



Osaka JALT Journal

Vol. 10 (2023)

<http://www.osakajalt.org/journal>

A Reflective Analysis of a Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) Course

Fasih Raza
Osaka Kyoiku University
raza.fasih2@gmail.com

Article History

Published: November 15, 2023

Keywords

Course design
Curriculum development
Course evaluation
Japanese as a second language
JSL

Abstract

Designing a second language course is a skillful task requiring expertise not only in the subject matter but also the pedagogy of second language teaching. If the process of course designing is weak, the designed course may not achieve its intended learning outcome. In designing effective second language courses, the process revolves around learners' needs. Therefore, it is important that after the delivery of second language courses learners also evaluate them to improve their quality. This study is an attempt to evaluate a Japanese as a second language (JSL) course from the learners' perspective, taking an emic approach to collect data from lessons where the researcher is a student attending a JSL course. The course is evaluated through mapping the experiences with the second language course design and implementation research. This analysis will help other JSL course designers and instructors to evaluate their own courses and improve them in the light of the available literature on the subject.

Introduction

Learning a second language is a complex and multifaceted process that requires careful planning and instruction. Second language acquisition (SLA) research has provided valuable insights into how individuals acquire and develop proficiency in a second language. Drawing upon this research, language educators can design courses that optimize language learning outcomes. This paper examines the experiences and insights gained from taking a JSL course at a university in Japan, with a specific focus on mapping my learning experiences with the principles and practices of second language course design and development research.

In this paper, my reference of critique will be the literature on second language course design and SLA research. I will utilize the framework for designing and delivering second language courses to assess the JSL course I attended. This evaluation will be based on a comparative analysis of the theoretical recommendations for course design/delivery and the actual implementation of the course, accompanied by practical examples for potential improvements.

To begin with, it is important to understand the essential elements of second language course design. Several authors have described different elements of a second language course. These include needs analysis, environment/situation analysis, formulation of aims and outcomes, selection and sequencing of materials, designing formative and summative assessments, and evaluating learners and the course based on the learning outcomes of the students (Brown, 1995; Graves, 1996; Macalister & Nation, 2019; North et al., 2018; Nunan, 1988). All these elements affect each other and addressing one part is akin to dealing with the entire course design (Graves, 1996).

Elements of Language Course Design

Needs Analysis

A crucial step in course design is conducting a needs analysis to identify learners' linguistic, communicative, and cultural needs. This process involves gathering information about learners' proficiency levels, motivations, goals, and expectations. By understanding the specific needs of the learners, course designers can tailor instruction to address these requirements effectively.

Environment/Situation Analysis

Second language courses are not designed in a vacuum. They are affected by different factors of the context in which they are taught. The success of a program depends on the context of the course design and delivery. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to consider the impact of different contextual factors that can potentially impact the design and implementation of a second language course. For example, a course designed and implemented in Japan for international students must consider the past experiences of students with learning a second language, because they could be different from what Japanese learners are accustomed to. Not only learners, but Richards (2017) mentions that the teachers, the institution, means of delivery, and the overall sociocultural environment are important considerations for designing and implementing a successful second language course. Despite the importance of this stage, it is the one most often ignored because of the oversimplification of the factors involved and a lack of methodology to conduct such an analysis (Tessmer, 1990).

Formulation of Aims and Outcomes

Clear, measurable aims and outcomes serve as the foundation of an effective language course. Course designers must establish realistic and attainable outcomes that align with learners' needs and expectations. These outcomes should encompass the development of linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), language systems (lexis, syntax, phonology, and semantics) as well as cultural competence.

Selection and Sequencing of Learning Materials

The choice of appropriate learning materials plays a significant role in facilitating language acquisition. Course designers should carefully select materials that cater to learners' proficiency levels and are engaging, authentic, and culturally relevant. Sequencing the materials in a logical and progressive manner ensures a smooth progression of learning and builds upon previously acquired knowledge and skills. For adult learners, this specifically means that they must be able to track their progress and be aware of where they are heading on their second language learning journey.

