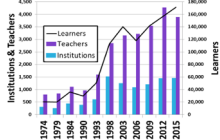


## Alaska State Japanese Speech Competition

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### Learners in the U.S. / Alaska



#### History/relationship between Alaska and Japan

- Alaska was the first state to open a trade office in Japan (1965)
- Alaska is a growing year-round tourism destination for Japanese people
- Each year there are 20,000-30,000 Japanese tourists visiting Alaska

#### What is Immersion?

Immersion Education is the process by which children learn another language by having large amounts of their classes being taught in the foreign language, starting at the elementary school level.

#### History of Immersion programs

Millions of children around the world use the immersion education process to learn second and even third languages. Many schools in Europe, Asia and Africa, students spend entire school days taught in a language completely different than their home language. Immersion education didn't appear in North America until 1963 starting in Quebec, Canada. They developed a French Immersion program that provided a total French immersion environment starting in kindergarten, which then spread throughout ten Canadian provinces. Specifically in Alaska, the Anchorage School District (ASD) started considering elementary language programs in the 1970's. Two partial elementary language programs were finally accepted into the district in 1985. One of those was the Japanese Partial Immersion Program at Sand Lake Elementary which started teaching students in the 1989-90 school year.

### K-12 (Immersion & regular) to Higher Education

#### UAF

##### Japanese Studies Major

One year of studying abroad is required

##### Japanese Studies Minor

##### Study abroad opportunities

AU- Akita International University (with KEI)

Hokkaido University

JLCS- Japanese Language & Culture Studies

HUSTEP- Short-Term Exchange Program

NGU- Nagoya Gakuin University

OGU- Osaka Gakuin University

Toboku University

DEEP- Direct Enrollment Exchange Program

JYPE- Junior Year Program in English

IPLA- International Program in Liberal Arts

Waseda University

##### AP Japanese policy

If high school students take AP Japanese exam, depending on their score and school, they can test out of the equivalent class and obtain the course credits.

School	AP Score	Credit Equivalency
UAF	3 or higher	8-10 Credits
UAA	3 or higher	6-8 Credits
UAS		No Credits Transferable

##### JLPT: Japanese-Language Proficiency Test.

Level	Summary of Linguistic Competence Required for Each Level
N1	The ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances. L1 is required to enter Japanese universities for non-Japanese L1 speakers.
N2	The ability to understand Japanese used in every situations, and in a variety of circumstances to a certain degree.
N3	The ability to understand Japanese used in everyday situations to a certain degree.
N4	The ability to understand basic Japanese.
	The ability to understand some basic Japanese.

##### Job Opportunities

- JET program: JET (the Japan Exchange and Teaching program) offers two types of position: ALT and CIR. ALT is an Assistant Language Teacher at schools in Japan. CIR will work for Japanese government offices and requires high Japanese proficiency (usually N2 and above). Currently UAF graduates work as CIR at Niigata Prefecture office, Saitama Prefecture office, and Shimanto International Relations office.
- Fairbanks North Star Borough
- Anchorage School District
- US government
- Etc.

### AK State Japanese Speech Competition

#### -What is Alaska State Japanese Speech Competition?

##### Speech Contest Mission Statement:

"Through the Alaska Japanese Competition, we bring together all Alaskan students of the Japanese language and give the students an opportunity to share their knowledge and skills of and enthusiasm for Japanese language and culture. The contest promotes mutual understanding between Alaska and Japan."

There are four big categories which are Skits & Songs, Poetry, Haiku and Speech. Each category has 2-3 judges, who judge using a well-designed rubric. Each year there are about 100 volunteers in addition to the large number of participants that help make this event possible.

#### -Skits & Songs

- Elementary Non-Heritage Skit
- Elementary Mixed Skit
- Middle/High/College Non-Heritage Skit
- Middle/High/College Heritage Skit
- Song I: Elementary
- Song II: Middle/High/College

#### -Poetry

- Elementary/Middle/High/College
- Original Poetry

#### -Haiku (Japanese Poetry composed of 17 syllables, broken down to 5-7-5)

#### -Speech

- Beginning
- Elementary
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Open
- Aurora (winners of this division can go to a national level competition)

