Teaching Public Speaking to Japanese Junior High School Students

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I.　Introduction

(1.1) Abstract

This is a partial report of a teaching activity of "English and public speaking" at a junior high school in Tokyo. This activity originally began as a part of the "after-school-project" launched by the municipal's board of education in 1999, targeting their junior high school students[1]. The project aims to support them so that they can enjoy, after school, a variety of activities and learn a number of things such as foreign languages, handcrafts, shogi, and reading literature[2].

I have been in charge of the English Club, in which some of the members occasionally get a chance to challenge English speech contests organized by the local board of education or/and by some official institutes, and the school asked me to prepare their students for the contests. Based on a set of records of a year, I report how the training program was planned and the whole procedure was conducted, together with the entire background of this training scene.

(1.2) General Background

Ur (1991) mentioned about "speaking" as the most important of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in learning a foreign language. She further discussed that classroom activities that develop learners' ability to express themselves through speech therefore are a significant component of a language course (p. 120). In the suggestion list of what the teacher can do to help students, she put "Keep students speaking the target language" (pp. 121 - 122), which is what is going to be dealt with in a form of "speech" or "public speaking" in this paper.

Over a decade's experiences of supporting both the Japanese students and their regular teaching staff in "public speaking" at a junior high school has brought me a wonderful opportunity to realize that it is a quite attractive and at the same time a challenging assignment for those who teach English in Japan. A number of Japanese junior high schools have started employing "public speaking" in English educational programs although they do not really have any powerful measures for that yet. As for the school where I help its English teachers and students, the school administration has selected several motivated students to enter the local contest supported by the board of education. There is also a year when ambitious students enter some other famous speech contests.

The most prestigious contest of the kind is "Prince Takamado Trophy's-All Japan

Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest" ("Inter-Middle" meaning "junior high")[3]. It proudly presents the facts that lately over a hundred thousand students have been applying from the in-school preliminary level for the contest annually. There are, by now, numerous contests founded by local educational authorities nationwide (Sawa, pp. 65‐66)[4]. The Japanese schools have become more and more interested in "public speaking" in the field of English education.

What is "public speaking" then? It is defined as follows by Encyclopedia Britannica: 1) the act or process of making speeches in public, and 2) the art of effective oral communication with an audience[5]. Or, "Public Speaking" is "speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner"[6]; it is a form of communication to convey the knowledge and wisdom to listeners, or to influence their attitudes or behavior. Its purpose can range from simply transmitting information, to motivating people to act. Public speaking is almost as ancient as speech itself[7].

Nomura (2002) of JACET, the Japanese Association of College English Teachers (Daigaku Eigo Kyoiku Gakkai), introduced Lucas to explain what is "public speaking" focusing on its features (pp. 12‐13) in comparison with other types of oral communication in "Process-Oriented Approaches to Oral Communication." First of all, "public speaking" is more highly structured. The listeners do not break the speech. It is also very important to prepare for the speech beforehand. Second, it uses more formal language. Slang and grammatical errors should be avoided as much as possible in public speaking since the audience still expect something special while we use very colloquial style in daily conversations. Third, public speaking needs "a different method of delivery." It is natural, when just chatting, to insert, expressions such as "you know," "I mean," and "uh," for instance. However, it should not happen in public speaking; instead, the speaker's voice and volume should be controlled properly so that the speech would be understandable enough for the audience.

(1.3) Overview of the paper

The syllabus covered in this paper is, in the first place, intended to clarify the social context of the course and the resulting restrictions and opportunities regarding topics and methods. The major components of this paper are the sections of "teaching context" and "my approach," which are respectively taken up in the later part. "The teaching context" needs to be explained first well enough and it is very important because of the rather unusual situation and the nature of the course for a public school.

For a similar reason as above, "my approach" has to be commented on in detail because of the reason and way the course was designed, and as the result realized in the actual classroom by the school administration.

II. Teaching English Public Speaking at a Junior High School

(2.1) Teaching Context

The Institution and Staff

The institution offering the after-school course is a public junior high school in Tokyo, founded in 1948. Many of the local residents send their children there traditionally. The number of the students has been over 330 for the last several years, all together of the first, second and third graders. It is considered a large-scaled junior high school while some other schools in the district have been recently having a hard time to secure a sufficient number of students for good organization of classes for the coming years. It is located in a large, but quiet residential area, covering the school zones of two major public elementary schools. The area holds a few old, cozy commercial zones and many small village-like elegant residential places.

There are a number of houses and apartments in the commercial zones, and also in the residential area. In the past, there used to be a number of "company apartments and houses" of mainly major banks, companies in insurance business, and governmental organizations, which were sold when Japan entered "the lost decade."[8] What was interesting is that some premises of the company housing were intended especially for those who had been just back from abroad, which means that they and their families had been through international experiences under non-Japanese speaking circumstances and then had to fit into the Japanese way of life once again, or even for some of them, for the first time. Their children are often called "returnees" who are in most of the cases regarded by the other children as "bilingual of English and Japanese" but in fact came back to Japan from all kinds of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Its diversity is immense. Although the corporations stopped having real estate properties for their employees in the area, individual owners and real estate agencies keep this local "image and atmosphere" of the area. They are somewhat successful, which we witness on plenty of the websites in which this area is promoted as a leading attractive educational area.

There are also some special cases, though not many, such as children who have been in Japan all the time but have been getting home education in English for some reason. What is typical about them is that one of their parents is often not from Japan. Additionally, there are several students with Asian backgrounds, some of whom speak also Japanese at home, and some not. Some even have to play the role of interpreters of Japanese for their family members in daily life. Again, the variety is enormous.

The majority of the students works very diligently, and usually succeeds in the entrance exams of senior high schools so that they manage to arrange the right track for the future by the time they complete the junior high school's program. The school proudly announced that, in 2004, 70 third graders passed the entrance exams of the national and other public senior high schools and institutes, 69 passed private schools, and 1 flew abroad for further study, which makes 140 graduates in total. In 2016, 53 graduates were admitted into the national and public (founded by the metropolitan Tokyo) schools and 74 in private schools (127 in total). This indicates that indeed this school has established itself as one of the most effective public schools

in the whole area.

Concerning the official teaching staff, most work full-time and are Japanese native speakers. They are extremely busy people being in charge of so many activities not only directly connected to their students but to numerous administrative chores, which is endlessly time-consuming. Those who teach English are no exceptions. In fact, the first job I was offered to do was teaching the intensive English course for catch-up, as a part-time instructor, during the summer vacation while the regular staff could finally have several days off. For the moment, the school has three English teaching staff: one in each grade.

The other member to refer to in the English section is an ALT, "Assistant Language Teacher" assigned by the board of education of the district. S/he pays a regular visit to all the local schools for teaching the students "Communicative English" by having a good command of "the real, living English" as a native speaker. Usually, the ALT is quite capable in many points of teaching English and is willing to help the classes.

