

## Designing a Listening/Speaking Unit to Improve Japanese Students' Listening Comprehension and Intelligibility

Keith Martin

For Japanese university students who are planning to study abroad, being able to understand what is said to them and to make themselves understood is not merely an academic exercise, but a matter of necessity. To develop these skills, students must learn how conversations are organized (discourse knowledge) and what is typically said in various real-life situations (pragmatic knowledge). However, although Japanese students typically have six years of English education prior to entering university, the majority of their training involves little or no emphasis on pragmatics or discourse. The purpose of this paper is to describe how Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research guided the design of a listening/speaking unit on discourse, pragmatics and phonology for Japanese university students who are planning to study abroad. Specifically, the paper explains how these skills contribute to developing listening comprehension and intelligibility and how self-made materials can be especially useful in this endeavor.

The paper begins with a description of the target group, topic and materials. It then explains the organization of the unit as well as why and how, based on SLA research, the unit addresses the areas of discourse, pragmatics and phonology.

### **Target group/Topic**

The listening/speaking unit is intended for Japanese university students, ranging from false beginner to high-elementary, who are preparing to study in the U.S. or Canada. The topic for the unit is *Making, Accepting and Declining Invitations*, real-life situations that the students are likely to encounter when studying abroad. This topic lends itself to the development of pragmatic competence by necessitating the use of lexical chunks for the speech acts of inviting and declining. It also promotes students' discourse competence as they learn to recognize and use features such as backchannel expressions and discourse markers. Finally, by developing the ability to accept and extend invitations in English, the

students can increase their opportunities for additional social and linguistic interaction while overseas.

## Materials

As Tomlinson (2001) points out, “authentic texts...can provide meaningful exposure to language as it is typically used” (p. 68). However, Harmer (2001) warns that authentic material that is too difficult “can be extremely de-motivating for students since they will not understand it” (p. 205). One alternative is to use a course book which includes professionally made materials for listening and speaking. Unfortunately, according to Thornbury (2005), the content of such materials is often “a far remove from naturally occurring speech” (p. 44). As Willis & Willis (2007) explain, this is because such materials “fail to incorporate many of the features which are typical of spoken discourse” (p. 43). To resolve this dilemma, instructors can create their own ‘authentic-like’ (Crawford, 1995, p. 29) materials which include “the natural qualities of authenticity” (Day and Bamford as cited in Tomlinson, 2001, p. 68). In addition to ensuring authenticity, developing self-made materials allows instructors to focus on the target language and take advantage of specific pedagogical techniques, such as recycling vocabulary, making recordings at different speeds, guiding the noticing of target language, and providing additional practice for problem areas.

## Authenticity

Authentic conversation includes a wide range of vocabulary features, such as discourse markers, speech acts, vagueness expressions, social formulas, spoken grammar, etc. In order to simulate authenticity, the conversations which serve as the listening texts for the unit include a variety of examples of these forms: buying time (um..., well,...), vagueness ( I don’t think so), adjacency pair (What’s up?/ Not much.), colloquial expressions (No problem), social forms (See you later.), backchannel expressions (Oh, I see.), feedback (Good idea!), and speech acts (Would you like to ...?). Furthermore, to provide a model of natural pronunciation, rhythm and stress patterns in the listening texts, the recordings are made with native English speakers from the U.S. and Canada. These speakers also participate as conversation partners in the final speaking activity. As Thornbury (2005) notes, “teachers often have a well-developed sense of how to make adjustments to their speech that favour intelligibility without sacrificing authenticity” (p. 46).

## Organization

The unit is separated into three sections: Pre-Listening, Listening, and Speaking. The activities in the Pre-Listening section are centered on two topics: *free-time activities* and *invitations*. The *free-time activities* topic serves to activate students' previous knowledge and includes the majority of the content-related vocabulary for the subsequent listening activities. The *free-time activities* topic is placed first so that the content vocabulary can be used in the *invitations* topic. The *invitations* topic includes function-related vocabulary and expressions for both the listening and speaking activities. All of this lexis is recycled throughout the unit. This promotes noticing during both listening and speaking. Both the "free-time activities" topic and the "invitations" topic begin with lead-ins; discussing photos for *free-time activities* and presenting a problem for *invitations*. According to Scrivener (2005), lead-ins "may be able to help raise motivation or interest" (p. 44). Furthermore, instructions for both topics are divided into short, simple steps. As Scrivener (2005) points out, "[s]eparating activities and instructions into different steps is an important technique. At each point, the learners know what they need to know without possible confusion from instructions for later parts of the activity" (p. 48).

