

*ON-LINE REFLECTIVE
RESEARCH PROJECTS
FOR UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS*

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Rationale

01

Course Objectives

Develop academic and language skills in tandem, through an integrated approach to language learning

Provide a content-based approach to the course

Students should have the opportunity to use English in active and meaningful

02

Activity Objectives

Develop students' critical thinking skills

Help student to learn to perform basic qualitative and quantitative research

Allow students the freedom to choose topics relevant to their interests

03

Online Objectives

Adapt to online via Zoom and On-demand materials

Provide a similar level of feedback that would be provided in face-to-face classes

Maintain as much of the interactivity of the activity as possible

Structure of the Activity

Google Docs (Questionnaire)

Students write research questions

Students write questionnaire questions

Teacher provides feedback in real time (and offline)



Google Forms (Questionnaire)

Teacher verifies that students have completed the questionnaire

Teacher monitor the responses of the participants

Students collect data for their research



Power Point (Presentation)

Students analyze and consider responses to questionnaire

Students organize their presentations

Students present their findings and conclusions



Google Docs (Reflection)

Students reflect on the process

Students reflect on the quality of their work

Students reflect on how well they accomplished the goals of their research

Class Demographics

- Class size of 24 students
- Upper Intermediate (IELTS 4-5) English ability (estimated)
- Student cohort stay together for 2 full semesters
- 1st year (17 females and 7 males, 18-19 years old)

Google Docs: Questionnaire Prep

Topics

Ss discuss which topics they are interested in

T discusses with Ss why they are interested in that topic and what they want to learn

Research Questions & Justification

Ss discuss what 2-3 questions they want to find answers to through their questionnaire

Ss discuss their justification for their research

Ss write questions and justification

Questionnaire Questions

Ss discuss how qualitative and quantitative questions will help them answer their research questions

Ss write begin to write their (bilingual) questions

Activity Organization

- Students chose their own partners
- Students chose topics of interest to themselves
- Students were given two class (90 minutes) sessions to complete
- Teacher provided real time correction and verbal feedback

Sample Pair Project Document

Partners: [redacted]

Topic: The impact of English in Japan and its influence on the Japanese language.

Rationale for research (why are you interested in this topic?):

This should be "academic" and not specifically focused on your interests.

English is often seen as the world's most influential language has developed and connected languages around the world. So it is crucial to know the impact of major languages, especially the impact of English on Japanese language. Although the internet and increased travel has allowed people to increasingly share their linguistic heritages and attendant values, it is important to know how the languages we speak daily changes our view of the world.

Three Research Questions (main points that you wish to research):

These should be open-ended questions that **focus on specific points** of data that you wish to collect

1. Impact on education/society/media/economy/minor languages

How big is the impact of English as a world language

特に教育面（どうやって習得したか、義務化の賛否）目標：2分以内

現状の方向性：こんなに多くの人がかような形で学んでいる + 英語義務化への高い支持率 → それだけ英語が必要というイメージがある(実際使うかはさておき)

もし入れられたら：グローバル面と外国人の友達の例（2への橋渡しとして時間空いたらいれる予定）

2. (What effect does English have on bilingual speakers and native speakers in Japan and how might it differ?)

How English impacts on Japanese society.

使う抵抗感とか英語話者への憧れとか最後のフリースペースのときの英語の影響とか？

3. How does English affect the Japanese language ?目標：2分以内

カタカナ語とかの言語的なやつ

現状の方向性：外来語を外国語と見なすか新たな日本語と見なすかで評価が分かれる点と何かもう一つ。

Google Forms: Questionnaire for Participants

Participant Consent

Ss write section explaining their research

Ss write section for gaining consent of participants

Organization of Questionnaire

Ss transfer questions from Google Docs to Google Forms

Ss arrange the questions in order based on discussion

T checks and provides feedback before questionnaire goes live

Collecting Data

Ss send link to questionnaire to their participants

Participants usually are selected from Ss friends and family

The screenshot shows a Google Form titled "Women education rights in Japan". The form is in Japanese and includes the following text:

We are from Sophia University Faculty of Foreign Studies Department of English studies. We appreciate your cooperation.
私たちは上智大学外国語学部英語学科の久保保乃と日比野陽暉と申します。この度はアンケートにご参加いただきありがとうございます。|

Many countries around the world are working to achieve equality between men and women. However, what about Japan? In 2018, Tokyo Medical University was accused of lowering female applicants test scores from 2010. A principal in Osaka prefecture stated that a woman's job is to give birth to two or more children, and that is more important than their career life. Unfortunately, the Japanese society seems to be far from equal. 世界中の多くの国が、男性と女性の平等を達成するために取り組んでいます。しかし、日本はどうでしょう？ 2018年、東京医科大学は2010年から女性志願者のテストスコアを下げたとして非難されました。大阪府の校長は、女性の仕事は2人以上の子供を産むことであり、それは彼らのキャリアライフよりも重要であると述べた。残念ながら、日本社会は決して平等ではないようです。