The administration (the headmaster and the vice-principal) are well aware of the current situation, realizing the regular teaching staff indeed need some more support from outside for the reasons mentioned above, and they are willing to help as the school administration, so that they arrange a few part-time instructors. The central coordinator is the vice-principal; he makes sure for all the teachers to work together comfortably whenever necessary and to make a good use of proper facilities and rooms in the school buildings, for instance, sometimes arranging the largest hall of the school with audio equipment for the speech contest preparation course to try rehearsals. His assistant is the chief of the English teaching staff, who works over more detailed plans and meetings in the school and assures smooth processing of all the paperwork and procedures for the contests by communication with those who are involved in the project outside the school. These people have been playing significant roles in the course for which this syllabus is intended.

The Target Group of Students

The target is a group of students who are voluntarily participating in the two major speech contests. Usually there is no one from the first grade for the speech section though there are some first graders willing to make an entry into the section of "recitation," which is not dealt with in this paper since it is another course.

In many cases the students come to register the class because they are curious about those events and doing well in the regular English classes, but a few cases are that the teachers suggest the students to try this sort of "outside the school" activities because they are excellent students, and as the result, they feel like challenging it. In any case, everybody is motivated and excited, and attends the class with high expectations. Nobody is forced to take the course; they all want to learn more.

The students can be categorized further into two groups: the first group consists of returnees and a few special cases under non-Japanese speaking circumstances, and the second are those who were born and grew up naturally in Japan, entirely in the Japanese speaking environment

all the time, without real exposures to English and/or other languages. Although it has to be decided based on each individual case, the returnees often have to make an entry into the frame of the returnees' section, which automatically means they are considered to speak already "close to native" level of English.

Quite frankly speaking, it is true that among the returnees admitted by the school some are much more fluent in English than the regular teaching staff. Their English is simply better and actually native-like. However, it does not immediately mean that they all know how to make a speech in public. It is very different from just "chatting" with friends, which tends to be often overlooked.

Meanwhile, there are children who came back to Japan years ago; often they cannot really write nor speak grammatically correct and logically clear English though their pronunciation is that of native speakers. In many cases, they somehow consider that their English is acceptable enough, in fact very much all right. There are cases that some of them get shocked when suddenly encountering someone else speaking English who is just back to Japan after many years of speaking nothing but English. Then the former ones get upset, and become at a loss to find out finally that something is wrong with their English.

Then, we have students from the totally Japanese cultural and linguistic background. According to my observation through years of teaching, this type of children who form the majority of Japan, have two main problems they suffer from in spite of their diligent work. One is the fact that they have to face so much trouble with writing English not only from the lexical and syntactical point of view but also from the level of "logic" itself. Evidently, the English logic is not what they are familiar with, and it is not simple to learn it if you are not a native speaker of a European language such as Germanic and Italic languages. This difficulty directly results in the tough time they have to undergo when writing their speech drafts. It is frequently pointed out that "you should just start writing it in English from the beginning" instead of trying to translate your Japanese sentences. However, you need some basic knowledge in order to do that, and the reality is that you cannot expect anything like that from those children since they have by far not reached the level yet. The other problem they soon realize is the English pronunciation and intonation, which is also very difficult without proper training. Those who have never had to speak anything else but Japanese have a tremendous problem in English phonology. Even those who can reasonably understand written English are often lost when trying oral communication in English. This is easily imaginable for anybody that knows the significant differences between the Japanese and English sound systems. As explained by Avery and Ehrlich (1992, p. 134), it is a well-known fact, for instance, that Japanese speakers tend to encounter difficulty in pronouncing English words with consonant clusters and/or closed syllables. Another famous example is the difference between /r/ and /l / sound.

Despite all the trouble mentioned so far, however, the students have a very strong point. They are intelligent and willing to listen for improvement, and above all, they are all highly motivated learners. This year, eight students signed up, and two of them were returnees from the USA. Two of the eight were second graders, the rest third. No one joined from the first grade.

The Course

The course began almost accidentally more than a decade ago with the school and students' feeling like challenging something new such as going for "Setagaya-Ku Speech Contest" and the administration judged that it would be an interesting project to promote in the coming years. Recently, the school has been sending the students mainly to the "Setagaya-Ku Speech Contest" which is a district level yet still high standard, and to the "H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy – All Japan Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest"[9] which is an extremely high standard, national level. In addition, the school will be positive to send participants if they find any other suitable occasion. This year, six went to the final round and among them, one won the third prize (bronze medal) of Setagaya, but none could go to the final in Prince Takamado.

The intended course is an "after school" program. Therefore, the class starts in the late afternoon after all the regular classes are done. It starts at the pace of once a week and the last two weeks, it might increase to three times a week or to the degree of "as much as possible" if necessary. Last two years, the class started in the first week of September and finished in the last week of October, which was decided based on the schedules of those contests. It began at 3:00 and ended at 5:00 (when possible at 5:30), so it was a class of 120 to 150 minutes. However, it seldom happened that all the members could stay through the class; everybody was busy and some were late while others had to leave earlier. I was the main instructor of the course together with another for the recitation group, and I got powerful backup by the regular teaching staff. The ALT gave me another strong support as a native speaker of English. Basically, the course style will remain unchanged in various aspects.

The Facilities and Resources

We can use any facility in the school as far as it does not interfere with the official activities going on in the school such as after school club activities and other extra classes. I need to first talk to the chief of the English teaching staff and then the vice-principle in order to use classrooms. Besides the normal classrooms, the school has a few conference rooms, an audio room and two big halls in the gym and they are all available upon request as far as this course does not always occupy them.

Some interesting equipment like microphones, tape recorders and players, video recorders, cameras and players are also usable on the same condition. In any case, the main coordinator is the vice-principle, and everything has to be consulted and agreed beforehand as the right procedure. Since it is a public school, the district opens the school to any group of local residents after school and over the weekend, so we all have to be careful how we use any facility there. The meeting timing of the class also has to be consulted in the same way.

The Constraints

The most influential constraint is the fact that this course is not an official one. It could be more effective and operated in much more efficient manner if intertwined with the other English classes, but it is not. Since it is a completely independent class, it is difficult to connect

with the others. As the result, the students cannot really apply the topics and materials to anything else, which have a dangerous possibility of becoming just a burden for them in the short term. It could be pushed away because of other important school events and regular exams so that the students might have to put it aside a while in order to study the official subjects even though they want to go ahead because it is interesting and they feel they are learning something. The students are very busy; they attend regular classes and all the school events, and moreover, some are deeply involved in activities such as the students' committee and sports club after school.

Because it has nothing to do with the official classes, the regular English teachers cannot always spare time for it though they try to help me desperately hard. In the same way, the ALT is also difficult to catch after the officially assigned classes. He has to visit many schools in a limited time in order to teach "Communicative English" to those huge classes.