The second section of the unit, Listening, provides students with an awareness of how the language is organized and used in context. The listening exercises are based on short conversations scripted by the author. "One advantage of scripting speech is that teachers can incorporate repeated examples of particular features" (Thornbury, 2005, p. 44). Thus, by creating several short dialogues, language items can be repeated, and noticed, across the dialogues as well. The Listening section includes both top down and bottom up activities. It begins with the top down activities of predicting and listening for gist in order to activate students' schemata. According to Harmer (2007), "activating students' schemata and giving them some topic help to assist them in making sense of the listening is a vital part of our role" (p. 305). Subsequently, the bottom up activities involving listening for detail, such as having students fill in the blanks on an incomplete transcript, provide guided noticing of the language features that are being studied (Thornbury, 2005, p. 48). These activities also help students to recognize phonological aspects of language, such as weak and connected forms.

The third section, Speaking, provides students with additional training in phonology as well as an opportunity to implement their new pragmatic and discourse knowledge through interactive speaking. The section begins

with guided noticing of sentence stress. Using the conversation from the previous activity, the instructor reads the sentences aloud while marking the accented words. Students then mark their papers in the same way. The instructor then reads the sentences again, modeling the sentence stress and intonation. The instructor then leads the students in choral repetition of the conversation. The second activity uses the same conversation, this time emphasizing phrasing. The instructor reads the conversation, pausing after each phrase and drawing a vertical line at that point. The students do the same on their papers and then the instructor guides them in choral repetition. Finally, the students practice the conversation in pairs, emphasizing phrasing, sentence stress and intonation. The two final activities encourage students to practice both speaking and listening through conversations. Both exercises are forms of information gap activities. As Gibbons (2002) observes, “The best pedagogic tasks involve some kind of information gap” (pp. 23-24). The first activity is somewhat structured and the second is largely unstructured, thus scaffolding students toward greater autonomy. In the first activity, students try to complete their weekend schedules by walking around the room and inviting other students to do various activities. At the same time, they must accept or decline invitations from other students. In the second activity, students use information from a local English-language magazine about upcoming events to make, accept, and decline invitations with native speakers. They must also arrange a time and place to meet for invitations that they accept.

### **Pragmatics Knowledge/Discourse Knowledge**

In order to develop their listening and speaking, students need to become aware of the language and processes of speech acts (pragmatics knowledge) and the language and processes of discourse (discourse knowledge), such as lexical chunks, back-channel expressions, and discourse markers. To make the discourse markers and speech act expressions more noticeable, they are repeated throughout the three dialogues. These items are also recycled in the scrambled sentence dialogue for the Speaking section. “One way to raise learners’ awareness of features of spoken language is to expose them to instances of speaking and to have them study transcripts of such instances” (Thornbury, 2005, p. 43). In addition to making the discourse markers and speech act expressions more salient, the scrambled dialogue also models how these features are used. This is important, because “[s]peech act knowledge...means knowing not just how particular speech acts are

typically realized, but how such speech acts fit into the longer exchanges that form units of talk” (Thornbury, 2005, p. 17). Furthermore, this activity also adds to discourse knowledge. Asking students to unscramble the lines of a dialogue “teaches students about cohesion and coherence properties of language” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 133).

