

The 1st grade English communication I Cross-curriculum lessons Part7

The 1st grade English department

Textbook: Landmark Fit Lesson 8 Mariko, Nagai, Super Interpreter

Period: December

●This lesson's purpose (Only cross-curriculum lessons)

1. To consider the merits and demerits of AI translators and Human translators.
2. To think about co-existence with AI to live in a "global society".

●Introduction

- To learn about Ms. Mariko Nagai's career and consider the reason why she translated 「美しい故郷、浪江町」 into "beautiful Namie Town as our home".
- To tell students that translation is not just translating a word into another word.
- To imagine work in a foreign country and to think about what students would need to consider when they wouldn't be able to communicate with foreign people well.

●Students' opinion about the merits or demerits of AI translators and human translators

< AI translators >

○ Merit

- We can carry them easily.
- They are compact.
- We can use it for a long time if we buy them once.
- They are less expensive than human translators.
- They are easy to use
- We can up-date many times
- They can translate a lot of languages.

○ Demerit

- We would be at a loss when they break down.
- They tend to mistranslate.
- We always need wi-fi.
- They can't translate our feelings well.
- They can't be lack situational awareness.
- We may lose time.

< Human translators >

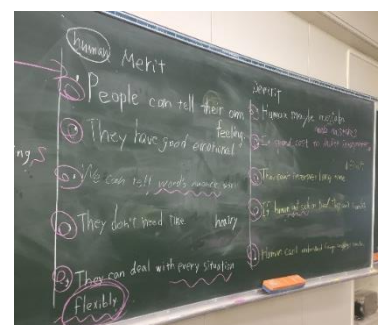
○ Merit

- They can translate depending on situation.
- They can think about feelings.
- They also give useful advice for us.
- We can relax with a native Japanese speaker.
- They can handle problems flexibly.

○ Demerit

- It's expensive.
- It's difficult for them to translate many languages.
- It's hard to work for a long time.
⇒ In term of schedules and expense
- We take care of their health and working condition.
- We have to think about human relationships.

- Students' opinions about AI translators and Human translators
- After students thought of ideas by themselves, they made pairs and discussed their opinions.
⇒ They wrote one unique opinion.
- We usually encourage a creative and open discussion.
⇒ Therefore, we sometimes don't correct small grammar mistakes.



○Summary

At first, we planned a debate, the topic was “AI translators” VS “Human translators”, but due to COVID-19, we gave up our first plan. Instead of the debate, we tried essay writing based on the students' opinions.

< Essay writing's topic >

1. You work abroad. You are invited to a welcome party hosted by your company.
⇒ Cross-industry people would come to the party.
2. The common language is English. Your English is at a conversational level.
3. The aim of the welcome party is to build up human relationships.
⇒ You don't have to talk about business.
4. You are the only Japanese guest.

Students imagined the situation. They wrote about if they went to the party, which translators would they choose, AI or Human. We told the students that they should explain their choice and write two examples to support their opinion. The students chose two opinions from those they had written on the blackboard and thought about the opinions more deeply.

<Essay's structure>

Topic sentence ⇒ Example 1 ⇒ Example 2 ⇒ Counterargument ⇒ Rebuttal (⇒ Conclusion)

<Evaluation(Example)>

Structure	5 · 3 · 1 (Followed the format)
Content	5 · 3 · 1 (Persuasive or not, logical or illogical)
Grammar & Spelling	3 · 2 · 1
Length	2 · 0
Total	15 points

○Student examples

<AI>

- The party would be cozy. I would enjoy talking by myself as much as I can. If impossible, I would sometimes rely on an AI translator.
- If I went to the party with a human translator, other people might think I was like a child with his/her parents. It would be embarrassing!
- I could show I could make use of AI devices.
- I would have to work in the foreign countries, I couldn't depend on a human translator forever. Therefore, I would take part in the party with an AI translator from the beginning.

<Human>

- I would feel helpless without a human translator. This is the first party, so I would like to take part in the party with a person who could speak Japanese.
- A human translator might give useful advice, for example, the knowledge and manners of a welcome party and culture differences I should be careful about.

- A human translator said to me, “When this happens, let’s say ○○” from time to time.

<No translators(a few students)>

- I wouldn’t improve my English skill if I relied on translators.
- It would be important for me to proactively communicate with someone even if I couldn’t do it well.
- I think that people wouldn’t want to become friends with a person who couldn’t communicate by him/herself.

The party’s aim was to build human relationships not business, therefore, the students who chose AI wrote that they would try speaking basic English, and if they were in trouble they would use an AI translator. On the other hand, many of the students who chose a human wanted to relax with Japanese people and build up human relationships.

We didn’t try a debate this time but we could share a lot of opinions with the whole class. The students made good use of their opinions. We could enjoy various opinions when we read their essays.