Although it is of great help for the students to receive comments on their drafts from the native English speaking teacher, it could cause confusions and conflicts at the same time, which might be rather stressful to them and those who have to go in-between for them. It is almost inevitable that native speakers have a hard time explaining the children why they do not say some things (because they just don't say so) and what exactly is funny with some expressions in the original writing. If, for some reason, the writer absolutely disagrees to rewrite the parts suggested by the native teacher (because the writer doesn't understand and/or can't pronounce them), I have to help them to find the best possible compromise for the writer. I usually take a lot of time talking to the students, discussing the topics they want to deal with, while trying to figure out what kind of personality each individual has and how I can help them in the best way in order to enhance their abilities through English education.

(2.2) Goals and Objectives

Based on Brown's definition (1995, p. 21), the goals and objectives of this course are relatively easy to set. Each participant is required to make all the efforts in order to get the best result in the contests. Concerning setting the concrete goals, it depends on each of the students according to what they actually want to achieve most. One might say that she or he wants to get into the top three of the district; someone else might say that she or he wants to go to the final. Or, others might just be intending to improve pronunciation and intonation of English, and to be able to speak understandable English.

The goals of this course are to prepare the students to do a reasonably good performance in the speech contests and to feel somewhat comfortable in speaking English (not panicking by switching to English). Eventually gaining confidence in English communication later could be noted as one of the goals as well. The definition of "reasonably good performance" here depends on the level of each individual to a large degree.

The objectives are the following: by the end of the course, the students will be able to:
・write a simple speech draft.
・speak understandable English in public which may mainly implies proper pronunciation

and intonation. "Proper" means here, it should be "acceptable" and "understandable" as English.

- distinguish between written English, informal oral English, and formal oral English.

(2.3) My Approach

There are six major points in my approach. First of all, the students are all pretty motivated learners attending such a class like this, with a determination to improve their English. In order not to discourage them, therefore, the teaching side has to be always "positive" on any incident and phenomenon caused by the students in class. "Never give them any negative comment" is my motto once getting into the classroom; otherwise it is simply counterproductive. Instead of saying "No, no. You are wrong saying such a thing," for example, an appropriate advice would be: "OK. I see you are trying hard. Very good! But how about it if you say '…'?"

Second, one should keep it in mind at any time that "everybody here is very unique and different from each other." It means that one can never compare the students lightly with each other. Particularly as described in the former part of this paper, the diversity of the students' background in this school is immense. Each individual should be considered as a separate case, not as a group, and it should reflect on the way of guiding each student. Naturally, so many things depend on the members of the class of each school year; the teaching side should not be so easily upset by the way every day class goes.

Third, respecting each individual automatically requires listening to everybody's ideas and opinions. In my case, I spend a lot of time on thorough discussion with each student, if possible with the other staff, to find out what he/she really means and wants by writing, for instance. Once the student agrees that there is a better solution, the rest of work is not complicated. Everybody is a hard worker enough to make a better draft and in the end perform a good speech.

Fourth, it is important to get strong support by the other teachers, Japanese and English speaking, from both sides. Although they do not always have sufficient time and occasions for this class, they should be involved as much as possible. Also, since the chief covers most of the administrative work, it is needed to be in close touch with him all the time during the project. As many things have to get done such as arranging the former year's video of the contests to watch with the students in the audio room. He is of course an interesting information source with some concrete, statistical features to help our understanding on the project. The ALT has a natural, keen feeling on English, and he should be listened to carefully too.

Fifth, there is an argument frequently raised by a certain type of students who insist, "Sensei, we can't do it because we are Japanese. It's too difficult for us to pronounce (or read or write) it. The ALT sensei can do it of course, but that's because he is a native speaker!" What I say to them is then, "Yes, you can! I can do it, and I am Japanese. Why not at least trying?" In this way, I am intending to teach the students from the standpoint of a Japanese native speaker who uses English as a tool for communication. I can teach them focusing on the "orally understandable" English from the phonological point of view instead of using a recorded tape,

showing how they can use their lips and jaws.

Additionally, I have to stress the importance of learning the formal oral English for better communication. One way is to try to express yourself first in your native language formally and then to get exposed to this type of English.

Finally, what is stated above leads us to one approach: homework, in other words, tasks. The students get homework according to each level by the end of the day, and bring the outcome of their work to the next class for better and more efficient interactions to get the result. It is all right that they mail or fax the teacher to ask whatever if they really don't understand the intention of assignments, but they have to once sit and think quietly about it all by themselves because after all they have to know what they want to express in public, and no one can help them once they begin the performance in front of the audience. On the other hand, nobody should get unnecessarily nervous about the details such as the deadline of a small piece of homework. As mentioned many times, this is not a required course, and the students are busy and so are all in the school. Plans should be flexible.

(2.4) Selected Syllabus Type

The selected syllabus types for this course are basically functional, skills-based, and task-based. In addition, "cooperative language learning" as described by Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 195) is introduced.

In order to organize and put the thought on the paper, it is necessary for the learner to know how to say certain things in certain manners to convey the right meanings; in other words, it is a matter of expressions. As discussed in the section of "Functional Syllabuses" by Brown (1995, p. 10), the speaker is supposed to know, while talking to the audience, how to greet people, change a topic, giving information and the like. Therefore, that is what the students have to learn in the process of making their speeches. In this connection, what Brown calls "Topical Syllabuses" (1995, p. 9) might fit too, which are organized by certain topics or themes rather than situations.

Another significant aspect is the "Skills-Based" type of syllabuses explained also by Brown (1995, p. 11). In order to find out what the students really want to choose as a topic, they need to think well and deep enough, and consequently they might have to read enough materials on the topic. They have to use several skills, in that case, such as skimming for the general idea, scanning a reading for specific information, guessing vocabulary from context and so on. These skills are to be eventually explained and covered as well in class.

Brown further describes the "Task-Based" type of syllabuses (1995, pp. 11 - 12), which is the other important element in this class. The students are required to fill out an application form, to write notes and memos, and in the event, write the speech drafts. They work over the task in class and after class at home, and the teacher and the other staff check it. By repeatedly going through the checking procedure together, the students can prepare their unique, original speech presentation.

There is a useful idea presented as a list of tasks suggested by Willis (1996, pp. 26 - 27). It

gives some clear and concrete examples of tasks that can be applied immediately to the class such as listing (first list as topic-candidates), sharing personal experiences with classmates (to choose the topic, this is a good way), and making creative tasks (writing, checking and reading the draft). Willis also talks about the "Planned language" (1996, p. 33), where a distinction is luminously made between the two extremes of spontaneous and planned language. The students have to be aware of it, and they are expected to learn about them and be able to handle the planned language.

Concerning writing, it is helpful for the teacher to use a book for teaching like "Treatment of Error" by Ferris (2002), where she instructs teachers how to respond and cope with the writing errors by students, by indicating each case's example.

The effect of "cooperative language learning" should not be underestimated either. It should be actively implemented in the course, which reinforces each student's motivation and consciousness for improvement as just explained above in the part of "sharing personal experiences." Each individual can be encouraged by each other, and by the teacher(s) and can learn from each other as well.