### **Pragmatic Competence/Discourse Competence**

Acquiring knowledge, however, is not the final goal. As Harmer (2007) points out, “students need chances to activate their language knowledge through meaning-focused tasks” (p. 79). This view is echoed by Chapelle (1998) : “It may be important that learners have an audience for the linguistic output they produce so that they attempt to use the language to construct meanings for communication rather than solely for practice” (p. 23). The two speaking activities address these points by encouraging students to develop their discourse and pragmatic competence through interactive speaking. The materials for the first activity are simple, yet provide a clear structure. The students have some support from the familiar information on their papers, but they must, nonetheless, put their discourse and pragmatic knowledge to use to complete the activity. The second activity includes authentic materials; the weekend events listing from a local English language magazine and native speakers. While the locations on the event list are known to most of the students, they are seeing the events and other information for the first time. This naturally adds an element of interest as they read through the information and choose activities they would like to attend. Most importantly, however, this activity gives the students the opportunity to interact with native speakers and it provides an authentic experience for the intended end use of living in the U.S. or Canada.

### **Phonology**

In preparing to live in the U.S. or Canada, there is one more important area in which students need to develop proficiency if they are to understand native speakers and be understood: phonology. In fact, Thompson (2001) remarks that:

Japanese learners...find the more complex sounds of English very hard to pronounce, and they may have even greater difficulty in perceiving accurately what is said. Often a student can say quite a complicated sentence with faultless grammar and choice of words,

yet would be unable to understand the same sentence if it was said to him or her (p. 213).

As Rost (2001) explains, Japanese is a syllable-timed language whereas English is a stressed-timed language, so “Japanese learners often have difficulty identifying key words in spoken English, due in part to the different stress systems” (pp. 9-10). Specifically, “[s]tress-timing produces numerous linked or assimilated consonants and reduced (or weakened) vowels so that the pronunciation of words often seems slurred” (Rost, 2001, p. 9). Therefore, typical phonological aspects of informal U.S. and Canadian speech, such as connected speech, weak forms, and blending, are explained, identified and practiced throughout the unit. The Pre-Listening section introduces students to these phonological features and allows them to briefly practice them through choral repetition. Then, in the Listening section, students are given more extended opportunities to listen for and identify the changes they hear. For example, in the listening for gist activities, three conversations are played three times. For the first listening, ‘informal’ pronunciation is used, but the rate of speech is slightly reduced. For the second listening, the rate is slightly increased and for the third listening, a normal rate is used. A normal rate is also used for the listening for details activity. The listening for details activity also requires students to write the formal pronunciation that corresponds to the informal pronunciation they hear. This activity promotes recognition of the association between the two pronunciations. In the Speaking section, students have an opportunity to actively use the phonological features they have studied. However, because emphasis is on listening comprehension of this pronunciation, students are only prompted to use informal pronunciation when it is necessary for intelligibility.

### **Intelligibility**

As important it is for students to understand what is said to them, others must also be able to understand what they say. Although pronunciation plays a part in that, Thornbury (2005) points out that “[n]ative speakers...frequently identify the non-native-like use of stress, rhythm, and intonation as being a greater bar to intelligibility, and a stronger marker of accent, than the way individual vowel and consonant sounds are produced” (p. 37). This can be especially true of Japanese speakers. As Avery and Ehrlich (1992) observe:

When learning English, Japanese speakers frequently experience difficulty in pronouncing closed CVC syllables and may add a vowel to the end of a closed syllable to make the word conform to the Japanese pattern. Thus, a word with a closed syllable such as 'sit' may be pronounced as 'sito' with two open syllables (CV-CV). (p. 54)

This addition of syllables affects stress, rhythm and, ultimately, intelligibility. With this in mind, materials are included in the Speaking section to make students aware of and help them improve their sentence stress, rhythm and intonation. In Speaking Activity One (Sentence Stress and Intonation) and Activity Two (Phrasing), the students are given the transcript from the Post-Listening activity and, as Thornbury (2005) recommends, they listen and mark the stressed words and phrasing. Students then use their papers to practice the sentence stress and phrasing with a partner. This choral repetition and pair work is intended to guide students toward greater fluency, which Thornbury (2005) describes as "the capacity to string long runs together, with appropriately placed pausing" (p. 64). Finally, interacting with native speakers in the Information Gap Activity enables students to gain experience using their new listening and speaking skills in a situation similar to one they might encounter while living abroad.

