

2019 The Japan Foundation Japanese Teaching Methods Program for Teachers of the Japanese-Language

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Essential questions:

1. What are the different ways that we can teach about Japan through Japanese?
2. How can we learn about teaching Japanese from other international educators?

These were two key questions that I pondered during the 2019 The Japan Foundation Teaching Methods Program held in Urawa, Saitama, Japan. The program consisted of 36 teachers from 26 countries. It was a six-week program centred on teaching methodologies and networking. This was the first year that such a "methodology course" had been held, and it proved to be a big success amongst participants.



PHOTO: Our first day



PHOTO: Presentation about my Japanese teaching context

I had the opportunity to present information about syllabus changes in NSW, Australia and the ongoing focus that language teachers have in teaching interculturally and communicatively. I also was able to hear the context of Japanese teachers in many other countries. Many were impressed by the innovation in our syllabus, our continued focus on reflecting on identity and culture and overall commitment to providing Languages education at the primary and junior high school levels. There was great interest in Australian texts for Japanese learners too, with many teachers from Europe expressing a desire to have similar books written in their own language!

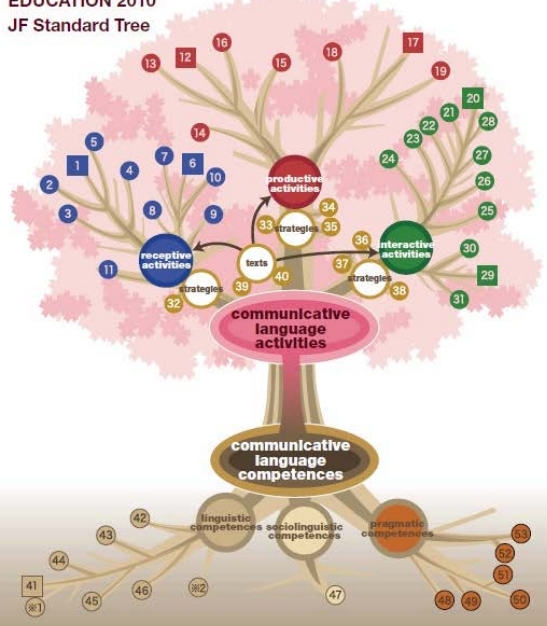
Lectures

The program included many lectures on the topics of:

- Second language acquisition
- How to teach speaking, reading, writing, listening, vocabulary and culture
- How to evaluate and create tests
- Our role as a Japanese teacher
- How to use The Japan Foundation's textbook and online series: Marugoto
- How to increase motivation using the ARCS model: <https://www.arcsmodel.com/>

The lectures were centred about The Japan Foundation standards. We worked in teams to design lesson plans that reflected the standards as well as evaluate our own teaching.

JF STANDARD FOR JAPANESE-LANGUAGE EDUCATION 2010
JF Standard Tree



About the category numbers of language competences and language activities
The category numbers of communicative language competences and communicative language activities in the JF Standard Tree start from the branches, which represent language activities, and increase towards the roots of the tree, which represent language competences. Also, the numbers enclosed in squares signify general or comprehensive activities or competences, while the numbers enclosed in circles stand for categories in which the activities and competences are further classified in more detailed groups. [receptive activities: 1 - 11] [productive activities: 12 - 19] [interactive activities: 20 - 31] [tests: 32 - 40] [competences: 41 - 56]

The JF Standard presents sentences that describe the levels of Japanese-language proficiency as what the learner "can do" in Japanese, which are classified in the abovementioned categories. The "Can-do" within each category are further divided into six levels. "11 semantic competences" and "12 pragmatic competences," which are categorized as linguistic competences, are listed but presently have no "Can-do" entries.

