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Challenging Assumptions
Looking In, Looking Out

Strategic interaction for Japanese students

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Learners should have more opportunities for interpersonal negotiation in the target language in unrehearsed situations, drawing on whatever L2 resources they have acquired so far. In this paper the author proposes a junior high-to college-syllabus for developing interpersonal conflict-managing skills in English, adapting Strategic Interaction proposed by DiPietro (1987) and later developed by Long (2000). The author has added further innovations to this technique by proposing solutions, with some limitations, so that it will better suit Japanese students who tend to fear face-to-face negotiations in conflict situations.

Strategic Interactionは、DiPietro (1987)によって提案されその後Long (2000)によって改良されてきた言語学習アクティビティーである。予行練習無しの場合で、自分が持つ言語能力を自由に駆使して交渉することを可能にするStrategic Interactionは、学習者の対人交渉力を向上させるために絶好の活動である。この活動はどちらかといえば上級者向きと思われてきたが、本稿ではそれを中学校から大学まで利用可能とするシラバスを提案している。またこの活動が内包する若干の問題点を指摘し、日本の学生にとって、より参加しやすいものとするための改善点を提案している。

What is Strategic Interaction?

Strategic Interaction (SI) is a language-learning task proposed by DiPietro (1987). It is a technique for realizing authentic language use in the classroom between two groups of learners in an unrehearsed situation created through dynamic scenarios. As the name *Strategic* indicates, SI demands that learners use the target language creatively to tackle a real life-like task. The term *Interaction* shows that SI demands of its participants an abundance of active and collaborative exchanges in the target language. In JALT1988 there were at least two presentations given on this topic, and in JALT2000, Long (2000) re-introduced this technique by adding his innovation, and reported on it in *The Language Teacher*, December 2000. It is along this line that I have been developing the application of SI for the Japanese classroom environment.

Basic framework of strategic interaction

Scenarios

SI scenarios as proposed by DiPietro (1987) have three features distinct from other replication activities. First, as shown in Scenario Example below, two participants' groups use different versions of the same scenario; they have different situations though they are in the same context, and the counterpart's situation is unknown to the group. Second, the scenarios explain the situation, but never give any direction about their course of action. Therefore, the participants are free to react to the situation according to their own will. Third, as a corollary of the second feature, the scenarios give rise to personal hidden agendas in both of the roles, making the interaction almost as realistic and unpredictable as in real life.

Scenario Example: Surprise! Surprise

Role A: You are preparing for a final exam, which will be given tomorrow. It is evening and your friend (B) calls you to invite you over for a while. What will you do? Should you keep studying? Do you need a break? You know that this friend loves to talk and may keep you there for hours.

Role B: It is close to the end of the college semester and today is the birthday of your friend (A). You and your friends have organized a surprise birthday party for A. You extend an invitation to come over to your place, where the party will be. Of course, you cannot reveal the real purpose for your invitation. (DiPietro, 1987, p. 50)

Roles and phases

In DiPietro's (1987) method, the class is divided into even numbers of groups, each consisting of no more than eight students. These groups are paired up to perform different roles of the same scenario. For example, a class of 36 students might be divided into six groups of six students, which respectively perform:

- Role A, Scenario 1 vs. Role B, Scenario 1
- Role A, Scenario 2 vs. Role B, Scenario 2
- Role A, Scenario 3 vs. Role B, Scenario 3

The activity consists of three phases; *rehearsal*, *performance*, and *debriefing*. During the *rehearsal* phase, all the groups convene separately and confidentially to discuss, ideally in the target language, how to play the assigned role; they make sure they have understood the scenario, predict their counterpart's aims, and prepare several possible courses of action to reach a solution. Each group chooses one member who actually performs the role in the *performance* phase. Special care is taken so that each group will not overhear what their counterpart group is discussing. The teacher acts as the facilitator, visiting groups and giving guidance upon request.