Monitoring and Evaluating Learners' Progress

Monitoring learners' performance is an important ingredient of the language course design process. Monitoring and evaluation ensure that at every stage of the learning process, teachers and students receive feedback about the progress of learning. Using these data, teachers must make amendments to the existing course to make it more effective and tailor it to students' needs. There exist three primary purposes of assessment: to support students' learning, to gauge the effectiveness of students' learning, and to meet the requirements of accountability. The assessments employed for the first purpose are referred to as formative assessments, while those employed to fulfill the second and third purposes are known as summative assessments (Carless, 2011). Macalister and Nation (2019) mention six different types of assessments which serve different purposes, tabulated below in Table 1.

Table 1
Assessment Types and Their Purposes

Assessment types	Purpose
1 Placement assessment	to assess the level of learners at the beginning of the course to place them in an appropriate course
2 Observation of learning	to assess if the learning activities during lessons are helping learners to achieve learning goals
3 Short-term achievement test	to monitor, at regular intervals, if learners have learned the content taught during lessons; for example, with weekly tests of vocabulary and reading skills
4 Diagnostic assessment	to assess the strengths and weaknesses of learners; for example, through interviews and classroom activities
5 Achievement test	to evaluate, typically at the end of the course, what learners have learned through the course; to help in evaluating the effectiveness of a course
6 Proficiency assessment	to assess what learners can do with available knowledge of the L2; for example, with common proficiency tests such as IELTS and TOEFL

Evaluation of Course

Course evaluation plays a crucial role in second language teaching as it provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of instructional practices, materials, and overall course design. By systematically evaluating a course, educators can identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students. Macalister and Nation (2019) mention five key reasons for evaluating a language course.

- i. Quality improvement
- ii. Alignment with learners' needs
- iii. Accountability and effectiveness
- iv. Students' engagement and satisfaction
- v. Continuous professional development

Course evaluation is an essential component of second language teaching. It allows educators to assess the quality and effectiveness of their courses, align instruction with learners' needs, and foster continuous improvement. By valuing and incorporating student feedback, educators can create a dynamic and responsive learning environment that maximizes language acquisition and cultural understanding (Norris, 2016).

Alignment of Course Elements

One important consideration in designing educational courses is to keep the course design connected and coherent (Badley, 2019; Mickan and Wallace, 2020). All elements—needs analysis, aims and objectives, learning materials, continuous assessments, and final evaluation—should be well aligned. Course designers must ensure that each component serves a purpose, is coherent with the others, and contributes to the overall learning experience. Even if each component is well designed, if all components do not align well with one another, the result of the course is likely to be ineffective.

Research Methodology

This study takes an emic perspective, or otherwise an insider's perspective (Riazi, 2016), to reflect on a JSL course which I attended as a student. While attending lessons, I used reflection-in-action (Schön, 1987) to evaluate the classroom practices through a critical lens. During classroom observations, notes were made on different aspects of the lessons including teaching materials, teaching methodology, learning outcomes, and classroom assessments. Besides lesson observations and reflection, document analysis of the course outline and other students' feedback were also used as data. All data analysis was informed by SLA literature with a special focus on course design and implementation.

Limitations of the Study

This current study is limited to the students' perspective and the analysis of course documentation given to students. The analysis does not include the course designers' or teachers' perspectives, which could have revealed insights into the decisions taken regarding various aspects of the JSL course. Moreover, the present study is also limited in its consideration of practical challenges which course designers and teachers face during the process. For instance, if a course is well-designed according to the research on second language course development, but the teachers are not well-trained in the

communicative approach to teaching languages, it could be difficult to achieve the stipulated learning outcomes. As a result, course designers will design a course as per their previous training.

Reflections on the JSL course

In this section, I will provide a reflection on the Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) course that I participated in at a well-known public university in Osaka, Japan. I will start by giving an overview of and the context for the course. Following that, I will systematically discuss each component of the course, detailing the actual occurrences and how I, as a fellow second language educator, believe they should align with the insights from SLA literature. In other words, I will analyze the course by comparing the classroom practices I encountered with the principles and recommendations derived from research on the design and execution of second language courses.