コミュニケーション言語能力とコミュニケーション言語活動のカテゴリ
(communicative language competences) (communicative language activities)

| コミュニケーション言語活動 communicative language activities | |
|---|---|
| 産出 | |
| 活動 | |
| 12 話すこと全般 overall oral production | 17 書くこと全般 overall written production |
| 13 経緯や物語を語る sustained monologue: describing experience | 18 作文を書く creative writing |
| 14 論述する sustained monologue: putting a case (up, in a debate) | 19 レポートや記事を書く reports and essays |
| 15 公共アナウンスをする public announcements | |
| 16 講演やプレゼンテーションをする addressing audiences | |
| 方略 | |
| 33 表現方法を考える | 34 (表現できないことを) 別の方法で補う compensating |
| | 35 自分の発話をモニターする monitoring and repair |
| 理解 | |
| 活動 | |
| 1 聞くこと全般 overall listening comprehension | 20 読むこと全般 overall reading comprehension |
| 2 母語話者同士の会話を聞く listening conversation between native speakers | 21 手紙やメールを読む reading correspondence |
| 3 聴取やプレゼンテーションを聞く listening as a member of a live audience | 22 必要な情報を探し出す reading for orientation |
| 4 指示やアナウンスを聞く listening to announcements and instructions | 23 情報や要点を掴み取る capturing information & key points |
| 5 音声メディアを聞く listening to audio-media and recordings | 24 読解を読む reading instructions |
| 11 テレビや映画を見る watching TV and film | |
| 方略 | |
| 25 意図を推測する identifying cues and inferring (spoken & written) | |
| やりとり | |
| 活動 | |
| 20 口説でのやりとり全般 overall spoken interaction | 24 文章でのやりとり全般 overall written interaction |
| 21 母語話者とやりとりをする understanding a native speaker interlocutor | 25 手紙やメールのやりとりをする correspondence |
| 22 社会的なやりとりをする conversation | 26 インフォーマルな場面でやりとりをする informal discussion (with friends) |
| 23 インフォーマルな場面でやりとりをする informal discussion (with friends) | 27 フォーマルな場面で議論する formal discussion and meetings |
| 24 フォーマルな場面で議論する formal discussion and meetings | 28 共同作業中にやりとりをする discussing a document, organizing an event |
| 25 共同作業中にやりとりをする discussing a document, organizing an event | 29 店や公共機関でやりとりをする transactions to obtain goods and services |
| 26 インタビューする/受ける interviewing and being interviewed | |
| 方略 | |
| 29 発言権を取る(ターン・テイキング) taking the floor (turn-taking) | 30 議論の展開に協力する co-operating |
| | 31 説明を求める asking for clarification |
| テキスト | |
| 28 メモやノートを取る note-taking (lectures, seminars, etc.) | 32 要約したり書き写したりする processing text |

| コミュニケーション言語能力 communicative language competences | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 言語的知識の能力 | |
| 41 使える言語の範囲 general linguistic range | 42 使用語彙領域 vocabulary range |
| 43 言葉の使いなし vocabulary control | 44 文法的正確さ grammatical accuracy |
| 45 音素の把握 phonological control | 46 正書法の把握 orthographic control |
| 47 意味的能力 semantic competences | 48 読字能力 literacy |
| 社会的言語能力 | |
| 49 社会言語的な適切さ sociolinguistic appropriateness | |
| 語用能力 | |
| ディスコース能力 | |
| 51 柔軟性 flexibility | 52 発音癖 intonation |
| 53 話題の展開 thematic development | 54 一貫性と結束性 coherence and cohesion |
| 機能的能力 | |
| 55 話しことばの流暢さ spoken fluency | 56 叙述の正確さ professional precision |

JF 日本語教育スタンダード <https://jfstandard.jp/> 著作権 © The Japan Foundation

PHOTO: The Japan Foundation Standard. Are there any areas that you feel your lessons are catering heavily towards?

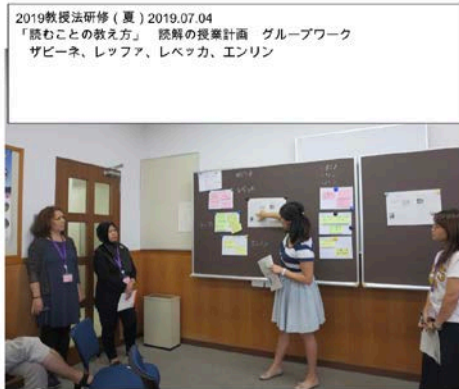


PHOTO: Team teaching on the topic of reading

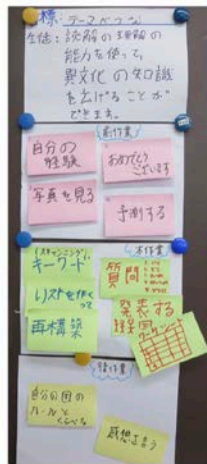


PHOTO: Cultural investigation: Mt Fuji



Excursions

We were able to go on many excursions that also enriched our understanding of Japan and culture. Many of the teachers attending had a keen interest in developing mature age students' career opportunities in Japan.



