



全国語学教育学会 日本語教育研究部会
JALT Japanese as a Second Language Special Interest Group

JALT JAPANESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
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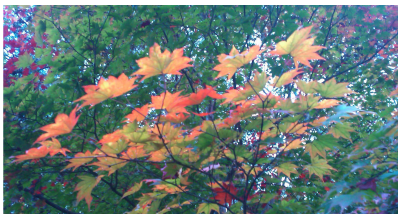
Mission Statement

The mission of the Japanese as a Second Language Special Interest Group (JSL SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is to serve as a resource for promoting JSL teaching, learning and research. We welcome JSL teachers, learners, and researchers to join and take an active role in our SIG.

Message from the Coordinator

Dear Colleagues, hope this finds you all well. We are happy to report that we now have 70 members. The JSL forum entitled "Testing and Evaluation in Japanese Proficiency" was held on October 13 (Saturday), 2012, at the 38th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning (JALT 2012) held in Hamamatsu city, Shizuoka Pref. We also had a SIG AGM on the same day. It was very nice to meet many of you at the conference and share ideas with you.

Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska



Dakigaeri Gorge (Akita)

Message from the Newsletter Editor

Welcome to the JSL SIG newsletter autumn issue. In this issue, we will report the 38th JALT annual conference, which was held in October in Hamamatsu. JSL SIG had the annual general meeting. You can see the new officer list in the second page. Also, JSL SIG sponsored a forum, and the details are summarized by Asami sensei, Kakiyama sensei, Kanbara sensei, and Hattori sensei. The latter part of this issue is Noguchi sensei's Japanese Teaching Hint, Part II and Matsuzawa sensei's Letter from China, Part II. I appreciate the contributors and supporters for this issue. Feedback is truly appreciated either directly to the author or to the editor. Thank you for your continuing support and cooperation. Please enjoy this comfortable weather and the Kouyou season.

Nozomi Takano

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■ JALT Annual Conference ■

The 38th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exhibition was held on October 12-15, 2012 at ACT City Hamamatsu, Shizuoka.

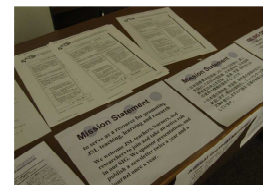


JSL SIG held the annual general meeting on Saturday, October 13th. Two officers were newly elected, Tamayo Hattori for a membership co-chair and Okada for a record.



Annual general meeting

JSL SIG also sponsored a forum, "Testing and Evaluation in Japanese Proficiency" on Saturday, October 13th. Please refer the summary in the following pages for the details.



JSL SIG table

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<http://jalt.org/jsl/>

JSL SIG Forum: Testing and Evaluation in Japanese Proficiency

What are the roles of standardized Japanese Language assessment tests for JSL (Japanese as a Second Language) educators and learners? This forum introduced and discusses the four assessment tests, namely the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), CAL (Center for Applied Linguistics) Oral Proficiency Exam (COPE), and the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA).

New Japanese-Language Proficiency Test Kaori Asami

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The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) has been offered by the Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services since 1984 as a reliable means to evaluate and certify the Japanese proficiency of non-native speakers. Since 2009, the JLPT started to be offered twice a year in July and December. Over time, test applicants became diverse, and use of JLPT results has expanded to include employment screening and evaluation for promotions and pay raises. To ensure the continuing relevancy and accuracy of the JLPT, a revised version of the test was introduced in 2010. This new test takes full advantage of the most advanced research in Japanese pedagogy and testing theory, and reflects the data accumulated since the original JLPT was launched over 20 years ago. In this presentation, 4-points about the new JLPT were introduced: (1) revised to measures communicative competence required to perform tasks; (2) increased the number of levels from 4 to 5; (3) revised the scoring method; and (4) revised to include a JLPT "Can-do" self-assessment. The presenter concluded by summarizing how JLPT test results were used.