Lastly, it has to be discussed how each of the types of the syllabuses is combined or arranged, or integrated. Honestly speaking, however, the only possible answer to it is that it depends. It depends on the situation, for example, how many students are present at the moment, what kinds of topics or themes they choose, and how often the main teacher gets help from the other staff. It might be even better not to decide so long beforehand how those syllabuses should be strictly combined. Once the course sets off, it will decide its direction by itself, so the teacher should be flexible to organize each class.

(2.5) Units and Their Components

There are in total six units. The first unit deals with mainly starting up; writing the draft of the speech. The second is about the performance of the speech for the most part focusing on training the basic components like pronunciation and other techniques. The third deals with the practical aspect on giving a presentation and the environment in which each participant has to give the speech. In the fourth unit, the real, just-before preparation for the contests is discussed and in the fifth is about the final rehearsal. Then the participants are going to "smell powder" which is the major event and a real challenge for them, and the last unit is about reviewing.

Each unit has a few components each of which is to support the main goal, and by proceeding step by step, the students gradually acquire the necessary skills and self-confidence so that they can perform well in front of the audience in the end.

(2.6) Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

It is highly unlikely that the teacher in charge of this course is required to make any quantifiable evaluation of each student neither for the authority nor for the students. One reason is because the result of the contests means all to the school, that is to say, nothing else is

of any real importance. In such a case, the teacher does not really have much to do publicly except for submitting the report on the course to the school administration and/or giving some personal comments to each student, which is no obligation. In case of producing remarkable results, those "winners" will eventually receive the awards specially set up by the school, and might be honored to perform again during the regular English program in the school hall, but that is something the students are not informed of beforehand.

Another reason is that quite probably the significance of this project lies in each student's mind. As discussed in the section of "the goals and the objectives" already, one of the goals without the numerical target is found in the fact itself that the students challenged a hard, complicated assignment, and they all more or less succeeded it, by which they deserve a strong positive feeling of achievement and self-respect. It is a matter of self-assessment after all.

Since the school began to organize the course, the feedback of the student has been coming back. Almost all of them felt that they were happy they took the course after school and they felt they have achieved their own goals. Some said that English did not scare them anymore; others said that talking to the audience was a new experience and a lot of fun. Some of them even said that they started seeing what they could major in at the university level; they want to study "communication," "language", or "international communication" for instance.

III.　Discussion: Theories and Practices

(3.1) Speech Components and Preparation

Citing Ehninger, Monroe and Gronbeck, Fukuyama (1989) explained that there are five steps in speech communication, namely "public speaking": 1) the Attention Step draws the audience's attention, 2) the Need Step tells the importance of the theme, 3) the Satisfaction Step guides the best solution(s) and/or precept(s), 4) the Visualization Step proves the audience why those solution(s) and/or precept(s) are to benefit them, and finally, 5) the Actuation Step appeals to the audience for agreement and practice (p. 7). He further introduced Ehninger's idea of the levels of the procedure of preparation for public speaking (pp. 16 - 17). According to that, they are: 1) selecting and narrowing the subject, 2) determining the specific purpose, 3) analyzing the audience and the occasion, 4) gathering material, 5) making the outline, 6) wording the speech, 7) practicing aloud for clarity and fluency, and 8) delivering the speech.

Mikuma (2002) of JACET also made an interesting analysis and suggestion of the entire procedure of "making speech" in the section of "public speaking" in "Process-Oriented Approaches to Oral Communication." According to him, it starts with 1) selection of the topic, and 2) focusing on it, then moves to 3) confirmation of the purpose of the speech, and 4) audience-analysis and adjustment of the speech to the situation based on it (pp. 43 - 47).

What Fukuyama and Mikuma explained in fact matches, to a great extent, what I have been employing as a procedure in teaching and training Japanese junior high school students for speech contests as shown later in this paper[10]. The program starts with the selection of the speech topics involving discussions with the class participants to define what "making a speech"

means, what they can achieve with/through it, and how they can narrow the topics they first set with what kind of intention. Then the class moves to another stage where each speaker-to-be works over the speech draft in which she/he could realize the purpose for the target audience. Evidently, those steps of our program are a form of optimization that we have established through experience.

(3.2) Preparation of Speech Drafts

In the process of preparation for the speech draft, the speaker-to-be has to decide, first of all, the topic of his/her speech, which is after all what he/she wants to tell the audience most and at the same time what seems the most appealing to the audience in the range of what the speaker is able to convey. How can we find it out then?

Fukuyama suggested to focus on "brainstorming" before starting anything else, offering a clear picture of what sort of work it is by citing Frost: brainstorming is spontaneous discussion for various ideas, which is also a problem-solving activity to determine directions for a solution while activities of gathering and sharing information (p. 41).

Brown gave also a good explanation of brainstorming in decision-making: "brainstorming" is a technique to initiate some sort of thinking process, and it is used to prepare students to discuss a complex issue or to write on a topic (p. 184). This statement has made me realize that it is actually what we always had done as "discussion" or "chatting about it" in the classroom. Ur recommended this approach by showing a concrete example of a way of doing as well, which at once helps students build vocabulary around the topic and idea (pp. 68 - 69). It is also one of the typical techniques that I often use during the class.

After the topic is decided, the participants are to move forward to the next step; they have to write speech drafts. It is an important task of the teachers to confirm, at this stage, what kind of shape each draft is required to take, namely the "format," according to the administration of the organizer, and to make sure all the procedural operations will be executed properly and rapidly.

This paper discusses three aspects that play very important roles when actually starting writing the draft: the cultural background, the style and the organization. They are basic, essential elements in preparation for speech.

Yamada indicated what the act of "speaking" is considered to be: a long list of Japanese proverbs such as "Kuchi wa wazawai no moto (The mouth is the source of calamity)," which shows the Japanese skepticism towards talking, while in the western world, speech is associated with the cultured, and silence viewed as the domain of the savage (p. 17). Furthermore, Yamada introduced a popular quote by Thomas Mann on this point of view (p. 17): "Speech is civilization itself. The word, even the most contradictory, preserves contact – it is silence which isolates."

Therefore, it is certainly one of the "must" items that the teacher has to be well aware of and seriously cope with the matter of how to convey what this cultural background actually means to the students when teaching public speaking. Brown pointed out that that is one of the

differences between L1 and L2 writing when comparing them with each other, maintaining that what is important is to determine appropriate approaches to writing instruction for L2 writers indifferent contexts, and what is required from writing - teachers is to be equipped to deal effectively with the sociocultural and linguistic differences of L2 student (pp. 338 - 339).

One commendable approach is to use suitable teaching materials in order to demonstrate what is an example of good public speaking. By showing a number of authentic English speeches that are well known worldwide, Ohmi (2003) put it that the most effective way of learning public speaking is to appreciate those real examples by experiencing them (pp. 2 - 3). He added that this method does not choose any specific age range; in other words, this is quite effectual from the level of junior high to university, even beyond it, adults (p. 4). The lesson in which this teaching material is implemented has been gradually successful last two years in my course. The students become more interested in the attractiveness of public speaking by being able to make a holistic picture of what it is through the authentic materials.

