

**Utilizing Student-Generated Video Podcasts  
in a Japanese English as a Foreign Language Classroom**

**By**

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## Abstract

Japan has been quick to adopt a variety of innovative technologies. Changing English education, on the other hand, is a very slow process in Japan. Consequently, though Japanese students score high in other subject areas, their abilities in English lag behind other Asian nations. In response, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) has revised English educational guidelines for all levels of education. Despite these efforts, ineffective teaching methods, low student motivation, and unique cultural factors contribute to Japanese students' poor listening and speaking skills in English.

The incorporation of information and communications technology (ICT) into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has been suggested as a possible tool for increasing student motivation and enhancing listening and speaking skills. Audio and video podcasts are examples of ICT tools that can be easily adapted for use in EFL classrooms. In this paper will discuss how podcasts enhance English skills by providing additional time-on-task, improving listening and speaking skills, addressing a variety of learner needs and styles, and increasing student motivation. I will explain the benefits and potential drawbacks to using podcasts in EFL classrooms. Through the lens of digital natives and technology saturation, I will explore how podcasts may be especially effective in a Japanese EFL setting. Finally, I will outline a plan for integrating student-created video podcasting into a high school EFL class in Japan.

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## Introduction

Japan has been quick to adopt a variety of innovative technologies. Changing English education, on the other hand, is a very slow process in Japan. Consequently, though Japanese students score high in other subject areas, their abilities in English lag behind other Asian nations. In response, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) has revised English educational guidelines for all levels of education. Despite these efforts, ineffective teaching methods, low student motivation, and unique cultural factors contribute to Japanese students' poor listening and speaking skills in English.

As many Japanese students have not traveled abroad and have little to no interaction with speakers of any other languages, they often do not view English as a valuable subject (Matsuura, Fujieda, and Mahoney 472). Prior to April of 2011, the first year of compulsory English courses was the first year of junior high school, when most students are twelve years old. Recent MEXT surveys find the majority of these first-year junior high students, over sixty percent, enjoy their English studies; however, enjoyment steadily declines to less than fifty percent by the third year of junior high school. Student enjoyment of other subjects was also studied, and English consistently ranks lower than other school subjects (MEXT, "Five" 5-6). These results match similar findings by Japanese scholar and English teacher Yoshiyuki Nakata who notes that the third year of junior high school is typically when more complicated English grammar rules and lexical items are introduced (14). This increased difficulty may be why thirty percent of third-year junior high school students claim they cannot understand the majority of their English coursework (MEXT, "Five" 6).

MEXT's 2011 proposals stress the importance of adapting English classrooms to meet a variety of learner styles and abilities. The incorporation of information and communications

technology (ICT) into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has been suggested as a possible tool for increasing student motivation and enhancing listening and speaking skills (MEXT, “Five” 7-9). Audio and video podcasts are examples of ICT tools that can be easily adapted for use in EFL classrooms. In this paper I will discuss how podcasts enhance English skills by providing additional time-on-task, improving listening and speaking skills, addressing a variety of learner needs and styles, and increasing student motivation.

I will begin by looking at the reasons for the current instructional and learning difficulties in Japanese EFL classrooms and briefly discuss how the Japanese government is attempting to address these problems. Secondly, I will examine the types of podcasts available for EFL instructors and discuss how categorizing podcasts by media, author, and content is useful for educators who want to integrate podcasting activities into EFL coursework. I will explain the benefits and potential drawbacks to using podcasts in EFL classrooms. Through the lens of digital natives and technology saturation, I will explore how podcasts may be especially effective in a Japanese EFL setting. Finally, I will outline a plan for integrating student-created video podcasting into a high school EFL class in Japan.

## **1. Why Teaching and Learning English is Difficult in Japan**

Despite compulsory English courses from the first year of junior high through the third year of senior high school, Japanese students receive some of the lowest scores in Asia on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). On the 2004-2005 TOEFL exams, Japanese students were nearly the worst in the region, beating out North Korea by only one point (ETS, “2004-2005” 7). As Japan is largely monolingual, students have few opportunities to use English outside of the classroom. While this seems like a reasonable explanation for the low TOEFL scores of Japanese students, students in other monolingual countries, like nearby South Korea, score consistently higher than Japanese students (see fig. 1).

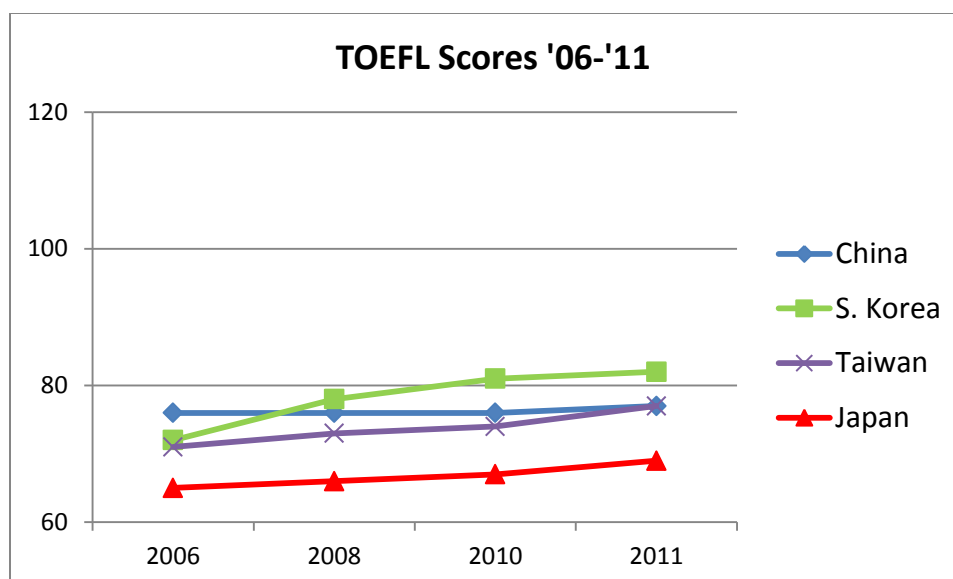


Figure 1. TOEFL iBT Scores 2006-2011; TOEFL Test and Score Data Summary; Educational Testing Service; Web; 20. Nov. 2012.

Another reason for Japanese students' poor performances on standardized tests of English is the prevalence of teaching methods which do not give priority to listening and speaking. The grammar-translation method, with its emphasis on grammar rules and direct translation of text, is firmly rooted in many EFL classrooms in Japan (Larsen-Freeman 11-21; MEXT, "Five" 4; Nakata 14). This means students are unlikely to practice spontaneous speech inside the classroom. Since the TOEFL introduced the speaking section in 2006, it has routinely been the weakest category for Japanese students (see fig. 2).

Lack of confidence or ability in speaking is often exacerbated by the washback effect from high school and university entrance exams, where reading and listening are the most common tasks (MEXT, "Five" 12; Nakata 14-5). Washback is commonly defined as "the influence that a test has on the way students are taught" (Harmer, "Teach" 285). Many Japanese English teachers, mirroring only the exam tasks, prevent students from acquiring

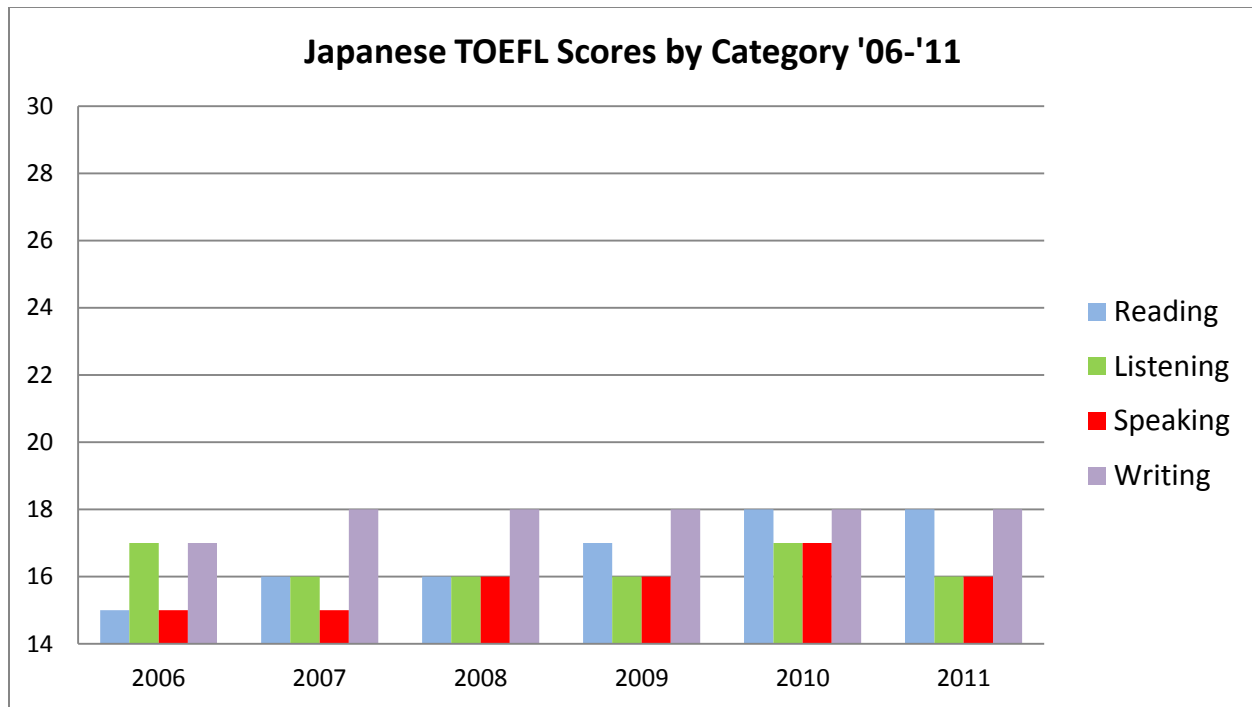


Figure 2. Japanese TOEFL iBT Scores by Category, 2006-2011; TOEFL Test and Score Data Summary; Educational Testing Service; Web; 20. Nov. 2012.

important speaking skills like debating, persuading, or even expressing their own feelings. Even after at least six years of formal English study, many Japanese university students often lack the willingness or ability to produce spontaneous speech or engage in communicative activities in English (Carney 42-7; Natusch 121; Ono 32).

Japanese cultural norms provide additional deterrents to Japanese students. A strong sense of interdependence has enabled Japanese people to live in relative peace, even in their famously small and crowded spaces; however, this can lead to problems in EFL classes. Nakata explains that in a collectivist culture like Japan, “teamwork, cooperation, consensus in a group, harmony, group cohesiveness, equal treatment of members’ devotion, and members’ participation is expected” (152). This can be frustrating for non-Japanese EFL instructors who repeatedly observe students who have studied English for six years conferring at length with classmates before answering even a simple question in English (Carney 41-6).



In Japanese classrooms, which mirror Japanese society, a sense of belonging and acceptance is paramount. Both in and out of school, Japanese students are told, “*Deru kui wa utareru*,” or “The nail that sticks up gets hammered down.” This famous Japanese proverb is meant to teach a student that if he or she differs from the group, in a positive or negative way, he or she will be sharply criticized. Fear of public humiliation creates a classroom atmosphere “where ‘making mistakes’ is not socially acceptable” (Nakata 86). Rather than risk a mistake, students will remain silent. This, of course, stunts the growth of speaking abilities and self-confidence in English. Similarly, a fear of *kaomake*, or losing face, will cause some Japanese students, embarrassed by their inability to speak, to avoid communicating with an English-speaking foreigner (Schreiber). It is now a commonly accepted view that weaknesses in the Japanese educational system have produced students who are not motivated to learn English and have poor English communication skills.

Recognizing this phenomenon, MEXT has made significant adjustments to its recent Courses of Study, recommended policies and educational standards, for English. In April of 2011, MEXT mandated 45-minute, weekly English lessons for fifth and sixth-year students in elementary schools. The change is meant to match similar standards in nearby rival nations. South Korea has required English for ten to twelve-year-old children since 1997, while China added the provision in 2005 (McCurry).

One of the biggest changes at the high school level is the requirement that English courses be taught entirely in the target language by 2013 (MEXT, “Five” 9). This condition will, likely, be difficult to fulfill. A recent survey of public high school English teachers in Japan contends that only twenty percent are teaching oral communication skills in English (McCurry).

In addition, while students express a desire to learn more practical language, many are hesitant to take part in English-only classes (Hadley 118-9; Matsuura, Fujieda, and Mahoney 486).

At every level, MEXT identifies the need for cultivating greater student motivation for learning English, while “developing skills necessary in life and work” (“Basic Plan” 1.2). Concerns over the requirements outlined in the new Courses of Study for English led MEXT to create and distribute a document describing more precise means for achieving the new policies. “Five Proposals and Specific Measures for Developing Proficiency in English for International Communication” was published and distributed to educators in June of 2011. These proposals set assessment standards for students and instructors, stress the importance of adapting English classrooms to meet a variety of learner styles and abilities, suggest ways to increase student motivation and exposure to authentic English, and encourage schools to develop exams requiring integration of the four skills (MEXT, “Five” 2-13). Proposal Three specifically discusses the potential for information and communication technology (ICT) to help create student-centered classrooms that can be adapted to meet students’ interests and abilities. MEXT recognizes ICT is especially useful for providing students with supplementary or self-study materials, as well as giving students greater access to authentic language and deeper exposure to aspects of culture (MEXT, “Five” 7-9). While a variety of ICT tools may be useable in an EFL classroom, podcasts may be the most beneficial for EFL classrooms in Japan. Podcasts are an effective way to improve listening and speaking skills in English, which are currently the weakest areas for Japanese EFL students (see fig. 2).

## **2. Types of EFL Podcasts**

Merriam Webster currently defines podcast as, “a program (as of music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download over the Internet” (“podcast, n”). The term

*podcasting* was first used in print by journalist, Ben Hammersley his 2004 article, “Audible Revolution,” in the British newspaper *The Guardian*. It is a portmanteau of the words *iPod*, Apple’s popular digital media player, and *broadcasting* (“podcasting, n”).

## **2.1 Categorization of EFL Podcasts by Media**

Although podcasts can be classified in a number of ways, for EFL educators it is useful to look at three general aspects: media, author, and content. Each of these features can be further subdivided into more specific categories. Though the current OED definition of *podcast* limits digital files to audio, video has quickly become a preferred format for many podcasts and *podcast* has become acceptable term for both audio and video formats (Andersen, 219). While the word *podcast* is commonly used for both audio and video files, some current scholarly literature prefers the term *vodcast* for a video podcast (Gkatzidou and Pearson 292; Schnackenberg, Vega, and Relation 1; Rocha and Coutinho 56). A third term, *enhanced podcast*, is also identified by some scholars (Pals, Randell, and Shawback 29; Sandars, 387; Vallance and Shibata 65). An enhanced podcast is an audio podcast which also contains still images and hyperlinks. Enhanced podcasts, therefore, fall into a category that is between audio and video podcasts.