## **Conclusion**

It is clear that low-level Japanese university students need to improve their listening and speaking skills in order to communicate effectively while studying abroad. Deciding how to design a listening/speaking unit to accomplish that, however, is not as obvious. Fortunately, as this paper showed, Second Language Acquisition research points to the importance of discourse, pragmatics and phonology in developing listening comprehension and intelligibility. Furthermore, the paper also demonstrated how using self-made materials makes it possible to ensure authenticity that might not be present in commercial course books while at the same time offering valuable scaffolding by, for example, repeating vocabulary throughout the unit, adjusting the speed of listening materials, guiding noticing of target language, and including additional activities for students' weak areas. Therefore, by basing content and structure on SLA research, it was possible to design a listening/speaking unit that not only teaches students how to carry out the inviting function, but also helps them develop the general knowledge and skills they need to communicate

successfully in other situations. Moreover, because of the universal nature of the knowledge and skills developed through the unit, these same materials can also be used with other target groups, including those that do not intend to study abroad, to help them improve their listening comprehension and intelligibility.

#### REFERENCES

- Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (1992) *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chapelle, C. (1998) Multimedia CALL: lessons to be learned from research on instructed SLA. *Language Learning and Technology*, 2 (1), 22-34.
- Crawford, J. (1995). The role of materials in the language classroom: Finding the balance. *TESOL in Context*, 5 (1), 25-33.
- Gibbons, P. (2002). Classroom talk: creating contexts for language learning. In *Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom* (pp. 14-39). Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.
- Harmer, J. (2007) *The practice of English language teaching* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Harmer, J. (2001) *The practice of English language teaching* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000) *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rost, M. (2001). Listening. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 7-13). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Scrivener, J. (2005). Classroom activities. In *Learning teaching: A guidebook for English teachers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), (pp. 41-60). Oxford: Macmillan.
- Thompson, I. (2001). Japanese speakers. In M. Swan & B. Smith (Eds.), *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems* (pp. 212-223). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Thornbury, S. (2005). *How to teach speaking*. London: Pearson Education.
- Tomlinson, B. (2001). Materials development. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 66-71). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



## Appendix A: Procedures for Pre-Listening Activities

### A) Topic One: Free-time Activities

1) First, write 'Free-time Activities' on the board. Then hold up a large photo that shows people playing tennis. Ask the students to raise their hands if they know what the photo is of. Call on one of them to answer. Write 'play tennis' on the board. Repeat the activity with a photo of people shopping.

2) Give the students a handout that has a list of ten activities numbered from one to ten and photos of those activities, in random order, lettered from 'A' to 'J'.

1. \_\_\_ play basketball    2. \_\_\_ do yoga                    3. \_\_\_ go to the beach  
 4. \_\_\_ go snorkeling    5. \_\_\_ go to the ballet    6. \_\_\_ work at my part-time job  
 7. \_\_\_ watch a movie    8. \_\_\_ have a barbecue    9. \_\_\_ go bowling  
 10. \_\_\_ go to a concert

3) Choral Repetition: Using formal pronunciation, do choral repetition of each of the activities, being sure to emphasize the stressed syllables.

4) Instruct the students to write the letter of the correct photo in front of each activity.

5) Checking the answers:

Although this is not a primary focus of the unit, providing students with the necessary language to check answers with a partner makes this more student-centered and encourages students to use English when they would often rely on their L1.

a) Write the following example dialogues on the board:

#### Agree

A: Which picture is 'play basketball'?

B: I think 'play basketball' is picture 'C'. OR

A: \*Oh, okay. I think so, too.

#### Disagree

A: Which picture is 'play basketball'?

B: I think 'play basketball' is picture 'D'.

A: Really? I don't think so. I think 'play basketball' is picture 'C' \_\_\_\_\_.

B: Hmm. Let's ask the teacher.

b) Have two students demonstrate the first answer using the two different dialogues.

c) Do choral repetition of the dialogues to practice sentence stress and intonation.

d) Put students with a partner and have them make the same kind of conversations to check their answers. They cannot look at their partner's paper or speak in Japanese.

