

---

---

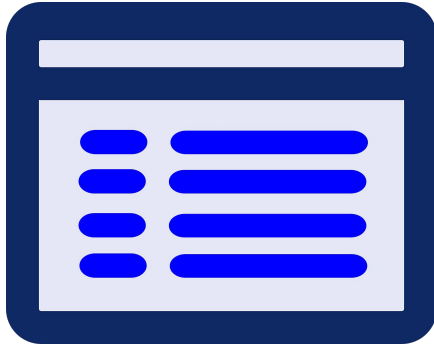
# Helping Students to Overcome Bottom-Up Listening Challenges through Voice of America Quizzes, Songs and Reaction Papers

Mari Yamauchi  
@Chiba University of Commerce

---

---

# Outline



## Background

## Explicit Instruction on Connected Speech Features

- Song Cloze Activity
- VOA Audio Quizzes with Google Forms
- Reaction Paper

## \* Use of “Audio” with Google

## Forms

## Results

## Conclusions

# Background

## Bottom-Up Listening Challenges of Japanese EFL Learners

- **Unaware** of the **difference in rhythm** between L1 and L2, and **too unfamiliar** with **connected speech** features of English
- **Relying too much on Japanese** sound system to process spoken English

**Unable** to **segment** what they hear and **recognize** words/phrases they know

# MUST-Learn Connected Speech Features + for Japanese EFL Learners

♪ *But if you feel like I feel  
Then let me know ...*

Wrong mental  
representations

1. **Reduction:** le(t) me レットミー
2. **Linking:** if\_you (ɪfjə) イフユー
3. **Flapped T:** but\_if (bətəf) バットイフ
4. **Weak Form:** like\_I (ləɪkəɪ) ライタアイ
5. **Dark L:** feel (fiɫ) フィール

# Explicit Instruction on Connected Speech Features+ (2021 Fall)

1. Connected Speech Features Instruction in A Lesson
2. Song Cloze Activity
3. VOA Audio Quiz with Google Forms
4. Reaction Paper

# 1 Connected Speech Instruction in A Weekly Lesson (English for Freshmen)

0. Feedback on Reaction Paper	Review of Previous Week	10-15 mins
1. Song Cloze Answers & Explanation	Connected Speech Features	10 mins
2. VOA Video Quiz Feedback & Explanation	Story Comprehension, Vocabulary and Grammar: Feedback based on the quiz results	15-20 mins
3. VOA Audio Quiz Feedback & Explanation	Connected Speech Features: Feedback based on the quiz results	15-20 mins
4 Kahoot / Quizlet Live	Voabulary and Grammar: Linked to #2	15-20 mins
5 Speaking Practice	Practice in Pair (Teams); Individual Practice (Flipgrid)	15 mins
6 Reaction Paper	Reflectiion and Questions	5 mins

- **20-30 minutes** (out of 105) was used for the bottom-up listening skills instruction
- VOA **audio & video** quizzes were based on the same VOA lesson → **Context-ualized** listening activities

## 2 Song Cloze Activity: PDF Worksheet & Target Phrases

Song Dictation Can't Take My Eyes Off You.pdf

Can't Take My Eyes Off You By Boys Town Gang

Originally produced by Bob Crewe & Bob Gaudio

*You're (1 ) ( ) good to be true	君は信じられないくらい素敵だ
Can't take my eyes off (2 ) you	目が離せない
You'd be like heaven to touch	天国に触れたみたいなんだろうな
Oh I wanna (3 ) ( ) so much	抱きしめたい
At long last love has arrived	やっと愛がやってきた
And I thank God I'm alive	神様ありがとう 生きててよかった
You're (1 ) ( ) good to be true	
I can't take my eyes off of you	
Pardon the way (6 ) ( ) stare	こんな風に見つめてごめん
There's nothing else to compare	他に比べようがない
The (7 ) ( ) you leaves me weak	君を思うと 弱気になる
There are no words (8 ) ( ) speak	言うべき言葉も残ってない
But if you feel (9 ) ( ) feel	もし君も同じ気持ちなら
Then let me know (10 ) ( ) real	どうか教えて 現実だって
You're (1 ) ( ) good to be true	
Can't take my eyes off of you	