## **2.2 Categorization of EFL Podcasts by Podcaster**

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), *podcaster* is the term used for “a person who makes podcasts” or “an organization involved in podcasting” (“podcaster, n”). However, Apple, which holds one of the largest online repositories of podcasts through *iTunes* and *iTunes U*, uses the term *author* when referring to a podcaster (“Making a Podcast”). One of the greatest proponents and pioneers of EFL podcasting, British author and educator Graham Stanley, also prefers the term *author* over *podcaster*. He divides EFL podcasts into four author

categories: authentic, educator, teacher, and *student* podcasts. Authentic podcasts are found everywhere on the Internet, and are produced by both individual amateurs and professional organizations. They are most often made by native speakers for a native or advanced level English-speaking audience, though some, such as EFL scholar Steve McCarty's *Japancasting*, are created by non-native English speakers ("Spoken" 71-2).

Although the intended audience of most authentic podcasts is not EFL students, as the same suggests, these podcasts provide a wealth of real language in natural situations. These podcasts are especially useful for EFL teachers in Japan who may not be native speakers, but want to expose their students to native speaking situations (Anzai 453). A variety of directories are mentioned in the podcasting literature to assist Japanese EFL instructors in locating suitable podcasts. Among the most frequently cited are *iTunes*, *Podcast Alley*, *Japancasting*, and *TeacherTube* (Li 90; McCarty "Spoken" 71-2; Gray 105). With the ability to search and filter results by author, description, language, popularity, subject, or title, *iTunes* is a convenient source for English instructors looking for new podcasts. In addition, *iTunes* makes it easy to share podcast links via email or by using popular social media sites like Facebook and Twitter (Apple).

EFL instructors looking to improve their own skills can make use of educator podcasts. Educator podcasts are made specifically for instructors and help teach new skills or give information about the newest methodologies (Stanley). These include step-by-step technology tutorials and recordings of live presentations from events and conferences. Educator podcasts are available through a variety of organizations, including the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association. The TESOL International Association makes a variety of recent conference presentations and virtual seminars available to members

through its website, [tesol.org](http://tesol.org) (“Resource Center”). Although intended for an American audience, the recent article, “Ten Best Podcasts for Teachers,” provides a variety of educator podcasts that are useful for EFL instructors. Included on this list are, NPR Education, The Tech Teachers, and The Teachers’ Podcast (Stenger). Since technology is constantly evolving, it is important for EFL instructors to stay up-to-date on podcasting techniques in order to successfully integrate them into the classroom. For EFL instructors who prefer their information in print, the article “Podcasts: A Language Lab in Your Pocket” provides a brief introduction into audio and enhanced podcasting using Apple-based software (Pals, Randell, and Shawback). Apple’s iTunes U is a free and convenient way for instructors to securely create and distribute course material. Step-by-step instructions for tasks are provided and it is easy for instructors to link traditional course materials related Internet sites or their own audio and video. It is available to K-12, college, and university instructors in twenty-six countries and includes access to over five hundred thousand public resources, including digital audio, images, and video from museums, universities, and other cultural institutions (“Apple in Education: iTunes U”).

One of the most common types of podcasts used by instructors is the teacher podcast. Teacher podcasts are most commonly made by teachers for, or as a supplement to, their own classes (Stanley). Similarly, technology researcher and scholar, Khe Foon Hew subdivides teacher-created podcasts into lecture and supplementary categories (337). Teacher podcasts can be distributed to students directly by the instructor via email, digital file posting programs, or personal websites. The development of Really Simple Syndication (RSS) allows students to subscribe to teacher podcasts. The podcasts are automatically delivered to subscribers as soon as they are posted, or made available, by an instructor.

For instructors who may be camera shy, student podcasts are an excellent option. Student

podcasts are made by the students themselves, with the guidance or help of an educator (Stanley). Though not specifically mentioned in the literature, student-generated podcasts may be particularly effective in a group-centered culture like Japan, where students are accustomed to working in task-based, small group activities.

### **2.3 Categorization of EFL Podcasts by Content**

While categorizing podcasts by media and author is informative, instructors may find classification by content to be the most practical. Although it is possible to divide the content of podcasts into numerous categories, it is useful to divide them into one of three common subcategories: lecture, preparatory, and supplemental. As the name implies, lecture podcasts are straightforward recordings of classroom lectures. As such, lecture podcasts require little time and effort by an instructor. Preparatory podcasts provide information and materials meant to be listened to or viewed before a classroom session, while supplemental podcasts provide additional materials to be viewed or listened to after a classroom session. Preparatory podcasts are similar to the common task of an assigned reading. Uses for supplemental podcasts include providing extra material for advanced students and exam preparation (Hew 338; Copley 395).

As podcasting expands, podcasts may overlap into more than one category. The *Japancasting* site, addressed in some detail by McCarty, has several podcasts that demonstrate this phenomenon. Individual episodes in several of these podcasts include content created by a combination of native and non-native speaking English and Japanese teachers and students (“Spoken” 71-4). In an article for *Education Technology Research and Development*, Khe Foon Hew describes another cross-category podcasting example. He describes a classroom project involving student-made podcasts which are created to be used as teaching podcasts for future students (338).

### 3. Educational Advantages of Using Podcasts to Teach EFL

Regardless of how podcasts are categorized, they provide a number of educational advantages such as additional time-on-task and increased fluency and retention. In addition, podcasts are adaptable to a variety of learner needs and abilities and have been shown to increase student motivation and engagement. These positive outcomes make podcasts attractive educational tools for EFL classroom instructors.

#### 3.1 More Time-on-Task

Time-on-task is the amount of time students spend on learning and classroom-related activities; it is sometimes referred to in the literature as *engaged time* (Aronson, Zimmerman, and Carlos 3). Lecture podcasts are just one example of how podcasts can extend classroom learning beyond the actual meeting time and space. Studies in Australia, Japan, and the U.K. find that students benefit from having access to in-class lectures outside of the classroom. The opportunities for additional listening give these students chances to look up unfamiliar words, phrases, or concepts on their own, and then hear them again in the context of the lecture. Non-native English speakers in these studies feel that teacher podcasts free them to focus on the lecture in class, knowing they can listen to it again and add notes later (Copley 397; McCarty, “Window” 16; Taylor and Clark 393).

McCarty is one of several authors to recognize the freedom podcasts bring to students, allowing them to review lectures during their commute or any time that is convenient for them (“Window” 13; Mochizuki 4; Vallance and Shibata 72). Reviewing lecture podcasts aids in retention of content presented by an instructor. Researchers Michael Vallance and Yukiko Shibata describe several positive outcomes from student-made enhanced podcasts, including an increase in student recall of information after creating podcasts. Unfortunately, there is no

evidence in their study that using podcasts produces more favorable results than more traditional types of study aids (69). In a 2008 American study, however, university students who study using teacher podcasts score nearly ten percent higher on exams than students who use only in-class lectures and notes to study (McKinney, Dyck, and Luber 621-2). A similar study of Iranian EFL students finds students who use teacher podcasts for study and review outperform students who use only in-class lecture notes and textbooks for study and review (Shoar, Abidin, and Pour-Mohammadi 8).

The increased time-on-task provided by podcasts is certainly related to aspects of portability and convenience, which are among the most commonly mentioned features of podcasting in the literature (Anzai 455, Schnackenberg, Vega, and Relation 3, McCarty “Spoken” 68). Anzai argues that in the past, “physical distance and time have been major constraints for the effective study of EFL learners,” but today’s cell phones and digital media players are incredibly lightweight and increasingly affordable (455). EFL students comment that with podcasts they “can learn anywhere,” and mention how they are “efficient for the busy person” (Vallance and Shibata 72). Other students note that they “can see the lectures more than once in my own time and at my own pace and therefore get a better understanding” (Copley 397). In their 2009 study, educational researchers Vicenc Fernandez, Pep Simo, and Jose M. Sallan find that access to course information via podcasts not only leads to an overall increase in students’ time-on-task, but also allows EFL students to develop a better “global vision of the chapters, reducing the time required to study and assimilate the contents, and allowing them to efficiently manage their time” (389-91).

This evidence supports American psychologist B.F. Skinner’s views on positive reinforcement and learning. In his article “The Science of Learning and Art of Teaching,”



Skinner claims that learning occurs and is best maintained through repetition and positive reinforcement (25). EFL professor and computer assisted language learning (CALL) researcher Nicolas Gromik contends that iPods have already proven to be successful language tools in Japanese EFL classrooms, enhancing vocabulary acquisition and retention through multiple plays (“Cyber” 110-2). Lucy Taylor and Steve Clark’s international students studying in Australia praise the ability to review classroom material multiple times: “I could listen to the podcasts for those sentences that I could not get twice or three times” (393). Similarly, British professor Jonathan Copley affirms that the majority of his students downloaded audio and video podcasts of his lectures and played them numerous times, especially before exams (389-91). Not surprisingly, the percentage of the students utilizing the podcasts increased with the difficulty of the course. For his most difficult course, one hundred percent of the students downloaded the audio podcast of his lecture and eighty-three percent downloaded the video podcast (389). Audio and video podcasts help make classroom content more accessible for students, and they are especially useful for helping students to review difficult information.

As previously mentioned, there is evidence that teacher podcasts are effective study aids for exam preparation. Interestingly, Japanese EFL students in a 2010 study prefer materials made by and featuring the familiar voices of their professors over professionally-made options for Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) preparation (Ono and Ishihara 541). A 2011 study of EFL students finds they prefer to review with teacher podcasts because they believe them to be more efficient and reliable study aids than their notes; these same students maintain that they learn more from reviewing a podcast than from rereading a corresponding section from the textbook (Shoar, Abidin, and Pour-Mohammadi 9-10). This same study reports that students who use teacher podcasts to review score higher on vocabulary

tests than those who use notes and textbooks (11). Copley contends that audio and video podcasts of his lectures are a popular form of exam review with both his native English-speaking students and non-native English-speaking students (389-97). Taylor and Clark also document positive feedback from their Australian and international students (391-3). One international student from China comments:

Because I have an iPod, I can just download it, you can subscribe to the broadcast, and you don't have to worry about downloading because it will download automatically. And then you just use your iPod and can listen as many times as you want. Like, for us, if it's not easy to understand, we can listen many times (Taylor and Clark 391).

Increased time-on-task is not limited to teacher podcasts, but is also found in student-created podcasts. In her study of non-native English speakers studying in Australia, researcher Karen Stead finds students using authentic and short, student-generated podcasts spend an additional twenty minutes of class time focusing on their pronunciation (13). While searching for relevant links to add to their podcasts, Vallance and Shibata's Japanese students spend more time exploring websites written in English (65). While this particular example demonstrates how coursework related to podcasts exposes students to examples of written English, podcasting is perhaps most effective for improving listening comprehension and speaking fluency.

### **3.2 Increased Listening Comprehension and Speaking Fluency**

The use of *extensive reading*, defined as “reading in quantity and in order to gain a general understanding of what is read . . . to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a linking for reading,” is an accepted practice in EFL teaching (“extensive reading, n.” 193-4). This same technique is now commonly applied to the skill of listening in EFL classrooms. Examples of extensive listening tasks include: listening

to lengthy stretches of speech, like a lecture or conversation, in order to find the main idea or make inferences (Brown and Abeywickrama 162). Listening to authentic podcasts improves overall English listening comprehension and awareness of common features of connected speech, such as the reduction or change of unstressed syllables found in elision (sounds disappearing into each other), assimilation (sound changing to become more like immediately preceding or following sounds), and intrusion (insertion of linking sound) (Lu 84-85; Harmer, “Practice” 42).

Podcasts are not only authentic sources for extensive listening samples, but they also demonstrate examples of real-life English on a variety of subjects. This increased exposure to authentic English allows students to learn vocabulary and phrases on subjects that are of interest to them and which they are, therefore, more likely to use and enjoy using. By imitating the natural language they hear in authentic podcasts, students can improve their fluency. The *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching* defines *fluency* as:

the ability to produce written and/or spoken language with ease...speak with good but not necessarily perfect command of intonation, vocabulary and grammar... communicate ideas effectively, and produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties” (204).

By allowing EFL students to listen to authentic samples of English as many times as they wish, and imitate the pronunciation they hear, podcasts provide a benefit students do not get from live conversations. In addition, students can practice listening and speaking while doing other activities. This is also an authentic task, since we rarely perform language tasks in isolation in real-world activities. Students in several studies recognize the ability to practice this kind of multitasking learning as a notable advantage of podcasts (Vernandez, Simo, and Sallan 386-7;

Copley 391; McCarty, “Spoken” 71). In addition, the privacy of listening and practicing at home with authentic examples allows shy students to build up speaking confidence in a pace and manner that is comfortable for them. Instructors of students in a 2009 study notice marked improvement in student confidence and pronunciation abilities after listening to authentic podcasts and recording their own peer-reviewed podcasts in English; the students perceive this progress as well, with eighty-five percent claiming they feel increased confidence and ninety-five percent stating that they feel their pronunciation has improved (Stead 10-14).

Although not specifically addressed in the current literature, authentic podcasts are valuable for EFL teachers who want to introduce their students to the varieties of English and English speakers they will encounter in the world. Noted author and linguist Braj Krachru is the originator of the term *World English* and is famous for his illustration of worldwide spoken English as a series of concentric, “Inner,” “Outer,” and “Expanding” circles (Krachru 356). The Inner Circle is composed of “the traditional bases of English – the regions where it is the primary language,” namely Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Krachru 38, 356). Many students have little exposure to varieties of English from other parts of the world. This is partially due to the high saturation of entertainment and media from the Inner Circle. Utilizing authentic podcasts from nations which fall in the Outer and Expanding circles better prepares students for what they may encounter when they leave school and enter an international workplace. Linguist and author, David Crystal, states that, globally, there are three non-native speakers for every one native speaker of English, making the ability to understand the varieties of World English a valuable asset (69).

As EFL students study in countries from the Outer and Expanding circles, student-created podcasts help students recognize and correct their own pronunciation mistakes. A 2006 study of

two Japanese EFL classes finds students are more interested in improving their pronunciation after creating and viewing their own video podcasts (Lynch 198-9). Likewise, EFL professor Mark Shrosbree affirms the use of digital video in EFL classes. He maintains that videotaping spontaneous, peer-to-peer conversations for oral exams helps to increase the validity and reliability of test assessment (Shrosbree, “Language” 76-8). In addition to recording oral exams, Shrosbree uses teacher-created and student-generated video podcasts in his courses. He creates teacher-made vodcasts, with accompanying worksheets, to demonstrate positive and negative language models for his classes (Shrosbree, “Language” 79).

