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LT 549

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ACA 3 – Writing: A Family Instagram Post

Context description:

This course is a beginner-level conversation/interaction-focused Japanese course, and the learners in this course are adult, public university students. Students have a variety of backgrounds and students vary greatly in age (18-30+), nationality (international and domestic students), and linguistic backgrounds. It is expected that most students come into the class with almost no knowledge of Japanese, but some may be heritage speakers and some may have a little bit of experience with the language before taking the class. The main SLOs of the course focus on preparation for subsequent Japanese courses at the university. These SLOs place importance on foundational language skills such as reading and writing short simple sentences that have functional relevance to daily life, as well as speaking and listening tasks that relate to personal information and ask learners to be able to synthesize, speak and respond to short, simple utterances. These correspond with TLU tasks that revolve around everyday life language functions such as reading lists, interacting with others on social media, talking about personal information, and other communicative tasks.

Statement of Purposes:

This assessment intends to measure students' abilities to write a short text about their families in the context of an online post. Based on this, the intended consequences of this assessment are that the students will benefit from the feedback from this test and gain confidence in writing about their families, online and off, and that the teacher will get a read of writing proficiency in order to measure relevant SLOs and skills. From these intentions, the test takes the form of a summative, achievement test. This test will also be criterion-referenced as it is intended that student ability to use new vocabulary, forms, and strategies to create their written work, and these should be measured according to students' individual skills. The results of these criteria will both help the teacher to measure SLOs in the course relating to proficiency

in writing about one's family and their success in the family unit. The SLO that is being measured here is that students will be able to create short, simple sentences about their personal lives in a variety of daily life contexts. In order to accurately measure student progress and achievement towards these SLOs, this assessment will take place at the end of the family unit; at this point students will also be able to participate in Japanese speaking communities somewhat effectively as well, so the timing also matches this intended consequence. As this test intends to measure student writing skill as a summary of their achievements from the unit, this is also a summative test and would make up part of a student's final grade. This is important to include in students' grades and to assess, as discussing family is a relevant topic to daily life and conversation among friends and acquaintances; in this way, it is relevant to the course and its purpose.

In order to accurately measure the SLOs and to reach the consequences of increasing student confidence in discussing their families, the instructor will have to make decisions about what content will be most useful to students to write about their families, to participate in online spaces, and what content might need to be discussed further. They will also have to decide how to adequately and appropriately measure these things. These decisions can be made to achieve these consequences by conducting needs surveys in class before the unit begins, and by carefully considering rubric creation.

Construct specification:

This assessment intends to measure students' ability to ...

1. Write basic sentences about personal matters, specifically their families and family member details.
2. Use simple conjunctions such as 'and' and 'but' in short, written texts to build upon meaning.

Here, we intend to mainly measure item (1), which is measuring students' abilities to apply the content of the unit in a written format. We need to measure this in order to make decisions about what content to cycle back into future units, and in order to measure students' progress towards course SLOs relating to writing about daily life. Before the unit begins, we also need to gather information from our students about their families so that we know what relevant vocabulary and phrases they might need to know and use. Item (2) is more concerned

with writing style rather than language content, and attempts to measure student success in writing in fluid, naturalistic ways that are relevant to daily language use. As described by item (2), conjunctions are often used in daily life language use which makes this item relevant to the course and relevant to measuring SLOs and writing skill. Overall, these constructs are both relevant to the course and the students, and they attempt to aid the instructor in making decisions about recycling and creating content as well as measuring students' writing skill in this context.

Assessment Task Template

TLU Task: Writing an Instagram Caption	
Areas of language ability: Writing: producing short, simple sentences about one's family; using simple conjunctions	
Task characteristics	
Setting	<p>Physical circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will be working on this project on their own. They should type it, but handwriting is ok. <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students and Teacher <p>Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will have several class periods to write and edit their post; this will require about an hour of class time throughout the week leading up to submission of the post.
Input	<p>Form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aural: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher: Instructions for task and submission guidelines - Student: n/a - Visual: Example of the writing task <p>Languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Japanese: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher: Example of the writing task - Students: n/a - Length: visual: a short paragraph; aural: reading

