

The School House

The Publication of the JALT Teaching
Younger Learners SIG

全国語学教育学会若い人たちに教える
研究部会研究部会定



ISSN: 1881-0713



From the Editors

Dear SIG members,

April 1 marks the beginning of the school year, and fiscal year in Japan. It is a time when students and teachers in mainstream schools, and new employees at companies meet for the first time. While an exciting time, it can also be rather challenging. Do you remember how you felt on the first day at school, club or work? No doubt our students are also looking forward to the new school year and class groups, but lead-in activities go a long way to help create a welcoming, warm and relaxing class environment and build group cohesion.

In this issue, you will find some helpful ideas for beginning of year activities by Grant Osterman, Timothy Ang and Gaby Benthien, as well as the third part of an article series written by Rab Paterson and his students. Part 3, co-authored by Mitsuki Saito focuses on the utilization of multimedia platforms. Rab's concluding comments and the article series itself certainly reminds us of our students' potential.

This year marks the 3rd year of the pandemic. While many of us spent a considerable amount of time teaching and participating in conferences and workshops online over the past two years, 2022 seems to be the year for a full return to face-to-face teaching. We hope everyone will go through this transition smoothly.

Please take a look at our submission guidelines on our homepage (<https://jalt-tyl.net/submission-guidelines/>) and consider sharing any ideas, projects, photos, reviews and research with the TYL membership.

We hope you have a wonderful spring!

Kate & Gaby



Message from the SIG Coordinator

Dear SIG membership,

As I write this brief message at the beginning of April, I am encouraged with thoughts of new beginnings; New chances to improve our teaching, and new opportunities with employment. I think that many of us are starting a new chapter in our lives. It is also true that many people have adopted the philosophy of with COVID and are getting back to a new normal. The TYL SIG too has started thinking about getting back to face to face conferences and gatherings. I hope you will have the opportunity to attend a meeting soon and reconnect with your fellow colleagues.

Allow me to think forward for a minute to share with you some upcoming face to face events. There are two main upcoming events that I will try to go to in person. They are the PanSIG conference in Nagano the weekend of July 8-10 and a little further in the year in October is the 21stCentury Language Teaching Conference in Okinawa. At the PanSIG conference, we will be holding a joint forum in collaboration with the Intercultural Communication in Language Education Special Interest Group this year in Nagano. Please come and join us either in person or via an online hybrid format. There are many events scheduled for entertainment and of course quality professional development. I hope to see you there.

Finally from all the officers in the TYL SIG, we truly appreciate your support and understanding of our current situation. Our goal to ensure the best possible professional development for the SIG is as strong as ever. However, we also understand the concern for public health and personal safety. Therefore, as much as possible we will also continue to bring quality content to you via a virtual medium.

I hope you are having a wonderful spring. Please stay safe and continue your work with young learners.

Sincerely,

Dr. Grant Osterman

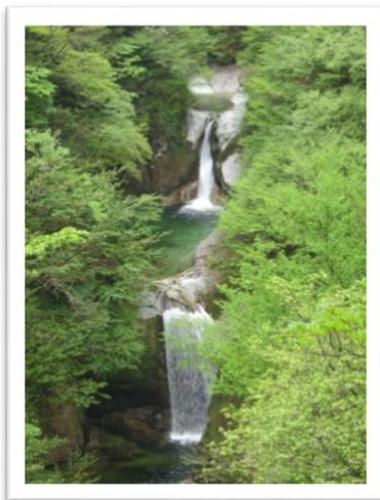


Table of Contents

Utilizing a Communication Focus	Grant Osterman	4
Lesson Plan for ‘Hello, Hello’ Icebreaker Activity	Timothy Ang	8
Icebreakers and Beginning of Year Activities	Gaby Benthien	15
Multi-Media Book Review Projects. Part 3: Utilization of Multimedia Platforms	Rab Paterson & Mitsuki Saito	23
Submission Guidelines Link		31
Member Survey Link		31

Utilizing a Communication Focus

Grant Osterman

Family English School International

I often hear from Japanese English teachers that they would love to have a more communicative focus but just do not know how to do it. They also state that the pressure from parents and administration for passing high school or university entrance tests is just too great to deviate from grammar-intensive pedagogy. Below is some information that I think will help.

Questions & Speaking

Of course speaking should be a major component of our lessons and can be combined with grammar to create lessons that meet both goals of communication and national testing. When it comes to speaking, I like to tell my students that if they do not use the language they are no better than those students who have never had the chance to learn it. I tell my students that they need take an active part in their learning. Therefore, over the years I have developed a system to assure students are using the language as much as possible. The idea was taken from David Paul's 2003 book *Teaching English to Children in Asia* (pp. 10-11). It shows a format for what students should be doing in their classes.

