A Unified Curriculum Project for English Majors Based on SLA Principles

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SLA 原理に基づいた
英語専攻学生のための統一カリキュラム作成プロジェクト

ABSTRACT

The curriculum design for communication and skills courses for low-proficiency English majors is described. The rationale for the unified curriculum, an outline of the course, and an explanation of remaining issues will be given. The SLA principles which are guiding this project are explained. Content is structured around tourism and Japanese cultural topics, vocabulary quizzes based on topical lexis are conducted weekly, and mid-term and final tests consisting of presentations and tasks are used for assessment. Examples of tasks are given.

Introduction

Current professional practice in the field of ESL/EFL (English as a second language/English as a foreign language) is based on communicative methodology which includes many of the following elements: meaning-based input, meaning-based output, communicative strategies, language-based learning, fluency development, and meta-cognition of language-learning strategies. All of these elements plus insights from the field of cognitive psychology regarding the importance of attention for the creation of memory, which is a key element in the acquisition of a second or foreign language, are important elements to consider when designing a curriculum for a language program. Task-based learning is a vehicle used to incorporate the above elements into a course.

Traditional EFL classroom practices in Japan include the study of randomly produced vocabulary lists,
grammar taught in discrete units with an emphasis on the explanation of the grammar rules in Japanese, and translation of material from English into Japanese. The main problem with these teaching methods is that the results are far too slow to instill motivation in the students, particularly in students who are not academically inclined to begin with. In an attempt to follow foreign language teaching methods as now practiced in much of the world, and with the goal of motivating students to be more self-directed learners so that they will become proficient users of English as a foreign language, the author, with the assistance of adjunct lecturers, is in the second year of a two-year cycle of the curriculum design for the oral communication courses for English majors in an international studies department at a small university in Japan.

**Background**

The move away from the audiolingual and grammar/translation approaches and towards a communicative methodology in the teaching of foreign languages began in the early 1970s and has continued to the present day. Meaningful communication is seen as both the process for and the ultimate goal of foreign language (FL) teaching (Dueñas, 2004). Within this methodology, content-based instruction (CBI) has become a well-known instructional option for the past two decades (Stoller, 2002, 107 in Dueñas, 2004, 74). Instead of choosing discrete language items to teach based on a hierarchy of perceived complexity, content based around a common theme is used to shape the language that will be taught. According to Stryker and Leaver (1997:3), four elements should be incorporated in a CBI course: 1) the language should come from the subject matter; 2) materials should be from those produced for native speakers; 3) students should learn new information from the material; and 4) the content should be useful for the students and be appropriate for their level of proficiency (Leaver & Stryker, 1989:271). Content-based instruction and assessment is being implemented at universities in Japan chosen to participate in the Global 30 Plus project created by Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) (Aubrey, 2014).

In order to create appropriate course content for a CBI class, the following elements based on current Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles should be included.

1) **Meaning-based input through thematically and locally based materials**

The explanation of the importance of a content-based curriculum is detailed in the introduction above. Sprenger (2013) emphasizes, “Schemata … are formed in our brains through repeated and varied experiences related to a topic. (Schema are) …. those networks in the brain that we form, store, re-form, and restore through our interactions in the world through both experience and environment.” More information regarding the implementation of each of the curriculum components can be found in the course description which follows.

2) **Meaning-based output through tasks based on course theme**

While meaning-based input requires the learner to manipulate concepts in order to comprehend, such comprehension doesn’t require that there be an understanding of the order necessary to produce a comprehensible utterance. Meaning-based output, on the other hand, does require the learner to order the
elements of an utterance so that it makes sense to the recipient (Gass, 2013). Producing meaning-based output forces the foreign language speaker (FLS) to move from a semantic framework to a syntactic framework (Swain, 1998). In particular, in an oral communication environment, the FLS will find it necessary to negotiate and to perform repair of her/his utterances in order to communicate. The FLS will need to use communicative strategies in order to produce meaningful speech (see 4 below).

