



Mentoring Investigation Report

Designing a Primary Japanese program to be co-delivered by a classroom teacher and nearby secondary teacher of Japanese using Edmodo

Background information

Mentor teacher(s) name: *Laura Carrington*

Mentee teacher(s) name: *Mary Shannon*

School: *Glossop High School and Cobdogla Primary School, SA*

Language: *Japanese*

Year level: *Years 5-7*

School or class context

Profile of Mentor's school

Glossop High School is a co-educational public school of more than 600 students located in the Riverland of South Australia. The school is split into two campuses: the middle campus (Years 8-10) located in Glossop and the senior campus (Years 11-12) located in Berri. GHS offers four languages- Japanese, Spanish, Greek and Ngarrindjeri, the local Aboriginal language. There is a very strong sister school relationship with a school in Japan which involves approximately ten Japanese students participating in the Japanese Home stay program annually and ten Australian students travelling to Japan on the Japan Trip every two years.

Profile of school community

A small number of public and private feeder primary schools have language programs in place including Spanish, Japanese, Greek and German. A need for a sufficient number of primary school-trained language teachers has been on the agenda for some time but due to lack of adequate school funding, geographical isolation and community support, this has not yet been fully implemented.

Profile of mentee's school

Cobdogla Primary School is a co-educational public school of fewer than 50 students located in the Riverland of South Australia, approximately 12km from Glossop High School. As this school does not have a language program and other schools in the area do, their students arrive under-prepared for the high school languages program setting. This school was chosen as the focus of the mentoring program as it has a recent history of offering Japanese but due to student numbers and availability of a Japanese teacher, the Japanese program is no longer running. Principal Mary Shannon accepted the opportunity to become a mentee in this project and used her non-instructional time (NIT) teaching lessons to deliver a Japanese program supported by me.

Focus of investigation

I used a guiding question to focus my investigation and mentoring relationship. It was:

'How will I design a Japanese language and culture learning program for colleagues in my region that encompasses their needs?'

Goals of mentoring program

The AFMLTA *Professional standards for lead teachers of languages and cultures* (AFMLTA 2012) are articulated through eight dimensions. The goal of this investigation was to link to the '**Language pedagogy**' dimension. The standard is:

They (lead teachers) work with others in designing, implementing and evaluating languages programs and languages and cultures learning models, suitable to different contexts.

Although the mentoring program would have ideally been implemented with multiple feeder schools involved, time and resources meant focusing on one school was more feasible.

Implementation

After initial research about the school context and its needs through emailing Cobdogla Primary School principal and mentee, Mary Shannon, and visiting the school with the Japanese Home stay students and their hosts, a program to be delivered primarily by the 'Secure Social Networking Site' called Edmodo was established. In the process of establishing the school's context, Mary reported the students' enthusiasm for the program, following the Japanese students' visit. She said, in an email '...the Year 5/6/7 class had a ball. They were really excited and enjoyed the visit'. Edmodo resembles Facebook, which is the most well known social networking site, so there was confidence that the mentees and students could quickly become familiar with this tool. Also, Edmodo was already being used regularly by the mentor, so no additional training needed to take place.

Both mentor and mentee worked hard in their busy schedules to communicate via email and to arrange an initial lesson designed as a diagnostic review of students' current knowledge.

In the diagnostic review lesson the Year 5/6/7 students were asked a series of questions to ascertain what they already knew about Japan and its language, and what they wanted to learn. Their responses were recorded on their Edmodo page (see Appendix). It was interesting to see that a few students new to the school who had never studied Japanese had unrealistic views about Japan and its language. The class had just finished a unit on the Olympics with a focus on China, so had recently had some connection with an Asian culture.

The Edmodo group called '*Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)*' continued to be a place for the mentor, mentees (Principal Mary Shannon and the classroom teacher) and the students to share resources and learning. For example, a YouTube clip of the *hiragana* alphabet engaged the students and allowed them to review their prior learning (see Appendix).

The students enthusiastically responded to this learning opportunity and were excited to use Edmodo (see Appendix).

Later that week following the diagnostic review, the classroom teacher shared the students' excitement about the task set on Edmodo in a lesson where they had to research the aspects of the Japanese culture they were questioned about in the face-to-face lesson. It was up to the students how they would present their research (see Appendix).

Japanese photos (*Where is Pikachu?*) and YouTube clips which were shared with Glossop High School Japanese classes were also shared with Cobdogla Primary School's Year 5/6/7 class (see Appendix).

Outcomes and evaluation

The answer to the focus question of this investigation 'How will I design a Japanese Language and Culture learning program for colleagues in my region that encompasses their needs?' is 'by using technology'.