← PDF worksheet delivered online to be worked on before the class

Target phrases:

- |                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 jus(t) too                  | X ジャストトゥー |
| 2 of (off_of_you)             | X オフオブユー  |
| 3 hold_you                    | X ホールドユー  |
| 6 that_I                      | X ザットアイ   |
| 7 thought of (thought_of_you) | X ソートオブユー |
| 8 lef(t) to                   | X レフトトゥー  |
| 9 like_I                      | X ライクアイ   |
| 10 that_it's                  | X ザットイツ   |

## 2 Song Cloze Activity : Instructions for Students

### SONG DICTATION

手順

✓ (1) ひとつとおり、自力で  
ワークシートの空所を埋める(印刷 or ノート)

(2) 解説を確認+発音リピート

(3) 歌詞を見ながら繰り返し口ずさむ

(4) 意味を浮かべながら  
普通に歌えるように練習

聞こえた音と単語をマッチさせるため。

↓

- スペルミスは気にせず、カナを使ってもOK。
- 止めながら埋めてください。
- 粘りすぎる必要なし。

口を動かす

↓

耳の反応が良くなります

音声変化に慣れて、リズムに合わせられるのが目標  
\*完璧は目指さず、難しければ7-8割ぐらいでよしとする

聞いてすぐ絵が浮かぶぐらい、  
音と意味がしっかりマッチするのが目標  
\*全部が難しければ、サビだけでも。

←How to practice

- (1) **Listen** to the song and try to **fill in the blanks**
- (2) **Listen** to the lecture (explanation) and **repeat** the model (in-class)
- (3) Look at the lyrics and **sing along**
- (4) **Practice singing** thinking what you're saying



## 2 Song Cloze Activity: Explanation Recorded in Video

Connected Speech Features Instruction

←2022    ↓2021 (pre-recorded)

### 音声変化に慣れて リズムに乗ろう



\*You're (1    )(    ) goo(d) to be true  
Can('t) ta(ke) my eyes\_off (2    ) you  
You('d) be like heaven to touch  
Oh I wanna (3    )(    ) so much  
A(t) long las(t) lo(ve) has\_arrive(d)  
And\_I than(k) God\_I'm\_ali(ve)  
You're (1    )(    ) good to be true  
I can't take my eyes off of you

1 **jus(t) too** ジヤス(ト)トゥ \*t脱落

エジヤス トゥ グットゥゴビトゥル

2 **off\_of\_you** オーフオブユ \*連結

キヤン(イ)タイ(イ)マァーイソーフォビュ  
ユッビツイ(ウ)ヘブンタッパチ

3 **hold\_you** ホウジュ \*連結

オアウオナホウジュ リタマツチ  
アッロシラス(イ)ラー(フ) ハザライ(イ)  
アンダッセン(イ) ガーダマライ(イ)



1 つながる+消える  
kick **u(p)** the  
キカッ

Where\_is the momen(t) when neede(d) the most?  
You kick ( **up** ) the leaves\_an(d) the magic\_is lost  
You tell me your blue sky's fa(de) to grey  
You tell me your passion's ( **gone** ) away  
"And\_I don('t) nee(d) no carrying\_on"

2 つながる  
gone\_away  
ゴウ ナウエイ

3 つながる  
stand\_in  
スタンディン

You stand ( **in** ) the line jus(t) to hit\_a new low  
You're faking\_a smile with\_the coffee to go  
You tell me your life's ( **been** ) way off line  
You're falling to pieces\_everytime  
"(A)nd\_I don('t) nee(d) no carrying\_on"

4 弱化(短い)  
× ビーン  
○ ビン、ベン

# 3 VOA Audio Quizzes using Google Forms

Google Forms Quiz delivered online to be worked on before the class

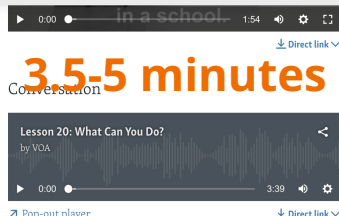
3. Anna は泥棒を追いかけてましたが....



