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DESIGNING A LESSON PLAN TO SPEED UP PROFICIENCY DEVELOPMENT IN ELEMENTARY- LEVEL JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Designing a Lesson Plan to Speed up Proficiency Development in Elementary-level Japanese as a Foreign Language Classroom

In this paper I would like to suggest a lesson plan to speed up proficiency development in the elementary-level Japanese as a foreign language classroom from the Novice level to the Intermediate level. The textbook “Genki: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese (Lesson 4)” is used to suggest a lesson plan in this paper.

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The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is a standardized global assessment of functional speaking ability. The OPI establishes a speaker’s consistent functional ability as well as the upper limitations of that ability. There are four major categories of ACTFL OPI assessment criteria; functions, content and contexts, accuracy, and text type. Functions are such as asking and answering questions, narrating, and describing. Content and contexts are such as the sets of circumstances, linguistic or situational, in which these tasks are performed and topics that relate to these contexts. Accuracy is with which the tasks are performed such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, sociolinguistic appropriateness or acceptability of what is being said within a certain setting. Text type is such as discrete words and phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or extended discourse.

According to the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guideline, Novice-level speakers are characterized by the ability to convey minimal meaning by using lists of words. Novice-level speakers are also limited to the memorized materials. The Intermediate-level speakers are characterized by the ability to create with the language by combining sentences in simple direct conversations on daily activities and personal environment. The Intermediate-level speakers can ask and answer questions about familiar topics and handle simple situation or transaction.

In this paper I would like to suggest a lesson plan to speed up proficiency development in the elementary-level Japanese as a foreign language classroom from the Novice level to the Intermediate level. The textbook “Genki: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese (Lesson 4)” is used to suggest a lesson plan in this paper.

The lesson plans will include integration of function, content, accuracy, and text type. The total immersion in the target language is necessary to achieve the speed up of proficiency development in the foreign language classroom. The lesson plans will guide from skill-getting to skill-using by empowering students through pre-speaking. It is also important to teach learners to negotiate meaning in the classroom.