3) Language-based learning through discrete activities for grammar, vocabulary, and pragmatic skills which are related to the theme

While the content-based classroom will have as its main focus meaningful input and output, in order to facilitate the learning process, discrete activities with a focus on vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatic skills are used. The difference from the traditional grammar-based curriculum is that the items are chosen based on the content and not in a linear order or with the idea that each element must be mastered before introducing other elements (Fry et.al.to be published 2015).

4) Ability to use communicative strategies to shape interaction through the teaching of techniques for managing the language environment

Sato (2005), who has produced a large body of work on the use of communication strategies in the language learning classroom, defines communication strategies as methods for dealing with breakdowns in communication, which are inevitable for foreign language learners. Sato’s research on the acquisition of communication strategies by university students in a Japanese classroom showed that teaching strategies and raising students’ awareness of their use of the strategies (see section on meta-cognition below) were useful for the students, though consistent use and the creation of opportunities to use the strategies were required for the strategies to be used in real conversations. As can be seen by Zhang’s (2009) definition of fluency below, the use of communication strategies is an essential part of the ability to use a foreign language with ease.

5) Fluency development through scaffolding of activities and the use of assessment tools which require students to perform complex tasks related to the theme

Zhang, paraphrasing Parrott (1993), says that “oral fluency … is operationally defined as the ability to communicate an intended message; to adjust the messages according to the responses of the listener; to produce coherent utterance and stretches of speech; to respond and speak with continuity; and to use strategies to aid communication when the appropriate vocabulary or grammar is not available,” (Zhang, 2009). Focused attention leading to the creation of memory through tasks that require manipulation of the material is required, not just memorization.

6) Metacognitive awareness of the purpose for activities and strategies through timely explanations of the purpose for activities

Andersen says, “Metacognition can be defined simply as thinking about thinking. Learners who are
metacognitively aware know what to do when they don’t know what to do; that is, they have strategies for finding out or figuring out what they need to do. The use of metacognitive strategies ignites one’s thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling.” (Anderson, 2002) He also lists five different strategies that students can use to aid their language learning efforts: preparing and planning for learning, selecting and using learning strategies, monitoring strategy use, orchestrating various strategies, and evaluating strategy use and learning. While evidence-based research on the efficacy of teaching metacognitive strategies is still sparse, a study shows that metacognitive strategy training can have a positive effect on vocabulary learning (Zohreh, Reza 2003).

Description of students enrolled in these courses

Students in a department of international studies at a small university who major in English as their first foreign language (第一言語) followed the typical pattern of taking English Conversation I for two semesters, usually in their freshman year and then taking English Conversation II for two semesters, typically in their sophomore year. Other students who are majoring in another language or who are in other departments are able to join these classes, but the number of these students who do so is small. Most students who enter the department have low TOEIC scores (under 400) or hold low Eiken certificates (Level 3 or lower).¹

Description of classes:

Starting in 2012, the number of class periods was increased from two to three 90-minute classes each week for a 15-week semester. The goal of increasing the amount of class time was so that students would become more fluent while studying within Japan. The class periods are shared by one regular faculty member and one or two adjunct lecturers.

First-year and second-year students are mixed together and the classes are split into levels, presently two levels. A first-year student will have second-year students in her or his class in the initial year and then, as a sophomore, will have new freshman students in the class. Previously, the classes had been divided on a college year level, but, because of the small number of students, students of all proficiency levels were placed in one class. By dividing the classes on a two-year class basis, some accommodation can be made for proficiency levels.

Issues with class design:

Because of the structure of the classes as described above, it is not possible for a class to advance from a lower-level text in the first year to a higher-level text in the second year without the level of the class becoming too difficult for new students. On the other hand, if the same level of difficulty is maintained for both years, the students stop making progress in acquiring English oral competency.

Most students enter the department with a lack of focus for their language studies. Most students have a vague desire to become competent in some way that will be useful in the international community. Many

¹ The EIKEN Test in Practical English Proficiency is a Japan-based English proficiency test with 7 levels, 5 being the lowest level.
students have little experience with various aspects of their own cultures, let alone international experience. (For reference, in 2014, there were a total of 13 students regularly attending the two classes. Five were from the local area, 7 were from Tokyo, one was of Chinese nationality and one was of South Korean nationality. Both of these non-Japanese students attended high school in Japan. Several have had one or two short trips outside Japan, one has traveled abroad several times, and almost all students have limited experience with traveling outside the Kanto area in Japan.)

