

TAKAKO

So my name is Takako Aikawa. I'm a senior lecturer in Japanese. As the leader of the

AIKAWA:

Japanese language program, I am shaping the direction or future direction of the Japanese language program, and at the same time, improving the existing language curriculum.

So the high-level overview of the Japanese language program at MIT is, so we have three tiers-- beginning, intermediate, and advanced courses. And each layer aims to develop four language skills-- reading, writing, speaking, and listening. And our main focus, however, is to improve so-called communicative skills, be able to communicate with native speakers.

My first encounter with language teaching was when I was a graduate student, I applied for a teaching assistantship for Japanese teaching. I originally was trained as a theoretical linguist, so I didn't know anything about language teaching. But when I first taught Japanese, I found a great gem in language teaching. And since then, I'm very passionate about language teaching.