40-60 seconds  
x 5



LET'S LEARN ENGLISH - LEVEL 1



3.5-5 minutes

[Anna] The robbers (a) (b) bus. So, I ran after the bus. While I was running, I tripped and fell. \*

☐ (a) go (b) on a

☐ (a) go (b) on the

☐ (a) got (b) on a

☐ (a) got (b) on the

**Multiple Choice**

★音声変化に慣れることを目的としたクイズです。ピックアップした部分はもう完璧でしょうか？★ピックアップしなかった部分でも「ここがいまいち分からない」というところがあればぜひ！

Short answer text

**Comment Section**

Feedback for correct answers

<音>  
(a) go[t] 脱落 → ガッ  
(b) on\_a 連結 → オナ

<語句>  
trip = つまずく  
fall = 転ぶ

<全体>  
The robbers got on a bus. So, I ran after the bus. While I was running, I tripped and fell.  
泥棒たちがバスに乗ったの。それで私はバスを追いかけたわ。走っている間につまずいて転んだの。

**Connected Speech Features Instruction via Auto feedback**

# 3 VOA Audio Quizzes: Connected Speech Instruction in Class

## In-Class Instruction: Feedback, Advice, Additional Exercises

これはそう聞こえる！



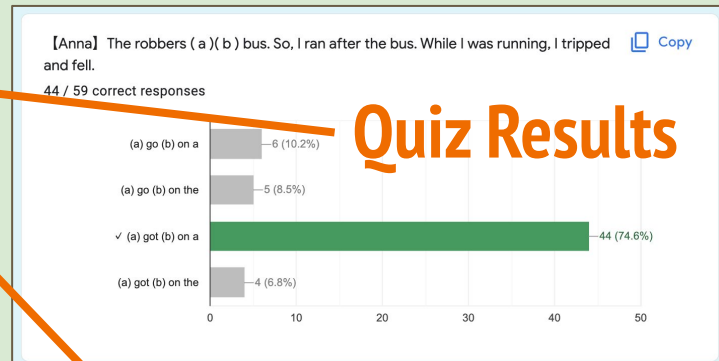
Lesson 42: I Was Minding My Own Business

Anna: I (1a) no time to be afraid, Guy. Well, I had time while I was resting (1b) bench. I had a lot of time.  
Guy: Then what happened?  
Anna: The robbers (2a)(2b) bus. So, I ran after the bus. While I was running, I tripped and fell.  
Guy: And that is the time that you hurt your arm?  
Anna: No. (c) I was lying on the ground, someone stepped on my arm!  
Guy: Ouch.

(1a) ha(d) : /d/が脱落 → had no time : ハッノウタイム  
(1b) on\_a : n と a が連結 → オナ

(2a) go[t] 脱落 → ガッ  
(2b) on\_a 連結 → オナ

While\_I がつながる → While I was が「ウィライフズ」



1の問題が一番難しかったです。  
話してる速度で理解できました  
ofとoffの聞き分けが難しい  
消える音があるときに聞こうとしても聞き取れない。  
**Reactions**  
1の3問目が全く分からなかった。

# 4 Reaction Paper: Reflect on Learning through the Song & Others

Reaction Paper April 25

メールアドレスは @st.cuc.ac.jp のものにしてください。コピーがメールで送られます。

Email \*

Valid email

This form is collecting emails. [Change settings](#)

2022 ver.