Overview of the JSL Course

The course was designed to cater specifically to foreign students who embark on their academic journey or engage in research activities in Japan. Typically undertaken during their first semester, this 15-week course serves as an essential foundation for their assimilation into Japanese society. As stated in their course outline, the aim of the course is 'to assist (students) to start and continue their research and social life in Japan'. However, there were different levels. The basic level which I attended specifically stated that students in this level 'are expected to acquire basic communicative skills and be able to carry on their conducts in everyday life situations, and to advance their study of Japanese for their academic purposes.'

Delivered in an intensive format, students devoted approximately 18 hours per week to attending classes, in addition to spending time on assignments, preparing for tests, and presentations.

In my case, I arrived in Japan with the primary objective of conducting research in the field of English education. Equipped with prior experience in conducting research at the master's level, focusing on English as a second language, and possessing several years of teaching experience, I possessed a unique vantage point from which to analyze the various elements encompassed within the course design. Consequently, I was able to discern beyond the immediate classroom dynamics and critically evaluate the efficacy of the course's constituent components.

Needs Assessment for JSL Course

The university implemented a needs assessment process for course participants, employing an online questionnaire comprising various inquiries. However, it appears that the primary objective of this assessment was to gauge students' proficiency levels and subsequently assign them to suitable instructional groups, rather than utilizing it as a comprehensive framework for course design. This assertion is corroborated by the fact that previous cohorts of students had already undergone the same course, suggesting a lack of direct integration between the needs assessment outcomes and the course's instructional content.

However, it is essential to recognize that a needs assessment serves multiple purposes. While one pivotal function is to ensure the appropriate placement of students in courses that align with their proficiency levels, it is equally crucial to leverage the results of the needs assessment to inform the formulation of the course's overarching aims and objectives (Rossner, 2017). By utilizing the insights gained from the needs assessment, instructors should ascertain the specific learning needs, preferences, and goals of the student cohort, thus informing the design of the course content,

instructional strategies, and assessment methods to optimize the learning outcomes (Richards, 2017).

Formulation of Learning Goals

The formulation of clear and specific learning goals is crucial for an effective language course. While the learning goals for the JSL course were presumably established prior to the needs analysis, they were designed in a manner that encompassed a broad range of learners without addressing individual requirements adequately. In fact, there was only one broad goal mentioned for the entire course (see the overview section above). To enhance course organization and ensure targeted instruction, it would have been beneficial to develop specific goals for each language skill. This would involve breaking down the overarching goals into measurable learning outcomes that could be addressed in daily lessons (North et al., 2018). Although the textbook units provided themes, grammatical structures, and vocabulary to cover, these alone did not offer a comprehensive understanding of the progress made in each lesson. The absence of clearly defined learning goals hindered the assessment of specific achievements. To address this, instructors should establish explicit and measurable learning goals aligned with learners' needs and abilities. This would enable better lesson planning, systematic progression, and individualized instruction. Clearly defined learning goals empower learners by providing a framework for tracking their progress and fostering a sense of accomplishment (North et al., 2018). Therefore, the formulation of specific and measurable learning goals for each language skill is essential for effective course delivery. By aligning instructional objectives with individual learner needs, instructors should enhance course organization, tailor instruction to specific goals, and promote meaningful language acquisition (Scrivener, 2011).

Selection and Sequencing of Learning Materials

The primary learning materials utilized were volumes 1 and 2 of the textbook entitled 'A New Approach to Elementary Japanese' by Nishiguchi (2012) specifically designed for A2 level learners on a Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scale. The author claims that the series offers a thematic approach to learning Japanese, prioritizing functional language acquisition over a focus on language rules. On the contrary, the included texts serve as a means of teaching grammar and vocabulary rather than utilizing texts as a foundation for teaching language functions (Ellis, 2003).

