescence around a new field, which was subsequently called “second language acquisition.” It is this field that I have been most professionally aligned with ever since.

Could you outline Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST)?

CDST attempts to account for the emergence of novel complexity from the parts of a system as they interact dynamically with each other within a particular context. The classic example is a flock of birds. As the birds interact, a kind of flock super-organism with its own complex behavior emerges. It is the same with language. It is an emergent system which results from individuals interacting together. Twenty years ago, I was struck by James Gleick’s (1987) writing that the act of playing the game has a way of changing the rules. Gleick was not discussing linguistic rules. Nonetheless, I reasoned that when individuals “play the game,” (i.e. interact using a language meaningfully) they end up changing the rules or patterns of that language. This process applies to different configurations and to different timescales, for example, to the shared understanding of individuals in conversation, to the emergence of dialects in speech communities, or to the evolution of language over time.

How does viewing Second Language Acquisition (SLA) through the lens of CDST help?

One way is that CDST recognizes the importance of context, in contrast to a lot of SLA research that treats context as simply incidental background information. In addition, it suggests that a more appropriate name for our field is second language development instead of second language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 2015). The word “acquisition”
makes language sound like it is something ingested, that it is finite, and that there is an end point. But all language users, even native speakers, continually develop their language resources throughout their lives. Replacing “acquisition” with “development” is significant because it reflects the unboundedness of the process. Understanding that language is an ever-changing dynamic system, achieving stability, but never stasis, has important implications for teaching.

What does it mean for teachers to cultivate a CDST perspective?

Well, I think it is helpful to conceive of language as a dynamic system rather than as consisting of a set of relatively fixed rules and vocabulary lists. Because teachers naturally teach in a way that is consistent with their conceptualizations, what transpires from a relatively fixed view of language is “the inert knowledge problem.” That is, students know about language, but they cannot use it for their own purposes in communication. In order to accomplish the latter, students must engage in using the language meaningfully for them.

The second point is to underscore the systemic nature of language. A systems perspective encourages us to think relationally. For example, new language points should not be introduced to students in isolation, but instead should be framed within the language system. Introducing new points is not simply additive; it changes the learner’s system. Furthermore, a system perspective implies that there need not be a set order of presentation, contrary to the way most language textbooks present atoms of language in sequence. Indeed, research from a CDST perspective convincingly demonstrates that students chart their own developmental trajectories; each is unique and quite distinct from any instructional order.

How can a CDST viewpoint influence classroom practices?

If we want our students “to play the game,” it would be helpful to have practices that are meaningful and engaging. Moreover, they should be iterative (not repetitive), in which students get to revisit the same territory over and over again. For example, using the same activity from time to time, but changing its parameters each time will renew the learning challenge for students at the same time giving them the practice that they need (Larsen-Freeman, 2013a). I also think that we should be teaching students to take their present language resources and to adapt them, i.e., learn to mold them to changing situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2013b).

A systems perspective goes well beyond how we view language. For example, it can help with classroom dynamics. I am sure that all of your readers will have experienced a class in which a great deal of their attention is directed at a single student. I call it the sore tooth syndrome because one’s tongue always seeks out that tooth, when all the other teeth are performing as they should. It is the same in a class of students: the teacher typically devotes a lot of attention, and perhaps worry, to that one student, when the rest of the students are doing fine. If you view the classroom and the students as a system, then a different approach is warranted. For example, you do not have to tackle the problem by yourself. Perhaps you could get the other students to enlist the problematic student in a more positive way, or you might attempt to understand how factors outside of the classroom are contributing to the student’s inappropriate behavior. Importantly, a CDST relational perspective would offer that an optimal way to handle such a situation is to allow yourself to be transformed. As for complexity theory, Ricca (2012) observes that we usually recommend that teachers get to know their students in order to move them along on their learning trajectories. However, a CDST approach requires teachers to be transformed themselves as result of the mutual influence of teachers and students.

Can a systems perspective still work in an educational culture where students are typically quite passive such as in Japan?

Absolutely. All teaching takes place within a context, which, as I said earlier, is not simply a backdrop, but an integral part of a system. In Japan, the context is such that it can be culturally appropriate for students to be silent as a sign of deference to the teacher’s authority. Teachers have to be sensitive to that context. The student, the learning process, and the context are inseparable. So, if you understand the classroom as a system, and you understand the cultural background as part of that system, then you can work within it. Indeed you can work with it to change the dynamics and to get the students to take on a more active role, if that is what you think will develop their capacities. That is exactly what effective teachers do, but they need to allow themselves to be transformed as well, not simply to impose their own expectations. After all, they, too are an integral part of the system.

How is the relationship between a student and teacher reciprocal? What are the implications for teaching practice?
People naturally adapt to each other in social situations, either converging or diverging. In CDST, the mutuality is acknowledged in the term “co-adaptation,” just as you and I are doing now. Teachers, too, have to co-adapt with their students. This is the basis for everything which follows. That is why I still find the first day of teaching a class quite stressful. The relationship-building aspect has to be genuine; students will know if a teacher is feigning interest. If you do not build a converging relationship with your students, then your effectiveness will be more limited. You don’t have to be best friends, but you do have to establish a relationship of mutual trust and respect with your students.

What would you say to teachers who feel that they are leading their students to water, but that their students are refusing to drink?

Gert Biesta (2007) wrote that research and theory can tell you what has worked, but not what works. Ultimately, it is the teacher’s present responsibility, using all the resources of the system, to find a way. As the well-known language teaching methodologist Caleb Gattegno always said, “It is the students’ job to work on the language, and it is the teachers’ job to work on the students.” You have to find something which engages students. Maybe they can write, or use a computer, or do a project outside class. By trial and error, maybe a topic that interests them can be identified, or reinforcing their agency (Larsen-Freeman, 2019); maybe they are given an assignment to find one. Also, you have to think relationally, rather than in terms of individuals. Maybe a student can find a classmate with whom they can work well together. The key to motivating your students might be different for each one, and that makes it difficult, but that is your job as a teacher. Teaching is not easy but can be very rewarding.

According to CDST, the journey to fluency in a second language is unique to each individual. What are the implications for teachers?

Teachers have known for years that each student is unique. The average does not characterize any individual student; means are simply statistical measures of a group. Because each student’s journey is unique, the teacher’s role is to help students relate to their learning and to make their own connections. Although the path of language emergence is different for each student, it occurs firmly within a social context as it comes about through interaction with others. I have always said that the role of teacher is as a manager of learning. There is a lot of talk about learner-centeredness, but I believe we should talk in terms of learning-centeredness. Of course, effective teachers focus on their students, finding ways to motivate them, but this is ultimately in the service of learning, which is our quest, after all.

Thank you very much for an enlightening interview!

My pleasure, Bob! There is so much more about CDST that interests me. In fact, as I have written recently, its lessons continue (Larsen-Freeman, 2017) and have transformed the way that I think.

References


To the second interview! For this interview, we bring you a discussion with Judith O’Loughlin. Judith O’Loughlin is an independent education consultant and author with 25 years of experience as an ESL and special education teacher. Her areas of expertise mainly lie in teaching K-12, adult and graduate levels in the United States. She recently published a book titled “Students with Interrupted Formal Education: Bridging Where They Are and What They Need” and gave a plenary presentation at the JALT International Conference, 2018. She was interviewed by Frazer Smith, an adjunct lecturer based in the Tokai area. His research interests include language learning motivation, multilingual identities, and ICT.
An Interview with Judith O’Loughlin
Frazer Smith

Frazer Smith: Judith, thank you for this interview. To begin, how did you first get into teaching?

Judith O’Loughlin: Actually, it began in high school. I was thinking of a very safe career and becoming a secretary. I happened to be home, as a sophomore, recovering from some surgery that I needed. One of the teachers came over to the house, talked to my parents and said, “She shouldn’t be a secretary. She needs to do something more.”

So, I decided to become an English teacher and pursued it as an undergraduate and became a high school and middle school English teacher. Along the way, I got married and had two young children. After two years of maternity leave, I couldn’t go back to my job because the position had moved to another school, which logistically wasn’t going to work.

So, after staying home for about three years, I went to visit an evening school for the foreign language students and met the director. He said someone had just quit and asked if I would consider becoming an ESL teacher in the building. I went home that night and thought my life had flipped 180 degrees. So, long story short, I started somewhere else and ended up here and never regretted it.

You recently completed a book focusing on students with interrupted formal education (Custodio & O’Loughlin, 2017). Could you tell us a little more about this and some of the causes?

There is a big range of causes. When you watch the news and see what’s happening in the United States, you see who will become the future generation of students with interrupted formal educations. There are people who are coming to America or hoping to get into America not only because of poverty, but also because of actual threats to their lives. They’ve come, just like earlier generations, including my grandparents, for a better life or for economic reasons. My grandmother, for example, never learned to read and write in her native language. She spoke Turkish, and she spoke Latino, a form of Spanish, but never learned to read or write in any language.