PHOTO: Create your own windchime (風鈴)

Projects

We had time to work on our own project. During this time, I used my experience of working as a group to create a basic assessment task that I could use for my beginner Year 7 class.

Based on what I learnt during this course, I aim to support a more communicative approach to Japanese teaching. As the whole course was in Japanese and all the participants communicated in Japanese, it was a real challenge for me to test my own ability. However, from this experience, I feel much more confident in using Japanese in all my classes and aim to do so in order to lift my own students' ability in speaking Japanese.

TASK INSTRUCTIONS

You and a friend have been asked to create an international Junior high school (JHS) in Japan. The students attending your school are Japanese students who want to go to an English school. A junior high school includes students from years 7 to 9.

You will both create a **Junior High School poster** for your new JHS.

To do this, you will include :

Slide 1: Create a name for your Junior high school **in Japanese**. Refer to the "Names" list.

Slide 2: A mission statement. This is an opening paragraph introducing prospective students to the school **in English**. Refer to the "Opening paragraph" scaffold.

Describe the values your school promotes and best characteristics of the school.

Slide 3: A classroom rules section. List at least five important classroom rules **in Japanese**. **Explain** why you've chosen these rules (5 sentences).

Slide 4: A classroom stationary section. List at least ten objects that students need to bring to school **in Japanese**.

Slide 5: A Japanese timetable including how many periods a day, times and subjects.

Slide 6: At least 10 **images** of your school, classroom or facilities. You will only have **ONE period** to do this so you must work in pairs or individually if your partner is away.

The period allocated will be: _____

Slide 7: A personal reflection answering the following questions. Answers must be clearly written on the poster.

Q1. *What are the differences and similarities between Japanese and Australian schools?*

Q2. *What do I want to learn more about in Japanese schools?*

Q3. *How did my group decide on the school we were designing, including it's names, timetables, rules and images. What experiences did you use to inspire your ideas?*

Q4. *What challenges did you face as a group and how did you overcome them?*

Q5. *What would you change about your school if you had another chance?*

Other activities that I plan to incorporate into my teaching:

- Greater use of project work
- Interesting ways to understand the intricacies of Japanese language. We had a few lessons on how to use Corpus to clarify the meaning of specific language. Corpus is similar to a linguistic library for analysing the meaning of words. If you are interested in understanding further about Japanese linguistics and meaning, we were recommended these sites:

KOTONOHA: <http://www.kotonoha.gr.jp/shonagon/> (Japanese corpus research site)

ひらひらのひらがなめがね: <http://www.hiragana.jp> (To add furigana to Japanese writing)

The Reading Tutor Web Dictionary: <http://chuta.jp/> (Dictionary for Japanese to English)

NINJAL-LWP for BCCWJ: <http://nlb.ninjal.ac.jp/search/> (Corpus search engine)

- Providing more opportunities to teach hiragana and katakana concurrently
- Using recent news and trends in the class with sites such as NHK news website; NEWS WEB EASY: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/news/easy/>
- Increasing the use of interactive websites such as Marugoto.

MARUGOTO: <https://www.marugoto.org/en/>

MARUGOTO Plus Japanese Learning: <https://marugotoweb.jp/en/index.php>

HIROGARU, get more of Japan and Japanese: <https://hirogaru-nihongo.jp/en/>

Erin's Challenge! I can speak Japanese: <https://www.erin.ne.jp/en/>

Japanese in Anime & Manga: http://anime-manga.jp/index_english.html

Reflections

Most of all, the program impressed upon me how important networking is to the business of Languages teaching. The challenges we each face are sometimes not only within our context, but widespread and commonly felt by many languages teachers around the world. Through open communication and networking, we can build a community of learners that are intrigued by Japanese and experience success in using it.

I am very grateful to the staff at The Japan Foundation, Sydney for supporting me in my preparation, the NSW Department of Education, as well as to the wonderful and expert staff from Urawa, Japan and other Japanese teachers for their inspiring ideas and perspectives.



Please visit below page for more information about course applications for the next Japanese financial year.

2020 Japanese Language Grants: <https://jpf.org.au/language/for-teachers/grants/>