- a. Noticing- the questions, words, structures
- b. Wanting- to ask simple questions and to speak
- c. Taking a Risk- by asking other students and teachers
- d. Further Experimenting- trying new words and phrases
- e. Succeeding- seeing how easy it is to converse
- f. Linking- to the classroom and hopefully their daily lives (internalization)

I have modified this to use in my classes using questions and keeping a student-centered classroom. Below is a simple 3 step outline.

1. Allow students time to ask questions with friends (a, b)

- 2. Students ask again with other groups and expand their comfort zone (c, d, e)
 - 3. Now students can ask to the whole class and continue outside of class with more confidence
- (f)

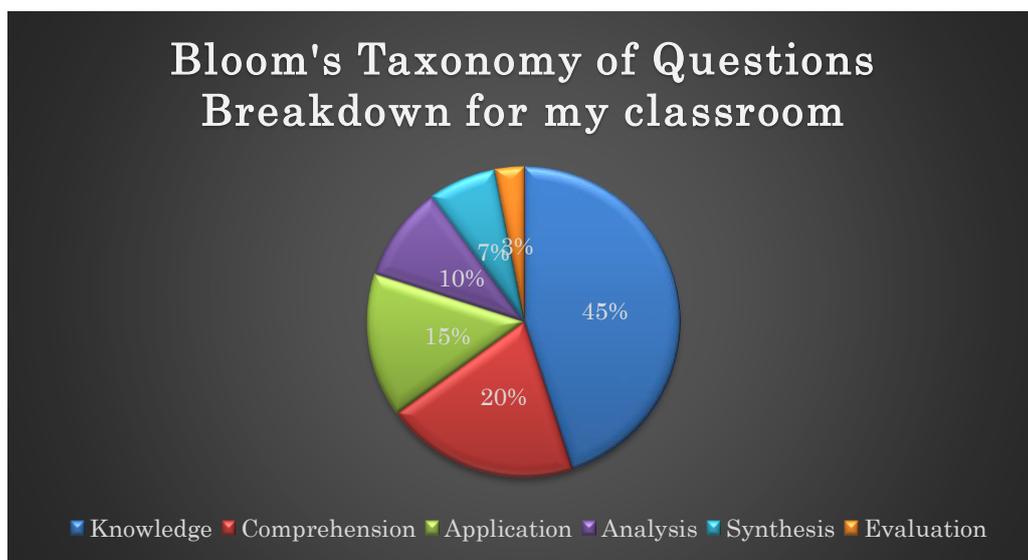
So now you might be asking what the breakdown or balance of questions should be. I am not sure there is a simple answer to that as each class holds a unique feel, but I can show you what has worked for me. I think most educators are familiar with Bloom’s taxonomy (Bloom, 1956), so I will only briefly cover it. I will welcome any comments and questions later.

Bloom’s Taxonomy of Questions

Here is a chart that shows a basic breakdown of the balance of questions in my classes. As you can see, the most useful is the knowledge and comprehension section (around 65%). This is where most of our questions will fall. This is the lower-level questioning that will focus on remembering and understanding prior lessons and general knowledge. However, as the students advance in their English understanding and ability, they will be able to tackle more advanced style questions of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Figure 1

Application in the Classroom



Most questions in our classrooms will focus on knowledge and comprehension. For example, a student might ask about the meaning of a word or what we did over the weekend. Therefore, I have designed my lessons around a simple format (see below) that is easy to adjust for each class.

Step 1: Warm-up Questions: This section is used to get students ready for the topic and to practice speaking in a natural way by asking and answering questions. Students might ask: What is your favorite food? Or they might also ask: How was your weekend? Open ended questions are best in order to get your students thinking about English and not just saying yes or no.

Step 2: Speaking Practice, Substitution Speaking Drills, and Extension Drills: Here I introduce different activities for students to learn how basic syntax can be extended to almost any topic and situation. This is also where a grammar related exercise can be done. For example, if the unit in a text book is about introducing Japan, students can substitute a word or phrase that the teacher gives. Then the basic grammar form can be extended and used in drills.

Step 3: Presentation: This section allows students an opportunity to present a topic in front of the group or class. However, it is best to practice in small groups first and then present to the class. Most sections introduce a topic in question format that the student first answers themselves. For example, how would you introduce Japan?

The final section of a lesson can be a “free talk” session where students practice all aspects of the lesson and to use prior vocabulary in the question-and-answer format. It is a great opportunity to recycle words and to get practical application.

These 3 steps are included in almost all of my lessons and are expanded as needed. I use this method with all ages from K-5 to high school. These steps also allow a teacher much leeway in their lesson planning. Anyone interested in more details can email me for sample lessons. I think having students ask questions not only gives them a chance to speak, it also stimulates deeper thinking about the topic.

