

Approaches in Preparing Japanese Students for Employment Interviews in English

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Introduction

In the vast array of goals that teachers develop for language classes are those goals of developing the skills that students will need in the navigation of the English employment interview. These interviews will often be required of those Japanese who are interested in employment with foreign companies or those Japanese companies which do business abroad ; in short, almost any large Japanese business. The existence of these important interviews will require the language teacher to consider a task-based approach in teaching students in the preparation for the eventual interviews that they will encounter in search of future employment. This paper will examine the task-based methods of preparing for these interviews and what the students will encounter in the process of preparing for and succeeding in performing the English employment interview and suggest possibilities for the university curriculum to include some emphasis on these interviews in an effort to provide more support to students who are attempting to enter industries which require a certain level of English-speaking proficiency in order to perform their jobs.

What is the task-based approach?

When we are presented with the course that will focus on the ability of the students to perform tasks such as navigating the interview test, we will need to design tasks which will help those students prepare for a very specific goal. Designing tasks that are communicative will be essential for these students as they will be of a very practical

nature. As Nunan (1988) lists in the characteristics of the communicative approach we can see that these characteristics must be considered by those teachers helping students prepare for these interviews.

In the traditional approach the focus is on the language as a structured system of grammatical patterns but in the communicative approach the focus is on communication. In the traditional approach the language items are chosen based on linguistic criteria however in the communicative approach this is determined on the basis of what language items the learner needs to know in order to get things done. The items are sequenced on linguistic grounds in the traditional approaches but with the communicative approach this will be determined with an emphasis on content, meaning and interest. There are also differences to be found in the degree of coverage. In the traditional approaches the aim is to cover the whole picture of language structure by systematic linear progression however in the communicative approaches the aim is to cover ; in any particular phase, only what the learner needs and sees as important.

The view of language is also seen to be different in the two approaches. In traditional approaches a language is viewed as a unified entity with fixed grammatical patterns and a core of basic words, while in the communicative approaches, the variety of language is accepted and seen as determined by the character of particular communicative contexts.

The type of language used in traditional approaches is formal and bookish while the communicative approaches emphasize everyday language. The students are regarded as being successful when they are able to produce formally correct sentences. The aim of the communicative approaches is to have students communicate effectively and in a manner appropriate to the context they are working in.

The language skills that are emphasized will also be an important consideration. In this instance, reading and writing are the language skills emphasized in the traditional approaches while with the communicative approaches spoken interactions are regarded as at least as important as reading and writing. The roles in the classroom are traditionally teacher-centered while with the communicative approaches the roles will be student-centered. We can also see differences in the treatment of errors and error correction. In the traditional approaches incorrect utterances are seen as deviations from the norms of standard grammar while with the communicative approaches partially correct or incomplete utterances are seen as such rather than just wrong. Students who are able to communicate ideas that are understandable regardless of the correctness of grammar usage will be seen as giving acceptable responses.

The final aspect of the connection between the traditional approaches and the communicative approaches is that of the similarity/dissimilarity to natural language learning. With traditional approaches the emphasis is on the form of the utterances rather than the content. The reverse is true of the communicative approach in that the content of utterances is emphasized over form. (Quinn adapted in Nunan 1988 : 26-28)

Task-based teaching methodology

Ellis (2006) tells us that there are two methodological procedures for teaching tasks. The first is how these procedures are related to the task-based syllabus and the conversion into actual lessons. The second is how the teacher and students are to participate in the lessons. Ellis deals with the how these procedures are related and the conversion into actual lessons in his 2006 article and we will provide concrete examples here to illustrate how the students and teachers actually participate in the lessons.

The design of the task-based course Ellis notes is a three-step process which is similar to those proposed by others (Estaire and Zanon 1994 ; Lee 2000; Prabhu 1987 ; Skehan 1996 ; Willis 1996) and outlined in a similar fashion. These steps (or phases as Ellis calls them) are pre-task, during task and post-task.

In the pre-task phase the students are prepared for performing the task so that it will enhance their ability at acquisition. In this phase Lee (2000) describes how important it is to “frame the task”. The students need to know what they are required to do and what kind of results they should expect from their efforts. The task should also be presented in a way that motivates the learners. Dornyei (2001) is mostly concerned with what is called “whetting the students’ appetites” to perform the task and to help them to perform the task. Skehan (1996) suggests alternative pre-task alternatives that would be helpful in making the likelihood of success in performing the task much higher. In a procedural sense these alternatives can be engaged in any one of four ways :

Supporting learners in performing a task similar to the task they will perform during the task-phase of the lesson.

