



OHARA Tetsushi

Subjects:

Pre-Advanced Japanese

3TIPs

- 1 Leave the decision-making to the students to increase independent and active learning
- 2 Reflect on the learning by linking language to other circumstances
- 3 Challenge students to think differently and to be willing to try new things

Q: What do you do to enhance students' learning in your classes?

A: I focus on students' "learning" rather than "teaching" when composing my classes.

I am always thinking about how students can learn well, not how I can teach them well, and how they can learn independently and actively. For example, homework is usually given to students by instructors, but since last year, we have created and implemented a system in which students can decide the content and methods for the homework in

intermediate to advanced classes. Of course, we require a certain level of quality and quantity, but we also ask students to decide what they want to study, think of ways to improve it, and submit the results as homework. For example, students may decide, "I'm weak in grammar in Lesson X, so I'll practice" or "I'm weak in conversation, so I'll talk with my Japanese friends." By sharing the authority to decide the learning process and content with the students in this way, I hope that they will develop the ability to learn that will last a lifetime after graduation.

Q: Isn't it difficult to evaluate students' homework if it is uneven?

A: We have a **self-evaluation system** as a mechanism to evaluate the work in a way that students can understand. Starting this semester, we ask students to write down the reason for the homework they came up with, their evaluation after practicing it (A+, B, etc.) and the reasoning for that evaluation. The teachers then comprehensively evaluate the students' motivation and efforts by comparing the actual homework with the students' self-evaluations. As specific evaluation standards cannot be unified, the reasons

for teachers' evaluations are also shared with the students.

Another way to enhance students' learning is to **encourage students to do a lot of reflection**. In general, there is a notion that "practice" and "reflection" are important for learning. At the end of each lesson, students are asked to reflect on their work and submit a report at the end of the semester. However, the important part of reflection is the notion of **"Significant Learning."** Rather than simply looking back and saying, "I got better at grammar and kanji," this reflection should cover how what students learn in Japanese class influences their other

名前: _____

1 この課を勉強して、それぞれの項目の満足度や達成度を自分で評価してください。0= not happy at all, 3=somewhat satisfied, 5=Fantastic

A: この課の内容がよく理解できた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・学んだ数字・語彙・文法をよく理解し、活用できるようになった。
 ・長解やディスカッションの内容をよく理解することができた。

B: 他の科目や場面で学んだことを日本語クラスに生かすことができた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・専門科目などで勉強した内容、スキル、考えを応用することができた。
 ・大学以外の場面で学んだことを応用することができた。

C: この課で学んだことを他の科目や場面で生かす方法を考えた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・学んだことが他の科目や場面のように関係しているか考えた。
 ・学んだことを他の科目や場面で役立てる方法を見つけた。

D: 新しく気付いたことやこれからやってみようと思ったことができた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・新しい考え、方法、習慣などに気付いた。
 ・もっと知りたいこと、調べたいこと、試してみたいことができた。

E: 自分で計画や目標を立てて、達成することができた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・授業の予定表を見て、計画や目標を立てた。
 ・自分の日本語力向上のために必要なストラテジーを見つけた。

F: クラスメイトと良いコミュニケーションができた。 0-----1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 ・効果的なフィードバックをあげることもらうことができた。
 ・お互いをよく理解することができた。

◀ Reflection sheet used in class

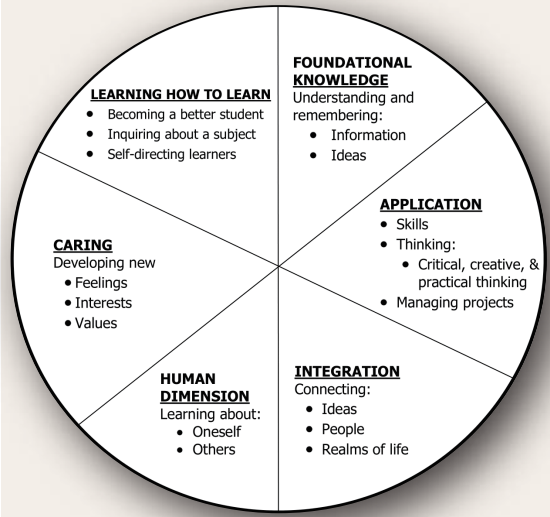
2 あなたの学習のプロセスを自己評価し、良かったところ、変えたほうが良いところを書いてみましょう。

できたこと・うまくいったこと・学んだこと	よくなかったこと・まだよくわからないこと・やめること	新しくすること・もっと学びたいこと・続けていくこと

specialized classes, daily life, friendships, learning methods, personal values and thoughts, and whether they were able to relate to and extend their learning. Throuh performing this self-evaluation, we believe that it is possible to establish "one's own learning" separate from others, and this establishment promotes independent learning.

Q: What do you do to motivate students?

A: What I personally try to do is not only teach the content of the textbook, but also share with students why they need



▶ The concept of "Significant Learning"

to learn that content.

For example, when the school computer broke down during use, if students only know the grammar, "I broke the computer," then there is a good chance that the Office will tell them to pay for it when they ask them. However, if students know the expression, "The computer is broken," then it is likely that the Office will handle it by preparing a new computer. In this way, I explain that knowing grammar and expressions will give students the ability to handle any situation. Rather than simply telling them to study, I think that adding the fact that vocabulary and grammar will help them in

graduate school, so I think that by sharing my story, I can get students interested and motivated in the class.

I also provide students time to enjoy free conversation after allotting them to Breakout Rooms so that they can get to know each other. This method has actually received a positive response from students, who say that it is a good way to exchange information and build relationships in a time when connections with other people are becoming scarce. Since we have been doing a lot of pair and group work from the time of in-person classes, we also spend more than half the class in Breakout Rooms even after

all kinds of situations in the future will increase their motivation.