氏名 \*

Short answer text

One Thing を使った音声学習はどうでしたか？驚きの音声変化！とか、耳が慣れてきた（はや！）とか、口が回らないなど、自分の処理の状態について思いつくことをなんでも書いてください。 \*

Long answer text

4/25の授業について、感想・質問・コメントをください。(★これができた ★これが分かった ★これはできるけどこれはまだ難しい etc.)

Long answer text

Encourage them to pay attention to their own listening process

- If they're getting used to connected speech
- If their mouth work right

- It was **difficult** but I got **more used** to [the connected speech features in the song] after listening to it repeatedly.
- I'm **now used** to [the sound] but my **mouth** doesn't work right.
- The song wasn't **too fast**, but the **linking** made it **hard** to understand what was said.

*Great!*  
*Yeah, it's natural because ...*

## 4 Reaction Paper: Great Input for the Teacher



From Reaction Paper:

*I just barely followed the subtitles, but took long to understand the meaning.*

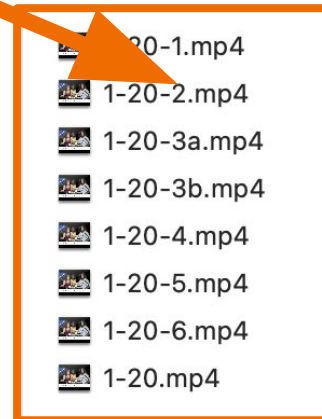
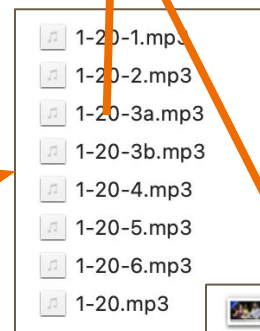
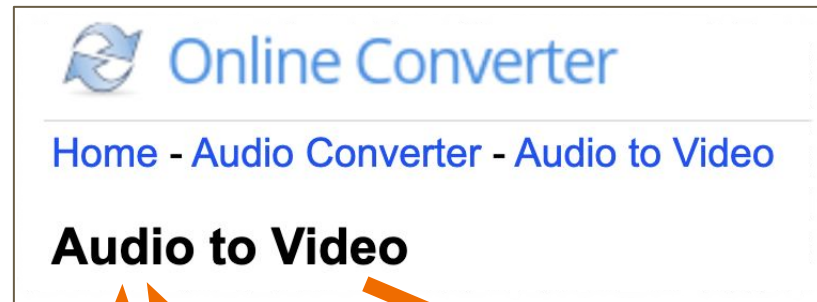
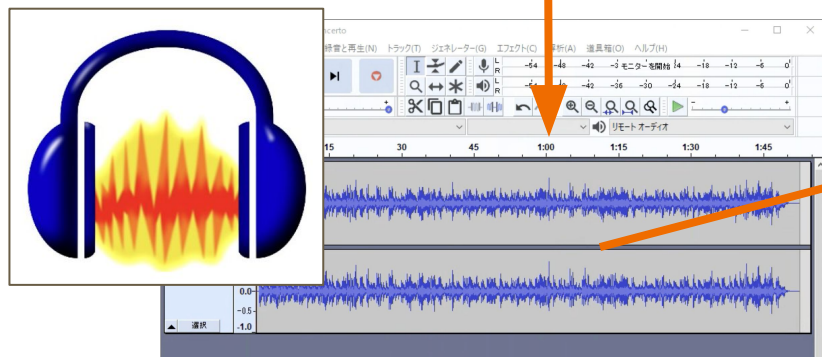
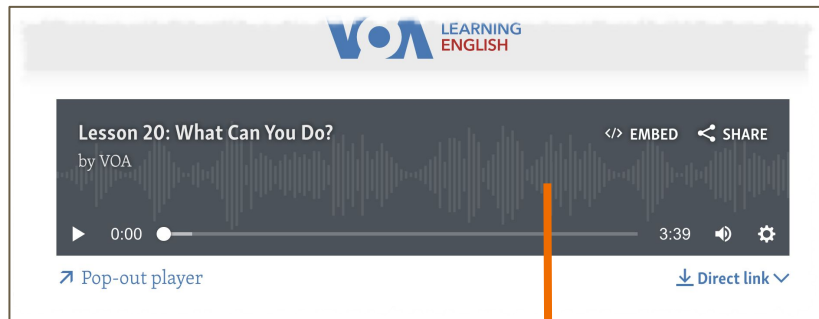
*It's hard to understand what I heard **in the order I heard**.*