Asking students to observe a model of how to perform the task.

Engaging the learners in non-task activities designed to prepare them to perform the task

Strategic planning of the main task performance. (Ellis 2006 : 3)

The pre-task Ellis points out was an essential aspect of the Communicational Teaching Project (Prabhu 1987). In this activity the whole class, including the teacher

were involved in the activity. The task had similar content to that which would be found in the main task. In Prabhu's project the task was done through questions and answers given after the pre-task was completed. The teacher was given the lesson plan which included the pre-task and a set of graded questions. The pre-task, which can be considered as a kind of demonstration, is clearly defined as, "a task in its own right" by Prabhu and it is used by the teacher to bridge the gap for the student to the next level of language learning.

Modeling the task can be one way to have students observe the task without actually going through the motions of carrying out the task. In observing this model the students can see how the task can be done 'ideally' Nunan has suggests a list from Rubin and Thompson (1982) with glosses from Candlin and Nunan (1987) (in Nunan 1989) as ways in which students can be taught to become independent :

Finding your own way : Helping learners to discover which methods of learning work best for them. Learners discover other ways of learning from others in the class to learn in as independent as they can.

Organizing information about language : Developing ways for learners to organize what they have learned through making notes and using them for easy reference.

Being Creative : Experimenting with ways of creating and using language including new ways of using words, playing with arrangements of sounds and structures, inventing imaginative texts and playing language games.

Making your own opportunities : To learn language actively by performing in class through interacting with fellow students and the teacher, asking questions, listening to the language, reading various kinds of texts and practicing writing. Rehearsal is of great importance in the class.

Learning to live with uncertainty : Not always relying on safe answers but trying to work things out with resources such as dictionaries. Helping learners to keep on talking and trying to understand the gist of texts rather than every language item in them.

Using mnemonics : Helping the students to find ways to recall what they have learned, quickly through using rhymes, word associations, word classes, particular contexts of occurrence, experiences and personal memories.

Making errors work : Learning to live with errors and helping learners to prevent errors from blocking their participation in tasks. Helping the learners ask for error correction and learning from the errors they make thus allowing them to

understand the extent of the gravity of certain errors.

Using your linguistic knowledge : Helping learners make comparisons with what they know about language from their mother tongue and building on what they have already learned in terms of rules and conventions for language use.

Letting the context help you : Helping the learners to understand the relationship between words, sounds and structures, developing the ability to infer meaning from context, background information and out-of-class experience.

Learning to make intelligent guesses : Developing the ability to work out meanings. To focus on the main parts of a message and relate these to the overall text and context. To guess on the basis of probabilities of occurrence and meaning then trying to work out what is relevant from the text.

Learning formalized routines : Encouraging students to learn routines and whole phrases such as idioms, routine expressions, sound sequences and dialogue extracts as examples of ways of expressing interpersonal functions.

Learning production techniques : Helping learners to worry less about accuracy by developing paraphrasing ability, their willingness to ask for help and for using gestures as a way to keep on talking.

Using different styles of speech and writing : Developing the learners' ability to differentiate between different styles of speech and writing both productively and receptively. Finding ways to transfer their 'mother tongue' experiences to the new language. (Nunan 1989 : 81–82)

Ellis suggests that there are ways to make the learning process easier on students by providing non-task preparation activities. These activities will help the student to identify the language that they will need to express their ideas and thus will allow them to produce more complex utterances. "Three ways in which the teacher can focus on this vocabulary are ; predicting (by asking the students to brainstorm a list of words related to the topic), cooperative dictionary search (choosing learners to look up words in the dictionary) and words and definitions (learners match a word on a list to a definition)". (Ellis 2006 : 5). In this way we can help the learners to go from learning the new vocabulary to incorporating the use of that vocabulary into actual communication with less difficulty thus making the learning process move more smoothly and allow for increased learning in terms of amount learned and the speed at which the learner is able to absorb the new material.