**Development of new curriculum:**

Through the 2011 academic school year, widely-used conversation-oriented textbooks were chosen by the individual teachers. Typically, the second level of a textbook series was used for second-year classes. With the mixing of first and second year students and with the creation of the possibility of movement between levels, it became imperative to create a curriculum that accounted for the multi-level structure of the classes.

**Rotation of syllabus:**

In order to deal with the class level dilemma which is explained above, a two-year rotating task-based syllabus was created. A thematic structure of lessons that extends over a two-year period was designed and will be repeated so that students do not repeat the exact same content in the two years.

**Theme:**

The overarching theme is focused on Japan: traditional and modern culture, geography, daily life, and so on, the goal being that students develop the ability to see their culture (or the host culture if the student is from abroad) from an objective viewpoint and learn to talk about Japanese society and culture to someone from outside the culture.

The first year of the curriculum (first completed in 2013) focuses on the local (Chiba) and Tokyo area of Japan and the second year (2014) focuses on areas and culture in Japan that are outside of the greater Tokyo area. A new 2-year cycle will begin in 2015.

Students are encouraged to be able to understand and express similarities and comparisons with other cultures, in particular the cultures of the other department major languages, Korean and Chinese, and with English-speaking countries. The purpose is 1) to give students a focus for their language acquisition; 2) to prepare students for work in travel, international business, and service industries; 3) to be able to coordinate with and utilize content and activities of the Tourism Department and the Department of Japanese Traditional Culture.

This theme was chosen based on the long experience of the author (13 years part-time and 6 years full-time) with the students who attend this university. Students who come from local regions of Chiba Prefecture often have not traveled much outside of the area, sometimes only visiting the capital of Tokyo a few times while growing up, and have had limited contact with people from other cultural backgrounds. Students who come from Tokyo also have limited experience with visiting areas outside of the capital. The lack of in-country experience, let alone international experience, hinders the students’ ability to discuss topics with a global focus even though the students have an interest in expanding their horizons as evidenced by their enrollment in a department of international studies.
The university has a department of Japanese traditional studies, one of the few in the country. Displays of traditional kimonos and also activities organized around traditional themes are held frequently on the campus. There is also a department of tourism studies, though this department will be closing in the near future.

Due to its location in Chiba Prefecture, graduates from various departments have found jobs at the international airport, at hotels, and at such tourist attractions as Tokyo Disney Resorts. Employment prospects are enhanced by knowledge of a second language. The number of foreign tourists to Japan has increased greatly within the past two years with 10 million visitors arriving for the first time in 2013 (Japan Tourism Marketing Co., 2014). The Japanese government is hoping for 20 million visitors by 2020 when the Olympic Games will be held in Tokyo (Matsutani, 2014). On the other hand, with the weakening of the yen in the past couple of years, the students, who often come from lower-middle class backgrounds and have limited financial resources, are less likely to participate in study abroad programs.

See Appendix 1 for a sample of the theme-based weekly topics.

**Division of levels:**

All levels work on the same thematic material. The distinction is in the level of difficulty of material presented and required of the students in order to perform tasks. The purpose is: 1) to allow students to move up and down levels depending on effort and ability; 2) to create a department-wide atmosphere of both cooperation and competition in order to enhance the language skills of the largest number of students; and 3) to enable instructors to create and share materials.

**External Goals:**

The department has set the goal of having English majors attain a level equivalent to the Eiken Level 2 proficiency test, preferably by taking and passing this test by the end of the second year of study. If a student already has achieved this level before entering the class, the student will be expected to show an increase of 100 points per year on their base score for the TOEIC exam. The purpose is to have an external objective standard for students to aim for in order to maintain motivation and prepare for future careers. Students are required to take either an Eiken exam or the TOEIC exam in the second semester each year in order to earn credit for the course, although a passing grade is not a criterion for credit.

**Criteria for Grades:**

Student grades are a combination of the following:

1) Class participation, with a minimum number of points required to pass the class. Students accumulate these points by raising their hands to participate.