In the *performance* phase, the two role groups via their performers perform one scenario, as shown in Figure 1. The groups that are not performing are assigned the role of onlookers. Onlookers are not shown the scenario being performed, but observe the performance and try to figure out what the scenario is about and what the performers are trying to achieve. When a performer gets stuck during

the negotiation, they can be excused for a moment to get help from their group members. As to the length of a *performance*, DiPietro (1987) suggests to “let the participants perform as long as they appear motivated to work” (p. 84).

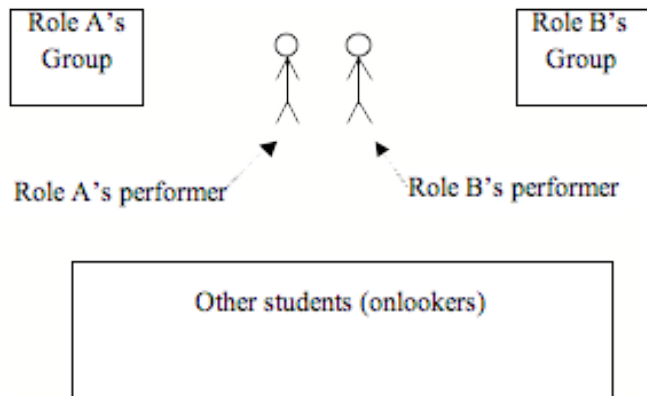


Figure 1. The classroom layout of the performance stage

During *debriefing*, the whole class reflects upon the performance and exchanges questions and answers highlighting some of the language use that drew students' attention.

The fact that students have experienced communication problems in the preceding phase gives the class motivation and need for language focus. Since the language focus is based on a student-generated discourse, such activities become more meaningful and relevant to the students.

How strategic interaction is unique

Remarkable authenticity

Nowadays an effort has been made to make classroom L2 use as close to real language use as possible, and several activities have been developed for this purpose, namely problem solving, debate, task-based language teaching, and SI. Among these activities, SI is unique for its authenticity since it incorporates lifelike conflicts, the speaker's freedom of decision-making, creation of the speaker's personal agenda, and inclusion of emotional as well as intellectual areas.

Effects on students' general social abilities

The above-mentioned characteristics of SI help build students' overall interpersonal communication abilities both in L2 and in L1. By means of playing other social roles, students can learn to stand in the “shoes of others,” and learn to cooperate to reach a compromise solution as well.

To ensure successful strategic interaction

I have been trying SI as an organizer and performer since 1988. Throughout this experience it has become clear that in order to let SI run smoothly in the Japanese classroom we need to remedy two negative tendencies that can occur, *deadlocking* and *hyper-aggressiveness*.

Deadlocking

One of the negative tendencies is *deadlocking*, where the two performers stubbornly insist on their fixed claims and

no possible solution emerges. The following example is an instance of a failure I saw in a video presentation.

In the presentation, performers from two role groups, consisting of six students aged 18-19, interacted with each other for three minutes using the following scenario.

Scenario: Paying Back the Money (anonymous author)

Role A: (male or female) You lent your friend some money. He/she hasn't paid back the money by the day he/she promised. You demand him/her the money today.

Role B: (male or female) You borrowed some money from your friend. You carelessly forgot about it and are unprepared to pay back the money.

Unfortunately, most of the time was spent in clumsy silence except for the following four turns of interaction:

Role A:...(silence)... I want the money.....

Role B: ...(silence) ...I have no money....

Role A: ...(silence)...I know you have money.
...(silence) ... You bought a CD.

Role B: ...(silence) ... You are rich. ...(silence) ...
You can wait. ...(silence) ... (3 minutes/finish)

This is an extreme example, but I have found that SI interactions tend to fall into similar *deadlocking* even with more advanced L2 speakers.

Hyper-aggressive/defensiveness

The other tendency is the performers' hyper-aggressiveness/defensiveness. When assigned a role to complain or make a claim, some performers tend to assume an excessively

aggressive stand. In a similar way, when criticized by the other performer, some tend to be excessively defensive and obstinate. I have observed this even among those who are usually modest and flexible in dealing with other people. When this happens, SI interaction turns into a harsh and poignant confrontation, and performers can be inwardly hurt by the opponent's attack. Such a sterile confrontation should be avoided, because it may harm students' relationships.