So, the reasons for new immigrants to leave their countries are varied, but most of them revolve around poverty. They’re at the point where they can’t feed themselves, and so they’re coming to the United States to save their lives. They’re coming also with their children who are being threatened by gangs. And so, when you see on TV these caravans, you see mostly mothers and children trying to protect their children, and many of these children have been in and out of school. When they go back to school, there’s just such a big gap in what they understand and can learn. I guess that’s part of what got me interested in the topic of resilience. Not only for that generation, but for the kids that I taught who had normal, consistent education in their native country and who came here and just sort of gave up on learning English and becoming bilingual. So, it’s a wide variety of stories that produce the interrupted formal education issue.

What lead you to write about this topic in the initial stages?

My colleague, Brenda Custodio, with whom I wrote the book, worked in a school in Columbus, Ohio, that brought in many of these students. The school helped them with specialised instruction and support from teachers that had been trained to work with them—not the typical training that I had gotten. I don’t think there’s any training at a university level right now, and I could be wrong, for students with interrupted formal education. We do learn about newcomers and how to build language, but that traditional way doesn’t always work because if they have no number sense, don’t know how to calculate, don’t understand an alphabet, and don’t know how to read their native language, you have to start at a very, very low level. Also, it’s kind of a spiral; you move forward and then you move back. Also, neither of us found any intake document that’s consistent throughout the United States, for example, there is no complete data on who they are. So, we’re kind of working in a blind area, where you work with a student and figure out what his or her needs are. There are some newcomer schools around the country that have been looked at. Marguerite Lukes (Lukes, 2015), in New York City, has written about them. Debbie Short and Beverly Boyson (Boyson & Short, 2004) investigated schools that had not only newcomers but these kids that had limited education in their first language.

Could you tell us more about your approach to building resilience?

The first thing I looked at was something by Edith Grotberg (Grotberg, 2003), who had done some work on building resilience in the nineties and called it the “I Have, I Am” model. We looked at aspects of it. For instance, the learner understanding who he or she is—learners that have an idea of who they are and what they can do—and that was the “I
Am” and “I Have.” What a learner can do is partially “Can Do” and “What I Have” as the resources they can turn to when they need them. She did a lot of research on these ideas and wrote this model up. And then bouncing off this, a number of psychologists have worked on the idea of resilience— the idea of having learners know what resources they have within themselves and around them in the world that they can turn to for help. Resilience as a mindset—moving from trauma to being resilient—there’s been a lot of writing on it, but nothing that synthesizes it all together. It’s in little modules that haven’t been brought together. Edutopia (Lucas, 2018), which is a website that George Lucas created, has some things about actually building resilient teachers.

George Lucas?

Yeah, the Star Wars guy! He started this thing called Edutopia about five or six years ago. He started a magazine with his money that anyone can subscribe to, and just the other day, there was a whole thing about teachers needing to be resilient, as well.

How do you think such challenges compare to children from minority backgrounds in Japan?

I think possibly the issue is different, but it also has similarities. Different in the sense that they’ve had more consistent education than SIF (students with interrupted formal education) students in the United States. Their difference is the “Who I Am” in the sense of “I don’t fit. I don’t fit the typical Japanese culture, but I’m a conglomerate or a mixture of multiple cultures.” So, it puts a real burden and also a challenge and responsibility on the teacher to understand what they bring to this and how their diversity is an asset, not a detriment. It’s difficult in a culture that has a lot of uniformity. You know, an interesting story, and I’ll tell it really quickly. I had a little girl named Akiko in the United States, and she had red hair naturally, like a chestnut mare. We had a number of Japanese students at my school in New Jersey in the nineties, and Akiko kept coming up to me saying, “I don’t fit with the other Japanese, and I don’t fit in America.” And I said, “But you’re just wonderful, you’re a good student and you’re beautiful and you work hard and people like you.” She responded, “But I’m not really Japanese, I have red hair.” And I think that characterizes the challenge of it. You know, she didn’t fit and how does she get to fit? I think that I worked really hard at it, but I think that she had a really hard time. Her parents told her she was beautiful, she was special because of her chestnut hair, she was smart, and she worked hard, but it’s a big challenge, definitely. I don’t know how it can be overcome, and listening to Diane [Larsen-Freeman], too. The idea that diversity is an asset and understanding the importance of diversity. In the United States particularly, we’re really fighting this battle as teachers against this mindset that only looks at things in one way. There has been a battle against bias in certain legislative pieces that is trying to fight against a narrow view, a narrow perspective of culture.

Could you tell us a little about the “My Name, My Identity” campaign?

This started at the Santa Clara Office of Education, in California, by the director there, Ms. Yi Wan. She started it as a small project to respect students based on their names and not changing their names in the classroom, because your name is your identity, and learning to pronounce the names of the students is important. There is a website in which there are four modules, teaching about My Name, My Identity and children’s literature and other activities to respect the diversity of names. And, if you go to the website (Santa Clara County Office of Education, 2018), there are places all over the United States, and I think outside as well in which people have taken the pledge that they will respect students’ names and identities. So, the first module is focusing on what your name means and ties into everything else I’ve been doing, in the sense that your name gives you your cultural identity, it has a story of your family history, it has a story of you. And so, to change your name, means to lose your identity.

Finally, would you like to comment on the conference theme of Diversity and Inclusion?

Yeah, it’s hard to look at that from one’s own lens. For instance, my own lens has always been from the time I was a child. My father’s parents came from Russia and my mother’s family came from Turkey, and they were both Jews but different Jews. And so, I lived with diversity and different languages all my life. So, diversity and acceptance, and interest in different people and different cultures were strong parts of my life, and it seems that my country has taken a move in the other direction: “If you’re not like me, you’re scary and suspect.” I’m seriously concerned about it. You see a lot of it on the news, and you don’t know how much of it is just the isolated cases being blown out of proportion or, whether it is racial or ethnic identities emerging where there are only good guys and bad guys. That’s the scariest piece for me. So, the pendulum swings back and forth. Particularly, the world is looking at the United States and what it’s going to do, and the hope is
that somewhere along the line, people will find that we're all part of a human race and the commonalities of being humans, who have good days and bad days, are similar. You know, our experience may be different, but in the end, we're more similar than different.

References

Steven Asquith & Lorraine Kipling
We welcome submissions for the My Share column. Submissions should be up to 600 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see the guidelines on our website below).
Email: my-share@jalt-publications.org • Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare

Hi, readers, and welcome to the latest edition of My Share. Lorraine and I hope that for many of you, summer has provided a moment to take a deep breath, unwind a little, and get a touch of clarity as to how you will approach the coming months. Personally, I really enjoy the planning process, especially figuring out how my existing courses might be updated with new ideas. On many occasions the ideas provided by the My Share authors have proven useful to my planning. The contributions in this issue are once again outstanding, so we are sure that they will provide you with considerable inspiration for the coming autumn term.

First off, James Taylor introduces a collaborative public speaking activity entitled Vote for Us in which students prepare and give a campaign speech for a mock election on global issues. This activity not only focuses upon improving students’ presentation skills, but also encourages them to look deeply into an issue in a realistic way. In the second contribution, Ryan Lege explains a really simple and effective method of having students review vocabulary with a focus upon accurate production. This idea is especially practical as it could be adapted to almost any level or context, and would provide ideal scaffolding for multiple classroom activities. I am really looking forward to using this in many of my classes. In the third article Steve Hampshire invites us to picture his interpretation of a creative description game, in which students must guess who is describing a genuine image, and who is bluffing. This sounds like an awful lot of fun as learners delight in trying to fool their classmates. And finally, Phillip Olson describes a great, zero-prep vocabulary review quiz, which would enliven any class period. We are sure that there is something for everyone in this month’s selection and we hope that the coming term is both rewarding and productive for you all.

—Steven Asquith

Vote for Us!
James Taylor
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Quick Guide
» Keywords: Global issues, elections, pair work, public speaking skills
» Learner English level: Intermediate and above
» Learner maturity: High school or university
» Preparation time: 30 minutes
» Activity time: Three 90-minute lessons (varies depending on learners and institution)
» Materials: Computer with Internet connection, projector, worksheets, ballot box

This activity requires students to prepare and give a convincing campaign speech for a mock election. In a discussion or global issues course, this...
activity is an ideal way for reviewing topics taught while giving students the chance to concentrate on issues that interest, concern or affect them. It also challenges them to think deeply about the issues in order to develop their opinions and potential solutions. It has a collaborative aspect and aids public speaking skills. With fortunate timing it can coincide with a real-world election but can otherwise be used as an engaging review activity at any time.

Preparation

Step 1: Find appropriate videos online or check the links in Appendix A
Step 2: Edit the topic list in Appendix B to reflect the course content
Step 3: Print both Appendices
Step 4: Get a receptacle to use as a ballot box

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the activity to students by explaining the concept of election campaign speeches, candidates and running mates. Distribute Appendix A and explain that public speakers alter their intonation, speed, body language, gestures, and facial expressions.
Step 2: Watch the videos of famous political speeches as a class. Make notes and discuss the speakers’ use of the aforementioned techniques. Note that Winston Churchill’s speech is a photo-montage rather than a video, but body language and gestures are still discernible. Inform students that the videos may be useful examples for them when preparing their own speeches.
Step 3: Distribute Appendix B and instruct students to form pairs. Explain that they must choose two topics from the course and answer the questions regarding the reasons for their topic choices and their opinions on those topics. Their answers will form the bulk of their speech. Monitor to check students’ work and offer feedback.
Step 4: Instruct students to practice their speeches and encourage them to pay attention to the public speaking techniques seen in the videos from Step 1. Students can record themselves practicing or ask others to watch them in order to receive feedback and improve their performance.
Step 5: Explain that there will be a vote after all the speeches but ask students not to vote for themselves. Have students give their speeches in front of the class.
Step 6: After all pairs have spoken, ask the audience to vote. Tally the votes and announce the winners.