The basic organization of the coursebook involves each unit featuring two or three sets of monologues or dialogues, referred to as 'master texts'. These texts introduce students to the grammatical and lexical items to be learned and practiced within the unit. Subsequently, questions and answers pertaining to the same text are provided, presumably for practicing the targeted language items. A list of useful expressions and explanations of grammatical items follows. Each unit also includes extension activities such as pronunciation or kanji writing practice. Lastly, a workbook for practicing kanji characters used in the master texts is given separately with the coursebook.

However, it is necessary to challenge the author's claim that the coursebooks promote a functional approach because the coursebook predominantly presents language through dialogues heavily infused with grammatical and lexical components in each unit.

Considering that learning materials significantly influence the organization and delivery of a second language course, they undoubtedly shape students' overall experiences. As a second language teacher myself, I perceive that the coursebook imposes a high cognitive load on students due to the frequent introduction of novel grammatical and lexical items. Each unit encompasses a minimum of two grammatical

items, with some units containing as many as five or six, in addition to eight to ten new lexical items. These newly introduced items are packed within a mere 400 to 800-character texts, making it challenging for students to simultaneously comprehend the meaning and form of the text within their working memory. Personally, there were instances where I found myself merely reciting the text without understanding its intended message.

The issue of authenticity also arises when considering these materials. Since they are not corpus-informed (McEnery et al., 2019), questions arise regarding their authenticity, as the language presented may or may not be frequently used in real life as showcased in the text. As mentioned earlier, the language is written with a focus on grammatical aspects rather than authentic usage.

Overall, the learning materials employed in the course were not suitable due to their teaching approach and heavy emphasis on grammatical and lexical instruction, resulting in a heightened cognitive load for learners (Sweller et al., 2022). Consequently, the overall effectiveness of these materials is compromised due to the aforementioned factors.

Teaching Methodology

The effectiveness of a language course relies not only on the organization of its elements but also on the delivery of instruction in line with how learning occurs. Instructional strategies play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of a course, even though they are partly influenced by the learning materials used. In the present case, the materials served as a driving force in determining the teaching methodology employed. As the materials predominantly consisted of written texts, a significant emphasis was placed on repeated recitation, often involving 20 to 30 repetitions within two consecutive lessons spanning a total of three hours. Regrettably, the repetitions were often performed without a thorough understanding of the content, and, at times, students struggled to pronounce certain words and phrases. The inclusion of numerous novel grammatical and lexical items posed challenges in terms of working memory capacity, hindering effective transfer to short and long-term memory, which are crucial for long-term learning (Adams & Delaney, 2022). This teaching approach reflects The Audiolingual Method, which advocates for repetitive drills without errors as a means of acquiring a second language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This pattern of repetition was also evident in homework assignments, where students were expected to create personalized texts using the provided model text. These texts would then be checked and corrected by the teacher, and students were required to read them aloud multiple times to their peers in the following lessons.

While repetition drills can offer certain advantages, such as pronunciation practice, they alone are insufficient for language acquisition. Ideally, each repetition should involve a modification in one of the variables, such as changing the interlocutor, minimizing the time, or adding information to the initial repetition. In second language acquisition research, this concept is referred to as iteration rather than repetition (Freeman 2012).

The pace of the course also warrants consideration. One positive aspect of the course was its clearly outlined scheme of work, guiding learners with a complete overview of the content to be taught in each lesson. Initially, the scheme included coverage of 24 units from two books of the coursebook series over a 15-week period, equating to roughly 1.5 units per week. However, based on students' feedback during the course, it was subsequently adjusted to encompass 18 units, allowing for a more manageable pace of one unit per week. This modification provided additional time for students to assimilate the forms and expressions encountered during lessons.