Q: What methods have you devised now that classes are online?

A: Since going online, I feel that there are fewer opportunities to get to know one another as mutual communication between "teacher and student" and "student and student" during class and before and after class has decreased. For this reason, I try to talk more about myself in my online classes than usual. I myself have studied abroad during university and

moving online, and I change the rooms frequently to encourage peer interaction.

Q: What steps do you take to improve your classes?

A: There are no specific steps, but I think about and adjust class content to achieve the underlying goals of intermediate to advanced classes (not only language goals, but also goals such as "Becoming an autonomous learner," "Extending one's own learning," and "Thinking critically.") In the language faculty meetings, we sometimes propose content from actual

research that we would like to try with APU students and incorporate into our classes.

Starting this semester, we are planning a new activity in which students will create quizzes and give them to each other. Specifically, students will come up with reading comprehension assignments, multiple choice lists, questions, solutions, and evaluation methods for quizzes to share with one another. I thought this method would be interesting to try out as students will not only further their reading comprehension abilities through reading various materials in Japanese, but by creating their own quizzes, they will also

learn from classes, and then try to develop learning plans and implement classroom activities.

For example, by giving students time to think and seek opinions from other students rather than immediately giving them an answer to a question, students can acquire thinking abilities and foster an attitude of collaborative learning with classmates, creating learning together.

If a student asks, "Why is this answer wrong?" even once when checking answers to a quiz or test, I often start an exchange of opinions with the class rather than simply correcting them by saying, "It's wrong because..." Since language is always

advance their autonomous learning. If it goes well, I would like to incorporate it into future classes while considering ways to improve it.

Q: What is important to you in the process of education?

A: Ultimately, an environment in which everyone can create their own learning. At the root of this concept is the philosophy that "Teaching < Learning." Rather than the instructor preparing various teaching materials and giving detailed instructions, I always thinking about what students can

changing, it is sometimes difficult to determine a definite right or wrong in a test question. In a discussion that started with a student who used the English word "instant," a word not often used by Japanese, to mean "quick," 70% of the students concluded that this use was correct, and the student actually got that answer right. However, I also shared that the term may not be understood by Japanese who do not know English well in that situation, and I expanded this learning by telling students that they can interact with others appropriately in a range of situations if they know how to convey something in various ways. 5 minutes of answering a question can take 30 minutes

if it is turned into a discussion, but I think it's worth more than a point on a test because it influences memory retention and thinking skills.

Q: What do you expect from students who take your classes?

A: I would like them to challenge a variety of things, including the instructor.

For the students, I think it is important that they do not take the passive stance of simply doing what they are told, but rather that they take the initiative to incorporate their own ideas and nature into their

as teachers. In particular, I am still trying new challenges to think in different ways in everything I do. From the notion "What would happen if the teacher didn't teach?" , I came up with the idea of having one of my students play the role of teacher instead. Rather than having the teacher take the lead in explaining the answers to the grammar exercises, I have one of the students take the role as the teacher and have the students collaborate in answering the questions. Through this technique, the reactions of the students in the class are greater than having the instructor take the lead in answering the questions, and a variety of questions and opinions emerge. It seems that

learning. When I actually attended a university in America, I had study with and foster a change in the way I thought. When I was assigned to write an essay on three documents, I felt a great sense of accomplishment when I took on the challenge of writing an essay that could logically convince the professor, while daring to approach the assignment from a different angle rather than the one the professor intended. I think it is a very good learning experience to challenge teachers willingly.

Sharing the leadership and decision-making authority to control the class with students is one of our challenges

independent and active "Learning" occurs without the teacher doing the "Teaching," and the enjoyment added is also evident. For this outcome, it is important to transfer the leadership and decision-making power in the class to the students.

Past episodes of make-up classes

The participation rate of students in the make-up class was poor, but then the idea of using flash mobs in class came to mind. What if about a third of the students who came to the make-up class suddenly raised their hands in the next class and said, "I want to explain in place of the teacher!"

The students who didn't attend the make-up class would be surprised because they wouldn't know what was going on (laughs). Theoretically, there is a belief that motivation to learn increases when emotions are involved. If students freely engage with their own thoughts and ideas while being playful, and they think, "This is interesting!" or "I wonder what this is all about?", then I think I have succeeded in motivating them to learn. As long as I can ultimately get the students to learn well, I am not so particular about the "Teaching." Of course, it would be great if I could connect the learning to the point where it was not only enjoyable but also extended, but there are times when it is not up to me

but the students themselves to reach that point. My field of expertise is autonomous learning, so I hope that students will ultimately be able to learn on their own. I think it is the role of the teacher to support that mission.

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Interviewer Impressions

I see that Professor Ohara aims to provide classes which guide students on how to learn and how to be motivated in the future. With the theory that, "Motivation for learning increases when emotions are involved," Professor Ohara is always thinking on a case-by-case basis, not only at turning points such as the end of the semester, and taking on challenging new approaches. I felt that not only the students, but also the professor himself enjoys these classes. I also felt that the self-evaluation system was an important process that allowed the students to reevaluate their own learning more deeply, as it provided them with hints on what they should do next and what they should improve on, unlike a typical lecture that ends after submitting the assignment. I would like to make use of this experience in my own studies in the future.

What is [Q]?

At APU there are many professors who put together wonderful classes, and if we could get to know how these classes are planned, it would contribute to the improvement of other professors' classes. For that purpose, we have begun doing interviews in order to learn about class planning. These articles have been entitled [Q], comprising a variety of meanings such as: increasing the [Q]uality of classes, answering [Q]uestions to increase quality, and forming a [Q]ueue, or line, of class improvements. We would be very happy if these articles could contribute to the [Q]uest of APU professors' class quality improvement.