VOA Level 1 Lesson 13 (Done on May 16)

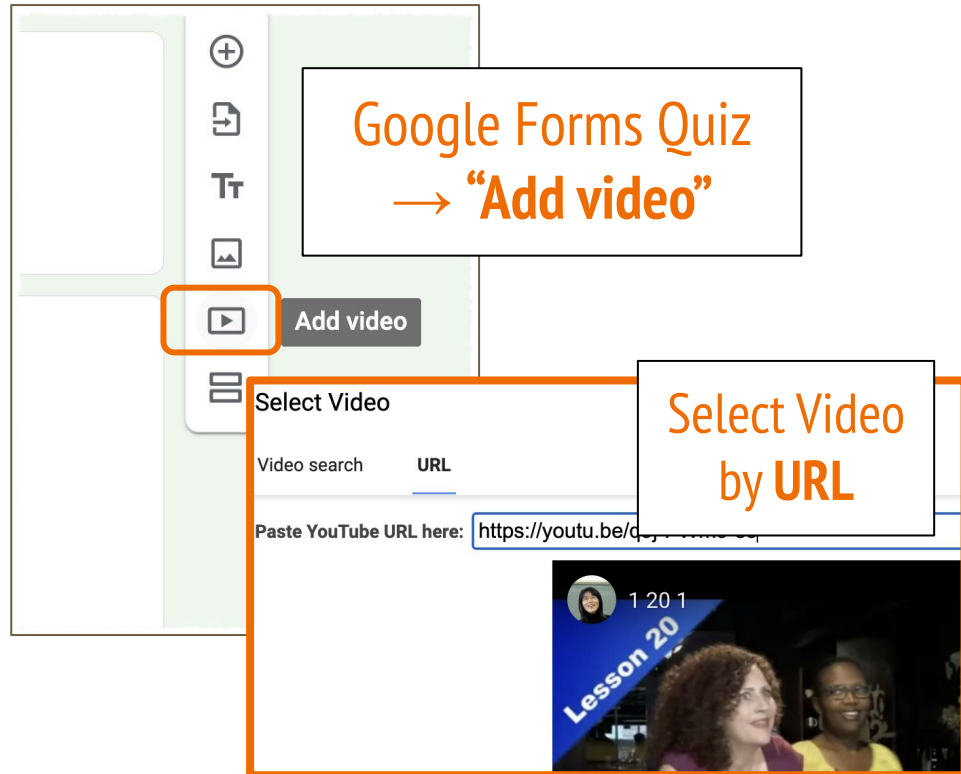
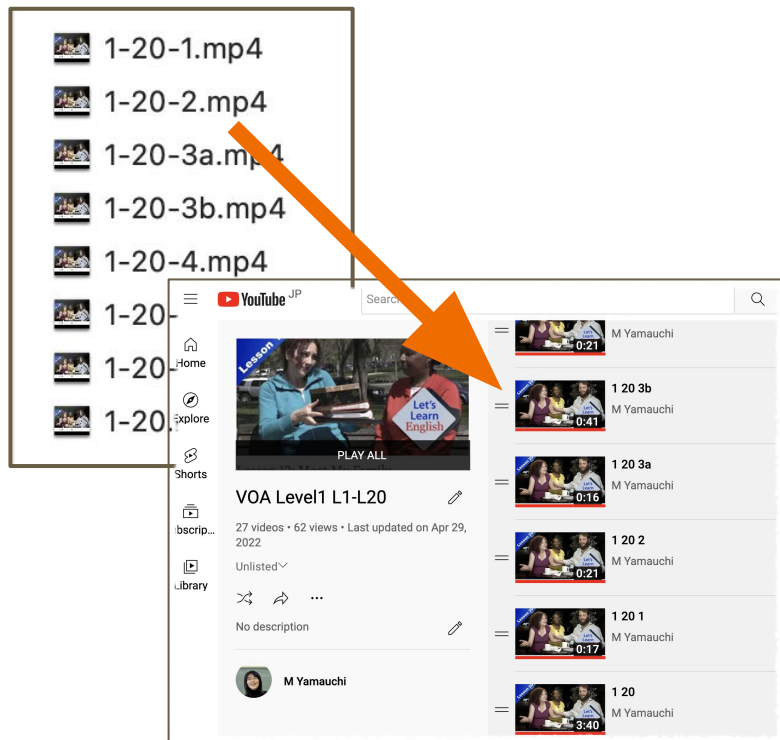
# Use of “Audio” with Google Forms