### **3.3 The Ability to Adapt to Learner Styles and Abilities**

Podcasts are not only helpful for advancing listening and speaking fluency, but they are advantageous for their ability to be adapted to a variety of learner styles and needs. This quality is noted by Ono and Ishihara as one of the unique benefits to student-created vodcasts (543-4). Ono and Ishihara claim that in addition to offering an expanded audience, vodcasting provides a rare, creative outlet for their Japanese students (545). Students in Copley’s 2007 study of teacher podcasts believe they learned material better using a combination of media (audio, pictures, text, video) over one type alone (398). A constructivist approach to student engagement maintains that the best learning process for students is the one that actively engages them (Rocha and Coutinho 55; Taylor and Clark 395). From this perspective, video may have the advantage over audio, as it appeals to both audio and visual learners.

As previously mentioned, teacher podcasts of lectures allow students who are struggling in class to review topics covered in class. Teacher podcasts of supplementary lectures can help students who need extra help on specific materials. A supplementary review of important topics can also help students narrow their focus for exam preparation. For ambitious or advanced

students, authentic podcasts are an easy way for an instructor to provide additional material that parallels or advances work presented in class. Scholars also recognize teacher podcasts as efficient ways to catch up students who have missed classes (Copley 391, Schnackenberg, Vega, and Warner 673, Hew 344). Podcasts are an adaptable learning tool, allowing students to break up information into segments and study at the time of day that is most convenient for them.

### **3.4 Increased Student Motivation and Engagement**

Increased student engagement and convenient access to current materials are some of the most commonly noted benefits of podcasts in education (Stanley 5; Gromik “Film” 35; Lynch 295; Gray 114; Anzai 459; McNulty and Lazarevic 57; Schnackenberg, Vega, and Relation 3). As many instructors can attest, knowing their peers will view their work helps to motivate students to achieve a higher level of work. A 2006 study of Japanese EFL students shows a significant increase in student attention when viewing video they created themselves, over videos generated by a third-party. This same study finds students are more motivated to do work, more willing to ask questions, and more interested in improving their pronunciation (Lynch 298-9). Likewise, Ono and Ishihara find their students more actively participating in classes using student-generated podcasts. They partially attribute the increased engagement to the freedom to be creative, something their Japanese technology students have few opportunities to demonstrate in the classroom (545).

When using student-created videos in the classroom, increased motivation is often mentioned with the additional benefits of improved self-assessment and organizational skills (Shrosbree, “Language” 83; Lynch 299). Gromik’s article, “Film Editing in the EFL Classroom,” explains the distinctive benefits students gain through developing, filming, and editing their work. He uniquely recommends the use of storyboards, drawings or pictures of

each scene with corresponding lines written below, to help students visualize and self-edit their scripts before they begin filming. As they choose which takes to include in the final product, students gain insights into their language strengths and deficiencies. Gromik argues that students also acquire valuable knowledge of technology by learning how to edit their own work, but he acknowledges that in his observations most of the negotiations in editing tasks are not done in English. Gromik provides some evidence that students are more likely to use English as they become comfortable with editing techniques and terminology (“Film” 30-5).

By tying language tasks in student-generated podcasts directly to language tasks from previously-acquired coursework, instructors report noteworthy gains in student participation and attention (Vallance and Shibata 69-74). In one example, EFL students are asked to record a conversation using prepositions of location and adverbs of frequency, two topics from recently-completed chapters of their textbook. After viewing their work, the instructor discovers student comments are more positive and insightful (Lynch 297-8). Podcasts can also help make classes more meaningful by providing students with information before class. McCarty suggests creating a more efficient classroom experience by assigning podcasts as a pre-listening activity, leaving more time for in-class discussions (“Window” 7). In a 2007 study, college professor Randall J. Hollandsworth finds students in classes using podcasts are more prepared and more likely to participate (42-3).

#### **4. Potential Problems with Podcasts in EFL**

Although there are numerous advantages to using audio and video podcasts in education, there are also problems that warrant discussion. Potential podcasting difficulties include: cost, accessibility for all students, assessment, and privacy issues. As the scope of this paper focuses on Japan, these issues will be addressed only in the Japanese context and are discussed in the following section.

#### 4.1 Investment of Time and Money

Before beginning any new classroom activity, it is important to consider the financial investments and time investments for both students and instructors. These issues must then be weighed against the potential benefits. Since nearly all Japanese students already own and regularly use the technology used for creating and listening to or watching audio and video podcasts, it should not require any additional financial investment on their part. However, if an instructor hoping to integrate student-generated podcasts does not have access to a digital video camera through his or her employers, at least one digital video camera would need to be purchased for student use. Inexpensive flip cameras are currently available online from numerous retailers for about thirty dollars. Computers and Internet access at Japanese schools are now universal and basic video editing programs, like Microsoft Movie Maker and iMovie, are preloaded on all computers (MEXT, “School Education” 28).

In MEXT’s “Survey on IT Education, 2005,” more than ninety percent of all teachers were able to use computers; however, only seventy-one percent of junior high school teachers and sixty-seven percent of high school teachers were able to teach with them (“School Education” 29). Results from 2011 surveys indicate that only twenty-nine percent of junior high schools and twenty-two of high schools in Japan use ICT materials to teach English (MEXT “High School;” MEXT “Junior High School”). An instructor who feels uncomfortable using podcasting technology will need to spend some time learning from a specialist at school or seek out educator podcasts (see section 2.2).

Early reviews of EFL podcasting in Japan tend to focus only on audio podcasts. Until recently, the file size, cost, and time involved in creating vodcasts was substantially higher. It is reasonable to believe that these issues caused some scholars in Japan to view vodcasting less



favorably than its audio counterpart. However, with the ability to compress larger files, the pervasiveness of Wi-Fi, and the development of faster devices, creating videos for online consumption has become a common part of modern global culture. In 2008, Anzai found only twenty-seven percent of Japanese university students using podcasts (461). *YouTube*'s most recent site statistics show more than four thousand hours of videos are uploaded every sixty minutes as people create their own podcasting "channels." Nearly three-quarters of visitors to the site are international, and millions of users subscribe to new channels every day ("Press Room Statistics").

#### **4.2 Technology Accessibility and Training**

More Japanese students may be watching video podcasts than previously thought, but instructors must guide students through the initial process of creating a podcast or vodcast (Anzai 461). Although current MEXT guidelines provide students with ICT training and access in schools, students may need to be introduced to the tools needed to produce their work (MEXT "Information Oriented Education"). While Japanese students are technologically-skilled and frequent users of computers and digital media players, it is important to remember that students are more adept at performing skills involving their cell phones (Lockley 187-92; Anzai 463). Socio-cultural influences and language limitations may make Japanese students appear to be less proficient with technology in an EFL classroom. In addition, a sense of politeness or peer pressure can cause Japanese students to intentionally appear ignorant in class. A lack of exposure to ICT vocabulary in English, or low English-language abilities in general, may contribute to misunderstandings involving technology in an EFL setting, and the amount of new, technology-themed vocabulary necessary to create a podcast or vodcast in English may cause some EFL instructors to avoid using them (Lockley 191).

As students' previous ICT training was, likely, not in English, it is important for instructors to build time into class schedules for software and hardware orientation. This will also help alleviate any student anxiety over using technology that is new or less familiar to them. At the beginning of their vodcasting project, Ono and Ishihara note that their EFL students express uncertainty about their projects; however, by the end, they view vodcasting as an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Interestingly, students feel little anxiety over using new technology and are more concerned with their presentation and language skills (Ono and Ishihara 543-4). This demonstrates that while it is necessary to provide technology training before beginning an audio or video podcasting project with students, an instructor's main focus should still be on language and communication skills.

If students' technology abilities, interests, and needs are not carefully considered by an instructor, it can lead to confusion and misunderstandings; however, the potential benefits of using student-created podcasts seem to outweigh the additional burden of time they might add (Ono and Ishihara 543-5; Gromik, "Film" 30; Shrosbree, "Language" 80; Lynch 299). Proper preparation in the form of thoughtful planning and technological training is imperative for successful integration of audio and video podcasts in the EFL classroom.

### **4.3 Podcasting Assessment**

Assessment of creative and non-discrete items can be difficult. There is little discussion and almost no examples of podcasting rubrics in current EFL podcasting literature. Unfortunately, the articles that do provide brief descriptions of assessment include broken links to examples (McCarty, "Window" 10; Armstrong, Tucker, and Massad 81). Holistic assessment, which is an overall assessment within a number of specified categories, is typically used to assess longer written works and may be useful for assessing student-created podcasts.

Advantages of holistic scoring include: quick rater evaluation, easy interpretation of results, and a general emphasis on student strengths; however, holistic scoring provides less specific or instructional feedback (Brown and Abeywickrama 283-4). A holistic assessment of the final product, such as student-created podcast, does not consider the process of creating the podcast. As it is process that will constitute the bulk of the classwork, it is important that the process also be assessed in some way. A possible solution is to document each step in the creation and production of a podcast and assess each task with a holistic scale. An example of a holistic scale applied to a podcasting task can be found in Appendix K.

For written tasks, such as the writing of the script for the podcast, it is possible to apply an analytic scale. Analytic scoring will help the students to concentrate on the details necessary to create a successful script. Analytic scoring categories for a podcasting script may include: grammar, content, and organization (Brown and Abeywickrama 346). Similar to the holistic scale, an analytic scale will include a description for each category; however, an analytic scale has a more detailed description of each category or subcategory. An example of an analytic scale applied to a podcast script-writing task can be found in Appendix H. The total of all of the completed tasks can easily be put together into a student portfolio, along with peer- and self-assessments. Since students will likely be nervous about having their work seen and evaluated by peers, instructors may choose not to have peer- and self-evaluations scored, but include them in the completed portfolio to inform students' future work. A portfolio provides tangible evidence of student work and makes it easy for students to see their progress and share their work with parents, friends, or other instructors. Regardless of the type of assessment used, it is important that rubrics or scales are provided along with tasks; students need to be aware of what is expected of them in each step of the creation process.

#### 4.4 Issues of Student Privacy

A final issue seldom appearing in literature on EFL podcasting in Japan is concern over student privacy. Japanese Communication and Media Studies professor Toshie Takahashi discusses the potential hazards for students placing personal information and images online, and mentions that *sarasu*, or cyber bullying, is not uncommon (75-7). These concerns are especially sensitive in a collectivist culture like Japan, where public humiliation is perhaps the greatest fear (Nakata 152). McCarty suggests keeping unwanted online traffic away by using password protection in order for students to gain access to online materials (“Spoken” 71). A similar feature can be used on *Blogger*, *YouTube*, or *iTunesU*, allowing an author to permit access only to invited guests who receive permission from a group member or administrator. Other researchers note the importance of receiving parental permission, especially when working with minors, and the necessity of using secure and reputable websites (Schnackenberg, Vega, and Relation 7-8). Although there are certainly risks to consider, an educator who plans carefully will create podcasting activities that are safe, helpful, and enjoyable for students.

While the problems discussed above are mostly related to student-generated podcasts, there are also potential issues to be aware of when using other types of podcasts. Although increased student motivation is a noted outcome in nearly every article about EFL podcasting, future research will need to look into the influence of the novelty of new technology in relation to the enhanced student motivation. Students in an Australian study comment that “it’s a nice change from having just read, read, read,” but warned that audio and video podcasts are no different from other popular educational techniques: “as soon as it becomes overused people just stop [using it]” (Taylor and Clark 392).

Likewise, the use of lecture podcasts to help students catch up on missed classes has the

potential to be misused. While the university students in McCarty's study enjoy using lecture podcasts to review material presented in class, some consider using them in place of class ("Windows" 16). A small percentage of Copley's surveyed students also indicated that access to lecture podcasts made them consider missing class (393-4). In both cases, no evidence is presented on podcasting's influence on actual course attendance. However, Copley's students are given the opportunity to explain why they still attended live lectures when podcasts were available online (see fig. 3)

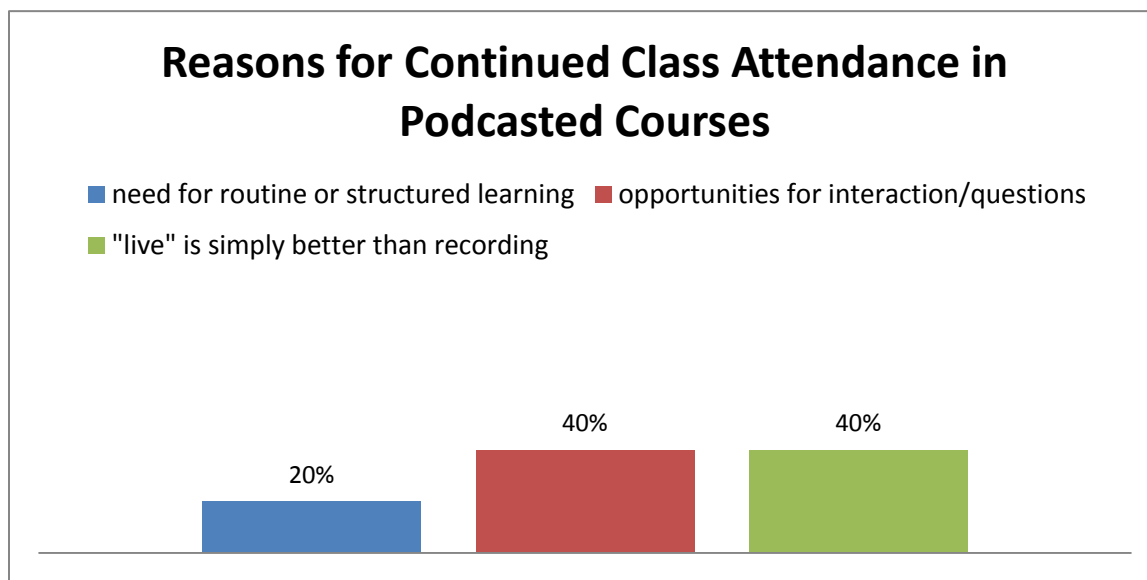


Figure 3. Reasons for Continued Class Attendance in Podcasted Courses; "Audio and Video Podcasts of Lectures for Campus-Based Students: Production and Evaluation of Student Use;" Innovation in Education and Teaching International 44.4, 2007; Web; 20 Oct. 2012.