ACTFL OPI Standards: Integrating "Connections" in Language Teaching

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In Japanese Language Education (JLE), for instance, instructional designs, classroom teaching and learning and assessment has been a major concern for more than twenty years. This session introduced the Japanese Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) which is based on a design developed by the American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL). In fact, this has been widely applied by teachers who are qualified as OPI testers and researchers, to language education. It has been considered as one of the major assessment tools to evaluate foreign language programs. In particular, the development of language learning and teaching in conversational contexts, and interactive relationships between speakers and listeners are the focus of this test. Firstly, the speaker introduced the key structure of the OPI referring to the 2012 up-dated ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines to help listeners get acquainted with its standards. Secondly, the procedure of the OPI was contrasted with a second language educational context. Attention was paid to examples of the simple application based on OPI techniques in order to conduct our performance-based Japanese language classroom teaching. As standards establish criteria ranges, from both teachers' and learners' perspectives, the OPI influences language learning and teaching by showing goals and indicators that facilitates learners initiating conversations using spiral approach. The presenter underscored how this approach greatly helps them to explore important linguistic elements. Ways that the Japanese OPI enables learners to identify what they can and cannot do in given contexts were outlined.

Oral Assessments for Young Language Learners: Characteristics and Benefits

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This presentation examined several ways of assessing the oral performance of young Japanese language learners. The procedures and reputed benefits of the Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA), the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA), and the CAL Oral Proficiency Exam (COPE) were outlined. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in the US developed these tools in response to requests from many school districts for alternative assessments that would be appropriate for young language learners, such as in Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) and language immersion programs. Most of them have common oral proficiency categories and rating scales. In the latter part of the presentation, the following three questions were discussed: What kinds of language tasks are appropriate for children? In what ways is assessing children is different from assessing adults? What is the significance of oral assessments?

Japanese Oral Interview Test for Children: Data Analysis

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Oral interview tests can be a great way to observe how individual students communicate. One of the challenges for language teachers is how to evaluate vast amounts of assessment data after conducting oral interview. In this presentation, presenters introduced how they utilized oral interview data in their action research. The presenters taught in Japanese immersion programs in the US and implemented the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA), which is developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics. The tasks cover a wide range of school topics, such as describing academic concepts, retelling stories, and role playing. Short video clips of each task were shown to explain typical errors students in immersion settings make, as well as communication strategies used during the interview. Then, presenters introduced how they analyzed the interview data to find out language developmental patterns of the students. At last, the benefits and challenges of conducting SOPA were discussed.



Asami, Takano, Kakiyama, Hattori, Kambara

In order to acquire Comprehensive Communication Ability ②

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The last time in the Early Summer issue, I introduced the main idea of “Comprehensive Communication Ability,” and thought what kind of activities we can do in our class using an existing textbook. This time, I will introduce a project work possibly carried out at beginner’s level. Before that, let me review the key concepts of “Comprehensive Communication Ability.” The chart below is the summary of the key concepts.

[See Chart 1]

Traditional communicative approach tries to train only two abilities, “understand and can do” in just two areas, “language and culture,” i.e., “□” marked parts. However, as you can see, the key concepts of “Comprehensive Communication Ability” are quite wide. As well as the “□” marked parts, whole “□” parts are covered. It is really hard to cover the above all only if we just use an existing textbook. We need to think up some project work type learning activities. The following is a project work conducted in my classes in summer session this year: July 26th to August 15th in 2012.



Noguchi sensei with students

First of all, I handed out the following sheet to students.

[See Project Work Handout]

In this summer, four groups performed their original ones, and all their performances were very good. Actually, the following is the most attractive and educational.

[See Performance Sample]

One of the students of the group majors in arts, and she leads the group quite well, and made an excellent performance. I think the project work covers the entire key concepts of “Comprehensive Communication Ability,” and it can be summarized as in the following chart.