- \* Google Forms only accepts **video** clips on **YouTube**
  - Need to **convert** MP3 to MP4 & **upload** it to **YouTube**
- \* A VOA conversation is **too long** (3.5-5 minutes) for bottom-up listening training
  - Better to **divide** one conversation into **4-5 parts**

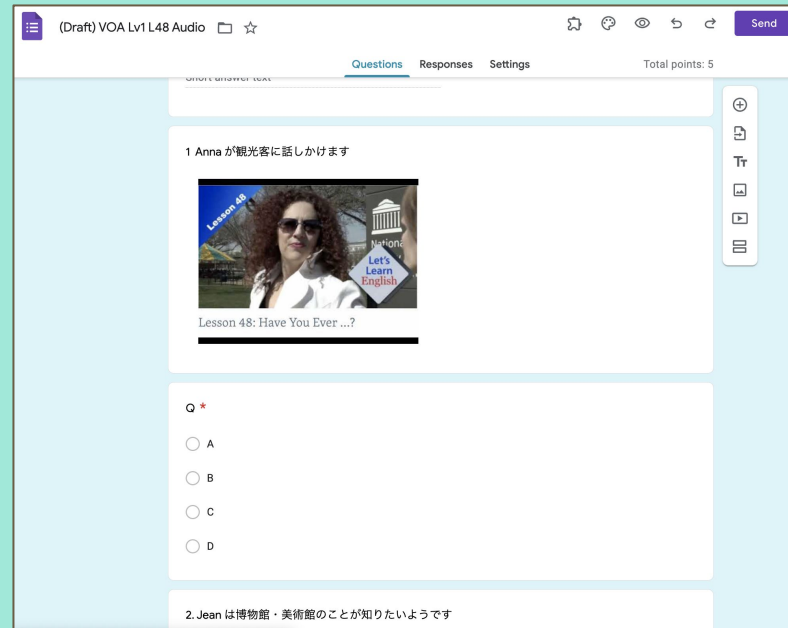
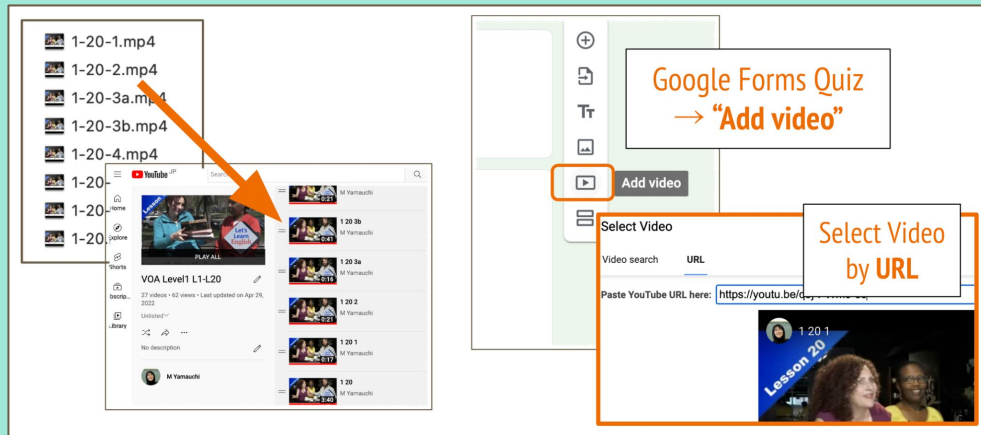
# Download MP3 → Divide It → Convert MP3 to MP4