The basic structure of the course followed a one-week format. On Monday mornings, the grammar of the unit was introduced, with explanations of all the

grammatical items and sometimes vocabulary, albeit with limited practice due to the presentation of all the unit's grammar and lexis within a single lesson of approximately 1.5 hours. Nevertheless, this introductory explanation proved beneficial in facilitating comprehension of the forthcoming texts that incorporated these grammar points. From Monday afternoons to Fridays, the focus shifted to studying written texts. The teacher would play the audio of the text, and students were expected to repeat it while reading the text, followed by closing their coursebooks and repeating after the audio or the teacher. Thursday mornings were dedicated to kanji writing practice, with students attempting to write the kanji characters associated with each unit in a workbook provided alongside the coursebook. However, the arrangement of kanji characters presented a challenge, as they were not organized from easy to difficult but rather based on the words and expressions used in the texts. This discrepancy was notable since the texts primarily represented the use of oral language, meaning that these lexical items were more likely to be encountered in spoken Japanese rather than written Japanese. Even if they were used in written Japanese, they would be more prevalent in advanced-level texts rather than basic-level materials. Consequently, the selected kanji characters were not particularly useful for beginners, as they would not commonly encounter them in their immediate surroundings such as train stations and parking lots. In total, the course attempted to teach 211 kanji characters across 18 units. Furthermore, since Japanese is a semi-pictorial language, kanji characters are an important subject matter to teach. However, during the course, no special strategies were taught to manage learning kanji. Since kanji poses a whole new set of cognitive challenges to learners of other languages, it is essential to equip learners with strategies which are useful for learning languages which incorporate ideographic writing components such as Japanese (Rose, 2017). In addition to kanji learning strategies, it is also pivotal to train students in strategies which are generally useful for learning a second language (Oxford, 2017).

While there were several teachers who made efforts to go beyond the textbook and create positive learning experiences, the overall teaching methodology remained teacher-centered and influenced by behaviorism which views second language learning as a collection of behaviors acquired through repetitive drills and error correction (Lightbown & Spada, 2022). Nevertheless, instances were observed where teachers deviated from this approach and incorporated more communicative methods to facilitate language use among students. For example, a teacher used Japanese songs and scaffolded our understanding using printed lyrics and pre-song explanations of the lyrics and the context.

Assessment

The assessment component of the course played a crucial role in facilitating student learning and promoting their progress. The incorporation of diverse assessment methods ensured a comprehensive evaluation of students' language proficiency and provided valuable feedback for their ongoing development. Throughout the course, students encountered various types of assessments, including homework tasks, classroom presentations, and both written and oral midterm examinations.

The homework assignments served as an opportunity for students to apply their learning outside of the classroom. These tasks were carefully checked by the instructor, who provided feedback to guide students' improvement. This feedback not only helped students to understand their strengths and weaknesses but also directed their focus towards areas that required further attention. By actively engaging with these assessments, students were encouraged to reflect on their own learning processes and take ownership of their language development.

In addition to the continuous assessment through homework tasks, the course also included other assessments such as classroom presentations and midterm examinations. These assessments served as important milestones for students to

showcase their language skills and knowledge. The classroom presentations allowed students to demonstrate their oral proficiency and ability to express themselves in Japanese. The written and oral midterm examinations, on the other hand, provided a comprehensive assessment of students' understanding of the course content which, in this case, was grammatical competence.

One noteworthy aspect of the assessments was the availability of a sample exam paper, which closely resembled the actual assessments. While this approach aimed to alleviate students' anxiety by providing a familiar format, it also raised some concerns. Although students could achieve high scores by closely following the sample exam, it did not necessarily reflect their independent mastery of the grammatical items being tested. This discrepancy between performance on the sample exam and the actual language proficiency created a false sense of achievement and hindered students' overall language development.

Despite this limitation, the assessments in the course served as valuable tools for students to monitor their progress and make informed decisions regarding their language learning strategies. The feedback provided by the instructor, coupled with the opportunities to showcase their skills, motivated students to continuously improve and strive for greater language proficiency. By integrating assessments into the course design, the instructors successfully fostered a learning environment that supported student growth and engagement.