[See Chart 2]

As the above charts show, project work type activities will cover most or all key concepts of “Comprehensive Communication Ability” I think some teachers of the Japanese language do not like project work type activities, since those are different from step by step drill activities which may improve the syntactic accuracy of production. However, I think project work type activities will be very helpful to nurture the survival ability in this global society, and should be adopted in Japanese language education a lot more than before.

[Chart 1] Key concepts of “Comprehensive Communication Ability”

	Language	Culture	Global society	Learner	Other subjects	Outside of class
Understand	✓	✓	◎	◎	◎	◎
Can do	✓	✓	◎	◎	◎	◎
Connect	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎

[Project Work Handout]

Project Work

You are supposed to give a performance using the Japanese language at the farewell party held on Wednesday August 15th. This is a part of your final exam, so whole the process; the preparation to the performance will be evaluated. You should discuss well what you will do and how you can do to fulfill the following requirements. You will have three discussion sessions in class.

1. The party is very lively and noisy. Try to get audience’s attention, and make them fun.
2. The performance should be conducted in Japanese, but there are some audiences who do not understand Japanese, so if it is necessary, provide English translation.
3. Three Japanese students will come next discussion session to help you. Cooperate with them well.
4. Try to adopt Japanese culture; traditional or recent, and show how it is different or similar to culture of other countries.
5. Try to utilize various technologies.
6. The performance should be finished in 30 minutes.

[Performance Sample]

Title : Color Theory

1. Each of twelve students takes a role of a color, and introduces his/her color.
2. Each student wears the clothes of assigned color.
3. Starting with primary colors: red, blue and yellow, secondary colors, and tertiary colors are introduced one after another.
4. When they introduce their colors, they also show how those colors are used in Japan. For instance, in case of blue, the student shows how the color is used for kimono, and the uniform of Japanese National team.
5. They dance around when colors mix.

[Table 2] Summary of the project work “Color Theory”

	Language	Culture	Global society	Learner	Other subjects	Outside of class
Understand	Understand how to introduce themselves or colors	Understand representative items of each color in Japan	Understand information of colors in the internet	Understand their own roles for the performance	Understand Color Theory	Understand the situation of the party
Can do	Can introduce themselves or colors	Can say representative items of each color in Japan	Can utilize the internet and a slide show software	Do their roles for the performance	Can connect Color Theory to the performance	Can attract audience by giving the performance
Connect	Introduce themselves or colors in front of others, and communicate with others	Connect representative items of colors in Japan with those in other countries	Build up a close connection with Japanese volunteers	Do their roles in cooperation with others	Connect the Japanese language, Japanese culture and Color Theory	Deepen relationships with others at the party

Letter from China ②**Takashi Matsuzawa**Zhejiang Normal University
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Since writing the precious *Letter from China*, there have been many changes in my life. In September I quit working at a company in Shenzhen to start teaching at Zhejiang Normal University in Zhejiang Province, in eastern coastal China. Perhaps due to my advancing age, it was getting difficult to work in Shenzhen, so I applied to the Japan-China Skilled-Workers Exchange Center, a non-profit public-service foundation that helps send Japanese teachers to Chinese universities. Fortunately, I was accepted as a teacher candidate and after explaining the situation to my manager, I received permission to leave. Working for the Japan-China Skilled-Workers Exchange Center has both merits and demerits. Teachers cannot choose which university they will work for. However, there is no rigid retirement age for this program. After completing the center's two-week training, I was assigned to a university to teach right after the training.

Zhejiang Normal University is a mammoth provincial educational institution with about 25,000 undergraduates. As this university evolved from a teachers college, majority of its students are women. Its campus is huge. The apartment for foreign teachers is located near the east end of the campus and it takes nearly 30 minutes to get to the North Gate, where the nearest shopping area is located, by foot. Classes started on September 3 and I was given four courses to teach: Japanese Conversation 2 (for second yr. students) and 4 (for third yr. students), Japanese Business Documents and Japanese for Tour Guides. Those latter two courses were electives for third yr. students. In total, I was responsible for teaching 16 school hours a week (one school hour here is 40 minutes). While in Japan, I tried to obtain details about

these courses. However, since summer holiday had begun and the teacher responsible for class assignments had changed, I had to leave Japan before obtaining any information.