## 5. Digital Natives and EFL Podcasting in Japan

The current generation of students in Japan may lack the English language abilities they will need in future jobs, but they excel in using technology. Paralleling MEXT recommendations, some scholars have proposed the use of popular technologies, such as

podcasts, in Japanese EFL courses (Anzai; Lockley; Gromik “Cyber”). Much of the prevailing literature about podcasting in education addresses the potential for use with today’s digitally native students. Education and technology author Marc Prensky was the first to popularize the use of the term *digital natives* to describe students who have grown up entirely in an ICT world (“Digital Natives” 1). Prensky’s contemporary, author and scholar Don Tapscott, discusses similar ideas about this group of learners, but uses the term *Net Generation* or *N-Geners* (7). In his 2001 article “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants,” Prensky claims that the average college graduate has played ten thousand hours of video games and watched twenty thousand hours of television (1). With today’s portable technologies, like smartphones, tablets, and laptops offering unlimited instant access to music, games, and videos, those numbers are certainly higher.

The concept of digital natives is widely accepted in Japanese culture thanks in part to a documentary produced by Japan’s national broadcasting company, NHK. *Digital Natives: Portrait of the Young People Who Will Shape the Next Age*, first broadcast in 2008, promotes the idea of innovative, young people using technology to create a better future. A year later, a translated version of Don Tapscott’s book, *Grown up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World*, was released under the more emphatic title *Digital Natives Are Changing the World* (Takahashi 68-9). Some scholars in Japan prefer the term *keitai* (cell phone) natives over digital natives, while others add the category of *neo-digital natives* when referring to those born after 1996 (Takahashi 70). *Keitai* natives may be the most accurate term, as recent studies find Japanese students increasingly dependent on their cell phones (Anzai 459; Hashimoto et al. 29; Lockley 184; Takahashi 72-3). *Keitai* native students expect to, via the World Wide Web, have constant and instant access to knowledge, including while they are in the classroom

(Schnackenberg, Vega, and Relation 2). Today's digital natives have no memories of a world without computers, and neo-digital natives can only imagine a world without the Internet and cell phones.

The bulk of Prensky's work addresses the divide between the ways digital natives learn and how their "digital immigrant" instructors teach ("Digital Natives," "Teaching"). Prensky argues that one of the biggest mistakes made by digital immigrant teachers is a false belief that teaching methods used when they were students, even if they were effective, will work for today's digital natives ("Digital Natives" 3). Unlike many students in past generations, Prensky suggests that digital natives study foreign languages in order to "make friends in other places" ("Teaching" 77). This means digital native students are likely less interested in reading literature and more interested in connecting with other digital natives around the world. The way today's digital natives connect is also changing. Gone are the days of students writing letters to pen pals or even participating in overseas email exchanges. Today, students can send a short message to hundreds or thousands of followers around the world instantly via *Twitter*; they can use *Instagram* to post a digital photo to several social networking sites simultaneously, or use *Skype* to have a live video chat with someone half a world away. In short, students today have access to information and people around the world like never before.

Japan's *keitai* natives have not only grown up surrounded by Web 2.0 technology and the Internet, but they interact with them in a variety of new ways (Anzai 465). Web 2.0 is a bit of a misnomer as it does not refer to any specific version of the World Wide Web, but to its intended use. Web 1.0 refers to the early days of the Internet "in which content was delivered to a passive audience," as opposed to Web 2.0 which includes, "online collaborative tools designed for the user to generate content, make changes to the content, and to share the content easily" (Wilson et

al 65-66). Blogs, podcasts, and social networking sites, like *Facebook*, are examples of Web 2.0 tools. Japanese EFL author and professor, Yayoi Anzai specifically recognizes the growing trend of Japanese students using the video functions of their digital devices (465). EFL instructors hoping to integrate vodcasting into the classroom may be able to cash in on this fad.

EFL instructors in Japan have begun exploring ways to integrate podcasting technologies into their classroom activities at the college and university level with positive results (Lynch 299; McCarty, “Window” 10-19; Ono 453-454). Due to Japan’s pervasive use of technology, podcasting may be an especially effective ICT tool for EFL classrooms. Since 1999, Japanese cell phones have been able to connect to the Internet, download content, and exchange information (Takahashi 70). According to Japan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIC), Japan currently ranks number one in (ICT) infrastructure improvement, has the fastest broadband service, and one of the highest percentages of smartphone ownership in the world (MIC 8-10). Citing *Twitter’s* official blog, *The Japanese Times* recently declared that Japanese language tweets account for fourteen percent of all tweets worldwide (Akimoto). Student access and daily use of home computers is virtually universal, and by high school, nearly all students own cell phones and digital media devices and are using them daily (Anzai 459-60; Lockley 187; Takahashi 72-3; Williams 85-7). This technology saturation has helped make Japanese high school students the fourth most digitally proficient in the world, behind South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand (Kyodo). *Keitai* natives are part of the *oyayubibunka*, thumb culture, and use their cell phones to watch television and videos, play games, and surf the Internet (Lockley 187; Takahashi 70). In a 2008 study, ninety percent of these students expressed a desire to use new technologies to study English (Anzai 460-4).

Although most of the research on EFL podcasting has been in higher education,



podcasting can be effectively utilized in high school EFL classrooms to increase student exposure to the target language through increased time-on-task and repetition. Podcasting also builds student confidence and motivation in English. High school teachers struggling to make their EFL classrooms more dynamic for their *keitai* native students should be encouraged to try podcasting activities with their students. Results from recent MEXT studies support the integration of podcasting into EFL classrooms (see fig. 4). Japanese students taught using ICT perform better on exams than students who are taught without ICT (see fig. 4).

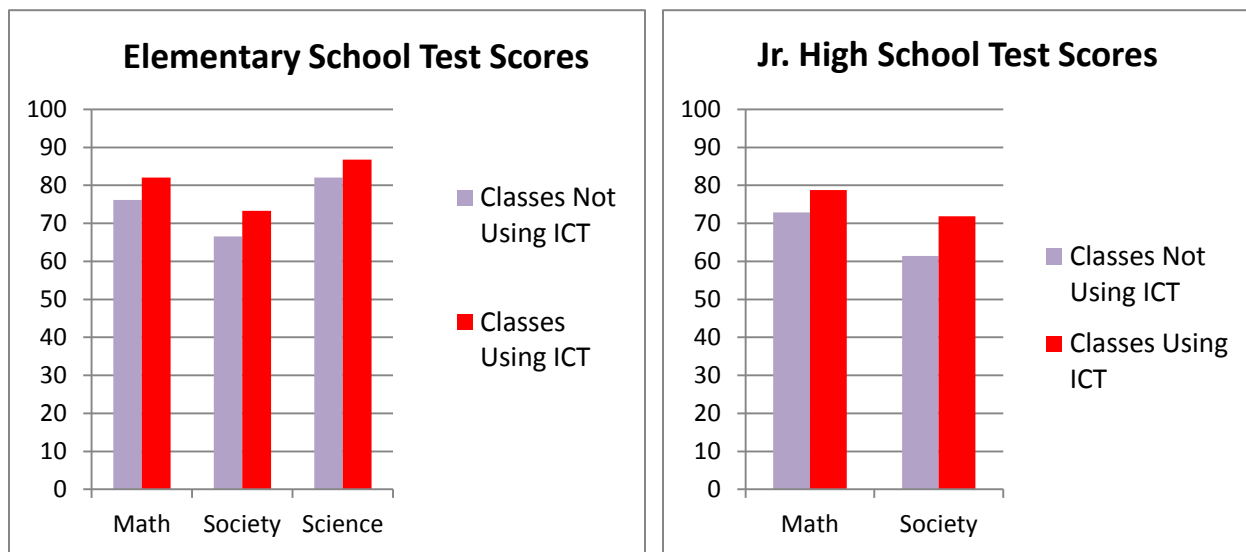


Figure 4. Empirical results of educational effects of ICT use as a result of FY2006 MEXT commissioned project “Research contributing to promote ITC utilization for education;” *White Paper on Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2009*, Chapter 2, Point 5; MEXT; Web; 20 Oct. 2012.

Though not specifically mentioned in the literature, student-generated podcasts may be particularly effective in a group-centered culture like Japan, where students are familiar with working in task-based activities and small group work. A detailed plan for integrating student-created video podcasts is presented in the following section.

## **6. Practical Application of Podcasting in EFL – Unit Plan**

### **6.1 Description of the Class**

This unit is designed for an English listening and speaking class at a private high school in Japan. The class meets once a week for eighty minutes. Because classes are sometimes cancelled for school exams or activities, the class will only meet thirteen times over the course of the term. The class runs from April to mid-March and is divided into three terms. Students are graded separately for each term, and a final grade for the year is calculated by averaging the percentages of the three terms.

The class consists of sixteen male and female students in their third year of high school; most of the students are seventeen years old. Students at this school can choose a course of study, similar to a major, in high school and take extra classes focusing on that subject. This class consists of students in the English course. Most of this students in this class are at a TESOL language proficiency of three (Developing) or four (Expanding) (“TESOL Pre-K–12 English Language Proficiency Standards Framework”). Since junior high school, these students had at least two classes a week taught entirely in English by a native speaker. Additional English classes, focusing on grammar and vocabulary acquisition, are taught by Japanese EFL instructors. Language tasks for this class are intended to parallel the tasks students are learning in an English reading and writing class taught by another instructor who is also a native English speaker. Students have had two ICT courses taught in Japanese and are familiar with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint; students have used them to complete coursework for previous English courses. Although these students have more exposure to English than students who are not in the English course, they still struggle with spontaneous speech acts and low confidence in their speaking abilities.

## 6.2 Description of the Unit Goals

The purpose of this unit is to expose students to more samples of authentic English and give them more opportunities for spontaneous speech. This will increase the students' listening skills and help them to gain more confidence in their speaking abilities. This unit uses the process of creating a podcast to help students become more engaged and motivated in class. Additionally, this course is intended to give students some freedom to be creative while learning to work on a series of tasks that lead toward completion of a term-long project.

For the first episode students will create a three-minute video podcast in English for foreigners interested in Japan. The podcast must give at least one cultural tip about Japan. Students have previously studied the cultures of a variety of English-speaking countries around the world, so they are familiar with aspects of culture such as food, clothing, recreation, government, etc.

The unit is divided into four sections: preparation, filming, editing, and assessment. The instructor needs to make sure students understand the objectives for creating the podcast and what students' specific roles and responsibilities require. As students may choose to include teachers or students from other classes, the instructor should be sure to share basic information about the project with other classroom teachers. Other teachers also need to be aware that students will be filming around school during some of the class periods.

Students will perform a variety of activities over the course of this unit, including: listening for specific information, making general observations, brainstorming, writing, peer-editing, storyboarding, organizing, editing videos, and evaluating work. As they perform these tasks, students will use specific grammar rules. For example, students will use imperatives to give advice and *should* as a modal auxiliary to offer opinions or suggestions. In addition, the

process of organizing and creating podcasts in English will improve students' abilities to ask and answer questions, make comments, and use back channeling. Students will also learn how to use podcasting technology to practice English. By the end of the unit, students will be better able to communicate in English with peers and English teachers.

### **6.3 Description of the Classroom, Technology, and Materials**

The class meets once a week in a multi-media classroom which has a computer for each student. At the front of the room, there is an additional computer for the teacher. This computer is connected to a digital projector and the student computers. The teacher can project the images from his or her screen onto a projection screen at the front of the room. The teacher can also share his or her screen with the student computers. These features allow the instructor to share audio and video with the class or demonstrate functions of specific software programs. All of the computers are loaded with Movie Maker, a basic video editing program. Each computer also has two pairs of headphones equipped with a microphone. The room also has two white boards and dry erase markers.

The school owns small, handheld digital video cameras. The teacher checks them out from the media office and brings them to class as needed. The cameras feature pop-out USB connectors for transferring files to the classroom computers. Each camera also has a small, removable tripod.

As there is not a required text for this class, the teacher prepares worksheets and other classroom materials. Examples of these materials can be found in the Appendices. Students will need a notebook, a thin binder to be used as a portfolio, a USB flash drive for saving files, a pencil, and an eraser for this class. Nearly every student has an electronic dictionary, which they may bring if they choose. In addition to physical materials, the instructor has created a *YouTube*

channel for the class. This channel is set to private, so only invited members may view uploaded videos. This also ensures that student videos will not come up in any public searches. The teacher has uploaded his or her own example videos which are used in class. Additionally, the teacher has added sample podcasts from other *YouTube* channels to the Favorites section of the class *YouTube* channel. This allows students to easily review any of the videos they see in class. Each year, the school's Media Office collects signed permission forms from parents which give permission for student images to be used in school-related activities. As these forms are in Japanese, the teacher has confirmed with the Media Office that student images may be used on the private *YouTube* channel for the duration of the school year.

#### **6.4 Description of Assessments and Evaluation**

For this unit, students will work with a partner to plan, write, film, and edit an original, three-minute video podcast. The process of creating this podcast episode will take one term, and is repeated in subsequent terms. Each step of the creation process is documented and collected in a student portfolio. The final products for each term, the video podcast episodes, are collected to form a digital portfolio, which is added to the student portfolio. The student portfolio allows students to evaluate their work and improve over the course of the year. Although the framework for all of the podcasts is the same, the tasks for each episode will be unique. Keeping the basic format the same for each episode allows the students to focus on the specific language tasks for each episode. This unit plan describes the creation of one episode.

It is imperative that both the instructors and students clearly understand the goals of this project and how student work will be assessed. Students are graded on both the process and the final product, the podcast episodes. A description of the podcast assignment and grade explanation are given to the students on the first day of class (see Appendix B). The assignments

for each step of the process are listed on the Podcast Episode 1 worksheet. As students complete each task, the teacher will use an ink stamp to indicate that the task is completed. If an assignment is completed late, the teacher will write the letter L in green ink next to the ink stamp. This allows the teacher to check in with students and make sure students are not confused or falling behind. The more substantial assignments in the unit, such as the episode script and storyboards, are individually graded on analytic or holistic scales (see Appendices H and K).

Completed assignments and the Podcast Episode 1 worksheet are kept students' portfolios. Although students are expected to keep all completed work in the portfolios so it can be evaluated at the end of the term, the teacher also keeps a separate record of completed tasks for each student. This record will be referenced in case a portfolio is lost or damaged. Although students are not assigned grades for the smaller tasks, timely completion of these tasks factors into the final process grade. As indicated on Podcast Episode 1, any late work will result in five points being subtracted from the final podcast grade (see Appendix B). This should encourage students not to fall behind or lose their portfolios.

## **6.5 Description of Daily Classroom Activities**

### **First Day**

For the first day of class, the instructor will need to add the three introduction podcast samples to the class *YouTube* channel (see Appendix A). The teacher also needs sixteen copies of the Podcast Episode 1 worksheet (see Appendix B). It is likely that students have watched videos on *YouTube*; however they are unfamiliar with the basic format of a podcast episode in English and how key terms, or tags, are added to uploaded videos to make them easy to find in a video search. Students are also unaware of the public and private settings on *YouTube*.