Tasks and the interview test

These aspects of the communicative approach outlined above will have a direct influence on students preparing for English interviews. It should be clear that the emphasis of the communicative approach within a given language classroom will be of great benefit to the student who is preparing for such English-language interviews in Japan. Students will need to be more concerned with giving correct and complete responses that are understandable and communicate ideas. Emphasis on teaching students to do interviews will require that students think more carefully about content, meaning and interest. Conversely, the questions that the teacher asks will also need to be prepared in concern for these aspects.

Students will need to “find their own way” in learning how to answer the questions of the interview test. These questions can be highly personal thus requiring a specific personal response that no one else can prepare for them. This simple fact forces the student into independent learning to make his or her way through the interview process. They may hear responses from other students which use certain language but the content of the response by its very nature must be all their own.

The students will need to “organize the information about language”. Making notes is suggested as a way to prepare language and thus also to prepare responses to those questions the learner will be asked in the actual interview. There may be questions which require a long response that is complex but it may also be true that the response will need to be short and to the point. An example is given here :

Examiner : Please tell me your examinee number, your name and the name of your school.

Examinee : Number 2347. My name is Junko Higuchi. Kyushu Kyoritsu University.

The response below will be equally acceptable to the one given above :

My number is 2347. My name is Junko Higuchi and I am currently attending Kyushu Kyoritsu University in Kitakyushu.

In preparing for the interview, grammar study can be a difficult area to focus on. Of course, student responses will need to be grammatically correct. However, this grammatical efficiency may be sacrificed in favor of speedy comprehensible responses.

Thus, leaving the need for worrying about grammar to be less of an obstacle than one may originally be concerned with. The same may be said for the grammar study that Quinn referred to as "bookish". This type of grammar concentration will more than likely be sacrificed for the sake of clarity and speed. Language skills are equally important but given the nature of the task at hand a focus on listening and speaking will be of the utmost importance to these students.

Examiner : Did you sleep well last night?

Examinee : Yes. I slept quite well. I went to bed at eleven o'clock and got up at six o'clock.

This accurate but rather lengthy response would therefore be best substituted for a direct and more concise response such as this :

Examinee : Yes I did. Thank you.

Examinee : No. I had a lot of trouble sleeping.

The students who produce language that is acceptable will be more likely to be successful in completing the interview task. As explained by Quinn, the student who can communicate in the proper context will be successful. Those students who go on to have employment interviews can be assured that their responses will be accepted as correct if the views of Quinn are adhered to. Unfortunately for the student, this may not always be the case as the interviewers or institutions may have their own private agenda in regards to acceptable responses to given questions. Indeed, the employer or institution may have a strict interpretation of what is an appropriately acceptable response to a given question.

Being creative with the language is also suggested by Rubin and Thompson as found in Nunan (1989). They suggest using new ways to use words. In the classroom preparation for general language ability this will be a useful activity but in the critical preparation for the interview this may cause the student to be overly wordy in responses and thus more likely to make errors in grammar or simply be difficult to understand. In the classroom rehearsal is thought of as a very positive activity and this is also true of preparation for the interview test. Students who are given the opportunity to write out responses and then practice them in mock interview tests will be making their own

opportunities as suggested by the authors.

An example of where the students will need to use creativity in their responses can be seen in the following questions :

Q : Have you ever boarded one of our airplanes?

Q : Please give us your impressions of the flight attendants on that flight.

This will require a specific answer which cannot be prepared and will need a variety of vocabulary that the student may or may not be able to use. These questions can be practiced but will be very individual in response as no two answers will be alike. Those who practice responses may find that these responses will be looked upon as something that has been overly rehearsed and will give a bad impression to the interviewer thus reducing the applicants chances for success.

In learning to live with uncertainty students face a great challenge. While they have studied a variety of interview questions and interview scenarios they will not be able to predict with any certainty what questions they may be asked. This leaves the student feeling more apprehension toward the interview by believing that there is really no real way to prepare for it. The lone comforting aspect for the student is that there are themes that can be found in most interviews for which the student can prepare. These themes include ; introductions, reasons for applying, school life, overseas travel, marriage and hobbies. With this general knowledge the student will be able to give some thought to possible responses to questions covering these themes.

Similar to the example sighted above, the student will have to deal with uncertainty. Examples of questions that add to this sense of uncertainty are the short speech questions that can sometimes be asked.

Q : Please make a two-minute speech on "some impressive sights in Japan".

Q : Please make a two-minute speech on "a mothers place in the home".