Variations

Depending on student maturity and level, the number of example videos can be changed, as can the required number of topics and sentences. If students are old enough to have voted, the teacher could elicit a discussion of their experience and talk about voting in his/her own country. Students could also make posters or slides to accompany their speeches. Requiring students to ask questions after each speech would encourage further discussion of topics and ideas. The teacher could prepare a prize for the winners.

Conclusion

This activity helps students develop their collaborative and public speaking skills while focusing on the topics that interest them. It also allows them to share ideas and opinions with their classmates. It can be an effective way to review the course, and students often appreciate the opportunity to further explore topics of interest to them.

Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>

Collaborative Crafting of Perfect Sentences

Ryan Lege
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Quick Guide

» Keywords: Vocabulary, collaboration, context
» Learner English level: All levels
» Learner maturity: Recommended for high school level and up
» Preparation time: 10 minutes
» Activity time: 20 to 40 minutes
» Materials: Vocabulary list, whiteboard/chalkboard, scrap paper for students, transparency or projector (optional)

Vocabulary instruction is often decontextualized and meaning focused, and frequently eschews real
language use. Experts in vocabulary instruction speak of vocabulary learning depth and breadth. One of the highest levels of vocabulary mastery is the ability to use the word in novel ways. This activity involves students in a highly engaging game which forces them to experiment with and learn to use vocabulary in a collaborative environment. This is because students’ collective vocabulary knowledge is required to complete each round.

**Preparation**

**Step 1:** Prepare the vocabulary list. Select a range of vocabulary that you want students to learn or practice using. It is useful if students at least have receptive knowledge of most of the words. For example, in university level classes, you may want to select words from most frequent words lists. The final list should be from 30-50 words in length with most of the words at a comfortable level for students.

**Step 2:** Prepare how you will display the vocabulary list for the whole class. You may use a transparency, or a computer or mobile device with a projector. You will need a way to cross out words from the list that is displayed for the class. Alternatively, you could write the list of words on the whiteboard/chalkboard.

**Procedure**

**Step 1:** Arrange students into groups of 3-4.

**Step 2:** Display the vocabulary list so that it is visible for all students.

**Step 3:** Explain the objective and rules of the game: Groups work together to create an original perfect sentence for any of the vocabulary words that they choose from the list. When a group finishes a sentence, they bring it to the teacher. If the sentence is perfect (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.) the group receives one point. Cross the word off the master list. The same word may not be used again by any of the groups. If the sentence is not correct – tell students that it is not correct, offering only a short explanation as to the reason, for example, “grammar” or “spelling.” Students return to their group to attempt to revise the sentence and create new sentences. A group may show the teacher a maximum of 2 sentences at a time.

**Step 4:** Begin the first round. To earn points during this round, each sentence must be a minimum of 5 words in length.

**Step 5:** After about 10 minutes, or when about one third of the vocabulary has been correctly used, stop the students.

**Step 6:** Increase the minimum number of words to 7. Begin the second round. Continue playing until most of the words have been correctly used in an original sentence.

**Step 7:** Explain the rules of the final round. Choose 2 of the remaining words. Groups work together to create a sentence of 9 words or more in length for each of these words. However, during this round each sentence is worth 5 points. Groups only get one chance to submit each sentence; all members should agree to submit the sentences to the teacher.

**Step 8:** Tally up the points and announce the winner.

**Conclusion**

This activity utilizes students’ prior knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to produce new, original output. The activity is a way to review new vocabulary while practicing using correct grammatical structures.

**Picture This**

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**Quick Guide**

- **Key words:** Descriptive challenge, memory, imagination, question and answer
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate and above
- **Learner maturity:** Senior high school and above
- **Preparation time:** 10 minutes
- **Activity time:** 10 to 15 minutes per pair
- **Materials:** A selection of picture postcards, snaps or similar, a postcard size blank card, 2 envelopes postcard size or bigger, language support slips for A and B presenters and class questioners. (See Appendix)
- **NB:** You will also need a suitable out-of-classroom prep space for A/B presenters

Pictures are a great resource for engaging students. They can capture interest, spur the imagination, act as prompts, bring the outside world into the classroom and help students draw out language from their own knowledge. Many English language exams also employ pictures as part of listening tests and for oral assessment. Drawing on these elements ‘Picture this’ puts two students head-to-head in front of their classmates in a battle of wits, combining a
descriptive and challenging activity with a class Q&A component. Can memory and good descriptive skills sway the class one way, or will a clever and colorful imagination be enough to trick them and triumph?

Preparation

Before class, decide on your student pair(s). Pair students of similar abilities.
Prepare 2 envelopes, 1 containing a picture the other a blank piece of card.
Copy A/B presenter and class language support slips.

Procedure

Step 1: Explain the activity to the class.
Step 2: Choose your first pair. Do rock, paper, scissors to decide who has which envelope. Give out the envelopes but don’t open yet.
Step 3: Give out the class language support slips. Class members start thinking of possible questions.
Step 4: While the class is doing this, exit the room with students A and B, who now open their envelopes. The blank cardholder, if allowed a glimpse of the real picture, could prepare to present something similar or be encouraged to imagine something quite different.
Step 5: Give the presenters their language support slips. Run through the Time to Think expressions. Set a time limit to prepare for their presentations.
Step 6: Meanwhile, return to the main class and monitor /elicit some practice questions.
Step 7: Revisit students A and B for final checks. Return their cards into the envelopes and reenter the room with A and B standing at the front of the class.
Step 8: Do rock, paper, scissors to start. The first presenter, with the language support slip, now has 30 seconds to describe the main elements of their picture.
Step 9: The class asks the first presenter questions to elicit more details.
Step 10: Repeat Step 8 with the second student.
Step 11: Give students a moment to confer then take a class vote on who they think the true picture holder is.
Step 12: Reveal the true picture holder.

Conclusion

So, picture this: Your students using colorful descriptive language, asking questions, exercising their imaginations, testing memories, and responding to questions off the cuff, all infused with an element of competition and (maybe) a surprise ending. Picture perfect!

Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>

Spelling Battleship
Philip Olson
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Quick Guide

» Keywords: Active learning, competition, vocabulary.
» Learner English level: Any level
» Learner maturity level: Any level
» Preparation time: Minimal.
» Activity time: 40 minutes (including set up time)
» Materials: White/blackboard and any vocabulary list

There is virtually no teacher prep time required to do this activity, and it can utilize and reinforce students’ learning of any vocabulary taught in a unit or chapter that you are teaching. It is a variation of the Spelling Bee competition in which a more interactive approach is applied. The preparation is done by the students for this activity, as they must study and remember the spelling and pronunciation, as well as the list of words. Students are not allowed to see their vocabulary lists during the game. Students do a repetition drill for correct pronunciation practice, and time is given for remembering the spelling of the words.

Preparation

Step 1: Explain that this is a vocabulary competition game called “Spelling Battleship” because teams will be attacking each other with the unit vocabulary words.
Step 2: Divide your class into at least three roughly equally sized teams.
Step 3: After the teams have been made, students stand up in straight lines in their teams, lining up according to their team number on the board, where the points are scored.
Step 4: Explain to the class that you will announce a countdown from three to start: “3…2…1… GO!”

Step 5: After announcing “GO!”, any student from any team can raise their hand if they can remember a word from the vocabulary list (they cannot look at their word lists at this point!).

Step 6: Team one attacks team two, team two attacks three, team three attacks team four, and team four attacks team one, so, if a student from team two raises his/her hand first and says: “collect”, then the members of team three must spell that word, letter by letter: student 1: “C”, student 2: “O”, student 3: “L”, student 4: “L”… and so on.

Step 7: After “GO!”, a team scores one point for saying a word first with correct pronunciation, and one point is scored for this team for each mistake made by the “attacked” team. For example, in step 6, if student 3 from team three says “R” instead of “L”, then team two scores a point. A team scores two points if they spell the word correctly.

Step 8: After a team finishes spelling, the teacher begins a new round with the countdown again: “3…2…1… GO!”

Variations

For higher level classes I sometimes have the students attack not just with a word, but with the word used in a sentence. To make it more difficult, the student says a definition of the word only. I also use variations in the scoring scheme to suit class needs, such as awarding two points for saying a word first, as it becomes more difficult to remember words as the game progresses. I also become stricter in higher level classes, encouraging not only the correct spelling, but also the correct pronunciation of the word.

Conclusion

I use this game regularly throughout the semester in university classes, and it is an exciting break from the usual class routine. It works very well to wake up a class and keep them focused on learning vocabulary during class time. Also, as mentioned in the Variations section above, the game is easily adjusted to make it more challenging for higher level classes, and for when you continue using it throughout the school year.
Engaging Reading Activities with Quizizz
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Quizizz is a free online tool for creating and taking multiple-choice quizzes. It provides competitive, multi-player games similar to Kahoot! and Quizlet Live. Quizizz is designed so that students can enjoy learning and be more engaged. Teachers create a quiz on the website and play the online game mode called Live Game. Students join the game and take the quiz on their mobile phone, tablet, or computer using an access code. They can see both questions and answer options on their devices, unlike other applications like Kahoot!. Quizizz can be played as a whole class competing against each other, or individually as homework. Although there are hundreds of existing quizzes available that have been created by other users, here I would like to share how to create your own quizzes and play them in your classroom.