There are several objectives for the first day. Students will acquire basic background knowledge about a podcast in English. Students will understand the difference between public and private settings on *YouTube*. Students will understand the purpose of tags on videos and be able to search and find videos in English on *YouTube* using tags. Students will demonstrate the ability to determine appropriate English tags for sample videos. This will develop students' global listening skills in English.

The teacher activates students' background knowledge on podcasting by asking students if they have ever seen a podcast on the Internet. If students are unfamiliar with the word *podcast*, the teacher will explain the term. If students have not seen a podcast, or are unsure if they have, the teacher can ask them about videos they have seen online. The teacher helps the students generate a list of words associated with video podcasts on the board. The teacher also asks students about videos they have made themselves, for example: "What do they like to film?" and "What kind of videos do they like to watch on the Internet?" This activity will take about five minutes.

The teacher then shows the first of the three examples of video podcasts in English from the class *YouTube* channel in order to generate interest in the podcasting assignment (see Appendix A). Each example is short, less than three minutes, and has a similar format to the one the students will create. The teacher explains that people who upload videos to *YouTube* list key terms, called tags, related to the video. This makes it easy for people using the public search function to find uploaded videos. The instructor shows the students where the tags are listed for the first video. This activity will take approximately ten minutes.

After the teacher shows the second video, he or she asks the students to make a list of words they would use to tag the video (see Appendix A). The teacher uses this opportunity to

show students that *tag* may be used as a noun and a verb. Students are asked to compare their list with a partner. The instructor shows the video a second time and asks the students to edit their list of tag words. Finally, the instructor shows the students the tags listed by the person who uploaded the video. The teacher shows the third video (see Appendix A). As a class, students suggest words they would use to tag the video, and the teacher lists them on the board. The teacher compares the class list with the uploader tags for the third video. This activity should last about fifteen minutes.

The teacher collects email addresses from students to give them access to the class *YouTube* channel. The teacher explains that each student will have access to the *YouTube* channel for the class, but only invited members of the class may view videos uploaded onto the channel. The teacher explains that public videos can be seen by anyone who finds them by searching online. The teacher shows the students how they can choose to make a video public or private when they upload it to *YouTube*. Since the class *YouTube* channel is private, the teacher informs the class that he or she will email a link to each of the students. This link will be the only way for students to find the *YouTube* channel for this class. This activity will last about fifteen minutes.

The teacher hands out the Podcast Episode 1 worksheet and explains the assignment to the students (see Appendix B). For their first podcast, students will create a three-minute video podcast episode in English intended for foreigners interested in Japan. The podcast must give at least one cultural tip about Japan. Students will already be familiar with terms like *brainstorming*, *draft*, and *peer editing* from previous English reading and writing courses. The instructor will take time to teach any unfamiliar vocabulary to the class. Since Japanese uses many borrowed words from English for film and technology, many of the terms on the



worksheet will not be new for students; however, as students are likely to have a lot of questions about the assignment, twenty-five minutes is allotted for this portion of the class.

Before explaining the homework for the first day, the students are divided into two groups. The first group is given the assignment of searching for a *YouTube* video on the U.S. site using the tags “tipping,” “culture,” and “food.” The second group searches for a *YouTube* video on the U.S. site using the key words “Indian,” “culture,” and “tips.” Students are asked to watch one of the top videos from the search results. The teacher tells the students to be ready to discuss the videos they watch in English during the next class. The instructor asks the students to note anything about the video that surprises them. Students are also asked to consider whether or not the tags provided by the person who uploaded the video are accurate or appropriate. The teacher demonstrates how to do a search on the American *YouTube* site and shows students that advertisements, or ads, are often listed above the search results. These can be recognized by the word *ads* in blue to the right of the title. Advertisements are also in a shaded box. The instructor points out that students need to be careful to watch the videos from the search results and not the advertisements. The content of the advertisements is not related to the searches. Students are reminded that they need to bring their portfolio, USB flash drive, and a notebook with them to every class. This portion of the class should take about ten minutes.

If there is extra time, the instructor will show a fourth introduction video (see Appendix A) and point out the use of imperatives to give tips or advice. The teacher shows the video a second time and lists the examples of imperatives from the video on the board. This activity can take five to ten minutes.

## **Second Day**

For the second day of this class, the instructor needs sixteen copies of the Video Podcast

Observation Sheet (see Appendix C) and the homework completion stamp. The instructor will also need to upload the three video examples of cultural tips (see Appendix A) to the class *YouTube* site prior to the start of today's class.

Though students have now seen several examples of authentic podcasts in English; however, students are not aware of the exact format of a podcast episode. Students do not know typical greetings, transitional expressions, closings, or back channeling comments and gestures for podcasts in English. By the end of today's lesson, students will be able to identify the basic format of a podcast episode. They will also be able to recognize and list examples of greetings, transitional expressions, closings, and common back channeling comments from selected podcasts. In addition, students will practice listening for specific information.

At the beginning of the second day, students will show the instructor their labeled portfolio. For the first activity, the teacher breaks the class into groups of four, and asks them to tell the group about the podcasts they watched for homework. Each group should have a pair of students from each of last week's two homework groups. The teacher walks around to each group of four and answers any student questions. He or she also makes sure all students are speaking in only in English. The teacher then asks one person from each group to briefly tell the class about the podcasts their group members watched. This activity will take approximately fifteen minutes.

When the first task is completed, the teacher briefly reviews the parts of a formal email in English. Students have previously written formal emails in English as part of an English reading and writing class assignment. Today's class will show students that podcasts have a similar format. The teacher hands out the Video Podcast Observations sheet (see Appendix C) and explains how podcasts have a similar format to formal emails in English. The instructor explains

any additional terms from the Video Podcast Observations sheet that might be unfamiliar to students. This will take approximately ten minutes.

The teacher tells the students that they will watch three short videos and listen for examples of words or phrases for each of the categories listed on the Video Podcast Observations sheet. The instructor tells the students that when they hear an example they should write it down and not worry about spelling. The teacher shows the three videos of native-English speakers giving cultural tips (see Appendix A) and asks the students to fill out the sheet as they watch. The teacher shows each video twice. After viewing all of the examples, the students move back into their small groups to share their observations with the group. As the students share their answers, the teacher spends some time observing each group and answering any questions the students have. After the students share their answers, the teacher asks some of the students to write their answers on the board. This generates a list of words and phrases the students can use later when they write their scripts. Thirty-five minutes is allotted for this activity.

Before the end of the class the teacher walks around to each student and places a stamp next to the first assignment to indicate it is completed. The teacher asks the students to put the Video Podcast Observations sheet in their portfolio and stresses the importance of not losing portfolio items. Completed items will be used to complete future tasks. This activity should take about five minutes.

For homework, the teacher asks the students to go to the class YouTube channel and watch two additional podcasts posted in the Favorites section (see Appendix A). As they watch each video, students are asked to write additional examples of words or phrases from each category on the Video Podcast Observations sheet. Students are asked to write these examples in their notebooks and bring them to the next class. The teacher demonstrates how students can

navigate to the class *YouTube* site and find the Favorites section. This activity should take about ten minutes. If there is additional class time, students may begin the homework on the classroom computers.

### **Third Day**

Prior to today's class the teacher uploads the video to go along with the Communication Skills Video Clips worksheet on the class *YouTube* channel. For today's activities, the teacher will need bring sixteen copies of Communications Skills Video Clips worksheet (see Appendix D) and sixteen copies of the Three Ideas worksheet (see Appendix E). Students cannot determine if some communication skills are perceived as strong or weak in English. Students have difficulty expressing why some behaviors are not effective communication skills in English. Students do not have specific ideas for their podcast episode. By the end of today's class, students will be able to recognize strong and weak communication skills from sample videos. Students will be able to identify some behaviors and gestures that are considered negative communication skills in English and demonstrate an understanding of how to avoid them. Students will generate three specific ideas for their podcast before the next class.

When class begins, the teacher asks the students to list the categories from last week's Video Podcast Observations sheet from memory. As the students recall the categories, the instructor writes them on the board. The instructor elicits examples from each category. Students are asked not to look at their Video Podcast Observations sheet or notebooks. Later, the teacher asks the students to take out their Video Podcast Observations sheet and add new examples from the video podcasts they watched as homework. When this task is completed, the instructor asks the students to put the Video Podcast Observations sheet in their portfolio. This activity will take about fifteen minutes.

The instructor hands out the Communication Skills Video Clips worksheet (see Appendix D). The teacher explains that students will be watching twelve short video clips. Each clip is short, between ten and thirty seconds. At the beginning of each clip there is a clearly listed number. Students will write the number of the clip on the line next to the description. After the students have watched the clips once, the teacher puts them in pairs and asks the students to compare their answers with their partner. The teacher plays the clips a second time before giving the answers to the class. The teacher assigns each pair two descriptions and asks the students to decide if each clip is demonstrating strong communication skills or weak communication skills. If they are poor communication skills, students should discuss with their partner why they are ineffective and how they can be avoided. Later the teacher will ask each group to share their answers with the class. The instructor asks students to put the Communication Skills Video Clips in their portfolios and tells the students that they will use them again later. Thirty minutes is allotted for this task.

The teacher asks the class to share examples of aspects of culture. The students have previously discussed these aspects as part of a class about the cultures of English-speaking countries around the world. After listing as many aspects as they can recall, the teacher asks the students to come to the board and write specific examples of each aspect from Japanese culture. This activity will take about fifteen minutes.

The teacher hands out the Three Ideas worksheet (see Appendix E) and gives students the remainder of the class time to begin thinking about what culture tips they want to share in their podcast. Students work on this activity individually. It will need to be completed before the beginning of the next class. If students finish this activity in class, they can begin to list vocabulary words related to each idea.

## Fourth Day

For this class, the instructor will need to bring an ink stamp, sixteen copies of the Brainstorming worksheet (see Appendix F), sixteen copies of the Script Sample handout (see Appendix G), and sixteen copies of the rubric for the podcast script (see Appendix H). The teacher will also need to add the Word of the Day podcast (see Appendix A) to the class *YouTube* channel.

Students have trouble identifying elements of a podcast and the purpose of a longer stretch of English speech without subtitles. This is not unusual since students spend more time focusing on reading skills in English, as reading and writing are the most common tasks found on tests. It is also worth noting that all Japanese television programs are broadcast with subtitles, so students have habit of reading when watching videos. Students will practice listening for specific information and listening to find the purpose of a two-minute podcast in English. Students will be able to recognize examples of words or phrases that are used in specific sections of podcasts, such as the greeting and closing. Students will be able to identify the purpose of a two-minute podcast in English.

The teacher begins by dividing the class into five groups and telling the students they are going to watch a podcast. Before starting the clip the teacher asks each group to listen for one element of the podcast: greeting, identification, transitions, closing, and comments. The podcast episode is from Sesame Street's *Word of the Day* podcast (see Appendix A). Sesame Street characters are very popular in Japan, even among high school students. This episode features Johnny Galecki, from the American TV show *The Big Bang Theory*, which is also popular in Japan. It is a good example of an authentic podcast that is about two-minutes long. The podcast has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Before showing the clip a second time, the teacher asks

the students to listen for the purpose of the podcast. The teacher tells the students that listening for purpose is similar to finding the main idea when they read a paragraph. After watching the clip again, the teacher gives the students a few minutes to discuss their answers with their group. The teacher walks around to each group to make sure they are speaking in English and not relying too much on their dictionaries. When the instructor is certain that each group is ready, he or she asks the class to identify the elements of the podcast from last week and explain the purpose in English. This activity should take about fifteen minutes.

The teacher asks the students to take out their Three Ideas worksheets and Podcast Episode 1 sheets. If the Three Ideas worksheet is completed, the teacher stamps next to the assignment on the Podcast Episode 1 sheet. This activity should take about five minutes.

The teacher assigns pairs for the podcast assignment. It is important that the teacher try to pair weaker or shy students with stronger or more outgoing ones. Students will spend a great deal of time together working on their first podcasts, so it is important that pairings be carefully considered. Once students have their partner assignments, the teacher hands out the Brainstorming worksheet (see Appendix F). Using the Three Ideas worksheet, each pair works together to fill out the Brainstorming worksheets. They can use information from their Three Ideas worksheets or work together to think of new ideas. As students complete their Brainstorming worksheets, the teacher stamps the Podcasting Episode 1 sheets. This activity should take about twenty minutes.

As students finish the previous activity the instructor gives each student the Script Sample handout (see Appendix G). Students are asked to read the script aloud with their partner. The teacher will walk around to answer any questions and make sure students are staying on task. This activity will take about five minutes.

For homework the students will work with their partner to create a rough draft of their script for the next class. The teacher reminds the students not to copy the script sample, but to look at their notes and the Video Podcast Observation sheet for help. The teacher hands out the rubric for the podcast script (see Appendix H) and explains how the final version of the script will be graded. This will take about five minutes. Students have the remaining time to get started on their scripts. Before the end of class the teacher reminds the students to save their work on their USB flash drive. The teacher also asks the students to bring colored pens to the next class.

### **Fifth Day**

For this class the teacher will need an ink stamp and a variety of colored pens for students who do not have them. The instructor will also add the Taiwan Culture video to the *YouTube* channel for the class (see Appendix A). Students do not give constructive criticism to each other. When they are asked to comment on another student's performance they will only talk about things the student did well. Students do not review their written work before it is turned in. Students will be able to recognize examples of communication mistakes in a podcast made by other English language learners. Students will be able to help other students by finding mistakes before they turn it in to a teacher.

The teacher tells the class they are going to watch a video made by students in Taiwan. In the video, the students give several cultural tips about Taiwan. Before the teacher shows the video, he or she asks the students to look for what the video does well, and what the students should work on. After showing the video twice, the teacher gives the students time to discuss their answers in small groups. Then, as a class, the students identify the things they like about the video. The teacher lists these on the board. Later, the teacher also lists the things that are not



done well in the video. The teacher asks the students to explain how the video mistakes could be avoided. The teacher lists the students' answers on the board. This activity will take about fifteen minutes.

The teacher asks the students to get together with their assigned partners. The teacher asks to see the first draft of the students' scripts and stamps the students Podcast Episode 1 sheets if the scripts appear to be completed. This will take about five minutes. Students will not be allowed to participate in the peer-editing activity until they have a rough draft of their script.

The teacher assigns two pairs to work together to review their scripts. Students have practiced peer-editing as part of their English writing classes, so they will be familiar with this activity. The teacher points out that if a student finds a mistake and does not make a note about it, they are not being helpful. Students may feel embarrassed if a peer finds a mistake, but the teacher reminds them that it is more embarrassing if the instructor finds the mistake. The teacher also reminds the students that fewer mistakes mean a higher score. The teacher tells the students that each script must be read by three other pairs. When a pair has read a script and made comments, they should sign the bottom of the last page. The teacher asks students to write comments and corrections in colored ink. Each pair should choose a different color from the previous group. The teacher walks around the room to make sure students are staying on task. The teacher also answers questions the students have. When students have had their scripts read by three other groups, they can begin to make corrections to their own scripts. The teacher tells the students that they need to bring their revised scripts to the next class. Before the end of the class, the teacher should stamp the peer-editing task for all students who participated in the activity.