In conclusion, the assessments in the course played a pivotal role in evaluating students' language proficiency and promoting their ongoing development. Through a combination of diverse assessment methods and constructive feedback, students were able to monitor their progress and make informed decisions to enhance their language learning. While the presence of a sample exam paper raised concerns about the authenticity of students' achievement, overall, the assessments positively contributed to the effectiveness of the course and students' language acquisition.

Evaluation of Learners

In this article, the evaluation process in the course is distinguished from assessments, as the former pertains to assessment of learning, while the latter focuses on assessment for learning or assessment as learning (Chong & Reinders, 2023). The final evaluation in the course encompassed three tasks. Firstly, learners were required to deliver a 7-minute presentation followed by a 3-minute question and answer session. Secondly, a written exam was administered, which assessed the comprehension of all the grammatical items taught throughout the course, along with a section on reading comprehension. Lastly, an oral exam was conducted, wherein students were asked questions related to the themes covered in the course.

The first type of evaluation, the final presentation, held significant importance, as a substantial amount of time was allocated for its preparation. However, it can be argued that this aspect of the course was one of its weaknesses. The presentations focused on students' academic research, which contrasted with the functional Japanese taught in the lessons. Moreover, the presentation leaned heavily towards academic language, fostering rote learning. While the presentation allowed students to learn new vocabulary related to their research, it appeared to showcase superficial learning to a wider audience, as students were expected to memorize and regurgitate scripted content given the complex language involved and the time constraints. The Q&A session following the presentations predominantly comprised preplanned questions which students made and gave to each other, limiting the opportunity for spontaneous interaction and testing genuine understanding of language proficiency. Aligning the final presentation with the language and grammatical items taught during the course would have been more beneficial. Moreover, the time duration of 7 minutes was demanding for beginners. This also shows that the course instructors expected students to memorize rather than use their available language resources to complete the task.

The next evaluation task consisted of a written test primarily focused on assessing the grammatical items taught in isolation, along with a Kanji character test. Surprisingly, only a small subset of the total Kanji characters studied was included in the test. Considering the significant time dedicated to learning Kanji characters, a more comprehensive evaluation of kanji would have been appropriate.

The final evaluation task, an oral exam, was deemed the most suitable assessment method. Given that oral language learning was a central focus of the course, the oral exam provided a fair representation of classroom learning. Additionally, a question bank was provided to support students in their exam preparation and further enhance their learning.

Self-assessment, in the form of a questionnaire administered towards the end of the course, served as another strength. It allowed students to reflect on their own proficiency in the Japanese language. However, it would have been advantageous if this self-assessment information was utilized by teachers to inform and tailor future lessons based on the students' feedback. The Individual Study Consultation session, where students had a 10-minute one-on-one meeting with the teacher to discuss their performance and receive feedback, further supplemented the self-assessment process.

Overall, the evaluation process was a strong aspect of the course. However, improvements could be made in the presentation component to alleviate the pressure on students and ensure more meaningful learning outcomes. Additionally, giving due consideration to the comprehensive assessment of kanji characters would have been beneficial, given the significant time allocated to their learning.

Course Evaluation

Within the context of this course, the evaluation of its effectiveness played a crucial role, prompting the students to complete a questionnaire aimed at assessing various aspects of the course. Nevertheless, it is imperative to emphasize that, as indicated in the needs analysis, the value of the data collected remains futile if it is not utilized to inform course-related decisions. Unfortunately, it appears that in numerous educational institutions, adherence to conventional procedures takes precedence over using evaluation data to enhance the quality of instruction.

Conclusion

In closing, the JSL course that I participated in exhibited both favorable and unfavorable aspects. The subsequent table provides an overview of the course's strengths and weaknesses.

Table 2
Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of the Course

Strengths	Weaknesses
Needs analysis was implemented but data were presumably not used to inform course design.	Teaching methodology was weak and focused more on the 'repeat after me' approach rather than the communicative approach.
There was strong teacher support throughout the course.	Materials selection needs improvement. This was arguably the weakest point of the course because materials dictated the pedagogy and made the entire experience less worthy.