How to Create Quizzes on Quizizz?
To begin, you need to create an account as a teacher. After logging in, click “Create a Quiz” in the menu bar. On the Quizizz Editor page, there are three options to create your own questions. The first option (Create new question) allows you to see how the question will appear on the students’ devices (Figure 1).

With the second option (Import from spreadsheet), you can import questions from a spreadsheet. If you choose this option, you need to download the template first, then edit the file and upload it. The third option, Create as a spreadsheet, is a combination of the first two that allows you to create a quiz online with a spreadsheet (Figure 2). After creating all of the questions, press FINISH QUIZ and your quiz will appear under My quizzes. Now you are ready to play the game in your class.
How to Play?
To play the Live Game, you will need a computer and students will need a mobile phone, tablet, or computer. All of the devices need to be connected to the Internet. It is not absolutely necessary, but it will be better if you have a central screen in the room on which students can see their rankings during the game and the winner’s podium after the game.

Next, you should go to My quizzes, pick the quiz you want to play, and click the purple Live Game button. On the next page, you can change some settings of the game. Then, click the green PROCEED button, and a game code will be displayed. Show the host page on the central screen so that your students can see the game code. Once your screen is ready, have your students go to the page for joining the game (<https://quizizz.com/join>) or open the Quizizz app on their devices and have them enter the game code. After they enter the game code and their names, their names will appear on the screen (Figure 3).

After all of your students have joined the game, press the Start button. There will be a 5 second count-down both on the main screen and on the students’ devices, and the game will start. The first question and the answer options will appear on the students’ devices, and then they will select the answer(s). If you want to randomize the order of the questions, you can do so on the settings page before starting the game. You can also shuffle the answer options if required. Immediately after the students answer the question, they can see if their answer is correct or not. If the answer is correct, they will get points, and the more quickly they answer, the more points they get. Then, they will see their rankings (Figure 4). After that, the next question will come up immediately. Unlike Kahoot!, the students do not have to wait for others to answer the question; they can move on to the next question and proceed at their own pace. After answering all the questions, they can see their results and review the questions on their devices. You can decide whether or not to let the students see the correct answers on that page.

After all of the participants answer all of the questions, there will be a podium on the screen to honor the five top players. Then, on the next page, you can see the overview of the game results (Figure 5). By using this page, you can see which questions were the most difficult, and explain or give comments about the questions if necessary.

Author’s Use in the Classroom
Although there are many ways to use Quizizz to make your classes more engaging, my favorite way is to use it as a reading activity. Here, I would like to share the ways that I have used Quizizz in my classes.

Reading Comprehension Questions
Answering questions is one effective reading comprehension strategy (Grabe, 2009). Quizizz can turn traditional reading comprehension question activities into fun and competitive activities that students find more engaging. Just like making handouts, you can create multiple-choice questions on Quizizz. Also, the combination of the time limit and ranking board during the game will make students try to read faster and answer faster, and as a consequence, it will facilitate their reading fluency.
True or False Questions
If you want to keep it simple, or do not have enough time to create elaborate questions, I would recommend true or false questions. They are very easy to make since the answer options will only be true and false. Note that when you play a Live Game using true or false questions, do not select Shuffle answer options. As you can imagine, it will just make the game unnecessarily confusing (sometimes true will be on the top and sometimes on the bottom of students’ devices).

Another key to make Quizizz more engaging is to let students play in pairs. When I use Quizizz as a reading activity, I generally have my students get into pairs and play collaboratively. Although they don’t have to share their device, compared to playing individually, working in pairs increases their interaction, and this will enhance their engagement.

Conclusion
Quizizz is one of the most engaging online tools for language classrooms because it helps students enjoy classroom activities. From my experience, Quizizz brings fresh energy into the classroom, and my students are always happy to play it. Of course, just having fun is not enough for language learning, but lowering students’ affective filters through such an experience should be essential for successful language learning. Hopefully, this encourages you to use this tool in your classrooms and helps your students enjoy your classroom activities.

References

Bringing Climate Education into EFL Classrooms
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Droughts in India, record high temperatures in Australia, rain bombs covering the entire city of Dallas, scores of animals perishing—it seems that every day there is news of a new extreme caused by the climate crisis. Close to 40,000 protesters from 15 countries gathered in the German city of Aachen on Friday, June 21, 2019 to raise awareness and demand that leaders around the world declare a climate emergency. These ‘Fridays for Future’ strikes started due to the brave actions of Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg. We are now in a state of climate crisis, and since students are leading the charge, it should be our role as educators to provide them with the information and skills vital to their understanding of the natural world. The goal of this article is to introduce the science of climate change, suggest some age appropriate approaches and teaching strategies, and give teachers some resources to help them teach about climate change with confidence.

One of the challenges language teachers face is finding resources that allow for the right language and pedagogical methods for our classes. Rather than creating an entirely new climate crisis class, infusing all courses with relevance to the climate crisis is a better way to approach the topic (Henderson, 2019). In the language classroom, many of us have the latitude to design courses in which the necessary language is taught as we introduce concepts and facts.

Let us look at how we can approach the topic at elementary, middle, and high school levels.
Elementary Students
There are two things to keep in mind with elementary (Grades 1-6) learners: tone and vocabulary. Above all, elementary learners should be taught positive, uncomplicated aspects of nature and the environment. Conveying simple, relatable messages about nature nearest to them is the best way to strengthen their relationship to the natural world. For example, talk about a nearby park—the insects, birds, people, and pets that visit the park, and why it’s such a great place to be during the day. Finding out what students know is a great way to continually reinforce their innate love for nature (Wilson, 1984). Animals are an excellent way to teach elementary students about our connection to nature. Simply showing photographs of endangered animals can get any class talking about the need to protect their habitats. (WWF, 2019). For example, pass out animal photographs and have groups of three or four students discuss their habitats, such as arctic, rainforest canopy, jungle, or ocean. The issue of plastic, specifically ocean plastic, is another important environmental and cultural issue to tackle. Students can be encouraged to notice the many ways we use plastic and to think about ways to reduce our dependence on it.

Middle School Students
We now know for certain that climate change is happening. The October 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report warned us that we only have twelve years to limit fossil fuel use before exceeding the recommended safe zone of a 1.5°C increase in average global temperatures (IPCC, 2018). Many scientists, activists, religious leaders and philosophers have talked about our moral obligation to act in the face of the climate crisis (Moore & Nelson, 2010).

As the following graph shows, the trend of stable temperature that lasted over one thousand years was followed by a rapid increase caused by greenhouse gas emissions in the 20th century. This visual is an excellent way to let students see at a glance how serious the problem is. Older students could use library books or the Internet to research what humans were doing to cause this rapid increase, with hints and useful vocabulary lists provided as needed. For younger students, it might be easier to use a gapped listening activity, with any difficult words provided and easier words as gaps.

Figure 1. “Hockey Stick” graph (Mann, Bradley & Hughes, 1999).

Middle school students need to understand the difference between weather (short term) and climate (long term), not to mention the greenhouse effect. Briefly, because of increased greenhouse gases like CO2 in the atmosphere, the increasing “thickness” of the atmosphere traps more heat, thereby causing global warming. National Geographic’s ‘Global Warming 101’ YouTube channel and the relevant section from the documentary film ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ provide excellent visual lessons that explain why the hottest ten years since 1880 have almost all been the last ten years. NASA’s Climate Kids website is a great place to find classroom-suitable graphics. Explain how fossil fuels like natural gas and gasoline create CO2 and have students brainstorm some common sources such as gas ranges, scooters, cars, trucks, buses, and airplanes.

Greta Thunberg has become a symbol of the climate crisis movement. Focusing on her life and her message is a great way to get students interested in the issues since she is a global role model for direct action in fighting the climate crisis. An information gap activity about her could precede, or follow, watching one of the many videos available online. A list of possible questions and answers is available as an appendix (see the link at the end of this article). The questions can be selected or altered to suit language and ability level, as indicated on the teachers’ notes. Students can also write what they think about Greta and her movement.

High School Students
At high school level, we can ask students what they think is causing climate change. One of the main causes being greenhouse gases, the next focus should be the sources of CO2 and methane (CH4) caused by the burning of fossil fuels. Our elementary school CO2 source list can expand to include shipping and construction, and livestock farming. The topic presents some difficult vocabulary, so teachers should ensure that they provide adequate scaffolding before embarking on communicative activities.
Once students understand the causes of climate change, they can start to learn about the solutions, which include solar, hydro, geothermal, and wave energy. The following activity, provided as an online appendix to this article, asks students to guess what percentage of each type of energy would be appropriate for Japan. The poster can be shown to students after completing the activity.