References

Bloom, B. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives, handbook I: The cognitive domain*. David McKay.

Paul, D. (2003). *Teaching English to children in Asia*. Longman Asia ELT Publishing.



Lesson Plan for ‘Hello, Hello’ Icebreaker Activity

Timothy Ang

Kansai University

Keywords: Greetings, Singing, Task-based learning

Introduction

First day introductions can be nerve wracking for young learners, especially for introverted students who are just meeting their classmates for the first time. Finding fun and engaging activities to begin the semester can be a challenge for teachers. This icebreaker is an activity based on the song “Hello Hello How Are You” by the Kiboomers (The Kiboomers Kids Music Channel, 2015).

Music in Language Learning

Music is an effective way to teach English. It has been suggested that musical and language abilities may share similar brain mechanisms (Milovanov et al., 2008). Furthermore, others have stated it enhances and motivates language learning (Israel, 2013) and developing musical ability may also benefit further language acquisition (Chobert & Besson, 2013). The song “Hello Hello How Are You” has the potential to benefit student language learning.

Teaching Points

The main goal of the activity is to encourage students to introduce and get to know themselves and to get to know each other. This activity sets the tone of what is in store for the rest of the semester and makes students feel welcomed to the class. As a bonus, it also serves as a great energy booster tool for my early morning or less motivated classes.

Lesson Plan

Title of Video	Hello Hello How Are You by the Kiboomers
Student Age	6-11 years old (Primary school level)
Class Size	15-20
CEFR (Common European	A2- Can make him/herself understood in very short

Framework of Reference for Languages - Fluency Aspect)	utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident. (Council of Europe, 2022)
Skills to be emphasized	Listening and speaking
Language	<p>Grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am, I am not (verb + contraction) - I am not so good today (negative) - I hope you will feel better soon <p>Verbal Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knock - Greet - Point - Open <p>Adjectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Happy - Angry - Sad - Tired - Excited
Functional	Greetings and Introduction
Objective	<p>During/After completing this activity, students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gain the confidence to approach others - Introduce themselves in English. - Express how they feel - Use appropriate gestures
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assignment worksheets - Lyrics (See Appendix) - Video See reference list for link: The Kiboomers Kids Music Channel (2015)
Pre-Activity Warm-up	
<i>Get students' attention</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the board, write in large letters and separate into two columns “teacher’s questions” 	

and “students’ answers”. These columns will be filled up during class.

- Ask the students if they like to sing and if so what songs do they know? Where can they listen to songs?
- Add vocabulary words such as lyrics, singer, radio, music, television.
- Ask the students how they feel now. Their answers will tie in to the activity later.

Main Activity

Play the video

- Settle down the class and play the video when everyone is ready.
- On a piece of paper, ask the students to write down the words or expressions they hear from the video.
- Explain and breakdown the scene, adjust the speed and rewind difficult to understand parts if necessary.

Comprehension check

- Choose several lines from the song and write them on the board.
- Repeat by reciting or singing 10-20 seconds selected lines with the class.
- Ask the students what were the characters doing in the video?
- What did you think about the song? Do you like it? How would you describe the song?
- When do we use the exclamation punctuation symbol found in the title of the song?
- Write the relevant vocabulary on the board and practice spelling and pronunciation.

Social skills

- Ask students:

What do people usually do when meeting someone for the first time?

Why are these actions/words important?

When people see someone they know, how do they attract their attention?

What are ways to greet someone? (Hi, hello, good morning, gestures and body language, etc.)

Practice greeting

- Break the students into pairs. The two roles are: greeter and receiver.
- Set the scene by choosing a student and modeling the activity. In front of class, walk towards the student and act surprised. Start reading the lines from the video. The students can pick up what needs to be said but if not, write it on the board or print out the lyrics. (see Appendix)
- Instruct and emphasize to students that one student does the introducing while the other listens and then they switch roles. When everyone understands, the activity can start.
- Teacher(s) walk around the classroom to monitor.
- You can create a competition to see who greets the most number of classmates.
- For higher level students ask them to add longer sentences to the lyrics or create a variation with what they did over the weekend etc.

Hello, my name is (_____)

And last week I (_____)

Post-Activity Wrap Up

Review

- Play the video again.
- Ask students what they thought about the activity.
- Ask the students to repeat the grammar and vocabulary points of the video.
- For homework, ask the students to come up with answers to “how do you feel?” or “how are you?” to serve as a review activity for next week’s lesson.