Using mnemonics will make answering questions much easier for the students because they will be able to refer to their own personal experience and compare their answers to others who will most often have similar experiences and thus will be giving similar answers to questions in regard to their own personal experiences. The only differences will be for those who are high school graduates with no college experience in the same

group with those who are currently in college or are recent graduates. Students who are able to give a chronology of their lives will be more likely to be able to handle the interview with more confidence. Recent high school graduates will be more likely to have less to say which can turn out to be an advantage because they will have less chance to make errors in statements due to the limited nature of their response.

Questions such as these require the student to have some experiences in the area being asked about.

Q : Do you have a part-time job? Have you ever had a part-time job?

Q : What kind of job is it?

Dealing with making and correcting errors can be problematical. Students will always want their incorrect responses to be corrected but in the classroom this can sometimes serve to be time consuming with little overall benefit. The nature of the short response to certain interview questions can make correcting them a little easier and also the students can be encouraged to correct the responses of other students which can help make the activity a less threatening experience. Teachers may be more likely to want to correct each incorrect response for fear that the student will learn to produce a response that will lead to a less favorable evaluation during the interview process. However, experiences with students taking airline interview tests have shown that the questions posed to students during these interviews often required less of a response than those questions practiced during the preparation time. This may not always be the case thus students should be prepared for any kind of situation regarding the ease or difficulty of potential interview questions.

Among the many questions that can be difficult for the student to answer are questions about vital statistics. An example of a particularly simple sounding yet tricky question is the following :

Q : Please tell us your height, weight and eyesight.

Students will tend to want to answer each fact with the same form of sentence which is impossible. Errors in answering this question can be seen in the following response :
I am 160cm tall. I weight 45kg. I am 1, (comma) 0 (zero) eyesight.

Practicing the above response usually leads to the student with a great deal of

overconfidence. The students believing that this question is too easy eventually find that they have made an error in at least one area of the response.

Using your linguistic knowledge can be problematical for Japanese as word order in sentences differ so much from English. Also, students learn that there are “loan words” from other languages which they often assume to be from English. One of the most common mistakes in this regard is the Japanese use of the word for part-time job which is a loan word in Japanese, “*albeit*”. This word is often assumed to be from English but is of course a derivation of the German word which means “work”. Convincing students that this is not English is a difficult task for the language teacher.

Loan words can be a major problem for students preparing for interviews. Many words that actually have become part of the Japanese language are either pronounced in an incorrect fashion (“katakana” English) or are simple odd uses of the original English word.

Q : Do you live in a house, apartment or condominium?

A : I live in a mansion. (condominium)

Q : What does your father do?

A : He is a salaryman. (sic) (company worker)

Q : Do you have any licenses?

A : Yes for pasacom (sic) (personal computer) and wapro (sic) (word processing)

Letting the context help you refers to the students developing the ability to recognize the relationships that exist between words, sounds and structures and how the students will develop the ability to infer meaning from the surrounding words and structures. This can be attained through making connections between the classroom experience and what the students have learned through their own personal experiences outside of the classroom. This aspect can also be problematic as students in non-English speaking countries such as Japan will have fewer opportunities to gain personal experiences in the language outside of the classroom. Teachers will be charged with the responsibility of guiding the students toward opportunities to use the language that may have not occurred to them

Since the students will be giving a lot of personal information it may be desirable to allow them to work on conversations where this kind of information can be given in a natural setting. The more opportunities the student has to talk about this information, the more likely it will be that the student will feel comfortable with it during the interview. An example of a partial interview can be seen here. The relationship between the content of this interview and that of most common conversation textbooks will be clear.

Introductory Interview

Q1 : Please tell me your examinee number, your name and the name of your school.

A1 : It is 347. My name is Akiko Shimada. I am a senior at Kyushu Kyoritsu University.

Q2 : Did you sleep well last night?

A1 : No, I did not. I was a little nervous.

Q3 : What time did you get up this morning?

A3 : I got up at six.

Q4 : What did you have for breakfast?

A4 : I had toast, eggs, salad and tea.

Q5 : How did you get here today?

A5 : I took the JR Line to Hammamatsu cho and changed there for the monorail.

Q5 : Are you still nervous?

A5 : Yes. I am still a little nervous.