2) Weekly homework with a minimum number of points required to pass the class: students are expected to study outside of class for at least the amount of class time weekly and are expected to do several hours of preparation for mid-term and final performance tests.

3) 10 quizzes per semester, based on vocabulary drawn from word lists for Eiken levels 3, Pre-2, and 2, and chosen to fit the weekly class theme-based topics. Students are required to get a passing score of 60% on all quizzes. Make-up quizzes are offered if justified. The same quiz is given to all levels at the same time.

4) Vocabulary notebook, 200 words or phrases per semester. Words are self-selected, but must not be taken
from the class vocabulary lists used for the class quizzes. Each entry must include two full sentences drawn from authentic sources. While a completed notebook is required in order to earn credit to pass the class, homework points for a maximum of 20 words can be earned each week by submitting the notebook.

5) Mid-term dialogue and task performance with a minimum number of points required to pass the class. These performance tests are conducted in front of students and instructors from all levels of classes.

6) Final dialogue and task performance with a minimum number of points required to pass the class. These performance tests are conducted in front of students and instructors from all levels of classes.

The purpose for giving students several methods to earn a good grade for the class is: 1) to establish minimum criteria for passing the class; 2) to motivate students by having them design much of their own material for the performance tests; and 3) to allow all students an opportunity to earn a good grade, but also to tie high grades to a high level of competency.

Examples of application of SLA principles in course design and management

1) Meaningful input

As described above, the theme of using topics of interest to foreign visitors to Japan was chosen based on familiarity of the subject to the students and applicability to their future career goals. An example of a text unit based on describing regional handicrafts can be seen in Appendix 2.

1) Meaningful output

Both discrete language activities and more holistic activities are planned so that there is always an element of choice required. This requires the students to listen carefully to select an utterance or response based on meaning. An example is one task required for the second-year mid-term exam: describing a regional Japanese dish. Each student must describe a different dish following guidelines for content. The student delivers the presentation orally along with a few visual images as illustration. Personal opinion about the dish is part of the presentation. An example of student work is shown in Appendix 3. Following the presentation, the presenter must answer two questions from the class about information not included. This requires the presenter to have gathered other information and to be able to respond with an appropriate open-ended response.

2) Discrete language activities

Vocabulary items for the weekly quizzes are chosen to accompany the unit topic. One week the words are phrases directly used in the textbook (see Appendix 3, first page) while the following week’s items are chosen from the Eiken lists by choosing items which may be useful for using the topic in conversation. Examples with item of study in bold print for the unit on regional foods are:

1) I’d like to learn more about Japanese handicrafts.

2) Jason bought two souvenirs in Tohoku. One is an akabeko ornament. The other is a kokeshi doll.

3) Let me show you around when you come to Japan.
Grammar items, too, are chosen to help students comprehend and produce the topic. For instance, in the topic on regional foods, the passive tense along with the use of verbs for the senses was introduced and practiced since it is often used in literature and speech when describing an impersonal item. Worksheets and practice activities are used, most of them requiring a choice of grammar item that fits the meaning.

Examples from the unit on regional foods are:

Use of passive tense for describing objects:
1) Nagasaki is known for its *castella* cake.
2) Tempura batter is made by mixing flour and cold water

3) Use of communication strategies

At the beginning of the year students are given a list of phrases which are useful in negotiating comprehension in the class. Students are reluctant to use questions such as “What does ~ mean?” or “Could you write that word on the board?” at first because they are not used to asking questions, particularly if the questions indicate a lack of understanding. Opportunities are deliberately created for students to use the phrases and participation points are given for doing so.

4) Fluency

A large part of the two assessments each term is devoted to presentations incorporating the various elements of the topics practiced that term. Students are told which elements are required in each presentation, given correction on individually produced work, and given time to practice in class. Models of content are given, often by posting on the class website. See Appendix 4 for an example of a rubric that is used for grading the presentation. Students listening to the presentations are required to fill out a listening sheet based on their classmates’ speech. Part of the grade for the assessments is based on how well the student has filled out this form. Then each presenter is asked at least two questions by the audience. The questions must ask for additional information about the topic. An example of a presentation on regional foods and the questions asked and responses made can be seen in Appendix 2.