Conclusion

An active and music-based icebreaker activity is explained in this article. Music is powerful in teaching language for a number of reasons including its benefits to language learning and motivation (Israel, 2013). The teaching point highlighted in this activity is familiarizing yourself with your classmates through practicing a basic greeting dialogue. The activity is aimed at students who are at CEFR A2 level, and comprises simple grammar and verbs that can be pre-taught. This activity can teach students about language and social etiquette. Having used this activity in the classroom and as someone who was reticent in his younger years, this activity holds a special place. I encourage others to explore and use music as a way to educate language learners.

Appendix A

Lyrics for Hello Song

Hello	hello, hello
Hello	how are you
How are you?	how are you today?
Hello, hello	I am hungry.
How are you?	I am tired.
Hello, hello	I am hungry.
How are you?	I'm tired.
How are you today?	I am hungry.
I am fine	I am tired.
I am fine	I'm not so good today.
I am great	oh... I hope you will feel better soon.
I am fine	hello
I'm just great!	hello
I am fine	how are you?
I am great	hello
I'm very well today	hello
Great!	how are you
Hello, hello	hello
how are you?	hello
Hello, hello	how are you?
how are you?	I'm very well today!

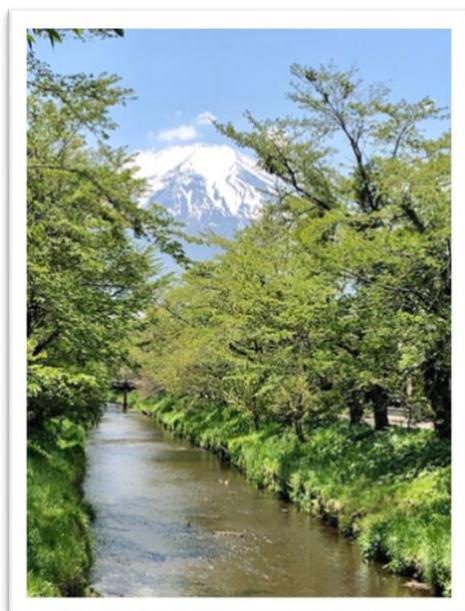
References

Chobert, J., & Besson, M. (2013). Musical expertise and second language learning. *Brain Sciences*, 3(4), 923–940. <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci3020923>

Israel, H. F. (2013). Language learning enhanced by music and song. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal, Special* 2(1), 1360–1366. <https://doi.org/10.20533/licej.2040.2589.2013.0180>

Milovanov, R., Huotilainen, M., Välimäki, V., Esquef, P. A. A., & Tervaniemi, M. (2008). Musical aptitude and second language pronunciation skills in school-aged children: Neural and behavioral evidence. *Brain Research*, 1194, 81–89. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brainres.2007.11.042>

The Kiboomers - Kids Music Channel (2015, August 5). *Hello Song | Hello Hello How Are You | Hello Song for Kids | The Kiboomers* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x23rTDI4AMs>



Icebreakers and Beginning of Year Activities

Gaby Benthien

Shumei University/ Chuo University

The beginning of the school year or the start of any new classes can be the cause of excitement as well as anxiety for students. Depending on the class set-up, students may be concerned about where to sit if they do not know anyone, and seek a smiling face. Teachers want to create a relaxed and safe/non-stressful class atmosphere and often plan a special introductory class or special activity to make students feel comfortable as part of a (new) learning community and/or to lead into the course content. Icebreakers are activities with an added feature: Helping students get acquainted and build a learning community (Eggleston & Smith, 2004). In fact, as with many learning activities, the emphasis should be on the process rather than the product (Benner, n.d.). A positive and safe learning environment is essential as it acts as a base for engaged learning, promotes communication between students, and creates group cohesion (Dörnyei 1997, 2001).

A search on the Internet will produce any number of useful websites that showcase and describe different icebreaker activities. However, before we commence this special class / use icebreaker activities, we should consider the following:

Aim: What do we hope to achieve by the end of the class?

Class / class composition: Do the students already know each other or are they meeting each other for the first time? How long has it been since they last met? What kind of experiences might the students have had (since they last met)? What kind of skills do they have?

L2 usage: What is the role of the L2 in the activity/lesson? What kinds of L2 skills are required? Can the activity be conducted without the students feeling anxious or

worried about their L2 skills?

Group cohesion and positive learning environment: Does this activity promote group cohesion? How will this activity assist in the creation of a positive, relaxed and safe learning environment? Is the activity fun/interesting?

I have used a number of activities over the years, and some favorites include the following:

Activity 1: Hello!

This activity is simple, and can be used in a number of ways. It is based on the following conversation types.

Basic conversation

Type A (Students don't know each other)

X: Hi I am X, what is your name?

Y: I am Y.

X: How is it going Y? How are you Y? How are you doing Y?

Y: I am great (a bit nervous/ hungry) and you?

X: I am good! (Add further questions/responses as required) See you around!

Y: See you!