#### 6) Categorizing

a) Write the following categories on the board:

PLAY...                      GO...                      DO...                      HAVE...                      GO TO...

b) Have the students come to the board and write their activities under the correct heading.

-This will enable students to notice the grammatical and/or semantic relationship of the words in each category.

c) For each activity, have the students write words associated with it. For example, for the activity 'go to the beach' they could write 'sand', 'ocean', 'shells', etc. If necessary, write an example for one of the activities.

-This activity will help students with the Listening for Gist activities when they have to determine the activity by hearing vocabulary associated with that activity.

#### 7) Pronunciation

a) Explain that you will say the activities again using 'fast' (informal) pronunciation. They must raise their hand and say the number of the activity.

b) Ask the students how informal pronunciation is different. If necessary, contrast formal and informal pronunciation of particular activities to get students to notice the transformations.

c) Write the following on the board:

##### 1c.) Connected speech

- |                     |          |                  |
|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| i) watch a movie    | → watcha | movie            |
| ii) have a barbecue | → hava   | barbecue         |
| iii) work at        | → workat | my part-time job |

##### 2c.) to → ta

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| i) go to the beach | → go ta the beach |
|--------------------|-------------------|

##### 3c.) t → d

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| i) go ta the beach | → go da the beach |
|--------------------|-------------------|

d) Do choral repetition of the examples, then do choral repetition of the activities again using 'fast' pronunciation.

**B.) Topic Two: Invitations**

1) Introduce the topic 'Invitations' by telling the students that you want to watch a movie, but you don't want to watch it alone. (This is to elicit the idea of inviting and hopefully the expressions for inviting as well.) Normally one of the students will say 'Ask your friend' or something similar.

2) Next write the word 'Invitations' on the board. Then ask the students how you can ask your friend. If the students provide some of the expressions for inviting, write them on the board. If not, prompt them by writing the first word of the three target expressions and ask the students if they know the questions. If they still do not know, write out the questions for them.

3) Then, to the right of 'Invitations' write 'Accepting ('Yes')'. Ask the students how to say 'Yes' to an invitation. Again, if they make appropriate suggestions, write them on the board. If not, write some target expressions.

4) Next, explain that it's good to make a comment after accepting an invitation. Write an example and then ask for their ideas. Following are examples of target invitation expressions and ways of accepting the invitations:

<u>Invitation</u>	<u>Accepting ('Yes')</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Do you want to _____ on _____?	Okay.	That sounds fun.
Would you like to _____ on _____?	I'd love to.	That's a good idea.
Why don't we _____ on _____?	Sure.	Great idea.

5) Finally call on a student and, using the activities from section one, invite him/her to do something on the weekend. Explain that they should accept (say 'Yes') using one of the expressions on the board. Repeat the conversation with one more student then have the students take turns inviting each other. Here is an example conversation:

Teacher: Yuko, do you want to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_?  
 Yuko: Okay. That sounds fun.  
 Teacher: Great.

## 6) Pronunciation

Write the following examples of 'fast' pronunciation on the board:

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| a) want to          | → wanna               |
| Do you want to....? | Do you “wanna”.....?  |
| b) d+you            | → dju                 |
| Would you like to   | → “Wouldju” like “ta” |
| c) silent ‘t’       |                       |
| Why don’t we...?    | → Why don (t) we...?  |

Do choral repetition of the ‘fast’ pronunciation of the invitations one time with the students. Then repeat step 5 above, this time using ‘fast’ pronunciation to invite students to do various activities and having them accept.

7) Tell the students that, of course, sometimes you can’t accept an invitation.

On the board, write the following expressions for declining invitations and making excuses:

Declining (saying ‘No’)

I’d love to, but ...

Thanks, but ...

Sorry, I can’t.

Sorry, I’m busy then.

Making Excuses

I’m working on Sunday afternoon.

I’m playing tennis on Saturday morning.

I’m going to the beach on Sunday morning.