Learning to make intelligent guesses where the students are taught to develop the capacity to work out meanings will go a long way toward helping the students boost their personal comprehension skills as they learn how to guess the meanings of words from given sentences and looking at the context of the words in those sentences. These guesses will be based on probabilities of occurrence and meaning. Then the students will be better able to determine what may be relevant and irrelevant in comprehending the meaning within a given passage. Once the student has attained this level then they will be better able to respond to a wider variety of questions which may contain vocabulary that is not immediately clear to the learner. The likelihood of this occurring within an employment interview is quite high due to the wide variety of topics and thus vocabulary that may be found within any interview test.

This aspect of the interview is one that may cause the most concern for the student and may result in the most errors in grammar or understanding.

Q1 : Tell me about your major?

A1 : I am 165cm tall.

In this instance the student has made an intelligent guess. It is incorrect as the student has confused 'major' with 'measure' but it does exhibit the fact that the student was able to make an intelligent guess about a word that she knew. This is less likely to be judged as harshly because the student has made a guess based on experience.

Q2 : Do you know who the prime minister is?

A2 : No, I don't.

Again, the student has made a guess. She doesn't know the meaning of the term "prime minister" but she does understand that the question usually requires a yes-no answer and has answered accordingly.

Learning formalized routines will also be important as the students should be encouraged to learn whole phrases or idioms. Using these expressions can be important in giving the students a personal identity with the language as they develop language and phrases that they feel comfortable with and can use in a variety of speaking situations. Students who are exposed to example dialogues of given situations will be able to see how these formalized routines are used in actual conversation and then will be more likely to be able to imitate these formalized routines in their own actual conversations outside of the classroom.

A simple example of this would be in the question below :

Q1 : Who do you respect?

A1 : I respect my mother.

A2 : I respect my history teacher.

A3 : I respect Mother Theresa.

The student in this simple example has learned how to correctly identify the person they respect in a simple and correct manner that cannot be disputed or corrected. It is to the point correct and also demonstrates an understanding of the correct use of the word 'respect' while giving factually correct (we assume) information.

Learning production techniques occurs when the teacher makes efforts toward helping the student to be less concerned with making errors and more concerned with developing a sense of fluency. This would include encouraging the student to ask for help and use gestures. Anyone who has taught for any length of time will know that these can be extremely difficult areas for the student to make progress. Particularly in the area of asking for help we can see in Japan that students will be very hesitant to ask questions in the classroom thus will be unable to correct errors to confirm correct responses. These students will also have difficulty in developing the ability to paraphrase. Gestures, as well can be very difficult to encourage as students may tend to want to blend in with others rather than bringing attention on themselves which is exactly what the use of gestures will do in spite of the fact that the use of these gestures will make their ability to communicate ideas much easier and faster.

Using different styles of speech and writing involves developing the students' ability to both productively and receptively differentiate between different styles of speech and writing. The students will find ways of transferring their mother tongue experiences of these differences into English (Nunan 1989 : 81-82). Activities have been suggested which allow the student to think about the language they are using. A student as independent learner is suggested by Dickenson (1987 in Nunan 1989 : 83-84). Students who are learning to prepare for the interview will need to be concerned with more independent learning as their answers will be by their very nature different and more personal than that of their classmates :

- 1 . Practical reasons : *In some situations, it is impossible for learners to attend regular classes. For these learners, it is a matter of self-instruction or nothing.*
- 2 . Individual differences : *Self-instruction enables us to cope with differences in aptitude, cognitive styles and strategies, and learning strategies.*
- 3 . Educational aims : *Self instruction facilitates the development of strategies which seem to characterize the 'good' language learner. It also promotes autonomy and fulfils requirements for continuing education.*
- 4 . Motivation : *Self instruction can have a positive effect on motivation.*
- 5 . Learning how to learn : *This reason cuts across several of the others already summarized. Finding out about learning processes, planning learning and then using appropriate and preferred strategies is a basic and important educational objective. (Dickenson in Nunan 1989 : 83-84)*

For those students who are unable to attend for practical reasons there may be little

that can be done on a practical level to help them in preparation for the interview. Reviewing potential questions individually may be suggested but it is often the case that the student may be well aware of the question and appropriate responses but without the experience of performing the actual interview the student may be lost. Individual differences can also be problematic but there are often great similarities among students which cannot be overlooked. They are often of similar age, background, educational experience, language experience and maturity. One area that may put one student over another is that of using the language in a practical manner ; that is that they have had extensive experiences with the language overseas. These students will most often be at a greater advantage over those with little or no overseas language use. Motivation is also of a similar rate of occurrence among students. Except for the occasional student who decides on an alternative career these students are likely to be highly motivated and thus be quite likely to engage in independent learning. These students are also more aware of learning how to learn and many will have already attained the ability to discover on their own how best to learn more completely and extensively.