Type B (Students know each other)

X: Hi Y. Nice to see you again.

Y: You, too. How is it going X? How are you X? How are you doing X?

Y: I am great (a bit nervous/ hungry) and you?

X: I am good! (Add further questions/responses as required) See you around!

Y: See you!

Timing: Use an alarm to make students change partner after a designated time. Varying the time (and sound) adds a fun factor.

Class arrangement: First of all, remind the students to smile during this activity and encourage positive body language. The activity can be completed in a number of ways.

Free: Students walk around the class and choose partners freely.

Semi free: Some kind of restriction is added (for example, teachers can hand out green/blue/red/yellow cards. Students must talk to people who have the same color/a different color)

Circles: Students are divided into 2 groups, and form an inner circle of students inside an outer circle of students. Movement options: Only students in the inner circle move to chat to the next person/ Only students in the outer circle move to chat to the next person. Students can face each other or talk back to back.

Lines: Arrange desks in two lines so that students face each other. All students sit at a desk and chat to the person sitting opposite. After a set time, students in one line move up, so they have a new partner to chat to. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to talk to all members of the class.

Activity 2: Marshmallow Challenge

This is a classic team building activity. Students work in groups to create a tower using 10 sticks of spaghetti, 1m of twine and masking tape. They must first build the tower using the spaghetti, and then place a marshmallow on top. As the marshmallow is quite heavy, this is actually rather difficult. The tower must be stable long enough for the teacher to measure it (bring a measure tape). During this activity, students tend to

naturally communicate their ideas verbally or non-verbally. It is great fun and does create a relaxing if somewhat competitive environment! I remind students to use English as much as possible throughout the activity.

Timing: I usually give students 10 minutes to discuss/ draw ideas and 20 minutes to build the tower.

Variation: Add a penalty for using Japanese, for example 1 mm off the height of the tower each time a group is caught speaking Japanese.

Warning: Older students will check their smartphones for ideas...

See the following links for details:

<https://www.marshmallowchallenge.com/>

https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower_build_a_team/transcript?language=en

<https://medium.com/@peterskillman/the-design-challenge-also-called-spaghetti-tower-cda62685e15b>

Activity 3: What did you do? Exploring our five senses (adapted from Helgesen (2019))

This activity can be used after any holidays for students who are new to each other or already know each other. Students are given a worksheet (blank or with some hints), and are then asked to recall an event during the holidays and write (draw) about it using adjective(s) or sense related words. The level of language can be adjusted to suit the group.

Worksheet hint and content example

What did you do? I went skiing in Nagano.

Feeling/How did you feel? Exciting/excited

Sight/ What did you see? White snow. Beautiful blue sky.

Sound/ What did you hear? Whoosh (sound of skies/snowboards) / Excited voices /

Silence

Smell/ What did you smell: Delicious food/ Fried meat (Hamburger)

Taste/ How did your lunch taste? Delicious/ Salty (Hamburger)

Touch/ Did you touch anything? I touched the snow. It was so cold.

Timing: 20 minutes +

Class arrangement

Once students have prepared the worksheet they can discuss what they did and their feelings throughout the experience in pairs or groups.

Conversation starter: Where did you go? How was it?

Activity 4: The best! (adapted from Helgesen (2019))

What is the best thing that happened to you in the last month? The aim of this activity is for students to discuss a positive experience using wh-questions (Where / When / Why / Who /What / How). The activity can be done as a conversation (pairs/small groups) or as a group process writing/communication activity.

Conversation:

Students ask the first questions and then the follow up wh- questions in pairs/groups. See options from Hello activity for variations.

Group process writing:

One student is chosen and asked by the rest of the group: Where did you go in the vacation? The student answers with, for example, Yamanashi, and writes this information on piece of paper. The paper then gets passed around to the other members of the group. They make guesses using the question prompts about what they think that student did in Yamanashi, and add this information in writing (without talking).

Question prompts:

- ◇ Who did s/he go with?
- ◇ What did s/he do?
- ◇ What did s/he eat?
- ◇ How was it?

The paper is given back to the student, who then changes the sentences back into the first person, reads the contents aloud and comments on each statement's accuracy. E.g. That's right! No, I didn't do that. The student can also add more information.

Example:

Initial sentence written by Ken: *I went to Yamanashi*

Ken went hiking> I went hiking. >Yes, that's right!

Ken went hiking with his friends > I went hiking with my friends.> No. I went with my family.

Ken ate *hōtō* noodles (a Yamanashi specialty)> I ate *hōtō* noodles > Yes, I did. The pumpkin *hōtō* noodles were delicious!

I had a great time. > Yes, I certainly did. It was the best! I want to climb more mountains during the next vacation.

Variation:

Each student creates a poster or booklet with the information and shares it with the rest of the class. This can also be displayed in the classroom.