Causes and solutions

Why do such negative tendencies happen? From my SI experience, I estimate that there are four major causes of these problems as discussed below.

Lack of experience

In the above-mentioned SI presentation, the cause of failure is not only students' L2 linguistic limitations but also their lack of experience in this activity. Japanese students are not usually accustomed to making face-to-face negotiation in a conflict situation in the classroom because of the power-distanced classroom culture. A solution to this is to let students first experience SI in their L1 to get accustomed to it.

Rigid faithfulness to the given role

Another cause is students' rigid faithfulness to their given role. In a rather collectivist society, people seriously try to carry out their assigned roles even in classroom activities, regarding their roles more important than their individuality.

When such a student is assigned a role in the classroom, that student will be so obsessed with the role that he/she cannot think or act as an individual. This leads to deadlocking, driving the performers to stick to their roles, even by becoming highly aggressive or defensive.

Defects in scenarios

Sometimes deadlocking and hyper-aggressiveness/defensiveness can originate from the scenarios themselves. It is very easy for a scenario to be contaminated with hidden directions. When this happens, the scenario controls the course of action, prohibiting the performers' free decision making.

Let's look at the previously mentioned scenario 'Paying back the money.' In Role-A's part, the scenario goes "You demand from him/her the money today," which clearly directs the performer's course of action. In addition, the scenario title "Paying back the money" implies that the only solution for borrowed money is to pay it back. These factors pre-determine Role-A's personal agenda, and the performers have no other choice than repeat "I want the money." and "I have no money." What if the scenario had another title such as "Talking about borrowed money," and Role-A's scenario went "You are worried about the money," instead of "demand him/her the money today."? Then, Role-A could have acted more flexibly, and as a result let Role-B propose, for example, to pay back the money some other time. Alternatively, B might even have begged A to exempt him/her from the debt by giving some plausible excuses, or offered to compensate for A by doing some service.

Let's look at another example. The next scenario also hinders performers' flexible solutions by controlling the course of action in the three underlined parts; including one in the title.

Scenario: Refund or No Refund?

Role A: You must return a defective toaster to the department store. Unfortunately, you have lost the purchase receipt and you have only your lunch hour to take care of the matter. Prepare yourself for an encounter with the salesclerk.

Role B: You are a salesclerk in the hardware department of a large store. You have been ordered to be careful in accepting returns of merchandise that may not have been purchased at the store. Prepare yourself to deal with someone who is approaching you with a toaster. (DiPietro, 1987, pp.48-49, underline added by the present author)

The title 'Refund or No Refund' allows only two courses of action, and 'must return' and 'ordered' allow only one fixed course of action. When we notice such defects, we need to remedy them by properly rewriting the problem parts. Below is a version of the same scenario rewritten by the present author to allow more flexible courses of action:

Rewritten scenario: A Defective Toaster

Role A: Yesterday you bought a toaster in a large store but later found it to be defective. You've lost the purchase receipt, but you are back at the hardware department with the toaster.

Role B: You are a sales clerk in the hardware department of a large store. At present you are a part-timer, but you want to get promoted to a full-time position by selling more goods and gaining customers' popularity. Now a customer comes in with a toaster.

In the reformed version, the scenario doesn't imply any course of action. Therefore, the scenario allows many flexible solutions, such as offering free repair, replacing it with a new toaster, suggesting that A buy a better one by paying more money, as well as simply giving a refund if A insists. Because these solutions can make both parties happy, it is easier for the performers to reach a mutually beneficial compromise.

Overemphasis on competition

An additional cause of deadlocking and hyper-aggressive/defensiveness is the performers', and sometimes the teacher's, overemphasis on competition. People can confuse SI with debate and simulations that require participants to "fight" a win-or-lose battle with each other. To solve such misunderstanding, the teacher should emphasize to the class that the goal of SI is to cooperate with each other in order to reach a mutually agreeable solution.