One example of the field few women work is STEM, which is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines – science, technology, engineering and mathematics – in an interdisciplinary and applied approach. 少数の女性が働く分野の一例はSTEMです。これは、科学、技術、工学、数学の4つの特定の分野で、学際的かつ応用的なアプローチで学生を教育するという考えに基づいたカリキュラムです。

The purpose of this research is to see the perception of society from a women's point of view. この研究の目的は、女性の視点から社会の認識を見ることです。

This questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes. Individuals will not be identified from this questionnaire. このアンケートには約5~10分かかります。このアンケートから個人を特定することはできません。

Thank you for your time. お時間をいただきありがとうございます。

Activity Organization

- Write consent and explanation for study
- Add and arrange questions
- Proof for double barrelled or inappropriate questions
- Send to participants

Example Topics Chosen by Students

Questions Responses 47

Research of Depopulation in Rural Areas in Japan

Questions Responses 22

Survey of Gender Inequality - Women's rights to choose their dress/

Questions Responses 23

Section 1 of 4

How Japanese people perceive poverty and homeless people? ✕ ⋮

Questions Responses 48

Section 1 of 5

The survey for the food waste problem / 食品廃棄問題に関する調査 ✕ ⋮

Questions Responses 89

Decreasing Birth Rate and Stereotypes towards Parenting

Questions Responses 63

Section 1 of 5

Poverty and Prostitution of Japanese Female College Students. ✕ ⋮

Questions Responses 17

Section 1 of 5

The impact of English in Japan and its influence on the Japanese language. 英語の日本、及び日本語への影響 ✕ ⋮

Questions Responses 42

Section 1 of 3

Women education rights in Japan ✕ ⋮

PPT Presentations: Analyzing the Data

Creating Presentations

Ss create PPT presentation (and send to T) that:

Shows their findings

Discusses implications

Presents their conclusions



Watching Presentations

Ss each watch other (3-4) presentations with their partner

Ss discuss questions regarding other presentations

Ss answer questions and submit to teacher

Activity Organization

- Students review the data collected
- Students discuss which data answers their research questions
- Students discuss implications of data that goes against their research paradigm (what surprised them)
- Students use other sources to support or refute their conclusions
- Students review and assess other presentations

English Skills Fall Semester Pair Project Working Document

This is the section that you should copy and paste into your own google doc

Names:

Pair Project Questionnaire and Presentation Assessment

5= Distinction

1=Needs improvement

Questionnaire

/20

Quality of Justification for Research

/5

How well does the justification flow into the research? Does it seem grounded in reality, personal experience, and has a specific purpose?

Quality of Research Questions

/10

Are the questions relevant to the topic of interest and are they functional in that they can further academic advancement of knowledge?

Quality of Questionnaire Questions

/5

Are the data questions relevant to the research questions and do they attempt to gather enough relevant data to address said questions?

Presentation

/20

Organization of materials

/5

Does the presentation follow a natural flow and make sense to the listener?

Presentation of findings

/5

Are the findings presented in a clear and concise manner that also recognizes any problems or biases that are inherent in the research/research questions/data questions?

Overall quality of the slides

/5

Are the slides easy to understand and present the information clearly and concisely?

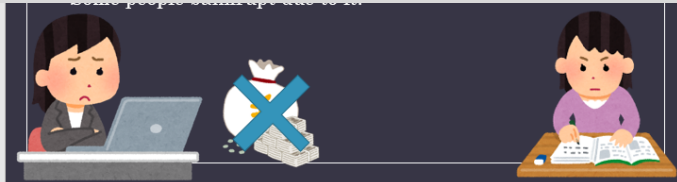
Further research into the topic

/5

Are there enough references to support and or refute the conclusions/findings of the researchers?

Comments

Example Presentation Slides from Students



What is your perception of brothels, Soap lands, cabaret clubs, girl's bars, etc.?

Perception	Percentage
Dangerous	66.7%
Very dangerous	15.8%
Appropriate	
Somewhat appropriate	

Most people think these jobs are **dangerous** for college students.

What do you think about female college students who are in poverty starting to work at brothels, Soap lands, cabaret clubs, girl's bars, etc.?

- I can't agree but maybe it can't be helped.
- I think it can't be helped but I don't have a good impression of them.
- It's good because they can earn money effectively.
- They can earn a lot, but I think it's high risky socially.

Etc.

What is your perception of brothels, Soap lands, cabaret clubs, girl's bars, etc.?