5) Metacognition development

At the beginning of each term, students are interviewed individually to find out what the student wants to work on and to offer suggestions for how the student can do so. Students are also encouraged to set their test goal at this time.

Throughout the term, teacher comments are made about the purpose for various activities. For example, for the unit on regional foods, a simple explanation of how the passive tense is used to describe impersonal general objects or conceptions was given in Japanese. Activities using the present tense and the passive tense for description were first practiced separately and then combined. In follow-up sessions, students were asked for a brief description of how the grammatical rules worked. Teacher comments are also made about the sequence of
activities for such skills as listening comprehension so that students understand that there is a reason to actively participate in each activity.

**Discussion of results**

At the present, the course scaffolding has just been put in place. A lot of work remains to be done to ensure that this curriculum design actually leads to an improvement in the students’ communicative proficiency. All evidence for the efficacy of this program is anecdotal at the present time. The following observations have been made by the instructors and are followed by suggestions for ways to analyze the results and for improvements in the program.

1) Many students move from relying on an English-Japanese translation of words and phrases to reading sentences and guessing the meaning from the context. In the second term this academic year, several students have mentioned that they have gone from relying on translation to looking at words in context. A pre-test and post-test of students’ comprehension of vocabulary introduced in class may show whether or not introducing and practicing words in context helps students improve their vocabulary.

2) Listening comprehension skills appear to improve from the beginning of the school year. Students listen to other students’ utterances so that they can find something new to say (a response cannot be repeated by another student.)

   It may be useful to have students keep a notebook with a list of questions and possible answers that they have learned to ask.

3) Since students are graded on their ability to ask relevant questions after the presentations (and are given a chance to practice these skills in prior class sessions), student ability to listen to content seems to improve.

   Research based on testing students at the beginning of the term by having them ask questions after a presentation by the instructor on one of the assessment topics and then recording questions asked after student presentations later in the term may show whether or not there has been an improvement in the students’ meaningful output.

4) Pronunciation and intonation improve. Through the constant repetition of communicative strategy phrases, which are used to control comprehension of input from the instructor and other students, students become fluent in saying these phrases.

   Reading of the content of presentations for assessment is not permitted, but key phrases are allowed on the slides used for presentations. Student pronunciation and intonation becomes much clearer as the student concentrates on conveying the meaning. This would be a very interesting area to research further, perhaps by recording students both reading their presentations and speaking without the script to see in which situation the pronunciation and intonation are more comprehensible to fluent English speakers.

5) There seems to have been a more positive response on the part of students to the topics in the first year which centered on the local and the Kanto area. Perhaps students were able to relate more because they actually know something about the area. Comments have been received from students in the second year indicating that they had no knowledge of other areas of Japan and had a hard time making choices for presentations. It
may be better to interweave the two areas, local and distant, so that students can relate better to the content.

6) The topics and the language content have been chosen by the instructors, who have long experience as foreign residents of Japan, and frequently, as hosts to visitors from abroad. However, it would be useful to locate more research and data on the actual language needs of foreign tourists in Japan so that the content will match the reality of the communication needs of tourists.

7) Students who have participated in international events with foreign visitors and residents have provided feedback on their experiences. Several students participated in an international day event with visitors from a sister city in the U.S. Several students also participated as guides at an international conference for foreign language professionals. All the feedback has been very positive, with students commenting on how much they used language content and topic content from their oral communication courses. The students who have participated in these events become particularly motivated in classes.

It would be very useful to find more international events for students to participate in and to make such participation part of the course. Costs and time requirements for students must be given careful consideration.

Other issues

For the fall semester of the 2014 academic year, both classes of writing were taught to the same students by the two sharing teachers. The grammatical content and some of the topics from the English Conversation course were covered in these classes. This extra class time with a focus on written work seems to have made a noticeable difference in students’ ability to listen and speak in the oral communication classes. Increased class time through coordination of a theme and the recycling of concepts, vocabulary, and grammatical structures in a variety of skills classes would probably result in much greater increases in students’ proficiency. Unfortunately, such coordination does not seem to be possible at the present time. The writing classes will not be shared by the English conversation class teachers in the coming year and there will not be coordination with these classes.

