Oral Activities for the High School Japanese Language Classroom.

A group of classroom activities to develop oral Japanese skills at the high school level are described, with illustrations and, in some cases, student worksheets. The activities include: (1) a game for determining the appropriate referent for an adjective; (2) a paired-student activity in which students match individuals with characteristics; (3) a board game, with cue cards and answer cards provided; (4) a game in which students find a classmate who has a specific characteristic; (5) a personal oral interview exercise; and (6) a game for discovering shared interests. A list of additional resources for oral activities appropriate to the high school classroom is appended. (MSE)
Oral Activities for the High School Japanese Language Classroom

by Cliff Darnall, Japanese Teacher
Elk Grove High School (Northwest Suburban H. S. District #214)
500 W. Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove Vil., IL 60007

ACTFL ‘94 (Atlanta, Georgia, Nov. 18, 1994)

Introduction To the Packet

Anyone who has taught high school realizes the importance of including a variety of activities in the classroom. Many high school students are not willingly to do long sequences of teacher-led drill sessions. They enjoy having frequent chances for student-to-student interaction, which gives them a chance to use the language without having to fear making mistakes in front of the entire class. Moreover, if we as teachers are indeed striving to improve our students’ ability to use the language for communication, we must provide opportunities for information to be exchanged in the classroom.

The activities in this packet are my adaptations and variations on ideas I have picked up at workshops, in coursework, and in the literature. These oral activities are student-centered, involving pairs, small groups, or the milling of students around an entire class. The activities are highly structured, as is necessary at the early levels of learning; but most also involve simple communicative interchange.¹

It is important, I feel, to provide lots of time for speaking practice in class. Students can do much of their writing practice outside of class, but in general students’ speaking opportunities are mostly limited to the classroom. Students must realize that their teacher places great importance on the oral language. Although it may be impossible to have frequent speaking tests in large classes, many quizzes and tests should still involve listening. Moreover, oral participation in class should compose a major part of each student’s grade, and students should be made aware of this fact.

Finally, I would note that activities such as the ones presented here should be integrated into the overall lessons, not just introduced haphazardly. In many cases, careful preparation for the activity will be needed to make sure that the students will have the language ability to carry out the tasks well in their small groups. Once the activities have been set up, the teacher is free to stand back, circulate, and help out—or in the case of the milling activities at the back of the packet, take part as one of the participants.

¹The exception is the board game, which provides a fun, student-centered way for students to get additional meaningful practice on difficult structures. Student teams must correctly complete a mini-dialog exchange in order to advance. Because whenever a team pulls a cue card the other pulls an answer card to check what the other team says, grammatical accuracy can be carefully monitored in small group work even when the teacher is on the other side of the room. By making new question and check cards and an appropriate instruction card (on the middle of the gameboard), the teacher can easily use the same gameboard as a change of pace activity several times during the year. Communicative tasks can also placed on the cue cards, though this may sometimes affect how well the other team can check accuracy.

(Note that if the locations marked 〜つ戻る result in any net advancement for the students, they must successfully carry out the mini-exchange or return to the location they rolled from. Teachers may prefer to have the locations marked 回休む interpreted to mean that students return to their location before rolling and forfeit only that current attempt.)
BATTLESHIP: の- and な-Type Adjectives
Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove H.S. (IL) copyright 1994 Illustrated by Ayano Tamura

DIRECTIONS: First choose eight squares below for which you will say that the left-hand adjective applies to the noun, and mark those eight squares on your paper. Do not let your opponent see which ones you marked. Do ジャンケンボン to decide who goes first. If you ask your partner a question and he/she answers affirmatively ("yes"), you get a point and get to ask again. If he answers in the negative, you lose your turn. (If the partner does not complete the negative answer, your turn continues.)

Roleplay adult acquaintances for the first part of the game. The teacher will have you switch to informal style later. Be sure to include the necessary particles when you speak. Use the patterns below:

Sample with の-type Adjective: その車 高い (安い)

-> Question: その車は高いですか。
-> If yes: ええ、高いです (よ)。
-> If no: いいえ、高くないです (よ)。安いです。

Sample with な-type Adjective: 真理さんの部屋 静か (うるさい)

-> Question: 真理さんの部屋は静かですか。
-> If yes: ええ、静かです (よ)。
-> If no: いいえ、静かじゃないです (よ)。うるさいです。

-> Question: 真理さんの部屋 (は)、静か？
-> If Y: うん、静か (だ) (よ)。
-> If N: うん、静かじゃない (よ)。うるさい。
You know who half of the people in the pictures are. Your partner knows who the other is. Use Japanese to find out who the people you don't know are. Roleplay adult acquaintances for the first 4 people on each side, high school students for the others.