A syllabus for teaching SI from JHS to college

As discussed earlier, the basic principles of SI are dealing with lifelike conflicts, with the speaker's freedom of decision-making, creation of the speaker's personal agenda, and the inclusion of emotion as well as intellect. Although the final stage of SI may be for advanced learners, its basic principles are applicable to lower-level classes as well, even in junior high school classes in Japan. We might say that by the application of these SI principles in junior and senior high school, we can make classes more authentic, interesting, and meaningful.

Activity-based syllabus for building SI abilities

Below is an activity-based syllabus for developing students' SI abilities from the novice to the experienced level. It forms a spiral syllabus in that Steps 1 through 9 form a continuous cycle and leads to the next cycle dealing with more mature content, both mentally and linguistically. Such a spiral syllabus enables students to be familiarized with the activities, and constantly adjust the topic content to students' growing linguistic abilities, intellect, and maturity.

What follows are descriptions of these steps. The techniques used in Steps 1, 2, 3 and 6 are adapted from Long (2000), Step 4 from Ninomiya (1996), and Step 7 from Sanmori (1996). For lack of space, only one example is provided for each step, but some additional examples are provided in the Appendix.

Step 1: Discourse self-assessment task

Students assess how confident they are in handling given conflict situations. This task is designed to let students get oriented to responding to conflict scenarios.

Task: Talking to New People

You are a member of your school tennis club. In a tennis tournament, you meet a charming boy/girl in another school team. You want to become friends with him/her. [] (1=very easy, 2=challenging but possible, 3=difficult, 4=can never do so)

Step 2: Multiple-choice discourse completion task

Students choose their reactions to a conflicting situation from the provided list such as in the table below. This activity is

effective for letting students realize there are a variety of agendas possible to cope with a problem.

Task: The Lottery Winner (for JHS students)

Last month, you and your friends bought some lottery tickets. Your lottery ticket has just won 50,000 yen! You are very happy. But your friends may ask you about your lottery. They may be jealous and want some money from you. How will you tell your friend?

[] “I didn’t win. How about you?”

[] “I just won 1,000 yen. So I want to buy you a hamburger.”

[] “I won 50,000 yen on the lottery. So I want to buy you a hamburger.”

[] “I’ve lost my lottery ticket. What a shame!”

(Miura, Nakashima & Ikeoka., 2006, p.237)

Step 3: Written discourse completion task

After students have learned how to react to conflict scenarios in the first two steps, they create their original reactions to the provided conflict scenarios, such as in the task below.

Task: An Award or a Trip (for JHS students)

You are in the 3rd year of junior high school. You have never been absent from school for 2.5 years. You will be awarded a Full Attendance Award in your graduation ceremony if you are never absent. Now you have won a weeklong trip to Australia! However, the trip is from June 14 to June 21, and you have school until 20. Your parents say it is okay, but your teacher says NO. She says, “The Full Attendance Award

is more important than traveling in Australia.” What will you do? (Miura et al., 2006, p.238)

Step 4: Student-created conflict scenarios and listing students’ solutions

After experiencing the first three steps, students will be able to create their own versions of conflict scenarios. Collect these scenarios and distribute several good ones to class and assign students to create their reactions to any one of them. Then, collect students’ reactions and print them in a list, pass it out to the class, and let students choose the best three reactions

Student-created conflict scenario: What is your excuse?

Your Mom is mad at you. “You are watching TV again. Have you finished your homework?” How would you respond to avoid her anger? (Ninomiya, 1996, pp.154-156)

Example of the students’ responses to the above scenario:

1. Don’t worry, because I am your son.
2. No, I haven’t. But please listen to my excuse. Homework isn’t important to my life. I don’t like to study. I want to watch TV. Don’t take my free time.
3. I can do it in a minute. Today’s homework is as easy as no homework. Maybe when you ask me again, I’ll have already done it.
4. It’s my relaxing time. If I don’t relax at all, I can’t do it well.
5. I don’t have any homework today. I have already studied hard at school. so I am very tired. Don’t

- say anything to me, please. If you say something to me, I'll be very sad.
6. I have a headache now, so I can't do my homework.
 7. Oh, sorry. I'm a bad boy. I'll do it soon. I'll turn the television off.