Part-time lecturers at this educational institution, who have played an essential role in the creation of the course design, are now limited to three years of work on one-year contracts. This restriction on continued service makes the improvement of language teaching very difficult. It will be very important to ensure that any new part-time lecturers will understand the importance of their participation in following the course design.

Conclusion

Understanding the present-day accepted principles for foreign language teaching, coordination between professional language teachers, analysis of students’ present and future needs, and constant re-evaluation of course design are all essential elements in creating a course design that leads to improvements in students’ foreign language proficiency. It is hoped that the above description of one attempt at course design will contribute to the professional discussion about course design in the Japanese context.
REFERENCES


Appendix 1

Year One Fall Semester Syllabus

Week 1 Reports on summer holidays: Summer homework due; Learning to change the future tense to the past tense: summer in Japan; Learning to reflect on past events and suggest changes in future plans
Week 2 Describing the life of a college student in Japan; Learning to use a combination of the present and present progressive to describe a typical schedule; Learning to use both personal experience and general experience to explain about college life in Japan
Week 3 Giving advice; Learning to use modals to give advice about shopping to a new resident in Japan; Learning to ask questions for comprehension when giving advice
Week 4 Describing exotic or unusual events and places; Learning to use the present perfect tense to ask about experience; Learning to talk about unusual experiences in Japan and abroad
Week 5 Describing typical Japanese foods; Learning vocabulary for typical Japanese food items; Learning how to explain unfamiliar terms for food items
Week 6 Making recommendations for foods to eat; Learning to use adjectives to give reasons for food recommendations; Learning to use hypothetical statements and comparisons to recommend food
Week 7 Describing seasonal variations; Learning to use time markers and adjectives to explain about seasonal variations in Japan; Learning to make general recommendations for adjusting to living conditions in Japan
Week 8 Holding an extended conversation about life in Japan; Learning to extend a conversation through the use of feedback comments; Learning to agree, disagree, and change topics during an extended conversation
Week 9 Mid-term Performance Week: Practice for performances; Students will perform and be graded on several self-created dialogues; Students will continue to perform and be graded on several self-created dialogues
Week 10 Explaining about a holiday in Japan using personal experiences; Learning vocabulary for various holidays in Japan; Learning to talk about own experiences on holidays
Week 11 Explaining about a holiday in Japan using a general description; Learning to talk about general experiences on holidays using impersonal terms; Learning to combine personal and general experiences to describe holidays
Week 12 Describing yearend customs in Japan; Learning vocabulary for traditional yearend customs and learning to use circumlocution for unknown vocabulary; Learning to describe own family customs for the yearend
Week 13 Reports on winter holidays: Winter homework due; Learning to change the future tense to the past tense: winter holidays in Japan; Learning to reflect on past events and suggest changes in future plans
Week 14 Final Performance Week: Practice for performances; Groups of students will perform and be graded on several self-created dialogues
Week 15 Final test; Make-up quizzes, consultations about design of study plans for spring break; Return of class work, consultations about design of study plans for spring break
Appendix 2

Sample Unit

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Unit 12
Regional Handicrafts

I. Vocabulary: Read these vocabulary words and sentences with your teacher.

1. handicraft (工芸) My aunt likes to do handicrafts.
私の叔母は、工芸をするのが好きです。

2. hobby (趣味) Her hobby is reading mystery novels.
彼女の趣味はミステリーを読むことです。

3. else (その他に、代わりに) Shall we go somewhere else?
他の場所に行こうか。

4. carve (彫る、彫刻する) We carved our initials into the tree.
木に自分たちのイニシャルを彫りました。

5. ancient (古代の) I like to study about the history of ancient Rome.
私は古代ローマの歴史の勉強が好きです。

6. thread (糸) We need a needle and thread to sew.
縫うには針と糸が必要です。

7. remind (思い出させる) This picture reminds me of my childhood.
この絵は私に子ども時代を思い出させます。

8. luck (運) I won the game by luck.
運良く勝ったのさ。

9. plant (植物) The pine tree is one of the most popular plants in Japan.
松の木は、日本で人気のある植物の一つです。

