Lexis TESOL Training Centres

CLAIR

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LTTC

Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)

Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program

Lexis TESOL Training Centres

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Overview.

In 2018, the Lexis Group was approached by the **Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)** to deliver communicative-based teache**r training to Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program** in five prefectures across Japan. In 2019, this training was expanded to include high level training for a combined cohort of Japanese English Teachers (JTEs) and ALTs. The program was overseen by Lexis TESOL Training Centres and was the first of its kind in Japan.

Background.

In recent years there have been several Government-led reforms with regards to English language education in Japan. The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) have begun a push towards more communicative language teaching with a focus on students graduating with high levels of English. Moreover, the university entrance exams were set to be revised to include all four skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) from 2020.

Problem.

A 2016 survey ranked Japan as 26th out of 60 countries where English is not used as a first language, with regards to English ability. This issue stems from the fact that the vast majority of English lessons in schools are taught using the grammar translation method. It was clear that for the Government reforms to be implemented, a drastic shift in teaching methodology needed to take place, focusing on all 4 skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary.

CLAIR recognised the need for more appropriate training for their ALTs and JTEs to achieve the desired results for students, but realised they lacked the knowledge and resources to implement such extensive training across the country. An external provider would be needed to design, deliver and manage the training across the country.

Countries where English is not used as a first language with regards to English ability

Solution.

As one of the leading providers of Cambridge accredited teacher training courses, and having substantial expertise in designing and delivering bespoke training programs, Lexis TESOL Training Centres proposed a number of accredited programs, but ultimately proposed several bespoke programs for CLAIR to choose from. It was important that the training was consolidated over time and that the trainees were given the opportunity to implement new techniques in their classrooms while receiving feedback from experienced teacher trainers on these techniques.

For this reason a combination of face to face training and portfolio tasks was proposed and ultimately the following were chosen across the different prefectures:

- **Five days initial training with two days follow up training (after 6 months) with 8 portfolio tasks**
- **One day initial training with one day follow up (after 6 months) with 4 portfolio tasks**
- **One day initial training with 4 portfolio tasks**

These practical trainings combined trainer input with practical teaching tasks to allow trainees to put theory into practice.

Impact.

The training promoted the shift towards communicative language teaching in Japan and at times challenged the views of the experienced ALTs. The training was extended the following year to allow ALTs and JTEs to attend the sessions together, creating more opportunity for collaboration and cooperation.

The improvement in teaching quality demonstrated by the participants has been observed by schools and prefectures. The standard of portfolio tasks has improved greatly through the continued efforts of the participants and the feedback they have received.

The program is to be extended further in 2020 with more locations, a dedicated primary school stream and a larger number of participants due to join the program.

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