	<p>of the short paragraph as an example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher: Asking for questions, instructions for task and submission - Student: Questions - Length: visual: n/a ; aural: short discussions of task and questions <p>Topical content: One's family</p>
Expected response	<p>Form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral: n/a - Visual: A short paragraph about one's family accompanied by a picture of their family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Length: short paragraph, about 5-7 sentences <p>Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English: n/a - Japanese: A paragraph describing one's family - Length: A short paragraph, about 5-7 sentences <p>Topical content: One's family</p>
Recording method for assessment task	<p>Assessment Task: Writing an Instagram Post About Family</p> <p>Types of assessment record: Recorded score out of 100 in gradebook in writing assignments section. Written feedback on the assignment and the option to redo the assignment to earn up to an 80.</p> <p>Aspects of ability: Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing basic sentences about personal life, specifically, one's family - Using conjunctions to build meaning. <p>Scoring method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criteria: The quality of their written input as is required of the prompt – this will be based upon considerations of detail in regard to the description of one's family and their image, and their overall writing accuracy and style. - Score reported: Total Score (100 possible) = Description

	<p>of Family Members (30) + Picture Included (10) + Picture Context Described (10) + New Vocabulary (15) + Conjunctions Used (10) + Writing Accuracy (20) + Style (5) (see rubric in model assessment task)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures: The instructor will give students instructions on how to do the assignment and what the requirements are at the beginning of the second week in the family unit. During this time, students will also receive the rubric and the instructor will show them an example of what their post might look like. Students will work on their writing project inside and outside of class during the week to get feedback and edit it as needed. At the end of the week, students will submit their picture and paragraph about their family either digitally or on paper. The instructor will then grade them and record grades in the grade book and give written feedback on the submission.
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Model Assessment Task (Step 4):

Students will be made aware of the writing project itself, its intended consequences and the assessment guidelines and the rubric on the Monday that the week the assignment is due; the assignment would be due on the following Friday. On Monday, the instructor will introduce the project, its purpose and grading guidelines and check for students' understanding of what they are being asked to do. Students will have about an hour total of class time that week to work on the project, and will also be prompted to work on the writing project outside of class.

“We’ve spent the past week talking a lot about the ways that we can describe our families! Now, we’re going to talk about a bigger assessment for this unit that will help us to see how we’re all doing with this new information! What we will be doing is choosing a picture of our family and writing an “Instagram-style” caption about the picture and your family members in the picture! This will end up being about 7 sentences long. Here, you’re being asked to describe the event happening in the picture or the context around it, and to give some details about your family members in the picture. I’ll pass out the rubric now, but what you’ll see is that

you need to include everyone's name, age, and one other detail about them! This will give us the chance to see how we're doing with the family content, and hopefully you all will see how much you've grown! Other than describing the picture and your families, you're also being asked to use the new conjunctions and vocabulary that we've been working on, and to write in a consistent style throughout. In order for me to measure how we're all doing with writing in general too, I'm asking that we make sure that our writing is accurate and free from typos, errors, or character errors! We will spend time in class this week working on this together, and you'll get the chance to peer review and get feedback from me as needed! This assessment will be due by the end of the day Friday. What questions do we have about this writing assessment?

Sample Task:

ie, Canvas Assignment page, instruction page

DUE: Friday, 11:59 pm, digital submission, handwritten or typed ok

You are making a post about your family on Instagram in Japanese. Choose a picture of your family that would be a picture that you might post online! Then, write about what is happening in the photo (why are you gathered?) and some details about your family! Be sure to use new vocabulary, our new conjunctions, and to use the same style throughout! Refer to the rubric for further information about grading and completion of the assessment, and refer to the slides from Monday for an example post.

*You can re-do/correct this assignment for up to 80 points after getting it back.