References

Benner, D. (n.d). *Activities to break the ice.*

<https://tcea.org/documents/ebooks/TCEA-eBook-Icebreakers-That-Shatter.pdf>

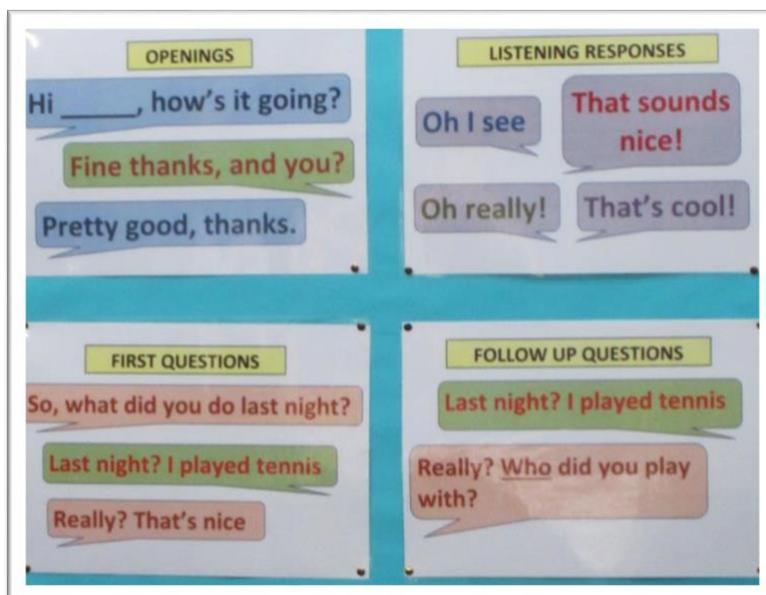
Dörnyei, Z. (1997). Psychological processes in cooperative language learning: Group dynamics and motivation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(4): 482-493.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/328891>

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom.* Cambridge University Press.

Eggleston, T., & Smith, G. (2004). Building community in the classroom through ice-breakers. *Teaching of Psychology*, 1–21.

Helgesen, M. (2019). *English Teaching and the science of happiness: Positive psychology communication activities for language learning.* Abax ELT Publishers



Multi-Media Book Review Projects: Part 3 - Utilization of Multimedia Platforms

Rab Paterson & Mitsuki Saito

Tokyo Gakugei University International Secondary School

This is the third part of our collaborative paper focusing on the Multimedia Book Review Projects. In the first part Honami Kimoto covered the blogging aspect of the course and the prewriting / planning documents and in the second part Aya Yamauchi looked at the impact of educational technology on student motivation. Both authors gave in-depth reviews of their experiences with the apps and approaches they used in my classes on these aspects of 21st century learning. Now, it is my pleasure to introduce Mitsuki Saito, the third and final member of my student team of collaborators. She will now explain her reactions to the presentation parts of the course starting with ‘normal’ in- class book review presentations given from the front of the room with a slideshow. Then she will cover the creation of book review video trailers, and a design of a literature themed website to host all these multimedia creations so students in other courses and years can view them. In her section below she makes many points that are very pertinent to teachers wanting to improve their own in-class presentations teaching work by incorporating educational technology workflows. I hope you all enjoy her section and learn from her experiences like I did.

21st Century Style Education

My name is Mitsuki Saito, and like my fellow students, I attend a junior high school in Tokyo, Japan. I have lived abroad for the vast majority of my childhood and have attended many different schools both in and outside of Japan. Therefore, I have a broad spectrum of

educational experiences to draw on as I express my opinions and thoughts on my current educational environment in this paper. As mentioned in the previous parts published by my classmates, our English class with Rab is no ordinary one. Each and every aspect of the projects is extensive in nature, and students are far from falling asleep, unlike in our other, more typical Japanese classes. For example, in Japan, when being given a typical book review task the norm is for students to possess an inherent dislike towards it as it usually just consists of writing a long essay on paper by hand. Notwithstanding the fact our school is in Japan, Rab's methods are more diverse, distinct, international, and very modern in style. When talking in depth about this project with my parents (T. Saito & R. Saito, 2020), they were astonished that such a wide variety of research and writing skills that even some adults do not have, can be attained through a typical English class at junior high school when taught in this way.

In our class, we were constantly challenged as we stepped into an atmosphere of technology and 21st-century style education. During this course, we utilized a wide range of online apps to improve the quality of our writing in our Academic Book Review. We also assembled presentation slideshows, video versions of our presentations hosted online to reach a wider audience, and websites to showcase all our work in an e-portfolio style. This served as the culmination of this entire book review project that we had been working on for over six months. These last three parts of the project involved only a few out of the many media platforms we utilized. However, they are all crucial constituent parts that lead to substantial improvements in students' abilities, and without a doubt contributed to students developing skills needed for the future.