Step 5: Making textbook stories more strategic

Textbook conversations can be monotonous and without conflict. After teaching with such materials, add some element of conflict in the conversations and let students create their own reactions to it. For example, use a shopping dialogue and have the clerk give the wrong change to the customer, or change a home-stay situation and make the host family too busy to take care of the guest. Here is an original textbook conversation:

Shop attendant: May I help you?

Customer: Yes, please. I'm looking for some gloves.

S: What color do you want?

C: Black.

S: The black ones are over there.

C: Can I try them on?

S: Sure.

C: These are a little too big.

S: How about these?

C: Fine. I'll take them.

S: Anything else?

C: No, that's all. How much are they?

S: 17.95, please.

C: Here's 20 dollars.

S: Here's your change. 18, 19, 20.

C: Thank you very much.

Here is a rewritten version of the same conversation that includes a conflict situation. The first part of the conversation is the same, and thus is omitted up to the line "How about these?" The conflict arises in the underlined part because the total is incorrect and so the customer has to point it out.

[.....]

C: Fine. I'll take them. How much are they?

S: 17.95, please. Anything else?

C: Yes, how much are these rings?

S: 2.70 each.

C: Okay, I'll take these five rings.

S: A pair of gloves and five rings, ...that's 41.45 in total.

C: _____

(Miura et al., 2006, pp.227-230)

Step 6: Correcting misunderstanding

This is pair practice for correcting groundless rumors about oneself or about one's own country. Each student tells his/her partner rumors about him/her or his/her country, and the

partner quickly responds to them. (Long, 2000, p.17, revised by the present author)

Task: Correcting Misunderstandings about Oneself

- I hate school just like you.
- I hear that you eat five bowls of rice for breakfast.
- People say you keep cockroaches for pets in your room.
- Why do you like to take a cold bath in winter?
- I hear that you never clean your room.

Step 7: Impromptu justification

This is training for making impromptu justification for one's statement. The teacher asks students about their likes/dislikes, then instructs them to give an answer just opposite to what they really like/dislike, and asks them to give reasons for the answer immediately.

Sample dialogue of answering Yes-or-No questions:

(T=teacher, S=student)

T: Do you like Sunday? Answer No.

S: No, I don't like Sunday.

T: Why don't you like Sunday?

S: Because I can't see my classmates on Sunday.

T: Why can't you see your classmates on Sunday?

S: Because we don't have school on Sunday.

T: Okay, say it all together.

(Miura et al., 2006, pp.226-227)

Sample dialogue of answering alternate questions:

T: Which do you like better, a rich life or a poor life? Answer "a poor life."

S: I like a poor life better.

T: Why do you like a poor life better?

S: Because I can find real friends.

T: Why can you find real friends when you are poor?

S: People can get no money from poor people. So stingy and selfish people do not take an interest in poor people.

T: Good! Say it all together.

Step 8: Real strategic interaction with convergent roles

Having experienced Steps 1-7 above, students will be ready to smoothly participate in a real Strategic Interaction. Here is a question: Should we start real SI with complementary role pairs or incompatible role pairs? In the complementary SI, the two pairs' cooperation is of mutual benefit to them. In the incompatible SI, one of the person's happiness means the other's misery. Although DiPietro (1987) says that the latter roles "produce conversations that have a greater degree of strategic interplay" (p. 45), for Japanese students I recommend starting with complementary roles for reasons I previously gave in this paper. Also, I recommend finishing a performance phase in five minutes even if the interaction has not concluded because interaction tends to start going around in circles after that.

Convergent Scenario: Can I go home now? (For SHS students)

Role A: You are a high school student who is very fond of video games. At 12:40 p.m. this afternoon, a new Pocket Monster game will be on sale and you are excited. Since this game is so popular, it is predicted that all the copies will be sold out in 15 minutes. Now you are going to the teachers' room to talk to your homeroom teacher Ms. Brown.