Rubric:

POINTS	REQUIREMENT
30	Discuss Family Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10 points for names of all in picture - 10 points for ages of all in picture - 10 points for one other thing about each person
10	Picture: Is there a picture provided? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10: Yes - 0: No

10	<p>Picture context: Describes the context of the picture (event, circumstances for documentation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10: Yes; in a clear and concise way - 5: Yes - 0: No
20	<p>Writing Accuracy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20 points: no errors in characters, vocabulary, typos, grammar, etc - 15-19 points: few errors that do not impact comprehensibility - 10-14 points: occasional errors that somewhat impact readability/comprehensibility - 5-9 points: frequent errors that impact readability/comprehensibility - 0-4: many errors that greatly impact meaning
15	<p>New vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15: 3 new words from family unit used correctly - 10: 2 new words from family unit used correctly - 5: 1 new word used correctly - 0: no new words used correctly
10	<p>Conjunctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 10: 2 conjunctions used correctly - 5: 1 conjunction used correctly - 0: no conjunctions used correctly
5	<p>Style: Consistent writing style throughout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5: Yes - 0: No

Assessment Justification/AUA:

This assessment intends to measure students' ability to write about personal topics such as family through the scenario of creating an online post. For this reason, this assessment rates highly in terms of positive washback, authenticity and predictive validity, but it fails to do so in all areas of desirable assessment features.

1. **Reliability:** By design this test rates highly in reliability; for each student it should produce comparable results as they are given the same prompt, amount of in-class time, and opportunities to take advantage of time in and outside of class to refine their

product. Students are given the same opportunities to work on their product in class during the week, and get feedback from their peers and the instructor as they need it. In this way, this test rates highly in terms of reliability, but it also might create reliability issues as well. If certain students are taking more advantage of this in-class time, then they might have overall better products than those who are just as skilled but did not participate as much in editing and giving/receiving feedback in class. This might be able to be addressed by stressing the importance of using the class time that is given effectively, or scheduling individual check-ins with each student throughout the week.

2. **Validity:** This test rates highly in terms of predictive validity, as how students are scoring on this writing test is likely predictive of their ability to create posts online and write short sentences in other contexts, and as they will likely score similarly on future writing tests. This is because they are given time to think through their content before they produce it, so the time that they are given in this assessment is realistic to the TLU task. It is also predictive of how they would do in future writing tests, especially ones of the same format, as issues here might carry over or show progress in fixing those errors between tests. That is, the writing and feedback received on this test will likely carry into the next one and manifest there in certain ways. While this test may rate highly in terms of predictive validity, it does not rate highly in consequential validity. This relates to the issue with reliability described above, but if learners are not taking advantage of the time to build their confidence in this type of writing about this type of topic, then they might not reach the intended beneficial consequences of this assessment. Stressing the importance of this test for building learners' skill in this certain area would be important to avoid this issue.
3. **Practicality:** This assessment is mostly practical, in that students are allowed to either type or handwrite their digital submissions; digital submissions make it easier for the teacher to grade and deliver feedback. Also, if written or hard-copy feedback is preferred or required, this can easily be achieved by printing out a student's submission and writing comments directly onto it. While this assessment is practical in this way, it is impractical in that it might require some students to work with the instructor to alter the

guidelines of the assignment if they have adversity when discussing family or non-traditional experiences. This could definitely be addressed in having meetings with students, but it represents a notable issue in designing this test for a larger group of students.

4. **Washback:** This assessment is highly beneficial in terms of positive washback, as the context of an online post is highly relevant to this daily life-focused course. This washback would look like focusing on the online domain in instruction, and this would be both engaging and relevant to students. In this way, the positive washback from this assessment would result in meaningful language learning experiences for students. While this assessment provides highly positive washback, it also provides some negative washback as well. As students are allowed to type their assignment to submit it, they would not be required to practice their growing character-writing skills. This typing modality is appropriate for the context, but for the context of this beginner class it creates some negative washback in terms of practicing and getting feedback on handwriting skills.
5. **Authenticity:** This assignment intends to contextualize the measurement of skills and SLOs through an authentic task, and it definitely achieves this through the nature of the assessment. In this assessment, students are being asked to write a post as though they would for a real social media post; in this way this assessment is very authentic in the task that it is measuring student writing skill through. While it is authentic in this way, it is also somewhat inauthentic in terms of the content of these posts. While people do post about their families in this way, the guidelines of the assessment reduce the authenticity of the content that would be in the post; the fact that this is an assessment detracts from authenticity overall. Recognizing this aspect of the assessment and prompting students to explore Japanese posts about family online could help to address this issue, but due to the nature of the assessment there is no way to completely avoid this.