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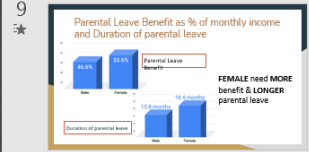
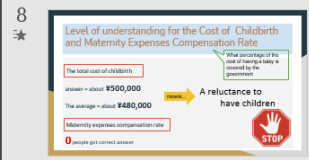
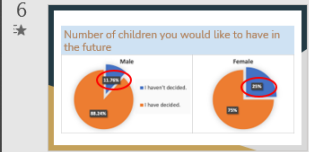
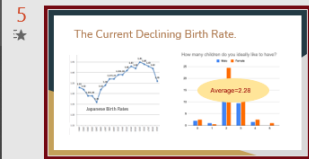
Click to add notes

Example Presentation Slides from Students

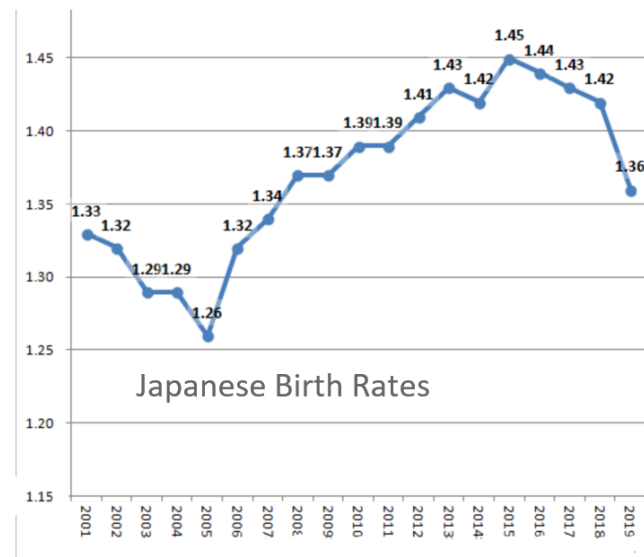
5

★

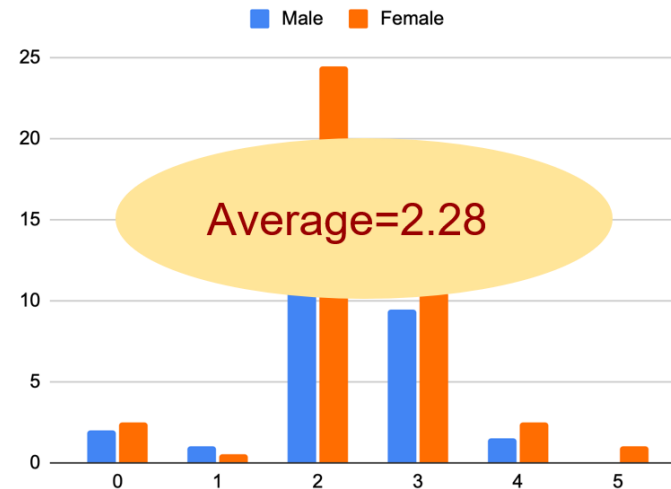
How does gender equality influence or affect birth rates? (or marriage?)
 Percentage of female population



The Current Declining Birth Rate.



How many children do you ideally like to have?



Example Presentation Slides from Students

- 10 Demonstration for hypothesis ①
- 11 Demonstration for hypothesis ②
- 12 Demonstration for hypothesis ③
- 13 Conclusion
- 14 Limitations
- 15 References

Conclusion

the results from the questionnaire...

- ❖ Young people do not care much about problem of depopulation in rural areas in Japan. Some even consider it as a natural phenomenon and do not see it as a problem.
- ❖ Young people tend to respect the value of convenience more than that of nature which is the main attraction of rural areas. This tendency can be brought by this mass consumption society.
- ❖ The huge gap of opportunities in education and employment motivates people to move from rural areas to urban areas especially when they consider their future life plans.
- ❖ The causes of depopulation in rural areas assumed by this research: the main population in Japan may continue to decrease and that people find more value on urban areas where they have convenience and opportunities.

Self-Analysis: Critiquing Their Own Work

Self-Analysis of Questionnaire

Ss work with partner / T to discuss their own answers to review questions considering:

Research Justification

Quality of Research Questions

Quality of Questionnaire Questions



Self-Analysis of Presentation

Ss work with partner / T to discuss and answer their review questions considering:

Organization of the presentation

Presentation Findings

Quality of the Presentation (style)

Any additional research they did into the topic

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Questionnaire /20

Quality of Justification for Research /5

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Are the questions relevant to the topic of interest and are they functional in that they can further academic advancement of knowledge?

Quality of Questionnaire Questions /5

Are the data questions relevant to the research questions and do they attempt to gather enough relevant data to address said questions?