After arriving at school, I found out that there were textbooks for only two of the courses. -This was not a comfortable realization after being told that I could teach as I wanted. For one course, I used several closely related texts. As most of my career had been in business, I somehow managed to apply my experience towards this course. As for Japanese Conversation 4, since there was no reference text, I started by conducting an original *Can-Do* survey in which many general expressions were listed, such as 'I can introduce myself', or 'I can explain my symptoms when I get sick', etc. The next few classes were devoted to items which most students replied "no" to. Meanwhile, I found a book of daily and social conversations in Japanese published in China. This seemed good for practical use and it included a number of role-plays.

Let me talk about the students. I now recall that the students I taught in Shenzhen tended to consist of young female employees. Now the classes I am teaching consist of about 20 students per class. Whereas one class is at Zhejiang Normal University, the other is at Xingzhi College (which seems to be a private college operated by the university). There are only one or two male students in each class. I hear students in China study hard. It seems true as most second year students can understand my lectures in fundamental Japanese without problem and some of the third grade students respond to my speech when I try to elicit their laughter. I believe that the best medicine for a new teacher is diligent students, so I feel very happy about them. My contract term with the university is one year and I'm committed to trying my best here.

Lastly, you may have heard about recent friction between Japan and China. My friends and relatives in Japan ask me if I'm safe. I can honestly tell there have been no

JSL Members

The JSL-SIG currently has around 70 members. To expand our network and share JSL information more dynamically, please invite your colleagues and friends to join us!

Benefits to be a member : Be able to

1. contribute a paper submission to the peer-reviewed JALT JSL-SIG journal, which is published bi-annually.
2. receive three SIG newsletters per year.
3. contribute articles, conference reports, lesson plans, teaching ideas, students' essays, call for papers, etc. to the SIG newsletter.
4. present at the Pan-SIG conference (apply through the Pan-SIG official Web page).
5. participate the JSL forums as a presenter at JALT and/or Pan-SIG conferences (contact mierze@tuj.ac.jp for details).
6. attend JSL-SIG meetings and workshops.
7. request information of Japanese teaching materials, methods, cultural exchange, culture and society, pragmatics, etc. (contact mierze@tuj.ac.jp)
8. obtain the updated information of academic conferences and call for papers.
9. receive the member's discount for the JALT related conferences.

How to join (if you haven't joined) :

1. Become a JALT member. The easiest way is going through the JALT website, <https://jalt.org/joining/>
2. On this application page, find Special Interest Group (SIG) section and choose JSL. You can join SIGs as many as you want (1500 yen per a SIG). There is also an option to become a JSL-SIG newsletter reader for 2500 yen per year without the JALT membership.

* Please refer the JALT membership categories and fees on

<http://jalt.org/main/membership>

incidents in which I felt bad or uncomfortable, let alone any danger. The Chinese people inside and outside of the campus treat me just as any other Chinese person. It is true that some demonstrations in China developed into riots, but I believe those were exceptional cases. On behalf of the honor of my Chinese friends, former coworkers and students, I need to report the reader that majority of Chinese people have remained calm about this issue. (I received sympathetic e-mails and notes of concern from residents of Shenzhen as well.)

**JSL Newsletter**

Would you like to make a contribution to our SIG newsletter, sending your article to us? We are accepting articles, book reviews, conference announcements, conference reports, conference review, interviews, lesson plans, essays from your students, etc. from both JALT JSL members and your colleagues.

It would be appreciated if the author of the article could send his/her contribution both in Japanese and English. When you cannot find your translator for your contribution, please feel free to contact us.

The deadline for the next issue is **January 20, 2012**. We look forward to receiving your contribution.

JSL Newsletter Editor

Nozomi Takano

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