Wording the speech is, in my own learning and teaching experiences, one of the most painful and complicated operations to the students, and at the same time, demanding labor to the teachers since it requires them to prepare diligently in order to guide the students in the least backbreaking manner. Furthermore, the teachers continuously have to make a close observation of the work of the writers that is being processed so that they could react properly and timely for any necessary adjustment of modification of the speech draft.

Basically it is natural to think that speech consists of three main parts: introduction, body, and conclusion, according to Fukuyama (p. 51). How should we, the teachers, coach our students for making the whole writing procedure easier for them, then? And this automatically determines the style and organization of the speech.

Fluharty asserted that the speaker should first prepare the body, the core of the speech, before the introduction since he/she has to know what the whole thing is about before introducing it; the core part is the substance of the discussion in which the speaker wants to achieve the original purpose (p. 64).

In order to construct the body of the speech, Fukuyama advocated the following procedure (p. 51): first, you set up a very clear "central idea" based on the theme already decided, then, collect the supporting materials of the central idea, and finally, organize them according to their contents, lengths and circumstances to fit them all into the frame of the speech as a whole. What he indicated seems quite convincing from my empirical point of view and Fluharty and Ross (p. 64) confirm it: "the speaker should prepare the body of the speech before deciding on the introduction because he must know what he is talking about before he can introduce it." He went further to refer that "the body is the core of the speech in which the speaker accomplishes his specific purpose." (p. 64).

Concerning the speech organization, there is an effective example presented by Olsher. The speechwriter can reconfirm each step to go through by following Olsher's "check list" (p. 81). It starts with "title and greeting" and ends with "advice and closing" while describing what function each major section has. This would enhance the writing ability of the students when

introduced in the actual high school class because it is not only simple for the students to comprehend the whole system but also it is easy for the teachers to teach with at the same time. It is very effective and cogent. The teacher can check the properness of several crucial elements in each writer's draft such as vocabulary, grammaticality, logicality, story message, and conclusion.

In the actual process of checking the student's writing, the teacher needs something concrete on which both the teaching and learning side can cooperate with each other in order to enhance the writing skills and logical development of the speech draft. "Treatment of Error (in Second Language Student Writing)" by Ferris is recommendable as such because of its explicit pedagogical standpoint to give a strong and practical support to the L2 (Second Language) writers by demonstrating "error treatment" in most effective and efficient ways. In this book, Ferris asserted, from the viewpoint based on her own teaching experiences, that there are three reasons to execute "error feedback" which got revealed through several research studies: the first reason is that error feedback can help students to improve their accuracy in the short term, second, students do value teacher feedback on their writing supporting the idea that it helps their improvement, and third, instructors have to work at finding the best way to help the students to be "independent self-editors" of their own writing later (pp. 7 - 9). Ferris continued, "The remainder of this book is devoted, therefore, to identifying ways in which teachers can prepare themselves and their students to focus on accuracy in writing most effectively." (p. 9).

(3.3) Training of Speaking

In consideration of the fact that the Japanese learners of the English language challenge to make speeches in English, what the teaching side first has to keep in mind is English pronunciation and some other oral communicative skills to go with it.

Achieving a certain comprehensible level in English pronunciation and inflection is in particular a serious and laborious task for the students whose native language is Japanese as empirically realized by the majority of English teachers in Japan.

There are countless reasons for this troublesomeness that could be immediately enumerated here; one of the most well-known reasons is the difference between the phonological systems of English and Japanese. Besides the whole description of "common pronunciation problems" in English (pp. 96 - 108), Avery and Ehrlich made a clear identification of the typical problems which Japanese native speakers confront when learning speaking English (pp. 134 - 138) together with other major language groups. For example, they pointed out that closed syllables and consonant clusters are difficult for Japanese speakers and that Japanese is a syllable-timed language, and therefore the Japanese native speakers may have difficulty with English that has the stress-timed rhythm. This makes us already foresee that a number of concrete and tiresome problems in practice, huge and minute, will stand in our way to learn speaking English. The description goes on: since Japanese has a five-vowel system, Japanese learners of English must learn many more vowels that are new to them (p. 134).

Thus, teaching English pronunciation in Japan looks a desperate mission. It is inevitable,

however, that we have to face the reality and overcome it as far as we teach English in Japan. How should we cope with it then? Could we think of remedies that would work for any of the problems discussed already?

According to Kosuge, there are two conventional manners of instruction: 1) making students listen to models of good quality by tapes, CDs and/or teachers themselves, and 2) explaining how to pronounce each vowel, consonant and diphthong (p. 10). Fast learners among the students quickly start picking up some hints from the first and in this context, Ohmi is right; he strongly recommended the "Oral Interpretation Method", making a good use of his book and CD with a number of examples of "well known speeches" (pp. 9 - 10). This seems to have started showing some results in the teaching/learning context of the program I have been involved in. Those who are not particularly keen on this field and thus cannot pick up anything yet, often have to wait for the teacher's instruction of the second aspect here in Japan. Adding more suggestions, Kosuge reminds us of the roles of other elements in English oral expression such as: 1) rhythm, 2) collocation and 3) intonation besides training of only pronunciation (pp. 12 - 13).

Nonaka raised an interesting question often asked by English native speakers: why is the voice of Japanese, especially Japanese women, so thin and hard to hear? (p. 14). He implies that some Japanese speakers apply a completely different system of breathing and using the air for utterance in daily conversation. Nakatsu, a "returnee" from the U.S.S.R. right after the World War II, a professional user of American English who studied in the U.S.A, introduced a Japanese girl's episode whose speech in English was just like a tender and beautiful "bird's singing" and simply not understandable as English (pp. 13 - 19), and asserted that, apparently, the amount of air Japanese speakers take in their lungs is by far insufficient to be able to speak natural American English at a normal speed (pp. 23 - 26). Although no scientific evidence is presented in her book such as concrete figures on the "amount of air" hypothesis, Nakatsu is a devoted and efficient English teacher who has been teaching English to Japanese speakers implementing her unique and original methods over decades after having spent many years by speaking only American English, and her suggestions are often profound ones supported by her own steady teaching experiences. Based on her unique opinion, she planned and executed a special pronunciation training that is not only theoretical but also quite physically demanding for Japanese speakers, as shown in her website (http://nakatsu-miraijuku.com/); to be more concrete, she suggested that the trainees should get used to breathing more deeply and efficiently, or "abdominal breathing (respiration)" so that they could get "enough air" which is necessary for making each English vowel and consonant, and also "consonant clusters," for instance.

Makino argued about this pronunciation problem from another angle: the students immediately have to learn each word's pronunciation when they encounter it for the first time so that the whole cognitive process of learning could include also the phonological aspect and this is a serious task of the teaching side (p. 15). In Japan, it is practically not amazing to know that they do not necessarily teach how to pronounce each new word at its first appearance in

the reading class though it is actually an appalling story. He asserts, from his own teaching background, that it is a tremendous demand, but on the other hand, it is most effective and certainly rewarding in the sense that students acquire, or at least know the right pronunciation of the new words (pp. 15 - 16).