Oral Presentations

First off, I will describe the book review presentation. As Aya Yamauchi mentioned in

the previous paper in this series (Paterson & Yamauchi, 2021) students were given the task to design and deliver a formal in-class presentation based on their written book review. There were a range of important factors taught to us in order to design a professional-level presentation. For instance, building credibility for speakers at the beginning to gain the audience's trust, organizing the information into an effective structure to increase the audience's memory retention of the content, using dyslexic friendly fonts, avoiding copyright infringements, and adding QR codes that link to other parts of the book review project. Most of these were covered in YouTube videos by Rab on his YouTube channel (Paterson, 2013).

Aside from basic presentation delivery skills, we were also given lectures on non-verbal body language communication including eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, movement, posture, and other non-verbal ways of engaging with the audience. Many of these were used by us at the Okinawa JALT's 21st Century Language Teaching Conference in October 2020 (Paterson, Kimoto, et al., 2020), where we presented the content of these papers online. The best advice I received from Rab was regarding the psychological aspects of a presentation. This involves spiking up the dopamine level in the audience at certain important times of the presentation. For example, presenters can add a related and humorous or shocking point just before a significant part or important message. In addition, the "One Last Thing" strategy is also something new that I obtained from this course project (Gallo, 2009). The strategy builds on the psychological tendency of the audience to pay more attention when they are aware that the presentation is coming to an end, therefore this is where presenters should deliver a very important final point of their choosing so as to avoid just ending with answers to the audience's questions when the presenters have little control over the questions asked.

Most teachers just give students a basic structure on how they should format and structure their presentations, and with only rudimentary information as to why they want them to do such things. These so-called, “proper structures” never made much sense to me. However, listening to Rab, I truly was convinced and really comprehended the presentation strategies he suggested. Not only do I appreciate the suggested approaches, but also relish the fact he elaborated on why he asked us to do certain things. For example, in this course, Rab did not accept “boring” presentations full of bullet points and this was a shock to many students. However, he told us research has shown bullet points impair audience memory retention (Medina, 2011; Gallo, 2009). This was just one example of his having a reason for the instructions he gave to students in class. However, in return, he would accept any off guideline work if justified by a good reason, something which differentiated him from the rest of the teachers that have taught me. When listening to many of my classmates’ presentations from other classes (after my having learned all these skills in his class), a clear difference between students from Rab’s classes and other students of the same age from other classes in terms of their presentation quality was clearly visible to us.

Literature Themed Websites

For hosting our project, we used Google Sites to create and develop a literature-themed website, where we posted/worked on our projects in groups of three to four students. In my opinion, this task was undeniably the most captivating task, for the reason that we were able to exhibit and bring out our inner creativity when working alongside our peers. My section of our team’s website is set to be viewed by our classmates only to preserve the privacy of our members as we are not adults; however, an overview of the site can be viewed on the video of our Okinawa JALT Keynote presentation here -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2P_0eI2GjDw&t=1662s). It contains my self-introduction, a brief explanation about the author, a summary of the book, my academic book review, presentation slides, links to purchase the book, a book trailer, and every other relevant thing regarding this book that our team could think of. My team and I would gather, contemplate and discuss the website, using our creativity to improve the site. This made the task more than just a superficial, mediocre ‘homework task’.

Originally this project started as a predominantly individual research task (due to COVID-19), but then it brought in online group work when doing peer review of written work, and after classes returned to face to face, teamwork was really stressed as producing the website helped us acquire and use communication and collaboration skills, both online and face to face. Moreover, brainstorming ideas, strategizing, and constructing an engaging website (as other students would be looking at it) was compelling. Exerting all our knowledge accumulated from the past year on one platform was simply delightful to do. Our team used techniques such as alliteration, humor, and other such approaches. The website creator app used in this project, Google Sites, is remarkable, with no payment required. It also provided an easy-to-use framework which was simple to manipulate, even for beginners like myself and my classmates.

Book Review Video Trailers

The last material was a 4-6-minute-long video, created as a book trailer. This idea was based on the the work of Kaori Hakone who developed the original idea as a contest for students learning Japanese (Hakone, 2010). This was a task where we summarized the book and recommended it visually and entertainingly. The video trailer contains all the information from our book review, the presentation, interesting special effects, and background music. Honestly, for the book trailer, giving it your all is a volitional act. For

me, I scarcely had any experience with video editing, so I was planning on putting together a somewhat entertaining video to a certain extent. Nevertheless, I found myself going all out and pushing boundaries which 100% was due to the motivation Rab ignites in his students.