8) Once again use ‘fast’ pronunciation to invite students to do something on the weekend. This time, however, the students will decline the invitation and give an excuse using the expressions on the board.

Teacher: Yuji, do you want to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_?

Yuji: Sorry, I can’t. I’m \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

Teacher: Oh, I see. Maybe next time.

9) Have the student continue the activity with the other students.

10) Have the students do the activity again with each of the other students, but the person receiving the invitation can accept OR decline.

11) When the students have finished, end the class by telling them that next time they will be doing listening and speaking about invitations.

## Appendix B: Procedures for Listening Activities

### A) Activity One: Brainstorming (Predicting)

- 1) Write the word 'Invitations' on the board.
- 2) Have pairs, without looking at their notes, think of words and expressions they will hear.
- 3) Have students write their ideas on the board.

### B) Activity Two: What's next? (Predicting)

- 1) Erase previous activity's vocabulary and write the following on the board:
  - a) A: Do you want to go swimming on Friday?  
B: Sorry, \_\_\_\_\_. I'm playing tennis.
  - b) A: I'm having a barbecue on Sunday.  
B: Oh, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - c) A: Do you want to go to a concert on Friday?  
B: Sure. \_\_\_\_\_!
- 2) Ask students to come to the board and write what they think will be said next.
- 3) Hand out the worksheet that students will use for activities 3-6.

### C) Activity Three: How and Who? (Listening for Gist)

- 1) Have students listen and circle whether the people are talking Face-to-Face or By Telephone.
- 2) Tell them to circle if the people are two friends or a student and a teacher.

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
(1)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher
(2)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher
(3)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher

### D) Activity Four: Accept or Decline? (Listening for Gist)

- 1) Have students write the correct conversation number in front of each topic.
- 2) Tell students to listen if the second person accepts or declines the invitation and circle the answer.

<u>Which conversation?</u>	<u>Accept / Decline</u>
___ watch a DVD	(Accept / Decline)
___ go to a jazz concert	(Accept / Decline)
___ go to a barbecue	(Accept / Decline)

**E) Activity Five: True or False?**

1) Have students listen again and circle True or False.

- (1) Masa is going to Mr. Smith's at 5pm. True False  
 (2) Tomo doesn't want to go to the jazz concert. True False  
 (3) Peter is going to watch a DVD with only Yuta. True False

**F) Activity Six: What Did They Say? (Listening for Details)**

1) Have students listen again and circle the answer.

Conversation One: When is Masa going to Mr. Smith's?

- a. on Saturday afternoon  
 b. on Sunday afternoon  
 c. on some afternoon

Conversation Two: Kurt is going to the jazz concert \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. alone  
 b. with Tomo  
 c. with some friends

Conversation Three: When is Peter going to study?

- a. tomorrow  
 b. before the movie  
 c. after the movie

**G) Activity Seven: Complete the Conversation**

(Discourse Markers/Backchannel Devices)

1) Give students the handout for Listening Activities 7-9.

2) Have students listen to part of two conversations again and fill in the missing words.

(Note: for this paper, the answers have not been deleted).

3) Have students work with a partner to check their answers.

a) Conversation One: Masa and Mr. Smith

Mr. Smith: Um, I'm having a barbecue on Sunday afternoon.

Masa: A barbecue? (1) That sounds fun.

Mr. Smith: Yes. (2) Would you like to come?

Masa: Sure. (3) I'd love to. What time?

Mr. Smith: Well, come over about 2pm and we'll eat around 5pm.

b) Conversation Two: Tomo and Kurt

Kurt: Are you doing anything on Friday?

Tomo: I don't think so. Why?

Kurt: Well, there's a jazz concert in Shibuya.

Tomo: A jazz concert? Cool.

Kurt: Yeah. (1) Do you want to go with me and some friends?

- Tomo: Sure! Oh, wait. Sorry, (2) I'm busy then. (3) I have to work on Friday night.
- Kurt: (4) Oh, okay. Maybe some other time.

**H) Activity Eight: Feedback or Explanation? (Discourse Markers/Backchannel Devices)**

- 1) Have students circle if the expressions are for 'feedback' or for 'an explanation'.