10. weave (織る) My grandmother weaves baskets with straw.
私の祖母は藁でカゴを織ります。

11. dye (染める) Did you dye your hair?
髪を染めたの？

12. cover (覆う) The streets were covered with a thin layer of snow.
数々の通りが、うっすらとした雪で覆われていました。

13. a while (しばらくの間) Masamitsu left school a while ago.
正光はしばらく前に学校を出ましたよ。

14. traditional (伝統的な) It’s traditional in America to eat turkey on Thanksgiving Day.
感謝祭の日に七面鳥を食べることは、アメリカでは伝統的です。

15. paint (塗装) Each wall in the room is painted with nature scenes.
部屋の中の各壁は自然の風景で塗装されています。

16. originally (もとは) The convenience store chain 7-11 is originally from the United States.
コンビニのセブンイレブンは、もともとはアメリカ合衆国のものです。

17. polish (磨く) This silver tray is polished and shiny.
この銀のトレーは、磨かれて光っています。

18. ornament (装飾・飾り) We decorate Christmas trees with many ornaments.
私たちは、クリスマスツリーにたくさんの飾りをつけた。

19. collect (集める) When I was little I used to collect insects.
小さい頃、よく虫を集めましたものでした。

20. carefully (注意して) She carried the glasses very carefully, so she didn’t break them.
彼女はとても注意してそのグラスを運びました、壊さないために。
II. Warm Up: Work with a partner. Interview your partner by asking these questions. Write your partner’s answers.

ウォーミングアップ：ペアワークをします。相手にインタビューをし、以下の質問をしましょう。聞いた答えは書きとりましょう。

1. Name some Japanese regional handicrafts.
2. What kinds of Japanese regional handicrafts have you made or seen?
3. What kinds of regional handicrafts do you want to make or see?
4. What is a special handicraft from your hometown or prefecture?
5. Match the following regional handicrafts of Japan with a description. Put the letter of the best answer on the line.

(Problems deleted for reasons of space)

III. Dialogue: (Directions deleted for reasons of space)

Sally and Miki are talking before class.

サリーとミキが授業の前に話しています。

Sally:  Hi Miki! Long time, no (1) _____________.
Miki: Yes, I guess I haven’t been here for a (2) _____________.
Sally: Where have you been?
Miki: I went up to visit the Aizu region with my family.
Sally: Where’s that?
Miki: It’s in Fukushima. Here’s a (3) _____________ for you.
Sally:  Thanks! What is it?
Miki: It’s called Akabeko, a red cow, a (4) _____________ toy from the Aizu region.
Sally: How is it made?
Miki: It’s covered with washi paper and then (5) _____________ and lacquered.
Sally: Where does washi paper come from?
Miki: It’s made from a (6) _____________ called mulberry.
Sally: It’s beautiful! Thank you so much! How did you know that one of my hobbies is collecting Japanese (7) _____________?
Miki: That’s a great hobby. What (8) _____________ have you collected?
Sally: Well, let’s see. I have a red lacquered tray from Kamakura.
Miki: I know that! It’s called Kamakura-bori. It’s made of wood and it’s carved. And then it’s lacquered and polished.
Sally: Right! And I have a temari ball from Kyoto.
Miki: What’s that?
Sally: It’s a ball wrapped with tread. It was started in ancient Japan.
Miki: Oh, that reminds me of a Christmas ornament.
Sally: Yeah, it looks that. Sometimes they were given for good (9) _____________
Miki: Now I remember. I was given one as a present by a friend.
Sally: I also have (10) _____________ from Ishikawa prefecture.
Miki: You sure have a lot of Japanese handicrafts! How are you going to take them all back with you?
Sally: Very carefully!

Questions: Work with a partner. Ask and answer the following questions about the dialogue. Write the answers in full sentences.

1. Where did Miki go?
2. What souvenir did Miki give to Sally?
3. How is an Akabeko made?
4. What is one of Sally’s hobbies?
5. How many Japanese handicrafts are mentioned in the dialogue?
IV. Grammar & Practice: Active & Passive Verb Forms

Active: John paints the house.
Passive: The house is painted by John.

