

# Methodology and Textbooks

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*Through seminars, workshops, and books on methodology, innovative language teaching methods such as Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, and task-based language learning (TBLT) have been introduced to teachers of Japanese as a second language (JSL).*

*Although none of these methods has been adopted in total in most JSL classrooms, some teachers feel that they have renewed their teaching, mainly by adapting TBLT to go with textbooks based on audiolingualism (ALA). Such eclecticism, however, often leads to a gap between the teachers' and students' perceptions. Despite teachers' efforts to use communicative methods, some JSL learners believe that their classrooms are too textbook-oriented. One reason for the differences between learners' and teachers' perceptions may be the degree of eclecticism. For example, if a teacher uses an ALA-based textbook, practices patterns, gives accuracy-oriented written tests, and introduces a task for a short-time segment, learners will regard the class as textbook-centered. Another reason for the differences in perception between teacher and learner may be the degree of adaptation: If a teacher introduces tasks that allow learners to use only the learned patterns and vocabulary without creating any active language negotiations, the class will not be communicative.*

*JSL teachers planning to introduce communicative classroom techniques to their classes (with or without using an ALA-based textbook) may wish to prepare themselves and their learners for these new techniques. First, in order to adapt a certain method effectively, they should study not only classroom techniques but also their basic theoretical backgrounds. Second, to see whether they are doing what they believe they should do and to check the degree of eclecticism, it is helpful for them to audiotape or videotape an actual class and analyze what they are doing in their classrooms.*

*It also is useful at the beginning of the semester to help learners get ready for the course by discussing the kinds of classroom activities they can expect and why these activities are important. Such information can be provided together with course objectives. In addition, it is necessary for learners to evaluate the course at the end of the semester. Such an evaluation should include separate sections for textbooks and other such materials and for classroom activities.*