Formal-level interaction:
S1: すみません、～ている人は誰ですか。S2: __さんがです（よ）。
Informal-level interaction:
S1: のう／ね、～ている人は誰か？ S2: __さん（だ）（よ）。

Presented at ACTFL '94
Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), copyright 1994
Illustrations by Tasuku Iizuka, Takako Takayanagi, Ayano Tamura and Shinobu Itoh
GAME BOARD ACTIVITY CUE CARDS  Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove H.S. (IL) copyright 1994
Copy these off on cardstock and place the number of each card on the back.

(Illustrations by Tasuku Iizuka.)

Speakers: Two high school friends

Speakers: Two family members

Speakers: S1: A h.s. student  
S2: An adult

Speakers: Two high school friends

Speakers: Two family members

Speakers: S1: A h.s. student  
S2: An adult

Speakers: Two high school friends

Speakers: S1: A h.s. student  
S2: An adult

Speakers: Two high school friends

Speakers: Two family members

Speakers: S1: A h.s. student  
S2: An adult

Speakers: S1: A h.s. student  
S2: An adult
HERE’S WHAT TO SAY:
(The speakers and situations are indicated on the cards.)

SPEAKER #1 comments how it was before, asking for agreement at end.

SPEAKER #2 agrees, but says it has now become the opposite and asks for agreement.
ANSWER CARDS FOR GAME BOARD ACTIVITY
By Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), c. 1994 (W/ thanks to Shiro Watanabe and Tasuku Iizuka.) ACTFL '94

Copy these cards off on cardstock and place the number of the card on the reverse side. When the team whose turn it is picks up a cue card to produce the mini-dialogue, the opposing team picks up the answer card with the same number and checks for accuracy. This way, the teacher does not need to “be with every group at once.”

| 1. | S1: 前は、きれいだったね。 | S2: うん、でも今は、落ち着くなったね。 |
| 2. | S1: 前は、高かったね。 | S2: うん、でも今は、落ち着くなったね。 |
| 3. | S1: 前は、新しかったですね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、古くになりましたね。 |
| 4. | S1: 前は、狭かったね。 | S2: うん、でも今は、広くなったね。 |
| 5. | S1: 前は、不便だったね。 | S2: うん、でも今は、便利になったね。 |
| 6. | S1: 前は、静かでしたね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、小さくなりましたね。 |
| 7. | S1: 前は、高かったですね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、高くなりましたね。 |
| 8. | S1: 前は、やさしかったね。 | S2: うん、でも今は、難しくなったね。 |
| 9. | S1: 前は、遠かったね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、遠くになりましたね。 |
| 10. | S1: 前は、長かったですね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、近くになりましたね。 |
| 11. | S1: 前は、狭かったですね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、狭くになりましたね。 |
| 12. | S1: 前は、長かったですね。 | S2: ええ、でも今は、狭くになりましたね。 |
FIND SOMEONE FOR WHOM ... IS TRUE

Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), ACTFL '94
With thanks to Takeshi Fukui and Shiro Watanabe.

Use Japanese to find someone for whom each of the following is true.

EXAMPLE: ________さんはこの学校に兄弟がいる。*

-> Question: ________さんはこの学校に兄弟がいる？*

- Yes Answer: --うん、いる。*  (-> Have the person write name in Japanese in blank.)
- No Answer: --うん、いない。*  (-> Try a different question.)

* Of course, change to formal (distal) style when speaking to an adult in the classroom.