Despite already having an informal relationship with Mary Shannon, and only working a short drive from the mentee school, time and resources meant technology was going to be our best friend. So much is available

online now that once a relationship was set up between all parties, Edmodo, YouTube, online language learning games and other resources provided the building blocks of the design and the relationships formed held the program together and made it successful. As the Standard suggests, 'They (lead teachers) work with others in designing, implementing and evaluating languages programs and languages and cultures learning models, suitable to different contexts'.

I worked with the Cobdogla principal and classroom teacher of the Year 5/6/7 class to design an initial Japanese language and culture program that would get them back on their feet with a Japanese program, help them implement it and also to evaluate the needs of all parties throughout the mentoring program.

I would not have designed and implemented such a program had:

- there not been a need or interest in a Japanese language and culture program at the school
- the mentees not had sufficient ICT skills or resources
- there been more time available for me to regularly visit the school in person and deliver lessons
- there been a Japanese teacher at the school already.

Throughout the mentoring program I learnt that:

- I could communicate well with my line manager, the school's daily manager and my principal to gain approval to participate in the project and support to complete my research and report writing
- I had the confidence to communicate with a leader in the community outside of my school and although I am not in a leadership role in my school I have the leadership skills to make a difference in the community. Mary Shannon was very approachable due to being part of the local netball club in which I am involved.
- Fortunately, Mary Shannon had the ICT skills to get excited about using Edmodo. I hadn't considered whether she would be interested in using this technology prior to making and introducing the site to the students. This was lucky!
- I could be better organised if I had less 'on my plate'.
- I could communicate well with the Year 5/6/7 students. Although I have the subject knowledge to teach Japanese language and culture up to Year 12 and experience teaching Year 8-11, I was unsure if I would have the pedagogy to teach at the primary level. Mary Shannon explained that I had engaged and related to them well.
- Open Access College, which is a distance education school, can offer Cobdogla Primary School an online Japanese lesson each week with one of their Japanese teachers free of charge due to low student numbers. This is currently being organised between OAC and CPS. The teacher I am working with at OAC was actually a Japanese teacher at my primary school in her first year of teaching, and I never imaged I could be working with her.

APPENDIX: Selected data: Edmodo discussions



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

What do we know about Japan?

As a class, let's brainstorm what we think we know about Japan.

Then, let's answer some questions about Japan to work out what we need to learn more about! (*_*)v

The flag is red and white.

The great wall of China

The Capital of Japan is Tokyo.

Counting to ten. (75%)

The temples and houses look different.

They have lots of festivals.

There is a big mountain.

1. In which continent is Japan located?

In Asia

2. Which countries are Japan's neighbours?

China, India, Africa (William), Indonesia, Philippines,

3. How big is Japan compared to Australia?

3000km², Japan is smaller than Australia, 5,10,20 times smaller.

4. How many people live in Japan?

More than Australia, 3-20 times more

5. What language do Japanese people speak? What does it sound and look like?

Japanese! know numbers 1-20, Hello, goodbye teacher, colours,

6. Which religion do Japanese people have?

Christian, Buddhism

7. What do Japanese people look like?

Eyes are not as round, their skin colour is darker, often have short hair,

8. Is Japan a wealthy country or a poor country

75 % think it is a wealthy country

9. What is Japan famous for in Australia?

Sushi, Rice, Beijing Olympics, Origami, Chopsticks, nasigoran, karate, noodles, sumo,

10. What Japanese made items do we have around our classroom? Our house?

Teddybears, toyota, nissan, mitsubishi, suzuki, honda, kawasaki, yamaha, (hyunda), (ford),

nintendo, sony,



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Final comments

In Japan they learn English and about many cultures enjoyed the lesson!
Can learn Japanese and another language in highschool!
Will be able to maybe do Japanese in Primary school!

Aug 20, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag -



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Why do we need to know about another culture/language, Why Japan?
for business and tourism, close proximity, working in shops cafes, tourism,

need to know the culture to understand their culture, re parties, so we understand what they are saying.
Need to know the culture of the food, otherwise only know the words to say the food type.

Aug 20, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag -



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes in Japanese!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98rDSRw7sv0>

Aug 19, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag -



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

AIOOE song for the little ones!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrXHizFaoI0&am...>

What sound does a dog make in English? Listen to how Japanese people think dogs sound! (^_^)

Aug 19, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag -



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Learn Hiragana using Dr. Moko's Mnemonics System!
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdJdRwjPVkM&am...>

Aug 19, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag -



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Japanese Alphabet Song
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrMkJAzBWQc&am...>



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Here's a place to learn your hiragana recognition skills! Real Kana!