Conclusion

We have examined here the task based methods and the connection to the interview test which many high school and university graduates will experience as they attempt to attain employment with foreign companies or those businesses in Japan doing work overseas. In connecting this to the task-based approach in language teaching we can see that we are able to have a positive influence on those students who are preparing for such employment interviews. We have seen that in trying to make the students more independent we can help them be more capable of navigating the English interview in a way that will make them more attractive to potential employers. By making the learners better organizers of information we can allow them to better process the language that they will need to successfully complete any language interview. By giving the students the opportunity to interact with their classmates more we can allow them to rehearse any possible language interaction that they may be called upon to perform in the language interview whether it be to answer direct questions, make comments or in some cases to make short speeches on certain chosen topics. Through such practice students may become overly comfortable with the situation and thus we will need to teach them to live with the uncertainty of the interview by learning to understand the gist of texts

and conversations rather than each conversation word for word.

The students will need to find ways to recall what they have learned more quickly as the interview will allow little opportunity to delay or carefully consider an appropriate response. Regular language lessons often offer such opportunities even if the concentration is not on preparing for the interview. Errors must be treated with caution. Students should be encouraged to respond with less concern for errors and only be corrected when such correction allows them to learn from their errors. In making intelligent guesses the student should be able to work out the meaning of certain questions through the understanding they have developed about the relationship of words to each other. While this will not be useful in the sense of understanding from the context of a conversation since there is none it is possible to decipher the meaning of a given question from the vocabulary that the student recognizes while trying to filter out the vocabulary that is not being understood because this will be useless in responding to the given question. The same can be true for the student to make intelligent guesses about the meanings of words and phrases through the words or phrases that they may already know. If the students learn how to produce language through paraphrasing or through the use of gestures will be increasing the likelihood of making a correct response.

We can also see that the students will need to know about certain topics which are commonly found in such interviews. (See appendix) If we can help the students to better be able to feel comfortable with the language in an interview or one-to-one conversation then we will be making great strides toward preparing Japanese students for work in the English-speaking world.

Appendix One

Theme : Reasons for applying

Q1 : Why do you want to become a flight attendant?

A1 : Because I like work that brings me in contact with people and that requires some physical activity.

A2 : When I traveled on your airline I was impressed with the way the flight attendants worked. I decided that that's the kind of work I'd like to do.

A3 : Because I think its work that a woman can do well. I believe that it is a very worthwhile job.

A4 : Because I like English and I'd like to get a job that will allow me to make good use of my knowledge of English.

Q2 : Why are you interested in working for our company?

A1 : Because I believe you are a well known, leading company with lots of promise.

A2 : I made comparisons of several airlines and I like the way your company operates best of all.

A3 : I have an acquaintance who works for your company as a flight attendant.

Listening to her talk about her work, I decided to become a flight attendant myself.

A4 : When I flew on your airline while I was a student, I was very favorably impressed by the way I was treated by your flight attendants.

Q3 : Why do you want to leave your present job and become a flight attendant?

A1 : Because I'd like to do something more active than desk work.

A2 : Because I'd like to broaden my horizons and my outlook.

A3 : Because the job of flight attendant has many attractive points that are lacking in my present position.

Appendix Two

Theme : School life

Q1 : Please tell me about your major.

A1 : I'm in the English Literature department at Kyushu University and my major is English Literature. I'm especially interested in O. Henry and am fascinated by his unique life.

A2 : I'm a student in the Department of Japanese Literature at Waseda University. I'm majoring in Economics.

A3 : I'm in the Law Department at Nihon University and I am majoring in Civil Law. I think it is a very important subject and closely related to our lives.

Q2 : How did you study foreign languages at school ?

A1 : I practiced speaking English with the other students in the ESS. Also, we invited a foreign instructor once a week and practiced free conversation.

A2 : I recorded FEN and asked my teacher about the phrases I didn't understand to improve my listening ability.