1. ________さんは大学に行っているお兄さんがいる。 (名前： )
2. ________さんは大学に行っているお姉さんがいる。 (名前： )
3. ________さんは二つのスポーツ部に入っている。 (どんなスポーツ？)
4. ________さんは三つのスポーツ部に入っている。 (どんなスポーツ？)
5. ________さんは日本に行ったことがある。 (いつ？)
6. ________さんは日本に行きたい。 (いつ？)
7. ________さんは大学で日本語を勉強するつもり（だ）。 (どの大学？)
8. ________さんは他の外国語を勉強している。 (何語？)
9. ________さんはホワイトソックスよりカブスのほうが好き（だ）。
10. ________さんはフットボールよりバスケットのほうが好き（だ）。
11. ________さんは自分の部屋に電話がある。 (自分で払う？)
12. ________さんは自分の部屋にテレビがある。 (自分で買った？)
13. ________さんはアルバイトをしている。 (どこで？)
14. ________さんは車をもっている。 (自分で買った？)
15. ________さんは東海岸の大学に行きたい。 (どの大学：)
16. ________さんはイリノイ出身じゃない。 (出身はどこ？)

Note to Teacher: The cues can be placed on a bingo grid instead, resulting in an activity called “People Bingo.” (Both “Find Someone Who...” and “People Bingo” have been used by foreign language and ESL teachers for years.) Questions can be made to focus on a particular structure or structures or can review several structures (as above). I believe it is important to try to get students to ask follow-up questions and thus have added the additional blanks to the right of most questions.)
You will receive a card showing who you are to pretend to be. All of you will be high school students, but you will use the formal style because it is the first time you have met each other, especially since you're from different schools. Interview students in your group to complete this chart. For each person, find the name of the chart with his or her last name, then fill in the person's first name, the person's age, where his or her home is (use a letter from the map), and the name (number) of his/her school.

Name: Tanaka
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Suzuki
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Morizaki
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Yamakawa
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Kobayashi
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Matsuo
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Ito
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Watanabe
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

Name: Iizuka
Age: __
Home: __
School: __

YOUR ROLE: Family name: Tanaka
Given name: Haruki (M) or Haruko (F)
Age: 15 years old
Home: Osaka
School #8 High School

YOUR ROLE: Family name: Yamakawa
Given name: Masashi (M)
or Masako (F)
Age: 16 years old
Home: Kobe
School #3 High School

YOUR ROLE: Family name: Itô
Given name: Kiyoshi (M)
or Shinobu (F)
Age: 17 years old
Home: Hiroshima
School #2 High School

YOUR ROLE: Family name: Watanabe
Given name: Haruki (M)
or Ayano (F)
Age: 18 years old
Home: Tokyo
School #1 High School

Note to the Teacher: First review appropriate questions and answers. Then break the class into groups of 9. (For smaller groups, use fewer cards.) Each student in a given group gets a map (top section of page). Students are comfortable reading hiragana. Information can be added to the cards if desired. Of course, one of the roleplay cards can be added from the bottom of the page.
For each indicated time period, circle the activity of your choice from the options given. Do not show anyone your card. Your goal is to use Japanese to find others who match or nearly match your choices. Assume you are talking to a high school student you have just met, so you might still be using the formal style.

The conversation should proceed as follows:

A: 〜さん、TIME WORD、なにをしますか？
B: 〜ます。〜さんは？

A: {わたしそ}{も}{は}、〜ます。

Use this one if you had chosen the same activity.
Use this one if you had chosen the other activity

Then reverse roles to carry on the conversation concerning the next time period. You might use じゃ or それじゃ to start later parts of the conversation. Talk about all four periods with the same partner. Then each of you should give yourselves the following number of points, depending on how many times you matched, and find a new partner.

SCORING TABLE:

6 points for a perfect match of answers
4 points if you matched on three activities
2 points if you matched on two activities
1 point if you matched on one activity
3 points if you matched on no activities

(Note: Transitional writing style is being used.)
SOME RESOURCES FOR ORAL-ACTIVITIES
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM

Two Key Background References:


Oral-Based Supplementary Student Texts I Use at Elk Grove High School:


村野良子・谷道まや, 1988,『絵とタスクで学ぶ日本語』凡人社

Some Other Sources Of Oral Activities:


Also check:

- Various back and current issues of the Newsletter of the Japanese Language Teachers Network (c/o Center for the Improvement of the Teaching of Japanese Language and Culture in the High School, University High School, 1212 W. Springfield, Urbana, IL 61801)

- Teachers editions and student texts and workbooks of your text and other texts


- Publishers’ displays here at ACTFL ‘94