All of what has been reported above is a potential remedy which is practically realizable to enhance the holistic speaking ability of learners in the actual teaching context; teachers must therefore consider to implement any of those methods.

Finally, we should not forget that we still have a major subject left to nail down: we have observed and examined more or less how we should teach English pronunciation, however, what English pronunciation should we teach in reality to our students, the Japanese native speakers? As repeatedly indicated in this paper so far, almost all the English teachers in Japan must have experiences of desperately challenging the students in order to redress their accented pronunciation. It is not a simple question to conclude but we need to have a kind of answer in mind before setting out for the classroom every morning since we should not be wasting time and mental and physical energy of both sides of students and teachers by the obsession of achieving "native-like" pronunciation through forever-lasting, unrewarded, backbreaking exercises.

Avery and Ehrlich did not forget to mention about this point: in the Introduction of "Teaching American English Pronunciation," they warned us in advance that we should set some "realistic goals," together with a clear designation of their basic standpoint that attempting to completely eradicate a foreign accent is an unrealistic goal (xvi).

Anybody would agree with them, and as the result, we would have to find a compromise somewhere on the line of reasonably comprehensible pronunciation of English that Japanese can still expect to master. Arimoto made a suggestion that instead of challenging to attain "native-likeness," we should aim at "EIL –English as an International Language" defining that the speaker might still have a Japanese accent, but communication is fully possible (pp. 27 - 28). Arimoto further stated three points are very important: 1) teachers should keep making an effort for improving their own pronunciation skills, 2) it is more and more required to know how the teaching side can observe and analyze the pronunciation of each individual of students and advise and coach the speaker effectively, and 3) we should enhance the listening ability of the students at the same time because it always goes together with the speaking ability (p. 29). In any case, more arguments and academic studies are expected on this issue in the future.

(3.4) Significance of Teaching English Public Speaking at School in Japan

Azuma, a sociolinguist, introduced a quite interesting concept by Hall, a communication specialist, explaining that there two types of context: "high context" communication can be defined as a communication which occurs under the circumstances a great deal of information such as knowledge and experiences are shared with each other by the social members, while he named the opposite case "low context" in communication which each individual does not have much mutual information to share with others as a database (pp. 170 - 174). For instance,

Japan has a culture of "highest context" in which people do not have to rely each time on verbal information exchange for everything; on the other hand, in the American culture, people have a tendency to talk, tell, ask, explain, negotiate, and do any other kind of linguistic activity through verbal interaction in the "low context." Azuma further added that Roasch and Segler developed this perspective to demonstrate a model of the high-low relationship with languages, telling that what differentiates each culture is not separated but linear, in other words, it is a gradation of degrees with German as one of the lowest and the highest, possibly Japanese and Korean (pp. 174 - 175).

It would be a tremendously significant opportunity for our students to get known to this sort of profound, linguistic, sociocultural and anthropological thought by having a chance to take a speech course at school. The class could be fruitful and full of implications on human beings and the relationship between language and society from the global point of view.

IV.　Conclusion

(4.1) Theoretical Considerations

Ohmi made an assertion, in "Theory and Practice of English Communication" (2003), that it is far from being wise to separate two ideas of "studying English for entrance examinations" and "learning oral communication skills in English" in the daily teaching activity in the classroom (p. 20). It is another form of stupidity that we try to differentiate "reading" and "writing" or "speaking" and "writing" in his opinion (p. 21). Those "near-sighted ways of teaching" should be renounced immediately and teachers have to think about more holistic approaches (p. 19). In other words, we have to once again recognize those four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking, as a whole, for which "teaching public speaking" courses could be quite useful and contributable to play an important role in school education.

Kosuge suggested that teachers, Japanese teachers in particular, should remind themselves of three perspectives in teaching speaking: 1) the pronunciation does not have to be a hundred percent perfect, 2) but they have to make a continuous effort to improve their own pronunciation, and 3) they hopefully do not have to rely on other media such as CDs and tapes when teaching in the classroom; they should keep challenging themselves to use their own voice (p. 13).

Although it seems to be a waste of time and energy as many teachers feel, it is after all not just a tiresome job to teach how to speak English to your students. It sometimes presents us a wonderful world of communication, which we might have never realized in our native language. Reaching to the point that you and your students realize it, it is already rewarding.

Although it sounds extremely difficult, there always seem to be ways to get to a certain level by carefully checking what is possible and what not, and how both of the teaching and learning side together could cope with it.

(4.2) Summary

Although it is an "outside-the-compulsory" course and still experimental, This "preparing for the speech contests" is a unique, interesting, and above all, beneficial program both to the students and to the school. It provides them with a suitable opportunity to experience a series of work partially as a group and partially individually through the various class activities.

The major goal of this course for the students is to learn a number of skills and techniques in order to perform well in the annual English speech contests, and eventually through the experiences, they start having a certain idea about themselves and their future.

The school takes care of the whole process to help the students, by organizing the class, arranging the teacher who actually teaches the class directly and by making all the conditions such as time, space and equipments available for the purpose, without really asking for the direct evaluation and effect, but with high expectations that the students will achieve "something fruitful and meaningful" for themselves. The course result, therefore, is not reflected in the official school program in any form. The effect of the course is seen maybe in several years after that.

(4.3) Closing Comments

This project is still new and rare in the school and the municipal. Therefore, what is waiting in the future is not clear yet. However, it is certainly an enormously interesting project, and considering the movement of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in recent years, the aspect of oral communication in English has been more and more stressed and will be even more strongly emphasized in the near future. In that connection, it is guite possible that a course like this will grow and improve.

A potential problem is who is going to teach such a course? Does any junior high school have the right instructor and/or teaching staff to support and maintain the system right now? Or, are all those schools going to ask the MEXT for the budget to employ the ALTs, the native English-speaking teachers? It is highly unlikely and it is simply not realistic, and besides, there rises a doubt whether all the ALTs with naturally English speaking logic and mentality (though the fact itself is nothing wrong) will be able to understand the young Japanese students with basically a Japanese cultural background and be able to teach how to write a serious, understandable English logic based sentences from scratch by talking to them only in English, explaining "why it is not so" when you try to communicate in English.

It is desperately needed, now, to bring along the Japanese- speaking teachers who can train the students. The ALTs are of course helpful, but also taking into consideration the aspect of students' identity, it is not likely that they are the ultimate solution in Japan.

This is an inevitable issue, and the entire school system in Japan should take it seriously and we need fresh forces to tackle this new challenge.

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End Notes

1) http://www.city.setagaya.lg.jp/kurashi/103/133/523/d00005717.html   from the official website of Setagaya-ku, Tokyo.

2) http://www.city.setagaya.lg.jp/kurashi/107/162/804/d00134104_d/fil/1.pdf   from the official website of Setagaya-ku, Tokyo.