#### -Pictures of each category (Speech / Song / Haiku / Skit)

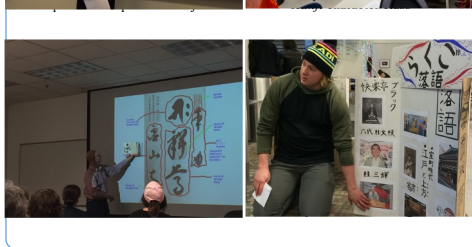
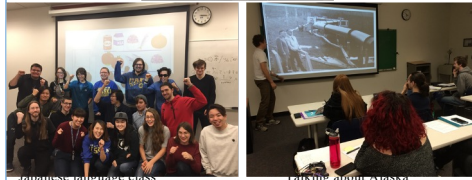
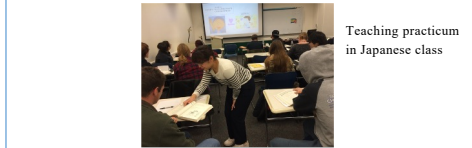


### Pedagogy at UAF

The purpose of this poster is to research how students use various study resources and improve their Japanese linguistics and communication skills. In the UAF Japanese Studies Program, students learn Japanese through a curriculum that is based on the research findings of the process of foreign language acquisition. Students participate in various language related events and projects. One of these is the Alaska State Speech Competition. Students' proficiency levels become higher through language practice and self reflection. At UAF students not only learn Japanese Modern literature, but also classic Japanese, language courses, and various projects such as learning Alaskan history and nature & earthquakes in Japan before going to study abroad. If students are majoring in Japanese Studies, they are required to study abroad in Japan for one year. Through studying abroad, their Japanese fluency and adaptation to other cultures become high. Exchange students from Japan have opportunities to learn pedagogy in Japanese language classes. Participating in events like the Japanese Speech contest is a great opportunity to not only to learn the language, but to also to think about K through 12 foreign language education.

#### -Foreign Language teaching experiences as TAs/Tutors

Exchange students have opportunities to be teaching assistants or tutors during their period of exchange. If they are interested in teaching, especially if they are from an University of Education, they can take pedagogy classes: Foreign Language Practicum and Language acquisition Practicum for Teachers of Japanese. Through these classes, students observe Japanese classes and teach in those classes under instructors' supervision. They discuss on second language acquisition research topics, learners' learning process, teachers' teaching styles and pedagogy, and what they learned from their teaching experience. It is a great opportunity to learn how to organize the class and teach Japanese.



### Learning Acquisition Process

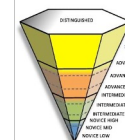
#### - Japanese Language

- The Japanese language is completely different from the English language. First, Japanese grammatical order is Subject- Object- Verb (SOV) whereas English is subject-verb-object (SVO). Second, English and Japanese letters are totally different. In Japanese, there are three types of letters which are hiragana, katakana and Chinese characters that are called kanji. Hiragana and katakana are phonetic symbols, but kanji are meaning symbols. Third, pronunciation is also different. On one hand, Japanese words are usually pronounced with each letter. On the other hand, English words are pronounced as syllables. Because of that, at the beginning of learning the language, learners face difficulties in listening to Japanese.

#### - How long does it take to learn Japanese? (FSI Data)

- According to the survey from the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of the US government, Japanese is ranked as a Category V, which means that the Japanese language takes the longest time for native English speakers to acquire compared to other languages.

#### - ACTFL scale



ACTFL

5C



Category	Hours	Language closely related to English	Spanish / French
Category I	22-24 weeks (575-600 hours)	English	
Category II	30 weeks (750 hours)	Language similar to English	German
Category III	36 weeks (900 hours)	Language with linguistic and/ or cultural differences from English	Swahili/ Indonesian
Category IV	44 weeks (1100 hours)	Languages with significant linguistics and/ or cultural differences from English	Russian/ Ukrainian
Category V	88 weeks (2200 hours)	Language which are exceptionally difficult for native speakers	Japanese

According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), 5C refers to Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities as the goals for Foreign Language Education. Communication has three standards, which are Interpersonal Communication, Interpretive Communication, and Presentational Communication and function in a variety of situations. Cultures has two standards which are Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives and Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives that focus on the learner's interaction with cultural competence and understanding. Connection also has two standards which are Making Connections, and Acquiring Information & Diverse Perspectives. These two connections are focused on, in order to facilitate effective use of the target language. Comparisons also has two standards, which are Language Comparisons and Cultural Comparisons. These comparisons are for interacting with cultural competence. Lastly, Communities has two standards that are School and Global Communities, and Lifelong Communities. These communities facilitate participation within multilingual communities at home and around the world.

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