**Figure 2.** Japan’s 100% energy solution by Stanford University (2019).

A good example of a solution close to home for Japanese students is Yokohama city’s plan to eliminate all internal combustion engines by 2050. The downloadable PDF (City of Yokohama, 2018) could be printed and read in groups to inspire discussion of civic transportation issues. This also covers how local and national governments can and should lead the way in developing solutions. Students could then find other examples of energy solutions and present them to each other in pairs or groups in class.

At the high school level, it’s also important to have a conversation about media literacy. In a time when memes on social media spread disinformation, students need to know how enormous commercial interests finance fake news and create doubt about climate change (Oreskes & Conway, 2012).

Make sure you debate the possibility of participating in a ‘Fridays for Future’ student strike like the one started by Greta Thunberg, the Swedish protestor who began her activism at age 15. By utilizing YouTube, you can find her three and-a-half minute COP24 speech at Katowice, Poland. Depending on the IT resources available at your school, you can also print out the text of her speech or show it on the class monitor. Students would have to add appropriate punctuation, capitalization, and make decisions on paragraphing. Quizlet.com has a word list and definitions already prepared (search for ‘Greta COP24’), so you could bookend the lesson by introducing the vocabulary and then end with a matching game.

For higher levels, students could consider cultural aspects that make it possible for hundreds of Canadian students to leave class to protest but very difficult for Japanese students to do the same. Let them know that twenty-one students are suing the American government for violating their right to clean air and clean water under the concept of public trust doctrine (Juliana v U.S., 2016).

For even higher levels, there is an excellent 16-page downloadable workshop (WWW, 2019), designed by the World Wildlife Fund in association with the Netflix series Our Planet, that could fill two or three class sessions. Some students are assigned as world leaders and have 100 billion “World Dollars” to spend. Others give briefings on energy, food, and health to lobby governments on how to best invest their fund to ensure a positive future for the planet.

**The Climate Reality Project**

In October this year, Tokyo will host a two-day training of former US Vice President Al Gore’s Climate Reality Project. At the training, Mr. Gore will assist participants in gaining the skills, knowledge, and network necessary to solve the climate crisis. This will be a great opportunity for high school students, teachers, and others who are eager to participate and act for climate solutions.

Polls in the U.S. (Ipsos, 2019) show that teachers want climate crisis training and parents want schools to teach it. So, whether it’s in the streets or in the park, at the planned global strike on September 20th, or in the classroom on a daily basis, now is the perfect time to muster the courage, information, and support to teach about the climate crisis and its solutions—no matter what courses, ages, or levels you teach. By bookmarking online sources for climate change education, creating age-appropriate lesson plans, and collaborating via social media networks, any teacher can become confident in teaching about the climate crisis.

The appendices are available as downloadable PDF Files from the online version of this article at: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/youngerlearners.

**References**


Further Reading


North American Association for Climate Education. https://naaee.org/eepro/groups/climate-change-education


Chris Kozak has been a passionate music and ESL educator in Japan for over twenty years. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Alberta, Canada, and teaching accreditations from a wide range of institutions and associations. He is a volunteer in Al Gore’s Climate Reality Leadership Corps and gives the Nobel Peace Prize-winning presentation to explain how to take action against the climate crisis.

Marian Hara studied English Literature at Stirling University and holds an RSA EFL Diploma. She recently retired from a private high school in Tokyo, where she helped set up communicative language teaching, global studies, and writing courses, as well as piloting two teacher resource books through publication.
Robert Taferner & Stephen Case

If you are interested in writing a book review, please consult the list of materials available for review in the Recently Received column, or consider suggesting an alternative book that would be helpful to our membership.

Email: reviews@jalt-publications.org
Web: http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/book-reviews

This month’s column features Christopher Robert Cooper’s review of On Task 3.

On Task 3


Reviewed by Christopher Robert Cooper, Himeji Dokkyo University

On Task 3 is the highest of a three-level series of textbooks that are designed with a Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach. The aim of this review was to evaluate the tasks in On Task 3 through the prism of Ellis and Shintani’s (2014) four criteria for distinguishing a task from an exercise: primarily meaning-focused; information, reasoning, or opinion gap (Prabhu, 1987); learners mainly use their own linguistic and non-linguistic resources; and there is a communicative outcome that is clearly defined. On Task 3 was trialed for this review with one class of only three students. Whilst I think the book is designed for and would work well with larger classes, it is also possible to use it with small classes.

Each unit starts with a one-minute speech with no preparation, forcing learners to rely on their own linguistic resources. They are then given the chance to search for and write down vocabulary that they needed in their speech but did not know. The first task of each unit is an input task built around reading an article. The pre-task always provides a gap. In Unit 1, some keywords and a photograph are provided to encourage prediction, creating an information gap. This makes learners want to read to the end of the interesting story in order to find out if their guesses are correct, which is the main task.

The post-task consists of a comprehension check and discussion linked to the story about meeting friends online. The main communicative outcome of the task seems to be enjoying the story.

The second task of each unit is output based. In Unit 1, learners ask each other questions and find things they have in common with other students. In the pre-task, they think of questions they would ask when meeting someone for the first time. In the main task, they form their own questions to find out information about classmates that is specified in the book, such as birthplace, favourite food, and dream job. Finally, the post-task is to write a short paragraph about similarities with a partner. In my class, two students found that they were born in the same hospital and had similar music tastes.

Finally, there is a listening exercise, where learners listen to a seemingly unscripted conversation between two speakers from different countries and suggested presentations are provided. The presentations can be used for assessment along with a task completion check for self-assessment.

The book meets the four criteria set out by Ellis and Shintani (2014). There is a meaning focus rather than a focus on grammar or prescribed language, there is always a gap, there are opportunities for learners to rely on their own linguistic resources first, and there seems to be a clearly defined communicative outcome—understanding a story or getting to know your classmates and finding similarities with a partner. In my class, two students found that they were born in the same hospital and had similar music tastes.

The only real criticism I have is the assessment options. The main form of assessment is unit tests, which are available for download. They may be useful in contexts where teachers are expected to use a written paper test to evaluate students, but they are not necessarily in the spirit of TBLT.

Willis (1996) has several suggestions for the assessment of TBLT, such as vocabulary tests created...
Task 3 largely achieves these goals, as the content is interesting, and it should be easy for instructors to follow the lessons with little planning time.

References

Recently Received
Julie Kimura & Ryan Barnes
pub-review@jalt-publications.org

A list of texts and resource materials for language teachers available for book reviews in TLT and JALT Journal. Publishers are invited to submit complete sets of materials to Julie Kimura at the Publishers’ Review Copies Liaison address listed on the Staff page on the inside cover of TLT.

Recently Received Online
An up-to-date index of books available for review can be found at: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/recently-received>.
* = new listing; ! = final notice — Final notice items will be removed on August 31. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

Books for Students (reviews published in TLT)
Contact: Julie Kimura — pub-review@jalt-publications.org

Discovering cool Japan — Tsuda, A., Kinshi, K., & Valvona, C. Tokyo: Seibido, 2019. [This text has been adapted from the NHK program Cool Japan. The units are structured in two parts. First, participants go out to report on an aspect of Japanese culture. This is followed by a studio discussion where people from different countries talk about the differences between Japanese culture and their own. In addition to exposing learners to several varieties of global English, this coursebook also develops the ability to convey Japanese culture to the world in English. It comes with mid-term and end-of-term tests as well as mini-tests for each chapter. CD, DVD, and teacher’s manual available.]


Pocket Readers — The following are by Boon, A. Tokyo: Halico Creative Education, 2018.
! The job interview: Book 1. [A graded reader in a business context. Book 1 begins with the job hunt.]
! The first week on the job: Book 2. [A graded reader in a business context. Book 2 follows you, a new employee in the product marketing department of a chain of convenience stores.]
! The presentation: Book 3. [A graded reader in a business context. In Book 3, you, the new employee, gives a presentation explaining the company’s new partnership deal.]
The meeting: Book 4. [A graded reader in a business context. In Book 4, as the new employee, you are going to chair your first business meeting.]
The email: Book 5. [A graded reader in a business context. In Book 5, you have to deal with many emails in your inbox. You are invited to attend an email training workshop.]
Entertaining overseas visitors: Book 6. [A graded reader in a business context. In Book 6, you are going to look after and entertain two business guests arriving from the United States.]

Speaking for Presentations — Robinson, L. Tokyo: Tryialogue, 2019. [2-level coursebook featuring a wide variety of speech topics with well-ordered activities that allow speakers to organize their ideas and prepare their presentations. Useful sentence structures are provided and high-frequency vocabulary is frequently recycled. There are QR code links to videos of sample presentations. The series is suitable for CEFR A2-B1.]

* Winning formula for the TOEIC® L & R test Rev. Ed.) — Akaida, T., & Bruce, J. M. Tokyo: Cengage Learning, 2018. [Revisions reflect updates to the new question format used in the TOEIC® Listening and Reading test. Students will learn test-taking strategies and tactics in each unit.]

Books for Teachers (reviews published in JALT Journal)
Contact: Greg Rouault — jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org

David McMurray

Graduate students and teaching assistants are invited to submit compositions in the form of a speech, appeal, memoir, essay, conference review, or interview on the policy and practice of language education. Master’s and doctoral thesis supervisors are also welcome to contribute or encourage their students to join this vibrant debate. Grounded in the author’s reading, practicum, or empirical research, contributions are expected to share an impassioned presentation of opinions in 1,000 words or less. Teaching Assistance is not a peer-reviewed column.