## Sixth Day

For today's class, the instructor needs sixteen copies of the How to Storyboard handout (see Appendix I), one hundred copies of the Podcast Episode 1 Storyboard (see Appendix J), and sixteen copies of the storyboard rubric (see Appendix K). Students have difficulty visualizing and planning how their podcast will look. Students do not know what a storyboard is and are not familiar with the term *shot* as it relates to film. Students will practice listening for specific information from a longer video. They will also be able to recognize the usefulness of a storyboard and how it functions in similar way to an outline. Students will be able to create a storyboard for their podcast episode.

The teacher begins the sixth day by giving the students the How to Storyboard handout (see Appendix I). The teacher briefly describes the words *storyboard* and *shot* before showing the students the animated video *How to Storyboard* (see Appendix J) made by the production company First Light Movies. The teacher asks the students to get into groups and try to describe the seven types of shots illustrated in the clip: wide, full, tracking, tilt, zoom, close-up, and point-of-view. The teacher shows the clip several times until the students have a clear understanding of the meaning of each kind of shot. Twenty minutes is allotted for this activity.

The teacher hands out blank storyboard sheets to the students (see Appendix H). The teacher explains that creating a storyboard will help the students to plan their video. Using their script as a guide, the students begin to create storyboards for their video. Students may find that they want to revise their script after creating the storyboards, which is one of the reasons why storyboards are helpful. Storyboards will help students plan their filming and think visually. The teacher assigns the storyboards and final versions of scripts as homework and allows students to work for the remainder of the class. The teacher walks around to each group to make

sure they understand the homework and are speaking in English. The teacher reminds the students to save any script changes to their USB before the end of the class.

### **Seventh Day**

The instructor will need to bring an ink stamp, four digital cameras, and sixteen copies of the Podcast Episode 1 Shot List (see Appendix L) to class. The instructor should make sure that the cameras are fully charged and functioning properly before the students arrive to class. The students do not know what a shot list is or how to film using the school digital video cameras. The students will rehearse their podcasts before filming. By the end of today's class, the students will be able to fill out a shot list and demonstrate how to use the school's digital video cameras.

The teacher begins by checking to make sure students have completed their storyboards and have a final version of their script. If they do not have them finished, they will need to complete them before they start to film. The teacher stamps the students' Podcast Episode One sheets. The teacher hands out blank shot lists (see Appendix L). The teacher matches pairs to make groups of four. The teacher explains how students will work together when filming. Each pair is assigned another pair to work with when filming. In each group of four there will be two people being filmed, one person running the camera, and one person taking notes on the shot list. The teacher explains the importance of marking down each shot as it is filmed, even if there is a mistake. Having an accurate shot list will help during editing. Students with complete shot lists will be able to easily find the shots they need. This will take about ten minutes.

The teacher hands out one digital camera to each group. The teacher explains how each camera works and asks the students to follow his or her directions carefully. If the students have the screen facing them, the power button is on the left side. The students turn on the video

cameras. The teacher explains the basic functions of the camera. The red button in the middle starts and stops the video, the upper left button plays a recorded video file, and the upper right button deletes a file. The teacher gives the students time to practice the functions, and tells them that they will need to explain how to use the function to the class in English. The teacher then asks one member of each group to demonstrate and explain a function in English. Twenty minutes is allotted for this activity.

When the teacher is confident the students understand how to use the cameras, the teacher asks the students to take turns filming, speaking, and writing information on the shot list. As long as they are working on the task and speaking in English, students do not need to be saying their scripted lines for this task. The teacher explains that it is important have a short pause every time the red button is pushed. This will make it easier for students to edit later. This activity should take about fifteen minutes. When the activity is finished, the teacher asks the students to erase their practice videos and return the cameras.

The teacher tells the students that they will begin shooting during the next class. The students are told that they will have two class periods to complete their filming. This should be sufficient time since the completed video will be approximately three minutes in length and the rule of thumb is one hour of filming for each minute of the podcast episode. The teacher lets the students use the remaining time to practice their dialogue for the podcasts. The teacher walks around to each group and answers questions.

### **Eighth Day**

For today's class the teacher needs to bring at least eight shot lists (see Appendix L) and 4 digital video cameras. Before class, the teacher makes sure that all of the cameras are all working and fully charged. Students have not yet started filming their podcasts. It is important

that students work together and stay on task. The objective for today's class is for students to use their storyboards and scripts as guide for filming at least one section of their podcast.

The teacher begins by reminding the students that there are other classes in session and they are not to disrupt any class on campus without the permission of the teacher. The teacher gives each group a clean shot list and digital camera. The teacher answers any questions the students have and reminds them that they must return to the classroom no later than ten minutes before the end of the class. Students are instructed to return to the classroom if they have any problems. The instructor remains in the classroom until the students return. When students come back to the classroom, the instructor asks the students to transfer the video files to their USB flash drives. The teacher checks to make sure each group has properly saved their video files before collecting the cameras. After collecting the cameras, the instructor checks to make sure students have been filling out the shot lists. Students place the shot lists in their folders and keep them to use for editing. The teacher makes sure that all of the cameras are functioning properly before the students leave. If there is extra time at the end of class, the students can discuss what worked well and what was difficult in filming. They can use extra time to make a plan for what they will film in the next class.

As an added back up measure, the instructor may choose to copy the files from the digital video cameras to a USB flash drive at the end of each class period. This copy can be used if a student USB flash drive is lost or damaged. The Media Office staff will erase the files from the digital video cameras when they are returned each week.

### **Ninth Day**

The teacher will need to bring at least four cameras and eight shot lists (see Appendix L) to today's class. Before the students arrive, the instructor makes sure the cameras all work and

are fully charged. It is a good idea to have an extra camera available in case one is not functioning properly.

The teacher reminds students that this is their final day of shooting. If students are unable to complete filming today, they will need to check out a camera from the Media Office in their free time to finish filming. The teacher gives each group additional shot lists and a digital camera. The teacher answers any questions the students have and reminds the students to return no later than ten minutes before the end of the class. Students are instructed to return to the classroom if they have any problems. The instructor remains in the classroom until the students return. When students come back to the classroom, the instructor asks the students to transfer the video files to their USB flash drives. When the students have completed that task, the teacher collects the cameras and checks to make sure students have been filling out the shot lists. The teacher reminds the students to bring their USB flash drives, storyboards, and shot lists to the next class. In the next class, the students will begin editing. The teacher makes sure that all of the cameras are functioning properly before the students leave.

### **Tenth Day**

For today's class, the instructor needs sixteen copies of the editing guide (see Appendix M). Students do not know how to edit using the Movie Maker program. By the end of today's class, students will be able to perform basic editing functions using Movie Maker. Students will practice listening, evaluate their video performances, choose their best work, and read English instructions in the editing guide.

The teacher checks to make sure each group has their USB flash drives, storyboards, and shot lists. The teacher asks the students to work with their partners on one computer. Since the school computers use Japanese operating systems and versions of software, a member of the

Media Office who speaks both English and Japanese is in class to help students to begin to edit their videos. The instructor hands out the editing guide (see Appendix M). The guide demonstrates how to do basic functions with the Japanese version of Movie Maker, the editing program installed on the school computers. The guide uses screen grabs of the Japanese software with English instructions to explain the editing process. Editing will be the longest task to accomplish, so the teacher has allotted three full class periods to complete editing.

With the help of the Media Office worker and the teacher computer at the front of the room, the instructor shows the students how to import a file from their USB flash drive and drag it into the Movie Maker timeline. The teacher then asks the students to perform the same task on their computers. The teacher walks around the room to make sure each pair is able to complete the task. The teacher then asks the other student in each pair to complete the same task. Each group has now imported two files. This should take about ten minutes.

The teacher demonstrates how to cut an unwanted portion of a video. The teacher again asks each member of the student pairs to repeat the task. The teacher then demonstrates the storyboard view and explains that this view is good for adding transitions between video files. The teacher shows the students where the transition options are located in Movie Maker and shows the students several examples of transitions. The teacher chooses a transition and drags it into the square between the video files on the storyboard. The teacher asks each student to perform the same task. The instructor points out the *undo* feature in Movie Maker and explains that this feature functions the same way in Movie Maker as it does in Word, a software program the students regularly use in other classes. The teacher continues, demonstrating how to add audio, create titles, and save a project. After each demonstration the teacher pauses and asks the students to try the task. Twenty minutes is allotted for this portion of class.

The teacher reminds the students to use their shot list. The shot numbers and notes should help them to quickly find the best takes of the files they need. In addition, students can refer to their storyboard to help them put files in the order they want. The teacher allows the students to continue editing their files for the remaining fifty minutes of class. The teacher frequently reminds the students to save their work on their USB flash drives.

### **Eleventh Day**

For today's class the instructor brings three digital video cameras and extra shot lists. Before the students arrive, the teacher makes sure the cameras are fully charged and functioning properly. In today's class, the students will continue to analyze and edit their podcasts. The objective for today is to get students comfortable with editing. By the end of today, students should have all of their videos cut and placed in the correct order.

The teacher begins by asking if students want to review any of the editing tasks from the previous week. If students seem unsure of any tasks, the teacher reviews them. The teacher tells the class they should try to have all of their videos cut and placed in the correct order by the end of the class period. The teacher allows the students the entire class period to edit, but walks around frequently to answer questions and make sure students are staying on task. If more than one group seems uncomfortable with a task or has the same question, the instructor demonstrates the task for the entire class again. While editing, students often find they want to reshoot a portion of their work. If a group wants to do this during class they may. Before the end of the class, the teacher reminds the students to save their work on their USB flash drive.

### **Twelfth Day**

There are no special materials required for today's class. The objective for today is to get all of the editing completed on the podcasts. Since students should have all of the takes cut and



placed in order, students should be able to spend the day adding transitions, and any additional graphics or effects.

When the students arrive, the teacher reminds them that today is the last day to edit in class. The teacher tells the students that they should have transitions between their video clips and finish adding any audio or graphics by the end of the class period. If students do not finish in class they will need to complete editing as homework in no later than two days. The teacher allows the students to edit for the remainder of the class. As students finish editing, the teacher will save a completed copy to grade and upload to the class *YouTube* channel. The teacher reminds student that they will need to turn in their portfolio during the next class.

### **Thirteenth Day**

Prior to class, the instructor uploads all of the students' podcasts to the class *YouTube* channel. The podcasts are listed in a separate playlist for easy viewing. The teacher will also need to bring thirty-two copies of the Podcast 1 Group Evaluation worksheet (see Appendix N) and sixteen copies of the Podcast Survey (see Appendix O).

At the beginning of class, students are each given two copies of the group evaluation sheet (see Appendix N). Students are assigned two other groups to assess in class. The teacher plays the podcasts for the students, allowing time between podcasts for students to finish evaluations. After viewing all of the videos, the teacher collects the evaluation sheets. Forty minutes have been allotted for this activity. The teacher types all of the student comments, without the names, and distributes them to the students with their final grades and portfolios. This allows the teacher to remove any mean or inappropriate comments. Students will use the comments to make stronger podcasts in the next term.

The teacher collects the portfolios from all of the students. Finally, the teacher asks each student to complete a short survey about the podcasting (see Appendix O). The information from the survey can help the teacher make any needed adjustments before the beginning of the next term. This activity will take about fifteen minutes.

If there is extra time remaining in class, the teacher asks the students to comment and post questions about the videos on the *YouTube*. Students are encouraged, but not required to view the online feedback and questions from their classmates and respond. The teacher asks the students to write all online feedback in English.

## **7. Conclusion and Discussion**

In the unit plan above, I have discussed how student-generated podcasts can be effectively integrated into a high school EFL course for third year students. While this unit plan was written for a listening and speaking class, it could be easily adapted for an EFL culture class by changing the topic of the podcast episodes. With small changes, activities could be simplified to work with younger high school students. Conversely, removing simple reviews and going through activities at a quicker pace would make the activities useful for a university EFL course. No matter how they are adapted, lesson plans that are well-thought-out and deliver content in an effective and efficient way will be beneficial and positively received by students.

It is clear that today's students are learning in new ways and from diverse sources. Japanese students regularly use technology related to podcasting and have expressed interest in using this technology to learn English (Lockley 187; Takahashi 70; Anzai 460-4). Given the pervasiveness of ICT in Japan, podcasting provides opportunities for students to be creative while learning English communication skills that will make them more valuable to future

employers in an increasingly global world. Podcasts can help bridge the gap between what is learned in the classroom and what is found in an authentic communicative context.

Teacher podcasts are becoming popular at universities in English-speaking countries like the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia (Copley 397-8; Hegelheimer and O'Bryan 165; Schnackenberg, Vega, and Warner 669-70). Exposure to teacher podcasts while still in their home countries helps EFL students successfully prepare for study abroad in an English-speaking country. Student anxiety can be reduced as students become familiar with the lecture format, delivery styles, and classroom norms they are likely to encounter when they begin classes overseas.

Podcasts hold promise in their outcomes for *keitai* native students. Evidence supports the increased academic and social benefits for teachers and students. Just as students improve their speaking fluency by listening to their own podcasts, an instructor can evaluate his or her teaching skills and styles by listening to podcasts of classroom lectures. Podcasts are also a convenient way to share work with colleagues or provide evidence of professional development (McCarty "Window" 19).

Considering the declining birth rate in Japan, competition among schools for recruitment of new students is likely to become more intense (Yew). Educators looking to help their students succeed need to do so in innovative and effective ways that will continue to attract new students. As Japanese schools actively compete for new students, podcasts give an institution a more positive, cutting-edge image. A reputation of innovative classes and supportive teachers may draw more successful students and increase enrollment. Podcasting on-campus events can generate greater interest in a school and give it a more innovative public image (McCarty, "Window" 4-19).

Reports based on classrooms that utilize podcasts indicate that they have a positive impact on test scores, fluency, and student engagement and motivation. Though there are difficulties to consider, instructors who enthusiastically embrace podcasting activities in the classroom by committing to the training and planning necessary to ensure success, will be rewarded with classrooms of engaged students who are motivated by their English fluency progression. While there is encouraging evidence about the positive effects of podcasting in EFL classrooms, more research needs to be done on how effective they are long-term.