Assessments were varied and useful.	Learners were not trained in general language learning strategies and specific Japanese learning strategies.
Final evaluation tasks were reliable except for the final presentation.	The course was heavily focused on memorization.
	Specific learning outcomes for each skill were missing in the course.
	Overall, the teacher talking time was more than the student talking time.

After a detailed analysis of the course, I conclude with a set of guiding principles that should be taken into consideration when designing instructional courses. Macalister and Nation (2019) have outlined a collection of 20 principles for course design, which are categorized into three primary domains: content and sequencing, format and presentation, and monitoring and assessment. I firmly assert that these principles can serve as a viable framework for the evaluation of existing second language courses as well as the development of new ones. For example, if the same JSL course is to be repeated, one aspect of it can be improved by changing the learning materials from the use of a structure-focused textbook to a more communication-focused textbook which includes information gap activities to foster real communication. No course can be a perfect fit for everyone, but an attempt to make it learner-centered and learning-oriented can help in facilitating second language learning.

References

- Adams, L. R. & Delaney, F. P. (2022). Long-term working memory and language comprehension. In J. W. Schwieter & Z. E. Wen (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of working memory and language* (pp. 859 – 880). Cambridge University Press.
- Badley, K. (2019). *Curriculum planning with design language*. Routledge.
- Brown, D. J. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Chong, W. S. & Reinders, H. (2023). Introduction: Learning-oriented language assessment – insights for evidence-based practices. In S. W. Chong & H. Reinders (Eds.), *Innovation in learning-oriented language assessment* (pp. 1 – 12). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language teaching and learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Freeman, D. (2012). On the roles of repetition in language teaching and learning. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 3(2), 195–210. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2012-0009>
- Freeman, D. & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques & principles in language teaching (3rd ed.)*. Oxford University Press.
- Graves, K. (1996). A framework of course development purposes. In K. Graves (Ed.), *Teachers as course developers* (pp. 12 – 38). Cambridge University Press.
- Kostka, I & Bunning, L. (2018). *Curriculum design in English language teaching*. Tesol Press.
- Lightbown, M. P. & Spada, N. (2022). *How languages are learned (5th ed.)*. Oxford University Press.
- Macalister, J. & Nation, I.S.P. (2019). *Language curriculum design (2nd ed.)*. Routledge.
- McEnery, T., Brezina, V., Gablasova, D. & Banerjee, J. (2019). Corpus linguistics, learner corpora, and SLA: Employing technology to analyze language use. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 39, 74–92. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190519000096>
- Mickan, P. & Wallace, I. (2020). Language education curriculum designs: Voices for uncertain times. In M. Peter & I. Wallace (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of language education curriculum design* (pp. 3 – 7). Routledge.

- Nishiguchi, K. (2012). *A new approach to elementary Japanese*. Kurosio Publishers, Japan.
- North, B., Angelova, M., Jarosz, E. & Rossner, R. (2018). *Language course planning*. Oxford University Press.
- Norris, J. M. (2016). Language program evaluation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 100(51), 169 – 189. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12307>
- Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus design*. Oxford University Press.
- Oxford, L. R. (2017). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies (2nd ed.)*. Routledge.
- Riazi, A. M. (2016). *The Routledge encyclopedia of research methods in applied linguistics*. Routledge.
- Richards, J. (2017). *Curriculum development in language teaching (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. & Rodgers, S. T. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching (3rd ed.)*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, H. (2017). *The Japanese writing system*. Multilingual Matters.
- Rossner, R. (2017). *Language course management*. Oxford University Press.
- Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning teaching (3rd ed.)*. Macmillan Education.
- Sweller, J., Roussel, S. & Tricot, A. (2022). Cognitive load theory and instructional design for language learning. In W. J. Schweiter & Z. Wen, (Eds), *The Cambridge handbook of working memory and language* (pp. 859-880). Cambridge University Press.
- Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. Jossey Bass.
- Tessmer, M. (1990). Environment analysis: A neglected stage of instructional design. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 38(1), 55 – 64.