

## JAS331 BE Japan Studies Special Topics 30

### **Intercultural collaboration: Teaching English to Elementary-School Students Winter 2014 (from January 9 to February 7)**

**Course Instructors:** Dr. Tomohisa Machida (Akita International University)  
Dr. Daniel J. Walsh (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)  
**E-mail:** [tmachida@aiu.ac.jp](mailto:tmachida@aiu.ac.jp) (Machida), [danielw@illinois.edu](mailto:danielw@illinois.edu)  
(Walsh)  
**Meeting Times:** M/W/F 9:00-10:30 & 10:45-12:15 @ B-302  
**Office:** A2-0  
**Mailbox:** No. 3  
**Office Hours:** M/W TBA or by appointment  
**Style of Class:** Workshop  
**Number of Credits:** 3

#### **Course Description**

This course provides a project based learning (PBL) platform to students for intercultural collaboration. Due to the current MEXT's policy reform about elementary school education, English language education (*Foreign Language Activities*) is mandatory for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in elementary schools in Japan. Classroom teachers are required to teach English with a native English-speaking assistant language teacher (ALT) once a week (45 minutes) in class. For effective instruction of English, mutual communication between a Japanese classroom teacher and an ALT is essential. However, team teaching between those teachers has not been successfully conducted in school due to lack of communication between teachers. For better globalization, future schools in Japan will need teachers who are willing to cooperate to work with teachers from different cultural backgrounds. In addition, showing a model of team-teaching to elementary-school students can lead to cultivate the idea of intercultural collaboration among the young learners.

Therefore, this PBL course focuses on pursuing effective methods of collaboration in English language instruction between Japanese and international students. This will prepare methodology for classroom interaction involving native speakers. After learning basic foreign language teaching methods and observing actual classroom activities, students in this course are expected to team-teach elementary school students from Daisen City three times in a practicum format. Students will be involving planning lessons and creating materials for effective English instructions.

At the same time, this PBL course provides critical perspectives in perspective in evaluating, adapting, and developing materials for teaching English to young Japanese

learners through a lecture given by a teacher trainer in *Daicen* City board of Education. Students also have an opportunity to participate in a panel discussion about elementary school English education in East Asian countries. In this panel discussion, teachers from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan will discuss current issues and future visions of English language education in East Asia. By the end of the semester, students will be experienced in critiquing existing intercultural collaboration in Japanese schools as well as critically adapting and designing team-teaching between a Japanese and an ALT.

Learning activities will be highly diverse, including:

- Team-building exercises
- Classroom lecture and small group discussion
- Collection of secondary data on community demography, cultural and linguistic background
- Demonstration lessons to elementary school students (Three times at AIU)
- Field interviews of teachers, ALTs, and students, and members of prefectural/city board of education
- Field trips to a local public school and *Daisen* City Board of Education
- Team presentations to *Daisen* City Board of Education (?)
- Development of class website with summary reports, photos, blog, etc.

## Objectives

### 1. Student Learning Goals

- Students actively engage with cross-cultural teammates in course activities.
- Students demonstrate ability to analyze opportunities and challenges facing foreign language instruction through co-teaching.
- Students begin to develop competence in applying the basic knowledge and methods of foreign language education to real teaching contexts to elementary school students.
- Students demonstrate understanding of their own culture and appreciation of cultural diversity.
- Students begin to develop their readiness to work with culturally and linguistically diverse counterparts in their future career.

Through those group works and comparative analyses during PBL in Akita, students enhance their abilities as future leaders in education fields, such as Intercultural understanding, communication skills, coordination skills, analytical and integrating skills, critical thinking, and problem solving skills.

## 2. Expected Outcomes

- Individual Report
- Group Report and Presentation
- Web-based Information Sharing Systems (PBL website)

### **Grading Components**

Each student will prepare a course portfolio documenting their learning experience and outcomes. Portfolios will include the following:

1. Personal learning objectives and self-assessment of learning
2. Field notes, writing assignments (reflection paper)
3. Lesson plans and materials
4. Demonstration lessons (Three times)
5. Class presentations
6. Public presentations
7. Reflection paper
8. Graded final projects (contributions to website)

In addition, each student will participate in an exit interview with course instructors.

### **Materials**

Each student will be required to purchase the following materials. Other materials will be provided on our AIMS.

