Since the 1990 Immigration Act, the number of foreign students who need extra Japanese instruction has consistently increased, and almost half of all school districts in Japan now enroll Japanese language learner (JLL) students. It is no longer unusual for Japanese teachers to have newcomer JLL students in their classes. On the other hand, Japanese schools fail to meet the language needs of the JLL students, resulting in serious problems of low academic achievement among those JLL students.

The purpose of this study is to explore how to design lessons for JLL students through examining the CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) model in the United States.

First, the problems of current education for JLL students and the significance of the CALLA model in Japanese context are outlined. Secondly, the theoretical backgrounds of the CALLA model and its basic framework are examined. Thirdly, the key concepts and curriculum design of the CALLA model are discussed. Fourthly, to evaluate its effectiveness, some CALLA project assessments are reviewed. Lastly, some implications of the CALLA model for the education of JLL students are presented.