Role B: You are Ms. Brown, a high school teacher who is in charge of a homeroom. You are a little upset because four students have gone home this morning. Now it is noon, and you are thinking of sneaking out of school during the lunch break to buy a newly-released Pocket Monster game to grant your son's request. You hear it will be on sale at 12:40 p.m. and will be sold out in 15 minutes. As you are leaving the teachers' room, one of your students comes to see you. (Miura et al., 2006, p. 213)

Step 9: Real Strategic Interaction with nonconvergent roles

As students experience performing convergent roles several times, they become increasingly good at cooperating with each other and reaching a compromise quickly. Then students may gradually get bored with peaceful scenarios and want to try more challenging ones. It is at this time that we should introduce nonconvergent roles.

Nonconvergent Scenario: A Dream Dinner (For college students and upper)

Role A: You have been dating your sweetheart for five years. Both you and your sweetheart want to marry very much. Your sweetheart's parents approve of your marriage, but your own parents are strongly against it. Finally, you have persuaded your parents to change their minds. You want to tell this good news to your sweetheart, so you asked your sweetheart to meet at your favorite restaurant. Now you and your sweetheart are just taking your favorite seats looking over the ocean.

Role B: You have been dating your sweetheart for five years. Both you and your sweetheart have wanted to marry very much. Your parents approve of your marriage, but your sweetheart's parents are strongly against it. You think you cannot wait any longer, so have started dating another man/woman whom you like very much. You want to terminate your relationship with your sweetheart. Eventually your sweetheart asks you to have dinner at your favorite restaurant together. Now you and your sweetheart are just taking your favorite seats looking over the ocean. (Miura et al., 2006, p. 217)

Final remarks

“Fact is stranger than fiction,” goes the proverb. Our students' life is filled with mismatches, miscommunication and conflicts; some of them are serious but others are humorous. Then why don't we make them into scenarios, act them out, and discuss with our students what wise solutions we can think of? Strategic Interaction is a technique to

realize such an interpersonal communication workshop in our L2 classroom. No doubt it will bring a new spice, meaning, and motivation into the classroom.

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Appendix: Additional examples of activities

Step 1: Discourse self-assessment task

Task: Declining a Request (for JHS and SHS students)

You are buying a canned drink from a vending machine on the street. One of your classmates passes by and asks you to lend her/him 100 yen 'just because (s)he hasn't got small change.'. He/she borrowed 100 yen from you last week and has not returned it yet. You want to tell him/her to return it first before asking for another. []

(1=very easy, 2=challenging but possible, 3=difficult, 4=can never do so)

Step 2: Multiple-choice discourse completion task

Task: A Basketball Lover (for JHS and SHS students)

You are a 9th-grade student. You love playing basketball very much. You have played basketball in your school club for over two years. Last March your old club coach retired, and you have a new coach, Mr. Ishikawa. You don't like his way of coaching. Last week you had a big argument with him and said, "I'll quit the club." Now you are not a member any more. You feel empty and miss basketball very much. What would you do?

[] I will join some other sport club.

[] I will look for some basketball-lovers and form a small basketball club myself.

[] I will practice basketball by myself at home.

[] I will apologize to Mr. Ishikawa and say, "May I come back to the club, please?"

Task: Want a ride? (for SHS students and upper)

You have been attending a diving school at a marine resort in a foreign country for one week. You have become acquainted with a local young man. One day he offers to drive you to your apartment after the lesson. You like the man, but do not fully trust him yet. What will you say?

“I have an appointment with my friend. Thank you anyway.”

“No, thanks. I am okay.”

“Can I invite Kayoko and Ryoichi, too?”

“I make it my own rule never to get in a man’s car. Thanks anyway.”

[Your original answer]

(Connected with the above) You have declined the man’s invitation, but he insists on your coming. What will you do?

I will shout in a loud voice, “Go away.”

I will explain why I don’t want to take the man’s car.

I will accept his invitation.

I will start yelling in Japanese.