Email: teach-assist@jalt-publications.org

The author of this issue’s Teaching Assistance column vibrantly debates the differences between working as a Student Assistant and as a Teaching Assistant at a Japanese university. Hailing from Hanoi, Nguyen Binh Anh Thu came to Japan in October 2013 to enroll in Kyushu Japanese Language School. After 18 months of study she entered a university in Japan. In her second year of undergraduate studies in teaching Japanese as a foreign language, she obtained an N1-level certificate in Japanese language skills. Fluent in three languages, Anh Thu is currently studying for a master’s degree in American Literature.

I’d Rather be a Student Assistant than a Teaching Assistant
Nguyen Binh Anh Thu

In addition to taking courses and doing research at graduate school, I am working two part-time jobs. I am an SA (Student Assistant) and a TA (Teaching Assistant) for 3 subjects with supervision from different teachers.

I have found that the role of the SA is more challenging than that of a TA. In my role as a SA, I get to provide support to students in a classroom setting. It is an opportunity to teach students who are dynamic, enthusiastic and eager. I help students to find direction and focus on their studies, which can have an immediate and lifelong impact. In my role as TA, I have to support the teacher. As a graduate teaching assistant, I thought that I could teach undergraduate students. However, in reality I am helping the professors who are doing the actual teaching of undergraduate courses.

Part-time jobs for SAs are usually offered to undergraduate students rather than graduate students. My supervisor, however, pointed out that an SA would be useful in her class of 14 Japanese students and 4 Chinese students. She recommended that I accept the SA job to help the Chinese students because they couldn’t speak Japanese well enough to follow the syllabus. When I heard that, I replied “Why me? I am not Chinese. I am not Japanese. I am Vietnamese. I can’t talk with them in Chinese. I can’t interpret for them when they don’t understand instructions in Japanese.” But my supervisor replied that I needn’t worry, I wouldn’t have to speak any Chinese with them. As a foreign student, perhaps I could empathize with their feelings better than a Japanese student could do. And if a Chinese student were to be the SA, the students might talk only in Chinese. The Chinese students have to improve their Japanese ability, and the teacher was prepared to teach them Japanese. So after this convoluted conversation, I accepted to work as an SA.

I am glad I accepted the role of SA. There are 2 SAs in one class. My co-SA is a 2nd year Japanese student. We share the work. The students were fresh out of high school so they did not know each other. The goal of the class is to help the 18 new students get used to university life. We encourage the Chinese students to interact with Japanese students, which is difficult for international students to do because of the language barrier. Therefore we play games so the students could get to know each other.

To learn how to be a SA, I attend a training workshop with other SAs once a month. It is organized by an outside consulting company contracted by the university. This training consumes a lot of time. At the workshop, a trainer explains various ways to support freshmen. The stated goal of the consultants is for us to achieve full attendance in our classes, and to prevent freshmen from dropping out of university. After exchanging information about the problems we face, we are given homework to carry out during the following month.

My co-SA and I have had many ideas of how to reach the goal of the class. At first, we prepared our self-introductions on PowerPoint software. We introduced ourselves to the new students by making presentations because we thought that if we only introduced ourselves with a few words, it would not leave a deep impression on the students. We encouraged the students to emulate our presentations to talk about themselves. One by one, the students
used PowerPoint for 3 to 5 minutes, like we did. I thought it was a good thing for them to buy a USB, to borrow laptops and to practice on PCs. Surprisingly for me, the freshmen had excellent computer skills and especially the Chinese students prepared good visual presentations about themselves.

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The Japanese language class covers honorifics, correct grammar, kanji, and vocabulary with the aim of enabling students to pass the Japanese language test. I am a TA, but I study in the class as a student. I really like this class because I can improve my Japanese ability. In the class of Japanese teaching methodology, students can learn how to teach Japanese to foreigners. Actually, as a TA, I support the teacher less than I thought I would have to. Other TAs whom I interviewed reported that they planned lessons with the head instructor (Hirata, 2018). While TAs in other classes whom I interviewed said that they were asked to translate, and to review the writing in students’ daily journals.

Although the job as a SA is more time consuming and challenging, I do receive a little higher salary. At my university in Japan, the SA salary is 850yen per hour, 1600yen per lesson. The TA’s salary is 1,000 yen per hour, or 1,500yen per lesson to a maximum of 10 hours per week. On the one hand, being a TA in Japan is easier than in other countries. But it is low pay when compared to other jobs that require a bachelor’s degree.

According to classmates, at some universities in China, TAs prepare lesson materials, print and copy papers and help teachers in class. On the other hand, the TA in China makes approximately 10,000 yen per month as a salary. This salary includes the pay for helping students in class as well as helping the teacher outside of classes which takes about 6 hours per week. Salaries in the U.S. are much higher (Bruens, 2012) but the TA is responsible for preparing lesson plans and teaching classes without the presence of a supervising instructor.

When I return to Vietnam, I hope to become a Japanese language teacher. I think I have been lucky to be a TA because I earned money and had free time to study. In addition to being rewarding, the SA job afforded me opportunities to receive training, spend time with students, and to make friends and colleagues.

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**References**


Extracting a Published Paper from Your Dissertation

Tiffany Ip
The University of Hong Kong

After discussing the possibilities of turning a dissertation into a conference presentation in my previous column (Ip, 2019), I am going to offer some advice about how to go a step further by not just having your findings ‘disseminated’ but also ‘published’.

It is said that many oral presentations and most poster presentations at conferences do not get developed into full-fledged published papers. Apparently, a lot of good intentions and potentially interesting findings go to waste because researchers do not follow up on them. There are many factors to explain why this may happen. Apart from requiring perseverance and time to write a full paper, studies with negative results, small sample sizes, and a lack of funding (Khan, 2019) may have a smaller chance of being followed up on.

With that said, a manuscript based on a dissertation has a relative advantage as it likely has enough substance to be published in a peer-reviewed journal or book as it contains a substantial investigation and is hopefully the result of quality supervision and meticulous revision. The real challenge of publishing from a dissertation is therefore not doing the research itself but rather converting it into a publishable manuscript.

How Different Is a Dissertation from a Published Article?

As a rule of thumb, you should never simply copy and paste content from your dissertation. Although a dissertation and a published article share similar sections, dissertations are normally much longer than articles, which are typically only around 5,000 words including references. Additionally, they are different in terms of the following aspects:

1. **Abstract.** The abstract of an article is usually shorter than that of a dissertation.

2. **Introduction.** The introduction to an article also tends to be more concise as your target audience is assumed to be familiar with the necessary background and, unlike your examiners, is not there to judge if you have kept abreast of the literature.

3. **Methods and Results.** You need to be selective and focused when reporting these in an article. Whereas the methods and results sections in a dissertation include all your experiments, models and findings, the corresponding sections in an article may report only a selected number of these that answer the (possibly only one) research question or hypothesis you raise in your article introduction. It is thus possible to convert the content of a dissertation into more than one article.

4. **Title.** Some people may like to use the same title for their dissertation and published articles, but this is not a must, especially if you extract only part of your investigation from your dissertation. A cumulative title describing all of your dissertation chapters may not be suitable for your shortened work in a published article.

Where Can You Publish Your Work?

There are plenty of options for you to publish your work in. As mentioned in Ip (2019), some conferences such as the JALT International Conference and the JALT PanSIG Conference have a publication following the conference, allowing you to publish what you presented as a peer-reviewed paper. While some may think a conference proceedings is less prestigious than a journal article, JALT’s post-conference publications include a rigorous review process. If there are issues with the originally submitted articles considered suitable for possible inclusion in the proceedings, JALT has content editors who work with authors to help them produce a publishable article. For more details, please refer to the JALT Publications site: http://jalt-publications.org/.

From time to time, special editions of peer-reviewed journals or books invite submissions of...
articles that focus on a particular topic or theme. If your dissertation happens to be oriented around the suggested topic, you may also transform it and try for one of these.

Of course, you may also do a bit of research and select an appropriate journal. If publishing in a ‘prestigious’ journal matters to you, you can target journals with higher impact factors or those with the backing of a major publishing house. First, read through the aims and scope of journals that you are interested in. After deciding on a journal you would like to submit an article to, be sure to tailor your manuscript to the specific requirements of that journal, including its recommended structure, word limit, reference style, and any other details mentioned in the guidelines for authors. The academic requirements that are supposed to be met by a dissertation are not necessarily the same as the standards stipulated by a journal.

A Word of Caution
Potential concerns exist in some universities regarding the publication of dissertations, as technically dissertations belong to the university they were produced through. Manuscripts based on them might be considered self-plagiarism, duplicate submission, or result in copyright issues. It is always recommended for you to check with your professor or department before you publish an article from your dissertation. In general, journals are not against publishing articles from dissertations.

Conclusion
Needless to say, good language and organization in a paper are vital. Your paper with original ideas and valuable data may still be rejected if it is too difficult to understand. The Writers’ Peer Support Group associated with JALT consists of a team of experienced peer readers who can assist writers who want to publish with any publication. You can find more details at the JALT Publications site here: https://jalt-publications.org/psg.