On a related note, but slightly on a tangent, when we went under lockdown in the beginning of 2021, Rab had no issues transitioning our original face-to-face class to a fully online digital platform. As a student, this was very convenient and helpful because, in other subjects students were often overwhelmed by the new burden of coursework emailed and sent by snail mail post, and also struggled in adapting to an entirely new online environment without training beforehand as some teachers introduced completely new (to us) apps just at this difficult time. In contrast, for Rab's class, we already had prior training of online work using G Suite and other online apps in a collaborative manner in our face-to-face classroom prior to COVID 19, so nothing was new to us when we our class switched to being fully online.

Therefore in Rab's class, each student developed individually from daily usage of important skills such as writing skills, reading skills, analyzing skills, cognitive flexibility, and videography skills. In addition to these skills, taking Rab's class made me feel so motivated and stimulated in every aspect possible as we do all these and more by bringing in digital literacy instruction. This makes me want to try harder and exceed the expectations of not only Rab but myself as well. How he respects his students and the way he communicates, inspires me to do the same to the people in my vicinity. This was exemplified by our inclusion in the "21st century Language Teaching" Online Conference hosted by Okinawa JALT in October, 2020 as keynote presenters with Rab, and this paper (and the earlier two) developed from our presentation at that event.

This concludes the third and final paper in the trilogy that started with Rab Paterson and Honami Kimoto, then Rab and Aya Yamauchi, and now finally Rab and I. Through the descriptions and anecdotes above, it can be seen that diverse forms of learning took place even amid a global pandemic. Moreover, being able to present about our personal thoughts on language pedagogy, and writing about it for *The School House* has only augmented our wonderful educational experiences with JALT and we hope to continue this relationship in the future. Thank you for reading.

Final Word

The writing of this set of three papers with my students has been a tremendously fulfilling and rewarding experience for me as an educator. Seeing them grow from hard working young students learning in class, to presenting online at a professional standard in an academic setting to an audience of adult educators (and winning the Michele Steele Best of JALT award with me for their work on that presentation in the process), and now ending up with publications to their names while still only being junior high school students is a testament to their innate abilities to learn and their amazing work ethic. As their example has shown, younger students are more than capable of performing at very high levels in academic settings if given the right guidance, training, and opportunities. As professional teachers of younger learners it is up to us to provide the first two, and it is for organizations like JALT to supply the opportunities for them to show what they can do to enable them to shine. That being the case I hope to see more younger learner students being showcased at future JALT events and in publications. Finally, on behalf of them all collectively I would like to offer our thanks for this chance they were given to show what they are fully capable of doing in their academic writing from their school assignments.

References

- Gallo, C. (2009). *The presentation secrets of Steve Jobs: How to be insanely great in front of any audience* (1st ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Hakone, K. (2010). *Japanese book trailer contest—About the contest*.
https://sites.google.com/view/sakuramedalbooktrailercontest/about-the-contest_1
- Medina, J. (2011). *Brain rules: 12 principles for surviving and thriving at work, home and school*. Scribe Publications.
- Paterson, R. (2013, 2017). *You Tube Channel—Presentations theory & practice section*.
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJLMSRz7mEYh4uR2-WQWw4rCfZwjdhjml>
- Paterson, R., Kimoto, H., Yamauchi, A., & Saito, M. (2020, October 3). *Multimedia Bookreview Projects* [Keynote Presentation]. JALT Okinawa Chapter - 21st Century Language Teaching Conference, Online. https://youtu.be/2P_0el2GjDw
- Paterson, R. & Yamauchi, A. (2021) .Multimedia Bookreview Projects - Part 2. *The School House*, 29(2) 5-9.
<https://jalt-tyl.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/The-School-House-Volume-29-Issue-2-Autumn-2021-V2-final.pdf>
- Saito, T., & Saito, R. (2020). *Interview with my parents* [Face to face].

Submission Guidelines

Detailed submission guidelines can be found here:

<https://jalt-tyl.net/submission-guidelines/>

Please make sure to follow APA 7 guidelines for referencing.

Thank you very much!

Kate & Gaby



Member Survey

The nomination form for the TYL SIG's selection of the Michele Steele Best of JALT award is now open. The TYL SIG is looking to submit a nominee that presented in the 2021 calendar year. The Michele Steele Best of JALT Awards is a program that was started to honor the speakers who make JALT events such valuable experiences. Since 2010, JALT hold a special reception at the JALT International Conference in November to celebrate the winners of this award.

You can submit your nomination below. Please remember to write in a presenter that presented in the 2021 calendar year. The deadline to submit a nomination is July 1, 2022.

<https://forms.gle/hCvimrZLG6HZZ3h6A>

Thank you and have a good April,
Amy Braun
(JALT TYL SIG Membership Chair)

Photo credits:

Gaby Benthien