A3 : I tried to speak to foreign instructors as much as possible when I was in school. I also took part in a home stay program in the U. S. for a month during the summer vacation.

Q3 : What extracurricular activities did you participate in as a student?

A1 : Because I wanted to get a job in which I could use English, I belonged to the ESS-

that is the English Speaking Society.

A2 : When I was in junior and senior high school, I belonged to the tennis club. And when I was in junior college I was in the golf and tennis clubs. In high school I participated in the inter-high school competition.

A3 : I belonged to the tea ceremony and flower arranging clubs. At first, I just wanted to find out more about them but as I continued I learned more about the depth of traditional Japanese culture.

Appendix Three

Theme : Work

Q1 : Once you become a flight attendant, what kind of service would you like to offer?

A1 : I will keep smiling and create a friendly atmosphere.

A2 : I will always try to keep in mind the kind of service the passenger expects.

A3 : I am good at taking care of babies and children, so I think I could give good service when there are many families on board.

A4 : I'd like to offer service to satisfy passengers of all ages.

Q2 : Do your parents agree with your wanting to become a flight attendant?

A1 : Yes. They support me in this.

A2 : Yes, they do. It's a very competitive job but they have encouraged me to do my best.

A3 : In the beginning, they were against it, but I spent a lot of time convincing them. Now they both support me.

Q3 : This job is harder than it seems. Are you sure you can carry it out?

A1 : Yes, a woman who graduated before I did and became a flight attendant told me a lot about the job. I realize that it requires a lot of physical exertion.

A2 : Yes, I flew on international airlines many times and I know how hard a flight attendant's work is.

A3 : Yes, there are different aspects to any job. I know that it may be hard in the beginning, but I will do my best to get through it.

Appendix Four

Theme : Overseas Travel

Q1 : have you ever traveled abroad?

A1 : I've been to Guam, Singapore and Hong Kong. I enjoyed sightseeing on the tours I took to those places.

A2 : I went to Hawaii with a friend during summer vacation last year. I had a good time wind-surfing and shopping. I had many chances to speak English and increase my confidence in the language.

A3 : When I was a sophomore, I traveled around Europe for a month with a friend. We set our own itinerary. It was very difficult to make arrangements for planes, trains and hotels but it was a good experience.

A4 : Unfortunately, I have never been abroad, but I plan to go to Europe after I graduate from junior college.

Q2 : Have you ever lived abroad?

A1 : Yes, I have. When I was a second year high school student, I stayed with a family in a suburb of Los Angeles for a month during my summer vacation.

A2 : My father was transferred to New York and lives there by himself so my mother, sister and I visit him for about a month every summer.

A3 : Because my father works for a trading company, I lived in London from the time I was in junior high school until I became a second year high school student. I have many English friends and I'm confident of my ability in English.

A4 : No, I've traveled abroad but never lived abroad.

Appendix Five

Theme : Self introduction

Q1 : Please introduce yourself.

A1 : I'm a student at Keio University, where I am majoring in English Literature. I have been interested in English ever since I was in junior high school. I studied English by radio.

During my summer vacation last year, I took part in a home stay program in England for a month. I made friends with a lot of people in England, and because of that, I've come to like English even more. I will continue to brush up on my English.

A2 : Maybe it is because I am the only girl in my family but people say that I am generous, cheerful and frank.

When I had to change schools because my father was transferred, I was able to adjust quickly to a new environment. I found that I could make friends with almost anyone.

I believe my character is fit for the job of flight attendant.

A3 : I love sports. I've played basketball for ten years and I am on the university basketball team. I was the captain last year.

The most important thing in basketball is teamwork and I've learned how difficult it is to get the team members to work together. I would like to make good use of this experience in my job.

Q2 : What could you tell me in order to promote yourself?

A1 : When I was a student, I worked part time at a hotel. From that experience I learned that staying healthy and keeping a good attitude were important in order to take care of customers with a smile. I believe this is also true of the job of flight attendant.

A2 : I am a cheerful person. I can mix well with people and I can cope well with any situation. I believe I am very well suited for flight attendant work which will put me in contact with a lot of people.

A3 : I seem to be considered a kind of trouble-shooter by my friends. They come to me with their problems or disagreements or to get my advice. It is a role I am comfortable with. I think that working as a flight attendant is right for me because it means working with people. □ 1

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