3) H.I.H Prince Takamado Trophy – All Japan Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest. http://www.jnsafund.org/   http://www.jnsafund.org/documents/2017kaisaiyokoenglish.pdf

4) https://ci.nii.ac.jp/els/contentscinii_20180120225537.pdf?id=ART0009884268. "Throughout Japan there are numerous foreign language and Japanese language speech contests at the middle school, high school and post-high school levels…The sponsors or organizers of speech contests are both private and public groups, such as schools, boards of education, business and cultural societies and newspaper companies, etcetera."

5) http://www.britannica.com/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=public%20speaking&query=public%20speaking

6) http://www.publicspeakingproject.org/PDFS/chapter2.pdf

7) http://www.compserv.sabah.gov.my/research/E/e1.html

8) https://www.thebalance.com/japan-s-lost-decade-brief-history-and-lessons-1979056
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9) See the latest information about this contest attached in the section of Appendices (II. H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy 69th All Japan Inter -Middle School English Oratorical Contest), or visit: http://www.jnsafund.org/documents/2017kaisaiyokoenglish.pdf

10) See the section of Appendices (I. Course Schedule).

(Appendices)

I. Course Schedule

1	September 1	Unit 1 (a) Introduction: getting known to each other. Getting started: what is "speech"? /Think about the topic. Have you ever seen or done anything like that? Let's see a good example. (Chaplin) (the original in English with Japanese translation)
2	September 5	Unit 1 (b) Let's write a draft: what do you want to talk about? And why? Group discussion and individually consulting the teachers.
3	September 8	Unit 1 (c) Finish the draft: get the help from the teacher (and the ALT). Keep working over the draft with the teaching staff.
4	September 12	Unit 2 (a) Pronunciation check: read your draft aloud. Can you pronounce everything? Individual pronunciation check by the teacher (and the ALT).
5	September 15	Unit 2 (b) Memorize the draft: can you talk to the audience without reading the draft? What about the pronunciation, intonation and the expressions? Individual check of speech performance by the teachers (and the ALT if necessary).
6	September 19	Unit 2 (c) Performance check: consider every aspect of making a speech (such as gestures, tones and volumes). Individual check of speech performance by the teachers. Those who have not memorized the drafts should work even harder.
7	September 22	Unit 3 (a) Do not always count on the microphone, but let's get used to how to use it anyway (about the PA system). The class will be held in the gym hall and afterwards in the audio room. Individual check of speech performance by the teacher and group discussion on performance (peer conference). Check each other's performance. Try to get used to talk in a big hall. Then move to the audio room to see the video of the district contest of the last year (and eventually group discussion).
8	October 3	Unit 3 (b) Get used to talk to many people in the big hall. The class will be held in the gym hall and afterwards in the audio room. The audience (English teachers and the school staff) will be waiting for you.
9	October 6	Unit 4 (a) Rehearsal: first in the hall, then in the classroom individual check up by the teachers. Think about the attitude of making a speech in public and learn some techniques for improvement.
	October 7	District Speech Contest: First round
	October 8	Prince Takamado Trophy: Tokyo District first round
10	October 10	Unit 4 (b) Review meeting: peer conference and comments by the teacher while watching the recorded performance in the audio room.
11	October 13	Unit 4 (c) First individual check up by the teacher and then move to the hall for performance. Peer conference and the teacher's comment.

12	October 17	Unit 5 (a) Rehearsal
13	October 20	Unit 5 (b) Rehearsal
14	October 24	Unit 5 (c) Rehearsal
	October 27	District Speech Contest: Final
15	November 6	Unit 5 (d) Rehearsal
	November 25	Prince Takamado Trophy: National (Final)
16	November 28	Unit 6 Review meeting: So how was it? And what do you think have you learned? General comments and then comments on each student's performance by the teachers.

Notes: ・The class starts usually at 3:30 and ends at 5:00 (if possible it might last till 5:30).
　　　　・The official deadlines of the application forms and drafts have to be checked and all the necessary papers and procedures have to be completed in time by the chief of the regular teaching staff with the cooperation of the school office. The course instructor (main teacher) gets all the report from the chief.
　　　　・The reason to use Chaplin's speech in "The Great Dictator" is because it is one of the most famous speech examples that the Japanese people know or at least have heard about, and it is a beautiful, and very moving text, with a special atmosphere and characteristic out of which you can make your own speech by changing the elements in the text such as the tone, stress and intonation. It is introduced in a number of books published in Japan as an excellent example. In class, the original text is introduced together with "*Kando suru Eigo* (Moving English Texts)" by Ohmi, in which the core part of this speech is taken as a teaching material (2003, pp. 26 - 33).

II. H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy 69th All Japan Inter -Middle School English Oratorical Contest

2017.6.3

H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy
69th All Japan Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest

Semifinal Contest: Wednesday, November 22, 2017, 9:00a.m., Akasaka Civic Hall, Tokyo
　　　　　　　　　Thursday, November 23, 2017, 9:00a.m., Akasaka Civic Hall, Tokyo

Final Contest:　　　Friday, November 24, 2017, 11:15a.m., Yurakucho Yomiuri Hall, Tokyo

Purpose:

The purpose of this Contest is to provide middle school students with opportunities to master English as an international language and to become internationally minded, thereby contributing to further enhancing the Japanese culture and to fostering friendship with peoples of the world.

Prefectural Contests and Central (Semifinal and Final) Contests:

The Prefectural Contests shall take place in each of the 47 prefectures throughout Japan to be conducted by respective Prefectural Boards of Education or branch offices of The Yomiuri Shimbun in each prefecture. The participants chosen as finalists of these Prefectural Contests are eligible to participate in the Semifinal Contests in Tokyo on November 22 and 23 and the Final Contest on November 24 to compete for the Prince Takamado Trophy.

Prefectural Contests:

1. Date and Place

The date, the time and the place shall be decided by each prefectural contest organizer.

2. Qualifications for Participation

(1) Students enrolled in middle schools in Japan who are recommended by their school principals.
　　Students who fall under (a) ~ (d) below are not eligible to participate:
　　　　(a) Those who, subsequent to their fifth birthday, resided in English-speaking areas* for a total of one year or more, or continuously for six months or more.
　　　　(b) Those who were, for over six months, enrolled in schools which actually provide education in English beyond the English language course (including International Schools, American Schools, or any other schools where over half of their curricula are conducted in English), irrespective of whether such schools are located within Japan or overseas.
　　　　(c) Those whose guardians or relatives from English-speaking areas* are residing in the same domicile.
　　　　(d) Those who won the 1st to 3rd places in any previous Prince Takamado Trophy's Final Contest.

　　　　* The term "English speaking areas" refers to the countries/regions which use English as (a) their primary language, (b) official language, or (c) semi-official language. For the list of such countries/regions, please consult the website of the JNSA Fund. (http://www.jnsafund.org)

(2) Those who have entered the Contest in violation of the above provisions shall be disqualified.

(3) As regards the question of qualifications in individual cases, the authority for the final decision rests with the JNSA Fund. In case of a doubt, please consult the Prince Takamado Trophy Secretariat of the Fund.