Publishing dissertations is, in some cases, one of the requirements for graduate students to finish their programs. Whether publishing your dissertation research is mandatory or not, making an effort to convert a dissertation into a published manuscript serves as an excellent building block for junior researchers and first-time authors. Hopefully, your journey of academic research and writing will not stop at the completion of your dissertation, and publishing a manuscript based on your dissertation will help you to make a broader and more significant contribution.

References

Tiffany Ip teaches at universities in Hong Kong. She gained a PhD in neurolinguistics and strives to utilize her knowledge to translate brain research findings into practical classroom instruction.

Learner Development SIG
The Learner Development SIG has been an active part of JALT since 1993. We commemorated the 25th anniversary of the LD SIG in 2018 with the hope of further improvement and development of the SIG and its activities. Some might wonder why we started our activities under the name of “Learner Development” rather than “Learner Training”, “Learner Independence”, or “Learner Autonomy” which are also relevant realms of our SIG activities. One of the founding members, Richard Smith, wrote in our first newsletter (Learning Learning), “[w]e chose “Learner Development” as the name of the SIG, then, precisely because of its
relative obscurity and concomitant capacity to embrace and, we hope, enable synthesis of a wide range of hitherto separate interests.” With this intention, the LD SIG has evolved by providing various platforms for discussions with members for the past few decades to answer the questions which may not have clear answers.

Publications
Members of the LD SIG can access two types of publications. In our newsletter, Learning Learning (http://ld-sig.org/learning-learning/), contributors can engage in a wide range of writing to showcase practical and theoretical ideas for learner development as well as ongoing research. If you are a new member of the SIG, the “New Members’ Voice” section allows you to introduce yourself to the LD community and get connected with people. The Learner Development Journal (https://ldjournalsite.wordpress.com) is a relatively new attempt for the LD SIG to stretch our unique personalities. The journal contains research articles, reviews, and reflections written in a range of styles which discuss learner development from theoretical and practical points of view. For both Learning Learning and The Learner Development Journal, our editorial team uses a collaborative approach so that contributors receive constructive feedback from various perspectives through discussions with our committed editors. Therefore, we see the road to publication as a constructive process during which both contributors and editors can learn from each other.

Events
Get-Togethers is our local event which follows the university school calendars. While the Hiroshima and Kansai get-togethers have paused for the moment, Tokyo Get-Togethers continue to be active. The Tokyo Get-Together team is planning to hold the Creating Community: Learning Together (CCLT) conference (http://ld-sig.org/cclt4/) in December 2019, which might lead to a future publication. We are also keen on hosting forums at the Pan SIG, JALT CALL, and JALT International conferences. Every year, we provide opportunities for our members to present in the LD SIG forums at each of these conferences. Although we rarely turn anyone down, the LD forums are technically vetted, although by the SIG rather than the conference committee for such events. If you are looking to further promote your academic portfolio, our forums are one of the best places to start presenting your interests regarding learner development.

Introducing New Associate Member

IBEC
We run an officially certified Cambridge English Exam Center. We mainly offer the internationally renowned and prestigious Cambridge English Exams. Starting this spring, we have also been certified as one of the very few total agents of Cambridge English Exam Centers in Japan to provide “Linguaskill Business”, a new international online business English exam, aimed at university students and business people. We also offer exams that test the four English skills for schools, from A1 Level.

100余年の歴史を有する世界が認め権威ある英語テスト「ケンブリッジ英語検定」を扱う、ケンブリッジ英検認定試験センターを運営しております。今春より、国内でも希少なオンライン4技能ビジネス英語テスト「Linguaskill ビジネス」を扱う総代理店認定を受け、大学生・就活生・ビジネスパーソンなどを対象とした国際通用性の高い英語テストにサービスの提供を開始致しました。学校様向けの英語4技能試験もA1レベルから扱っております。

2019 JALT Research Grant Proposal Application Period: June 1 to September 30
Each year, JALT awards up to three grants for a maximum of ¥100,000 each for research on language teaching in Japan. Only JALT members who have no outside funding sources to conduct research are eligible to apply. The goal of the grants is to support language teachers in their professional development and to encourage teachers to engage in classroom-based research. Grant applications are collected each summer and vetted by the JALT Research Grants Committee. Winners of the grants receive funding before the start of the following school year during which they conduct their studies, provide quarterly reports, and receive guidance from the committee. Following the completion of the research, winners are invited to give presentations on their projects at the JALT international conference and to publish a paper in The Language Teacher. The deadline for proposals for projects starting in the 2020 school year is September 30, 2019. Details and application can be found on the JALT Research Grants website: https://jalt.org/researchgrants
Joining JALT
Use the attached furikae form at Post Offices ONLY. When payment is made through a bank using the furikae, the JALT Central Office receives only a name and the cash amount that was transferred. The lack of information (mailing address, chapter designation, etc.) prevents the JCO from successfully processing your membership application. Members are strongly encouraged to use the secure online signup page located at https://jalt.org/joining.
Scott Gardner  old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org

The Bard of Lard

You’ve heard of Basho (芭蕉). You know the rhythmic structure of a *tanka*. What? You don’t? You can hardly call yourself an appreciator of Japanese culture if you can’t say a thing about its history of innovative poetry. If you need a primer on the subject, though, please don’t look here. I’m far more read up on cosplay than the *Kokinshuu* (古今集—Old and New Poetry Collection).

It would take hundreds of pages to present an adequate image of the beauty and mystery of nearly two millennia of Japanese poetry. It will take only one page, however, to sully that image permanently with the following works by Ooji (大父) from the island of Usa (a territory which has recently come under international dispute—nobody wants it). An obscure and best forgotten poet, Ooji composed mainly in the rare *rimu riku* style.

There once was a daimyo from Mito Who’d walk around incognito. With villains he’d wrestle Then flash his credentials. The peasants all thought he was neato.

In Beppu the operative word Is “onsen,” so I have heard. The people down there Golf in their swimwear And soak in each water hazard.

The Lord High Admiral Poohbah Took his beach vacation at Tsukuba. What need there, you ask, For a snorkel and mask? He’d be better off in Aruba.

Shikoku-ites will assail ya With their travel paraphernalia; They’ll fill you with wonder For their land down under As Japan’s own mini-Australia.

Two ladies from Hachinohe Made a game for a rainy day. Swinging mallets indoors On soft woven floors, They call it Tatami Croquet.

The colors of Kyoto in autumn Are brief, so don’t lounge on your bottom. They take a big squeegee To all the *momiji* Until you can no longer spot ‘em.

There’s no truth in the claim of Yakult’s To cure baldness in male adults. I’ve also learned Calpis Rubbed into your scalp is Not going to improve your results.

The sleepy town of Obama Once met with considerable drama When it shared its name With a person of fame And was Googled more than Yokohama.

A hog on a bench in Sendai Was accosted by a passerby Asking, “When will this blight Be removed from our sight?” It replied with a sneer, “When pigs fly!”

In the mountains of Gifu are those who Know a man whom everyone goes to When feeling unwell. He just casts a spell. They call him the Wizard of Ozu.

A young traveler from Berlin Fell prey to a strange allergen When she ate a taco With some *chirimenjako*. I doubt she’ll try that again.

The northern town of Rumoi Was the scene of a Soviet ploy To ferry across Cheap Russian soy sauce And sell it as a decoy.

Aioi, a city in Hyogo, Was trying to jumpstart its mojo. Said the mayor, “Look, then; Add an ‘r’ and an ‘n,’ And make ‘Aironi’ our new logo!”
Up your teaching game!
Four days of practical and research-based presentations, workshops, and materials displays. Plenty of opportunities to network and socialize.

Venue: WINC Aichi www.winc-aichi.jp

全国語学教育学会・第45回年次国際大会教材展示会
後援: 名古屋市教育委員会, 愛知県教育委員会
Picture this: Language support: A and B presenters

**Presenter A**
Describe the main subject of your picture. For example:

*In my picture* some people are riding horses in the mountains.

Now add some more details.

*In the foreground / background* there is / are

*Next to the __*some trees, mountains

*On the right / left* houses, a church

Don’t forget numbers, size, and colors. “…and two big blue umbrellas”.

Time to think:
Okay, let me think...umm...
I can’t remember exactly but maybe ...

♫ ...........

**Presenter B**
Describe the main subject of your picture. For example:

*In my picture* some people are riding horses in the mountains.

Now add some more details.

*In the foreground / background* there is / are

*Next to the __*some trees, mountains

*On the right / left* houses, a church

Don’t forget numbers, size, and colors. “...and two big blue umbrellas”.

Time to think:
Okay, let me think...umm...
I can’t remember exactly but maybe ...
Picture this: Language support: Class questioners

Class. Ask questions to find out more about the pictures.

In your picture is / are there ___________________________?

Can you see __________________________________________?

What is / are __________________________________________ doing? / wearing?

What does ___________________________________________ look like?

What color ____________________________________________?

How old ________? /big _________? /many ________ are there?

<< ..........

Class. Ask questions to find out more about the pictures.

In your picture is / are there ___________________________?

Can you see __________________________________________?

What is / are __________________________________________ doing? / wearing?

What does ___________________________________________ look like?

What color ____________________________________________?

How old ________? /big _________? /many ________ are there?
Appendix A – Political Speeches

Directions: Please watch the following speeches given by famous politicians. Underneath each person’s name please write complete sentences about what you noticed about at least two of these five things:

- Speed
- Intonation
- Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Body language

Don’t worry about what they say; focus on how they say it.