Active: The artist covered the box with washi paper.
Passive: The box was covered with washi paper by the artist.

The passive form makes the object more important. It’s formed by changing places of the object and the subject, using this formula:

\[
O + \text{be verb} + \text{present participle} + (\text{by S})
\]

\[
\text{I do it.} \quad \text{I did it.}
\]

\[
\text{It is done (by me).} \quad \text{It was done (by me).}
\]

A. Change the active to passive form or the passive to active form. 能動態の文は受動態の文に、受動態の文は能動態の文にしましょう。
1. I collect stamps.  
2. Mariko wrapped the present.
3. We carved our initials into the tree.
4. This basket was woven by my grandmother.

(Additional problems deleted for reasons of space)

B. Work with a partner. Take turns reading these statements in the passive form using the verbs in parentheses. Answer “True” or “False”. (Directions and some problems deleted for reasons of space)

True or False

1. Tokyo Tower (build) in 1976. __________________
5. Square watermelons (grow) on Shikoku island now. __________________
7. The first company in Japan (start) 300 years ago. __________________
8. Miyagi Prefecture (know) for its roasted cow tongue. ________________
9. Artificial flowers made from silk (wear) by geisha. __________________
10. Twenty-four million chopsticks (use) each year in Japan. _______________

V. Your turn: Work with a partner. Find a Japanese handicraft from your prefecture or another prefecture and write down ten sentences about it below. Write as many passive sentences as possible: “It is made of . . .” “It is known for . . .” Then read your sentences to the class and see if your classmates can guess which handicraft you are describing.

やってみよう: パートナーと協力。あなたの県からの日本の手工芸品や他の都道府県を検索し、以下、それについて10文章を書き留める。できるだけ多くの受動文を書く：「それは作られている。」「それは知られています。」それらをクラスメートに読んで、あなたのクラスメートは、あなたが記述されている手工芸品を推測できるかどうかを確認。
Hello, everyone! Today I’m going to tell you about a really delicious regional Japanese food. Do you know the difference between kishimen and udon? I suppose that no one knows. Today I’m going to tell you.

Kishimen is one of the well-known varieties of Japanese noodles. Nagoya is especially known for its kishimen. It’s chiefly made from flour, water, and salt. Kishimen looks like udon. But the noodles are flatter than udon.

And cooking kishimen is very difficult, because kishimen absorbs more water than udon does when it is boiled. It’s necessary to use special techniques for cooking kishimen, for example, when cooking kishimen, use less amount of water than for cooking udon, and a shorter cooking time is used. I think that it is because of the use of cooking techniques that kishimen looks glossier than udon does when cooked.

Next, I’ll talk about how to eat kishimen. We usually put various toppings on kishimen, for example, chicken pieces, deep fried bean curd, chopped onion, and so on.

Last, I was told by my friends who lives in Aichi Prefecture that kishimen isn’t actually popular there. That surprised me.

Thank you for listening.

Questions asked by other students following presentation:
1) What kind of toppings do you like to have when you eat kishimen?
2) What is the best place to eat kishimen around here?

Notes:
1) This is the third draft after teacher corrections.
2) The grammar has been left just as the student had written it for this draft.
3) The presentation was accompanied by 4 slides showing photos of kishimen.
4) The rubric used for scoring this presentation can be seen in Appendix 4.

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Appendix 4

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLASS MID-TERM EXAM GRADING SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>ID NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**PRESENTATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hands in copy of presentation</td>
<td>/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes 5 words from vocabulary lists</td>
<td>/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes 2 sense verbs</td>
<td>/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening statement</td>
<td>/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes a regional food</td>
<td>/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing statement</td>
<td>/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical correctness</td>
<td>/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation</td>
<td>/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers one follow-up question</td>
<td>/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers one more follow-up question</td>
<td>/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presentation** /30

Asks one follow-up question to: /4
Asks one follow-up question to: /4
Hands in completed listening worksheet /12

**Written Test on use of sense verbs w/wo llke** /20

**Halloween party – use of passive to report** /30

TOTAL /100

Scorer: Date:
In Appreciation

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