<u>Expression</u>	<u>Feedback or Explanation</u>
1. That sounds fun.	a.) Feedback b.) Explanation
2. I'd love to.	a.) Feedback b.) Explanation
3. Well...	a.) Feedback b.) Explanation
4. Oh, okay.	a.) Feedback b.) Explanation

**I) Activity Nine: Scrambled Conversation (Post-Listening: Ordering Sentences)**

- 1) Have students work in pairs and put the sentences in the correct order.

- \_\_\_ What about on Saturday? Do you want to go then?
- \_\_\_ Good idea. Then we can buy some popcorn before the movie!
- \_\_\_ Oh, sorry. I can't. I have to work at my part-time job on Friday.
- \_\_\_ Well, I think there's a movie at 3:30 pm.
- \_\_\_ Oh, hi, Ron. What's up?
- \_\_\_ Oh, I see. That's too bad.
- \_\_\_ Well, see you on Saturday.
- \_\_\_ Not much. Hey, do you want to watch a movie on Friday night?
- \_\_\_ Great. What time do you want to meet?
- 1 \_\_\_ Hi Jun. It's Ron.
- \_\_\_ Yeah, see you then.
- \_\_\_ Well, I'm playing tennis in the morning, but I'm free in the afternoon.
- \_\_\_ Okay. Then why don't we meet at the theater about 3:00 pm?

**Appendix C: Procedures for Speaking Activities**

**A) Activity One: Sentence Stress and Intonation (Pronunciation)**

- 1) Give students a transcript of the Post-Listening conversation with the sentences in the correct order. Have the same sentences written on the board.
- 2) Read the conversation again, exaggerating the stressed words, and place an accent mark over the stressed words. Have the students mark their papers in the same way.
- 3) Do choral repetition of sentence stress and intonation.

**B) Activity Two: Phrasing (Pronunciation)**

- 1) Read the conversation exaggerating the pauses at the end of phrases. Draw vertical lines at the end of the phrases and have the students do the same on their papers.
- 2) Do choral repetition to check answers.
- 3) Have the students turn their papers over and do choral repetition again.
- 4) Have students practice the conversation with their partners, emphasizing the phrasing, sentence stress and intonation.

**C) Activity Three: Information Gap (Conversation)**

- 1) Give students a chart like the one below, but BLANK. Draw the same chart on the board for the explanation.
- 2) Have the students write three FUN activities that they are doing this weekend, either real or imaginary, for example:

Student A:

	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MORNING	Play tennis		Do yoga
AFTERNOON			
EVENING		Go to dinner	

- 3) Have students walk around the room and invite others to do something this weekend. BUT they:
  - a) should pretend to use their cell phone to 'call' their partner.
  - b) can't look at their partner's paper.
  - c) can only make ONE invitation during one conversation.
  - d) can only do an activity ONE TIME during the weekend.

Student B:

	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MORNING		Play golf	Go to a movie
AFTERNOON		Go swimming	
EVENING			

Example conversation:

Student A: Hi \_\_\_\_\_. This is \_\_\_\_\_.

Student B: Oh, hi \_\_\_\_\_.

Student A: Hey, would you like to play GOLF on Saturday afternoon?

Student B: Oh, sorry. I can't. I'm playing GOLF on Saturday morning.

Student A: Oh, that's too bad.

Student B: How about playing VOLLEYBALL on Sunday afternoon?



Student A: Yeah. That sounds great.

Student B: Okay. See you on Sunday afternoon.

Student A: Yeah, see you then.

**D) Activity Four: Native Speakers IGA (Conversation)**

Two native speakers, one from the U.S. and one from Canada, will participate in this activity.

- 1) Give students and guests a copy of the “Upcoming Events” (or similar) section of a local English-language magazine.
- 2) Have everyone choose FOUR events that they would like to do in the upcoming week.
- 3) The participants must try to find someone to go with them to as many of their chosen events as possible. (Do NOT tell them this before they choose!)  
BUT they can ONLY go to the events that they chose. They must politely decline invitations to other events.
- 4) When they find someone who has chosen the same event, the two participants must arrange a time and a place to meet.