Winston Churchill:  
____________________________________________________________________________

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3qSDaC2IgM from 11:00 to end

Richard Nixon:  
____________________________________________________________________________

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yQJEGcI-Uw from 2:17 to 2:53

Hillary Clinton:  
____________________________________________________________________________

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M945IppM_Pk from 8:56 to 9:45
Barack Obama: ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueMNqdB1QIE from 0:11 to 2:56

Margaret Thatcher: ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJchseAmfmw from 37:40 to 39:16

Who do you think is the best public speaker? ____________________________
What do they do well? ____________________________
Appendix B - Vote for Us!

First, you need to find a partner.
Your name: _____________________   Your partner’s name: _________________________

Next, you need to decide who will be the President and Vice President.
President: ________________________     Vice President: _________________________

Now look at the list of topics and choose **TWO** that you think are important and want to talk about.

| ☐ Culture shock | ☐ Jobs | ☐ Body art |
| ☐ Mental health | ☐ Money | ☐ Race |
| ☐ Gender roles | ☐ Stereotypes | ☐ Immigration |
| ☐ Refugees |

Topic 1: _________________________  Topic 2: ____________________________

Why did you choose Topic 1?  Think about why it is important to you or to the country, and why you want to talk about it. Write at least two reasons.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Think about Topic 1 some more. What is your plan to make the situation better?  Write four things that you would do if you were President.

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Why did you choose Topic 2? Think about why it is important to you or to the country, and why you want to talk about it. Write at least two reasons.
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Think about Topic 2 some more. What is your plan to make the situation better? Write four things that you would do if you were President.
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Your speech needs an introduction (the start of your speech) and a conclusion (the end). Your introduction needs to grab the audience’s attention. Write your introduction here:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Your conclusion should remind people of your important topics and your plans to make things better. Write your conclusion here:
____________________________________________________________________________

Show your work to the teacher. 
Now you need to practise your speech. Think about the things we discussed last lesson:

- Intonation    - Speed    - Facial expressions
- Gestures     - Body language

You also need to decide who will say which parts of the speech. Practise as much as you can. You want people to listen to you, believe in you, and vote for you!
Learning about Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future Movement

These questions are designed for Grade 9 level but can be adapted for other grades. Likewise, the answers can be presented with blanks for lower levels or used as a straightforward dictation activity for higher levels. The questions and answers could also be cut up to be used as a matching game or for a “karuta”-style listening activity.

If you prefer fewer questions, combine the first few answers as an introduction that the students read before starting the Q&A session. Some alternatives have been included in brackets.

This can be run as a random mingling-style activity, with one answer per student, pair work with two students taking turns to ask and answer the questions, or a group activity in two stages.

**Group Activity**

Divide the class into 3 or 4 groups (alternatively 6 or 8 groups with large classes). In this first group, students practice reading all of the questions plus the answers they have been assigned. The teacher(s) should circulate to check and help students with pronunciation, stress, and intonation.

Then form new groups, with one member from each of the initial groups – doubling some students up if the numbers are not even (which is useful if you have some weaker students). In the new groups, the students ask each other and answer the questions in turn, with a gap fill handout if necessary.

A whole-class choral review of all the answers can wrap it up, with further review later as required, leading to formal testing if needed. Students can also quiz each other to review.

**Students Making Questions**

Another way to use this material is to present it in paragraph form to the students, who then work in groups (or as an individual homework exercise) to create the questions themselves, possibly giving half each to half of the class or dividing among groups.

The questioning can then be done, likewise in pairs or groups, with the students scanning the paragraph to answer their classmates’ questions. The teacher will need to check the students’ questions and proposed answers before the activity is run, so plan the timing accordingly.

**Discussion Activity**

This could be followed by a whole class or group discussion, with open-ended questions such as “What do you think of Greta’s activity?”, “Would you like to join in this kind of activity?”, or “What can young people in Japan do about the climate crisis?” Survey style questions are also interesting, with Yes/No or Agree/Disagree answers, as well as questions like “Is this a good way to fight against the climate crisis?” and “Do you think it’s OK to miss school for a climate strike?” Sometimes students are more willing to express their ideas in groups and this provides more talking time. The groups can then share some points from their discussion in turn.

**Note 1:** Explain any new vocabulary or difficult pronunciation before starting the activity, e.g.

- activity 活動
- parliament 議会
- movement 運動
- climate 気候
- crisis 危機
- solve 解決する
- ppm100 万分の1
- strike ストライク

giving the Japanese equivalent.

**Note 2:** Please select the questions you want to use or add other details from your own reading

Adjust the wording and length of answers to suit the student level and grade.
Greta Thunberg and the Climate Crisis

1. Where does Greta Thunberg come from? She comes from Sweden.
2. How old is she? She is 16 (years old).
3. When did she start her activity? She started when she was 15.
4. What did she do then? She started a school strike outside the Swedish government building (parliament).
5. Why did she do that? She wanted to send a message that adults must do something about global warming.
6. Did Greta start her movement with friends? No, she sat outside the building by herself, holding a poster.
7. Did she really go on strike from school? Yes, but not every day, only on Fridays.
8. What did she call her movement? She called it “Fridays for Future”.
9. Did she get into trouble at school? No. Her teachers want her to study but they understand her message.
10. What did her parents think? They worried about her, but they supported her ideas.
11. How did Greta get this idea? When she was younger, she learned about global warming. She couldn’t understand why adults are doing nothing to solve this problem.
12. What did other people think about her actions? A newspaper wrote about her and then other students joined her.
13. Is she very famous? Yes, she has met many world leaders and some people want her to get the Nobel Prize.
14. Is this movement only in Sweden? No, it has spread all over the world. Many young people are angry.
15. What does Greta want adults to do? She wants them to listen to scientists who say we must stop global warming.
16. What does she say about global warming? She says it is getting worse and it’s now a “climate crisis”.
17. How is global warming getting worse? The CO2 levels are rising. The level is now 415 ppm.
18. What is a safe level of CO2? Scientists say we should cut CO2 to 350 ppm.
19. Has Greta changed anything? Yes, in Sweden many people have stopped flying because it causes more CO2.
21. What else can we do to cut CO2 levels? We can use less oil and coal (fossil fuels) and plant more trees.
22. Are students in Japan striking too? Yes, students in Tokyo and Kyoto held marches from February this year.
23. What do Japanese schools think about this (students striking)? Japanese schools are strict about students not going to school.
24. Is it hard for Japanese students to strike? Yes, but the last march in Tokyo was held from 4:30 so many students could join.
Making use of infographics

Charts and illustrations can help effectively communicate important information and ideas effectively. For this example, one idea is to have the students work in groups or pairs to match the definitions in Japanese with the types of energy listed on the worksheet below. Marking each other’s answers is time-saving and fun.

Pre-teach important vocabulary so the students can pronounce each word correctly, and review their pronunciation at the start of the following lesson. Having students read the definitions aloud at the start is recommended. You can review in the next lesson by asking, “What does ___mean?” and having the students read the definition aloud, “It means ___”, or ask each other in turn.

Next, have students guess the range of percentages recommended for Japan to move to a 100% sustainable energy mix. The team that gets the most correct answers from among the percentages listed on the worksheet can be presented with an ‘eco-scientist’ award. It’s fun to give a great looking certificate to the winning team(s). Then you can spend time discussing details and deal with any questions. Don’t forget to give students a copy of the infographic or display the poster in the classroom.

With more time to spend and/or stronger students, you might ask pairs or groups to conduct research online to find the benefits and drawbacks of each method. The same could also be done with coal, oil, methane, LNG, and nuclear depending on the overall length of time you are spending on this activity. High level students might be able to handle a discussion or debate on whether nuclear power is sustainable or not, considering the risks and costs of things like decommissioning and waste storage.
A 100% Sustainable Energy Plan for Japan

Experts produced a plan for Japan to change its energy balance. Let’s try to read their minds! This is a team challenge to win today’s “Eco-scientist Award”!

Make sure you know these words before starting:
- electricity 電気
- energy エネルギー
- power 電力
- public 公的
- collect 集める
- heat 熱
- panel パネル
- produce 作る・生み出す
- turbine タービン

Part 1: What do we call these types of energy? Choose a-j from the box below.

1. collecting and converting solar energy to electricity with panels on top of houses
2. placing many solar panels on the ground over a large area of land
3. using mirrors to focus the sun’s heat on one place and produce energy
4. collecting wind on the land using windmills of many sizes
5. using large windmills in the sea to collect energy
6. using large company and public buildings to collect the sun’s energy.
7. using the movement on top of the sea to produce energy
8. making energy from the heat deep in the land
9. using the movement of flowing water to produce energy by moving a turbine
10. using the movement of the water deep in the sea to produce electricity

Check your answers to find your score for Part 1. Change papers with another team & write the score.

Part 2: Now try to think like expert scientists.
What percentage did the scientists recommend for each kind of energy? Match the percentages:

0%, 0.2%, 0.5%, 0.7%, 1.7%, 3.4%, 4.1%, 5.5%, 7%, 76.8%

Now change your papers again to learn your total score. Let's find the winning team or teams!

Name: ___________________________________