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Type: Practice-oriented Oral Face-to-face presentation

I see what you mean: Cultivating Young Learners' Agency Through Debates

Sunday 18 May 2025 10:40 (25 minutes)

TITLE

I see what you mean: Cultivating Young Learners' Agency Through Debates

RELEVANT SIG

Teaching Younger Learners (TYL)

FORMAT

Practice-oriented Oral Face-to-face presentation (25 minutes, including Q&A)

Short English description

KEYWORDS

debate
young learners
metacognitive approach
learner agency

First-time presenter?

ABSTRACT

Debates are often conducted in higher-level classes, such as junior and senior high schools and university foreign language courses. However, little is known about whether it is possible to engage young learners of English in Japan in debates and how it can help cultivate their agency and autonomy in the language classroom.

In this workshop, I will walk you through my sixth graders' journey in preparing, practicing and expressing their arguments during debates. This unit is a part of our sixth grade's English curriculum that aims to provide a venue for our students to use the English expressions they have learned in the year, as well as immerse

them in the environment of debates where they can be confident to express their ideas while learning to listen respectfully to others' opinions. Employing a metacognitive approach, I guided my students in planning, practicing, and reflecting on their performance. At the end of the workshop, we will look at how this approach in debates may have helped cultivate my students' agency and autonomy.

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