# Upload MP4 to YouTube → Add the video to your quiz







I prepare "Audio" clips on YouTube  
& add the "Audio" clips to Google Forms

↓  
Other teachers add questions, answers,  
and auto-feedback

\* Sharing copies of Google Forms  
is super easy.

Teacher collaboration for developing the same type of VOA audio quizzes

# Results


1. **Pre-and Post-Tests to Check Their Bottom-Up Listening Skills**
2. **Post-Semester Course Evaluation Survey**

# 1 Checking Their Bottom-Up Listening Skills

NO6 音声聞いて、空所(1)-(4)に入る語句を解答欄に入力してください。

A: If ■■■, ladies and gentlemen,  
I'll show you (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the museum's most famous paintings.  
On the right is one (2) \_\_\_\_\_ most popular works, Venetian Sunrise.  
B: Wow! ■■■. The ■■■■■.  
A: Yes. This artist (3) \_\_\_\_\_ for his use of rich colors.  
We'll be showing some of his other works (4) \_\_\_\_\_ special exhibition next month.  
B: Really? ■■■■■.

NO6 音声



NO6 (1) I'll show you \_\_\_\_\_ the museum's most famous paintings.  
Short answer text \_\_\_\_\_

NO6 (2) On the right is one \_\_\_\_\_ most popular works, Venetian Sunrise.  
Short answer text \_\_\_\_\_

NO6 (3) This artist \_\_\_\_\_ for his use of rich colors.  
Short answer text \_\_\_\_\_

NO6 (4) We'll be showing some of his other works \_\_\_\_\_ special exhibition next month.  
Short answer text \_\_\_\_\_

**8 Conversations**

**4 Gaps / Conversation**

- 100% = **64** points (2 x 32)
- **3** times: Test 1 (**W1**), Test 2 (**W7**) & Test 3 (**W13**)
- **26** students (out of 32) took all the three tests

e.g. Target: Linking & Weak form  
I'll show you ( **some\_of** ) the museum's Famous paintings

# 1 Checking Their Bottom-Up Listening Skills

Score Changes from W1 to W7, W13 (N = 26)

	Mean	Median	SD
Week 1 (Pre-Test)	38.1 (59.5%)	39.0 (60.9%)	9.4
Week 7 (Post-Test 1)	49.1 (76.7%)	51.0 (79.7%)	11.3
Week 13 (Post-Test 2)	50.6 (79.1%)	50.5 (78.9%)	11.6