MEXT. (2012). *Hi, friends! 1&2*. Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo Shoseki. (95 yen + Tax each)

MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) (2008). The new course of study. Retrieved from [http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/index.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/index.htm)

### **Final paper: 5 pages (12-point font, double space, Times New Roman)**

Write your answer to a question “How can two teachers (a native and a non-native teachers) effectively corroborate to teach English to elementary school students?” Include your experience and knowledge which you have learned through this PBL course in your final paper. Currently, in-service elementary school teachers struggle to work with nonnative ALTs effectively for English lessons. What kinds of ideas and solution can you propose to them?

## **PBL Course Schedules**

### 1. Preparation

To register for the course, students must:

- Be interested in teaching English at elementary/secondary schools
- Be nominated by faculty
- Submit an application packet including nomination, resume and statement of interest
- Be interviewed by course instructors

### 2. Course schedule

#### **Course Schedule (FW: Field Work)**

#### **WEEK 1**

1/10 (F) 9:00 Introduction & Understanding English Education in Japan  
Introductions/ Getting to know you, Syllabus & Course Guidelines,  
Japanese education system, New Course of Study, English education in  
elementary schools (Machida & Walsh)

**Reading:** Mondejar et al. (2011): Effective implementation of foreign language  
education reform in Japan: What more can be done?

10:45 Issues about Team-teaching, NEST vs. NNEST (Machida)

**Reading:** Dorner, J. E. (2012). Native and nonnative English speaking teachers'  
collaboration that benefits all.

#### **WEEK 2**

1/13 (M) **No Class**

1/15 (W) 9:00 Planning a lesson (Machida)

**Reading:** Brown. (2007): Ch 11, Lesson planning (pp. 164-178).

10:45 Difference between Japanese education and US education (Walsh)

**Reading:** Walsh. (2002): Constructing an artistic self: A cultural perspective

1/17 (F) 9:00 Formative and alternative assessment (Machida)

**Reading:** Watanabe (2011): 小学校外国語活動をどう進めるか (1-3) : 学習指導要  
領と評価の在り方について

10:45 How to observe lessons (Walsh)

**Reading:** Machida & Walsh (In-process). EFL policy reform and Japanese teachers: A case study in elementary schools

PM (1:00) **FW:** Class observation at **Nangai Elementary School (Daisen City)**

### **WEEK 3**

1/20 (M) 9:00 Classroom management (Machida)

**Reading:** Murray & Christison (2011). Planning activities and managing classroom interaction

10:45 Establishing self in Japan (Walsh)

**Reading:** Walsh. (2002): The development of self in Japanese preschools: Negotiating space

1/22 (W) 9:00 Foreign Language Anxiety (Machida)

**Reading:** Horwitz (1996). Even teachers get the blues: Recognizing and alleviating language teachers feelings of foreign language anxiety

10:45 Practice for the 1<sup>st</sup> demo-lesson (Advice from TA)

1/24(F) 9:00 **FW: First demo lesson @AIU (D201 & D206) Kyowa E. S. (9:10 Arrv)**

10:45 Feedback session

### **WEEK 4**

1/27 (M) 9:00 Practice for the 2<sup>nd</sup> demo-lesson (Advice from TA)

10:45 Guest speaker from Daisen City Board of Education (**Ms. Takahashi**)

1/29 (W) 9:00 **FW: Second demo lesson @AIU (D201 & D206) Omagari E. S (9:20 Arrv)**

10:45 Feedback session

1/31 (F) 9:00 Discussion for effective team-teaching with guests from overseas

**Reading:** Wang (2012). Preparing NESTs and NNESTs for team teaching at the pre-service level.

Kwon (2009). The current situation and issues of the teaching of English in Korea

PM (2:30-4:30) **FW:** Panel discussion about Elementary School English Education in East Asia at Omagari Elementary School

## **WEEK 5**

2/3 (M) 9:00 Continuing self-teacher education (Machida)

10:45 Practice for the 3<sup>rd</sup> demo-lesson (Advice from TA)

2/5 (W) 9:00 **FW: Third demo lesson @AIU (D201 & D206) Yokobori E.S. (10:10 Arrv)**

10:45 Feedback session

2/7 (F) 9:00 Team presentation about what they learned in class

10:45 Preparation for presentation to Daisen BoE

PM **FW:** Class presentation to Daisen BoE (TBA)

2/14 (F) Individual reflection paper due (5 pages)