**Appendix D: Worksheet for Listening Activities 3-6**

**A) Activity Three: How and Who? (Listening for Gist)**

Instructions:

- 1) Listen and circle whether the people are talking Face-to-Face or By Telephone.
- 2) Circle if the people are two friends or a student and a teacher.

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
(1)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher
(2)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher
(3)	Face-to-Face / Telephone	Friends / Student-Teacher

**B) Activity Four: Accept or Decline? (Listening for Gist)**

Instructions:

- 1) Write the correct conversation number in front of each topic.
- 2) Listen and circle if the second person accepts or declines the invitation.

<u>Which conversation?</u>	<u>Accept / Decline?</u>
___ watch a DVD	(Accept / Decline)
___ go to a jazz concert	(Accept / Decline)
___ go to a barbecue	(Accept / Decline)

**C) Activity Five: True or False?**

Instructions: Listen again and circle True or False.

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| (1) Masa is going to Mr. Smith's at 5pm.          | True | False |
| (2) Tomo doesn't want to go to the jazz concert.  | True | False |
| (3) Peter is going to watch a DVD with only Yuta. | True | False |

**D) Activity Six: What Did They Say? (Listening for Details)**

Instructions: Listen again and circle the answer.

Conversation One: When is Masa going to Mr. Smith's?

- on Saturday afternoon
- on Sunday afternoon
- on some afternoon

Conversation Two: Kurt is going to the jazz concert \_\_\_\_\_.

- alone
- with Tomo
- with some friends

Conversation Three: When is Peter going to study?

- tomorrow
- before the movie
- after the movie

**Appendix E: Worksheet for Listening Activities 7-9**

**A) Activity Seven: Complete the Conversation**

(Discourse Markers/Backchannel Devices)

Instructions: Listen to part of two conversations again and fill in the missing words.

a) Conversation One: Masa and Mr. Smith

Mr. Smith: Um, I'm having a barbecue on Sunday afternoon.

Masa: A barbecue? (1)\_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Smith: Yes. (2)\_\_\_\_\_?

Masa: Sure. (3)\_\_\_\_\_. What time?

Mr. Smith: \_\_\_\_\_, come over about 2pm and we'll eat around 5pm.

b) Conversation Two: Tomo and Kurt

- Kurt: Are you doing anything on Friday?  
 Tomo: I don't think so. Why?  
 Kurt: \_\_\_\_\_, there's a jazz concert in Shibuya.  
 Tomo: A jazz concert? Cool.  
 Kurt: Yeah. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ go with me and some friends?  
 Tomo: Sure! Oh, wait. Sorry, (2)\_\_\_\_\_. (3)I \_\_\_\_\_ on Friday night.  
 Kurt: (4)\_\_\_\_\_. Maybe some other time.

B) Activity Eight: Feedback or Explanation?

## (Discourse Markers/Backchannel Devices)

Instructions: Circle if the expressions are for 'feedback' or for 'an explanation'.

<u>Expression</u>	<u>Feedback or Explanation</u>	
1. That sounds fun.	a.) Feedback	b.) Explanation
2. I'd love to.	a.) Feedback	b.) Explanation
3. Well...	a.) Feedback	b.) Explanation
4. Oh, okay.	a.) Feedback	b.) Explanation

C) Activity Nine: Scrambled Conversation

## (Post-Listening: Ordering Sentences)

Instructions: Work in pairs and put the sentences in the correct order.

- \_\_\_\_\_ What about on Saturday? Do you want to go then?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Good idea. Then we can buy some popcorn before the movie!  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Oh, sorry. I can't. I have to work at my part-time job on Friday.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Well, I think there's a movie at 3:30 pm.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Oh, hi, Ron. What's up?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Oh, I see. That's too bad.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Well, see you on Saturday.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not much. Hey, do you want to watch a movie on Friday night?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Great. What time do you want to meet?  
 \_\_\_1\_\_\_ Hi Jun. It's Ron.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yeah, see you then.