(Miura et al., 2006, p.222)

Task: The Lunch (for SHS students and upper)

You are staying with the Brown family in Australia. Your host mother, Jeanette, makes sandwich for your lunch, and you appreciate it. However, it always contains some pickled cucumber, which you really hate. So, you cannot eat the sandwich. You are back at home, and your host mother will ask you how you liked the sandwich. How would you respond?

“Jeanette, thank you very much for the sandwich. I enjoyed it very much.”

“Jeanette, thank you very much for the sandwich. But please don’t put pickled cucumber in it.”

“Jeanette, thank you very much for the sandwich. Could I have something else for my lunch tomorrow?”

“Jeanette, I am having such a good time here. I am really glad I came. Only, ...I don’t like pickled cucumber very much.”

(Miura et al., 2006, p.223)

Step 3: Written discourse completion task

Task: No money. (for SHS students and upper)

You are traveling in downtown Tokyo. You got lost and you were very hungry, so you went into a restaurant and ordered dinner. (They have only expensive dinners on their menu.) Now it is time to pay, and you realize that you have lost your wallet. It was an accident, and you never meant to steal a meal. How will you explain this to the waiter?

You: _____

(Miura et al., 2006, p.241)

Task: Some Nice Words for My Best Friend (for SHS students and upper)

You are in the school drama club. Your club performed a play “School Song Forever” in the national school drama contest, and you played the hero in it. Now you have just won the Best Actor Award in the contest. Sayuri, your best friend, played the heroine in the same play, but she did not win any awards. Now you are going to make a speech at

the award ceremony. You want to say some nice words for Sayuri in your speech. What will you say?

You: _____

Step 6: Correcting misunderstanding

Task: Correcting Misunderstandings about One's Country (for SHS students and upper)

- When Japanese want to say “thank you,” they say “otankonasu.”
- In Japan, cars drive on the right side of the road.
- Most Japanese have arranged marriages even today.
- It is very safe to go out alone at night in big cities in Japan.
- Isn't it unclean for five or six people to share the same bath water in Japan?

Step 7: Impromptu justification

Task: Yes-or-No Questions for Impromptu Justification (for SHS students and upper)

- Do you like a fast and punctual train? Answer no and give reasons.
- Do you like watching television? Answer no and give reasons.
- Do you like Christmas? Answer no and give reasons.
- Do you like an examination? Answer yes and give reasons.

- Do you like rainy days? Answer yes and give reasons.
- Do you like cockroaches ? Answer yes and give reasons.

Task: Alternate Questions for Impromptu Justification (for SHS students and upper)

- Which do you like better, living in a big house or living in a small house? Answer “a small house.”
- Which do you like better, staying in a clean hotel or staying in a dirty hotel? Answer “a dirty hotel.”
- Which do you like better, a good karaoke singer or a poor karaoke singer? Answer “a poor karaoke singer.”
- Which do you like better, a clever dog or a stupid dog? Answer “a stupid dog.”
- Which do you like better for a pet, a cat or a snake? Answer “a snake.”
- Which do you like better, a strict club coach or an easygoing coach? Answer “a strict club coach.”

Step 8: Real Strategic Interaction with convergent roles

Scenario: I have to tell you something. (for SHS students and upper)

Role A: You are a high school student. You are not very hardworking, and sometimes fall asleep during the class and occasionally skip classes. Because of your laziness, you do very poorly in the final exams and receive an F (a failing

mark) in math and chemistry. Your homeroom teacher wants to see your parents, so has sent them a letter this morning. It will be delivered to your house tomorrow. You want to prepare them for it. You have just come home.

Role B: You are a mother /father of a high school student. Your child has made you promise that you will never enter his/her room without permission. This morning, while your child was out, you secretly entered his/her room, opened his/her drawers and chests because you were interested in his/her daily life. You carelessly handled a figure of Mickey Mouse and it fell on the floor and broke. You know it is a present from your child's girlfriend/boyfriend and he/she treasures it. Your child will find it broken when he/she comes home. Now your child has just come home. What should you do?