1

3. Terms and Qualifications for Application

Speech Division

(1) An application form for H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy Contest and two copies of the speech draft must be submitted to the prefectural contest organizer by the deadline specified by the organizer.

(2) Theme: Open.
Speeches should be those that reflect the opinion or message of the speakers in English, which have not yet been presented elsewhere. Speeches used in any of the preliminary contests related to the Prince Takamado Trophy, however, are allowed. Plagiarizing is strictly prohibited. Quotations must expressly be so stated. Speakers who violate these rules will be disqualified.

(3) Time Limit: Five minutes.
Exceeding the time limit results in deduction of points from the speaker's final score.

(4) Copyright: The copyright of the speeches of the prefectural representatives is reserved by the organizers of the Prince Takamado Trophy, the JNSA Fund and The Yomiuri Shimbun, as referred to below.

(5) **a.** Participants are not allowed to use any amplification equipment.
b. Use of any eye-catching tools, excessive gestures and/or performance is prohibited.
c. Standing in front, or by the side, of the lectern when delivering the speech is in principle prohibited, unless the contestant is considered to have justifiable reasons such as prohibiting physical conditions.
d. Violation of one or more of the above rules may result in deduction of points from the final score.

Recitation Division

The rules applicable to the Speech Division are *mutatis mutandis* applied to the Recitation Division. The participating students and/or their teachers should contact the respective prefectural contest organizers for information on application methods, title, time limit and other pertinent rules and guidelines. This Division is held at the prefectural level only; no central contest is organized.

4. Awards

(1) The top three contestants from each Prefectural Contest are eligible to participate in the Semifinal Contest in Tokyo. (One contestant per school; if two speakers from the same school are chosen for the top three, the fourth runner-up is eligible to represent his/her prefecture.) Due to demographic distributions, however, Aichi and Fukuoka Prefectures may send four contestants, and Tokyo, Osaka, Kanagawa and Hokkaido Prefectures may send five contestants to the Semifinal.

(2) Those who win 1st to 3rd places but are not eligible to participate in the Semifinal due to the rule in section (1) above shall receive an "Honorary Award" and may also be invited to the Grand Reception, provided that they bear their own travel and accommodation expenses.

(3) The Prefectural Contest winners shall be presented with a certificate.

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Central Contests:

Semifinal Contests

1. Schedule

Date and Time	Semifinal Contest Divisions	Number of Schools to be Selected for the Final Contest
Nov. 22 9:00a.m.-1:15p.m.	**1st Division — Kanto District: 10 Prefectures** Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Chiba, Gunma, Nagano, Yamanashi, and Shizuoka.	6 (out of 34)
Nov. 22 1:45p.m.-6:20p.m.	**2nd Division — Northern Japan: 12 Prefectures** Hokkaido, Aomori, Iwate, Akita, Miyagi, Yamagata, Nigata, Fukushima, Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, and Gifu.	7 (out of 38)
Nov. 23 9:00a.m.-1:40p.m.	**3rd Division — Central Japan: 12 Prefectures** Aichi, Shiga, Mie, Nara, Wakayama, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Shimane, Tottori, Okayama, and Hiroshima.	7 (out of 39)
Nov. 23 2:10p.m.-6:55p.m.	**4th Division — Southern Japan: 13 Prefectures** Yamaguchi, Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kochi, Fukuoka, Oita, Saga, Miyazaki, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, and Okinawa.	7 (out of 40)

2. Place: Akasaka Civic Hall (Address: 4-18-13 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo)
3. Qualifications: Top three speakers chosen from each Prefectural Contest, with the following exception: four contestants from Aichi and Fukuoka, and five contestants from Tokyo, Osaka, Kanagawa and Hokkaido.
4. Application: The Prince Takamado Trophy Application Form should be submitted together with one typed copy (A4 size) of the speech manuscript.
5. Deadline for Application: Within one week following the Prefectural Contest in which the contestant participated.
   Deadline for Speech Manuscript Submission: Wednesday, Oct. 11. (Upon receipt of the application papers, details for the Semifinals shall be provided by the end of October.)
6. Mailing Address for Application: Prince Takamado Trophy Secretariat,

   c/o The Yomiuri Shimbun, Tokyo Office

   1-7-1, Otemachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8055

   Tel 03-3217-8393 (13:00-18:00 on weekdays); Fax 03-3217-8358

7. Judging Method: Speeches shall be judged on the basis of the three main viewpoints (Contents, English, and Delivery). An emphasis shall be placed on the contents.
8. Subsidy for Expenses: The organizer shall provide a subsidy for all participants in the central Contests to cover their travel and accommodation expenses.

Final Contest

1. Date and Time: Friday, November 24th, 2017 11:15a.m. -3:15p.m.
2. Place: Yomiuri Hall, Tokyo (near Metro Yurakucho Station)
3. Qualifications: 27 speakers selected as the finalists from the 151 participants at the Semifinal Contests.
4. Judging Method: Same as the Semifinal Contests.

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Awards for the Final Contest:

First Place	Prince Takamado Trophy
Second Place	Yomiuri Shimbun Trophy
Third Place	JNSA Fund Trophy
Fourth Place	The Japan News Trophy
Fifth Place	Yomiuri Shimbun Trophy
Sixth Place	Yomiuri Shimbun Trophy
Seventh Place	Yomiuri Shimbun Trophy
Eighth to Twenty-Seventh Place	Honorary Awards

The World Family Award for Human Connection
This award shall be presented to students, from among the finalists, who have given outstanding speeches on the topic of human connection.
Embassy of Ireland Award
This award shall be presented to the fourth prize winner. The prize is an invitation to attend summer school in Ireland for two weeks next summer.

First to Third Places:
◆The Yomiuri Shimbun shall award certificates to the schools of the top three winners.
◆The JNSA Fund shall award certificates to the top three students and gold, silver and bronze medals to the top winner and the two runners-up respectively.
◆The Mitsubishi Corp. shall invite the top three winners to a summer school program for two weeks in the United Kingdom in the following year.
◆Soroptimist International of Tokyo-Azuma shall present the top three winners with a certificate and a supplementary prize.
◆IBM Japan shall present the schools of the top three winners with a certificate and a supplementary prize.
◆King Jim Co. Ltd. shall provide the schools of the top three winners with a prize.
◆SEIKO WATCH CORPORATION shall present the top seven winners with a prize.
◆Pentel Co., Ltd. Shall present all of the 27 finalists with certificates and a supplementary prize.
◆The Japan News shall present a one-year subscription of its newspapers to the schools of the top three winners.

Fourth to Seventh Place:
◆The Yomiuri Shimbun shall award certificates to the schools of the fourth through seventh place winner.
◆The JNSA Fund shall award certificates and medals to the fourth through seventh place winner.
◆The Japan News shall present six-month subscriptions of its newspapers to the schools of the fourth to seventh place winner.

Eighth to Twenty-Seventh Places:
◆A medal shall be presented to each of the eighth through twenty-seventh place finalists.
◆The Japan News shall present three-month subscriptions of its newspapers to the schools of the eighth to twenty-seventh place finalists.

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