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## Appendix A

### List of Links for Unit Plan

#### Day 1

1. Introduction Podcast 1 – Sesame Street: Alton Brown: Recipe – 01:41

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCxAM4bcYIU>

tags: alton, brown, abby, cadabby, recipe

2. Introduction Podcast 2 – Learn English in Three Minutes – Asking “Where do you live?” – 02:52

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kbbn36T\\_R20](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kbbn36T_R20)

tags: English, learn, France, newbie, basic, beginner, podcast, EnglishClass101, com, educational, lesson, lessons, school, teacher, student, students, teachers

3. Introduction Podcast 3 – How to Eat a Lobster... From the Food Network Kitchens – 02:37

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjVD0TD9b0M>

tags: how to eat a lobster, food network kitchens, techniques, how to, food network, eat, lobster, tips, tricks, utensils, edible, body parts, knuckle, claw, tail

4. Introduction Podcast – Eat Like Local Do in Venice – 02:16

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=latdXp7Kd9M>

tags: Travel, venice eating joint, venice bar, venetian food and drinks

5. Homework – Tag search, group 1 –

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfeXpVQ0rOY>

6. Homework – Tag search, group 2 –

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08rbPogHvIE>



## Day 2

### 1. Taiwan Travel Tips – 02:50

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyZno6ndM0I>

tags: lianne, lin, taiwan, taiwanese, travel, tips, advice, useful, asian, model, host, abc, tutorial, first, trip, how, to, find, atm, umbrella, mosquito

### 2. Korean Culture Shock – Episode 1 (Did you eat lunch?) – 2:26

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCajLqRAYU>

tags: culture, shock, first, impressions, of, korea, seoul, language, learn, 한국, 첫인상, 컬쳐쇼크, 컬쳐, 쇼크, 문화적, 충격, confusion, difficulty, denial, alienation, and, gettin.

### 3. Beijing Travel Tips – The Forbidden City - 01:50

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq7u6jwTkLs>

tags: city, travel, help, China, tips, need, culture, Forbidden, Beijing, Travel, Lauren, In, Asia, Bercarich, adventure, tour, destination

### 4. Homework Video 1 – FRCS Explore Students' Super School News Broadcast - 02:36

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCqfCUJ\\_RxE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCqfCUJ_RxE)

### 5. Homework Video 2 – PNN March 6, 2012 – Smiths Station High School – Panther News Network 05:38

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-cNi2JVwQA&list=UUuwakyxROiz6i3prUzN9vAQ&index=3>



**Day 4**

Sesame Street: Johnny Galecki Explains the Word Transform 01:45

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGuioNS2Y2s>

**Day 5**

Taiwan Culture – 01:13

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4tmYxtjSXI>

**Day 6**

How To Storyboard – First Light - 01:56

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVXMQMUDITs>



## Appendix B



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Podcast – Episode 1****What's a podcast?**

A podcast is a free video or audio series — like a TV or radio show — that you download from the Internet and play on your computer, digital media player, or cell phone.

The first podcast you create for this class will be a video podcast, and you will be paired with a classmate. You will make your podcast for a foreigner who is interested in Japan. You must have at least one cultural tip about Japan in your podcast. Your podcast should:

- ◆ have a title.
- ◆ be at least 3 minutes long, but not longer than 4 minutes.
- ◆ use correct grammar and pronunciation.
- ◆ be interesting.
- ◆ give useful information (tips).
- ◆ have a clear introduction and conclusion and smooth transitions.

Your first podcast is due June 12<sup>th</sup>. You will need to turn in this paper with your podcast, so don't lose it. As you finish each assignment, ask your teacher to stamp below. Five points will be deducted from your podcast episode grade for each late assignment.

_____ Three Ideas	_____ Storyboard
_____ Brainstorming	_____ Shot List
_____ First Script Draft	_____ Final Script
_____ Peer-editing	_____ Podcast Episode

The rubric for your podcast episode is on the other side of this paper. Read it carefully and be sure you understand what you need to include your podcast. Making a podcast will take a lot of work, but it will also be fun. Make sure you use your class time well and ask for help when you need it.

## Podcast Episode Rubric

	5- Superior Performance	4- Outstanding Performance	3- Acceptable Performance	2- Skills not refined	1- Missing Skills	0-Unacceptable Performance
<b>Pronunciation/ Enunciation</b>	Precise, easily understandable	Most words understandable	Some words and phrases unclear	A number of words unclear	Many words unclear	Cannot understand
<b>Volume, Pace</b>	Easily heard Conversational, Easy to listen to	Easily heard most of the time Moments of speeding and/or long pauses	Decreasing volume at end of sentences Moments of speeding or long pauses	Significant periods of low volume Speeding most of the time	Difficult to hear most of the time Speed hurts clarity	Can't hear Words run together
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Varied, vivid, catchy and memorable	Varied, clear, and concise	Repetitive	Frequent fillers, Bland	Confusing, Slang used frequently	Obscenity or offensive
<b>Introduction</b>	Attention getting, Previews, Gives reason to listen	Attention getting and previews	Attention getting or previews	One quick statement or question	Announces topic	None
<b>Conclusion</b>	Summarizes, repeats, and provides next step	Summarizes and repeats	Summarizes	One sentence	Abrupt and sudden	"End"
<b>Length</b>	3-4 minutes	3-4 minutes	3 minutes	2.5 to just under 3 minutes	2- 2.5 minutes	Less than 2 minutes
<b>Poise, Eye Contact</b>	No signs of nervousness, Always maintains eye contact	A few signs of nervousness, Maintains eye contact most of the time	Occasional nervous habits, Maintains eye contact most of the time	Some notable nervous habits, Occasionally has eye contact	Constant fidgeting, Looks up infrequently	Can't speak, gives up, Eyes always on the script
<b>Transitions</b>	Makes clear transitions throughout the presentation	Makes clear transitions most of the time	Makes clear transitions some of the time	Very few transitions	One transition	No transitions
<b>Format/Details</b> <i>-Gives at least one Japanese cultural tip</i> <i>-Gives specific examples and details to support tip.</i> <i>-Well organized</i>	Tip thoroughly discussed, Clear organizational statement, All points fully explained	Tip thoroughly discussed, Most points fully explained, Easy to follow	Tip discussed, but not in as much detail as needed, A few points fully explained, Makes sense most of the time	Tip is off-topic, Minimal explanation of points, Some points don't follow	Tip is off-topic or incomplete, Heavy reliance quoted material, Lacks focus	Tip is off-topic or missing, No personal explanation of points, Jumbled – can't follow

(Adapted from O'Malley and Pierce 84)

Appendix C

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Video Podcast Observations**

Title

Opening/Greeting

Identification

Transitions

Closing

Comments

## Appendix D

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Communication Skills Video Clips**

Watch the twelve video clips. Match the description with the clip.

- \_\_\_\_\_ no intonation; no energy
- \_\_\_\_\_ fidgeting; moving too much
- \_\_\_\_\_ hair in face; playing with hair
- \_\_\_\_\_ bad posture (slouching)
- \_\_\_\_\_ strong volume and intonation
- \_\_\_\_\_ not looking at camera or speaker
- \_\_\_\_\_ background music too loud
- \_\_\_\_\_ distracting movement behind speaker
- \_\_\_\_\_ OK, but not smiling
- \_\_\_\_\_ reading script; not memorized
- \_\_\_\_\_ looking at camera; clear voice
- \_\_\_\_\_ no gestures

(Adapted from Shrosbree, "Video")

## Appendix E

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Three Ideas - Podcast Episode 1**

For your first podcast, you and your partner must give cultural tips about Japan in English. You can give tips about food, music, festivals, behavior, travel, or any other part of culture. Try to choose something that is interesting to you. If you were watching a podcast, what would you want to learn about? Think of three ideas for your podcast and write them below. When you meet with your partner, you will have six ideas to choose from!

Idea #1

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Idea #2

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Idea #3

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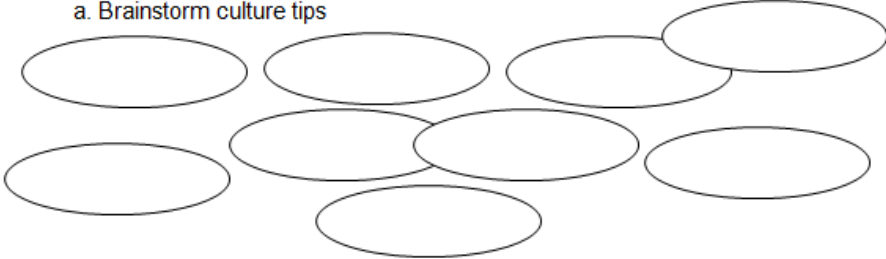
## Appendix F

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Brainstorming**

**1. Think of a Japanese cultural tip**

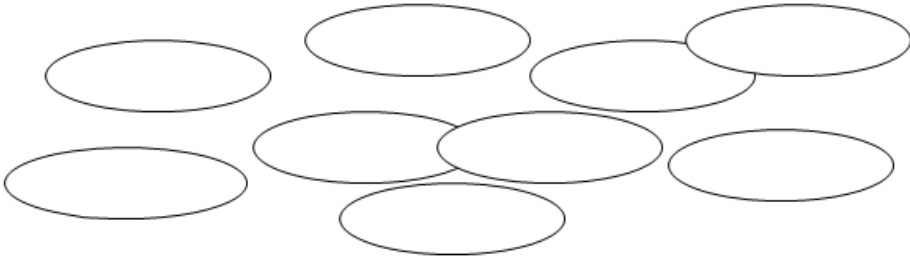
a. Brainstorm culture tips



b. Choose your tip: .....

**2. Think of scenes to film**

a. Brainstorm scenes



b. Cut scenes you do not need

**3. Think of things you want to communicate**

(Adapted from Shrosbree, "Video")

## Appendix G

**Podcast Episode 1 Script Sample**

HARUKA  
Hello, I'm Haruka.

SHIORI  
And I'm Shiori. Welcome to our podcast-

HARUKA & SHIORI  
Cherry Blossoms!

SHIORI  
Today we're going to talk about saying "yes" and "no" in Japan.

HARUKA  
That's right! There's a polite way to say things in every culture.

SHIORI  
You're right. I remember when we were preparing to go to Australia last year, our English teacher taught us a polite way to say "no."

HARUKA  
Oh really?

SHIORI  
Yes, she told us that if our host family offered us food we didn't like, we didn't have to eat it.

HARUKA  
Oh, that's very different from Japanese culture.

SHIORI  
I know. She taught us the phrase, "It's not my favorite."

HARUKA  
It's not my favorite.

SHIORI  
Yes, that it a polite way to say that you don't like something in English.

HARUKA  
Wow. That's very useful.

SHIORI  
Yes.

HARUKA

Well, today we want to teach our viewers about a similar situation in Japan.

HARUKA & SHIORI

Okay! Let's get started.

SHIORI

Okay. Well, "no" doesn't always mean "no" in Japan.

HARUKA

And "yes" doesn't always "yes."

SHIORI

That's true. It's a difficult topic and can be confusing for foreigners when they come to Japan.

HARUKA

For example, if you are out eating and drinking with Japanese people and they keep giving you more and more food-

SHIORI

They might ask you if you want more and you will say "no," but they will keep bringing more food.

HARUKA

That's right! A Japanese person will assume that even though you say "no" you really want more food.

SHIORI

Yes, in this situation you should say "結構です."

HARUKA

That's right. It's the polite way to say "No, thank you" in Japanese.

SHIORI

Let's try it out.

HARUKA

Okay!

SHIORI

Wow, that food was delicious. Thank you so much for bringing me here.

HARUKA

You're welcome. Are you still hungry?



SHIORI  
No, thanks. I'm full.

HARUKA  
Oh, okay. I'll order more food for us.

SHIORI  
Oh, wait. 結構です.

HARUKA  
Oh, I understand. I'm actually very full, too.

SHIORI  
Yes, I'm full, but it was a wonderful meal! Thank you.

HARUKA  
You're welcome.

SHIORI  
I hope that helps you understand how to use 結構です.

HARUKA  
Me, too.

HARUKA & SHIORI  
Thank you for watching!

HARUKA  
I'm Haruka.

SHIORI  
And I'm Shiori. See you next time!

HARUKA  
Bye!

## Appendix H

### Analytic Scoring Rubric for Podcast Script

Domain Score	Content	Sentence Formation	Usage	Mechanics	Organization
<b>4</b> (excellent)	Addresses assigned topic; the ideas are exceptionally clear and offer unique insight into the topic; no extraneous material.	Standard word order, no enjambment (run-on sentences), completeness (no fragments), standard modifiers and coordinators, and effective transitions.	Standard inflections (plurals, possessives, -ed, -ing with verbs, and -ly with adverbs), subject-verb agreement (we were vs. we was), standard word meaning.	Effective use of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and formatting (new speaker indicated by space)	Appropriate title, effective opening and identifications; topic is stated; variety of transitional expressions used; arrangement of material shows plan, comments and closing are logical and complete.
<b>3</b> (good)	Addresses the assigned topic; only minor flaws in development of ideas; offers insight into the topic but not to the same extent as 4.	Mostly standard word order, some enjambment or sentence fragments.	Mostly standard inflections, agreement, and word meaning.	Mostly effective use of mechanics; errors do not interfere with understanding.	Adequate title, opening, and identifications; topic is stated; transitional expressions used; sequence and closing is logical.
<b>2</b> (adequate)	Addresses the assigned topic; a few elements are not well developed or are missing; offers little insight into the topic	Some non-standard word order, enjambment, and word omissions.	Some errors with inflections, agreement, and word meaning.	Some errors with spelling and punctuation slightly interfere with understanding.	Elements of title, opening and identifications, transitional expressions, and closing may be incomplete or misused; problems of organization interfere with understanding.
<b>1</b> (below expectations)	Partially addresses topic; ideas are not well-developed; the topic is unclear or off-track.	Frequent non-standard word order, enjambment, and word omissions.	Shifts from one tense to another, errors in conventions (them/those, good/well, double negatives, etc.)	Frequent misspellings of even simple words; little formatting evident; interferes with understanding.	Opening and identifications, transitional expressions, and closing are missing or not understandable; no evidence of organization.

(Adapted from O'Malley and Pierce 145)

## Appendix I

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**How to Storyboard**

Storyboards help you plan your video. They help you imagine how your finished video will look. Storyboards help you:

- make fewer mistakes.
- identify weak parts of your script.
- edit smoothly.
- organize your filming

As you watch the video, write notes about the meaning of each kind of shot.