<http://www.realkana.com/>

Aug 30, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag ▾



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

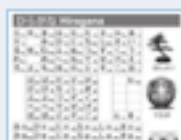
Here are the hiragana and katakana charts!
As you can see, there are 46 standard characters.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER CHARACTERS IN THE BOXES???

'TEN TEN' and 'MARU'

Some characters can be altered with two little dashes " known as 'tenten' or a small circle known as 'maru'. New sounds are made. In hiragana there are then 69 sounds. ...

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hiragana_katakana_chart_1_2.pdf

Preview

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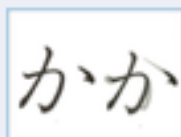
Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Let's learn hiragana! Here are the first 15 hiragana characters for you to learn to recognise with clever pictures to help you remember them! Use the Hiragana songs to help you with the pronunciation (*_*)v



a_o_with_hints.pptx

Preview



ka_ko_with_hints.pptx

Preview

Post: Note Alert Assignment Quiz Poll

type your note here...



Me to Year 9 Japanese Semester 2, Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v, Year 8 Japanese Semester 1, more...

Hiragana Flashcards!
 Print two-sided, decorate if you wish, cut out to the size you like!
 Ten-ten and maru included!
 うれしい!! Ureshii! Happy!



hiragana_flashcards.pdf

Preview

Sep 4, 2012 | Reply | Share | Tag ▾



Ms. Leach to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Hello Miss Carrington,
 Here are some of the responses from our class :)

 "It is good we get to learn Japanese again" Kate Carlos

 "I like all of it (how to speak Japanese)..." William Bulling

 "I have enjoyed learning more about Japan and its people" Chloe Harrison ...

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Me - Arigatou!

Thank you!
 Would else would they like to learn?



Me to Year 10 Languages, Year 8 Japanese Semester 1, Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v, more...

かわいい! Kawaii! Cutel
 ピカチュはどこですか。Pikachu wa doko desuka? Where is Pikachu?





Cobdogla 567 to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Hello Miss Carrington. The year 5/6/7 class are starting their research about Japan. They are using your questions as a guide. The students are choosing how to present their information. They are excited about learning Japanese again.

Aug 23, 2012 | [Reply](#) | [Share](#) | [Tag](#) ▾



Me - Konnichiwa!

I am very happy to hear this!

I would like to visit in week 7 either Monday after lunch or Wednesday after recess. I would love to see what they have learnt and revise hiragana.

Aug 25, 2012



Cobdogla 567 - Sorry only just checked this site.... Wednesday after recess

11:30am, would be a suitable time. The classroom teacher Miss Leach will be in the class to support you.

Aug 27, 2012



Type a reply...



Me to Cobdogla P.S. Japanese (^_^)v

Final comments

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Aug 20, 2012 | [Reply](#) | [Share](#) | [Tag](#) ▾

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Reflective summary

Overall, I am very pleased with outcomes of the mentoring program. I will continue to network with Mary Shannon and the classroom teacher via email and Edmodo to evaluate the program, develop and implement further programs in their school, probably with the support of Open Access College. Until the end of the year, I will share useful resources at the same time I share them with my Year 8-11 Japanese classes. This will not create an added workload. I will endeavour to deliver two more classes face-to-face with the Year 5/6/7 class- one at Cobdogla Primary School and one at Glossop High School with my Year 8 class. My Year 8 students will continue to teach *hiragana* to the Year 5/6/7 class.

As Mary and I are leaving the Riverland next year, I will begin networking in term 4 with my successor who could continue to support Cobdogla Primary School's Japanese program. He will also get to teach Japanese to the current Year 7s as they become Year 8s. I will encourage him, although he also is not in a leadership role, to work in a shared role with the primary school teachers and leaders to begin language programs using technology.

At this point I wonder if what I have established with this school will make a difference to the number of students choosing Japanese over Spanish for Year 8. I wonder if this will make them better prepared than the previous year. Unfortunately this will be difficult for me to tell.

As I relocate to a metropolitan school in 2013, I would like to develop another mentoring program with a feeder school without a language program to compare country and city perspectives on early career teachers being lead language teachers. The languages coordinator has already informed me that he would like me to reinvigorate the Japanese program and I am thinking this may be one means to work towards this goal.

I look forward to touching base with Mary Shannon once she returns from a DECD teaching exchange in 2014 and evaluating the Cobdogla Primary School Japanese language and culture program, one and a half years after it was reborn.