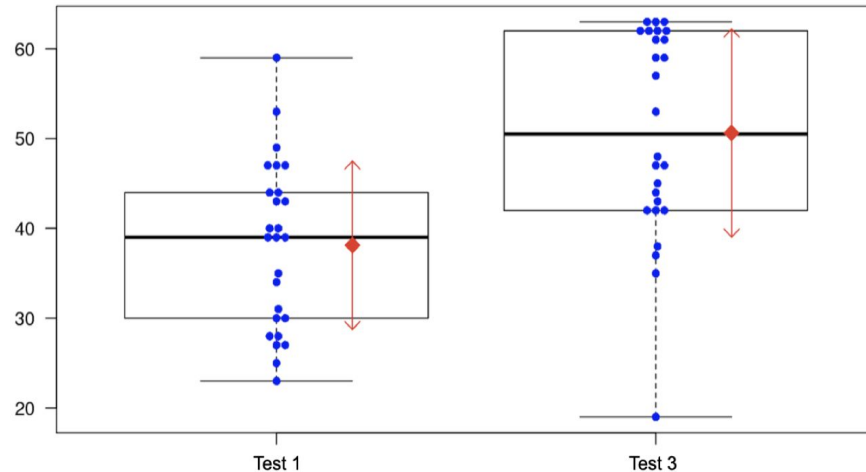
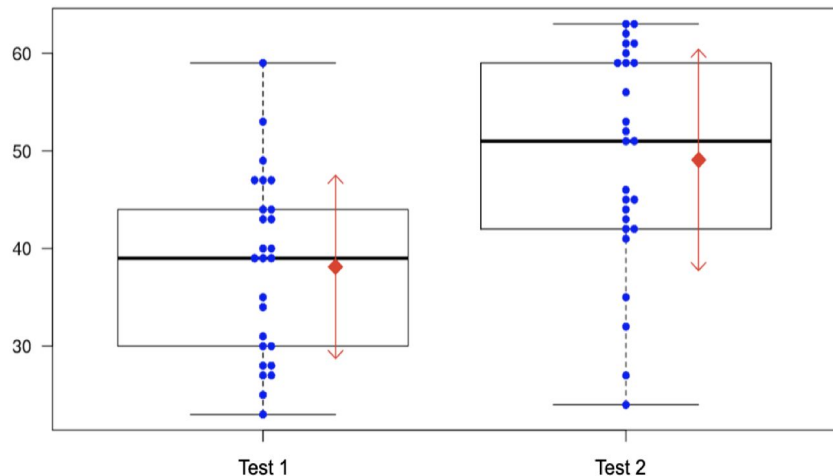
Roughly  
60%  
to 80 %

	V	p-value	Effect size (r)
W1 – W7	36.50	.0004124	.69
W1 – W13	23.50	.0001822	.73

Score  
difference  
→ Large  
Effect sizes  
→ Large

# 1 Checking Their Bottom-Up Listening Skills

Score Changes from W1 to W7, W13 (N = 26)



Most of the students were now much better able to segment spoken English and recognize linked words, reduced syllables, and assimilated sounds.

## 2 Post-Semester Course Evaluation Survey

18/20 mentioned  
listening skills

*(O) Do you think you improved your English? (N = 31)*

I strongly think so	I think so a bit	I really don't think so	I don't think so at all
13 (41.9%)	14 (45.2%)	4 (12.9%)	0

*(Q) How satisfied are you with the activities in this course? (n = 31)*

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
VOA audio quiz	21 (67.7%)	10 (32.3%)	0	0
Song cloze activity	20 (64.5%)	10 (32.3%)	1 (3.2%)	0

23 comments: Happy to understand the lyrics/to be able to sing; Enjoyed practicing

23 comments: Easy to replay; Easy to find what they were weak at ; VOA video quizzes helped

# Conclusions

**MUST**-learn connected speech features(+) for Japanese EFL learners:

1. Should be **explicitly taught** to those with underdeveloped bottom-up listening skills to help them to improve their listening skills
2. Can be **effectively taught** through self-grading quizzes and song cloze activities (plus students enjoyed learning through them)
3. Can be **learned relatively quickly** (within 7 weeks)

\*Online materials and activities developed here can be used in different learning settings, either online courses (real-time/on-demand), or in-person courses (with/without activity restrictions).



# References

- T. Greer & M. Yamauchi, “Pronunciation Tasks for Academic Study Skills,” JALT2007 Proceedings, pp. 553–561, 2008.
- M. Reed & T. Jones (eds.), Listening in the Classroom: Teaching Students How to Listen, Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press, 2022 (e-book).
- M. Yamauchi, “Active Learning in the Japanese EFL Classroom”, The Journal of Chiba University of Commerce, vol. 57, no. 3, pp.71-94, 2020.
- M. Mizumoto, “Comparing Paired Samples (web application),” Accessed from <http://langtest.jp/shiny/paired/>