Presentation /20

Organization of materials /5

Does the presentation follow a natural flow and make sense to the listener?

Presentation of findings /5

Are the findings presented in a clear and concise manner that also recognizes any problems or biases that are inherent in the research/research questions/data questions?

Overall quality of the slides /5

Are the slides easy to understand and present the information clearly and concisely?

Further research into the topic /5

Are there enough references to support and or refute the conclusions/findings of the researchers?

Comments

Activity Organization

- Students are given other presentations prior to class to watch (each presentation is 5-10 minutes)
- 1 full 100 minute class is provided to them to complete their own and other review sheets while watching presentations
- Teacher uses Break-Out rooms to discuss and provide insight to students

Examples of Self-Analysis from Students

Names: [REDACTED]

Pair Project Questionnaire and Presentation Assessment

5= Distinction

1=Needs improvement

Comments

How time flies! This would be the last assignment of skills in the freshman year. To be honest, overall, we are satisfied with what we have presented to the class, because there are supporting details and data analysis are added at each slide. However, compared to others' presentations we watched, then we found some points should be included to make the presentation much more relevant and convincing.

First of all, since the small amount of data collection which resulted in our conclusions may be one-sided. For instance, when it comes to fashion liberation, it should be separated by various occasions. Also, it not only exists among women, but also males have complained that it is dull to wear suits and ties almost everyday. Therefore, at the questions-preparation phase, [REDACTED] and I could only think of the negative effects of the limitation of clothes in Asia. We found that both women and men embraced a little confusion of fashion liberation, on the other hand, women did have more religious or moral restrictions than men.

Secondly, about applying methodology and theory. Probably because women's rights of clothing is a quite newly-developed field, so that only few academic papers are related to what we want to investigate.

Thirdly, about how to precisely and concisely present conclusions from a questionnaire is quite challenging. In order to give the audience a well-rounded logical information, so we thought that data should also be mentioned, which turned out that there was only little time

Names: [REDACTED]

Pair Project Questionnaire and Presentation Assessment

5= Distinction

1=Needs improvement

Comments

- Our slides might be a little difficult to find the most important information.
- We did not have many references on our conclusions, although we are pretty satisfied with the references on our demonstration parts.
- We are not sure that our research questions are perfectly functional for the further academic advancement of knowledge, but we were able to conduct necessary questions to analyze the issue.

Names: [REDACTED]

Pair Project Questionnaire and Presentation Assessment

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Comments

It was hard to create a presentation and practice it online, but we were able to learn how to divide tasks even in this difficult situation and cooperate with our partner. Overall we succeeded in giving a well organized and understandable presentation. Thank you for giving us a great opportunity and a chance to learn worldwide issues. We cannot thank you enough. We really wanted to have your class face to face. Love you Wayne!

Names: [REDACTED]

Pair Project Questionnaire and Presentation Assessment

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Comments

- In terms of gender, age, academic status, and marital status, our data was biased, so we don't have much justification.
- We read our script so fast that listeners might not understand.
- We put so much information/contents. (Not clear) It is too difficult for listeners to understand easily.
- We use references only to support our presentation.
- Our conclusions are not organized/academic.
- There are not enough new findings for further development through our presentation.

Recommendations

01

For lower-level students:

Provide them with a limited range of topics (relevant to them)

Provide example questions that they can “plug-and-play” into their questionnaires

Focus on one type of analysis (qualitative or quantitative)

Allow them to talk about percentages (i.e. 35% of participants...)

02

Scaffolding the activity:

Dedicate a few lessons to explaining how to analyse data;

2 lessons for Google Docs, 1 lesson for presentation and review

*** 2 lessons having students analysing data (this was not done)**

Provide example:

- 1) Research questions**
- 2) Questionnaire questions**
- 3) Justification for research**
- 4) Presentation**
- 5) Self-evaluation**

03

Benefits of this activity:

Allows for ample time for Ts to provide feedback specific to student pairs or groups

Allows for multiple sessions of critical analysis of the process

Introduces Ss to research / questionnaire writing

Ss can work at their own pace, while having constructive feedback from T

Recommended Readings (and Inspiration for the Activity)

- Eagan, M. K., Sharkness, J., Hurtado, S., Mosqueda, C. M., & Chang, M. J. (2011). Engaging undergraduates in science research: Not just about faculty willingness. *Research in higher education*, 52(2), 151-177.
- Meyerhoff, M. Schlee, E. & MacKenzie, L. (2015). *Doing sociolinguistics: A practical guide to data collection and analysis*. New York: Routledge.
- Moore, N. (2006). *How to do research: a practical guide to designing and managing research projects*. Facet publishing.
- O'malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skehan (1998). *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning* by Peter Skehan. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zina, O. (2021). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.