**wide shot –**

**full shot -**

**tracking shot -**

**tilt shot -**

**zoom shot -**

**close-up shot -**

**point of view (POV) shot -**

Appendix J

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Podcast Episode 1 Storyboard

Type of shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Video: \_\_\_\_\_

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Type of shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio: \_\_\_\_\_

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Video: \_\_\_\_\_

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Type of shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio: \_\_\_\_\_

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Video: \_\_\_\_\_

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Type of shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio: \_\_\_\_\_

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Video: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix K

**Holistic Scoring Rubric for Podcast Storyboards**

<b>Level/Score</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Not Achieved (0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not reach the minimum level</li> </ul>
Acceptable (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The storyboards contain some detail.</li> <li>A portion of the script is provided.</li> <li>Most scenes have some detail and some action described.</li> <li>There is information about some of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions between scenes</li> <li>Camera action, angles, and shots</li> <li>Sound effects</li> <li>Additional graphics or effects</li> <li>Timing</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sketches are included and have some accuracy.</li> <li>The storyboards are understandable and have some flow.</li> </ul>
Good (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The storyboards are mostly accurate or detailed.</li> <li>A suitable portion of the script is provided.</li> <li>Most scenes are detailed and the action is described.</li> <li>There is detailed information about most of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions between scenes</li> <li>Camera action, angles, and shots</li> <li>Sound effects</li> <li>Additional graphics or effects</li> <li>Timing is relatively accurate compared to the script</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sketches are reasonably accurate.</li> <li>It is relatively easy for a third party to understand the shots and flow of the podcast.</li> </ul>
Excellent (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The storyboards are accurate and detailed.</li> <li>A suitable and appropriate portion of the script is provided.</li> <li>Scenes are detailed and the action is accurately described.</li> <li>There is consistent, detailed information about:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transitions between scenes</li> <li>Camera action, angles, and shots</li> <li>Sound effects</li> <li>Additional graphics or effects</li> <li>Timing is accurate and consistent with the script and transitions</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sketches are consistently accurate and show care and attention to detail.</li> <li>It is easy for a third party to understand the shots and flow of the podcast.</li> </ul>

(Adapted from Churches)

## Podcast Episode 1 Shot List

[illegible]

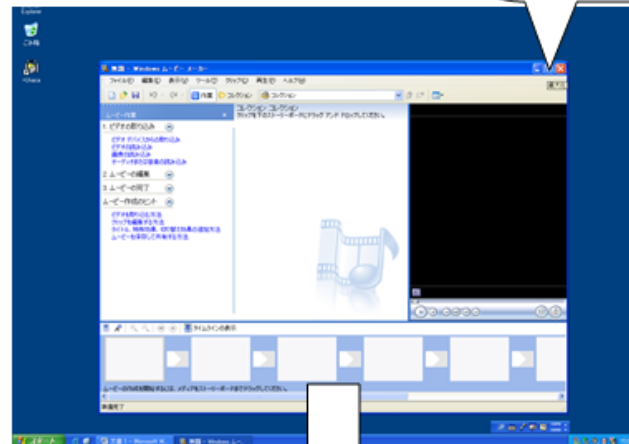
## Appendix M

## Editing Guide for Movie Maker XP

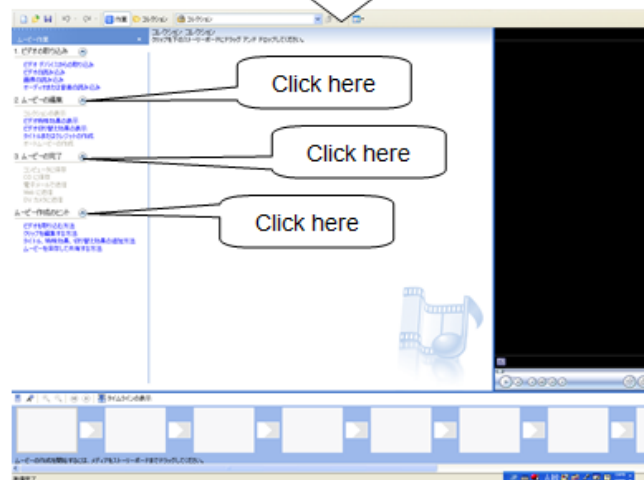
### 1. Open Windows Movie Maker



### 2. Use the biggest view

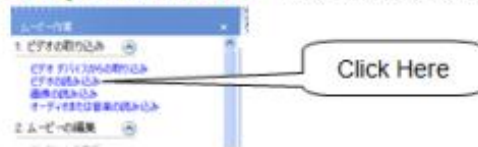


### 3. Open the controls on the left

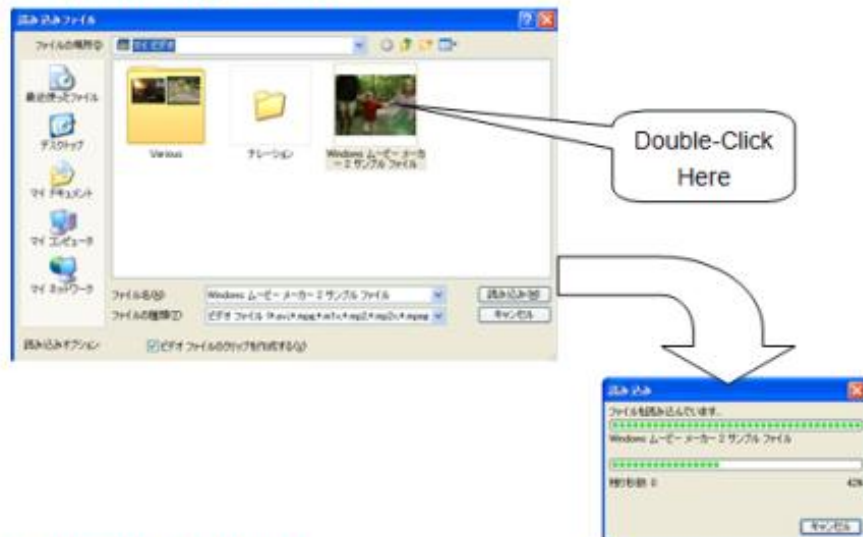




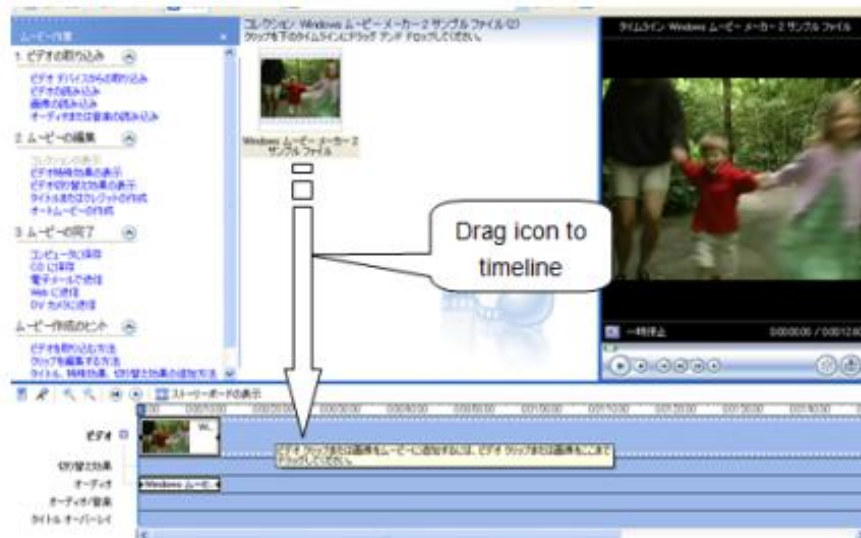
#### 4. Import a movie file 「ビデオを読み込み」



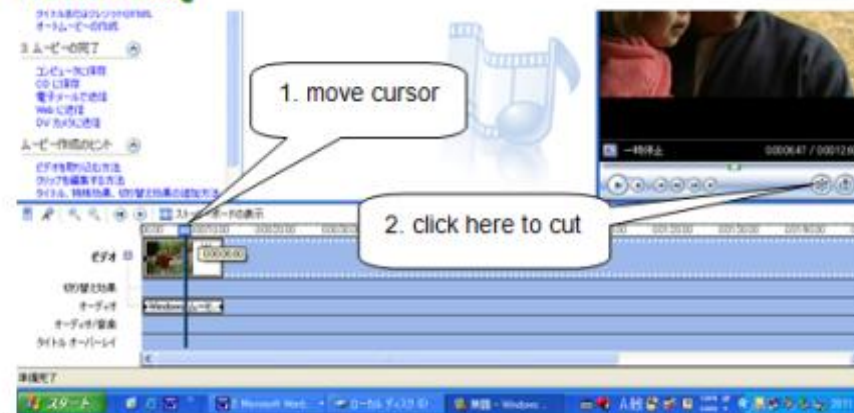
#### 5. Import the sample movie files 「ムービー メーカー 2 サンプル ファイル」



#### 6. Drag movie to timeline



## 7. Basic editing



## 8. Story board view



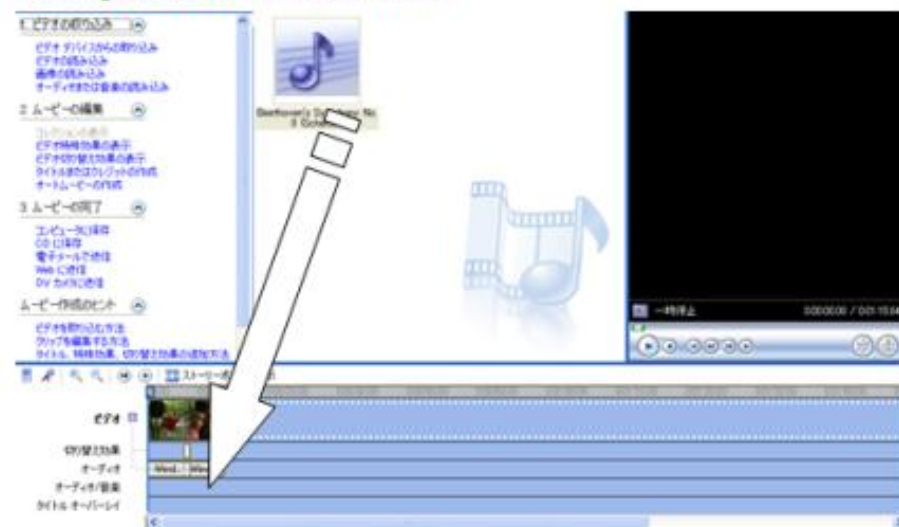
## 9. Add a 'transition'



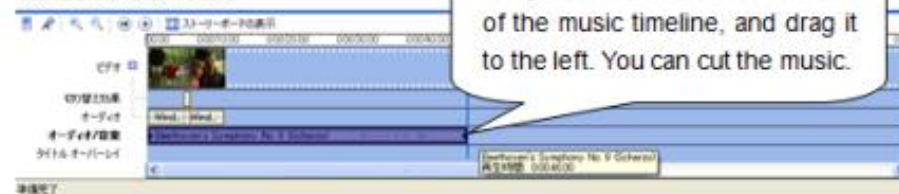
## 10. Add music



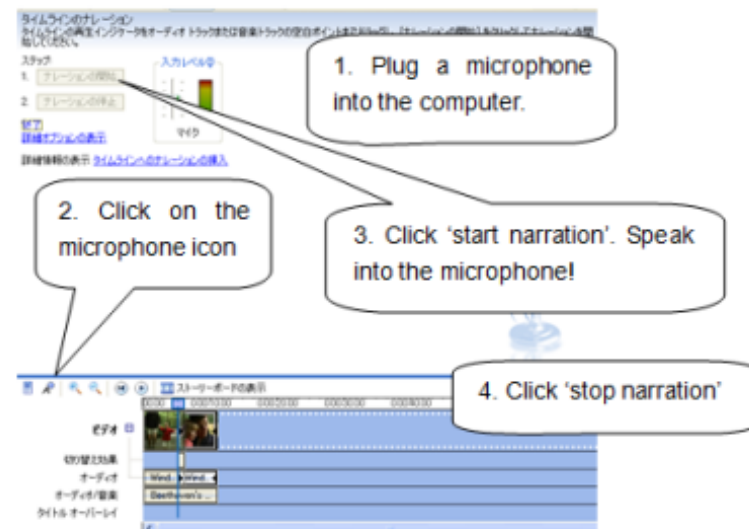
## 11. Drag audio to the audio timeline



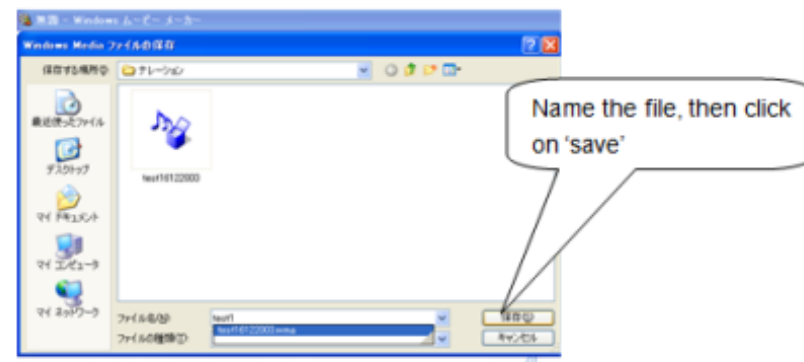
## 12. Edit the timeline



### 13. Add narration



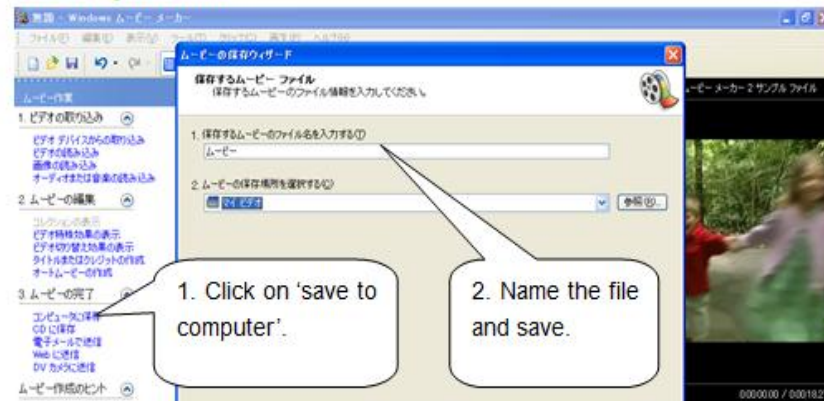
#### 14. Save the narration file



## 15. Change the view



## 16. Save your video



## 17. Try other functions

- make titles
- use special effects
- and more!

## Remember

- Keep it simple!
- Save often!
- Keep all files in one folder. Save everything on to a portable drive.

(Adapted from Shrosbree, "Digital")

## Appendix N

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Podcast Episode 1 Group Evaluations**

Group Members:

\_\_\_\_\_

Podcast Title:

\_\_\_\_\_

What is one thing you learned from this podcast?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What should this group work on for their next podcast?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What did this group do well?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix O

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Podcast Survey**

1. What new vocabulary did you learn in this class?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What did you learn from watching podcasts made by native English speakers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What did you learn from watching your classmates' podcasts?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What did you learn making your own podcasts?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What was your favorite part of this class? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What was your least favorite part of this class? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What could be improved for next term?